DISCOURSE AND INEQUALITY *

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PREFACE

I am grateful and honored to be able to address you on the relations between discourse and inequality. The theme of this conference, "Communication and Equality", is important and timely. I may assume I speak also for the other participants when I say that we are all indebted to the organizers of this conference, and in particular to Professor Margaret McLaughlin, for the social commitment expressed by the choice of this theme.

In my opinion, not only the study of discourse and communication itself will be theoretically and empirically enriched by the analysis of fundamental social problems. Also, we may hope, such an analysis may contribute to a broader understanding, and ultimately to the solution of such problems –if only because of a critical position taken towards those who are responsible for, and who have the highest interests in the perpetuation of social inequality, namely, the dominant elites. Since we belong ourselves to a fraction of these elites, that is, to the academic or symbolic elites, this critical stance is necessarily also a form of self-criticism.

Although I appreciate the positive implications of the formulation of the topic of this conference, I shall focus on *inequality* rather than on *equality*, with the understanding that I hope that my analysis will ultimately contribute to the realization of the same goal, viz., social equality and justice.

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* This paper was presented as an invited keynote address to the international conference of the International Communication Association, ICA, held in Dublin in June 1990. The timely topic of this conference was "Communication and Equality", a topic I had advocated for this conference in order to promote a more social and critical way of doing communication and discourse studies. I do indeed hope that with this and similar papers, such a more socially relevant, responsible and critical approach to language and discourse will soon become less marginal in our field. Although such critical studies have not yet entered the mainstream, several critical books have appeared on discourse, language, power and inequality, during the last few years.

Instead of the usual footnotes and references (which generally lack in keynote addresses), I have added a brief and updated bibliographical note for the readers of *Lenguas Modernas*.

1. INTRODUCTION

We may hope that after this conference it will be even more obvious that discourse and communication are crucial in the establishment, the legitimation and the reproduction of power and inequality. My contribution to this common enterprise will focus on one of the most persistent and vicious forms of inequality in European and Europeanized societies, namely racism, including ethnicism, ethnocentrism and anti-semitism. (Ruth Wodak will later in particular focus on the renewed but old anti-semitism in Europe).

The situation in Europe

I assume that most of you, especially those from North America, get little detailed information and background stories about the ethnic and racial situation in Europe. To give you an idea about the seriousness of the situation in Europe, let me briefly summarize some facts from an as yet unpublished report of an important European committee. Note that this report is based on official documents and expert advice from the member countries. The everyday reality of racism is even harsher:

Some facts reported by the Committee of Inquiry into Racism and Xenophobia of the European Parliament

(Summary)

1. *All member states.* There are substantial right-wing groups and parties that openly incite to racial hatred and regularly attack minorities or other non-European immigrants. Whereas such parties may get up to 10% or 20% of the local vote, their anti-immigrant ideologies are sometimes supported by an even larger percentage of the population. Virtually none of these groups or parties are prohibited by law, and their actions seldom prosecuted.

2. *The Netherlands.* Unemployment among young minority group members is two to three times as high as that of white youths, reaching 75% in some areas.

3. *Belgium.* Despite many complaints, no right-wing political parties have ever been convicted for making racist statements against immigrants, even in publicly distributed leaflets. This is hardly surprising when we also know that a Minister of the Interior in 1987 himself called immigrants "barbarians". The Mayor of a Brussels borough had 150,000 copies of an information brochure distributed in schools, depicting North Africans as "terrorists" and "fundamentalists". Again, this may be expected when we also know that a Royal Decree of May 7, 1985, allowed six Brussels boroughs to ban certain foreigners from living in the borough.

4. *Denmark.* In the night of July 12/13, 1986, some 2,000 "rockers" attacked a hostel with asylum seekers to protest against the influx of refugees. And when a right-wing party called such refugees "vast hoards of terrorists... who breed

like rats", the public prosecutor found that such remarks did not give cause for prosecution under the law.

5. *Sweden.* Similar attacks by youths against refugees or other immigrants regularly take place in Sweden.

6. *Germany.* Despite the increasing number of racial attacks, there is a reluctance on the part of the police and the public prosecutor to prosecute racially motivated violence. Two men who killed an Iranian refugee only got an 18-month suspended sentence. An arson attack in the city of Wuppertal in 1987 against foreigners led to the death of a Greek couple and caused serious burns to 18 other foreigners. Similarly, out of hate against foreigners, a 19-year-old youth a year later in Schwandorf set fire to the house of a Turkish family, killing the Turkish couple and their son. These events are the real consequences of widespread resentment (75% according to a recent poll) against foreigners.

7. *France.* In the last four years, 20 people, mostly of North African origin, were killed in racially motivated murders. According to a recent survey, 76% of those questioned about such racial killings agreed that "the behaviour of some of them can justify racist reactions against them". The perpetrators of such crimes often get very lenient sentences. Several Mayors have openly refused to register non-European children in local schools. For Le Pen, leader of the *Front National,* the Holocaust was nothing more than a "detail of history", whereas the representative of the *Front National* in the European Parliament, Mr. Autant Lara, publicly declared that the Nazis had failed to exterminate Mrs. Simone Weil, former president of the European Parliament.

