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Discourse Society 2003 14: 309

DOI: 10.1177/09579265030143004

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Discourse & Society
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 SAGE Publications
 (London, Thousand Oaks,
 CA and New Delhi)
 www.sagepublications.com
 Vol 14(3): 309–348
 [0957-9265
 (200305) 14:3;
 309–348; 032084]

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ABSTRACT. In this article, the discourse on immigration and nationality of the French mainstream parties UDF/RPR¹ (1996–1997) is examined. In particular, those discursive properties are studied that appear to be of crucial importance to the manifestation of ethnic dominance. The analysis includes topics, actor-referential strategies, topoi and fallacies in argumentation, and some rhetorical devices that are employed. The findings show that right-wing political discourse is organized by a global strategy of negative other-presentation, not only of the 'others', who are almost systematically derogated, accused of abuse and thus criminalized, but also of their supposed allies, the political Left, object of systematic delegitimation.

KEY WORDS: *France, mainstream Right, parliamentary debates, political discourse, politics, racism, UDF/RPR*

1. Introduction

In spring 2002 the democratic opinion in the world, in Europe, and France in particular, was shocked by the outcomes of the French presidential elections. Together with the UDF/RPR candidate Jacques Chirac the right-extremist candidate Jean-Marie le Pen of the Front National (FN) was the winner in the first round of elections. In particular, leftist voters, whose candidate Jospin was defeated, were traumatized when they felt obliged to vote for the mainstream Right in the second round in order to prevent the extreme-right candidate being elected to the presidency.

Research has shown that immigration is among the most important issues influencing the decision of FN voters to vote for the party (the other being law and order) (Betz, 1994). Although the FN is by no means a one-issue party, it has always focused strongly on the 'immigration question'. The FN program is based on the principle of 'national preference': giving priority to people of French origin

and excluding 'the Other' at all levels: social, economic and political. Statements of FN leaders, especially those of Jean-Marie Le Pen, are often provocative. The FN deliberately tries to influence lexical usage, particularly in the domains of immigration, ethnic relations and racism. Has this party succeeded in doing so? What about the discourse of rightist political parties on immigration? Are anti-immigration repertoires equally gaining ground in the discourse of the mainstream Right? In order to examine this, I analyzed the discourse of the French UDF/RPR coalition in parliamentary debates on immigration and nationality during 1996–1997.

In their election program entitled 'Un nouvel élan pour la France' (1997), the French mainstream Right UDF/RPR is declared to adhere to republican, humanistic values such as tolerance, brotherhood and patriotism. This last value, in particular, is emphasized using the formula: 'faire gagner la France, partout et toujours' (make France win, everywhere and always). The ambition of the UDF/RPR coalition is to make France the engine of Europe. The 1997 election program of the UDF/RPR does not speak explicitly of immigration or (anti) racism. Only the need to fight against illegal immigration and illegal work is explicitly mentioned. All other areas that are important for the immigrant population are implied in general objectives such as the equality of opportunities, a school 'that favors citizenship' and social support 'for those who need it'. This general absence of a specific policy is clearly related to the strong preference of these parties for assimilationist policies, as exemplified in the following fragment from a report of an UDF commission entitled 'Immigration, aujourd' hui et demain' (Immigration, today and tomorrow):

(1)

(. . .) soit prendre la nationalité du pays d'accueil et s'assimiler en se liant étroitement au destin de la France tout en conservant de leur spécificité culturelle les éléments compatibles avec le modèle culturel français, soit refuser cet engagement et s'efforcer de rejoindre la société de leur cœur, car il serait malhonnête et inadmissible de demeurer en France tout en restant lié à un Etat étranger, arabo-islamique, par exemple, et constituer en quelque sorte une entité autonome, voire hostile dans le pays d'accueil. (UDF, 1997)

(. . .) or take the nationality of the receiving country and assimilate by relating intimately to the fate of France, while keeping from their cultural specificities those elements that are compatible with the French cultural model or refuse that commitment and take efforts to join the country of their heart because it would be dishonest and inadmissible to stay in France while remaining linked to a foreign state, arabo-islamic, for example, and constitute, so to speak an autonomous, even hostile, entity in the receiving country.

Assimilation apparently implies inclusion. The research reported in this article shows, however, that the discourse of the Right on immigration and nationality is characterized by major exclusive features. Similar to the right-extremist Front National, the mainstream Right uses strategies of positive self- and negative other-presentation, associates immigrants with problematic social phenomena

and expresses fear about the decline of the French civilization. The discourse of the Front National, unlike the mainstream Right, is consistently rooted in a social-Darwinist ideology and oriented towards institutionalizing discriminatory practices such as policies of 'national preference' (Van der Valk, 2002). The discourse of the Right, however, is not only less explicit, it is also more contradictory. More positive approaches, such as emphasizing republican values, co-exist with more negative, prejudiced approaches. Although the mainstream Right is worried about the threat of racism and right-extremism, it is more oriented towards delegitimizing the Left than the Extreme-Right. The effect is that anti-immigration stances are overemphasized in order to be distinguished from the viewpoints of the Left.

2. Background

As a result of labor migration or of the independence of former colonies, France has experienced significant immigration since the beginning of the 19th century. Labor and colonial immigration has given way more recently to the arrival of asylum seekers from countries at war (Papademetriou and Hamilton, 1996).

French immigration policies are constructed around three main principles: containment of the migration 'flows', prevention of illegal immigration, and the integration of immigrants who are accepted as legal residents. French immigration laws, which regulate the entry and residence of foreigners, date back to 1945. Since then, 25 modifications have been made, the majority since 1980 (Barats-Malbreil, 1996) (for a discussion of the main provisions, see Barats-Malbreil, 1996 and CNCDH, 1993). Since 1990, the tendency in most European countries has been to control and severely restrict migration flows. In France, until the summer of 1997, these restrictions were mainly implemented through the so-called Pasqua Laws of 1993, which facilitated identity controls, restricted the possibilities for family reunification, instituted the status of 'asylum seeker' and reformed the nationality code (for a discussion of the Pasqua Laws, see Costa-Lascoux, 1993). As a result, many people who for many years had been residing legally in France were retroactively 'irregularized' and second-generation immigrants remained foreigners without knowing or wanting to (Webber, 1997). Several years later, in 1997, the so-called Debré Laws, which specifically address the prevention of illegal entry and residence, further refined this restrictive system.

The concept of 'integration' as a policy goal addressing the issue of legal immigrants' cultural differences became dominant after the 'headscarves affair' in 1989. It then gained victory over two competing concepts, 'insertion' (which presupposes the protection of differences) and 'assimilation' (which presupposes the suppression of differences) and was imposed as a compromise by the Socialist government (Bonnafous, 1992). The concept was quickly institutionalized, mainly by the efforts of different ministerial bodies and the 'Haut Conseil pour l'Intégration' which was instituted in 1990 by its first minister Michel Rocard.

Since then, French policies have favored integrating 'immigrés' once they have been accepted as legal residents.

The French model of integration is consciously constructed and opposed to the British–American multicultural model that is based on the recognition of ethnic groups as communities. This integration 'à la française' operates at the level of the individual. In the spirit of the indivisible, civil Republic, the principles of equal rights and duties (despite diversities) encapsulated in the Declaration of Human Rights are opposed to the logic of ethnic minorities as represented by the British–American model (Farine, 1993). Notions of 'community', 'cultural pluralism', or any concept that emphasizes the importance of the immigrants' culture of origin are rejected because they are assumed to reflect an immigrant's state of non-integration. This state is believed to engender social problems between immigrants and French society, and thereby threaten social cohesion which, in turn, would favor the development of racism. 'Communautarism', in the dominant vision, is considered a danger (CNCDH, 1996)² (for a discussion of the French model of integration, see Farine, 1992, 1993; Perotti, 1992, 1993; for an analysis of multiculturalism as a negatively valued form of differentialism, and as opposed to the positively valued French model of individual assimilation, see Todd, 1994; for a [French] vision on multiculturalism that goes beyond, and indeed somehow reconciles traditional dichotomies of universalism versus particularism, the private versus the public, see Touraine, 1997; see also Liauzu, 1999).

From 1995 until 1997 France was governed by a right-wing coalition of the RPR and the UDF. In 1997, this right-wing coalition was defeated by the *Parti Socialiste* (PS). In the election campaign of 1997, Jospin, leader of the PS, had promised to repeal the Pasqua and Debré Laws. Correspondingly, the issues of revising the immigration and nationality laws and of developing a 'regularization' procedure for illegal foreigners were high on the new government's political agenda. The new government proposed several modifications to the immigration and nationality laws – not including their promised repeal, however – that largely followed the recommendations of Patrick Weil, a social scientist who specialized in immigration questions (Weil, 1997). In spite of the government's former declarations of intent, the draft bill Chevènement did not aim to abrogate the Pasqua and Debré Laws, not even their most contested clauses. Many clauses that left-wing MPs formerly considered to constitute 'aggression against individual liberties', to be 'contrary to the constitution' and to 'violate the principle of equality' were maintained.³

