

# **How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis**

## **A Multimodal Introduction**

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# 3

## Presenting Speech and Speakers: Quoting Verbs

### Introduction

Whereas in the previous chapter we dealt with a broader lexical content analysis, in this chapter and those that follow we begin to provide tools for the analysis of more specific language and grammatical and visual features. Our first step is to look into the importance of carefully describing and analysing the way people are represented as speaking both in language and images. Here we find some important language and visual resources for evaluating social actors, for signifying broader discourses, ideas and values that are not overtly articulated. We begin with the representation in language and then in the second half of the chapter move on to visual representations, looking at gaze and interaction, and poses.

### Quoting verbs

In both texts and in speech it is extremely revealing if we look closely at the words chosen to represent how someone has spoken. For example, you are having a conversation with Jane, who says:

My house mates simply don't do enough cleaning.

You then report this conversation to someone else. You might quote Jane exactly. But you will also have to choose a word to express that it is something she said. So you might say simply:

Jane said, 'My house mates simply don't do enough cleaning.'

Or you could say

Jane whinged, 'My house mates simply don't do enough cleaning.'

The first case, using 'said', sounds much more neutral. But in the second case, the word 'whinged' creates much more of an impression on the person you are telling this to as to the mood, attitude or even character of Jane, and therefore to the credibility of her comments. Such choices of quoting verbs can, in this way, lead you to make evaluations of the situation she explains, on the likelihood of it being true or whether we may more easily dismiss the complaint as just more of Jane's whinging nature.

This section deals with the way that these simple word choices, describing how someone has spoken, can have a considerable impact on the way that authors can shape perceptions of events. In the above case, both sentences simply state what Jane has said. Neither passes any judgement on what Jane said explicitly, whether it is true, exaggerated or otherwise. But quoting verbs can be used to provide such information implicitly (Austin, 1975; Caldas Coulthard, 1994; Fairclough, 1995a).

Consider the difference between the following two sentences:

The management announced that striking workers would be punished.  
The workers grumbled about problems with conditions.

In the first sentence the management 'announced', while in the second the workers 'grumbled'. In this case, there may well have been nothing inherent in how each group spoke that warranted these word choices. The word 'said' could have served in both cases. So

The management said that striking workers would be punished.  
The workers said there were problems with conditions.

In this case, what is said is not evaluated. But in the case where 'announced' and 'grumbled' are used we are encouraged to make particular interpretations of the events. Those who 'announce' things appear to have power and legitimacy. Those who 'grumble' appear to have much less of both. This can be brought out if we reverse the two.

The management grumbled that striking workers would be punished.  
The workers announced there were problems with conditions.

Here it now appears that it is the management who are unreasonable and that the workers have a legitimate complaint that is not so much about their character but about the actual conditions in which they work. This is not stated overtly but is communicated through the connotative value of the quoting verb choices. In each case we can see how these choices communicate entire discourses. In the first place, where the management 'announce' and the workers 'grumble', we find a whole set of identities, 'scripts' and values are signified. We have a rational, organised management concerned with productivity and the well-being of the factory. In contrast, we have the

selfish, much less well-organised rabble of the grumbling workers who may harm productivity.

Caldas Coulthard (1994: 305–6) offers a systematic breakdown of verbs of saying that allows us to direct our attention more precisely to the implicit evaluation and connotation that is taking place through their use. These are shown in Table 2.

What is important is that through analysis we are able to draw out more precisely just what is connoted through the use of each kind of quoting verb. Below we expand on what we view as the more salient parts of the table:

- **Neutral structuring verbs** introduce a saying without evaluating it explicitly (e.g. say, tell, ask). So if I report that Jane said ‘My house mates simply don’t do enough cleaning’, this does not carry any particular guidance as to how we should think about this statement and about Jane herself. But often in language speakers who are represented as only using these kinds of speaking verbs can appear as disengaged or even less personalised. And as we consider in later chapters on representational strategies and transitivity, it may be important for authors to bring readers/listeners closer or further away from the thoughts and feelings of certain social actors. One way to do this is to elaborate on their thoughts and feelings or their internal mental state. So if we say that someone ‘cried’ and ‘whispered’, the reader is drawn to empathise with them much more so than with a person who only ‘said’.

**Table 2** The meaning potentials of quoting verbs (from Caldas Coulthard, 1994)

Speech-reporting verbs		
Neutral structuring verbs		say, tell, ask, enquire, reply, answer
Metapropositional verbs	Assertives	remark, explain, agree, assent, accept, correct, counter, announce
	Directives	urge, instruct, order
	Expressives	accuse, grumble, lament, confess, complain, swear, claim
Metalinguistic verbs		narrate, quote, recount
Descriptive verbs		
Prosodic (loudness, pitch emotion)		cry, intone, shout, yell, scream
	Voice qualifier (manner)	whisper, murmur, mutter
Paralinguistic	Voice qualification (attitude)	laugh, giggle, sigh, gasp, groan
Transcript verbs	Relation to other parts of discourse	repeat, echo, add, amend
Discourse signalling	Discourse progress	pause, go on, hesitate, continue

