Politics, Culture & Socialization

Vol. 14-15, 2023-2024, Special Issues

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Articles

Book Reviews

Democracy, Democracy Support
and Democracy Socialization

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Abstract: What is the current democratic situation in the world? How can we explain the presence or absence of democracy in countries? How much popular support is there for democracy? How can we explain variance in this support for democracy? These are the key questions to answer in this article. Only a small fraction of the world's countries are democracies, and only a small fraction of the world's population lives in a democracy. Moreover, many existing democracies suffer from a gradual erosion. Favourable conditions for democracy include a positive economic development, a good functioning of the actual democracy, democratic leaders without autocratic temptations, and a strong and robust support for democracy among the population. Support for democracy among citizens in the world is however weak: only a minority said that a representative democracy is a very good way of governing the country and even less support a representative democracy without also supporting a non-democratic rule by experts, a strong leader or the military. Support for democracy on the individual level is the effect of various other orientations such as knowledge of democracy and autocracy, satisfaction with democracy, political trust, subjective well-being, and emancipatory values. People acquire these orientations through experience and socialization. Committed democrats are concerned with the decline of democracy and the intensifying wave of autocratization in the world over the past decade and ask for new initiatives to establish and defend democracy.

Keywords: democracy socialization, democracy support, democracy

Introduction

The U.S.A. is the example of a democracy in the eyes of many. So, it was a big surprise when the Republican former president and 2024 presidential candidate Donald Trump told a crowd of Christian supporters that they won't 'have to vote again' if they return him to the presidency in the coming election. 'Christians, get out and vote! Just this time – you won't have to do it anymore'.[2] Even greater was the surprise when he turned out to have been elected by an overwhelming majority, while Americans generally say in surveys that they are in favour of a democracy. Not only in the U.S.A. but also in other countries, e.g. Hungary, democracy is in danger under attack from an undemocratic leader. The current situation of democracy in the world is indicated

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1 Prof. Dr. Henk Dekker: professor emeritus, Institute of Political Science, Leiden University, dekkerh@fsw.leidenuniv.nl https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/staffmembers/henk-dekker#tab-1
2 https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/article/2024/jul/27/trump-speech-no-need-to-vote-future . https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/article/2024/jul/30/donald-trump-wont-have-to-vote-anymore-fox-interview.

by words such as decline, recession, degradation, erosion, and backsliding. This brings me to a number of questions. Who keeps track of the democracy versus autocracy developments in the world and how? What is the current democratic situation in the world? If there is indeed a decline, what are the causes of this decline and what explains the presence or absence of democracy in a country most? That leaders want more power is not unusual, but what do citizens think about it? Who keeps track of the support for democracy in the world? How is support for democracy measured? How much popular support is there for democracy? Is support for democracy declining, and if so, also among mature democracies? And how can we explain variances in this support? Driven by amazement and curiosity, I looked for answers to those questions as much as possible based on empirical evidence. The ones I found so far are below.

Democracy in the world

Democracy is defined and measured differently in the relevant literature. 'Thin' or 'minimalist' definitions include a few institutional features. 'Thick' or 'maximalist' definitions include more institutional attributes and involve also economic, social, and cultural aspects. An extremely 'thin' definition includes only presence of elections. This makes sense because democracy cannot exist without elections but is on the other hand not completely satisfying because elections in themselves do not make democracy and can even serve as a facade for the opposite (electoral autocracies). A few additional institutional features, which have been mentioned in several publications and on which there seems to be consensus, are: incumbent government can be turned out of office through elections; these elections are fixed-term, free and fair; universal adult suffrage; right to run for office; trias politica with an independent judiciary; a competitive multi-party system; freedom of expression; independent media with alternative sources of information; and an associational autonomy (among others, Dahl, 1971). These attributes are also reflected in the description of democracy in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: 'Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures'.[3] The different conceptualizations and operationalizations of democracy have led to several questions about the validity and reliability of the existing measurements of democracy (Knutsen, 2010). In any case, it seems good not to rely on one but several data sources for knowledge of the situation of democracy in the world. Here I use the international comparative measurements of democracy by Freedom House, the Economist Intelligence Unit, the Varieties of Democracy Institute, the Bertelsmann Stiftung, and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Freedom House[4] publishes every year a global report on political rights and civil liberties since 1973 and a regional report on democratic governance since 1998. The 2024 *Freedom in*

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3   The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948 (General Assembly resolution 217 A) as a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations. Articles 21.1, 21.2, and 21.3 present de democracy features. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights .

