BLENDING TIMES, POLITICS AND IDEOLOGY. A TEXT-WORLD THEORY APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF LEGITIMISATION. THE CASE OF NORTHERN IRELAND.

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Objective

- Understand legitimisation of political actions and beliefs in conflict situations

- Conflict society: Political discourse → multiple audiences

- Two-fold objective of PD
  - **Representative:** producing and reproducing a social construct of society → IDEOLOGY
  - **Politically-advancing:** Constitutive part of the political activity → POLITICAL PRACTICE

[Co-exist in PD]
Language plays an indirect role in promoting values, beliefs and social practices that justify policies, or particular world views (Schäffner & Wenden 1995: xxi)
Legitimisation

- Legitimising: actions, behaviours, historical events become justified through objectivisation (Berger & Luckman 1966)

- Promotion of a specific representation of society imbued with authority and truth: “Who does what, to whom, when and where” (Chilton 2004)

- 3 types (Martín Rojo & Van Dijk 1997; Filardo Llamas 2009)
  - Legitimisation of a political action (pragmatic legitimisation)
  - Legitimisation of a view of society (semantic legitimisation)
  - Legitimisation of the role of discourse (socio-political legitimisation)
Methodological Approach: Text-World Theory

- **Text World Theory (Werth 1999, Gavins 2007)**
  - Uncovering of mental representations obtained by an audience from a given instance of discourse → “text-world”

- Mental representation influenced and modified by common ground of audiences

- **Two audiences:**
  - Text-worlds → two features
    - Political audience → **prominent** representation related to political actions → **PRAGMATIC LEGITIMISATION**
    - Community audience → **prominent** representations related to ideological beliefs (and group membership) → **SEMANTIC LEGITIMISATION**
Text Worlds & Proximisation

Proximisation (Cap 2010)

- Original account: imminence of a threat
- Threat →
  - Political action
  - Ideological belief
- Three aspects:
  - Spatial
  - Temporal
  - Axiological

IDCs

ODCs
Proximisation (Cap 2010)

- Original account: imminence of a threat
- Threat →
  - Political action
  - Ideological belief
- Three aspects:
  - Spatial
  - Temporal
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Text – Worlds (Gavins 2007)

- **TEXT – WORLD 1**
  - **Time**
  - Participants: enactors → relations (description)
    - function-advancing propositions
  - Location

- **TEXT – WORLD 2**
  - **Time**
  - Participants: Location

- **TEXT – WORLD 3**
  - **Time**
  - Participants: Location

- **BLENDED WORLD (metaphors)**
  - **Time**
  - Participants:
    - Location
Text Worlds & Proximisation

Proximisation & Legitimisation (Chilton 2004)

Text –Worlds (Gavins 2007)

TEXT –WORLD 1

Time
Participants:
- enactors \rightarrow relations (description)
  \downarrow
  function-advancing propositions
- objects \rightarrow relations (description)
  \downarrow
  function-advancing propositions

Location

TEXT –WORLD 2

Time
Participants:

TEXT –WORLD 3

Time
Participants:

TEXT –WORLD 4

Time
Participants:

World-switch (time)

World-switch (attitude)

ODCs

IDCs

ODCs

Metaphor

BLENDED WORLD (metaphors)

Time
Participants:

Location

Location
Linguistic strategies

- **Text worlds uncovered with linguistic categories:**
  - Deictics & referential expressions ➔ Placing of text in a particular context:
    - Participants
    - Circumstances (time and space)
  - Transitivity ➔ Relationship between participants
    - Saying, doing, sensing, being, etc
  - Metaphors ➔ Persuasive power of PD & moral evaluation
    - E.g. POLITICS IS WAR
Data: IRA Easter Statements

- 7 Statements (1999 → 2007)
  - All of them after 1998 Peace Agreement

- “Commemorative” value (Easter Rising 1916)

Hypothesis ➔

- If after peace process, are there really threats?
  - Are they ideological / political?
- Do threats disappear after the end of the Armed Campaign?
- Which socio-political elements are legitimised? How?
Legitimisation of political actions (before 2006)

**Text World 1**
- **Time:** Present / fact
- **Participants:** IRA organization
  - have called cessations
  - have engaged in initiatives
- **Location:** Our country Ireland

**Text World 2**
- **Participants:**
  - Others (British government / Unionists)
  - remove causes of conflict
  - deliver

**Text World 3**
- **Time:** Past
- **Participants:**
  - Others (British government / Unionists)
  - failed (commitments)

**Text World 4**
- **Participants:**
  - We
  - honour (commitments)

**Text World 5**
- **Participants:**
  - IRA leadership
  - enter discussions with IICD

**Text World 6 (Quest)**
- **Time:** Present/fact
- **Participants:**
  - We
  - search

**Text World 7 (War)**
- **Time:** Present/fact
- **Participants:**
  - Britain
  - war

**Text World 8**
- **Participants:**
  - those
  - defeat IRA

**Text World 9 (creation)**
- **Time:** Present/fact
- **Participants:**
  - We
  - create,
Legitimisation of political actions (after 2006)

**Text World 1**
- **Time:** Present / fact
- **Participants:** IRA → organization statements
- **Location:** Irish republicanism remains
- **We believe**

