Defining 'Intervention': A Comparative Study of UK Parliamentary Responses to the Syrian Crisis

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Language and Communication

By

Yaser Mohammed Altameemi

Supervised by

Prof. Tom Bartlett

School of English, Communication and Philosophy (ENCAP)

Cardiff University, September 2019

Dedication

To my mother, father and wife, the soul of this thesis

Acknowledgements

There are many people I would like to thank for helping this thesis to take its current shape. Without these people, the completion of this thesis would not have been possible. I owe my deepest gratitude to my parents; I am thankful for your encouragements ever since I was a child to do the best in my studies. I am really grateful for your prayers that were key to my success in the path of my studies. I would also particularly like to thank my wife, Albandari; without your patience, I would have been lost in my PhD journey. I know you have spent months and years looking after the children while I was very busy with my research. Although you stayed in the UK with me having a dependent visa, my entire life was dependent on you during my studies.

I would also like to thank my special supervisor, Prof. Tom Bartlett. I am very lucky to have had such an amazing supervisor. I am really thankful for your time, patience, enthusiasm and encouragement until the last step of conducting my viva, and thank you for always looking at the positive side of my work. Our supervision meetings have been incredible moments that have allowed me to enhance my research skills. Second, I owe a great debt of gratitude to Dr Lisa El Refaie for being my independent panel for the annual reviews and then for reading the first full draft as my second supervisor when Prof. Tom left Cardiff University eight months ago. Your comments for the annual reviews and for my first full draft before submission were always constructive, and they have had a great impact on developing the thesis as a whole.

Last but not least, I must also give a special mention to certain people. Thanks are extended to my special friends during my studies at Cardiff University. Thanks to Thamir Alomaim, Hamzah Tamtam, Yasser Alzamil, Rayan Alzuraiqi and Abdulaziz Aleyba for your time outside the campus, and the long chats that have recharged my batteries and brought me back to study with energy. A group of people at Cardiff University also deserve a huge amount of thanks, specifically in my programme of teaching. These are Dr Katy Jones, Dr Dawn Knight, Dr Tereza Spilioti and Dr Amanda Potts. Thanks also to my colleagues for their advice and encouragement: Jaspal Singh, Dorottya Cserzö, Zayneb Al-bandawi, Susan Reichelt, Argyro Kantara and Piotr Wegorowski. I owe a particularly great debt of gratitude to Jaspal Singh for being a member of the Scales group. Thanks for

Abstract

This research investigates the strategic use and negotiation of keywords, such as *intervention*, at the time of the first and second UK parliamentary votes to take action in response to the Syrian crisis. The first vote, to authorise UK military action in response to the use of chemical weapons in Syria, was defeated on 29 August 2013; and the second vote, to authorise UK airstrikes in response to the role of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Syria, was passed on 2 December 2015. More specifically, I investigate how the terms of the two parliamentary debates changed as a response to changes in the material situation in Syria and in the media coverage of these events. The main data comprises the Prime Minister's and Leaders of the Opposition's speeches during the two parliamentary debates. I first analyse each of these according to Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) practical reasoning approach to see how the speakers construct and legitimise different understandings of the key terms at risk through the argumentation strategies they employ. However, rather than adopting a normative perspective such as looking at the validity of an argument, I consider the speeches as performances that draw on themes that are salient in popular discourse at the time of their production. Therefore, I apply a corpus linguistics analysis of press coverage around each vote to look at the central themes that the newspapers use as shared understandings in society. Then, I look at how speakers in Parliament use the ideas shown in the media to see how concepts are construed and reconstrued at different *scales* of interaction (Blommaert 2015). This research has three central contributions: (i) empirical: a case study of intervention as a floating signifier in debates over the Syrian crisis; (ii) methodological: combining corpus linguistics with a practical reasoning approach; and (iii) conceptual: relation of 'scale' between public discourse and real time debate.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Overview

Before I started my PhD programme at Cardiff University in September 2015, I had an interest in what became known in the news as 'The Arab Spring'. The 'Arab Spring' was a series of anti-government protests, uprisings and armed rebellions that started in Tunisia in late 2010 and expanded to other Arab countries, including Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Yemen and Syria. The situations in Libya, Yemen and Syria became the particular focus of media representations because of the developments in these countries regarding the conflict between the opposition parties and ruling regimes. In March 2012, I visited one of my friends who was studying in Irbid (a city in the North of Jordan, which is close to the Syrian border). The trip took place during spring, a time when the trees are in blossom. However, during our wonderful trip, I noticed many Syrian refugees in Irbid. My friend explained to me how the number of refugees was increasing due to conflict in Syria between the Assad Government and opposition. At that time, I started thinking about media representations of the events because agencies such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya (in the Middle East) did not give much attention to the dark side of the revolution. In contrast, the focus of these media was how rebels had been increasing and how the Assad Government faced pressure on how to deal with the Opposition. Thus, I became interested in looking at how news agencies represented events in Syria and how the voice of the Opposition was shown in the media.

A salient issue in Syria was the use of chemical weapons by the Assad Government on 21 August 2013. That moment was a central focus of the news because the US President Barack Obama had stated a year previously that using chemical weapons would amount to crossing a "red line" in terms of the possibility of US military action in Syria (Kessler 2013). Several news agencies, such as the BBC, CNN and Al-Jazeera, reported that Assad's use of chemical weapons was a sign that would force the Government to step down. The reports were about the international anger against the use of chemical weapons and possible intervention against the Assad Government. On 29 August 2013, the British Parliament met to debate taking action against "the Syrian government and the use of chemical weapons" (House of Commons 2013) (henceforth, '**the first vote**' in this research). The decision of the Parliament was against intervention in Syria with a salient

difference between the Ayes and Noes in Parliament (ayes: 220 and noes: 332).[1] Two years later, another parliamentary vote was held in December 2015 to debate possible intervention against Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (hereafter, ISIL) in Syria, and the House approved action against ISIL (ayes: 397 and noes: 223) (House of Commons, 2015) (henceforth, '**the second vote**' in this research). This noticeable difference between the first and second vote prompted my interest in looking at how the Syrian crisis was represented in the UK newspapers and how the MPs in Parliament debated the possible UK intervention in Syria. I was concerned with various questions, such as: why did the two debates end up with different conclusions and a clear difference between the ayes and noes? Was it because of a change in events on-ground? Was it because of a change in parties? Was one debate more effective than the other? How did the discursive strategies change in each vote? Consequently, I decided to apply for a PhD to analyse the language of the debates from the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and the main interest of the thesis developed into investigating how the concept of the intervention was presented differently in the two debates as a possible response to the Syrian crises.

Recognising that such changes do not occur in a vacuum, the overall model of this thesis seeks to consider the different stances on intervention at the time of the two votes through the consideration of three interconnected aspects: the material/historical events (a general background of the two votes), shared popular representations of the events in the UK (as represented in the media) and the argumentation strategies within the two parliamentary debates. Figure 1.1 illustrates how these elements work together in analysing the shifting meaning of intervention:

---

[1] Ayes in Parliament refers to the supporters of a motion and noes refers to the opposition.
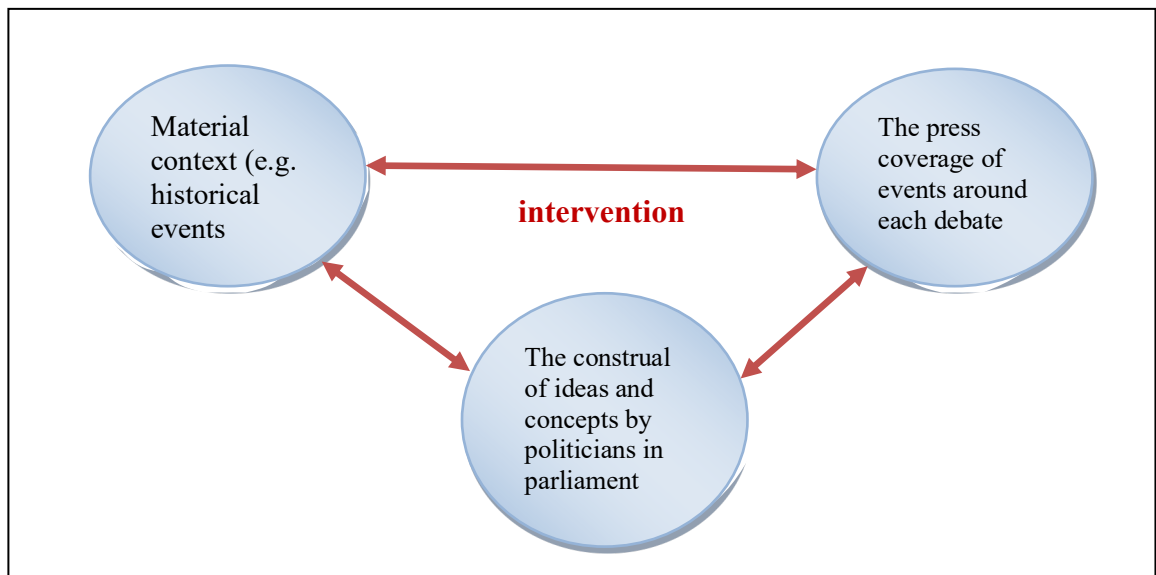
Figure 1.1: The proposed triangulation of analysing the meaning of intervention in each vote.

In order to answer the questions mentioned above, I put forward the following broad research question of the thesis: **how do the terms of the UK parliamentary debates on possible intervention in Syria change as a response to the changes in the material situation in Syria and in the media coverage of these events?**

This central question is further divided into three sub-questions:

1. What themes and topics do the newspapers develop around the situation in Syria and the possibility of military action at Time One and Time Two?
2. How do speakers strategically rescale the themes developed in the press in their construals of *intervention* in Time One and Time Two?
3. How do the speakers seek to create equivalences and differences across their construals of military intervention/action in order to gain a majority at Time One and Time Two?

1.2. Thesis Structure[2]

The thesis contains eight chapters. **Chapter One** (the current chapter) provides a general overview of the thesis that shows the motivation for choosing this topic and the angle of the research.

Chapter Two includes two main sections: a description of the political background to the situation (Section 2.2) and a review of previous research on political discourse (Section 2.3). Section 2.2 provides the context of the UK and Syria. First, I look at how the Syrian revolution shifted to a humanitarian crisis with specific coverage of events around the use of chemical weapons and the development of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the region in order to provide an overview of the Syrian context (Section 2.2.1). Then, I look at the recent development of UK foreign policy and changes in parties to see how the possible military action is considered within these changes in UK politics (Section 2.2.2). The second section of this chapter reviews and evaluates previous research that has informed the theoretical structure of my study. The first of these approaches is Discourse Theory (Section 2.3.1), which is linked to this thesis because of its specific interest in how the meanings of key concepts shift in political discourse and how the construction of discourse creates our actions in real life. Then, Section 2.3.2 looks at approaches that are referred to collectively as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) because they consider the relationship between text and context more than Discourse Theory. I focus on one specific development in the field of CDA, Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) method of analysing political texts. Then, I relate the relationship between text and context to Scales Theory, and how it will theoretically contribute to applying the levels of context in the specific analysis of speeches in Parliament. The chapter ends with the main question and sub-questions of this research and the general orientation of answering these questions.

Chapter Three provides the methodological approaches of data collection and analysis that are adopted in answering the research questions. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part presents the use of corpus linguistics from a methodological perspective for the specific purpose of analysing general themes in the press coverage of

---

[2] Some parts of Chapters Two and Chapter Five are published in Altameemi and Bartlett (2017).

the events in Syria around the period of each parliamentary debate. This part shows how the press coverage is used in this research as a proxy for shared understandings in Britain around the two votes. The second part introduces the methods of collecting the data of the debates and the procedure of applying the theoretical approaches, specifically Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) framework. In this section, I discuss the usefulness of using the practical reasoning approach from the performative perspective in order to investigate how speakers in parliament construe the meanings of concepts within the reconstruction of their arguments.

Chapter Four provides the analysis of press coverage around the first vote of the possible intervention against the use of chemical weapons in Syria. In this chapter, I analyse the coverage of newspapers using the Graphcoll tool in order to manage the analysis of extensive data. Graphcoll is a useful tool to look at the collocation networks of the newspapers and to identify the keywords around the topic of the situation in Syria. After this stage, I undertake a thematic analysis of how the newspapers use the keywords. The newspapers in Chapter Four generally present the British concerns towards the possible immediate military action, and they produce a complex web of concepts around this general orientation. From there, I develop a typology of themes that will be considered as a form of shared knowledge that was available to politicians for strategic use in their speeches to Parliament at the time of the first debate.

Chapter Five covers the analysis of the speeches in the first parliamentary debate. This chapter starts by analysing the Government motion that is provided for the debate. Then, the speech of British Prime Minister and Conservative, David Cameron, is analysed using Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach. After this analysis, Section 5.4 discusses how Cameron rescales the shared understandings shown in the press, and how he strategically reconstructs specific aspects that suggest the significance of British humanitarian intervention. The chapter then moves to analyse the Opposition amendment and the speech of Ed Miliband, Leader of the Labour Party (Sections 5.5 and 5.6). Then, Section 5.7 discusses how Miliband constructs the elements of his argument with the consideration of ideas in the press to raise concerns around the possible British intervention as a strategy to counter the claim of Cameron. I end the chapter with a discussion of how the speakers use linguistic strategies to construe the concept of intervention in such a way as to create a majority that supports a specific position.

Chapter Six follows the same format as Chapter Four in presenting media coverage around the time of the second vote on defeating ISIL in Syria. The thematic analysis of this chapter (Section 6.3) highlights the direct threat of ISIL upon British national security as the generally shared understanding across the papers.

Similarly, **Chapter Seven** follows the same structure as Chapter Five in analysing the debate in Parliament. On this occasion, however, the Leader of Opposition in Parliament at the time of the second vote is Jeremy Corbyn, who became the leader of the Labour Party after the general election in 2015. The analysis of Cameron's speech (Section 7.4) suggests that the meaning of intervention is linked to concepts that highlight the importance of protecting national security as ISIL has a direct threat upon Britain. However, in Section 7.7, Corbyn takes the opposite side by conceptualising the negative concepts around any military intervention.

Chapter Eight summarises and discusses the findings of the four analytical chapters (4-7), particularly with regard to answering the research questions. First, Section 8.2 briefly summarises the findings of the analytical chapters that provide the answers to the research sub-questions. Then, at the end of this section, I discuss the key findings to answer the main research question that highlights the chronological progress of the meaning of intervention with the consideration of the triangulation model of this research. These discussions are expanded to discuss the shifting semantics of intervention (Section 8.3), and this is followed by the main contributions of this thesis (Section 8.4). Research reflections on various aspects of this thesis are also discussed in Section 8.5. The chapter ends with concluding remarks for further research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The central perspective of this research is looking at the construal of British intervention by Parliament in response to two Syrian incidents: the use of chemical weapons; and the role of ISIL in Syria. From this general goal of the project, I suggest the importance of considering three central elements to investigate the changes of the meaning of *intervention*: the material/historical events (a general background of the two votes); shared popular representations of the events in the UK (as represented in the media); and the argumentation strategies within the two parliamentary debates. In Section 2.2, I provide the context of the whole research. This part comprises: Section 2.2.1, which looks at the context of events in Syria, and Section 2.2.2, which provides the context of the UK. Section 2.3 discusses how previous theoretical and analytical approaches, specifically Discourse Theory (DT) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), have approached the analysis of discursive strategies in political discourse (PD) with the consideration of the relationship between text and context. In Section 2.3.2, Discourse Theory (DT) is discussed, as it focuses on how the meanings of keywords shift in discourse, and how they might be fixed by incorporating them with other concepts in discourse. CDA is then outlined in Section 2.3.3, as it deals with more practical linguistic tools than DT in order to analyse changes in discourse and social practices. Then, Section 2.3.4 discusses how Scales Theory problematises the ways of dealing with levels of context and how ideas shown in the media can be employed by MPs to produce specific meanings of intervention. Section 2.4 will offer a brief conclusion to this chapter.

2.2. Background of the Research and Historical Events

The votes in Parliament, from which the speeches in this thesis are analysed, were made in response to events in Syria to discuss the possible *intervention*. First, on 29 August 2013, the British Parliament met to debate possible action against the Syrian Government over the use of chemical weapons. The decision of the Parliament was not to take action in Syria (ayes: 220 and noes: 332). Two years later, on 2 December 2015, the House of Commons met once again to debate potential intervention in response to the growing threat from ISIL in Syria, and this time the House voted to take action against ISIL (ayes:

397 and noes: 223). Clearly, while both votes concern possible military action in Syria, the different outcomes can be related to changes in the material circumstances at the time of the two votes. However, what is interesting from an analytical discourse point of view is the significant shift in the construal of intervention in light of these changing material circumstances as well as the public awareness of these events.

The background of the research provides the situation in Syria and the context of the UK at the time of each vote. I start by giving an overview of the situation in Syria including the Arab Spring, the progress of the Syrian revolution and the involvement of international powers in Syria. Then, I move on to discuss the context of the UK, with a focus on the institutional context of Parliament and recent UK foreign policy.

2.2.1. Issues around the Syrian Situation at the Time of the Two Votes

The political and social impact of the popular uprisings in late 2010 and early 2011 that became known as the 'Arab Spring' remains significant today, years after many of them have ended. These events began in Tunisia and expanded to other Arab countries, including Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Yemen and Syria. According to Manfreda (2018:1-2), the events in these nations generally began in the spring of 2011, which led to the name 'Arab Spring'. A central reason for these uprisings was popular demand for reforms and public freedom, which started with several unemployed youths who had suffered from a lack of essential needs, such as education, health and obtaining jobs in their countries (BBC 2013a). They had even faced difficulty with running their own businesses, as was the case with a young, unemployed man, Mohammed Bouazizi, when he set fire to himself after officials stopped him selling vegetables in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia.

Anger started to spread among the Tunisian public, and they felt that the action of Bouazizi reflected the situation of many young people in the country. Large numbers of people began to ask for reforms in order to provide young people with opportunities to run their own businesses and obtain jobs in the country. However, those demands were ignored by the Tunisian Government at that time, as a result of which the public began demanding much wider reforms in the whole country. The Tunisian Government attempted to deter the crowds of opponents. Around 300 people were killed during the subsequent unrest, which forced Bin Ali (the president of Tunisia) to resign in January

2011, after twenty-three years in power, and go into exile in Saudi Arabia (BBC 2013a). This revolution expanded to Egypt, and then, the Egyptian youths followed the same path as Tunisia by asking the Government of Hosni Mubarak (Egyptian president) to resign. These Egyptian young people also faced the same issues as in Tunisia regarding lack of essential needs. Following Bin Ali, Hosni Mubarak resigned in February 2011 after thirty years in power.

The short-term goals of both the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions had inspired Arab youths to take up the challenge and ride the wave of the revolution in other Arab countries, too. In Libya, Bahrain, Yemen and Syria, young people followed in the footsteps of their Arab peers and began demanding reforms for their essential needs, including their freedom of speech. Due to the negative impact of these revolutions in Arab countries, some have changed its name to 'The Arab Autumn' (Kailah, 2015). This term has been used negatively by various Arab media, suggesting that none of these countries that had experienced a revolution became better than before the revolution started. For example, the situation in Libya, still under conflict, as well as the bloodshed became a symbol of these revolutions. The Syrian situation, in particular, shifted to a humanitarian crisis due to the general conflict in the country between rebels and the Syrian Government. In the following sections, I will trace these developments, including the use of chemical weapons and the development of terrorist groups in Syria, specifically ISIL.

2.2.1.1. *The Syrian Situation Before the Chemical Attacks*

Inspired by the regime changes in Tunisia and Egypt, the youth of Darra (south) in Syria began to protest, calling for general reforms and freedom of speech. On 15 March 2011, the winds of the Arab Spring uprisings reached Syria. The Syrian protesters' main slogans were "Selmyah, Horryah" (peaceful change, Horryah!) (BBC 2015a). They used this expression to reflect the peaceful demands of reform. Due to the fear of repression, the opponents started with few people. In its history of governing the country, the Syrian Government had a clear stance regarding any opposition. For example, opposition to the Assad Government came from organised groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, which culminated in the Muslim Brotherhood insurrection and the subsequent massacre of thousands of civilians in Hama in February 1982 (Holliday 2013:11–12). As this was a

common strategy by the Government for dealing with any opposition, many Syrian civilians were aware of the danger of standing with the rebels or even showing sympathy with them. Instead, civilians started to use social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, as instruments to spark, mobilise and coordinate the uprisings (Shehabat 2013). The Syrian Government responded to the peaceful demonstrations in Darra by opening fire and killing 200 demonstrators and detaining many hundreds more in an attempt to crush the call for reforms (Shehabat 2013:2).

Civilian rebel forces then began organising and arming themselves to combat Government violence, which led to Government military power destroying entire neighbourhoods and towns by bombing them (Wiersema 2013). The Government started to attack any place that was controlled by the Opposition to overcome them. Most of these places were controlled by Sunni civilians who also took the Syrian revolution as part of the ideological conflict between Sunnis and Alawites. On the other hand, the Syrian Government relied on a small core of trusted military units that were controlled mainly by Alawites and members of the Assad family (Holliday 2013:8). As a result of the Assad Government's suppression, Sunni soldiers in Assad's army defected and established the so-called Syrian Free Army (SFA). On 29 June 2011, Gen. Salim Idriss, one of the Opposition leaders, clarified on YouTube that the rebels had been suffering at the hands of the Government and that they had not faced the Government with any military action for the first four months since the revolution began. Subsequently, the SFA was then established officially in June 2011, its leader being the dissenting Colonel, Riyadh Al-Asaad. He argued that they aimed to protect the rebels and their families. SFA gained control of some places in Syria, such as Dara, Doma, Humus and Al Ruston. The defected soldiers in Assad's army strengthened the Opposition and had a great impact on Assad's power as they had on the military experience (BBC 2016).

The Syrian Government used various methods to defeat the Opposition. On 21 August 2013, the Assad Government turned to use chemical weapons to bomb some suburbs around Damascus and defeat the rebels in the places they controlled. That use of chemical weapons killed approximately 300 civilians, including children, women and older adults (CNN 2014; BBC 2015). At this point, the first vote of Parliament was held

to debate the possibility of military action in Syria against the use of chemical weapons (the context of the UK is shown below).

2.2.1.2. *Development of ISIL*

At the beginning of the Syrian revolution, the various armed opposition groups in Syria shared the same goals of defeating the Assad Government and establishing a transitional government. However, there was an issue regarding the solidarity between the opposition groups (Shehabat 2013). The SFA attempted to unite the rebels across the country and to act as a representative for the Syrian Opposition in the UN. However, the SFA failed to unify the rebels (BBC 2013b; Ruys 2014). For example, apart from the SFA and its affiliates, various other groups were operating more or less independently, and this hampered efforts to unite the Opposition (Ruys 2014:253).

The chaos in the Syrian Opposition paved the way for terrorist groups to take advantage of the circumstances in the region. The most salient radical group appeared in Syria: the Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (ISIL). The roots of ISIL can be traced back to 2004, when the organisation was known as 'al-Qaeda in Iraq' formed by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who was originally part of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network. The aim of al-Qaeda in Iraq was to remove Western occupation and replace it with a Sunni Islamist regime after the US invasion of the country in 2003 (Gander, 2015). When al-Zarqawi was killed during a US airstrike in 2006, the Egyptian Abu Ayyub al-Masri became the new leader and named the group 'Islamic State of Iraq (ISI)'. In 2010, Masri died in a US-Iraqi operation, and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi took power (Gerges 2017).

When the civil war in Syria started, ISIL fought against Syrian forces and gained ground throughout the region. In 2013, the group officially renamed themselves 'ISIS', which refers to 'Islamic State of Iraq and Syria', because they had by now expanded into Syria. It had also joined the rebellion against the Syrian Government, setting up the al-Nusra Front (CNN 2017). In April 2013, Baghdadi announced the merger of his forces in Iraq and Syria and the creation of 'Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant' (ISIL). The leaders of al-Nusra and al-Qaeda rejected the move, but the fighters loyal to Baghdadi

split from al-Nusra and helped ISIL remain in Syria (BBC 2015c; Gander 2015). ISIL gained an advantage of several volunteer rebel fighters from various Middle Eastern countries because of personal religious opposition to Assad's Government (Wiersema 2013:2–3). Then, ISIL declared itself the caliphate to unite Muslims all over the world under the leadership of Baghdadi. However, ISIL had a negative impact on the Opposition because they not only fought the Assad Government, but also fought any opposition group that did not follow the rules of ISIL (Kailah 2015). Thus, the ideological role of ISIL had increased civilians' suffering from violence in Syria.

The danger of ISIL had expanded in the region. As such, they began to plan terrorist attacks in European countries. The US-led coalition started airstrikes against ISIL in August 2014 (CNN 2017). In September 2014, the US and five Arab countries launched airstrikes against ISIL around Aleppo and Raqqa (BBC 2015a). After the beheading of the British citizen David Haines by ISIL, Cameron called the House of Commons to debate possible military action against ISIL in Iraq on 26 September 2014. He argued that fighting ISIL was "morally justified" because ISIL constituted a direct threat to British national security. Parliament voted in favour of attacking ISIL in Iraq. Then, the House of Commons met on 2 December 2015 to debate extending airstrikes against ISIL in Syria, and that motion was passed.

2.2.1.3. *Involvement of International Powers in Syria*

On an international scale, the Syrian conflict created a complex diplomatic situation that had led to debates about possible *intervention* internationally, specifically in response to the use of chemical weapons and the role of ISIL. Several international participants were involved in the Syrian conflict, either as Assad's allies or supporters of the Opposition. However, the various international powers had failed to find a comprehensive political solution for the whole Syrian crisis.

First, the allies of Assad's Government were Russia, Iran and Hizbullah.[3]These allies supported Assad's claim that his regime was fighting terrorists who were trying to destabilise the country. Russia strongly supported the Assad Government openly in international organisations, such as the UN. Russia denied that the Syrian Government had used chemical weapons and warned that military intervention without approval from the UN Security Council would amount to a grave violation of international law (Gilbert 2013:5). Furthermore, Russia had strong ties to the Assad Government and blocked the UN Security Council from allowing any foreign intervention against the Syrian Government (Wiersema 2013:3). However, Russia had allowed international forces to attack ISIL in Syria because ISIL had also caused a threat to the Assad Government (BBC 2015c).

On the other hand, America, Turkey and several Gulf states were involved in providing the rebels with materials, such as weapons, smartphones and access provide to 3G wireless internet from the Jordanian border or Turkish border (Shehabat 2013). These countries had also attempted to help the rebels in involving them in diplomatic solutions between the parties in Syria, such as the so-called "Geneva II talks" (Ruys 2014:254). However, these countries did not manage to find a political solution and failed to find representatives for the various fighting groups in Syria that could establish a unified opposition (Ruys 2014). When ISIL took control of places in Syria, Russia and supporters of the Opposition did not have a shared mission in defeating ISIL. In particular, there was a marked ideological conflict between Russia and Turkey because Russia was the strongest ally for the Assad Government while Turkey was seeking to find a comprehensive solution in Syria as Turkey was directly affected by the large number of refugees (BBC 2015b). These material events reflect the complexity of the situation in Syria and the suffering of the international community, either in finding a unified opposition or a comprehensive solution between opposition groups and the Syrian Government.

---

[3] Hezbullah is a non-state organisation and plays a major role in Lebanese politics and operates openly in southern Lebanon (for more details about the role of the leader of Hizbullah in Syria see Hummel 2013; Matar 2015).

2.2.2. UK Context

This section provides an overview of the concepts that contextualise the development of UK foreign policy regarding possible international intervention. This section provides background regarding intervention against international governments and background in dealing with terrorism.

Before looking at the overall development of UK foreign policy, it is worth mentioning the changes in internal politics in the UK. Around the time of the two votes, a general election took place in the UK on 7 May 2015. David Cameron had won the previous general election in 2010 and had become Prime Minister as head of a coalition government. David Cameron and Nick Clegg formed a coalition government (Conservative-Liberal Democrat), of which Cameron became the head and Prime Minister. In the general election of 2015, the Conservative Party won an outright majority in the election under David Cameron's leadership who was elected as Prime Minister. In the case of military action policy, Cameron believed in "supporting humanitarian intervention" in cases such as the humanitarian genocide in Darfur, Sudan (BBC 2006b). However, he rejected neo-conservatism of opposing any military action because, as a conservative in general, Cameron accepted human nature and suggested that, on some occasions, military action can be a means for solving problems and crises in the world (BBC 2006a).

Miliband, on the other hand, was the Leader of the Labour Party and Leader of the Opposition between 2010 and 2015. Miliband attempted to present himself as a new type of politician who tried to unite the divisiveness of his party, specifically after Blair's Government (Kite 2010). After the 2003 Iraq invasion, Tony Blair (UK Prime Minister, 1997-2007) had faced criticism for his negative impact on UK foreign policy regarding international intervention (this will be expanded below).[4] Miliband was a vocal critic of

---

[4] When Blair resigned in 2007, Gordon Brown became the Prime Minister (2007-2010). In general, Brown took the opposite stance to Blair, specifically in blocking the support for international military action. However, there had been a division in the Labour Party after Brown's leadership of the party. These circumstances resulted in the Labour Party losing the general election of 2010 (for more details about British internal politics, see Dunt 2010; Kite 2010).

the Iraq war in 2003 (Dunt 2010). However, he backed UK military action in Afghanistan in 2001 and Libya in 2011. These events reflect the fact that Miliband had not opposed military action in all cases, but he had accepted this path on some occasions. On 8 May 2015, Miliband announced his resignation as the leader of the Labour Party after their defeat at the 2015 general election.

Shortly after, Jeremy Corbyn announced his candidacy for the Labour leadership and was elected leader in September 2015. Corbyn is known as an anti-war and anti-nuclear campaigner. He broadly supports a foreign policy of military non-interventionism and unilateral nuclear disarmament. Non-interventionism (or non-intervention) is a foreign policy that holds that political rulers should minimise relations with other nations, but still retain diplomatic and trade relations while avoiding wars unless related to direct self-defence (Laughland 2014). Corbyn is known to have a clear stance against the idea of military action in UK foreign policy. This general orientation shows Corbyn has a stronger attitude than Miliband towards the possibility of British military intervention. In the following sub-sections, I will provide an overall context of the UK around the two votes concerning possible intervention in Syria.

2.2.2.1. *Recent UK Foreign Policy and Military Intervention*

The development of UK foreign policy is a complex procedure, particularly since the period of New Labour Government (1997-2010). In making foreign policy, addressing international conflicts is regarded as a central dimension, along with the consideration of other issues, such as economic, geographic and strategic factors. According to Williams (2004:911), foreign policy is explicitly affected by dependence on domestic factors (such as public opinion), globalising pressures (such as communications technologies), integrative tendencies (especially within the European Union) and transnational forces (such as lobbying from non-governmental organisations). These issues are not fixed, but are continuously redefined or 'reconstrued' as politicians seek to integrate them into a coherent and persuasive foreign policy. An example of such fluidity in foreign policy is the change in how potential military intervention is discussed after the mistakes of the Iraq invasion in 2003. At the time of the two debates on the Syrian crisis, there was an elephant in the debating chamber in the form of Tony Blair's role in the previous

'intervention' in Iraq, the lack of international consensus around this and Blair's manipulative use of information provided by the "dodgy dossier" in drumming up support for the intervention (Strong 2015:611). With regard to possible military action, the development of recent foreign policy suggests that two central issues explicitly appear in the debates: the dimension of alliance and legality and the dimension of intelligence and evidence.

1. The Dimension of Alliance and Legality

A central idea in the foreign policy of the previous New Labour Government was the relationship with America. Williams (2004) suggests that Blair followed the notion of 'Atlanticism' in that the UK interests were best served by remaining America's closest ally and encouraging "effective US leadership." Blair claimed that this policy would strengthen international institutions such as the UN. For example, Blair supported the US-led coalition after the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001, standing "shoulder to shoulder" with America to protect international security. Then, Blair backed the US war in Iraq, following this policy to accommodate the relationship between Britain and America (Doig et al. 2007:26).

The Iraq war inflicted damage upon the idea of 'Atlanticism', which promoted a movement of the UK foreign policy towards looking at three key international institutions, including the UN, EU and NATO, instead of supporting a particular ally such as America (Strong 2015). This shift in policy appeared clearly in the UK's stance towards supporting the NATO motion against the Gadhafi regime in Libya in 2012. The UK argued that military action in Libya was a legal action supported by the international community without depending on specific sources of intelligence. David Cameron allowed a vote on Libya in 2012, as he aimed to gain plaudits for not being Blair by supporting the NATO motion (Strong 2015:617).

A part of showing the alliance dimension in the specific context of the first vote is Obama's redline. At the time of the use of chemical weapons in Syria, Obama's redline was represented in the media with the coverage of possible urgent American action against the Assad Government. A year before the chemical attacks, Obama stated:

We have been very clear to the Assad regime, but also to other players on the ground, that a red line for us is we start seeing a whole bunch of chemical weapons moving around or being utilized. That would change my calculus. That would change my equation… (The White House 2012)

The media highlighted that the Assad Government had crossed the redline and would be punished by America. However, as Kessler (2013) suggests, the redline was not, in fact, about the use of chemical weapons; instead, Obama's focus was on controlling the Syrian Government stockpile of chemical weapons and ensuring that they did not fall into the hands of terrorist groups. In the first vote, Obama's red line was explicitly debated concerning the contestation of defining the alliance concept.

Another shift in recent foreign policy is looking at the norms of legality and the international community. The legality of military action against the use of chemical weapons in Syria appears in identifying the action either as a "humanitarian intervention" or "Responsibility to Protect (R2P)" (Stahn 2013:29). These two concepts are used by the international community in debating possible foreign intervention to legitimise military action against war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity (Stahn 2014:962-962). The legality of acting against the chemical attacks in Syria was a concern as the Syrian Government is not a member of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) (Fitzpatrick 2013:109; Vishwanathan 2013). The OPCW works to ensure that chemical weapon stockpiles are destroyed, and that they are tracked and monitored to prevent the rogue development of chemical weapons. The Syrian situation presented an obstacle for legitimising international intervention against the Syrian Government (Hummel 2013).

In the context of possible British intervention in Syria, the UK Government provided the motion by stating the situation as a humanitarian crisis and the need for possible intervention. According to Strong (2015:616), Cameron was consensual in style and cautious in substance, in part because he was the head of the coalition government. Cameron's Cabinet explicitly endorsed his Syria policy, a vital point in a time of coalition. This stance was in contrast to Blair's exclusion of Cabinet from the key decisions over Iraq (Short 2010:3). These concerns around the first vote backed up the experience of Iraq in debating the meanings of humanitarian intervention and legality of

military action, and how the Iraq invasion inflected the meaning of these concepts. These changes reflect the shift in the UK calculus in considering an international intervention and alliance issue, and these issues remain complex in terms of how speakers in Parliament (re)construe these concepts in representing the meaning of intervention.

2. The Dimension of Intelligence and Evidence

The lack of reports around the use of chemical weapons in Syria and Blair's manipulative use of information were concerns for legitimising intervention in Syria by misleading information. At the time of the Syrian chemical attacks, it was clear that chemical weapons had been used without clear reports about who used them (Pita and Domingo 2014:393). Nevertheless, the development of UK foreign policy highlighted the importance of the reports and resolutions of the UN towards international intervention. The source of reports had become a severe issue in changing the extent of public scepticism and how the Government had to justify its actions more carefully in terms of how any intervention is not only dependent on specific sources of reports.

Another salient concern around the first vote was the call for immediate action before the full reports of the UN. Cameron called for the vote eight days after the use of chemical weapons, which was a concern because the media referred to the Government motion as calling for immediate action. This issue is also linked to Blair's 45-minute claim when he called for urgent action because weapons of mass destruction (WMD) were under the control of the dictator Saddam Hussain (see Chilcot 2016 for the official damning legal verdict on the debate and the intervention). Therefore, according to Hennessey (2007:347), leaders must now work far harder than in earlier generations to convince sceptical public and political opinion of the case for anticipated military intervention.

2.2.2.2. UK Foreign Policy and Terrorism

Fighting 'terrorism' has become a significant term over the last twenty years as part of protecting national and international security (Jackson 2007; Strong 2015). Such 'terrorism discourse' includes the terms, assumptions, labels, categories and narratives used significantly in political discourses of the modern era (Jackson 2007). The UK's

previous actions against terrorism, such as fighting al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, were regarded as part of protecting international and national security, specifically after 11/9 in America. Since the Iraq invasion, foreign policy has indicated a significant difference between defeating terrorist groups for the sake of protecting international security and defeating dictatorship for the norm of democracy. For example, in the case of al-Qaeda, attacking al-Qaeda was needed to protect national and international security (i.e., defensive action rather than aggression). Even though all the goals of the coalition against al-Qaeda had not been achieved, this issue was not considered as a serious failure in comparison to the Iraq invasion (Strong 2015). This is because some goals had been achieved, such as decreasing the risk of terrorist groups and limiting their capability to attack targeted goals, such as places in the UK. According to Brighton (2007) and Strong (2015), British foreign policy deals with defeating terrorism by considering two main dimensions: (i) national and international security and (ii) multiculturalism.

The first dimension is protecting national and international security. The threat of ISIL not only concerned local people in Syria, but also several Western journalists and aid workers, such as James Foley, who was executed by the group in August 2014, and Alan Henning, who was killed in October 2014 (Gander 2015). ISIL increased its threat to international security with actions such as the terrorist attacks in the Middle East and the Paris Attacks in November 2015 (Gerges 2017). Since April 2013, the media represented ISIL's threat upon international security, showing their expansion in controlling places in Iraq and Syria (BBC 2016). At the time of the second vote, media coverage had escalated the threat of ISIL by reporting several terrorist attacks committed by this group.

The second dimension around dealing with terrorism is multiculturalism in the UK. According to Brighton (2007), the multiculturalism of the British community is a significant issue, specifically regarding possible backlash after an international intervention. He suggests that taking global action may have negative consequences inside the UK, such as London's attack in 2005, which is regarded as a backlash against the UK intervention in Iraq. On the other hand, ISIL attempted to attack the solidarity of the British community by releasing videos and using social media to call young Muslims

to join the 'caliphate' and fight under the name of Islam (Gilsinan 2015). The global role of ISIL reflected the concerns that British Muslims might be affected by ISIL and commit terrorist attacks because of British participation against the group. Therefore, at the time of the second vote, it is vital to consider the changes in the meaning of defeating terrorism along with the consideration of multiculturalism.

2.3. Dealing with Political Discourse Analysis

As stated above, in this thesis, I will look at the development of the meaning of intervention in the UK context with a specific focus on the parliamentary level. When exploring political practices in Parliament, one must not limit this view to only behavioural actions, such as supporting/negating a vote; politicians who have power produce discourse in Parliament, creating new terms and vocabularies to promote new meanings of keywords, such as intervention (Fairclough 2000; Fowler 1991). From that angle, political discourse (PD) in Parliament is seen as a negotiation of meanings to create a consensus/majority to support a vote. This 'practical nature' of government and politics can be understood by investigating the use of language to gain a comprehensive understanding of the production of ideas (Finlayson 2004). In the second part of this chapter, I will, therefore, review previous research into the negotiation of meanings within a political context. I will start this section by discussing how the specific keyword intervention has been investigated in the previous research. This will be followed by reviewing Discourse Theory to discuss how actions can be created through discursive strategies and the construction of discourse. Then, I will move on to look at the approaches of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which considers the construction of discourse as a social practice among other aspects in society, such as culture and history. In the review of CDA, the approach of Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) will be given specific attention because it focuses on analysing responses to a political crisis. Then, I will review Scales Theory (Blommaert 2001, 2005, 2015) and discuss how Blommaert problematises the relationship between text and context, and how his theoretical aspects will be employed in this thesis.

2.3.1. Specific review of the Key Concept of Intervention

 Before moving on to a discussion of the theoretical framework for analysing the construals of concepts around the meaning of intervention, it is crucial to provide a brief overview of the negotiation of the meaning of intervention in political discourse. In this section, I start by providing possible definitions around intervention that are gleaned from the studies of international relations. Then, I discuss how the identification of intervention is given an interest in studies of language use in political discourse. Here, I focus specifically on how this key term has been considered.

The word intervention has been given significant consideration, particularly in the studies of international relations with regard to the identifications of the boundaries of intervention. One of the general definitions of intervention is as any interference of a state in the affairs of another, and this perspective is expanded to include all international, economic, political and cultural interactions (Shaw 1993). This traditional definition among others (e.g. Forbes and Hoffman 1993) has led to much debate on various international affairs that are related to international relations and the ethics of intervention. Several recent studies (e.g. Philip 2008; Rattan 2019; Sellers 2014) have expanded these general issues in international affairs and discussed deeper ideas with regard to the identification of the various types of intervention. For example, Rattan (2019) highlights two types of intervention: direct and indirect. Direct intervention refers to any military action, whereas indirect intervention comprises several types of action, such as economic intervention/coercion which involves "the imposition of sanctions, embargoes, and boycott by interfering with trade and shipping and by denial of access by land and water" (Rattan 2019:3–4). This difference is important because it not only considers military actions, but also recognises the wider meaning of intervention which includes military and non-military actions. Social values are also negotiated within the identification of intervention, such as liberal intervention, which involves intervening in other states to achieve the liberal objectives of the sovereign states. This was the claim that Blair used in UK foreign policy to justify the war in Iraq (Milne 2012:2–3). With regard to the specific Syrian crisis and the use of chemical weapons, Stahn (2013) discusses the legal issues of military action against the chemical attacks used by the Assad government. As shown in Section (2.2.1), Stahn highlights ideas such as

Responsibility to Protect (R2P) as a window of negotiating the international legality of military action in Syria. Although these studies discuss international law and legislation of action rather than the meaning of intervention, they deal with the term intervention as a keyword in discussing the legality of military action in international studies.

An exploration of how the meanings of keywords such as intervention shift over time has been given more attention in discourse studies than in international studies. In general, Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) provide developed frameworks on analysing how actions, such as military action, are (de)legitimated through the use of language (this will be explained further in the following sections). For example, Chilton (2004), Fairclough (2005), van Dijk (2005, 2006) and Doig et al. (2007) all discuss how politicians use language to (de)legitimate military action in the 2003 Iraq war. Other studies (e.g. Lukin 2013) investigate specific keywords such as "war", specifically on analysing collocation and semantic network discourses related to the 2003 Iraq war. Wilson et al. (2012) not only look at the changes of the meanings in the newspapers coverage of the prelude to the invasion of Iraq, but they also discuss the argumentation structures around the meaning of military action. Within their discussion of the pro-war and anti-war arguments, they highlight how the arguments in the press are contested with notions such as liberal intervention and humanitarian intervention. However, these studies do not specify intervention as a central concept. Oddo (2014) has provided a greater focus than others by considering intervention as a key concept. He examines how American presidents from opposing political parties and specifically George W. Bush and Barack Obama respectively inaugurated and extended the war in Afghanistan. Oddo (2014) discovered that Bush establishes the overarching features of "war on terror" discourse, whereas Obama's speech is reconstructed by shifting the focus to refer to "a struggle against terrorism and extremism." Oddo (2014:519) discusses the use of intervention in US foreign policy and how intervention is expanded to develop the meaning of global interventionism against terrorism. Here, intervention is used as a salient concept to refer to military action but with the consideration of other concepts, such as national security, that are embedded within the identification of the meaning of intervention. This study among others give more attention to the term "war" than "intervention" when analysing the discourses around possible military action. I follow this adoption as a general focus

when looking at the discourse, but I suggest that the term intervention is a focal debated action because this is explicitly highlighted in the studies of international relations.

The discussion of this section emphasises the importance of using "intervention" as a key concept, as shown in the studies of international relations. However, the investigation of the meaning of intervention should be considered through the tools proposed by discourse studies. Therefore, in my review of the following sections, I will discuss how studies in political discourse consider the changing meanings of key concepts in political discourse.

2.3.2. Discourse Theory

Discourse Theory (DT) is a salient approach in linguistics that is concerned with how meanings are negotiated and fixed in discourse. It provides central concepts in looking at political discourse (PD) as a political process. DT develops the idea that alliances and, hence, political majorities are created discursively through the interconnection of central ideological concepts and principles from different social and political groupings in a coherent web of meanings. This is a process which Laclau and Mouffe (1985) refer to as 'articulatory practice'. For example, as prime minister, Cameron attempts to convince MPs about a specific issue to create a majority that supports his position. This strategy among politicians is linked to the 'primacy of politics', which means that political articulations determine how we act and think and, thereby, how we create a society (Laclau 1990b:33). According to Laclau and Mouffe (1985), the system of discursive meanings that sustain hegemonic power can never reach a state of closure because hegemonic power is always negotiaited between various members in society. From this perspective, discourse is conceived of as an attempt to fix a web of meanings within a particular domain, and this is 'the politics' in DT (Howarth 2000:104).

Within individual discourses, nodal points, such as democracy, are those signifiers around which the web of discourse is woven. For example, in medical discourse, 'the body' is a nodal point around other signs, such as 'symptoms' and 'tissue', which acquire their meanings by being related to the body in particular ways (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:26). The nodal points cannot possess a density of meaning by themselves, but acquire signification through their correlation to other signs in PD. As such, a nodal point

is an empty signifier; "a pure signifier without the signified" (e.g. democracy, as we will see below) (Žižek 1989:97). DT is vital in showing how the ways in which terminologies are construed change as the PD changes, as well as how articulations of elements in PD create new meanings to establish what is called *social imaginaries* (overarching ideological constructs, to be discussed further below). Speakers in Parliament strategically use social imaginaries to obtain popular support. From this angle, I will discuss two central ideas in DT: the logic of equivalence and difference and articulation and social imaginary together.[5]

In the first central idea, Howarth et al. (2000:16) suggest that the logic of equivalence and difference refers to the social antagonisms that reflect a contestation between members in society (either on an individual level or institutional level) in building an identity towards specific issues. In the institutional context of Parliament and debating the possibility of intervention, the MPs come with no identical ideas in defining the meaning of intervention. The logic of equivalence attempts to expand on the meaning of concepts (empty signifiers), minimising points of contention to unite groups behind a common cause and against a rival cause which is defined in contrast to the common cause. In contrast, the logic of difference seeks to maximise the differences in opposition groups in order to divide them.

A good example of these two ideas can be seen in Howarth's (2000) study of South African politics in the period of the Soweto uprisings in June 1976 and the declaration of a national state of emergency in 1986. Howarth suggests that, during the time of the uprising, the South African Government used the logic of difference in an attempt to differentiate Africans' homeland by claiming that Zulu people, Bantu and others were different from each other because each group had different interests. On the other hand, the National African Congress used the logic of equivalence to suggest that the various Africans' homeland was united through the imaginary of being 'native Africans' in opposition to the White South African 'Loulas'. These processes of the logic

---

[5] I have chosen to combine the logic of equivalence and difference together because they have strong interconnected ideas. This is the same for articulation and social imaginary.

of equivalence and difference reflect the fact that the MPs debate the identification of who they are in relation to a specific issue, and how this strategy is practised to gain a majority in a vote.

This case is also similar to what Griggs and Howarth (2000) suggested when they investigated the actions of environmental protesters against Manchester Airport's second runway. The 'eco-warriors' used the logic of equivalence by defining themselves as an ally for the local residents, as they shared the identity of people in the region who were affected by pollution, disruption and lack of consultation by the construction project. This collective identity motivated the residents who stood against the construction of the second runway in opposition to the Airport, which was characterised as damaging the quality of residents' lives. However, pro-Manchester Airport campaigners sought to dislocate this alliance through describing the eco-warriors as a danger to the local residents because they were "anti-progress" of the local community (Griggs and Howarth 2000:61). Griggs and Howarth related the failure of the eco-warriors' campaign to their ultimate inability to impose their vision of the social imaginary of uniting eco-warriors and residents.

The second central idea is the consideration of social imaginary and articulation. Social imaginary is identified in DT with another concept which is called myth. Myth represents "an alternative to the logical form of the dominant structural discourse" (Laclau 1990a:62). A social imaginary has been reached when the alternative idea represented in myth becomes a horizon in which any social demand has been inscribed, as was the case with the Enlightenment or the creation of a Communist society (Laclau 1990b:62–64). In other words, myth becomes a social imaginary when it becomes a social value and motivates our responses to actions in particular ways.

An example of the creation of social imaginary is the study of Montessori and López (2015). They investigated the transformation of the meaning of democracy in Spain in the time of the uprising that appeared in Madrid and Barcelona on 15 May 2011 and then spread to other Spanish cities. The anger of Spanish people was a result of seeing politicians behave like the allies of the financial sector, rather than represent the public. Montessori and López (2015) argued that the public was able to disarticulate the

meaning of democracy as being an element in the political parties in Spain because people shared the view that political parties were against democracy in reflecting the voice of the public. The several shared emotions and ideas motivated the public to create the myth to call for an alternative political system. However, according to Montessori and López (2015:217), the movement was unable to turn this into a social imaginary because the traditional electoral procedures remained the same.

From this perspective, concepts around the signifier intervention, such as national security, become social imaginary when they have an effect and motivate the majority to support or negate an action. Jessop (2004, 2008) and Jessop and Sum (2012:86) suggest that imaginaries are creative products of semiotic and material practices with more or less performative power. Jessop (2004) agrees with Daly (1991) and Miller and Rose (1990) by showing that political parties seek to manipulate knowledge and power to secure and/or reproduce different imagined economies. These arguments show how even a social imaginary, such as *democracy*, is not entirely fixed and progresses over time. Moreover, MPs strategically articulate the social imaginary to construe the meaning of concepts in specific ways for particular incidents.

In the context of the House of Commons, MPs articulate (i.e., articulation process) several ideas that lead to creating a social imaginary. Articulation refers to "any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the particularity practice" (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:105). In this respect, articulation means how individual ideas are developed by interconnecting central ideological concepts and principles from different social and political groupings. This is a uniqueness of ideology that motivates a majority in the House of Commons either to support a vote or to stand against it. In this research, I consider the concepts that are strategically connected as elements/moments by the speakers in the debate to construe intervention as one nodal point within contested notions, such as democracy and international law. I argue that the need for such contestation and in such a crucible was brought about as a result of Blair's intervention in Iraq and its place in the mediated popular imagination, a context which can be seen as provoking the breakdown, or *dislocation* (Torfing 1999:301), of previously stable articulations of intervention. Similarly, in this project, I will compare the changes

in the meaning of intervention in two parliamentary votes. The change in material circumstances in Syria perturbs the system of meaning relations that comprise military action.

Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) approach provides significant theoretical notions and ideas about the progress of PD and the contestations of meanings of the concepts as part of constructing social realities. However, there are two central concerns in using this theory for analysing PD: mechanisms of analysing PD and recognising the context of PD. First, DT does not talk about the tools and the ways that changes happen in discourse. From this angle, DT does not look at the linguistic features as small units before relating these features to the whole movements of the elements in the discourse (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:49). However, I suggest the importance of considering how small linguistic units articulate the meaning of intervention as part of reconstructing the discourse. Due to this issue, Montessori and López (2015:204) suggest the significance of combining CDA and DT because "DT provides tools to analyse the dynamics of a society, whereas CDA provides tools to analyse these dynamics." Even though Howarth and Stavrakakis (2000) suggest that their edited book provides empirical case studies on the application of DT, the chapters discuss the whole changes, including the material and linguistic features together, in interpreting the ideas behind social changes. Second, DT appears to represent discourse as changing by its own moment of production rather than the consideration of historical context, so CDA seems to offer a more persuasive view of the relationship between discourse and society (Rear 2013:390). Thus, I will follow the recommendation of Montessori and López (2015) by combining CDA and DT to look at the linguistic features in political discourse with a consideration of the sociocultural and historical context.

2.3.3. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) for Analysing Political Discourse (PD)

There are several schools of Critical Discourse Analysis, but all share the principle that discursive and contextual features, including sociocultural and historical elements, are central to the study of language in social practices, such as power and hegemony. What

distinguishes CDA from being merely Discourse Analysis is summarised by Fairclough (2001:4) as being that:

> *Critical is used in the special sense of aiming to show up connections which may be hidden from people – such as the connections between language, power and ideology...[6]*

Fairclough recognises that language affects our understanding of the world, and it more or less mobilises us. Furthermore, van Dijk (2009) argues that CDA includes philosophical, theoretical, methodological and practical developments. From these perspectives, Flowerdew and Richardson (2018) and van Dijk (2009:62) have observed the rationale for the change of designation of CDA to Critical Discourse Studies (CDS). In this study, I shall use the term CDS because analysts not only analyse the linguistic features, but also consider the social context, historical background and cognition within the interpretations of the use of the language.

These general considerations of analysing discourse in CDS differ from the way that Discourse Theory (DT) sees discourse. Fairclough and Wodak (1997:55) define discourse as:

> *Social practice implies dialectical [or] a two-way relationship: the discursive event is shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them.*

This quote reflects a significant theoretical contrast between CDS and Laclau & Mouffe's (1985) theory, particularly with regard to the role of material structures in shaping and constraining discursive formations. However, while I ultimately agree with the CDS position that both the production and the consumption of symbolic systems (orders of discourse, etc.) are overdetermined by a range of factors that are more or less extra-semiotic (Bartlett et al. 2018:462), I consider that several key concepts of Laclau and Mouffe's theory can be rearticulated within a CDS-oriented approach, as this is suggested by Montessori and López (2015).

---

[6] Fairclough is referring here to Critical Language Study, now commonly known as CDA, and then as CDS.

In this section, I review the CDS approaches that provide frameworks for analysing the discursive practices in PD. Following the same path of CDS, it is argued that:

> *CDA does not constitute a well-defined empirical methodology but rather*
> *a bulk of approaches with theoretical similarities and research questions*
> *of a specific kind. But there is no CDA way of gathering data, either.*

<div align="right">(Wodak and Meyer 2009:27)</div>

Given this emphasis, applying CDS for analysing PD does not provide precise directives in the way of deciding the tools for investigating the changes in discourse and the relationship between these changes to the social practices. However, this orientation is useful because, within CDS, various approaches follow different strategies in dealing with PD, and the analyst needs to apply the ones that answer the research questions.

2.3.3.1. *The Socio-cognitive Approach*

The conceptual framework of van Dijk (1997, 1998, 2003, 2008a) is based on three dimensions: discourse, cognition and society. In this approach, analysing *discourse* refers to the analysis of the linguistic features of discourse, such as semantics and lexicon. The dimension of *society* is used to show the social context of discourse. Van Dijk regards *cognition* as the interface between language and society. He suggests that, in order to understand the relationship between macro-dimensions (such as power and dominance) and micro-dimensions (such as language use and interaction), one has to bridge the gap by investigating the mental representations that are socially-shared models based on personal experience.

Van Dijk (2008b:65) has noted that power in the socio-cognitive approach is "a property of relations between social groups, institutions or organisations." This means that it would be incorrect to talk in this thesis of how the Prime Minister or MPs obtain their power through their construal of the meaning of military action alone, since they gain this power through their institutions, such as the party in Parliament and the electorate. Instead, what I should investigate is how the PM uses language and construes the meaning of intervention to obtain support from constituents that reinforce his/her

(de)legitimation of actions with the importance of considering the social and institutional contexts as parts of producing the meaning of intervention.

With regard to the tools of analysing discourse, van Dijk provides a broad linguistic operationalisation without providing particular tools for analysing small units in discourse (Wodak and Meyer 2009:22). He gives an example of the structural analysis for analysing racist discourse, such as syntax (e.g. passive and active ways of showing responsibility for action), lexicon (e.g. the choice of words) and rhetoric (e.g. metaphor, metonymy, euphemism, etc.) (van Dijk 2008b:105–6). Then, he links the analysis of these features to the cognitive and social dimensions. He suggests that, in general, analysts choose the linguistic tools that reveal linguistic features depending on the research questions. From that perspective, van Dijk agrees with DT to some extent in dealing with the changes in discourse as a whole in the general sense, but he also suggests that the analyst should determine the tools of analysing linguistic features.

An example of analysis using van Dijk's approach is the speech of José María Aznar (the Spanish Prime Minister, 1996-2004) in the debate about legitimising the Spanish support for the Iraq war in March 2003 (van Dijk 2008b). At the time of the vote, there was a vast majority in Spanish Parliament against the Iraq invasion. Aznar's speech is analysed by looking at "contexts as mental models" in that they refer to the memory representations of individuals. The analysis of positive self-presentation and negative other presentation are two key features analysed in Aznar's speech. Van Dijk (2008b:202) suggests that Aznar negatively presents Hussein as the "danger for all of us" because he has control of weapons of mass destructions (WMD) and terrorists might use these weapons through their alleged links with Hussein. Aznar also presents the socialist Opposition in Parliament negatively, arguing that they were betraying their own policies because they do not support the war against the dictator Saddam Hussein, which is inconsistent with the humanitarian and social values of the socialist Opposition. According to van Dijk (2008b), here, Aznar attempts to combine his values with those of the socialist Opposition through his representation of invading Iraq as *humanitarian action*. However, Aznar failed to win the vote and legitimise intervention. Van Dijk relates this finding to the significance of considering the institutional context and the

shared knowledge between MPs in Parliament as they shared the negative experience about the Iraq invasion. In this study, we see, then, how van Dijk presupposes that shared experiences in society are regarded as contexts that are "subjective episodic models (experiences) of participants dynamically construed (and updated) during interaction" (van Dijk 2008b:241). In this way, he agrees with DT in dealing with context as a subjective element, and how individuals contextualise the elements of discourse in an interactional moment.

There is a concern in van Dijk's approach about the effectiveness of politicians controlling the mind of the public because politicians do not always control context. Some material events may have more impact on the mind of the people than the construal of politicians. Van Dijk (2006:377) responds to this concern by suggesting how Blair had decided on the Iraq invasion a year before the held vote in March 2003. He suggests that there were several votes about intervention in Iraq before the proposed motion of Blair, and in each vote, the supporters of the Iraq war had been increasing. Van Dijk suggests that Blair's timing of the vote was a central contextualising of the discourse that enabled him to legitimise intervention, as there was strong support for the motion, even when he put his government majority at risk. The timing of the debate allowed Blair to describe "us" as democracies and "them" as a dictatorship, so those who opposed intervention were framed as not supporting British values (van Dijk 2006:378). Here, van Dijk clarifies the relationship between speakers and context in that politicians consider the social and cultural context in their speech, and they manipulate specific information at particular times to support their ideas. Thus, we can say that the context is subjective to some extent, as the MPs contextualise the elements of discourse in a broad context to their specific selection of information that justifies their positions.

In van Dijk's approach, the idea of contextualising discourse is also linked to the exploration of dimensions of knowledge that are socially shared in terms of mental and social perspectives. According to van Dijk (2003), MPs in a debate not only construe the meanings within their interactional moment, but also perform this process by bringing ideas and concepts that are contested in the broad context. Here, knowledge is defined as "the beliefs shared by the competent members of epistemic communities and which have

been "certified" as such based on the knowledge criteria of an epistemic community" (van Dijk 2003:95). Epistemic communities here not only refer to merely social groups in a specific context, but also community of practice, thought and discourse such as the community of MPs in parliament. Van Dijk tends to show knowledge in interaction as personal or shared by a group of people, and the main focus of this paper is investigating strategies of how MPs use different kinds of knowledge in parliamentary debates. Van Dijk (2003) analyses the debate in the House of Commons held on Friday, September 14 2001, on 'International Terrorism Attacks in the USA'. This debate was held after the terrorist attacks of 11/9 in America. Van Dijk (2003) suggests the analysis of the debate is an ideal example of analysing the knowledge of speakers. In that debate, Blair begins by declaring that "the attacks were not merely directed against the 'US' but against the basic democratic values in which we all believe so passionately and on the civilised world" (cited from van Dijk 2003:123). Van Dijk suggests that Blair performed the general fears from terrorist groups to give the concept alliance a high concern at that time by linking the shared political system between the US and UK which is the *democracy*. These fears are contextualised by Blair to justify standing "shoulder to shoulder" with America. This finding indicates that MPs use their knowledge of the context strategically to reconstruct their arguments (these ideas will be discussed fully in Section 2.2.4).

Further research using Van Dijk's approach to demonstrate how knowledge is activated or/and deactivated is the study of Maalej (2012). He investigated the use of personal deixis in the last three speeches of Bin Ali (the president of Tunisia) after Mohamed Bouazizi set fire to himself. Maalej looks at the progress of the last three statements of Bin Ali after the start of the Tunisian revolution, and how Bin Ali represents himself in relation to the Tunisian public. In particular, he investigates how the President used the deictic centre in the social field to show the discretion for the social roles of participants in society. Maalej follows the model of van Dijk (1998) with more focus on investigating positive self-presentation (Bin Ali) and other negative presentation (the public). The study found that the first two speeches seem to be almost similar by using 'we' and 'they'. In doing so, Bin Ali distances himself as the one who has power and puts the blame on the public. According to Maalej (2012), Bin Ali used this strategy to maintain political status and blame responsibilities on others. However, as the public

demand had become stronger than before, in his last speech, Bin Ali started to use the pronouns 'I-you' and 'we-they' in a different way from the first two speeches. Maalej (2012) suggests that, when the number of oppositions had increased, Bin Ali recognised his loss of power and tried to reproduce power abuse in society. Then, in his last speech, Bin Ali attempted to seek commonality and solidarity with people as addresses in discourse. Bin Ali also claimed that he should fight what he called "gangs" (i.e., rebels) in Tunisian society. These findings suggest how politicians use high levels of the context, and how they contextualise issues shown in media in specific ways to legitimise their claims and actions. Furthermore, politicians select specific types and amount of information that enables them to (de)legitimise their actions. Thus, in this thesis, I shall consider how MPs use ideas in the media to support their arguments, and how these ideas are reconstructed differently in their speeches.

The concept of shared knowledge should not be investigated only within the levels of individuals; it should also be analysed at an institutional level. Saghaye-Biria (2012) has investigated shared knowledge at an institutional level without looking at specific speeches of individuals. In his study, he considered how the United States House of Representatives Homeland Security Committee initiated a series of congressional hearings that were held on March 2011 to investigate the use of racism against American Muslims in the United States Congress. The data of this study was based on the congressional hearing held on 10 March 2011 entitled 'The Extent of Radicalization in the American Muslim Community and That Community's Response'. Saghaye-Biria (2012) follows van Dijk's approach by looking at the representation of 'us' and 'them' to investigate how US Government decision makers may use racist language by looking at how American Muslims are represented as either an in-group or an out-group in the congressional discourse. Saghaye-Biria (2012) suggests that the overall findings reveal that American Muslims are represented in two discourses. The first discourse introduces the Muslim community as the problem because Muslims fail to cooperate fully with law enforcement and to stand against extremist imams who are leading them. In contrast, the second discourse assesses Muslims as a part of the solution, as they are said to be inherently loyal, law-abiding citizens, who have cooperated in counter-terrorism missions and are willing to continue to cooperate. The result provides a general sense of racist

discourse against American Muslims, and this is picked up by politicians in their political debates. I will follow this orientation by looking at how the media produces shared understandings in the British community regarding the possible intervention in Syria.

Van Dijk's approach is a useful framework for looking at the performance of politicians when they bring their knowledge of the social and cultural context into a debate. However, a central concern in this approach is that van Dijk looks at the whole text by considering linguistic features without fixing a systematic methodology. I do not wish to suggest that van Dijk's approach is not useful for analysing speeches in Parliament. Rather, I argue that his model should be considered in this thesis from the perspective of showing how politicians use shared knowledge in their societies (including institutional context and public context) within their construal of the meanings of intervention. However, speakers' uses of shared understandings should also be considered from a pragmatic perspective as Piazza and Green (2015:18) argue that speakers use 'Common Ground" as a strategy of manging information when they construct an argument. In this project, the shared understandings proposed by van Dijk should be linked to the idea that the different themes in the media can be drawn on as 'common ground' by the different speakers. As the themes change in the two parliamentary debates, the speakers also change their uses of common ground as a performative element as well as a pragmatic element when they build an argument. From this angle, I agree with van Dijk that politicians, to some extent, control the context through their selection of knowledge and information, but, at the same time, I suggest that the context also affects the reconstruction of the politicians' discourses and their pragmatic strategies. Thus, the focus on the cognitive aspect would limit the investigation of how meanings shift from one discourse to another. This issue is taken on board in the Dialectical-Relational Approach (DRA), established by Norman Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995, 2003), which looks at how social actions in the broad context are represented in a structured text rather than highlighting cognition as the central element in analysing PD.

2.3.3.2. *Dialectical-Relational Approach*

The Dialectical-Relational Approach (DRA) was developed by Norman Fairclough who sees CDS as the analysis of dialectical relationships between semiosis (including

language) and other elements of social practices (cited in Wodak and Meyer 2009:27). He uses the term "dialectical" to suggest that "relations between elements in society are dialectical in the sense of being different 'discrete', i.e., not fully separate" (Fairclough 2009:163). He uses this idea to highlight that discourse does not occur as an individual instance, but always through interrelations with other moments in society. Nevertheless, discourse and discursive practices (i.e., 'discursive events') are determined by 'order of discourse': the set of conventions associated with social institutions, such as parliamentary discourse in the House of Commons. Conversely, orders of discourse are ideologically shaped by power relations in social institutions and society as a whole (i.e., 'social order') (Fairclough 2001:14). Fairclough links these elements to the idea of 'discourse as social practice'. These theoretical perspectives are important in this project because Fairclough presupposes the levels of text production, discursive practices (i.e., interactions) and socio-cultural context that lead to a display of how concepts of intervention are construed by MPs.

In this approach, Fairclough applies the notion of social conflict between the social classes, which is part of the Marxist theoretical tradition, and he tries to detect linguistic manifestations in discourses produced/consumed in society. This orientation appears clearly in his early work when he refers to the objective of analysing the use of language as "to help increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others because consciousness is the first step for emancipation" (Fairclough 1989:1). From this perspective, he deals with the investigation of ideologies as a construction of social practices, thus differing from van Dijk who sees ideology as a constitution of 'social cognition' that is "schematically organised complexes of representations and attitudes with regard to certain aspects of the social world" (van Dijk, 1993:258). This is to say that Fairclough does not treat cognition as a central element in analysing the use of power in society, but rather, sees discourses as the effects of social structures and practices. However, the position that I will take is that it is possible to view discourses as both social practices and as meditated through cognitive structures. Thus, in this project, I will not refer to social actions, such as the chemical attacks, as elements that are determined by individuals through their selection of specific information. Rather, I follow Fairclough's approach by looking at discourse as shaping

events and being shaped by them. Nonetheless, I also consider the importance of van Dijk's approach from the angle of how the MPs strategically use social actions as shared knowledge in their arguments to build specific meanings of intervention.

Fairclough suggests that every instance of language is a communicative event consisting of three dimensions: text (speech, writing, image or a combination of these), discursive practice (production and consumption of text) and social practice (social actions). Then, he suggests that the three dimensions should be analysed in three stages:

- **Description**: the stage which is concerned with formal properties of the text.
- **Interpretation**: the stage which is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction.
- **Explanation**: the stage which is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context.

(Fairclough, 2015:58)

Figure 2. 1 below shows Fairclough's (2001, 2015) three-dimensional model for CDA.
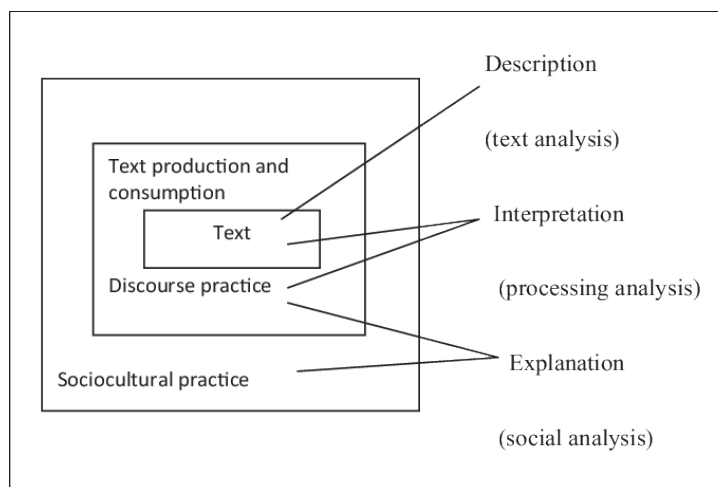
Figure 2. 1: The three-dimensional model for CDA (Fairclough, 1995)

Dealing with the dimensions of discourse (i.e., stages of analysing discourse shown in Figure 2. 1) draws on Systematic Functional Linguistics (Halliday 1985), which analyses

language as shaped by the social function it has come to serve (Wodak and Meyer 2009:27). In the textual analysis, Fairclough organises four main headings of analysing a text: vocabulary, grammar, cohesion and text structure. In the grammar heading, he analyses the structure of the clauses by using transitivity and modality in order to analyse how participants in discourse are represented. Then, these grammatical features are used in his version to look at the process of production and consumption of discourse and relate these to a higher level of discursive strategies and context. Following these procedures, Fairclough shows the complex relationship between discourse and social practices, and he argues that these dimensions are central in analysing PD.

However, as suggested by Wodak and Meyer (2009:22), Fairclough's approach provides broad linguistic operationalisation in analysing discourse. Several studies, including Trimithiotis (2018), emphasise this notion. He reviews how Fairclough sees contexts as multilevel within and between discourse. Spier (2018) and Tavassoli et al. (2018) have also used DRA to follow the general orientation of CDS in dealing with texts in the analytical procedure in order to show the dialectic relationship between text and institution, and social practices and social conditions. Fairclough also followed this notion in his earlier work (e.g. 2005) by combining his notion of multilevel of contexts and texts with the stages of producing concepts in discourse as theorised by Jessop (2002) and Harvey (1996) to discuss the analysis of responses to a political crisis and the emergence of new discourses around material events.

Fairclough (2005) analysed Blair's speeches over the period 1999-2002. He discussed the moment of 'emergence' as the process by which complex realities can be translated into new discourses by articulating elements of existing discourses. Here, Fairclough shares the view of DT in dealing with how individual ideas are articulated together to create a social imaginary that motivates and then (de)legitimises specific actions. He provides an example of how the roots of the discourse of 'globalisation' as it emerged at the end of the last century can be traced back to a variety of related discourses which developed relatively discretely over several centuries, but which were articulated at this point as a response to both the material and ideological discursive conditions of the

time.[7] Fairclough (2005) suggests that this 'emergence' came about when Blair expressed the British values as universal values and by welding them to the values of the international community. Then, from this point, Saddam Hussein and WMD were construed not only as threatening international security, but also as representing a direct threat upon the values and security of Britain. Thus, Blair legitimised intervention through making new textualisation in placing the responsibility upon Britain to protect international security and join America (the closest ally) to achieve this goal. This conception of emergence will be employed in my research to discuss how the existence of crises in Syria emerged in parliamentary discourse and how the discourse of British intervention was articulated with other elements, either from previous discourses or/and from the media coverage that, together, reached the emergence moment.

In the general sense, Fairclough's approach is useful for this research in linking the context to the social structure rather than to the cognition of individuals. However, in this approach, the mechanisms and tools of analysing textual features show broad linguistic operationalisation (Wodak and Meyer 2009:22). In other words, Fairclough suggests the levels of analysing a text without providing a clear systematic model for the textual analysis, and this is a similar issue to van Dijk's approach. However, I need to use a more systematic model for analysing PD that reveals how MPs reconstrue the meaning of intervention and, from there, to relate the textual analysis to the situational, institutional and societal context as another level of analysis. This issue is a central aspect of the Discourse-Historical approach (DHA) of Wodak, which provides a more systematic method for dealing with text and context in the analysis of PD.

2.3.3.3.   *Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA)*

The third approach to CDS I discuss is the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA). This approach was elaborated by Wodak and her colleagues (e.g. Wodak and Meyer, 2009). To situate and explain verbal action with respect to the broader historical context, DHA argues that historical context is a central element in the procedure of investigating

---

[7] This way of dealing with discourse tends to follow Foucault's genealogical approach, specifically in showing the relationship between knowledge and power as a form of controlling society.

the structure and function of verbal actions. This approach is different from the socio-cognitive approach and DRA specifically in the fact that it provides a more systematic sequence of steps for analysing discursive strategies and levels of context. The broad goal of DHA (i.e., gaining a full understanding of a social phenomenon through several steps of dealing with text and context) has led to criticism that different procedures have been used in different studies, which makes applying the DHA difficult in practice (e.g. Reisigl and Wodak 2009; Wodak 2009; Kwon et al. 2009). Reisigl and Wodak (2009:95) have responded that a basic characteristic of DHA is that "categories and tools are not fixed once and for all. They must be elaborated for each analysis according to the specific problem under investigation."

Before moving on to discuss the proposed steps of dealing with text and context, DHA highlights the importance of determining the nature of PD. Wodak (2009b) disagrees with the perspective of political theories which argue for rational and predictable outcomes in the political decision-making process (van Eemeren and Houtlosser 1999, 2009; Henkemans 2014; Williams and Young 2009). She assumes that "doing politics is highly context-dependent, influenced by national traditions and political systems, by the habitus of politicians, the modes of performance, the many embodied personality features, organisational structures, and antagonistic political interest" (Wodak 2009a:26). Wodak's approach differs from political theories by dealing with argumentation strategy as a discursive feature among others (see Wodak and Meyer 2009 for the detailed discursive strategies). This orientation of dealing with PD is similar to van Dijk in the way that both approaches deal with political discourse as a performative strategy to create meanings of key concepts in discourse to (de)legitimise actions.

As stated above, in the DHA model, elements of PD are dependent on the historical and social context. DHA brings general guidelines to deal with the systematic methods of considering the relationship between text and context. The context in the framework of DHA refers to the external features of the text, comprising four levels that must be provided before analysing the PD:

- The intertextual and interdiscursive relationships between utterances, texts, genres and discourses

- The extra-linguistic variables
- The history and archaeology of texts and organisations
- The institutional frames of the specific context of a situation.

(Wodak 2009b:318)

In my analysis of the speeches, therefore, I not only look at the real-time of the debate, but also at the relationship between how speakers back up the past experiences, such as the Iraq invasion, in their discourse and the broad context of the UK. DHA highlights the complexity of deciding the appropriate context of discourse, and then presupposes these levels of context to provide a detailed and full background of the PD. With regard to analysing the discursive features in PD, three features refer to the use of language: "The DHA is three-dimensional: (1) after having identified the specific contents or topics of a specific discourse, (2) discursive strategies are investigated. Then, (3) linguistic means (as types) and the specific, context-dependent linguistic realisations (as tokens) are examined" (Reisigl and Wodak 2009:93).

An example of considering levels of context in DHA is the study of Kwon et al. (2009). They followed the management teams of UK and Australian business units of Defence Systems International (DSI), a leading corporation operating globally in the defence sector. In this study, they analysed three episodes from a two-year ethnography of senior management teams in DSI. A central issue in DSI is that it faces a dilemma over the geographical organisation of facilities because of the polarisation of labour within a small number of metropolitan areas. The three episodes in this study discuss the possibility of constructing a new building as a solution to this problem. In each episode, Kwon et al. (2009) apply DHA to investigate the outcome progress of the decisions towards the possibility of constructing a new building, and how the procedure of decision-making progresses with the consideration of the situational and broad context. In the first episode, the decision was clear and it was to construct building B. Kwon et al. (2009) argue that the first episode is affected by how members apply facts, such as relating to trends in the workforce, health and safety considerations and benefits to communication and coordination in the business. These situations are used as warrants to

support the new building. The second episode took place about nine months later and came from a regular meeting where the team revisited the issue and reached a different decision. In the second episode, the revision of the first outcome produced two cases: (1) support for constructing a new building, and (2) splitting the business into two parts. At this stage, there was no clear, comprehensive shared view among members in DSI towards the construction of the new building. The third episode is from an email between a researcher and a member of the team where they clarify the final outcome that was four months after the second episode. According to Kwon et al. (2009), the context of the team was reflected in the third episode, as they show their solidarity and their shared interest through their continuous support for the construction of the new building. These findings of the three episodes suggest how the institutional context (i.e., the value of solidarity of the team) played a significant role in supporting the new building in the last episode. Therefore, in my study, it is worth considering how MPs construe the meaning of intervention in the real-time of the debate with a consideration of the social and institutional context. Furthermore, the present study reinforces the significance of considering the chronological changes in the context in the two votes in that the meaning of intervention should be considered in terms of the contextual changes around each vote.

DHA has demonstrated how discursive mechanisms and contextual factors influence the development of concepts debated at the institutional level, which is significant to my project on the House of Commons. However, DHA still deals with context as a background of discourse without sufficiently implementing context within the analysis of discursive strategies. This criticism is highlighted to suggest "the need to develop quantitative approaches to analyse large-scale linguistic corpora and integrate them with rich qualitative analyses" (Kwon et al. 2009:295). Baker et al. (2008) consider this issue and suggest several levels of analysis which can be used to deal with the relationship between text and context and the level of analysing each domain. I discuss this point in Section 2.3.3. Thus, for this project, I suggest that the levels of context in DHA should be rephrased into three levels: the context of the Syrian situation, the media coverage of events around each vote, and the specific context of the British Parliament.

For the specific analysis of discursive strategies, Reisigl and Wodak (2009) provide a case study using their detailed linguistic tools for the analysis of textual features, but as shown above, analysts need to pick up the tools that answer their research questions (for more details about the strategies, see Reisigl and Wodak 2009). One of the significant linguistic strategies is the analysis of argumentation by looking at the topoi device (which deals with the overall characteristics of arguments in discourse). KhosraviNik (2015) looked at the discourses of Iran's nuclear programme as represented in Iranian newspaper *Kayhan* (a conservative Islamic Republic of Iran). He investigated the ways this newspaper devised micro-linguistic and macro-argumentative strategies to construct and de/legitimise the positions of self and other. He analysed the published articles of *Kayhan* newspaper in January 2006. KhosraviNik (2015) suggests that this period was remarkable because Ahmadinejad (the Iranian President) offered his full support for the programme at that time, while Iran was in a struggle with the international community to continue its nuclear programme. After identifying the topics in *Kayhan* through the historical and cultural contexts, KhosraviNik (2015) analysed the topoi in the established topics. The results showed that *Kayhan* was an influential radical conservative paper, which represented a strong 'us' (i.e., Iran) versus 'them' (i.e., the West). KhosraviNik (2015) suggests that the newspaper takes this ideological perspective through the use of various topoi such as the topos of 'resistance' that construes Iran as struggling by standing against the united international 'other' to gain high power on an international level. Thus, *Kayhan* represents the self (Iran) as 'we' are on the right path because 'we' resist 'them'. KhosraviNik (2015) applies DHA as the systematic method for analysing the argumentation structure. However, he did not show how the ideas move from one level of context to another. For example, KhosraviNik (2015) shows that Ahmadinejad played a significant role at the background of the period covered without sufficiently showing how his central ideas were circulated in *Kayhan*. Thus, even though DHA provides systematic steps for dealing with the discourse that helps to minimise the risk of bias caused by analysts' interpretations, there are concerns about connecting text and context in practice.