4   Freedom House is 'a non-profit, nonpartisan organization that works to create a world where all are free'. The mission is to inform the world about threats to freedom, to mobilize global action, and to support democracy's defenders. 'Freedom House is founded on the core conviction that freedom flou-

Trump's New Face of Power in America

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Abstract: This article proposes that the advent of Trumpism was an historical moment of danger that compels us to analyze the micropolitics of the present. In the first part, I describe the constellation that gave rise to Trumpism. In the second part, I recall Goffman's concept of face-work and discuss how it remains relevant for describing Trump's aggressive face-work. In the third part, I take Deleuze and Guattari's concept of faciality as a point of departure for understanding micro-fascism. As an abstract machine, Trump's faciality engendered and diffused fascisizing micropolitics around a messenger/disruptor in chief. It worked in connection with a landscape and relative to a collective assemblage of enunciation that extracted a territory of perception and affect. In the micropolitics of the present, the defining feature of Trumpism was how the corrupt abuse of power and the counterforces limiting his potency collided on an ominous, convulsive political reality TV show that threatened US democracy.

Keywords: Trumpism, micropolitics, face-work, faciality, assemblage, landscape, impeachment, micro-fascism

> We are all sufferers from history, but the paranoid is a double sufferer, since he is afflicted not only by the real world, with the rest of us, but by his fantasies as well. – Richard Hofstadter (1964)

> When a man unprincipled in private life desperate in his fortune, bold in his temper, possessed of considerable talents, having the advantage of military habits—despotic in his ordinary demeanor —known to have scoffed in private at the principles of liberty— when such a man is seen to mount the hobby horse of popularity —to join in the cry of danger to liberty—to take every opportunity of embarrassing the General Government & bringing it under suspicion—to flatter and fall in with all the non sense of the zealots of the day—It may justly be suspected that his object is to throw things into confusion that he may "ride the storm and direct the whirlwind." – Alexander Hamilton (18 August, 1792) quoted by Rep. Adam Schiff (20 January, 2020) in his opening argument for President Trump's Senate impeachment trial

Introduction

2016 was a tumultuous year in US politics and the turmoil continued since Donald Trump was elected president. His rhetoric and demeanor in the political theatre of struggle prompted a range

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of views on whether fascism has already happened, is on the rise, or cannot happen in the US. In this debate, the difficulty is that whatever fascist traits we see, echoes we hear, or themes we interpret, depends on how we define "fascism." Paxton (2005) tackled the problem of definition and noted that the language and symbols of a future, popular American fascism need not resemble historical European fascism. Amid all the chaos after Trump's election, Grossberg (2018) claims that the similarities between Trump's administration and fascism as a form of political behavior do not warrant the conclusion that he is a fascist. Paxton offers a comparative analysis of historical stages that begins in Europe while Grossberg emphasizes the cultural particularism of the contemporary US political context. Their accounts come close to converging when theorizing the link between choices, actions and "mobilizing passions" or political struggles and the "affective landscape." Likewise, in a genealogical study, Connolly traces "aspirational fascism" by attending to affective flows of communication and contagion. His approach gives due weight to "multiple resonances between words, techniques, bodily demeanor, facial expressions, fears, images…" (Connolly 2017, p. 5). Colasacco (2018), however, suggests that fascism and Trumpism have a few features in common: "radicalism, populism, and perhaps above all, what Griffin calls 'palingenetic ultranationalism' (palingenetic denoting renewal or rebirth—or 'making great again')" (p. 28). Gounari (2018) describes a shift in discourse that took a "neofascist authoritarian turn" while Lebow (2019) and Morris (2019) make parallel cases that Trump's "neoliberal authoritarianism" is best characterized as "inverted American-style fascism." Relatedly, many other observers and commentators have noted how Trump's affective political communication promulgated post-truth politics, intensified political polarization, deepened fear and hostility, and encouraged violence.