8. *Italy.* In February 1990, 200 masked people armed with baseball bats and iron bars organized a beating of Blacks and gypsies in the town center of Florence. Other racial attacks have taken place in many other cities.

9. *The United Kingdom.* For many years there have been widespread racist harassment and violence, such as arson attacks, against (mostly Asian) families, women and children, who are daily terrorized in their homes and on the street. In 1989, the London police alone reported six racial incidents per day –probably a fraction of the real figure, because most immigrants have little faith in the zeal of the police in clearing up such crimes.

10. *Switzerland.* In 1989, 30 members of a right-wing group ransacked a centre for asylum seekers. This event followed a series of arson attacks against immigrants, one of which resulted in the death of 4 Tamil refugees.

11. *Austria.* Ruth Wodak will report about widespread anti-semitism in Austria.

All this is only the tip of the iceberg and ignores the massive everyday inequities suffered by minorities in virtually all domains of social, cultural, economic and political life. Indeed, the more subtle and indirect forms of racism in which large parts of the white population and its elites are involved may be even more consequential than the blatant racism of right-wing groups.

(Published in the summer of 1990)

Obviously, these shocking facts and figures are not representative of the whole population of Europe. There are also many active anti-racist groups, numerous initiatives to build up a multiethnic society, and elites that are truly committed to ethnic and racial equality and justice. Yet, I believe that in case you did not know about the facts of racism in Europe, this conference on communication and equality is one of the places where such blatant forms of inequality should be communicated. Your active cooperation in making such facts known, and thus raising international support for the struggle against them, is absolutely crucial.

That this support is crucial may also be emphasized by the fact that the leaders of the European Community are meeting right now, and right here in Dublin. Earlier they have repeatedly made statements and implemented policies to counter terrorism and drugs. Despite insistent requests, however, they have as yet never taken a stand or implemented joint measures against the increasing racism in the European Community. Apparently, for the (white) political elites, racism does not have priority. Indeed, some of their own immigration policies, for instance those related to refugees, also decided upon here in Dublin only a few days ago, as well as in the framework of the so-called "Schengen" accord, have themselves often been characterized in terms of racism against Third World peoples.

Aims

It is against this socio-political background that I shall discuss some of the results of my work of the last decade about the reproduction of racism in discourse, especially in conversation, news in the press, and textbooks.

Also, I shall discuss some more general theoretical issues about the relationships between discourse, communication and inequality. After all, discourse is a micro-phenomenon and racism and inequality are typical macro-phenomena, and we should examine how such different societal levels are connected.

To do that, we need an interdisciplinary framework, featuring the analysis of structures and strategies of discourse and communication, a theory of social cognition and, related to both, a theory of societal, political and cultural structures of group dominance and reproduction.

One of the most provocative theses I shall discuss is that the discursive reproduction of racism and other forms of group inequality is largely controlled by various elites; not only the political or corporate elites, but also the 'symbolic' elites, such as leading scholars, teachers, writers and journalists. That is, people like us.

2. INEQUALITY

Unfortunately, there is no time to discuss the details of the theory of inequality, and I shall only briefly summarize some of its features, features

we shall later need in the analysis of the reproduction of racism through text, talk and communication.

1. Inequality is the structural result of historical processes of social, political, cultural group dominance.

2. Group dominance is a form of social power, namely the exercise of illegitimate or unacceptable group control of dominant group A over dominated group B.

3. Hence, dominance and inequality have moral implications: They are found *wrong*, at least by the dominated group.

4. This means that dominance needs continuous legitimation. Such legitimation is usually discursive and communicative, and we may assume that such legitimating discourse and communication are highly ideological.

5. At the micro-level, dominance is reproduced by actions of members of A that (partly) control –that is, limit the freedom of– members of B.

6. The dominant group A is able to control the dominated group B because of its material or immaterial power resources, such as wealth, status, work, education, or knowledge.

7. Group A will ensure that group B will have no or less access to such resources. This is the core of the concept of inequality.

8. Group dominance may involve control of actions and control of minds. Modern (more or less 'democratic') forms of dominance are usually mental, viz., operate by manipulation or persuasion.

9. Discourse and communication are the main channels for this mental control, that is, for the production of social cognitions. Therefore, the dominant group will ensure that it maintains privileged access to, and control over the means of this kind of symbolic reproduction.

10. Dominance patterns also exist within dominant groups themselves. That is, the same analysis we just gave for inter-group relations also holds for the relation between dominant elites and the 'others' ("ordinary citizens") within the dominant group.

11. In particular, the dominant elite groups control the means of symbolic reproduction in order (1) to control the reproduction of their own elite-power, and (2) to persuade the whole dominant group to maintain its dominant position vis-à-vis dominated groups (e.g., to avoid solidarity between dominated groups). Thus, discourse and communication are crucially involved in the reproduction of this kind of elite power.