However, even though the DHA approach proposed a detailed and empirical framework of analysing PD, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:22–25) criticise DHA

because Wodak's approach may lead to viewing political discourse as chains of classifications without providing a coherent character of the political discourse. From that perspective, I follow Fairclough and Fairclough by not applying all the strategies of DHA in analysing PD, while I apply with the levels of context. This point will be developed more in Section 2.5.3. The following section will show a review of Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach in order to discuss the usefulness of their framework for analysing discursive strategies of speeches in Parliament.

2.3.3.4.   *Practical Reasoning Approach*

The Practical Reasoning Approach of Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) is a new approach to CDS that is a development of previous approaches in the field, explicitly designed to analyse responses to a political crisis (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012). A central argument that Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) make is that, according to the nature of politics, analysing PD is primarily argumentative discourse and that it should be evaluated in a normative fashion in terms of the validity of the argumentative structures used. They argue that analysts should highlight that argumentation as the central discursive tool should be analysed based on a political perspective. They presuppose that focusing on the argumentation structure of PD will expand and refine CDS's framework by integrating analysis and evaluation of practical argumentation. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) argue that their approach is more compatible with analysing PD than other CDS approaches, such as the work of Chilton (2004) and DHA of Wodak. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:20-21) criticise Chilton's (2004) approach because it does not treat PD as fundamentally argumentation and deliberation, instead focusing on the cognitive perspective. This criticism can also be applied to van Dijk's approach, as he claims that cognition is the bridge between society and discourse. As we have seen previously, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) argue that Wodak in DHA proposed a taxonomical approach without showing how elements of discourse and context are interconnected to present the meaning of *intervention* by speakers in Parliament.

As a solution for critics of the previous approaches, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) proposed two main fundamental characteristics of critical social analysis: normative, which refers to the evaluation of social practices and beliefs as good or bad,

beneficial or harmful, etc., and explanatory, which investigates "why social realities are as they are, and how they are sustained or changed" (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012:79). They argue that CDS cannot by itself investigate the normative and explanatory characteristics, but when combining the CDS approach with the argumentation theory, this will help research in social science to investigate the normative and explanatory critique (this point will be discussed further below). Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) call their framework a practical reasoning approach. They chose the name practical reasoning because practical reasoning occurs in two main situations: (1) having various choices and deciding the normative one, (2) and having one choice and whether to choose it or not. According to Fairclough and Fairclough (2012), MPs in Parliament should build their arguments in relation to the Government motion (GM) by following the practical reasoning approach, with the elements of the argument following one of the situations in practical reasoning. In order to analyse practical reasoning in political texts, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) have advised analysing the argumentation reconstructions of speeches and then evaluating the arguments in relation to their rationality. Figure 2.2 is adopted from Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:44) to show the meaning and hypothetical structure of the core elements of a logically valid argument as considered from the perspective of practical reasoning. These can be summarised as:

Action A might enable the agent to reach his goal (G), starting from his circumstances (C), and in accordance with certain values (V), leads to the presumptive claim that he ought to do A.

Fairclough & Fairclough (2012:44-48).

As Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:44) go on to say, "It is often the case that the context of action is seen as a 'problem' (and is negatively evaluated in view of the agent's existing values or concerns), and the action is seen as the solution that will solve the problem."
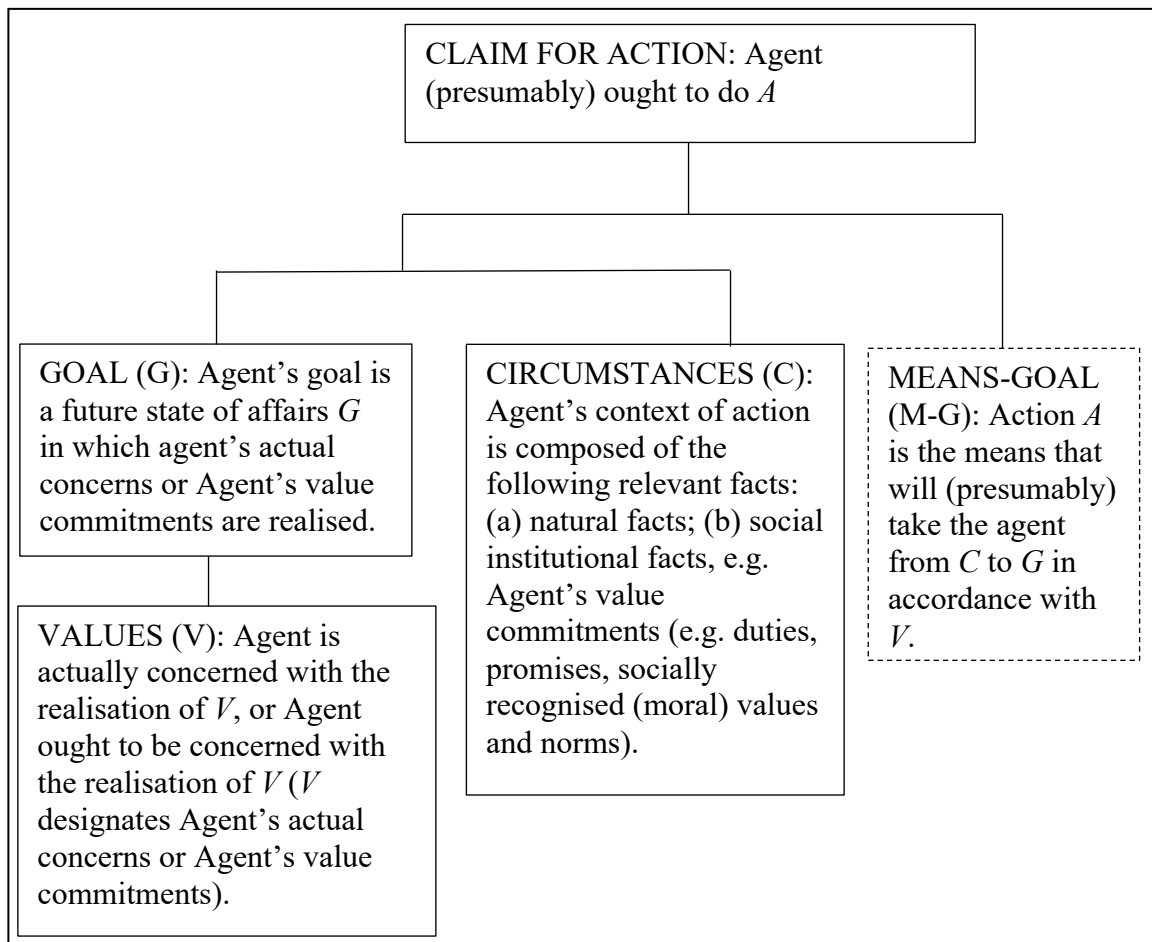
Figure 2.2: Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) proposal of the structure of practical arguments

These elements are not easy to implement in the analysis of speeches in Parliament. In the Methodology chapter, I will expand on discussing how this model will be used in the present research and the practical application of each element in the analysis of PD.

Harmon (2017) has examined the validity of using Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach by analysing the speech of the British PM campaign candidacy speech by Andrea Leadsom given on 4 July 2016. The central discussion of this article is about the methodological aspects (these points are expanded in the Methodology chapter). Harmon (2017) argues that the approach of Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) is useful for analysing PD because it considers the nature of discourse in relation to the argumentation structures. He suggested that the central claim of politicians in every election campaign is 'vote for me', even when this expression is not articulated. This general claim used by

politicians could be applied to the analysis of speeches made in parliamentary debate. However, I suggest that, within this broad claim, the MPs set out a specific action that is proposed to solve the problem because Fairclough and Fairclough define the claim as the means for achieving the goals rather than personal interest. Although Harmon (2016) aimed to discuss the methodological perspective of Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach, he did not discuss fundamental issues, such as dealing with long speeches in a debate.

Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:117–75) provide a case study on analysing the responses to the economic crisis in the UK. They analyse policy-making texts of the British Pre-Budget and Budget Reports that are delivered annually to the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Their data comprises two reports: the first was delivered by Alistair Darling in November 2008 (in the Labour Government led by Gordon Brown), and the second was delivered by George Osborne in June 2010 (in the coalition Conservative-Liberal Democrats Government). Fairclough and Fairclough analyse how the elements of the arguments are used by speakers to support a central action (i.e., the claim) that solves the financial crisis in the UK budget. The Labour Government provides its claim as allowing borrowing to rise to solve the problem (i.e., circumstance), which is the depth of recession of the economy. On the other hand, the coalition's central claim is reducing public spending and creating conditions for private-sector-led growth due to the problem (i.e., the emergence of the large budget deficit). Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) suggest, in general, that the two governments share the same crisis, which is the British financial crisis, but they conceptualise and present this problem (*circumstance*) differently. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) argue that this construal of *circumstances* led to various construals of argumentation structures. For example, in the argumentation structures, the two governments strategically used the idea of 'fairness' according to their values and obligations. Darling suggests that a central value is being fair in 'supporting' and 'helping' people by allowing borrowing. On the other hand, Osborne argues that 'fairness' is defined as "in this budget, everyone will be asked to contribute… But, everyone will share the rewards when we succeed." Here, Osborne is different from Darling by including the public in the *circumstances* as a part of the problem to justify their obligation of being involved in the *means-goal*, and so they

should cooperate with the Government in the financial crisis. This example emphasises the notion that the MPs not only try to construct a solid argument in the debate about the potential responses against crises, but they also articulate ideas and concepts to justify specific actions. Given this argumentative nature of PD in Parliament, the practical reasoning approach is ideal for analysing how speakers in Parliament reconstruct their argument to construe the meaning of intervention.

With regard to the normative perspective, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) agree with Blair's notion (2011) that aspects of the argument are mainly logical, rhetorical and dialectical, so arguments can be evaluated by looking at these three levels. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:62-66) use this general perspective to suggest three types of questions for evaluating the argument of the practical reasoning approach: challenging the rationality of elements, questions that defeat the whole argument, and questions that can rebut the claim. Hay (2013:324) emphasises the usefulness of Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach and suggests that this framework should give normativity more attention to the intended, unintended, real, anticipated and/or imagined effects of discourses to evaluate the rationality of argument. An example from Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012:155) case study for how to judge the logical validity of different arguments is asking the question "are the costs acceptable in view of goals and values that cannot be overridden?" This question is answered by evaluating the main claim with other alternatives, and how other reasons may refute the argument. At the same time, they consider the broad context of press reports about the policy of austerity, such as *The Financial Times*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian*. These reports are used as part of evaluating the normativity of each argument. However, there are concerns about evaluating the normative structure of the argument in this thesis because the purpose of this research is to investigate how various argumentation constructions produce various meanings of intervention.

In this thesis, I draw on the framework developed by Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) in order to map out the logical structure of the speeches in Parliament and the logical relationships between various elements and sections. However, I argue that, in focusing on the *normative* aspects of arguments and considering whether they are rational

and valid, Fairclough and Fairclough have neglected the *performative* element: i.e., the use of popular tropes, affiliation strategies and lay understandings of complex events as elements within the structured argumentation of their contributions to ongoing debates. Thus, I follow the notion of Wodak (2009a) by referring to the action of politics as not only a logical structure but as also a mode of social performances that are dependent on socio-cultural and historical context. In this way, I take on board Fairclough and Fairclough's call for a more elaborate analysis of argumentation, but with the goal of explaining not whether the argument can be considered as good or rational, but why such a performance might have been effective at a particular time before a particular audience and according to the precepts of subjective, contingent and partial judgment of what is right and wrong. Specifically, in terms of this research, we can build on Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach to analyse what beliefs, values and concepts are used within the arguments of different speakers and in particular how 'intervention' as a signifier is both strategically drawn on and continually redefined as both an input and output of this process.

Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach provides a systematic model for analysing political speeches, but they do not show how the broad context of the country should be considered in their framework as a specific context for explaining the construal of the meaning of keywords. Rather, they discuss the broad context from the angle of discussing the normativity of the arguments when they refer to the reports of the newspapers. The Socio-Cognitive approach and Discourse Historical Approach suggest more useful tools for considering the context than the approach of Fairclough and Fairclough (2012). However, these approaches do not provide a full consideration of how ideas and concepts move from the broad context (i.e., the press coverage) to the institutional context of the parliamentary debate to explain the performances of the MPs' construal of intervention. They only provide the context as part of the background of the analysed discourse. Due to this issue, I will discuss how scalar analysis can contribute to considering the relationship between the levels of contexts.

2.3.4. Applying the Scales Approach to the Whole Framework

In this project, I do not see the broad context around the two votes as only a background of the text (speeches in Parliament). Rather, I see the levels of text and context as interconnected in an organic way, feeding into each other as the ideas move between these two levels. From this perspective, there is a concern about how I shall consider the process of the MPs in Parliament using the ideas and issues debated in the broad context within the specific context of a parliamentary debate. Blommaert reinforces this orientation and suggests a problem which is:

> *Studies of language in society tend to apply a simple untheorized distinction in the "levels of context" included in analysis: the micro versus macro distinction. Discourse analysis of spoken interaction, or the sociolinguistic analysis of individual variables in speech would typify micro-analysis, while ideologically oriented critical discourse analysis and studies of language policy and language attitudes would typify the latter.*

(Blommaert 2015:107)

In this emphasis, a central criticism against the CDS approaches is that they do not strongly incorporate the context substantially enough in analysing discourse (Blommaert, 2005). Several CDS studies have worked in corpus linguistics to solve this issue by considering various levels of discourse. Baker et al. (2008) have combined corpus linguistics and CDS[8] to facilitate several levels of analyses that seek to deliver a robust investigation of text and context. They proposed several steps to achieve this goal. First, they suggested 'context-based research', whereby they "examine[d] how the terms refugee, asylum seeker, immigrant and migrant were conceptualised by 'official' sources." They used this "initial examination of context," as it proved "to be useful in setting the scene for further analysis" (Baker et al., 2008:.283-284). Then, they prepared these findings for the detailed analysis of the media. However, this approach does not treat the problem of considering how ideas move from one level to another. From an

---

[8] They refer to CDS in their article as critical discourse analysis (CDA).

argumentative perspective, Piazza and Green (2015:2) highlight the importance of considering "how a particular claim is strategically pushed forward in the longer text of multi-party news report, in which various voices are present, from the reporter's to many authoritative and legitimated sources". This notion is not only important from a pragmatic and normative perspective of argumentation, but it can also be applied for looking at how concepts and ideas progress among various levels of discourse when speakers reconstruct an argument. However, this issue of the relationship between text and context is more developed by Blommaert (2005) and Lazzaro-Salazar (2016) who have problematised the understanding of meanings in society, and who suggest the need to deal with the issue of contextualisation of language signs. Scalar analysis answers some significant conceptual problems that linguists have identified relating to the appropriate unit of analysis, the relationship between context and language and the connections between language and other semiotic resources (De Costa and Canagarajah 2016).

The difficulty of linking the two levels of context (i.e., press coverage and parliamentary debate) is a central concern in Scales Theory. Blommaert (2005:108) suggests the importance of considering the "level of context" because the barrier between levels of context seem blurred. Blommaert highlights the difficulty of defining the necessary and adequate level of context that helps interpret the generalisation of a phenomenon. The equation of scale to a territory (i.e., region, city or nation) influences scholars to think of the scale as an objective. However, De Costa and Canagarajah (2016) argue that it is more useful to separate scales from objective material entities and keep them open to framing places/spaces and time in diverse ways in relation to the interests and histories of different social groups. They suggest the difficulty of fixing the meaning of scales in that they reinforce the idea of dealing with the size of macro-level context and its relation to a social phenomenon as dependent on several historical and socio-cultural aspects.

Theoretically, scalar analysis seems to consider the problematic issues around text and context, but a central point in the functional analysis is how to identify scales. According to Blommaert (2015), scales are epistemological constructs that help scholars and communities to understand, interpret and/or define social life. Moore (2008) has

made a persuasive argument for treating scales as a category of practice. This orientation means that scholars would identify and adopt scales as they emerge from the practices of people and institutions. I believe that this adoption of scales as a category of practice tends to resolve some of the definitional issues with scales. In this way, analysts should take the cue from how scales work in practice by looking at how ideas in the various levels of context are rescaled in interactional practices.

Scalar analysis is not only unique in discussing the dimension of scales and the necessity of identifying levels of scales. Blommaert also negates the idea of one-dimensional models that view meaning as a singular and linear outcome of interaction (Silverstein, 1992:57). Kell (2015) also raises a similar issue of how to make the analytical move from micro to macro in a way that can enable analysts to explain abstract phenomena. Blommaert (2001) uses Silverstein and Urban's (1992) considerations by replacing the one-dimensional model with a multi-dimensional package of effects, some of which are enacted locally and others occur later in forms of re-entextualisation, which refers to the movements of ideas within a complex multi-dimensional levels of contexts, and how this process move from a context to another. This suggestion attempts to account for the complexity of meanings shifting from local to macro and vice versa. In the context of this study, I can use these important ideas of using scales in more constructive ways in looking at how speakers in Parliament consider the broad context of the UK in their strategic construction of arguments.

More specifically, I will discuss how scale relates to the argument structure in which central topics (in the press coverage) are reformulated in the context of the parliamentary debate. Scales Theory bears some similarity to Reisigl and Wodak's (2009) call to consider several levels of context, but Blommaert (2015) goes further to consider the movements of ideas between levels of contexts as a category of practice. This notion, and van Dijk's approach (2003, 2005, 2008b), should be combined to explore how the media practise the coverage of events that are shown as shared understandings in the British community. Then, scalar analysis becomes important by looking at how speakers in Parliament use the shared understandings shown in the press to construe the meaning of intervention. Thus, combining scales and the approach of Fairclough and Fairclough

(2012) will contribute to a better understanding of the strategic construal of the meaning of intervention in the two votes, and how MPs translate the ideas developed by the newspapers into their specific context.

2.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have reviewed previous research from a wide range of perspectives that will enable the construction of a model for the current research project to investigate the speakers' construal of the meaning of intervention in order to obtain a majority in the British parliamentary debate about the possibility of military action in Syria. As stated in the introduction, investigating the meaning of intervention depends on the consideration of three aspects: the material/historical events (a general background of the two votes), shared popular representations of the events in the UK (as represented in the media), and the argumentation strategies within the two parliamentary debates. Figure 2.3 below revisits the proposed triangulation of analysing the meaning of *intervention* in each vote.
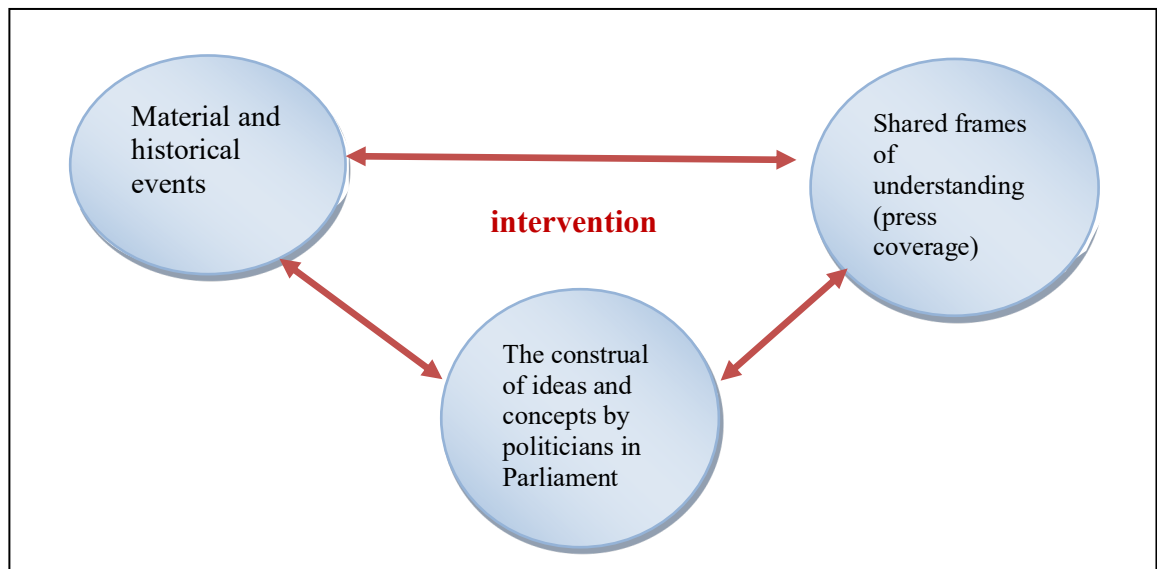
Figure 2.3: The proposed triangulation for analysing the meaning of intervention in each vote.

Although previous literature has focused on various aspects regarding shifting the meaning of keywords in political discourse, such as the relationship between language and society, there is a clear limitation in considering how the debates are structured performances drawn on from common knowledge. Following the triangulation of

analysing intervention (in Figure 2.3), my general approach will be briefly outlined below.

First, I will follow Baker et al. (2008) and Wodak (2009) in relation to applying levels of context. I will use three levels in this project: material/historical events (this is shown in the Background), the press coverage (as public 'common sense'), and the institutional and situational level (speeches in Parliament). In Section 2.2, I provided a general background of the Syrian situation and the context of the recent UK foreign policy. For the second aspect, I will follow Baker et al.'s (2008) method by using corpus linguistics to analyse the press coverage of events around the two votes in order to provide detailed context before analysing the parliamentary speeches. This step will also employ van Dijk's idea of "shared knowledge" (2003, 2005, 2008b) to highlight how the media emphasises specific ideas as shared understanding in the British community.

Regarding the analysis of the specific speeches (i.e., the third aspect in the triangle), I accept Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) call for a more elaborate analysis of argumentation. However, I will not employ this to explain whether the argument can be considered reasonable or rational; rather, I will use it to provide a reasonable expansion for the failure and success of the first and second motions, respectively. In terms of this research, I will build on Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach to analyse how *intervention* is strategically drawn on and continually redefined as both an input and output of this process. With regard to the context, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) look at the press coverage of events to evaluate the validity of arguments. However, as mentioned above, a scalar analysis will be applied to the findings of the specific argumentation structure in order to look at how speakers strategically rescale ideas that are used by the papers to articulate concepts around the meaning of intervention. The last step in the analysis of the speeches involves relating these small units of analyses to the general movement of discourse by using concepts from Discourse Theory. In that level of analysis, I will consider how the speakers construct their arguments and develop competing concepts and ideas for social imaginaries and values in using the logic of equivalence and difference as an attempt to gain a majority in the vote.

In bringing the triangulation shown in Figure 2.3 together, I will look at the speeches in Parliament as contextualised performative rescaling in which shared ideas shown in the general context are manipulated to build the meaning of intervention in order to obtain a majority that votes for a specific action. This thesis will attempt to address the gap of considering the relationship between text and context by answering the following broad research question: **how do the terms of the UK parliamentary debates on possible intervention in Syria change as a response to the changes in the material situation in Syria and in the media coverage of these events?**

This central question is further divided into three sub-questions:

4. What themes and topics do the newspapers develop around the situation in Syria and the possibility of military action at Time One and Time Two?
5. How do speakers strategically rescale the themes developed in the press in their construals of *intervention* in Time One and Time Two?
6. How do the speakers seek to create equivalences and differences across their construals of military intervention/action in order to gain a majority at Time One and Time Two?

In the concluding chapter, I will discuss my findings and attempt to provide a feasible *explanation* (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012) for the different fortunes of the two motions through a consideration of the different conjuncts of context-common frames-discourse strategies at the times of the two votes.

Chapter Three: Data and Methodology

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, it was suggested that the procedure of investigating the construal of intervention should follow a triangulation to consider the historical context, common understanding as represented in the media coverage and the strategies employed in the parliamentary debate. I will follow Baker et al.'s (2008) approach of combining corpus linguistics (CL) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) that is developed to facilitate several levels of analyses that seek to deliver a robust investigation of text and context for a specific political crisis. The historical context around the two votes has been provided in the previous chapter, Section 2.2. In Chapters Four and Six, I will analyse media coverage as a proxy for the shared understandings in the British community. However, this will also be included in the discussion in Chapters Five and Seven to determine how speakers in Parliament use ideas presented in the media. Thus, the central purpose of analysing the press coverage is to provide the thematic analysis as a common ground of central ideas represented in the public domain.

In this chapter, I start by discussing how press coverage is considered in the present research and the methodological aspects of the thematic analysis (Section 3.2). Then, I move on to the data collection and methods used for examining parliamentary debates (Section 3.3). At the end of this chapter, Section 3.4 shows how the findings of the press coverage can be combined with the findings of the argumentation structures used by speakers in Parliament through intertextual analysis.

3.2. Examining the Press Coverage

Newspapers have been chosen to be analysed for this research because various studies have demonstrated the importance of the relationship between the press and Parliament (e.g. Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999; Strömbäck 2008; Van Aelst and Vliegenthart 2014). Although these studies have not dealt with this relationship from a linguistic perspective by looking at the movement of discourse, they have been crucial in showing the importance of considering the newspapers' coverage at a higher level than the parliamentary context. As the main goal of analysing the press coverage is not to

investigate how each paper constructs an argument around the possibility of military action in Syria, but rather, to establish the themes of such discussions, I follow Zheng's (2014) claim that applying argumentation frameworks in non-argumentative discourses, such as narratives and explanation, is not useful. For example, in the case of the present study, I use the newspapers' coverage as non-argumentative discourse in order to investigate themes and topics around each vote. Therefore, I will use corpus linguistics (CL) to investigate the central themes and ideas used by the press in the representation of the Syrian situation. Then, the findings of the press coverage will be used in the analysis of the speeches to see how speakers draw ideas from the broad context in real-time debates in order to fix the meaning of intervention in a particular way. It is worth mentioning that the process of producing ideas around an issue is not only a one-way process that starts in the press and is then integrated by politicians in parliamentary debates. Politician, in fact, form a central source in media discourses through reports of their speeches, interviews and articles written by them, for example. Thus, the influence of the movements of ideas is a two-way process. Nonetheless, because the focus of this study is on Parliament, I will investigate how speakers in Parliament draw ideas from the broad context to their institutional context. The following section will discuss the methods of analysing the newspapers.

3.2.1. Introducing Corpus Linguistics (CL)

This section will begin by introducing the use of Corpus Linguistics (CL) because it helps to manage the analysis of large data (i.e., large number of articles in the newspapers). CL can be defined as "dealing with some set of machine-readable text which is deemed an appropriate basis on which to study a specific set of research questions" (McEnery and Hardie 2012:1). In brief, a corpus is a collection of transcriptions of speeches or written texts that are downloaded to a computer system. Corpora are constructed in a computer system to process a large quantity of data very quickly, as most corpus studies seek to investigate the use of language in a large dataset.

McEnery and Hardie (2012) have claimed that web databases such as Google could be regarded as a type of corpus if they are used to investigate a linguistic phenomenon. However, Baker (2006) and Leech (1991) have argued that text archives of web databases

are different from corpora because the latter must be designed for a particular "representative function" (Baker 2006:26–27). Therefore, corpora are designed and collected specifically to investigate linguistic phenomena. Using CL for analysing press coverage will enable a large number of articles to be analysed in order to identify central concepts in the coverage of Syria in the British newspapers. This approach, therefore, overcomes the criticism of CDS in terms of its qualitative analysis of specific texts using a CDS approach and the production of observations based on small texts (McEnery and Hardie 2012:17-18). Using CL in this study will, therefore, decrease the bias of the research (Baker 2006:11-12), specifically in relation to issues such as the number of articles analysed, what these articles are and how the analysis of these articles can determine the general feeling in the country at the time of the two votes.

3.2.2. Building the Corpus

The dataset in CL is considered an essential factor in determining how the corpus/corpora of a study should be built. According to Baker (2006) and McEnery and Hardie (2012), there are various types of corpora, which are constructed according to the nature of the research goals. Amongst these are:

1. 'Specialised corpora', which are designed to study the use of language in relation to a particular issue (e.g. analysing the language used in newspapers).
2. 'Diachronic/monitor corpora', which are designed to investigate the development of language over time and may contain several sub-corpora that are divided into periods.
3. 'Reference corpora', which are designed to create a database that represents the language as broadly as possible.[9]

According to these definitions, the corpus of the press coverage in this research is a specialised corpus because the corpus is designed to study the central themes and topics that the papers use in representing the Syrian situation and possibility of British military

---

[9] The latter two types of corpus are described in detail in Sinclair (1991:23–26).

action. The findings of the press coverage will show the shared common knowledge in the British community regarding the Syrian situation.

3.2.2.1.   *Data Regarding Press Coverage*

A principal criterion in building a corpus is that it should be representative. Biber (1993:243) defined representativeness as "the extent to which a sample includes the full range of variability in a population." Thus, making the sample representative increases the validity of generalising the findings when analysing the use of language in a corpus. Representativeness is achieved according to two factors: (1) *balance*, which means that the various sub-corpora in the main corpus should be balanced, and (2) *sampling*, which determines how the text chunks for each genre are selected. Following the principle of balance, I will seek to select articles covering the Syrian situation **before** and **after** each debate. Looking at this sort of period around each vote will provide more representative corpora that display the wide varieties of language used. I also specified the dates of the data to be collected: that is, **eight** days before and **eight** days after each debate. The purpose of including coverage published **eight** days before is that chemical weapons were used eight days before the first vote (21 August 2013). I then covered the eight days after to make the corpus balanced in representing the situation. This method was also followed in the second vote to make the corpora of the two votes balanced. The period covered for the first vote (Time One) will be from 21 August 2013 to 6 September 2013, and the period covered for the second vote (Time Two) will be from 24 November 2015 to 10 December 2015. With regard to the sampling frame of the corpus, a sample is assumed to be representative if the findings it generates are also true for the general population. Taking this issue into account, I characterised my corpus by looking at four newspapers for each debate: *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, *The Sun* and *The Mirror* (two tabloids and two broadsheets, one tends to be 'left-wing' and one 'right-wing' in each category). It is worth mentioning that the papers have differences in the production of the news and a range of factors (e.g. intended audience, differences between editorial pieces and hard news, etc.). Furthermore, there are various complex issues about maintaining an analysis with the comparison between conservative versus liberal in the British press (Baker et al. 2008; Conboy 2007; Richardson 2007). The differences between the papers in covering the Syrian situation may affect the way each paper presents themes and topics (this issue

is expanded upon in Section 3.2.3). However, regarding building the corpora of the papers, the central goal is that the newspapers have different readerships throughout the UK, so they can represent public perceptions around the two votes.

3.2.2.2.   *Building the Newspapers' Corpora*

The corpora of newspapers were downloaded from LexisNexis. Regarding ethical clearance, Baker (2006:38) suggests that analysts do not need to obtain ethical permission or permission from copyright holders before collecting and analysing texts that are already available in the public domain. Figure 3.1, below, is a screenshot taken from LexisNexis which gives an example of how to build a corpus for each paper. The boxes in the left-hand side display the parameters for downloading the articles. In the first box, the search terms have been input to identify the articles that use particular words to build the specialised corpora. If I download all the articles in the specific period without specifying terms in the search box, several unrelated items will be included (e.g. articles about sport and education). Therefore, I followed the method proposed by Potts et al. (2015) and used the names of places or objects that are not evaluative words to build the corpus. For example, Potts et al. (2015) used the term 'Katrina' as the central word, in addition to other words, to build their specialised corpora to analyse articles that evaluated the 2005 US hurricane crisis. The second and third boxes show the selected period and the source. In the third box, the researcher selected the desired archive (in this example, *The Telegraph*). The articles from each newspaper were downloaded in one corpus because each paper will be analysed separately (this point will be discussed in Section 3.2.3). The last box, 'Moderate similarity', was ticked because some articles were reproduced more than once in the same period, so ticking this box avoided the repetition of articles. As an initial step, I tried to download the articles without ticking the last box (Moderate similarity), but found several duplicated concordance lines. Therefore, ticking this box solved the duplication of concordance lines in the corpora.
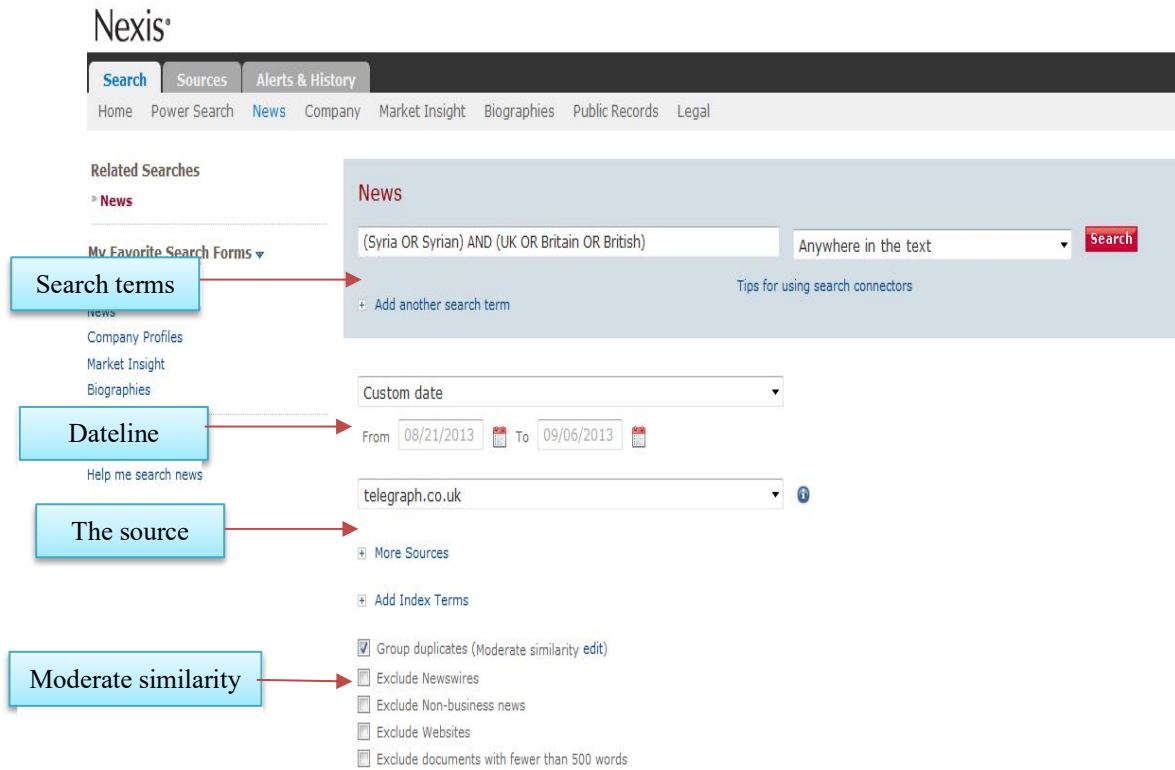
Figure 3.1: Screenshot of LexisNexis webpage.

Table 3.1, below, shows the number of articles relating to the coverage of the first vote. The word 'OR' was used between the terms input into the search box to identify all articles containing any of the search terms. On the other hand, 'AND' was used to identify any article containing all the search terms. For example, when 'Syria OR Syrian' was input into the search box, this identified any article containing either 'Syria' or 'Syrian'. However, if we input 'Syria AND Syrian' into the search box, this identified any article containing both terms. We can also do a more developed search such as '(Syria OR Syrian) AND (UK OR Britain)' in which this identified any article containing at least one term from those between brackets. I used various search terms as an initial step in order to determine the difference between the numbers of articles available for each newspaper. For example, for the first vote, I looked at the following search terms: Syria, Syrian, chemical, weapons, UK, Britain and British in order to look at the number of articles with various search terms. According to McEnery and Hardie (2012:6), this step decreases bias in building the corpus by identifying specific texts that support the desired interpretations.

Options of Search Terms	*The Telegraph*	*The Guardian*	*The Sun*	*The Mirror and The Sunday Mirror*
1. **Syria OR Syrian**	811	428	292	279
2. **Syria OR Syrian OR chemical weapons**	812	432	293	279
3. **Syria OR Syrian OR chemical weapons OR UK**	More than 3000	3000	2805	1763
4. **UK AND (Syria OR Syrian OR chemical weapons)**	812	331	147	152
5. **(Syria OR Syrian) AND (UK OR Britain OR British)**	811	359	186	195

Table 3.1: Numbers of articles containing various terms identified using the search box

Table 3.1 shows the different words used in the search box and the numbers of articles identified with each method. The table shows that the third method identified the highest numbers of articles across the four newspapers, and this is because downloading any article containing the keyword 'UK' not only identified texts regarding the Syrian crisis, but also other topics such as sport. The fourth and fifth methods identified the number of articles relating to the UK and Syria, which suggests that these articles focus on the Syrian issue as well as the representation of the UK. The fourth and fifth methods decreased the number of articles without specifying the focus because articles relating to the UK's stance should be located using terms such as 'Prime Minister', 'MPs', names of politicians, etc., rather than only 'UK' or 'Britain'. Furthermore, using terms such as 'UK' and 'Britain' without 'Syria' led to missing some articles representing the situation in Syria. Due to this issue, I then limited the choice of search words to those used in the first and second search methods because they identified the highest numbers of articles

that specifically discussed or referred to the Syrian topic. Then, I chose the first method of using search terms because this choice also solved the problem of downloading articles of Time Two that were related to articles containing the various names of ISIL. For example, one of the names of ISIL is 'IS', which refers to the 'Islamic State', and searching for articles containing the term 'IS', would identify all articles containing the verb 'is', which would affect the focus of the corpus. Thus, the first search technique was selected for this study, as this choice also solved the problem of downloading articles regarding Time Two.

3.2.3. Methods of Analysis

In this section, I will identify the steps that were followed in this research to analyse the press coverage. The newspapers were analysed by considering two central stages. First, a collocational analysis was applied to identify mainly the keywords and lexical network of each paper. Second, a thematic analysis was applied by looking at the concordance lines of the keywords in order to see the themes and topics that the papers developed around the situation in Syria.

3.2.3.1. *Collocational Analysis*

The analysis of a corpus tends to be driven by investigating how one word occurs together with others. This notion refers to a central concept in CL known as '**collocation'**, which can be defined as a "way of understanding meanings and associations between words which are otherwise difficult to ascertain from a small-scale analysis of a single text" (Baker 2006:96). Collocation looks at how far away from the word under investigation (known as the '**node**') one should look for collocates. A node occurs with collocates within a '**span**' (i.e., occurrences of words to the left and right of the node).

The collocational analysis is the first step I carried out after building the corpus of each paper. According to Baker (2006), collocational analysis is useful in two ways. First, it provides a focus for the initial analysis, which is particularly helpful when a large number of concordance lines need to be sorted multiple times in order to reveal lexical patterns. This method enables the concordance lines to be organised and managed, as presented below. Second, collocational analysis reveals the most salient lexical patterns

surrounding a subject, from which several discourses can be obtained. Brezina et al. (2015) have argued that collocation networks can be used to operationalise the notion of the 'aboutness' of a text. This investigation of aboutness will be useful in determining more or less general topics and themes that the newspapers have used to cover the Syrian situation and possible British intervention. Thus, collocational analysis not only organises the concordance lines, but it also makes the analysis better focused on analysing the central concepts in the texts, which can be regarded as representative concepts for the rest of the concordance lines.

Several studies have looked at how to identify the relationship between collocates in discourse. There are various issues around the criteria of identifying collocations, and the most relevant issues for my study are discussed below. Firth (1957:14) has suggested three primary criteria for identifying collocations, which can be summarised as:

1. Distance: the span around a node (the left and right words to the node).
2. Frequency: the frequency of words in a span with the node.
3. Exclusivity: how the words in a span can be exclusive to the node (e.g. in the press coverage, the word 'chemical' is exclusive to the node *Syria* because Syria is strongly and exclusively connected with 'chemical' when the word 'chemical' appears in the text of the corpora).

In addition, Gries (2013) has identified three further criteria to be considered: directionality, dispersion and type-token distribution (for more description of these criteria see Gries 2013). For the purpose of this research, I focus on the directionality criterion that considers the strength of the attraction between two words. For example, the word 'chemical' has a stronger relationship with the node *Syria* than Syria has with the word 'chemical'. Directionality considers the uniqueness of collocates by looking at how strongly a word collocates with the node with the consideration of its frequencies in the whole corpus. This criterion will reveal which words significantly collocate with the node Syria, and so should be analysed. Brezina et al. (2015) added an additional criterion to this, which is 'connectivity' between collocates. They argued that collocates of words do not occur in isolation, but are part of a complex network of semantic relationships, which ultimately reveals their meaning (Brezina et al. 2015:141). Therefore, they suggested the

importance of considering the complex collocation network between the collocates themselves in a graph. In order to determine the most suitable software tool to use in this study, I identified a question that helped to specify the tool's desired characteristics and functions: **How can the tool identify the strongest collocates used within the representation of the Syrian topic?** By answering this question, I will analyse the concordance lines of the strong keywords, which should reveal the central topics and themes that the papers use in their representations of the situation in Syria.

The GraphColl tool meets the needed characteristics of identifying the relationship between collocates, and specifically, the directionality and connectivity criteria which are important in identifying the collocates network in a corpus to reveal the strong words around the Syrian topic. Brezina et al. (2015) have argued that this tool is unique because it considers the connectivity criterion, which is missed in other tools, such as AntConc, Sketch Engine and Wmatrix. Furthermore, GraphColl presents the result of the relationship in a graph to simplify the identification of the relationship between collocates. Brezina et al. (2015:148-149) designed the GraphColl tool specifically for collocational analysis and referred to it as a "graphical collocations" tool. According to their description of GraphColl:

> *A collocation search is performed in the corpus for the given node. This computes all word frequencies within the collocation window for the specified node. Then, a statistical comparison is run between the frequencies of words within the collocation window and those outside of the window. Each point ('vertex') in the graph (displayed as a circle) represents a word type in the corpus. Lines ('edges') run from the node to its collocates, their length representing the strength of the collocation. Shorter lines indicate higher values of the association measure, and thus stronger collocational bonds…*

(Brezina et al. 2015:149)

Analysts should use the Delta P measure in GraphColl for 'directionality' and 'connectivity' because this measure takes directionality into account by producing two different values of collocational strength for any pair of words. These two criteria (directionality and connectivity) focus on considering the function of 'keyness' in a corpus to identify what a corpus is about or the 'aboutness' of a corpus. From that angle, I

will use the two criteria to identify the keywords of each newspaper to analyse their concordance lines. An example of considering the two criteria is that, in *The Telegraph*, the two collocates *military* and *action* are very strongly related to the node *Syria* among other collocates. These two collocates (*military* and *action)* have a synchronic relationship, which means that each one occurs with the other as the strongest collocate. In which case, I did not analyse the concordance lines of the two collocates, while I chose to analyse *military* because it has a stronger relationship with the node *Syria* than the collocate *action*. In addition, *military* significantly occurs with other terms, such as *intervention* and *strikes*. This method of identifying strong keywords will avoid analysing duplicated concordance lines in each paper, and it will save time to look at other keywords. The Delta P metric is also used, as it calculates two different probabilities: the value of the node with collocates in relation to its occurrences in the whole corpus, and the value of a type (i.e., term) in relation to its collocation with the node and other collocates.[10] By carrying out this complex equation, Delta P helps to identify the strength of types in relation to a node. Moreover, Delta P has been developed within the GraphColl tool to allow users to identify their statistics through a simple interface (Brezina et al. 2015:141), which simplifies the identification of strong collocates. Therefore, I used the Delta P measure in this study because it takes the uniqueness of keywords into account by producing two different values of collocational strength for any pair of words in a corpus.

3.2.3.1.1. Importing Data into GraphColl

After the corpus was built using LexisNexis, several necessary steps were carried out to present precise results for analysis using GraphColl. First, I used a window span of five words to the left and five words to the right to see how many times a collocate occurred with the node 'Syria' in this size of the occurrences. I chose a window of five because it is common in computational linguistics (McEnery and Hardie 2012:129). Then, I conducted an initial analysis without any filters using mainly the Delta P measure to see the initial findings for *The Telegraph* corpus. This finding revealed that many of the

---

[10] In CL, the term 'type' refers to an individual word in a corpus and 'token' for each of its occurrences in the corpus.

strong collocates around the node *Syria* were functional words (e.g. in, on, at, and, etc.), as in Figure 3.2. I needed to remove the functional words because they make the identification of strongest collocates complex, and they will provide a long list of strong collocates that only provide little information without showing the 'aboutness' of a corpus.
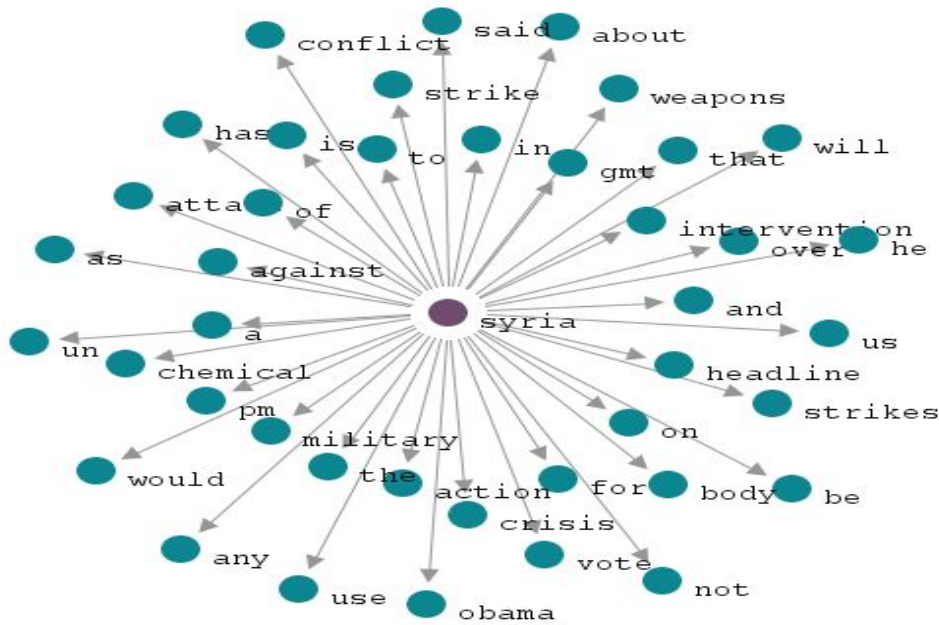
Figure 3.2: Initial results for strongest collocates to the node 'Syria' with no filter applied.

Brezina et al. (2015) used a filter to remove the functional words in their data. However, they did not clarify their use of the filter in their study. The only method they suggested for decreasing the frequency of the functional words is selecting an association measure that highlights the exclusivity of collocates, such as the Delta P scores. They also suggested that increasing the threshold will increase the values of collocation frequency, which will lead to a decrease in the frequency of the functional words. I implemented this method, but the functional words continued to have a strong relationship with the node.[11]

---

[11] I also contacted some corpus linguists regarding this issue (i.e., filtering the functional words in GraphColl), but unfortunately, none of them had dealt with cleaning corpora using GraphColl. Then, I asked some of my friends who specialise in computer science and have experience in programming tools relating to language use. Dr Abdulaziz Alayba (a lecturer at the University of Hail, who specialises in

Then, I followed Alayba's recommendation to use the Data Science Dojo website, available at http://demos.datasciencedojo.com/demo/stopwords/, to remove the functional words from the corpus.[12] This step removed approximately 80% of the functional words. Then, I manually cleaned the extra functional words that appear as strong collocates in each corpus.[13] An example of the results obtained after removing the functional words is shown in Figure 3.3, below. This figure was obtained using the same settings for the identification of collocations as Figure 3.2, which contained the functional words.
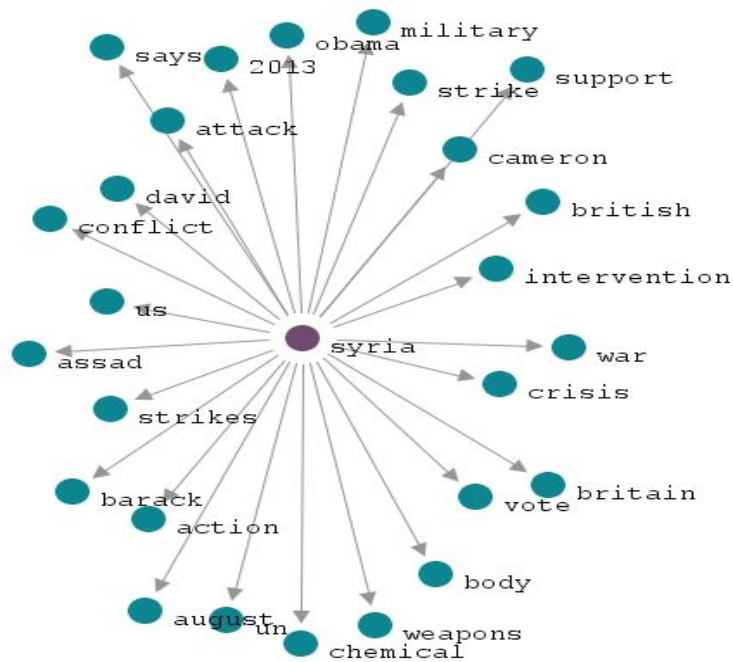
Figure 3.3: Initial results for strongest collocates to the node 'Syria' with functional words removed.

After cleaning the corpora data using the method described above, I created a normalised corpus that combined a balanced corpus for the four papers in one corpus to

---

designing corpus tools for analysing Arabic language in social media) tried to input some codes into GraphColl to add the required filters, but he was not successful. Then, he recommended using the Data Science Dojo website to clean the corpus of functional words.

[12] In computer science, functional words are known as 'stop words'.

[13] The list of the additionally removed functional words is located in the file for each newspaper on the CD-ROM.

look at the global collocation network across the four papers. Figure 3.4 below shows the normalised corpus of Time One for all four newspapers with the applied setting for identifying the collocation network. This collocation network is explained in Chapter Four.
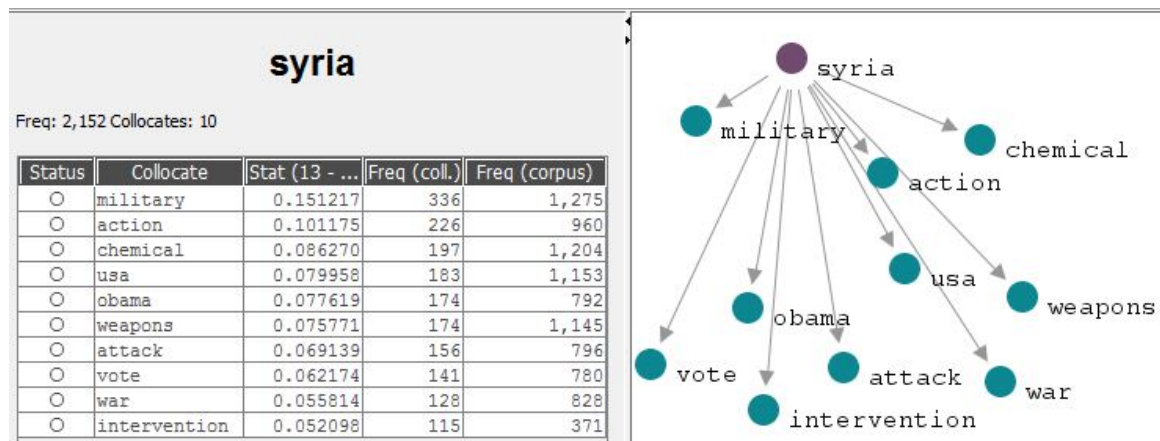
Figure 3.4: The four newspapers, Syria: Delta P (0.05205), L5-R5, C5-NC5; function words removed[14]

I chose to present the ten strongest collocates to the node 'Syria' for two reasons: to provide a general overview of the collocation network of each paper, and to identify the strongest collocates in order to 'drill-down' and analyse the concordance lines in which they occur. Showing the ten strongest collocates of each newspaper will present the potential of the general level of analysis by revealing the broad perspective of the newspapers.

3.2.3.2.   Thematic Analysis of the Keywords

The central purpose of drilling down and looking at the concordance lines is to identify the central themes and topics in representing the Syrian situation because, as stated above,

---

[14] These parameters refer to the method used for producing a collocation network around a node. Delt P (statistic name); numbers between brackets (cut of value that is used for increasing the uniqueness of collocates to the node); L5-R5 (the size of left and right collocation windows 'span'); C5 (minimum collocate frequency with the node); NC5 (minimum collocation frequency of the node and collocate together in the whole corpus); function words removed (the filter applied).

press coverage is used to provide generally shared understandings at the time of each vote. From that angle, I chose the three strongest collocates for each paper and a keyword from the Government motion of each debate in order to investigate a variety of central topics and themes, but in a manageable way. The keywords of the Government motion were determined through looking at the general potential response to the Syrian crisis proposed by the Government. In the first vote, the term *intervention* is a keyword in the motion proposed because the Government motion explicitly describes the possible action in Syria as humanitarian "intervention". In the motion of debate two, the two keywords are *airstrikes* and *ISIL*, and these terms are among the four strongest collocates in the corpus of each paper. Thus, in the press coverage of Time Two, I will directly analyse the four strongest collocates to the node *Syria*. By following this method, I will analyse four keywords for each paper in both times. In the press coverage of Time Two, there was an issue in identifying the lines that contain the collocate 'ISIL' because this group has various names. In this case, before the analysis, I identified all the names that belong to ISIL and combined them with ISIL. The term 'IS' was replaced in the corpora by ticking "match the case" in the text files and Microsoft Word documents. This step avoided the inclusion of the verb 'is' under the name of ISIL. This step was also carried out for 'US', which refers to the USA. Here, I replaced 'US' with 'USA' to avoid the combination of 'us' and 'US' in the analysis. Another keyword is 'airstrikes' that can be written as 'airstrikes/air strikes'. I replaced this to 'airstrikes'.

Then, for each keyword, I analysed a random sample of fifty concordance lines. According to McEnery and Hardie (2012), analysis is carried out by corpus linguists in two ways: corpus-based studies and corpus-driven/neo-Firthian studies. Corpus-based studies use corpus data as a method for exploring a hypothesis or theory. On the other hand, corpus-driven studies posit that the corpus itself should be the sole source of language hypotheses (Tognini-Bonelli 2001:84–85). However, McEnery and Hardie (2012) have rejected this distinction and contradicted the idea that the corpus itself has a theoretical status. They suggested that all types of corpus analysis should be recognised as corpus-based because both CL approaches are regarded, to some extent, as methods for dealing with data (McEnery and Hardie 2012). I will apply this perspective for my study by using CL as a corpus-based approach: that is, as a method of dealing with a large

amount of press coverage and to provide detailed background information regarding the two votes. At the same time, this thesis will also use CL as a corpus-driven approach in the general sense, by not setting a specific framework for analysing the concordance lines. The present research follows several studies, such as MacDonald et al. (2013), who presented themes that evolved from the analysis of the corpora through an inductive approach without adhering strictly to any particular CDS framework.

In the thematic analysis, the concordance lines of each paper are analysed separately in the appendices. I categorise the concordance lines according to the evolved theme or topic in each line. Then, I look at the shared themes and topics across the four papers from these concordance lines. This method will consider the significant tensions between the papers. However, the boundaries between the categories and themes are not always apparent because it is challenging to label some concordance lines under a specific theme. For example, "*ISIL is against peace. If we don't act after the Paris attacks, when will we?*." This line can be categorised either under the theme of ISIL as a global battle or UK involvement. In this case, I follow the suggestion of Potts et al. (2015) and look at the metadata of the concordance line, then see the context of the line that displays the salient theme. The metadata of this example suggests the focus of the article on the UK involvement and representing the action against ISIL as an unavoidable option.

3.3. Dealing with Speeches in Parliamentary Debate

This section presents the methods followed in collecting data and analysing parliamentary debates. First, I provide the method of data collection for the two debates. Second, I highlight the methods for analysing the speeches by using Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach. Then, I discuss how this approach is applied, its potential weaknesses and the considered issues in analysing speeches in Parliament.

3.3.1. Data Regarding Parliamentary Debates

The data relating to the parliamentary debates comprises two votes. The first is the vote of supporting action against the use of chemical weapons in Syria that was held on 29 August 2013. The second is the vote on expanding airstrikes from Iraq to Syria against

ISIL that was held on 2 December 2015. For each vote, I will analyse the speeches made by the Prime Minister and Opposition leaders to investigate how politicians structure their debates, how they bring different aspects of background/shared knowledge in the higher-level context (i.e., press coverage) and how they strategically use them to construe concepts around the meaning of intervention. Furthermore, the Government motions and the proposed amendments will be included in the analyses because they help present the broad central ideas of the speakers in each debate.

The data for the parliamentary debates is taken from the website of the House of Commons, which is freely accessible. The votes are available at http://www.parliament.uk/business. Similar to the press coverage, these open sources of information do not require ethical permission, as explained by Baker (2006). The webpage contains a video of the whole debate and written texts for the four parts of the selected data: the Government motion, the Opposition amendment, speeches of the Prime Minister (David Cameron), and speeches of the Opposition leaders (Ed Miliband in the first debate and Jeremy Corbyn in the second debate). I used the video of the whole debate to correct some parts of the transcriptions provided by Hansard (House of Commons, 2013).

3.3.2. The Nature of British Parliamentary Debates

Before discussing the use of the practical reasoning approach, I shall first discuss how the discourse of parliamentary debate will be considered in the analysis. Several linguists have investigated the gap between speakers' words and the different interpretations of what they say and how they use language as "a form of social practice" (Fairclough 1995:7). However, linguistic features are not considered out of their context. According to Chilton (2004), the context of parliamentary debate is complicated because it combines different uses of discourse and various topics, such as education, healthcare, business, and so on, and each one entails a specific representation of language. These issues are debated in Parliament as part of the policy-making process in order to legitimatise and legislate particular actions (Ilie 2003). For example, MPs construe the meaning of keywords such as democracy as a legitimising strategy for the desired actions. It is also worth pointing out that the speeches produced by key speakers in parliament are not only authored by

politicians themselves. The production of a speech can also be produced through different interactional roles that various people play in a group. This procedure of producing speeches in parliament is similar to the general idea of Goffman (1981), specifically the roles of principal, author and animator that are not necessarily all performed by 'only' one person.[15]

With regard to the nature of discourse in Parliament, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:200) have argued that "deliberation is a genre, while debates are activity types," so parliamentary debates are "activity types which draw on the genre of deliberation." Deliberation in the parliamentary debate leads the participants to share normative and collective decisions, even when some are against an agent's beliefs and orientations. This method of deliberation adopts the stages of deliberation interactions, "Open, Inform, Propose, Consider, Revise, Recommend, Confirm and Close," proposed by McBurney et al. (2007:100–101). These processes were discussed in detail by Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) and can be summarised in brief steps. First, any debate is based on a motion presented by the Government in which the motion provides the debated issue. Motions divide MPs into two sides: supporting or standing against. Those who are against the motion may submit a proposed amendment to the Government motion. The debate is managed by the chairman (the Speaker). In a debate, the principal speakers present their arguments, and then any MPs who wish to contribute can raise their hands, and they will be invited to speak by the chairman. Usually, the end of the discussion is decided by the chairman, and then the MPs have to vote whether to support or stand against the motion.

In the specific context of a parliamentary debate, the MPs follow specific strategies in turn-taking when asking questions (Chilton 2004; Chilton and Schäffner 1997). According to the rules of the British Parliament, questions have two functions: "to obtain information or to press for action" (Chilton, 2004:95). MPs have the right to ask questions in advance before the debate. In addition, the MPs can ask questions in the debate without the need to submit them in advance, and this is called 'non-tabled or

---

[15] Animator is the 'sounding box' through which utterances are made, and it can be a human or a device such as a speaker system; author is a person who composes the words that are uttered by the animator; andprincipal is an individual or a group whose beliefs are represented by the word uttered.

supplementary questions.' Therefore, questions and interventions are organised in Parliament, and the key speakers prepare themselves for interventions from the floor. These features illustrate the difficulty of analysing a speech made by the Prime Minister or any other key speaker because the interventions from the floor affect the subsequent development of the speaker's argument and elements of the discourse.

3.3.3. The Practical Reasoning Approach

It has been argued in the Literature Review chapter that the practical reasoning approach of Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) has been chosen in this research in order to investigate how the speakers in Parliament develop an argument in a structured way with additional connections between different phases of the argument. In this thesis, therefore, the approach of Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) is used to investigate how the speakers perform their arguments by articulating concepts strategically to build new meanings of intervention. Figure 3.5 has been adopted from Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:48) to show the meaning and structure of the core elements of a practical reasoning argument. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:39-50) provide a detailed proposal for their framework and assign the elements in the analysis. Their framework will now be summarised in brief.

Generally, they argue that a speech in Parliament should be analysed by considering the elements of argumentation structure. The first element of the argument is the *claim*, which is shown at the top of Figure 3.5. The *claim* is the central element because all other elements of an argument are built by speakers strategically to support the claim. Therefore, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) call the elements 'premises' because they are presumptive means-end in supporting the claim that is proposed to achieve the goals.

Another central element in the argumentation structure is *circumstances*, which refers to expressing the problem and the agent's context. For example, in the first vote, the use of chemical weapons, and the context of the UK and Syria are parts of *circumstances*. Fairclough and Fairclough suggest that agents in the *circumstances* choose actions over others because they find themselves in particular circumstances and

not others. In other words, MPs in Parliament may differ in understanding and conceptualising *circumstances*, and from those expressed situations, they will identify specific goals that should be achieved. Within *circumstances*, there is an element called *circumstantial/moral/institutional* values that are regarded as a sub-element under the *circumstances*. Fairclough and Fairclough suggest that this type refers to the commitments that individuals are bound by moral, legal and institutional obligations (this will be discussed more below).

Another separate element in the argumentation structure is *value* which Fairclough and Fairclough argue is different from the *circumstantial values* (which are mentioned above under the *circumstances* element). They propose that *value* as a separate element refers to the actual concern that the agent may have. They provide an example to distinguish between the two elements by claiming that the coalition government in 2010 used the idea of fairness to suggest that the Government had to cut spending and increase tax to solve the budget deficit in a fair way. This strategy refers to *circumstantial values* because it reflects the Government obligation and commitment to be fair. At the same time, fairness is presented by the Government as an active concern, as "the Government ought to be concerned with justice as fairness," so in this way, it is used as a *value* (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012:146-147). Fairclough and Fairclough attempt to make it clear in claiming that *circumstantial values* are external reasons that exist in society and are employed by an arguer to support his/her argument. However, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) have suggested the distinction between these two elements is difficult, and indeed sometimes remains implicit. Thus, I will discuss below how I shall differentiate between *circumstantial values* and *values*.

Another related element to the *values* is the *goals* of the agent. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) suggest that *goals* are not only a form of 'my goal is…'/'I want X', but rather, they presuppose that goals are (*possible*) *future state affairs*. Agents sometimes give themselves *goals* that they do not actually desire, but they think are right, worthy and appropriate of being pursued. These *goals* are restricted by the *values* of the agent (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012). The last element they mentioned very briefly is the *means-goal* that shows how the proposed action of the agent (*claim*) is the means that will

(presumably) take the agent from the problem (*circumstances*) to *goals* in accordance with *values*.
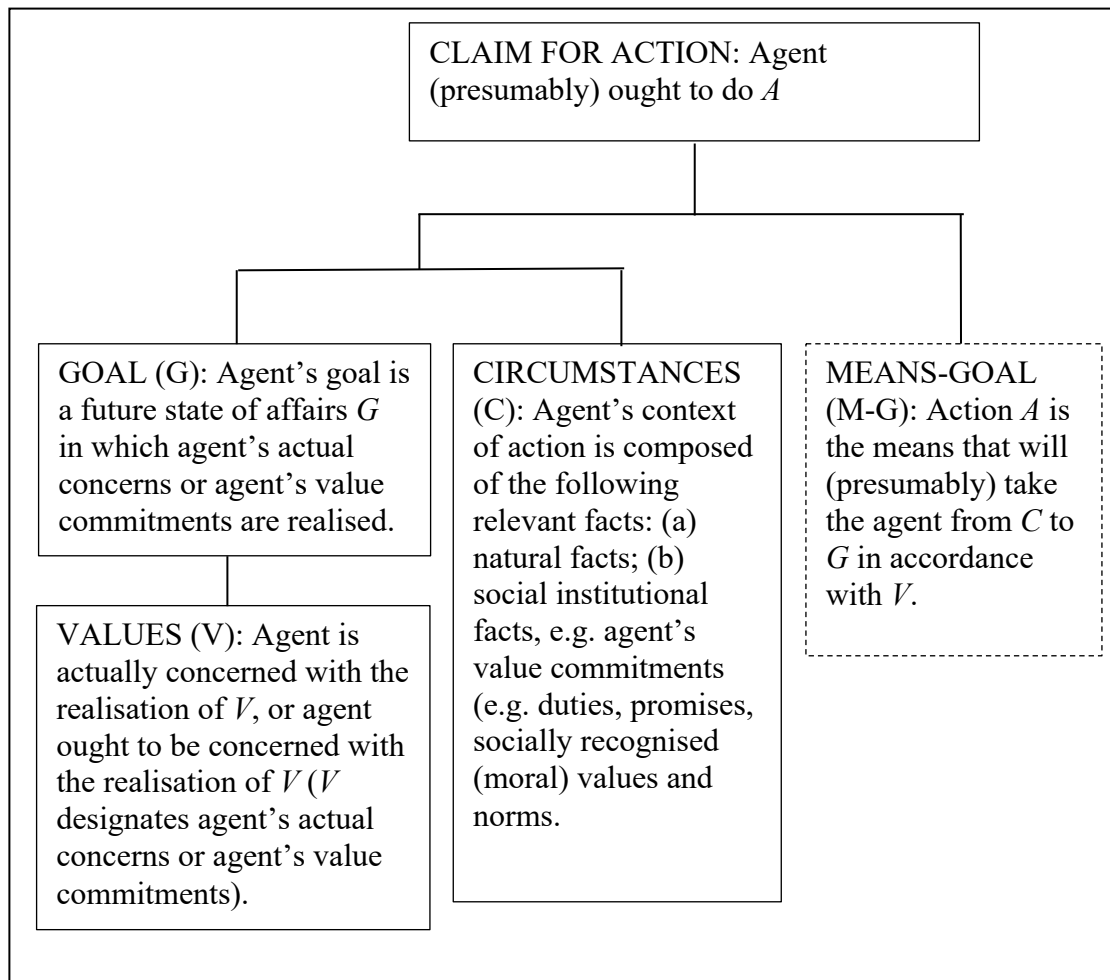
Figure 3.5: Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) proposed the structure of practical arguments.

The brief definitions given in Figure 3.5, above, show the main elements of the practical reasoning argument, and how they are interconnected. However, this framework will be used in this study with the following considerations:

1- **Assigning elements to the speeches and what they mean within the data of this project:**

- Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) suggested that, within the *circumstantial* element, there is a sub-element called *circumstantial/institutional/moral values*. They argued that this sub-premise/element is different from the *premise of valu*e.

However, as shown above, they argued that the distinction between the two elements remains complex. In the context of this study, I suggest that the obligations and commitments of MPs that show a legal perspective are *circumstantial values* imposed by speakers in the debates. On the other hand, I will consider *values* as the actual concerns of the speakers that act as an internal motivation for choosing specific actions. For example, the 'national interest' of the deep concerns of the chemical attacks in Syria and caring about international law is the main *value* provided by David Cameron because Cameron represents them as a personal preference. Therefore, I propose that, by looking at the speeches delivered at various times and labelling elements of arguments in the speeches, an analyst can make a distinction between *circumstantial values* and *values*. Although this method is not ideal, it could decrease bias in the categorisation of the speeches, as these elements are not always expressed explicitly.

- The *means-goal* premise is defined as a conclusion that would show how an action is appropriate for solving problems or achieving goals. However, in this research, I will add to the *means-goal* any sub-action that can be regarded as part of the main action because the sub-actions can work as premises to support the claim and as the means of achieving the goals. For example, in his speech, Cameron suggested that MPs should reduce public concerns regarding interventions before supporting military action. This step (reducing public concerns) should be considered as a part of the *means-goal* because it supports the main claim – taking action – and helps to achieve the goals proposed by the Government.

- Extra elements of the practical reasoning approach: Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) provided the central elements of an argument in their practical reasoning approach, but the framework they proposed was flexible and allowed additional elements. For example, in their case studies, they revealed various additional elements of argument construction. I will add some extra elements to the practical arguments of the speeches. Some of these were used by Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) in their case studies and some other elements are explicitly represented in the speeches examined in this project.

- The elements of an argument are coordinated and linked together. In many situations, the boundaries between the elements of an argument in a speech are blurred, and it can be difficult to make a clear distinction between the start and end point of each premise. This leads to a problem in which one part of a speech may contain two elements of an argument. For example, Cameron in the first debate stated: "For my part, I think the most likely possibility is that Assad has been testing the boundaries. At least 14 uses and no response—he wants to know whether the world will respond to the use of these weapons…" This example contains the explicit presentation of *circumstances* (the chemical attacks) and the implicit presentation of a *negative consequence of counter-claim* (the possibility of another chemical attack if no action is taken against the Assad Government). When situations like this occur, I will identify them according to the dominant element (which in this case is *circumstances*), and the implicit element (which is here the *negative consequence*) will be considered when it is mentioned explicitly with other ideas in the speech.

2- **Dealing with long speeches:**

- Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) analysed speeches shorter than the ones included in the current study. They suggested that long speeches should be divided into several formulations, and each formulation contains one central idea in a speech. Each formulation should have several premises (elements of argument) that support the main idea (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012:122-125). These formulations are analysed sequentially from the beginning of the speech until the end. I will follow this method because it will clarify the connection between the elements of an argument. After analysing a speech in this way, they provided a schema for argument construction to display how the ideas in the speech are connected. However, because the speeches in this research are too long, I will establish the schema after the first formulation and the structure of argument from the ideas of the first formulation. Then, I will build up the structure of the speeches gradually through an analysis of each of the formulations, in turn, adding the new ideas and premises at each stage in red to show the development of the argument. This method will show clearly the development of the

construction of arguments by considering each formulation at one stage rather than providing only one schema after the last formulation. After the last schema, I will discuss the findings regarding argumentation structure in relation to a higher level of context (i.e., press coverage), which will be discussed in the next section.

- The second point to consider when examining long speeches made in a parliamentary debate is interventions from the floor. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) did not clearly show how interventions from the floor should be considered within the analysis of particular speeches. In this study, these interventions are included in the analysis when they relate directly to the ideas presented by a speaker. Furthermore, interventions affect the sequential development of an argument, as a speaker will sometimes need to respond to specific interventions from an MP. As a result, the formulations in the parts of the speeches go forwards and backwards. However, I will still divide each speech into central formulations, as this method will contribute to illustrating the connectivity between the elements of the argument, as well as demonstrating the clarity of each argument's development.

3.4. Intertextual Analysis

After the last formulation of each speech, I will conduct an intertextual analysis. This can be considered a scalar analysis because I will discuss how the speakers bring elements and ideas from the broad context (i.e., press coverage) into their specific arguments. This combination of text and context was a concern raised in Wodak's approach (Reisigl and Wodak 2009) (Section 2.3.2). The intertextual analysis will show how shared understandings shown in the press, as suggested by van Dijk (van Dijk 2003, 2008b), were used strategically by politicians to manipulate the possible British intervention in Syria. However, this method is different from the methodological perspective of intertextuality in CDS that refers to instances of texts linking to other texts. In the case of this study, I follow the scalar analysis by considering levels of analyses for media and speeches in parliament in order to investigate how ideas move from a specific context to another, and then how this procedure participate in the construal of the meaning of intervention. Therefore, in this level of analysis, I do not only apply the analysis of the newspapers as a background for the speeches, but I also combine the findings of the

newspapers' coverage with the findings of the speeches in order to see development of concepts from a context to another. From this perspective, I will back up central themes and ideas shown in the press coverage schema (at the end of each press coverage analytical chapters). Then, I will discuss how the elements of the whole argumentation structure are distributed to the central themes of the papers, and how each speaker rescales the ideas shown in the press to their argument. However, an issue of intertextual analysis is that a speaker may not give some themes/topics significant attention, or some themes may not be mentioned at all. Thus, I will discuss how some themes disappear in argument construction, and how the omitted ideas relate to the construal of the meaning of intervention. The scalar analysis will reveal the discussions of the speeches, and the relationship between the press coverage and parliamentary debate.

At the end of the analytical chapters of the two votes (Chapters Five and Seven), I will discuss how speakers seek to create equivalences and differences across their construals of intervention to gain a majority. I will discuss how the analysed elements of the argumentation structures will contribute to the overall articulation of the discourse by each speaker. These discussions will reveal how speakers define intervention and how they identify themselves in relation to the various arguments shown in the House of Commons as an attempt to either support or stand against British intervention in Syria.

3.5. Conclusion

At the beginning of this chapter, I indicated the importance of considering triangulation to analyse how speakers in Parliament identify intervention based on their shared cultural knowledge of British society. Despite the difficulties inherent in acknowledging levels of context and text, this approach will enable me to determine the specific level of information required for each aspect in the triangulation of this study. I suggested that the first step in the triangulation is identifying the general background to the two votes (Section 2.2). However, I also expected that there would be a need for additional contextual information, as suggested by Baker et al. (2008). From that perspective, I moved to look at how press coverage of the Syrian situation represents central topics and themes around the possibility of British intervention in both votes. I used some central methods in corpus linguistics to analyse a large dataset. The collocational analysis proved

a useful method to identify the keywords in each paper. In this study, I will analyse a sample of fifty concordance lines of the selected keywords from the collocational analysis to identify the central concepts and ideas shown in the press. The analysis of press coverage Time One will take place in the first analytical chapter (Chapter Four), and the press coverage for Time Two will be set out in the third analytical chapter (Chapter Six), so that the analysis of press coverage for each time frame precedes the analyses conducted for the parliamentary debate.

Then, I suggested that we move on to analyse the speeches in Parliament using Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach. The analysis of the speeches in Parliament is the central focus of this study, in which I attempt to investigate how speakers articulate ideas and concepts to generate specific meanings of intervention using the practical reasoning approach from a performative angle. After this step, I will undertake an intertextual analysis exploring how the themes and topics represented in the media and the background are drawn from parliamentary debate, and how different concepts compete to be the site to which meaning is fixated to intervention in particular ways. Then, at the end of each parliamentary chapter, I will discuss how the speakers strategically use several elements in their speeches as an attempt to gain a majority in the debate by using the logic of equivalence and difference. These analyses will be presented in Chapters Five (parliamentary debate Time One) and Seven (parliamentary debate Time Two).

Chapter Four: Analysing the Press Coverage of the Chemical Attacks in Syria and the Possibility of British Military Action

4.1.   Introduction

The present chapter looks at themes and topics around the situation in Syria leading up to and immediately after the first UK parliamentary debate (21 August 2013) on the appropriate response to the use of chemical weapons in Syria. The chapter analyses in quantitative and qualitative terms how the newspapers (*The Telegraph, The Guardian, The Sun* and *The Mirror*) develop concepts that can be seen as shared knowledge in the British community around covering the chemical attacks in Syria. The result of the press coverage is provided in this chapter before comparing the speeches to Parliament of the Prime Minister, David Cameron, and the leader of the Opposition, Ed Miliband. In this way, the chapter tries to capture the interrelations between (changes in) the broad representation of intervention in the press and the construal of intervention by the political leaders in terms of the way these meanings are used strategically within different stages of the speeches and the different functions.

This Chapter Four has a similar structure to Chapter Six, in that both chapters have a similar presentation of the findings that should be mentioned at this stage. At the beginning of each chapter, I first introduce the collocation analysis of the press coverage using GraphColl. The result of GraphColl shows the 'aboutness' of the corpora of newspapers around representing the situation in Syria. Then, I will present the thematic analysis of the concordance lines of the newspapers. The central themes are the result of analysing the keywords of the four papers (see Appendix One for the whole analysis p.261[16]). In this chapter, I provide examples from the concordance lines (in Appendix One) that were considered as a representative sample for the themes. At the end of the chapter, I try to provide the central concepts that identify possible meanings around intervention as shared common knowledge in British society. Each example in the chapter

---

[16] Analysing the concordance lines of the keywords and categorising the themes are shown in the Methodology chapter.

is provided with identifiers that allocate the place of the concordance line in the Appendix, and in the Excel files for each term. The examples provided in this chapter will be presented, as in Figure 4.1 below:

Unique identifier:

12: the line number in the 50 random sample Excel file and analysed tables in the Appendix.

397: the same line but in the whole concordance lines in the excel file.

