

Demonizing the Enemy

Discourse of Terrorism in
The New York Times

Huang Yingshan



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恐怖主义形象的语言学研究：以《纽约时报》为例

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前 言

2001年9月11日，美国纽约的世界贸易中心受到袭击并被摧毁，造成重大人员伤亡和财产损失。“9·11事件”发生的当晚，美国总统布什称该事件是恐怖主义行为，美国将针对恐怖主义开展一场战争。此后，美国政府和军方在世界范围内进行一系列以“反恐战争”为名义的军事行动。恐怖主义成为政府和公众注意力的焦点。普通民众对恐怖主义对其生命和财产的威胁感到忧虑，而学术界人士则试图揭示恐怖主义的本质、根源和手段。不同学科的研究者都在努力探索这一复杂的社会政治现象，包括哲学、历史学、心理学、生理学、政治学等。而近些年来，语言学家同样开始关注恐怖主义，尤其是从事批评话语分析的研究者把话语视为其最重要的研究对象。他们试图通过政治话语的分析来阐明以美国为首的一方和与其对立的另一方各自所使用的话语策略，从而揭示双方是怎样通过话语来建构各自的意识形态，并进而影响公众舆论的。

自20世纪80年代以来，认知语言学发展迅速，成为语言研究的主流范式。语言学家在研究句法、形态、词库甚至语篇中有了一个新的视角和各种新的概念分析工具。少数批评话语分析的研究者（如 Paul Chilton）试图把批评话语分析与认知语言学结合，他们开始把认知语言学中的范畴化、概念隐喻、概念转喻等中心概念应用于政治语篇的分析，取得了不少新的发现。但是，总体而言，这一视角的研究仍然很少，尤其是关于恐怖主义的话语研究。本书试图从认知语言学视角进行恐怖主义话语的批评分析，在理论框架上把批评话语分析与认知语言学

相结合，在实践上以 Charteris-Black (2004) 提出的批评隐喻分析理论为操作指导，目的是回答以下三个研究问题：(1) 美国主流媒体在恐怖主义的形象建构中使用了哪些重要的概念隐喻？(2) 这些概念隐喻是怎样将恐怖分子妖魔化的？(3) 这些隐喻对公众的思维和行为有可能产生哪些影响？

本书的分析语料为《纽约时报》2001 至 2011 年间关于恐怖主义的报道。我们使用 LexisNexis 学术数据库，将检索范围限制在 2001 年 1 月 1 日到 2011 年 12 月 31 日，语料为标题中包括“恐怖”(terror)、“恐怖主义”(terrorism) 或“恐怖分子”(terrorist/terrorists) 的所有新闻报道，由此建立一个由 4469 篇报道组成的语料库。然后，对这些报道的标题进行仔细研读后，找到可能的概念隐喻，并确定隐喻关键词，然后使用 Wordsmith 软件在语料库中对这些关键词进行检索。文章的主要发现如下。

首先，《纽约时报》在恐怖主义形象的建构中使用 5 类主要的概念隐喻，包括战争、宗教、非法、野蛮、非人，由此衍生出一系列的具体隐喻：恐怖主义被建构为战争、恶魔、伊斯兰教、犯罪、专制、野蛮、猎物、昆虫、疾病等。这些隐喻在新闻报道中的出现频率极高，并且相互强化，构成一个大的隐喻网络。其次，概念隐喻成为像《纽约时报》这样的主流媒体最重要的话语策略，在丑化恐怖主义并使公众形成刻板印象 (stereotype) 的过程中起到关键作用。Chilton (1985, 1986, 1988) 曾指出，国际政治中的概念隐喻是两个认知域的映射，当我们在目的域中进行推理时，会受到源域中逻辑的限制，迫使我们采取该认知域的视角，因此如果能够把概念隐喻强加给大众，就能诱导他们自愿地接受主流意识形态。因此，主流媒体在描述恐怖主义时所使用的概念隐喻使读者接受了恐怖主义是美国最大的敌人的观点，并使他们相信恐怖主义是一群邪恶的穆斯林分子，以毁灭美国为最终目标。随着主流媒体在报道中不断使用这些隐喻，恐怖主义的形象最终被固化，使美国以至世界公众形成关于恐怖主义的刻板印象。最后，主流媒体中占主导地位的概念隐喻有可能产生严重的社会后果。按照 Herman & Chomsky (1988) 提出