It is the fundamental assumption of this talk that racism in Europe and North America is a form of white group dominance, and produces the inequality by which minority groups, immigrants, refugees or Third World peoples are victimized.

It is this dominance of white groups and their elites, and this discourse about ethnic relations, that I shall turn to now. After that, I shall briefly come back to the more general relations between discourse and inequality.

3. RACISM AND DISCOURSE

The overall aim of my research on the reproduction of racism was to link structures and strategies of text and talk of white majority group members with the structures and strategies of their 'ethnic' social cognitions, and the latter to the social practices and societal processes of the reproduction of racism, that is, to various forms of ethnic and racial discrimination.

Obviously, since racism is not innate, racist social cognitions are acquired and discriminatory actions learned. One major assumption of our research is that this process of acquisition in white-dominated societies is largely discursive. Let us therefore examine some of the properties of such discourse.

EVERYDAY CONVERSATION

Detailed analysis of some 180 in-depth interviews carried out in the Netherlands and California first shows that, indeed, the topic of 'ethnic affairs' is very prominent in the everyday talk of white people in present multiethnic societies of Europe and North America. As we shall see shortly, the relevance and prominence of this topic of conversation are not only due to everyday interethnic experiences, but also, or rather, to the prominence of this issue in the mass media. Much everyday 'ethnic talk' indeed reproduces media discourse (for details, see my book *Communicating Racism*, 1987).

New immigrant groups, such as the Turks in the Netherlands and Germany, West Indians and Asians in the U.K. and the Netherlands, or Mexican Americans and other Hispanic groups in the USA, as well as later groups of refugees, e.g., Iranians, or Tamils from Sri Lanka, continue to call widespread attention.

Also, their arrival or presence give rise to concern, not only of the politicians and the media, but also of ordinary citizens, especially when such groups come to reside in 'their' cities and neighborhoods. The same is true for resident minority groups, such as African Americans in the USA or the native Americans ('Indians') in Canada.

This special attention typically also expresses itself in discourse, and such discourse plays a vital role in the communication of socially relevant

knowledge and beliefs of the majority group. Power and dominance of white (European) groups in these countries is unthinkable without this commonsense topicalization of race and ethnic affairs. Indeed, the social cognitions required for the very reproduction of the ingroup, such as group attitudes and ideologies and feelings of ethnic identity, can only be shared through these forms of everyday talk.

Systematic analysis of this talk reveals a number of properties that precisely sustain this specific function in the reproduction of white group power:

(1) *Topics*. Topics (i.e., semantic macrostructures) of ethnic/racial talk are not 'free' or more or less arbitrary, as in most other conversations. That is, when ethnic minorities, immigrants or refugees are brought up, special topics seem to come to mind, viz., events and situations that illustrate the prominence and availability of the following overall social cognitions about such groups:

(a) Socio-cultural difference (rather than similarity) and lack of adaptation
(b) Deviance of established (dominant) norms (including crime)
(c) Competition for scarce resources (space, work, housing, welfare, etc.).

  Example of difference

  I would put up one HECK of a battle if my daughter decided to marry Black (...) and it doesn't have to do with superiority or anything else, it's just too vast a difference for me to be able to cross over. (Example taken from an interview in California).

Note that these topics not only characterize the overall definition of the contrast and difference between US and THEM. Also, more negatively, the definition of THEM is given in terms of deviance and threats, viz., as threats to "our" country, space, 'balanced' population composition, employment, education, housing, welfare, or other valued resources. If we recall the definition of dominance, we recognize here the typical concerns of dominant group members.

We see that these general topic categories are usually not discussed neutrally, let alone positively, but mostly negatively. That is, they at the same time express underlying prejudices, group norms and goals, as well as dominant ideologies.

Here we see a first link between text structure and the contents and structures of underlying social cognitions. In other words, topical analysis tells us something about the hierarchical structures of our social representations in memory.

(2) *Stories*. These topics may be specifically organized in textual schemata (superstructures) such as those of stories and argumentations. Thus, if we
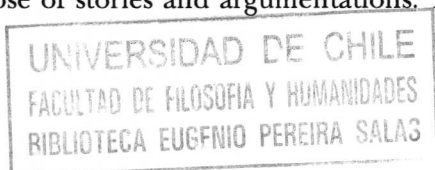
examine the narrative structures of such talk, we find first that most of the stories do not have an entertaining function, but rather a persuasive or argumentative function: They provide the concrete, self-experienced, and hence unrefutable premises of a general argumentative conclusion that is mostly negative.

Also, about 50% of the stories lack the well-known (obligatory) Resolution category. This structural feature may be interpreted as signalling the structure of underlying episodic models in memory, that is, cognitive representations of ethnic events, in which, for the storytellers, there *is* no solution to the 'ethnic problem' discussed in the story.