What remains to be explored is how Trump's shock politics spread like a contagion in the direction of micro-fascism. One starting point is Deleuze and Guattari's observation that "What makes fascism dangerous is its molecular or micropolitical power…" (1987, p. 215). If, as Guattari (2016, p. 104) suggested when he was working with Deleuze in the 1970s, "micro-fascist conjunctions of power can spring up all over the place," then this article proposes that such a conjunction sprang up in the US. In this conjunction, Trump's political performances are for all to see, read about, react to, and to rate. And as Garcia (2018) remarks:

> Trump's political performance must be taken as a possible opening, as a symptom capable of generating ethical repositionings that would lead the American community to genuinely ask about its political order (p. 332).

Trump's fascisizing micropolitics threw the US political order into disorganization so he could wield more power in the executive branch. In October 2019, House Democrats voted for a formal impeachment inquiry that led to a momentous vote on whether the president acted ethically and legally, or jeopardized the constitution by usurping Congressional power and undermining the system of separated powers. But after Senate Republicans acquitted Trump, it would be up to voters in the next presidential election and the courts to check and balance his efforts to consolidate power.

In the first part, I describe the constellation of Trumpism. In Benjamin's (1969) sense, an historian "grasps the constellation which his own era has formed with a definite earlier one" (p. 263). Looking back at what happened, we can see how Trump's politics surged up from historical tendencies and past events. But there was also a rupture in historical patterns and unprecedented presidential actions that disregarded democratic norms, rules, practices and laws. Going beyond the boundaries of other presidents, Trump learned to *ride* the storm and *direct* the whirlwind. As Adorno (2020, org. 1967) once warned, meteorological metaphors can naturalize the very real political problem of right-wing extremism.

Work in Progress

The State of America IV: A Nation Divided, But Still Strong

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Abstract: America continues to be the world's number one (1st) economy as it is the leading innovator in digital applications. Meanwhile, it has fallen somewhat on "democracy" measures. Three of the world's leading democracy monitoring organizations. Freedom House, The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) have, among many issues, particularly noted a dangerous political polarization and a rejection of the electoral rules of the game in America. EIU cites America as having become a "flawed democracy" especially on the rejection of the political culture variable of acceptance of electoral defeat by Donald Trump and allies.

Keywords: United States, deeply divided, flawed democracy, still strong

America has eight of the world's topmost valued companies by market cap. Furthermore, the top five are digital companies. World's Largest Companies by Market Cap:

1. Microsoft (computing) - USA
2. Apple (mobile phone) - USA
3. NVIDIA (chip production - USA)
4. Alphabet (Google) - USA
5. Amazon (cloud computing} - USA
6. Saudi Aramco (oil) – Saudi Arabia
7. Meta Platforms (Facebook) - USA
8. TSMC (Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. LTD) - USA
9. Berkshire Hathaway (business holding company) - USA
10. Eli Lilly (pharmaceuticals - USA) (Source: Largest Companies by Market Cap. companies-marketcap.com)

Microsoft became the #1 most valued company at $3.342Trillion after it partnered with OpenAI to launch GPT Chat. American companies lead China, Europe and the world in the development of digital technology with NVIDIA the #1 chip maker for AI. This digital lead results in strong economic development for America which has avoided recession in recent years after an eco-

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The analysis of political equivocation
by British political leaders

