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Ain't no black in the Union Jack

Discursive repertoires constructing a positive identity of The British
National Front

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Picture 1. Photo from the National Front's site on forming a new unit

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ABSTRACT

Högextremism är ett ökande problem i hela Europa och de medföljande sociala orättvisorna drabbar fler och fler. Denna avhandling utreder, inom ramen för kritisk diskursanalys, de retoriska tekniker som högerextremister använder för att åstadkomma positiv självpresentation och attrahera nya medlemmar till grupperingar och partier. Studien undersöker de diskursive repertoarer, dvs återkommande meningsmönster bestående av ideologiska teman och ämnen, som används i rasistpropaganda. Avhandlingen redogör för de diskursiva repertoarer som det brittiska extremhögerpartiet The National Front använder sig av i sina internettexter. Partiet har en typisk högerextremistisk ideologi som förespråkar en snabb återgång till traditionella värderingar och en utrensning av de "omoraliska" element som rubbat den samhälleliga ordningen och familjestrukturen. Partiet vänder sig, i enlighet med denna syn, emot invandrare, homosexualitet och samhällets upplevda moraliska förfall. Materialet för studien utgörs av 35 artiklar från The National Front's webbsida, som skrivits av partimedlemmar och som därmed reflekterar partiets ideologiska uppfattningar. Ur dessa artiklar togs återkommande teman, ämnen och metaforer ut, och man kunde slutligen se hur dessa byggstenar bildade fyra bredare repertoarer: Moralisk Plikt, Konspiration, Orättvisa och Nationalism. Uppbyggnaden av dessa repertoarer diskuteras dels utgående från texternas målgrupp och dels utgående från retoriska drag som anses typiska för rasistpropaganda. Alla repertoarerna presenterade partiet positivt och rationaliserade därmed deras radikala åsikter. Den positiva självpresentationen sker dels genom att partiet framställs som räddare och hjältar i den plikttrogna och oundvikliga kampen för sitt land. En ständigt återkommande metafor är britterna som offer för en inkompetent regering, och the National Front som den enda räddningen. Den positiva presentationen av partiet sker också genom den negativa presentationen av andra; invandrare blir i denna version av verkligheten lata parasiter, vilket ställs emot de hårt arbetande och utsatta britterna. Partiets politiska agenda blir alltså ytterst synlig i deras texter och varje ord genomsyras av ideologiska påtryckningar. Diskursiva repertoarer visar alltså inte enbart på retoriska tekniker som använts i artiklarna, utan även de åsikter och värdegrunder som retoriken baserar sig på, vilket gör dem till ett användbart verktyg i kampen mot destruktiv propaganda

KEY WORDS: discursive repertoires, Critical Discourse Analysis, positive self-representation, The National Front, racist rhetoric

1 INTRODUCTION

We live in a mediated society where people are subjected to a constant stream of information from newspapers, TV and, perhaps foremost, the Internet. These messages aim at trying to convey their individual views of the world, and one might easily overlook that all mediated texts construct a reality which coincides with the ideology of their author. When hearing a seemingly neutral account of an event, we are being influenced by implicit value systems without knowing it as we perceive them to be natural. (Fairclough 1995: 44.) Each speaker or writer unavoidably advocates his/her personal value system, and no mediated message can thus ever be seen as impartial, but rather needs to be acknowledged as an individual or collective expression of opinion.

The illusion of neutrality plays an important part in the quest for 'truth', but even openly biased sources of information have today also started gaining credibility, in particular in cases where their content somehow fulfils people's emotional needs for security and stability. Increased globalisation is today characterized by, on the one hand, increased flexibility and liberalism and, on the other hand, the backlash of intensified traditionalism, conservatism and fundamentalism. Messages that are hostile to changes in the traditional makeup of our Western society have accordingly become more generally accepted. (Andersson 2002.) Some of today's most noticed advocates of such messages are political far-right groupings which enforce their characteristic opposition against, for example, immigration, homosexuality and abortion through subversive political rhetoric.

There has been an alarming rise in far-right politics and racist activity in Europe and North America during the past few years. Hate group activity in the U.S has grown by almost 50% since the year 2000, and several European countries, such as France, Germany and Austria, have increasingly started supporting parties which aim at 'reinforcing' order and tightening the laws of immigration. These tendencies have consequently created a resurgence of nationalism in Europe and North America. (Anderson 2002, Ovenden 2003, ADL 2006, EU 2007.)

The reasons for the increased interest in a right-wing agenda are complex. Merkl and Weinberg highlight the "social breakdown thesis" (2003) as a central factor:

> (…) traditional social structures, especially those based on class and religion, are breaking down. As a result, individuals lose a sense of belonging and are attracted to ethnic nationalism, which according to psychological research increases a sense of self-esteem and efficacy. For similar reasons, they may be attracted to family and other traditional values (53).

The rapid social changes of our society have thus provoked a regressive movement that tries to handle this breakdown of traditional social structures with an extreme return to order and tradition. Other reasons for the increased interest in right-wing politics seem to be socio-economic, connected to fears of economic recession and unemployment; the notion of 'foreigners stealing our jobs' is widespread and, to a large extent today, socially acceptable. The importance of the Internet cannot be ignored either, not as an explicit reason for increased racist activity, but rather as an effective facilitating device for organizing the activity, exchanging ideas, and spreading the word, which has helped these movements to develop and gain ground. (Gardell 1998: 56; EU 2007; Holthouse & Potok 2008: 2)

There is a vital need for a critical examination of the right-wing-movements and racist organizations in order to reveal their ideological agendas and be able to resist the prevalent views of racist thought as some kind of 'natural' solution to social change. An effective means for understanding and exposing these agendas and thought patterns is analyzing the *discourse* of written and spoken racist texts since racism as a social practice and an ideology displays itself discursively (Wodak & Reisgl, 2000:1). *Discourse*, then, can be defined as a group of utterances that belong together and create a version of reality or identities through recurrent themes (Foucault 1972: 49). Discourse analysis can thus supply us with valuable insight into racists' views of themselves and the outside world (van Dijk 1995: 245).

The present study focuses on the way racist organisations aim at trying to present their ideology positively by discursively constructing an attractive identity for themselves.

The organization chosen as material for the study is the iconic British extremist right-wing party the British National Front, which I will henceforth refer to as the National Front[1], which is a commonly used epithet.

My hypothesis is that the National Front aims at constructing a positive identity for the party and its ideology through implicit patterns of meaning in order to rationalize racist opinion and attract potential members. My material consists of articles written by party members on the homepage of the National Front. I will extract from these texts recurrent *themes* and *topics* which form discursive repertoires that aim at presenting the party and its ideology in a positive light. I will finally discuss possible reasons for why these particular repertoires have been used, based on my outline of target members and the most common persuasive means of racist rhetoric.

The study will be conducted within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which is a field within Discourse Analysis that is methodologically well suited to investigate racist discourse as it is concerned with how power relations and social inequalities are negotiated through language. "One the one hand, racist opinions and beliefs are produced and reproduced by means of discourse; on the other hand, through discourse, discriminatory and exclusionary acts are prepared, promulgated, and legitimised" (Wodak & Reisgl, 2000: 1). CDA considers language in its social context, and common topics are for example how dominance, discrimination and control are expressed through ideological language. CDA is a theoretical framework or school of thought rather than a particular method or theory, and it is used in fields such as gender studies, racism and political oratory (Wodak 2006: 4, 5).

Racist discourse, as any ideological discourse, is highly dependent on being persuasive and, thus, projecting a positive identity of racists to potential members in order to obtain power.

[1] Not to be confused with French right-wing extremist party *Le Front National* lead by Jean-Marie LePen, which is also occasionally translated into *The National Front*.

Racist discourse can be analysed by investigating how racist authors construct this positive identity and, consequently, how they work to make racism seem appealing. This can effectively be done through analyzing their texts in search of *discursive repertoires* (Wetherell 2001: 247), which are patterns of meaning constructed by themes and metaphors which evaluate our experiences and narrate events from a personal viewpoint. Feminist discourse could, for example, build a discursive event around the consistent topics of aggressive men and the abuse of women in order to create a repertoire with the 'woman as victim', which becomes part of everywoman's identity. They here use the recurrent metaphor of the male abuser to construct a reality where men are *always* oppressive and women are *always* oppressed.

These versions of reality are always *ideological*, which means that they are always subjectively constructed according to the values of the author or speaker. The above example of feminist discourse is obviously influenced by the author's personal ideology. This happens implicitly as the author does not literally have to express her negative opinions of men, but rather constructs a view of the world which gets to speak for itself. These patterns of meaning thus reveal the means that are used for constructing a positive image of oneself or one's organisation.

Much discourse-analytical work on racist discourse has been conducted within the framework of CDA and it has given valuable insights into the dynamics of racism. Teun van Dijk has, through his extensive analyses of spoken and written prejudice against immigrants or foreigners, established important terminology concerning typical features of racist rhetoric. In his outline of the recurrent "semantic moves" (2004: 15) that are characteristic to most racist discourse, he gives prominence to *rationalization* (quoted in Reisgl & Wodak, 2000: 184) of racist opinion as the most basic and all-embracing move of all racist rhetoric. These semantic moves will be further discussed in chapter 2.1. His studies have, for example, covered racist discourse in textbooks (1987), the press (1991), within political debates (1993; van Dijk & Wodak: 2000), amongst the social elite (1993), and finally the latent racism expressed in everyday conversations among friends (1984, 1987).

Latent everyday racist practices, and the covert racist slur of the person in the street was further developed by Jane Hill in her book *The Everyday Language of White Racism* (2008), where she explains how: "White virtue is protected by projecting racism onto an imagined category of 'skinheads' and 'Ku Kluxers' that whites seldom encounter in real life" (22). This quote describes convincingly the rationalizing properties of racist thought; when people do not want to idenitify with a 'racist', they construct a more positive and socially accepted identity for themselves. Larger racist organisations are accordingly able to institutionalize this natural defence-mechanism in their texts, as they supply potential members with excuses or disclaimers for racist thought.

The building of a positive identity is vital for one's self-confidence and self-acceptance, and racist activity is often dependent on your cultural identity. Ruth Frankenberg, in her study "White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness" (1993), conducted research on how white women in California constructed a self-image, based on their cultural identities as 'white women' and how race influenced their social lives. Based on their use of *discursive* repertoires, she found that the women she interviewed were constantly re-negotiating their apprehension of whiteness and racism. Discursive repertoires are thus rarely homogenous, but rather display the complexity of human thought and the difficulty of constructing a realistic positive identity for oneself.

The thesis has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter starts with the introductory background information about the study and moves on to describing the articles that have been used as material, as well as brief general information about the party website in order to describe the context of the material (1.1). This is followed by a discussion of the method of identifying discursive repertoires (1.2) and finally the description of the National Front (1.3). This description will provide the general information about the party and its policies (1.3.1), as well as an account of the target members of right-wing movements (1.3.2). The second chapter describes the theoretical frame, which in the present study is Discourse Analysis and the construction of identities through discourse (2.1) as well as Critical Discourse Analysis (2.2). The third chapter consists of an analysis of repertoires identifiable on the homepage of the

National Front, while the final chapter is a general discussion about the findings and the conclusions that can be drawn from them.

1.1 Material

The primary material of this study consisted of texts on the homepage of the National Front. I will first describe the general layout and function of the website, and then give a detailed outline of the texts used as the material for this study.

At a first glance, the page looks rather unprofessional as it is unorganized with different fonts, varying line spacing and pictures in different sizes. The page contains practical information about the party, its policies, how to join, who to contact and how to donate money. Technical detail about webmasters and contributors is difficult to locate as the contact information only displayed phone numbers and addresses, but no names. Most of the articles that were analysed were also anonymous or signed with a pseudonym, such as "The Crusader". There iss obviously an inclination to remain anonymous amongst webmasters, local organizers and authors, which reveals a prevalent reluctance to be publicly associated with the National Front. However, a few articles are signed with a first name, which may signal familiarity towards the reader. These first names then supplies the party with a welcoming and informal tone, which might appeal to the target group (See 1.3.2).

The site is interactive, as there is a members' forum where members of the site could log in and "share their views" (*NF Members' Forum*), but the information is not available to the general public. Several of the published articles were sent in by members, as they had been encouraged to participate in the party's communication with the public. The party paper *Britain First*, is also downloadable on the page and members are encouraged to write to the editor. The main part of the page, which is located in the centre, consists of categories of articles written by the members of the party.

These articles concern a wide variety of topics, for example, party activities and happenings such as demonstrations or the forming of new units, general social development in Britain and the ideology of the British Front. The articles are divided into 13 categories, according to content, and these categories were listed on the *Articles - page*. Most of the articles are 1-3 pages long and often include small pictures that illustrate the subject matter of the article.

For the present study I chose to focus on the categories *History of the NF*, *National Front Politics*, *News*, *General Articles, Information, Values and Culture in Decline in Britain*, *The National Front on Education*, *Young National Front*, *The Immigration Problem*, *Socialism*, *Nationalism* and *The Fallen*. I chose these categories because they all discuss contemporary social development; rather than analyzing the party's *explicit* theoretical policies, I wanted to investigate how these were *implicitly* applied in practice to evaluate current events. I analyzed the first 10 articles out of every group, except for *The National Front Education*, which only had 5 articles. My sample consequently consisted of 35 articles in total. The number of articles was chosen to supply me with a random, yet sufficient, amount of material. The articles were chosen and analyzed within the time frame of September 2008 and May 2009.

The names of the analyzed articles are available in Appendix 1 "Articles used as Material" where the full name and source details of the individual articles are given. The appendix also lists the short individual *keywords* that will be used as each article's source reference in the present study. An extract from the analysis may consequently look like this: "The National Front opposes multiculturalism (sale)". The word in brackets is the keywords, or source reference, to the article "Britain is not up for sale" where the information is taken from.

Other informative articles from the website, such as the *Statement of Policies* and *Rules of Membership*, were used as general source material for this study. These articles are also referred to by keyword. The details and keywords of these articles are available in Appendix 2.