3. *Theoretical and methodological framework*

The methodology of this study is imbedded in a complex and multidisciplinary theoretical framework pertaining to discourse, social cognitions (beliefs, values, knowledge, ideologies, etc.) and society (for the relation between theory and method in discourse analysis, see Van Dijk, 2000a). The conceptual notions of

racism and discourse are central to this framework. Racism is defined as a complex, multifaceted system of domination and exclusion that produces social inequality between different ethnic groups. This system is (re)produced by social practices of dominant groups including their discourses and by shared social representations (Moscovici, 1981). These social representations imbue these practices with meaning and thus legitimate social inequality and the daily organization of dominance and exclusion. Note that in my conception, racism not only refers to overt and violent forms of social domination, but also to more indirect and subtle forms expressed in daily practices. It should, however, be stressed that racism is not seen as a property of individual persons, but rather as a dynamically changing, ideological dimension of social practices, including discursive practices. Racism is a historically specific ideological construction (Hall, 1980). It changes with time and with the economic-political and sociocultural conditions under which it functions (see among others Bowser, 1995; Hall, 1980, 1996; Wieviorka, 1991). Hall warns against the misleading viewpoint that '(...) because racism is everywhere a deeply anti-human and social practice, that therefore it is everywhere the same – either in its forms, its relations to other structures and processes, or its effects' (1996: 435). Contemporary forms of racism are often characterized as cultural racism or new racism. Martin Barker, in his study of the new racism in the UK, points to two changes in the post-war ideological legitimization of racist practices: the superiority of one's own culture and nation is no longer emphasized either openly or straightforwardly. Racist practices are now legitimized on the basis of so-called 'principal otherness'. Presumed biological-genetic differences in the post-war period are replaced by differences between cultures, nations or religions represented as homogenous entities. 'Race' is coded as culture, ethnicity or religion. Barker (1981) characterizes the new racism as pseudo-biological culturalism. In this vision, the building blocks of the nation are not the economy or politics, but human nature. 'It is part of our biology and our instincts to defend our way of life, traditions and customs against outsiders – not because these outsiders are inferior, but because they belong to other cultures' (Barker, 1984: 78). Discourse is viewed as a powerful mechanism in our modern post-industrial, communication and information society. Discourse is central to the reproduction of society. Social processes, developments and changes are reflected in texts. Discourse as a social practice plays a crucial role in the production, legitimation and reproduction of racism as an expression of ethnic dominance and exclusion.

POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Political discourse is a form of public discourse. The defining features of public language include its emphasis on abstract social, political and economic forces and on people acting as social agents rather than as individuals (Kress, 1986). Public discourse is predominantly the language of political and professional processes and institutions, as opposed to private language with its subjective, individual and emotional expressions⁴ (Van Zoonen and Holtz-Bacha, 2000).

Political discourse is predominantly argumentative,⁵ oriented towards persuasion.

Politics and language are closely intertwined. Talk is the core business of politics. In a broad sense, many forms of public text and talk have sociopolitical conditions and consequences and/or topics. It is consequently important to distinguish between political discourse in the narrow sense and other forms of public discourse that may have political implications. Wilson (1990: 179) concisely defines political talk as: 'The real-world linguistic activities of practicing politicians'. He argues that political language is no different from any other language. Many everyday linguistic devices occur in a more extreme form in politics, as a result of which the relationship between explicit and implied meaning is particularly interesting in political discourse. Van Dijk (1997a, 2000a) discusses the general structural, functional and contextual properties of political discourse in the narrow sense, focusing on parliamentary debates in particular, thus offering a specific frame of analysis. He argues that political discourse, first of all, may primarily be defined and studied contextually in terms of the participating actors, their social function, goals and the political institutions and cognitions involved. It may, moreover, be investigated at the structural level even though few exclusive features are to be found there, although in parliamentary debates the forms of address for opening and closing discussions are standardized. On a third level of analysis, the semantic level, exclusive features do not occur either. For this reason, according to Van Dijk (1997a: 24)

... once we have analyzed the particular properties of political contexts, political discourse analysis in many respects will be like any other kind of discourse analysis. The specifics of political discourse analysis therefore should be searched for in the relations between discourse structures and political context structures.

These non-exclusive, though possibly typical and interesting, discourse structures and strategies are the local and global meanings and the formal structures and strategies examined in this study.

Because political discourse represents a form of social action it may and should, ultimately, also be analyzed as this level of social action, e.g. as an instrument in the exercise of power, control and exclusion or, by contrast, as an instrument for achieving equality and democracy. For Critical Discourse Analysts this relationship between discourse structures and meaning relative to the level of the accomplishment of social relations is a crucial one, assuming that 'any property of discourse that contributes locally to the successful accomplishment of these actions may thus be seen as a manifestation of ethnic dominance – or as a means to challenge it (. . .) a major, but generally ignored or denied contextual function of these debates' (Van Dijk, 2000a: 78).

Finally, Van Dijk points to the influential role of political and in particular parliamentary discourse on the level of communication, where it strongly influences the mind of the public at large.

For the purpose of this study, I classify discourse as political when it is acted

out by political actors in the context of specific political institutions, such as political parties, and has a direct functional role as a form of political action, such as in meetings or debates, as part of the political process, such as the creation and passage of legislation or elections (for an elaborate discussion of the definition of political discourse, see Van Dijk, 1997a; for other studies of political discourse, see Beard, 2000; Blommaert and Bulcaen, 1997; Chilton and Schäffner, 1997; Feldman and De Landtsheer, 1998; Reisigl and Wodak, 2001; Straehle et al., 1999; Van Dijk, 1993, 1997b; Van Zoonen and Holz-Bacha, 2000).

POLITICAL DISCOURSE ON 'L'IMMIGRATION'

Unlike the preceding 20 years, in which differing opinions on the subject were largely emphasized, 'immigration' was not really an issue in the campaigns of the traditional parties during the March 1993 parliamentary elections, the European elections of 1994 and the presidential elections of 1995. Only for the Front National was it a central issue (Oriol, 1995). Candidates from the mainstream conservative parties did not raise the question at all, nor did they discuss it in a repressive manner similar to the FN. The leftist parliamentary parties either kept silent (except for some greens) or were more or less outspoken, depending on the circumstances: silence in public relations programs addressed to the public at large, more elaborated viewpoints when they were requested by grassroots organizations. The whole issue was left to the FN and other right-extremist candidates (see Oriol, 1995). The rise of the FN and its opinions is certainly related to this lack of an alternative vision from the democratic parties. Through their silence, or even their alignment, these parties legitimated the viewpoints of the FN. The problem of the relationship between the FN and the mainstream (conservative) parties in France is the lack of a so-called 'cordon sanitaire' around the FN.⁶

These conclusions from Paul Oriol's study of election programs correspond to the findings of Bonnafous in her 1991 research.⁷ She also pointed to the inconsistencies of the traditional parties in their approach to the question of 'immigration'. These parties did not include the immigration issue in their overall political arguments during the period under study (1974–1984). For them, it was a marginal question. The FN, on the Extreme-Right, was the first to theorize the issue and subsequently set the terms for the debate. The other parties followed and even the leftist newspapers, Bonnafous shows, accepted the definition of the situation as an issue of integration, with the foregrounding of North Africans for special attention, as initiated by the Extreme-Right.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

A major focus of this article is the political discourse of parliamentary debates. Although parliamentary debates represent an influential and authoritative genre of discourse, surprisingly few studies on this subject existed until the late 1990s (see Carbó, 1992; Harris, 2001; Rojo and Van Dijk, 1997; Seidel, 1988, 1989; Ter Wal, 2000; Van Dijk, 2000c; Van der Valk, 2000; Wilson, 1990). Largely following Carbó, I define a parliamentary debate as a highly structured institutional

and political speech-event whose main declared goal is to produce legal and policy instruments for the benefit of the nation. It is structured by a set of legal values in which faith in rational argumentation and counter-argumentation, order, clarity, justice and equality are assumed to prevail (Carbó, 1992). This institutional speech-event, moreover, is determined by the current political regime, by the political culture as it has historically developed over a long period, and as it currently exists, and by the social formation in which it functions. The aim of parliamentary debates is to exercise control over legislation and rule-making as a strategy for governing the country. Political parties, as representatives of different sections of the population, defend or oppose draft bills proposed by the government, define policies and control their implementation. In doing so, these politicians oppose their political opponents and the government or, on the contrary, align themselves with other parties and the government. In short, they engage in adversarial and confrontational processes. The institution in which these practices are enacted, the parliament, may alternatively, following Harris (2001) be characterized as a 'community of practice' with its own set of formal and informal rules and regulations in which intentional and explicitly face-threatening (and face-enhancing) acts accord with the expectations of its members (for the contents of formal rules and regulations in French parliament, see *Assemblée Nationale*, 1997). Thus, as Harris emphasizes '... though Members speak as individual agents on particular occasions, there is a strong sense in which their linguistic behavior is constrained and defined not only by their respective political roles but also by the discourse practices of the community' (2001: 454). This practice is marked by a high level of formality owing to its formal context in combination with politeness strategies that make use of deliberately insulting and face-threatening lexical items (for politeness strategies in political discourse, see Harris, 2001). Political actors using these strategies try to influence public opinion in order to gain votes and thus power. Parliament is the medium par excellence by which political discourse, via the media, including the televising of parliamentary debates, reaches and influences the public.

INVESTIGATED CATEGORIES

The expression of ethnic inequality in the politics of the Right is the central focus of this article. As Van Dijk has elaborated, background opinions are expressed, especially via semantic characteristics, while the way in which this happens, the stylistic, rhetorical and pragmatic aspects, are determined particularly by the context and used to emphasize the semantic dimensions of the discourse and to enhance its persuasive effects (Van Dijk, 2000b). Following this insight, this research focuses especially on the semantic characteristics of the data under study. Other structures are discussed as far as they fulfill a supportive and emphasizing function. Therefore, the following general discourse-analytical dimensions are focused upon:

- *Semantic strategies.* Discourse may express and constitute meaning in many

different ways. In numerous research projects on ideological, especially racist, discourse, it was found that the overall semantic strategy of the majority of such discourses may be represented by the following four basic principles, which may be expressed in the text with the help of multiple linguistic devices:

Emphasize positive things about us.
 Emphasize negative things about them.
 De-emphasize negative things about us.
 De-emphasize positive things about them. (Van Dijk, 2000b)

- *Argumentation*. Because political discourse predominantly has a persuasive function, its formal structure is frequently argumentative. These arguments as well, including not only their content, but sometimes also their structure, may provide information about underlying ethnic opinions.
- Given the political nature and the institutional context of the data under study, sociopolitical strategies of *legitimation* and *de-legitimation* are another important area of focus: how are sociopolitical exclusions legitimated? How are alternative approaches de-legitimated and excluded from the accepted order of discourse? How do political actors legitimate their own viewpoints and policy options? 'Legitimation (. . .) is a discourse that justifies 'official' action in terms of the rights and duties, politically, socially or legally associated with that role or position. Indeed, the act of legitimation entails that an institutional actor believes or claims to respect official norms, and hence to remain within the prevalent moral order' (Van Dijk, 1998: 256).

