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Introduction

This book explores an area common to two academic disciplines: linguistics and international relations. As the phrase international relations has been accepted by scholars and by everyone else, it cannot be avoided completely, though, whenever possible, the phrase interstate relations will be preferred. The main reason for this preference is that the book will focus on relations between and among states, rather than nations. Despite the general acceptance of compound terms such as nation-state or occasional nation-for-state substitutions, in most cases every effort will be made to keep the two notions apart. Also, interstate more accurately reflects the book’s primary goal, namely, the search for the elusive ‘state is a person’ metaphor, or the personification of the political state. However, whenever interactions on the world stage are referred to, any established term, for example, international affairs, international politics, international relations, or interstate relations will be assumed to be sufficiently synonymous. For terminological simplicity and maximum coherence, the overarching abbreviation IR will be used in the text, wherever appropriate.

Though relations between states form the bedrock of this project, the book’s major concern is the language used to write and talk about these relations. The combination of the two research areas results in a study exploring a specific kind of language; that is, the language of IR. This language can be perceived as specific owing to the particular environment it is meant to refer to and describe. This environment is a tangled web of tangibles and abstractions which interact and form exceedingly complex events and processes.

From among a plethora of abstract concepts dotting the IR environment, the political state has traditionally attracted the attention of scholars from different disciplines and of many persuasions. Linguists,
notably cognitive linguists, have also shown growing interest in the linguistic sphere of domestic and foreign affairs, where the concept *state* features prominently. The increased attention paid by linguists to the language of IR has coincided with the rebirth of interest in metaphor. The language of politics, whether domestic or international, has provided a fertile ground for over three decades of intense research in conceptual metaphor. Not only have linguistic metaphors been identified in IR discourse, but metaphor as a conceptual phenomenon has been vigorously espoused. One particular proposal of conceptual metaphor, the ‘state is a person’ metaphor, forms the central part of this project.

In many ways, this book is polemical in nature, critiquing conceptual metaphor, in particular personification, for its contribution to the growing ideologization of research. The multiplication of increasingly more detailed conceptual metaphors, whose existence is backed up with little or no linguistic evidence, makes semantics even fuzzier than cognitive linguistics claims it to be. As for linguistic metaphors, their ubiquity and pervasiveness in the language of IR should be submitted to scrutiny. This is not to question metaphor *per se*. It is the deliberately inflated presence of either conceptual or linguistic metaphors that is in doubt. The ‘state is a person’ metaphor takes centre stage in these deliberations.

It is true that occasionally the state is assimilated to a person by the deliberate linguistic attribution to it of human traits. However, this is different from proposing that we ‘think’, ‘conceive of’, or ‘mentally portray’ the state as a person. The marginal use of linguistic personification of the state does not constitute evidence of conceptual personification, ubiquitous and pervasive, as is often stressed. Similarly, proposals resulting in the excessive conceptual metonymization of the state are challenged as spurious and vastly exaggerated. Besides criticism levelled at some cognitive proposals, the book offers an alternative account of the linguistic behaviour of state names. Paradoxically, despite critiquing mainstream cognitive treatments of IR discourse, the solution proposed is hopefully cognitive to some extent.

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the language used to talk and write about so-called actors (or agents) of the IR arena. The tenets of the major IR schools of thought are briefly outlined and the two types of international actors are defined and discussed: nation-states and non-state-actors. The state-actor, despite divergent views expressed in IR literature, remains by far the major player on the international stage. Much of Chapter 1 is devoted to the discussion of various theoretical issues concerning the use of language in relation to the political state. One of these points is the role of perception in foreign policy analysis.
and its possible relation to language and cognition. The highly imagist nature of IR discourse is discussed. One of the most basic image perceptions of the state is that it is an actor, that is, either ‘someone or something that acts’ or ‘someone who performs in theatre/film’.

Chapter 2 is about the politicized side of the language of IR. This chapter is primarily a review of different accounts suggesting that not only is every act of language potentially political, but so is everything else in society. With the widespread ‘political take on language’, numerous linguistic analyses of discourse have insisted on language being a political and social phenomenon. The concept of power struggle, permeating contemporary political discourse and discourse analysis, as well as the hiding and uncovering of hidden facts about reality, emerges in this chapter. Numerous authors have gone to great lengths to prove that political texts contain hidden and highlighted elements, and the hiding and highlighting are handled by means of conceptual metaphor. Metaphor is often shown as a tool for creating new realities. It is also seen as an outcome of creating new realities. The importing of political agendas into metaphor research has turned conceptual metaphor into an ideologized tool.