- **Metapositional verbs** mark the author's interpretation of a speaker. For example: 'declare', 'urge' and 'grumble' are assertive, directive and expressive respectively. We saw this where the management were described as having 'announced', which is assertive. We can see the difference here if we said Jane declared, 'My house mates simply don't do enough cleaning'. This immediately appears much more likely to be a true report on events than were Jane to be depicted as 'complaining'. It also makes her appear as more assertive than a person who whinged.
- **Metalinguistic verbs** are where the kind of language used by a speaker is specified. For example, if a speaker said: 'it was really hard living with all those messy people' Jane narrated. Here this may be used for ironic effect. On the other hand, were this switched to 'Jane recounted' there is a greater sense of her simply reporting on what happened.
- **Descriptive verbs** categorise the interaction. For example: 'whisper' and 'laugh' mark the manner and attitude of a speaker in relation to what is being said. So if Jane whispered, 'My house mates simply don't do enough cleaning', the audience is directed more to *how* she said this. Of course, this too signifies attitudes, power relations and likelihood of truth. In this case, whispering would suggest lack of power in that she did not feel able to speak out. If workers 'whispered' that there were problems with working conditions, this would indicate something of the predicament in which they found themselves in relation to the management, for example, that anyone heard publically might not have their contract renewed.
- **Transcript verbs** mark the development of the discourse (e.g. repeat) or relate the quotation to other parts of the discourse (e.g. pause). So we might find 'Jane added, they are all quite lazy to say the least'. Press releases might present the person or persons they are promoting as 'he added' or 'continued' to give an impression of them offering more information when in fact it may be the same point.

All of these different verbs of saying can be used to make certain participants appear more authoritative or subservient, legitimate or non-legitimate. They can help define the roles of sets of participants or events even though these might not be explicitly stated. In the example above, 'announcing' sounds more official, formal, and is the stuff of official groups. 'Grumbings' are not necessarily well formulated, they are not coherent and therefore indicate not being official and suggest a lack of power.

Quoting verbs can also direct us to consider some participants as having a negative attitude and others as being friendly, or they can suggest levels of moderation, such as where a person is represented as 'remarking' as opposed to prosodic descriptive verb such as 'yelling'. We can see this effect in the following two sentences

Minority community leaders shouted that they have suffered increased levels of abuse.

Minority community leaders remarked that they have suffered increased levels of abuse.

In the second case, the leaders appear moderate, in control and official through the use of a neutral structuring verb of 'saying'. In the first sentence, however, the use of the prosodic descriptive verb 'shouted' makes them appear emotional and perhaps threatening.

In the following example we see a different kind of representation created through a different verb of saying related to levels of implicitly ascribed reliability:

Minority community leaders claimed that they have suffered increased levels of abuse.

Here we can see the effect of 'claim', what Caldas Coulthard would describe as a 'metapropositional expressive'. Claims are not factual but can be contested and the use of this word invites doubt. The word 'felt' would have a similar meaning. In the following case we can see how the use of the word 'explain' changes the meaning to decrease uncertainty:

Minority community leaders explained that they have suffered increased levels of abuse.

In this case, the minority leaders appear to be telling us facts rather than simply their opinions, although this is not overtly stated.

By turning our attention to some concrete examples of how verbs of saying are used in actual texts, we can develop our sense of how they have been used in different ways to influence the way a reader will interpret events and persons.

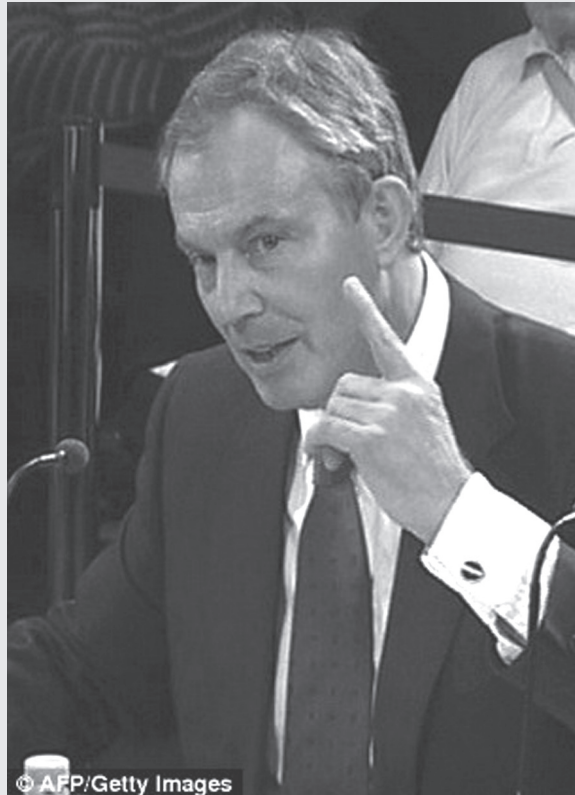
### Case study 1: Quoting verbs and implicitly implied guilt

The first example is a report in the British newspaper *The Daily Mail* (29 January 2010) on the enquiry into the British government's decision to participate in the invasion of Iraq in 2003, where former British Prime Minister, and New Labour leader, Tony Blair is questioned. *The Daily Mail* is traditionally hostile to New Labour, so the attitude taken in the text is not surprising. However, what CDA helps us to show is exactly how texts communicate their ideologies in ways that are not necessarily overt. And in this case, as we shall see, quoting verbs play a big role in the evaluation of social actors and the reliability of what they say. The quoting verbs are underlined.