In addition to taking the above-mentioned theoretical considerations into account, the selection of concrete discursive categories to be examined was made after a review of the relevant discourse characteristics, as identified in texts about ethnic relations in prior research (Reeves, 1983; Van Dijk, 1987, 1991, 1993) and on the basis of pragmatic considerations of potential comparability. Thus, it was decided to investigate the topics of the discourse and of the argumentation (topoi, fallacies) developed to underscore opinions or justify practices on a general level. Other semantic moves included in the research project were forms of indirect language use, such as implicitness. Another focus was the local text characteristics of rhetoric (metaphors, irony, repetition, euphemisms, hyperboles, etc.) and actor-referential strategies.

TOPICAL ANALYSIS

A topic is what a sentence, discourse fragment or text is about. It is, as Tomlin et al. (1997) elaborate, the starting point of the utterance as a message and also the center of attention. It expresses the most important information of a discourse (fragment). A topic has an important cognitive function of control in the preparation or understanding of a speech. A topic may also be defined as a semantic macrostructure regulating the overall coherence and global meaning of a text including ideological dimensions (Van Dijk, 1995). It is a text feature that

facilitates text comprehension because it evokes a mental model (Tomlin et al., 1997).

SEMANTIC STRATEGIES OF SELF- AND OTHER-PRESENTATION

Discourse may express and constitute meaning in many different ways and at many levels of analysis. Discourse meaning is the primary level for the manifestation of beliefs, opinions and underlying ideologies. An important focus of attention, therefore, is the semantic strategies of self- and other-presentation.

ACTOR DESCRIPTION

Strategies of self- and other-presentation are among others acted out in the nature of actor and participant representation. For instance, ethnic minority actors may be included or excluded, they may be represented in specific or more general terms, named or unnamed, negatively portrayed or positively attributed with positive or negative traits (see Van Leeuwen, 1996). They may alternatively be depicted in homogeneous categories or subdivided and differentiated in specific groups. The same holds for the description of in-group actors and participants. These variations in actor descriptions, and in particular their variation for in-groups and out-groups, may reveal dimensions of the opinions of speakers on immigrants and ethnic relations.

ARGUMENTATION

As political discourse predominantly has a persuasive function, its formal structure is frequently argumentative. These arguments, in particular their content, may give information about underlying opinions, e.g. on ethnic relations. The purpose of argumentation as a social activity is to resolve a difference of opinion 'by means of exploring the relative justification for competing standpoints' (Van Eemeren et al., 1987: 218; for other approaches to argumentation, also see Van Eemeren et al., 1987). The primary focus in this approach is thus not on the form or content of arguments, but rather on interactions and procedures. Pragmadiialectical research has distilled 10 central rules that constitute the common ground for argumentative discussions. Half of these are related to the process of argumentation, they prescribe the rules of conduct for participants in a discussion in order to better resolve differences of opinion. These I refer to as the process-argumentation rules. The other half of the rules for critical discussions are less related to the process and more to the product, to the arguments as they are produced in the process of argumentation. I refer to these as the product-argumentation rules. Three argumentative devices have been examined in the data under scrutiny, topoi, counterfactuals and fallacies.

TOPOI

'Topos' is a concept that originated in the classical argumentation theory of Aristotle. Literally it means 'place' or, in the words of Erasmus, 'seat of arguments' (Goyet, 1993: 415). Historically, topoi, as well as *lieux* in French, *common-*

places in English and *gemeenplaatsen* in Dutch, have been conceptualized in many different ways (see, e.g. Goyet, 1993). Broadly speaking, a contemporary consensus exists about the following properties (Plantin, 1993). A topos is a system of public knowledge, a discursive resource in which one may find arguments for sustaining a conclusion. A topos may be characterized by its social use in the political arena rather than by its formal properties, although certain structural features have been identified, in particular by Ducrot and Anscombe (1983) and by Anscombe (1995). Topoi are general principles that support an argument without themselves constituting the argument itself (Anscombe, 1995). They are the consensual, self-evident issues of a community, laws of life at any one time, 'basic principles of human thought and conduct' (Eggs, 1993: 404). Topoi vary, however, according to time, place and domain of knowledge. The topoi of specific domains, such as the medical or legal domain, are called 'lieux spécifiques', 'specific places' rather than 'common places' (Nicolet, 1993). Topoi are linked to tradition, lessons of earlier times that are revived around new issues, based in custom or originating in authoritative sources such as religious texts, e.g. the Bible. They are transmitted from generation to generation. The topoi of former times have sometimes developed into the proverbs of present times. They are often hyperbolic, lacking nuances (Bouvier, 1993). They are general in that they may be applied to many different situations rather than being limited to specific situations at specific moments (Anscombe, 1995). Although topoi refer to socially shared beliefs, they are not always absolutely common. Cicero already confirmed 'les lieux communs ne sont pas . . . communs, ils ne sont pas à la portée du premier venu' (cited in Goyet, 1993: 421). Moreover, it is not exceptional for a topos to exist simultaneously alongside its opposite (Anscombe, 1995; Bouvier, 1993). Leff argues that topoi should not be considered static bases but mobile strategies for informing human debates on contested issues: 'le cœur même de la rhétorique humaniste' (1993: 513). Commonplaces are supportive strategic tools used by competitors in the social arena in the process of adapting to reciprocal arguments. Van Eemeren et al. (1987) also emphasize the procedural character of topoi. They conceptualize a topos as an 'argumentative move in the discursive arena'. In my view, however, commonplaces are the socially shared beliefs underlying and (discursively) informing argumentative moves, thus rendering them more effective. It is their effectiveness as tools of persuasion that make topoi attractive to politicians who aim to have a decisive influence on policies and to gain adherence and voters. They provide the (standard) arguments, typical for specific issues. For instance, immigrants may primarily be seen as striving to benefit from our welfare provisions or as a burden on our economy.

FALLACIES

In the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation, fallacies are more broadly defined as transgressions of discussion rules within an argumentative text or discussion (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 2000; Van Eemeren et al., 1995). Van

Dijk (2000a) argues that fallacies, as a formal level of discourse, are not ideologically variable, in the sense that their use varies according to the ideological opinions of the language user. Nonetheless, the fallacies that are employed in the discourse on minorities are important for my analysis because, on a semantic level, they may signal, emphasize or de-emphasize ideological meanings, particularly as fallacies are often accompanied by implicitness (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 2000). Such implicit language-use has the advantage that it enables differing interpretations: the use of fallacies may amongst others be denied. This is particularly the case for those fallacies that are violations of the product argumentation rules. Moreover, several fallacies such as the *ad hominem* fallacy are used as rhetorical devices to convince the public and are thus likely to be utilized by politicians engaged in argumentative debates. More generally, the fallacies that are violations of the process-argumentation rules are used particularly in order to delegitimize opponents' standpoints. Some fallacies that may be distinguished and frequently occur in discourse on ethnic issues are populism, overgeneralization, setting up straw men, the fallacy of the slippery slope, the *ad hominem* fallacy and the fallacy of compassion.

COUNTERFACTUAL ARGUMENTS

The term counterfactual is used for argumentative moves that are based on imaginary situations. An imaginary situation is constructed in order to better predict expected negative consequences that are used to persuade the audience of the necessity of specific policy measures. Counterfactuals are frequently formulated in 'if . . . then . . .' sentences.

RHETORIC

Rhetorical *figurae* are known for their persuasive function. This function may be both intensifying or mitigating in relation to semantic content. Rhetorical means such as metaphors, irony, hyperboles, euphemisms and rhetorical questions may steer attention, enhance interest and thus reinforce the argumentation of the speaker. Rhetorical tools emphasize meaning. 'Rhetoric (. . .) is essentially geared towards the persuasive communication of preferred models of social events, and thus manages how recipients will understand and especially how they will evaluate such events, for instance, as a function of the interests of the participants. It is therefore not surprising that rhetorical structures play such an important role in ideological manipulation' (Van Dijk, 1998: 208).

4. *The data*

This article presents an analysis of right-wing contributions to French debates on nationality and immigration. The overall corpus consists of debates in the *Assemblée Générale* selected from the *Journal Officiel* 1996–1997. During this two-year period three series of 40 plenary debates were held addressing the issues of immigration and nationality: the discussion of the so-called Debré draft bill on

immigration *Diverses dispositions relatives à l'immigration* [Diverse measures concerning immigration] (17–12 1996 to 26–3 1997, 346 pages); of the Guigou draft bill on nationality *Nationalité* [Nationality] (26–11 1997 to 1–12 1997, 260 pages); and of the Chevènement draft bill on immigration *Entrée et séjour des étrangers en France et droit d'asile* [Entry and residence of foreigners in France and asylum rights] (9–12 1997 to 16–12 1997, 613 pages). A total of 146 MPs participated in the debates analyzed for this study. Fifteen of them are women (for an overview of the political groups represented in French parliament during the period under study, see Annex).

From these three series of debates I made a selection of speeches for a more detailed qualitative analysis. For this article two MPs (one from each party) were in particular selected to illustrate the analysis: Bernard Accoyer of the RPR and François Bayrou of the UDF. Their discourse is representative for many of the analyzed speeches of their right-wing colleagues.

The debates on immigration, and in particular the debates about Minister Chevènement law are very long and often end well after closing time or even after midnight. This is mainly due to innumerable procedural incidents, an extremely high number of amendments and frequent unauthorized interruptions. Although frequently interrupted, the debates generally consist of a sequence of long monologues rather than constituting a real discussion between MPs. Apart from interruptions, another typical interactional characteristic may be identified in the French debates. MPs spend much time and many words acting out their political position on immigration questions within the broader ideological context of their relation to political allies and opponents.