1.2 Method

The aim of this study was to extract discursive repertoires that have the purpose of constructing a positive identity for the National Front. I have defined the concept *discursive repertoire*, based on Wetherell and Potter (1989: 38), as underlying patterns of meaning which position the topics and events of the text. This method is thus mainly concerned with how evaluative narratives reveal the thought processes of the narrator, and it is thus highly suitable for investigating ideological rhetoric, such as racist propaganda.

Authors of racist rhetoric are quite obviously concerned with projecting a positive image of themselves as this will make their opinions more convincing and persuasive. This study is consequently concerned with *how* the discursive repertoires achieve this positive self-representation.

The identification of repertoires was initiated by the intensive (re)reading of the material, as suggested by Wetherell (2001: 210). When one is finally deeply immersed in the texts, certain recurrent patterns start to emerge in the form of topics, metaphors and themes. The *themes* are large abstract units of meaning which have a quite generally descriptive purpose. These themes are constructed by more concrete and event-based topics, which are usually concerned with difference, deviance or threat (van Dijk 2002, 152). The themes are finally completed by *metaphorical stories* which give detailed accounts of current events and aim at symbolizing the theme. Van Dijk (1987: 68) elucidates how "such a story is not merely an account of personal experiences, but rather an expression of our 'social experiences' as members of the in-group", which underlines the persuasive importance of these metaphors. Themes which discussed similar issues were finally assembled into a number of discursive repertoires. This method of extracting discursive repertoires can be exemplified with the theme *Contemporary lack of respect for traditional values* (part of the Repertoire of Moral Justice). It was constructed by topics about, for example, the sexualized media, and homosexuality breaking down traditional values. The theme was further developed by metaphorical stories concerning, for example, serious crimes committed by young

people or immigrants. The *Contemporary lack of respect for traditional values* was finally tied to the Repertoire of Morality, as its message coincided with several other themes under that heading. This way of identifying a repertoire gives a profound insight into the self-image of the party, as it requires detailed processing of the actual stories and topics that were being used to construct a positive identity for the National Front.

After having categorized the recurrent topics, themes and metaphorical stories according to the repertoires, I compared these to the classic semantic moves of racist texts introduced by van Dijk (2004:15). This comparison was carried out in order to highlight how the implicit patterns of meaning of the National Front largely corresponded to traditional features of racist rhetoric, and thus had the aim of rationalizing racist thought and presenting the party positively. The repertoires were finally analyzed based on my outline of the target demographic (section 1.4), with the aim of investigating how the repertoires had been constructed to appeal to this group and thus attract new members.

The following section will describe the activity, influence and resurgence of the National Front, in order to outline the source of the texts under study and their consequent ideological background. The party is here also described within the context of right-wing radicalism in Britain, which supplies the party activity and development with a social context. This chapter is an important stage of the study, as it establishes the concrete social conditions where the rhetoric of the party is created and communicated.

1.3 Right-wing radicalism and the National Front

The escalating globalisation and economic recession since the 1990s have resulted in more religious, cultural, and ethnic fundamentalism. Social changes that have expanded and diversified our social networks and cultural identities have obviously also created a need for more fixed categories of being or identities; we want stable and orderly conceptions of ourselves and the others.

This has created the resurgence in political right-wing radicalism all over Europe. (Gardell 1998: 30.) 'Right-wing radicalists' can be defined as "groupings that are anti-communist, anti-socialist and hostile or indifferent to values and practices of liberal democracy" (Davies and Lynch 2000: 5). The National Front is thus, in line with this definition, a grouping which is highly dissatisfied with the current political situation in Britain and supports a return to more traditional and conservative values.

Right-wing radicalists advocate radical political change as the most effective way of improving our societies. In order to convey this notion of positive change, they usually thrive on threat; through upsetting the public with dystopian images of the social status quo, potential voters are more inclined to embrace the parties' controversial opinions.

The biggest European right-wing parties, such as Jörg Haider's *Die Freiheitlichen* in Austria, and Jean-Marie LePen's *Le Front National* in France, have started focusing on particular threats, such as immigration and unemployment. The general working-class public usually perceives these threats as being current and important since they deal with peoples' everyday-problems and seem to promise solutions. These parties are thus most successful in times of social crises or difficulty as social threats become more palpable and urgent (Gardell 1998: 2, 3, 31); when there are clear threats to the well-being of the nation, people are more inclined to actively support change.

The roots of British right-wing radicalism can be traced back to the 1920s, but the contemporary British far right originates mainly in the National Front, which was founded in 1967 (Kirkup 2009). The party prides itself on being "Britain's longest-lived White Nationalist movement" (NF History), and it has been described as "the most conspicuous authoritarian radical right movement of the 1970s and 80s" (Barberis et al. 2005: 639). The British National Front is a neo-fascist party which (like all right-wing movements) is anti-communist, anti-socialist (ibid., 639), as well as strongly opposed to multi-racialism and mass-immigration, abortion and homosexuality. (Davies & Lynch 2000: 5). The British Front thus aggressively opposes a wide variety of current social and political issues in Britain on the basis that the overly liberal influence of the Labour party are destructive to the nation.

The National Front was formed as a merger of the Racial Preservation Society[2], The British National Party[3] and the League of Empire Loyalists[4]. It had its heyday in the 1970s under the rule of John Tyndall. At this point the party started rising in local elections all across Britain, which was largely due to the growing debate about the liberal immigration politics of Europe (Gardell 1998: 23). The party nevertheless lost ground in the 1980s partly due to the formation of antifascist-groups, as well as the increasingly right-wing reign of Margaret Thatcher, which took away the novelty of the British Front's anti-immigration policies (NF History). The National Front also lost much support at this time due to its criminal activity, such as street violence, guns, incitement to racial hatred and the general vandalism of young skinheads who were connected to the party. Party members organised marches and riots which often ended up in bloodshed, and the British Front is still often described as an aggressive and violent grouping (Cannon 2002; Atkins, 2004).

However, their own website constructs a very different account of the party's history. They are there depicted as having been innocent victims of persecution; their meetings have been attacked, main cables have been severed with axes and their "peaceful demonstrations" have been interrupted by "large mobs of Red thugs" (NF History). Accounts of this kind clearly show how the party rhetorically tries to construct a positive image of itself, in accordance with my hypothesis.

Political marginalizations as well as interior party conflicts eventually created splits within the National Front, which resulted in former members[5] forming new groups such as the NF Constitutional Movement and the British National Party (NF History). The National Front continues its activity to this date, and regardless of their current

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[2] British pressure group consisting of white supremacists. The group mainly opposed immigration and was active in the mid 1960s.

[3] Political party lead by John Bean, active 1960-1967. Not to be confused with the modern BNP, lead by Nick Griffin.

[4] Small British pressure group that opposed the dissolution of the British Empire, lead by Arthur K. Chesterton. Active 1954-1964.

[5] Andrew Fountaine formed the NF Constitutional Movement, John Tyndall Formed the British National Party.

influence being "minimal" (Shields & Storry 1999: 355), the party and its factions have experienced resurgence in the past few years; the last election results of the National Front (2009) were the best in 30 years. The National Front is now also putting much effort into developing their youth grouping "The Young National Front" (Young NF). (see section 1.4)

The most successful remnant of the National Front today is John Tyndall's British National Party, which is now run by Nick Griffin. It is the fastest growing party in the country as nearly a quarter of a million Brits voted BNP in the last election (NF History).

The activity of the National Front today is limited, but the small local units are nevertheless flourishing. Party members still organize marches and demonstrations, mainly against "bogus asylum seekers and immigrants flooding into Britain" (NF History), but also, for example, gay parades. Their latest demonstration in March 2009 was aimed at the large number of immigrants in Leicester, where "the English are predicted to become a minority". (NF History). The party is also, on a more everyday-basis, actively involved in the publishing and spreading of its propaganda. Their ideology is communicated through magazines, local leaflets, posters and internet articles (NF Unit). The National Front has its own monthly magazine called *Britain First*, and the Young National Front has *The Bulldog*. Both of the magazines are available through subscription and include party news, activist information and articles by members (NF Bulldog). The party benefits perhaps mainly from its website, which contains all the relevant information about the party and its activities. This website was described in more detail in chapter 1.2. The main aim of the party is concerned with marketing itself and advocating its policies to the general public.

Merkl and Weinberg describes how far right groupings are dependent on "populist mobilization" (2003: 83 - 84), that is, rhetorical mechanisms that give voters a common sense of purpose and belonging. The major elements of this mobilization are usually anti-establishment propaganda, the ordinary people's return to power, and the citizen's priority in their own country.

These elements are clearly used by the National Front, as most of their rhetoric emphasizes their will to give power back to the people and let them determine their own future. This rhetoric is obviously most persuasive when aimed at the poorest members of the working class or people with low social standing, as will be shown in the following section. The party criticizes the current government which is perceived to be a dictatorship with no concern for the will of the people. It wants a fairer electoral system with "real democracy to Brits" (NF policies). The party distances itself from dictatorship, by stressing how they do not wish to impose their opinions on anyone, but instead try to "empower the people to do the right thing" (NF policies).

The establishment is also criticized for its inability to restrict immigration which, according to the National Front, would be in the people's best interest. The party strongly opposes multiracialism as they describe how "the multiracial Commonwealth is a farcical relic of an unfortunate past which should be disbanded" (NF policies) This resistance is rationalized by the fact that party members have respect for all cultures, but that every culture and race should develop separately from each other, since they can never co-exist. The National Front wishes to halt all non-white immigration, and advocates a "phased and humane repatriation of all coloured people in Britain. (NF policies)
The party's opposition to immigration also coincides with the mobilizing element of the "citizens' priority in their own country" (Merkl & Weinberg 2003: 84), since the immigrants are accused of taking over the country. The party's aversion to internationalism also becomes visible in their desire to restrict foreign imports, oppose multinational corporations, have a predominantly British input in the media, as well as a withdrawal from both the EU and NATO (NF policies).

Immigration and internationalism are seen as threats to the average Briton (which will be further discussed in ch. 4.3), and the National Front here emphasizes how only traditionalism and family values can hinder the decline of contemporary society. The party sees the nuclear family as an ideal social unit, and frequently refers to 'our children' as those who will benefit most from the radical changes offered by the party:

" (…) they [our children] will need housing when they get older. How can they get a house, if we continually give away all available housing to non-British people?"
(hate words). The National Front highlights their support for British families by demanding more green play areas, better education and quality of teachers, as well as the possibility for parents to stay home more with their families (hate words).

Traditional values are, according to the party, intimately connected with order and righteousness:

> Most people who were alive in the 1940s and 50s agree that life was a whole lot better and more relaxed then. This was before mass immigration, when we could call our country our own. The Christian religion stood alone, our neighbours were British, and everyone shared in a common history, which had shaped a unique culture.
> (drug overdose)

The above quotation shows a highly idealized image of Britain in the past. The National Front is, as suggested by its name, a nationalist party and the national identity is a key concept in all of their propaganda. Contemporary society becomes the opposite of this utopian image and the National Front aims at reinforcing the traditional values of order. All of the party's main political issues, such as immigration, traditionalism and nationalism, merge in the common desire for a return to older times, and the subsequent removal of elements that obstruct this process.

In order to spread their propaganda effectively, the party needs to establish a target group who are predisposed to easily receive its policies. The following chapter will outline the demographics of those who are particularly inclined to participate in far-right activities. This outline thus describes both existing and potential members of the National Front.

1.3.1   The Demographics of Membership

This study is based on the notion that "language is functional, rhetorical and seeks to persuade" (Miell and Wetherell 1998: 69) and aims at investigating language through looking at its function. The texts of the National Front naturally have a persuasive aim, as they are explicitly political propaganda. The persuasive techniques (such as the discursive repertoires which aim at constructing a positive identity for members of the party) are targeted at a certain audience that are predisposed to be most receptive to the message of the party, and aim to spread the propaganda as quickly and effectively as possible.

The propaganda is consequently constructed in line with the social situation and political aspirations of the target members. This chapter will, with the help of literature on right-wing movements as well as texts by the National Front, identify the social groupings most likely to be approached by, and attracted to, right-wing-propaganda.

The National Front outlines the terms for joining the party in their "Conditions of Membership" on their website:

1. You must be over 14 years of age.
2. You must be of white parentage.
3. Your spouse or partner must also be white.
4. No Homosexuals, male or female are allowed as members.
5. You must not be an illegal drug user.
6. You must be a British Nationalist first and foremost.

(Join NF)

These restrictions explicitly forbid other than white, heterosexual nationalists to join. In practice this outline mainly consists of young working-class men. Nick Ryan (2004:12), who has studied British extreme-right-movements, describes the environment as "a

tribal world of maleness, identity and violence". The desire to become a right-wing radical is thus not dependent on particular personality traits, but is rather a response to the social and interactive environment of the movement (Klanderman & Mayer 2006: 7). The membership of a certain group may represent what is perceived as admirable features, such as masculinity, courage or strength. (ibid. 225); the members can then feel that these positive features are projected onto their personality, as part of the group. Being the member of a right-wing group can also simply supply you with a "collective identity" (ibid. 225) and a feeling of belonging. Merkl and Weinberg described how the partaking in nationalist activity increases one's sense of self-esteem and efficacy (see ch. 1), which becomes clear in this context, as the group-spirit gives the members a sense of personal importance and purpose.

These groups thus seem to have an important identity-building function, in that the group gives the member a sense of self. Glenn Greenwald (2007) outlines how right-wing movements often portrays themselves as a 'masculine movement', whereas liberals, conservatives and communists are described as feminine, and therefore 'sissy' or weak. The National Front displays this polarization in statements such as: "(…) we need to clean up our society, starting at the top. Political parties like Labour and Conservative which have embraced sleaze must be replaced with those who have higher moral values" (pornography).

The nationalist sentiment is frequently displayed with images of robustness and determination as well as idealistic references to war and struggle which largely coincide with traditionally masculine ideals: "What will you say to your children when they ask what *you* did in this second battle for Britain?" and "It is an instinct to live in one's own territory and to breathe the air of freedom, to look upon one's homeland."(media). The page which gives instructions for starting up a new local unit, is illustrated by an all-male group in soldiers' uniforms, as they call themselves "the *real* alternative" giving "*real* democracy to the British people":

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Picture 1. Photo included in the National Front's instructions for starting up a new unit. (organising)
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The above inserted picture gives a highly balanced and positive image of being a National Front member. On the one hand, the men are laughing and playing music in the amenable company of friends; on the other hand, they signal discipline, loyalty and hard work in their warlike/work- uniforms and upright postures. The photo is an obvious symbol of the order and righteousness of older times, and the organising of a new unit then becomes connected to traditional and decent teamwork.