Chapter 3 deals with metaphor as it is understood by different scholars in language studies. First, the chapter gauges the degree of uncertainty over what constitutes contemporary metaphor studies. Second, after clarifying possible research goals in metaphor studies, the chapter reviews several contrasting approaches to metaphor analysis. Third, particular attention is paid to conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), with its belief in the ubiquity and pervasiveness of conceptual metaphor. Fourth, methods of metaphor identification are sought and reviewed. Metaphor researchers are divided over the issue of what indeed metaphor is, that is, whether it is a language phenomenon or a conceptual phenomenon. Confident proposals for increasingly more detailed conceptual metaphors have multiplied in the literature, though the incessant use of the words conceptualization, understanding, or viewing does not by itself constitute evidence of conceptualizing one thing in terms of another. Finally, a sidestep from cognitive metaphor is taken in favour of applied approaches to the study of metaphor, where focus on language is re-established.

In Chapter 4, the proliferation of metaphors in the language of IR is thoroughly discussed. Rather than assuming some kind of state of the art in the field of IR metaphors, a detailed review of metaphors imposed or installed in IR texts is undertaken. The common claim is that metaphor is hidden and the researcher's task is to uncover it. In some cases,
metaphors are elaborately concealed and the process of uncovering them becomes extremely delicate and sophisticated. The lack of interest in metaphor, characteristic of traditional accounts of IR and political science, has been attributed to the incompatibility of metaphor with reason and the view of metaphor as ‘a mere garment of rational thought’ (Chilton, 1996a: 13) or ‘a convenient label’ (Chilton and Lakoff, 1995: 56). Advances in cognitive linguistics have motivated researchers to argue for the pervading metaphorization of the language of international politics. Although it is claimed that metaphors are often difficult to recognize, IR language is firmly believed to be replete with them. The overarching abstract process of the metaphorization of virtually everything in terms of containers, referred to as containerization, is critically assessed. Finally, the personification of the state is submitted to scrutiny, especially its clandestine functions discussed in the literature. One of the assumptions challenged in this and the next chapter concerns the pervasiveness and ubiquity of the personification of the state.

Chapter 5 reports on the results of the research examining the linguistic behaviour of state names in IR press texts. The goal of the analysis has been to identify cases of personification of the state. Journalistic language for IR has been chosen as the source of data because it is directed to a general, non-specialist audience. Rather than using a regular corpus, texts from *Newsweek* and *The Economist* have formed the linguistic stock that shapes the world views of average readers in our analysis. This manual search is meant to approximate the reading process of major international weekly news magazines by educated readers interested in world affairs. The alleged metaphoricity of journalistic language, commonly attributed to this type of discourse, has not been confirmed in this study. The personification of the state takes place at a fairly low level, meaning 2–5 per cent of the totality of the use of any given name. The low figures have been found to be steady across all five frequency groups of state names under analysis. The results of this analysis do not confirm the view prevailing among cognitive linguists, namely, that of the pervasiveness and ubiquity of personification.

Chapter 6 focuses on metonymy as a possible alternative to metaphor in accounting for personification effects. One of the most common dilemmas dealt with in current cognitive linguistic literature is whether a given phenomenon is metaphorical or metonymic. Depending on what is needed in a given description, the two phenomena are either brought together to look sufficiently similar or taken apart to be considered as very different. None of the criteria proposed by cognitive linguists offer a fully satisfactory means for teasing apart typical metaphors
from typical metonymies. In the words of Kövecses (2002: 144; italics added), by way of metonymy ‘[w]e try to direct attention to an entity through another entity related to it’ and therefore ‘instead of mentioning the second entity directly, we provide mental access to it through another entity’. The idea of ‘providing mental access’ to an entity is challenged in this chapter. Proposals for hypothetical targets of state names dotting the literature are claimed to be largely redundant. As the choice of potential targets is virtually unlimited, the very idea of a mentally accessed target is confusing. Attempted accuracy in pinpointing the correct target of a state name, be it a president, prime minister, chancellor, foreign office, government, citizens, and so on, is illusory. The alternative to the ‘state is a person’ metaphor, the ‘state for institution for persons’ metonymic chain, works some of the time, but it displays arbitrariness in the target selection.

Instead, a more realistic level of predictability is proposed, which avoids fine-tuned, but at the same time arbitrary, pronouncements. The view expressed in Chapter 7 is that the totality of the occurrences of state names can be addressed by means of semantic extensions. The key area in which ‘possible personifications’ have been tentatively selected in Chapter 5 is handled by means of setting-to-participant semantic extensions. This particular type of semantic extension is sufficiently general to accommodate all occurrences marked as carrying human-like qualities. In the vast majority of cases, state names designate settings in which events evolve and individuals with relations between them are accommodated. It is only in a minority of instances that state names occur in more active roles, that is, those of participants. Given vast disproportions in the numbers of occurrences between names-settings and names-participants, it is logical to assume that, derivationally, the former are primary and the latter are secondary.