5. *Topical analysis*

The topics discussed in the parliamentary debates are obviously related to the content of the draft bill under discussion and its separate articles. Related to the content of the laws on immigration and nationality, citizenship criteria are discussed as well as residence rights, visa regimes, regularization measures and identity checks. Moreover, and not particularly related to the content of the bills, comparative topical analysis shows relatively high numbers of the following topics. French right-wing MPs often point to the need to develop cooperation to prevent future migration and for integration as a policy objective for legally residing immigrants. They show themselves to be worried about the costs of immigration and the need to adapt to European standards (which are generally considered to be more strict). Right-wing politicians often consider immigrants from a perspective of potential fraud and the abuse of laws and rules. French parliamentary discourse of the Right is replete with references to national political identity and traditions which are considered particular, or even superior, and of references to public opinion, mostly as a legitimating device.

6. Actor description

Actor descriptions were analyzed for their dimension of implied inclusion or exclusion with the help of the system network of Van Leeuwen (1996).

Some of the groups of main actors that are constructed and represented as in- and out-groups in the French parliamentary debates are the political actors in parliament: the government, the Left and the Right, political groups, French citizens and immigrants.

Political actors in the French parliament are normally referred to by the use of pronouns: 'nous' (we) and 'vous' (you). 'Nous' is also used to refer to the French people, especially in the debates on nationality (for an analysis of the use and manipulation of the pronominal system for political effect, see Wilson, 1990). French citizens, moreover, are specified and differentiated in the toponymical characterization 'la France' and/or the ethnonymical designation 'les Français' (the French). Nation-related references such as 'le peuple' (the people), 'la nation' (the nation), 'nos concitoyens' (our co-citizens), 'nos compatriotes' (our compatriots) also frequently occur, excluding those immigrants that acquired French nationality rather than being born French. These references also are highly likely to occur in the nationality debates.

Analysis of actor-referential strategies may highlight the fact that discourses that are apparently about 'them' sometimes actually have 'us' as central focus, as the speech of François Bayrou, leader of the UDF in the debates of nationality exemplifies (Assemblée Nationale, pp. 6412–23): 'The French', 'France' and 'the people' (referring to the French people) are abundantly present as actors in the speech of Bayrou, while it is much more difficult to find actors referring to 'the Others'.

In the first half page of Bayrou's speech, 'le peuple' ('the people') occurs no fewer than 10 times. In his integral speech, 'France', 'les Français', 'le peuple' and 'la nation' (referring to the French nation is meant) occur 54 times. The only actors mentioned relating to migrants and their families are 'jeunes de nationalité étrangère' (youngsters of foreign nationality), 'jeunes étrangers' (foreign youngsters) or only 'les jeunes' (the youngsters), all references to generations, frequently combined with references to their local orientation emphasizing a lack of belonging. These references occur 20 times as actors in Bayrou's speech. One also finds incidental references to 'fils d'étrangers' (sons of foreigners). The 'sans-papiers' (foreigners without documents) are mentioned once.

Bayrou begins his speech with two phrases containing 'le peuple' (the people) five times:

(2)

François Bayrou . . . notre Constitution indique, en son article 2, que le principe de la République est le 'gouvernement du peuple, par le peuple et pour le peuple'. Elle dispose en son article 3 que la souveraineté nationale appartient au peuple et qu'aucune section du peuple ne peut s'en attribuer l'exercice. (p. 6412)

. . . our Constitution indicates, in article 2, that the principle of the Republic is the 'government of the people, by the people and for the people'. In article 3 it is stipulated that national sovereignty belongs to the people and that no section of the people may monopolize its implementation.

The most common term for immigrants, also in the text of the law, is 'étrangers' (foreigners). This category includes the specified, differentiated and associated terms 'illegal foreigners' and 'legal foreigners' (reference based on legal status). Generally, legal foreigners are backgrounded in the speeches of the Right, whereas illegal foreigners are foregrounded and often attributed negative traits. For example, Bernard Accoyer contrasts 'ceux qui sont dans l'illégalité' (literally: those who are in a state of illegality) with 'nos ressortissants qui respectent les lois' (our subjects who respect the law) and 'des étrangers qui sont entrés régulièrement sur notre sol et respectent également nos lois' (foreigners who have legally entered our territory and also respect our laws) (p. 74-17). By adding, to the French and to legal foreigners, the positive trait of respecting the law, it is indirectly suggested that being illegal entails acting illegally. Illegal immigrants are thus criminalized.

The core meaning of the term 'étrangers' (foreigners) (reference based on local orientation) is a lack of belonging. Note the excluding and alienating effect when French citizens of foreign origin are, often on the basis of physical appearance, still called foreigners.

Different designations are used for foreigners without documents, a central issue in French debates on immigration: 'ceux qui sont dans l'illégalité' (those who are in illegality), 'clandestins' (illegal immigrants), 'sans-papiers' (the documentless), 'travailleurs clandestins' (illegal workers). It is remarkable that in the debates much fewer lexical items are used to designate legal foreigners than to designate illegal foreigners.

To distinguish them from illegal immigrants, legal immigrants are characterized as 'étrangers en situation régulière' (foreigners in a legal situation), a common and central element in all these designations being the reference to legal status. 'Belonging' or 'not-belonging' are here exclusively defined in juridical terms.

7. *Argumentation: topoi*

The discourse of the Right about immigration and nationality in France is characterized by a frequent use of topoi. Topoi, commonplaces or 'lieux communs' is an old rhetorical notion referring to the 'socially shared values and maxims of a particular rhetorical community' (Billig, 1993: 58) to which opponents in a discussion might refer. These stereotypical arguments are based on socially shared opinions and may also be found in other discourse samples about immigration. These topoi generally imply simple common sense conclusions. Topoi

that frequently occur in the discourse of the mainstream Right in the French parliamentary debates in 1996–1997 are:

- **Topos of exceptional legislation:**
Our legislation is exceptional, compared to other European countries.
Implied conclusion: other countries are more strict. We should also be more strict.
- **Topos of burden:**
Immigrants are a burden on social expenditure.
Implied conclusion: we must stop immigration by means of strict immigration policies.
- **Topos of unemployment:**
Immigrants cause unemployment.
Implied conclusion: we must stop immigration by means of strict immigration policies.
- **Topos of profit:**
They only come to profit from our country.
Implied conclusion: we do not need such dishonest people.
- **Topos of abuse:**
They are only abusing laws and rules.
Implied conclusion: we should not trust them.
- **Topos of advantage:**
They are given more advantages than the French.
Implied conclusion: the French are discriminated against and must be cared for.
- **Topos of culture:**
Their culture and values are different.
Implied conclusion: they cannot integrate harmoniously and our culture is superior.
- **Topos ‘for their own good’:**
Immigration favors racism and harms the integration of former immigrants.
Implied conclusion: stopping immigration is in the interest of immigrants themselves.
- **Topos of the rise of ‘Right Extremism’:** ‘for our own good’
Flexible immigration laws favor Right Extremism.
Implied conclusion: strict immigration laws discourage the Extreme Right and are better for all of us.
- **Topos of complicity:**
The Left wants to open up our country and to favor illegal immigration.
Implied conclusion: do not trust the Left.
- **Topos of decline:**
The growth of illegal immigration will lead to the decline of our civilization.
Implied conclusion: illegal immigration must be curbed if we want to survive.

I now analyze a short speech in which different topoi occur. The analysis of

topoi is alternated with other discourse features that are typical for immigration debates. The speech is made in a discussion about the categories of persons who may acquire a residence permit for reasons of 'personal and family situations' (Article 4 of the Chevènement Law).

Bernard Accoyer, MP of the RPR, shows his concern about the measures proposed by the government, which will supposedly provoke a flood of immigrants and will heavily weigh on social expenditures. It was better, he ironically argues, to call the law 'the Saint Bernard law' because it is only intended to give a legal and media-oriented follow-up to the 'demagogic improvisation' of the Socialist Party and its friends in the case of certain illegal individuals. Note how the political consequences of this action, the structural character of the problems of the illegal immigrants in Saint Bernard's church, the importance of the solidarity movement and the media impact of the action of documentless foreigners, the victims of the Pasqua and Debré laws are played down by Accoyer, when he speaks of 'some illegal individuals'. Hyperbolically he continues:

(3)

Bernard Accoyer J'ai bien compris que vous préféreriez vous occuper de ceux qui sont dans l'illégalité plutôt que de nos ressortissants qui respectent les lois et des étrangers qui sont entrés régulièrement sur notre sol et respectent également nos lois. (p. 7417)

I have understood that you prefer to strive harder on behalf of those who are illegal than on behalf of our subjects who respect the law and on behalf of those foreigners who have entered our country legally and who respect our laws equally.

The implication is that illegal immigrants do not respect the law. They are thus negatively contrasted with other positively evaluated groups and criminalized while the government is delegitimized. Note that many illegal immigrants, among them the hunger-strikers of St Bernard's church, did not enter the country illegally but were made illegal after they had already been residents of the country, sometimes for many years, when they lost their residence permits after changes in the immigration laws.