The National Front, as a right-wing movement, is most likely to turn to the working class and those who lack resources (Gardell 1998: 24), as it can then appeal to their feelings of social powerlessness. Most right-wing parties in Western Europe have since the beginning of the 1990s done particularly well amongst blue-collar workers (Betz 1994: 161) and Ryan (2004:21) confirms this, in describing right-wing groupings as "a working-class movement, full of dull anger and resentment at the bias of *the system*". The National Front provides their working class with means for resistance and hope for attaining power. Threatening images of the dominance of *the system*, that is the government, naturally resonate best with people who have a lower standing in society and can not directly affect that dominance. Klandermans and Mayer's (2006: 8) emphasize how acting on one's beliefs in this context may not have a particularly significant political influence but nevertheless supplies the actor with dignity and integrity. The professional conditions of the working class are recurrent issues in the rhetoric of the National Front, as the party explicitly states how it wants to support the locals and working people, so they do not have to "be treated as cogs in a machine by

absentee owners" (NF policies). They also emphasize how "wherever possible decision-making would be brought closer to the people and as many decisions as possible would be made at local rather than national level." (NF policies) The National Front here refers to the inferiority of the working class and juxtaposes them with manipulative employers.

The party's focus on the working class is also visible in the language of the articles on the homepage, as it is often strongly colloquial. Linguistic variation usually signals affiliation with a certain group (Thomas, Singh & Pekhei 2004: 167) and the party may here, through colloquial language, attract members of the working class by signalling a similar social and non-academic position. This is not a claim that every member of the working class appreciates only colloquial language, but rather that the National Front has occasionally chosen this style to associate themselves with the stereotypical language of the street and 'the ordinary people'. Most of the texts which describe party policies usually aim at appearing quite politically correct, but the texts aimed directly at active members speak in a different voice. The instructions for members wanting to organize a new local unit assume a strongly colloquial tone, using slang and occasional vulgar expressions. This linguistic style is paradoxically used mainly when encouraging members to organize new units and produce material in a professional and conscientious way: "When making posters, make sure the spelling and grammar are spot on. Don't look amateurish and shoddy".

Another example encourages new members to stand their ground in the organisation of a new unit: "Remember: the opposition to the National Front are a bunch of cowardly anti-democratic scumbags in various guises and you shouldn't have any problems."(organising) These appeals clearly represent politics expressed through the language of the street in a genuine and approachable manner; instructions of political organization are given in the form of friendly advice.

The working class has also traditionally been the main target of racist or Nazi-propaganda, as racist organisations have flattered their perceived 'instinctive' and 'healthy' aversion towards foreigners or immigrants (Kramar 2000: 15). These

organisations have then effectively used the target group's social position as a rhetorical tool; the non-academic and subjective becomes superior to the scientific and, therefore, insincere.

Right-wing parties generally appeal mainly to young voters and, particularly, young men (Betz 1994: 26; Sherrod 2006: 685). Besides the gender factor, the key characteristics of young people who join neo-fascist movements has been found to be political orientation, lack of parental support, low levels of social integration, and low degrees of educational attainment (van Hoven & Hörschelmann 2005:46). Reasons for the over-representation of boys in right-wing extremist activity has been explained in many ways: for example, that their process of socialization may be more steered in directions of competitiveness and exclusion than that of girls (Sherrod 2006: 686); that physical violence usually works as a masculine means for gaining respect from the in-group, or that they have been subjected to an absent, overly authoritarian or aggressive father figure (Kimmel & Aronson 2004: 258). The theories that aim to explain some kind of masculine predisposition for right-wing extremism are often inconsistent and vague, but theories on the personal relevance of social participation in similar group activities are more elaborate.

Young people in general are easily attracted to the concept of a stable social network:

> Groups – whether xenophobic or not – provide young people with a network of friends and help compensate for experiences of familial or economical deprivation. Young people (…) might encounter highly ideological opinion leaders in a xenophobic group context, internalize xenophobic attitudes, and eventually become tools of these group authorities. (Sherrod 2006: 686)

The fact that right-wing extremism is usually a group-based activity thus has major relevance for young members, as it becomes a means for controlling their own personal development. Cotterell (1996:46) agrees, as he highlights how group belonging often

supplies adolescents with status which, in aggressive or gang-like groupings, simply stems from other people's respect or fear for the group. The National Front has acknowledged this target group, as it has now started giving special attention to young men who are able to start up, or organize, units of the Young National Front[6] (Young NF). The National Front here takes advantage of young people's quest for respect and social belonging; the boys are tempted with positions of responsibility within the group hierarchy, where they are requested to be reliable and contactable as "many young people will be looking up to them" (Young NF). This promise of respect and responsibility appeals to many and gives them a sense of established identity within a group that increases their social standing.

In conclusion, the target group seems to consist mainly of young white working class men. These men usually harbour feelings of resentment to the current British government that originate in feelings of personal, political or social powerlessness. The attraction of radical right-wing movements consequently lies mainly in their identity-building and social qualities; young men looking for a stable social identity are attracted to these social networks that, under the pretext of national sentiment, thrive on masculinity and personal power display.

2. RACIST RHETORIC

Racist rhetoric is today present in a wide variety of social contexts, but most visibly in the propaganda of racist organizations such as the KKK [Ku Klux Klan] or Neo-Nazi-movements. However, one must not overlook the latent prejudice in seemingly neutral texts such as news reporting, or the informal conversation among friends, which is even more frequently occurring. Racist organisations have also been able to extend and transform their means of propaganda, due to the largely unrestrictable forum of the Internet. There has since the early 1990s been a "proliferation of Internet sites, e-mail groups, chat lines, newsgroups and other forms of activity associated with racist and

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[6] The Young National Front (YNF) is a recently resurrected sub-grouping of the National Front that

neo-fascist groups", which has caused "(…) both official and popular discourses to be in a constant state of flux" (Solomos & Schuster 2002: 51). The Internet thus allows for a quite open interaction and communication, as human rights' legislation and norms of social acceptability are easily evaded in cyberspace. The staggering development in racist activity demands the close investigation of racist rhetoric, in order to gain insight into how racism is constructed, spread and established as a 'commonsense' ideology.

The present study addresses the issue by analyzing the Internet texts of the National Front. The study is concerned with the analysis of how recurrent themes, topics and metaphors form discursive repertoires that are the building blocks of a certain ideology. In order to understand the positioning of these repertoires, one needs information on the traditional structure of a racist text. This chapter will describe the function and explicitness of racist texts in general terms, and finally give a detailed outline of some of the most frequent rhetorical devices of racism. The presentation of these rhetorical devices will be based mainly on Teun van Dijk's outline of certain "semantic moves" (1987; 1994; 2004) that have been found to recur in most racist texts.

These moves are further included in the analysis (ch. 4), as they provide an insight into the rather systematic construction of seemingly personal or informal racist texts.

Racism is today part of most social institutions in some way, but the explicit forms of racism nevertheless give negative connotations and oppose the social norm. Racist evidence or evaluations needs to be in line with accepted norms and principles, in order to be persuasive (van Dijk 1987: 85) and most contemporary racist rhetoric is thus expressed implicitly. Covert racist discourse "does not reproduce racist stereotypes by conventional reference, like explicit stereotypes of races or cultures. Instead they communicate by absence and silence that invite inferences" (Hill 2008:41). Racist authors nowadays seldom state explicitly hateful opinions towards refugees or

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consists of young white nationalists, who are over 14 years old.

foreigners, since that would directly taint their moral reputation in the eyes of others. They rather present a seemingly logic and neutral view of the world that presupposes, or implies, that foreigners are innately connected to certain negative behaviours. The readers are encouraged to draw their own conclusions in a process which largely deprives the writers of immediate moral responsibility.

Van Dijk's research is based on the presupposition that all contemporary racist rhetoric is carried out with the primary aim of *rationalizing* racist opinions (quoted in Reisgl & Wodak, 2000: 184). This rationalizing effect is mainly achieved through "the positive self-representation of white group speakers and the negative other-representation of minority groups" (van Dijk, 1993:109); the Other is constructed as frightening and incompatible with 'us'. The authors of racist texts, accordingly, have to provide a pleasant and sophisticated impression of themselves so their judgemental rhetoric will appear sympathetic and justified. The persuasive means that will be discussed below, are thus used in racist texts to achieve this polarization.

The device most relevant to this study is the *choice of topic* for a text; certain topics are highlighted, whereas others, which may be equally relevant, are ignored in order to represent a particular position. (van Dijk, 1993: 113)

The importance of topic selection is clearly visible in implicit racist rhetoric, where the topics construct a reality that gets to speak for itself. News reporting is here an illustrative example, as the myth of objectivity often disguises the fact that news reporting is largely dependent on the choice of topics, rather than truths of universal relevance.

Van Dijk outlines how the most common topic classes in discourse on immigrants are "immigration problems, crime, violence, deviance and (unacceptable) cultural differences" (van Dijk, 1993:113). The polarizing effect of racist topic selection is clearly visible in these topic classes, as the they are exclusively problem-centered and clearly manifest how stories in many social contexts (not only explicitly racist ones) are rhetorically constructed to present immigration negatively. The problem stories told

about immigrants usually lack any kind of resolution (van Dijk, 2002: 151). The problems connected to immigration are described as infinite conflicts which can not be resolved. This narrative standpoint obviously presents immigration as more threatening than stories with constructive solutions and happy endings. The narrow topic selections encourage readers to deduce that immigrants bring irreconcilable social conflicts, and thus deserve to be treated with hostility.

Another frequently occurring device is the use of disclaimers (van Dijk 2002:150), such as "I'm not a racist, but all the Arab men I know are chauvinists", or "We have nothing against blacks, but…". Disclaimers have a polarizing effect, in presenting the speakers as tolerant with substantiated argumentation, whereas the subjects are simply behaving negatively. The first positive part of the statement functions as "a form of face-keeping and impression management" (151) which rationalizes the subsequent negative statements. Disclaimers consequently negate the fact that you are *racist* and thus keep you within the realms of social decency, but nevertheless allow you to express racist thought. The National Front uses disclaimers frequently, as in this statement on gay rights: "We are not against homosexuals who cannot help themselves, and who carry out their deviant activity in private. What the National Front opposes is the promotion of homosexuality, particularly when it is aimed at young children." (gay parades)

Another important way of constructing a negative image of 'them' is through *argumentative fallacies*. These can be defined as arguments that are not logically constructed, but aim at "credibility rather than truth" (van Dijk 2002: 157). One kind of fallacy is making generalizing deductions from single cases, such as "my Chinese neighbour is aggressive, therefore all the Chinese are aggressive" (ibid.157). This fallacy is strongly intertwined with topic selection, since it is entirely dependent on choosing appropriate cases that illustrate a particular point. With the help of these deductions, one can create a solid stereotype, based on the 'evidence' of one or two instances. Racism is in general highly dependent on this type of "experience-based facts" (van Dijk 1987: 77), where personal observations gain high validity as arguments or pseudo-neutral information. This further underlines the racist's praise of the

subjective opinion for being truer, in its personal sincerity, than scientific facts or social norms.

Another type of fallacy consists of referring to authoritarian sources, such as academic scholars or the Church, for the 'truth' in order to seem more reliable. (van Dijk 2002: 157) These sources give the text a quasi-scientific style which makes the writer seem logical and well-read. The National Front provides an illustrating example of this device in their discussion of homosexuality: "It states quite clearly in the Bible that this is a wicked perversion." (support) The reference does not name a particular paragraph of the Bible, nor the exact phrasing, but rather namedrop the Bible as a traditional source for respectable guidance.

A similar device is what Anita Pomerantz (1986: 45) calls "extreme-case-formulations", which are phrases that are built around extreme generalisations, such as "*everybody* knows that all Muslims are religious fanatics" or "*nobody* wants to work with Asian people" (46). Authoritarian sources create the notion of a higher acceptance, whereas the extreme-case-formulations create the notion of collective social approval, and the purpose of both is the relieve of personal responsibility.

Most racist rhetoric is built around these common features which represent ways of creating distance and difference between the in-group and out-group, simultaneously justifying this process. The texts of the National Front include several of these features which are highly relevant in this context, as they make the rationalizing purpose of identity-building clear.

The following chapter is concerned with how an identity can be constructed through recurrent themes, and why the deciphering of these kinds of repertoires is vital when seeing language as an ideological tool in society.

3. DISCOURSE AS A PERSUASIVE TOOL

The general theoretical framework of this study is Discourse Analysis, since it looks at the construction of identities through discourse in a social context. However, the study leans more specifically on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), a discourse analytical field which focuses on language as a vehicle for negotiating power and expressing ideology. This theoretical framework is suitable for treating racist propaganda as it focuses on the influential and coercive properties of language. The National Front

expresses its ideology through discursive repertoires of positive self-representation, which construct ideal identities for members of the party and aim at gaining power positions for the National Front.

3.1 Discourse Analysis

The term *discourse* is today used in varying ways, which can make it difficult to establish a consistent definition of such a broad concept. *Discourse* can broadly be defined as every text or utterance that has any influence on the real world, but also, more narrowly, as utterances or texts which belong together for some specific purpose in a certain context, such as a 'discourse of femininity' or 'discourse of imperialism' (Mills 1997: 7). However, the most useful definition of *discourse* for the present study, is Michel Foucault's "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault 1979: 49). This definition of discourse sees language as a powerful device that helps us make sense of the endless impulses that we are exposed to by creating discursive structures that make meaning.

One can not claim that discourse *is* reality, but rather that it directs our apprehension of it (Mills 1997: 51). We can never personally experience every person or procedure in the world but in stead have to let discourse form versions of selected events for us. This enables us to discuss and negotiate phenomena which we have not experienced ourselves.