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'You're a liar and murderer': Blair booed after telling Iraq inquiry he has no regrets



**Figure 6** Tony Blair defends himself (The *Daily Mail*, 29 January 2010)

**No regrets: Tony Blair said Britain would ultimately be able to look back on the Iraq War with 'immense pride'**

Tony Blair was heckled today as he refused to express any regret for the Iraq war and insisted Britain would ultimately be able to look back on the conflict with 'immense pride'. There were cries of consternation from witnesses watching the official inquiry into the conflict as the former prime minister rejected the chance to note his sorrow at the loss of British lives. Chairman Sir John Chilcot had to tell audience members to be quiet during Mr Blair's closing comments, in which he insisted he stood by his actions in the run-up to the 2003 war, despite the 179 British troops killed in the conflict. 'It was divisive and I'm sorry about that,' he conceded but continued: 'If I'm asked whether I believe we're safer, more secure with Saddam and his sons out of power, I believe that we are.' Asked if he had any

regrets at all, he replied: ‘Responsibility but not a regret,’ prompting the audience to erupt and cry: ‘What, no regrets? Come on’. When the cameras cut off and Mr Blair readied to leave, he was booed and one audience member shouted ‘you’re a liar’ before another chimed in ‘and a murderer’.

In this article, we find 13 cases of quoting verbs in this short text. These are: ‘heckled’, ‘refused to express’, ‘insisted’ (twice), ‘cries’, ‘rejected’, ‘tell’, ‘commented’, ‘replied’, ‘erupt and cry’, ‘booed’, ‘shouted’ and ‘chimed’. Only one of these, ‘replied’, is a neutral structuring verb. It is clear, therefore, that the writers of this piece are seeking to shape how we are to interpret this particular set of events and its participants, especially Tony Blair. In the text there are three participants: Tony Blair, the audience, and the Chair. We can create a table to show which verbs of saying are used to describe the comments of each:

**Table 3** Quoting verbs for ‘No regrets’ article

<b>Blair</b>	<b>Crowd</b>	<b>Chair</b>
Refused to express	Heckled	Tell
Rejected	Cries	
Insisted	Erupt	
Conceded	Cry	
Continued	Booed	
Replied	Shouted	
	Chimed	

What we find is that Blair’s comments are represented for the most part through metapositional verbs such as ‘refused to express’, ‘rejected’, ‘insisted’ and ‘conceded’. All these clearly mark the author’s interpretation of the speaker, i.e. Tony Blair. In all these cases he is represented as a man who is being defensive. We can see this in the following sentence:

He refused to express any regret for the Iraq war and insisted Britain would ultimately be able to look back on the conflict with ‘immense pride’.

We can draw out the way that these choices of quoting verb create meaning by showing the way different choices could have been made, as in:

He explained that he did not feel any regret for the Iraq war and suggested that Britain would ultimately be able to look back on the conflict with ‘immense pride’.

In the text, the fact that he ‘refused to express’ suggests that he should, in the opinion of the writers, express regret. Where we have substituted the quoting verb ‘explain’ above, he sounds much more comfortable with what he is saying. It is common in news reporting to use ‘refused to comment’, or ‘refused to express’ as an indication of

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avoidance and therefore something to hide or of plain guilt. Journalists can use this strategy to avoid having to overtly claim that there is guilt, which could place them in a difficult legal situation.

Where the text uses 'insisted', in the following sentence we are given an impression of lack of confidence, of a man who lacks credibility:

Mr Blair's closing comments, in which he insisted he stood by his actions in the run-up to the 2003 war, despite the 179 British troops killed in the conflict.

We can draw out the way that this quoting verb works in the following sentences:

The pool attendant instructed that we leave immediately.

The pool attendant insisted that we leave immediately.

In the first sentence, the attendant is represented as simply delivering instructions. In the second, the insistence suggests that they might be ignored. It suggests a level of persistence that would not be required of someone who was confident of having authority and respect.

We can draw out this meaning a little more through a further example:

The librarian explained that the student must return the book immediately.

The librarian insisted that the student must return the book immediately.

In the first case, we can see that the librarian appears calm and authoritative. They are simply explaining the rules to the student. Therefore the authority of the librarian to make this demand is clear. In the second sentence, we can see that what the librarian is doing appears much less authoritative and less confident. Throughout this book we will be looking at many such subtle ways in which the power and authority of social actors, or the lack thereof, can be communicated implicitly through language and where power can be attributed where there in fact is none.