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Abstract: Equivocation, sometimes referred to as "the intentional use of precise language", is the focus of this article. Data are reported concerning the extent to which politicians equivocate in televised interviews and Prime Minister's Questions (so-called *reply-rate*). In addition, methodological techniques devised by Peter Bull and colleagues for the analysis of equivocation are discussed. These involve the identification of different types of questions, whereby it is possible to establish whether a politician has provided an answer. An equivocation typology is presented, whereby 43 techniques of not replying to a question are identified. Examples of equivocation by recent British political leaders are discussed: *Conservative Prime Ministers*: Margaret Thatcher, John Major, David Cameron, Theresa May, Boris Johnson; *Labour Leaders of the Opposition*: Neil Kinnock, Ed Miliband, Jeremy Corbyn; *Liberal Democrats leaders*: Paddy Ashdown, Nick Clegg, Tim Farron; *UKIP leaders (United Kingdom Independence Party)*: Nigel Farage, Paul Nuttall.

Keywords: equivocation; equivocation typology; reply-rate; questions; non-replies; Prime Minister's Questions

Introduction

Politicians are notorious for not answering questions, but is this just a social stereotype? Thus, is it true that politicians <u>never</u> answer questions, as some would have us believe? Or do some questions receive an answer? If so, what is the proportion of such questions?

The term equivocation refers to the use of vague and ambiguous language. It has been variously described as "…nonstraightforward communication … ambiguous, contradictory, tangential, obscure or even evasive" (Bavelas et al., 1990, p.28), "the intentional use of imprecise language" (Hamilton & Mineo, 1998), and as "calculated ambivalence" (Wodak et al., 2009). The prime focus of this paper is on equivocation as used by British politicians, specifically in the context of televised political interviews and Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) in the House of Commons. However, some data on Japanese televised political interviews are also included for comparative purposes (Feldman, Kinoshita & Bull, 2015).

According to Bavelas et al. (1990), equivocation can be understood as a multidimensional construct, in terms of four specific dimensions (*sender*, *receiver*, *content*, and *context*), which are defined as follows. Sender refers to the extent to which a response reflects the speaker's

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opinion; statements are considered as more equivocal if the speaker fails to acknowledge the statement as his/her opinion, or attributes it to another person. Receiver refers to the extent to which the message is addressed to the other person in the situation (the less so, more equivocal the message). Content refers to comprehensibility (an unclear statement being considered more equivocal), and can be distinguished from context, which refers to whether the response is a direct answer to the question (the less the relevance, the more equivocal the message).

In the context of this multidimensional approach, a substantive study of political equivocation was conducted in Japan by Feldman, Kinoshita and Bull (2015). In an analysis of 194 televised interviews, 145 politicians were compared with 49 non-politicians. The non-politicians had varying degrees of expertise, for example, university professors, social critics, and economists, and were considered competent to speak on specific issues and make them understandable to the layperson.

Responses to questions by the interviewees were analysed in terms of four Bavelas et al. (1990) dimensions as described above (Feldman et al., 2015). Significant differences were found on three of the dimensions (namely, sender, receiver and context). In comparison to the non-politicians, politicians were less inclined to disclose their own thoughts and ideas (sender), and more inclined to address people other than the interviewers asking the questions (receiver); they were also less inclined to give direct answers to the questions (context).

Whereas in the foregoing study, equivocation was based on the four Bavelas et al. (1990) dimensions, an alternative approach has been devised, based on the analysis of what is termed *reply-rate* (Bull, 1994). This refers to the proportion of similes questions that receive a *direct answer*, defined as a response in which politicians explicitly provide the information requested in the question. So, the lower the reply-rate, the more equivocal the politician (Bull & Waddle, 2023). In terms of the four Bavelas et al. dimensions, reply-rate corresponds to equivocation in terms of context. Reply rates formed the basis for a series of studies of equivocation in the context of British political interviews and PMQs (Bull, 1994; Waddle & Bull, 2020a).