Discourse analysts investigate the concrete *function* of language and look beyond the sentence as an independent unit. They want to see how language is used as a social practice within a certain context and are concerned with what is often vaguely called *larger structures*; meanings that are often underlying the actual written or spoken statement. (Mills 1997: 135)

Discourse analysis is considered to be as a highly applicable method of analyzing social phenomena through looking at the meanings of language, but there is nevertheless a

lack of consistent methodological framework. This problem is mainly caused by the application of discourse analysis on a remarkably wide variety of fields, such as history, politics and psychology (Mills 1997: 18). Fairclough (1995: 5) accordingly emphasizes how there is a great need for "socially relevant models for text analysis". The means for investigating structures of meaning are often grammatical, but since discourse analysis is often concerned with implication, one also needs to take relevant external social factors and scientific fields into account. This study, for example, takes into account the fields of semantics, rhetoric and political history in order to conduct a sufficiently extensive and complete study. Methodologies from different academic fields will continue to be applied until consistent research models are developed, which has resulted in a highly interdisciplinary and varied field.

The multitude of methodologies and disciplines within discourse analysis clearly shows the range and diversity of discourse analysis. Foucault's definition of discourse as something that shapes the subject matter (1979: 49) further highlights the extensive power of discourse and the subsequent importance of its analysis. The present study strongly relates to Foucault's views, as it investigates how discourse in practice has shaped the perceived identity of a political party through discursive repertoires. The following chapter will introduce how these repertoires or versions of reality are created through discourse, and thus outlines the discursive tool that will be used in this study.

3.2 Creating Realities and Repertoires through Discourse

Discourse structures our way of life into versions of reality and identities which we can usually process as positions in culturally recognizable patterns of talk such as "the fragile victim" or "the autonomous woman" (Potter and Wetherell 2001: 24). Character positions such as these allow us to mould our own life into a familiar shape. We get a sense of belonging and can participate in everyday life according to the 'character' outlined for us. These constructed identities are tightly knit to cognitive psychology, in

that they create certain cognitive models which we use to make sense of the world, and of our own identity. (Mills 1997: 51).

Constructing versions of reality, or identities, involves *active selection* (Potter and Wetherell 2001: 17), which means that we choose to acknowledge and understand objects which fit our particular perspective. Discourse is always ideological (a concept which will be explored later) and we are unaware of the selections we make, as they seem 'natural' to us (Fairclough 1995: 40). Racist thought, accordingly, thrives on the notion that a world of innate racial features and consequent racial segregation 'makes sense'; it is part of the natural order in the apprehension of the world (Hill 2008: 21). They exclusively select to acknowledge cases of negative events involving immigrants, since these correspond to their cognitive models of immigrant behaviour.

When narrating our experiences in line with our perceived identity, we use certain selected themes and metaphors to position the narrative in a certain way. These selections create what has been labelled *interpretative* or *discursive repertoires*. The concept was initially introduced and applied by the British social psychologists Margaret Potter and Jonathan Wetherell (1987). They combined the fields of social psychology and discourse analysis as they looked at "textual constructions of psychology" and thus how texts reflect images and representations in one's mind (Burman & Parker 1993: 2, 15).

The discursive repertoires work as analytical tools in discourse analysis, and are by Potter and Wetherell defined as: "(…) a cluster of terms and metaphors which are selectively put forward to provide evaluative versions of events" (1987: 138). Our thoughts naturally shape our way of expressing ourselves, and these 'hidden agendas' can mainly be found, not in the explicit wording, but rather in these underlying patterns of meaning that narrate other events (Burman & Parker 1993: 2). If someone would like to construct an identity of 'the autonomous woman' in their rhetoric, one could draw on metaphors of this autonomy, such as professional success or confidence, in order to shape the impression of the woman in question. This identity of this woman is, thus, not

explicitly expressed, but rather implicitly created through recurrent metaphors and descriptive terms.

The repertoires are the discursive tool of the present study, and they will here be used to show how the National Front has constructed a positive identity of the party. The dissection of these repertoires will reveal the metaphors and themes have been used to evaluate events, which, in turn, will reflect the ideology and thought processes of the party. The following chapter will provide a definition of the term *ideology* and outlines how Critical Discourse Analysis provides a framework for the vital investigation of ideology in discourse.

3.2 Critical Discourse Analysis and Ideology

Discourse is always expressed from a particular perspective or based on a subjective way of selecting information, and it consequently becomes a means for negotiating differences and establishing power structures in society. Ruth Wodak (2006: 4) argues that language can not create power, but that it is a powerful vehicle for indexing, expressing and challenging power. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a part of the general methodology of discourse analysis which deals particularly with these questions of conflict and power within language and the ways social differences are negotiated through discourse. CDA can not be described as one particular theory or methodology, but rather a school of thought with a common perspective on the relevance of interdisciplinary work between when analyzing discourse. CDA consequently provides you with a theoretical framework and motivation for investigating these negotiations of power in text, but the methodology varies depending on individual studies (Wodak 1997: 7).

Critical Discourse Analysis is primarily used for analyzing texts which display inequalities, such as discourse on prejudice or gender issues, and it is concerned with questions of how ideology is expressed through language.

All texts express certain norms and values, and are thus permeated by a certain *ideology*. Ideology can be defined as "the fundamental cognitive beliefs that are at the basis of the social representations shared by the members of a group"(van Dijk 2004). When reliable texts express certain beliefs frequently and consistently, members of the target group start regarding the statements as natural or self-evident; "a particular ideological representation of some reality may come to appear as merely a transparent reflection of some 'reality' which is given in the same way to all (Fairclough, 1995: 44). The quote describes how an ideology becomes *naturalized*, and in that way transparent. When immigrants are accused of 'stealing our jobs' in a wide range of media discourse, these utterances are slowly developed into naturalized truths by the target audience. The fact that they can only be described as highly subjective claims is ignored due to the frequent application of the argument in seemingly neutral contexts.

One can never strive to completely unideological discourse since it is an inevitable part of its subjective nature. However, through being familiar with ideology and the myth of 'neutrality' in discourse, one can actively resist persuasion and oppose the skilfully constructed rhetoric of destructive propaganda.

The aim of the Critical Discourse-analyst is thus to detect certain discursive structures in order to "decipher these ideologies" (Wodak, 2006 :4). The concept of ideology is obviously a vital part of this study since the National Front has explicit ideological aims. I will decipher the ideologies of the British Front through identifying discursive repertoires; the repertoires which are found in the material are naturally a reflection of the ideology of the British Front, and the discursive structures apply this ideology to concrete constructed realities.

When using CDA as framework for analyzing discourse, the main focus is that of *positionality*; the fact that a text is never neutral, but constructed from a certain ideological viewpoint (Barker & Galasinski 2001: 59). A text consequently positions topics in a certain way, based on the author's/ group's personal apprehension of reality. An example is when the National Front speaks of "the unhygienic and perverse actions of homosexuals" (gay parades), an utterance which is clearly positioned to convey the

party's negative opinions of homosexuality as self-evident. Critical discourse-analytical work aims at investigating how the author's ideological standpoints are visible in the text and, accordingly, how information is distorted or changed to correspond to the author's ideological aims.

Another important field of interest for CDA is *evidence*; how we try to prove that something is 'real' or 'true' in discourse (Barker & Galasinski 2001: 59). This is clearly visible when, for example, a vicar who is a member of the National Front has written an article where he lists places in the Bible that oppose immigration and multiracialism (suppression). The Bible is used as a reliable source, supplying the reader with impeccable guidance which substantiates the anti-immigration argument.

Both of these main concerns are based on the power of ideology, and the way it always influences a text. The concerns of positionality and evidence are highly important theoretical concepts for the present study, since its focus lies on the positive self-representation through language. Positive self-representation is largely dependent on positioning since it is achieved through the construction of reality in a way that seems most attractive or "the *image* which they want to transfer to the audience" (Wodak & Wagner 1998: 392). This is strongly intertwined with for example *disclaimers* (see chapter 2.3), which work to save face and, thus, project a positive self-image. For example, when the National Front claims that the party is definitely not racist but rather have a mutual respect for cultures and simply believe that they should not interfere with, or dominate, each other (repatriation). Statements like these clearly aim at positioning racist agenda in a more positive and socially acceptable light.

Critical Discourse Analysis works to reveal the ideological aspects of texts and highlights the, usually implicit, ways of positioning the subject matter. The field is a vital framework for investigating social inequalities, as it extracts the author's cognitive processes and gives an insight into the actual value systems and opinions that have shaped the text. The present study will now, in accordance with Critical Discourse Analysis, move on to deciphering the ideologies of the National Front.

4. ANALYSIS

This chapter contains the analysis of 35 National Front articles, which has the aim of detecting discursive repertoires. My hypothesis was that the National Front aims at constructing a positive identity for the party and its ideology through implicit patterns of meaning, in order to rationalize racist opinion and attract potential members. I will now from these texts extract recurrent *themes* and *topics* which form discursive repertoires that aim at presenting the party and its ideology in a positive light. I will finally discuss possible reasons for why these particular repertoires have been used, based on my outline of target members and the most common persuasive means of racist rhetoric.

Through intensive (re)reading of the articles and close dissection of the rhetorical structure of the texts, I have extracted four discursive repertoires. These form a positive identity for party members and position party policies in a way that is connected with traditionally constructive values.

The first repertoire is the Repertoire of Moral Justice. This recurrent pattern of meaning creates a version of reality where Britain is experiencing horrifying moral decline. The current state of affairs goes against the religious and traditional values of the National Front and works to present the party positively as morally righteous saviours.

The second repertoire has been labelled the Repertoire of Conspiracy. It describes how the victimized native British are subjected to a governmental conspiracy which aims at ruining the traditional values of the country in order to use Britain as a pawn in global politics for the government's own benefit. This anti-establishment rhetoric works to criticize the government and is an effective rhetorical strategy that presents the National Front as the 'real' voice of the people.

The third repertoire is the Repertoire of Injustice. This pattern of meaning depicts a society where the native British are neglected and abused to the advantage of immigrants who undeservedly receive unjust amounts of welfare money, employment advantages and priority in housing. This repertoire constructs the negative image of the immigrants as the antithesis of the hard-working British.

The final repertoire is the Repertoire of Nationalism, which describes the nation as every Briton's most important social network. National identity is here an innate part of one's personality, and thus belongs exclusively to native Britons. This repertoire presents a twofold image of the British Front's national pride: partly their atmospheric love for their country and, more militantly, their tough and masculine will to fight for it.

In what follows, I will give a more in-depth analysis of these repertoires: how they are constructed and what they aim to achieve. Each repertoire is exemplified by extracts

from the articles where the most illustrative expressions are underlined. Each extract has been numbered, and this number is used as a source reference when the extract is referred to in the fluent text.

4.1 Repertoire of Moral Justice

The articles of the National Front are permeated by an image of the party as a beacon of moral guidance. Themes of moral decline describe the pitiful current state of Britain and, when focalized by a horrified and judgemental narrative voice, they show right-wing politics positively as a righteous and regulatory force. Davies in his research on Le Front National[7] describes how subjects of traditionalism, work ethic and family values play a prominent part in right-wing rhetoric (Davies 1999: 66). Connecting the National Front to this type of straightforward orderliness is thus a classic device to make the party's politics more persuasive.

The first recurrent theme that forms this repertoire is the *lack of respect for order and traditional moral values* and the second theme is the *contemporary disruption of traditional family values* These themes create a dark version of a troubled society that urgently needs a radical change which the National Front is willing to achieve. Nationalism and anti-immigration-policies in this context become heroic efforts to save the country from moral deterioration through removing threats to the moral stamina of the British people. Davies has shown how this kind of "legitimate defence" (1999: 156), is a typical justifying tool for right-wing doctrine. In exposing and condemning this moral downfall in Britain, the party is supplying the deteriorated country with much needed assistance and guidance, rather than being racist or homophobic. Kramár (2000:303) agrees, as he discusses how this reference to a 'greater purpose' or 'the general good' justifies the means of getting there. This legitimate defence is consequently based on the Nation's best interest, and therefore excuses minor ethical qualms.

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[7] The main French far-right nationalist party, lead by Jean-Marie LePen.

One of the main themes constructing the repertoire of moral justice is, thus, the *contemporary lack of respect for traditional moral values*. The moral standard seems to be set by historical values of the British nation and of Christianity. The theme is, thus, partly constructed by topics on the idealized history of Britain and, partly, by topics on moral values derived from Christianity. The party here benefits from what van Dijk calls the "authority move" (1987:300); the references to nationalism and religion effectively justifies the opinions of the British Front, as the party in this way becomes connected to traditionally authoritative sources for moral guidance.

The party frequently compares the horror of contemporary society to the success of earlier historical eras associated with political power and possibility. Victorian society, the height of the British Empire and the years before World War II are usually presented as ideal images of Britain when the national pride, social order and work ethic of the Britons gained them prosperity and power. These extracts illustrate this contrast between previous British societies and the Britain of today, from a moral standpoint:

(1) Victorian Britain, was the gold standard for modesty, and morality. Coincidently Britain then ran the largest empire the world had ever seen, spanning ¼ of the Earth. Today, with sleaze, porn and other filth everywhere, those who govern the country are unable to even provide the basics for citizens within the UK. (pornography)

(2) The National Front felt that if Britain is to return to a civilised and efficient country it was vital to bring the next generation up with the kind of moral code and self-discipline that was in existence in this country before 1960. Unfortunately parents and society in general have left children to be influenced almost entirely by subversive and insane media controllers. (falling apart)

The persuasive purpose of these texts becomes evident, as one can immediately detect the evaluative language that puts forth the ideological agenda of the party. Previous times are connected to positive lexical choices such as *modesty*, *morality* (1)[8], *civilised, efficient*, and *self-discipline* (2) which highlight the idealized social conditions of the times in question, but also (more importantly) the moral standards of the National Front.

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[8] The example is taken from extract 1. All examples from extracts are hereafter marked with their own number.

These references to idealized living conditions are characteristic of right-wing or racist propaganda, as the promotion of "a utopian revolutionary world view that seeks to overthrow the existing order" (The Evens Foundation 2002: 47) connects the party to a determined quest for positive social change.