The distinction between primary and secondary roles inevitably leads to the assumption of extensions of the latter from the former. Semantic extensions are not just claimed to be ubiquitous; they are ubiquitous. Every language expression exhibits some extension of meaning, from meaning A to meaning B. To avoid sweeping generalizations, the phenomenon in question is assigned to a particular type of semantic extension. At the same time, the generality of the semantic extension proposed (setting-to-participant) avoids arbitrary assumptions about the metonymic target (be it a person, prime minister, president, minister, and so on). Also, the generality of the claim put forth matches the overall tendencies observed in the totality of the language data collected.
Parts of the discussion in Sections 7.2.3 and 7.3.1 draw on fragments, and form a revised version, of Sections 3.1 and 3.2 in Twardzisz (2012a: 98–102).

Although the book’s primary concentration by far is on language, IR scholarship can also benefit from some of its observations. For IR scholars, the book offers some insights into the nature of both the language of IR and current research on this type of language. Irrespective of individual IR scholars’ views on metaphor in the language of IR, they can take advantage of a systematic analysis of the current means of talking and writing about the state as an international entity. IR scholars can benefit from this analysis, as little effort has previously gone into examining the role of metaphor in (international) politics and the methodology used in investigating the subject. Furthermore, the analysis stresses the increasing fuzziness and terminological confusion in current linguistic research, which has relevance for IR scholarship.
Most of us have some preconception of world affairs, no matter how incomplete it is. Scholars of IR are not unanimous in their views on what precisely constitutes the scope of the discipline. While the political state used to be considered the major, if not the only, point of interest for theorists of IR, recent decades have witnessed an uncontrolled growth of other international entities. In this chapter, our focus is on the language used in both IR theory and practice whenever specific reference is being made to the major divisions of the world-system. Those divisions have traditionally been called actors (or agents). Both terms evoke the idea either of acting or of those who actively participate in relations and exert their influence upon other actors.

The language of international actorness generally conforms to the language used in any of the major schools of IR. Owing to the multiplicity of studies and approaches, those schools have been given different names. The well-established division of schools in IR can be enumerated as follows: (1) realist, (2) pluralist, liberal, or rationalist, and (3) structuralist, Marxist, or revolutionist. All three paradigms deserve a summary description.

Realism, the oldest tradition in IR, goes as far back as ancient Greece and has become the dominant paradigm within the contemporary discipline of IR (see Beer and Hariman, 1996: 1). The Athenian general Thucydides, Chinese strategist Sun Tsu, Indian statesman Kautilya, Italian diplomat Niccolo Machiavelli, English philosopher Thomas Hobbes, and many others in more recent times have contributed substantially to the realist tradition. Among the commonly accepted characteristic features of the realist doctrine is the deeply flawed nature of humanity, that is, self-interest, pride, anger, and ambition provoking fear and suspicion among people, putting at risk the possibility of
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civilized life (Stern, 1998: 10). In order to maintain security for citizens and stability in day-to-day activities, some higher form of order-keeping is needed. A governor or a sovereign (which in present times usually manifests itself as the state) has become the central feature of realist thinking in IR. Or, as Brown and Ainley (2009: 70) put it, ‘realism offers a state-centric account of the world’. So, in realism, not only does the sovereign state take centre stage in the international arena, but it also interacts with other sovereign states. Foreign policy analysts in the realist camp understand the state as a unitary actor without probing more deeply and analysing the roles of the discrete components of the state’s executive or legislative bodies. For the realist, states are in constant competition for power, the pursuit of which is achieved through maximum concentration on rational calculation, with the least possible distraction by other issues (see Beer and Hariman, 1996: 6). As foreign policy is no philanthropy, competition between and among states may become tense at times, leading to open conflict. Though international wars have recently become infrequent, in classical realism, close to the Hobbesian view, peace ‘is a period of recuperation from the last war and preparation for the next’, as stated in Bull (2002: 23). It should not come as a surprise that ‘[h]istorically, realism flourished during periods of turbulence, articulated by those seeking stability, certainty, and […] increased control/domination’, as noted in Peterson (1996: 271). So, what began in Hobbes’s Leviathan as a theory of human nature became a theory of the state, regarded as a unitary actor which uses military and other forms of power. In an international context, there are no common sentiments or common purposes, but each state attempts to secure its own objective, possibly at the expense of other states (see Stern, 1998: 11).