**Text World 2**
- **Participants:** We
- **honour (commitments)**

**Text World 3**
- **Participants:** you
- **maximum unity**

**Text World 4**
- **Participants:** British & Irish government
- **continue efforts**

**Text World 5 (movement)**
- **Time:** Present/fact
- **Participants:** We
- **alternative peaceful route**
The leadership of Óglaigh na hÉireann extends fraternal greetings to republican activists, supporters and friends at home and abroad and thanks them for their continued assistance (IRA 1999)
Over the past five years, we have called and maintained **two prolonged cessations of military operations** to enhance the democratic process and underline **our definitive commitment** to its success. *We* have contributed [...] to the creation of a climate which would facilitate the search for a durable peace settlement. **IRA guns** are silent. [...] For the past 12 months progress towards its [GFA] implementation **has been blocked.** (1999)
Analysis: Participants and audience(s)

**Self political actions ↔ Others’**

The record shows that the IRA have honoured every commitment we have made, including the opening of IRA arms dumps to inspections by the agreed International Inspectors [...]. We have done so despite the abuse of the peace process by those who persist with the aim of defeating the IRA and Irish republicanism, and the obvious failure of the British government to honour its obligations. (2001)
On this the 83rd anniversary of the Easter Rising we commemorate all those who have given their lives for Irish freedom. Without their effort and sacrifice the current opportunity for a just resolution of the conflict would not exist. (1999)

In our view the conflict is caused by British involvement in Irish affairs and by the injustices perpetuated by unionist misrule since partition 75 years ago. (1999)

Our patriot dead are not criminals. We are not criminals. (2005)
Today we are witnessing another attempt to criminalise and demonise republicans and the republicans struggle. [...] Twenty-three years ago, the men and women in the H-Blocks and Armagh Gaol defeated the policy of criminalisation. Ten Irish republicans died on Hunger Strike in defence of the integrity of the republican struggle. This new attempt will also fail. (2004)
Regrettably, the British government’s war with republicans continues with ongoing British Intelligence, covert surveillance operation, with the remilitarisation of South Armagh, Tyrone, Belfast, and other areas of the Six Counties. The RUC continues with its recruiting of informers and the harassment of nationalists on a daily basis. Those who seek a military victory need to understand that this cannot and will not happen. (2000)

- Problem with decommissioning
- Political actions of IRA not mentioned

IDC certainty “against” outcome of ODC (political) actions
Following our statements of July 28 last year, IRA volunteers have adhered, in the spirit and the letter, to the decisions and instructions outlined by the leadership. […]

The IRA has no responsibility for the tiny number of former republicans who have embraced criminal activity. They do so for self-gain. We repudiate this activity and denounce those involved. […]

The leadership of Oglaigh na hEireann believes that it is possible to achieve the republican goal of a united Ireland through the alternative route of purely peaceful and democratic means. (2006)
Analysis: Changing times? Emphasising value & Addressing audience

- The IRA is fully committed to the ideals and principles of the Proclamation of Easter 1916. We urge maximum unity in the time ahead. (2006)

- We believe that Irish republicanism is stronger, more united and more confident than at any time since partition and that we can achieve an end to the partition of our country… (2007)
Summarised representation of ideologcal beliefs

- Republican beliefs legitimised by means of:
  - Time ➔ Historical reasons:
    - Present ideology results from past beliefs.
    - Two events are highlighted:
      - Easter Rising - 1916
      - Hunger strikes - 1980s
        - Deictic connection with present
  - Person: our
  - Space: same imagined homeland - aim

- Attitude:
  - Certainty in evaluation of present (outcome of past actions)
  - Shared identity with audience (family & quest metaphors)

- Opposition to ODC (External participants):
  - Historical origin (75 years ago)
  - Present effect (certainty of nouns + link between groups)
    - Ongoing threat to IDC’s ideological beliefs
Summarised representation of political actions

- Republican beliefs legitimised by means of:
  - Time → Historical reasons:
    - Similarities between past & present actions.
    - Positive past actions continue in present:
      - Struggle for Irish republicanism
      - Cessations, commitments
  - Attitude:
    - Certainty about negative outcome of others & positive of self (pre-2006) & positive actions of both groups (post-2006)
    - Demanding actions by others (pre-2006) & by “self” (post-2006)
  - Opposition to ODC (External participants):
    - Negative actions (real-metaphorical wars & threats)
    - No opposition when conflict “ends”
Concluding thoughts

The role of “proximization”

- Space:
  - External (British) threat to internal (Irish) deictic centre

- Time:
  - Use of history for legitimising purposes:
    - Of ideological beliefs (struggle ← throughout history)
    - Of political actions (comparison of times)
  - Axiological
    - Certainty of negative actions by others
    - Demand for actions by others
    - Positive evaluation of self

Simultaneous addressing of different intended audiences in NI

- Society (as a whole, communal) → commemoration (& need to legitimise republican identity)
- Other political actors →
  - Demand for them to perform certain actions
  - Legitimisation of positive actions by the self

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<tr>
<th>Ideological &amp; political conflict</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Threat</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Politically-determined threat</td>
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<td>downplayed when peaceful actions</td>
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<td>• Positive ideology (historical)</td>
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Problematic understanding by other communities?
References