Here we find a clear example of the fallacy of the straw man. A fictitious standpoint is ascribed to the government in order to make opposition easier. In this opposition we identify first of all a populist turn:

(4)

Bernard Accoyer Vous avouerez que les Français ne peuvent pas vous suivre en ce domaine. Ils se souviennent des régularisations massives de 1982, des régularisations, massives de 1988 et des 160 000 demandes de régularisation de 1997 qui, avec ce texte, pourront toutes être satisfaites. Ils savent que le regroupement familial multiplie le nombre des régularisations par un facteur élevé. Ils connaissent la fécondité importante de ces familles et savent que ce sont ainsi plusieurs millions d'hommes, de femmes et d'enfants supplémentaires qui seront sur

notre sol, et, si un certain nombre d'entre eux peuvent trouver un travail, ils émargeront largement aux budgets sociaux alors que leur taux de chômage étant au demeurant aggravé, vous en conviendrez, monsieur le ministre, par leur présence même. (p. 7417)

You must admit that the French are not able to follow you in this respect. They remember the massive regularizations of 1982, the massive regularizations of 1988 and the 160,000 requests for regularization of 1997, which, on the basis of this text, may be granted. They know that family reunion multiplies the number of regularizations by a high factor. They know the significant fertility of these families and know that thus several more millions of men, women and children will be on our soil, if some of them may find work, they will largely eat from the manger of the social budget. While their unemployment rates are – unfortunately – still more significant than those of our compatriots, this unemployment rate indeed being high, you will admit this, Minister, by their presence.

We may find four topoi in this counterfactual statement that is replete with intensifying adjectives:

- the topos of the high fertility of migrant families;
- the topos of migrants as causing and thus being responsible for unemployment;
- the topos of migrants' welfare-dependency;
- the topos of numbers.

The implied conclusion of these four topoi is that immigration should be curbed. Note the stylistic repetitive use of 'they know'. . . , 'they remember', . . . 'they know'. . . and 'know'. The fragment also contains an apparent concession (if some of them may find work . . .). The animal metaphor of eating from the manger of the social budget clearly has a negative connotation, suggesting a passive attitude of profiting from our welfare.

Besides acting out a populist strategy by repetitively referring to 'the French', the speaker tries at the same time to strengthen the factual validity of his statements. He thus tries to transform his argumentation into an explanation. His populist argumentation also fulfills the function of justifying his anti-immigrant stance. This is reinforced by the use of repetitions.

The government is indirectly accused of ignoring the will of the French. This indirect accusation is part of a strategy of impression management, aimed at legitimizing the standpoints of the Right and by implication delegitimizing the Left. Delegitimation is more explicitly expressed in the first sentence of this discourse fragment. The topos of 'they are a burden for our social funds' recurs several times in Accoyers' speech.

(5)

Bernard Accoyer Nous savons que l'un des problèmes causant des tensions que nous sommes unanimes à déplorer est dû aux étrangers, je veux parler des

prélèvements opérés en leur faveur sur les finances sociales, et tout spécialement sur la branche famille. (p. 7417)

We know that one of the problems that causes tensions that we un-
animously deplore is due to the foreigners, I want to speak of the levies
implemented for their benefit on the social budget, and more
especially on family allowances.

Accoyer is trying here to show that the topos of the burden is a consensual issue that all relevant stakeholders in France, the French and the political class, agree about: 'nous savons' (we know), 'nous sommes unanimes à déplorer' (we un-
animously deplore).

After having elaborated his stereotypical argument and most of all the burden topos, Bernard Accoyer concludes in one of his final counterfactual statements:

(6)

Bernard Accoyer Une telle situation contribuera à nourrir le chômage et les tensions les plus perverses et les plus dangereuses pour notre pays. (p. 7418)

Such a situation will contribute to the encouraging of unemployment and the most perverse and most dangerous tensions for our country.

The speaker leaves implicit and thus to the imagination of the audience what the most 'perverse and most dangerous tensions' are and what 'such a situation' is. Obviously he is indirectly referring to ethnic conflicts. Vagueness in such a discursive context has the function of avoiding the impression of negative other-presentation. Parallelism (les plus . . . et les plus . . .) here adds to a hyperbolic formulation.

The authority of former president, General De Gaulle is used to legitimate the straightforward racist content of Accoyers statements (fallacy of authority):

(7)

Bernard Accoyer Vous vous en flattez, et je vous en félicite, d'être un républicain, et vous avez multiplié les références au général de Gaulle, qui a dit, lors d'un conseil des ministres: 'J'aimerais qu'il naisse plus de bébés en France et qu'il y vienne moins d'immigrés'. (p. 7417)

You advocate, and I congratulate you for it, being a republican and you have multiplied the references to General De Gaulle who has said in a meeting of ministers: 'I would like it if more babies were born in France and that less immigrants would come'.

A consensus is suggested in which the minister is reminded of his references to General De Gaulle.

8. *Argumentation: fallacies*

To give an example of the use of fallacies by the French mainstream Right I made a more detailed analysis of a debate in which the facilitation for foreign artists to

obtain a temporary residence permit, is discussed. A fallacy found most frequently in the argumentation of right-wing MPs in parliamentary discourse is the *fallacy of the straw man*. The Left's proposals are often distorted, oversimplified or exaggerated to make critical comments easier. The *argumentum ad hominem* is often used as a political strategy to call into question the motives of the Left with regard to proposals on immigration questions, or to underline the Left's lack of credibility by pointing to inconsistencies between standpoints and former practices of leftist MPs and/or authorities (*tu quoque* variant of the *ad hominem* fallacy). I also found many cases of the fallacy of *evading the burden of proof*.

Article 3, par. 1 of the 'Chevènement' draft bill stipulates the (professional or family-related) reasons on the basis of which a residence permit may be issued. Referring to the problems that foreign artists meet when trying to obtain a visa, and to the historical contributions that these artists have made to the cultural richness of France, both the Socialist Party (M. Dray), the RCV (M. Caresche) and the communists (M. Gérin and M. Braouezec) in different ways defend amendments to accept 'artistic and cultural profession' as a basis for obtaining temporary residency. Their amendments are discussed together. This discussion takes more than 1 hour and ends after midnight. The right-wing opposition vehemently opposes issuing a residence title on the grounds of artistic performance. Their arguments and utterances, often expressed in interruptions, show a complete disdain for foreign cultural manifestations and highlight a more global strategy of negative other-presentation (for general characteristics of interruptions in French debates on immigration, see Van der Valk, 2000).

Several fallacies may be identified in the argumentation strategy of the Right. Jeremy Bentham in his *Handbook of Political Fallacies* (1962) defines a fallacy as 'an argument employed or topic suggested for the purpose, or with the probability of producing the effect of deception, or of causing some erroneous opinion to be entertained by any person to whose mind such an argument may have been presented'.

The (fallacious) arguments against any of these amendments, against the acceptance of 'artistic performance' as a temporary residence title, may be summarized as follows: because it is impossible to define who is an artist and who is not, and because people may come from 'any country on the planet' to profit from this title, the acceptance of these amendments implies ending all control of illegal immigration and laying our country wide open (*straw man fallacy*). Because real elite artists are never refused admittance, the Left is accused of only insisting on these amendments for reasons of publicity and for electoral reasons, namely to please the communists and their supporters (*argumentum ad hominem*). The arguments of the Left are against French culture and threaten the values of France (*straw man fallacy*). The Left ridicules and discredits parliament (*argumentum ad hominem*). To privilege artists in this way, moreover, is discriminatory towards other professional categories, such as sports people (*argumentum ad misericordiam*).

One of the four political fallacies that Bentham (1962) identifies is the *fallacy*

of danger. This fallacy aims to create groundless alarm. The final intention of the fallacy is to repress any discussion of the proposed matter. In terms of the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation, the fallacy of danger is a typical form of a straw man fallacy.

The consequences of an action, in this case the acceptance of an article of the draft bill, are highly exaggerated and proposals are distorted, making them easier to criticize (Van Eemeren et al., 1995).

This fallacy may be seen in the counterfactual move in the following example, in which serious consequences for immigration control are predicted on the basis of the imaginary effects of the introduction of a temporary residence permit for artists:

(8)

Bernard Accoyer Monsieur le ministre, vous nous avez reprochés de conduire une bataille de procédure. En réalité, à travers de ses interventions, insistantes j'en conviens, à travers de ses amendements, nombreux j'en conviens, l'opposition a voulu appeler l'attention du pays tout entier sur l'inconséquence du geste que vous faites en proposant ce texte qui va mettre un terme à la maîtrise des flux migratoires clandestins. Ce geste est coupable. Vous venez ici de signer le crime. (p. 7401)

Mister Minister, you have blamed us for a procedural fight. In reality the opposition via its interventions, insistent I admit, via its amendments, numerous I admit, has sought to draw the attention of the whole country to the inconsistent gesture that you make in proposing this text which will bring to an end control of the flood of illegal immigration. This gesture is culpable. You have here signed your name to a crime.

The speaker hyperbolically suggests that facilitating the issuing of temporary residence permits to foreign artists implies that all control on immigration will end. He considers this a danger, even a crime. While the speaker in the first part of the second sentence apparently concedes to the blame expressed by the minister, he not only legitimates this critical attitude in the second part of the same sentence but also adds to it by using hyperbolic accusations from a legal discursive repertoire (culpable/crime), thereby implicitly suggesting the complicity of the opposition in the trafficking of people. Note also that this legitimization strategy is reinforced by a populist move ('the attention of the whole country') and by presenting the criticism as a matter of concern of the entire opposition.

To conclude, the contributions of conservative MPs in the debate on Article 3 of the Chevènement law represent typical examples of modern discursive racism. It is no accident that culture is the main topic of this debate. Just as biology and physical appearance were central concerns in the era of biological, scientific racism, nowadays, culture is the central issue of racism (Barkan, 1992; Barker, 1981; Miles, 1989). Nor is it accidental that many clarifying utterances of MPs are made in interruptions, which by definition are unprepared and spontaneous. As far as linguistic devices are concerned, I identified a condensed presence of

features that, in combination, constitute the expression of racism in the debate on Article 3: a global strategy of negative other-presentation, a frequent use, first of all, of fallacies but also of topoi and counterfactuals, accusations and deligitimizing moves towards the Left, and the use of irony, hyperboles and metaphors at the level of rhetoric.

9. Rhetoric

Many rhetorical *figurae* are known for their persuasive functions and are thus interesting for political discourse analysis. Such persuasive functions are in particular fulfilled by semantic structure figures such as metaphor, irony, hyperbole and rhetorical questions.