These lexical choices are put in contrast to the strong colloquialisms connected to the moral corruption of contemporary society, such as *filth*, *sleaze* (1)*, subversive*, *inane* (2) as to reflect the severity and horror of the situation. In using hyperboles, the National Front describes the downwards spiral of society in a very convincing way. Hyperboles increase the severity of the situation and motivate political change. They are therefore a common stylistic feature of right-wing rhetoric as they effectively evoke an emotional response of disgust or fear in the reader. (Davies 1999:66). The British Front here uses hyperboles in the form of strong imagery and colloquialisms, which enforce the horrors of moral decline in straightforward and seemingly honest terms.

The contemporary lack of respect for traditional moral values is, as mentioned, also constructed by the topic on Christian values, since Christianity is largely presented as the moral foundation of the British nation. Two articles are written by priests and quite obviously circle around religious subject matters. The lack of respect for Christian values is, however, a recurrent topic in several of the other texts as well, and thereby connects the party to trustworthy sources. These references are visible in the following extracts:

(3) Political parties like Labour and Conservative which have embraced sleaze, must be <u>replaced with those who have higher morals</u>. Parties like Labour and Conservatives have no respect for the <u>sanctity of life, or marriage</u>, as shown in the legalised holocaust which occurs today in government sponsored abortion shops. <u>A return to basic Christian values is recommended, like Moses led the Israelites out of captivity to freedom,</u> we need modern leaders who can free us from our current bondage of financial debt, sleaze and <u>unChristian values</u>. (pornography)

(4) We need to concentrate our attack on all those who pursue anti-nationalist and <u>immoral policies</u>. To make it clear to the public that <u>the type of people who have governed increasingly since the end of the second world war are the kind of people who killed Christ</u>. (defend homeland)

(5) Any government promoting third-world immigration and the flood of bogus asylum seekers, <u>anti-Christian heathen infidels</u> and economic refugees into the United Kingdom is not only betraying the British Nation, but is <u>going against the will of God</u> and the laws of nature. (suppression)

(6) <u>As Christians it follows that we should heed the words of Jesus Christ and follow his moral teachings.</u> We haven't, Instead we have allowed warmongers, moneylenders, Marxists and vindictive tyrants – <u>the kind of people who had Jesus killed</u> to determine our government policies.

The party here connects itself to Christian values in order to increase its own credibility. The members identify themselves with Christ literally as *those who have higher morals* (3) and their policies as *the will of God* (5), but also more symbolically as 'saviours'. This identity entails the Christ-like ability to acknowledge moral decay and through constructive measures reduce it. The concept of Christianity, in this context, becomes a sanctuary or refuge for readers who feel that their sense of community and traditional ethical values are disappearing (Fredrickson 2003:133).

The current British government is accordingly connected to Christian symbols of evil such as *the kind of people who killed Christ* (4) and *anti-Christian heathen infidels* (5). In going against the British Front you are going against the will of God which, effectively, gets to represent what is 'natural' or 'right'. By incorporating Christianity into the natural order of the National Front, the party introduces their policies in a socially acceptable framework that allows them to draw on familiar symbols of good (us) and evil (them). The party can thus avoid accusations of pushing a personal agenda, and in stead claim to advocate old and well-established rules of proper conduct. In conclusion, the important thing to realize is that religion is here not merely a source of information, but perhaps even more, an effective manipulative device that appeals to emotion and familiarity rather than logic.

The second theme that constructs the Repertoire of Moral Justice is the *contemporary disruption of traditional family values*, which especially revolves around the protection of our children. This theme is constructed by topics about young people being victimized by the moral decline in society, as well as about homosexuality. This

apparent concern for family values works as a justifying device for prejudiced opinions, as most of the British Front's measures seem to have the main purpose of creating a positive environment for our children. The presumption is here is that the policies of the British Front should be carried out for 'the greater good', which excuses prejudice or aggression, as the end result is worth it (Kramár 2000:304). The party frequently underlines how the traditional security of the nuclear family has been disrupted due to morally corrupt influences such as pornography, homosexuality and drugs. These factors are blamed for splitting up marriages, but also for misleading children into delinquency and psychological turmoil. The topic about young people being victimized by the current moral decline is visible in the following extracts:

(7) There are many British children whose <u>young lives have been wrecked, through the glamorizing of a new unhealthy sub-culture</u> – or more accurately anti-culture. Our own flesh and blood has been <u>lead-astray from long-established traditional ways</u> that had been devised over centuries, to secure our safety and well-being.

(8) The epidemic of filth, which has besieged our nation, has caused a reduction in the birth rate, as <u>young Britons seek fulfilment, not within the safety of marriage, but through self indulgence.</u> (...) <u>In stead of experiencing the joys of fatherhood, young men are seeking cheap thrills through the media</u>. (pornography)

(9) Nor despite continual reports of the <u>abysmal state of our schools</u>, has the public made any effort to reclaim them from communists and left-wing mind-benders. As a result of public apathy, <u>murders and stabbings</u> have become commonplace. <u>The number of suicides, particularly among the young has risen sharply</u>, so too <u>a pathetic dependence on drink and drugs</u> which is a damning indictment on our society. (falling apart)

(10) (...) it is the religious, anti-social, self-destructive and subversive socialist brainwashing that takes place. This Marxist indoctrination includes sneering at tasteful and established culture, <u>engendering thoughts of rebelliousness against parents, religious leaders and established rules. Also the promotion of homosexuality and the acceptance of casual recreation sex which is given to children as young as six.</u> One television programme aimed at pre-school children showed a family going shopping. <u>The supposedly normal family consisted of two female parents and two children, one black and one white.</u> (interfaith)

The extracts portray contemporary popular culture as mere hedonistic consumption, thriving on indifference and aggression: *the glamorizing of a new unhealthy sub-culture* (7), *self indulgence*, *cheap thrills* (8), *pathetic dependence on drink and drugs* (9) and *thoughts of rebelliousness against parents, religious leaders and established rules* (10). The youth culture gets to represent the self-indulgent lifestyle of young people today where the orderliness and altruism of previous generations has given way to a mentality concerned only with easy pleasure. However, British youth are not blamed for this change in attitudes, but are in stead seen as victims of the general social decline caused by the Labour government. The malaise and victimization of children is naturally an effective device for conveying party policies, as the innocence and defencelessness of children and teenagers spark the readers' emotional responses of empathy as well as aggression. *Left-wing mindbenders* (9) and *Socialist brainwashers* (10) become the scapegoat for the moral decay of Britain, which will be treated further in chapter 4.2.

The above mentioned extracts repeatedly display images of threat, which is a rhetorical device characteristic to most of the party's texts. In this repertoire of Moral Justice, the notion of threat is conveyed through "extreme-case-formulations" (see ch. 2.3) which are particularly evident in this theme about the disruption of traditional family values. In this dark version of reality, *every* young person is involved in drug abuse or stabbings and *every* school is terrifyingly deteriorated. This strong sense of threat and the literal invasion of "non-pure elements", personified by immigrants and left-wing indoctrination, puts clear emphasis on exclusion (Davies 1999:100) and how the British would improve their standard of living without such negative influences. The well-being of Britain consequently presupposes the removal of, for example, immigrants. The party's general image thus benefits from the theme of family values, since the love for the children connects the party to features of caring and moral obligation, which in turn creates a positive and justified sense of community and support, that says that 'we are good', but what we have been subjected to is bad and needs a change. The negative concepts of racism, aggression and intolerance are replaced with notions of saving the children from moral decay and building a future for them by cleaning out unwelcome elements, which sounds much more socially acceptable than explicit extremist propaganda.

Homosexuality is a topic that is seen as a particular threat to young people's moral character. It is presented not as an inherent sexual preference, but rather as a cultural artefact stemming from general moral deterioration. This aversion to homosexuals is accordingly presented positively as a struggle against negative social influence on young people rather than incitement to hatred against individuals.

(11) The NF speaks out against homosexuality, and mass immigration, <u>not because we hate people. But because we love our children. We don't want them growing up to be homosexual, as we know this is wrong.</u> (hate words)

(12) We are not against homosexuals who cannot help themselves, and who carry out their deviant activity in private. What the National Front opposes is <u>the promotion of homosexuality, particularly when aimed at young children. The fact that for forty years, youngsters have been denied the freedom of an innocent childhood, in itself could explain much of their confusion in determining who they really are.</u> (gay pride)

(13) New Labour is d<u>istorting the very fabric of society</u> in so many ways. To me one of the worst was making it legal for men to have sex with 16 year old schoolboys now followed by the 'Gay' movement's demand to make it 14 years. <u>The despicable removal of Section 28 now means homosexuality will be taught to school children as a normal and acceptable way of life</u> (...) (conspiracy)

The National Front mainly focuses on homosexuality as something deviating from what is 'natural', declaring it as *wrong* (11), *deviant* (12) and not *normal* nor *acceptable* (13). The party seldom mentions equal homosexual relationships and in stead focuses on abnormal or unsettling situations involving homosexuals. The texts repeatedly highlight how confused young people can be brainwashed into becoming homosexuals, or how young boys can become abused by homosexual paedophiles. The party also emphasizes how they do not oppose homosexuality *in private*, but rather the promotion, or encouragement, of the lifestyle. This again emphasizes a personal tolerance for homosexual individuals but opposition against the concept of homosexuality as a pleasure-seeking way of life that aims at disrupting traditional monogamy. This view clearly coincides with homosexuality as a mere symptom of today's self-indulgent youth culture and a threat to the nuclear family.

This Repertoire of Moral Justice has emerged through the recurrent themes of the *lacking morals of contemporary society* and *the contemporary disruption of traditional family values.* The party outlines these moral ideals based on topics about well-established traditions of moral conduct from reliable sources such as national history and religion. Through connecting themselves to these trustworthy sources, the party increases their own reliability and thereby justifies their causes. *The contemporary disruption of traditional family values* was constructed by topics on homosexuality and the malaise of young people due to the current moral decline. The Repertoire of Moral Justice aims at creating a threatening and deteriorating picture of contemporary society where there is a great need for radical change. The party's subsequent judgement and criticism of these phenomena show its policies as logical solutions to evident problems. These accounts of a moral downfall are thus highly functional, as they enable the party to assume the role as saviours or heroes. Through creating this positive repertoire the party negates allegations of being racist or prejudiced, as it convincingly demonizes the people and the social phenomena that they are opposing.

4.2 Repertoire of conspiracy

The second repertoire that emerges from the texts is that of a powerful government conspiracy against the British nation, which has resulted in the current social deterioration and was set in motion when the Labour Party was voted into power after World War II. Far-right parties are traditionally anti-establishment (Merkl & Weinberg 2003: 80) and according to the National Front, the British people are being brainwashed by the government into leading destructive lifestyles. This conspiracy is carried out in order to destroy Britain's "proud traditions and national heritage" (conspiracy) in favour of multiculturalism and globalisation. The signature "The Crusader" outlines this conspiracy more in detail:

(14) If you accept that there is a determined effort to destroy the British Isles by fragmenting the country and the people, and you also accept that the grand plan is to make these fragments minor regions within a European state, then the unbelievable excesses forced on the indigenous population all make sense. (conspiracy)

These allegations against the government have the recurrent rhetorical aim of constructing a threatening societal situation, and of undermining the current political leaders. Merkl and Weinberg state how most right-wing extremists criticize the government in order to: "rob them of their basis of political and moral legitimacy in order to replace the dominant values with 'the common sense of the people' as a new basis of legitimacy" (2003: 79). This alleged conspiracy thus takes away the authority of the government and in stead allows for the British Front to portray themselves as a worthy contender for the throne, as they construct an identity of reliability and honesty.

The members of the British Front claim that the conspiracy is a direct reason for the moral downfall of contemporary British society (cf. 4.1) and, accordingly, identify themselves as the voice of the people in revealing and opposing it. This repertoire is the one most hostile to the government, and thus enables the British Front to, yet again, motivate the need for a radical political change. The party simultaneously gets to advocate ways of turning the deceptive state machine into a strong and honest movement of the people.

The repertoire is mainly built around the themes of *hidden governmental control* as well as *corrupted media influence*. The themes express a general metaphoric dichotomy of the British people as oppressed victims and the government as dictatorial villains. The party's role as a working-class movement here becomes evident since the rhetoric of this repertoire draws on feelings of political powerlessness which naturally resonate best with the working class. The theme of *hidden governmental control* is constructed by the topic of strong government censorship and control as well as the topic on secret government supervision. This theme focuses on the perceived secrecy with which the government controls and sanctions its citizens' every move, in order to ensure adhesion to the outlined political goals. It also aggressively points out the perceived

incompetence of the leaders in charge. The topic of the dictatorial government control and censorship of the British is visible in these extracts:

(15) A politically-correct fifth column, who wants to destroy the British Nation, have come to occupy the corridors of power to the extent that the British who oppose this treachery are, mostly, held in check by threat of arrest and strict censorship. (sale)

(16) Not only is our land being invaded, but those elected to serve our interest insist that it must be. Anyone making a move to defend our territory is viciously attacked by Parliament. What a nerve-racking position to be in. (drug overdose)

(17) That outside influences govern 'British' leader's [sic.] decisions can clearly be seen in the way that the policies that are implemented, nearly always run counter to the national interest. Currently everything Parliament does increasingly takes power away from the people, particularly in the way that it continually expands free trade and globalisation. (small business)

(18) Brave men and women stand up for freedom of speech only to be assaulted and called Nazis (…). We have a situation where the left wing have made it an offence to question their actions, supported by the Police who are too frightened to do their job properly. (conspiracy)

The British Front constructs a frightening autocracy in accordance with the dramatic concept of a conspiracy. The government is here connected to violent verbs of power, such as *destroy*, *occupy* (15), *invade* and *attack* (16). The government is literally presented as an armed force attempting to take over Britain at the cost of the people. This image of dominance and occupation becomes even more evident as the government is consistently depriving the Britons of their rights by wanting to *destroy the British nation* (15), implementing policies that *nearly always run counter to the national interest* and *take away power from the people* (17). This theme of government control strongly emphasizes how the current leadership takes away the power from the people and deliberately conspires to hold them down.

The perceived government control is mainly visible in the imminent sanctions that are carried out against those who do not adhere to the implicit rules, as these people are *held in check by threat of arrest and strict censorship* (15) or *viciously attacked by Parliament* (16). This inclusion of punishments in the repertoire of conspiracy increases

the sense of threat and emphasizes the government's disloyalty to their own subjects. The image of these sanctions coincides well with the metaphor for the government as being a *mafia-like network* (falling apart); the country is run in a fashion similar to morally deprived criminals.