的宣传模型 (Propaganda Model), 媒体必须依赖政府作为其消息来源, 但同时受到政府的控制。因此, 政府的官方话语以十分隐蔽的形式在主流媒体中出现, 本书语料分析中所发现的概念隐喻实际上是美国政府官方话语的体现。这些隐喻与美国政府在“反恐战争”中使用的恐惧政治策略 (politics of fear) 完全吻合, 它们在民众中产生恐惧, 因此民众毫不怀疑地接受政府采取的各种侵犯其隐私的“反恐”手段。这为政府加强其对民众的控制提供了合法的、自然的方式。以概念隐喻为代表的这些话语策略已经在美国社会中产生严重的社会影响。“9·11”之后, 在主流媒体的影响下, 许多美国民众常常混淆恐怖主义和伊斯兰教两个概念, 也不严格区分穆斯林和恐怖分子, 因此针对穆斯林甚至阿拉伯裔美国人的歧视攻击行为迅速增加。按照 Stanton (1998) 的种族灭绝阶段理论, 概念隐喻这样的话语策略是导致种族灭绝的道路上一个重要的阶段。

本书的分析表明, 认知语言学范式将为批评话语分析提供新的分析概念和手段, 促进批评话语分析的深入发展。本书是将认知语言学与批评话语分析结合起来的一个尝试, 研究范围聚焦于概念隐喻。实际上, 认知语言学的许多思想有潜在的重大价值, 包括范畴化、概念隐喻、概念转喻、识解和概念整合等。如果能够把这些新的概念分析工具应用于对恐怖主义话语的研究, 不仅能够深化对恐怖主义的研究, 而且能够扩展认知语言学的应用范围。

Preface

On September 11, 2001, the World Trade Center in New York, a symbol of America's wealth and prosperity, was attacked and destroyed. In the immediate aftermath of this event, US President George W. Bush described it as "deliberate and deadly terrorist acts" and "despicable acts of terror". Since then, the US government and military have been carrying on so-called "War on Terror". And the issue of terrorism has been the focus of attention of both the government and the public. Ordinary people are scared by the brutality of terrorism whereas scholars are intrigued by its nature. Researchers from a variety of disciplines are interested in terrorism, including philosophy, history, psychology, physiology, and political science. In recent years linguists have also begun to study terrorism, thus shedding more light on such a complicated phenomenon. In particular, linguists working in the tradition of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) regard discourse as their central research object, analyzing discourse related to terrorism, especially political discourse, such as statements of political leaders. The purpose of their analysis is to uncover the discursive strategies employed by politicians and to reveal the ideology hidden in such discourse.

The past three decades has witnessed the emergence and development of Cognitive Linguistics (CL), a new paradigm gradually accepted in mainstream linguistics. Owing to the rise of CL, linguists are now equipped

with a variety of newly developed conceptual tools to deal with syntax, morphology, lexicon, and even discourse. A few scholars like Paul Chilton, a leading figure in CDA, have made some efforts to combine CDA and CL in the analysis of political discourse. And they have begun to apply such concepts as categorization, metaphor, and metonymy to discourse analysis. However, progress has been slow. With regard to the analysis of discourse of terrorism, the CL approach has been applied by only a few researchers. This book will build on previous studies of discourse of terrorism, and approach the phenomenon from a CL perspective. Meanwhile, in line with CL's emphasis on real language use, we will make a corpus-based study of the discourse of terrorism in US mainstream media.

Our corpus consists of 4469 news reports concerning terrorism published in *The New York Times* between 2001 and 2011. We will address the following research questions. Firstly, what are the conceptual metaphors that serve to construct the image of terrorism? Secondly, how those conceptual metaphors work to demonize terrorists? Thirdly, what might be the consequences of those metaphors on our thinking and action? Our approach is a combination of CDA with CL. More specifically, we will combine the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) which developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), and Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) proposed by Charteris-Black (2004). The research is organized around the aforementioned research questions. We will first identify all the conceptual metaphors related to terrorism that occur in the headlines of the 4469 news reports. Then, we will discuss how those metaphors serve to demonize terrorists and lead to stereotypes of terrorists. Finally, we will explore the possible consequences of those metaphors in terms of the Propaganda Model (PM) proposed by Herman and Chomsky (1988).