1.1: number of the table in the Appendix

(T): abbreviation of the source of the line. Here, (T) refers to The Telegraph

The analysed **sub-node**

*12@397#1.1(T): Both Mr Obama and Joe Biden, his vice president, supported the idea that Congressional approval was needed for **military** action while they were senators during the Bush administration.*

Figure 4.1: Presentation of concordance line

4.2.   The Collocation Analysis of the Newspapers

As a starting point and from a methodological viewpoint, the main purpose of using GraphColl in my research is to identify the keywords that I will analyse in the corpora. This method is used to avoid the bias of choosing the keywords before the analysis of the concordance lines. However, GraphColl is also useful for giving an overview of the general orientations in the newspapers' coverage to show the aboutness of the corpora when the newspapers use the node *Syria*. Figure 4.2 shows the ten strongest collocates in the normalised corpus of the four newspapers corpora.[17]

---

[17] The normalisation of the corpora of the papers is shown in the Methodology chapter.
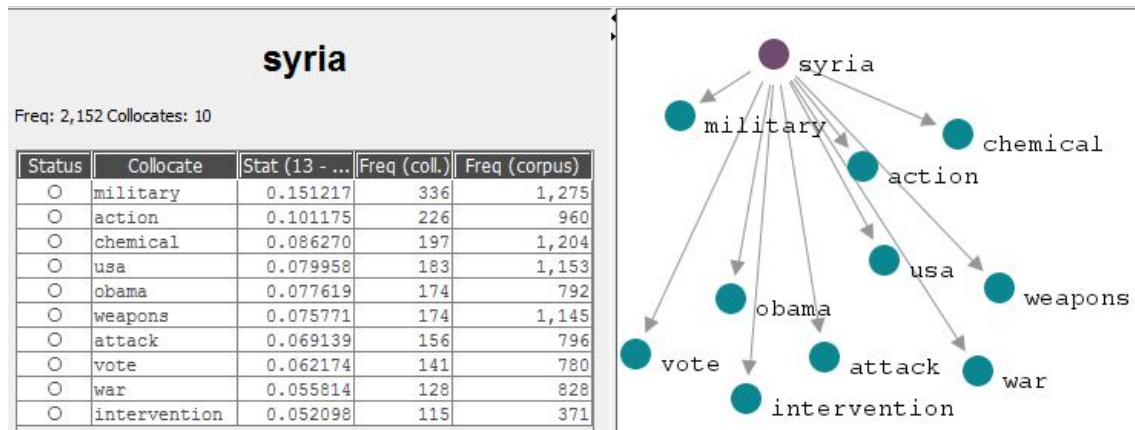
Figure 4.2: Normalised corpus of the four newspapers, "Syria": Delta P (0.05205), L5-R5, C5-NC5; function words removed[18]

In Figure 4.2, we see that the two strongest collocates are *military* and *action*, so there is an emphasis on the military response over the situation on the ground, a theme which is strengthened through the appearance of *attack* and *intervention* as the seventh and tenth strongest collocates. The prominence of the specific collocation *military* represents an interesting orientation that the overall situation in Syria is represented primarily from an overwhelmingly military perspective in the newspapers. An interesting general finding in the network is that none of the ten strongest collocates refers to the humanitarian aspects. The normalised corpus refers to the British context with the specific focus of showing the situation in Parliament by using the term *vote*, which is the eighth strongest collocate. Furthermore, the international orientation is considered by the focus on representing the *USA* and *Obama* as the fourth and fifth strongest collocates. A further cluster of collocates is *chemical*, *weapons* and *war*, which emphasises the specific event of the chemical attacks and the broad situation in Syria (i.e., civil war). Generally, Figure 4.2 shows the focus on conceptualising the possible British response as military action within the representation of the situation in Syria. Figures 4.3-4.6 below show the ten strongest collocates to the node *Syria* for each newspaper in order to provide an

---

[18] This point is mention in Section 3.2.4.1, but it is mentioned here to remind the reader. These parameters refer to the method used for producing a collocation network around a node. Delt P (statistic name); numbers between brackets (cut of value that is used for increasing the uniqueness of collocates to the node); L5-R5 (the size of left and right collocation windows 'span'); C5 (minimum collocate frequency with the node); NC5 (minimum collocation frequency of the node and collocate together in the whole corpus); function words removed (the filter applied).

overview of the collocation network for each of these in turn. After the figures below, I will highlight the central differences and similarities between the collocation network of the papers around the main node of *Syria*.
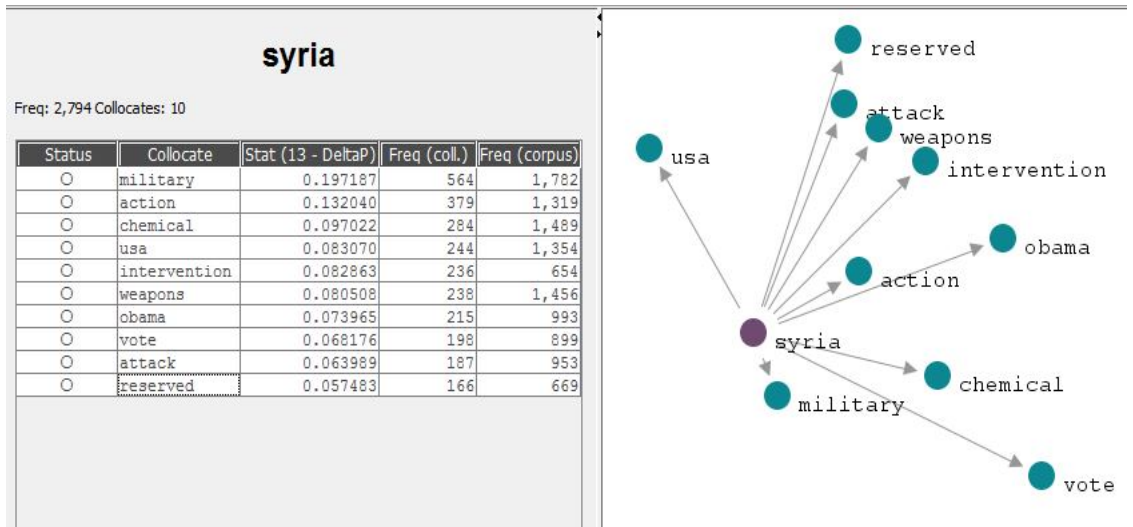
Figure 4.3: The Telegraph, "Syria": Delta P (0.0573), L5-R5, C5-NC5; function words removed
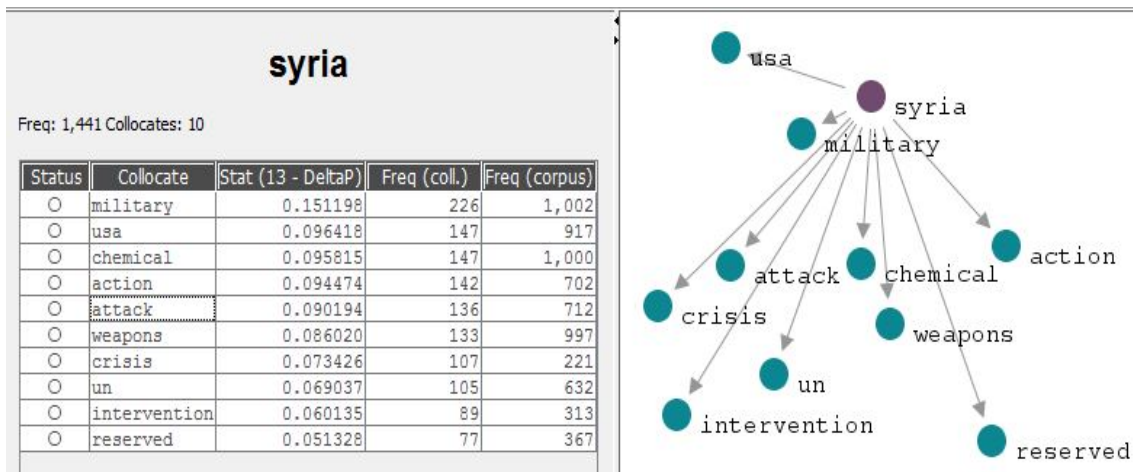
Figure 4.4: The Guardian, "Syria": Delta P (0.05), L5-R5, C5-NC5; function words removed
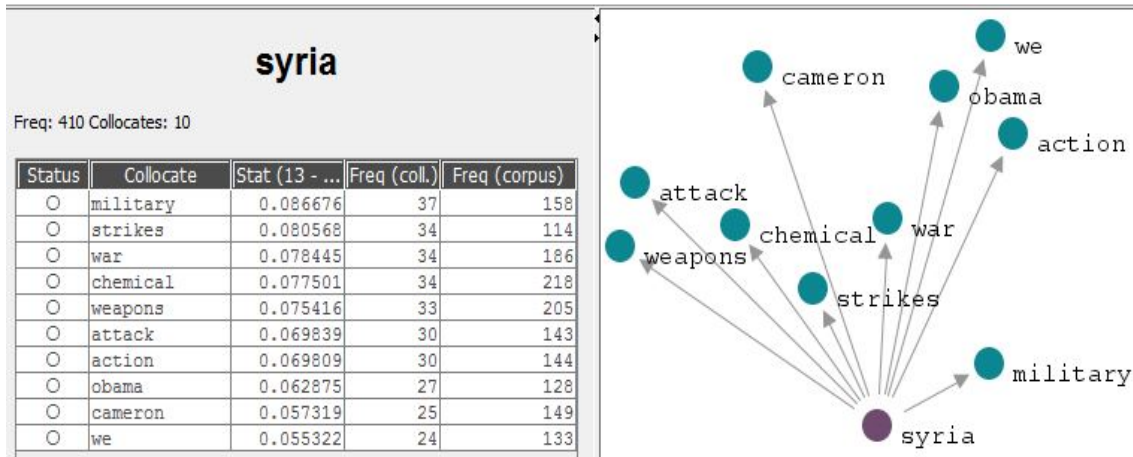
Figure 4.5: The Sun, "Syria": Delta P (0.055), L5-R5, C5-NC5; function words removed
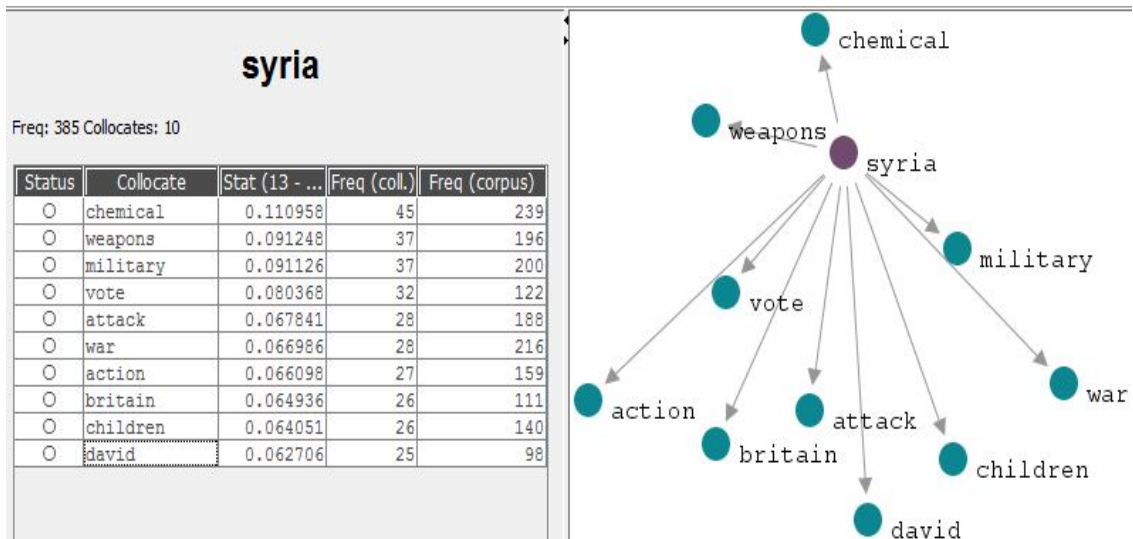
Figure 4.6: The Mirror, "Syria": Delta P (0.055), L5-R5, C5-NC5; function words removed

Most strikingly, all the papers except *The Mirror* have *military* as the strongest collocate of Syria. *The Mirror* has *chemical* and *weapons* as the two strongest collocates, ahead of *military* in third, which would suggest a focus on the situation in Syria rather than possible military action. The keyword *intervention* is the highest place in *The Telegraph* (i.e., the fifth strongest collocates), while it is the ninth strongest collocates in *The Guardian*. This finding of both papers still suggests the significance of using *intervention* as a vital collocate in representing the situation in Syria. The collocate

intervention does not appear in the figure of *The Sun* and *The Mirror*. However, the four newspapers share the focus on emphasising military response over the situation on the ground by using terms such as *military*, *action* and *attack*. Moreover, the papers highlight the *UK* and *USA* as active participants in representing the situation in Syria. This strong combination between the UK and the USA tends to suggest the long history of international allegiance between the two countries. *The Guardian* is the only paper that does not refer to the UK within the ten strongest collocates, whereas it tends to focus on highlighting the role of international participants more than the UK. The papers refer to the specific event in Syria by using the collocates *chemical* and *weapons*, while the tabloids (*The Sun* and *The Mirror*) use *war* as an additional strong collocate to the main node *Syria* that emphasises the broad situation of Syria as a war. This use of *war* tends to suggest that the tabloids not only cover the specific event of the chemical attacks, but they also deal with the representation of the Syrian conflict as an essential issue in covering the events at the time of the vote.

The figures above showed us a brief overview of the web of significations that the term Syria enters in the four newspapers. In order to obtain a fuller picture of the meanings around the node *Syria* and its use in the press coverage, I will now 'drill down' and analyse fifty concordance lines for the keywords.

4.3. Thematic Analysis of the Newspapers

This section looks at the repeated concepts and themes that evolve in the newspapers within the representation of the possible response against the use of chemical weapons. According to the results of the concordance lines (see Appendix One, p.261), I identified four frequently recurring themes around the term *Syria* through the inductive method described in Chapter Three: UK involvement, UK internal politics, international participants and the negative situation in Syria. Within the analysis of these general themes, I will highlight the salient tensions between the papers.

4.3.1. UK Involvement

The analysis of the concordance lines suggests that a central overarching idea developed by the newspapers is the existence of British concerns about any military action in Syria. I

identified two frequently recurring subthemes under the representation of the British involvement: **the danger of the repercussions of intervention** and **the negative experience of previous invasions**.[19]

With regard to the first subtheme, the newspapers distance the UK from being directly involved in Syria by raising concerns about the possibility of acting against the Syrian Government. The papers highlight the fears over intervention as a shared experience for the British community in two subthemes: putting further conditions before any vote for intervention and vagueness of the Government motion. First, the newspapers highlight that intervention should meet several conditions. An example of distancing the UK from military action is the activation of the international community as in:

1. *13@441#1.1(T):* **HEADLINE**: *Strike on Syria: Lord West, a former First Sea Lord and Security Minister, has advised against carrying out **military** action against Syria without UN backing.*
2. *17#1.12(S): The horrific images remind us that atrocities have been committed by both sides. But the risk of armed **intervention**, particularly without a UN resolution, is that it makes a bad situation very much worse.*

Examples 1 and 2 propose the UK should urge the UN to provide legal advice as a central condition before any direct British military intervention.[20] The two examples here suggest that the role of the UN and legality are two fundamental concepts that should be linked to the meaning of British military intervention in Syria. The papers expand this to highlight the significance of the UN's reports before any military action (e.g. 8@54#1.4 and 32@290#1.4)[21]. The papers also reflect the worries about the fact that Syria is not a member of OPCW, which should support possible legal action against the use of chemical weapons. Therefore, the newspapers here implicitly distance the UK from any action without clear international legal advice. Legality is expanded to highlight the vagueness

---

[19] I put the central ideas in bold to make it easier to pick up the central ideas shown in the press when I move to analyse the parliamentary debate.

[20] Even though examples 3 and 4 refer to the role of the UN as international participants (the third theme, Section 4.3.3), the central idea in these lines is the concerns around British military action.

[21] How to figure out these lines in the appendix is shown in Figure 4.1.

of the Government motion (the second way of the first subtheme). The papers express concerns around the motion through the reports from authorities such as:

3. *28@255#1.3(T): Follow our live coverage on the Syria debate in the House of Commons; Labour leader Ed Miliband insisted he is not ruling out military **intervention** in Syria but the potential consequences of such action needs to be clear*
4. *20@80#1.14(M): Former Tory former defence minister Gerald Howarth MP said: "We have to be realistic about what it is we can achieve. Where will this **military** intervention lead on?"*

These examples represent the negation of the possible military action in Syria because this path is not clear. Miliband and Howarth in examples 3 and 4 not only suggest the ambiguity of the situation in Syria, but they also raise the vagueness of the motion because it does not consider the possible negative consequences of intervention.[22] The papers also reinforce this idea to suggest that the Government calls for "foolish rush to war backfired" (30@120#1.14) without clear identification for the meaning of the action in Syria (as in examples 3 and 4). This presentation of the papers reassures the general orientation of how "the British public still strongly opposes any military action" (11@34#1.9). Examples 1-4 negatively describe the British intervention by emphasising the danger of repercussions of military action in Syria.

The other subtheme of showing UK involvement is **linking the experience of previous interventions to the current situation in Syria.**[23] The spectre of previous British military interventions, particularly the Iraq war and its consequences, looms very large in British foreign affairs and media coverage. In the coverage of this period, the papers link the previous interventions to the current situation in two frequently recurring ways: the complexity of the circumstances and the fears of unintended consequences.

---

[22] The negotiation of defining the concepts between speakers is discussed in detail when I analyse the debate and the speeches of Cameron and Miliband in the following chapter. Here, I mention only the central point raised by papers.

[23] Representing the situation in Syria as negative is discussed in Section 3.3, but here I identify the representation of the situation within the context of the UK because the papers link it with regard to this theme to the evaluation of the British intervention.

The newspapers articulate the complex web of issues in Syria in a way that leads to a repetition of the mistakes of previous interventions as in:

5. *33@199#1.8(G): It was the complexity of the circumstances as well as the all too vivid lessons from Iraq of the unintended consequences of **intervention** that frightened MPs. But parliament has not abandoned faith in Britain as a player on the world stage.*
6. *28@86#1.9(S): Yet Britain and the West have long ruled out direct **military** intervention terrified of repeating the horrors of Iraq and wary of Syria's complex web of fighting groups and national alliances which some commentators have likened to Europe before the First World War.*

Here, the papers conceptualise the significance of considering all complicated issues in the Syrian crisis rather than focusing only on the chemical attack (5). An example of the complicated situation in Syria is the role of fighting groups (e.g. Example 6, 14@48#1.10 and 29@106#1.10)[24], so any intervention will make the situation in Syria worse. For example, when the UK and the USA attack the Syrian Government, this action will increase the power of some radical groups in the region. By addressing these issues, the papers report that several British political leaders raise concerns towards the complicated issues in Syria before any participation (e.g. 16@94#1.8, and 27@161#1.8). An example of this is that "the archbishop of Canterbury has warned MPs to consider all the aspects of a 'delicate and dangerous situation' before making their decision" (18@106#1.8). A reason for the complexity of circumstances is the lack of full and accurate reports about the situation in Syria, and this concern is linked to the Iraq war (e.g. 22@68#1.9). As the infamous 'dodgy dossier' with its 45-minutes claim were an effect of Blair's manipulation, the papers link any call for urgent response against the use of chemical weapons in Syria as a negative shared experience of previous interventions in British society. With regard to the context of the UK around the vote, the British Government showed its intention of acting in Syria after only eight days since the use of chemical weapons. The newspapers address concerns about the complex Syrian situation with the lack of reports about the detailed issues in Syria. This coverage reinforces the general

---

[24] How to figure out these lines in the appendix is shown in Figure 4.1. on page 82

British rejection of any action in Syria and the fears of repeating the mistakes of the previous interventions.

In addition to covering the complexity of the situation, the papers relate the negative experience of previous interventions by highlighting the fears of "unintended consequences." This concern is mentioned above in Examples (5) and (6), and it is expanded in other lines as in:

7. *9#1.12(S): But the truth is the West can do little more in Syria besides limited strikes without getting embroiled in what could be World War III. Nobody has the stomach for that. Iraq and Afghanistan have given **intervention** a bad name.*
8. *9@36#1.14(M): But he (Cameron) would be wise to listen to the public instead of straining to press the button. We too deplore atrocities committed on both sides in Syria. But as Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya prove, **military** intervention releases deadly forces and risks even more carnage.*

Examples 7 and 8 demonstrate how the media makes explicit connections between the current situation in Syria and the experience of previous interventions with a specific focus on the Iraq war. Even though the papers represent the chemical attacks in Syria as having existed (which is different from the Iraq situation), they highlight the fears of the British public and MPs of repeating the scenario of Iraq (7 and 8). The papers evaluate the concerns of military action as having existed in the UK by using statements such as "terrified of repeating the horrors of Iraq" (8) and "there is a huge scepticism among the public about entering another war" (19@68#1.10). In this emphasis, the fears of "unintended consequences" (7) is a shared common knowledge, which the newspapers represent as a negative impression toward British intervention in Syria.

Within the representation of the UK involvement theme, there is a general tension between the papers in that *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* show the negative concepts of possible military action in a softer tone than *The Guardian* and *The Mirror*. *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* (which tend to be pro-Conservatives) represent voices that support military intervention in Syria. For example:

9. *46@569#1.3(T): In a round of interviews, Mr Cameron defended his handling of the proposed **intervention**, arguing that his aim was the protection of the innocent.*

*10. 1#1.12(S): The moral argument for international **intervention** in Syria after the chemical weapons attacks is powerful.*

These two examples suggest how the humanitarian and moral concepts should be part of a possible intervention due to the bad situation in Syria. Furthermore, examples 9 and 10 suggest that, although *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* focus on representing the concerns of British involvement in Syria, they refer to the possible positive concepts around intervention (see Appendix One for more detail, p.261). Thus, the positive concepts around intervention in *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* are only a part of showing the various views and voices towards *intervention*, whereas the shared view across the four newspapers is highlighting concerns around British intervention. Figure 4.7 below shows the central ideas represented by the newspapers when they refer to the theme of UK involvement.
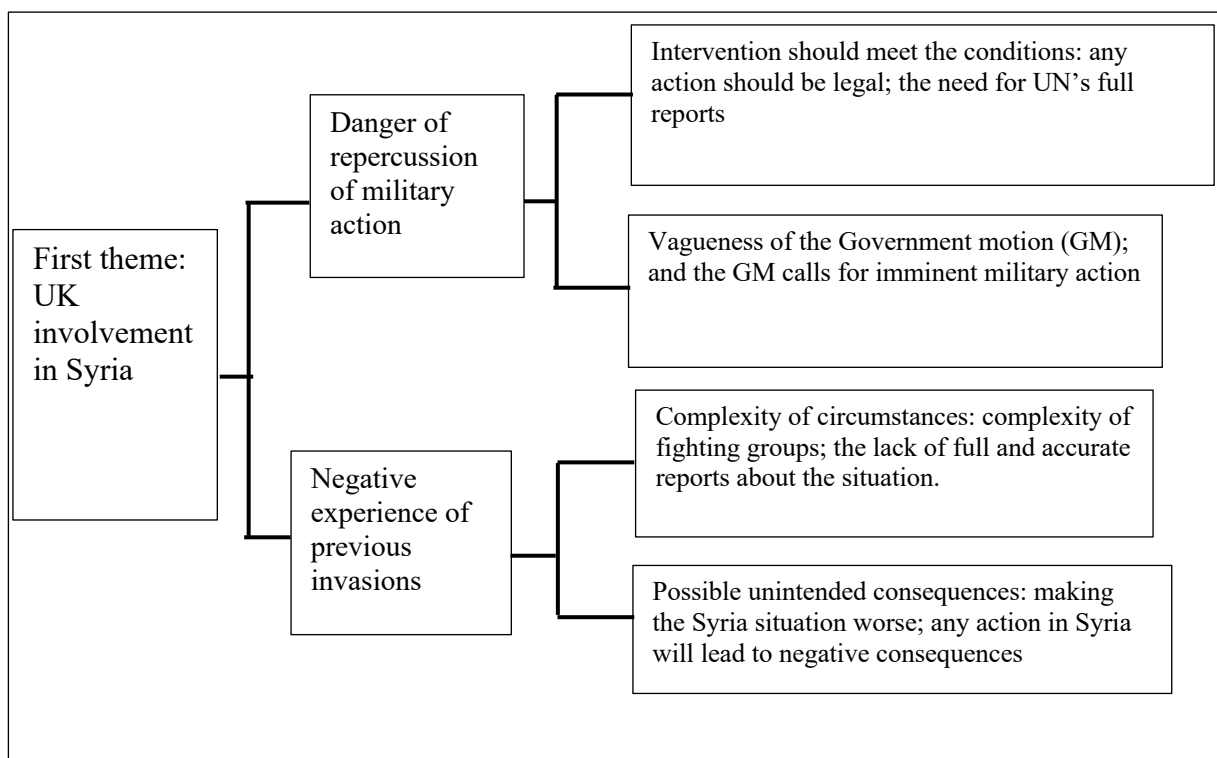
Figure 4.7: The central ideas of the first theme (UK involvement)

The central idea shown in this theme is distancing the UK from being involved directly in Syria due to two central ideas: the danger of repercussions of military action

and the negative experience of previous interventions. This coverage of possible military action displays how the dominant structural discourse around the meaning of intervention in the past has changed in the way of making intervention a shared fear in the British community. The development of the negative concepts around intervention can be seen as an impact of the Iraq invasion, and this seems similar to how 'democracy' constructed by Spanish citizens has a negative impact on them because politicians use this term to gain elections without reflecting the voice of people (Montesano Montessori and Morales López 2015). In the case of the press coverage here, concerns around intervention have become shared knowledge in the British community (this point will be discussed more in the intertextual analyses of the speeches).

4.3.2. Internal Politics

A second prominent theme developed in the press coverage of the Syrian situation is the representation of political issues in the UK. In this theme, the newspapers move the focus from representing the issues around military action in Syria to highlighting the conflict among the MPs and political parties about the potential of intervention in Syria. The newspapers not only cover events that relate to current foreign policy against the use of chemical weapons, but they also contextualise the conflict between parties and leaders as a part of representing the story. In these terms, we see that the situation is treated as a political issue which is being used for strategic political party purposes. For this theme, in particular, there is a clear tension between the papers. Due to this fact, I will, therefore, highlight the significant differences between the papers within my discussion more than the other themes. The internal politics theme is shown in two subthemes: **decreasing the blame upon Cameron** (in *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*) **and Cameron's struggle to persuade MPs to support military action** (in *The Guardian* and *The Mirror*).

The first subtheme is construing the criticism upon the stance of Cameron and the Government. Although *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* highlight the negative concepts around intervention as shown in the previous section, they represent Cameron's failure in a soft tone. By doing this, these two papers suggest the difficulty of deciding on the Syrian complex situation. For example, Nick Clegg, the Deputy Prime Minister, is reported as saying that:

11. *22@727#1.1(T): he (Nick Clegg) is "wrestling" with the decision of whether to support* **military** *action. He told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "A terrible war crime has been committed a week ago. We face a judgment, a choice, everybody does by the way, every single MP. I'm struggling with this, I'm wrestling with this."*

The Telegraph suggests that deciding on military action is a difficult job for political leaders in the UK, so achieving the approval of military action can be difficult. On the other hand, *The Telegraph* positively portrays the stance of Cameron by focusing on his respect for the will of Parliament and he is shown as "a model of dignity: he accepted with good grace that the country was against intervention and promised to honour Parliament's decision" (30@1014#1.1). *The Sun* supports this orientation by suggesting that: "David Cameron will make the moral case for a **military** assault on Syria." (14@43#1.9). This line links military action to the long history of humanitarian intervention that reveals the reasonable means in which Cameron makes his case. *The Sun* also portrays Cameron's position as being different from Blair even when Cameron lost the vote as in:

12. *44@165#1.10(S): How dare Tony Blair criticise the Commons voting against attacking Syria. He (Blair) described the decision as "shocking". It's no more shocking than his weapons of mass destruction claim which led us into* **war** *with Iraq.*

Here, *The Sun* moves the focus from evaluating the stance of Cameron to comparing it with the mistake of Blair in the Iraq war. This example tends to show that losing the vote in Syria should not be linked to Cameron's leadership, but rather, the failure of the debate should be linked to the difficulty of making the decision.

On the other hand, *The Guardian* and *The Mirror* negatively evaluate Cameron's performance in this vote and his failure to persuade the MPs before the debate as in:

13. *33@657#1.7(G): The calls came as No 10 was told that only 20 Tory MPs, out of a total of 304, fully supported military action against the Assad regime after the* **chemical** *weapons attack on 21 August.*

The Guardian not only reports the public concerns about intervention, but it also shows concerns among the Conservative MPs towards the Government motion. This large

number of opponents against military action displays the struggle of Cameron to persuade his MPs to support his stance. This strong position against *intervention* is further developed to suggest that:

> 14. *22@130#1.8(G): Several ministerial aides, including David Burrowes and Daniel Kawczynski, have also spoken of their reluctance to back military **intervention**, raising the prospect of resignations if they fail to be persuaded.*

This example displays the strong opposition of some MPs who deny the path of intervention, and their intentions to resign if the House of Commons supports the Government motion. Examples 13 and 14 express how the proposed motion by Cameron is perceived negatively by politicians, even from MPs in his own party. A further finding is that the Opposition Leader Ed Miliband expands his rejection of Cameron's case to criticise Cameron's leadership. For example, he is reported as saying:

> 15. *24@55#1.15(M): the PM's "cavalier" stance lay behind his failure to win the **vote**. But he said last night blocking any military intervention in Syria was not the result he wanted.*

This example, line 20@47#1.15 and 40@97#1.15 highlight doubts regarding Cameron's leadership of the country. Line 45@109#1.15 suggests that the decision of the Parliament reflects the voice of the British people because both strongly oppose military action, thus negatively construing Cameron as not reflecting the concerns of his constituents. *The Guardian* and *The Mirror* raise concerns about Cameron's leadership as he does not reflect the voice of British people. Figure 4.8 below shows the central ideas represented by the newspapers when they refer to the second theme (internal politics in the UK).
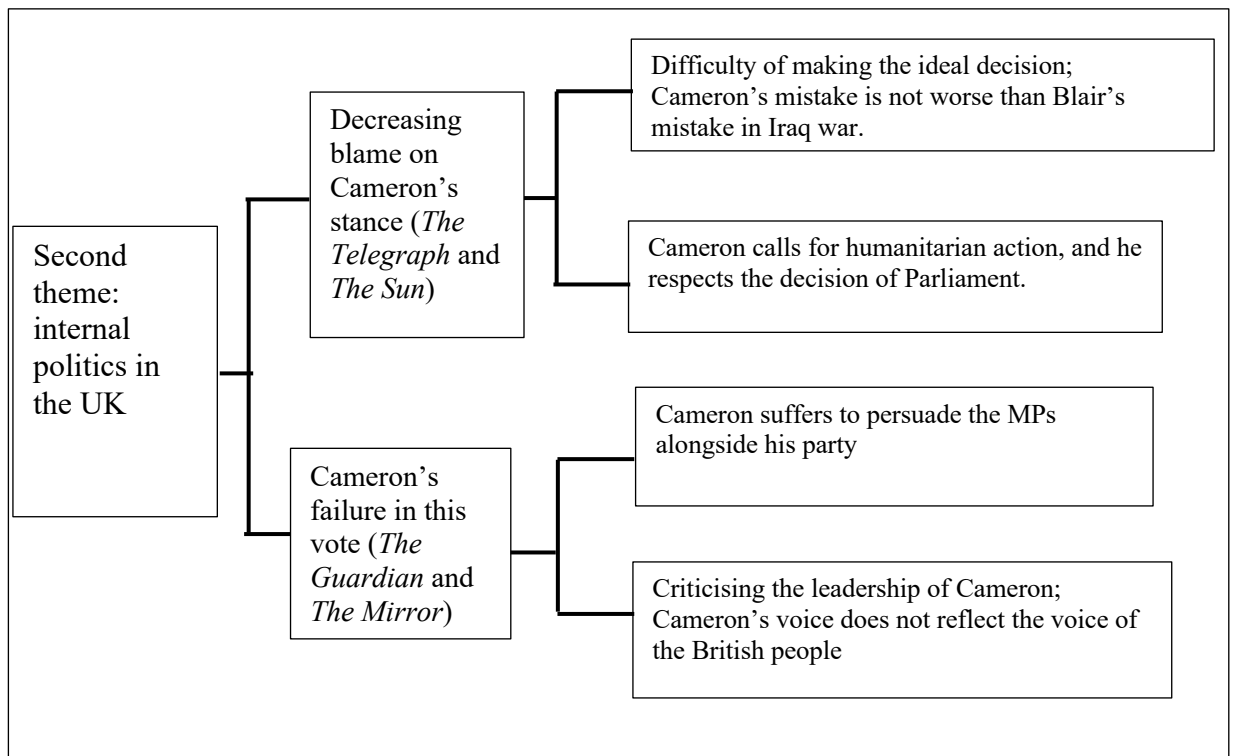
Figure 4 8: The central ideas of the second theme (internal politics in the UK)

Together, in this section, the newspapers show various orientations towards the evaluation of the political parties within the representation of the situation in Syria. *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* focus on highlighting public concern as a result of complicated circumstances. In contrast, *The Guardian* and *The Mirror* link the decision of the British Parliament to Cameron's failure and concerns around his leadership. Furthermore, they suggest that Cameron does not reflect the concerns of the public towards intervention. Even though these representations of the papers differ in tone and orientation, they share the idea of representing the existence of the British community's fears about possible intervention in Syria. Therefore, this theme only reinforces the British worry about military action shown in the first theme without developing further ideas in relation to the possible British intervention.

4.3.3. International Participants

The third theme to be discussed is the representation of different international action and their role in events surrounding the situation in Syria. In this theme, the newspapers focus on representing the American stance as the term *USA* appears the fourth strongest collocate in the normalised corpus (see Figure 4.2), and this shows how the stance of the USA is represented significantly in covering the chemical attacks in Syria. In the present theme, the international participants are represented in two subthemes: **the unstable stance of America** and **the stance of other international participants**.

Regarding the first subtheme, in the early days of the chemical attacks, the newspapers emphasise the firm stance of the USA towards acting in Syria. The papers suggest that:

16. *14@115#1.3(T): Last night, John Kerry, the USA secretary of state, said there was "undeniable" evidence of a chemical attack in what were the strongest words from the Obama Administration to date - and strongest indicator yet of imminent USA military **intervention**.*
17. *2@60#1.5(G): The paper's story, citing "administration officials", states that "a list of possible targets for a **military** strike has been circulating in the White House since late last week. It quotes a single unnamed official as saying: "We are continuing to assess the facts so the president can make an informed decision about how to respond to this indiscriminate use of chemical weapons."*

These examples show how the USA is being construed as an authoritative source here, and this implicitly shows the link between the American and British Governments both supporting intervention. These examples and 8@265#1.1 report the "imminent USA military intervention" (16). This American intention towards the Syrian situation would motivate the UK to support the USA-led coalition because there is international support from America. In other instances, Obama is represented as being prepared to take urgent action in Syria for the sake of protecting his "red line" (e.g. 2@25#1.2 and 27@795#1.2). There are also statements from American officials, such as General Michael Hayden, who assures the USA has the ability to attack Syria alone without support from allies (28@948#1.1 and 36@1223#1.3). These calls for urgent military action reflect a similar stance to Cameron when he calls for immediate military action against the chemical attacks. Obama and Cameron also share the view that:

*18. 29@123#1.11(S): Mr Obama's decision-making will be guided by what is in the best interests of the USA. He (Obama) believes countries who violate international norms regarding **chemical** weapons need to be held accountable.*

This example demonstrates that international action is a vital action to prevent such Syrian atrocities and to uphold international prohibition for the use of chemical weapons (18). Thus, intervention is needed to protect international security (e.g. 15@405#1.4 and 12@188#1.6), and this legitimises the fact that Cameron is acting in accordance with the USA. In the first theme (Section 4.3.1), Cameron is represented as taking the same stance as Obama by supporting immediate military action. The papers suggest that Obama and Cameron highlight the moral value as a central concept for the meaning of intervention. Thus, they represent the situation as a humanitarian crisis and intervention as humanitarian action. These specific construals of Cameron will be discussed more in the analysis of his speech.

In contrast to the first subtheme in this section, the tone of Obama had rapidly changed from the strong and robust support of intervention to an attempt to distance the USA from being involved in Syria, specifically after the British debate.[25] Less than a year from the use of the chemical weapons, Obama states in a speech at The White House that: "We have been very clear to the Assad regime, but also to other players on the ground, that a red line for us is we start seeing a whole bunch of chemical weapons moving around or being utilised. That would change my calculus." (The White House, August 20, 2012). These warnings are shown as having changed over time as in:

*19. 50@1482#1.2(T): He (Obama) has also sent a confusing message over his 'red line' over Syria's use of **chemical** weapons, declaring in Sweden that this wasn't his red line, but that of the international community.*
*20. 45@1552#1.4(T): Obama set a red line and then claimed that he didn't. A major reason why the West is considering action is because over a year ago Obama laid down a red line for war - if Assad uses chemical weapons then the **USA** will take action.*

---

[25] I discuss this idea here by relating it to the time after the debate because this idea saliently developed chronologically before and after the debate as the tone of USA had changed in the press after the British debate.

The tone of the USA is reported as changing to display a vague meaning of the American position and Obama's red line (19). Example 20 expresses how Obama denies his red line in that the meaning of the red line is ambiguous. This changing of the American stance suggests that Obama's red line is not robust, while he is reported as suffering to identify the ideal path of acting in Syria. Another difficulty facing Obama is the lack of support from authorities (e.g. the USA Congress) to back his position. After the debate, Obama is also shown as:

21. *35@610#1.6(G): he (Obama) is also struggling to convince (largely Democratic) members of Congress that military action in Syria would be limited and run no risk of miring the **USA** in prolonged conflict.*
22. *35@695#1.7(G): Obama said he was asking "every member of the global community" to consider what message impotence and inaction in the face of the use of **chemical** weapons would send to dictators everywhere.*

These two examples suggest obstacles that Obama faces in legitimising intervention in Syria, and how the action is perceived as a concern on an international scale (e.g. 12@397#1.1 and 31@1058#1.1). Obama not only seeks support from the USA Congress, but he also tries to persuade the international community to support action in Syria (example 22 and 29@123#1.11). The papers also represent Obama's stance as he "is also struggling to convince (largely Democratic) members of Congress" (35@610#1.6). These examples are parallel with Cameron's failure in the UK context in that the papers suggest how Cameron and Obama attempt to exclude the worries of their public towards military action in Syria.

Even though the papers give the American stance a clear focus, they significantly represent the stance of Russia, France and the UN as part of reporting international participation. Russia opposes any intervention in Syria as the papers represent that:

23. *43@1476#1.1(T): Russia, one of the Syrian government's main arms suppliers, opposes **military** intervention over an alleged chemical weapons attack in Syria. Moscow is also sending new warships to the Mediterranean but says it is just rotating ships in the area.*
24. *38@232#1.8(G): The Russian president also challenged the US to present its case for military **intervention** to the UN security council, after suggesting that if Barack Obama was worthy of his Nobel peace prize, he should think about the possible victims of any intervention by foreign forces.*

In these examples, Russia and others (e.g. 48@1718#1.1 and 49@1238#1.3) put pressure on the possibility of American intervention in Syria. The newspapers represent Russia as an obstacle by warning that any military intervention would have "catastrophic consequences" (12@98#1.3). Russia "challenged the USA to present its case for military intervention to the UN Security Council" (24). The papers suggest that this stance of Russia is another negative concept around the meaning of military action because Russia warns for any involvement in Syria without UN approval, and this will have an impact upon the legality of action in Syria. The lack of international position against the chemical attacks is shown as an additional negative aspect of intervention in Syria. These global concerns reinforce the fears in the British community towards intervention as shown in the first theme. France appears as the only Western participant that supports the possible USA-led coalition (e.g. 6@18#1.9 and 23@71#1.9) while:

25. *43@265#1.8(G): France, along with the United States, is pushing for military action against the Assad regime, a poll at the weekend showed that 64% of French people were opposed to a military **intervention**.*

This example suggests that, even though France may back military action, intervention is shown with a negative impression because French people do not want to support any action in Syria. The percentage of French people is used to display the notion of intervention as a public concern even when some leaders, such as Hollande and Cameron, urge their countries for intervention. Several international authorities reinforce the global concerns of military action in Syria, and they attempt to deny the call for military action at the time of the vote (e.g. 29@593#1.5, 42@848#1.5 and 46@930#1.7). Figure 4.9 below shows the central ideas represented by the newspapers when they refer to the third theme (international participants).

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                              ┌──────────────────────────────┐ │
│                                              │ At the early use of the      │ │
│                          ┌──────────────┐    │ chemical weapons:            │ │
│                          │ The unstable │────│ possible imminent American   │ │
│                          │ stance of    │    │ military intervention;       │ │
│                          │ America      │    │ significance of protecting   │ │
│  ┌──────────────┐        │              │    │ Obama's red line             │ │
│  │ Third        │        └──────────────┘    └──────────────────────────────┘ │
│  │ theme:       │                                                              │
│  │ international │                            ┌──────────────────────────────┐ │
│  │ participation │───┤                        │ The change of Obama's tone   │ │
│  │              │                             │ about his red line after the │ │
│  │              │                             │ British debate; Obama suffers│ │
│  └──────────────┘                             │ to persuade the USA Congress.│ │
│                                               └──────────────────────────────┘ │
│                                                                                │
│                                               ┌──────────────────────────────┐ │
│                          ┌──────────────┐     │ Russia is an obstacle to any │ │
│                          │ Other        │─────│ intervention in Syria        │ │
│                          │ international │     └──────────────────────────────┘ │
│                          │ participants │                                       │
│                          │              │     ┌──────────────────────────────┐ │
│                          └──────────────┘     │ French Government is the only│ │
│                                               │ international participant    │ │
│                                               │ that backs the USA-led       │ │
│                                               │ coalition; French Government │ │
│                                               │ does not reflect the voice   │ │
│                                               │ of the French people.        │ │
│                                               └──────────────────────────────┘ │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 4.9: The central ideas of the third theme (international participants)

The central idea in this theme is the lack of international consensus towards military action in Syria. From the results in this section, the weak support of international authorities and legality are two central concerns around intervention on a global scale. These ideas at the international level emphasise the importance of international legality and the support of the international community. For example, although Obama and Cameron attempt to relate the action to moral norms and the protection of international security, the fears in Britain and America seem to override the moral norms around the positive concepts of intervention. However, the stances of the leaders who support intervention are shown as not reflecting the concerns of their communities. The newspapers also represent Russia as strongly opposed to any intervention in Syria without the approval of the UN, and this would raise concerns about the legality of action in Syria. The press coverage proposes that possible UK military action cannot be considered within the local context alone, while several international issues can raise concerns to identifying British intervention.

4.3.4. The Negative Situation in Syria

The negative situation in Syria is the last theme represented in the concordance lines of the four newspapers. In this theme, the papers make a clear focus on representing the situation in Syria more than a direct evaluation of intervention or stances of international participants. However, the situation on the ground in Syria and the alleged atrocities of the Assad regime would serve as implicit legitimation/delegitimation for intervention, so this theme should be considered in relation to the meaning of British intervention as a whole. The papers also refer to this theme within the representation of the other themes. The papers negatively represent the situation in Syria by using two subthemes: **the seriousness of the chemical attacks** and **the complexity of the Syrian situation**. In these two subthemes, the papers suggest that, while the use of chemical weapons is a serious incident that has negative impact upon Syrian civilians and this may require a humanitarian action, there are several complex issues in Syria that should be considered.

The first subtheme is the seriousness of the chemical attacks, and this sub-theme tends to reinforce the need for action against this atrocity. The newspapers (and specifically, *The Telegraph*) use emotive language to describe the situation in Syria as an existed fact. For example, Hague is reported as saying:

> 26. 6@135#1.2(T): "The only possible explanation of what we've been able to see is that it was a **chemical** attack. Clearly many, many hundreds of people have been killed. Some of the estimates are well over a thousand."

This example and others (e.g. 7@157#1.2, 19@554#1.2 and 37@11031.2) portray the chemical attacks in Syria as an atrocity that has a negative impact on people, not only in Syria but in the whole world. *The Telegraph* uses emotional terms, such as "Assad's use of chemical weapons **'heinous'**" (19@554#1.2) to reflect this atrocity and to refer to the crisis as against humanity for the whole world (e.g. 11@49#1.13). These evaluations are promoted through highlighting personalised accounts of civilian suffering that could heighten how Syria is now a poor place. An example of this representation is:

> 27. 33@141#1.11(S): The father of eight, speaking in the shade of the unforgiving, said: "Interference from the UK and USA will only make things worse. Iraq and Egypt changed their leaders but nothing changed for the ordinary people." At

*another refugee camp nearby was Ahmad, 36, who fled from a Damascus suburb where government forces are said to have unleashed deadly **chemical** weapons last week.*

The papers use these personalised accounts to move the Syrian crisis from being a Syrian issue to an international crisis. Example 27 shows how the use of chemical weapons may increase the number of Syrian refugees to other countries, which is a concern for neighbouring and European countries, as many refugees reach Europe through Turkey.

The other vital subtheme is the complexity of the Syrian situation. The idea of showing the complexity of the Syrian situation is shown in the first theme, but it had more of a focus on evaluating possible military action in Syria. The idea of the complexity of the Syrian situation in this theme focuses on representing the Syrian situation without an explicit evaluation of the possible intervention. The papers suggest that the use of chemical weapons is under investigation as in:

28. *7@148#1.7(G): At least three victims of the alleged **chemical** weapons attack in east Damascus on Thursday have been smuggled to Jordan where samples of their blood and urine will help determine which agent was used to gas hundreds of people.*

This example suggests that the situation is still under investigation. The papers represent this issue to suggest that the UN inspectors are reported as doing their jobs in Syria, and their reports had not been provided at the time of the British parliamentary debate. In this way, the papers suggest the importance of providing a full picture about the situation in Syria that would challenge any ambiguity. Another complex issue is the consideration of the broad context of Syria as a war. In the analysis of the concordance lines, *The Sun* focuses more than the other papers in highlighting the broad situation in Syria as in:

29. *9@30#1.10(S): **HEADLINE**: More bombs won't bring Syria peace… Come December, with 4,000 dead, the UN claimed the nation was "close to civil **war**". One year into the crisis, 7,500 lives had been lost and 230,000 Syrians driven from their homes.*

Example 29 suggests that the Syrian civilians suffer from the path of the revolution as being shifted to a "civil war." This example and others in *The Sun* (e.g. 2@4#1.10 and

4@11#1.10) express the necessity of considering all the issues in the broad Syrian crisis. Therefore, the papers refer to the importance of conceptualising the web of complexity in Syria. This representation of the Syrian situation reinforces the concerns of British military action. Figure 4.10 below shows the central ideas represented by the newspapers when they refer to the fourth theme (the situation in Syria).
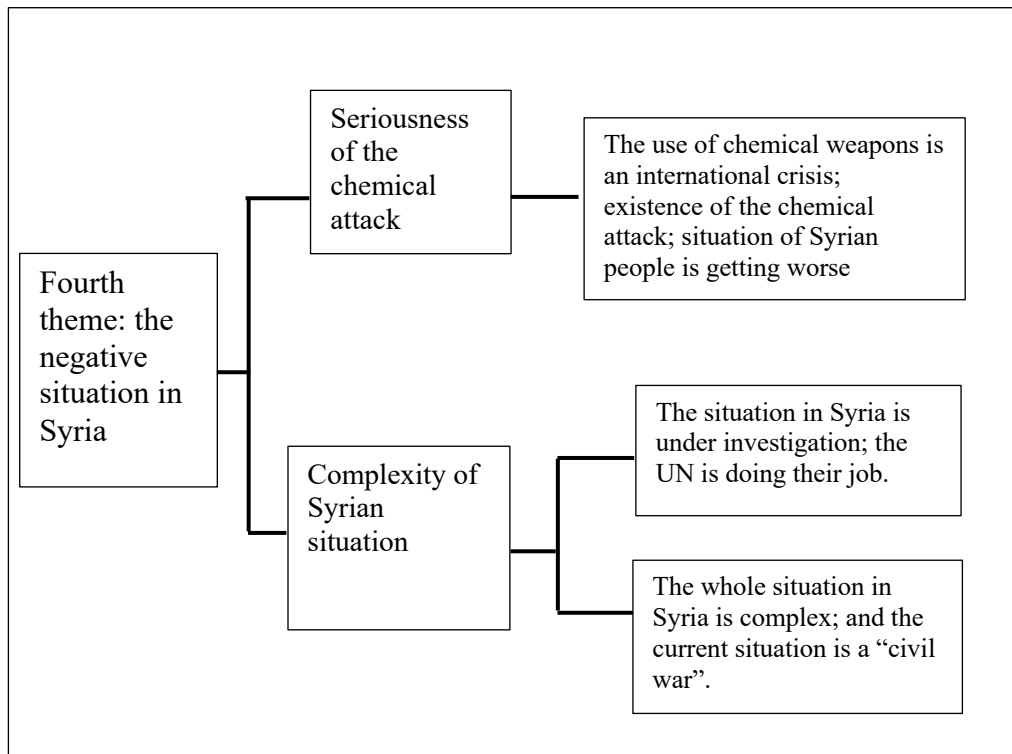
Figure 4.10: The central ideas of the fourth theme (the situation in Syria)

In this theme, the newspapers highlight two central concepts. First, they agree about the existence of the chemical attacks in the region, and how this Syrian issue is articulated as an international crisis in relation to the international prohibition of the use of the chemical weapons. The representations of extreme suffering and the seriousness of the chemical attacks tend to justify intervention and, more specifically, construe the humanitarian element as an aspect of the 'meaning' of intervention. However, the press coverage reveals that the situation in Syria should be considered within its broad context,

such as the case of refugees, fighting groups and UN reports. Although the papers represent the situation in Syria as a humanitarian crisis, they focus on the complexity of the situation more than the importance of intervention in Syria. The complexity of the situation is shown here as shared knowledge that appears to distance the UK from being involved in military action.

4.4.   Overall Remarks on the Press Coverage (Time One)

The analysis of the press coverage reveals a varied and complex network of concepts around the meaning of possible British intervention against the use of chemical weapons in Syria. Figure 4.11 below summarises the central themes used by the press within the representation of the situation in Syria.
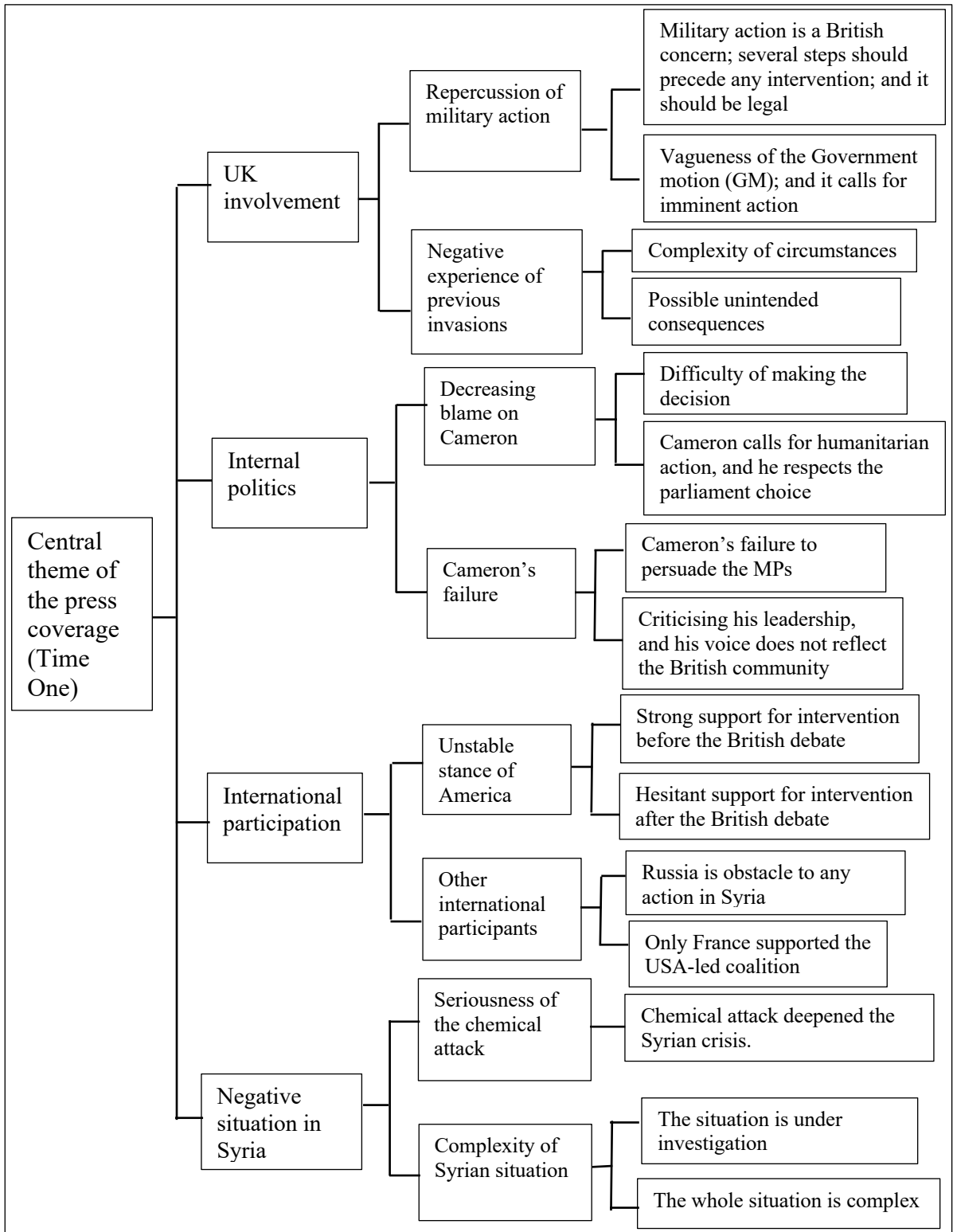
Figure 4.11: Central themes and subthemes used by the press within the representation of the situation in Syria in Time One

In this chapter, I have identified four central themes and topics that the papers use in covering the possibility of intervention against the use of chemical weapons in Syria. These four themes include: UK involvement, internal politics, international participation and the situation in Syria. Starting from the incident, the newspapers suggest that the use of chemical weapons should not be isolated from the whole situation in Syria, while they highlight other issues, such as the complex situation in Syria and the stance of international authorities (e.g. Russia and the UN). The papers also raise concerns about the legality of intervention in Syria without the approval of the UN. Although the papers refer to the catastrophic situation in Syria as a serious international crisis, they give the issues of legality and complexity higher concern as shared British understandings around the meaning of intervention. The specific context in the UK is represented with the overall concerns of the public as well as politicians towards participation in Syria. Nevertheless, the papers describe the Government as calling for a "foolish military action" (30@120#1.14) in Syria. By emphasising the Government's call for possible immediate action with lack of reports, the papers link the Government motion to the mistakes of the Iraq war. Moreover, the alliance concept is represented negatively specifically by *The Guardian* and *The Mirror* by showing the stances of Obama and Cameron who share the view of supporting action in Syria. The papers address Cameron's position to suggest that he does not reflect the public concerns because he gives the alliance aspect more importance than the voice of the British people. These ideas are combined as shared understandings that highlight concerns around the possibility of British military intervention in Syria.

This chapter has attempted to provide the central concepts that the newspapers use in representing the situation in Syria, and how these representations, as shared knowledge, may potentially be used as raw materials for either justifying or countering British intervention with the debate in Parliament. The papers do not produce identical construal of the concepts around the possibility of military action in Syria, but they provide various concepts that can be regarded as shared knowledge in British society. The predominant representation of military action in the media at Time One is in terms of showing that intervention is not 'humanitarian' because it will have unintended consequences due to the complexity of the situation and lack of UN reports and approval.

Chapter Five: Negotiating the Meaning of Intervention in the Speeches of Cameron and Miliband about the UK's Response to the Use of Chemical Weapons in Syria

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter provided the media construal of key concepts in the representation of the situation in Syria that are taken to stand for shared knowledge in the broad context of the British community. I identified four central themes: UK involvement, UK internal politics, the situation in Syria and international participants. From these four key themes, the overarching representation of intervention is rephrased as not humanitarian because it will have unintended consequences due to the complexity of the situation and lack of UN reports and approval. The present chapter examines the articulation of meanings around the vital concept of intervention during the first UK parliamentary debate (21 August 2013) on the appropriate response to the use of chemical weapons in Syria. In light of van Dijk's (2003, 2008b) concept of shared understandings, Wodak's (2009) consideration of levels of context and also Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach, I will consider how the speakers strategically reconstruct their definitions of intervention by rescaling ideas and concepts identified as shared understandings in the press coverage. The conclusions drawn from this chapter will be used in Chapter Eight to assist in answering the general research question set in Section 2.4.

The presentation of this chapter is similar to Chapter Seven in that both analyse the speeches of the Prime Minister and the Opposition Leader. The detailed structure of the analytical process is shown in the methodology chapter, but here, I briefly mention the overall presentation. First, the Government motion (GM) is analysed before Cameron's speech, and the Opposition amendment (OA) is analysed before Miliband's speech. The GM and OA are included in the analysis to provide the key concepts and the overall claim of each party towards the potential of military action before the discussion of the speeches. Second, because the GM and the OA are short, I present the analyses in the same sequence as Fairclough and Fairclough (2012): first, I present the analysed text, then I discuss the key points, and at the end of the section, I provide the schema of the argument's reconstruction. However, the speeches of Cameron and Miliband are too long to be presented in a single move, particularly because in each case, the speech as a whole

represents several formulations of the speaker's argument around separate topics/themes. Therefore, I build up the structure of the speeches gradually through an analysis of each of the formulations, in turn, adding the new ideas and premises at each stage in red to show the development of the argument. After the analysis of argumentation reconstruction of each speech, I move on to discuss how speakers rescale the themes shown in the press within their elements of arguments to produce a specific definition of intervention (in the intertextual sections). At the end of the chapter, I will discuss how the speakers use the small elements in their construal of concepts to articulate specific meanings of intervention, and how they use the logic of equivalence and difference in their discourse as a whole to seek a majority that supports their positions.

5.2. The Analysis of the Government Motion (GM)

In this section, I analyse the Government motion (GM) that is to be debated in order to identify the meaning of British intervention against the use of chemical weapons. The GM should provide an overview of the central argument and vital elements of Cameron's case before analysing his actual speech. The GM identifies the possible British participation in Syria as a "*humanitarian intervention*" in that the humanitarian concept is pointed to as an *intervention* in the motion, as discussed below. The GM states:

1 **Syria and the Use of Chemical Weapons**

2 That this House:

3 Deplores the use of chemical weapons in Syria on 21 August 2013 by the Assad regime,
4 which caused hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries of Syrian civilians;

5 Recalls the importance of upholding the worldwide prohibition on the use of chemical
6 weapons under international law;

7 Agrees that a strong humanitarian response is required from the international community
8 and that this may, if necessary, require military action that is legal, proportionate and
9 focused on saving lives by preventing and deterring further use of Syria's chemical
10 weapons;

11 Notes the failure of the United Nations Security Council over the last two years to take
12 united action in response to the Syrian crisis;

13 Notes that the use of chemical weapons is a war crime under customary law and a crime
14 against humanity, and that the principle of humanitarian intervention provides a sound
15 legal basis for taking action;

16 Notes the wide international support for such a response, including the statement from the
17 Arab League on 27 August which calls on the international community, represented in the
18 United Nations Security Council, to "overcome internal disagreements and take action
19 against those who committed this crime, for which the Syrian regime is responsible";

20 Believes, in spite of the difficulties at the United Nations, that a United Nations process
21 must be followed as far as possible to ensure the maximum legitimacy for any such
22 action;

23 Therefore welcomes the work of the United Nations investigating team currently in
24 Damascus, and, whilst noting that the team's mandate is to confirm whether chemical
25 weapons were used and not to apportion blame, agrees that the United Nations Secretary-
26 General should ensure a briefing to the United Nations Security Council immediately
27 upon the completion of the team's initial mission;

28 Believes that the United Nations Security Council must have the opportunity immediately
29 to consider that briefing and that every effort should be made to secure a Security Council
30 Resolution backing military action before any such action is taken, and notes that before
31 any direct British involvement in such action a further vote of the House of Commons
32 will take place; and

33 Notes that this Resolution relates solely to efforts to alleviate humanitarian suffering by
34 deterring use of chemical weapons and does not sanction any action in Syria with wider
35 objectives.

The GM was submitted in advance before the debate, and it presents a statement for MPs to deliberate, in this case, a statement that supports the UK intervention in Syria. The circumstances of the situation are highlighted at the beginning of the GM (lines 3-10) and in other lines (lines 11-15 and 24-28). The proposed problem is the use of chemical weapons in Syria, and this is stated clearly as the central issue. Another suggested problem is that the situation in Syria had been getting worse due to a negative and weak stance of the international community towards the whole Syrian situation over the past years (lines 11-12). The GM expands these issues to support the legality of action in Syria and identify this action as a "humanitarian intervention" (line 14) with an obligation upon the international community to do their jobs and provide the reports (lines 24-28). Although the GM negatively highlights the role of the international community, later in the motion, it refers to the positive role of the United Nations (UN) and how "humanitarian action" may "if necessary, require military action that is legal" (lines 7-10). The goals of calling for action in Syria are twofold: deterring any further use of chemical weapons and saving lives in that country.

However, the wording of the GM leaves it rather ambiguous as to what the specific humanitarian response is that the MPs are voting on. The GM presents the factual *circumstances* mentioned (the use of chemical weapons and the negative international stance) and certain *goals* (saving lives and deterring any use of chemical weapons) informed by *circumstantial values* (humanitarian attitude, legal action and institutional facts of obligation) without providing clear *means-goal* or actions that the MPs should support. Together, these elements of the GM emphasise the seriousness of the chemical attacks in Syria, and the need for urgent "humanitarian intervention" that will prevent any further use of chemical weapons (lines 7-10 and 29-36). The GM supports these elements by the argument from authority (the Arab League) that backs action against the use of chemical weapons (lines 16-20). It could be argued that the GM is calling on the MPs to vote for a humanitarian response and action in order to stop attacks on civilians and

obtain international support. However, the use of the term '*humanitarian intervention*' is vague and unfixed and will thus form the basis of negotiation between many MPs within the debate. Figure 5. 1 below shows the structure of practical argument for the GM.

CLAIM: The MPs ought to support the GM which calls for humanitarian action against the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

GOALS: Saving lives and deterring further use of CW.

VALUES: No exact concerns mentioned in the motion, only the circumstantial values

CIRCUMSTANCES: The situation in Syria; negative stance of the UN towards Syrian crisis; UN's failure to solve the Syrian crisis. CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES: includes international law; legality of action in Syria; and humanitarian value.

MEANS-GOAL: if the MPs support the GM, the goals will be achieved.

ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY: argument from the Arab League that supports the need for taking international action against the Syrian regime.

Figure 5. 1: The structure of practical argument for the Government motion

111

From the wording here, we see that the limits of '*humanitarian intervention'* and its relationship to *'humanitarian suffering'* and *'military action'* are the central concepts to be debated. These concepts show that the debate will not just be about the effectiveness of the proposed intervention, but also about the very meaning of the concept itself. Thus, in the analysis of the speeches of Cameron and Miliband, I will focus on how the elements and strategies of each argument may re-construe the concept of *intervention* and how, as performance, this draws on broader discourses in the public domain, rather than evaluating the extent to which the argument is logically valid according to objective normative criteria.

5.3. Cameron's Speech

Cameron is the first key speaker in the debate. He also delivered the longest speech. Cameron's speech comprises four formulations with central themes and ideas that contribute to his construction of the meaning of intervention. These four fundamental formulations, which will be analysed in turn, comprise the key concepts of the speech, the negative imaginary of the 2003 Iraq invasion, the impact of the chemical attack in Syria and decreasing the risk of military action.

5.3.1. Cameron's First Formulation: Key Concepts of the Speech (1-35)

In this introductory part (lines 1-35),[26] Cameron introduces the first formulation that contains the central elements of his argument, which are expanded in the following formulations of his speech. Cameron introduces his speech in the first formulation by using three central elements: *circumstances*, *the negation of an anticipated construal* and *means-goal*.

The first element of argument in this introductory part (first formulation) is the *circumstantial* element (lines 4-6, 10-12, 16-17, 21-24 and 31-35). Cameron represents the *circumstances* in two ways: expressing the situation in Syria and highlighting legal and moral stances towards the use of chemical weapons. First, the use of chemical weapons is shown as the main problem, and Cameron presents this issue through highly evaluative terms. For example:

> *The question before the House today is how to respond to one of the most abhorrent uses of chemical weapons in a century, which has **slaughtered innocent** men, women and **children** in Syria* (4-6)

This example not only presupposes the existence of the use of chemical weapons, but it also implies the need for a clear stance against this crisis. Cameron uses highly charged words such as "slaughtered" to show the catastrophic situation and depicts the victims as "innocent men, women and children" rather than opponents of the regime or fighting

---

[26] These numbers refer to the line numbers in the analysis of Cameron's speech (see Appendix Two, p.353 for the detail categorisation of Cameron's speech using Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach).

113

groups. However, at this stage, Cameron avoids talking about complex issues, such as the situation of fighting groups in Syria, whereas he only refers to the victims as "innocents." Now, the concept of complexity is excluded from the *circumstances* while Cameron attempts to state the situation as a "humanitarian catastrophe" by focusing on the Syrian chemical attacks. This point will be discussed more in the following formulations.

Another aspect that falls within the category of *circumstances* is the *circumstantial values* that establish the legality of supporting the GM and voting for military action. Cameron states that "we have a summary of the Government's legal position, which makes it explicit that military action would have a clear legal basis" (11-12). The legality of the case is justified with an *argument from authority*, in this case, by authorities such as the Joint Intelligence Committee (16-17). Within these *circumstances*, Cameron refers to his main *goal,* which is "preventing and deterring further use of Syria's chemical weapons" (23-24). In this opening section, Cameron establishes the basis of his argument in terms of the extreme circumstances in Syria and the subsequent legal justification for intervention.

The second central element in this formulation is the *negation of an anticipated construal* from other speakers (6-9). This is an element of argumentation used by Cameron that is not classified in Fairclough and Fairclough (2012). The strategy of *negation of anticipated construal* is used by Cameron in this debate when he talks about the circumstances in a way that explicitly pre-empts and counters any anticipated alternative construals that might be suggested by an MP. Cameron attempts to distance any negative concept of being part of the meaning of *intervention* such as:

> *It is not about taking sides in the Syrian conflict, it is not about invading, it is not about regime change, and it is not even about working more closely with the opposition…* (6-9)

Here, Cameron demonstrates his awareness of possible rebuttals that might be raised by some MPs, and he attempts to negate in advance any possible counter-claim. This strategy will be discussed more in the next formulation (Section 5.3.2), where it is used strategically by Cameron to exclude negative concepts around the meaning of intervention. From this perspective, Cameron attempts to distance the UK from being

directly involved in the Syrian conflict, and he suggests that supporting the motion does not automatically mean direct military action.

The third element of the argument in this formulation is the *means-goal* strategy (17-21). I consider the *means-goal* as the suggested sub-actions that precede the main action (i.e., the claim), and, together, they participate in achieving the proposed goals of the argument. Cameron uses the *means-goal* only once in the introductory part when he suggests that:

> *We have a motion from the Government that sets out a careful path of steps… Those include the weapons inspectors reporting, further action at the United Nations and another vote in this House of Commons* (17-21)

Here Cameron distances the UK from being involved in any direct military action through proposing several steps that will precede any British military action. However, the steps that Cameron suggests here are vague, and he does not identify which step is the first and how these sub-actions can relate to the possible British military action. Thus, these concepts around the meaning of intervention are not identified clearly in Cameron's first formulation. Figure 5.2 shows the reconstruction of the argument for this part of Cameron's speech.
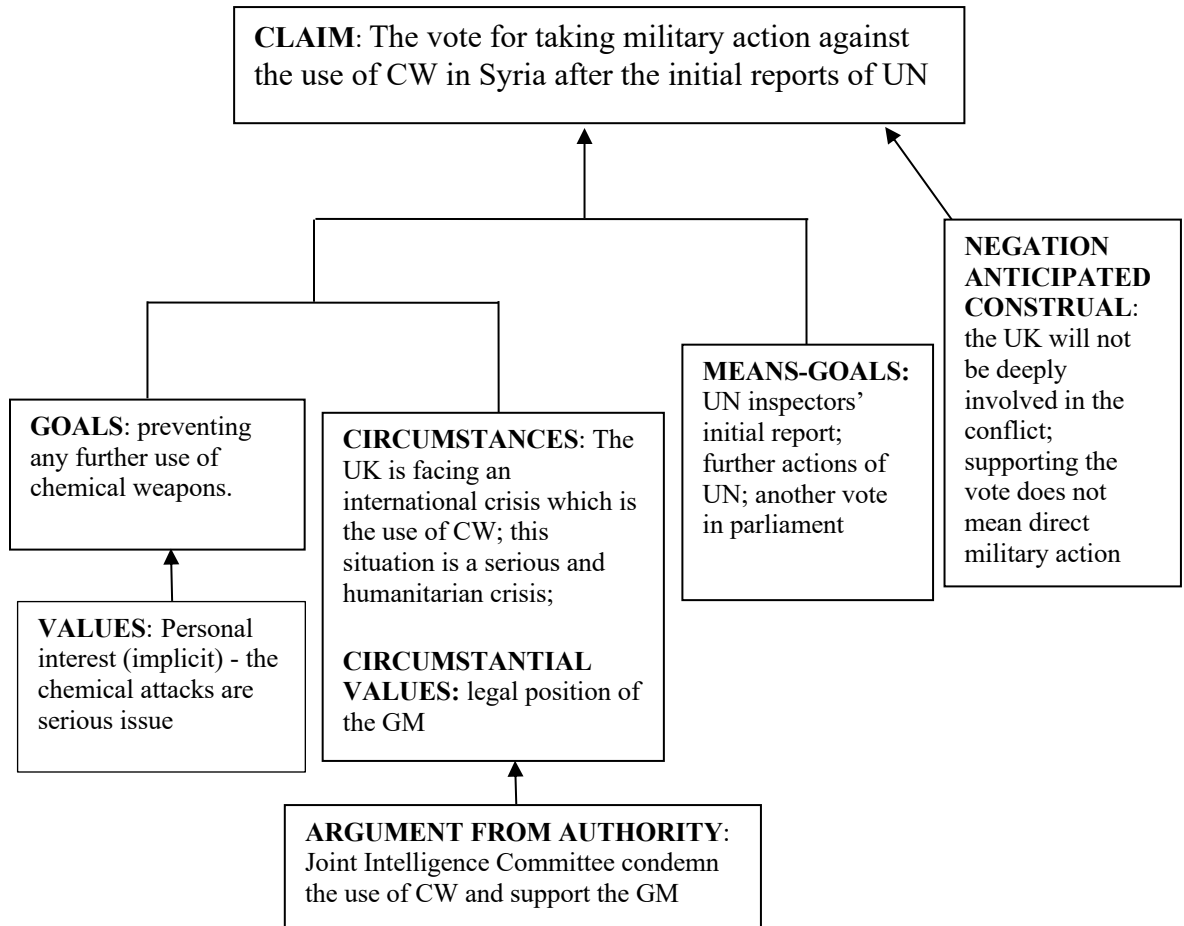
Figure 5.2: The structure of practical argument for Cameron's speech (first formulation)

5.3.2. Cameron's Second Formulation: The Negative Imaginary of the 2003 Iraq Invasion (40-86)

After setting out the key principles of his case, Cameron moves to the second formulation of his speech: the negative experience of the Iraq invasion, which he evokes both implicitly and explicitly. This feature of his argument occurs at various points in his speech (253-260, 436-446, 455-461 and 520-530), which are, therefore, included in this section. Cameron represents this formulation by using three main elements: *circumstances*, *means-goal*, and *dealing with objections and alternatives*.

The first aspect of this formulation is to contrast the *circumstances* behind the invasion of Iraq and the current situation in Syria (40-44, 46-61, 74-77 and 81-86). Cameron claims that the *circumstances* of the Syrian situation are different from the Iraq invasion in two ways: the clarity of the situation in Syria and international consensus against the use of chemical weapons. In the first strategy, Cameron proposes the clarity of the Syrian situation due to the existence of the evidence of the Assad Government's commitment of using chemical weapons. For example, Cameron suggests:

> *The fact that the most recent attack took place is not seriously doubted. The Syrian Government have said it took place. Even the Iranian President said that it took place… We have multiple eye-witness accounts of chemical-filled rockets being used against opposition-controlled areas. We have thousands of social media reports…* (46-53)

Here, Cameron emphasises the clarity of the situation and the availability of outside sources, the Iranian and Syrian Governments, who support his assessment of the situation in Syria rather than depending on one intelligence source. Thus, he implicitly attempts to distance his stance from Blair's position by not depending on one intelligence source as was the case with Iraq invasion. This example also displays how Iran (Assad's ally) reinforces the existence of the chemical attacks. However, Iran is shown in the newspapers' coverage as denying the chemical attacks in Syria, as I will discuss in Section 5.4. The second way in which Cameron distances the current situation from the

Iraq war is to emphasise the international consensus for the response against the chemical attacks in Syria, as in:

> *The differences with 2003 and the situation with Iraq go wider. Then, Europe was divided over what should be done; now, Europe is united.* (54-55)

Here, Cameron attempts to discount the idea that Britain is in the front line of any intervention in the Middle East, as had been the case in Iraq. Instead, he suggests that authorities in the West share their backing for action against the use of chemical weapons. He presents Obama as having "opposed the action in Iraq" (71-72), calling for an international response once his red line was crossed through the use of chemical weapons. However, as analysed in the last chapter, the press reflects the opposite situation, showing the unstable stance of the Western countries (this is expanded in Section 5.4). The *circumstances* in this formulation display how Cameron attempts to exclude the ambiguity of the Syrian situation as a negative concept around intervention and to show the international consensus as an alternative concept. Within the *circumstances* in this formulation, Cameron also highlights his values and goal when he proposes that:

> *In drawing up my motion I want to unite as much of the country and of this House as possible. I think it is right, on these vital issues of national and international importance…* (67-69)

Cameron confirms that the motion's *goal* is to "unite the country", so he adds a potential new element to the meaning of intervention, which is enhancing the unity of the country. This goal is restricted by the *value,* which is the "national and international interest." This element is labelled as a value because Cameron explicitly uses this idea as a personal interest to support the need for action in Syria. Therefore, the solidarity concept is construed in the argumentation structure as an additional concept to military intervention.

After the representation of the differences in *circumstances* between Iraq and Syria, Cameron briefly highlights the existence of British public scepticism towards intervention. The concerns of military action are linked to the *means-goal,* which is the

second central element used by Cameron in this formulation (74-80). Cameron argues that:

> *because of the damage done to public confidence by Iraq, we would have to follow a series of incremental steps, including at the United Nations* (77-78)

In this quote, Cameron adds an extra sub-action, which is the role of the British leaders in preparing the public to accept participation against the use of chemical weapons. Even though he considers the existence of the British public concerns, he suggests the main reason for this concern is the previous mistakes of the Iraq invasion. Thus, he proposes that the MPs should act to prepare the public to accept the possibility of military action.

Then, Cameron employs a strategy of *dealing with objections* raised by some MPs from the floor (253-260, 436-446, 455-461 and 520-530). Within the debate, Dr Julian Lewis (Conservative) raises the first concern of depending on specific sources for explaining the situation in Syria without compelling evidence about what happened in Syria. In response, Cameron claims that:

> *Intelligence is part of this picture, but let us not pretend that there is one smoking piece of intelligence that can solve the whole problem. This is a judgment issue; hon. Members will have to make a judgement.* (444-446)

Here, Cameron denies any suggestions of similarity between the *circumstances* of the Iraq invasion and the current call for intervention in Syria. Furthermore, he presents the reports of the JIC as a further source in justifying the validity of the proposed *circumstances* (253-260). After this quote, Mr John Baron (Conservative) raises concerns over supporting one party over others in the Syrian civil war and being involved in the complexity of fighting groups in Syria. Cameron denies this point by suggesting:

> *This debate and this motion are not about arming the rebels or intervening in the conflict, or about invasion or changing our approach to Syria. They are about chemical weapons—something in which everyone in this House has an interest.* (459-461)

119

Cameron uses this same expression at the beginning of his speech as a strategy of *negation of anticipated construal*. However, he refers here to another element that is *dealing with objections and alternatives* because Cameron negates the ideas raised by Baron. Cameron uses this expression to specify the meaning of intervention and exclude other concepts that cast intervention in a negative light, such as being involved in the Syrian civil war. The last concern towards supporting the GM fears a backlash of intervention in Syria. Before any MP suggests the possibility of backlash, Cameron raises the importance of considering the feelings of the young British Muslims that call for action against the Syrian Government to protect Muslim civilians in Syria. Cameron distances the current situation with the spectre of the Iraq negative consequences, such as the London attack in 2005. In contrast, he proposes that young Muslims seek a response from Britain against "the most horrific deaths from chemical weapons" (528). Furthermore, this stance of young Muslims is supported by the authority that is the "National Security Council" (523). From these considerations, Cameron argues that the response to the chemical attack is "the right message" (530), so he implicitly reassures the importance of intervention as a personal interest and *value* within his negation of objections. Figure 5.3 below shows the elements of argumentation added to the overall speech through Cameron's contrast of the current situation with the negative imaginary of the invasion of Iraq. The red fonts refer to the ideas that are developed in this second formulation in order to make it easy of showing the new ideas and elements that are added to the previous formulation (this way is explained in the methodology, Section 3.3.3).

CLAIM: The vote for taking military action against the use of CW in Syria after the initial reports of UN

NEGATION ANTICIPATED CONSTRUAL: The UK will not be deeply involved in the conflict

GOALS: Deterring any further use of CW; uniting the country by supporting the vote

CIRCUMSTANCES: The UK is facing an international crisis which is the use of CW; this crisis had made the Syrian situation worse; the current situation is different from the Iraq invasion; the evidence of the alleged chemical attacks; Western countries are united to back intervention **CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES**: legal position of the GM

MEANS-GOALS: Steps of the Government motion including UN inspectors' initial report; another vote in parliament; MPs should decrease public concerns over intervention

DEALING WITH ALTERNATIVES AND OBJECTIONS: There are several sources about the situation, and the MPs should make the decision; the UK will not be involved in the civil war; there will be no backlash for action in Syria; young Muslims seek the support of British military action.