The policies of the government are, according to the British Front, not only damaging because of their liberal left-wing direction but, more relevantly, because of their intentional aim of harming the British people and their national heritage. These harmful intentions are connected to the government's international ambitions; the British Front accuses the politicians of being dominated by foreign influences and, therefore, submissively adjusting their policies according to their powerful allies rather than the people. The British government is, in conclusion, most interested in making the country a pawn in the game of international politics and, therefore, encouraging immigration and globalisation which is harmful to the native population.

The theme of hidden governmental control is also created by the frequently recurring topic of government; the texts construct an Orwellian fear of the all-seeing eye of the government which is secretly supervising its citizens. This control naturally limits the freedom of the individual and shows how the decisions of every British citizen are secretly influenced by restrictive mind-control. Consequently, the supervision takes away power from the people and shows how British citizens are unaware of their submission to a manipulative political system. The following extracts display this topic of supervision:

(19) The powerful state machine has its electronic eye on every citizen and so operates now not from democracy, but from pure autocratic whim, a thing it attributes instead to small nationalist movements that dare to spring up in defence of the indigenous people(…). (media)

(20) Afraid to say how they feel, or report what they see, many Britons cower in fear at their new masters. The British are no longer represented at any level. The occupying invisible army is in league with the Labour and Conservative Parties who readily carry out their anti-British demands. (ballerina)

(21) Before "9.11" Muslims were less of a threat to white Christians than either Socialists or the New World Order and they probably still are. (…) Muslims are not trying to <u>force us</u> into the EU, <u>create a police state</u> or permanently dumb-down education. Nor are they clamouring to close hospitals or fire and police stations. They are not <u>closely monitoring every British citizen, introducing restrictive legislation or trying to whittle down our numbers</u>. (sale)

One can again clearly see how warlike and mechanical metaphors of *the powerful state machine* with its *electronic eye* (19) and *the occupying invisible army* (20) construct a negative and distant image of the government as someone to fight against. The repertoire frequently uses lexical choices which juxtapose the distanced and cold omnipotence of the government to the down-to-earth closeness of the National Front. In recurrently emphasizing the theme of negative government control, a dramatic image is constructed of how the large and unstoppable British government works against its small but patriotic people, naturally represented by *small nationalist movements that dare to spring up in defence of the indigenous people* (19).

The texts of the National Front are usually, as mentioned, hyperbolic and apocalyptic in their expression, to emphasize the urgency of the destructive political situation; expressions like *Britons cower in fear at their new masters* (20) give connotations of gothic fiction rather than political rhetoric. This anthemic style of language, combined with the presentation of the government as sly dictators, encourages people to join forces and fight the evil system. Accordingly, the images of inescapable citizen control show the National Front as saviours who represent the people in their commonsensical quest for freedom.

The second main theme that constructs the Repertoire of Conspiracy is concerned with *corrupted media influence*. This theme is made up of topics about the media's disruption of traditional moral values and its role as the government's submissive ally. The National Front claims that British people are mainly trapped in the cycle of brainwash because of the media, as it is the government's submissive means of communication that indoctrinates the public with implicit left-wing propaganda. They are responsible for showing and, therefore, promoting inappropriate items of popular

culture such as pornography and homosexuality which work to achieve the government's goal of disrupting traditional British values and morals. The topics of how the media disrupts traditional moral values and its secret alliance with the government are frequently used in these extracts:

(22) Unfortunately parents and society in general have left <u>children to be influenced almost entirely by subversive and insane media controllers.</u> Nor despite continual reports of the abysmal state of our schools, has the public made any effort to reclaim them from communists and left-wing, mind-benders. (falling apart)

(23) Opium was used in China at the turn of the century, <u>to weaken the native population</u>, so that they would easily submit to foreign rule. <u>Pornography is being applied to the British population today to the same effect. The BBC is pumping it into every living room, the Tabloid press is doing its part also, The internet being the worst offender.</u> (pornography)

(24) <u>Certainly the whole gay scene is being driven by communists, mainly from within the mass media, as well as big business.</u> Those promoting the homosexual agenda are the same people who <u>push multi-racialism, alien culture, race-mixing and the need for more immigration.</u> (gay parade)

(25) The media has come full circle and is now <u>big ugly lie machine</u> that has lost sight of reality and lives in a world of its own making, <u>functioning to mount attacks and smear campaigns against its own enemies.</u> (media)

The British Front describes a corrupted media system that has no intention of informing or educating, but rather dumbing down and misleading its audience. The media is presented as the ignorant ally of a destructive political system which works to break down the moral stamina and traditional value system of the British people.

The lexical choices show the media business as inane, but nevertheless powerful, as they are *mounting attacks and smear campaigns* (25), *weakening*, *pumping* (23), *pushing* and *driving* (24) people into negative behaviours. The theme of how the audience is unknowingly being subjected to conspirational influences is clear in the topics being connected to the media. The party blames the media for glamorizing negative left-wing lifestyles and interests, such as pornography, homosexuality and race-mixing, and integrate these into British society.

British citizens are again portrayed as victims of the absolute control of the media, when children are being *influenced almost entirely by subversive and insane media controllers* (22) and pornography is *being applied to the British population* (23). The choice to engage in these left-wing activities is consequently not a conscious choice by the British citizens, but rather a result of an influential governmental conspiracy expressed through the media. The theme of destructive media influence thus maintains the image of the British people as helpless good-willed victims who are simply being subjected to negative influence; the party is then able to criticize the social *status quo* without offending the party's existing or potential members. The media is also the main offender of the Conspiracy of Injustice (chapter 4.3) where it, apart from spreading negative behaviours, also diminishes the value of the British national identity and makes the Britons feel inferior in their own country.

The Britons are, in conclusion, subjected to this apocalyptic governmental conspiracy which is aiming at breaking down traditional values in favour of destructive values, and eventually turning the British Isles into a part of the globalized European society. The National Front explains how this supervision and mind-control of British citizens happens through the corrupted media machine which is the powerful ally of the government. The media is accused of slowly breaking down the innate moral stamina of the British through lowering the tolerance level for negative behaviours such as pornography and homosexuality. This claim of a nation-wide conspiracy demonizes the Labour government and allows the National Front to motivate political change as well as enforce their identity as a small, but honest, movement of the people.

4.3 Repertoire of Injustice

The Repertoire of Injustice is concerned with the claim that British people are treated unjustly in Britain, concerning for example housing and job opportunities, to the advantage of the immigrants. This claim of injustice is a conventional part of racist rhetoric, and van Dijk explains how "(..) in stories about minorities, the local or national

authorities are often portrayed as favoring the minority group, so that the majority members feel discriminated against" (van Dijk 1987: 72). This repertoire strongly actualizes the notion of a "legitimate defence" (Davies 1999: 156) as this perceived injustice allows resistance. The Repertoire of Injustice is the most overtly racist of the repertoires and most explicitly advocates the biased policies of the British Front.

This repertoire is also closely connected to the Repertoire of Conspiracy since this perceived injustice is also spread by the government, through the media, in order to increase globalisation and destroy the national heritage of Britain. However, where the Repertoire of Conspiracy deals with threatening top-down mind-control in a dramatic manner, the Repertoire of Injustice, from a bottom-up perspective, more realistically treats the social conditions for British people as citizens and workers.

The Repertoire of Injustice also gives a very practical and solution-oriented impression, when it defines immigration as the largest social problem in Britain and tries, pseudo-constructively, to resolve it. The party manages to avoid sounding racist as it shows these immigration-related problems as a direct consequence of the liberal propaganda spread by the government. Consequently, they do not explicitly blame the immigrants, but mainly the overly welcoming government.

The first theme that constructs this repertoire is *only whites are racist* where the party presents itself as being subjected to racism and prejudiced accusations simply because of their skin colour. They here successfully create "mirror images" (Kramàr 2000:37) of immigrants, as they project their own bias on to others in order to strengthen the confidence and cohesion of their own group. The second theme is called *immigrant advantages over natives in Britain*, which describes a reality where British natives are constantly being neglected by the social institutions of their own country to the advantage of immigrants.

The first theme of *only whites are racist* is constructed by topics about how white people are being wrongfully persecuted for speaking their mind, when they are, in stead, usually victimized by the media or by immigrants. The theme is also made up of

metaphorical stories that describe real-life situations where this injustice has been visible. The media is frequently mentioned as an institution guilty of inventing smear-words and unfounded accusations against white people as part of their paranoid persecution of native Britons. The National Front highlights, in this context, the way the media's moral judgement frightens the British people into suppressing their 'true' opinions. The party here makes good use of van Dijk's "consensus move" (1987: 300) where the truth of your own statements become validated or proven through the consensus of others. The National Front frequently uses this device when they refer to their own policies as the suppressed views of the people.

The party manages to make racism appear, not only as common and therefore acceptable, but also as an honest and straightforward view of life. The following extracts reflect the topic of native Britons being unjustly persecuted simply for being white and speaking their mind (and thus the minds of all other native Britons):

(26) <u>Every white person's action is condemned as racist</u> but every black person has the freedom to speak and act as they please (…) <u>They are even persecuting white children in nursery schools for being racist.</u> Babies don't know what racism is but this government wants to make an example of them anyway. (conspiracy)

(27) The truth is that <u>white Britons (or whites anywhere else) are not allowed to complain about anything unless it's also the concern of non-whites. Then it's fine.</u> (…) <u>If you're white you are a bastard</u> and if you happen to like being white then you are lower than scum. (media)

(28) The National Front argues that white people and their cultures around the world will only survive by white co-habiting with white (…) and yet the very same people that preach racial separatism for their own kind, <u>will attack the white man for wanting to do the same, by branding him "racist"</u>. It's high time that white people took not of this survival tactic, regardless of petty name calling. (interfaith)

(29) During the recent two-hundred-year anniversary of the abolition of slavery, <u>self-hating, brainwashed whites</u> paraded through streets in London with T-shirts sporting the slogan "Sorry" printed on them. (…)All of this "slavery" propaganda was nothing more than an <u>unfair assault on the white British nation. Anti-white and anti-British journalists also had a field-day attempting to humiliate people</u>. (propaganda)

The above mentioned "mirror images" become evident here, as black people or immigrants, are always given unfair advantages and are allowed to assume that white people are an inferior race. From the premises mentioned above one can deduce that white people in general are hardly ever racist but rather misunderstood, and that in particular the British Front has been misinterpreted and wrongly accused of being racist. This theme downplays racist opinions, in constructing a reality where white people are not even allowed to open their mouth without being accused of being overly conservative or judgemental: *Every white person's action is condemned as racist but every black person has the freedom to speak and act as they please* (26), *white Britons (or whites anywhere else) are not allowed to complain about anything* (27) and *self-hating, brainwashed whites* (29). In addressing this perceived prejudice against all white people, the party facilitates the expression of prejudiced opinions; any opposition against such opinions can then be explained away as unfounded accusations.

The party again frequently uses the "extreme-case formulations" (see ch. 2.3), in this case with the purpose of creating a clear division between us (all white people) and them (all immigrants). They achieve this division by using generalizing racial labels such as *every white person, every black person* (26)*, white Britons or whites* (27) and *non-whites* (28). These labels naturally have the function of making the bad behaviour of one immigrant generally applicable as they usually contrast the well-meaning and disadvantaged Britons to the disruptive and spoiled immigrants. Van Dijk clarifies how "narrative event evaluations thus function metonymically as (negative) group evaluations" (1987: 70). One criminal event carried out by a Muslim can consequently become representative of the entire Muslim community's innate disposition for criminal activity.

However, on a deeper rhetorical level, these generalizations work to create a racially determined reality made up of two incompatible and irreconcilable parties. This destructive binary becomes representative of the problem that needs a solution and is essential to the British Front's presentation of contemporary society. According to the party policies, this conflict-ridden relationship can not be repaired, but rather needs to be ended in everyone's best interest.

The theme of *only whites can be racist* is also constructed by certain metaphorical stories that depict current situations which are evaluated as yet another example of racism against white Britons. The article "The Disgraceful treatment of Ballerina Simone Clark shows Britain is under Enemy Occupation Country" gives an account of the National Ballet's ballerina Simone Clark who has been "pushed into resigning" because she was a member of the British National Party. The story is angled to show the unjust treatment of Clark, and it highlights how an immigrant ballerina would never be laid off in the same way.

> (30) Can you imagine a Muslim dancer being sacked in the same way? Of course not, not even if she supported one of her own nation's extremist organisations that advocate the use of violence in Britain, which at least ten per cent of them do (ballerina)

The article gives a concrete example of a white person being persecuted for being "pro-English". The text then compares this wrongdoing with the probable overly tolerant treatment of an immigrant in a similar situation.

Another article, "Slovakian attacks on English school boy" (slovakian), depicts the case of 10-year-old Jake Steadman who got physically abused with a metal bar by a Slovakian woman, after having shouted racist slurs at her. The racist slurs are downplayed as having been uttered "after much provocation" and evaluated as harmless compared with the consequent beating. They then emphasize how the court charged the boy with "inciting racial hatred", which is an effective example of unjust treatment of a white person being abused by an immigrant. The National Front spitefully concludes the article with "10 year old Jake was clubbed, by a Slovakian, after telling her she should go home. The police as more interested in investigating possible 'racist remarks' that Jake may have made before the attack (slovakian)."

Several other stories are told with the similar purpose of revealing the everyday injustice between white native Britons and immigrants. The common message of most

of them, seem to be that immigrants are getting away with most offences since only whites are ever accused of being racist.

The other main theme *immigrant advantages over natives in Britain* is created by the topic of immigrants being an overall financial and social burden. Other topics are, more concretely, how immigrants get unjust advantages concerning housing, employment and citizenship. The theme is finally completed by metaphorical stories that exemplify these unfair advantages in everyday life. This theme also justifies racist opinion in that it demonizes the immigrants and the political system that has allowed them to the enter Britain.

Immigrants are the reason for problems with unemployment, poverty and unavailable housing since they make up the superfluous part of the population that deprives the natives of their rights. The theme is consequently constructed around the basic conflict of the whites who are the rightful recipients of British social welfare, and the immigrants who are Other and therefore unworthy.