The use of the quoting verb 'conceded' is also important here, as we can see in the following sentence:

'It was divisive and I'm sorry about that', he conceded.

Again, the verb 'explained' could have also have been used. But we can see the importance of this choice in the following sentences:

The student conceded he had lost the library books.

The student explained he had lost the library books.

In the first sentence, it appears that the student was attempting at some point, or at least had the intention of so doing, to deny losing the books. In the second sentence,

the student appears much more honest. From these examples we can see how participants can be represented as untrustworthy simply through an accumulation of quoting verbs that after all are purely the interpretation of the author. All utterances can be accurately reported, as can sequences of events, but nevertheless the ideological mark of the author can be simply worked into the story.

In contrast to the quoting verbs used for the utterances of Blair, we can see that the Chair's utterance is represented with a neutral structuring verb 'tell'. Of course such a term is not neutral in itself, as all choices used by an author are motivated, but its use implies an utterance without emotion, which here serves to present the Chair as neutral. It is often the case in such reports that the officials are represented through neutral structuring verbs. Police representatives simply 'tell' or 'say' or use metapositional assertives such as 'explain' and 'announce'. In a text it is always important to identify who is represented as neutral.

A range of prosodic descriptive verbs are used to describe the audience's negative reaction towards Blair. 'Heckled', 'cries', 'chimed', 'shouted', 'erupt and cry' and 'booed' are used to emphasise the considerable size and collective anger of the audience. Their loudness is further emphasised by noting the chairman 'had to tell' them to be quiet.

Overall, this text is clearly intended to suggest that Blair's actions were not going to be accepted or forgiven by the British public. Interestingly, in the news media at the same time, there was little concrete information about what the war meant, why it was fought and what the consequences were. All of these issues, as they did at the time of the invasion, remained largely absent from public debate. This story clearly is an attempt to use these events as one way to attack the former Prime Minister, rather than to explain in concrete terms what went wrong.

## Case study 2: Quoting verbs and lack of agency

In this example we find the British Prime Minister at the time, New Labour leader Gordon Brown, represented as having little power, where quoting verbs are one strategy by which this is accomplished. Again, this text is from the newspaper *The Daily Mail* (11 November 2009). This is an item dealing with an event where Gordon Brown (or one of his advisers) had written to the mother of a soldier who was killed in Afghanistan, but misspelled his name. At the time this text appeared, many people were becoming concerned about the very purpose of the conflict. No clear aims and objectives had ever been offered by the government. In the news media a theme of supporting our brave troops had emerged, which displaced any actual debate about the reasons for the war. This text therefore shows that news media are often so focused on political figures and political administration that they lose sight of actual events and contexts (Bennett, 2005).

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**Gordon Brown: Under siege over letter to soldier's family, he speaks of his own grief**



**Figure 7** Gordon Brown vulnerable (*The Daily Mail*, 11 November 2009)

Gordon Brown spoke of his personal grief at losing a child as he responded to criticism of his handwritten letter of condolence to a dead soldier's mother.

The Prime Minister suggested the awful experience of his daughter Jennifer Jane dying at just ten days old meant he understood the pain of bereavement.

He had already apologized to the distraught mother of Grenadier Guard Jamie Janes, 20, after she berated him for apparently misspelling her son's name and other words in his note of sympathy

Yesterday he reiterated his sorrow for her loss and said: 'The last thing on my mind was to cause any offence.'

A shaken-looking Mr Brown was forced to defend his treatment of the war dead – and again try to explain the purpose of the Afghan mission – during his monthly press conference.

He revealed he had asked for a full investigation into the circumstances of Guardsman Janes's death. An inquest has not yet been held.

At the beginning of the article Brown is represented as simply having 'spoken' of his own experience of losing a child, which through a neutral structuring verb represents this as simply a transparent account. Following this we find that:

The Prime Minister suggested the awful experience of his daughter Jennifer Jane dying at just ten days old meant he understood the pain of bereavement.

Here we find 'suggested', a metapositional expressive, which appears here either as a lack of conviction, confidence or a lack of forcefulness. He does not simply 'say', or 'explain' that this allows him to understand, but 'suggests' this might be so. Here we can ask if the author of the text wished to represent Brown as weak and powerless, a man who was on the defensive rather than in control and decisive, or as a man who was tentatively 'suggesting', rather than 'knowing' in order to sound respectful. In the next line we are told:

Yesterday he reiterated his sorrow for her loss and said: 'The last thing on my mind was to cause any offence.'

Here we find a discourse signalling quoting verb suggesting that he is repeating what he has said before. Subtly this gives a sense of a man who is trapped in an ongoing situation where people are not convinced. We can tease this meaning potential out with the following examples:

He reiterated to his girlfriend that he had not in fact kissed her best friend at the party.

He explained to his girlfriend that he had not in fact kissed her best friend at the party.