Thus, the stories tell about everyday conflicts and predicaments that are seen as illustrative of the overall ethnic situation, in which minority groups are assumed to create all kinds of problems for "us". Again, we observe a link between text structures and underlying cognitions involved in the interpretation of the ethnic situation.

(3) *Semantic moves.* One of the properties of the local semantics of such conversations is the extensive use of disclaimers and other strategic moves, such as:

–   Apparent Denial ("I have nothing against Blacks/Turks, BUT...")
–   Apparent Admission ("Of course there are also smart Blacks/Turks, BUT...")
–   Transfer ("I don't mind so much, BUT my neighbors/colleagues...")
–   Contrast ("*We* always had to work hard for our money, BUT *they*...)

The structure of these moves is interesting. Their first parts are functional within the overall communicative and interactional strategy of face keeping and positive self-presentation ('I am a tolerant citizen', 'I am not a racist', etc.), whereas the second part implements the main semantic and persuasive point, viz., negative other-presentation.

This dialectic positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation is however not merely an expression of the contrast between 'true' and 'apparent' meanings of such discourse. It also exhibits the underlying ambivalence of many speakers in a society in which norms of ethnic tolerance have been learned and partly accepted by the white dominant group, but found in conflict with opinions and attitudes that organize what they see as negative experiences.

This cognitive inconsistency, thus, is itself the result of sociocultural structures and processes of what is sometimes called 'modern' (or 'symbolic') racism, especially among the elites (or the upper-middle class generally). This kind of racism is less blatant. Indeed, most people involved would violently deny that "this has anything to do with racism". Yet, it subtly confirms the dominance of the ethnic group through processes of inferiorization, marginalization and exclusion of minority groups.

There is much other research that has analyzed these processes of dominance in detail, also from the point of view of the actual experiences of ethnic minority group members (see Essed's (1991) work on highly educated Black women in California and the Netherlands, also represented at this conference).

We see that the analysis of these semantic moves points to a complex relationship, viz., between textual structures, underlying structures of cognitive representations, interaction patterns (face keeping), and broader sociocultural aspects of modern racism.

(4) *Style.* Of the many elements of style in everyday talk about minorities, we find the usual attitude-dependent variation in descriptions of outgroup members and their properties and actions, ranging from (rather exceptional) blatant derogatives to typically mitigating expressions of opinions.

Striking is also the use of what may be called the pronouns and demonstratives of 'distance', such as the use of *They/Them* or *These people* in contexts where full descriptions such as *My Turkish/Black neighbors...* would have been more appropriate. I interpret such uses as signalling underlying structures of differentiation and opposition in mental models of the situation, viz., between US and THEM.

(5) *Conversational properties.* Similarly, when white people talk about minorities, they often hesitate, make false starts, repairs and pauses (*Yesterday, this eh eh... this Tu this Turkish neighbor...*) Such properties of spontaneous talk may be interpreted as signalling the rather specific monitoring influence on lexicalization by the positive self-presentation goals of communicative models of the interaction.

More than in much other talk, conversational "delicacy" is called for because naming other groups is known to be betraying socially controversial opinions. Again, we witness a link, this time hardly controllable, between conversational structures, cognitive strategies and interactional strategies of face keeping.

NEWS IN THE PRESS

Similar analyses may be made of news reports in the daily press (for details see my book *Racism and the Press,* 1991). In several projects, we analyzed many thousands of reports from Dutch and British national newspapers, both liberal and conservative.

In this case, we were not only interested in news structures, the underlying social cognitions of white journalists or the processes of newsmaking or the influence on the readers, but also in broader societal processes involved in the institutional reproduction of racism. That is, we

wanted to know what role exactly the press plays, either autonomously or in cooperation with other powerful institutions of white society, in defining the ethnic situation, in manufacturing the ethnic consensus, and in legitimating the power of the dominant white group.

Results of these projects, involving extensive content and discourse analyses as well as analyses of interviews with readers, confirm and further detail findings of much earlier work on the media. New, however, is the discourse analytical approach, which not only studied news discourse structures but also related such structures to social cognitions, and both discourse and cognition in turn to societal structures involved in the reproduction of inequality by the press.

The findings of this research may be summarized as follows:

(a) *Hiring.* As may be expected, especially in Europe where minority groups are not only less numerous but also much less powerful than in the USA, minority journalists are still seriously discriminated against, both in hiring and promotion. Even the quality newspapers of Europe have virtually no minority reporters, let alone editors. Similarly in the USA, more than 60% of all newspapers have no Black journalists, and those that have them seldom promote them to higher ranks. If hired at all, minority journalists are often limited to 'ethnic' stories and assignments.

Our analyses show that this sociological aspect of the reproduction of racism by the press as an institution also involves cognitions and discourse, that is, negative attitudes about the abilities of minority journalists, as well as a biased perspective and choice of topics in news accounts of the ethnic (and other) events in society.