The major findings of this book are as follows. In the first place, we

have identified all the important conceptual metaphors of terrorism that occur in the headlines of news reports of *The New York Times*. Those metaphors are organized in terms of five domains, including war, religion, lawlessness, barbarism, and dehumanization. And the major conceptual metaphors are listed here: TERRORISM IS WAR; TERRORISM IS EVIL; TERRORISM IS ISLAM; TERRORISM IS LAWLESSNESS; TERRORISM IS TYRANNY; TERRORISM IS SAVAGE; TERRORISM IS PREY; TERRORISM IS INSECT; TERRORISM IS DISEASE.

Secondly, this book has revealed the role of the metaphors identified above in demonizing terrorists. They not only enable the public to grasp such a highly abstract concept as terrorism, but also impose a particular ideology in their mind. The public are led to accept a particular view of terrorism, rather than questioning whether such a view is grounded in reality. Therefore, the media rely on conceptual metaphors as an important discursive strategy to shape the ideology of the public. Readers of *The New York Times* have accepted the image of terrorism as an enemy, as a faceless mass, and as a swarm of evil Muslims eager to destroy the US. Since this image has occurred time and again in the newspaper, it will be stereotyped in the readers' minds and it is difficult to change.

Thirdly, this book has explored the consequences of conceptual metaphors for the society, focusing on the relationship between the government and media, the discourse of fear, and the stages to genocide. According to Herman and Chomsky (1988), the media depend on the government and are manipulated by the government. To deal with terrorism, the government may practice politics of fear, realized by discourse of fear. Then, newspapers are dominated by discourse of fear, and this in turn leads to an atmosphere of fear in the society. The readers are led to believe that things are out of control and are more compliant, which is exactly the aim of the government. In addition, the media misuse the

concepts “terrorism” and “Islam”, often confusing them. Owing to this confusion, the life of Muslims and Arabs has been seriously affected. Harassments of Muslims and attacks on mosques have disrupted the life of Arab Americans. More importantly, metaphors of terrorism may be an important stage on the road to genocide. When terrorists are consistently represented as less human, it becomes psychologically acceptable to engage in genocide or other atrocities (Frank and Melville, 1988). Therefore, the role of metaphors of terrorism is too serious to be ignored.

This book has tried to do CDA from a CL point of view. As a burgeoning paradigm in linguistics, CL has a number of conceptual tools to offer for our analysis. Besides conceptual metaphor, we may explore how other tools, such as metonymy, frame, and conceptual integration, can help CDA researchers to conduct discourse analysis from new perspectives. It is hoped that in the future more scholars will approach discourse of terrorism along this line in order that we will have a better understanding of how mainstream ideology concerning terrorism is constructed and maintained. Ultimately, the purpose of such an approach is to raise people’s critical awareness on the issue of terrorism.

Key words: Cognitive Linguistics; Critical Discourse Analysis; Conceptual Metaphor Critical Metaphor Analysis; terrorism.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background to This Research

Terrorism has been on the international agenda for many decades. And the controversy about the definition of terrorism has just been as old as the concept itself. For instance, to date the international community has not been able to agree on the nature of anti-colonial movements in Africa, Asia, and South America in the 1970s or the nature of Jewish campaigns against the British authorities in Palestine. However, in some cases there is no disagreement concerning whether a particular act counts as terrorism or not. For example, the assassination of 9 Israeli athletes during the Munich Olympic Games in 1972 was and still is regarded as an act of terrorism. Since 1972, incidents of terrorism have been on the rise. In particular, the 1990s was a critical turning point for terrorism, for it witnessed the emergence of religious fundamentalist groups motivated by religious imperatives. Different from the traditional terrorists who just “want a lot of people watching, not a lot of people dead” (Jenkins, 1975), these groups have exposed the rhetoric of mass-destruction terrorism and sought to maximize violence against the perceived enemy. Aum Shinrikyo’s sarin gas attack in the Tokyo subway system in 1995 marked the official debut of terrorism involving WMD (Hudson, 1999).



Member of Black September in Munich in 1972^①



Aum Shinrikyo's Sarin Gas Attack in 1995^②

① http://military.china.com/zh_cn/history4/news3/11078476/20100824/16101034_4.html.

② [Http://www.news.qq.com](http://www.news.qq.com).