VALUES: Personal interest (implicit)- the significance of the action; action against the use of CW is in the national and international interest

ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY: Joint Intelligence Committee condemn the use of CW

Figure 5.3: The structure of practical argument for Cameron's speech (second formulation)

121

5.3.3. Cameron's Third Formulation: The Impact of the Chemical Attacks in Syria (93-292)

Cameron's third formulation centres on issues around the impact of the chemical attack, but also includes (lines 93-99 and 134-138) a projection for the fourth formulation, which is discussed in the following section. Lines 253-260 are analysed in the second formulation because they present the negative imaginary of the Iraq invasion. Furthermore, lines 492-500 are covered in this section, as they also deal with the impact of the chemical attacks. Cameron employs two central strategies in this formulation: *circumstances* and *negation of objections and alternatives*. This formulation also briefly touches on the *values* and *goals* within the two primary elements, as we will see below.

The first element is the *circumstances* (103-111, 169-175, 184-191, 200-207, 214-252 and 283-292). These *circumstances* are the same shown in his first formulation, but here, Cameron expands the ideas shown in the introductory part through two sub-elements: the *circumstantial values* and *evaluating the chemical attacks*.

At the beginning of the third formulation, Cameron sets out the *circumstantial values* suggesting the British responsibility of acting against the use of chemical weapons:

> *The deep public cynicism imposes particular responsibilities on me as Prime Minister to try to carry people in the country and people in this House with me... I want us to try to have the greatest possible unity on the issue* (103-104)

Cameron suggests that calling for military action is the public choice, and he wants to take this obligation to reflect the voice of the British people. In the second formulation (Section 5.3.2), Cameron highlights the public concerns, but as shown, he argues these concerns are caused by the mistake of the 2003 Iraq war. Now, he tries to construe the concern of the public by suggesting that the public puts the obligation upon him to unite the country, so he urges the MPs to support his position. Within this *circumstantial value*, he provides his personal interest (i.e., *value*), which is uniting the Parliament towards backing intervention. A further suggested *circumstantial value* is the international prohibition of the use of chemical weapons as in:

The 1925 post-first world war agreement that these weapons are morally reprehensible, so do we want to try to maintain that law? (185-188)

Cameron turns the focus from highlighting the obligation upon the UK to suggesting the legality of acting against the chemical attacks to uphold the international law (169-175 and 184-191). Here, Cameron refers to supporting the international law as an extra concept to the meaning of intervention, and he puts forward the obligation upon the UK to take this role as he raises the question "*do we want to try to maintain that law?*".

The other way of showing the *circumstances* is the evaluation of the chemical attacks, an emotional portrayal which he backs up with argument from the authority Médecins Sans Frontières[27]:

The video footage illustrates some of the most sickening human suffering imaginable. Expert video analysis can find no way that this wide array of footage could have been fabricated… (217-219)

Cameron similarly cites official authorities such as the Chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), which he quotes as saying that:

"there is little serious dispute that chemical attacks causing mass casualties on a larger scale than hitherto…took place on 21 August". (238-239)

Cameron thus makes great efforts to make the situation in Syria seems clear cut, excluding any ambiguity or room for doubt within the *circumstances*. He backs up this view by citing several authorities, such as NATO, Obama, the Arab League and reports of Médecins sans Frontières. Cameron further excludes other issues related to the Syrian situation, such as the conflict between the Syrian regime and opposition. He only talks once about the general situation to construe the *circumstances* of chemical attacks as deepening the unfortunate situation in Syria, such as increasing the refugees in

---

[27] Also known in English as Doctors Without Borders, Médecins Sans Frontières is an international humanitarian medical non-governmental organisation (NGO) of French origin best known for its projects in conflict zones and in countries affected by endemic diseases.

neighbouring countries (lines 492-500). Cameron attempts to make the situation in Syria only focused on the chemical attacks, while he excludes (disarticulates) other issues (e.g. conflict between the regime and opposition) to support his proposed *circumstances*.

The second central strategy in the third formulation is the *negation of objections and alternatives* (112-129, 141-149, 155-161 and 267-278) raised either by the Opposition amendment or other MPs from the floor in the debate. First, Cameron deals with the Opposition amendment, which is, in this case, the counter-claim to his argument. Cameron refuses the Opposition motion because:

> *It refers to the deaths on 21 August but does not in any way refer to the fact that they were caused by chemical weapons... Secondly, in no way does the Opposition motion even begin to point the finger of blame at President Assad...* (119-129)

He claims that the Opposition amendment ignores the seriousness of the chemical attack and the humanitarian situation in Syria because it does not back the GM that calls for *humanitarian intervention*. Cameron narrows down the focus on *circumstances* to be about the chemical attacks, and the action should be "purely about deterring and degrading future chemical weapons use by Syria" (157-158). He suggests that blaming the Assad Government is a central point that should be stated clearly in the Syrian case. The second objection against Cameron's claim is when Kawczynski (Conservative) suggests that allies such as Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Qatar should act in Syria instead of the UK. However, Cameron argues:

> *We would need countries that have the capabilities to take that action, of which the United States and the United Kingdom are two.* (159-160)

He negates the suggestion of Kawczynski by proposing that acting against the chemical attacks is a duty upon Britain and its allies together because they have "the capabilities to take that action" (159-160). Cameron suggests the possible military action is shared at an international level, but at the same time, the UK should be involved because of its capability. The third objection against the GM is that Jackson (Labour) highlights the

complexity of the situation in Syria and the concerns around the response against the chemical attack. Cameron attempts to refute this objection by suggesting that:

> *In the end, there is no 100% certainty about who is responsible; you have to make a judgement. There is also no 100% certainty about what path of action might succeed or fail… I think we can be as certain as possible that a regime that has used chemical weapons… if nothing is done, that it can use these weapons again and again on a larger scale and with impunity.* (267-275)

In this statement, this is the first time that Cameron highlights the possibility of a degree of ambiguity in the Syrian situation and the GM. The subtext in this quote was the Iraq war. However, Cameron reasserts the significance of focusing on one particular incident, which is the Assad Government's responsibility for the chemical attacks. From that point, he argues that inaction will lead to further uses of chemical weapons. Therefore, he emphasises the idea that the motion is about a severe humanitarian catastrophe that justifies humanitarian action in Syria.

In this third formulation, the concepts of Cameron move from a *circumstances* stage to the *negation of alternatives and objections*. This development of ideas among elements can show how Cameron strategically stated the impact of the chemical attacks upon Syrian people and the international community. From that point, he develops the obligation upon the UK and MPs. Then, he negates objections that attempt to defeat his circumstances in order to justify the importance of British humanitarian intervention. Figure 5.4 shows the development of Cameron's argument by adding new ideas in this formulation to the previous formulations.

COUNTER-CLAIM: Not to vote for action in Syria, specifically at this time.

CLAIM: The vote for taking military action against the use of CW in Syria after the initial reports of UN

NEGATIVE CONSEQUANCES OF COUNTER-CLAIM: Another use of CW; OA does not focus only on the chemical attack

GOALS: Saving lives and alleviating humanitarian suffering by deterring any further use of CW; protecting the international prohibition for the use of CW; uniting the country by supporting the vote

VALUES: Personal interest (implicit)- the significance of the action; national and international interest of the chemical attack; uniting the stance of Britain

CIRCUMSTANCES: The UK is facing an international crisis which is the use of CW; this crisis had made the Syrian situation worse; the current situation is different from the Iraq invasion; the evidence of the alleged chemical attacks; Western countries are united to back intervention; existence of the British public concern; the situation is clear;

CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES: legal position of the GM; Britain has the duty and capability to act in Syria; Cameron has the obligation of uniting the country; international prohibition of the use of chemical weapons;

ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY: Joint Intelligence Committee condemn the use of CW; NATO, Obama, Arab League and reports of Médecins sans Frontières support the presented circumstances.

MEANS-GOALS: Steps of the Government motion including UN inspectors' initial report; considering the significance of the circumstances and use of CW; this vote and the second vote will achieve the goals.

DEALING WITH ALTERNATIVES AND OBJECTIONS: There are several sources about the situation, and the MPs have to make the decision; the UK will not be involved in the civil war; there will be no backlash for action in Syria; the young Muslims seek the support of British military action; UK has the capability to respond to the crisis; Cameron negates complexity of situation and MPs should make decision with the available sources

NEGATION ANTICIPATED CONSTRUAL: The UK will not be deeply involved in the conflict

Figure 5.4: The structure of practical argument for Cameron's speech (third formulation)

126

5.3.4. Cameron's Fourth Formulation: Decreasing the Risk of Military Intervention (298-547)

In his fourth formulation, Cameron uses elements of argument to provide strategies that tend to decrease the concerns around supporting military action. Lines 93-99 and 134-138 are covered here because they show the strategies of the motion. Within this formulation, lines 436-446, 455-461, 492-500 and 520-530 are analysed in the previous formulations, and they are clarified above within the related formulations. In this fourth formulation, there are two central elements: establishing the *means-goal* and *dealing with objections and alternatives*.

The first element is the *means-goal* that occurs in lines 298-306, 376-380, 391-397, 481-486, 500-503 and 544-547. In this element, Cameron attempts to show that military action is not imminent as many MPs wonder about this issue. Instead, he suggests general steps before intervention as he sets out:

> *...what Britain would need to see happen for us to take part in that—more action at the UN, a report by the UN inspectors and a further vote in this House.* (304-306)

Cameron suggests that there are further actions that will be taken before any intervention, but these actions are not identified clearly. Cameron claims that "the weapons investigators in Damascus **must** complete their work" (376-377). However, he asks the MPs at the time of the debate to support intervention before the final reports of the UN, so this may affect the logical series of proposed sub-actions before any intervention. Moreover, Cameron displays his awareness of public scepticism when he suggests extra sub-actions as:

> *I am fully aware of the deep public scepticism and war-weariness in our country... I totally understand that,* **and we should reassure our constituents that this is about chemical weapons**, *not intervention or getting involved in another middle eastern war.* (394-397)

Cameron goes as far as to suggest several actions that need to precede intervention, and he adds an extra action, which is that the MPs should decrease the public concerns as part of supporting the claim of the Government. This strategy is also shown above in the second formulation when Cameron suggests the obligation upon the MPs to decrease the public scepticism. In this quote, the bold words show the proposed action upon the MPs. A further crucial step suggested by Cameron is the political process as part of the motion, but he suggests that any such political process should work alongside a strong response over the use of chemical weapons (485). Cameron suggests these sub-actions and the claim of the motion would achieve the goals of protecting international law (500-503 and 544-547) and thus, legitimise the action in Syria. Cameron provides his *means-goal* without a clear interconnection of the sub-actions that precede military intervention. For example, he proposes that the Assad Government must be punished because of breaching international law and simultaneously shows the importance of the political process. This combination of the two actions is complex because Cameron does not show how these steps work together to achieve the proposed goals (this will be discussed in Section 5.4).

The second central element in this formulation is *dealing with objections and alternatives* (317-332, 349-358, 368-371, 414-426, 455-461, 475-480 and 511-519). In this element, Cameron negates any suggestion that stands against the possible British military action. Hugh Bayley from the floor highlights the potential negative impact of action upon the civil war in Syria. Cameron suggests:

> *In my view, that was solely about deterring and degrading the future use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime—full stop, end of the story.* (320-321)

At the beginning of the speech, Cameron considers British concerns about being involved in the Syrian complex civil war, using a strategy called *negation of anticipated construal* (Section 5.3.1). In this quote, lines 317-332, 414-426 and 455-461, Cameron uses the same idea to reject the worries of the MPs regarding the British involvement in the complex situation in Syria. Cameron reaffirms his attempts to exclude negative concepts, such as arming the rebels and changing the Syrian policy. Then, he suggests:

*By any standards, this is a humanitarian catastrophe… doing nothing is a
choice—it is a choice with consequences. These consequences would not
just be about President Assad and his future use of chemical weapons…
People ask about the British national interest: is it not in the British
national interest that rules about chemical weapons are upheld? In my
view, of course, it is…* (349-360)

In this quote, Cameron uses three elements within his *negation of objections*. He
reassures that the *circumstance* in Syria is a humanitarian issue and so needs a
humanitarian solution. From this angle, Cameron claims that standing against the GM
would mean "doing nothing" for humanity. He also uses the strategy of the *negative
consequences of not acting*, as the Assad Government would use the chemical weapons
again if there is no action taken against this crisis (349-360 and 319-321). Cameron
denies the counter-claim (not supporting the action in Syria) by highlighting "the British
national interest" as the *value* that should motivate the MPs to support the GM.

Cameron also attempts to negate any alternatives to the GM, mainly through the
negation of depending only on the role of the UN without at least supporting the action at
the time of the debate. He affirms the importance of the UK taking a clear stance in
supporting action alongside the work of the UN in Syria. He expands this idea to refuse to
put the obligation under the International Criminal Court (ICC) because of the slowness
of ICC's wheels (386-371). Within the negation of the alternatives, Cameron addresses
potential concerns about focusing on the political process without carrying out the
possible military action as he suggests:

*There is not some choice between, on the one hand, acting to prevent
chemical weapons being used against the Syrian people and, on the other,
continuing to push for a long-term political solution. We need to do both.*
(477-479)

Here and in 511-519, Cameron does not discount political solutions, but suggests the
necessity of responding to the chemical attacks in addition to the political solutions.
Although Cameron highlights the importance of urgent response against the chemical
attacks throughout his speech, it is not until this moment that he clearly identifies the
meaning of the main action/response. The reconstruction of the *means-goal* in Cameron's

argument displays the ambiguity of the concepts around the meaning of intervention because Cameron does not link how the main action, as well as other steps, work together to achieve the goals. Therefore, Cameron's identification of military intervention at this stage is still vague. This ambiguity of concepts around the meaning of intervention will be discussed below in the intertextual section. Figure 5.5 shows the reconstruction of the ideas represented in this formulation in addition to the elements and ideas of the previous formulations.

COUNTER-CLAIM: Not to vote for action in Syria, specifically at this time.

CLAIM: The vote for taking military action against the use of CW in Syria after the initial reports of UN

NEGATION ANTICIPATED CONSTRUAL: The UK will not be deeply involved in the conflict

NEGATIVE CONSEQUANCES OF COUNTER-CLAIM: Another use of CW; OA does not focus only on the chemical attack

CIRCUMSTANCES: The UK is facing an international crisis which is the use of CW; this crisis had made the Syrian situation worse; the current situation is different from the Iraq invasion; the evidence of the alleged chemical attacks; Western countries are united to back intervention; existence of the British public concern; the situation is clear; Obama shares the view of upholding international law. **CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES:** legal position of the GM; Britain has the duty and capability to act in Syria; Cameron has the obligation of uniting the country; international prohibition of the use of chemical weapons

MEANS-GOALS: Steps of the Government motion including UN inspectors' initial report; considering the significance of the circumstances and use of CW; this vote and the second vote will achieve the goals; MPs should act to reduce the public concerns; political process and supporting intervention should act together

DEALING WITH ALTERNATIVES AND OBJECTIONS: There are several sources about the situation, and the MPs should make the decision; the UK will not be involved in the civil war; the young Muslims seek the support of British military action; UK has the capability to respond to the crisis; Cameron negates complexity of situation and MPs should make decision with the available sources; excluding strategies such as arming rebels; the motion supports "humanitarian action"; possible further use of CW if there is no action; political process should be applied with intervention; ICC would not achieve the goals because of its slowness

GOALS: Saving lives and alleviating humanitarian suffering by deterring any further use of CW; protecting the international prohibition for the use of CW; uniting the country by supporting the vote

VALUES: Personal interest (implicit)- the significance of the action; national and international interest of the chemical attack; uniting the stance of Britain

ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY: Joint Intelligence Committee condemn the use of CW; NATO, Obama, Arab League and report of Médecins sans Frontières support the presented circumstances.

Figure 5.5: The structure of practical argument for Cameron's speech (fourth formulation)

5.4. Intertextuality: Rescaling Practice in Cameron's Speech

Section 5.3 above showed the elements and ideas that Cameron used in his speech to construe the meaning of intervention at the specific context of the debate. In this section, I do not only apply the intertextuality by dealing with the press coverage as the background for Cameron's speech, but I also combine the findings shown in the press with the argumentation structure of Cameron's speech. By doing this, I follow the scalar analysis and discuss how Cameron rescales the central themes that emerged from the papers into the structure of his argument and its contribution to his speech as a whole. The analysis of press coverage in the previous chapter showed four central themes that the newspapers use in representing the events and the potential of British intervention in Syria: <u>UK involvement</u>, <u>internal politics</u>, <u>international participants</u> and <u>the negative situation in Syria</u>. In Chapter 4, I provided a summary of the four themes and central ideas (see Figure 4.11). In this section, I discuss how Cameron strategically incorporated these themes into the structure of his argument, as schematised in the previous section.

Within the GM itself, <u>the situation in Syria</u> and the use of chemical weapons as a problem/crisis that needs a solution is presented as the main *circumstance*. And in his speech, Cameron elaborates on this theme, labelling these *circumstances* a "humanitarian catastrophe." By dwelling on the situation in Syria in setting out the *circumstances* behind the motion, Cameron presupposes that the existence of the chemical attacks shown in the press is an accepted fact and this construal aligns him with the subtheme of <u>the seriousness of the chemical attacks</u> and allows him to build on this presupposition and to fix the "humanitarian" element as a part of the meaning of his *means-goal* that supports the main claim (i.e., *intervention*). In this way, saving lives in Syria and alleviating humanitarian suffering, rather than any political gain, is presented as the *goal* of intervention, and Cameron can call upon the *circumstantial values* of humanitarianism in order to legitimise intervention. This strategy also implicitly supports the *value* regarding the need for humanitarian action against the humanitarian catastrophe of the chemical attacks. Cameron emphasises the subtheme of <u>the seriousness of the chemical attacks</u> through his use of evaluative language in describing the moral prohibition of the use of chemical weapons to produce the *value* of humanitarianism that should motivate the MPs to back the *means-goal* and his *main claim*. Through these strategies, therefore, Cameron

construes the *circumstances* of the Syrian situation so as to establish that any response in Syria should be defined as a humanitarian intervention rather than aggression.

However, because Cameron's intention to call for possible 'immediate action' as the main *means-goal* of the GM is known publicly and, in the press, ahead of the debate, the papers have addressed this issue with regard to concerns over <u>UK involvement</u> and <u>complexity of the situation</u>. Therefore, although these concerns are a result of the proposed *means-goal* in the GM itself, they are also treated as a second set of *circumstances* in the debate. With regard to the first of these, the papers portray that the Government calls for immediate action with lack of reports through the theme of <u>UK involvement</u> which comprises <u>the repercussion of the danger of the military action</u> and the <u>negative experience of the Iraq invasion</u>. In order to address these concerns, therefore, Cameron firstly modifies the *means-goals* as possible action, but with conditions that downplay the idea that the action is 'immediate'. Thus, Cameron suggests the GM is different from the 45-minutes claim of the Iraq invasion because the action is not immediate, while the *means-goal* includes several conditions before intervention. The proposed conditions before direct intervention are not part of the GM's *means-goal*, but Cameron adds them in his *means-goal* in the debate to counter the concerns of "immediate action."

In the second set of circumstances (i.e., the GM as a problem for Britain in the debate), the complexity is linked to the situation in Syria rather than the experience of the Iraq invasion. Cameron already emphasised <u>the seriousness of the chemical attacks</u> and then stated in his *circumstances* that this is enough to override concerns over the <u>complexity of the Syrian situation</u>. Moreover, Cameron refers to international politicians and organisations, such as NATO, Obama, the Arab League and Médecins sans Frontières, as an *argument from authority* in order to support his construal of international obligations as a *circumstantial value* and to confirm the legality of the *means-goal* and the ultimate *goal* of upholding international law. However, in the theme of <u>international participants</u>, the papers have suggested the international support shown in the GM is just the UK/US alliance, while the papers raise concerns towards international legality because of the lack of support of the international community. Similarly, at some points in the debate, some MPs suggest that the Joint Intelligence Committee should be involved directly in Syria rather than the UK. However, Cameron attempts to undermine this

alternative because of the slowness of international organisations. Rather, Cameron justifies working with the US at the time of the debate on the basis of <u>the seriousness of the chemical attacks</u> and suggesting that, because the action is not immediate, the UK and US will gather international support over time. This situation is also integrated into Cameron's *values*, as this issue reflects the global interest of upholding international law that should motivate the support for the main claim.

Generally, distancing the UK from immediate action is done through *the negation of anticipated construal* at the beginning of Cameron's speech to suggest that the GM is not about direct involvement in Syria. Cameron, thus, downplays concerns about <u>the repercussion of military action,</u> <u>the negative experience of the Iraq invasion</u> and the <u>complexity of circumstances</u>. However, other MPs raise these issues from the floor, and Cameron occasionally has to *deal with objections* from the floor. In this way, it would seem that various MPs are trying to highlight the circumstances of <u>complexity of the Syrian situation</u> and, in response, Cameron has to make a direct rebuttal in order to maintain the focus on his chosen *circumstances* of <u>the seriousness of the chemical attacks,</u> which enable him to construe his *means-goal* as humanitarian action and, therefore, legitimate intervention.

5.5. The Analysis of the Opposition Amendment

The analysis of the Government's case above showed how the argumentation reconstructions of the motion and Cameron's speech reveal performative strategies that help identify the meaning of intervention. In this section and the following section, I look at the opposite view to the Government's claim, and how the concepts around the meaning of intervention progress in the parliamentary debate. In my analysis of the Opposition amendment (OA) and Miliband's speech, I highlight and discuss the significant tensions between the Government's case and the Opposition's case. The OA of this vote is provided by the Opposition party, which is the Labour Party, earlier to the debate. In this section, I analyse the OA before I move on to analyse Miliband's speech. The OA reads as follows:

1   manuscript amendment (b), leave out from 'House' to end and add—

2   'expresses its revulsion at the killing of hundreds of civilians in Ghutah, Syria on 21
3   August 2013; believes that this was a moral outrage; recalls the importance of upholding
4   the worldwide prohibition on the use of chemical weapons; makes clear that the use of
5   chemical weapons is a grave breach of international law; agrees with the UN Secretary
6   General that the UN weapons inspectors must be able to report to the UN Security
7   Council and that the Security Council must live up to its responsibilities to protect
8   civilians; supports steps to provide humanitarian protection to the people of Syria but will
9   only support military action involving UK forces if and when the following conditions
10   have been met that:

11   (a) the UN weapons inspectors, upon the conclusion of their mission in the Eastern
12   Ghutah, are given the necessary opportunity to make a report to the Security Council on
13   the evidence and their findings, and confirmation by them that chemical weapons have
14   been used in Syria;

15   (b) compelling evidence is produced that the Syrian regime was responsible for the use of
16   these weapons;

17   (c) the UN Security Council has considered and voted on this matter in the light of the
18   reports of the weapons inspectors and the evidence submitted;

19   (d) there is a clear legal basis in international law for taking collective military action to
20   protect the Syrian people on humanitarian grounds;

21   (e) such action must have regard to the potential consequences in the region, and must
22   therefore be legal, proportionate, time-limited and have precise and achievable objectives
23   designed to deter the future use of prohibited chemical weapons in Syria; and

24   (f) the Prime Minister reports further to the House on the achievement of these conditions
25   so that the House can vote on UK participation in such action, and that any such vote
26   should relate solely to efforts to deter the use of chemical weapons and does not sanction
27   any wider action in Syria.'.

The central idea of the OA is that the OA:

"will only support military action involving UK forces if and when the following conditions have been met…"(9-10)

This statement suggests the main claim of the OA. It does not take the opposite side of the motion, although there are similarities and differences between the two arguments, as we will see below. The OA agrees with the GM that the use of chemical weapons is prohibited internationally, and if chemical weapons are used, 'humanitarian protection' has to be supported by steps (this is explained below), which means that the UK may not be involved directly in that protection. The OA appears to suggest that intervention can only be considered as 'humanitarian' if the UK follows the steps indicated by the OA. The OA also agrees with the goal of the GM by stating that, if any military action is needed, it will be aimed at deterring any further use of chemical weapons, alleviating a humanitarian crisis and upholding the international prohibition on chemical weapons. Therefore, the GM and OA agree that a central element of intervening is acting to prevent something bad from happening or continuing, as well as the potential need for UK military action. However, they disagree in terms of what activities count as a 'humanitarian intervention'. The central tension between the OA and the GM is that the OA sets several conditions (or what can be called sub-actions) that the current situation has to meet before supporting any intervention. These material safeguards add to rather than recalibrate the meaning of intervention by the OA, emphasising the need for caution and attempting to prevent any negative consequences of military intervention.

At the beginning of the OA, the *circumstance* and the main problem is the use of chemical weapons in Ghutah, Syria on 21 August 2013 and the affected victims due to this atrocity. This *circumstance* is expanded to suggest that, "the use of chemical weapons is a grave breach of international law." This statement provides the *circumstantial value* of international prohibition for the use of chemical weapons. Another *circumstantial value* is the obligation upon the UN to do their job on the ground in Syria by providing reports about the situation in Syria and their work of protecting the civilians (1-8). The *goals* of the OA are stated at the beginning and within the representation of the *means-goal*. There are two main *goals*: protecting the Syrian people from any further use of chemical weapons and protecting the UK from any potential consequences of any

intervention (8-10). However, the *values* that could narrow down the *goals* are not represented clearly in the amendment. Then, lines 11-27 comprise the central element of the OA's argument, which is the *means-goal*. In these lines, the OA suggests several sub-actions that must precede the main claim, which is British military intervention. The sub-actions are linked to the role of the UN to do their job on the ground and provide their reports and legal recommendations about the ideal "international response" against the chemical attacks. The OA agrees with the GM about the seriousness of the chemical attacks, and how that breached international law. However, the OA distances the UK from being involved directly in Syria. Thus, the *means-goal* of the OA is the crucial significant difference between the OA and GM. Figure 5.6 below shows the argument's reconstruction of the OA. To obtain a clear identification of the web of meanings of the Opposition stance, I will move on to look at the argument of Miliband after the schema to see how these concepts are reconstrued and developed by Miliband in his speech.

CLAIM: Any military action should follow specific suggested criteria and proposed conditions

| **GOALS**: Provide humanitarian protection to Syrian people; deter any further use of CW; avoid any potential consequences in the region; being precise through any action. | **CIRCUMSTANCES**: The Syrian situation.

 CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES: Duties upon the international community; legality of military action. | **MEANS-GOAL**: International institutions' roles as part of the plan, The House of Commons role these days; several strategies and steps. |

VALUES: No clear values represented in the amendment

Figure 5.6: The structure of practical argument for the Opposition amendment

5.6. Miliband's Speech

In his speech, Miliband expands the ideas shown in the amendment to produce the meaning of possible British intervention. Miliband not only directly challenges Cameron's strategic construal of intervention by rebutting many of the points in the first speech, but he also puts forward a new argument as part of his construal of intervention. There are, however, several significant similarities between the elements underlying the arguments of both Cameron and Miliband because, while Miliband rebuts Cameron's case, he builds up his ideas and elements of the argument. This situation is what Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:50) call the deliberation, which is the genre of the parliamentary debate, because MPs not only debate an argument proposed by the Government but also deliberate alternative practical arguments that support different claims. However, the alternatives should not always provide clear counter-claims against the claim of the Government, as is the case with the OA which supports intervention with extra considerations of the *means-goal* and different weighting of *circumstances*. In this section, I discuss how the similarities and differences between the two speeches contribute to the two politicians' alternative construals of intervention as a signifier. Miliband's speech has three central formulations: key concepts of the speech activation of the international institutions and compelling evidence and possible negative consequences[28].

5.6.1. Miliband's First Formulation: Key Concepts of the Speech (1-33)

In this introductory part, Miliband sets out the central ideas of his position towards the possibility of military action in Syria. Then, he develops these ideas in the following formulations discussed below. In this first formulation, Miliband uses three central elements: *circumstances*, *dealing with Cameron's claim* and *Miliband's claim*.

The first element is the *circumstances* (lines 1-12 and 22-27). At the beginning of the speech, Miliband suggests that the chemical attacks killed "hundreds of innocent civilians in Ghutah on 21 August" (2-3). Then, he highlights the international

---

[28] See Appendix Three, p.382 for the detail categorisation of Miliband's speech using Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach.

circumstantial values by referring to "the condemnation of the use of chemical weapons and the fact that it breaches international law" (8-9), so echoing Cameron's construal of multilateral agreement on the severity of the situation as an essential element of intervention and as a distancing strategy from the sort of accusations levelled at Blair. Despite this similarity, however, there is a significant shift in emphasis when Miliband turns on the local level of Britain, which is the second category of *circumstances*. Miliband suggests that every MP should ask him/herself:

> *How can I make the lives of the Syrian people better? We should also have*
> *in our minds—it is right to remember it on this occasion—the duty we owe*
> *to the exceptional men and women of our armed forces and their families,*
> *who will face the direct consequences of any decision we make* (24-27)

Miliband reconstrues the *circumstantial value* of the MPs by highlighting two duties: (1) making the situation in Syria better, and (2) thinking about the British armed forces. Miliband identifies the duties because the MPs have the responsibility to protect both communities (i.e., British and Syrian) from possible negative consequences. Within the proposed responsibilities, Miliband provides a general *goal*, which is making the Syrian people in a better situation. While Cameron proposed the responsibilities upon the MPs through relating them to the protection of the international law, Miliband expands these duties of considering the ideal way for the "British" armed forces.

The second element is *dealing with Cameron's claim* (13-21), and Miliband attempts to show that the case of Cameron is invalid from the beginning of his speech as in:

> *the Prime Minister said… "We are not going to get further involved in that*
> *conflict. This does not change our stance in Syria." … but I do not think*
> *anybody in this House or in the country should be under any illusions*
> *about the effect on our relationship to the conflict in Syria if we were to*
> *intervene militarily.* (13-21)

Miliband strategically negates the construal of Cameron, and he calls Cameron's assumptions "illusions". Following Fairclough and Fairclough (2012), Miliband highlights the negative consequences of Cameron's claim because it was vague in relation to the clear identification of concepts correlating with intervention. From this point, Miliband suggests that the British response should not only be considered by the

existence of the chemical attack, but also the significance of considering the complicated *circumstances* in Syria. This construal of *circumstances* supports the complexity of the Syrian situation as shown in the press, as this point will be expanded in the intertextual analysis. Miliband attempts to counter the Government's case because it misses central concepts in identifying the meaning of military action. Miliband develops this idea in the following formulations of the rest of his speech.

The rest of the introductory part highlights the central claim of Miliband and the general conceptualisation of intervention (28-39). He states that:

> *Our amendment asks the House to support a clear and legitimate road map to a decision on this issue—a set of steps that will enable us to judge any recommended international action.* (30-32)

Miliband reassures the idea of the OA that several steps are set and recommended before any British military action. In contrast to Cameron's ambiguous and vague claim, Miliband states at the beginning of his speech that "if military action is to be taken, we will have to follow specific criteria…" (10-11). Then, at the end of this formulation, he puts the general rule of the amendment that "any military action we take must be justified in terms of the cause and also the potential consequences" (38-39). In this formulation, Miliband highlights two central concepts: the ambiguity of the GM and the need to identify clear concepts around the meaning of intervention. Even though he attempts to defeat Cameron's argument, he performatively builds up new ideas as part of the meaning of intervention, as will be shown in the following formulations. Figure 5.7 shows the reconstruction of the argument for the first formulation of Miliband's speech.
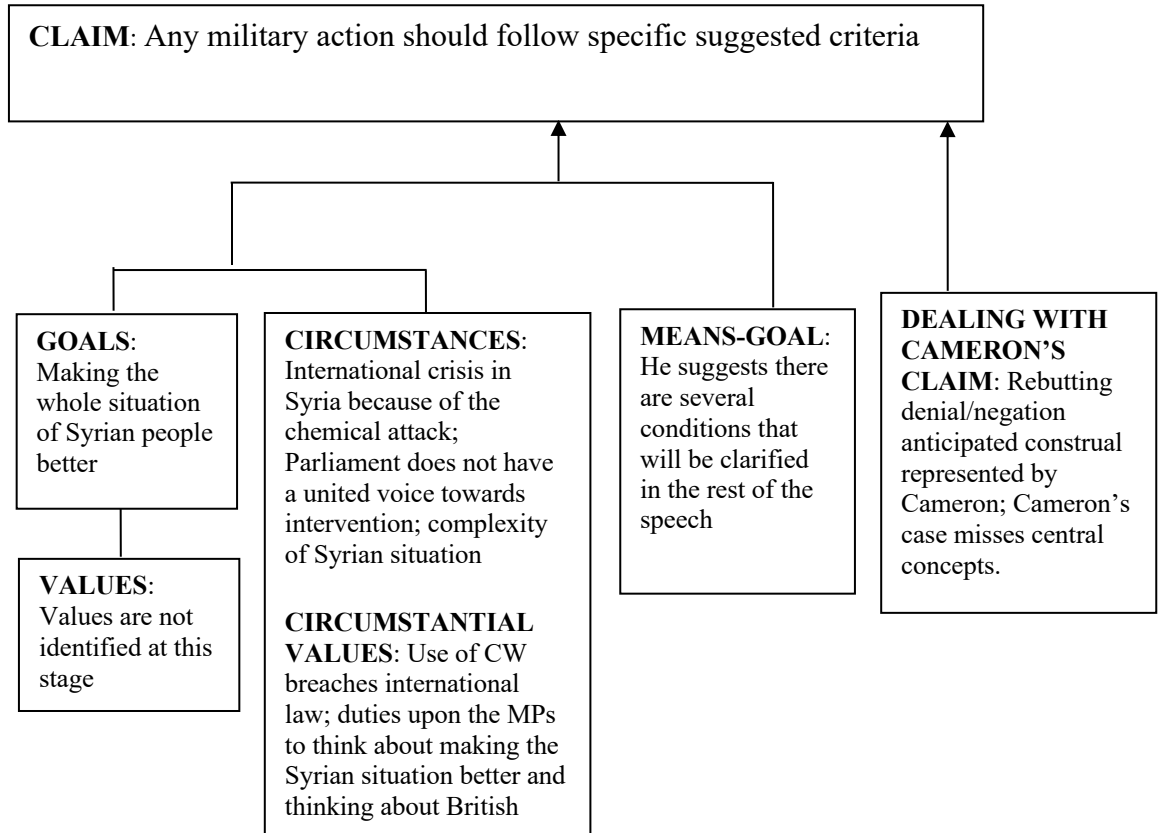
Figure 5.7: The structure of practical argument for Miliband's speech (first formulation)

CLAIM: Any military action should follow specific suggested criteria

GOALS: Making the whole situation of Syrian people better

VALUES: Values are not identified at this stage

CIRCUMSTANCES: International crisis in Syria because of the chemical attack; Parliament does not have a united voice towards intervention; complexity of Syrian situation

CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES: Use of CW breaches international law; duties upon the MPs to think about making the Syrian situation better and thinking about British

MEANS-GOAL: He suggests there are several conditions that will be clarified in the rest of the speech

DEALING WITH CAMERON'S CLAIM: Rebutting denial/negation anticipated construal represented by Cameron; Cameron's case misses central concepts.

5.6.2. Miliband's Second Formulation: Activation of the International Institutions (39-108)

Once Miliband has shown his key points of standing against the GM, he then expresses his second formulation, which is the consideration of the international stance towards the use of chemical weapons (39-108). Within this formulation, there is a projection for the third formulation (63-82), and these lines will be analysed in Section 5.6.3, while lines 149-154 and 169-172 are discussed in this formulation because they highlight the role of international participants. In the second formulation, there are three primary elements of the argument: *means-goal*, *dealing with Cameron's claim* and *circumstances*.

The first element is the *means-goal*, which refers to the steps and conditions that must precede any possible British military action (39-48 and 83-85). The role of international institutions is shown as a crucial step within the plan of the Opposition amendment. This element entails that the MPs should support and encourage the international community to be directly involved in response to the crisis as in:

> *We should strain every sinew to make the international institutions that we have in our world work to deal with the outrages in Syria.* (39-41)

In this bright contrast with Cameron, Miliband stresses that intervention should mean 'international intervention' rather than 'direct UK intervention'. Even though the Parliament deliberates on the possibility of British participation in Syria, Miliband attempts to distance the UK from being involved in direct military action at least at this stage. Then, he states that:

> *The third step is that, in the light of the weapons inspectors' findings and this other evidence, and as the Secretary-General said, the UN Security Council should then debate what action should be taken, and indeed should vote on the action.* (83-85)

Miliband supports the *means-goal* (i.e., the sub-action) by the authority (the Secretary-General). When Miliband distinguishes the role of international institutions from Britain's stance, he puts forward that any possible British action in Syria should be planned according to the result of international reports. Miliband uses the argument from authority to emphasise the validity of activating the role of the international community (*means-*

goal). Miliband reinforces the development of the UK foreign policy by shifting the focus to the UN that plays an essential role in (de)legitimising international military intervention. On the other hand, Cameron suggests that the UK and international institutions should act at the same time because the response against the use of chemical weapons is conceptualised as an "immediate action" against the humanitarian crisis. Miliband deals with the full reports of the UN as a condition before any British vote on intervention in Syria. Thus, he attempts to articulate the role of the UN as a central concept around the meaning of intervention.

Another central element in this formulation is the *circumstances* that highlight the duties and *circumstantial values* upon the international community and MPs (103-108, 149-154 and 169-172). Lines 103-108 suggest that the MPs should "try to build the widest support among the 15 members of the Security Council, whatever the intentions of particular countries." Although these lines suggest an implicit *means-goal*, which is the activation of the international community, they explicitly show the *circumstantial values* that indicate the duties upon the House of Commons. In this element, Miliband discusses the *circumstantial values* to reassure:

> *The international community also has a duty to do everything it can to support the Geneva II process… the responsibility that lies on the Government and their allies—to set out that case in the coming period* (169-172)

This quote suggests the role of the international community is to be directly involved in Syria, while the duty upon the MPs is to evaluate the ideal choice of response after the full reports of the international community, as shown in lines 151-154. *Means-goal* and *circumstances* seem to support each other as the ideas shift between various stages of the overall argument. Here, Miliband displays *circumstantial values* by highlighting the duties of the international community. Nevertheless, he distances the UK from being directly involved in attacking Syria in the *means-goal*. This contrasts with Cameron's argument in which he proposes that the UK should support military action because this action would increase the power of the international community, which will achieve the *goals* of preventing any further use of chemical weapons. The different weighting afforded to the role of the international community through their placement in the *circumstances* and *means-goal* of the argumentation structure has consequences for both

the semantic re-construal of intervention as an imaginary and the strategic *goals* of the two speakers.

The last element in the second formulation is *dealing with objections and Cameron's claim*, and this element occurs in 50-62, 83-89 and 95-102. Miliband uses this element to negate any construal that proposes the necessity of immediate military action before the recommendations of the international community because "evidence should precede decision" (52-53). Miliband goes on to refute making the UN's initial report as legitimising intervention because "what the weapons inspectors discover could give the world greater confidence in identifying the perpetrators of this horrific attack" (60-62). Otherwise, the UK military action tends to miss the legality and clarity of the response to the chemical attacks as in:

> *I have heard it suggested that we should have "a United Nations moment"*
> *… The UN is not some inconvenient sideshow, and we do not want to engineer a "moment". Instead, we want to adhere to the principles of international law.* (85-89)

Here, Miliband excludes the concepts 'legality' and 'clarity' as being part of the GM. He counters the time of the debate and suggests the time of the GM is a further negative concept around the possible intervention. He suggests that the UK should not act in Syria, while he proposes the *means-goal* that the UN are doing their jobs as they have the authority to decide about the legality of action after the full reports (*circumstances*). Further, Miliband suggests that he is "very clear about the fact that we have got to learn the lessons of Iraq… one of the most important lessons was indeed about respect for the United Nations" (99-102). He construes the negative experience of Iraq to justify that the role of the UN is a central lesson and concept in the meaning of intervention (*circumstantial value* and *means-goal*). Thus, he relates the significance of acting in Syria under the role of the international community. Figure 5.8 shows the elements of the argument developed by Miliband in this formulation as well as the ideas shown in the first formulation.

CLAIM: Any military action should follow specific suggested criteria

GOALS: Making the whole situation of Syrian people better

VALUES: Personal interests of Miliband are not clearly identified at this stage

CIRCUMSTANCES: International crisis in Syria because of the chemical attack; the Parliament does not have a united voice towards intervention; complexity of Syrian situation.
CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES: Use of CW breaches international law; duties upon the MPs to think about making the Syrian situation better and thinking about British armed forces; international community has the responsibility to do their work

MEANS-GOAL: He suggests there are several conditions that will be clarified in the rest of the speech; MPs should support international community to do their job; UN should provide full reports.

ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY: Secretary-General: the findings and proposed actions of the UN should be debated in the Parliament

DEALING WITH CAMERON'S CLAIM: Rebutting denial/negation anticipated construal represented by Cameron; Cameron's case misses central concepts; full reports needed before military action; respecting the role of UN by letting them do their work
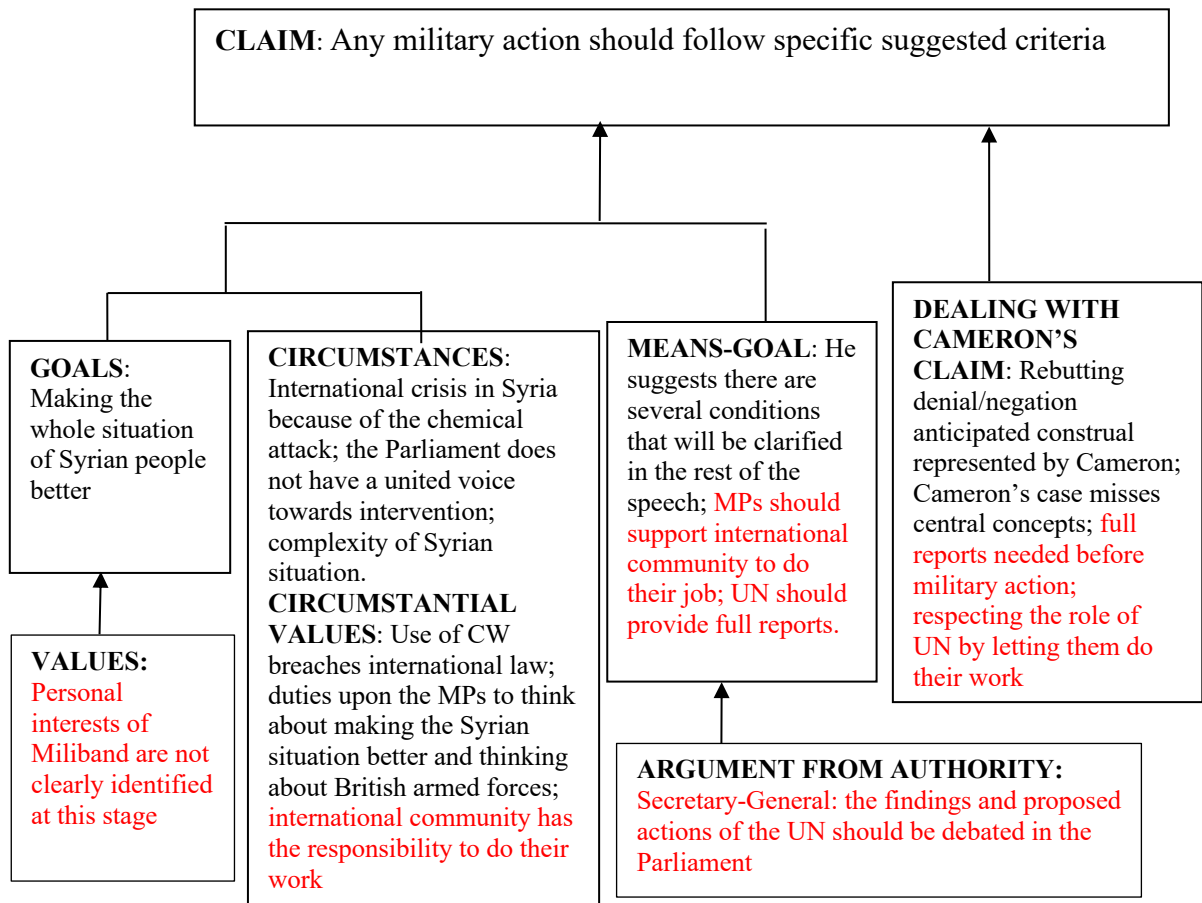
Figure 5.8: The structure of practical argument for Miliband's speech (second formulation)

5.6.2 Miliband's Third Formulation: Compelling Evidence and Possible Negative Consequences of Action (118-272)

The third formulation comprises two central ideas in Miliband's speech (118-272): compelling evidence and dealing with possible negative consequences of military action. These two ideas are combined under one formulation because Miliband interconnects them together in his construal of intervention. Lines 63-82 and 95-102 are analysed in this formulation as they discuss the ideas of the third formulation. There are two central elements in this formulation: *means-goal* and *dealing with objection and alternatives*.

The first central element is the *means-goal* strategy in that Miliband suggests sub-actions for MPs to do before any British action in Syria. The *means-goal* occurs in 63-82, 159-166, 197-203, 251-257 and 264-269. After providing the international community's duty towards the use of chemical weapons in the previous formulation, Miliband now turns to highlight the sub-actions that the MPs should do in the British context. From this angle, he suggests how Britain should act in Syria as in:

> *… there must be compelling evidence that the Syrian regime was responsible for the attack… as the Prime Minister said, in a conflict there is always a reason for doubt, but the greater the weight of evidence the better… We await the publication of that evidence, which I gather will be later today…* (63-71)

Miliband suggests the *means-goal* here (compelling evidence) is a significant concept around the meaning of intervention. Within this example, Miliband implicitly expresses that "compelling evidence" is a *value* because it appears as a personal interest of Miliband that is repeated over the speech. Miliband expands "compelling evidence" as a *means-goal* to suggest that:

> *Any military action must be specifically designed to deter the future use of chemical weapons; it must be time-limited with specific purpose and scope so that future action would require further recourse to this House; and it must have regard for the consequences of any action.* (159-166)

Here, Miliband provides criteria for how the MPs should consider the path of Britain. He proposes that the MPs should think and design the ideal path of military action before supporting any motion about intervention. Furthermore, these decisions should be built on

the reports of the international community, which will provide clear evidence and legal base for any action in Syria (264-269). Miliband implicitly refers to the *goals* within the representation of the *means-goal*. He proposes that the *goals* of any action should deter any further use of chemical weapons and protect Britain from negative consequences as in:

> *Any proposed action to deter the use of chemical weapons must be judged against the consequences that will follow.* (201-202)

After showing the goal of protecting the UK from negative consequences, Miliband highlights the broad *goal* of deterring any further use of chemical weapons as part of his identification of *intervention*. Miliband adds an extra *goal*, which is protecting the UK from negative consequences because he deals with the GM as a problem at the time of the debate. However, Cameron denies the possible negative consequences in his motion, so he uses the elements of *dealing with objections* to disarticulate the negative aspects around the GM. Miliband attempts to strengthen the relationship between the *means-goal* and *goals* as he argues "we will give ourselves the time and space to assess the impact that any intervention will have on the Syrian people" (251-252). Miliband highlights these elements in an attempt to fix the ideas (preventing the use of chemical weapons and protecting the UK from negative consequences) as central concepts around the meaning of intervention (270-272).

The second central element is *dealing with objections and alternatives*. Miliband uses this strategy to negate any objection or alternative that stands against the OA. This is used in 95-102, 118-125, 174-181, 185-191, 210-215, 219-226, 260-263 and 270-272. A vital point mentioned by Martin Horwood from the floor is when he asked, "Does he (Miliband) believe that the evidence that has been presented to us today by the Joint Intelligence Committee is compelling or not?" (93-94). Miliband answers this question by arguing that:

> *I think it is important evidence, but we need to gather further evidence over the coming days... I am very clear about the fact that we have got to learn the lessons of Iraq. Of course, we have got to learn those lessons, and one of the most important lessons was indeed about respect for the United Nations, and that is part of our amendment today.* (95-102)

Miliband denies depending only on one source even when it is a vital source, and he justifies this orientation by referring to it as a significant lesson after the Iraq invasion. He shows his strong stance of considering the UN's reports before any vote (185-191 and 219-226). Miliband raises concerns around the legality of action before the resolutions of the international community (118-125). Therefore, Miliband attempts to express the role of the UN as a central concept within the representation of the meaning of British military action. Another related implication of the call for urgent military action is that Miliband raises the concerns of unintended consequences as in:

> *I am not with those who rule out action, and the horrific events unfolding in Syria ask us to consider all available options, but we owe it to the Syrian people, to our own country and to the future security of our world to scrutinise any plans on the basis of the consequences they will have…*
> (176-179)

This quote and 260-263 show Miliband's agreement with Cameron's case about the possible need for military action in Syria. However, Miliband differs in the strategy of identifying the *means-goal* because he argues that any proposed action should be planned "on the basis of the consequences they will have" (197). Figure 5.9 shows the reconstruction of Miliband's ideas represented in this formulation in addition to the ideas in the previous formulations. Following the schemata is the discussion of Miliband's argument reconstruction within the consideration of the press coverage.
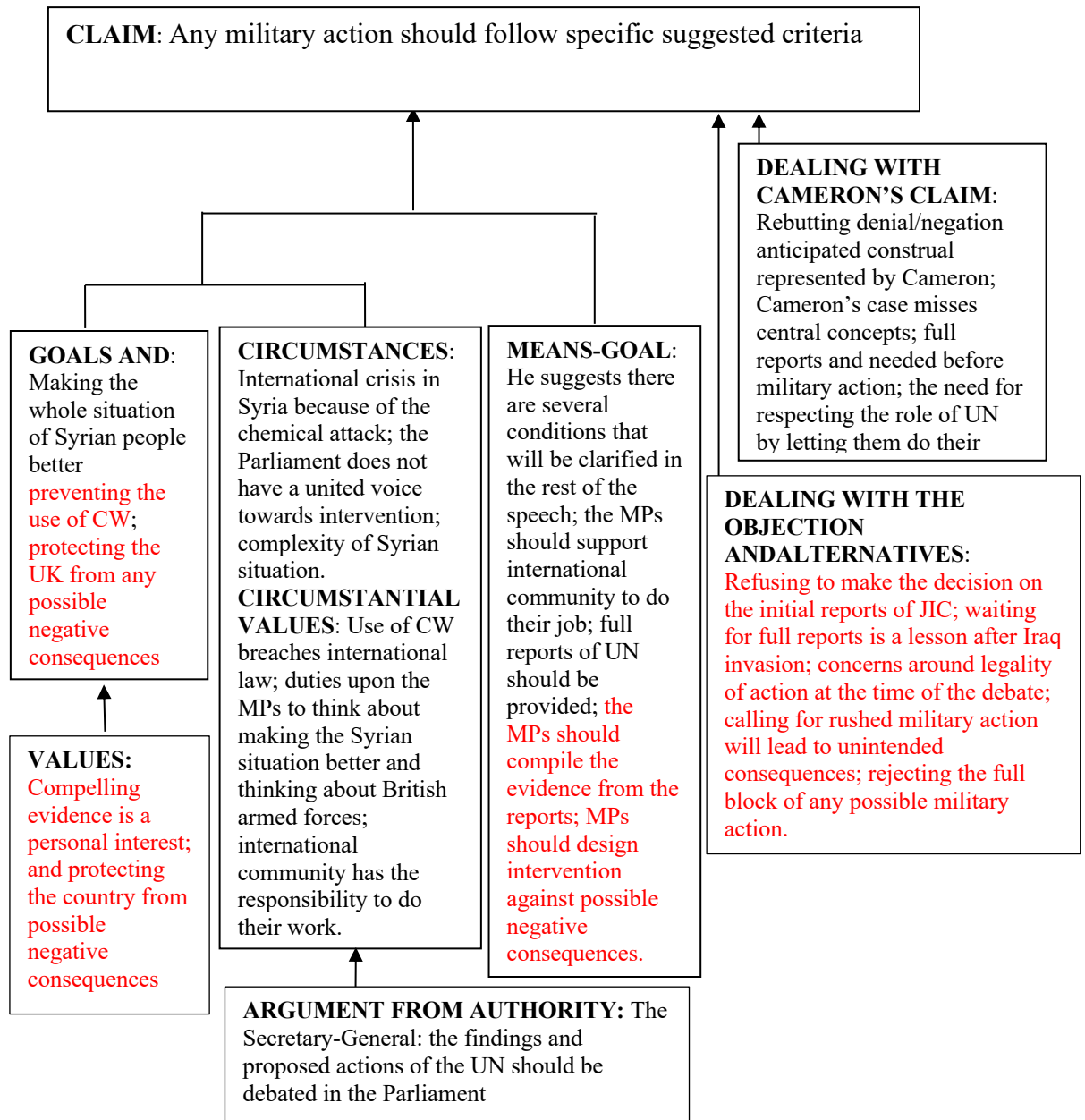
CLAIM: Any military action should follow specific suggested criteria

GOALS AND: Making the whole situation of Syrian people better preventing the use of CW; protecting the UK from any possible negative consequences

VALUES: Compelling evidence is a personal interest; and protecting the country from possible negative consequences

CIRCUMSTANCES: International crisis in Syria because of the chemical attack; the Parliament does not have a united voice towards intervention; complexity of Syrian situation.
CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES: Use of CW breaches international law; duties upon the MPs to think about making the Syrian situation better and thinking about British armed forces; international community has the responsibility to do their work.

MEANS-GOAL: He suggests there are several conditions that will be clarified in the rest of the speech; the MPs should support international community to do their job; full reports of UN should be provided; the MPs should compile the evidence from the reports; MPs should design intervention against possible negative consequences.

DEALING WITH CAMERON'S CLAIM: Rebutting denial/negation anticipated construal represented by Cameron; Cameron's case misses central concepts; full reports and needed before military action; the need for respecting the role of UN by letting them do their

DEALING WITH THE OBJECTION ANDALTERNATIVES: Refusing to make the decision on the initial reports of JIC; waiting for full reports is a lesson after Iraq invasion; concerns around legality of action at the time of the debate; calling for rushed military action will lead to unintended consequences; rejecting the full block of any possible military action.

ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY: The Secretary-General: the findings and proposed actions of the UN should be debated in the Parliament

Figure 5.9: The structure of practical argument for Miliband's speech (third formulation)

5.7. Intertextuality: Rescaling Practice in Miliband's Speech

As shown in the intertextual analysis of Cameron's speech, Cameron uses ideas in the four themes shown in the press and reconstructs his specific argument to represent the situation in Syria as a "humanitarian catastrophe" in order to legitimise "possible immediate humanitarian intervention" in Syria. In this section, I discuss how Miliband rescales media themes within the structure of his argument, and how he strategically uses these themes to construe competing representations of intervention in Syria.

From the beginning of his speech, Miliband shows his concerns regarding the GM and his opposition to "immediate" military action by rescaling in his *circumstances* the subtheme of <u>the danger of repercussion of military action</u> rather than Cameron's emphasis on <u>the seriousness of the chemical attacks</u> in his *circumstances* and, therefore, also within the strategy of *dealing with Cameron's claim*. Miliband also briefly rescales the theme of <u>internal politics</u> when he criticises Cameron's position as not reflecting the voice of the public concerns. However, Miliband does not block the whole idea of possible military intervention, instead proposing an alternative *means-goal* with additional steps and conditions. Simultaneously, Miliband reinforces <u>the danger of repercussion of military action</u> and suggests that supporting the GM at the time of the debate will legitimise possible immediate intervention. As the GM is stated as a problem, Miliband suggests that MPs first obligation is to think about the British armed forces and to choose an action that protects the UK from <u>the danger of repercussion of military action</u>. Therefore, Miliband escalates the concerns shown in the papers to undermine Cameron's proposed *circumstances* and reconstrues Cameron's claim as a problem rather than as a *means* for achieving the *goals*.

The idea of the possible "immediate action" is significantly linked to the papers with the ambiguity of the situation in Syria in two subthemes: <u>the complexity of the Syrian situation</u> (under <u>the negative situation in Syria</u>) and <u>negative experience of the Iraq invasion</u> (under <u>the UK involvement</u>). Miliband rescales these ideas to emphasise two *circumstances* that include the web of complex issues in Syria and the "timing" issue of the debate. In the first *circumstance*, Miliband echoes the representation of the newspapers to suggest that the consideration of all issues in Syria as an essential element in the *circumstances*. By doing this, he counters Cameron's claim in his *circumstances*

that there are a number of reliable sources that provide a clear picture of the situation in Syria. Then, Miliband weaves the complicated situation with the "timing" of the debate as a central *circumstance* because the Government is calling for immediate action without the full reports of the UN, and thereby, relating the GM to the negative experience of the Iraq invasion. As Miliband circulates the "timing" of the debate as a problem, he adds an additional *goal* that is protecting Britain from the danger of repercussion of military action and avoiding the mistakes of the negative experience of the Iraq invasion. Therefore, Miliband reinforces this concept in the *means-goal* to suggest several conditions before the vote on intervention. By doing this, Miliband emphasises the *means-goal* to distance his amendment from the negative imaginary of Iraq more than Cameron. The *goals* and *values* in Miliband's speech, therefore, construe "compelling evidence" as a further concept in reconstructing the elements of the argument.

While Miliband distances the UK from possible direct intervention in Syria, he tends to represent the situation in Syria as an international crisis rather than a British interest to act in Syria. In his *circumstances*, Miliband mentions the role of Russia and China only once when he suggests the full reports of the UN will make a clear stance towards the position of Assad's allies. Miliband rescales the subtheme of other international participants with respect to the role of Assad's allies to suggest concerns over the international legality of intervention in Syria. Miliband does not focus on particular stances of international participants, but instead, he uses the *circumstances* to reaffirm the significance of looking at the role of the international community. Miliband integrates international participation in *circumstantial value* to address the duties upon the international community to do their job and be directly involved in the Syrian situation. By this construal of *circumstantial values*, Miliband attempts to override Cameron's *circumstantial values* with regard to the moral obligation upon the UK to be directly involved in Syria. Miliband reconstrues international agreement not as a *circumstance* legitimising unilateral *intervention*, but as a *means-goal* to be achieved as part of multilateral action. By this activation of the international community, Miliband's basic premise of *circumstances* becomes more related to legitimising the means and *main claim* as an 'international' humanitarian action rather than a 'British' humanitarian action. Therefore, Miliband excludes the responsibility of the specific countries such as the UK and US of being involved directly in the Syrian crisis while he uses the *circumstances* and

means-goal to present this crisis as a global issue under the role of the international community.

The findings of the rescaling practice in Miliband's speech suggest that Miliband rescales ideas and themes from the papers more than Cameron, who attempts to exclude several ideas shown in the press. Miliband draws on the theme of UK involvement to build up the elements of his argument that support another vote for possible intervention with conditions and to undermine Cameron's claim. Miliband deals with the proposal of the Government as a problem because it has potentially unintended consequences. He disarticulates humanitarian values from immediate British intervention and strategically rescales various themes from the press to reconstruct the idea that a humanitarian catastrophe should not always justify a British military intervention, but is, rather, an obligation on the international community, while emphasising that any immediate intervention from the UK brings with it the danger of repercussion of military action.

5.8. Conclusion: The Construction of Equivalences and Differences Through Argument Structure

The analyses in this chapter suggest that the construal of meaning should be considered from a performative perspective with a consideration of the levels of context in order to see how the concepts and ideas shown in the press coverage are strategically rescaled to construe competing meanings of intervention. This consideration of "scalar analysis" shows the movement of ideas from the press level to the parliamentary level, and how the speakers produce concepts around the meaning of humanitarian intervention against the use of chemical weapons. Both speakers reconstruct their ideas in an attempt to gain a majority in the House of Commons while disrupting the efforts of their opponents.

As shown in the literature review, the logic of equivalence attempts to unite groups behind a common cause by minimising points of contention, while identifying an enemy defined in opposition to the common cause. In contrast, the logic of difference seeks to maximise the differences in opposition groups in order to divide them. In this section, I will interpret the findings of the previous sections to show how the different construals of intervention create logics of equivalence and difference in various ways as the two speakers seek to gain a majority that supports their positions.

Cameron uses the logics of equivalence and difference by articulating concepts around two central social imaginaries: humanitarianism and the Iraq invasion. First, Cameron presents the humanitarian catastrophe in Syria as a presupposed circumstance (see Section 5.4) and suggests that the existence of the chemical attacks is the most significant aspect of the situation and that this should justify humanitarian intervention. In other words, Cameron uses the logic of equivalence to unite a majority of MPs around the values of *humanitarian intervention* and the need to prevent any further use of chemical weapons and suggests an opposition between those who want to reduce suffering and those who will prolong it. However, in order to do this, he needs to use the logic of difference to split opposition on this point. He gives an alternative construal of the national and international interest and lumps together those who oppose the immediate actions of the GM and the non-interventionists on the grounds that those who block his proposed humanitarian action do nothing for humanity. Through this logic of difference, Cameron seeks to persuade those who have concerns over immediate action to support the GM and differentiate themselves from the non-interventionists.

Secondly, Cameron attempts to negate the social imaginary of the Iraq invasion that his opponents have used to increase opposition to the motion. Cameron highlights that the negative impact of the Iraq invasion affects the meaning of humanitarian intervention. By construing this social imaginary, Cameron disarticulates negative concepts against his proposed intervention, and they include: misleading information, legality of action and possible backlash. This is a strategy that Cameron uses to minimise the differences between MPs who feel negatively following the Iraq invasion and those who support the motion. First, Cameron emphasises the existence of the chemical attacks and the availability of sources to defeat the opponent's logic of equivalence, which parallels his actions with those of Blair. Here, Cameron disarticulates the ambiguity of the Syrian situation as being part of the circumstances to distance himself from Blair's use of the 'dodgy dossier'. Furthermore, Cameron addresses the international support that undermines the concerns around the international legality of intervention in Syria. In this articulation process, Cameron emphasises that the GM does not call for 'immediate' action while the motion will follow the reports of the UN among other additional steps before the intervention. Cameron compares his stance with Miliband, as they both bear similarities in supporting intervention with several steps that precede the main intervention. By doing this, Cameron combines those who have concerns of immediate action with the supporters to win some of Miliband's supporters because all these various stances share the basic value of supporting humanitarian intervention with delay. Cameron includes young British Muslims as urging the Government to support British intervention against "the most horrific deaths from chemical weapons" (528). By bringing in the Muslim community, Cameron attends to the concerns of other speakers, so that they overlook their differences with regard to avoiding the mistakes of the Iraq war (i.e., possible backlash).

In contrast, Miliband uses both the logic of difference to break up Cameron's social imaginaries of humanitarianism and national interest, and he uses the logic of equivalence to create support around alternative imaginary of the Iraq invasion, which concerns its disastrous repercussions. First, in order to break Cameron's logic of equivalence, Miliband construes humanitarianism as a broadly shared value among MPs, but suggests that the national interest is more significant social imaginary than humanitarianism because the value of protecting Britain from unintended consequences should come first..

In terms of the use of the logic of equivalence, we see that Miliband uses the social imaginaries of the Iraq invasion and international legality to equate Cameron with Blair and to unite all those who fear repeating the mistakes of the Iraq situation in opposition to those who would proceed rashly. Having created the equivalence between Cameron's actions and Blair's, and, therefore, activated the spectres of the 'dodgy dossier' and the negative consequences of the Iraq invasion, Miliband builds on these ideas to construct equivalences around the social imaginary of international legality. Miliband uses the value of international support and legality to construe the meaning of humanitarian intervention as global action rather than direct British intervention and thus, unite those MPs in favour of activating the role of the UN in the Syrian crisis. In this way, in contrast with Cameron, he attempts to bring together those who support action with delay and those who have concerns towards military action under the call for another vote after the proposed conditions.

Overall, this chapter has looked at how intervention is contested in order to gain majorities through strategic argumentation and the two logics. Cameron's speech and Miliband's speech are strategically reconstructed with the consideration of the topics and themes shown in the media. The speakers not only seek to build a valid argument, but they also consider various elements in discourse to reconstrue the meaning of intervention by (dis)articulating concepts and using the logic of equivalence and difference to fix concepts around the meaning of intervention. Cameron emphasises the humanitarian aspect of the intervention, even when this entails military action, and uses this to suggest the need for possible British intervention with international support, the careful balancing of pros and cons and concern for avoiding repercussions, which Miliband construes as essential elements of the concept. Miliband addresses the vote itself as a strategy for legitimating intervention, while he instead proposes that the conditions should precede the vote. The analyses show the contestation around the meaning of intervention and how deliberative argumentation can be used to legitimate/delegitimate an action or set of actions through the reconstrual of key concepts and the articulation of existing ideas in novel and competing constellations. In Chapter 8, I will provide a fuller discussion of what this means for the denotative, connotative and peripheral semantics of intervention as a floating signifier.

Chapter Six: Analysing the Press Coverage of the Role of ISIL in Syria and the Possibility of British Military Action

6.1. Introduction

The previous two chapters (Four and Five) have shown how common understandings in British society were used by Cameron and Miliband in their interactional moments to construe the articulation of the concept intervention. As we saw in Chapter Five, the model of the present research has identified how the speakers strategically rescale the ideas shown in the press within their arguments. As with Chapters Four and Five, in this chapter and the next, I identify themes in the press coverage from Time Two before analysing the speeches of Cameron and Corbyn and how they integrate the themes from the press coverage. On this occasion, the parliamentary debate was on possible military action against ISIL in Syria. The debate was held in the House of Commons on 2 December 2015.

As shown in the background of the research (Section 2.2.1), there are crucial differences between the context of the chemical attacks and the role of ISIL (i.e., events around each vote). First, the vote on defeating ISIL in Syria was not about new military action, but about extending UK military action from Iraq to Syria to defeat ISIL. The UK Parliament agreed to defeat ISIL in Iraq on 26 September 2014, and the House of Commons met again on 2 December 2015 to debate extending airstrikes against ISIL in Syria. Second, the situation of ISIL had been reported for a long time in the media, starting with its terrorist attacks in Iraq and Syria and then expanding its activity to threaten Western countries, such as the USA, France and the UK (CNN, 31 October 2017). ISIL took control of Falluja (in Iraq) in January 2014, and they had started to cause a direct threat upon international security (CNN, 12 December 2017). On 13 November 2015, just nineteen days before the second vote, ISIL shooters and suicide bombers attacked several sites in Paris. After this incident, the media significantly escalated reporting of the threat of ISIL to international security. There was also a significant shift in the internal politics of the UK as, on 7 May 2015, David Cameron had won the general election and became the Prime Minister for the second time, with Jeremy Corbyn having replaced Ed Miliband as the Leader of Opposition.

As with Chapter Four, first, I will present the collocation analysis of the press coverage using GraphColl. Then, I will offer a thematic analysis of the concordance lines of the newspapers. At the end of the chapter, I will provide the central concepts represented by the papers around the possibility of British intervention before I move on to the construal of the speeches.

6.2.   The Collocation Analysis of the Newspapers

The ten strongest collocates to the main node *Syria* in the normalised corpus are shown in Figure 6.1 below.
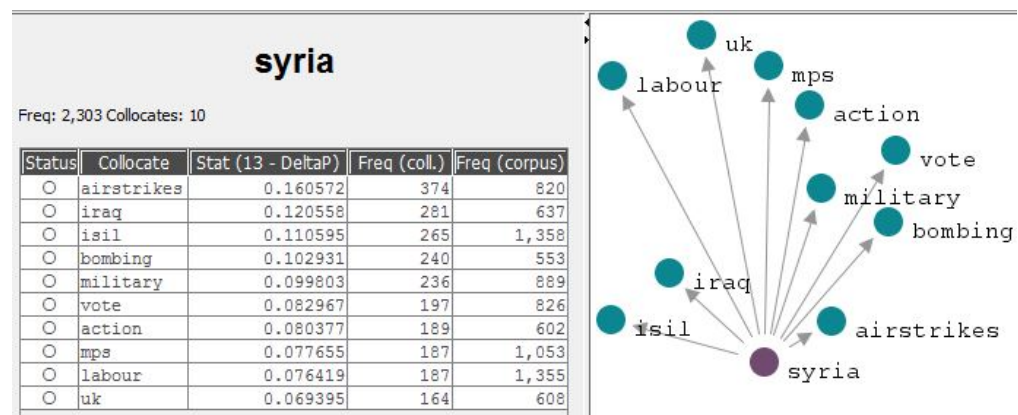

Figure 6.1: The four newspapers, "Syria": Delta P (0.065), L5-R5, C5-NC5; function words removed.

In Figure 6.1, we see that the strongest collocate is *airstrikes*, thus emphasising the military response over the situation on the ground. This theme is strengthened through the appearance of *military*, *bombing* and *action* as the fourth, fifth and seventh strongest collocates, respectively. The prominence of the specific collocate *airstrikes* represents an interesting contrast with the first vote in the collocation analysis, where the type of military action was left vague and the strongest collocations were *military, action, attack* and *intervention* without specifying the types of possible military action. After *airstrikes*, the two strongest collocates are *Iraq* and *ISIL*. Again, this represents a contrast with Time One because the findings of the collocation analysis did not include collocates that referred to the agent of aggression at that time, the Syrian Government. This difference between the two times suggests that, in the second vote, the role of ISIL in particular was highlighted in determining the boundaries of intervention. While we see from GraphColl

that the situation in Syria is represented in military connotations, such as *airstrikes*, *bombing*, *military* and *action*, a separate cluster of collocates emphasises the increasingly political aspect of the vote, with such words as *MPs*, *Labour* and *vote*. These collocates tend to suggest the change in the context of Britain, specifically after the general election of 2015 and the possibility of division in the Labour Party after the failure of Miliband. Figures 6.2-6.5 show the ten strongest collocates to the node *Syria* for each newspaper.
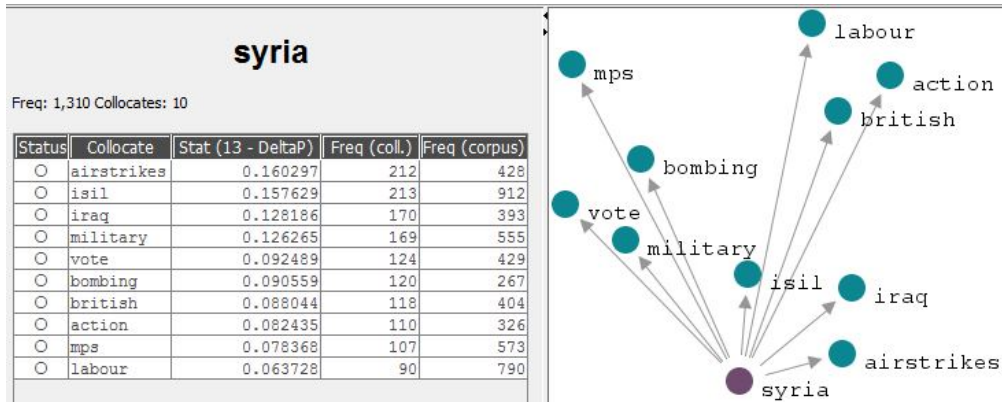

syria

Freq: 1,310 Collocates: 10

Status	Collocate	Stat (13 - DeltaP)	Freq (coll.)	Freq (corpus)
O	airstrikes	0.160297	212	428
O	isil	0.157629	213	912
O	iraq	0.128186	170	393
O	military	0.126265	169	555
O	vote	0.092489	124	429
O	bombing	0.090559	120	267
O	british	0.088044	118	404
O	action	0.082435	110	326
O	mps	0.078368	107	573
O	labour	0.063728	90	790

Figure 6.2: The Telegraph, "Syria": Delta P (0.055), L5-R5, C5-NC5; function words removed

syria

Freq: 2,173 Collocates: 10

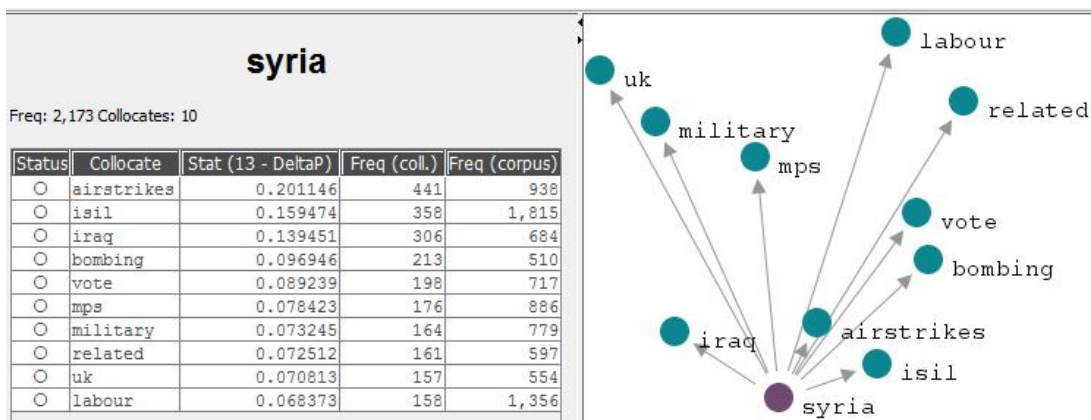| Status	Collocate	Stat (13 - DeltaP)	Freq (coll.)	Freq (corpus)
O	airstrikes	0.201146	441	938
O	isil	0.159474	358	1,815
O	iraq	0.139451	306	684
O	bombing	0.096946	213	510
O	vote	0.089239	198	717
O	mps	0.078423	176	886
O	military	0.073245	164	779
O	related	0.072512	161	597
O	uk	0.070813	157	554
O	labour	0.068373	158	1,356

Figure 6.3: The Guardian, "Syria": Delta P (0.068), L5-R5, C5-NC5; function words removed
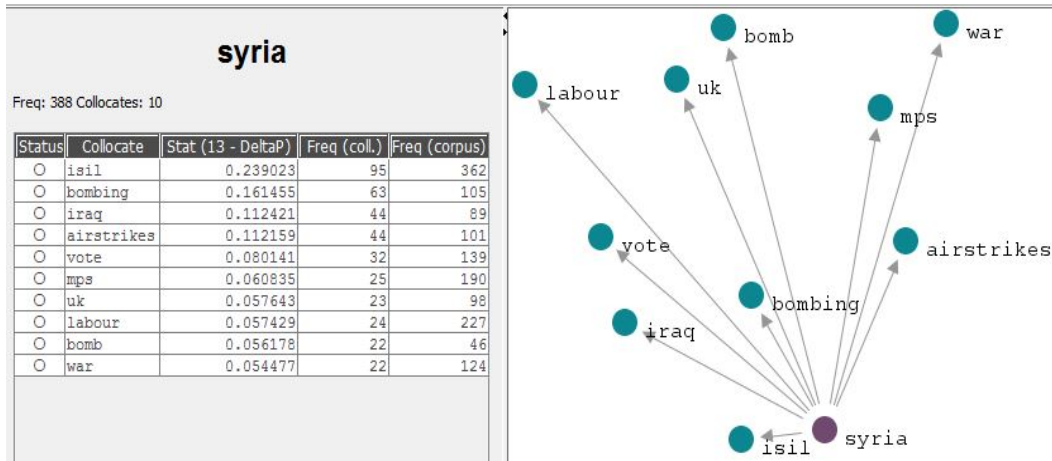
159

Figure 6.4: The Sun, "Syria": Delta P (0.054), L5-R5, C5-NC5; function words removed
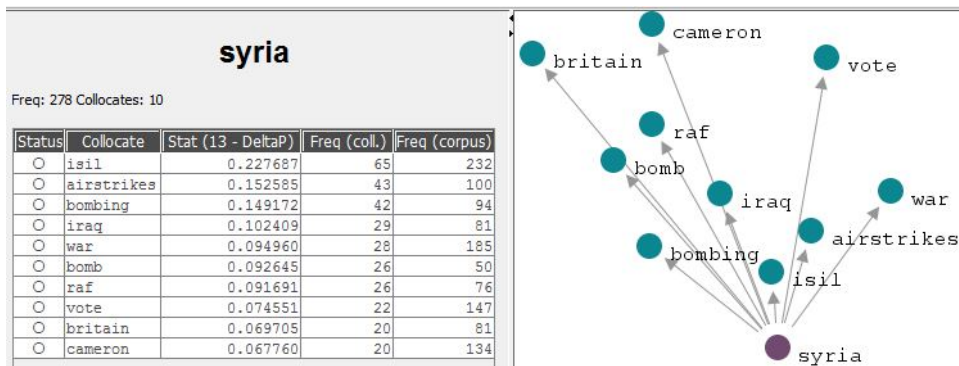

Figure 6.5: The Mirror, "Syria": Delta P (0.07), L5-R5, C5-NC5; function words removed

Figures 6.2 to 6.5 show similar strong collocates to the main node *Syria* with slight differences in the networks. First, they agree about construing the situation as a military situation through the strong use of terms, such as *airstrikes*, *bombing* and *military*. In addition, there is specific identification for military action in terms of using the collocate *airstrikes*. Second, the newspapers explicitly highlight the parliamentary aspect in terms of *vote*, *MPs*, *UK* and *Labour*, though *The Mirror* refers less to the parliamentary aspect than the other papers. A further clear result is that the papers use strong collocates that explain the situation on the ground in terms of the keywords *Iraq* and *ISIL*. None of the figures use terms, such as the UN and America, which refers to the international aspect in the ten strongest collocates. In contrast, in the first vote, the newspapers used the terms

UN and *USA* as strong collocates to the main node *Syria*. Therefore, the corpora of the first vote tended to focus on the international participants more than the second vote. This general collocation network in the second vote tends to reflect the concentration of the newspapers on the specific parliamentary aspect within the representation of the situation in Syria. An apparent finding in Figures 6.5-6.5 is that ISIL is top in the tabloids and not in the broadsheets. Tabloids are known generally for their strong views on terrorism, and this tends to show how tabloids emphasise the representation of ISIL more than the broadsheets. Thus, it is important to consider how this collocation network would emphasise concepts such as threats against Britain and protecting the country. In the following section, I identify and discuss the major themes that the papers develop to obtain the full picture of the meanings around the term *Syria* and its use in the press coverage.