(b) *Access.* Minority groups and organizations have systematically less access to the press. In part this is due to their lack of institutional power, also exhibited by lacking organization of press services, press offices, press conferences, or press reports.

However, the lack of access is also due to the active marginalization and institutional exclusion by the (white) press itself, for instance in newsbeats and newsgathering routines that avoid minority organizations, by negative prejudices about the credibility or reliability of minority sources, by doubts about the objectivity of ethnic group members in the definition of ethnic events, and by inadequate intercultural communication skills of white journalists. It may be expected that this complex set of social and cognitive factors also impinges on the structures of news reports, for instance in (a) choice of topics, (b) perspective, (c) the presence or absence of news actors, and (d) quotation of such news actors.

(c) *Topics.* What do newspapers typically write about when they write about ethnic affairs or ethnic groups at all? Even without much further research, the ordinary newspaper reader may come up with the obvious list:

(1) Violence, especially riots and other forms of public conflict

(2) Crime, especially drug dealing, assaults, theft or prostitution
(3) Race relations, especially discrimination and racial conflict (e.g.,
     busing, affirmative action, etc.)

Our figures show that these topics, both in Europe and in North
America, today as well as twenty years ago, are indeed usually part of the
top five of the frequency and size statistics of press reports about
minorities. Other major topics include:

(4) Immigration, especially when new groups arrive in the country/city
(5) Cultural differences and deviance (language, religion, Islam)
(6) Sports and popular culture (especially in the USA, e.g., black music).

With similar research results of several other scholars, we may conclude
from such frequency and size analyses that minorities remain associated
with a very limited number of stereotypical themes that seem to dominate
the ethnic attitudes of white journalists, as well as their interpretation of
ethnic events.
    At the same time, such topics are often newsworthy because they are
generally consistent witch the news values of negativity and conflict.
Indeed, news about minorities essentially remains news about 'problems',
and in some cases even news about 'threats' (demographic, economic,
financial, cultural or social), as is also the case in the topics of everyday
conversation.
    Although also other news actors, including elite persons, groups and
countries may regularly be portrayed in terms of conflict or problems, the
overall contrast between US and THEM is usually only reserved for the
accounts of enemies, for instance in the cold-war reports about Russians or
other communists, or the present reports about (typically Arab) "terrorists"
or (typically Latin American) "drug barons".
    White news actors are regularly covered in topics that tend to be absent
or rather infrequent when the participants are minorities: Culture (except
popular culture), Social affairs, Economics and Finance, Education, unless
prominent conflicts are involved in this case, for instance in the well-known
Honeyford affair in the UK (the Bradford Headmaster suspended and then
fired because of his racist writings). Especially positive contributions of
minorities in these and other social domains are seldom topicalized,
especially in the European press. Due to the growing prominence of a
Black political, economic and cultural elite in the USA, newspapers there
have more and larger stories about such topics, but still less than the more
stereotypical and negative topics.

(d) *Headlines*. Headlines express the top propositions of the semantic
macrostructure, that is, of the set of topics of news reports. They not only
define the ethnic situation, they also evaluate it. The most negative topics,
such as riots, violence, and crime also get additional emphasis by

prominent position and size in the headlines. Thus, in the headlines on ethnic affairs in the British press of the second part of 1985, 'police' is the most frequent word, followed by 'riot', 'black' and 'race'.

Analysis of the functional syntax of the headlines further shows that Blacks are primarily in first position when they are agents of negative actions, whereas the police and other majority institutions appear in this prominent position rather in neutral or passive roles (e.g., as victims), and have a less prominent position, or are fully absent when agents of negative actions.

(e) *Argumentation and editorials.* The editorials are the major formulation place for the ideologies of the press. Analysis of right-wing editorials about the urban disturbances shows an underlying socio-cognitive framework in which a clear opposition is established between US and THEM. US is associated with Great Britain, whites, the conservative government, the Tory party, the state institutions (e.g., the police) and ordinary citizens. THEM is associated with the "loony left", leftist city councils, anti-racists, Blacks, and of course "terrorists" and "agitators". The ideological value structure of such editorials emphasizes order, authority, and control: The black community should be obedient, patriotic, and loyal, its leaders should be strict towards "their young", and if they do not obey the law then they will have to suffer the actions of the radical right.

(f) *Quotation and sources.* If black groups and anti-racists have less access to the press, we may assume that they will be less quoted. As expected, detailed study of quotation patterns reveals that minority groups and their institutions or members are less quoted about ethnic affairs than majority institutions or elites.

If quoted at all, they are seldom quoted alone: A white person will be present to 'balance' the quote. Also, they will seldom be quoted on major topics, but mostly on the less prominent topics such as culture and the arts. On race relations, on which minorities may be assumed to be experts, if only by their experiences of discrimination, prejudice and racism, minorities are also seldom quoted, let alone quoted alone. For instance, for a topic such as prejudice, minority groups are quoted alone just once, and majority group persons or institutions nearly 100 times! In general, thus, quotes do not reflect who says what, but what sources the newspaper deems to be most consistent with its own ideology.