In the first case, the boyfriend seems to be stuck in a situation where he is not believed and where he is constantly justifying his behaviour. In the second, we get a sense that this is more of a one-off situation and that he may be more in control. As regards the representation of Brown as stuck in a situation, this would be one important part of the way the opposition might want to represent him as bedevilled with scandals and having generally lost his authority to govern the country.

In the next sentence we find:

Mr Brown was forced to defend his treatment of the war dead – and again try to explain the purpose of the Afghan mission.

Here he does not simply 'explain' his treatment of the war dead but has to 'defend' himself. Then he is represented as 'trying to explain' rather than simply 'explaining'. Here the neutral structuring verb is changed to a metapositional expressive through the use of 'try'. So it is implied either that he is not capable of explaining or that it is unlikely that he has an explanation.

Finally, Brown 'reveals' that there will be an investigation. The verb 'reveal' here could have been replaced, arguably, with the verb 'announce'. Officials who are represented as having agency often 'announce', as we saw above in the examples regarding workers and managers. But here the fact that he 'reveals' this information suggests less agency. Those who reveal may have something to hide in the first place. We can see this clearly in the following two sentences:

William revealed that he had a new girlfriend.

William announced that he had a new girlfriend.

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In the second case, we can see some of the meaning potential of 'revealed', that it suggests that there had been some time when the fact was not announced, that it may have been a secret.

An important feature overall of the quoting verbs found in this text is that Brown is not actually initiating any of his speech himself. Rather he is having to 'respond', 'reiterate' and 'defend' himself from criticism he is facing. This is a politician on the back foot, no longer leading confidently.

In summary, we can see that the *Daily Mail* newspaper uses this story not to inform readers about the war, but simply as an opportunity to shape the reader's perception of Brown the politician.

### Case study 3: Quoting verbs and emotional intensity

In 2005, the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* published a number of cartoons that were critical of Islamic extremism and the challenge to free speech. Some of these satirised the prophet Mohammed. After Muslim clerics from Denmark travelled abroad and communicated about these, there was much anger among certain Muslims who felt that it was blasphemous to represent Mohammed in this way. The Western news media reported on the angry protests by these people, many burning Danish flags and demanding the newspaper should be closed down. At this time in the Western news media the representation of Muslims had become largely dominated by negative coverage with links to various kinds of extremism (Poole and Richardson, 2006).

The following text is one such report from the British newspaper *The Daily Telegraph* (7 February 2006). We can clearly see that quoting verbs are used as one important tool in the way the events are represented.

#### **How clerics spread hatred over cartoons**

David Rennie

As world leaders pleaded for calm in the Mohammed cartoon row yesterday, the Danish Muslim leaders who set the crisis in motion insisted that they had been trying to promote a "dialogue of civilizations".

They also angrily denied allegations from moderate Muslims and European intelligence services that hidden "masterminds" triggered the sudden explosion of protests, a full four months after 12 cartoons of the Prophet were first published in the *Jyllands-Posten* newspaper.

Ahmed Abu Laban is the most prominent of a group of Danish imams and activists who toured the Middle East late last year, seeking to "internationalize" their campaign of protest at the cartoons, after deciding their complaints were falling on deaf ears back home.

Speaking from his office at the Waqfs mosque in Copenhagen, Mr Abu Laban said that the sudden explosion of anger at the end of last month was due to the rapid success of a “grass-roots” consumer boycott against Danish dairy goods and other exports.

Mr Abu Laban, a 60-year-old imam of Palestinian origin, also credited the hard-line “Salafist” television stations based in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, such as al-Majd and Iqra, with a “big influence” in fomenting the trade boycott. [...]

He denied claims from European intelligence and security sources that the Muslim Brotherhood, an Islamist opposition group banned in Egypt and other Arab nations, had worked hard to whip up Muslim anger over the Danish cartoons.

At the start of the item we find that world leaders ‘pleaded’ for calm. They do not simply ‘ask’ for calm, which would have suggested something much more moderate than ‘plead’. This provides a sense that the situation must be out of control. It also suggests that the leaders are not themselves in control. If we plead with people, then they have become almost unable to be reasoned with.

In the next line we find that they, the Muslim leaders, ‘insisted that they had been trying to promote a “dialogue of civilizations”’. Here we find the use of ‘insist’, which appears to throw some doubt on what they say. We can see the difference if we replaced this with the quoting verb ‘said’. ‘Insist’ also gives a sense of emotional involvement. This appears to be important in the way that the events are being framed.

This emotional temperature is continued in the next sentence, where we find that the Muslim leaders ‘angrily denied allegations from moderate Muslims and European intelligence services’. This could have been written ‘they have “rejected” allegations’. ‘Denial’ here, as we have seen in previous examples, again can hint at the possibility of guilt, and the use of ‘angry’ adds to the lack of measure in tone.

We then find the neutral structuring verb ‘said’ for the next section, which communicates a sense of a more official and neutral role as regards Ahmed Abu Laban. We are told at the same time that he speaks from his office. It is important for news media reporting that sources appear to be official and legitimate, even if at the same time they are being represented as corrupt or extreme.