Political interviews

Thirty-three interviews broadcast between 1987 and 1992 with UK political party leaders were reviewed by Bull (1994).There were three different sets of data. Firstly, there were eight interviews from the 1987 General Election, four with the Conservative Prime Minister (PM) Margaret Thatcher, four with the Labour Leader of the Opposition (LO) Neil Kinnock. Secondly, there was an analysis of seven interviews with the Conservative politician John Major, four from 1990 when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, the other three from 1991 after his appointment as PM (28 November, 1990). Finally, the third study was of 18 interviews broadcast during the 1992 General Election with the leaders of the three main political parties at that time: six with John Major (Conservative PM), six with Neil Kinnock (Labour LO), and six with Paddy Ashdown (Leader of the minority Liberal Democrats). Overall, the politicians answered slightly less than half of the interviewers' questions (mean reply-rate of 46% over all 33 interviews).

More recently, a study was conducted of 26 interviews from the 2015 and 2017 General Election campaigns (Waddle & Bull, 2020a). The interviewees were again UK party leaders: in 2015, David Cameron (Conservative PM), Ed Miliband (Labour LO), Nick Clegg (Liberal Democrats), and Nigel Farage (United Kingdom Independence Party[UKIP]). In 2017, the leaders were Theresa May (Conservative PM), Jeremy Corbyn (Labour LO), Tim Farron (Liberal Democrats), Paul Nuttall (UKIP). In 2015, the reply-rate was 42.8%, in 2017 it was 33.8%; overall, across all 26 interviews, the reply-rate was just 38%. Interestingly, in a completely in-

Knocking at the House with Closed Doors: Metaphorical representation of European integration in Ukrainian media discourse before 2014

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Abstract: The idea of European integration played an important role in Ukrainian political discourse, but was attributed different meaning in the course of its political development. This idea was crucial for a definition of Ukrainian foreign policy preferences and for the construction of Ukrainian national identity. In the Ukrainian context, this idea was found to be primarily constructed in regard to the question of the historical and geopolitical place of Ukraine. Public opinion in general largely reflects the instability in Ukraine-EU relations, as well as the inconsistent European integration policy of the Ukrainian government and the lack of a coherent policy from the side of the European Union.

This article focuses on a study of how the European integration was conceptualized and metaphorically presented in the Ukrainian press in the period of 2005 – 2010. By examining the metaphors used to describe this process in the Ukrainian media between 2005 and 2010, we gain valuable insights into the historical and discursive nuances that have shaped contemporary perceptions of European integration in Ukraine. Based on the Critical Metaphor Analysis and Conceptual Metaphors approach, we investigate the main frames and metaphorical representations of Europe and the European integration in the Ukrainian media.

It can be noticed that the European integration was described in Ukraine before 2014 with a tension between the two discourses – the discourses of closeness and of openness. The European Neighborhood Policy was created for an opening of the door for Ukraine to Europe and as a 'road map' for the Ukrainian way towards the EU. Despite that, for the majority of Ukrainians the EU before 2014 was still an unrealistic 'dream' where doors were 'rather closed' then opened.

Keywords: European integration, Europe, Ukraine, discourse, media, metaphors

Introduction

The discourse surrounding European integration in Ukraine has undergone a profound metamorphosis since the Euromaidan Revolution of 2014 and the subsequent Russian invasion in

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2022. This study which focuses on the pre-2014 period discourse is relevant due to the enduring impact of conceptual frames used by Ukrainian media before 2014 on Ukrainian public opinion and political discourse even nowadays.

Since 2014, the discourse of Europe and European integration in Ukraine has undergone significant transformations, reflecting the profound shifts in the country's geopolitical situation and national identity. The Euromaidan revolution, which culminated in the ousting of President Yanukovych, marked a decisive turn towards Europe, driven by a popular desire for integration with the European Union (EU). The 2022 full-scale invasion by Russia further intensified these dynamics, with European integration becoming not only a political and economic goal but a symbol of resistance and survival.