Rhetoric has a prominent position in parliamentary discourse in France. Several rhetorical *figurae* occur frequently. MPs try to steer their audience's attention by frequently deploying repetitions and rhetorical questions, often in combination. Rhetorical questions are at the same time tools of argumentation. They strengthen a claim that is made by forcefully inviting an intended answer and thus preventing the opposite answer that is in line with the opponent's arguments. At the semantic level we may identify many cases of irony, hyperboles and metaphors trying to influence models of ethnic events, especially of immigration as such and social representations of out-groups, in particular of opposed political groups, and of illegal immigrants. A hyperbolical style is used, in particular, where (mostly right-wing) MPs aim to emphasize immigration numbers, immigration costs, the negative consequences of immigration for the French, etc. Irony in parliamentary debates is frequently used in order to mitigate a negative other-presentation of immigrants or of the Left that supposedly defend their interests. A general typology of significantly occurring metaphors in French debates about immigration and nationality, is given below.

METAPHORS

Metaphors contribute to constructing, defining and understanding social reality (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). According to Hermans and Kempen metaphor is 'an indispensable structure of human understanding by which we can figuratively comprehend our world' (1993: 9). In a metaphor, one domain of reality is compared with another, more familiar domain of reality, whereby the understanding of the less familiar domain is enhanced by means of common sense reasoning. On the basis of certain similarities, one object or concept is assigned to another object or concept (Renkema, 1993). Research has shown that metaphors enhance the understanding of texts. 'Metaphors steer attention, conceptualize issues and sustain and create common-sense meaning, including lay social and psychological theories' (Van Teeffelen, 1994: 401). Metaphors help to bridge the gap between cognition and affect. They may have a strong impact because they are concrete and often visual. Metaphors 'as subconscious, affective, semantic, cultural and

universal products (. . .) are a powerful source of information regarding collective mental processes' (De Landtsheer, 1998: 132–3).

The use of metaphors in immigration discourse seems to have a transnational character, transgressing territorial and linguistic boundaries. Böke (1997), in her research on immigration discourse in the German magazine *Der Spiegel* (1947–88), identified water, war and commodity metaphors as being the most prominent, but others were also employed, such as a house metaphor, animal metaphors and organic metaphors (body, plants, fire, temperature). The most prominent ones and several of the others were also found in the discourse of the Right in the French parliamentary debates, while the metaphorical field of traffic is absent in the German data.

The following metaphorical fields were found to be most prominent in the French data when immigration and nationality were discussed.

The metaphor of aggression and war, implying impending danger and the risk of losing control over immigration. Examples include:

- Bombe à retardement (time bomb)
- Usine à gaz (gas factory)
- Désarmer (disarm)
- Arsenal (arsenal)
- Lutte (struggle) (against illegal immigration)

The water metaphor likewise symbolizes a loss of control over immigration. Too many immigrants enter the country. We lost control over the process.

- Flot (pump)
- Vannes et robinets (locks and taps)
- Affluent (pour in)
- Passoire (sieve)

The traffic metaphor symbolizes the easiness with which immigrants succeed in obtaining permits. It thus, additionally, emphasizes a loss of control over immigration:

- voiture balai (broom wagon), indicating a presumed container-category of people eligible for a residence permit
- RER de l'immigration' (RER is a Parisian rapid train) (RER of immigration)
- autoroute sans péage (highway without toll)

In addition, *a house metaphor* symbolizes a lack of restrictions on immigration, immigrants' abuse of the system, etc.

- . . . la porte ouverte à tous les abus (open door for all forms of abuse).

The use of different metaphors (aggression/war, water, traffic, house and computer) that reveal and emphasize the assumption that control over immigration processes has been lost, confirms the interactive nature of global and local textual structures. As Wilson puts it, 'the point of all this is that we can see how

assumptions may already be pre-wired for the interpretation of various political metaphors. They may not simply be single instances created for a specific moment in time, but are, rather, frequently constrained by a core theme which has been ideologically constructed, and this may be revealed through both local and global structure' (1990: 129). In the case of live metaphors (as opposed to standard dead metaphors) this sustenance of meaning by the discursive context and the occurrence of local and global repetition of the metaphorical concept is crucial to avoiding multiple interpretations of the meaning of a metaphor (Wilson, 1990).

Metaphors often occur in a discursive context of hyperbolic formulations or combined with other rhetorical figurae such as repetitions, as may be shown in the following examples:

(9)

Bernard Accoyer Que dire de décisions qui vont toucher de plein fouet – (. . .) – les caisses d'assurance maladie et les caisses de retraite? Avec l'élargissement que vous prévoyez dans cet article, vous allez étendre le champ des prestations à tous ceux qui n'auront séjourné que quelques années sur notre territoire et les faire bénéficier de notre système médico-social, don't vous savez bien qu'il est à bout de soufflé. (p. 7418)

What to say of decisions that will directly touch the health insurance funds and the pensioners funds? With the broadening that you foresee in this article you will broaden the financial support to all those who only have resided for a few years in our country and to make them benefit from our medico-social system, of which you well know is out of breath.

We here find a metaphor of aggression '*fouet*': whip, and a physical metaphor: '*à bout de souffle*': out of breath. The socio-medical system is here treated as a physical living body that may itself be aggressed and that may be touched by weakness and illness. The constraints on a social and financial system are thus visualized by the use of physical metaphors. These constraints are thus represented as logical, understandable and unavoidable. We also find the use of repetitions in combination with metaphors thus reinforcing the (combined) effect. Accoyer stipulates subjects that he didn't discuss:

(10)

Bernard Accoyer J'ai simplement centré mon propos sur l'inévitable appel d'air, sur l'inévitable relance des flux migratoires dans notre pays, (. . .) sur l'inévitable relance des clandestins, que vous avez pris l'habitude de régulariser et que vous allez, à terme, naturaliser. (p. 7418)

I have simply focused on the inevitable public call, on the inevitable flood of migration into our country, (. . .) on the inevitable push of illegal immigrants that you are customized to regularize and that you will, sooner or later, naturalize.

Note the organic metaphors: floods and air. The repetitive use of the explicit

'inévitabile' reinforces the inevitability that is implicitly suggested by the use of natural, organic metaphors. It is the inevitability of natural disasters that is suggested for the social phenomenon of migration.

10. The nation, identity, citizenship and the république: positive self-presentation

Debates on nationality in the French Assemblée Nationale show that nationalism plays a vital role in debates about immigrants in France. Nationality regulates the access to the nation and thereby the possibilities of participation in the management of the nation state. Achard (1998) makes a distinction between the dimensions of *demos* and *ethnos* in national politics. This distinction is related to different systems of naturalization in different European countries. It coincides with what is generally considered the civic-citizenship conception versus the romantic conception, the *Staatsnation* based on citizenship and popular sovereignty versus a culturally and ethnically based *Kulturnation* emphasizing bloodlines and homogeneity. '*Demos* presupposes the group, doesn't question it and poses the question of the legitimate field of political activity. *Ethnos* presupposes agreement about the activity and discusses who belongs to the group' (Achard, 1998: 20). The French naturalization system since the Revolution is predominantly based on *ius soli* although, as Achard has pointed out, the distinctions of *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis* are neither exclusive nor really opposed but analytical, and each system represents a specific mixture (see also De Cillia et al., 1999). The composition of this mixture is an important dimension of debates on nationality in European countries.

In November 1997 changes in the nationality laws were discussed in the French parliament. More particularly there was a discussion about whether children born to migrant parents would automatically obtain French nationality or whether they would obtain it after a voluntary declaration of intent at the age of 16 or 18.

François Bayrou, president of the UDF group in parliament, made a long speech in which he asked for withdrawal of the nationality law. The length of his speech, including interruptions by other MPs, takes 10.5 pages of the proceedings of the *Assemblée Nationale*. Bayrou's speech represents a typical example of a populist strategy anchored in historical references. In his speech, Bayrou argues that the discussion about nationality must be held with the 'sovereign people'. Historically, sovereignty is a concept central to the idea of the nation state, going back to the theories of Rousseau who located sovereignty in the people, as opposed to Locke who located it in the state. People should be directly involved in law making. Therefore, Bayrou proposes a popular referendum. The nation, being a community that shares similar values, is the most precious possession of the people, argues the UDF leader, more strongly, the nation is the people. A close connection is made between nation, the vaguer notion of people and the more *ethnos*-related concept of identity. These concepts frequently appear as collocations in

the debates on nationality, and in the speech of Bayrou, show an implicit shift towards a more *ethnos*-inspired concept of the nation:

(11)

François Bayrou Dans les réunions internationales du courant de pensée auquel j'appartiens – je suis sûr que c'est vrai pour d'autres aussi – il n'est pas de rencontre où les textes préparés sur le fait national ne soient l'objet de débats passionnés pour que le mot de nation soit remplacé par un autre: peuple ou identité, par exemple. (p. 6418)

In the international meetings of the movement that I belong to – I'm sure the same is true for others – there is no meeting where the texts prepared about the national fact are not the object of passionate debates about replacing the word nation by another: people or identity, for example.

Bayrou emphasizes that young foreigners themselves agree that the declaration of intent should be maintained ('for their own good'). He legitimizes his standpoint by pointing to the 'fact' that the proposals of the Left only favor the Front National.

The speech of Bayrou is first of all imbued with national self-glorification, a specific form of positive self-presentation emphasizing in a hyperbolic style the superiority of the French conception of the *Nation* and the *République*, core institutions of French politics with its emphasis on the sovereignty of the nation. The State in this conception is merely the juridical representative of the nation (Abet and Sajous, 1986). Bayrou quotes Renan, a famous philosopher who decisively formed the French conception of the nation:

(12)

François Bayrou (. . .) Un passé héroïque, des grands hommes, de la gloire, j'entends de la véritable, voilà le capital social sur lequel on assied une idée nationale. (p. 6415)

(. . .) A heroic past, great men, glory. I mean real glory, that is the social capital on which one establishes a national idea.