In the next line we find the use of the verb ‘credited’ to characterise the way he spoke of the influence of the television stations. This suggests that he feels that this is something positive. The wording might have been that ‘Mr Abu Laban, a 60-year-old imam of Palestinian origin, also blamed the hardline “Salafist” television stations based in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates’.

In sum, we can see how quoting verbs are used to communicate not simply how a person relates to events, but their very character and the nature of events. Here leaders have to ‘plead’ for calm where the Muslim cleric ‘insists’, ‘angrily denies’ and ‘credits’ other sources with fomenting anger.

## Representing speakers' attitude through visual semiotic resources

In texts where we find participants being cited, as in the examples above, we often find images of these persons. Sometimes we see them as if they have been captured in a moment of speaking, as in the case of the text about Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. These images too are managed to present a particular interpretation of the attitude, character and identity of the person and consequently is another semiotic resource by which events and comments can be evaluated implicitly. We might find, for example, that a particular text speaks of charges made against a politician. As well as using quoting verbs that connote lack of agency we might find a photograph of them which shows them speaking in a way that suggests lack of composure, as we find in the case of Gordon Brown.

It is usual for newspapers to have access to a collection of stock images for prominent social actors, which they can use depending on whether they wish to present them as confident, defeated, sensitive, etc. The photograph that we find accompanying a story may therefore not have been captured in a moment related to that story. However, even if it is the case that it has been, there is still the matter of the choice of this particular photograph. In this section, we look at some of the ways we can assess these representations and how they also encourage us to implicitly evaluate participants, to attribute particular kinds of meanings to their utterances. We look at the meaning of gaze and of poses in the image. We show that gaze in a photograph, where a person looks, and how they look, can be one important way of encouraging particular kinds of interpretations and of relationships between viewer and participant. We show that we appear to have a kind of dictionary of poses in our head that can be drawn upon as reliable signifiers of kinds of attitudes, moods and identity.

### Gaze

An important part of poses is the gaze of the person(s) depicted, whether or not they look out at the viewer, or whether they look downwards or upwards. All these can be resources for guiding the viewer as to how they should evaluate the participant, even if this is not explicitly stated. In this section, we present a set of observations that provide tools for analysing gaze and the way it can signify meanings more systematically.

Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) were interested in the way that images can be thought of as fulfilling the speech acts as described for language by Halliday (1985). When we speak, Halliday argued, we can do one of four basic things: offer information; offer services or goods; demand information; demand goods and services. In each case there is an expected or alternative response possible. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) thought images could fulfil two of these: 'offer' and 'demand'. So images can be seen by viewers as referencing actual acts of interaction in talk.

Both speech acts and image acts can be realised by ‘mood systems’. For example, in speech, commands can realise the imperative mood, as in ‘Don’t do it!’ We can state facts and make offers through the indicative mood, as in ‘You will like this cake?’ And we can indicate our attitude through other cues, such as tone of voice and posture. In images we can find both demands and offers realised visually along with the form of address.

In the case of the *Cosmopolitan* image found in the Introduction to this book, we can see that the woman looks at us. This has two functions. On the one hand, this creates a form of visual address – the viewer is acknowledged. On the other hand, it is used to do something to the viewer. This is what Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 124) describe as a ‘demand image’. It asks something of the viewer in an imaginary relationship, so they feel that their presence is acknowledged and, just as when someone addresses us in social interaction, some kind of response is required. The kind of demand, the mood of the address, is then influenced by other factors. There might be a slight frown that is unwelcoming and maintains a social distance. There might be a pout, as in the case of the *Cosmopolitan* woman. We might find gaze accompanied with postures that are welcoming, such as open arms or some kind of activity being undertaken in which we appear welcome. In this particular example, we find the woman looking at the viewer, thus acknowledging their presence and demanding some kind of reaction. She shows no clear emotion, but through this acknowledgement there is a sense that this world of glamour is more accessible to the viewer.

In real life we know how we should respond when someone smiles at us. We should smile back or else risk offending the other person. In the case of images, while we know that there will not be the same kind of consequences if we don’t respond appropriately, we still recognise the demand.

In the previous chapter we looked at the example of the Heart of England Health Trust website. Its homepage shows members of the Trust apparently in places of work. What they are depicted as doing and which roles are represented are crucial here, and will be explored in later chapters. What we want to note here is that three of the participants look out at the viewer. We are not simply asked to watch hospital activities, but are being invited into a relationship. In the last chapter we showed how, through language choices, the Trust represented itself and its aims through abstractions: ‘Cherishing’, ‘Excellence’, ‘Finding a Way’, ‘Innovation for Advancement’, ‘Working Together’. We considered the way that this was part of the empty corporate business language that has come to dominate public institutions, thereby backgrounding actual concrete matters of facilities, staffing and treatment. We can see that gaze is one semiotic resource that can be used to communicate interest and engagement with public needs, even though at the same time these may be farthest from the concerns of the Trust.