(g) *Local meanings.* Analysis of the meanings of words and sentences further shows the overall negativization of minority groups and anti-racists. These are invariably represented as 'noisy', as a 'mob', as aggressive and irrational, and especially as a threat to US, ordinary citizens, the British State, and of course, 'us, whites'.

> There is something decidedly rotten about education when a mob of adults
> pretending to be caring parents picket a school. (*Tel* Oct 21).

Discrimination and racism are consistently denied, and British tolerance emphasized. Therefore, accusations of racism, but also even moderate forms of affirmative action are branded as 'reverse (or black) racism', as intolerance, or inquisition and Gestapo tactics. In other words, as is the case in everyday conversations, the major local strategies are those of denial ("we are not racists, but..."), and reversal ("they are the real racists").

> (Handsworth). Contrary to much doctrine, and acknowledging a small malevolent fascist fringe, this is a remarkably tolerant society. But tolerance would be stretched were it to be seen that enforcement of law adopted the principle of reverse discrimination. (*Tel* Sept 11, Editorial).

> (Racial attacks against Asians). (...) Britain's record for absorbing people from different backgrounds, peacefully and with tolerance, is second to none. The descendants of Irish and Jewish immigrants will testify to that. It would be tragic to see that splendid reputation tarnished now. (*Sun* [Ed] Aug 14).

Many news reports, background articles and editorials, e.g., those on the Honeyford case, emphasize the claim that "we are no longer allowed to tell the truth".

> (Tottenham) The time has come to state the truth without cant and without hypocrisy. (...) the strength to face the facts without being silenced by the fear of being called racist. (*Mail* Oct 9, column by Linda Lee-Potter).

> (Racism in Europe). If there is one subject on which open debate is not conducted, has never been conducted and perhaps never will be conducted in this country it is the subject of race relations. (*Tel* Nov 13).

These and many other properties of news discourse about ethnic affairs thus show that the conservative press not only criminalizes and marginalizes Blacks, but also competes for symbolic power with the few white groups that are able to formulate a counter-ideology, viz., teachers, researchers and (other) anti-racists.

(h) *Style and rhetoric.* The negativization of Blacks and other anti-racists also shows in the lexical style and rhetoric of the news reports. In the tabloid press, alliteration, rhymes, comparisons and metaphors emphasize the negative evaluation of the opponent. Words are chosen from the lexical registers of animals, illness, irrationality, and political oppression:

> Snoopers (*Tel* Aug 1, Editorial).
> A noisy mob of activist demonstrators (*Tel* Sept 23).
> These dismal fanatics, monstrous creatures (*Tel* Sept 26).
> Unscrupulous or feather-brained observers (*Tel* Sept 30).
> The British race relations pundits (*Tel* Oct 1).

Trotzkyites, socialist extremists, Revolutionary Communists, marxists and Black militants (*Tel* Oct 9).
Race conflict 'high priests' (*Tel* Oct 11).
Bone-brained left-fascism (*Tel* [Ed] Nov 30, Editorial).
The multi-nonsense brigade (*Tel* Jan 11).
Mob of left-wing crazies (*Mail* Sept 24).
THE RENT-A-RIOT AGITATORS (*Mail* Sept 30).
What a goon (said about Bernie Grant) (*Mail* Oct 10, Frank Chapple).
He and his henchmen (...) this obnoxious man, left-wing inquisitor (about Grant) (*Mail* Oct 18).
SNOOPERS, untiring busibodies (*Sun* [Ed] Aug 2).
Blinkered tyrants (*Sun* Sept 6).
Left-wing crackpots (*Sun* Sept 7).
A pack trying to hound Ray Honeyford (*Sun* Sept 25).
Unleashing packs of Government snoopers (*Sun* Oct 16).
The hysterical "anti-racist" brigade. (...) the Ayatolahs of Bradford, the left-wing anti-racist mob (*Sun* Oct 23).

(i) *Effects on social cognitions.* In Amsterdam, we also did a study of the long-time effects of reporting on ethnic affairs. We interviewed some 150 people and asked them to retell in their own words what they remembered of a few ethnic events they had read about in their papers. Detailed propositional analysis first showed that for some events, such as the immigration of Tamil refugees, people even after two years were able to reproduce details of the mental models they had formed on the basis of the massive coverage of the "invasion" of another group of "economic refugees" (read: scroungers).

Although we found the usual variations in the opinions about ethnic minorities in general, and refugees in particular, it was also clear that the latitude of variation was clearly defined by these press reports. Radically alternative interpretations of the situation were not given, also because they were effectively censored from the national media. Thus, we concluded that on the one hand, special 'ethnic stories' may even be remembered in detail if the press repeatedly talks about such events, but that on the other hand the real influence of the press is more global and structural, namely by establishing the fundamental interpretation framework of ethnic events.