6.3. Thematic Analysis of the Newspapers

As in Chapter 4, the newspapers represent four central themes around the second vote: representation of the UK's involvement in Syria, internal politics in the UK, international participants and ISIL as a global battle. There are some tensions between Time One and Two in covering events and the possibility of British intervention in Syria, and these tensions will be highlighted in the analysis below. The full analysis of the concordance lines can be found in Appendix Four, p.400.

6.3.1. UK Involvement

The first frequently recurring theme is the representation of UK involvement in Syria. In this theme, the newspapers represent and evaluate the potential British military action in Syria as the most salient concept, just as in Time One. However, while the coverage in Time One developed this theme in terms of deep concerns towards the danger of being involved in Syria, in Time Two, we see the possibility of intervention referring to the significance of military action. I have identified two frequently recurring subthemes under the representation of UK involvement in Time Two: **the necessity of British military action against ISIL** and **concerns about bombing ISIL**. As can be seen in Appendix Four (p.400), *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* focus on representing the necessity of British

intervention as the overarching concept, while *The Guardian* and *The Mirror* focus more on raising concerns about bombing ISIL.

In the first theme, *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* emphasise the importance of military action to suggest how intervention is an unavoidable option for the UK, and this is done in two ways: by protecting national security, and by linking the current airstrikes to the original motion on defeating ISIL in Iraq. First, the papers highlight that British national security is under threat, and so defeating ISIL is significant to protect the UK. For example:

1. *14@250#2.1(T): Mr Cameron said:… that he had "examined his conscience" and determined that urgent action was needed to protect Britain from "military attacks" by* **ISIL***.*
2. *11@26#2.12(S): With the backing of the British public and the United Nations, and after a direct appeal for support from our French allies, we must take the case for air* **strikes** *very seriously indeed.*

These examples combine two central ideas (UK involvement and ISIL's threat), but the metadata (i.e. contextual information) of the lines suggest that the focus of the papers is on evaluating the British involvement (this issue is discussed in Section 3.2.4). The papers highlight that a central engagement for British intervention is that the incidents had been committed by ISIL, which threatens national and international security, and this group will continue their threat to the world if they are not stopped (Examples 1, 2, 3, 8@142#2.1, 18@324#2.1 and 25@105#2.9). *The Sun* emphasises the Paris attacks to suggest the solidarity of Western communities as a value that they share against terrorist groups (24@101#2.9, 15@29#2.10 and 24@47#2.10). Thus, *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* construe the threat of ISIL to present bombing ISIL as an inevitable option to protect national and international security.

Another way of showing the necessity of British military action in Syria is through linking the current airstrikes to the original motion, which is the vote for defeating ISIL in Iraq. As shown in the introduction, the House of Commons held two votes about defeating ISIL (attacking ISIL in Iraq on 26 September 2014 and expanding airstrikes from Iraq to Syria on 2 December 2015). *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* significantly use the collocate *Iraq* (as shown in Figures 6.2 and 6.4) to refer to bombing ISIL in Iraq rather

than activating the experience of the 2003 Iraq invasion. There are a few lines that refer to the negative experience of the Iraq war in 2003, but they suggest that the current situation is different from the Iraq invasion (e.g. 2@10#2.2 and 10@68@2.2). By this way of representing ISIL's threat, attacking ISIL is shown as the ideal strategy because:

3. *25@180#2.2(T): MPs on all sides of the House now seem to have satisfied themselves as to the rationale for extending British military operations from **Iraq** into neighbouring Syria.*

This example, 8@54#2.2 and 20@142#2.2 show that several MPs seek to extend British military operations to Syria in order to defeat ISIL in Iraq. The experience of airstrikes in Iraq is positively evaluated as in:

4. *28@53#2.11(S): RAF crews have already shown in **Iraq** that they can locate and kill ISIL fighters and destroy their military hardware, so I have no doubt they will continue in the same way.*

Examples 4 and 16@112#2.2 show the capability of the UK to defeat ISIL and achieve the goals in Iraq and Syria. Although British participation is shown in two countries, the action is represented as the same with identical circumstances because ISIL penetrates the chaos in Syria and Iraq. *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* highlight the recent experience of British airstrikes in Iraq as a positive shared experience that suggests the importance of expanding airstrikes to achieve the goals of degrading ISIL.

The second subtheme of showing UK involvement is **concerns about bombing ISIL.** Looking at the whole concordance lines in Appendix Four (p.400), *The Guardian* and *The Mirror* refer to the positive concepts of military action, such as protecting national and international security (5@80#2.5, 25@64#2.14 and 42@108#2.14). However, they focus more on raising concerns around extending airstrikes from Iraq to Syria. The two papers provide this subtheme by showing either the possible negative consequences of military action or the vagueness of the plan for attacking ISIL. First, *The Guardian* and *The Mirror* highlight various possible negative consequences of expanding military action, such as sending ground troops (8@140#2.5) and the possibility of civilian casualties in the region (38@760#2.5). A central concern shown in the two newspapers is the risk of not achieving the goals of the motion as in:

5. *1@34#2.6(G): HEADLINE: Five tests for action in Syria that fail the challenge of beating **ISIL**.*

Example 5, *4@60#2.5*, *8@258#2.5* and *18@578#2.5* suggest the high possibility of not achieving the proposed objectives of the Government. Then, *The Guardian* and *The Mirror* expand this idea to suggest the worry of backlash as a result of intervention as in:

6. *42@564#2.7(G): The Commons vote enabling British pilots to bomb targets across the border in Syria as well as in **Iraq** was significant politically and diplomatically (especially in the face of appeals from the French government). It will not make our streets any safer.*
7. *19@48#2.14(M): There are those who believe the RAF should join the nations already targeting the Islamic State in Syria. While others warn that such **airstrikes** would trigger a backlash.*

In these examples and *27@263#2.8*, the papers refer to a possible backlash that would threaten British national security after expanding airstrikes in Syria. This concept is contested by the four papers in how they represent actions that threaten the British community. On the one hand, *The Guardian* and *The Mirror* suggest that airstrikes would threaten the UK due to the possible backlash, while, on the other, *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* suggest that ISIL puts a direct threat upon national security, as the UK is one of ISIL's targets; therefore, the UK should make imminent action to defeat ISIL. This contestation of identifying the issue that threatens the British community is a central aspect in debating military action under the norm of protecting national security.

   The Guardian and *The Mirror* also negatively represent the original motion of bombing ISIL by raising concerns around the validity of the British airstrikes. The two newspapers suggest that the whole strategy of bombing ISIL is vague, and there are several concepts that should be identified as in:

8. *11@103#2.8(G): How will anyone decide when the **bombing** should stop? When all the towns the jihadis have been hiding in are reduced to rubble? When ISIL leaders come out waving white flags?*
9. *26@114#2.13(M): We cannot commit to David Cameron's bombing campaign in Syria. He has offered no clear strategy, no coherent coalition, no credible ground forces and no proper plan to defeat **ISIL**.*

These two examples display that the strategy of defeating ISIL is obscure and incomplete, which will lead to possible unintended consequences (e.g. 16@153#2.8, 21@203#2.8 and 41@182#2.13). Furthermore, *The Mirror* links these fears to the importance of avoiding the mistakes of the 2003 Iraq war as *The Mirror* construes military action as a problem (e.g.15@66#2.13). *The Mirror* reports that, "less than half of us support his plan to bomb ISIL strongholds as early as Tuesday" (16@70#2.13) in that bombing ISIL is represented as a concern for most British people.

This coverage of the papers of Time Two is different from Time One because in Time One, the papers represented the concerns towards British intervention as shared knowledge in the British community. However, the papers in Time Two tend to focus on the importance of defeating ISIL with the consideration of possible negative concepts around military action, specifically in *The Guardian* and *The Mirror*. Figure 6.6 below shows the central subthemes and ideas present the involvement of the UK in Syria.
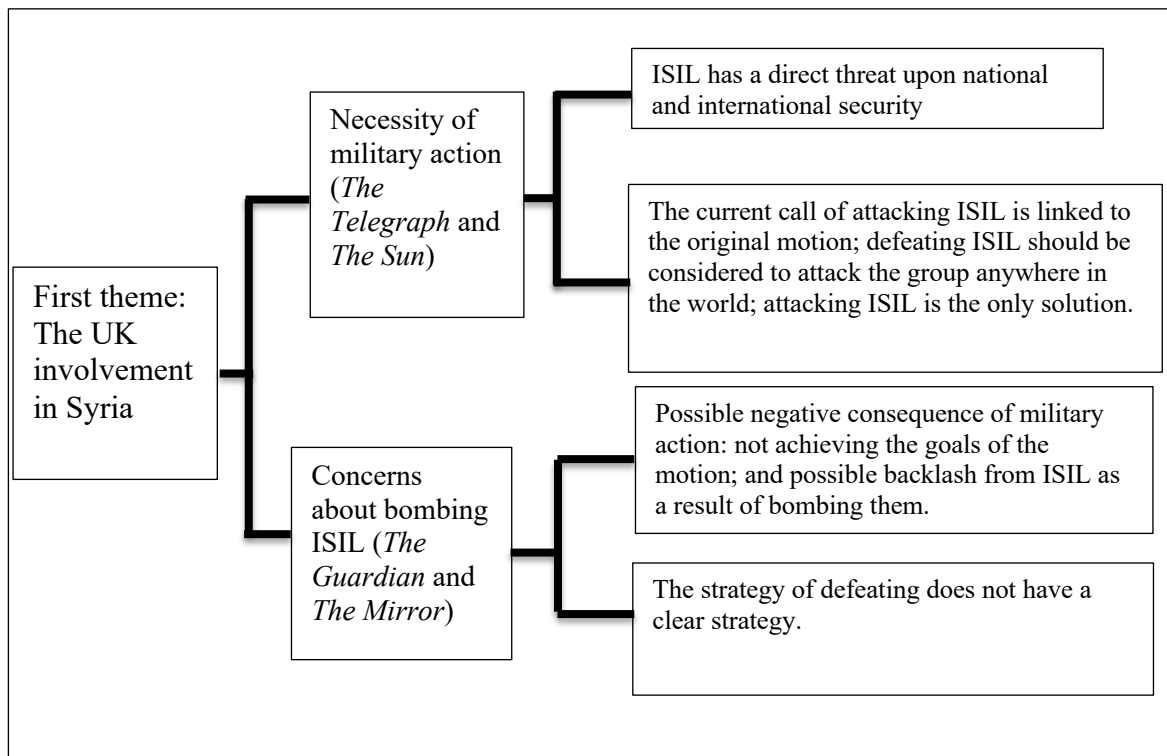
Figure 6.6: The central ideas of the first theme (the UK involvement)

In this theme, the overall press coverage displays the orientation of showing the necessity of UK involvement in attacking ISIL. We have seen that the central concept that the papers use in representing this theme is 'protecting British national security'. *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* explicitly call for expanding British airstrikes against ISIL due to the direct threat of ISIL upon national and international security, arguing that attacking ISIL is an unavoidable option. On the other hand, *The Guardian* and *The Mirror* highlight the threat of ISIL, but they suggest the vagueness of the plan of defeating ISIL and concerns of repeating the previous mistakes of defeating 'terrorism'. In sum, 'protecting national security' is a constant concept in the reporting, although the papers suggest various strategies of dealing with ISIL. As mentioned above, these significant weightings and construals of events are central concepts in identifying what the concept of intervention is taken to mean. We will return to this discussion in the intertextual analysis of the speeches in the following chapter in order to see how speakers use these concepts as shared understandings to build various meanings of intervention.

6.3.2. Internal Politics

A further theme developed in the press coverage of the Syrian situation is the representation of specifically political issues in the UK. This theme is the second most frequent theme used in the papers. Just like Time One (Section 4.3.2), the newspapers not only cover the events that relate to current foreign policy against the existence of ISIL, but they also contextualise the conflict between parties and leaders as a part of representing the story. In the press coverage of Time One, the papers highlighted Cameron's struggle to persuade MPs to support military action; however, after the vote of Time Two, the papers report Corbyn's struggle to undermine the Government motion. This theme is evolved by the press in two subthemes: **Corbyn's struggle to unite his party to stand against the GM** and **the division in the Labour Party.**

In the first subtheme, the newspapers focus on Corbyn's struggle:

10. *17@306#2.1(T): Three senior allies of Mr Corbyn have told The Telegraph that the Labour leader wants to use an extraordinary meeting of the shadow cabinet today to impose a whip on his MPs in an attempt to force them to vote against David Cameron's plans to bomb **ISIL**.*
11. *22@420#2.5(G): His (Corbyn) decision averts the threat of a mass shadow cabinet walkout while making it clear that his own firmly held opposition to **airstrikes** is official Labour party policy, backed by the membership.*
12. *13@31#2.12(S): Mr Corbyn will be forced into a humiliating climbdown tomorrow over his attempts to make his MPs oppose Syrian **airstrikes**.*
13. *11@28#2.14(M): But Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn is desperate to persuade his divided party to vote against extending **airstrikes** on ISIL.*

These examples and others (e.g. 2@36#2.1, 21@376@2.1, 17@152#2.4 and 24@61#2.14) allude to Corbyn's struggle to persuade the MPs to stand against bombing ISIL. Example 10, 17@306#2.1*,* 16@38#2.12, 17@152#2.4 and 39@357#2.4 show how Corbyn attempts to use his power to convince his party to block military action. In this move, the papers criticise the leadership of Corbyn. Example 11 expresses how Corbyn reminds the Labour MPs about the policy of the party, and how supporting the motion goes against Labour's historical stance against the use of weapons. Example 11 shows how *The Guardian* is less aggressive than the other papers towards the failure of Corbyn, as his position is linked to the policy of the party. In contrast, the other papers relate this

failure to his leadership, specifically when he tried to use his power and failed to persuade the MPs for supporting his position (examples 10, 12 and 13). The overall coverage of the papers suggests that many Labour MPs give the idea of 'national security' more significance than following Corbyn's claim about the policy of the party. In this subtheme, the papers reinforce the idea shown in the first theme about the necessity of British military action against ISIL, and how this idea is shared knowledge among the MPs in Parliament.

The second subtheme is representing the vote as a divisive issue in the Labour Party. This subtheme is different from the first subtheme because the first specifically focuses on Corbyn's role, while this second subtheme highlights the division in the Labour Party in general. The papers highlight this division in the party by expressing that:

14. *26@283#2.3(T): This would expose the full scale of opposition to Mr Corbyn among his senior colleagues and allow them to call for MPs to be whipped in favour of **military** action.*
15. *9@83#2.8(G): In contrast, when the Labour leader wrote to MPs on Thursday to set out his opposition to British **bombing**, he was enunciating a position that was out of step with most of the views that had been expressed at that day's shadow cabinet*
16. *14@27#2.10(S): Worried Labour sources said the intense pressure being placed on party MPs could completely blow the Government's **bombing** raid plans apart.*
17. *1@3#2.14(M): Insiders now believe well over 100 Labour MPs - around half the Parliamentary party - are prepared to vote in favour of **airstrikes** in Syria, regardless of Mr Corbyn's wishes.*

Examples 14-17 suggest the division in the Labour Party, and how the majority of MPs would back airstrikes in Syria. Furthermore, the examples reveal that the Labour MPs who would back military action face intense pressure from the leaders of the party. The papers express how more than half of the Labour Party would back the GM, and how "the majority of the shadow cabinet is in favour of backing the Prime Minister's plans for military action" (31@338#2.3). This general agreement about the necessity of defeating ISIL among British leaders tends to reflect the fact that British military action is taken for granted even before the debate. Thus, the papers suggest that the majority of the Labour Party share the general feeling in the country concerning the importance of defeating ISIL

rather than supporting party policy. Figure 6.7 below shows the central ideas represented by the newspapers regarding internal politics in the UK.[29]
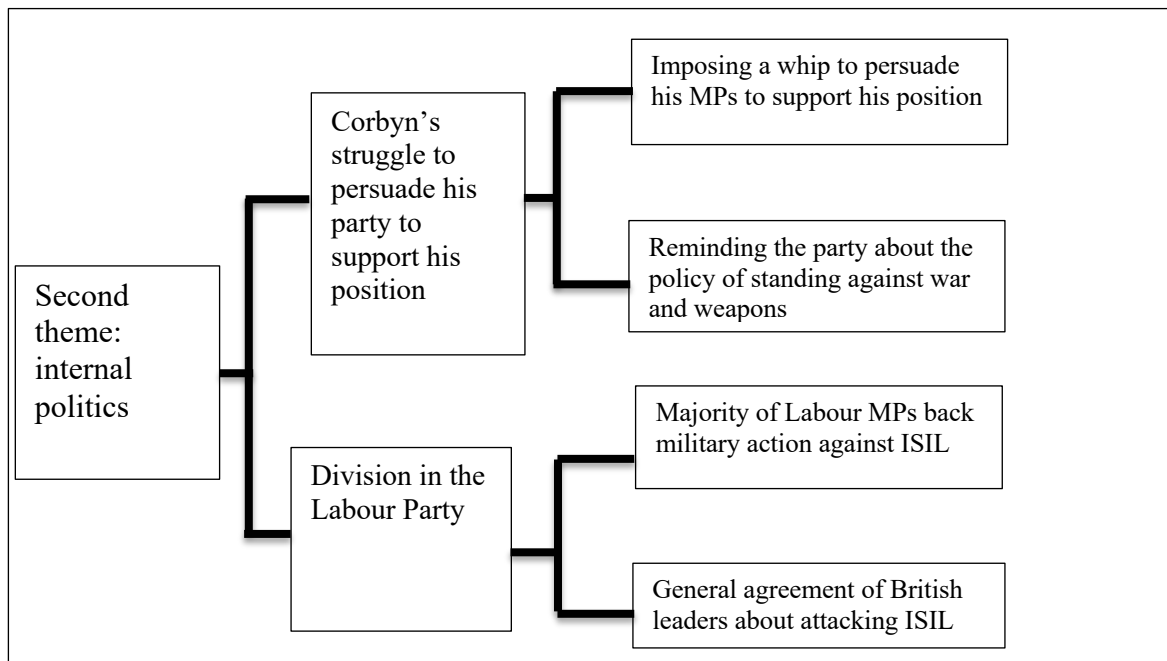

Figure 6.7: The central ideas of the second theme (internal politics in the UK)

The central idea of showing the internal politics theme in the press is the division in the Labour Party and how the majority backs the Government motion. The press coverage suggests the negative evaluation of Corbyn's position and his leadership because he attempts to persuade the MPs to support his position but fails to unite his party. The overall coverage of this theme reinforces the idea that shows the importance of defeating ISIL in the first theme.

---

[29] In the press coverage at Time Two and specifically at this theme, there is more to say than the discussion in this theme specifically regarding the division in the Labour Party because Corbyn's leadership has become a significant debated issue in the media since he has been elected as the leader of the Labour Party (for more details about Corbyn's representation in the media see Piazza and Lashmar 2017).

6.3.3. International Participants

The third recurring theme in the press coverage is the representation of international participants and their position towards bombing ISIL. In this theme, the newspapers cover the stance of several international authorities, such as the USA, Russia and Turkey. Although none of these participants is used as a strong collocate in the top ten collocates to the main node *Syria* in the corpora (see figures 6.1 to 6.5), this theme comes out as a significant orientation in representing the situation in Syria once we read the concordance lines in full. This result reinforces the importance of the methodological aspect of this research by drilling down to analyse the concordance lines of the keywords. In this theme, several international authorities are represented by their strong support of defeating ISIL. However, the stance of defeating ISIL is taken also from an ideological perspective, specifically between Russia and Turkey. The papers in general represent this ideological tension, particularly after Turkey's shooting down of a Russian warplane on its border with Syria on 24 November (BBC, 1 December 2015). From this perspective, the newspapers represent international participants in two subthemes: **the international consensus about defeating ISIL** and **the political conflict between Russia and Turkey**.

In the first subtheme, the papers highlight the international consensus toward the significance of bombing ISIL. Several international authorities had been bombing ISIL for a while in Iraq and they continued their airstrikes in Syria to defeat this group as in:

18. *4@71#2.1(T): The killings have led to the international community passing a UN Security Council resolution which vows to defeat **ISIL** by whatever means necessary.*
19. *27@520#2.5(G): In 2014 the CIA estimated its strength at up to 31,500 fighters in both Iraq and Syria. Since **airstrikes** began the US says it has killed at least 10,000 militants in both countries.*
20. *1@1#2.11(S): Fighter jets blitzed targets in **Iraq** in the first sorties from the Charles de Gaulle, newly-deployed in the eastern Med.*
21. *7@12#2.15(M): USA, Russian and French jets are already **bombing** ISIL targets there.*

Examples 18-21 show the positive evaluation of international airstrikes against ISIL. Moreover, the examples suggest that there is robust international support for military

170

action against ISIL. Example 18 legitimises military action as the UN engages international authorities to defeat ISIL "whatever means necessary" (18). The other examples (19, 20 and 21) suggest that the central means of defeating ISIL is through airstrikes and bombing. At the time of press coverage, the papers focus on representing the fact that France's significant bombing of ISIL was a backlash of what happened in the Paris attacks in November 2015 (e.g. example 27, 4@14#2.13 and 4@6#2.16). The newspapers not only represent unity among Western countries against ISIL, but they also suggest that even "neighbouring Arab countries have also dedicated military hardware to strike ISIL" (35@383#2.3). This example suggests that the threat of ISIL is not restricted to Western countries, but to Arab countries as well. In this subtheme, the papers highlight that several international authorities share the experience of ISIL's danger upon the international community, and thus, the importance of attacking ISIL becomes an international shared knowledge.

A further subtheme is the ideological conflict between Russia and Turkey in the region. The papers suggest that either Russia or Turkey is attempting to construe the situation in a way that supports its ideology in the region as in:

22. *35@644#2.1(T): The war of words continues after Turkey shot down a Moscow warplane with Recep Tayyip Erdogan attacking Russia's accusations that it bought oil from **ISIL**.*

The papers highlight the Turkish rejection of support for ISIL, and Mr Erdogan is reported as saying, *"Shame on you. Those who claim we buy oil from Daesh are obliged to prove it. If not, you are a slanderer,"* (7@125#2.1). Nevertheless, the papers refer to Russia as:

23. *6@194#2.6(G): Putin has said the best way to defeat **ISIL** is to support the "legitimate government" of Assad and not to allow the institutions of state to crumble, as in Iraq and Libya.*

Here, Russia is reported as suggesting a strategy of defeating ISIL that serves its goals in the region of protecting the Assad Government (23). The papers report that, "Regional military officials continue to insist that Russia has focused at least 85% of its bombing raids on the armed opposition to Assad, instead of ISIL further east" (50@513#2.8).

Russia generalises its meaning of defeating terrorism to attack any opposition to the Assad Government. Thus, Russia justifies attacking the opposition, as well as ISIL, under the claim of defeating terrorism in the region. Then, Russia accuses Turkey as "Mr Putin claimed Turkey has been funding the terror group by buying oil from them" (6@23#2.9). However, the papers also express the stance of Turkey as in, "NATO was serious, especially as Turkey is deeply unhappy about Russia's military intervention in support of Assad" (3@21#2.3). Here, Turkey is represented as taking the other angle by looking at supporting Assad as another problem for the Syrian people and denies the Russian strategy to achieve the goals of defeating ISIL. Although these representations reveal the clear tensions between international authorities towards the Syrian situation, these differences do not refute the general orientation, which is the significance of defeating ISIL. Figure 6.8 below shows the central ideas represented by the newspapers regarding international participants.
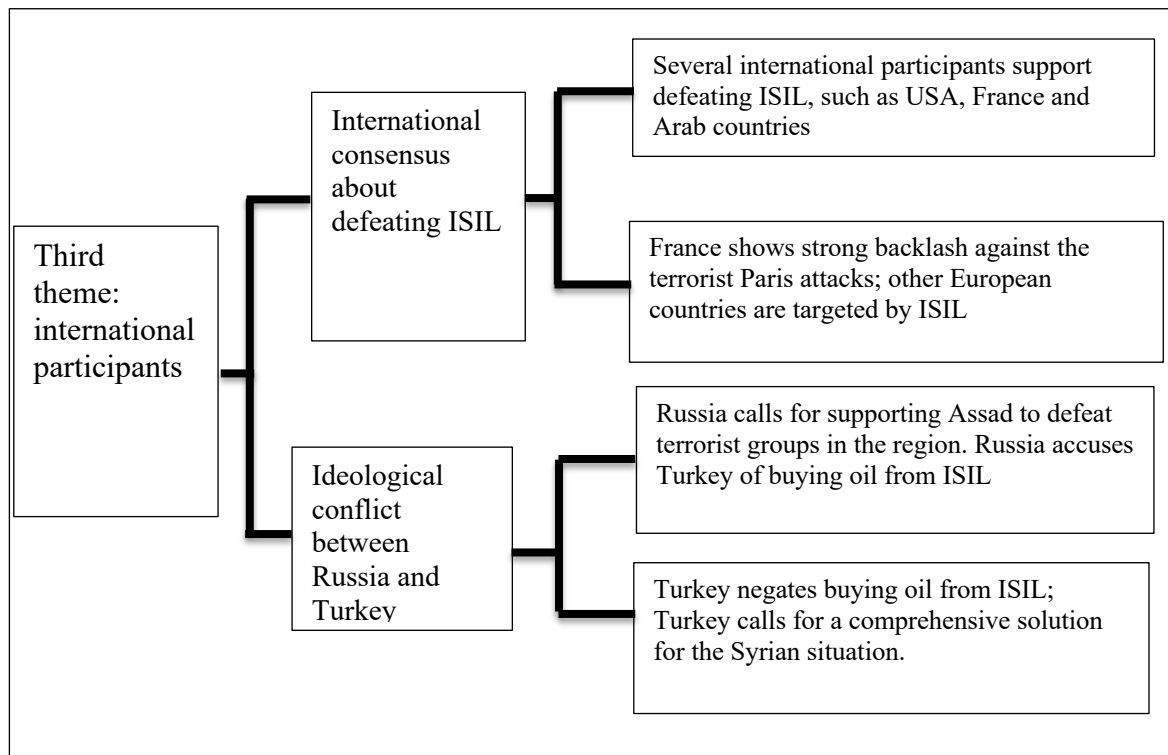

Figure 6.8: The central ideas of the third theme (international participants)

The press coverage of international participants reveals two subthemes that support the significance of defeating ISIL. The international consensus of defeating ISIL is shown as international shared knowledge that represents ISIL as a hated group on an international scale because ISIL threatens international security. A significant point is that the papers at Time Two give the alliance concept less attention than in Time One. However, the papers at Time Two give the concept 'protecting national and international security' a higher level of importance than 'global allegiances'. For example, the papers represent the UK in relation to other international participants, such as France, from the angle of sharing the view about the importance of attacking terrorism rather than the international allegiances. Even though there are "key players in the conflict in Syria, like the USA, Russia and Turkey, [who] want different outcomes from their military involvement" (39@427#2.3), they still share the orientation of the significance of defeating ISIL. This construal of the international consensus reinforces the idea of making defeating ISIL an international action that is supported by the UN.

6.3.4. ISIL as a Global Battle

The last central theme shown in the press is the representation of ISIL as a global ideological battle. The papers refer to the threat of ISIL within the previous themes, but that idea was not the overarching idea (this point is discussed in Sections 3.2.4.2 and 6.3.1). In this theme, the concordance lines focus on highlighting the international impact of ISIL that makes the situation 'a global ideological battle'. This theme is shown in two subthemes: **the international danger of ISIL** and **the increase in ISIL's power**.

First, the newspapers not only suggest the threat of ISIL on a regional scale upon the Syrian and Iraqi people. they also highlight the international threat of ISIL upon the whole world. This position leads the papers to express ISIL as declaring its battle specifically against European countries. The newspapers use several evaluative words in representing this stance of ISIL as in the bold words in these examples:

> 24. *23@165#2.2(T): we have **painfully** seen, these terrorists and **outlaws threaten** the entire world. **They target all of us**… One that is not limited to Syria and **Iraq**, but extends to Africa, Asia, with **its flames** reaching Europe and the rest of the world.*

*25. 9@121#2.7(G): ISIL will **continue to try to launch attacks** against the UK whether or not we are involved in the air campaigns in **Iraq** and Syria.*

*26. 15@28#2.11(S): How do the politicians in Brussels think the Paris killings occurred? With no visa needed to travel from Turkey, **ISIL can travel freely** from **Iraq**, Syria and beyond, into the **heart of Europe**.*

*27. 20@88#2.13(M): Paris - like Ankara, Beirut, and the **depressingly regular slaughters** in Syria and Iraq - is grim evidence that the **ISIL** fanatics are **bloodthirsty, medieval brutes**.*

These examples and others (e.g. 4@24#2.2 and 34@255#2.2) suggest that the battle is between ISIL and the international community, particularly European countries after the Paris attacks. The evaluative language in example 24 suggests the central strategy of ISIL is accessing Europe as the first target. By emphasising this concern, the newspapers suggest that ISIL tends to launch terrorist attacks in the world, as well as in the UK, even before any military action against them (25). Thus, here, the papers exclude the worries of a backlash from ISIL because the European countries are under the risk of being attacked by ISIL anyway. A strategy that ISIL uses in their battle with Europe is taking advantage of the open borders between Turkey and European countries, thus undermining the security of European society (26 and 27). The papers raise these concerns to frame international security as being at high risk from ISIL's terrorist attacks at any time as they can obtain access to Europe easily.

The papers expand the danger of ISIL to suggest that ISIL's power is increasing in the world (the second subtheme), and this is shown in two ways: radicalising Muslims to join ISIL and increasing of ISIL's financial power. First, the network of ISIL is represented as improving and becoming more complex over time, as this group attempts to increase their members through construing the meaning of 'uniting Muslims' over the world under the caliphate or the Islamic State. They justify their extremism by highlighting the solidarity of the Muslims as a central value for all Muslims around the world. For example, the papers report:

*28. 1@18#2.1(T): It emerged they (Kesinovic and Selimovic were both children of Bosnian refugees who fled to Austria from the war in their country during the nineties) had joined **ISIL** after Kesinovic telephoned her sister from Syria to let her know she was alright.*

*29. 5@18#2.9(S): TWO sons of a nursery school teacher have joined **ISIL** in Syria after slipping out of the UK.*

These examples show the ideological threat of ISIL through attacking the solidarity of the communities to achieve their extreme goals. The propagation of ISIL's ideology is an existing fear, as some young British Muslims had joined ISIL (e.g. 8@31#2.9, 10@40#2.9 and 45@197#2.9). As shown in the background (Section 2.1.1), the leaders of ISIL propose that if any Muslim does not show loyalty to Abu-Baker (leader of ISIL), he is regarded as a non-Muslim because he/she denies following the 'succession' of Muslims. From this point, they legitimise killing anyone who does not follow their rule, either Muslims or non-Muslims, as this is a part of their ideological battle across the globe.

The other danger of ISIL is financial power:

*30. 31@416#2.7(G): ISIL seized the oil fields, Syria's largest, during its surge into **Iraq** last summer.*
*31. 43@82#2.11(S): ISIL makes as much as £33million per month from selling crude oil from the numerous wells it controls in **Iraq** and Syria.*

Examples 30, 31 and 34@626#2.1 propose the self-sufficiency and the massive income of ISIL is a serious issue for the strength of ISIL in the region. As ISIL controls significant fields of oil in the region, this power shows how ISIL achieved some goals in their global battle by controlling the central pillars of the financial power of Iraqi and Syrian Governments. This increase in ISIL's power shows the escalation of ISIL's threat is a shared international experience. These reports about ISIL reinforce the necessity of attacking ISIL as shown in the first theme. Figure 6.9 below shows the use of the newspapers' ideas regarding the representation of ISIL's threat.
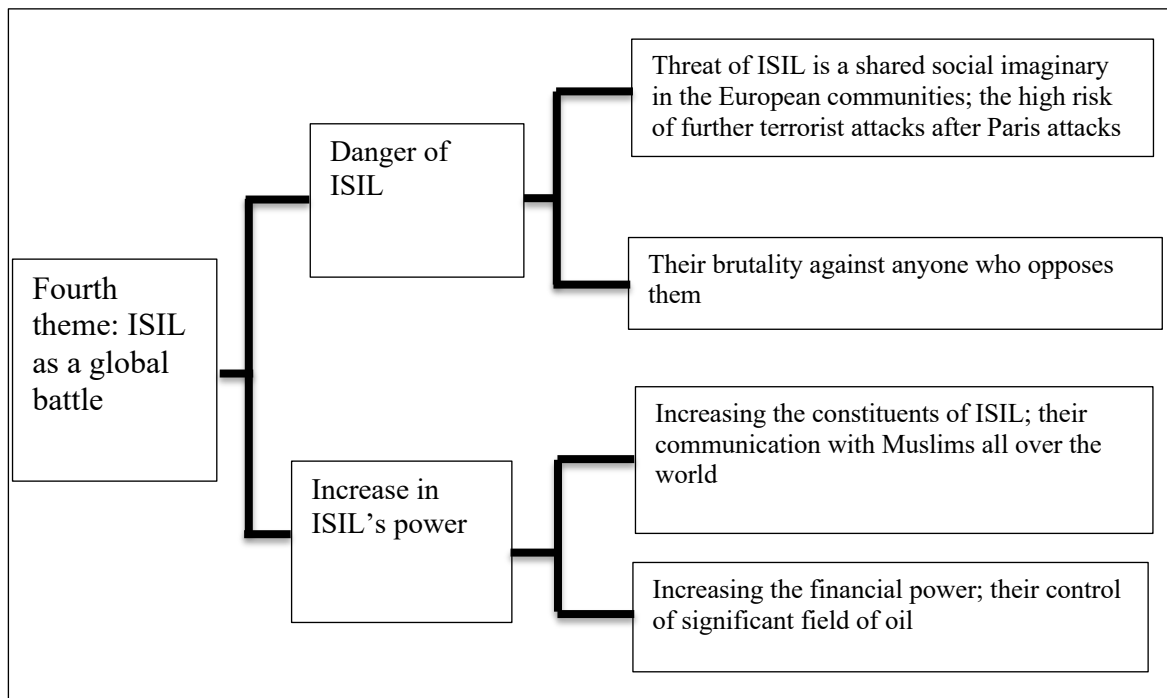
Figure 6.9: The central ideas of the third theme (international participants)

For this theme, the papers suggest that dealing with ISIL should be conceptualised as a global battle. The ideas in this theme reinforce the threat of ISIL and the importance of urgently defeating this group. This escalation of ISIL's threat suggests the negation of delay for degrading ISIL. The necessity of immediate action against ISIL is emphasises by the papers because ISIL takes advantage of the situation as the Turkish border is open for them and they can obtain access to Europe. Furthermore, the papers report worries about the increase in ISIL's power, either in terms of their constituents or their financial power. In this way, ISIL has been developing over time and inaction would mean greater difficulty in defeating this group in future.

6.4. Overall Remarks for the Press Coverage (Time Two)

The analysis of the press coverage at Time 2 reveals a varied and complex network of concepts around the situation of ISIL and possible British military action in Syria against ISIL. Figure 6.10 summarises the central themes.
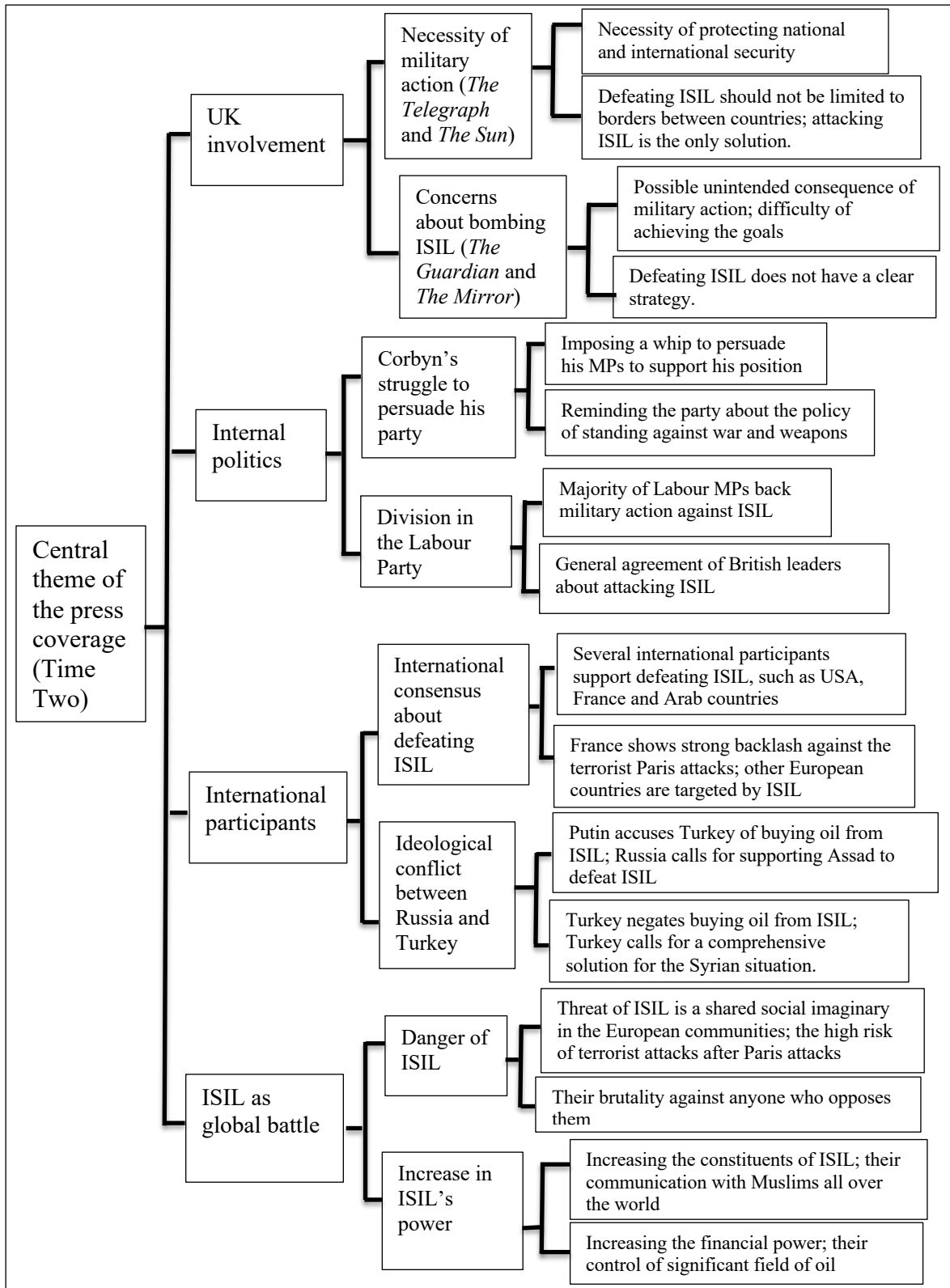
Figure 6.10: Central themes and subthemes used by the press within the representation of the situation in Syria in Time Two

Overall, the newspapers use various concepts and interconnected networks that make the connection between the different ideas in the press difficult. However, the coverage has three central aspects: the necessity of attacking ISIL, stances of international authorities and possible concerns towards the Government motion.

The salient aspect used by the papers is the necessity of defeating ISIL. The newspapers use evaluative language that escalates ISIL's threat as national and international shared knowledge because the European community is under a real risk, and simultaneously, the power of ISIL had been increasing. Several reported incidents committed by ISIL also reinforce ISIL's threat. By taking this angle, the papers emphasise that defeating ISIL is an inevitable option. Thus, the predominant representation of *military action* in the media at Time Two is in terms of immediate airstrikes in Syria to prevent the high risk of ISIL on national and international security.

Another central idea is the international consensus towards defeating ISIL rather than focusing on international allegiances. The papers represent the possibility of military action not from the perspective of supporting allies. Instead, the papers highlight defeating ISIL as an international shared view among various international authorities. This shared view is supported by the UN that tends to pave the legitimisation of military action in Syria. Although the papers refer to tensions between governments in ideological perspectives, there is an international agreement about the importance of defeating ISIL.

A concern around attacking ISIL shown in *The Guardian* and *The Mirror* is that the strategy of defeating ISIL is vague, and it would lead to possible negative consequences. They express that defeating ISIL had been underway for a year in Iraq, but the goals had not been achieved. However, unlike Time One, the possible negative consequences of military action are not shown as a central concept, as they were in the press coverage of Time One. From the coverage of Time Two, the papers suggest that the threat of ISIL is the highest concept that is shown as a common ground that motivates the international community to have a strong position to defeat ISIL.

The findings of this chapter suggest vital differences in evaluating the events in Time One and Time Two. First, the press coverage of Time One evaluated the situation in Syria by calling for immediate British action with complex circumstances that affected the identification of the type of intervention in Syria. Furthermore, the papers raised concerns about the legality of supporting action without the full reports of the UN. This

worry was linked to the negative imaginary of the Iraq invasion and the fears of repeating the mistakes of Iraq. On the other hand, the press coverage of Time Two suggests that ISIL caused a direct threat upon national and international security. The papers of Time Two show international consensus towards defeating ISIL and the UN's support for defeating ISIL. The comparison between the two times will be expanded in Chapter Eight. The overarching idea in the press coverage of Time Two is the need for immediate military action to protect national and international security from the increasing danger of ISIL.

Chapter Seven: Negotiating the Meaning of Military Action in the Speeches of Cameron and Corbyn about Expanding Airstrikes from Iraq to Syria

7.1. Introduction

In the last chapter, the press coverage of Time Two highlighted a central problem, the role of ISIL, and how this group is a hated group on a national and international level. The papers suggested that the danger of ISIL had been increasing and the delay of attacking them would have negative consequences, such as the Paris attacks. From these circumstantial facts, the newspapers portrayed national and international security (i.e., protecting the self) as a central shared understanding in representing the events around the second vote. This orientation was supported by international authorities, such as the UN. Although the papers referred to the possible negative consequences of attacking ISIL, this concern was a minor idea shown by the press because they focused more on the significance of defeating ISIL. The present chapter examines how the parliamentary debate at the time of the second vote responded to the changes in the material context and the shared understandings as circulated by the press. To this end, I investigate how Cameron and Corbyn strategically rescaled media construals of the Syrian situation in order to formulate arguments for or against military action against ISIL. The conclusions drawn from this chapter will be used in Chapter Eight to assist in answering the general research question set in Section 2.3 in which I will discuss the chronological development of the meaning of British intervention in the two votes.

The structure of this chapter is the same as Chapter Five. First, Section 7.2 presents and discusses the Government motion (GM), and this is followed by an analysis of Cameron's speech using Fairclough and Fairclough's schema structure (Section 7.3). Following this, Section 7.4 provides an 'intertextual analysis' where I discuss how Cameron strategically rescales the themes and ideas in the press to formulate his argument for supporting military action. The second part of this chapter starts with Section 7.5, which shows the analysis of the Opposition amendment (OA) and then Corbyn's speech (Section 7.6). After, I provide an 'intertextual analysis' of Corbyn's speech and compare it with Cameron's construal in Section 7.7. At the end of this

chapter, I will discuss how each speaker uses different elements of discourse, including social and historical context, in a strategic way to gain a majority in Parliament.

7.2.   The Government Motion (GM)

The GM called the MPs to vote to expand airstrikes from Iraq to Syria. In this section, I analyse the GM in order to provide an overview of the central argument and key elements of the government's case before analysing Cameron's speech. The GM states:

ISIL in Syria

That this House notes that ISIL poses a direct threat to the United Kingdom; welcomes United Nations Security Council Resolution 2249 which determines that ISIL constitutes an 'unprecedented threat to international peace and security' and calls on states to take 'all necessary measures' to prevent terrorist acts by ISIL and to 'eradicate the safe haven they have established over significant parts of Iraq and Syria'; further notes the clear legal basis to defend the UK and our allies in accordance with the UN Charter; notes that military action against ISIL is only one component of a broader strategy to bring peace and stability to Syria; welcomes the renewed impetus behind the Vienna talks on a ceasefire and political settlement; welcomes the Government's continuing commitment to providing humanitarian support to Syrian refugees; underlines the importance of planning for post-conflict stabilisation and reconstruction in Syria; welcomes the Government's continued determination to cut ISIL's sources of finance, fighters and weapons; notes the requests from France, the US and regional allies for UK military assistance; acknowledges the importance of seeking to avoid civilian casualties, using the UK's particular capabilities; notes the Government will not deploy UK troops in ground combat operations; welcomes the Government's commitment to provide quarterly progress reports to the House; and accordingly supports Her Majesty's Government in taking military action, specifically airstrikes, exclusively against ISIL in Syria; and offers its wholehearted support to Her Majesty's Armed Forces.

As stated in the Background (Section 2.2), the Government proposed this motion to receive backing to expand airstrikes from Iraq to Syria. The GM starts by highlighting the principle problem (*circumstances*), which is ISIL's threat (line 3). After presenting the problem, the main action (*claim*) is initially stated unclearly because it only shows the need for "all necessary measures" (6). Then, defeating ISIL is evaluated by the *circumstantial values* that work along with the *circumstances* to display the legality of attacking ISIL (7-8). The threat of ISIL is linked to the importance of achieving the *goals* of preventing terrorist acts and bringing peace and stability to Syria (9-10). The values underlying these goals, British national security and global peace, are implicitly construed within the expression of the goals. In other words, achieving peace is used in two ways: as a *goal* that has to be achieved, and as a *value* that justifies the main action of attacking ISIL. As suggested by Fairclough and Fairclough (2012), the *values* work to narrow down the *goals* of the *claim*, and here, British national security and international security work to restrict the three central goals: preventing any terrorist attacks, bringing peace to the world and stability to Syria.

Then, the GM shows the *means-goals* and strategies. The *means-goal* element does not only show how the *main claim* will presumably achieve the goals, but it also refers to sub-actions or strategies that act with the main action and which together achieve the goals. The *means-goals* comprise lines 10-15, and there are two types of strategies: short-term strategy and long-term strategy. The short-term strategy is 'airstrikes' and the long-term strategies are 'political settlement', 'providing humanitarian support to Syrian refugees', and 'planning for post-conflict stabilisation and reconstruction in Syria' (10-13). However, the GM highlights the focus on debating the short-term strategy, which is bombing ISIL by airstrikes. 'Airstrikes' is mentioned in the motion to refer to two points. First, it refers to the main action of the claim to defeat ISIL. Second, it is used within other strategies to achieve additional goals, such as "peace and stability to Syria." After these strategies, the central idea in the GM is that:

> *[This House] welcomes the Government's commitment to provide quarterly progress reports to the House; and accordingly supports Her Majesty's Government in taking military action, specifically airstrikes, exclusively against ISIL in Syria; and offers its wholehearted support to Her Majesty's Armed Forces* (18-21).

At the end of the motion, the claim has become clear as launching 'airstrikes' against ISIL in Syria. Figure 7.1 below shows the reconstruction of the GM's argument and how elements are interconnected to the main claim.

CLAIM: The UK ought to extend airstrikes against ISIL from Iraq to Syria.

GOALS: Preventing terrorist acts by ISIL; protecting the national and international security; bringing peace to Syria

VALUES: National UK security and international security.

CIRCUMSTANCES:

ISIL poses a direct threat to the UK and to international peace and security.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES: Legality of action.

MEANS-GOAL:

Short-term strategy: Airstrikes.

Long-term strategies: Supporting political solutions; providing humanitarian support; planning and preparing for post-conflict stabilisation and reconstruction.
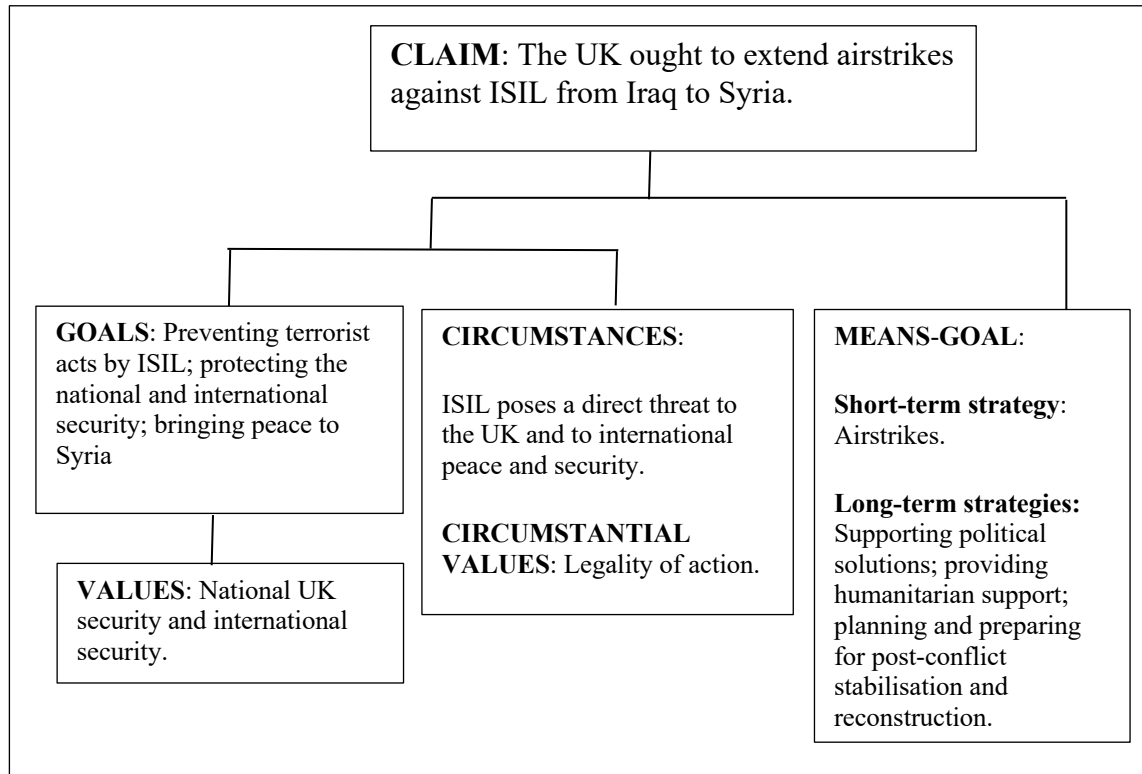
Figure 7.1: The structure of practical argument for the Government motion.

From the argumentation structure of the GM, the concepts 'national and international security', 'ISIL's threat' and 'international legality of action' are the central ideas to be debated in Parliament regarding the response to ISIL. These concepts show how identifying the British action is not only about weighting advantages/drawbacks of intervention, but it is also about how specific concepts are given a higher concern than others and they can constitute specific meaning of intervention. Although the second GM explicitly identifies the action as 'airstrikes', which is different from the first vote that left it vague as 'humanitarian intervention', the second debate is still about 'intervention' and defining the concepts around British participation in Syria. Therefore, speakers strategically construe the concepts around 'airstrikes' to produce specific meanings of interventions.

7.3. Cameron's Speech

In this section, analyse Cameron's speech and his development of the main ideas shown in the GM, particularly the construal of intervention. Before looking at the debate itself, it is worth noting that one night before the debate, Cameron stated in a meeting that MPs who did not vote with him were "a bunch of terrorist sympathisers" (Independent, 2 December 2015). This point is important because at several times in the debate itself, many Labour MPs made interventions from the floor, asking Cameron to apologise for his statement. These interventions in the debate reflect the negotiation of the MPs in the internal politics and the criticism of Cameron's statement as part of the moral deliberation in the House of Commons.

Cameron's speech is analysed over the following four sub-sections, each corresponding to a separate formulation of the motion as Cameron highlights central ideas that build up elements in his argument: (1) key principles of Cameron's claim, (2) the impact of ISIL's threat and the UK's capability, (3) minimising the risk in the course of the action, (4) and long-term strategies of political solutions[30].

7.3.1. Cameron's First Formulation: Key Principles of Cameron's Claim (1-156)

The introductory part of Cameron's speech is the first formulation (1-156) in which he sets out the central ideas of his speech, which he will pick up on individually later. Lines 115-121 are a projection for the second formulation, which is discussed in the following section. Lines 129-141 are covered in the third formulation, as they also specifically deal with the impact of 'ground troops'. The first formulation comprises three central elements of an argument: Cameron's *main claim*, *circumstances* (of ISIL and the situation of the UK) and *emerging positive consequences of action already taken*.

The first central element is identifying the *main claim* (1-4, 14-17, 27-34 and 51-57). At the beginning of the speech, Caroline Flint (Labour) from the floor asks if

---

[30] See Appendix Five (p.496) for the detail categorisation of Cameron's speech using Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach.

Cameron will "apologise for the remarks he made in a meeting last night against my right hon. and hon. Friends on the Labour Benches?" (11-12). However, in response, Cameron claims that:

> *I could not have been clearer in my opening remarks: I respect people who disagree; I respect the fact that Governments of all colours have had to fight terrorism; and I respect the fact that we are all discussing how to fight terrorism, not whether to fight terrorism.* (14-17)

Cameron expresses his respect for all the views in the House of Commons, but he fails to apologise for his statement. Within his negation, he justifies the construal of his main claim that it is "not about whether we want to fight terrorism but about how best we do that" (3-4). Cameron represents the importance of defeating terrorism as the main *claim* with the consideration of the overall picture of Syria. He suggests:

> *The situation in Syria is incredibly complex. I am not overstating the contribution our incredible servicemen and women can make; nor am I ignoring the risks of military action… I am absolutely clear that we must pursue a comprehensive strategy that also includes political, diplomatic and humanitarian action… a Government that represents all of its people and one that can work with us to defeat the evil organisation…* (27-34).

Cameron suggests that the central focus of the motion is defeating ISIL with the consideration of not being involved in the 'incredibly complex' situation in Syria. However, he relates the strategy of defeating ISIL as a positive action for the political process that is shown as the long-term strategy for the future of the region (this is discussed in the fourth formulation). In this example, Cameron describes the action against ISIL as a "humanitarian action" even before specifying the exact action (i.e., expanding airstrikes from Iraq to Syria). Stating "humanitarian action" at the beginning suggests that Cameron wishes to focus on this feature in legitimising the action as intervention rather than aggression. Then, he argues that defeating terrorism will achieve the short-term and long-term goals, protecting the security and establishing a new Syrian Government, as he expands these ideas in his speech. These strategies are shown as *means-goal* and as central parts of the main *claim*. At this vote, from the beginning of his speech, Cameron shows an important tension with his speech in the first vote . At this vote, Cameron includes the consideration of the complex situation in Syria, as considered

within his argument, while in the first vote, he excluded this element (this will be discussed further in Chapter 8). At this stage, and specifically Lines 1-4, 14-17 and 51-57, the speech sets out the general criterion of the main *claim* as the means of defeating terrorism rather than defeating ISIL or not.

Cameron then narrows down these general aspects to suggest the second central element in this formulation, which is the *circumstances* (27-30, 37-42, 64-67, 74-79 and 103-106). Cameron specifies a central issue in the *circumstances* as in:

> *We face a fundamental threat to our security. ISIL has brutally murdered*
> *British hostages.* (37-38)

Even though ISIL has its main role and actions in Iraq and Syria, here, Cameron suggests that ISIL has become a direct threat to national security. Then, he highlights that, at the time of the vote, the UK is only attacking ISIL in Iraq, while airstrikes had not yet been approved to be expanded to Syria. However, as "ISIL's headquarters are in Raqqa in Syria" (64-67), the delay of approving airstrikes in Syria is shown as a problem because British security is under threat without sufficient action from the UK to defeat ISIL's headquarters. As ISIL takes advantage of the chaos in the region, so this issue should be diagnosed by looking at the centre of ISIL either in Iraq or Syria. Cameron expands these *circumstances* to highlight the *circumstantial values* as in:

> *The action we propose is legal, necessary and the right thing to do to keep*
> *our country safe. My strong view is that the House should make it clear*
> *that we will take up our responsibilities…* (76-78)

He displays military action as a duty of the UK, thereby implying that the MPs should take this responsibility and support the action. Furthermore, Cameron suggests that defeating ISIL is a legal action. After showing the danger of ISIL above, Cameron puts forward these two *circumstantial values* as part of legitimising the action against ISIL.

As the debate is about extending airstrikes from Iraq to Syria, Cameron uses the strategy of *emerging positive consequences of action already taken* (60-64, 86-102 and 115-121). This is the third element in this formulation in that Cameron positively activates how the UK airstrikes in Iraq had achieved some goals of defeating ISIL. This element is noted by Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:141–42) as an extra element to the practical reasoning approach in one of their case studies. An example of this strategy is:

we should remember that 15 months ago, facing a threat from ISIL in Iraq, the House voted 524 to 43 to authorise airstrikes in Iraq. Since then, our brilliant RAF pilots have helped local forces to halt ISIL's advance and recover 30% of the territory ISIL had captured… (60-64)

This example shows the link between the actions already taken in Iraq and the current call for airstrikes in Syria. Cameron construes the current airstrikes against ISIL in Iraq as a positive reflection of the ongoing UK military action since September 2014, so the UK should continue its positive role with the coalition against ISIL. At this stage, Cameron identifies military action with airstrikes, but the concepts around 'airstrikes' have not been defined and fixed yet, so the meaning of intervention is still somewhat vague.

At the end of this formulation, Cameron summarises the main issues that will be covered in his speech (146-156). In these lines, Cameron highlights the central ideas of the formulations without yet fully providing specific elements that support the main claim (see Appendix Five, p.496). The reconstruction of the argument for this part of the speech is shown below in Figure 7.2.
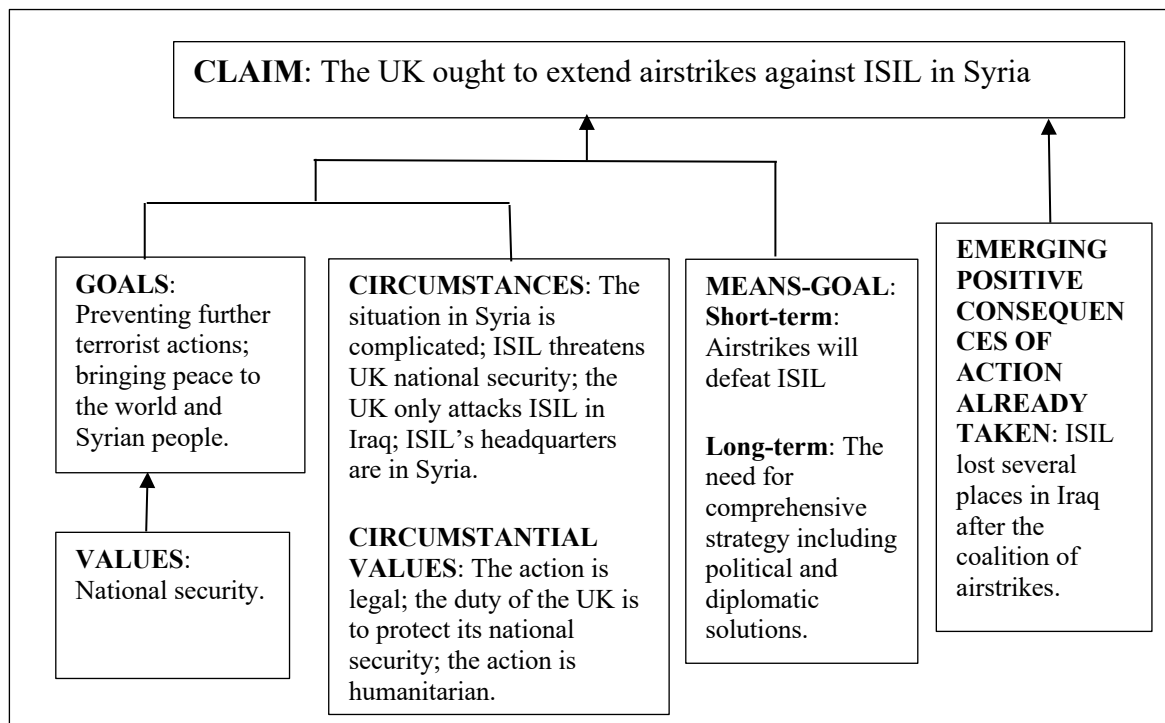

Figure 7.2: The structure of practical argument for Cameron's speech (first formulation)

7.3.2. Cameron's Second Formulation: The Impact of ISIL's Threat and UK's Capability (194-355)

Once Cameron has set out his basic position, as above, he then presents the second formulation of his support for the motion in specific terms of **the impact of ISIL's threat and the UK's capability to achieve the goals** (194-355). Within this section of the speech, there is: (1) a projection of the third formulation (163-172), which will be analysed in the following section, and (2) a brief discussion of the appropriate name for ISIL (174-182), which is marked up in Appendix Five (p.496), but is not discussed in more detail here. Furthermore, lines 115-121 are discussed in this section because they highlight ideas related to this formulation. Cameron uses the second formulation in three central elements: *circumstances*, *dealing with concerns around the main claim* and *emerging positive consequences of action already taken*.

The first element is the *circumstances* (205-221, 267-282, 306-307 and 326-330). In Cameron's speech, *circumstances* support the claim of showing how attacking ISIL is an inevitable option. The *circumstances* are represented through highlighting three problems/issues. The first issue is that the UK is in the top list of ISIL's targets. For example, Cameron states:

> *If there is an attack on the UK in the coming weeks or months, there will be those who try to say that it has happened because of our airstrikes. I do not believe that that will be the case. Daesh has been trying to attack us for the past year, as we know from the seven different plots that our security services have foiled.* (207-210)

This example emphasises the existence of ISIL's threat, as there have been several attempts to attack Britain by ISIL even before any military action against them has taken place. Cameron suggests that "ISIL/Daesh is planning attacks now" (306-307). He attempts to raise the idea that the existence of ISIL's threat entails the necessity of military action. Within this circumstance, Cameron discounts the concerns of some who fears possible backlash of military action because ISIL is already targeting the UK.

A further problem is that the members of ISIL have been increasing, and this will make the situation more complicated in the future as in:

Some 800 people, including families and children, have been radicalised to such an extent that they have travelled to this so-called caliphate. The House should be under no illusion: these terrorists are plotting to kill us and to radicalise our children right now (217-220)

From this example, Cameron not only indicates the risk of ISIL attacking the UK, but also raises another *circumstance* as the increase of ISIL's members, which leads to a negative consequence (increasing the complexity of defeating ISIL). The danger of ISIL here is the ideological battle they practise all over the world by convincing young Muslims to be united under the rules of what they call 'caliphate' in order to increase their constituents. On the other hand, Cameron refers to the young Muslims by using the pronoun 'our' to include them within British society and exclude them from being part of the radical group. Cameron suggests that the protection of these young Muslims is part of protecting British national security (this is discussed more in Section 7.4). Later in his speech, Cameron implicitly refers to the solution when he explains that, "Raqqa in Syria is the headquarters of this threat to our security. It is in Syria where they pump and sell the oil that does so much to help finance its evil acts…" (327-329). Cameron expresses that the central power of ISIL is in Syria, and defeating them should limit the development of ISIL. He strategically links this problem to the *circumstantial value* that "we have the capabilities that other members of the Coalition want to benefit from…" (271-272). He emphasises the obligation upon the UK to attack ISIL due to the UK's capability.

The third problem mentioned in the *circumstances* is the delay of British Tornadoes to attack ISIL in Syria as in:

*There was a recent incident in which Syrian opposition forces **needed urgent** support in their fight against Daesh. British Tornadoes were **eight minutes away**, just over the border in Iraq—no one else was close—but Britain could not help, so the **Syrian opposition forces had to wait 40 minutes** in a **perilous** situation while **other coalition forces were scrambled**. That **sort of delay** endangers the lives of those fighting Daesh on the ground, and does nothing for our reputation with our vital allies.* (277-282)

When Cameron highlights the threat of ISIL, he expresses the idea that the delay of expanding airstrikes from Iraq to Syria is an additional problem. The bold words in the example above display the timing situation and updates about the situation in the region.

In this example, Cameron uses two strategies together: a parallelism with *positive consequences of airstrikes in Iraq* and potential problems (*circumstance*) with delay of the UK's participation in Syria. This example shows the positive role of the UK in the region and how the delay of airstrikes in Syria affects the efficiency of achieving the goals of defeating terrorism. This *circumstance* suggests that the timing of military actions is a central concept around the meaning of defeating ISIL. Thus, the three problems/issues in this formulation engage for 'imminent action needed', and Cameron uses this idea as a central concept in his definition of the meaning of British intervention.

The second central element is *dealing with concerns around the main claim* (194-203, 226-230 and 348-355). In this element, Cameron attempts to deny the possible negative consequences of military action, and simultaneously to support the importance of attacking ISIL. For example, Cameron approaches this element with reference to the recent ISIL-inspired attack in Paris:

> *Paris was different not just because it was so close to us or because it was so horrific in scale, but because it showed the extent of terror planning from Daesh in Syria and the approach of sending people back from Syria to Europe. This was the head of the snake in Raqqa in action, so it is not surprising that the judgement of the Chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee and of the director general of the Security Service is that the risk of a similar attack in the UK is real, and that the UK is already in the top tier of countries on ISIL's target list* (197-203)

In the representation of the broader context, such as the Paris attacks in November 2013, Cameron indicates the British people are under real threat. The frightening situation of ISIL is explained as the central point that identifies military action as inevitable as Cameron argues that "the risks of inaction are far greater than the risks of what I propose" (227-228). Furthermore, the concerns of inaction are supported by authority, "the Chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC)" (201). The reports of JIC are used to increase the credibility of the argument, as they reinforce the real threat of ISIL. In an intervention from the floor, the Labour MP Stephen Doughty raises the concern that airstrikes could cause civilians casualties, but Cameron argues that:

> *One year and three months into those Iraqi operations, we have not had any reports of civilian casualties. I am not saying that there are no*

casualties in war; of course there are… will we be safer and better off in the long term if we can get rid of the so-called caliphate which is radicalising Muslims, turning people against us and plotting atrocities on the streets of Britain? (348-355)

In this response, Cameron highlights that the reports of Iraqi operations do not show civilian casualties. He proposes that, even though there is a possibility of negative consequences for airstrikes, they are safer than inaction for the long-term protection of British national security. Again, Cameron gives greater attention to the risk of ISIL against Britain than on local people in Iraq and Syria at this stage because ISIL has become a real threat for national security, which is the central problem. From this angle, he proposes that airstrikes have less possible negative consequences than inaction, and the action will achieve the goal of defeating terrorism.

The third central element of this formulation is *emerging positive consequences of action already taken* (234-262 and 344-347). This strategy is used in the first formulation above (Section 7.3.1) to refer to the effective role of UK airstrikes in Iraq. However, it is used here to add an extra idea, which is the UK's capability to attack ISIL. For example, Cameron suggests:

when it comes to precision-strike capability whether covering Iraq or Syria, let me say this: last week, the whole international coalition had some 26 aircraft available, eight of which were British tornadoes. Typically, the UK actually represents between a quarter and a third of the international coalition's precision bombing capability. (238-243)

This example suggests the positive consequences of actions already taken in Iraq. At the same time, the example displays British capability and its essential role in the international coalition. Cameron's construal of British role against ISIL reinforces the development of the UK foreign policy (as shown in Section 2.1.2) in that the UK decreases the focus on 'Atlanticism' in which the UK interests were best served by remaining America's closest ally and encouraging "effective US leadership. However, the recent development of UK foreign policy emphasises that the international affairs tend to be more focused on the international community after the repercussions of the Iraq invasion. Cameron uses the *circumstantial value* (UK capability) and *emerging positive consequences of airstrikes* in Iraq to construe airstrikes in Syria as an inevitable choice.

192

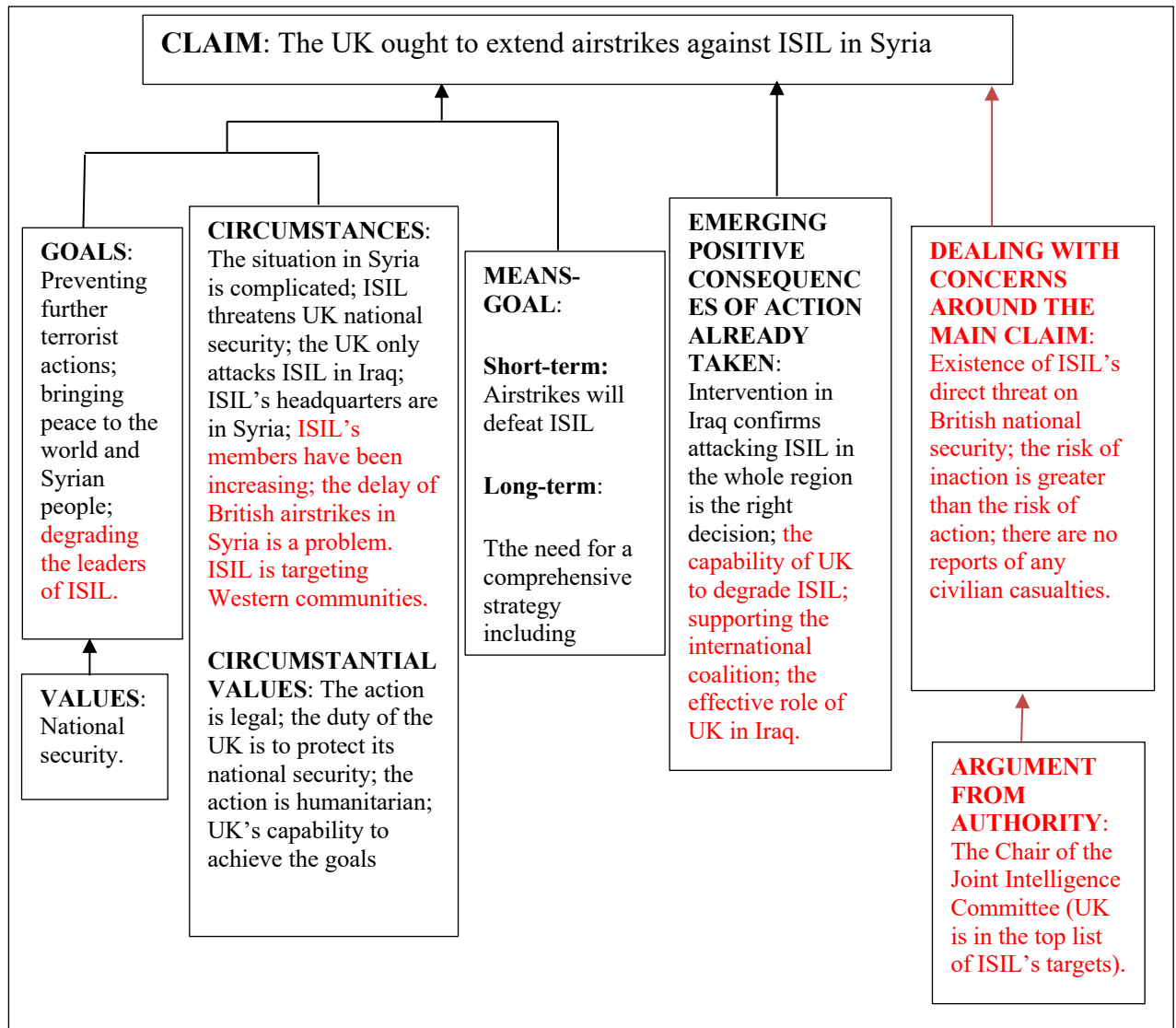Figure 7.3 below shows the added elements of argument reconstruction at this stage of Cameron's speech.

Figure 7.3: The structure of practical argument for Cameron's speech (second formulation)

7.3.3. Cameron's Third Formulation: Minimising the Risk in the Course of the Action (361-510)

In his third formulation, Cameron attempts to minimise the possibility of risk in the course of the military action by excluding the ideas of sending ground troops (361-510). Within the lines of this formulation, there is also: (1) a projection of the fourth formulation in lines 424-434 that will be analysed when I discuss the long-term strategies and (2) a repetition of the British capability to take military action (439-443), an idea that is discussed in Section 7.3.2. Lines 129-142 are moved in this formulation, as they discuss the same central idea of this formulation. In this formulation, Cameron discusses the idea of ground troops as part of his claim by using two central elements: *dealing with concerns around the main claim* and *means-goal*.

The first element is *dealing with the concerns around the main action* (365-390, 451-458, 479-481, 492-494 and 507-510). Cameron denies sending ground troops to Syria at this stage, and he deals with this idea as a negative concept around the meaning of military action. Instead, he highlights the positive consequences of airstrikes as in:

> *The question of whether there will be ground forces to make this operation a success… First, we should be clear what airstrikes alone can achieve. We do not need ground troops to target the supply of oil which Daesh uses to fund terrorism. We do not need ground troops to hit Daesh's headquarters, its infrastructure, its supply routes, its training facilities and its weapons supplies.* (368-372).

In this quote, Cameron excludes sending ground troops as part of the current call for action by justifying how airstrikes will achieve two central *goals* of the claim: targeting the supply of ISIL's oil and hitting ISIL's headquarters in Raqqa. Cameron highlights airstrikes as the central strategy at this stage, so he attempts to make intervention specific and limited as airstrikes without other types of military actions. George Kerevan (Scottish National Party) takes an opposing stance and raises a concern that airstrikes might cause civilian casualties because the situation of ISIL is complex, while sending ground troops is a better solution than airstrikes. Cameron responds:

Of course, Daesh has changed its tactics from the early days when airstrikes were even more effective, but that is not an argument for doing nothing. It is an argument for using airstrikes where we can, but having a longer-term strategy to deliver the necessary ground troops through the transition. The argument before the House is simple: do we wait for perfection, which is a transitional Government in Syria, or do we start the work now of degrading and destroying that organisation at the request of our allies… (383-389)

Here, Cameron changes his way around the possibility of sending ground troops because he presupposes that this strategy is an open choice that the UK may need for the long-term strategy, but the importance at this stage is the urgent support for airstrikes in Syria. Cameron agrees with Kerevan that airstrikes have possible negative consequences, but again, he repeats that inaction has much deeper negative consequences, as mentioned in the second formulation. Furthermore, Cameron refuses concerns around the action in Syria by suggesting that:

if we do not take action against Daesh now, the number of ground forces we can work with will get less and less and less (507-508).

Cameron rejects any calls for delay in military action on the grounds that airstrikes will help the moderate Syrian ground troops who are a key concept for the long-term political and diplomatic strategies. However, the central point here is that the non-radical ground forces seek help from the international community to attack ISIL, so these ground forces and Britain share the same goal of degrading terrorism and paving the way for a political solution in Syria. Liam Byrne (Labour) from the floor criticises Cameron's argument by suggesting that, "in Iraq there are ground forces in place, but in Syria there are not" (448-449). Byrne refers to the fact there are clear ground forces that fight ISIL in Iraq, but because the situation in Syria is complex, the UK may need to send ground troops. Cameron disagrees with this construal and suggests that the situations in Syria and Iraq with regard to ISIL "are intricately linked" (455). Therefore, in this element, Cameron reinforces his exclusion of the British ground troops as being part of his claim, while he hints at the additional concept of 'dealing with Syria ground troops', as we will see in the following element.

The second central element of this formulation is the *means-goals* (129-141, 394-415, 459-469, 483-488 and 499-507). In this strategy, Cameron does not discuss the

possible British ground troops, while he sheds light on how the current Syrian ground troops help the coalition to defeat ISIL (192-141). Before Cameron construes his *means-goal*, he proposes that defeating ISIL and terrorism in Syria will help to identify the meaning of the moderate Syrian fighters that participate in constructing "a new Syrian Government who represent all the Syrian people" (394-395). However, he emphasises that around 70,000 Syrian opposition fighters are shown to be moderate and can cooperate with the UK (400-415, 483-487 and 499-507). This is shown as a positive situation supported by JIC reports (408), and Cameron expands on it to suggest:

> *So there are ground forces who will take the fight to Daesh, and in many cases we can work with them and we can assist them… If we do not act now, we should be clear that there will be even fewer ground forces over time as Daesh will get even stronger. In my view, we simply cannot afford to wait. We have to act now.* (487-494)

According to Cameron, the moderate Syrian fighters suffer from fighting ISIL, and they need support in this job. He presupposes that airstrikes will increase the power of the moderate fighters. This construal of taking advantage of the ground troops is a central concept added by Cameron. In several previous military interventions, the UK was involved directly in the conflict, such as the situation in Afghanistan and the Iraq invasions. However, here, Cameron not only distances the UK's ground troops, but he also proposes their partial involvement through assisting the moderate fighters in Syria. In 459-469, Cameron proposes that attacking ISIL, as well as assisting the moderate fighters, will achieve two goals: degrading ISIL and preparing the moderate fighters for the transitional government in Syria. The lines of the *means-goal* in this formulation show the UK's positive participation in Syria, and how the main action (airstrikes) distances the UK from being directly involved in the complex situation in Syria. Figure 7.4 below shows the development of the argument and the new ideas used in this formulation.
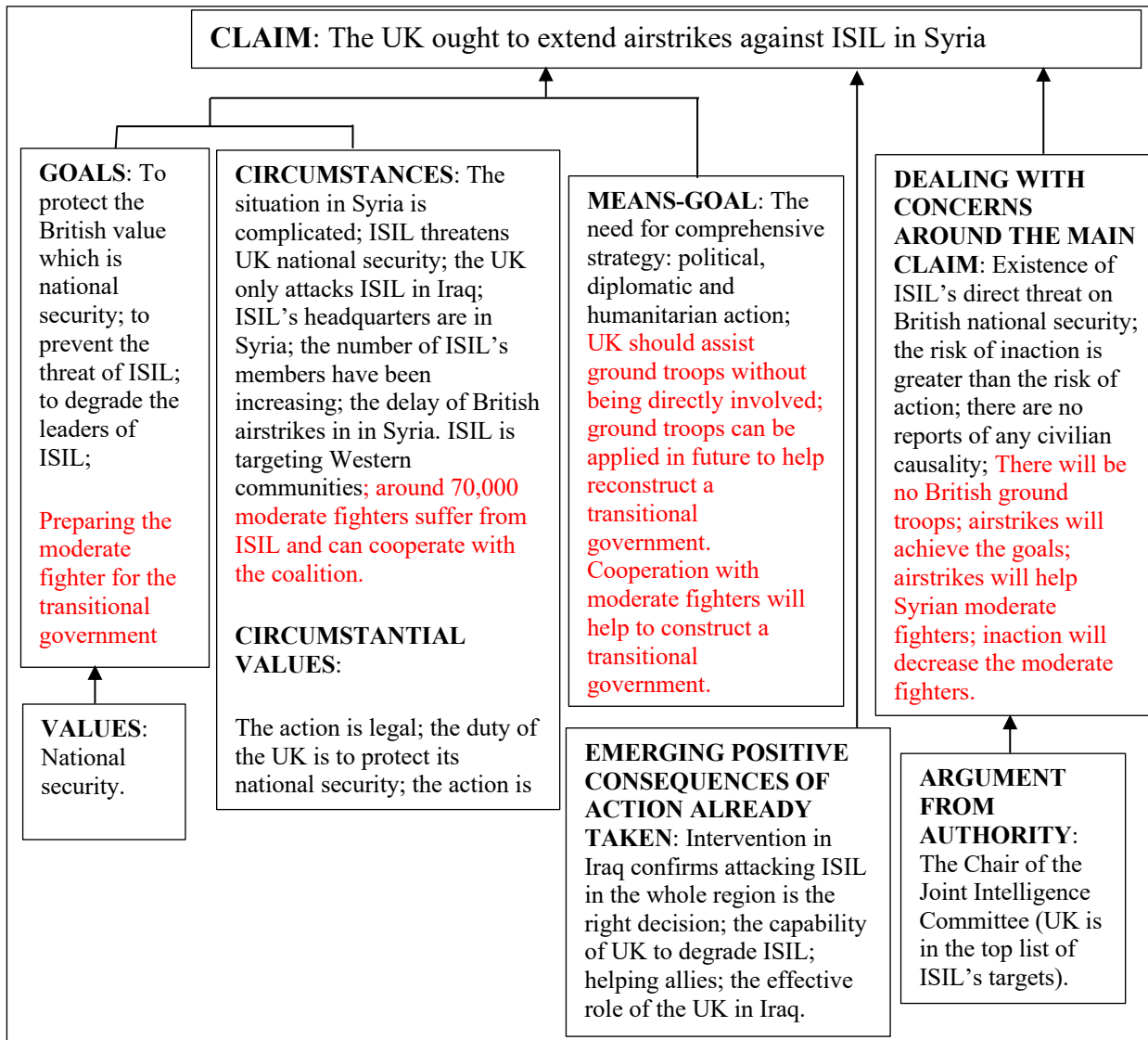
| CLAIM: The UK ought to extend airstrikes against ISIL in Syria |

GOALS: To protect the British value which is national security; to prevent the threat of ISIL; to degrade the leaders of ISIL;

Preparing the moderate fighter for the transitional government

VALUES: National security.