The second IR paradigm, known as rationalism, liberalism, or pluralism, was elaborated in the writings of the seventeenth-century international lawyer Hugo Grotius, and further developed by the eighteenth-century social philosopher John Locke and the nineteenth-century thinker John Stuart Mill. In this, people are described as more ready to cooperate and to limit their own desires in favour of the long-term good of both individuals and society, which are supposed to remain in harmony. Rational thought, rather than fear, anger, and coercion, results in people behaving more sociably. Humans themselves are considered far more rational than realists have traditionally assumed, and because of this they are ready to limit their desires for their own and their society’s common good. As opposed to the realist assumption about the lack of common sentiments, rationalists have assumed ‘a harmony of interests between self and society’, with
legal and social institutions overlooking ‘a just and reasonable order of things’ (Stern, 1998: 12). In the international arena, some inevitable conflict is mixed with mitigation, adjudication, and cooperation, regulated by accepted procedures of political and economic interaction. The Grotian (or internationalist) tradition, as rationalism is called in Bull (2002: 25), ‘describes international politics in terms of a society of states or international society’. In other words, all states interacting with one another follow the rules and principles founded by institutions of the society, or the collectivity, that these states form. With the growing importance of international institutions and international law, states are still the principal actors in the international arena. Interactions between and among states, through the rationalist lens, are neither fully conflict-bound nor completely harmonious. Pluralists have challenged the assumption that international interactions are limited to inter-state relations only, proposing a mix of other non-, supra-, or sub-state-actors, all weakening the traditional posture of the state. As a result of these proposals, the international arena has become increasingly congested, with multifarious players interacting at different levels.

The foundations of the third framework, referred to as structuralism, Marxism, or revolutionism, can be traced back to the writings of the eighteenth-century theorists Rousseau and Kant, the nineteenth-century philosopher Marx, and a host of writers and radical thinkers who followed in the twentieth and into the twenty-first century. For proponents of this paradigm, the existing order, domestic or international, cannot be tolerated and maintained, unless for strictly tactical purposes (Stern, 1998: 14). With more rifts across, rather than between, states, Marxists propose to criticize and undermine the existing order, as it is corrupt and unjust. The world as it is conserves unjust power relations which favour the stronger, or the privileged, over the weaker, or the underprivileged. Perceived conflicts are transnational, as they juxtapose and affect social strata both within and outside states, taking no account of state structures.

Although realism is presumably the most dominant framework, there have recently been other approaches to the study of IR, raising new issues (see Beer and Hariman, 1996: 6). There have been proposals for analysing international politics at different levels, generating different theories and findings, which makes it difficult to communicate vital subject matter across those levels and theories (Brown and Ainley, 2009: 67). Realism itself has been challenged by many of the newly proposed frameworks in the midst of ‘the intellectual turbulence of changing epistemologies that we identify as post-modernity’, as stated in Peterson
One of them, critical theory, has attempted to undermine the traditionally accepted order, including the international order, with the institution of the sovereign state as a major actor. Postmodernism has been suspicious of any theory claiming absolute and objective truth. Feminism has been both critical and deconstructive in a number of ways. Though not exclusively, it has challenged gender bias in numerous walks of life and has sought to promote women to play more significant roles in IR.

1.1 Actorness in international affairs

Today’s conceptions of the structure of the contemporary world differ from those evolving over the centuries in a number of ways. However, a common feature found in different epochs is the notion of identity, which leads to some form of togetherness among people. Tribalism is probably one of the first forms of such togetherness enjoyed by people. While it is true that some form of statehood has been present since ancient times, individuals have also played an important part in a political unit. As noted in Cassirer (1955: 61, 81, 94), a rational theory of the state has its roots in Greek philosophy, and it was Plato who first coherently posited a theory of the ideal timeless state. In terms of political identities, we refer to the ancient fundamental political community as the city-state or (Greek) polis, which is contrasted with the contemporary basic unit of the nation-state (see Zavadil, 2009: 220). However, it is also true that in ancient Greece it was the inhabitants of a given city-state (‘the Athenians’) rather than the place itself (‘Athens’) that received more attention, and therefore constituted what today we might call the actors (Brown and Ainley, 2009: 71). The tendency of ancient peoples to elevate themselves to the status of international actors was also observed in ancient China, Egypt, India, and possibly in other territories. Waltz (1959: 176) reminds us of the writings of the New Zealand/British philologist Eric Partridge and the Greek historian Herodotus, in which the authors repeatedly invoke various known groups of the ancient world, such as the Greeks, the Jews, and the Persians, who thought of themselves as better than other similar groups. The Greek city-state system, which had disintegrated by the middle of the fourth century BC, was displaced by the Roman Empire, which recognized no right to the independence of the peoples constituting this organism. Although the Roman Empire had collapsed by the fourth century AD, it gave way to a system formed by three competing religious authorities rather than states in the contemporary sense. These authorities were: the Western
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