

Edited by

Caterina Carta and Jean-Frédéric Morin



# EU Foreign Policy through the Lens of Discourse Analysis

## Making Sense of Diversity



The  
Globalisation,  
Europe, Multilateralism  
Series

EU Foreign Policy through the  
Lens of Discourse Analysis  
*Making Sense of Diversity*

*Edited by*

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ASHGATE

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# EU FOREIGN POLICY THROUGH THE LENS OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

*Honouring both the plurality and fecundity that characterises discursive approaches, this book demonstrates the pertinence of focussing on discourses, in their many different hues, for understanding one of the most salient developments of the contemporary international system: the production, reproduction and transformation of Europe. It will be of great interest all at once to students and scholars interested in the role of language in international politics, the workings of international governance, or indeed in the great European project.*

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Caterina Carta and Jean-Frédéric Morin  
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# List of Abbreviations

AP	Attentive public
CDA	Critical discourse analysis
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
CTC	Counter-Terrorism Coordinator
DA	Discourse analysis
DG	Directorates-General
DHA	Discourse-historical approach
DI	Discursive institutionalism
ECB	European Central Bank
EEAS	European External Action Service
EFSF	European Financial Stability Facility
EMU	European Monetary Union
EP	European Parliament
EPC	European Political Cooperation
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU	European Union
FPA	Foreign Policy Analysis
HR	High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
IHEDN	Institut des hautes études de défense nationale
IR	International Relations
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
MS	Member states
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPE	Normative Power Europe
POE	Policy and opinion elite
R2P	Responsibility to protect
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States of America
WTO	World Trade Organization

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# Introduction: EU Foreign Policy through the Lens of Discourse Analysis

Caterina Carta and Jean-Frédéric Morin

## What Do Discourses Tell Us about the International Role of the EU?

For over 50 years, the process of European integration has profoundly shaped an imagined sense of belonging to a European community. Despite difficulties in establishing what exactly a European Union (EU) identity is supposed to be, the process of European integration assumed the Aesopian motto 'United we stand, divided we fall'. Recent events conveyed the impression that European integration is not to be taken for granted. Waves of enlargement, institutional reforms, social and political unrest, economic and financial instability, both in Europe and in its immediate neighbourhood, have profoundly challenged the meaning and course of the European integration process.

In a speech delivered more than 20 years ago, Margaret Thatcher laconically posited: 'such a body [a European Community of 30 nations ...] is an even more utopian enterprise than the Tower of Babel. For at least the builders of Babel all spoke the same language when they began' (Thatcher 1992). This comment still evokes some topical concerns about the process of European integration. Beyond linguistic diversity, do European member states and EU institutions share the same references when contributing to the articulation of EU international discourse? Whose discourse is the one finally agreed upon? To what extent are different discourses compatible with each other? And, how can this diversity be translated into foreign policy practices?

This book looks at these questions through the lens of discourse analysis as applied to the field of International Relations (IR). Depending on one's theoretical lenses, discourses can be conceived as exercising framing, generative, performative and coordinative functions. First, discourses frame and structure what can be conceived and uttered (Hajer 1993). The process whereby we attribute a signified to a signifier entails the articulation of this signifier into a broader semantic system of meanings (Derrida 1976). Second, discourses generate and construct the meaning of what exists in such a way that nothing exists if it cannot be thought through and transposed into language (Wittgenstein 1971). Third, discourses have a performative power (Austin 1962). Rhetorical strategies inherent in discourses contribute to the way we perceive social facts (Foucault 2011 [1969]), by establishing semantic connections among phenomena. Therefore, discourses