CIRCUMSTANCES: The situation in Syria is complicated; ISIL threatens UK national security; the UK only attacks ISIL in Iraq; ISIL's headquarters are in Syria; the number of ISIL's members have been increasing; the delay of British airstrikes in in Syria. ISIL is targeting Western communities; around 70,000 moderate fighters suffer from ISIL and can cooperate with the coalition.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES:

The action is legal; the duty of the UK is to protect its national security; the action is

MEANS-GOAL: The need for comprehensive strategy: political, diplomatic and humanitarian action; UK should assist ground troops without being directly involved; ground troops can be applied in future to help reconstruct a transitional government. Cooperation with moderate fighters will help to construct a transitional government.

EMERGING POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES OF ACTION ALREADY TAKEN: Intervention in Iraq confirms attacking ISIL in the whole region is the right decision; the capability of UK to degrade ISIL; helping allies; the effective role of the UK in Iraq.

DEALING WITH CONCERNS AROUND THE MAIN CLAIM: Existence of ISIL's direct threat on British national security; the risk of inaction is greater than the risk of action; there are no reports of any civilian causality; There will be no British ground troops; airstrikes will achieve the goals; airstrikes will help Syrian moderate fighters; inaction will decrease the moderate fighters.

ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY: The Chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee (UK is in the top list of ISIL's targets).

Figure 7.4: The structure of practical argument for Cameron's speech (third formulation

7.3.4. Cameron's Fourth Formulation: Long-term Strategy of Political Solutions (518-622)

In the fourth formulation, Cameron uses elements of argument to provide the long-term strategies of political and diplomatic solutions. Lines 581-590 have already been discussed, as they display the British capability and obligation to defeat ISIL. In the third formulation, Cameron focused on the short-term *means-goals* that relate to defeating ISIL. Here in the fourth and last formulation, Cameron considers the long-term strategies as parts of the main action that lead to the achievement of the general goals of bringing peace to Syria and constructing a transitional government (518-622). In this formulation (518-522), Cameron calls the long-term strategies "the non-military elements" (526). A central idea in this section is that Cameron sees intervention as including military elements not only for achieving the short-term goals, but that will lead to a greater long-term humanitarian good. This section shows one central element that is the *means-goals*, and within this element, Cameron quickly refers to other elements of arguments. The *means-goal* is shown in two ways: the counter-terrorism strategy and diplomatic and political process.

The first *means-goal* is British counter-terrorism as a significant local strategy in the UK to protect British "national security" (526-557). Cameron represents this strategy as a central *means-goal* in addition to his *main claim*. Cameron suggests that:

> *Our counter-terrorism strategy gives Britain a comprehensive plan to prevent and foil plots at home and also to address the **poisonous extremist ideology** that is the root cause of the threat that we face. As part of this, I can announce today that we will establish a comprehensive review to root out any remaining funding of extremism within the UK. This will examine specifically the nature, scale and origin of the funding of Islamist extremist activity in the UK, including any overseas sources.* (529-534).

Within this *means-goal*, Cameron uses other elements of the argument, such as *circumstances* and *dealing with the concern around the main claim*. The *means-goal* here has a series of 'non-military' actions in the UK to protect the security and civilians from any attack by ISIL. Cameron justifies this strategy by highlighting the threat of ISIL as

they have "the poisonous extremist ideology," and they are "hijacking the peaceful religion of Islam for their warped ends" (541). He suggests that ISIL's threat is not limited to terrorist attacks, while they develop their strategy to "betray British Muslims" (547). Due to this *circumstance*, Cameron suggests that ISIL has a negative direct impact upon the solidarity of the British community, and so he suggests that the counter-terrorism strategy is a central strategy within the other strategies that together will achieve the proposed goals.

The second *means-goal* of the long-term strategy is the diplomatic and political process. Cameron had mentioned this strategy briefly in the first formulation (Section 7.3.1). Here, in this formulation, he expands this strategy and justifies how this strategy relates to the overall plan. This strategy has several sub-actions as:

> *It begins with identifying the right people to put around the table. Next week, we expect the Syrian regime to nominate a team of people to negotiate under the auspices of the United Nations. Over the last 18 months, political and armed opposition positions have converged. We know the main groups and their ideas… The aim is clear, as I have said—a transitional Government in six months, a new constitution, and free and fair elections within 18 months… hitting Daesh does not hurt this process; it helps this process…* (560-570)

Cameron suggests that the UK had been taking the political process before the vote on attacking ISIL. Here, he identifies how the political process relates to the current call for action in Syria. Even though Cameron admits that this strategy is a long-term process, he proposes that the conflict in Syria since 2011 is close to being solved. Cameron makes the 'timing' issue a significant concept within the consideration of the action. He suggests how the goals of the political strategies are imminent, and how airstrikes will help this process. The long period of the negative situation in Syria is linked here to dependence on the approval of airstrikes in Syria, as the political process is said to be progressing to achieve a transitional government within six months. Then, Cameron construes the usefulness of the political process as he proposes that:

> *people will not return to Syria if part of it is under the control of an organisation that enslaves Yazidis, throws gay people off buildings, beheads aid workers and forces children to marry before they are even 10 years old. We cannot separate the humanitarian work and the reconstruction work from dealing with Daesh itself.* (597-601)

This example suggests how Cameron strategically represents the *circumstances* to show the meaning of attacking ISIL as "humanitarian work", so he explicitly puts airstrikes in this example under the humanitarian norm. This part expresses that the situation in Syria is difficult and many people have left Syria not only because of the Syrian regime attacks, but also because of their suffering from ISIL. Even though the Syrian civilians are still suffering from ISIL, Cameron suggests the need for "the plan for post-conflict reconstruction to support a new Syrian Government when they emerge I have said that we would be prepared to commit at least £1 billion to Syria's reconstruction" (612-613). Committing money is a later strategy for the new Syrian Government, and this will be after achieving the short-term strategies. Cameron also adds that there are other goals that will be achieved such as:

> *protection, security, stabilisation and confidence-building measures, including meeting basic humanitarian needs such as education, health and shelter, and, of course, helping refugees to return.* (614-616)

These further goals are shown as extra positive concepts around the long-term strategy. In this example, Cameron identifies the meaning of 'humanitarian needs'. This example displays how Cameron interconnects various actions under the humanitarian aspect to legitimise the short-term and long-term strategies (this will be discussed more in Section 7.4). In this formulation, Cameron represents the long-term strategies as additional strategies to the main claim (defeating ISIL), and the goals of these strategies are dependent on achieving the goals of the main claim. Thus, Cameron construes 'airstrikes' as the most significant action that is given a high value for achieving the short-term goals, and then paves the way for the long-term goals. Figure 7.5 shows the reconstruction of the ideas represented in this formulation in addition to the elements and ideas shown in the previous formulations.
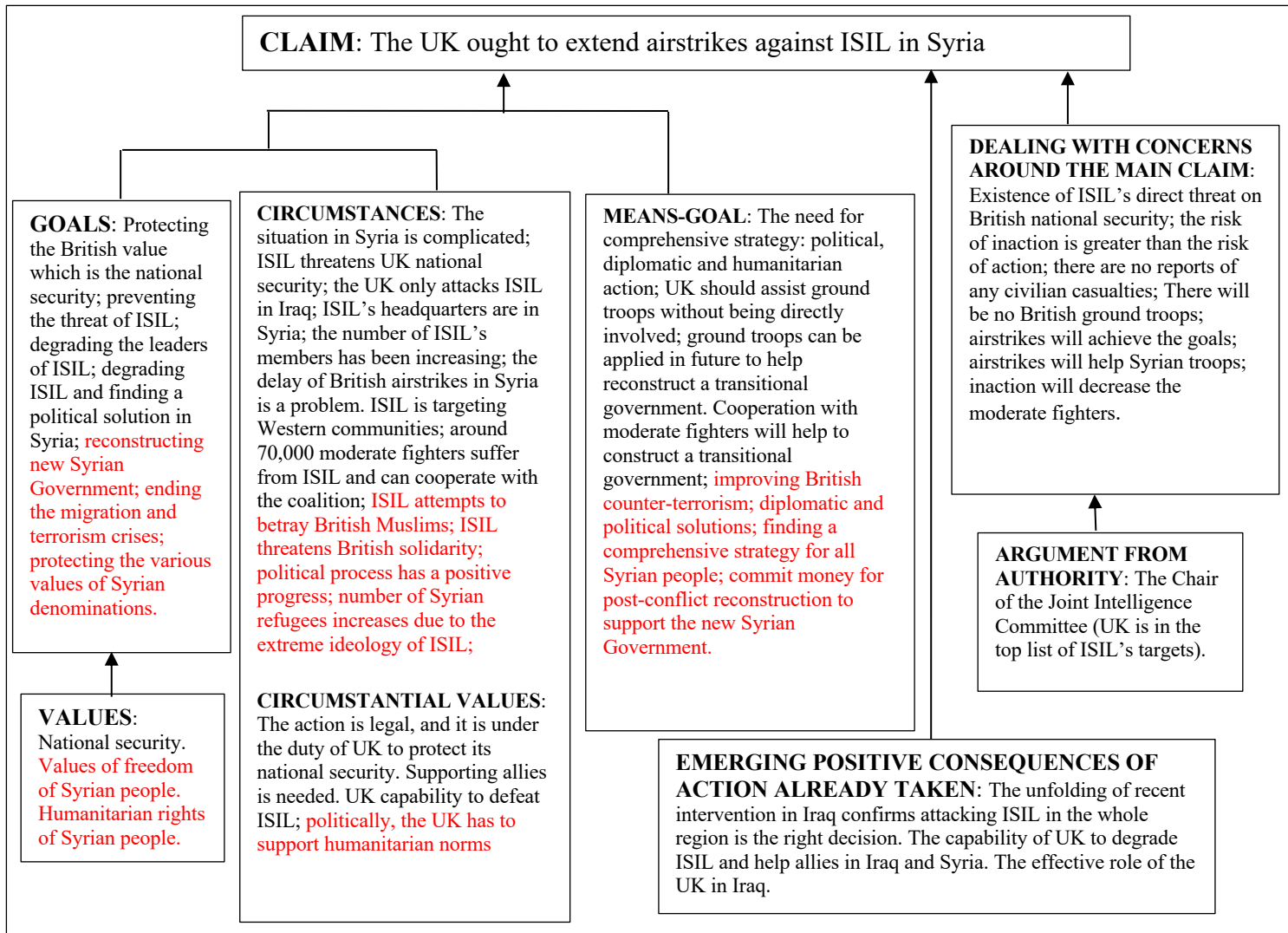
CLAIM: The UK ought to extend airstrikes against ISIL in Syria

GOALS: Protecting the British value which is the national security; preventing the threat of ISIL; degrading the leaders of ISIL; degrading ISIL and finding a political solution in Syria; reconstructing new Syrian Government; ending the migration and terrorism crises; protecting the various values of Syrian denominations.

CIRCUMSTANCES: The situation in Syria is complicated; ISIL threatens UK national security; the UK only attacks ISIL in Iraq; ISIL's headquarters are in Syria; the number of ISIL's members has been increasing; the delay of British airstrikes in Syria is a problem. ISIL is targeting Western communities; around 70,000 moderate fighters suffer from ISIL and can cooperate with the coalition; ISIL attempts to betray British Muslims; ISIL threatens British solidarity; political process has a positive progress; number of Syrian refugees increases due to the extreme ideology of ISIL;

MEANS-GOAL: The need for comprehensive strategy: political, diplomatic and humanitarian action; UK should assist ground troops without being directly involved; ground troops can be applied in future to help reconstruct a transitional government. Cooperation with moderate fighters will help to construct a transitional government; improving British counter-terrorism; diplomatic and political solutions; finding a comprehensive strategy for all Syrian people; commit money for post-conflict reconstruction to support the new Syrian Government.

DEALING WITH CONCERNS AROUND THE MAIN CLAIM: Existence of ISIL's direct threat on British national security; the risk of inaction is greater than the risk of action; there are no reports of any civilian casualties; There will be no British ground troops; airstrikes will achieve the goals; airstrikes will help Syrian troops; inaction will decrease the moderate fighters.

VALUES: National security. Values of freedom of Syrian people. Humanitarian rights of Syrian people.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES: The action is legal, and it is under the duty of UK to protect its national security. Supporting allies is needed. UK capability to defeat ISIL; politically, the UK has to support humanitarian norms

ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY: The Chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee (UK is in the top list of ISIL's targets).

EMERGING POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES OF ACTION ALREADY TAKEN: The unfolding of recent intervention in Iraq confirms attacking ISIL in the whole region is the right decision. The capability of UK to degrade ISIL and help allies in Iraq and Syria. The effective role of the UK in Iraq.

Figure 7.5: The structure of practical argument for Cameron's speech (fourth formulation)

7.4. Intertextuality: Rescaling Practice in Cameron's Speech

The previous section showed the elements and ideas that Cameron used in his speech to legitimate military action (i.e., airstrikes) (see Figure 7.5). Although in this debate the MPs explicitly specify the possible action as airstrikes, they still debate the construal of intervention because they bring elements to the discourse that identify the boundaries of intervention. As in Chapter Five, this section will discuss how Cameron incorporates the central themes that emerged from the analysis of the papers in Chapter Six into the structure of his argument. Therefore, in this section, I will combine the findings of the media coverage with Cameron's argumentation structure as this is explained in Section 3.4 and Section 5.4. The analysis of press coverage in the previous chapter revealed four central themes concerning the potential of British airstrikes in Syria: <u>UK involvement</u>, <u>internal politics</u>, <u>international participants</u> and <u>ISIL as a global ideological battle</u> (see Figure 6.10 for the summary of the themes and subthemes).

Cameron highlights that the basic *circumstance* and central problem in his speech is the threat of ISIL upon national and international security. First, on a national level, Cameron rescales the theme of <u>ISIL as a global ideological battle</u> to consider <u>the danger of ISIL</u> and the possibility of terrorist attacks in Britain, which the press had been reporting for a long period, but specifically after the Paris attacks. Mirroring the way this theme is generally covered in the press, Cameron uses a lot of evaluative and emphatic language, such as the UK is facing a "fundamental threat to our security," to emphasise <u>the danger of ISIL</u> to British national security rather than validating the level of risk. Having established the broad feeling towards ISIL's threat within his underlying *circumstances*, Cameron draws on the theme of <u>necessity of military action</u> to suggest that the *means-goal* should be immediate airstrikes to achieve the short-term *goals* of protecting national security. Cameron develops this threat of ISIL to add another concept in his *circumstances* that entails the delay of UK airstrikes is a problem. By this construal of *circumstances*, Cameron emphasises the *means-goal* to highlight that humanitarian values and national security are important potential semantic features of intervention, and from this combination, we see a clear tension between the two times. We can also see that intervention is identified by having immediate good (protecting national security), and this *goal* is linked to a short-term strategy (airstrikes).

The papers not only report on the danger of ISIL in general, but they also raise another issue, which is the increase in ISIL's power, particularly with respect to young British Muslims and to the group's financial efficiency. Cameron develops these themes in his *circumstances* when he stresses the rapid ideological development of ISIL in radicalising a huge number of people. Once Cameron has established this *circumstance*, he asserts the *values* of British solidarity as a means of legitimising airstrikes. In this construal, protecting young British Muslims can be set out as a *goal* of intervention, a strategy which reinforces the importance of immediate airstrikes to prevent the increase in ISIL's power. At the same time, Cameron reconstrues the *circumstantial values* to put the obligation upon the UK to protect national security and prevent young Muslims from being radicalised. In emphasising the *circumstances* of the increase in ISIL's power, Cameron addresses the *means-goal* to suggest two strategies: airstrikes to defeat ISIL and a counter-terrorism strategy to protect young Muslims from being radicalised.

With regard to the international level, Cameron rescales the theme of international participants with an explicit focus on the subtheme of international consensus to highlight how several international authorities share the view of strong support for defeating ISIL. By circulating ideas from international consensus, Cameron emphasises the strong legal position of action that is shared by several foreign governments and supported by the UN. Cameron strengthens this theme when he suggests that a central reason for defeating terrorism is supporting the *value* of a shared democratic system with America (van Dijk 2003). There is a danger here that such a construal evokes memories of Blair. However, Cameron distances himself from Blair by stating his *circumstantial value* of UK's capability to achieve the goals of protecting international security with the support of the UN, rather than justifying intervention under the norm of protecting the shared values with allies. The international consensus shown in the press also allows Cameron to expand his *means-goal* and suggest extra strategies (political and diplomatic processes in Syria) that are used to add a positive concept that justifies how airstrikes will help to solve the Syrian situation.

However, as the GM calls for expanding airstrikes from Iraq to Syria, the newspapers and specifically *The Guardian* and *The Mirror*, refer to concerns about bombing ISIL because of the unspecific timeline of defeating ISIL. Cameron *deals with concerns around the main claim* through an emphasis on the danger of ISIL in his

circumstances and his claim that the UK is in the top list of ISIL's targets. Another strategy for downplaying the concerns around intervention is the element of *emerging positive consequences of action already taken* that shows the effectiveness of airstrikes in Iraq against ISIL and implies that the continuing success of the Iraq campaign is dependent on the approval of this vote. Thus, Cameron represents airstrikes against ISIL in Iraq as a positive experience that should motivate the support for expanding airstrikes to Syria. Cameron counters <u>concerns about bombing ISIL</u> by revisiting the *circumstances* (national security under real threat) and *means-goal* to suggest "the risks of inaction are far greater than the risks of what I propose."

Overall, Cameron constructs the elements of *circumstances*, *goals* and *means-goal* to justify the significance of expanding immediate airstrikes from Iraq to Syria against ISIL. Cameron emphasises <u>the danger of ISIL</u> upon national and international security in the subthemes of the <u>increasing of ISIL's power</u> and <u>necessity of military action</u>. Developing the theme of <u>ISIL as a global battle</u> in his circumstances, Cameron suggests this is a shared feeling on a national and international level and thus, <u>international consensus about defeating ISIL</u> should motivate support for immediate airstrikes. However, some MPs from the floor raised <u>concerns about bombing ISIL,</u> such as the timeline and sending ground troops, and Cameron has to deal with these concerns through the element of *dealing with concerns around the main claim*. In this element, he revisits <u>ISIL as a global battle</u> and the <u>necessity of military action</u>, which are shown in the *circumstances*, *goals* and *means-goal* to justify his claim that "the risk of inaction is greater than the risk of action." Therefore, we see that Cameron deals with possible unintended consequences as a distraction that should not delay action against ISIL because the delay of action is treated as a problem, so he addresses the main *means-goal* as immediate humanitarian airstrikes to protect national security.

7.5. Opposition Amendments

For this debate, there are two amendments. They are included and analysed here in the same section because they are short.

The first amendment

Line 1, leave out from 'House' to end and add, while welcoming the renewed impetus towards peace and reconstruction in Syria, and the Government's recognition that a comprehensive strategy against Daesh is required, does not believe that the case for the UK's participation in the ongoing air campaign in Syria by 10 countries has been made under current circumstances, and consequently declines to authorise military action in Syria

The second amendment

Welcomes the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2249, which recognises that ISIL/Da'esh constitutes an 'unprecedented threat to international peace and security' and calls upon Member States to take 'all necessary measures' to eradicate the safe haven they have established over significant parts of Iraq and Syria, but considers that the proposal put forward by the Government does not represent a coherent and comprehensive military strategy that has a real chance of successfully eradicating Da'esh, but rather risks bombing innocent civilians currently held in Raqqa and other cities under Da'esh's control; therefore calls on Her Majesty's Government to work with the Secretary General, other members of the Security Council and other UN Member States, to establish a credible international coalition of ground forces predominantly from other Islamic countries, mandated by the Security Council to operate within Syria, to work in coordination with existing Allied and Russian air strikes towards the objective of eradicating Da'esh; further welcomes the commitment of the International Syrian Support Group to establish a ceasefire to facilitate a political resolution of the Civil War; and urges the Government to work within the United Nations to have the international coalition of ground forces authorised as the UN Peacekeeping force, mandated to create the conditions to enable such a political negotiation to take place.

The first amendment was produced by John Baron (Conservative MP). This amendment is very short. This amendment takes the opposite side to the Government motion and it can be labelled as a counter-claim in the process of deliberation in the parliamentary debate, as suggested by Fairclough and Fairclough (2012:203-206). The amendment starts by highlighting the goals of any military action. Its *goal* is different from the GM because it only focuses on the general goal which is the "the peace and reconstruction in Syria." Then, it moves to *rebut the main claim of the motion* by proposing that the air campaign does not meet the *circumstances*. Thus, the current amendment does not support the call for military action. This amendment only contains two elements of argument (*goals* and *rebutting the claim of the GM*), so there is no need to show the schema of the argument's reconstruction.

The second amendment is produced by Barry Gardiner (Labour MP) and others. The amendment uses four central elements of argument to rebut Cameron's claim and reconstruct another counter-claim. First, the *circumstance* suggests that ISIL had been causing an "unprecedented threat to international peace and security" (10-11). The second element is *rebutting the claim of Cameron* as "the Government does not represent a coherent and comprehensive military strategy that has a real chance of successfully eradicating Da'esh" (14-16). The amendment raises the concerns that the strategies of the GM will not achieve the goals. These concerns are supported by the element of the *possible negative consequences of the motion's claim* (16-17) to highlight the possible civilian casualties in Syria. The last element is the alternative *claim* that emphasises the activation of the Security Council to "establish a credible international coalition of ground forces," and "to establish a ceasefire to facilitate a political resolution of the Civil War" (17-25). These two actions are the *main claim* of the amendment. The amendment activates the role of the international community to support shared international ground forces rather than discussing the possibility of British direct involvement in Syria. Figure 7.6 below shows the argument's reconstruction of the second amendment.
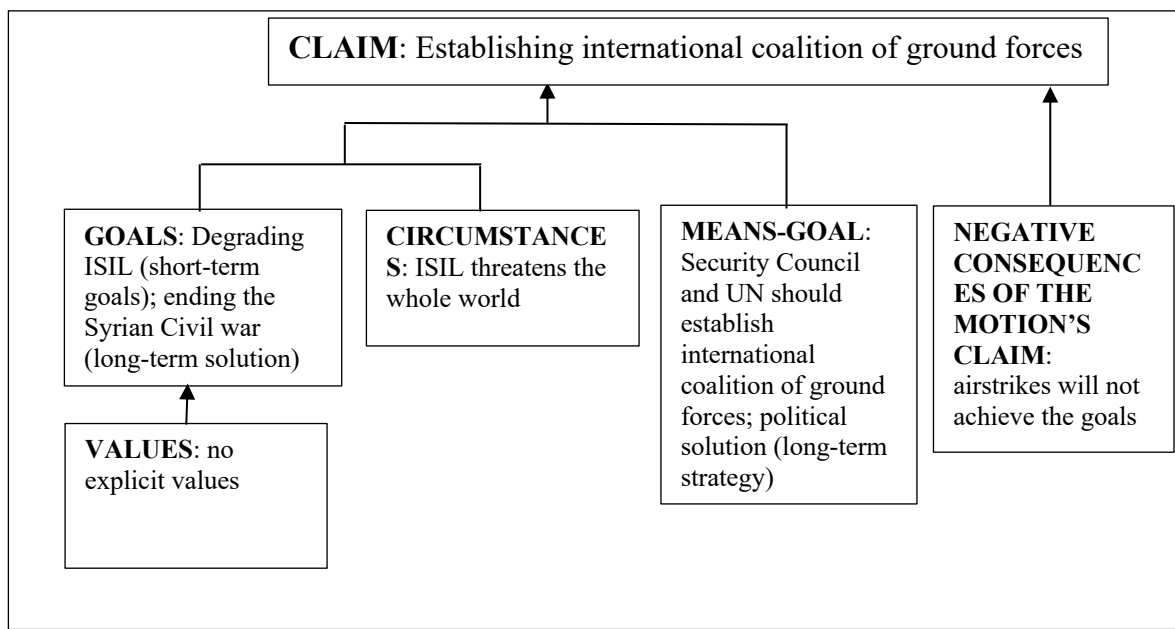
Figure 7.6: The structure of practical argument for the second Opposition amendment

The second amendment agrees with the GM in highlighting the main problem, which is the threat of ISIL. Furthermore, it agrees with the motion about the goals of defeating ISIL and ending the Syrian civil war. However, the GM and this amendment differ in their strategies and *means-goals*. This amendment differs from the GM by regarding the international ground forces as the means to achieve the goals. In contrast, the GM suggests airstrikes are the ideal option for defeating ISIL. Cameron and Corbyn (as we will see below) exclude the British ground forces from the means and strategies because this step may lead to negative consequences. However, this amendment takes another angle and calls for the coalition of ground forces to achieve the goals, and according to this amendment, this coalition must be established by the 'Security Council'. Thus, it calls for international military action, which is defined as ground forces, and this action should be supported by the Security Council.

7.6. Corbyn's Speech

Corbyn was the second key speaker in this debate, and his speech took place immediately after Cameron's. As with Miliband's speech (Section 5.6), there are several significant similarities and differences between the elements underlying the arguments of both Cameron and Corbyn. From this perspective, Corbyn not only tries to build and reconstruct concepts and ideas around the meaning of intervention, but he also attempts to rebut Cameron's case in his speech. Within the analysis of Corbyn's argument, I discuss the tensions between the two speeches, as this method is the same as the analysis of Miliband's argument (Chapter 5). Corbyn develops his argument through three central formulations: key principles of opposing military intervention, the situation in the UK and Syria and dealing with strategies of defeating ISIL[31].

7.6.1. Corbyn's First Formulation: Key Principles of Opposing Military Intervention (1-40)

In this introductory part, Corbyn introduces the central ideas of his argument, which he develops over his speech. In lines 1-40, Corbyn uses three elements of argument: *the possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim*, *negation proposed construal by Cameron* and *circumstances*. These elements are developed in more detail within his speech.

The first element is *the possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim* (1-10). In this element, Corbyn denies and attempts to rebut Cameron's *claim* about supporting intervention in Syria. The tone of opposition to the main claim is shown as in:

> *"The whole House recognises that decisions to send British forces to war are the most serious, solemn and morally challenging of any that we have to take as Members of Parliament… It is a decision with potentially far-reaching consequences for us all here in Britain, as well as for the people of Syria and the wider middle east"* (1-6)

---

[31] See Appendix Six (p.529) for the detail categorisation of Corbyn's speech using Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach.

In this opening statement, Corbyn suggests the difficulty of making the decision towards defeating terrorism, but in general, he negates the central *claim* of Cameron. Corbyn raises the potential negative consequences of military action upon British and Syrian people because of "taking a decision that will put British servicemen and women in harm's way, and almost inevitably lead to the deaths of innocents" (7-8). Here, Corbyn makes the meaning of intervention more general than Cameron's construal in that he attempts to establish that the approval of this vote not only means airstrikes against ISIL; it also comprises any type of military action including ground forces. In contrast, Cameron uses the term 'airstrikes' to refer to extending airstrikes from Iraq to Syria with the exclusion of ground forces.

The second element is *the negation of the proposed construal by Cameron against the opposition* (10-18, 15-18 and 30-33). This element is not used in Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) in their case studies, which might be because they do not analyse two whole speeches in a debate that oppose each other. In this element, Corbyn negates the attempts of Cameron to persuade the MPs by describing the opponents to the motion as "terrorist sympathisers." As shown in Cameron's speech, Cameron stated this description one night before the debate. In the debate, Corbyn demonstrates that:

> *"the Prime Minister's attempt to brand those who plan to vote against the Government as "terrorist sympathisers", both demeans the office of the Prime Minister and, I believe, undermines the seriousness of the deliberations we are having today…"* (10-18)

This quote shows the denial of Cameron's strategy of putting the MPs under pressure to support the motion by this persuasion. Here, Corbyn repeats the request of other MPs by asking Cameron to apologise to Parliament, but Cameron does not apologise as his apology is discussed in Section 7.3.1. In his introductory part, Corbyn not only counters the main claim of Cameron, but he also opposes the way that Cameron tried to persuade MPs.

The third element in this formulation is the *circumstances* (24-26 and 34-40). In this element, Corbyn represents the stance of the MPs towards the statement of Cameron. He negates the persuasion of Cameron, and he assures that:

"Abuse has no part in responsible democratic political dialogue, and I believe that very strongly." (24-25)

This example shows how Corbyn started his speech not by discussing the issues and possibility of British military action in Syria, but by highlighting the internal politics as a central issue. According to Corbyn, the MPs should debate issues in a civilised manner, and they should not be "abused" to support the GM. Corbyn deals with the situation of the call for military action as a problem as he proposes:

> *Since the Prime Minister first made his case for extending British bombing to Syria in the House last week, the doubts and unanswered questions expressed on both sides of the House have only grown and multiplied.* (34-36)

Corbyn suggests the concerns of military action had been increasing in the British community, and so "the Government have decided to push this vote through Parliament today" (36-37). Corbyn represents these political issues to criticise the Government's stance as not reflecting the voice of the public. However, the papers criticise the failure of Corbyn to persuade his party of his position. Here, Corbyn implicitly attempts to negate his failure and raise concerns towards the morality of the MPs for 'abusing' them. I will discuss this point in more detail in the intertextual analysis (Section 7.7). Figure 7.7 shows the reconstruction of the argument for the first formulation of Corbyn's speech. At this stage, Corbyn has not developed the core elements of his argument, while he highlights his central stance towards the GM. Corbyn shows his position as part of building his construal of the meaning of British military intervention.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  CLAIM: Not developed at this stage, only the strong opposition against the GM │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

| GOALS: No goals stated at this stage | CIRCUMSTANCES: The atmosphere of the debate is affected by Cameron's statement (terrorist sympathisers); public concern towards military action increases over time

CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES: Morality of MPs within the debate; | MEANS-GOAL: No means-goal at this stage | POSSIBLE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF CAMERON'S CLAIM: Military action will have negative consequences for British and Syrian people; Putting British servicemen and women in harm's way; civilian casualties in Syria |

VALUES: MPs should debate issues in a civilised and proper manner.

NEGATION PROPOSED CONSTRUAL: Objecting the motion does not meant that one is a "terrorist sympathiser"

Figure 7.7: The structure of practical argument for Corbyn's speech (first formulation)

7.6.2. Corbyn's Second Formulation: The Situation in the UK and Syria (47-121)

While Corbyn showed strong opposition to the Government motion before, he now moves on to the second formulation, which expresses the specific context of the UK and the broad context of the Syrian situation. Within this formulation, there is: (1) a projection for the third formulation (47-52), and these lines will be analysed in section 7.6.3 because they are part of discussing strategies of dealing with ISIL, and (2) lines 308-335 and 314-317 are moved to be discussed in this formulation because they discuss the British and Syrian situations. The second formulation has two elements: *circumstances* and *emerging negative consequences of action already taken*.

The first element is the *circumstances* (59-65, 71-80 and 91-97, 105-111 and 308-314). Corbyn uses this element in three ways: criticising the Government's call for military action, obligation upon the MPs and the threat of ISIL. First, Corbyn claims that

the Government is attempting to call for military action in the face of increased public concerns towards the UK's participation in Syria. Corbyn criticises Cameron for failing to recognise the escalation of public concern towards military action. In his circumstances, Cameron had suggested that the main concern for British people was national security, which is under risk because of ISIL. Corbyn is countering one of Cameron's *circumstances* and arguing for an alternative in terms of the British community fears of being involved in Syria as in:

> *"the Prime Minister understands that public opinion is moving increasingly against what I believe to be an ill-thought-out rush to war. He wants to hold this vote before opinion against it grows even further…"*
> (59-65)

Here, the example shows an update of the situation of the British people. After this construal, Corbyn tries to weaken the proposed strategies (*means-goals*) by Cameron, specifically "lack of strategy worth the name, the absence of credible ground troops, the missing diplomatic plan for a Syrian settlement…" (62-63). This construal by Corbyn is supported by the Foreign Affairs Committee (an alternative authority to Cameron) who reported, "the Prime Minister had not adequately addressed concerns" (77-79). Corbyn provides these *circumstances* to suggest the basis of making the claim is considering the "public concern," and he suggests that Cameron calls for imminent action in Syria to avoid the increasing of public concern towards intervention.

As part of the UK context, Corbyn expands his *circumstances* to provide the *circumstantial value* that suggests the MPs' duty in Parliament. The central *circumstantial value* is the obligation of the MPs to reflect the voice of the public. For example, Corbyn urges:

> *"every MP has a constituency, and every MP should be aware of what constituents' and public opinion is…"* (71-75)

When Corbyn expresses the concerns of the British people towards military action, he reminds the MPs of their duty to reflect the voice of their constituents. Public concern is shown here as fears of defeating ISIL. In contrast, Cameron argues that the central concern of the British people is the threat of ISIL upon national security, and there is a

need for immediate airstrikes. Corbyn goes against Cameron's view of *circumstances* to delegitimise military intervention (this will be discussed further in Section 7.7).

In the *circumstantial* element, Corbyn not only represents the situation of the UK, but also highlights the situation of ISIL and their threat to the world (105-111). Even though Corbyn raises concerns about military action against ISIL, he suggests this group is threatening the world as in:

> *Islamic State has imposed a reign of sectarian and inhuman terror in Iraq, Syria and Libya. There is no question but that it also poses a threat to our own people* (105-107)

Here, Corbyn agrees with Cameron about the existence of ISIL's threat. However, Corbyn then takes a different angle to recommend that fighting ISIL should be deliberated according to "whether extending British bombing from Iraq to Syria is likely to reduce or increase that threat to Britain" (107-108). This example and the others above show that Corbyn disagrees with Cameron about the relative weighting of the issues that threaten the British people. This use of 'public concerns' within *circumstances* suggests that this a specific interest that is a personal *value* of Corbyn, so he proposes to debate all the possibilities of defeating ISIL rather than specifying the claim as a military action.

At the end of this formulation, Corbyn uses the second element, which is *emerging negative consequences of action already taken* (112-121, 314-317 and 324-330). In these lines, Corbyn seeks to directly undermine Cameron's strategy of highlighting *emerging positive consequences of action already taken* in support of the motion. Corbyn casts doubts on the success of airstrikes in Iraq, while he suggests that extending airstrikes to Syria will not achieve the proposed goals as in:

> *During more than a year of bombing, ISIL has expanded as well as lost territory. ISIL gains included the Iraqi city of Ramadi and the Syrian city of Palmyra… In other words, extending British bombing is unlikely to make a huge difference.* (116-121)

This quote shows that the goals of actions already taken in the region against ISIL had not been achieved since airstrikes started in Iraq. The GM is linked to the idea that "the spectre of Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya looms over this debate" (316-317). Within this element, Corbyn refers to a central goal, which is defeating ISIL. Corbyn suggests that

airstrikes in Iraq prove the invalidity of attacking ISIL due to the negative consequences, so he highlights the negative experience of attacking ISIL in Iraq to rebut the *means-goal* suggested by Cameron. Again, Corbyn differs from Cameron in construing the experience of attacking ISIL in Iraq, as each speaker strategically reconstrues the events to support his own claim.

At this stage, Corbyn develops ideas that highlight British national security and public fears of any intervention. At the same time, he seeks to refute not only the idea of expanding airstrikes from Iraq to Syria, but he dismisses the whole strategy of British military action in Iraq and Syria. However, until this stage of his speech, the main claim is not provided clearly, while Corbyn explicitly takes the position of standing against the Government call for any intervention. Figure 7.8 shows the elements of the argument developed by Corbyn up to this part of his speech.

CLAIM: No clear claim at this stage, but Corbyn construes that the UK ought to stand against intervention in Syria

GOALS: Degrading ISIL

VALUES: MPs should debate issues in a civilised and proper manner; reflecting public voice and constituents

CIRCUMSTANCES: The atmosphere of the debate is affected by Cameron's statement (terrorist sympathisers); the public concern towards military action increases over time; public concern about military action has been increasing; Cameron's strategies are ambiguous; ISIL threatens the world;

CIRCUMSTANTIAL VALUES: Morality of MPs within the debate; MPs should reflect the voice of their constituents

ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY: Foreign Affairs Committee raises concerns around Cameron's construal of circumstances.

MEANS-GOAL: Not clearly identified at this stage

POSSIBLE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF CAMERON'S CLAIM: Military action will have negative consequences for British and Syrian people; Putting British servicemen and women in harm's way; civilian casualties in Syria;

EMERGING NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF ACTION ALREADY TAKEN: Targets of air campaign had not achieved the goals; possibility of repeating mistakes of previous interventions

NEGATION PROPOSED CONSTRUAL: Objecting the motion does not meant that one is a "terrorist sympathiser"

Figure 7.8: The structure of practical argument for Corbyn's speech (second formulation)

7.6.3. Corbyn's Third Formulation: Dealing with Strategies of Defeating ISIL (123-335)

In his third formulation, Corbyn does two things at the same time. He attempts to rebut the proposed strategies by Cameron and builds up his proposals for alternative strategies to defeat terrorism. Within this formulation: (1) lines 220-233 and 291-301 show discussions around MPs' requests to have a chance of talking in the debate, so these lines do not contribute to the discussion of the reconstruction of Corbyn's argument, and (2) lines 308-335 are discussed in the second formulation. The third formulation is shown in two central elements: *possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim* and *the main claim* (including proposed sub-actions "*means-goal*").

The first element is *possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim* (127-163, 174-189, 215-219, 190-207, 251-255, 288-290 and 304-307). In this element, Corbyn focuses on three issues: negative impact upon the UK, negative consequences upon the Syrian people and concerns around cooperating with ground forces in Syria. The first central issue is the negative consequences of military action upon the UK (174-189 and 215-219). Corbyn attempts to undermine making the choice of airstrikes as the ideal action for defeating ISIL. He first suggests that the British airstrikes may have a backlash as:

> *the Prime Minister has avoided spelling out to the British people the warnings that he has surely been given about the likely impact of UK air strikes in Syria on the threat of terrorist attacks in the UK…* (174-176)

This idea is also highlighted by Cameron when he denies fearing a backlash after the approval of airstrikes. Cameron proposes in the *circumstances* that the UK is already in the top list of ISIL targets even before any military action, so he puts military action as the *means* that will protect the UK from the threat of ISIL. However, Corbyn tries to counter Cameron's interpretation and suggests that any backlash would be related to military action, so *intervention* will increase the risk of ISIL upon national security. He raises the negative imaginary of the 7/7 attack in 2005, and the fears of repeating the same scenario (218-219). Corbyn distances himself from Cameron and suggests that military actions will threaten national security. Another possible negative consequence is

that military action will increase racism in the British community. Corbyn urges the MPs to consider how:

> *We should also remember the impact on communities here in Britain.... none of us—we can say this together—will tolerate any form of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia or racism in any form in this country.* (184-189)

Corbyn highlights that military action is a sensitive issue not only because of the possible backlash, but also because of multiculturalism in British society. These negative consequences reveal how Corbyn deals with military action as a problem in itself rather than being a strategy to achieve the goals (multiculturalism will be discussed more in Section 7.7).

Then, Corbyn moves on to show the possible negative consequences upon the Syrian people, which is the second issue in this element (*possible negative consequences of Cameron's main claim*) (190-207, 251-255, 288-290 and 304-307). Corbyn suggests military action will cause civilian casualties in Syria. He opposes the stance of the Government as in:

> *the Prime Minister has offered no serious assessment of the impact of an intensified air campaign on civilian casualties in ISIL-held Syrian territory... Many more have been killed by the Assad regime than by ISIL itself. Yet more bombing in Syria will kill innocent civilians...* (190-196)

Corbyn proposes that the strategies (*the means-goal*) of defeating ISIL should be defined by the Syrian civilians. Here, Corbyn seeks to undermine the *means-goal* of Cameron by interpreting the *circumstances* differently from Cameron because Corbyn determines the problem as the whole situation in the region rather than focusing only on the existence of ISIL and ISIL taking advantage of the chaos in Iraq and Syria. Then, Corbyn links this situation to show that airstrikes will make the Syrian situation worse. His rebuttal is supported by an argument from a witness who states:

> *"Members of my family still live there and Isil didn't kill them. My question to David Cameron is: 'Can you guarantee the safety of my family when your air forces bomb my city?'* (198-207)

From this statement, a Syrian civilian supports the concerns raised by Corbyn and at the same time, he suggests that military action is not a solution for the Syrian people. Corbyn emphasises that airstrikes have negative consequences upon Syrian civilians.

The last issue in rebutting Cameron's case is the concerns around the West coordinating with fighters on the ground (127-163). Corbyn states that:

Last week, the Prime Minister suggested that a combination of Kurdish militias and the Free Syrian Army would be able to fill the gap. He even claimed that a 70,000-strong force of moderate FSA [Free Syrian Army] fighters was ready to co-ordinate action against ISIL with the western air campaign… Kurdish forces are a distance away… Neither will the FSA, which includes a wide range of groups that few, if any, would regard as moderate and which mostly operates in other parts of the country… (127-137)

In this quote, it is suggested that it is difficult to guarantee that Kurdish and FSA fighters will cooperate with Britain in the region to defeat ISIL. He raises concerns regarding how moderate fighters can be defined. Here, Corbyn suggests that the meaning of moderate fighters is ambiguous, and it is difficult to define moderate fighters on the ground. Corbyn implicitly refers to the spectre of the Taliban in Afghanistan that was supported by the US to oust Russians. However, the Taliban that was cooperating with the US at that time became a radical enemy that threatened US security later. From this perspective, Corbyn delegitimises military action as being the means for achieving the proposed goal of defeating terrorism.

After the attempts to rebut Cameron's argument, Corbyn highlights his *main claim*, which is the second central element of the third formulation (157-163, 241-250, 262-268 and 272-277). Within the *main claim*, Corbyn emphasises the proposed strategies (*means-goal*). In this element, Corbyn justifies how the political process is the ideal action for achieving peace and defeating terrorism, while military action is construed as antagonistic and opposite to diplomatic strategy. The first strategy that Corbyn proposes in defeating ISIL is investigating the situation and having clear and sufficient reports about the whole story in Syria as:

I think we need to know exactly who is buying that oil, who is funding it, what banks are involved in the financial transactions that ultimately

benefit ISIL, and which other countries in the region either are or are not
involved.   (158-160)

These series of actions are proposed as the current imminent actions needed against the existence of ISIL's threat instead of direct military involvement. As Corbyn suggests in the previous formulation that the whole Syrian situation is ambiguous, he encourages the UK to consider the whole scenario rather than focusing only on the threat of ISIL (241-250). Corbyn suggests that the central problem is not the existence of ISIL, but rather "who" is behind the existence of ISIL and indirectly supports this organisation. The *main alternative* strategy suggested is that, "We absolutely need action to ensure that there is a diplomatic and political solution to the crisis…" (262-263). He suggests that these types of interventions will help to "establish a broad-based Government in Syria who have the support of the majority of their people" (272-273). From this angle, Corbyn negatively represents military action, while instead, he presupposes the alternative is the political and diplomatic process which is his *main claim* of the argument. At the end of his speech, Corbyn defines and rephrases his claim explicitly:

> *In my view, only a negotiated political and diplomatic endeavour to bring*
> *about an end to the civil war in Syria will bring some hope to the millions*
> *who have lost their homes… I think our overriding goal should be to end*
> *that civil war in Syria, and obviously also to protect the people of this*
> *country* (350-351)

From this quote, Corbyn presupposes that the MPs should recognise the overall situation in Syria instead of only defeating ISIL. He takes this point of view to suggest the validity of the political process to solve the whole situation in Syria, including the terror of ISIL and the British national security.

Lines 345-365 show a summary and concluding remarks of Corbyn's case. This part does not have any new elements or ideas that show the development of the argument, while he summarises the key concepts of his claim and attempts to urge the MPs to stand against the GM. Figure 7.9 shows the elements of the argument reconstruction for Corbyn's practical argument, including the new ideas provided in this last formulation. After the schema, I discuss how Corbyn rescales the themes shown in the press as part of his reconstruction of the claim in order to identify the meaning of British military action.
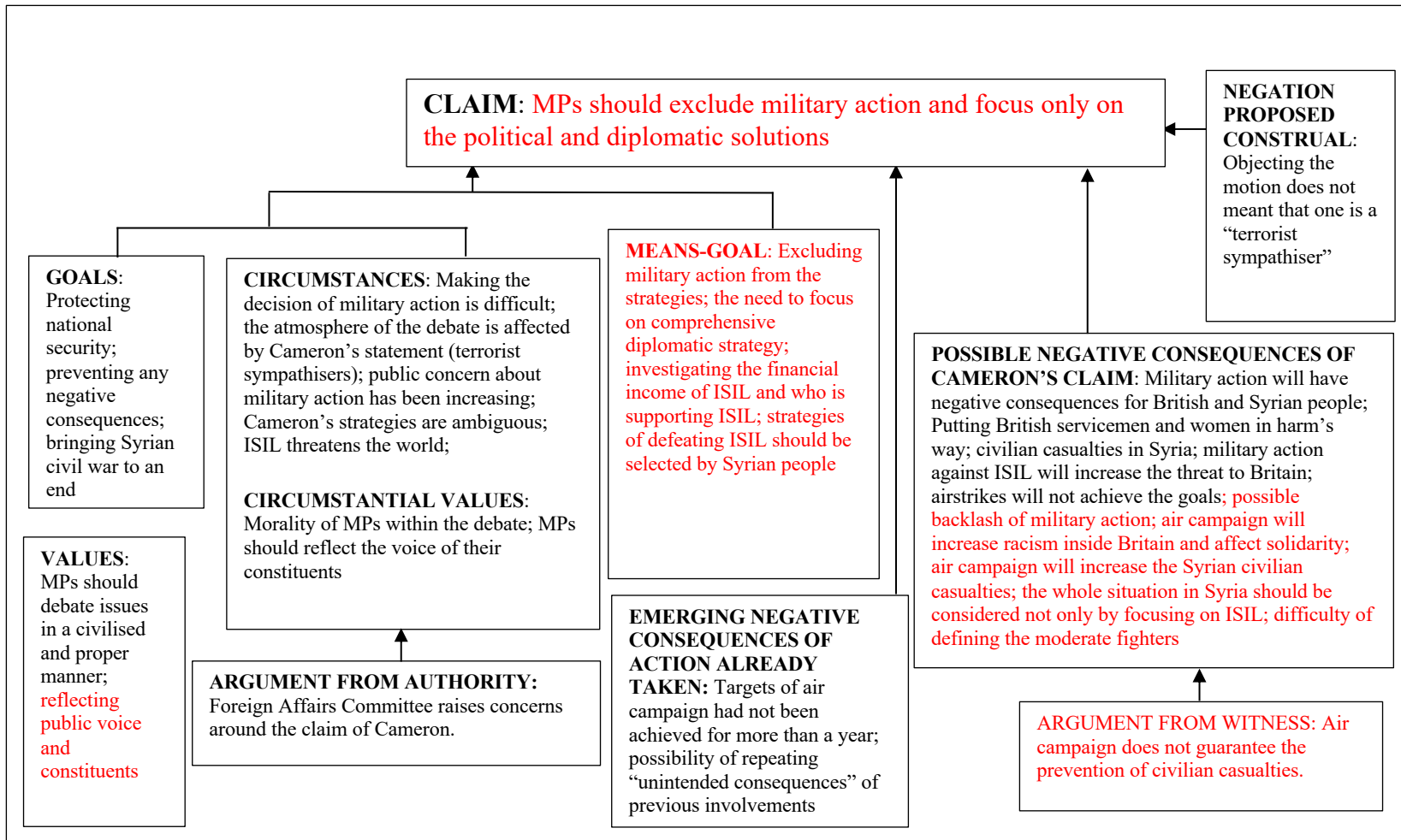
Figure 7. 9: The structure of practical argument for Corbyn's speech (third formulation)

7.7. Intertextuality: Rescaling Practice in Corbyn's Speech

The newspapers themes in representing the Syrian situation at the time of the second vote were: <u>UK involvement,</u> <u>ISIL as a global ideological battle,</u> <u>internal politics</u> and <u>international participants.</u> As shown in the intertextual analysis of Cameron's speech (Section 7.4), Cameron primarily draws on <u>ISIL as a global ideological battle</u> to portray ISIL as a real threat on international and national security and thus, justifies the need for immediate expansion of airstrikes from Iraq to Syria. Corbyn, however, rescales the themes of the press to support one central idea, which is the delegitimisation of airstrikes in Syria and adherence to the diplomatic process.

The starting point that Corbyn focuses on is the national level and the negative impact of airstrikes upon Britain. Corbyn refers to ISIL's threat as shown in <u>ISIL as global battle</u>, but he stands against the escalation of ISIL's threat as paving the way for military intervention. Rather, Corbyn circulates ideas from <u>the concerns about bombing ISIL</u>, while countering those shown in <u>the necessity of military action</u> to suggest in his *circumstances* that the action proposed in the GM is a greater concern for Britain at the time of the debate, more so than the threat of ISIL. Thus, Corbyn construes *possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim* in arguing that airstrikes are more likely to cause problems to Britain than to protect the national security. However, as there was strong opposition against Corbyn's stance, he turns to highlight Cameron's statement of "terrorist sympathisers" at the beginning of his speech because this statement negatively affects the environment of deliberation and puts all the other views against the GM under pressure. Here, Corbyn draws on the theme of <u>internal politics,</u> not to address reports of his failure to unite his party, but to emphasise *circumstantial values* regarding the importance of behaving in a civilised manner in Parliament, possibly as an alternative means of deflecting the explicit criticism of him in the press.

Corbyn reinforces the notion that airstrikes are a problem rather than a means of protecting national security in presenting *emerging negative consequences of actions already taken*, such as the goals of airstrikes in Iraq not having been achieved and a possible backlash against these airstrikes and increasing racism in Britain. Corbyn integrates these concerns with his *circumstantial value* through the implication that MPs should reflect the public worries about expanding aristrikes. By doing this, Corbyn reconstrues his *circumstances* to emphasise that the existence of the public concern is a result of the GM rather than ISIL's threat upon national security. Once

Corbyn has set out these concerns, he can downplay <u>the necessity of military action</u> and delegitimise making airstrikes an inevitable option. Through these strategies, Corbyn revisits the specification of the main *means-goal* of the Government (i.e., airstrikes) and calls to debate "whether extending British bombing from Iraq to Syria is likely to reduce or increase that threat to Britain" (107-108).

Corbyn also considers the aspect of the international level as a general way of countering the idea that 'airstrikes' are the main action for defeating ISIL. Corbyn ignores the themes of <u>international participants,</u> specifically those in <u>the international consensus about defeating ISIL</u>, through which the newspapers promote the view that several international authorities including the UN support military action against ISIL and focuses instead on the role of international participants only once in his *circumstances,* when he raises the suffering of Syrians. Corbyn expands this situation in the *possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim* to highlight that airstrikes will increase civilian casualties. Having established that the Syrian people are suffering from airstrikes and ISIL, Corbyn provides an alternative *means-goal* that justifies that the local people in the region should determine the means for defeating ISIL because they face a direct negative effect of airstrikes in the region. Therefore, Corbyn goes against the subthemes of <u>international consensus about defeating ISIL</u> and the <u>necessity of military action</u> and suggests instead that investigating the whole scenario of ISIL and who buys the oil from them, along with political and diplomatic procedures rather than military action, represent an appropriate *means-goal* for defeating ISIL at its base. Therefore, we can see that Corbyn uses these strategies to exclude defining airstrikes as an "inevitable option" in the *means-goal* of defeating ISIL.

In the analysis of the two speeches overall, it can be said that Cameron and Corbyn share the same view of ISIL's threat. However, they differ in weighting the importance of strategies for dealing with this problem. Cameron reinforces the escalation of ISIL's threat shown in the <u>necessity of military action</u> and <u>ISIL as a global battle</u> to legitimise immediate airstrikes in Syria. He uses this strategy and addresses ideas shown in the <u>international consensus about defeating ISIL</u> to reconstruct the main *means-goal* (airstrikes) as an inevitable military option. Cameron expands this idea in his *circumstances* to suggest that any delay in attacking ISIL will have negative consequences. In contrast, Corbyn draws on ideas from the <u>concerns about bombing ISIL</u> to block military intervention as a means for achieving the goals.

Those concerns are established in his circumstances to highlight airstrikes as a problem because it will have negative consequences. Rather, Corbyn urges non-military strategies as the ideal actions for dealing with ISIL's threat. From these findings, it is clear that Cameron has rescaled more ideas and concepts from the media than Corbyn, specifically those ideas that reinforce the escalation of ISIL's threat and the need for immediate action. On the other hand, Corbyn tries to downplay ISIL's threat to delegitimate the need for immediate airstrikes.

7.8. Conclusion: The Construction of Equivalence and Differences through Argument Structure

As discussed in the conclusion of Chapter 5, the construal of meaning should be considered from a performative perspective with the consideration of the different levels of context. In the debate of this chapter, Cameron and Corbyn perform the reconstruction of their arguments and rescale ideas from the broad context to produce specific concepts around the signifier intervention. The central social imaginary used by both party leaders in the debate is 'national security' and within this imaginary, Cameron and Corbyn provide several ideas as motives for supporting or opposing military intervention. Each speaker represents himself as reflecting the real concerns of British people, either in supporting military intervention or political process to protect the national security (cf. the claims by both eco-warriors and pro-Manchester Airport that they represent the interests of the local people, Griggs and Howarth 2000). Within the reconstruction of ideas in the speeches, both speakers used the logic of equivalence and difference in their attempts to win a majority in the debate.

Cameron follows the same line of the press coverage and material events that highlight the escalation of ISIL as a direct threat upon the British national security in terms of the social imaginaries of national security, the previous Iraq invasion and national harmony. First, with regard to national security, Cameron relates the increase in ISIL's threat to national security to legitimise the necessity of immediate airstrikes in Syria. He also reinforces the threat of ISIL due to their brutal ideology, thus applying the logic of equivalence to unite MPs in Parliament who see defeating ISIL as an unavoidable option because it has a direct threat upon national security with those who do so for humanitarian reasons. However, some MPs within the debate have concerns about the possible negative consequences of airstrikes, and others raise concerns about sending ground troops to Syria. These concerns tend to break down the proposed logic of equivalence by Cameron. He denies these concerns and makes his position as well as those MPs equivalent by sharing a higher *value*, which is the protection of national security from the direct threat of ISIL. Cameron argues that inaction has a greater impact on national security than the action against ISIL. Cameron claims that the call for immediate action is a reflection of public concerns, which has urged him to unite the country to support immediate action. Furthermore, as the current vote is a part of the original vote about attacking ISIL in Iraq, Cameron interconnects the two votes under the same action because they share the same goals.

He seeks to continue with the same majority that he gained in the vote of attacking ISIL in Iraq, as there was a notable difference between the Ayes (524) and Noes (43). Cameron motivates those who supported airstrikes in Iraq to continue their support for the current vote because both votes have the same goals, which are protecting national security and degrading ISIL. However, Cameron uses the logic of difference to split the Opposition and to divide those who have legitimate concerns over intervention from those who are fundamentally opposed to attacking ISIL, who he describes as "a bunch of terrorist sympathisers." At the same time, Cameron suggests that those who support airstrikes but have legitimate concerns are equivalent to those who support this intervention with concerns because both share the high value of protecting national security.

The second social imaginary is the Iraq invasion that entails the danger of repercussion of the Iraq invasion in 2003. Cameron attempts to break an implied logic of equivalence by some MPs who argue that both Cameron and Blair share the call for immediate intervention. Instead, Cameron shows his equivalence with the MPs by sharing the concerns towards repeating the mistakes of the Iraq invasion, and how the Government considers the lessons of the Iraq war. He also highlights the idea that evidence for the threat of ISIL comes not only from UK sources, but from international authorities, such as the UN and JIC. Cameron further seeks to counter possible similarities between him and Blair by suggesting that the *circumstances* behind the GM take into account public concerns about both the threat of ISIL and the availability of the evidence about the situation in Syria and Iraq. Furthermore, Cameron suggests how he and the MPs align themselves with the development of UK foreign policy by following the coalition of the international community and UN resolutions rather than supporting a particular ally, the US, as was the case with Blair.

The third social imaginary is enhancing 'national harmony', which suggests that the whole British society is under a fundamental threat from ISIL. Cameron uses this imaginary to suggest that MPs share the value of protecting young British Muslims from being radicalised by ISIL. In this case, the logic of equivalence is applied to groups outside Parliament, so this should be analysed at two levels. First, Cameron is suggesting that there is a bad logic of equivalence out there, the concept of the Caliphate as uniting Muslims, and that this needs to be broken down (through the logic of difference), so that an alternative logic of equivalence, British Muslims, can be encouraged. Therefore, Cameron splits ISIL's unitary vision of Islam through a

division into military and peaceful Islam. With peaceful Islam, this refers to the British Muslims, who will share the value of the importance of defeating ISIL. Thus, it is important for Parliament to take steps to prevent ISIL from creating the first equivalence. In other words, Cameron is not using this logic of equivalence directly to increase support, but he is using the threat of ISIL's logic of equivalence as a means of doing so. At another level, Cameron is trying to create a logic of equivalence to bring together all MPs who are worried about the radicalisation of Muslim youths in the UK and national harmony. Cameron emphasises the concept of multiculturalism and the need to treat Muslims as an in-group within British society in order to place responsibility upon the MPs to protect young British Muslims from being radicalised by ISIL.

On the other hand, in his speech, Corbyn focuses on one central social imaginary, which is the national interest, and this social imaginary includes democratic values and public concerns. In the first, at the beginning of his speech, Corbyn attempts to counter Cameron's creation of a logic of difference when he describes those who are against the motion as "terrorist sympathisers." Corbyn suggests that MPs must reject Cameron's use of this label and suggests instead that all MPs share the value of protecting national security, and they should deliberate the means of protecting this value in a civilised manner. Corbyn produces an alternative logic of equivalence to combine those who have concerns from airstrikes with those who oppose intervention in that they share the value of protecting national security, and that they share concerns about airstrikes because military action will have a negative impact on Britain.

Corbyn then goes on to highlight the idea of public concern as a central concept under the social imaginary of the national interest. Corbyn implicitly refers to his awareness about the majority that Cameron gained in the vote of attacking ISIL in Iraq when he highlights how this majority had been decreasing before the second vote of expanding airstrikes to Syria. Corbyn suggests that this majority had significantly decreased because many people in Britain started to raise concerns about airstrikes and, furthermore, that Cameron does not reflect the concerns of the public and has called for the vote before he loses his majority. Therefore, Corbyn suggests that those who supported attacking ISIL in Iraq in 2014 have now started to change their views, thus undermining Cameron's proposed logic of equivalence. Corbyn rejects another logic of equivalence proposed by Cameron with regard to the need to protect young

British Muslims from being radicalised by ISIL. Corbyn, in contrast, suggests that military action does not create solidarity and multiculturalism in the British community, but rather that airstrikes will affect the solidarity of British society. He argues that this action will increase concerns about Islamophobia, which tends to portray the Muslim community as different from British society. In this way, each speaker attempts to represent his claim as calling for solidarity in the British community and neglects the racial discourse by dealing with young Muslims as an in-group in the British community, but they differ in the application of the logic of equivalence and difference.

In general, Cameron uses several positive concepts around intervention, such as protecting national security, international legality, humanitarianism, availability of sources and the support of the international community to reaffirm the necessity of immediate airstrikes in Syria. In contrast, Corbyn reconstructs several elements in his argument to disarticulate the concepts that emphasise the importance of military intervention in Cameron's speech or the press and, as an alternative, he proposes non-military strategies as the means for protecting national security. These findings of this chapter also take another angle of Brighton's suggestion (2007) that entails multiculturalism is a central issue in debating British military action against terrorism. However, the speakers in the second debate use 'multiculturalism' as a further developed concept under the idea of 'national interest' in their overall construals of intervention.

In this chapter, I have discussed the construals of Cameron and Corbyn for intervention. Cameron specifies the type of action as airstrikes, a strategy he uses to protect national security from the direct threat of ISIL. Then, this notion is expanded to international legality and consensus towards defeating ISIL. However, Corbyn blocks any type of military action, and instead, he suggests non-military strategies. Therefore, we see that, even when speakers do not explicitly refer to intervention as the central debated concept at Time Two, the speakers still debate the type of intervention in Syria. In the following chapter, I revisit the findings shown in the analytical chapters (Four-Seven) in order to summarise the sub-questions of the research. Then, I will move on to discuss the main question of the research. Therefore, the following chapter will discuss the diachronic semantic progress of British intervention across the two votes with a consideration of the triangulation proposed in Section 2.4.

Chapter Eight: Concluding Discussion

8.1. Introduction

The central research question that this thesis addresses is "**how do the terms of the UK parliamentary debates on possible intervention in Syria change as a response to the changes in the material situation in Syria and in the media coverage of events in that country?**" The two votes analysed in this study both concern the possible British intervention in Syria. In the first vote, I investigated the construal of intervention in relation to the use of chemical weapons in Syria, whereas, in the second vote, I analysed the construal of the meaning of intervention in relation to the growing strength of ISIL in Syria and the region. Although this keyword (intervention) is not explicitly used in the debate and media coverage at Time Two, the concept intervention remains the underlying principle that is being debated because the MPs still negotiate the identifications of the boundaries of intervention in Syria, as this is discussed in Sections 7.2 and 7.4.

The main research question is further divided into sub-questions:

1. What themes and topics do the newspapers develop around the situation in Syria and the possibility of military action at Time One and Time Two?
2. How do speakers strategically rescale the themes developed in the press in their construals of intervention at Time One and Time Two?
3. How do they create equivalences and differences across their construals of military intervention/action in order to gain a majority at Time One and Time Two?

In order to reach an answer to these sub-questions, I suggested in Chapter Three that there is an interplay of three different aspects that need to be considered in the analysis of the thesis. These aspects include: (1) material and historical events, (2) press coverage (which is taken to represent 'shared knowledge' in British society), and (3) speakers' construals of the meaning of intervention through their argument strategies. In Chapter Two, I set out the general background of the research and discussed the material and historical aspects. In Chapters Four and Six, I used corpus linguistics (CL) to identify the central concepts and themes around British military action within press coverage of the situation in Syria around each vote (sub-question

one). In Chapters Five and Seven, I first analysed the argumentation structures of each speaker in its own terms and then in relation to: the themes identified in the press analysis (sub-question two), and the strategic creation of equivalences and differences between MPs' positions (sub-question three). In this chapter, I will start by summarising the answers to the sub-questions as they are answered in the analytical chapters (Four-Seven). Then, Section 8.2.4 discusses the aspects of this triangulation in order to answer the main research question that shows the interconnection of findings in the sub-questions and material events. After, I will discuss the ways in which the negotiations in Parliament can be said to represent the semantics of intervention as a floating signifier (Section 8.3). After the broad discussions of the findings, the main contributions of this research are shown in Section 8.4. This is followed by reflections on the methods used in this study and directions for future study (Sections 8.5 and 8.6). The chapter will end by providing concluding remarks of the whole thesis.

8.2. Analysis Summary of Sub-Questions

In this section, I will summarise the answers to the sub-questions. Then, I will interconnect the aspects of the triangulation proposed in this research to answer the main research question.

8.2.1. Themes and Topics as Shared Knowledge in Britain

Sub-question 1 is answered in Chapters Four and Six. Here, I summarise the general findings of ideas and concepts that emerged from the themes and topics of covering the Syrian situation around the two votes.

In the press coverage of Time One and Two, the newspapers not only cover the issues in Syria in the theme of situation in Syria, but they also emphasise the most predominant theme of UK involvement. However, the press coverages of Time One and Time Two are different in terms of the directions of representing these themes. At Time One, the newspapers emphasise concerns about the Government call for possible immediate action in Syria with lack of reports. These representations of UK involvements are considered in relation to the complexity of the situation in Syria, such as fighting groups, which emphasise the ambiguity of the Syrian situation. These concerns are circulated by the newspapers to compare the situation in Syria with the

negative experience of the 2003 Iraq invasion and raise concerns about repeating the mistakes of the Iraq war. In contrast, at Time Two, a central aspect emphasised in the press is the necessity of military action against ISIL because of ISIL's direct threat to national security, which is represented as the overarching shared knowledge. At Time Two, the newspapers do not highlight the complex web of issues in Syria. Instead, the central situation is specified as ISIL's threat upon national and international security. Therefore, the newspapers at Time Two represent the complex situation in Syria as a minor issue because the situation is specified upon the role of ISIL in the region, despite the Syrian conflict. The press coverage of Time Two is also more specific than Time One regarding the type of possible intervention. The press coverage of the second vote explicitly uses the term 'airstrikes' as the central possible action (see Section 6.2), while the newspapers at Time One represent UK involvement by using general terms, such as military action/intervention. These changes in emphasis on the major defining features of the situation at Times One and Two are further reflected in the stances taken by the newspapers towards internal politics. At Time One, the newspapers highlight Cameron's failure to unite Parliament to support the GM. On the other hand, in Time Two, the newspapers highlight Corbyn's failure to unite his party to oppose the GM. These representations of internal politics have an indirect construal of intervention at least by showing the general orientation of MPs towards supporting possible military action in Syria. Therefore, by focusing on the means of intervention in this way, the newspapers are possibly presupposing shared understandings as concerns and uncertainty towards supporting intervention at Time One while the necessity of intervention at Time Two.

Another common theme in the press at both times is the role of the international participants, and, again, both times vary in terms of how the theme is represented. The newspapers at Time One portray possible British intervention with a lack of support of the international community because the UN is being reported as doing their job in Syria and reports had not been provided. Instead, the international stance is highlighted by focusing on the American stance, specifically regarding Obama's red line and the protection of that red line. By doing this, the newspapers link the possible British intervention from the angle of supporting alliance rather than the international community. However, at Time Two, the newspapers emphasise the possible intervention with international support and international consensus of several international authorities. Thus, the international legality and availability of reports are

addressed as positive shared understandings across the four newspapers at the press coverage of the second vote. By considering these shared understandings at the two times in Chapter Four, the newspapers activate the negative imaginary of the Iraq invasion more than in Chapter Six because the newspapers at Time One highlight the lack of reports and UN's support as two central mistakes of the Iraq war.

In this section, we have seen that the newspapers at both times highlight four central themes that not only cover events in Syria, but also link these events to the possibility of intervention in Syria. The overall coverage of the newspapers at Time One raises concerns about the GM that calls for possible immediate action against the use of chemical weapons without the full reports and support of the international community. On the other hand, the newspapers at Time Two highlight the necessity of military action to protect national security from the direct threat of ISIL, and how attacking ISIL is also shared knowledge at the international level because the UN supports any means to defeat ISIL.

8.2.2. Identifying Intervention Through Strategic Rescaling of Themes in Arguments

Sub-Question Two is answered in Chapters Five and Seven. In this section, I summarise the findings of these chapters by looking at the strategic rescaling of ideas used by the speakers in Parliament. We have seen in Chapters Five and Seven that the argumentation structures of speakers are developed through the performative practice of construing and distributing ideas among the elements of arguments.

At both times, a central element in the argumentation reconstruction is the *circumstances*, as these set out the material and moral basis for the argument to follow through choosing to foreground specific details from a complex situation and, to some extent, presenting these as presupposed givens. In other words, speakers in Parliament strategically select and present *circumstances* in that each speaker reconstructs an argument to support a specific end (i.e., claim) (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012). A further consequence of this is that a significant strategy of speakers is to deny the *circumstances* set out by their opponents in order to invalidate the moral and logical arguments that are built on these, which is what Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) refer to as a deliberation process in which speakers reconstruct elements of claim and possible counter-claims. The element of *circumstances* is, therefore, a central contested area in both debates.

At Time One, Cameron's speech emphasises the seriousness of the chemical attacks shown in his *circumstances*, and this idea is the basis that he uses to build other elements. However, as the newspapers at Time One highlight the GM calls for immediate action with lack of international reports and support, Cameron attempts to refute these concerns by presenting the existence of the chemical attacks as accepted facts rather than disputed information. By doing this, the ambiguity of the situation in Syria and lack of information are excluded from becoming a part of Cameron's *circumstances*, while he uses these ideas in the element of *dealing with objections* to downplay the ambiguity of the Syrian situation. On the other hand, Miliband reinforces the concerns stressed in the newspapers that emphasise the GM as calling for "immediate action" with lack of reports, so Miliband's *circumstances* are reconstructed to highlight the GM as a problem rather than a means to solve the Syrian crisis. By considering these rescaling practices, Miliband's argument includes and develops more ideas from the press in his *circumstances* than Cameron does.

This case is the opposite at Time Two because Cameron rescales ideas from the press at Time Two more than Time One in reconstructing the *circumstances*. Cameron rescales ISIL's threat in his *circumstances* with an explicit use of emotive language that describes Britain as facing a "fundamental threat to our security." Corbyn agrees with Cameron about the existence of ISIL's threat, but Corbyn's *circumstances* downplay the escalation of the threat to delegitimate airstrikes as the ideal response. In these construals of *circumstances*, Cameron at Time One emphasises the existence of the chemical attacks as the central issue, with the exclusion of the ambiguity of the Syrian situation. In contrast, Cameron's *circumstances* at Time Two emphasise the press coverage of ISIL's threat upon national security to legitimate the importance of action against ISIL. Therefore, at Time One, Cameron's speech acts like Aznar's speech when he attempted to persuade Spanish MPs to support intervention in Iraq by highlighting the danger of a crisis that needs humanitarian action (van Dijk 2008b). However, at Time Two, Cameron's speech is similar to Blair's speech when he contextualises the debate at the specific time that suggests the general strong support of intervention (van Dijk 2006). Although van Dijk's analysis of these two speeches was related to differences in the cognitive aspect, these changes in cognition have to be seen as being mediated by press coverage, which is, in turn, a reflection of the changing material situations.

Representing the crises at both times, the *circumstances* are expanded in another sub-element, which is the *circumstantial value* in which the speakers propose as other considerations of context to legitimate the claim through the legal perspectives or obligations upon the institution (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012:47). At Time One, Cameron suggests that the public concern towards intervention is a result of the 2003 Iraq invasion in order to refute linking the public concerns as a result of the GM. From this perspective, he reconstructs the obligation upon MPs to decrease the public concerns. However, Miliband reinforces the public concerns of possible immediate action in the press and uses his *circumstantial values* to put the obligation upon the international community that should be involved directly in Syria to provide the full reports and legal advice. Thus, Miliband's argumentation reconstruction emphasises the press presentation of the importance of distancing the UK from imminent action in Syria.

At Time Two, Cameron highlights that the central *circumstantial value* is the national interest, thus proposing the significance of protecting national security. Then, he expands the *circumstantial values* of international legality and support as moral justification for attacking ISIL. At this time, Corbyn, in the *circumstantial values*, suggests that increasing public concerns towards military action because airstrikes against ISIL in Iraq had not achieved the goals. Thus, he uses this element to propose that the MPs should reflect the voice of the public and block intervention. Corbyn's *circumstantial values* are expanded to reject Cameron's statement of "terrorist sympathisers", and the idea of debating issues in a civilised manner is a central idea in Corbyn's *circumstantial values*. However, the overall negotiated *circumstantial value* at Time Two is the obligation upon Britain to protect national security. Given this, the central contestation area of the *circumstantial values* at Time Two is related to discussing the national interest regarding public concerns towards national security. Therefore, the negotiation of international legality and support is a central contested area at Time One, whereas speakers at Time Two debate the national interest of protecting national security as the central contested *circumstantial value*.

The various *circumstances* set the logical and moral foundations for proposing a specific *means-goal* to achieve the purpose of the GM. At Time One, as we saw above, Cameron's *circumstances* exclude labelling the GM as a problem, so he presupposes in *his means-goal* several conditions before British direct intervention.

By doing this, Cameron rejects the concerns of possible "immediate" action, as shown in the media. However, Miliband highlights that supporting the motion means legitimising military action. Instead, he emphasises that the conditions should precede the vote on possible intervention in order to distance the UK from direct intervention. As the Syrian situation is ambiguous at Time One, Miliband's *means-goal* are reconstructed to suggest that "compelling evidence" is a significant strategy before any vote about intervention, so the clarity of *circumstances* is suggested to protect the UK from unintended consequences. These contestations of *means-goal* at Time One can be seen as a result of speakers' contestations of their *circumstances* because the speakers take very different positions in their conceptualisations of *circumstances*. In contrast, the speakers in the second vote generally agree about the main *circumstance* (problem), which is the threat of ISIL, while they significantly negotiate the *means-goal* and strategies of defeating ISIL. From this perspective, the speakers do not significantly debate concerns around reports of ISIL's threat, but they debate the ideal *means-goal* for defeating ISIL. At Time Two, Cameron's speech emphasises ISIL's threat in order to use the *means-goal* as a justification for the necessity of immediate military action. Then, he revisits his *circumstances* to highlight that the delay of action is a problem because this will have negative consequences upon national security. Corbyn, on the other hand, suggests that any military action is a problem, while his *means-goals* are used to propose non-military strategies, such as who buys oil from ISIL as the ideal claim. Therefore, Corbyn's argument is significantly reconstructed to counter several ideas shown in Cameron's speech and press coverage rather than emphasising them as elements of supporting his *claim*.

The findings in Chapters Five and Seven suggest that the arguments are not only reconstructed from a normative perspective, but that speakers performatively reconstruct their arguments with the consideration of the media coverage. At Time One, we saw how the complexity of the Syrian situation, and lack of reports and international support, are represented as central concerns in Britain in relation to the possible immediate intervention in Syria. Then, these concerns are incorporated by the speakers in Parliament as central contested area in the *circumstances* because the speakers dispute the conceptualisation of the situation in Syria and how this situation has an impact upon the vagueness of the GM. On the other hand, at Time Two, the four newspapers share the view of ISIL's direct threat upon national security, so the existence of the problem is shown as an existing fact. This portrait of the press has a

clear impact upon the debate because the speakers in the second vote mainly negotiate the *means-goal* (strategies of defeating ISIL) rather than concerns towards *circumstances*.

8.2.3. The Logics of Equivalence and Difference

This section summarises the answer to Sub-Question Three, which is discussed in Sections 5.8 and 7.8. In this section, I highlight the progression of speakers' construal of the meaning of intervention by reconstructing different arguments in their interactional moment at the two times. Within the discursive strategies, the speakers take various positions and link their ideas to the use of the logic of equivalence and difference in an attempt to gain a majority in the debate. There are two central social imaginaries that are used in each debated: (1) 'humanitarian issues' at Time One compared with 'national interest' at Time Two, and (2) 'the disastrous repercussion of the Iraq invasion' at Time One compared with 'international legality and support' at Time Two.

With regard to the first comparison, at Time One, Cameron's speech recognises the issues for national security in relation to upholding the international prohibition for using chemical weapons, as well as public concerns on issues towards unintended consequences of British intervention. However, Cameron emphasises the humanitarian aspect of the intervention instead to override the concerns of possible negative consequences of action in Syria. Thus, Cameron's argumentation structure downplays these negative aspects in order to articulate the possible intervention as humanitarian action with conditions. By doing this, he argues that those who have concerns of immediate action are similar to the GM because the motion considers the public concerns and calls for possible humanitarian intervention with delay. In contrast, Miliband's speech disarticulates humanitarianism from the action of the Government by emphasising the public concerns as the central value that the MPs should reflect in Parliament. In this emphasis, Miliband attempts to deconstruct Cameron's logic of equivalence and to formulate a competing equivalence in terms of protecting Britain from unintended consequences.

At Time Two, the social imaginary of national interest is emphasised by the speakers more than at Time One. At Time Two, Cameron uses the logic of equivalence to unite MPs in Parliament who see defeating ISIL as an unavoidable option with those who do so for humanitarian reasons, but with concerns because

these various views share a higher value, which is protecting national security. Corbyn highlights the values of national interest from a different angle by articulating military action as causing an additional threat to national security. He suggests that, since airstrikes started in Iraq in 2014, public concerns towards airstrikes have been increasing because the goals of this military action have not been achieved. From this perspective, he argues that those who supported airstrikes against ISIL in Iraq are similar to those who block intervention because both share the support of non-military strategies in order to protect national security. From these findings, we have seen that the speakers at Time One contest issues around humanitarianism and protecting Britain from unintended consequences as central values, whereas national interest and protecting national security are the main contested social imaginary at Time Two.