TEXTBOOKS

Analysis of all (43) Social Studies textbooks used in secondary schools in the Netherlands shows the familiar picture, already sketched in much earlier research on the representation of minorities in textbooks, of stereotypes, prejudice and eurocentrism.

We first found that half of the textbooks do not speak about minority groups or ethnic relations at all, thereby simply ignoring, even in Social

Studies textbooks, the increasingly multiethnic nature of present-day Dutch society.

Second, of the many minority groups, the immigrant workers ("guest workers") are mostly dealt with, whereas black Surinamese and other minorities are discussed much less. The major topics are cultural difference and deviance, hence the special emphasis on immigrant workers from Turkey and Morocco.

Even when a group is discussed in a few lines, prominent prejudices about crimes, violence or drugs are mentioned, and hardly denounced. Different language, religion, eating habits and the position of women is stressed, and western superiority is usually implied.

Often minorities are blamed for their problems (e.g., lacking education, not speaking Dutch). Racism is seldom discussed (unless when far away, e.g., in the USA or South Africa), and discrimination only in euphemistic terms. On the whole, the portrayal of minorities is very similar to the treatment of Third World countries and peoples.

CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of many thousands of discourses of several genres (news reports, interview transcripts, textbooks, reports, etc.) and in several countries shows that, at all levels of description, minority groups tend to be characterized in terms of problems, conflicts or threats. In liberal discourse, they constitute people who 'have' problems, and therefore need 'help' from US (liberal whites). In conservative discourse, they are portrayed as 'making' problems, and hence they need to be controlled, punished or sent back. They are nearly always defined as THEM, seldom as part of US (the main exception: successful athletes in international competitions).

Topics of these discourses are selected from a very limited set, and involve emphasis on perceived cultural differences and deviance, lacking adaptation, crime, violence and other threats, abuse of valued resources, unfair competition, problems of affirmative action (e.g., busing), and in general any form of conflict. The tolerant attitudes of US are invariably stressed, also in right-wing discourse. Racism is mostly ignored, denied, or at least mitigated, both in liberal and in right-wing discourse. Problems as experienced by minorities, such as unemployment, are also ignored, or blamed on themselves. Equal rights or affirmative action tend to be represented as 'reverse racism' and as an attack against whites or the nation. The overall discourse perspective is always white.

Thus, topics, style, rhetoric, local semantic moves, argumentation, and other levels of analysis consistently show similar fundamental patterns in the discursive and underlying cognitive representation of ethnic minority groups.

4. Discourse and the reproduction of dominance

Our analysis of the discursive reproduction of racism is consistent with other studies of racism, for instance in politics, in the economy and in social life, and therefore also has more general implications for the study of inequality. That is, we have seen that inequality in a democratic, pluralist system needs legitimation and it is through various types of discourse and communication that such ideological consent is manufactured. The general processes at work in this form of discursively manipulated consent are the following:

(a) *Control of the means of symbolic production.* The elites own or partly control the means of symbolic reproduction, viz., the mass media, the schools and universities, literature and film, the church, etc., and thus also control public discourse.

(b) *Access.* There is a direct correlation between social power and the access to various types of public discourse. The powerless only have access to personal conversation, and are passive in other forms of communication. The powerful, on the contrary, have organized, institutional access to all important, decisive discourse genres (mass media discourse, meetings, reports, press conference, literature, etc.). Thereby they set the agenda of public discussion and the boundaries of legitimate opinion.

(c) *Representation.* Due to their control and preferential access, the elites also influence their own representation, and hence govern their own ideological legitimation. They are the ones that define the situation.

(d) *Reproduction.* Although discourse and communication of course only indirectly control the minds of the public at large, the control over their own self-representation also contributes to the persuasive processes that underlie the broader reproduction of elite power.

Also, the elites have the means to suppress resistance, if any, such as alternative opinions and media. Only when dominated groups are able to get other kinds of power (e.g., political or economic power) are they able to challenge dominant discourses.

5. Discourse and social cognition

Here we touch upon the crucial interface between discourse and dominance, viz., social cognition. The psychology of text comprehension has shown that public discourse is understood as a function of world knowledge, such as scripts.

The same is true for the evaluation of such discourse, which is based on social representations. Although individual discourses may not persuade all

people all the time, their shared, group-based social representations are gradually acquired through the many forms of text and talk in formal education and the mass media, and finally constitute the more fundamental interpretative frameworks we call ideologies.

These social representations shape the overall contents and structures of (situation) models people build for each social event and each discourse, and these models represent both our understanding and evaluation of each discourse. Only under specific conditions are people able to break out of this discourse-ideology circle. The processes involved here are among the most important to be studied in this decade.

6. DISCOURSE AND INEQUALITY: CONCLUSIONS

As discourse and communication scholars we are of course primarily interested in the actual implementation or expression of such social processes in the structures and strategies of discourse. Let us therefore finally summarize some of the typical features of these discursive structures and strategies:

1. *Pragmatics.* Coercive or restrictive control may be implemented directly at the level of directive speech acts, e.g., by commands, orders, advice, etc. The elites and their institutions have virtually total access to, and control over the exercise of such speech acts.