The changes in Ukraine's perception of European integration after 2014 have had a profound impact on both media narratives and political rhetoric. Prior to 2014, the European Union was often depicted as a distant, unattainable dream. Metaphors of closed doors, fortresses, and exclusive clubs dominated the discourse, reflecting a sense of exclusion and longing. Post-2014, however, the discourse has shifted towards one of urgency and inevitability, with European integration framed as a critical pathway for Ukraine's survival and success in the face of Russian aggression. This has influenced Ukrainian media to adopt a more assertive tone in discussing EU integration, often highlighting it as a matter of national security and identity rather than mere economic or political alignment.

This article delves into the metaphorical frameworks that have shaped and continue to influence Ukrainian public discourse on European integration because main conceptual frames of European integration were established in the period before 2014. Metaphors, as powerful tools of political language, offer deep insights into how events and policies are understood, framed, and communicated to the public. That is why we decided to look once again into metaphorical representation of Europe and EU integration which was in Ukrainian media in 2005-2010. The study of metaphors used in Ukrainian discourse around European integration provides a window into the evolving perceptions of Europe, the EU, and Ukraine's place within this broader geopolitical landscape.

This study of metaphorical level of discourse could be useful for understanding the shifts in political discourse in Ukraine, particularly how the ongoing conflict and the quest for European integration are interwoven in the national consciousness. It sheds light on how metaphors help construct political reality, influencing both public opinion and policy decisions. As Ukraine continues to navigate its path towards the EU amidst the challenges posed by Russian aggression, the metaphors used in its political discourse will likely continue to evolve, reflecting and shaping the nation's journey.

Theoretical and methodological background

Periods of substantial social and political changes are always accompanied by transformations in the public discourses and in political language. In the case of post- communist countries, therefore, political communication and the language used by symbolical elites may have direct practical and political significance. We examine in this article the metaphors that are prominent in the Ukrainian press discourse about Europe and European integration. First, we explain the theoretical background of the study, which relies on conceptual metaphor analysis. Second, we detail the method and the press sources that we used for the conceptual metaphor analysis in the empirical part. Third, we give an overview of the metaphors that we choose to select, after which we conclude the article with a discussion section.

Mere Duplication or Original?
ISIS Ability to Adapt Propaganda
to Different Target Audiences

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Abstract :ISIS's ability to recruit new members and spread its message has been widely attributed to its prolific production of propaganda items and its ability to adapt its message based on target audience. We tested these two hypotheses by analysing magazines published by ISIS central media in three languages (English [Dabiq] , Turkish [Konstantiniyye] and French[Dar al-Islam]) in two one-month periods in 2015 and 2016. To see how far the terrorist organization could generate original content in different languages instead of translations, we conceived a pre-trained deep learning model that measured similarity between articles in magazines, leveraging a sentence-based approach. In order to test ISIS ability to adjust message based on target audience, we further conducted qualitative content analysis. Our deep learning model test results showed, except for re-publication of one article in the second period, ISIS was in fact able to publish discrete propaganda items. The results of the qualitative content analysis showed ISIS was successful in differentiating thematic coverage of its propaganda content for English-, French-, and Turkish-speaking audience.

Keywords: Daesh, ISIL, magazine, translation, propaganda, similarity check

Introduction

ISIS, also named as the Islamic State or Daesh, has become notorious for its effective use of propaganda in its efforts to recruit new members and promote its ideology (Philips, Bucci, Florance, Dale, & Brookes, 2014; Johnson, 2015; Barrett, October 2017; Lister, 2014; Singer & Brooking, 2018; Sultan & De Landtsheer, 2019). Scholars have noted that massive propaganda has been central to the group's strategy (Milton, 2016), serving to bolster its legitimacy (Anfinson, 2021; Frissen, Toguslu, Van Ostaeyen, & d'Haenens, 2018; Boutz, Benninger, & Lancaster, 2018; Ubayasiri, 2021), recruit new members (Lakomy, 2021), and spread its message of terror and violence (Venkatesh, Podoshen, Jason, Rabah, & Glass, 2020).