We may here identify the fallacy of authority. The speaker wants to show the truthfulness of his point by quoting an authoritative historical writer.

(13)

François Bayrou Mais l'honneur de la République est d'avoir porté plus haut l'affirmation de Renan. Une nation, ce n'est pas seulement un héritage, pas seulement une communauté de vie; une nation c'est une communauté de citoyens qui partagent les mêmes valeurs. (p. 6416)

But the honor of the *République* is to have transcended the affirmation of Renan. A nation is not only a heritage, not only a community of life; a nation is a community of citizens who share similar values.

Note the personification of the *République* and the parallelism that emphasizes the

intended conception of the nation, as well as the frequent use of repetitions. The *République* is a political institution often represented as a human being similar to a philosopher, in this case Renan, and, of course, deserving the same authority and respect, rendering the related conceptions such as on the character of the nation incontestable.

Indeed, this value system, Bayrou argues, is threatened by 'other values' and 'a lack of integration', leaving implicit and presupposing that the audience knows what these other values are, and who holds them, who is lacking integration and who is responsible for it.⁸ This represents a clear instance of negative other-presentation, particularly when expressed in a discursive context in which instances of positive self-presentation.

(14)

François Bayrou . . . la nation est, et elle seule peut-être, la bonne réponse au besoin d'identité qu'expriment les groupes humains. La réponse est bonne parce qu'elle contient en elle-même l'antidote aux dérives de l'exclusion. (p. 6417)

. . . the nation, and perhaps only the nation, is the right answer to the need for identity that human groups express. The answer is right because the nation has in itself the antidote to the aberrations of exclusion.

This fragment shows that Bayrou is focusing more on historically developed programmatic political theories than on facts that may be uncovered empirically, given the ongoing processes of exclusion of migrants in French society.

(15)

François Bayrou C'est que la nation, pour nous Français, n'est pas une fatalité. La nation à la française n'est pas une réalité biologique ou ethnique. La nation est construite, à la fois à partir d'un héritage et du partage d'un idéal. (p. 6417)

It means that for us, the French, the nation is not a fate. The nation, conceptualized in a French way, is not a biological or ethnic reality. The nation is constructed, both out of a heritage and the sharing of an ideal.

What this ideal embodies is also left implicit. The implication here is that for others the nation is a biological fate. The indirect argument is that the French conceptualization of the nation is superior and other conceptualizations are indeed inferior. The nation as it is conceptualized by the French is supposed to have a universal validity. Bayrou discusses the ideal of the nation, a socio-historical construct, as an almost natural, universal law that is beneficial to all of mankind:

(16)

François Bayrou Il invite à l'universalité. Il exclut le refermement sur soi. Il a été écrit au nom de toute l'humanité et pour toute l'humanité dans la Déclaration des droits de l'homme et des citoyens. (p. 6417)

It invites universality. It excludes the isolation of the self. It is written in the name of all humankind and for all humankind in the Declaration of Human Rights and the Rights of Citizens.

National self-glorification is often expressed in a hyperbolic rhetorical way, as the above discourse fragment shows in which *grand*, encompassing lexical items are used and, in addition, repetitively accompanied by the adjective 'toute'.

Note also the repetitive use of strong adjectives:

(17)

François Bayrou C'est quelque chose de digne, de grand, votre nation, c'est important, cela mérite des efforts pour y entrer. (p. 6420)

It is something dignified, great, your nation, it is important, it deserves effort to have access to it.

The implications of the abolition of the declaration of intent that the government proposes are strongly dramatized in the following indirect accusation of the government and of the migrants who do not want to make an effort to deserve access to the nation:

(18)

François Bayrou C'est donc aux yeux de la nation que nous formons ensemble qu'il est choquant, qu'il est humiliant de faire la preuve que l'entrée dans la nation française ne vaut même pas une demande. (p. 6420)

In the eyes of the nation that we form together, it is thus shocking to show that access to the French nation doesn't even deserve a request.

A une époque où on a au moins l'habitude de mettre une lettre à la poste pour être remboursé d'un tube d'aspirine, on peut, peut-être, quand même écrire une lettre pour dire qu'on a envie d'être Français. (p. 6420)

In an era in which one is at least used to posting a letter in order to be reimbursed for a tube of aspirins, one may perhaps be capable of writing a letter to say that one would like to become French.

We find here a very suggestive expression, which is tuned to the knowledge of the audience – MPs first of all, but equally the wider public – about prejudices against immigrants:

- Immigrants are backward, they cannot write letters;
- They abuse our welfare system, even wanting to be reimbursed for a tube of aspirins;
- They selectively use their lack of knowledge and capacities: they can't write a letter to request citizenship but they can to be reimbursed for cheap aspirins.

These prejudices are not directly expressed but implicitly referred to, in order to avoid too explicitly negative other presentations (impression-management strategy). At the same time they are used as dialogic counter-arguments against the

Left. Leftist politicians regularly point out that some young people do not explicitly request French nationality because they lack knowledge about the correct procedures.

Nationalism is also expressed in pride about being French:

(19)

François Bayrou . . . nous nous inscrivons toujours dans cette idée de la fierté d'être Français. (p. 6421)

We inscribe ourselves always with the idea of pride at being French.

The French conceptualization of the nation in the eyes of Bayrou is a (heroic) heritage, a community of citizens who share similar values, the sharing of some ideal, and the expression of the need for identity. It is, it should not be forgotten, inclusive and a source of pride. We may expect that this inclusiveness in the French concept of the nation will be expressed in the discourse of its proponents, in this case, François Bayrou. Bayrou, however, is far from inclusive towards the others. On the contrary, they are almost systematically represented in a negative way.

In Bayrou's speech, national self-glorification – a specific expression of a more global strategy of positive self-presentation in debates on nationality – is combined with a strong political strategy of populism, denying the legitimacy of the left-wing government:

(20)

François Bayrou (. . .) pourquoi a-t-on peur que le peuple informé participe au débat? (p. 6414)

Why should one be afraid that informed people will participate in the debate?

Nous sommes, certes, politiquement minoritaires, mais je soutiens que le peuple français n'a pas eu conscience de vous déléguer ici comme ses représentants sur ce sujet de la nationalité. (p. 6414)

Sure we are a political minority, but I argue that the French people was not aware when it delegated you as its representatives on the subject of nationality.

The Left is denied legitimacy on behalf of 'the people'. One of the main polemical topics in French parliamentary debates is the legitimacy of the parties as representatives of the French population (see also Van der Valk, 2000). Representatives of the Right – whether they are a minority or a majority, government, or opposition – regularly claim to be the only representatives of the French people. The Left is systematically delegitimized in this respect and represented as only motivated on ideological grounds:

(21)

François Bayrou Mais j'entends bien, madame le garde des sceaux, qu'il ne s'agit pas ici

du peuple. Il s'agit de politique, il s'agit d'idéologie, il s'agit de doctrine de parties. (p. 6412)

But I understand, madam the Minister of Justice, that it is not about the people. It is about politics, about ideology, it is about the doctrine of parties.

Note at the rhetorical level the repetitive use of '*Il s'agit de*' (it is about) as an impact strengthening device.

Positive self-presentation is also realized sometimes by using different forms of disclaimers. In the speech of Bayrou I identified the disclaimer of apparent benevolence:

(22)

François Bayrou Telle est notre conception de la loi: elle doit être généreuse pour ceux qui souhaitent réellement entrer dans la nation, en partager les valeurs, en assumer les devoirs autant que les droits, pour ceux qui voient dans la France leur avenir; mais elle doit être également inflexible et rigoureuse pour ceux qui veulent en abuser. (p. 6422)

Such is our conception of the law: the law must be generous for those who really want to enter the nation, share its values, fulfil duties as well as Rights, for those who see their future in France; but the law must equally be inflexible and rigorous for those who want to abuse it.

In his speech, Bayrou focuses mainly on 'those who abuse' and not on those who want to 'share its values'.

Concluding we may say that, in general, the debates on nationality that were held in November 1997 in the French parliament present a typical, and at the same time particular, example of an ongoing process of construction and reconstruction of the nation/national identity, a process in which all political actors participate, from the Extreme Right, to the mainstream Right, to the socialists and the Left in general.

A strategy of positive self-presentation in the form of national self-glorification, which several political actors of the mainstream Right combined with a strategy of negative other-presentation, plays a key role in this process. At the semantic level, the national singularity of France, compared with other nations, is emphasized and the superiority of the French political system underlined: since the roots of the Enlightenment, of the concept of sovereignty of the people, of the Declaration of Human Rights, and of the modern constitutional state itself may be found in France, France must be considered a role model for all nations in the world. It has a universal vocation.

This strategy is underpinned by diverse linguistic realizations, of which the most remarkable is the heavily rhetorical character of speeches about nationality. This reflects the emotional charge with which the subject is invested. Instances of personifying the *République* and the Nation, the frequent use of the pronoun 'we' (the French) and toponymical (*la France*) and ethnonymical characterizations (*français*) should also be noted, however.