The main topic of this theme is that of immigrants as a financial and social burden. Welfare money is taken from the struggling Briton in order to be given to the spoiled immigrant, not as a response to this person's professional qualifications or societal contributions, but rather because of his/her social status as an immigrant. This perceived unequal rationing of social advantages becomes evident, for example, in these article extracts:

(31) The <u>enormous costs</u> in "compensation claims", "asylum grants", "refugee centres" and cleaning up the mess following inner city strife, not to mention the epidemic of crime, are <u>borne by the ordinary, long-suffering, British worker</u> (race riots)

(32) Every time you are stuck in a 2 hour traffic jam every <u>time a relative of yours is made homeless</u>, every time <u>a job which you applied for is given to a foreigner instead</u>, it must become more and more obvious that "this island ain't big enough for everyone" (repatriation)

(33) welfare say, 'you come no more, we send plenty cash right to your door.' Welfare cheques, they make you wealthy, NHS it keeps you healthy. <u>By and by I get plenty money, thanks to you British dummy</u>. (asylum)

(34) In our modern politically-correct world it has become fashionable to <u>pander to the needs of every foreigner, while leaving our own fellow countrymen to die</u> at the feet of people who simply couldn't care about the British. The National Front does care this is why we give up so much of our time. (gay parades)

The National Front aims at turning general political measures into highly concrete and relatable items for potential members. These extracts clearly depict Britain's immigration policies as a personal attack on each individual Briton within the tightly-knit community of "us – the abused British workers". This community is constructed through exemplifying social problems with personal cases. The party frequently refers to for example *a relative of yours* and *a job you've applied for* (32), as well as unifying references to national identity such as *British dummy* (33), *our own fellow countrymen* (34) and *the ordinary long-suffering British worker* (31). These extracts clearly work to create an imagined community where the values of the British Front are the only ones that make sense.

The party tries to connect themselves to national and racial values which the target group are expected to respond positively to. The target group was previously in this paper (1.3.2) identified mainly as white young working-class males, and the party's specific sympathies for the maltreated British worker naturally resonate well with this demographic.

The articles turn against both the government and the immigrants. Where the government is seen as responsible for a destructive social system, the immigrants are presented as one of the government's means for destroying Britain. The consequences of these immigration policies are taken to the extreme for persuasive purposes in the *enormous costs*, the *epidemic of crime* (31) and *leaving our fellow countrymen to die* (34). Britain's immigration policies are here connected to images of economic chaos, diseases and death in order to shock and encourage the reader to take a stand. These

dystopian symbols help not only the party leaders, but also potential members to identify with the role of a hero in saving the country from the evident decay.

Immigrants are described as arrogant and lazy, in being unappeasable parasites of the British welfare system with deliberate efforts to trample down the British natives. *Compensation claims*, *asylum grants* and *refugee centres* (31) are seen as redundant extravagancies which the British people should not be obliged to pay for, since these do not directly concern the native population. The article "Asylum Seekers" (asylum) mentioned above is a poem written in the manner of an immigrant where the party ridicules this unreciprocated generosity of the British government: *welfare say, you come no more, we send plenty cash right to your door* (33) This poem highlights the party's opinion that immigrants receive unearned money, whereas the hard-working natives can rarely benefit from this system.

Laziness is an implicit characteristic frequently assigned to the immigrants, and the apparent reason for why one should grudge them the welfare money is their innate lack of enterprise and work ethic, rather than their ethnic origins.

The National Front, with this topic, tries to disclose a kind of general injustice, mainly depending on the financial and social burden of all immigrants. However, the party occasionally deviates from this generally accusatory style as this theme is also expressed through the treatment of current topics on housing, unemployment and citizenship. These more concrete political standpoints work persuasively to show the party as constructively involved in political issues that are relevant to their target audience, rather than just being discontent or spiteful. The following extracts address the topic on immigrants' influence on the work market and issues of unemployment:

(35) <u>There is no reason why immigrants should fill so many positions in the public sector.</u> (…) The Labour party in particular has gone out of its way to <u>snub Britons and give our jobs to foreigners, most of whom never had the required qualifications.</u> This treachery must stop. (falling apart)

(36) Millions of foreign workers have been enticed into Britain, where by <u>grossly enlarging the workforce they have lowered wages, and pushed a countless number of Britons on to the dole queue.</u> That this government is not concerned about this and <u>cares only for illegal immigrants</u> and asylum-seekers shows how it is their intention to bring native Britons down to the level of the poor in the third world. (small business)

(37) The reason every public body has become inefficient is that <u>all staff now, must exclusively be either socialists, immigrants, homosexuals or Freemasons. No longer is experience or ability to do the job taken into consideration.</u> The recently introduced so called qualification of "diversity" has given employers <u>the right to turn down any white Briton who applies for work.</u> (gay parades)

The feature of negative other-representation is here visible, as the professional incompetence of immigrants is repeatedly underlined. This way the National Front can again persuade the reader that their objections against immigration have nothing to do with racism, but rather with their objective conclusions concerning their professional capacity in the workplace.

The reversed racism visible in the *only whites are racist*- theme is here also a factor as there, according to the party, seems to be a deliberate effort to push the British workers out of the public sector simply because they are British and thus do not fit the anti-nationalist Labour mould of a progressive society. The government is accused of *snubbing* (35), *pushing* (36) and *turning down* (37) the British worker, through sly political measures, as they incessantly try to make an honourable living.

Another important topic is that of housing and citizenship. The issue is an effective means for persuasion as it can literally symbolize the British people being deprived of, or pushed away from, their properties and living space. The following extracts are convincing examples of this device:

(38) How come <u>true Britons are denied</u> right of residence in the UK, while <u>countless black and Asian illegal immigrants carry out the two-hour marriage of convenience scam every day</u> and the government accepts these fraudsters as bona fide? (alien laws)

(39) <u>Fourteen families they moving in</u>/ but neighbour's patience wearing thin/ Finally British guy moves away/ now I buy his house, and then I say/ <u>'Find more aliens for house to rent'</u>/And in the yard I put a tent/ <u>Send for family (they just trash)</u>/ but they, too, draw the welfare cash!/ Everything is mucho good/ <u>And soon we own the neighbourhood</u>./ We have a hobby – it's called breeding/ welfare pay for baby's feeding. (asylum: poetry)

(40) The NF speaks up against homosexuality, and mass immigration, not because we hate people, but because we love our children. (…) Also, we want them to have a good future, they will need housing when they get older. How can they get a house, if we <u>continually give away all available housing to non British people.</u> (hate words)

The texts frequently state, not only that immigrants are moving in, but, more relevantly, how Britons are accordingly forced to move away: *true Britons are denied right of residence* (38), *Finally British guy moves away* (39) and *how can they get a house, if we continually give away all available housing to non British people* (40). Constructing immigrants as the competitor in the fight for housing and citizenship supplies party members with seemingly factual premises for racist opinion: immigrants are not bad people, but since they mistreat the Britons, we have a right to criticize them.

The issue of housing also seems to focus on presenting immigrants in a primitive light, enforced by images of mindless procreation and commune-like living arrangements, hosting their uncultured relatives. Citizenship is also part of the British services that are being handed out to immigrants, but withheld from people who are perceived to have a closer connection to Britain. Immigrants are here described as being given these undeserved advantages and often dishonestly, through, for example, *the two-hour marriage of convenience scam every day* (asylum) which again indicates how the British political system is being used for dishonest purposes. The government is repeatedly blamed for their lacking authority and poor judgement of character as they accept these immigrants.

The theme of *immigrant advantages over natives in Britain* is also frequently expressed through metaphorical stories. The article "Alien made laws, which we suffer from"

(alien laws) is devoted to showing real-life stories where native Britons have been deprived of citizenship or otherwise unjustly treated to the advantage of immigrants. People who are mentioned, such as Anne Markie, Jon Riser and Mary Martin, have in most cases been abroad and are now refused re-entry to Britain, due to their new nationality or other reasons. Most of the stories are concluded with a reminder of how an immigrant would be treated in a similar situation:

> (41) Anne Markie a New Zealander of British descent, was married to an Englishman for 31 years. She was told by immigration officials that she would have to leave Britain. This happened during the same week that an amnesty was given to 55.000 non-white illegal immigrants. (alien laws)

All of the individual stories include some kind of validation of character concerning the victimized protagonist; the people mentioned are connected to personality traits or levels of social standing which are generally seen as appealing or innocent. This is naturally done in order to make the protagonist appear sympathetic, which in turn increases the reliability and persuasive effect of the piece.

The stories also have a metonymic effect as these people get to represent Britons as a whole. Andrew and Laura Morris are *newlyweds*, Mary Martin *has ten grandchildren; she has lived in Britain since she was two years old*, Willa Jane-Douglas is of *true British upper class-stock, the kind that made Britain great* and so on (alien laws). The persuasive effect is evidently strong, as grandmothers, newlyweds and respectable British upper class is subjected to the evil workings of the system and the immigrants.

The articles "Is this Medway?" (Medway) and "The English in Chatham fight against immigrants and parliament to remain part of the UK" (burnt oak) also work as metaphors for issues on housing, as they account for the history and present state of two residential London areas, Medway and Burnt Oak. The texts depict the perceived deterioration of these places since the immigration has increased. The previously proper and safe neighbourhoods have been replaced by unhygienic grocery stores which are taking customers from British manufacturers and an unsafe atmosphere due to cultural

clashes in social institutions. These articles also exemplify the Repertoire of Morality, as they depict a perceived societal deterioration. However, the Repertoire of Injustice is more concerned with the reasons for this downfall.

The British Front strongly emphasizes how Britons are pushed into feelings of inferiority in their own country; in Chatham the English are being *pushed around, threatened and intimidated by the newcomers, while those in authority refuse to ever listen* (slovakian) whereas in Burnt Oak, *an English man is now made to feel like a displaced person there. Many able bodied white males admit to feeling threatened while walking the streets after dark* (burnt oak). British communities are here described as being occupied by threatening forces, and forced into deterioration.

The Repertoire of Injustice is concerned with how British natives are treated unjustly in Britain, and was, on the one hand, constructed of the theme *only whites are racist*. This theme consisted of the topic about how white people are being wrongfully persecuted for speaking their mind, when they are, in stead, usually victimized by the media or by immigrants. The theme is also made up of metaphorical stories that displayed this perceived witch-hunt of white people.

The second, larger, theme is *immigrant advantages over natives*. This theme used the overall topic of immigrants as a financial and social burden who, in their quest for easily attainable wealth, deprive the hard-working British natives of their rightful share. Other topics describe how immigrants are given advantages concerning employment, housing and citizenship. Racism is in this context presented as the justified response to injustice.

This repertoire displays explicitly negative references to immigrants. In this version of reality, lack of housing, unjust distribution of citizenship and accounts of cultural clashes all work to depict an innate antagonism between white and black people. This self-representation aims at evoking empathy for the National Front and agitation against the negative Other. This repertoire is the most clearly hostile towards immigrants and constructs the average immigrant as a lazy, primitive and sly parasite that is the

government's tool for destroying the social opportunities and national sentiment of the British.

4.4 Repertoire of Nationalism

The last repertoire that has emerged is the Repertoire of Nationalism, which is perhaps the most self-evident pattern of making meaning in texts produced by right-wing extremists. Kramár highlights how public debates about racism usually focus on people's views of *others*, whereas racists and racial theorists themselves are mainly *ethnocentric*, that is, they are most concerned with their own racial or national identity. (2000: 23). The texts of the National Front coincide with this claim, since most of their rhetoric aims at constructing a positive British identity for themselves, and enforcing this identity through examples which manifest their capabilities.

The generalizing construct of *national identity* becomes a vital force that shapes the natives and supplies them with certain positive qualities that awaken a natural aversion towards foreign elements (Davies 1999:100). An illustrative point of comparison is here the French Front National which cherishes this view of the nation as a "fundamental political entity" (ibid. 66) where "exclusion is viewed as a necessary, protective policy, guarding the 'superior' French nation from external, inferior menaces" (ibid. 135). This apprehension of national identity as a commonsensical prerequisite for racism is visible in the National Front's propaganda and convincingly justifies their biased opinions. Measures that are carried out are thus not merely important for the individual but also for the nation, which gives them a larger sense of purpose and relevance.

This repertoire is consequently concerned with defining British national identity in a positive way and identifying the British Front's policies as a means to fulfilling one's potential as a true Briton. The themes that construct this repertoire are those of *freedom* and of *Britishness*.

The first theme of *freedom* is made up of topics on territory and the right to personal freedom. This theme describes how the British national identity thrives on the notion of

freedom and is consequently incompatible with the limiting and destructive measures carried out by the government. The party underlines how: "For the last thousand years the British people have fought, and sometimes died, to preserve our basic freedoms. The National Front wholeheartedly believes that these freedoms must be maintained" (NF History). The following extracts show the encouragement to support the British Front in order to regain this freedom:

(42) Freedom is every human being's most prized possession. It is an instinct to live in one's own territory and to breathe the air of freedom, to look upon one's own territory and to feel emotions that cannot be translated into words. To deny this to anyone is a crime against humanity. (media)

(43) Your children and grandchildren are counting on you to do this. They want to be born into a free land. A land without crime, a land with housing for them, A land where they can live in peace without oppression, where they can be taught correct and just principles. (hate words)

(44) Britons never, never, never, shall be slaves. Not slaves to porn, not slaves to alien laws from Brussels and the UN, not slaves to addictive substances placed in food, but Free people. Able to govern themselves justly. (pornography)

(45) We only want our own land. We don't want to take land from anyone else. We don't want to invade anyone's country. We just want our land. Britain is a very small country, it's really not too much to ask that we keep this for ourselves. (…) We aren't being selfish, we just know that we will need this for our children. (hate words)

One can here see clearly the how freedom becomes an innate characteristic of the British national identity: *Britons shall never, never, never be slaves* (44), *They* [your children] *want to be born into a free land* (43) and *It is an instinct to live in one's own territory* (42). The main topic here is that of territory and the importance of protecting it, with the recurrent emphasis on exclusion and threat; the implication being that immigrants will never be able to assimilate these features, or adjust to them, since they are inborn and exclusive to Britons (Fredrickson 2003: 84). The notion of freedom is thus dependant on the possession of your rightful territory, presupposing that Britain has been occupied by alien forces, such as the government and immigrants, and needs to be reclaimed. The party frequently emphasizes how *we only want our own land* (45), stressing the injustice of their negative reputation when they only want what is

originally theirs. The emphasis is then being put on rightful possession and heartfelt nationalism rather than closing borders or repatriation.