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While much of this propaganda is distributed online through social media and other digital channels (Mitts, Philips, & Barbara F. , 2022) , ISIS has also been prolific in terms of producing print propaganda items such as magazines, pamphlets, and posters (Zelin, 2015) alongside a range of materials ranging from children's books (Engel, 2016) to textbooks on Arabic literature, history and physical preparedness (Olidort, 2016).

Several studies have examined the extent of ISIS's print propaganda output. For example, a study by Aaron Zelin that provides a snapshot for the totality of ISIS official media productions in a sample week in 2015 (from April 18 to April 24) shows that out of 123 total media outputs 88% were visual (63% picture, 20% video, and 5% graphic) whereas only 12% were textual (2% statement, 5% news report, 5% pdf). In terms of linguistic distribution, 8 of the items were in English, 5 in Russian, 4 in Kurdish, 2 in French, 1 in Urdu and the remaining 103 in Arabic. Accordingly, 78% of its media outputs came from provincial-level media operations whereas the remaining 22% came from central media (2015).

Due to the breadth of ISIS official media releases, Zelin's article provides insight into the general share of print propaganda material within overall ISIS media production. Yet, it only provides a picture of the status in April 2015. Both Milton and Winter argue the number of ISIS propaganda outputs decreased as the organization fell from power in time (Milton, 2016). Winter's study comparing number of propaganda items released for one week randomly selected in late summer 2015 and one week in January 2017 shows a decline by nearly 50 % in numbers. Accordingly, 892 unique items were released in 2015 whereas this number decreased to 463 in 2017. In 2015, the share of central media outlets within overall media releases was only 16, the remaining 84% coming from 29 provincial media offices. The share of central media rose to 41 percent in 2017 due to decline in number (only 22 remaining) and productivity of the provincial media offices (2018). This means, despite ups and downs of ISIS and resulting decline in provincial media output due to loss of territory, its central media outlets have been relatively prolific.

ISIS's *"communication strategy is comprehensive, cohesive, and multi-dimensional",* and textual propaganda has played a key role as in its *"full spectrum propaganda"* (Ingram, 2020, p. 20)*.* The organization has instrumentalized especially the magazines to impose its worldview and ideology, and relaying its message to both ingroups and outgroups. The fact that four different volumes of ISIS' Dabiq magazine were sold over Amazon to the Western readers for a period of time in 2015 testifies for the terrorist organization's obsession to communicate its core messages to outer world (BBC News, 2015).

In the book they edited in 2019, Baele et al. indicate ISIS central media office has published 7 different magazines in English, French, Russian, Turkish and Arabic between August 2012 and 2019 (2019, p. 89).

Voicing Politics: Linguistics and the Debility of Political Science

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Abstract: *Voicing Politics* claims that political attitudes vary with the language that people speak. Experiments with random assignment of bilinguals to answer survey questionnaires presented in either Estonian or Russian show that their answers do change when the language of the questionnaire is switched. First, relative to gendered Russian, genderless Estonian elicits more support for women's rights. Second, relative to futured Russian, futureless Estonian elicits more willingness to invest now for future gain. Third, relative to dominant Estonian, minority Russian elicits more awareness of the "most nationalist" party in Estonian politics. But the first claim is inconsistent with the authors' own evidence. The second claim is inconsistent with both Estonian and Russian's joint use of linguistic aspect to express futurity. The third claim is invalidated by Russian's lack of any translation for English "nationalist" that does not signal "anti-Russian," to which Russian speakers will be more sensitive regardless of dominant or minority status. The experimental asymmetries reported by the authors are attributable, not to differences between the Estonian and Russian languages, but to unspoken context, on which the use of any language for communication must rely but which varies from one language to the next and for which survey research cannot control. Since no practicable survey questionnaire can control what context respondents choose to activate in interpreting a question and deciding how to respond, rather than identifying "beliefs" or "attitudes," any survey research reveals unspecifiable variation in context. Since much of what purports to be known about politics has been inferred from inherently unreliable surveys, this implication of the errors in *Voicing Politics* is debilitating enough. But since the institutions that political science attempts to explain are uniformly consequences of language use, the uncritical endorsement of *Voicing Politics* by the discipline's most prestigious American academic press, its board, editor and referees, prominent endorsers and multiple reviewers is evidence that the debility revealed by this study's errors afflicts a broad sweep of the discipline extending far beyond survey research alone.