Where a person does not look out at the viewer there is a different kind of effect. There is no demand made on the viewer. No response is expected. This is what Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 124) call an ‘offer image’. The viewer is offered the image as information available for scrutiny and consideration. Had the *Cosmopolitan* women not looked out at us, we would have



been invited to simply observe what she does without any required response. This can be seen in the photograph accompanying the *Marie Claire* text on page 45. In the case of the *Cosmopolitan* image on page 8 it appears that this is a demand image that invites us to be like her, after all she is making the effort to acknowledge our existence.

Looking off frame also has meaning potential. When we see a person in an image looking off frame rather than at an object in the image, we are invited to imagine what they are thinking.



**Figure 8** David Cameron (*The Daily Mirror*, 16 April 2010)

The metaphorical association of ‘up’ and ‘down’ is also important in the meaning potential of gaze. Metaphorical association has been shown to be central to visual communication (Arnheim, 1969). For example, we might make a small distance between our thumb and forefinger to represent how close we were to verbally berating someone. In fact no physical proximity was involved in how close we felt at all, as it was simply a feeling of emotion. But the representation, the comparison, allows us to visualise this interaction. In Western culture ‘up’ and ‘down’ have strong metaphorical associations. We say ‘I am feeling down’ or that ‘things are looking up’. We can say that a person ‘has their head in the clouds’, or is ‘down to earth’. We have upper and lower classes and people with higher status are often seated higher than those with lower status. In images we often find politicians, when represented positively, looking off frame and slightly upwards. In images in women’s magazines, in contrast, we often find women looking slightly downwards, alongside captions like ‘Can you trust your boyfriend?’ In the *Marie Claire* image earlier in the chapter, we can see that the woman

looks slightly upwards too as she feels 'up' about the possibility of using the 'hot tips' in the article.

Politicians might be represented looking upwards to lofty ideals and to high status or downwards when they are worried, as in the photograph of David Cameron. Where people in images look directly outwards, this can communicate a sense of dealing with issues straight on, as can be seen in the photograph of Nick Clegg on page 76. These photographs all appeared in the British Press on the same day after a televised leadership debate. The press, eager for a more lively election, presented Clegg as new, direct and unfussy and Cameron as troubled and unnerved by the popularity of this new threat.

In the analysis of quoting verbs earlier in the chapter we looked at three texts that carried images. We can apply our toolkit for analysing gaze to these images in order to look at the way that gaze encourages viewers to evaluate events implicitly.

In the first case study, we found that Tony Blair is represented as being defensive through metapositional quoting verbs such as 'refused to express', 'rejected', 'insisted' and 'conceded'. 'Heckled', 'cries', 'chimed', 'shouted', 'erupt and cry' and 'booed' were the quoting verbs used to emphasise the considerable collective anger of the audience. We found that these verbs are one of the main devices through which his speech is implicitly evaluated. We are not told explicitly that Blair was on the back foot, or that the crowd was impatient and angry. This work was done by the quoting verbs. The photograph of Blair also plays an important part in this more implicit evaluation.

The photograph shows Blair in an offer image. The viewer is invited to watch not in a way that encourages a personal relationship, as in the *Cosmopolitan* image, or that of Nick Clegg, but as an observer. We see Blair in a moment of what appears to be irritation as he regards someone side-on, waving his finger. Had he been represented with the same posture looking at the viewer this would have meant the viewer would have been required to produce a response. But this is not the point of this text, which appears to be to encourage the reader to see Blair as remote, struggling and as a failure. Again it is notable that news readers here are not informed about the details of the war. They are not provided with facts upon which conclusions about Blair's activities and decisions can be put in context. Both in terms of language and visual, the reader is only encouraged to evaluate the personality of the politician. We could imagine the different effect of the text were we shown an image of bodies of civilians mutilated in the streets of villages of Iraq.

We find an even more extreme use of a close-shot in the photograph accompanying the text about Gordon Brown's misspelling of a soldier's name. Here we are encouraged to focus closely on his suffering. We find him looking off frame, slightly downwards. Again the viewer is invited to look at the participant as an observer rather than being invited into an interaction. We see Brown in a slumped position touching his own face, thoughtful, where the downwards gaze here appears to suggest negative thoughts. This image objectifies Brown as a man who is not fit to be appointed as Prime Minister again at the upcoming general elections. What we can see from both of these stories is that powerful evaluation of participants can be accomplished not only overtly

or through sensationalist headlines, but much more subtly through their representation in images.

## Poses

A photographer, who specialised in taking publicity shots of musicians for record companies, interviewed by one of the authors said that postures of the artists must suggest something about them, whether they are approachable, independent or moody, whether they are to be thought of as a unit or as individuals. She said she would photograph a boy band being playful and cheeky. This would mean they would be moving, perhaps jumping around in order to convey energy and fun, be touching each other in order for them to appear sensual and affectionate and have open postures to appear approachable, and would smile to suggest friendliness, look romantic or even 'snarl' a little to show a very mild sense of unconformity. In contrast, she would show an indie band as not giving out energy, so they would not jump around but have more closed or self-contained body shapes. They would be disengaged from the viewer, certainly not touching and she said she would find a way to distinguish the members to emphasise that they were individuals, often through making them strike slightly different and 'odd' postures. We can see that these simple decisions about poses can be connotators of identities and broader ideas. The boy band is available for the romantic fantasies of the younger fans. The indie band must appear darker, troubled and non-mainstream, even if they rely on a rather familiar set of connotations to communicate this.