2. *Semantics.* We have seen that dominant groups in general and elites in particular have partial control over their own representation. This first of all shows in discourse 'content', that is, in topics and local meanings. Certain topics, e.g., in the news or textbooks portrayal of minorities, are preferred, others censored. Biased stories may thus influence the public at large by communicating models that are consistent with prevailing social representations such as prejudices. Local semantic moves of negative other-presentation may likewise be combined with positive self-presentation, which results in further legitimating the status of the powerful.

3. *Style and rhetoric.* Style and rhetoric may be used to stress the relevance (or irrelevance) of semantic information or signal the contextual conditions of power discourse. For instance, directive speech acts may be accomplished in a specific style, e.g., legal. Rhetorical figures may be used to emphasize that A is good and B is bad, or conversely, to mitigate that A is bad and B is good. Syntactic style, finally, expresses the perspective with which social events are presented, and may also emphasize the negative actions of the outgroup while mitigating those of the ingroup.

4. *Social cognition and social structure.* We see that both through communication, such as control of the means of reproduction and preferential access, as well as through the implementation of power in various discourse structures, dominant group and elite strategies are geared

towards the production of 'bias' against dominated groups through a complex process of manufacturing social representations.

This communicative process is itself embedded in broader socio-political and cultural structures and processes that support elite control and prevent resistance from dominated groups, such as limited access of dominated groups to government and legislature, the media, the schools, the corporate boardroom, and all other institutional places where dominant discourse is produced.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SUGGESTIONS

The topics of this paper cover a wide area of studies in language, discourse and communication, and no full bibliography can be given here, only some suggestions:

DISCOURSE AND RACISM

On the relations between *discourse* and *racism*, see especially my own work of the last 10 years, including such books as the following:

Prejudice in discourse. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1984.
Communicating racism. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1987.
News analysis. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1988.
With Geneva Smitherman: Discourse and discrimination. Detroit: Wayne State U.P., 1988.
Racism and the press. London: Routledge, 1991.
Élite discourse and racism. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1993.

For several studies on racism and the press, see the bibliography in my book on that topic. For some studies in French, see also:

BONNAFOUS, S. (1991). *L'immigration prise aux mots.* Paris: Éditions Kimé.
EBEL, M. and P. FIALA. (1983). *Sous le consensus, la xénophobie.* Lausanne: Institut de Sciences Politiques. Mémoires et Documents 16.
WINDISCH, U. (1978). *Xénophobie? Logique de la pensée populaire.* Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme.
WINDISCH, U. (1985). *Le raisonnement et le parler quotidiens.* Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme.

Unfortunately, very little other work has as yet been published in English (or French or Spanish) on discourse and racism. For those readers who read German, I may recommend, e.g., the following books:

JÄGER, S. (1992). *Brandsätze. Rassismus im Alltag.* (Racism in everyday life). Duisburg: DISS.
WODAK, R., P. NOWAK, J. PELIKAN, H. GRUBER, R. DE CILLIA, and R. MITTEN. (1990). *"Wir sind unschuldige Täter".* Studien zum antisemitischen Diskurs im Nachkriegsösterreich. ("We are all innocent perpetrators". Studies in anti-semitic discourse in postwar Austria). Frankfurt/ Main: Suhrkamp.

For a more general account of experiences of racism, see:

ESSED, P.J.M. (1991). *Understanding everyday racism.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

DISCOURSE, POWER AND INEQUALITY

There is now a broader choice of books in the more general relations between discourse, power and inequality, again mostly in English. Here are some suggestions of some recent books:

FAIRCLOUGH, N. L. (1989). *Language and power*. London: Longman.
FAIRCLOUGH, N. L. (1992). *Discourse and social change*. Oxford: Polity Press.
FOWLER, R., B. HODGE, G. KRESS, and T. TREW. (1979). *Language and control*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
KRESS, G. (1985). *Linguistic processes in sociocultural practice*. Victoria: Deakin University.
KRESS, G. and B. HODGE. (1993). *Language as ideology*. Second Edition. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
LAKOFF, R. T. (1990). *Talking power. The politics of language*. New York: Basic Books.
NG., S.H. and J. J. BRADAC. (1993). *Power in language. Verbal communication and social influence*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
KRAMARAE, C., M. SCHULZ, and W.M. O'BARR. (Eds.). (1984). *Language and power*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
KEDAR, L. (Ed.). (1987). *Power through discourse*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
WODAK, R. (Ed.). (1989). *Language, power and ideology*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

One of the few recent books in Spanish on this topic is the excellent study of María Teresa Sierra (Mexico):

SIERRA, M.T. (1992). *Discurso, cultura y poder. El ejercicio de la autoridad en los pueblos hñähñús del Valle del Mezquital*. Gobierno del Estado de Hidalgo: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social.