Keywords: *Voicing Politics,* survey questionnaires, Estonian and Russian languages, survey language context, political linguistics

"The languages people speak can affect what they think and how they think about the political world around them" (Pérez and Tavits 2022, 130). To substantiate this proposition, *Voicing Politics* advances three hypotheses. First, genderless languages induce their speakers to express more support for women's political opportunities than do speakers of gendered languages. Second, "futureless" languages induce their speakers to express more support for paying costs today to secure gains tomorrow than do speakers of futured languages. Third, in every state, some language is "dominant" because used for politics; it may also be the language spoken by the majority of the state's population. The authors categorize any languages not used for politics

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but spoken by inhabitants of the state as minority languages, even if spoken by the majority. A minority language induces its speakers to express more sensitivity to issues concerning relations between dominant and minority populations and to be quicker to recall political organizations advocating the supremacy of the dominant language and its speakers, while a dominant language induces its speakers to recall more information about politics in general.

The empirical test of each hypothesis is ingenious. The investigators isolate the effect of language by randomly assigning bilinguals to respond to a survey questionnaire presented in either of two languages. One author's background in Estonia motivates a search there for bilinguals proficient in both Estonian and Russian. Estonian is genderless, "futureless" by the authors' definition, and dominant in the sense of now being used for politics as well as being the first language of most Estonian citizens. Conversely, Russian is gendered and, by their definition, futured, and it is also the first language of a minority of Estonian citizens, although before independence Russian was used for politics. The investigators also examine the question of information recall by randomly assigning Americans bilingual in Spanish and English to recall information about politics in the United States. Finally, all their findings from random assignment of bilinguals are also tested for external validity. Their test begins by categorizing languages used in the World Values Survey as genderless or gendered, "futureless" or futured, and dominant or minority. The categorization predicts responses about women's rights, about investing now for future gains, and about favorability toward minority rights.

Here I examine whether the investigators' case is as watertight as they think. It is not. But my goal in examining the case is not to discredit their effort. *Voicing Politics* makes two substantial contributions. First, it demonstrates beyond question that switching between languages used in survey questionnaires can alter responses. It goes astray when it attributes variation in responses to grammatical features of a language, such as genderlessness or "futurelessness." That attribution is provably invalid. Second, it pioneers the introduction into survey research of the discipline of linguistics. Survey researchers reliant on language to pose their questions and to formulate the answers have rarely if ever consulted the theoretical or empirical literature in linguistics about how languages work. *Voicing Politics* begins to introduce some of that literature. Its authors' case is leaky not because they venture into linguistics but because they do not venture nearly far enough.

What linguistics teaches about variation in languages concerns not merely and not mainly grammar. Grammar does vary, but where it varies, some other feature of the language compensates for the variation. In this sense, there is the universal grammar that Noam Chomsky and his adherents have labored to define. Part of the compensatory mechanism universally used by languages, when their grammar does not specify everything that might be overt in the grammar of some other languages, is context. No language fully specifies all the information needed to formulate or to interpret the meaning of any utterance or text, but every language relegates some of that information to unstated context presupposed to be shared among speaker and audience, author and readership, or signer and viewership. What is relegated to unspoken context varies across languages. Not grammar, but neglect of differences in the context missing from questionnaires presented to and answered by bilinguals randomly assigned to use Estonian or Russian, accounts for the differences in their responses. No survey questionnaire can control for variation in the context that the respondent must generate to choose an answer. This incapacity is the debilitating quandary that the study of linguistics reveals for survey researchers and not only for them but for political scientists in general.