According to Barthes (1973), poses are one important realm of connotation in images that are able to signify broader values, ideas and identities. Image makers therefore can rely on these established meanings to shape how we will perceive the ideas, values and behaviours of those persons depicted.

In the case of the *Cosmopolitan* image in the Introduction of this book, what kinds of discourse does her posture connote? What broader ideas and values are communicated by the way the woman is standing? She is leaning towards the computer keyboard as if about to press a key yet is clearly doing nothing of the kind. Of course this leaning posture will be one reason the page editor has chosen this image to illustrate an item on exercising. She also has one hand on her hip and her torso appears curved rather than rigid and straight. We can bring out the meaning potential of these if we consider a man striking the same pose. Placing hands on hips is one way we can communicate that we are squaring up to a person. If we place our legs slightly apart and our hands on our hips we take up physical space. We can imagine a much less confident and shy posture where we might take up little space. Yet when this posture is combined with curvature, something feminine is suggested. The model in this image is taking up space and appears confident, yet at the same time feminine. Of course pose should in all cases be considered in relation to other iconographical features, such as objects, setting and clothing.

So we can ask whether a pose involves taking up space or not and whether the pose is an open or closed one. We can also ask whether a pose suggests

either activity or stillness. In this case, the pose of the *Cosmopolitan* woman suggests activity. Often in women's lifestyle magazines we find photographs of women who are jumping in the air or waving their arms about. While it appears that they are doing nothing in concrete, this helps to bring a sense of fun and energy to the magazine. Again, this is important in connoting discourses of female identity that take women outside the mother/housewife role.

We can also ask if a pose suggests relative bodily control and discipline or the opposite. We find soldiers standing in controlled postures whereas we might find a group of teenagers standing in slumped or loose poses. This physical control and discipline metaphorically represents conformity and obedience whereas the physical lack of deliberate control and regimentation of the body in the case of the teenagers represents the opposite.

Recently, one of the authors was driving down a road in a very poor neighbourhood. Four youths of around 14 years of age walked out into the road so that he had to slow right down. They walked lazily and slouched with arms hanging, connoting lack of interest and lack of discipline, when in fact this manoeuvre of hassling drivers had been experienced on several occasions by the author and clearly required some dedication and organisation. We can imagine the difference had the youths walked out into the road, but stiffly and upright. This would not have communicated the same meanings.

In the text above we find Tony Blair appearing to be quite rigid. In this case, the control suggests tension and seriousness. Of course the firm gaze is also an important part of pose in this case. Below, in contrast, we find Nick Clegg in relaxed pose. This image was carried in the press prior to the general election in 2010, when he was being depicted as posing a real threat to the other party leaders, which in fact, as it turned out, he was not. Photographs tended to show him in relaxed, loose poses.

In the text above we showed how quoting verbs represented Blair as defensive, threatened and disapproved of by the audience. The image shows him not being composed and commanding, but being aggressive and cross, waving his finger. We could imagine the same text, but with an image of Blair in the fashion of the Clegg image. Because of the pose and gaze we would have been encouraged to feel much more sympathy and warmth towards him.

In the image accompanying the *Marie Claire* work item in the last chapter, pose is also an important connotator of broader meanings. While the text communicates a cynical self-interest, using trendy language and confident directives along with technical business terms, the image appears much softer, creative and pleasant. Importantly, her pose shows her sitting looking very relaxed, gazing out of the window, not blankly, which would suggest boredom. She also has a positive, contemplative smile.

When we analyse what is connoted by pose, we can ask a number of basic questions:

- To what extent does the person take up space or not?
- Do they perform for the viewer or are they self-contained?
- Is there an emphasis on relaxation or intensity?
- Does the pose suggest openness or closedness?



**Figure 9** Nick Clegg relaxed (*The Guardian*, 16 April 2010)

- If there is more than one person, to what extent do they mirror each other or strike different postures?
- To what extent are they depicted as being intimate, in close proximity, or is there some indication of distance?

## Conclusion

In Chapter 2 we dealt with more general lexical and visual content analysis. In this chapter we began to ask more specific questions of texts. We saw how very specific semiotic choices, through quoting verbs, gaze and poses, can be used to implicitly communicate kinds of identities and in turn evaluate the actions of participants. As we will continue to do throughout this book, we saw the value of systematically showing what kinds of semiotic choices characterise representation of different participants. What is important is that these choices, which may not necessarily be attended to consciously by casual viewers, are able to communicate broader discourses, values, ideas and sequences of activity that are not openly stated. It is these, the meanings that remain either implicit or only connoted in a text, that we must always observe to detect and make explicit. We must explain why a particular politician or other social actor is represented with particular quoting verbs, gaze and pose.