This protection of territory also ties on well to several of the other repertoires of the British Front, as the British territory gets to symbolize the protection of the family, the unjust deprivation of Britain from the British and the conspirational threats that are breaking down the nation.

The language is stylistically emotional and atmospheric, with expressions like *to breathe the air of freedom, to look upon one's own territory and to feel emotions that cannot be translated into words* (hate words) and *A land where they can live in peace without oppression, where they can be taught correct and just principles* (). This style is in many ways similar to traditional romantic nationalism, where authors in the past have referred to the state as "an internally harmonious whole, despite its apparent variety. The threat of disruption is always external, an evil that can be seen, though it may at times beguile the virtuous and innocent" (Arac & Ritvo 1991: 3). The language of the British Front thus shows an idealized picture of the country, where all evil comes from external sources and wants to harm the innocent Britain.

The second theme in the repertoire of Nationalism is *Britishness*. This theme is also highly patriotic as it outlines a strong British identity, although in a slightly different style than the previous theme. Where the theme of *freedom* rather poetically and evocatively describes an idealized free British society, the theme of *Britishness* more aggressively points out how to fight the urgent battle for the survival of the British national identity. The theme is constructed by topics about historical warfare and fighting for one's country, as well as agitating slogans at the end of articles. These topics of fighting and historical warfare are expressed in the following extracts:

(46) <u>The British are at war</u> – a war to secure our freedom, right to national self-determination and <u>our very survival.</u> The first rule of war is to identify the enemy. We have three enemies, Socialism, The New World Order and fanatics within the Muslim community who want to take over Britain and turn it into an Islamic state. (sale)

(47) Thus an odyssey begins in which, instead of being reduced to a third-world country by traitor politicians and immigration, <u>the British nation will once again assert its traditional values of honesty and fairness</u> (race riots)

(48) William Pitt warned the government in 1803 that "We must recollect what it is we have at stake, what it is we have to contend for. It is for our liberty, it is for our independence, nay for our existence as a nation; it is for our character, <u>it is for our very name as Englishmen, it is for everything dear and valuable to man on this side of the grave</u>" (church leaders)

(49) It's wonderful that some young people are prepared to pick up the banner of Nationalism and are prepared <u>to fight for their heritage, their future and their freedom.</u> (…) <u>Don't allow our forefathers to have died in</u> vain defending a country, which some politicians are prepared to break up and give away for a few pieces of silver. (conspiracy)

This theme is mainly concerned with connecting Britishness to a fighting spirit which is channelled towards the battle of maintaining their national identity. The British people are according to the texts having to be *at war* (46), *contend for* (48) and *fight for* (49) their nation. In this harsh reality, appeals such as *Don't allow our forefathers to have died in vain* (49), are effective references to previous warfare, as they provoke feelings of guilt and duty. Britain is still defined mainly as a part of an ongoing battle for their independence here, and Britishness is accordingly determined by its difference or uniqueness in comparison to the enemy and other countries. The British values of *honesty and fairness* (47) are mitigating factors of this warfare, and they how justify the fight for what is rightfully theirs, as opposed to the greedy intentions of other countries in conflict.

It becomes evident how "all the individual has and loves is conditioned by the nation" (Davies 1999: 156) as fighting for the nation according to the texts secure your *freedom, right to national self-determination*, *very survival* (46), *independence*, *character*, *everything dear and valuable to man on this side of the grave* (48), *heritage* and *future* (49). One's national identity turns into the primary part of one's personality which precedes (or rather presupposes) other personal interests. This theme of *Britishness* has a deeply persuasive purpose, as the references to hyper-masculine values of warfare, territory and protecting your family are likely to resonate well with the party's target group of young working-class males. These patriotic ideals reinforce a soldier-like

image of the British Front member as a 'real' man who stands up for his country and does his share in the party's strong social network.

The theme is further reinforced by short slogan-like appeals to the public, such as:

The British Bulldog will bite back (pornography)

Pride in yourself. Pride in your country. Britain Forever. (falling apart)

It's your country and your flag, fly it with pride. (asylum)

BRITAIN IS DYING –How long are you just going to watch? Before you do anything about it? (drug overdose)

These appeals are often placed at the end of articles as strong appeals that will catch the reader's attention. They are written in simple and concise language, urging potential members to join the National Front in order to save or reclaim their country. This language is clear and provides the target group with catchy slogans that construct an image of the party as easily accessible and, perhaps more relevantly, tangibly active. Whereas some of the above mentioned phrases are simply nationalist, others are more violent. An example of this violent tone is when The British Front identifies the British native as the "British Bulldog" (asylum), letting this metaphor characterize the Britons as stubborn and eager to fight. The tone of the entire theme is vengeful, and national identity is, in this context, an aggressive force that calls upon urgent action.

The Repertoire of Nationalism, in conclusion, circles around the themes of *Freedom* and *Britishness*, and through these themes aim at constructing a positive national identity for members of the National Front. *Freedom* creates a kind of romantic national pride and appreciation for the country with the topics of territory and the quest for personal freedom. The romantic depictions of Britain will accordingly awaken hostility towards the perceived threats to the nation. The theme of *Britishness* more aggressively describes a violent national spirit which is described as characteristic and necessary to the Britons, in order to reclaim and protect their country. This theme is constructed by topics of historical warfare and the concrete fight for the nation. The Repertoire of

Nationalism is crucial to party policies, since the concept of the Nation works as a unifying and justifying source of inspiration, and encouragement, for party members.

5. CONCLUSION

This study aimed at locating discursive repertoires and seeing how they worked to present the National Front and its members positively. Four different repertoires emerged; Morality, Conspiracy, Injustice and Nationality, and they all revealed the biased and traditionalist thought processes of the party. These recurrent patterns of meaning also worked to position the opinions of the party as the only 'right' option. This cluster of repertoires constructed a positive image of the party, partly through explicit positive self-representation, and partly through implicit inferences about

contemporary British society. Regardless of the occasional overlap, the repertoires were quite clear and often coincided with what is regarded as 'typical' features of right-wing rhetoric. Some of these features were the numerous current threats against the well-being of the nation, anti-establishment rhetoric, as well as the unjust treatment of the native population and the subsequent quest for reclaiming the country.

Van Dijk has stated how racist rhetoric is usually constructed with the main purpose of *rationalizing* racist opinion (quoted in Reisgl & Wodak 2000:184). A large part of this rationalization is achieved through the party's positive self-representation. The party members immerse themselves into the national identity of everyman: the National Front is the loyal representative of the entire native population. The party carefully expresses views that resonate well with the target group of white, young, working-class males; pride, strength, nationalism, traditionalism and hostility towards the Establishment are the honourable features that characterize the party's quest for power. The National Front also aims at appearing reliable as they draw on sources which are likely to be valued highly by the target group, such as the Church, British history, and the illusion of consensus from all native Britons.

The positive representation of the party is also achieved as a result of its negative other-representation and inferences of the social decline of Britain. The British nation is, according to the party, constantly being subjected to dangerous threats.

These threats are identified as the left-wing governmental conspiracy against the country, immigration, as well as foreign globalization politics that are increasingly taking over British politicians. The social menaces become personified by the government, immigrants and the perceived victims of the government indoctrination, such as homosexuals and the media.

The language that the threats against the nation are usually presented in emotionally inciting and upsetting language, in order to emphasize the need for political change. The party, in accordance with this style, makes frequent use of hyperboles (such as *the epidemic of filth which has besieged our nation* [pornography]) and extreme-case-

formulations (such as *everything that the British people once held dear is crumbling like dry rot* [conspiracy]) to depict the deterioration and victimization of the country, as well as the severity and urgency of the situation.

Perhaps the most frequently recurring theme in all of the repertoires is, accordingly, *victimization*. The horrible social and political state of Britain allows for the National Front to rise up as the voice of the people in their opposition towards these threats. The victimization of the Britons thus becomes a prerequisite for the glorification of the party and their radical policies become heroic and meaningful.

Immigration is seen as one of the major threats and the party enhances the positive view of itself by comparing party members to negative images of immigrants. Through creating an irreconcilable binary between immigrants and British natives, the National Front thrives on their own superiority and the immigrants' deviance. This image foregrounds the National Front's political visions of immigrant repatriation as an inevitable solution to an unsolvable conflict.

The persuasive effect of comparing the positive features of the British Front to the negative features of the Other is highly influential as it flatters the target group in its 'normality'. Immigrants who are portrayed as "spoiled parasites" are compared to the incessantly industrious, but abused, British workers. British homosexuals, who are left-wing deviants, are compared to the normal and family-centered heterosexual. These moves of positive self-representation create a community with a common value-basis that makes the policies of the British Front appear not only appealing but, more relevantly, persuasive and reliable.

The positive self-representation has thus happened through the party's positioning of the current social and political situation in their country, but also more explicitly through validation of character and the constant comparison to the negative Other.

 The National Front may not independently exude great influence on British society, but as part of the global rise in right-wing politics, they become an interesting and

frighteningly relevant example of positive self-representation as a political and sociological force. With apocalyptic accounts of a Britain in danger, combined with immigration policies that through rationalizing propaganda have become increasingly acceptable, the party manages to become a current alternative for British voters and actualizes a future where there might far less black in the Union Jack.

The present study on racist rhetoric shows how discourse analysis can be used to investigate socially significant areas outside of linguistic studies, within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis. Through revealing the thought processes behind propaganda texts one can increase awareness and dismiss the authors' illusion of sincerity or naturalness. This awareness might slowly develop into scepticism and a critical approach towards propaganda, which is a vital step in the fight against social and political inequalities.

Further studies within the field of critical discourse analysis are highly significant, as there are still several areas that need to be developed.

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Appendix 1. Internet Articles used as Material

The articles are divided according to category. The article name is followed by its keyword in brackets and the URL of the article.

<u>Values and Culture in Decline in the UK</u> (10)

"Communists in the Church" (communist church)
http://www.natfront.com/Communistsinthechruch.htm

"Death by drug overdose" (drug overdose)
http://www.natfront.com/death_by_drugs.htm

"Death of the Small Business" (small business)
http://www.natfront.com/death_of_the_small_business.htm

"Gay Parades – Just one symptom of a sick society" (gay parades)
http://www.natfront.com/manchpics.htm

"Pornography – the new Opium" (pornography)
http://www.natfront.com/pornography_the_new_opium.htm

"Protest against the Manchester Gay Pride Festival" (gay pride)
http://www.natfront.com/SECTION.values.htm

"Suppression of the Christian Message" (suppression)
http://www.natfront.com/christian_message.htm

"The country is falling apart" (falling apart)
http://www.natfront.com/country_is_falling_apart.htm

"The Disgraceful Treatment of Ballerina Simone Clark shows Britain is under Enemy Occupation Country" (ballerina)
http://www.natfront.com/Occupation.htm

"We must defend our Homeland" (defend homeland)
http://www.natfront.com/speachSunday4th.htm

General Articles (10)

"Alien laws enforced in Britain" (alien laws)
http://www.natfront.com/aleinlaws.html

"Asylum Seekers" (asylum)
http://www.natfront.com/verse.html
"Church Leaders fail us" (church leaders)
http://www.natfront.com/churchas.html

"Conspiracy Theory explained" (conspiracy) by Crusader
http://www.natfront.com/consp.html

"Destruction of our aircraft industry" (aircraft)
http://www.natfront.com/aircraft.htm

"Hate Words Used Against Us" (hate words) by Francis
http://www.natfront.com/SFFIwastalkingtoanelderlyGenttheotherday.htm

"Media – Biased against us" (media)
http://www.natfront.com/media.html

"National Front Activism" (activism)
http://www.natfront.com/activism.html

"Nuclear Guinea Pigs" (nuclear)
http://www.natfront.com/NuclearGuinesPigs.htm

"Why I support the National Front" (support) by Stephen
http://www.natfront.com/WhyIsupporttheNationalfront.htm

The National Front on Immigration (10)

"Anti-White Propaganda" (propaganda)
http://www.natfront.com/anti_white_propaganda.htm

"Bringing Asia into Europe" (Asia)
http://www.natfront.com/bringing_asia_into_europe.htm

Britain is not up for sale (sale)
http://www.natfront.com/britain_does_not_belong_to_anyon.htm

"Burnt Oak in London was a white working class area" (burnt oak)
http://www.natfront.com/burnt_oak_shopping_centre_london.htm

"Is this Medway?" (medway)
http://www.natfront.com/medway.html

"Race Riots" (race riots)
http://www.natfront.com/raceriot.html

"Repatriation" (repatriation)
http://www.natfront.com/repatriation.htm
"Rogues Gallery" (rogues)
http://www.natfront.com/RoguesGallery.htm

"Slovakian Attacks on English school boy" (slovakian)
http://www.natfront.com/chatham_residents_fight_against.htm

The National Front on Education (5)

"Boot Sex Offenders out from Schools" (sex offenders)
http://www.natfront.com/boot_out_sex_offenders_from_scho.htm

"Creating Bedlam for youth" (Bedlam) by A.K. Chesterton
http://www.natfront.com/bedlamyouth.html

"For all responsible parents" (responsible)
http://www.natfront.com/educationforne.html

"Panic over interfaith schools" (interfaith)
http://www.natfront.com/interfaithpanic!.htm

Appendix 2. National Front Articles used as General Source Material

"A Brief History of the NF 1967-2007" (NF History)
http://www.natfront.com/history.html

"Join the Young National Front (YNF)" (young NF)
http://www.natfront.com/young_national_front.htm

"Join Us" (Join NF)
http://www.natfront.com/join.html

"Organising a new National Front unit" (NF Unit)
http://www.natfront.com/new-unit.html

"The National Front – Statement of Policies" (NF Policies)
http://www.natfront.com/nfsop.html

"The Bulldog Relaunched" (bulldog)
http://www.natfront.org.uk/thebulldog.htm