11. *Fraud and abuse: negative other-presentation*

The positive self-presentation that is expressed in the discourse on nationality strongly contrasts with the negative presentation of the 'Other' as it is frequently expressed in a discourse of systematic suspicion towards migrants. Fraud and abuse were important right-wing topics in French debates on immigration and nationality over the research period as the quantitative analysis shows. They were especially present in debates about the immigration law and the nationality law of 1997 in almost all the issues discussed. No matter if the discussion was about a new system of visa with obligations for the government to motivate a refusal, or about the lodging certificate, about the introduction of a special residence permit for researchers and for artists, or about permits for reasons of personal and family life, in each case the mainstream Right parties evoked all sorts of possibilities of fraud and abuse thereby expressing suspicion. The same is true for discussions about French nationality for all children born in France, which has legal implications for the parents as a consequence, or for discussions about marriages with immigrants that may be marriages of convenience. Proposals of the bill are considered to facilitate 'evading or abusing the rules', immigrants are supposed to enter the country 'only to profit' and new rules are seen as 'open door for abuse' or 'encouragement to white marriages', etc., etc. This systematic expression of suspicion in the larger context of a strategy of negative other-presentation clearly has a function to justify harsh measures to restrict immigration without risking of being accused for repressive policies. Especially where negative opinions about others are expressed, we may often find cases of actor-avoidance combined with nominalizations and the use of 'on' as pronoun (one) instead of 'nous' (we):

(23)

François Bayrou On peut craindre, en effet, que ce double droit du sol élargi, qui avait été corrigé en 1993 en raison de l'importance des abus et des fraudes, ne soit en réalité une incitation à tourner la loi, à organiser artificiellement des naissances en France, qui donneront la nationalité à l'enfant et le droit de résidence aux parents. (p. 6422)

In fact, one may fear that the double *ius soli*, that has been corrected in 1993 for reasons of important cases of fraud and abuse, will in fact be an incitement to break the law, to organize false births in France which will give the Right of Nationality to the child and residence rights to the parents.

Who is 'one', who abuses, breaks the law, organizes births? All this is Left implicit but the message is a clear one of negative presentation of 'the other'.

In his speech, Bayrou focuses mainly on 'those who abuse' and not on those who want to 'share its values', as is also exemplified by the continuation of his speech and especially the concluding accusation:

(24)

François Bayrou Or il nous semble que, cette semaine avec la réforme du code de la

nationalité, la semaine prochaine avec le texte sur l'immigration, vous allez créer les conditions pour que se multiplient les abus. (p. 6422)

Thus, it seems that this week with the reform of the nationality code, next week with the text on immigration, you will create conditions for the multiplication of abuse.

Fraud and abuse have a predominant position too in the reciprocal accusations of political opponents. The right-wing parties accuse the Left of being too lax. Their concept of society is said to be too idealistic. They are supposed to favor fraud and abuse and especially illegal immigration, which will of course lead to criminality. They are accused of wanting to open the borders, of pursuing the elimination of barriers and of provoking immigration flows, especially illegal immigration. In short, the Left does not observe the republican laws according to the Right.

12. Conclusion

In this article, I studied discursive properties of French parliamentary discourse of the mainstream Right parties UDF and RPR, and more especially those linguistic structures that from earlier research in this field appeared to be quite typical or of crucial importance as contributions to the manifestation or challenge of ethnic dominance.

First, four analytical categories were discussed: topical analysis, the strategies that politicians use to represent main actors, the use of *topoi* and fallacies in argumentation as well as some rhetorical devices. A speech from the debates on nationality was studied in detail to illustrate the way in which the global strategy of positive self-presentation is enacted. The focus then shifted to the counterpart of this global strategy: negative other-presentation as it is expressed by fraud and abuse as a typical frame for the political Right to express its suspicion towards 'foreigners'.

Overall, the discourse of the mainstream Right appears to be highly rhetorical. Repetitions, rhetorical questions, hyperboles and instances of irony occur frequently. Metaphors are employed to symbolize threat and danger and the risk of loss of control or the lack of restrictions on immigration, and to symbolize the ease with which immigrants succeed in obtaining permits. Metaphors are also used to symbolize the threat of racism and right-extremism. Right-wing political discourse appears to be organized by a global strategy of negative other-presentation, not only of the 'others' who are almost systematically derogated, directly or indirectly accused of abuse of French laws and rules and thus criminalized, but also of their supposed allies, the political Left. The Left is equally derogated, ridiculed and frequently accused of harming the interests of the country and thus systematically delegitimized. Several linguistic categories contribute to this macro-strategy of negative other-presentation. Eleven instances of topical, common sense reasoning on immigration were identified. In seven of these *topoi* immigrants are represented in a blunt and straightforwardly negative way (*topos*

of burden, unemployment, profit, abuse, advantage, culture and decline). The macro-strategy of negative other-presentation is complemented by a macro-strategy of delegitimation of the political Left and its proposals for revision of draft bill (and by implication of legitimation of the policy proposals of the Right). Fallacies play a crucial role in this macro-strategy. The straw man fallacy and the *ad hominem* fallacy are central to this strategy of delegitimation. Proposals of the Left are often distorted, simplified or exaggerated to facilitate critical comments and verbal aggression. Motives, credibility, integrity and consistency of the Left and its policy proposals are put into question. The high occurrence of a local and global strategy of positive self-presentation in the debates on nationality is striking. On a semantic level, the national singularity of France compared with other nations is emphasized and the superiority of the French political system underlined. This strategy is realized by diverse linguistic devices. Speeches about nationality are heavily rhetorical. Also typical, are instances of the personification of the République and the Nation, the frequent use of the pronoun 'we' and of toponymical and ethnonymical characterizations.

NOTES

1. UDF: Groupe de l'Union pour la Democratie Française; RPR: Groupe du Rassemblement pour la République.
2. Note that in the beginning of the 1980s when the concept of 'insertion' was rather powerful and the right to be different was claimed by leftist migrant organizations, the FN used the idea of cultural difference as an argument for its deportation project for migrant workers. The FN claimed 'the right to be different' for the French and elaborated this later in its ideology of 'national preference' (see Maricourt, 1993).
3. For an overview of critical comments on the Pasque/Debré Laws made by socialist and communist MPs in the Assemblée Nationale during the debates on the Debré Laws – related to clauses of the bill which the Chevènement law left untouched one year later – see GISTI/CIMADE (1997). For a critical comment on the marginal improvements of the Chevènement law, see GISTI (1997).
4. Van Zoonen and Holtz-Bacha (2000) have shown, however, how public, political language, under the influence of the media, is increasingly becoming permeated by private language.
5. See Werlich (1982) for a basic discourse typology that distinguishes five forms of discourse types: descriptive, narrative, explanatory, argumentative and instructive. Of course elements of the other basic forms do also sometimes occur in political discourse.
6. The reaction of Le Pen to other politicians who imitate or approach his points of view: 'les électeurs préfèrent l'original à une copie' (the voters prefer the original to a copy).
7. Several critical studies on the discourse about immigration have been published in France. A widely known study is 'l'Immigration prise aux mots' by Simone Bonnafous (1991). She analyzes how a right-extremist minority in the 1980s succeeded in imposing, if not its ideas and proposals, at least some of its discursive representations, a process that since then has only deepened and widened. For other critical studies on the discourse on immigration and related issues, see Abet and Sajous (1986), Barats-Malbreil (1998), Honoré (1986), Tevanian and Tissot (1998).
8. For an analysis of the ill-defined nominalized concept of integration in the migrant debate see Blommaert and Verschueren (1998).

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APPENDIX

TABLE A1. *Political groups in the French parliament (1997)*

1.	Groupe Socialiste (PS) (242 members)
2.	Groupe du Rassemblement pour la République (RPR) (133 members)
3.	Groupe de l'Union pour la Démocratie Française (UDF) (106 members)
4.	Groupe Communiste (PC) (34 members)
5.	Groupe Radical, Citoyen et Vert (RCV) (33 members)
6.	Members of Parliament who do not belong to a group (5 among them are representatives of the FN)

TABLE A2. *Political groups in the French parliament (1996–1997)*

1.	Groupe Socialiste (PS) (56 members)
2.	Groupe du Rassemblement pour la République (RPR) (242 members)
3.	Groupe de l'Union pour la Démocratie Française (UDF) (200 members)
4.	Groupe Communiste (PC) (22 members)
5.	Groupe République et Liberté (RL) (23 members)
6.	MPs who do not belong to a group (3 members)

TABLE A3. *French parliamentary debates (1996–1997): Debré-laws. Diverses dispositions relatives à l'immigration (diverse measures concerning immigration)*

<i>Date of debate</i>	<i>Journal Officiel Assemblée Nationale</i>	<i>Number of pages</i>	<i>Number of speakers</i>
12–17–1996	113/2	40	12
12–18–1996	114/1	23	20
12–18–1996	114/2	22	15
12–19–1996	115/1	13	12
12–19–1996	115/2	57	15
02–25–1997	18/2	51	9
02–26–1997	19/1	30	20
02–26–1997	19/2	30	20
02–28–1997	20/1	35	17
02–28–1997	20/2	46	20
03–26–1996	30	17	8
		364 (total number of pages)	

TABLE A4. *French parliamentary debates (1996–1997): Guigou-laws. Nationalité (Nationality)*

<i>Date of debate</i>	<i>Journal Officiel Assemblée Nationale</i>	<i>Number of pages</i>	<i>Number of speakers</i>
11–26–1997	82/1	27	8
11–26–1997	82/2	31	11
11–27–1997	83/1	32	22
11–27–1997	83/2	26	3
11–28–1997	84/1	25	19
11–28–1997	84/2	29	9
11–28–1997	84/3	82	14
12–01–1997	85	8	8
		260 (total number of pages)	

TABLE A5. *French parliamentary debates (1996–1997): Chevènement laws. Entrée et séjour des étrangers en France et droit d'asile (Entry and residence of foreigners in France and asylum rights)*

<i>Date of debate</i>	<i>Journal Officiel Assemblée Nationale</i>	<i>Number of pages</i>	<i>Number of speakers</i>
12-09-1997	90/2	22	11
12-09-1997	90/3	28	10
12-10-1997	91/1	19	10
12-10-1997	91/2	18	8
12-10-1997	91/3	18	14
12-11-1997	92/1	15	6
12-11-1997	92/2	36	24
12-11-1997	92/3	27	8
12-12-1997	93/1	34	26
12-12-1997	93/2	48	14
12-12-1997	93/3	89	24
12-14-1997	94/1	27	17
12-14-1997	94/2	25	15
12-14-1997	94/3	33	18
12-15-1997	95/1	32	19
12-15-1997	95/2	29	18
12-15-1997	95/3	49	20
12-16-1997	96/2	32	11
12-16-1997	96/3	32	9
		613 (total number of pages)	



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