The second comparison of the social imaginaries is between 'the disastrous repercussion of the Iraq invasion' at Time One compared with 'international legality and support' at Time Two. At Time One, Cameron attempts to negate the social imaginary of the Iraq invasion that his opponents have used to increase opposition to the motion. In order to bolster support for the GM, Cameron's speech disarticulates the negative concepts that link the GM to the Iraq invasion, as these concepts are circulated by several MPs in the debate. Cameron emphasises the existence of the chemical attacks and the availability of sources to defeat the opponent's logic of equivalence that parallels his actions with Blair's use of 'dodgy dossier'. Young British Muslims are also included in the speech as urging the Government to support British intervention, so they overlook their differences with regard to avoiding the mistakes of the Iraq war (i.e., possible backlash). However, Miliband's construal articulates alternative values of "international legality" and "compelling evidence", which are used to break Cameron's logic of equivalence. These values are used in Miliband's speech as lessons from the Iraq invasion, so he equates himself with the MPs by sharing the concerns of repeating the mistakes of the Iraq invasion. In this articulation, he equates himself with MPs as sharing the concerns about the similarities between Cameron's position and Blair's position.

At Time Two, Cameron uses the logic of equivalence and difference to distance himself from Blair, but his main values at this time are "international legality" and "international reports". By doing this, Cameron suggests that supporters of intervention are parallel to those who have concerns about repeating the mistakes of the Iraq war because both groups consider the concerns towards international legality

and availability of information. Corbyn attempts to break this creation of the majority only when he refers to the possible unintended consequences. However, the articulation of disastrous repercussion of the Iraq invasion at Time Two is given less concern than Time One in creating a majority as this is shown in the general agreement between the speakers at Time Two towards the circumstances of ISIL's threat. At both times, Cameron uses the same logic of difference to divide the opposition to the GM, arguing that those who support the action in principle but have concerns are different from those who block intervention outright.

Overall, the contested social imaginaries are not only articulated through the discursive strategies of speakers when they build their arguments, but they are also articulated with the consideration of the material changes and media coverage. The speakers in the first vote contest the social imaginary of the disastrous repercussion of the Iraq invasion more significantly than humanitarianism. The speakers expand the fears of repeating the mistakes of the Iraq invasion to highlight the possible negative consequences upon Britain. In contrast, the speakers in the second vote negotiate the social imaginary of national interest that entails the protection of national security as the central contested social imaginary. At the second vote, the meaning of intervention is linked more to a defensive action to protect national security from the direct threat of ISIL. By carrying out these articulations of social imaginaries, speakers in Parliament gain a majority when they ultimately impose their vision of the social imaginary of uniting the various views among the members (Griggs and Howarth 2000). However, in both votes, speakers gain a majority not simply because of the validity of their arguments, but because speakers bring elements from the social and historical contexts that affect the construal of the meaning of intervention as this is argued by Wodak (2009a). In the following section, I discuss these points in order to answer the main research question.

8.2.4. Discussing the Triangulation of Material Events, Media and Parliamentary Debate

To bring together the three levels of analysing intervention and to answer the main question of this thesis, the concepts and ideas around the meaning of intervention move across the aspects of triangulation: material/historical events; shared popular representations of the events in the UK, and the argumentation strategies within the two parliamentary debates (as shown in Figure 8.1). When the speakers in Parliament

deliberate the identification of the meaning of British intervention, the historical background and the common understandings circulated by the media resonate upon and are incorporated into the interactional moment in Parliament. The purpose of this section is to interconnect the aspects of the triangulation in order to answer the main research question. In this section, I will highlight the key material events at both times. Then, these events will be interconnected to the significant changes in the media. After, I will briefly discuss how the two aspects of material events and media coverage are interconnected to the various changes in the two debates.
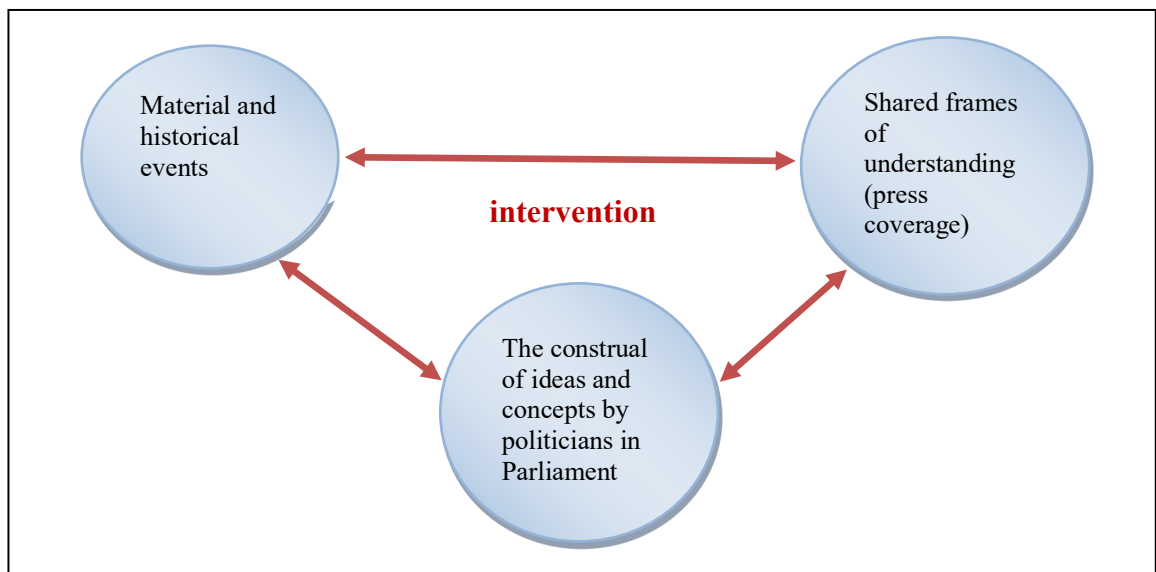
Figure 8.1: The proposed triangulation of analysing the meaning of intervention in each vote

The first aspect in the triangulation is the material and historical events in which the crises of the chemical attacks (at Time One) and ISIL's direct threat upon national and international security (at Time Two) are emphasised as two factual elements. However, there are various material events that significantly appear around each vote. First, the availability of reports is a serious issue that can be linked to the material events at both times. At Time One, the lack of reports explicitly appears in the historical background through referring to the 'dodgy dossier' and Blair's manipulation of information to legitimate war in Iraq (Strong 2015). There is a lack of reports at Time One, mainly because the Government had called for possible immediate action in Syria without the full reports of the UN. In contrast, at the second vote, ISIL already had a historical threat upon national and international security

because it was originally a part of al-Qaeda Network before it developed in Iraq. When the civil war in Syria started, ISIL exploited the chaos in the region (Wiersema, 2013; Gerges, 2017).

The second salient material event at both times is international legality. At Time One, the Syrian Government was not a member of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and there were concerns about attacking Syria under the rule of Responsibility to Protect (R2P). These are two central concerns highlighted in Section 2.2. However, the material aspects around international legality are different at Time Two, specifically with regard to the support of the international community to defeat ISIL. Although defeating ISIL started as the US-led coalition to defeat ISIL in Iraq, this coalition became an international action because there were several additional international countries who joined this coalition with the approval of the UN. This military action against ISIL at Time Two was not about new military action. Rather, it concerned expanding airstrikes from Iraq to Syria. The material and historical events of availability of reports and international legality are the significant changes across the two times.

The four newspapers represented material and historical events in order to reconstruct shared understandings about the possibility of British intervention in Syria. Regarding the material issue of the availability of sources about the Syrian situation, the newspapers at the two times take two different portraits. At Time One, the newspapers interconnect this issue by backing up the negative experience of the Iraq invasion. The newspapers link the complex web of issues in Syria with the history of 'dodgy dossier' and 45-minutes claim. However, the media coverage of the second vote is different because ISIL's threat has historically existed and there are various reports from international authorities. Therefore, the newspapers do not interconnect the history of the Iraq invasion to the military action against ISIL. Nonetheless, the newspapers in the second vote emphasise the material events and use emotive language to highlight the escalation of ISIL's threat.

The newspapers also give the second central material event (i.e. international legality) a high concern in the coverage of both times. At Time One, the newspapers do not explicitly highlight legal rules in the material events, such as R2P. Rather, they emphasise the Russian warnings against any intervention in Syria without UN resolutions. At this point, we see that the connection between the material aspect and the media is indirect, but they still emphasise the same point, which is concerns

around the international legality of action in Syria. In contrast, at Time Two, the newspapers not only incorporate the legality of attacking ISIL from a legal perspective, but they also address attacking ISIL as an internationally shared interest. The newspapers at Time Two expand the material events around the international legality of attacking ISIL in order to highlight how various countries with different ideologies in the Syrian situation share the highest interest of defeating ISIL. By spotlighting these issues in the material events, the newspapers at Time Two highlight the necessity of attacking ISIL as a central idea in the coverage of events around the second vote. Therefore, the two central issues in the material events (i.e., legality of action and availability of reports) are developed by the media through emphasising the complex web of concepts around representing the possibility of British intervention in Syria.

The aspects of material events and media coverage are further developed and negotiated in the two parliamentary debates. The speakers in the two debates either emphasise and develop ideas shown in the two aspects or try to refute these ideas in particular ways as they take various positions. Regarding the first broad issue (availability of reports), the speakers in the first vote significantly echo the media coverage about the possibility of repeating the mistakes of the Iraq invasion. Given this connection between Cameron's motion and Blair's motion, we saw in the first debate how Cameron attempts to reject these ideas from being part of his motion rather than developing the significance of military action in Syria. In contrast, Miliband's argument emphasises the concerns shown in the media in order to rebut Cameron's claim and reject any possibility of immediate action in Syria. Thus, we see that the speakers in the first vote contest the conceptualisation of the Syrian situation as a central issue in the debate. On the other hand, the lack of the reports is less debated in the second vote because ISIL's threat is treated as an accepted fact in the aspects of media and Parliament. The representation of ISIL's threat in the press is explicitly reflected in the parliamentary debate because the speakers in the second vote do not negotiate issues around circumstances, while they mainly debate the ideal means to defeat ISIL.

Regarding the second broad issue shown in media and material events, the speakers debate the support of the international community, which provides legal advice about intervention. At Time One, the opponents to the GM mainly incorporate the ideas shown in the media that entail how Cameron's stance supports the American

position rather than the support of the UN. Although Cameron argues that he and Obama will follow the recommendations of the international community, Miliband and opposition to the GM emphasise the importance of activating the role of international community and distancing the UK from being directly involved in the Syrian conflict. However, in the second vote, the speakers significantly reinforce the media coverage of the international support, and how attacking ISIL is backed by the UN. In this emphasis, the speakers explicitly reflect the media coverage and emphasise that British intervention is a participation among several international authorities rather than supporting the American position. Therefore, at Time Two, the idea of international legality and support is strongly interconnected in the aspects of the media coverage and Parliament. Given this, the speakers in Parliament strategically bring and reconstruct ideas from the aspects of the material events and media coverage to produce specific meanings of intervention.

These findings of the interconnection of ideas among the three aspects support the notion that ideas and concepts do not have a linear movement from a context to another, while they occur in multidimensional models of contexts and discourse (Blommaert 2015). The findings in this thesis also add to this notion that these ideas move between discourses in the three aspects with progress as we saw how the speakers emphasise specific ideas and concepts to articulate particular concepts around the meaning of intervention. This broad discussion of the aspects paves the way for discussing the semantic changes of intervention over the two votes, which will be presented in the following section.

8.3. The Shifting Semantics of Intervention

One of the central points of this thesis is that the key concept of intervention is a floating signifier, i.e., "a pure signifier without the signified" (Žižek, 1989:97). As the articulation process of the meanings of the key concepts sustain contingent among a group of people in a specific context (Laclau and Mouffe 1985), the MPs contest the articulation of the meaning of 'intervention' either to legitimate or delegitimate specific actions. The whole speeches are strategic ways of expanding and contracting the parameters of 'intervention'. The full analysis following Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) model allows us to see more about how the signifier is shifted and negotiated in Parliament. In this section, I discuss how the central aspects of the floating signifier (i.e., intervention) are made more or less prominent in each debate.

In Time One, we see the concept of intervention being built around the semantic components of 'humanitarian action', 'avoiding unnecessary risk to the country' and 'compelling evidence'. In relation to 'humanitarian action', the component of compassion is a central concept in Cameron's speech as he makes this his basic circumstance that should have the highest signification to the meaning of intervention. However, this concept is given less prominent importance by the speakers in the debate because they emphasise different aspects in order to construe different meanings for the term which expands the idea of 'avoiding unnecessary risk to the country'. This concept is given the highest signification in the first debate to distance the UK from unintended consequences. By this articulation process at Time One, the meaning of intervention significantly appears with avoiding unnecessary possible military action and activating the international community. Thus, we see how Cameron's speech is comparable to Blair's speech because both give the alliance concept more importance than the activation of the international community. The last central concept at Time One is 'compelling evidence', which reached the 'emergence' moment in the first debate. According to Fairclough (2005), this moment happens when additional concepts have been added to the meanings of key concepts. In Time One, the speakers emerge the concept of compelling evidence not only to highlight the availability of evidence around the chemical attacks, but also to identify the level of information needed in the debate and the sources of the reports as central concepts around the identification of intervention. These central concepts at Time One suggest that the use of chemical weapons should be shown as a humanitarian crisis, but this crisis should not legitimate immediate humanitarian intervention, given the dangers in such a position and the relative lack of support of the international community. Thus, the meaning of intervention is developed to be an international intervention to distance the UK from unnecessary risk to the country.

In Time Two, the most prominent concepts around the meaning of floating signifier (intervention) are 'national interest' and 'international support'. The 'national interest' is debated at Time Two in order to highlight the importance of protecting 'national security' from the direct threat of ISIL. Cameron's speech and the Government address the necessity of immediate action against ISIL as an important conceptualisation. In this emphasis, the 'necessity' and 'immediate' are two additional concepts in the web of meaning of protecting national security because ISIL's threat is fixed with their direct impact upon national security. Having established the

importance of protecting national security, the meaning of intervention is identified as a defensive action rather than an aggressive action. The other overarching concept around intervention is 'international support', which is developed to highlight the legality of action and support of the international community. This signification of the role of international community downplays the concept of alliance from being an important element in the meaning of intervention against ISIL. Therefore, we see how the concept of international community is a positive concept, while alliance is a negative concept in the articulation process of the meaning of intervention. From this perspective, intervention is positively conceptualised when its meaning collocates with the activation of the role of international community.

The articulations of concepts around the meaning of intervention at both times are seen as a result of MPs' deliberation around the possible involvement in Syria. We have seen how the central concepts that are debated over the two votes depend on the weighting of the signification of these concepts. Therefore, the floating signifier intervention cannot possess a density of meaning by itself; rather, it acquires signification through its correlation to other signs in political discourse.

8.4. Contributions of the Research

This thesis has made a number of substantive contributions to (1) the empirical investigation of the meaning of intervention in Syria in two parliamentary debates, (2) to the development of a methodology that combines practical reasoning approach and corpus linguistics, (3) and to the conceptual development of the concept of scalar analysis. These contributions have been achieved by applying the proposed triangulation of three interconnected aspects (i.e., material events, media coverage and speakers' construals of intervention). At this stage, it is worth considering these overall aspects together and summarising the main contributions in each case.

1. Empirical contribution: This thesis has investigated how meanings of concepts around intervention in Syria change in two parliamentary debates as a response to changes in the material situation in Syria and the general public understanding of those events as portrayed by the media. The thesis argues that intervention is a floating signifier because it is difficult to be fixed with one meaning while it is affected by various web of concepts that can identify potential contested meanings of intervention at every occasion.

However, identifying the boundaries of intervention is dependent on the historical and social contexts, which are significant elements in the discursive strategies of the construal of the meaning of intervention.

2. Methodological contribution: This research follows the calls of Reisigl and Wodak (2009), and Baker *et al.* (2008) who suggest the importance of considering levels of contexts and analyses in order to carry out a robust investigation of a social phenomenon. These ideas are combined with the consideration of shared understandings proposed by van Dijk (2003, 2006, 2008b). However, these shared understandings are analysed in the broad levels of media coverage of events rather than the cognitive aspect. From this angle, this thesis has combined corpus linguistics, in order to analyse the shared understandings in media, and the practical reasoning approach of Fairclough and Fairclough (2012), in order to analyse the construals of the speakers of the meaning of intervention in their strategic reconstructions of arguments. This approach is important because it goes beyond collocation analysis shown in the press coverage, and it discusses the complex web of meanings and concepts around intervention that are construed in the aspects of the triangulation.

3. Conceptual contribution: This research has enriched the concept of scalar analysis proposed by Blommaert (2015) in showing how ideas move from the media coverage of events to the specific context of parliamentary debates. In particular, the thesis has shown how the shared understandings shown in media should be applied to the discussion of the argumentation structures of speakers. The findings of the scalar analysis have helped clarify the theoretical discussion of the floating signifier in Discourse Theory.

8.5. Research Reflections

In this section, I present my reflections about the methods used in the data collection and analysis of the press coverage and the speeches in Parliament, including problems and limitations. Then, I consider potential directions for future research.

8.5.1. Reflection on Data Collection and Analytical Methods of the Press Coverage

This section contains reflections related to the press coverage methods that have been adopted in the data collection and analytical methods for this study. To begin, I followed the general orientations of corpus linguistics (CL) in order to analyse a large number of articles in newspapers. Regarding the period of the press coverage, I included the number of days as **eight** days before and after each debate. I think covering a greater period than this selected time, such as one month before and after each vote, would have reflected a greater variety of language use, which would have made the sample of articles more representative. However, because the use of chemical weapons happened eight days before the debate, this timing of the incident restricted the period covered. Then, the same period was applied to the second vote to make the corpora balanced.

With regard to the analytical methods, analysing corpora of newspapers required several steps. First, I used GraphColl because it identifies the keywords that are used in the representation of the Syrian topic. Before I analysed the corpora, the data had to be cleaned by removing the functional words. At this stage, I faced a technical issue, as explained in Section 3.2.3. This issue had a positive impact on me as a researcher because it required me to contact various academic staff to discuss this issue, as well as other issues relate to data collection and analysis methods.

In the analytical procedure, the purpose of using CL is specified to look at central repeated ideas and themes shown across the four newspapers around each vote. However, when I started my research, I did not have a wide understanding of the field of CL. Thus, it was time-consuming because I needed to attend several workshops in the department (e.g. SketchEngine, Wmatrix and AntConc) and spend a lot of time reading in this field. At the early stages of looking at press coverage, I was not sure from which position to start. I found the books of McEnery and Hardie (2012) and Baker (2006) to be key references in building my basic knowledge of CL. Then, I expanded my readings to reach my goal of using CL in the present research. A key useful step that my supervisor and I agreed was to specify and limit the central goal of using CL because sometimes I found myself looking at other areas that may have less connection to the overall purpose of my thesis.

Regarding the thematic analysis and discussing the shared understandings, the central reflection should be discussed in relation to whether the press coverage have acted as a proxy of shared understandings in Britain or not. First, using the concept 'shared understandings' can be problematic because the newspapers not always represent identical tone of the central themes as this issue has appeared clearly in the significant theme of internal politics at both times. Thus, it might have been better if the findings of the press coverage are taken from two sides of representing 'shared understandings' and 'contested understandings', and how these have been rescaled by speakers in Parliament. Another concern might be raised is to what extent that the newspapers can be used as the central source for analysing the shared understandings in the British community as there are various sources such as social media and TV programs that may contribute in representing the shared understandings in Britain. Even though the papers cover the event around each vote by bringing several sources such as speeches of politicians and reports, these selections of sources by the newspapers should be also considered from an ideological perspective of each newspaper. This issue leads to a specific additional reflection on the comparison between the newspapers. Although I highlighted some noticeable differences between the newspapers in some themes, it would have been more useful if other differences had been taken into accounts, such as differences between editorials and hard news, left and right /broadsheets and tabloids to see if these differences have an explicit effect on the presentation of themes. A further reflective issue is analysing the press coverage in two phases before and after each vote, but because of the time limit of the program this was difficult. This method would have helped to see clearly what concepts and ideas that the newspapers rescale from the debate in the coverage after the debate. By doing this analysis, I may have had two results: one shows the ideas that the MPs rescale from the press, and the other shows the ideas and themes that the papers rescale from the parliamentary debates. The last reflection is regarding the number of concordance lines and keywords. It might have been better if I had increased the number of keywords and concordance lines in order to have more representative findings. Overall, the findings in this research provide general themes and ideas that are explicitly used as shared understandings around the debates, but the limitations mentioned above would have to be developed with respect to the press coverage.

8.5.2. Reflection on Data Collection and Analytical Methods of Speeches in Parliament

In this section, I reflect upon the methods of data collection and the model of the analysis for the parliamentary debates. Moving to the data collection of debates, I collected the data for the parliamentary debates from the website of the House of Commons, which is freely accessible. I downloaded the speeches, and then followed the method of Spencer-Bennett (2018) by reviewing the videos of debates and comparing them with the provided transcriptions. I followed this method at the beginning to correct the mistakes in the transcripts and make them compatible with the speeches. However, I found that this method was also useful before analysing the argumentation structures because the process provided more context and understanding about how speakers performed their arguments in their actual speeches rather than only looking at the transcripts.

The main analysis model which was adopted in this thesis was the practical reasoning approach of Fairclough and Fairclough (2012). This model was chosen because it takes into consideration the nature of speeches in Parliament. From my own experience of working with Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) model, I found it useful because it helps to break down the big ideas in political discourse into small elements of discourse that should reveal the reconstructions of the meanings of the keywords. However, this model has the same limitations as many other CDS approaches, such as the difficulty of labelling the parts of a speech into the exact element of the argument.

A central issue I faced is the distinction between *circumstantial values* as an element under *circumstances* and *values* as a separate element. A solution I suggested for this issue in this study is that *circumstantial values* should be limited to the representations of legality and obligation, while *values* should refer to the personal interest of the speaker/agent and moral values. However, these differences are not always clear in the speeches and this issue may be at risk of subjectivity because these two elements almost occur in a grey area.

Another issue in applying this model to my data was dealing with long speeches because Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) do not analyse long speeches in their study. Thus, I was not sure about the ideal method to present the reconstructions of arguments within the analysis. After many hours of consultation with my supervisor,

the current method of this research was chosen to help simplify the presentation of the findings by dividing each speech into several formulations and then building up the argumentation structure in each formulation. I also discussed this method with several discourse analysts at conferences, and they encouraged me to continue this method. Furthermore, I was pleased that I also met a PhD student at a conference using Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) approach who decided to follow the same method.

Interpreting the findings of the argumentation structures is an important step because it involved considering the relationship between the context and the construal of the speakers. The triangulation of the research has provided insights that show the relationship between the findings of the speeches and the context of the UK at the time of the debate by looking at the press coverage. A challenge I faced in this model was applying the broad context of media coverage to the performative analysis of the argument. Deciding which ideas were rescaled in speeches and which were not sometimes remained difficult. In addition, the interconnection between elements of argument and themes shown in the press was an obstacle because ideas and concepts move between elements of arguments and themes in the press in a very complex network. Although the scalar analysis helped solve some of these issues, it was sometimes difficult to provide an accurate systematic method of relating the specific ideas in an argument to the broad context.

8.6. Directions for Further Study

In this section, I briefly outline some points that have been touched upon in this thesis, which have the potential to be further explored:

1. Analysing the development of the meaning of intervention on an international level is a potential consideration for further concepts that might be debated on an international scale. The findings of this research suggest that politicians not only debate the meaning of intervention by considering the local level of Britain, but they also bring several ideas and issues from international authorities as part of constructing their arguments. Therefore, looking at the political discourse in the international context will provide a more comprehensive investigation of how these broad discourses may have an impact on the construal of the meaning of intervention in the local context of the UK. For example, the analysis of Obama's speech

248

specifically around the first vote might have provided more insights around representing the meaning of 'international alliances' because his red line is significantly debated at Time One.

2. Analysing the press coverage in two phases before and after the debate should consider the two-way process of the movement of ideas between media and Parliament. In other words, analysing the press coverage might be developed to investigate how the representations of ideas and concepts progress over time before and after the debate in the media coverage. By carrying out this analysis, we may have two results: one showing the ideas that the MPs rescale from the press, and the other showing the ideas and themes that the newspapers rescale from Parliament.

3. A more developed framework for analysing the press coverage may provide insights particularly in two ways. First, applying a specific thematic model, such as the work of Sealey and Pak (2018), is a recommendation that might be applied using the same steps as this thesis. Sealey and Pak (2018) provide substantive implications for the thematic analysis of a specialised corpus, such as parameters of the boundaries of identifying themes. Second, qualitative analysis of specific articles around each vote should supply a deep discussion of the findings in addition to the analysis using CL. From this perspective, the findings of corpus analysis will be emerged with a more qualitative analysis in order to see how these analyses correspond to the thematic analysis of the press in this research.

4. Using social media and hashtags on Twitter is a possible significant angle to provide comprehensive common understandings in the UK, as people have greater access and can express their opinions with less barriers than newspapers. Furthermore, looking at tweets might be developed to analyse the tweets of agencies, such as *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph*, in order to investigate not only how they cover events in newspapers, but also how they use social media as a tool for reconstructing shared understandings in the country.

In conclusion, 'intervention' as a floating signifier is reconstructed within a complex web of concepts, the articulation of which is dependent on the social, historical and discursive in which they are embedded.

Bibliography

Altameemi, Yaser and Tom Bartlett. 2017. "Negotiating Intervention: Shifting Signifiers in the UK's Response to the Use of Chemical Weapons in Syria." *10plus1: Living Linguistics* (3):67–86.

Baker, Paul. 2006. *Using Corpora in Discourse Analysis*. London & New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Baker, Paul, Costas Gabrielatos, Majid KhosraviNik, Michał Krzyżanowski, Tony McEnery, and Ruth Wodak. 2008. "A Useful Methodological Synergy? Combining Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus Linguistics to Examine Discourses of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK Press." *Discourse & Society* 19(3):273–306.

Bartlett, Tom, Nicolina Montesano, and Harriet Lloyd. 2018. "Contesting Key Terms and Concepts in the Civil Sphere." Pp. 482–98 in *The Routledge handbook of language awareness*, edited by P. Garrett and J. M. Cots. London & New York: Routledge.

BBC. 2006a. "In Full: Cameron Speech." *BBC HOme*. Retrieved November 29, 2018 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/5407714.stm).

BBC. 2006b. "NHS Safe in My Hands Says Cameron." *BBC Home*. Retrieved November 29, 2018 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/5403798.stm).

BBC. 2013a. "Arab Uprising: Country by Country - Tunisia - BBC News." Retrieved November 26, 2018 (https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-12482315).

BBC. 2013b. "Guide to the Syrian Rebels - BBC News." Retrieved February 24, 2016 (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24403003).

BBC. 2015a. "Syria Profile - Timeline - BBC News." Retrieved February 23, 2016 (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14703995).

BBC. 2015b. "Turkey's Downing of Russian Warplane - What We Know - BBC News." *BBC*.

BBC. 2015c. "What Is 'Islamic State'?" Retrieved November 27, 2018 (https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-29052144).

BBC. 2016. "Syria: The Story of the Conflict - BBC News." Retrieved February 24, 2016 (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-26116868).

Biber, Douglas. 1993. "Representativeness in Corpus Design." *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 8(4):243–57.

Blair, J. Anthony. 2011. "Relationships Among Logic, Dialectic and Rhetoric." Pp. 245–59 in *Groundwork in the Theory of Argumentation: Selected papers of J. Anthony Blair*. Springer.

Blommaert, Jan. 2001. "Context Is/as Critique." *Critique of Anthropology* 21(1):13–32.

Blommaert, Jan. 2005. *Discourse: A Critical Introduction*. Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo: Cambridge University Press.

Blommaert, Jan. 2015. "Chronotopes, Scales, and Complexity in the Study of Language in Society." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 44(1):105–16.

Brezina, Vaclav, Tony Mcenery, and Stephen Wattam. 2015. "Collocations in Context A New Perspective on Collocation Networks." *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 202(2015):139–73.

Brighton, Shane. 2007. "British Muslims, Multiculturalism and UK Foreign Policy: 'integration' and 'Cohesion' in and beyond the State." *International Affairs* 83(1):1–17.

Chilcot, John. 2016. *Statement by Sir John Chilcot : 6 July 2016*.

Chilton, Paul. 2004. *Analysing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice*. First Publ. London and New York: Routledge.

Chilton, Paul and Christina Schäffner. 1997. "Discourse and Politics." in *Discourse as Social Interaction* , edited by T. A. van Dijk. London: Sage .

CNN. 2017. "ISIS Fast Facts - CNN." Retrieved January 22, 2018 (http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/08/world/isis-fast-facts/index.html).

Conboy, Martin. 2007. *The Language of the News*. Madison Ave, New York: Routledge.

De Costa, Peter I. and Suresh Canagarajah. 2016. "Introduction: Scales Analysis, and Its Uses and Prospects in Educational Linguistics." *Linguistics and Education* 34:1–10.

Daly, Glyn. 1991. "The Discursive Construction of Economic Space: Logics of Organization and Disorganization." *Economy and Society* 20(1):79–102.

Doig, Alan, James P. Pfiffner, Mark Phythian, and Rodney Tiffen. 2007. "Marching in Time: Alliance Politics, Synchrony and the Case for War in Iraq, 2002–2003." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 61(1):23–40.

Dunt, Ian. 2010. "Comment: Ed Miliband Is More Dangerous than They Think." *Politics.Co.Uk*. Retrieved November 29, 2018 (http://www.politics.co.uk/comment-analysis/2010/9/25/comment-ed-miliband-is-more-dangerous-than-th).

Fairclough, Isabela and Norman Fairclough. 2012. *Political Discourse Analysis: A Method for Advanced Students*. London and New York: Routledge.

Fairclough, Norman. 1989. *Language and Power*. First. London : Longman.

Fairclough, Norman. 1992. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Fairclough, Norman. 1995. *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. First Edit. Taylor & Francis.

Fairclough, Norman. 2000. *New Labour, New Language?* First Edit. Lomdon and New York: Routledge.

Fairclough, Norman. 2001. *Language and Power*. Second. Longman.

Fairclough, Norman. 2003. *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research*. First Edit. London and New York: Routledge.

Fairclough, Norman. 2009. "A Dialectical-Relational Approach to Critical Discourse Analysis in Social Research." Pp. 162–86 in *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, edited by R. Wodak and M. Meyer. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC: SAGE.

Fairclough, Norman L. 2005. "Blair's Contribution to Elaborating a New `doctrine of International Community'." *Journal of Language and Politics* 4(1):41–63.

Fairclough, Norman and Ruth Wodak. 1997. "Critical Discourse Analysis: An Overview." Pp. 67–97 in *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, edited by T. a van Dijk. London, Sage.

Finlayson, Alan. 2004. "Political Science, Political Ideas and Rhetoric." *Economy and Society* 33(4):528–49.

Firth, John. 1957. *Papers in Linguistics, 1934-1951 - John Rupert Firth - Google Books*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fitzpatrick, Mark. 2013. "Destroying Syria's Chemical Weapons." *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 55(6):107–14.

Flowerdew, John and John E. Richardson. 2018. "Introduction." Pp. 1–10 in *The Routledge Handbook of Critical Discourse Studies*, edited by J. Flowerdew and J. E. Richardson. New York: Routledge .

Forbes, Ian and Mark Hoffman. 1993. "Introduction: Intervention and State Sovereignty in the International System." Pp. 1–10 in *Political Theory, International Relations, and the Ethics of Intervention*, edited by I. Forbes and M. Hoffman. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Fowler, Roger. 1991. *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press*. First Edit. London and New York: Routledge.

Gander, Kashmira. 2015. "Isis Flag: What Do the Words Mean and What Are Its

Origins? | The Independent." *INDEPENDENT*. Retrieved November 27, 2018 (https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-flag-what-do-the-words-mean-and-what-are-its-origins-10369601.html).

Gerges, Fawaz A. 2017. *ISIS : A History*. Princeton University Press.

Gilbert, Ajebe Akame. 2013. "Chemical Weapons Use in Syria: Implications for International Law." *SSRN Electronic Journal*. Retrieved November 27, 2018 (http://www.ssrn.com/abstract=2317809).

Gilsinan, Kathy. 2015. "A Brief Guide to the Syrian Civil War - The Atlantic." *The Atlantic* . Retrieved November 27, 2018 (https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/10/syrian-civil-war-guide-isis/410746/).

Goffman, Erving. 1981. *Forms of Talk*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Gries, Stefan Th. 2013. "50-Something Years of Work on Collocations: What Is or Should Be Next...." *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 18(1):137–66.

Griggs, Steven and David Howarth. 2000. "New Environmental Movements and Direct Action Protest: The Campaign against Manchester Airport's Second Runway.Pdf." Pp. 52–69 in *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identities, Hegemonies and Social Change*, edited by D. J. Howarth, A. J. Norval, and Y. Stavrakakis. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.

Halliday, Michael Alexander Kirkwood. 1985. *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. Second, 19. London: Arnold.

Harmon, Lucyna. 2017. "Political Discourse as Practical Reasoning : A Case Study of a British Prime Minister Candidate Speech." *Linguistics Beyond And Within* 3(3):74–86.

Harvey, David. 1996. *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hay, Colin. 2013. "Political Discourse Analysis: The Dangers of Methodological Absolutism." *Political Studies Association* 11(3):321-327.

Henkemans, A. Francisca Snoeck. 2014. "Speech Act Theory and the Study of Argumentation." *Studies in Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric* 36(49):41–58.

Hennessey, Peter. 2007. "From Blair to Brown: The Condition of British Government." *The Political Quarterly* 78(3):344–52.

Holliday, Joseph. 2013. "The Assad Regime." *Middle East Security Report 8* (March):11.

House of Commons. 2013. "Syria and the Use of Chemical Weapons, Parliamentary Debates, Thursday 29th August 2013." *Parliament.Uk*. Retrieved March 2, 2017

(http://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2013/august/commons-debate-on-syria/).

House of Commons. 2015. "ISIL in Syria, Parliamentray Debates, Wednesday 2nd December 2015." Retrieved February 24, 2016 (http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmhansrd/cm151202/debtext/151202-0001.htm#15120254000002).

Howarth, David, Aletta J. Norval, and Yannis Stavrakakis. 2000. "Introducing Discourse Theory and Political Analysis." Pp. 1–37 in *Discourse Theory And Political Analysis*, edited by D. R. Howarth, A. J. Norval, and Y. Stavrakakis. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Howarth, David R. 2000. *Discourse*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Hummel, Stephen. 2013. *The Risk of Non-State Actors Acquiring Chemical Weapons in Syria*. Vol. 6.

Ilie, Cornelia. 2003. "Discourse and Metadiscourse in Parliamentary Debates." *Journal of Language and Politics* 2(1):71–92.

Independent. 2015. "David Cameron Brands Jeremy Corbyn a 'terrorist Sympathiser' for Opposing Syria Air Strikes | The Independent." Retrieved June 15, 2016 (https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/david-cameron-calls-jeremy-corbyn-a-terrorist-sympathiser-for-opposing-syria-air-strikes-a6756731.html).

Jackson, Richard. 2007. "Constructing Enemies : ' Islamic Terrorism .'" *Government and Opposition* 42(3):394–426.

Jessop, Bob. 2002. *The Future of the Capitalist State*. Vol. 44. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Jessop, Bob. 2004. "Critical Semiotic Analysis and Cultural Political Economy." *Critical Discourse Studies* 1(2):159–74.

Jessop, Bob. 2008. *State Power*. Cambridge.

Jessop, Bob and Nagi-ling Sum. 2012. "Cultural Political Economy, Strategic Essentialism, and Neo-Liberalism." Pp. 80–96 in *Neoliberal Urbanism and Its Contestations: Crossing Theoretical Boundaries*, edited by J. Kuenkel and M. Mayer. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Jørgensen, Marianne W. and Louise J. Phillips. 2002. *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*. First Ed. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC: SAGE.

Kailah, Salamah. 2015. "Altadkhul Alrussi Ykadum Man? "The Russian Intervnetion in Syria: Who Is the Client?" *Al-Jazeerah*. Retrieved February 24, 2016 (http://www.aljazeera.net/news/survey/2015/9/30/التدخل-الروسي-في-سوريا-يخدم-من).

Kell, Catherine. 2015. "Ariadne's Thread: Literacy, Scale and Meaning-Making

across Space and Time." Pp. 88–107 in *Language, Literacy and Diversity Moving Words*, edited by C. Stroud and M. Prinsloo. Routledge.

Kessler, Glenn. 2013. "President Obama and the 'Red Line' on Syria's Chemical Weapons - The Washington Post." *The Washington Post*. Retrieved November 27, 2018 (https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2013/09/06/president-obama-and-the-red-line-on-syrias-chemical-weapons/?utm_term=.9365954627dc).

KhosraviNik, Majid. 2015. "Macro and Micro Legitimation in Discourse on Iran's Nuclear Programme: The Case of Iranian National Newspaper Kayhan." *Discourse & Society* 26(1):52–73.

Kite, Melissa. 2010. "Ed Miliband: Self-Confessed Maths 'geek' with a Talent for Diplomacy - Telegraph." *The Telegraph* . Retrieved November 29, 2018 (https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/labour/8025055/Ed-Miliband-Self-confessed-maths-geek-with-a-talent-for-diplomacy.html).

Kwon, I., R. Clarke, and R. Wodak. 2009. "Organizational Decision-Making, Discourse, and Power: Integrating across Contexts and Scales." *Discourse & Communication* 3(3):273–302.

Laclau, Ernesto. 1990a. *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*. London and New York: Verso.

Laclau, Ernesto and Chantal Mouffe. 1985. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. First. London and New York: Verso.

Laughland, John. 2014. "(38) John Laughland: Non-Interventionism: The Forgotten Doctrine - YouTube." *Youtube.Com*. Retrieved November 28, 2018 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mgLUrFRt6k).

Lazzaro-Salazar, Mariana. 2016. "Downscaling Culture in Intercultural Interaction: The Case of Nurses' Professional Values in New Zealand." Pp. 114–37 in *Downscaling culture: Revisiting intercultural communication.*, edited by J. N. Singh, A. Kantara, and D. Cserző. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Leech, Geoffrey N. 1991. "The State of the Art in Corpus Linguistics." Pp. 8–29 in *English Corpus Linguistics: Studies in Honour of Jan Svartvik*, edited by K. Aijmer and B. Altenberg. London: Longman.

Lukin, Annabelle. 2013. "The Meanings of 'War': From Lexis to Context." *Journal of Language and Politics* 12(3):424–44.

Maalej, Z. a. 2012. "The 'Jasmine Revolt' Has Made the 'Arab Spring': A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Last Three Political Speeches of the Ousted President of Tunisia." *Discourse & Society* 23(6):679–700.

MacDonald, Malcolm N., Duncan Hunter, and John P. O'Regan. 2013. "Citizenship, Community, and Counter-Terrorism: UK Security Discourse, 2001–2011." *Journal of Language and Politics* 12(3):445–73.

Manfreda, Primoz. 2018. "What Is the Arab Spring? An Overview of the Middle East Uprisings in 2011." *ThoughtCo.* Retrieved November 26, 2018 (https://www.thoughtco.com/definition-of-the-arab-spring-2353029).

Matar, Dina. 2015. "Hassan Nasrallah: The Cultivation of Image and Language in the Making of a Charismatic Leader." *Communication, Culture & Critique* 8(3):433–47.

Mazzoleni, Gianpietro and Winfried Schulz. 1999. "' Mediatization' of Politics: A Challenge for Democracy?.".' *Political Communication* 16(3):247–61.

McBurney, Peter, David Hitchcock, and Simon Parsons. 2007. "The Eightfold Way of Deliberation Dialogue." *International Journal of Intelligent Systems* 22(1):95–132.

McEnery, Tony and Andrew Hardie. 2012. *Corpus Linguistics: Method, Theory and Practice*. Cambridge University Press.

Miller, Peter and Nikolas Rose. 1990. "Governing Economic Life." *Economy and Society* 19(1):1–31.

Milne, Seumas. 2012. *The Revenge of History: The Battle for the Twenty First Century*. Guardian News and Media Ltd.

Montesano Montessori, Nicolina and Esperanza Morales López. 2015. "Multimodal Narrative as an Instrument for Social Change : Reinventing Democracy in Spain — The Case of 15 M." *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines* 7(2):200–221.

Moore, Adam. 2008. "Rethinking Scale as a Geographical Category: From Analysis to Practice." *Progress in Human Geography* 32(2):203–25.

Oddo, John. 2014. "Variation and Continuity in Intertextual Rhetoric: From the 'War on Terror' to the 'Struggle against Violent Extremism.'" *Journal of Language and Politics* 13(3):512–37.

Piazza, Roberta and Melanie Green. 2015. "Argumentation in Discourse and Grammar." Pp. 1–24 in *Handbook of pragmatics : 2015 installment*, edited by J. Östman and J. Verschueren.

Piazza, Roberta and Paul Lashmar. 2017. "Jeremy Corbyn According to the BBC: Ideological Representation and Identity Construction of the Labour Party Leader." *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines* 9(2):120–41.

Philip, Kunig. 2008. "Intervention, Prohibition of (Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law)." *Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law*. Retrieved December 14, 2019 (https://opil.ouplaw.com/view/10.1093/law:epil/9780199231690/law-9780199231690-e1434?prd=EPIL).

Pita, René and Juan Domingo. 2014. "The Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Conflict." *Toxics* 2(3):391–402.

Potts, Amanda, Monika Bednarek, and Helen Caple. 2015. "How Can Computer-Based Methods Help Researchers to Investigate News Values in Large Datasets? A Corpus Linguistic Study of the Construction of Newsworthiness in the Reporting on Hurricane Katrina." *Discourse & Communication* 9(2):149–72.

Rattan, Jyoti. 2019. "Changing Dimensions of Intervention Under International Law: A Critical Analysis." *SAGE Open* 9(2):215824401984091.

Rear, David. 2013. "Laclau and Mouffe ' s Discourse Theory and Fairclough ' s Critical Discourse Analysis : An Introduction and Comparison." *Critical Policy Studies* 7(4):375–94.

Reisigl, Martin and Ruth Wodak. 2009. "The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA)." in *Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis*, edited by R. Wodak and M. Meyer. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC: SAGE.

Richardson, John E. 2007. *Analysing Newspapers: An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*. first. Palgrave Macmillan.

Ruys, Tom. 2014. "The Syrian Civil War and the Achilles." *Stanford Journal of International Law* 50(2):247–80.

Saghaye-Biria, Hakimeh. 2012. "American Muslims as Radicals? A Critical Discourse Analysis of the US Congressional Hearing on 'The Extent of Radicalization in the American Muslim Community and That Community's Response.'" *Discourse & Society* 23(5):508–24.

Sealey, Alison and Christopher Pak. 2018. "First Catch Your Corpus: Methodological Challenges in Constructing a Thematic Corpus." *Corpora* 13(2):229–54.

Sellers, M. N. S. 2014. "Intervention under International Law." *Maryland Journal of International Law* 29(1).

Shaw, Martin. 1993. "The Global State and the Politics of Intervention." Centre for the Study of Global Governance, London School of Economics and Political Science.

Shehabat, Ahmad. 2013. "The Social Media Cyber-War : The Unfolding Events in the Syrian Revolution 2011." *Global Media Journal* 6(2):1–9.

Short, Clare. 2010. "Evidence to the Chilcot Inquiry." Retrieved November 30, 2018 (https://www.commondreams.org/news/2010/02/02/clare-short-tony-blair-lied-and-misled-parliament-build-iraq-war)

Silverstein, Michael. 1992. "The Indeterminacy of Contextualization: When Is Enough Enough." Pp. 55–75 in *The contextualization of language*, edited by P. Auer and A. Di Luzio. J. Benjamins.

Sinclair, John. 1991. *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Spencer-Bennett, Joe. 2018. *Moral Talk Stance and Evaluation in Political Discourse.* First. Oxon and NewYork: Routledge.

Spier, Troy E. 2018. "Extremist Propaganda and Qur'anic Scripture: A 'Radical' Corpus-Based Study of the Dabiq." *Discourse and Society* 29(5):553–67.

Stahn, Carsten. 2013. "Syria and the Semantics of Intervention, Aggression and Punishment." *Journal of International Criminal Justice* 11(5):955–77.

Stahn, Carsten. 2014. "Between Law-Breaking and Law-Making: Syria, Humanitarian Intervention and 'What the Law Ought to Be.'" *Journal of Conflict and Security Law* 19(1):25–48.

Strömbäck, Jesper. 2008. "'Four Phases of Mediatization: An Analysis of the Mediatization of Politics.'" *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 13(3):228–46.

Strong, James. 2015. "Why Parliament Now Decides on War: Tracing the Growth of the Parliamentary Prerogative through Syria, Libya and Iraq." *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 17(4):604–22.

Tavassoli, Fatemeh, Alireza Jalilifar, and Peter RR White. 2018. "British Newspapers' Stance towards the Syrian Refugee Crisis: An Appraisal Model Study." *Discourse & Society* 30(1):095792651880107.

The White House. 2012. "Remarks by the President to the White House Press Corps | Whitehouse.Gov." *The White House, Office of the Press Secretary*. Retrieved June 11, 2016 (https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2012/08/20/remarks-president-white-house-press-corps).

Tognini-Bonelli, Elena. 2001. *Corpus Linguistics at Work*. Amesterdam: John Benjamins.

Torfing, Jacob. 1999. *New Theories of Discourse: Laclau, Mouffe and Žižek*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Vishwanathan, Arun. 2013. "Syrian Chemical Weapons: The Danger Within." *Observer Research Foundation* (45):1–8.

Van Aelst, Peter. and Rens. Vliegenthart. 2014. "Studying the Tango: An Analysis of Parliamentary Questions and Press Coverage in the Netherlands." *Journalism Studies* 15(4):392–410.

van Dijk, Teun A. 1997. *Discourse Studies : A Multidisciplinary Introduction*. SAGE.

van Dijk, Teun A. 1998. *Ideology A Multidisciplinary Approach*. London: SAGE.

van Dijk, Teun A. 2003. "Knowledge in Parliamentary Debates." *Journal of*

Language and Politics 2(1):93–129.

van Dijk, Teun A. 2005. "War Rhetoric of a Little Ally Political Implicatures and Aznar ' s Legitimatization of the War in Iraq." *Journal of Language and Politics* 4(1).

van Dijk, Teun A. 2006. "Discourse and Manipulation." *Discourse and Society* 17(3):359–83.

van Dijk, Teun A. 2008a. *Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach*. First Edit. Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo: Cambridge University Press.

van Dijk, Teun A. 2008b. *Discourse and Power*. First Edit. Palgrave Macmillan.

van Dijk, Teun A. 2009. "Critical Discourse Studies: A Sociocognitive Approach." Pp. 62–86, selected 62-67, 75–80 in *Methods for Critical Discourse Analysis*, edited by R. Wodak and M. Meyer. London: Sage.

van Eemeren, Frans H. and Peter Houtlosser. 1999. "Strategic Manoeuvrin in Argumenntative Discourse." *Discourse Studies* 1(4):479–97.

van Eemeren, Frans H. and Peter Houtlosser. 2009. "Strategic Maneuvering Examining Argumentation in Context." Pp. 1–24 in *Examining Argumentation in Context: Fifteen studies on strategic maneuvering*, edited by F. H. van Eemeren. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Wiersema, Alisa. 2013. "Everything You Need to Know About the Syrian Civil War - ABC News." *Abc News*. Retrieved November 27, 2018 (https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/syrian-civil-war/story?id=20112311).

Williams, David Cratis Williams and Marilyn J. Young, eds. 2009. *Discourse, Debate and Democracy: Readings from Controversia: An International Journal of Debate and Democratic Renewal*. New York, Amsterdam and Brussels: International Debate Education Association.

Williams, Paul. 2004. "Who ' s Making UK Foreign Policy ?" *International Affairs* 80(5):909–29.

Wilson, John, Ahmed Sahlane, and Ian Somerville. 2012. "Argumentation and Fallacy in Newspaper Op / Ed Coverage of the Prelude to the Invasion of Iraq." *Journal of Language and Politics* 11(1):1–30.

Wodak, Ruth. 2009a. *The Discourse of Politics in Action: Politics as Usual*. Amesterdam: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wodak, Ruth. 2009b. "The Semiotics of Racism: A Critical Discourse-Historical Analysis." Pp. 311–26 in *Discourse, of course : an overview of research in discourse studies*, edited by J. Renkema. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Wodak, Ruth and Michael Meyer. 2009. "Critical Discourse Analysis: History,

Agenda, Theory and Methodology." P. 216 in *Methods for critical discourse analysis*, edited by R. Wodak and M. Meyer. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC: SAGE.

Zheng, Haicui. 2014. "Book Review: Isabela Fairclough and Norman Fairclough, Political Discourse Analysis: A Method for Advanced Students." *Discourse Studies* 16(2):318–20.
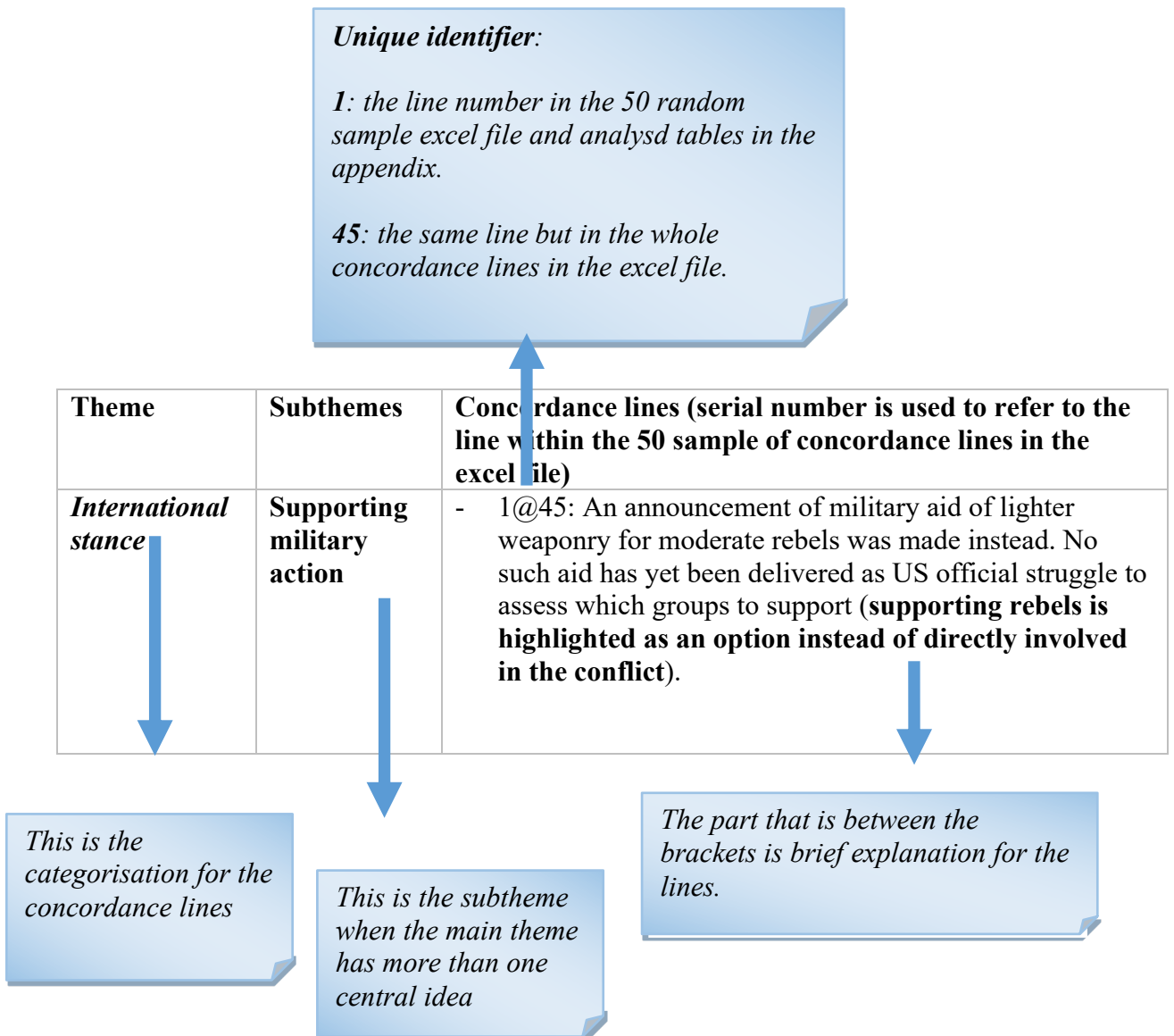
Žižek, Slavoj. 1989. *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. Verso.

Appendices

Appendix One:

Analysing the concordance lines of the keywords press coverage of Time (1)

The presentation of the tables [32]

Unique identifier:

1*: the line number in the 50 random sample excel file and analysd tables in the appendix.*

45*: the same line but in the whole concordance lines in the excel file.*

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
International stance	**Supporting military action**	- 1@45: An announcement of military aid of lighter weaponry for moderate rebels was made instead. No such aid has yet been delivered as US official struggle to assess which groups to support (**supporting rebels is highlighted as an option instead of directly involved in the conflict**).

This is the categorisation for the concordance lines

This is the subtheme when the main theme has more than one central idea

The part that is between the brackets is brief explanation for the lines.

---

[32] There are some words in the lines that appears in caps, and many of them appear like this because they are parts of the headline.

The Telegraph

Table 1.1: Military

Theme	Subtheme	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
UK stance and local context	**Voices support military action**	- 3@111: Mr Bridgen: "It would be bizarre in that case if we didn't have a recall of Parliament to debate military intervention in Syria." (the vote of supporting military action is needed) - 6@199: Senior Tories are also privately hopeful that Ed Miliband, the Labour leader, will ultimately back a motion for military action (Senior Tories hopes Miliband will support the military intervention). - 16@529: The Government therefore has to set out a clear case of why the UK needs to get involved in this conflict, the limits to its involvement, and what account it has taken of the consequences of taking military action (the government consideration for the military attack). - 17@573: David Cameron was plainly sincere in his belief that a military strike would improve matters in Syria, yet he accepted the will of Parliament graciously, courteously and without demur. (Cameron supports the military action because it will achieve goals, and he respects the voice of parliament). - 19@639: Mr Miliband said … "But if we are to undertake military action then certain conditions would have to be met" (Miliband supports military action with conditions). - 20@683: Mr Cameron, he said: "I've got to say to you, with the greatest respect, that's simply not the case. For me, that does not rule out military intervention. I want to be clear about this" (Cameron suggests that supporting the vote does not mean being directly involved in military action). - 23@771: At least five Government ministers face the sack in the wake of David Cameron's humiliating failure to secure parliamentary backing for military strikes against the Syrian regime (five Government ministers put blame on Cameron for

		not securing the support of military action).
		-
	Concerns around military action	- 13@441: Lord West, a former First Sea Lord and Security Minister, has advised against carrying out military action against Syria without UN backing. (military action should be supported by the UN approval). - 25@837: The "robust" meeting saw Labour accusing Mr Cameron and Mr Clegg of being "cavalier" about the need to let United Nations weapons inspectors finish their work before any military intervention (the Labour accuses Cameron and Clegg of being cavalier because they wanted to support military action before the reports of UN). - 29@970: Mr Miliband then told the Commons: "We have to learn the lessons of Iraq". He insisted that he was not "ruling out" military intervention in Syria but warned about the consequences of British involvement (UK should recognise the negative consequences of any military action). - 36@1234: "The Conservative MPs, and there were Liberal Democrats, who couldn't support us, they have a deep scepticism about military involvement and I don't think another UN report, or whatever, would make the difference (scepticism about rush military action in parliament). -
	Internal politics and evaluating the decision of UK	- 2@67: If military action is approved, the first wave of missiles could start within a week (the military action is imminent if it is approved). - 4@133: He (Hague) said taking military action or doing nothing in the face of a gas attack "may be the choice" that Britain faces (all options are open for the MPs) - 22@727: Nick Clegg, the Deputy Prime Minister, said he is "wrestling" with the decision of whether to support military action (there is a wrestling of making the decision by the Members in the Government). - 27@904: It is likely, therefore, that - rather than congratulating himself on halting Mr Cameron's military adventure - he and they are mulling over all of that today. Last night surely set Ed Miliband on course for Downing Street. The cost of his victory has yet to be determined (the debate as victory among UK parties). - 30@1014: Parliament's rejection of military action in Syria has been good for David Cameron and bad for Ed Miliband. More to the point, it has been

		good for our standing in the world (the decision of parliament is good for Cameron, but not for Miliband).
		- 37@1278: No British officers are now engaged in military planning and none will be involved in the execution of the operation, a British defence official confirmed (confirmation of Britain will not be engaged in military planning after the vote).
		- 40@1366: Last week MPs rejected government backing for potential military action against Syria by just 13 votes (parliament rejected to support military action).
		- 44@1520: David Cameron said Britain "can't be and won't be part" of any military strikes. (Cameron confirms the British choice).
		- 41@1410: David Cameron has insisted that he will not return to the Commons and ask MPs to again vote on military intervention in Syria
		- 46@1586: Karl McCartney, the Tory MP for Lincoln, warned that Parliament's failure to support plans for military intervention would "embolden Assad and his forces". (McCartney criticises the parliament stance).
		- 50@1784: The British have wisely decided to stay out, and no other NATO allies have stepped forward to offer military assistance. Obama looks increasingly isolated on the world stage (the British decision let NATO and Obama alone).
International stance	**Supporting military action**	- 1@45: An announcement of military aid of lighter weaponry for moderate rebels was made instead. No such aid has yet been delivered as US official struggle to assess which groups to support (supporting rebels is highlighted as an option instead of being directly involved in the conflict).
		- 8@265: No final decision has been taken on whether to attack Assad regime targets, he said, but the military will be ready to respond immediately to an order to strike from President Obama, he said. (Obama confirms the preparation for military action).
		- Assad's military for using chemical weapons against a suburb of Damascus, leaving at least 355 people dead (clear international blame on Assad regime)
		- 12@397: Both Mr Obama and Joe Biden, his vice president, supported the idea that Congressional approval was needed for military action while they were senators during the Bush administration (the military action is needed with the support from the Congress).

		- 11@375: The US and Britain blame President Bashar al-Assad.
		- 24@815: President Barack Obama said he recognised the world and the US are war-weary in the face of potential military action against Syria but that the US has an "obligation" to act (Obama recognised the international scepticism toward military action, but it is inevitable).
		- 26@882: Clinton hasn't said anything at all about President Obama's plans for military strikes against the dictatorship in Damascus (Clinton "has been remarkably absent").
		- 28@948: General Michael Hayden, a former director of the National Security Agency: "It would be good politically to have other nations join us, but in terms of raw military power, the United States has sufficient power to do this". (the US has the ability to back military action even when there are no other nations support the US).
		- 31@1058: Barack Obama has decided America should military action against Syria, but he will seek authorisation from the US Congress, he said (Obama would seek support from US Congress).
		- 32@1080: UN spokesman Martin Nesirky: "I've seen all kinds of reporting suggesting that the departure of the chemical weapons team somehow opens a window for military action of some kind," (the UN paves the way for military intervention).
		- 34@1168: Greening has a seat on the National Security Council which called for military action in the first instance (Greening supports military action).
		- 39@1344: Mr Obama initially seemed poised to launch military action without asking Congress, but over the weekend changed his mind (Obama would seek support from US Congress).
		- 42@1454: Obama surprised most onlookers on Saturday when he decided to ask Congress for support on military strikes which had then seemed imminent (Obama would seek support from US Congress, and makes military action imminent).
	Concerns of military action in Syria	- 5@177: Thomas de Maiziere, German defence minister: "The West should not think they can solve problems by military means in the Middle East." (Maiziere criticises the military intervention).
		- 7@243: The problem is this: either a military strike will not change very much - or it will change far too much (the path of US and UK for supporting military action is not clear specifically at the early

		days after the use of chemical weapons).
		- 10@331: Brent crude has risen to a five month high and markets are subdued after a suspected chemical weapons attack in Syria raised the prospect of more military action in the Middle East (the use of chemical weapons affected the market because that action would lead to a military attack).
		- 14@463: Details of intercepted communications between Syrian military chiefs… and testimony from survivors will be contained in the report (difficulty of investigating the Syrian situation).
		- 21@705: A recovery in emerging market currencies as fears eased of a US-led military strike against Syria also helped buoy the rupee (there might be some effect on market from military strikes).
		- 43@1476: Russia, one of the Syrian government's main arms suppliers, opposes military intervention over an alleged chemical weapons attack in Syria (Russia stands against military intervention).
		- 45@1542: Russia's forces there were able to "seriously affect the military situation," the source said (Russia stands against any military action).
		- 47@1696: We have also seen a return to traditional, 'safe haven' behaviour associated with a pending military crisis, with the US dollar strengthening. Gold and oil have also moved positively." (decision of military action would affect the market).
		- 48@1718: Russia would help Syria respond to any military intervention by the US over chemical weapons attacks, Vladimir Putin has warned (Russia stands against any military action).
		- 49@1762: In any conflict, those responsible for initiating military action should always remember the laws of unintended consequences - that even the best-planned military operations have a nasty habit of escalating out of control (evaluating Obama's stance: any military action should be considered with negative consequences).
Syrian government stance		- 9@309: The Assad regime enjoys a military advantage and, with every day that passes, the opposition becomes more radicalised (the role of Assad in the region affected people to be radicalised).
		- 33@1124: Meanwhile, Syria said Saturday morning it was expecting a military attack "at any moment" after the last of the inspectors left Damascus (Syrian regime was expecting any intervention).

266

		- 38@1300: Syria asks UN to stop military strike and seek 'political solution' (Syrian regime accepted to find a political solution).
Stance of Syrian people		- 18@617: Syrian rebel commanders also warned that a short two-day missile assault on Damascus would not deal a serious blow to the Syrian regime's military capabilities (short missile on Syrian regime would not affect the regime).
Others		- 15@507: Military commanders sealed agreement on the scope of attacks with regional allies and the Syrian opposition, officials at a two-day summit in Amman said last night. (Western allies and Syrian opposition agreed for the attack).

Table 1.2: Chemical

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
International stance	**The USA support for military action**	- 1@3: This would place intense pressure on President Barack Obama to act on his declaration last year that any use of chemical stockpiles by Syria's regime would cross a "red line" (Obama's stance towards his declaration last year).
		- 2@25: President Barack Obama declared that if Syria's regime were to unleash its chemical weapons - or even move them - America's "red line" would be crossed and the whole "calculus" would change. (Obama's red line crossed by Assad regime).
		- 3@47: The use of chemical weapons is a hot button issue as Washington has marked it out as a "red line" in the conflict. (the use of chemical weapons is hot issue for US).
		- 5@113: Exactly a year ago, Barack Obama declared that if Bashar al-Assad's Syrian regime were to unleash its chemical weapons, America's "red line" would be crossed. (Obama's red line crossed by Assad regime).
		- 12@311: A Pentagon advisor… "Do we simply punish him for using chemical weapons as a warning not to do so again? Or do we take out his ability to use chemical weapons for good?" (evaluating the need for action positively).
		- 15@399: Downing Street and the White House have warned the Syrian President, Bashar al-Assad, that he will face "consequences" for the chemical gas attack they are convinced his forces conducted, which killed hundreds in Damascus last week. (UK and US have strong stance against the use of chemical weapons).
		- 27@795: Ultimately, President Barack Obama is rushing into half-baked action for the wrong reason, because he offered a hostage to fortune a year ago by declaring the use of chemical weapons against civilians to be his red line. (Obama's red line crossed by Assad regime).
		- 30@883: [Mr Obama] … Does anybody seriously doubt it was chemical weapons when there a bodies of children stacked up? So that's just a façade. (Obama suggest chemical weapons are clearly used by the Assad regime).
		- 31@927: Yes, Obama does believe Assad has used chemical weapons against his own people and, yes, he does want to do something about it.

		But rather than take immediate action, he's going to seek Congress' approval first. (military action will be backed after the Congress approval).
		- 32@949: He (Obama) said the strikes would be "limited in duration and scope", but would hold Bashar al Assad's regime to account for using chemical weapons against his own people. (Obama's meaning for military action after the UK parliament vote).
		- 40@1191: Having previously insisted a US attack would punish Assad for using chemical weapons but not aim at regime change, Mr Obama stressed… (the purpose is to punish the regime not to change it).
		- 47@1411: US President Barack Obama says a "majority" of world leaders believe that Bashar-al Assad's regime used chemical weapons. (evidence for the use of chemical weapons).
		- 50@1482: He has also sent a confusing message over his 'red line' over Syria's use of chemical weapons, declaring in Sweden that this wasn't his red line, but that of the international community. (Obama was not clear about his red line).
	Assad's allies stand against any military action in Syria	- 10@245: Iran is now using Syria as a theatre for testing America's resolve. In particular, it will be watching to see if Assad can get away with jumping over Mr Obama's red line when it comes to using chemical weapons. (Iran test the West response to the use of chemical weapons).
		- 33@993: Speaking for the first time since the suspected chemical weapons attack on August 21, Mr Putin questioned whether it was the work of the Syrian rebels and not Bashar al-Assad's regime. (Putin highlights scepticism about who is responsible for the chemical attack).
		- 41@1235: Russia, one of the Syrian government's main arms suppliers, opposes military intervention over an alleged chemical weapons attack in Syria. (Russia stands against any intervention targets the Syrian regime because of the use of chemical weapons).
		- 42@1257: Russia insisted that Syrian rebel groups were responsible for the chemical attack. (Russia put the blame on rebels).
		- 49@1477: The United States and their allies "are using the chemical weapon (allegation) as a pretext," and "are saying that they want to intervene for humanitarian reasons," said Khamenei. (Khamenei criticises the US stance).

		-
	International prohibition of chemical weapons and necessity of military action	- 11@289: With France, Britain, Israel and some American congressmen urging swift military action against President Bashar Assad's regime if the use of chemical agents is confirmed. (there will be international stance after the confirmation for the use of chemical weapons). - 13@333: There have been decades of painstaking work to construct an international regime of rules and checks, overseen by the UN, to prevent the use of chemical weapons and to destroy stockpiles. (chemical weapons are prohibited for the world peace). - 16@465: The team of 20 UN inspectors has been in Syria since Aug 18 looking into three earlier suspected chemical attacks. (the team have been in Syria before the use of chemical weapons). - 29@861: He (Hollande, French president) further explained his reasoning for supporting the planned strikes, saying that the chemical weapons attacks of August 21 "cannot and should not go unpunished." (the need for punishing Assad regime). - 34@1015: United Nations chemical weapons experts left Syria and crossed into neighbouring Lebanon on Saturday as the organisation said its investigation into whether chemical weapons were used in the country is ongoing. (inspectors extended their role for investigating the use of chemical weapons in neighbouring countries). - 35@1059: Mrs Merkel said that there needed to be "a collective answer by the UN" to the use of chemical weapons in Syria. (Germany asks for the full reports of the UN). - 36@1081: "The chemical massacre in Damascus cannot and should not go unpunished," he (Maunuel Valls, the interior minister) said. (strong stance against the use of chemical weapons is needed). - 43@1279: Chancellor Angela Merkel has been proposed by some as an honest broker to rally G20 states to an minimum position that calls for the removal of chemical weapons to avert a strike. (Merkel proposes new solution for response for the use of chemical weapons). - 45@1345: A series of air strikes might assuage the growing clamour for action to prevent Assad conducting further chemical weapons attacks against his own people. (general airstrikes could achieve the goals of preventing any further use

		of chemical weapons). - 46@1389: President François Hollande of France, who is still considering backing the US in attacking Syria over the Assad regime's alleged use of chemical weapons. (France supports the US). -
Evaluation of the Syrian attack	*No subtheme*	- 4@91: Now opponents of Bashar al-Assad claim to have proof that he has done more than just "move around" a "whole bunch" of chemical munitions - he is accused of using them to kill between 500 and 1,300 people. (situation highlighted by the opponents accused the Assad regime). - 6@135: Hague… "The only possible explanation of what we've been able to see is that it was a chemical attack. Clearly many, many hundreds of people have been killed. Some of the estimates are well over a thousand." (chemical weapons were used and there were victims of that). - 7@157: The disclosure revealed the true scale of the alleged chemical weapons attack in Syria and further pushed the West to intervene (evidence for the use of chemical weapons). - 14@377: Perhaps the Alawite minority would be singled out for sectarian massacre; stockpiles of chemical weapons might be looted. (the need for clear reports). - 17@503: The Intelligence & Security Committee also said that the security of Syria's chemical weapons stocks was a "serious concern": if these fell into the hands of terrorists, the consequences could be "catastrophic". (the risk of terrorist groups to have chemical weapons). - 18@531: Cameron… We know they have both the motive and the opportunity whereas the opposition does not have those things and the opposition's chance of having used chemical weapons in our view is vanishingly small. (confirming that the regime has used the chemical weapons while the opposition does not have the ability). - 19@554: Assad's use of chemical weapons 'heinous', says Joe Biden. (description for the crisis). - 21@619: Assad's regime has now used chemical weapons several times and its ability to do so with impunity seems to have emboldened his forces. (negative consequences for not acting

		against Assad regime). - 22@641: The letter was released on the same day that American sources admitted there was "no smoking gun" proving President Assad personally ordered his forces to use chemical weapons. (evidence for the use of chemical weapons). - 24@707: It says that the rebels do not have the capability to deploy chemical weapons. (rebels did not use the chemical weapons). - 26@774: The four-page document said that intercepted communications between Syrian officials "confirmed that chemical weapons were used by the regime". (evidence for the use of chemical weapons). - 37@1103: One hundred thousand people are dead and a landmark event in history, a chemical weapons attack against civilians, has occurred. (difficult situation of civilians). - 39@1169: Chemical weapons are specifically banned by the Geneva Convention. Their use is a violation of the rules of war. (international prohibition for the use of chemical weapons). - 44@1323: The summit was supposed to concentrate on the global economy but now looks likely to be dominated by the international crisis over allegations that the Syrian government used chemical weapons in the country's civil war. (the use of chemical weapons is international crisis). - 48@1433: Like every right-thinking person, I am (Dr Phillip Lee MP) appalled by the use of chemical weapons. We must make those responsible for this horrific act… (evaluation for the use of chemical weapons).
Syrian government stance		- 8@201: Syria agrees to allow UN inspectors access to site of chemical weapon attacks. (agreement of Assad regime for UN inspectors). -
Stance of UK towards the use of chemical weapons		- 9@223: He (Hague) said that diplomatic efforts at the UN had failed and it would be legal for countries to take military action in response to chemical attacks without Security Council backing. (the need for military action). - 20@597: Mr Cameron had hoped to join America in launching cruise missile strikes against the Syrian regime as soon as this weekend after Assad was accused of deploying chemical weapons in a suburb of Damascus last

week. (Cameron's hope for joining US).

- 23@685: So is the second: that whoever ordered the chemical attack, it's not Britain's problem - with so many horrible things happening in the world, and with our existing entanglements abroad, why pick this one? Let's just leave it to the Americans for once. (the UK will not support the US for only this time).
- 25@751: A UN Security Council resolution drafted by British diplomats proposed "authorising all necessary measures" to shield Syrians from chemical weapons and sharply condemning the government for their use. (British diplomats support the UN to shield Syria).
- 28@839: Both MPs (Greening and Simmonds) voted against the Labour amendment at 10pm, which called for "compelling evidence" that the Assad regime was behind the chemical attack. (both MPs even stand against the Opposition amendment).
- 38@1147: Since last Thursday, when MPs rejected government backing for potential military action against Syria by just 13 votes, the US administration has released detailed intelligence on Assad's alleged involvement in a chemical weapons attack on a suburb of Damascus. (the situation after the debate supports the UK military intervention in Syria).

Table 1.3: Intervention

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Stance of UK and local context	**Voices support military action**	- 8@54: The Foreign Secretary will first need to set out the case in the House of Commons for limited intervention, making sure he doesn't misrepresent the evidence that Assad's regime has used weapons of mass destruction. (the need for limiting the intervention, and focusing on the evidence that Assad used CW) - 13@101: Downing Street says, after a weekend of briefing that military intervention may be imminent. (high possibility for military intervention to take place). - 15@136: The Prime Minister has now said he will wait for a report by United Nations weapons inspectors before seeking the approval of MPs for "direct British involvement" in the Syrian intervention. (Cameron suggests the reports of UN will be provided before the vote for military action). - 24@219: Long before the debate, a young Tory pointed out that the problem with intervention in the past had been the rush. (consideration for previous interventions). - 26@231: Mr Cameron nevertheless argued strongly for intervention, reminding lawmakers of a series of videos apparently showing the gruesome aftermath of what Syrian rebels and their Western backers say was a chemical strike. (Cameron highlights circumstances to support military action). - 31@285: Mr Cameron last night said he will wait for a report by United Nations weapons inspectors before seeking the approval of MPs for "direct British involvement" in the Syrian intervention. (Cameron suggests the reports of UN will be provided before the vote for military action). - 43@488: David Miliband calls for 'intervention' in Syria (general statement for David's stance). - 45@516: the House of Representatives who raised concerns about the cost of intervening, the muddled strategic goal of any intervention. (the goal of any intervention should be very clear; supporting of intervention with clear goals) - 46@569: In a round of interviews, Mr Cameron defended his handling of the proposed

274

		intervention, arguing that his aim was the protection of the innocent. (Cameron relates the goal of intervention to be humanitarian). - 49@648: He said there was no question that chemical weapons had been used in Syria, meaning that it was not a lack of trust in Government intelligence that led the House of Commons to vote against intervention last week. (Iraq war could affect the UK decision about the Government intelligence). - 50@661: He (Blair) warned that without foreign intervention Syria would end up split in two, with one part of the country likely to become a base for dangerous religious extremists. (Blair supports military intervention).
	Concerns around military action	- 9@69: Welby (The Archbishop of Canterbury) warns against 'rushing to judgment' over Syria intervention. (Welby warns for rush decision towards military intervention) - 21@188: General Lord Dannatt, the former head of the British Army, has come out against launching military attacks on Syria because there is no unanimous international or UN Security Council backing for intervention. (lack of unanimous backing for intervention) - 22@194: The Prime Minister made his case for military intervention against a backdrop of widespread public scepticism about the use of British military force in yet another foreign conflict. (Cameron calls for intervention within the wide public scepticism). - 25@226: The Government suffered a defeat tonight on plans for military intervention in Syria. (difficulty on the Government to achieve the27@247: Fears that a military intervention in the Middle East could take place within days saw the FTSE 100 slide earlier in the week. (concerns about military intervention to be imminent). - 28@255: Labour leader Ed Miliband insisted he is not ruling out military intervention in Syria but the potential consequences of such action needs to be clear. (Miliband considers the negative consequences of military action). - consensus about military action). - 30@269: He said the Scottish Government condemned the use of chemical weapons but the criteria for intervention had not been met. (Scottish Government: condemnation for the use of chemical weapons but the action should not be supported) - 32@290: John Boehner, the leader of the House,

		has sent a letter to Mr Obama seeking answers to a number of questions regarding intervention. (UK needs more information about the Syrian situation before supporting military action) - 38@382: Mr Fitzpatrick… I have problems both with the Government motion and the Opposition amendment… I'm opposed to military intervention in Syria, full stop. (there are problems for supporting any type of military action). -
	Others	- 16@144: Yet we were told that the Libyan intervention in 2011 was not about toppling Col Gaddafi, even though that is precisely what happened. (comparing Libyan intervention with Syria). - 29@262: Britain's fire power; With the possibility of intervention in Syria on the horizon, an arsenal of military might is available for use by defence chiefs. (possibility of UK intervention). - 33@309: The question that will be asked in some quarters is whether Thursday's vote on intervention in Syria is symptomatic of a new attitude in Britain. (questions about whether the debate has affected Britain attitude towards Syrian crisis). - 34@316: Mr Cameron got more than a little 'over his skis' on backing Syrian intervention, and as often happens when that is the case, he fell flat on his face. (Cameron's appearance after the debate). - 41@450: Now, that Mr Cameron has failed in his attempt to persuade MPs to support military intervention. (Cameron failed to support military intervention). - 42@463: Philip Hammond said it was "a bit rich" for the Opposition to start demanding a timetable for a new division of MPs when it was Labour strategy that led to a situation where the Prime Minister felt Parliament had ruled out intervention. (evaluation for Cameron's stance). - 47@593: The voices against intervention are always louder than the often silent majority who, however reluctantly, are "for" intervention. (evaluation of UK voices around military intervention). -
The international stance	**Western support for military action**	- 1@3: In an August 19 letter to Representative Eliot Engel, obtained by the Associated Press, Gen. Dempsey effectively ruled out even limited intervention, including US cruise missile attacks. (the possibility for even limited US intervention).

- 4@13: France has previously stated that any confirmed use of chemical weapons would provide grounds for military intervention. (France supports military intervention).
- 5@27: Western intervention in Syria would be a decisive attempt to mould the future of the Middle East. (general evaluation for the result of Western intervention)
- 6@32: Does Mr Obama have the courage, some would say foolhardiness? This would not just be intervention. It would be a decisive attempt to mould the future of the region, before it fell apart (evaluation for the result of Western intervention in relation to Obama's stance)
- 10@73: a former UN appeal judge and leading international lawyer, said yesterday that Russia was wrong to insist that military intervention would hinge on UN consent. (UN: intervention could not only hinge on UN consent).
- 14@115: the strongest words from the Obama Administration to date - and strongest indicator yet of imminent US military intervention. (the possibility of USA military intervention is imminent)
- 17@149: As President Barack Obama tries to rally world leaders to support military intervention in Syria he is also trying to convince another constituency closer to home: Congress. (Obama seeks the approval from the Congress).
- 35@321: John Kerry administered a diplomatic slap in the face to Britain following David Cameron's withdrawal of military support for intervention in Syria. (Kerry evaluates the UK stance negatively and that could reflect the relationship among the two countries).
- 37@360: The French leader stands alone as the only European ruler who remains committed to military intervention. (French support for USA-led action).
- 40@427: It is generally accepted here that Russia's UN Security Council veto would mean nothing in the face of consolidated western support for intervention. (consolidated western support for intervention would affect the Russia's stance).
- 44@508: A former US army chief has claimed that Barack Obama is eyeing intervention in Syria that would go beyond a mere deterrent against chemical weapons to damage the military capacity of the Assad regime. (US military attack will not be limited on deterring the use of chemical weapons).
- 48@618: The international community cannot

		"contract out" its morality by allowing Russia to block intervention in crises such as that engulfing Syria, he said today. (the international community would stand against the Russian block of intervention).
	Obstacles against intervention in Syria	- 3@9: Barack Obama stresses 'costs' of US intervention in Syria. (Obama: The cost of intervention may prevent some from supporting it). - 7@48: Russian foreign minister warns West that military intervention in Syrian conflict without UN Security Council approval would violate international law. (Russia: any military intervention without UN approval is illegal). - 12@98: Earlier on Tuesday, Russia warned that Western military intervention in Syria would have "catastrophic consequences" for the Middle East as divisions widen between Moscow and Washington. (Russia: Western intervention will not solve the problem while it will increase it, and it will make the relationship between Russia and America worse than the current situation). - 20@171: The problems of intervention are real enough, beginning with Russia's opposition, which is founded on their fear that overthrowing Assad will merely hand rule to extremists. (Russia is significant obstacle against intervention). - 36@336: Emma Bonino, the Italian foreign minister… Even a limited intervention runs the risk of becoming unlimited. (concerns about negative consequences). -
	Others	- 19@165: A cocktail of factors have come together to create jitters in the market, not least the looming prospect of Western military intervention… But investors are also looking ahead to September… (concerns of investors). - 39@402: There's been a lot of talk in the pro-Obama US liberal media of the end of the Anglo-American Special Relationship following Parliament's rejection of military intervention in Syria. (the UK decision could affect relationship between UK and US). -
Evaluation of the Syrian attack		- 23@203: Accurate intelligence of Assad's chemical weapons use is vital to justify any military intervention. (the use of chemical weapons legitimises military intervention).

Situation of the Syrian people		- 2@7: the rebels who would take over are hardly friends of the West; any intervention would be extremely costly… (negative considerations for military action).
Others		- 11@86: After the long bank holiday weekend, stock market traders have returned to their desks amid growing nervousness about the potential for military intervention in Syria. (concerns of market traders). - 18@158: The oil market has decided that the risk of political and thus military intervention has increased substantially overnight. (oil market concerns).
		-

Table 1.4: USA

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Stance of USA towards the use of chemical weapons	**Strong support for military action**	- 2@51: Barack Obama has ordered US intelligence agencies to establish whether hundreds died in poison gas attacks in Syria. (Obama urges intelligence to investigate the situation) - 3@78: US commanders have prepared a range of "options" for Mr Obama if he chooses to launch an attack on the Damascus regime, US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel said earlier. (commanders have prepared a range of "options" for action) - 4@102: Mr Kerry did not say whether the US would seek approval from the United Nations Security Council before launching any potential attack. (Kerry did not mention waiting for approval from UN) - 6@153: The United Nations adopted R2P in 2005 following the genocide in Rwanda - and its principles could be drawn upon by the US and Britain. (UN puts restrictions for US and Britain possible military action, but did not stand against military action) - 8@208: John Kerry, the US secretary of state, described the chemical attack as a "moral obscenity" and warned that Bashar al-Assad, Syria's president, must face "consequences". (Kerry urges for action against Assad regime) - 11@283: BODY: Mr Biden's comments make him the highest-ranking USA official to say the Syrian regime is the culprit in a large-scale chemical weapons attack on August 21. (Biden confirms the horrible use of chemical weapons by Assad). - 13@332: we do have to make sure that when countries break international norms on weapons like chemical weapons that could threaten us, that they are held accountable," Mr Obama told the US Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). (Obama suggests that chemical weapons threaten US community) - 15@405: President Barack Obama said the Assad regime's use of chemical weapons was "a challenge to the world" that presented a danger to US national security. (Obama suggests that chemical weapons threaten US community) - 20@480: I (General Michael Hayden, a former

| | | director of the National Security Agency) think the United States would act unilaterally because President Obama made this commitment for the US and frankly for himself about a year ago, (US may go for the action alone because of Obama's commitment)
- 24@615: US President Barack Obama said he will ask the US Congress to authorize military action against Syria, lifting the threat of immediate strikes on President Bashar al-Assad's regime. (Obama calls for urgent action)
- 25@631: US President Barack Obama addresses Americans about the situation in Syria. (Obama gives significance for US public opinion, and he explains the situation)
- 27@680: HEADLINE: Syria conflict: as it happened; John Kerry, the US secretary of state, has effectively set out the case for missile strikes on Syria, as he says the US cannot stand idly by as the Assad regime uses chemical weapons. (Kerry urges for the need of military action)
- 28@710: The USS Stout has been deployed to join sister ships Mahan, Ramage, Barry and Gravely, a US defence official said on Thursday. (US preparation for military action)
- 34@845: Syria's brutal two-and-a-half-year-old conflict has also claimed more than 100,000 lives, including hundreds who - according to the US and others - were killed in chemical weapons attacks by the Syrian regime near Damascus on Aug 21. (reports of US reassures the number of Syrian victims)
- 36@896: HEADLINE: Syria crisis: John Kerry says 'world wants to know if US can make a difference'; (Kerry highlights the US ability to attack Assad regime)
- 40@990: The Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved an amended resolution 10-7 that authorises US military intervention with a 90-day deadline and bans American boots on the ground for combat purposes. (showing the procedure of US legality to act against Assad regime)
- |
| | **Hesitant stance of USA** | - 5@128: A senior US official said Hagel planned to consult with his French and British counterparts about Syria, but the timing of that was unclear. (consulting allies France and Britain).
- 12@302: HEADLINE: Leaked US spy budget |

		reveals 'critical' intelligence gaps. (criticism of US intelligence role) - 14@358: US consumer spending accounts for 70% of economic growth, it is likely to have a big impact on this week's second estimate of US GDP. (the intervention may have negative impact on US economy). - 19@475: A recent poll showed just nine percent of Americans backing USA military involvement. (only few Americans support military action) - 29@735: President Obama said on Saturday that he would now be seeking the support of the US Congress, in a vote which will not happen before next week. (Obama seeks approval from US Congress) - 37@917: In the topsy-turvy world of the US Congress nothing is certain until the votes are counted. (the stance of US has not been confirmed) - 37@917: In the topsy-turvy world of the US Congress nothing is certain until the votes are counted. (the stance of US has not been confirmed) - 39@970: Syria was, even then, viewed by Washington as a "state sponsor of terrorism", but US officials argued that returning an envoy to Damascus could help persuade Syria to change its policies on issues including Lebanon, Israel and Iraq. (possible ways of persuading the Syrian regime to change its policy in the region; considering non-military actions) - 45@1135: Obama set a red line and then claimed that he didn't. A major reason why the West is considering action is because over a year ago Obama laid down a red line for war - if Assad uses chemical weapons then the US will take action. (changing in the tone of Obama towards his red line).
Stance of UK and USA together		- 9@233: The USA and Britain blame President Bashar al-Assad's military for using chemical weapons against a suburb of Damascus, leaving at least 355 people dead. (USA and UK condemn the use of chemical weapons, and show their anger). - 10@255: London's benchmark index followed US markets lower overnight. (market of Britain and US go down) - 16@423: HEADLINE: Former ambassador (Sir Nigel Sheinwald): US shares our disquiet over

		Syria; (UK shares the US's ~~its~~ concerns for the use of chemical weapons)
		- 17@448: Saturday August 24: David Cameron and USA President Barack Obama pledge a "serious response" to the Syria gas attack after a critical 30-minute phone call between the pair at 4.30pm n which they decide to consider "all options". (Cameron and Obama will consider all options to respond to the gas attack).
		- 18@472: But he (Bolton) was also critical of President Obama's handling of the crisis, suggesting the US had not shown leadership on the issue. (the issue is not the relationship between US and UK, it is the concerns of US leadership in this crisis).
		- 44@1091: Mr Cameron insisted he had no regrets about recalling Parliament to seek MPs' approval for a process which could have led to the UK joining the US in punitive air strikes on the regime of President Bashar Assad. (Cameron suggests that the vote did not damage the relationship with the US).
		-
Others	**Russian stance**	- 7@183: Sergei Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, says any action by the US or the UK would be a breach of international law. (Russia warns the US and UK from breaking the law)
		- 26@656: HEADLINE: Vladmir Putin: US evidence of Syrian chemical attack 'must be presented to UN'; (Russia urges the US to raise the evidence to the UN)
		- 35@869: Meanwhile it was reported that Russia has dispatched an intelligence ship to the Eastern Mediterranean, as it further beefs up its naval presence in the region ahead of anticipated US strikes against its Syrian ally. (Russia prepares for any possible attack against Assad regime)
		- 43@1054: Russian officials were in touch with Edward Snowden before the US intelligence leaker flew to Moscow from Hong Kong, President Vladimir Putin has revealed. (conflict between Russian and US intelligence)
		- 49@1238: But he (Obama) said that Russian opposition had left the council in "paralysis" and left the US no choice but to operate outside the global body. (Obama shows the pressure that Russia puts on US in the UN Security Council)
	French stance	- 30@760: Manuel Valls, the French interior minister, said on Sunday that France would not

		act alone in Syria but would await the decision by the US congress. (France waits for the approval of US Congress). - 47@1179: "Are we (French) going to wait for the inspectors' report? Yes, we are going to wait for the inspectors' report as we are going to wait for the US Congress vote". (France wait for reports and stance of US Congress)
	International market and additional international participants	- 1@22: On Monday night a senior USA senator claimed that the White House had quietly cut off some of the $1.3 billion (£830 million) in military aid that America gives to Egypt each year. (decreasing the support for Egypt). - 22@563: If the USA central bank does start curbing its $85bn-a-month bond-buying programme in September that would dent the metal, which benefited from this flood of liquidity. (the situation of USA market). - 23@585 & 25@631: Syrian television broadcast scenes of fighter jets, tanks and troops in training, flip sides of a countdown to a likely USA military strike meant to punish Bashar Assad's government for the alleged use of chemical weapons. (Syria prepares for any USA military action) - 31@773: Right now, the US is itself pondering whether "foreign policy begins at home" - the title of an excellent book by Richard Haas, (possibility of changing the foreign policy with the highlighting of Richard's book) - 32@790: Over the past few years Mr Gambarin has produced a giant image of Edvard Munch's iconic The Scream and a portrait of USA President Barack Obama, 'drawn' to coincide with his visit to Italy in July 2009 for the G8 summit. (not talk about USA response at all) - 33@812: EU Commissioner Neelie Kroes, in charge of the EU's digital agenda, is clearly excited about the spending spree Vodafone could go on after completing the $130bn sale of its interest in USA partner Verizon. (the situation of USA and international market) - 38@943: However, it left its Japanese growth forecast unchanged, and cut its predicted GDP growth for the USA and China. (discussing the international market) - 48@1210: Expectations for a good number have been building throughout the week as USA investors chose to focus on the positive data this week, like the ISM manufacturing and services

		data, the Beige Book, auto sales and the encouraging jobless claims. (the situation of US market).
		- 41@1010: Strategists at Morgan Stanley struck an optimistic tone, arguing that although there are destabilising factors in the short-term - such as the rising oil price, a tapering of USA quantitative easing and the German election - in the coming year the conditions for shares would be more positive. (international market)
		- 42@1032: Just hours ago the rupee fell back towards the record low it hit last week - 68.85 to the USA dollar… (USA market)
		- 46@1153: In the end, the summit's divisions over Syria prevented agreement on a joint statement signed by all of 19 countries - the 20th is the European Union. Instead, one was signed by the USA and Britain as well as Australia, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Spain and Turkey. (international division towards taking action against the chemical attacks)

The Guardian

Table 1.5: Military

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
International participants	**The role of USA**	- 2@60: The paper's story, citing "administration officials", states that "a list of possible targets for a military strike has been circulating in the White House since late last week. (the USA high possibility for military action). - 8@182: Now the risk to USA red line credibility seems to have tipped him over to back a direct military attack. (the US red line may courage the US to back military action). - 10@223: the USA, UK and France have already decided that such weapons were indeed used, and are readying to take unilateral military action. (the high possibility of united military action). - 27@553: Defence chiefs heard their political masters refer to the need to "deter" and "punish" Syria's Assad regime, and, as Barack Obama put it, "fire a shot across the bows". Yet they also knew that ministers - and the public - did not have the appetite for deeper military involvement. (Obama recognises concerns of Syrian government and public to go for deeper military intervention) - 33@672: The president's (Obama) promise that military strikes on Syria would be limited and narrow is of course welcome. (military action is promised to be limited) - 35@711: As Obama said in his Rose Garden speech on Saturday, "I have decided that the United States should take military action against Syrian regime targets." (Obama has clear stance towards intervention in Syria) - 36@731: President Obama began an uphill struggle on Monday to persuade Congress of the need for US military action in Syria (Obama struggled to persuade the Congress of the need for US military action) - 39@789: The political battle in Washington over the level and degree of US military engagement will be intense, forming a key element in the pro- and anti-intervention debate. (Washington debate will reveal key points about pro- and anti-intervention) - 40@809: Dempsey (US army general), who chose not to deliver an opening statement spelling out his views on Syria, said that his task was "to develop

		military options to deter" Assad from further using chemical weapons and "degrade his ability to do so". (Dempsey attempts to provide all options with the focus on specific goals).
		- 41@828: John Boehner, and a series of fellow Republican leaders announced they would back the president's call for military authorisation from Congress. (some US political leaders support military action).
		- 43@868: They (leaders of White House) set a window limited to 60 days for military action - during which Obama could order the limited, tailored strikes he has foreshadowed. (the military action is not urgent after the consideration for the situation of military attack)
		- 50@1007: The president, who spoke to 1,000 rabbis in an annual conference call which took place last Friday, has said a military response is needed to uphold an international ban on the use of chemicals weapons and to deter Syria from using them again on his people or on neighbours such as Israel or Jordan. (highlighting the purposes of the military action)
	Role of international participants	- 1@20: Military leaders such as John Dempsey, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, have urged caution, for fear of becoming further embroiled in a Middle East conflict where US allies are unclear. (leaders fears about military action in Middle East)
		- 19@398: Philippe Sands, a leading expert in international law, said the document failed to provide a "sound or persuasive legal argument" in favour of military action. (doubt about the legality of military action).
		- 23@476: it was claimed yesterday, giving weight to fears that western military intervention could inflame violence in the Middle East. (negative consequences for Western intervention).
		- 25@515: When Putin refused, the Prince (Saudi Prince Bandar bin Sultan) vowed military action. (Saudi stance towards the Syrian situation)
		- 26@534: France, whose military has stated it is ready for any action as soon as Hollande gives a go-ahead. (France is prepared for military action).
		- 29@593: Jordan, another anxious neighbour of Syria, has made clear it will not be involved in any military action, but it is a key base for the anti-Assad opposition. (neighbouring country does not support military intervention).
		- 31@632: Two other opinion polls published this week, and carried out after the Ghouta attack,

287

		indicated lukewarm support among French voters for military intervention in Syria. (the French support for military action in Syria is lukewarm)
		- 42@848: Meanwhile Israel fired a target missile to test a new missile defence system yesterday, triggering alerts across a region braced nervously for impending international military strikes against Syria. (Israel raises concerns and preparation for international military action).
		- 44@888: Earlier, Vladimir Putin, who will host the G20 summit on Thursday and Friday, warned the US against launching military action in Syria (Putin warns US from any military action).
		-
Evaluating UK stance in relation to the use of chemical weapons	**Concerns about military action**	- 5@122: But Lewis added that he remained adamantly opposed to a wider military campaign in Syria. (a UK political leader opposes the UK military action).
		- 7@163: Lord West, the former first sea lord, urged diplomacy before military aggression and was among those worried that the west could find itself sucked into a vortex of violence in the region. (Lord West suggests the diplomatic solution instead of military action).
		- 9@202: Commanders have privately been urging a strategy of containment of the fighting in Syria, and fear that even a limited military campaign may provoke Assad to more aggression. (Commanders raise fears that even limited military action could have negative consequences).
		- 11@242: Those close to Ed Miliband suggest he has been misreported by those assuming he has signed up to Syria action. There is no done deal. His conditions need to be met: any action must be legal and limited to defusing further chemical attacks, and military aims must be achievable. (Clarification: Miliband's conditions for military action)
		- 12@262: Hain said it was particularly hard to trust Cameron because of his long-standing support for intervention in Syria… If [the proposal for a strike] had come from a leader who had all along been opposed to military action, then I think people would sit up and say the chemical attack was absolutely monstrous and hideous… (concerns about people who may trust Cameron because of his focus on the use of chemical weapons).
		- 14@300: Allied air strikes against the Syrian government over the alleged use of chemical weapons could be delayed until next week in the face of strong parliamentary opposition to British

		involvement in immediate military action. (military action in Syria will be delayed because of the strong parliamentary opposition to British involvement).
		- 15@320: But No 10 was forced to defuse a growing parliamentary crisis by announcing last night that Britain would only take part in a military strike after a second parliamentary vote. (situation of UK parliament: even if the parliament supports military action, there would be another vote).
		- 17@359: What Britain does matters little in military terms, as the armchair peaceniks at home rightly point out, even if many foreigners still flatter our strength and cunning. (general evaluation for the UK: UK wants to support the peace while some other participants want to persuade the UK for military action.
		- 18@378: It (Joint Intelligence Committee assessment) says: "There is no obvious political or military trigger for regime use of CW on an apparently larger scale now. (the reasons behind the use of chemical weapons are not clear, and the situation needs a deep investigation)
		- 21@437: It was also the only party to lose a frontbencher during the battle, as Jim Fitzpatrick resigned as a shadow transport minister in protest at the suggestion of "any military intervention, full stop". (strong opposition from some MPs in parliament towards the UK intervention)
		- 24@495: HEADLINE: Syria debate: why I voted against military intervention… ABSTRACT: Sarah Wollaston: A military strike could escalate into a wider conflict. (stand against UK intervention through the considering of negative consequences)
		- 28@573: Ed Miliband…There would be no military intervention from Britain in Syria. (after the drawbacks of UK intervention, there will be no military action)
		- 30@613: Miliband's aides insisted Labour had not put a deal on the table offering to back a military strike. (Miliband is shown to take strong stance against military action)
		- 32@652: But after Ed Miliband's - and other politicians' - political gaming-based or genuine opposition to consideration of British military action in Syria, Blair's leadership and moral courage during the Kosovo conflict stands out in glowing contrast. (UK political leaders consider previous mistakes)
		-
	Stance of Cameron and	- 20@418: Cameron told MPs… "it is clear to me that the British parliament, reflecting the views of the

	Government	British people, does not want to see British military action." (Cameron agrees that the choice of parliament reflects the voice of British people).
		- 22@456: Government sources had indicated earlier in the week that they did not see any problem with Downing Street's plan to table an even tougher motion - to authorise British involvement in military strikes against the Assad regime. (Government sources support the motion).
		- 34@691: Cameron believes the Labour leader acted dishonourably by claiming that he was trying to secure a proper legal and political footing for military intervention, knowing that a vote against the government motion would kill off that option. (Cameron considers the vote against the government motion would kill off the option of going in military action)
		- 45@907: the pivotal moment last week was when David Cameron stood up in the Commons after the votes and announced that parliament had spoken against military action. (Cameron respects the decision of the parliament).
		- 46@927: Speaking in the Commons yesterday, Cameron made his support for military action clear despite last week's vote. (Cameron respected the decision of parliament, but he still supports military action in Syria)
		- 47@949: He (Cameron) insisted the British decision to cut off the option of supporting military action had not led to a freezing in the special relationship with America. (Cameron assures the UK decision will not affect the relationship between UK and US)
		- 48@969: Cameron's frustration at the way he has been forced to stand aside from any US-led military action was revealed when he questioned how Labour could live with itself after taking "the easy political way out" in last week's Commons vote. (Cameron is not happy about the achievement of Labour towards UK support for the US-led military action).
		- 49@991: "Mr Blair's contention that public disquiet in the UK in relation to military action against Iraq can be put down to the aftermath of military action is undermined by three facts. (Blair supports the current action, and highlights the main issues related to the Iraq war in relation to the UK intervention in Syria)
		-
	Preparation for action	- 4@102: A buildup of military aircraft on RAF Akrotiri on Cyprus suggested planning had reached a developed stage. (planning for military aircraft).

		- 6@143: In a sign of the increased pace of activity, the prime minister's spokesman said plans for a military strike were under way. (the UK military action is imminent). -
Evaluation of the Syrian power in the region		- 3@81: Assad added that military action would fail. In remarks reported by Reuters in Moscow, he said: "Failure awaits the United States as in all previous wars it has unleashed. (Assad assures the failure of any US military action). - 13@281: The Assad loyalist… with the Syrian army's air defence… "If we are unable to shoot down their warplanes with artillery, we have military pilots who are ready to attack these foreign war planes." (Assad and allies warn any foreign military action in Syria). - 16@339: the catalogue of atrocities committed by the Syrian armed forces and militia thugs in support of a regime which has institutionalised torture is sufficient reason for limited military strikes to limit the use of air power against the rebels. (the Syrian regime uses its power to fight rebels). - 37@750: Asked what would happen if outside forces carried out military strikes against his regime, Assad replied: "One must not speak only about the Syrian response, but rather what could happen after the first strike. (Assad regime warns for any foreign military attack in Syria). - 38@770: HEADLINE: Syria crisis: Military build-up: Troops in Damascus move away from sensitive sites. (Syrian regime prepares for any international military attack) -

Table 1.6: USA

Theme	Subtheme	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
US stance	**Stance of Obama and Kerry**	- 2@31: Fabius noted that the latest attack had come a year and a day after President Obama declared the use of chemical weapons a "red line" for USA action. (chemical weapons after the declaration of Obama's red line) - 3@46: The notion that the USA can somehow solve what is a sectarian, complex problem inside of Syria sometimes is overstated," said the president in the interviewed. (Obama suggests the nature of Syrian sectarian problem) - 7@106: HEADLINE: Front: Kerry: USA will act against Assad: 'Regime will be held accountable for moral outrage': (USA will act against Assad regime) - 9@139: Kerry said that, regardless of the outcome of the UN weapons inspections, the USA had already concluded that Syria had used chemical weapons. (Kerry assures the chemical attack in Syria) - 10@155: The Syrian atrocity, where the death toll has been reported by opposition-linked sources at 322 but is likely to rise, was damned as a "moral obscenity" by USA secretary of state John Kerry. (Kerry condemns the Syrian atrocity). - 27@442: HEADLINE: Syria crisis: Obama: we cannot accept indiscriminate gassing of civilians: USA releases evidence claiming to show chemical weapons were used by Assad as president goes on diplomatic offensive. (USA legitimises its military action against Assad regime) - 29@493: John Kerry, the USA secretary of state specifically mentioned a host of USA enemies, saying Iran could be "emboldened". (Kerry warns about staying idly without any action against Syrian regime). - 31@544: It's a potent sign of how low the American political bar is set that gratitude is expressed because a USA president says he will ask Congress to vote before he starts bombing another country that is not attacking or threatening the USA. (Obama seeks Congress approval with the consideration of Assad regime is not threatening USA) - 35@610: he (Obama) is also struggling to convince (largely Democratic) members of Congress that military action in Syria would be limited and run no risk of miring the USA in prolonged conflict. (Obama struggles for persuading members of

		Congress to support military action)
		- 39@678: Kerry said, warning of consequences to USA allies "if nothing happens to begin to change the equation" of the Syrian civil war. (Kerry suggests the need for action to avoid consequences)
		- 40@696: Kerry…"We have positioned USA assets throughout the region to successfully execute this mission…" (the USA would support its mission in the region)
		- 45@781: John Kerry, the USA secretary of state, has already said the UN report will not reveal anything not already known to Washington. (Kerry confirms the update of the situation even before the reports of UN)
		-
	Unstable stance of USA: The USA does not have stable stance towards taking military action	- 1@16: the USA first determined that the Syrian government used chemical weapons earlier this summer. (USA declares another previous use of chemical weapons)
		- 4@61: Senior USA officials are said to be considering choices ranging from increased diplomatic pressure on Syria to the use of force, including possible air strikes on Bashar al-Assad's troops. (USA seems to work on diplomatic and military paths together)
		- 5@76: The USA has a group of three destroyers in the eastern Mediterranean, which it has bolstered with a fourth. (the USA prepares for military action)
		- 16@255: The USA would find it hard to argue that the Syrian conflict poses an imminent national security threat. (The USA would find difficulty to propose the Syrian conflict threatens the national security).
		- 18@289: Still if the USA response is a limited one (no boots on the ground and no regime change); if it's articulated as a response to the use of chemical weapons; if it's intended to serve as deterrent to both Assad and future tyrants. (USA military action will be limited)
		- 19@306: The USA could go it alone sooner. (USA may take action in Syria alone)
		- 24@391: The USA has four guided-missile destroyers in the Mediterranean. (the USA seems to prepare for military action)
		- 25@408: USA leaders could also choose to capitalize on the 'Sustained Shia-Sunni Conflict' trajectory by taking the side of the conservative Sunni regimes against Shiite empowerment movements in the Muslim world. (the USA should capitalize the Shia-Sunni Conflict in the region)

		- 30@527: USA weighs up next move as UN team go to Lebanon[#xfffd] Two-thirds of French people oppose intervention, says poll. (the USA waits for UN team report)
		- 32@561: It is a case of breathtaking arrogance, a call for recognition that the USA is not only the world's policeman but the world's enforcer. (the USA acts as enforcer for military action in the world)
		- 33@578: But the briefing for USA legislators left many sceptical, according to numerous members of Congress. (USA's concerns around participation in military action)
		- 34@593: he (Vernon Bogdanor - Professor David Feldman devotes a chapter) notes in passing that constitutional conventions are vital to the election of the USA president. (how the decision of USA could affect the election)
		- 36@627: A group of USA ships led by the aircraft carrier Nimitz have been deployed in the Arabian Sea. (USA is shown with its preparation for military action)
		- 37@644: The USA pressured Arab states in the region to prevent the delivery of advanced weaponry, especially anti-aircraft missiles, to the Free Syrian Army (FSA). (the USA acts to prevent advanced weaponry to arrive FSA)
		- 38@661: Later came comments from USA House speaker John Boehner backing a Syria war resolution, adding to the likelihood of Congress voting for USA action. (John Boehner backs USA military action)
		- 44@764: The extended USA mission objective will make it harder to secure sufficient Democrat support in the House though, where a majority of Republicans are also thought to be opposed. (the mission of USA is difficult to be supported in the House)
		- 48@832: The results of separate UN weapons inspectors' on-site tests in Syria are likely to be known around the time the USA Congress votes on military action next week. (reports of UN inspectors have not been provided, and they will be provided around the time of the USA Congress vote)
	Other	- 49@849: Overall the FTSE 100 is currently down 1.44 points at 6532.00 ahead of the USA employment data, where around 180,000 jobs are expected to have been added in August. (talking about jobs is the USA).
		- 41@713: The statement could be a veiled threat to

		revive a contract for the delivery of the S-300s to Iran, which Russia cancelled a few years ago under strong USA and Israeli pressure. (in the previous few years, the USA achieve its persuading for not delivering S-300s to Iran) - 42@730: The USA has eliminated 90% of its chemical weapons and Russia over 60%. (talking about eliminating chemical weapons in the world).
UK stance and local context	**Before the debate**	- 6@91: Hague, who insisted Britain shared a common position with the USA and France, told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "We have tried those other methods - the diplomatic methods - and we will continue to try those. But they have failed so far." (Hague suggests the support of USA path) - 8@123: No 10 says Britain and USA will not be bound by findings of UN weapons team investigating chemical attack. (UK and US will not seek approval from UN) - 11@171: Legally, the UK and the USA indicated they were relying on the Geneva protocol of 1925 which banned the use of chemical weapons after the first world war. (UK and USA indicate the legality of acting against Syrian regime) - 12@188: In der Spiegel, Laura Poitras has a column on the "blatant attacks on press freedoms" coming from the UK and their superiors in the USA national security state. (UK and USA show their anger) - 13@204: When in doubt, the "grown-up" action is always to go to war. Whoever is in power each side of the Atlantic makes no difference, the UK always backs the USA. (the UK always backs the USA)
	After the debate	- 15@238: While much evidence points to the guilt of the Assad regime, would not due process require that judgment and We may agree with John Kerry, the USA secretary of state, that the use of gas is a "moral obscenity", but would we not feel that "a measured and proportionate punishment", consideration of action take place in the UN security council and await the report of the inspectors. (UK joins US for condemning the use of chemical weapons, but UK raises concerns about military action without the full reports) - 17@272: The development comes amid uncertainty over the threat of air strikes, which USA and UK officials had suggested would happen within days, probably by the end of the weekend. (UK and USA would be uncertain and the final decision has not been taken yet) - 20@323: Cue last-minute key change in Downing

		Street's unconditional promise to the USA, but he's (Cameron) still out of tune with a country that doesn't want to go to war. (the tune of Cameron toward backing USA had changed)
		- 21@340: Meanwhile, USA and British government attempts to rally support for military action were damaged by the publication of an Associated Press report quoting unnamed USA intelligence officials describing the case against the Assad regime as no "slam-dunk" (the situation is not clear for USA and UK, and that could affect the diplomatic solutions)
		- 22@357: Tactless it may be to point out, but exactly 200 years ago Britain and the USA were engaged in their second and (as it turned out) last war. (the same ~~mistake~~ argument of using chemical weapons done by USA and UK)
		- 26@425: It is a difficult time for our armed forces, having prepared to go into this action, to then be stood down and have to watch while the USA acts alone or perhaps the USA acts with France." (the UK changed its stance from preparing for action to watching the USA acts alone or with France).
		- 28@476: Earlier in the week he (Cameron) had been envisaging a military venture with the mighty USA president. (Cameron was expecting the Commons would support joining USA-led coalition)
		- 46: Britain is still hopeful that Russia's President Vladimir Putin will want to run an efficient summit focusing on the world economy, and will not be taken up by rhetorical assaults on USA plans to attack Syria. (Britain is shown with concern about Putin's summit)
		- 47@815: They (some British ministers) point to the contrast of the USA Congress where Obama aides have been "flooding the zone" to persuade representatives to back him next week. (some ministers show how Obama seeks support for military action)
		- 50@866: McCain insisted he still has an open mind on USA intervention, despite voting for wide-ranging authorisation in the Senate foreign relations committee on Wednesday. (McCain still supports the USA military action)
Syrian government stance		- 14@221: Assad… "We are ready for anything. Only God can take our souls, not America or Britain. The USA and UK have been threatening us for more than two years now, they think we would care, but they are stupid to think so…". (Assad challenges UK and USA to act in Syria).

296

France		- 43@747: Pierre Haski: Since the British surprise vote and the consequent USA decision, the French president has been on the defensive. (stance of France after the decision of UK and USA).
Other		- 23@374: Jihadi fighter… "This regime has protected Israel's borders for over 40 years. The USA won't topple this regime at all." (jihadi fighter suggests the USA stance towards the Syrian regime).

Table 1.7: Chemical

Theme		Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
International stance	The focus on the role of the USA	- 4@91: "Our red line was the use of chemical weapons. That was crossed a couple of months ago and the president took action," said State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki. (the US declaration towards their red line). - 9@187: They (Obama and Cameron) agreed that it is vital that the world upholds the prohibition on the use of chemical weapons and deters further outrages. (Obama and Cameron agreed that it is vital that the world upholds the prohibition on the use of chemical weapons) - 12@245: "We already saw this in Iraq!" senator Ruslan Gattarov tweeted in reaction to Obama and Cameron's call for a response to the chemical attack in Damascus. (senator Ruslan suggests that Obama and Cameron would repeat the same mistake of Iraq war). - 16@322: Pressed on whether the US would take military action, Carney said the last time the administration determined chemical weapons had been used, "on a smaller scale", it had decided to provide opposition fighters with assistance. (Carney displays a solution could be done by the US) - 18@361: As the Arab League threw its weight behind the allies' judgment that the Assad regime was responsible for the chemical attack, the US and Britain paved the way for intervention. (the Arab League's condemnation for the use of chemical weapons has paved the way for the US and Britain to intervene Syria). - 27@536: Most ironically, the greatest downside to a US military attack against Syria is that it would almost certainly have to be done without a UN Security Council imprimatur. That means to uphold the norm on chemical weapons it would be necessary to violate international law. (US military attack without UN Security Council imprimatur means violate international law) - 31@616: US intelligence had located the regime's chemical weapons teams on the ground before the attack and a warning went out to regime soldiers to put on gas masks and prepare for a chemical strike, Kerry said. (US intelligence confirms the evidence for the use of chemical weapons) - 32@636: The US secretary of state, John Kerry,

		last night advanced what he called a "clear and compelling" case that Syria launched a chemical attack that killed nearly 1,500 people. (Kerry states that it is "clear and compelling" case that Syria launched a chemical attack).
		- 35@695: Obama said he was asking "every member of the global community" to consider what message impotence and inaction in the face of the use of chemical weapons would send to dictators everywhere. (Obama urges "every member of the global community" to consider the type of the message will be sent)
		- 40@796 AND 42@838: Dempsey said the evidence of alleged Syrian chemical weapons use had changed his mind. (evaluation of General Martin Dempsey who is shown as sceptical about the merits of US military intervention because of the evidence of the use of chemical weapons)
		- 45@907: He (Obama) insisted he had not set the red lines requiring a military response if the Syrian government deployed chemical weapons. (the tone of Obama changed from calling for urgent military action to look at other options that could solve the Syrian crisis).
		- 50@1021: "Given security council paralysis on this issue, if we are serious about upholding a ban on chemical weapons use then an international response is required, and that will not come through security council action," Obama said. (Obama suggests that the ban on chemical weapons will not come through security council action").
	The role of other international participants	- 2@28: Ralf Trapp, a consultant on chemical and biological weapons, said getting access to the scenes of the attacks was paramount for inspectors. (UN inspectors should get access to the place of the attacks)
		- 6@129: China issued a statement saying it opposed the use of chemical weapons, but called for the UN team to "fully consult with the Syrian government and maintain an objective. (China stands against the use of chemical weapons, but it supports the diplomatic solution).
		- 10@208: "The time has come for a joint effort to remove all the chemical weapons (the Israel president call for international action to remove and destroy chemical weapons)
		- 14@283: In any case, the UN mandate, written by the security council, is to determine if chemical agents were used, not who used them. (the role of UN towards the Syrian crisis)

		- 15@302: While some will argue that such action is merely symbolic, it will send an important signal to the Assad regime - and other regimes - that the west cannot countenance the use of chemical weapons." (the west wavering stance towards the use of chemical weapons either to make action or diplomacy)
		- 19@380: The UN, however, has said the inspectors will produce an evidence-based narrative of alleged chemical attacks to date, which could be heavily suggestive. (the reports of UN may need to be investigated because they do not show clear evidence about the Syrian situation)
		- 22@438: To punish the Assad government for using chemical weapons would be the action of self-appointed global policemen - action that, in my view, would be very unwise. (criticising the West of acting as a global policeman)
		- 38@754: It (French intelligence dossier) adds that intelligence reports suggest the Syrians are looking at new ways of dispersing chemical weapons. (French intelligence reports suggest the Syrians are looking at new ways of dispersing chemical weapons)
		- 46@930: The UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, referring to Brahimi's travel to St Petersburg, said: "While the world is focused on concerns about the possible use of chemical weapons in Syria we must push even harder for the international conference on Syria to take place in Geneva. (Ban Ki-moon suggests to focus on the political solution as this is the "the only way to end the bloodshed in Syria.")
		- 47@953: The labs are not told which is the authentic sample, and must detect the laced chemical and report a negative result for the blank. (the UN inspectors face difficulties about the investigated sample)
		- 49@999: Samantha Power, the US ambassador to the UN, told a news conference in New York: "Even in the wake of the flagrant shattering of the international norm against chemical weapons use, Russia continues to hold the council hostage and shirk its international responsibilities. (the international stance against the use of chemical weapons is very weak while Russia takes strong stance to support Assad regime)
		-
UK stance and the Local context	**UK military engagement**	- 11@226: Hague's comments came after Assad denied using chemical weapons. (Hague rebuts Assad's claim toward his use of chemical weapons,

		and assured the existence of that crisis committed by the Assad regime).
		- 20@399: Cameron posted a message on Twitter about its conclusion. "The NSC (National Security Council) agreed unanimously that the use of chemical weapons by Assad was unacceptable - and the world should not stand by," (Cameron suggests the need for making military action after a meeting of the NSC.
		- 28@555: Cameron… "I think we can be as certain as possible that a regime that has used chemical weapons on 14 occasions and is most likely responsible for this large-scale attack will conclude, if nothing is done, that it can use these weapons again and again on a larger scale and with impunity." (Cameron highlights negative consequences of not acting against the Syrian regime).
		- 36@714: Britain's imperial general staff knew there would be outrage if it became known that the government was intending to use its secret stockpile of chemical weapons. (Britain considered that there is a possibility for the Assad regime to use its secret stockpile of chemical weapons)
		- 48@976: But I (Cameron) don't think anyone is seriously denying that a chemical weapons attack took place. (Cameron argues that the evidence for the use of chemical weapons is very clear).
	Negative evaluation for possibility of UK military action	- 21@419: Hain said… "But this is an action planned by a prime minister who for over six months has publicly declared that he wants to take military action against the Assad regime, with or without chemical weapons being the excuse for doing so." (the use of chemical weapons is regarded as excuse for the UK military action).
		- 24@478: Lord Ahmed …"But here they see it is right for Syria's chemical weapons and air strike capability to be dismantled…" (presenting UK Muslims as divided over missile raids)
		- 25@497: Nick Clegg… "I personally do not want to be part of a generation of political leaders who, when for the first time in close to a century we witnessed the ever more frequent use of chemical weapons… (political leaders in a very difficult situation by facing the protection of chemical weapons is broken)
		- 26@516: "Even if there is a rule allowing intervention to avert a humanitarian catastrophe that rule would not simply permit action to deter and disrupt use of chemical weapons," Akande (co-

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>

director of the Oxford institute for ethics, law and armed conflict) said. (British expert doubts about the success of intervention to deter the use of chemical weapons)
- 29@575: Bernard Jenkin, a member of the Tory 1922 committee, even called on the House of Commons to stop "post-Iraq panic paralysing the country", accusing his colleagues of resisting clear evidence that Bashar al-Assad has used chemical weapons against his own people. (Bernard Jenkin asked for clear evidence to avoid Iraq mistakes).
- 33@657: The calls came as No 10 was told that only 20 Tory MPs, out of a total of 304, fully supported military action against the Assad regime after the chemical weapons attack on 21 August. (majority of MPs stood against military action towards the use of chemical weapons)
- 39@775: Some senior Tories continued to put pressure on Downing Street to say it might be willing to hold a second Commons vote on whether Britain would in some circumstances participate in an attack on Syria in retaliation for the chemical attack. (some Tories suffer for supporting the motion, and would support the idea that the House could have another vote of military action).
-

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

Representation of the Syrian situation

</td><td>

Evaluation of the chemical attack

</td><td>

- 1@9: It goes on to suggest that the emerging Syrian doctrine for use of chemical agents - as has been described by at least one defector - is that they are designed to be confusing, ambiguous. (evaluation for the use of chemical weapons with the need for investigating the situation)
- 3@69: The opposition Syrian National Coalition has said the Ghouta attack was just the latest in a series of chemical weapons atrocities. (chemical weapons have been used before by the Syrian regime).
- 5@113: Whether the death toll is in the hundreds or over a thousand, as the rebels claim, this is one of the most significant chemical weapons attacks since Saddam Hussein's on the Kurds in Halabja 25 years ago. (this use of chemical weapons displays substantial issue in the world)
- 7@148: At least three victims of the alleged chemical weapons attack in east Damascus on Thursday have been smuggled to Jordan where samples of their blood and urine will help determine which agent was used to gas hundreds of people. (investigating the evidence for the use of

</td></tr>
</table>

Others		chemical weapons through samples of victims that smuggled to Jordan). - 13@265: as David Cameron, Barack Obama and European leaders step up their rhetoric against Bashar al-Assad, whose armed forces they accuse of carrying out the chemical weapons attack last Wednesday that killed many hundreds in eastern Damascus. (international agreement about the Syrian atrocity and the victims affected by the use of chemical weapons) - 17@341: The audience is not just the Syrian government but any would-be user of chemical, biological or nuclear materials to underscore the fact that any potential use of these would bring tremendous pain upon the party responsible." (the issue is not the Syrian government, but it is the use of chemical weapons) - 41@817: "We have high confidence that Syria used, in an indiscriminate fashion, chemical weapons that killed thousands of people," he (Obama) said. (Obama suggests the Syrian government indiscriminately used chemical weapons) - 43@861: The long war against chemical weapons use. (the use of chemical weapons has been internationally prohibited for a long time) - 44@884: Syria is the last country in the world with a large stockpile of chemical weapons that refuses to eliminate them. (the main reason for the Syrian regime to use chemical weapons is the existence stockpile of chemical weapons)
	Syrian government stance	- 8@168: Syria's claim to have discovered chemical weapons in Damascus follows its refusal to accept that a chemical weapons attack had taken place on Wednesday. (the government refuses that chemical weapons attack had taken place) - 23@458: Syria is warning of "grave consequences" if US-led military action goes ahead to punish President Bashar al-Assad for allegedly using chemical weapons. (Syrian government warns for response against any international attack in Syria) - 34@676: The Syrian government has countered accusations that it is guilty of deploying chemical weapons against international law by accusing rebels of attacking its soldiers with nerve gas. (The Syrian government has countered accusations that it is guilty of deploying chemical weapons while it puts the blame on rebels)
Others		- 37@733: This unit has sold weapons to some of

		the worst dictators of the past 40 years - and had a role to play in the most serious chemical weapons abuses since the Vietnam war. (the use of chemical weapons can be regarded as a result of long history of selling weapons to the worst dictator).

Table 1.8: Intervention

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
UK stance and local context	**Voices support UK military action**	- 19@113: The government has promised that any military intervention in Syria will be in accordance with international law. (the Government assures the legality of any military intervention) - 25@149: Downing Street publishes legal advice saying intervention would be legal even without UN security council approval. (Downing Street confirms that military intervention is legal)
	Negative side of UK military action	- 3@17: Britain can't act on Syria till it faces up to the spectre of Iraq: Until the truth about past mistakes comes out, the UK can't give a clear message about human rights and intervention. (Iraq war affected the stance of UK towards intervention in Syria) - 5@29: And the Telegraph is similarly exercised, contending that armed intervention would be a step into the unknown. (the Telegraph evaluates intervention negatively) - 14@82: Max Hastings, the military historian and journalist, gave a directly opposing analysis, saying Syria was "a hideously intractable situation in which we meddle at our peril" and it was "impossible to foresee a happy ending" in any intervention. (Max argues for the failure of any intervention in Syria). - 16@94: Abbott, a former Labour leadership candidate, told the Guardian she has not firmly made up her mind, but she is currently opposed to an intervention based on the available evidence. (Abbott stands strongly against any intervention because the evidence is not enough to make the decision) - 17@101: Speaking later to Channel 4 News, Dannatt said David Cameron needed to use

tomorrow's recall of Parliament to convince the British people that military action is the right step. "A clear case will only be made if a strategic context of how such an intervention can be made is laid out clearly. For the objectives, the beginning, the middle, and the end - how it's all going to finish. (Dannatt asks for clear plan before supporting any intervention).

- 18@106: The archbishop of Canterbury has warned MPs to consider all the aspects of a "delicate and dangerous situation" before making their decision on whether to vote for military intervention in the Syria conflict. (The archbishop of Canterbury calls to consider all the aspects of intervention).
- 20@118: Although there is legitimate debate about the existence and scope of a right of humanitarian intervention outside the framework of a UN security council authorisation, the UK has been consistent in maintaining the existence of a narrowly defined right to act in such circumstances. (the UK considers the need of making clear plan before any action)
- 21@125: Until Tuesday, British officials were adamant there was such a clear-cut case for intervention, there was no need to seek approval at the security council. On Wednesday morning that position was stood on its head. One possible reason for the U-turn is the legal difficulties above (British officials support strongly the intervention in two days before the UK parliamentary debate, but they changed their minds because of legality issue)
- 22@130: Several ministerial aides, including David Burrowes and Daniel Kawczynski, have also spoken of their reluctance to back military intervention, raising the prospect of resignations if they fail to be persuaded. (the two politicians warn for resignations if the military intervention is approved)
- 23@137: Goldsmith said he would be uneasy if it was not clear that was the only purpose of military intervention. (Goldsmith suggests that there was a debate about the consistent of the purpose for military intervention)
- 26@154: HEADLINE: Syria: legal doubt cast on British government's case for intervention. (doubt about legality of intervention)
- 27@161: He (Cameron) acknowledged people

were sceptical about getting into "another war in the Middle East" after the actions of the Blair government in the runup to the 2003 Iraq war "well and truly poisoned the well of public opinion" about intervention on the basis of secret intelligence. (evaluating Cameron's consideration of public scepticism, and his attempts of distancing himself from Blair's mistakes of intelligence)

- 28@168: An intense concentration on Syria over here in Britain, as MPs tussle about whether PM Dave should get parliamentary blessing for a military intervention. (doubt about the achievement of PM to support military intervention)

- 29@173: However, one senior Labour MP Jim Fitzpatrick resigned as a shadow minister before the vote, saying he was "opposed to military intervention in Syria, full stop". (Labour MP takes strong stance against military intervention)

- 30@180: Jack Straw, who was foreign secretary at the time of the Iraq conflict, said he had not made up his mind about intervention but questioned how the government proposed to "degrade" Syria's chemical weapons without a big military campaign that could cost £650m per month. (Jack wonders about the costs of military intervention)

- 33@199: It was the complexity of the circumstances as well as the all too vivid lessons from Iraq of the unintended consequences of intervention that frightened MPs. (fears of negative consequences have been considered by the MPs)

- 35@213: The Conservative leadership was more hawkish than Blair was. Cameron supported intervention without being sure he could secure parliamentary backing. (Cameron is described worse than Blair stance in Iraq)

- 36@218: parliament demonstrated that… Second, when it comes to questions of military intervention, it is clear that effective engagement with international institutions is essential. (the importance of activating the international community of doing their job in such international crisis)

- 37@225: MPs have, in their majority, refused to back a fourth military intervention by western powers since 2001. (majority of MPs have strong stance against military intervention)

		- 50@313: The Labour party will have no future if it refuses to "do difficult things" to stand up to dictators, a former cabinet minister has said in a strongly worded intervention in which he calls for an "urgent and deep reflection" about last week's Commons votes on Syria. (a former cabinet minister criticises labour stance of standing against UK intervention).
	Others	- 2@12: Hague restated that all options were on the table if chemical weapons use was proved, but British officials have acknowledged that any western military intervention would depend on Washington. (Hague: Britain intervention depends on US support for military action) - 31@185: They (Commons) had come for a crucial vote on military intervention in Syria. Or rather, for a non-vote on intervention in Syria. (there are two main options for the Commons). - 42@258: HEADLINE: Syria intervention: is there a new constitutional convention? (debate about the power of making the policy in parliament and government) -
International participants	**Possible negative consequences**	- 7@43: Russia has long opposed military intervention in Syria on the grounds that it would violate Syria's sovereignty. (Russia has strong stance against any intervention in Syria) - 11@67: Jittery stock markets this Tuesday on the prospects of US military intervention in Syria affecting risk-sentiment. (the US intervention would affect the market) - 32@192: Jihadi fighters in Syria plan to use western strikes as cover for a wave of attacks against President Bashar al-Assad's forces, it was claimed yesterday, giving weight to fears that western military intervention could inflame violence in the Middle East. (possibilities of negative consequences of western military intervention) - 38@232: The Russian president also challenged the US to present its case for military intervention to the UN security council. (Russia warns the US of making intervention in Syria and highlighting the possible negative consequences of such action) - 45@277: Most important of all, there are fears that American air strikes will open the way for future US meddling in Syrian affairs. Intervention may be extended to include the use

		of unmanned aircraft to attack "suspects" in Syria. (US military action will make US deeply involved in the conflict) -
	Unstable stance toward the use of chemical weapons.	- 1@5: the international community needs to ask… Third, why would Assad utilise chemical weapons at this stage and bring about a potential western military intervention? (international community should investigate the reasons behind the use of chemical weapons) - 4@24: Germany is unlikely to back intervention. (Germany would not support intervention in Syria) - 6@36: Turkey threw its weight behind the gathering western consensus on military intervention in Syria on Monday. (Turkey relates its stance to the western consensus) - 8@48: Until now, the issue of war had not featured as an election issue at all with all parties in solid agreement - cementing their pacifist alliance in a Bundestag (the Lower House of Parliament in Germany) vote a month ago - that intervention by the west in Syria was to be avoided at all costs. (political leaders in Germany have clear stance against military intervention). - 10@60: International law experts say intervention could be legally justified without a security council resolution under the UN's "responsibility to protect. (military intervention is legal without security council resolution under the UN, and this was represented in relation to the stance of the West to show that military intervention is imminent) - 12@72: The Financial Times… "Officials suggest intervention would be limited to a few targeted strikes on military assets - airfields or missile sites." (FT evaluates the response for the Syrian crisis) - 13@77: The hardening of Washington's response came as the UK, France, Germany and Turkey joined the calls for intervention. (general international stance to support intervention). - 15@89: As the Arab League threw its weight behind the allies' judgment that the Assad regime was responsible for the chemical attack, the US and Britain paved the way for intervention, saying it would be a response to a violation of international law and not aimed at

308

		regime change. (the Arab League' condemnation for the use of chemical weapons has paved the way for the US and Britain to intervene in Syria)
		- 24@142: Clooney… Not only was he asked to confirm the existence of his human-rights-abuse-spotting satellite over Sudan ("I'm not saying it's all that successful, but it's worth it"), and duck a question about US intervention in Syria… (concerns about some questions related to the US intervention)
		- 34@206: Significantly, in a leading article on Thursday - which incidentally accused Obama of "dithering" - it said: "Unpalatable as it is to the public, intervention in Syria is inevitable. (criticising Obama's stance, and describing him as "dithering")
		- 39@237: The UN has been granted some breathing space by President Obama's surprise announcement that he will call a vote in Congress over military intervention. (the US possibility of military intervention)
		- 47@289: Hagel (Former US Senator) … "Military intervention is always an option. It should be an option, but an option of last resort." (evaluation when intervention should be chosen as an option)
		- 48@301: The administration received crucial backing from chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, General Martin Dempsey, who had recently been openly sceptical of the merits of US military intervention. (Dempsey scepticism about US intervention).
	Various stances	- 40@244: They are in an especially difficult position because the Arab street remembers decades of western military intervention in their region and is deeply hostile to any more. (the Arab public have scepticism about military intervention)
		- 41@251: A BVA poll this weekend found 64% of people against French participation in a military intervention in Syria. (majority of French people stands against military action)
		- 43@265: While France, along with the United States, is pushing for military action against the Assad regime, a poll at the weekend showed that 64% of French people were opposed to a military intervention. (majority of French people stands against military action)

		-
Evaluation of the Syrian attack		- 49@306: Victims and refugees caught in these conflicts have repeatedly called for intervention by outside powers. (Syrian victims support military intervention)
Syrian government stance		- 44@270: Syria's president, Bashar al-Assad, has challenged the west to come up with "a single piece" of evidence that he has used chemical weapons. (Assad argues about the evidence for his use of chemical weapons)
Others		- 9@55: In his first intervention since the chemical weapons attack last week. (intervention refers here to the statement of Tony Blair) - 46@282: The Serbian intervention ended with the overthrow of the late Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic, who was subsequently put on trial for war crimes at the international criminal court in The Hague. (talking about Serbian intervention)

The Sun

Table 1.9: Military

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
UK stance and local context	**Voices support military action**	- 2@4: UK MILITARY SET TO ACT ON SYRIA (possibility of UK military attack). - 5@14: Tomahawk cruise missile attacks against Assad's key military installations are being considered as well as a strategic strike by RAF Tornado bombers based in Cyprus (military attack will achieve some objectives) - 10@31: UK: Drawing up plans for military action (possibility of UK military action). - 12@37 AND 15@46: He (Cameron) pulled tonight's knife-edge Commons vote on military action to avenge the chemical weapons atrocity (Cameron takes strong stance against the use of chemical weapons). - 13@40: Mr Cameron's own National Security Council met yesterday to agree on a military package based around sub HMS Tireless (Cameron supports National Security Council to back military action). - 14@43: David Cameron will make the moral case for a military assault on Syria (Cameron reassures the action is moral, and he calls for morality) - 17@52: Downing Street is reported to be furious that Labour leader Ed Miliband has not backed Cameron's motion paving the way for military strikes (Downing Street criticises Miliband's stance). - 31@96: And even though we are not now going to take military action in Syria, we can still make a difference (a UK response may mean other things if there will not be military action). - 32@101: At least David Cameron is the only leader who articulated a strong position - for limited military strikes against chemical weapons (Cameron's support for military action). - 43@134: On top of that, Labour all but ended Tory grandees' hopes for a fresh vote on British military action against Damascus in response to last month's chemical weapons attack on civilians (Tory grandees' hopes for

		another vote)
		- 44@138: Foreign Secretary William Hague signalled he was still ready to look at military action when he warned the spiralling refugee crisis will only worsen (Hague supports military action after the debate)
		-
	Concerns around military action	- 9@28: A second former forces chief spoke out against military strikes following on from ex-defence boss General Sir David Richards' warning to the PM in The Sun yesterday (key political leaders consider the risks of military action).
		- 11@34: As our poll reveals today, the British public still strongly opposes any military action despite last week's shameful atrocity (public stand against military action).
		- 16@49: WE haven't got enough military forces to take on Dad's Army but Cameron still wants to have a go in Syria (criticising Cameron who still supports the action even after the debate).
		- 18@55: It can't be doing its job correctly if the UK and US would even contemplate military action in the wake of the chemical attack (US and UK should let the UN to do its job).
		- 22@68: Angus Robertson said: "The UK government expected that we would vote for a blank cheque that would have allowed UK military action before UN weapons inspectors concluded their investigation" (financial situation for supporting the motion).
		- 28@86: Yet Britain and the West have long ruled out direct military intervention - terrified of repeating the horrors of Iraq and wary of Syria's complex web of fighting groups (complexity of making the decision, and concerns of repeating mistakes of Iraq war).
		- 29@89: PARLIAMENT made its view very clear - it doesn't want British involvement in military action so we will proceed on that basis (parliament has clear stance against backing military action).
		-
	Internal politics and evaluating the decision of UK	- 19@58 AND 20@61: A strong humanitarian response which may include military action YES NO 272 285 (parliament's stance).
		- 26@80: After Mr Miliband did a U-turn on his support for military action, fearing a revolt by

		his party, the PM told him: "You are letting down America." (there is antagonism among parties toward military intervention).
		- 33@104: David Cameron's plan for military action was beaten by just 13 votes - with 61 Tory MPs either voting against or missing the crucial Commons ballot (Cameron failed to convince MPs for military action).
		- 39@122: Mr Hague also attacked Labour's refusal to back the Government, even after they had watered down plans for swift military action (Hague criticises Labour's stance)
		- 41@128: GEOFFREY SHORES Bradford: I'M pleased Mr Cameron says he will respect the opinions of MPs, who represent the people, and not use military force in Syria. (positive evaluation for parliament's decision)
		- 45@142: Unite's chief, Andrew Murray, also deputy president of action group Stop the War, said the Labour leader "deserves credit" for opposing military action (Andrew suggests that Miliband "deserves credits" in parliament for opposing military action)
		- 46@145: Opposition to military action as things stand in Syria has hardened with 69 per cent opposed - up from 50 per cent just before last week's Commons vote. (opposition to military action has increased)
International stance	**Voices support military action.**	- 1@1: It has spurred demands for an independent investigation and renewed talk of potential international military action (the need for international action).
		- 6@18: Hollande spoke with Barack Obama on Sunday and told him France would support him in a targeted military intervention (France and US support the military attack).
		- 23@71: France said yesterday it still backed military action to punish Assad's government for the attack despite a British parliamentary vote. (France has clear stance towards supporting the military action).
		- 24@74: Kerry added "common sense" tells him Syria ordered the use of chemical weapons, and military action must be taken. (the need for backing military action)
		- 25@77: FRANCE took the place of Britain as America's closest military ally in confronting Syria last night (France appears as the closest ally for America because it supports the US-led military action).

		- 27@83: America's president Barack Obama - rocked by the loss of his closest military ally - is now considering taking action with support from France (America and France share the foreign policy towards the Syrian crisis). - 34@107: It's easier for the Americans and the French to take action because their presidents don't have to consult parliament before taking military action (the decision of US and France for military action is easier than UK). - 36@113: BARACK Obama last night vowed to punish Syria with military strikes - but only after getting permission from the American people (Obama has clear stance). - 37@116: Obama said he would seek congressional consent before taking military action for the attack, which he blames on al-Assad's forces (Obama wants to take the congressional consent). - 38@119: Barack Obama is putting plans for military strikes to Congress (Obama's support for the military action). - 40@125: The US President, who had called for a military strike against Assad's regime over gas attacks on civilians, then said he would seek the approval of the US Congress before ordering any action (Obama's stance has changed from rush military action to seeking approval from the Congress) - 47@148: And a US Senate panel approved the use of military force in Syria, in response to an alleged chemical weapons attack (US approved military action in Syria) - 49@157: US Ambassador Samantha Power - originally from Dublin - lashed Russia at the UN. She accused Moscow of holding the Security Council "hostage" by blocking military action against Syria to avenge the chemical weapons atrocity that slaughtered 1,400 (Samantha accused Moscow for blocking military action) -
	Concerns around military action	- 3@7: America"s 5-star generals oppose another costly and unpredictable military adventure (international consideration for negative consequences). - 7@21: Russia foreign minister Sergei Lavrov said London, Paris and Washington had no evidence Assad was to blame and questioned their "real motives" for military action in Syria

		(Russia rebuts the evidence supported by US, UK and France). - 8@25: STOCK markets wobbled yesterday and the oil price soared as traders fretted over Syria. Growing talk of military action against Bashar Assad's regime sparked nerves in City dealing rooms (concerns about international markets from any military action). - 21@64: What is happening in Syria is abhorrent, but history dictates that meddling with the internal affairs of another country by using military force rarely produces results. It's time we left other countries to sort out their own affairs (it is time to not being involved in the conflicts of other countries, and leave other countries to deal with this issue). - 35@110: THE world was left on tenterhooks last night when President Obama confirmed the United States would launch military action against Syria (the world is concerned after Obama's stance). - 42@131: The announcement comes as campaigners accused the West of continuing to dither over military intervention in the wake of a Damascus chemical attack that killed 1,400 people. (there is no clear plan or decision towards the West intervention) - 50@160: The annual summit of the richest nations' leaders saw insults traded over US President Obama's push for military strikes at the regime. (richest leaders insult Obama for his stance) -
Evaluation of the Syrian people		- 30@93: The father - who relies on UN handouts to feed his family - added: "I wanted the UK to join the US and attack Assad. Hit military airports (civilian's representation for the situation). -
Syrian government stance		- 4@11: Minister Omran Zoabi warned the US… "If the US leads a military intervention, it will have dangerous consequences. It will bring chaos and the region will burn." (the Syrian regime will act against any intervention). - 48@151: As Bashar became a computer nerd and promised his country reforms after the repressive, often brutal rule of his father, Maher honed his military skills with Syria's

		toughest men (evaluates brutality of Bashar) -
		-
		-

Table 1.10: War

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
UK stance and local context	**Concerns around military action**	- 1@1: They have been behaving like schoolkids since the Scottish people decided they were unelectable after their persistent lies about illegal Iraqi war, cash for honours, fraudulent expense claims and the rest. (Scottish seems to stand against war). - 10@34: BRITAIN'S former top warrior has urged David Cameron NOT to attack Syria - insisting missile strikes would do little to alter the course of the civil war. (the UK intervention could make the Syrian situation worse) - 14@48: By the time our men and women arrive, Syria could be an international war zone. (British forces could face international conflict in Syria, and this may make the situation complex) - 17@60: Following Iraq and Afghanistan, there is a huge scepticism among the public about entering another war. (previous interventions can be the main reason for not backing military action in Syria) - 19@68: After IraZq and Afghanistan, there is a huge scepticism among the public about entering another war. (previous interventions can be the main reason for not backing military action in Syria) - 20@71: CAMERON and Obama are looking to start a war - and we can't afford to pay the troops. (comments from the readers of the paper) - 21@75: In a packed Commons, the PM " was bombarded with questions from all sides on where strikes would lead, with Labour haunted by their party's vote to launch the Iraq war ten years ago. (Cameron faced difficulty to support strikes in Syria even from Labour that was supporting Iraq war) - 22@79: Blunder The PM will now stop the Royal Navy joining any US-led strikes - the first time the UK has failed to stand by its ally since the Vietnam War in the 1960s. (this is the first time that the UK does not support US since the Vietnam War) - 23@82: Winston Churchill said: "To jaw, jaw is always better than to war, war." (Churchill evaluates going to war negatively) - 28@102: LORD HURD Conservative Foreign Secretary… I think it's likely to increase and expand the civil war in Syria - not bring it to an

		end. (possible negative consequences of military action)
		- 29@106: Yet Britain and the West have long ruled out direct military intervention - terrified of repeating the horrors of Iraq and wary of Syria's complex web of fighting groups and national alliances which some commentators have likened to Europe before the First World War. (previous imaginaries that create concerns around UK participation).
		- 33@122: THE YouGov poll for The Sun showed Brits do not want to be dragged into a war we simply cannot win. (Britain will not be dragged for military action in Syria)
		- 34@126: BM, Biggleswade… MORE fuss was made over peeing on a wicket than there was over peeing on a war memorial. I am an old soldier. So sorry respect is a thing of the past. (criticising military action)
		- 42@157: Has Mr Blair forgotten that he took us to war saying Iraq had weapons of mass destruction - which turned out to be wrong? (question that raises negative imaginary about Iraq war)
		- 49@184: PATRICK UNIONS are right to be against war with Syria. (PATRICK UNIONS support the right option)
		- 50@186: DENIS DEACON By email I READ your article about the US and Syria with interest. It quoted Winston Churchill as saying the UK and USA had just won World War II. (the USA and UK only have positive result in the World War II)
		-
	Voices support military action and possibility of UK intervention	- 11@37: HEADLINE: SYRIA'S ASSAD IT; COUNTDOWN TO WAR WITH TYRANT Missile blitz 'in 36hrs' UK nuke subs to strike MPs recalled over crisis. (the UK intervention in Syria is imminent)
		- 12@41: Mr Cameron insisted the Commons will have the final say on whether Britain takes military action - after two-and-a-half years of holding off as Syria's civil war has left 100,000 dead. (Cameron would recall the House to be involved in the Syrian crisis).
		- 18@64: Defence Forces spokesman Commandant Denis Hanley said this area is NOT in the middle of the civil war conflict, which has escalated sharply in the last week. (Hanley suggests that Irish troops are not in the area of the civil war)
		- 25@90: Prime Ministers simply don't lose votes on war, leaving us in truly unchartered territory now.

		(PMs are criticised for their stance towards the vote) - 40@149: CABINET ministers yesterday stepped up their attack on MPs for ditching Syria war plans - even accusing Labour of cheering children's deaths. (Unnamed Cabinet ministers accused MPs who stood against military action) - 45@168: Tony Blair says go to war. (Blair supports strongly military action) -
	internal politics	- 13@44: So the PM faces his biggest test yet - to explain why the gravest action of making war is right. (Cameron is in difficult situation) - 15@52: It meant the PM was last night forced to dramatically suspend his plans for war on tyrant Bashar Assad's regime. (the hopes of Cameron changed dramatically after the debate) - 24@86: It is unprecedented for a Prime Minister to lose a Commons vote on such an important area of foreign policy such as making war. (losing the vote of not backing military action was unexpected) - 35@130: Where was the support during the Falklands War? (several questions to evaluate the relationship between USA and UK) - 37@137: But in Westminster last night, No10 aides said the PM, left, is now convinced the British people would not stomach war. (PM is convinced by the parliament to not support military action). - 39@145: The UK has already given over '350million to help the TWO MILLION refugees of the Syrian civil war. (the UK worked positively to support Syrian refugees) - 44@165: It's no more shocking than his weapons of mass destruction claim which led us into war with Iraq. (the Sun responds to Blair that the result of the vote is less shocking than the mistake of Iraq war) - 48@180: War It left David Cameron enraged, having already suffered the humiliation of seeing his war plans dramatically blocked by MPs last week. (Cameron suffered from persuading MPs to support military action)
International stance		- 5@15: So now, the world will act, right? After the atrocities of the Second World War the UN was established to ensure such horrors wouldn't happen again. (international prohibition for the use of chemical weapons). - 7@23: US military chiefs met with their European

		and Middle Eastern allies in Jordan for what could be a council of war - should they decide to punish Syria for the worst reported chemical weapons attack. (international concerns about the best option) - 26@94: US Secretary of State John Kerry signalled President Obama was ready for war after a sickening chemical weapons attack in Damascus killed 1,429 people, including 426 children. (the USA does not have stable stance) - 30@110: HEADLINE: OBAMA: IT'S JAW NOT WAR; SYRIA IN CRISIS CHANGE OF STANCE BY PRESIDENT He delays Assad attack Seeks Congress approval Strikes may never happen. (USA may not support military action) - 32@118: HEADLINE: WAR VOTE 'HISTORIC AMERICAN RETREAT'; (America does not have stable stance) - 41@153 & 43@161: Republican House Speaker John Boehner said he will support his war plan in a key vote to Congress, expected next week. (Boehner will back the action).
Evaluation of the Syrian situation		- 2@4: Observers say tensions between the city's Sunni Muslim and Alaw- ite faiths since the Syrian war began could be to blame. (the conflict in Syria between Sunni and Alawis) - 3@8: The children are thought to have joined up with terrorists linked to al-Qaeda as the organisation tries to gain a foothold amid the bloody civil war. (children's' suffering in Syria) - 4@11: "My mum and dad were killed in the war," he whispered. "I had no one. What else could I do?" (suffer of the Syrian kids) - 9@30: Come December, with 4,000 dead, the UN claimed the nation was "close to civil war". (update about the Syrian situation) - 16@56: THE leader of the Syrian Opposition, Pres"ident Ahmad Jarba… I also don't believe that this will lead to a much larger civil war. (Jarba supports military action against Syrian regime) - 27@98: father-of-14 Abdel, 47… "I wanted Britain to attack because I think it would help end this war." (evaluation of a civilian for attacking the Syrian regime) - 36@133: It is the worst humanitarian crisis since the Afghan civil war of the early 1990s, when 6.6million refugees fled. (evaluating the Syrian civil war). - 46@172: it's an atrocity and a war crime the United States says killed 1,429 people, including

		426 children. (describing chemical attack) - 47@176: In a tapped phone call, a senior commander from the Lebanese terror group Hezbollah told the Iranian embassy there that Syria's president intended to tilt the balance of power in the civil war. (according to Hezbollah, Assad will achieve the goals of the Syrian regime by its power)
Others		- 6@19: And, sitting nervously in the middle, Israel frets about a precarious future with Iranianbacked Hezbollah waging war from neighbouring Lebanon. (Israel fears from war supported by Iran) - 8@26: GIVING cash to Argentina is a form of treason. We could be funding a future war. (US deals with Argentina) - 38@141: The US joined the First World War in 1917. (talking about history).

Table 1.11: Chemical

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
International stance	**USA position of supporting military action in Syria**	- 1@5: Last year US President Barack Obama warned Assad the use of chemical weapons marked a "red line" in its response to the crisis (the use of chemical weapons is shown as Obama's red line) - 10@42: He is likely to hold urgent talks tomorrow with US President Barack Obama, who has said the use of chemical weapons in Syria would be a "gamechanger". (situation of political leaders) - 25@106: THE US wants the response to Syrian use of chemical weapons to be "very discreet and limited" and without seeking a regime change, the White House said yesterday. (the US suggests limited plan to respond to Syrian use of chemical weapons) - 26@111: With US air strikes looming in response to poison gas attacks last week on rebel-held Damascus suburbs, some of the formations on the move are accused by Assad's opponents of firing the chemical weapons. (the US supports military action, but the situation is not clear) - 29@123: He (Obama) believes countries who violate international norms regarding chemical weapons need to be held accountable." (the need to act against Assad regime) - 30@128: He (Kerry) argued: "We know a senior regime official who knew about the attack confirmed chemical weapons were used by the regime, reviewed the impact, and was afraid they would be discovered. (Kerry suggests that the Syrian situation is clear) - 38@162: The US says there is clear evidence that the Syrian government was behind a chemical weapons attack on its own people. (the US declares the guilty of Assad regime) - 40@170: Obama said: … "But I'm confident we can hold the Assad regime accountable for their use of chemical weapons, deter this kind of behaviour and degrade their capacity to carry it

		out." (Obama supports the need for action) - 44@186: Mr Kerry talks with the tyrant as their wives look on. The photo emerged after a chemical attack killed nearly 1,500 civilians. (Kerry reassures the evidence for the use of chemical weapons) - 45@191: Kerry said … "He is asking for authorisation to degrade and deter Bashar al-Assad's capacity to use chemical weapons." (Kerry shows the change of Obama's stance towards US action in Syria) -
	International communities show their intentions to investigate the situation and participate to respond to the use of chemical weapons	- 2@9: A UN inspection team landed in Syria on Sunday to investigate the claims of chemical weapon usage, which breaks international law. (UN inspection team will investigate the Syrian situation) - 4@17: HAIR, skin and blood samples are being smuggled out of the site of Wednesday's massacre to UN inspectors who hope to verify the use of chemical weapons. (the UN inspectors will investigate samples) - 11@46: News of imminent military action came as Syria yesterday finally agreed to let United Nations inspectors visit the scene of last week's chemical atrocity in Damascus. (situation of Syrian regime to allow UN inspects the situation) - 12@51: The news comes after chemical weapons experts interviewed and took blood samples yesterday from victims of the attack in a rebel-held suburb of the capital. (experts have samples from victims) - 13@55 AND 15@63: DANGERS OF AN ATTACK ON ASSAD 1 1 defences air defences would be a threat to our jets Blasting chemical weapons. (fears around West military action). - 17@71: FRANCE: Amongst the most hawkish of all Western countries Chemical attack on rebel-held suburb near Damascus last week killed 1,300 and sparked revulsion and outrage. (France evaluates the Syrian situation) - 46@195: There have been international calls for military action on Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's regime following the use of chemical weapons in Damascus this month. (the Sun highlights the general global stance against the use of chemical weapons)

		-
	Stance of Assad allies	- 35@149: He (Putin) said it would be "utter nonsense" for the Syrian government to use chemical weapons and challenged Obama to provide proof of a link to Assad. (Putin rebuts the use of chemical weapons by Syrian regime) -
Evaluation of the Syrian attack		- 3@13: As temperatures nudged 40°C (104°F) and they prepared lunch under the sweltering canvas, Mohamad said: "I wasn't surprised by this chemical attack by the regime. (a civilian evaluates the situation) - 5@21: Children were among the victims of the chemical attack at Ghouta last week - blamed on government forces. (there are children among victims) - 7@30: The most disturbing morning was a lesson on "nuclear, biological and chemical warfare". We were led through the horrors of what would happen if Saddam Hussein dropped nerve agents around us. (a correspondent describes the difficult situation of correspondent, and comparing the current situation with Iraq war) - 8@34: Airstrikes But there is speculation that the US, Britain and France could back limited airstrikes to demonstrate that deployment of chemical weapons will not be tolerated. (a response from US, UK and France would show the anger of these countries) - 9@38: It is even possible the chemical weapons deployed last week were fired by al-Qaeda to discredit Assad and drag the West into a bloodbath (Syrian event is ambegious) - 21@89: Today's debate will have to answer key questions. There needs to be strong evidence it was Assad's forces that used chemical weapons as this civil war is littered with claims and counter-claims. (the need for clear evidence for what happened in Syria). - 24@102: This is a brutal dictator murdering his people with chemical weapons. (evaluation for the Syrian government action) - 31@132: Perhaps real warplanes will soon come after President Bashar Assad's regime - which is accused of gassing its own people with horrific chemical weapons. (Assad's regime would receive warplanes because of the use of horrific chemical weapons)

		- 33@141: At another refugee camp nearby was Ahmad, 36, who fled from a Damascus suburb where government forces are said to have unleashed deadly chemical weapons last week. (a refugee because of the use of chemical weapons)
		- 36@153: Well, maybe the rebels had got their hands on the complex systems of delivering chemical weapons, and decided to bomb 1,400 of their own supporters. (the situation could be not clear).
		- 39@166: Syria is not the only nation in the region not to have signed the Chemical Weapons Convention, which set out for "the sake of all mankind, to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons". (general evaluation for the use of chemical weapons, and the need of destroying chemical weapons)
		- 41@174: The Sun Says - Page 16 Bashar is boosted by stalled mission MYVIEW By ROBERT HALFON Conservative MP THE Syrian people who have been gassed by Chemical Assad are waiting for President Obama to save their lives. (civilians urge Obama to act in Syria)
		- 42@178: US Secretary of State John Kerry said hair and blood samples indicated that Syrian government forces used the chemical weapon. (Kerry assures evidence for the use of chemical weapons)
		- 47@204: There were reports last night that a senior officer, the head of medical services in Assad's chemical warfare division, had defected to the rebels. (a senior officer defected to the rebels after the use of chemical weapons)
		- 48@209: WAS the Syria chemical attack that left almost 1,500 people dead ordered not by President Bashar al-Assad, but his shadowy brother, Maher? (It might be either Bashar or his brother who used chemical weapons).
		- 49@214: He was an artillery gunner who fired at rebel-held suburbs, but not with chemical weapons, he (Syria's Deputy Foreign Minister) said. (the regime denied the use of chemical weapons).
UK stance and local context		- 6@26: David Cameron has ordered a "serious response" to the use of chemical weapons by President Assad's regime. (Cameron has strong stance against the use of chemical weapons)

325

- 14@59: He (General Sir David Richards) said "pin-prick" strikes could aggravate rather than resolve the situation in the country, where up to 1,300 died in last week's chemical weapons attack near Damascus. (negative consequences for military action)
- 16@67: the PM said: "This is not about getting involved in a Middle Eastern war or changing our stance in Syria, or going further into that conflict. It's about chemical weapons, their use is wrong and the world shouldn't stand idly by." (Cameron urges to act against the use of chemical weapons).
- 18@76: The Sun showed strong opposition to ALL types of UK involvement in the civil war - despite last week's chemical weapons atrocity near Damascus that killed up to 1,300 people (the Sun showed the UK by standing strongly against any intervention even when the situation is the use of chemical weapons)
- 19@80: DEAN BUCHANAN Nottingham… IT is unacceptable for the West to stand by while President Assad kills his own people with chemical weapons. (Buchanan supports military action)
- 20@85: He (Cameron) pulled tonight's knife-edge Commons vote on military action to avenge the chemical weapons atrocity that left up to 1,300 people dead near Damascus last week. (Cameron is shown with strong support against the use of chemical weapons)
- 22@93: DEAN BUCHANAN By email WE have to act if it is shown that Assad has used chemical weapons on his own people. (the need to act against the use of chemical weapons)
- 23@98: He (Defence Forces Spokesman Commandant Denis Hanley) said: "It's actually one of the central parts of a soldier's basic training, the CBRN drills, Chemical Biological Radialogical and Nuclear, and we train for all that. (Irish troops serving abroad are continuously trained in how to deal with chemical warfare)
- 27@115: He (Cameron) added: "I strongly believe in the need for a tough response to the use of chemical weapons but I also believe in respecting the will of this House." (Cameron respects the parliament decision and still supports military action)
- 28@119: David Richards has advised David Cameron… How much more advice is

necessary to stop action until full information is available about who is using chemical weapons? Please cool it, Mr Cameron. (Richards advised Cameron about the need for the full reports and information)

- 32@136: Cameron: … It's important that we (UK) uphold the international taboo on the use of chemical weapons. (Cameron suggests the need to uphold international taboo)
- 34@145: At least David Cameron is the only leader who articulated a strong position - for limited military strikes against chemical weapons. (there is not huge support for UK military action)
- 43@182: Football be played by in the Dark They should from all But I don't want our troops to be the target of chemical weapons, as the tragic Syrians have been. (the need for considering any negative consequences for acting against Syrian regime)
- 50@219: The PM hit back … "Britain will be leading the argument on humanitarian aid and for continuing to respond strongly on chemical weapons." (Cameron still supports UK to stand against chemical weapons even when it is not military)

Table 2.12: Intervention

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
UK stance and local context	**Positive evaluation for the UK military action**	- 1: THE moral argument for international intervention in Syria after the chemical weapons attacks is powerful. (the use of chemical weapons legitimises intervention) - 14 AND 16: Unpalatable as it is to the public, intervention in Syria is inevitable. (intervention is inevitable even when it is unpalatable) - 18: Western intervention in the Middle East has rarely gone smoothly. (intervention is not imminent to happen) - 26: Mr Miliband yesterday admitted that blocking military intervention in Syria was NOT the result he wanted. (he supports military action with conditions) - 29 AND 33: LORD HURD Conservative Foreign Secretary 1989-95 THE aim of military intervention must be to improve the lot of those who are suffering. (Hurd supports strongly the UK intervention) - 30 AND 34: I am not opposed to intervention on principle. (he supports intervention) - 36 AND 41: There is a clear legal framework for intervention under the United Nations' "responsibility to protect", passed by the General Assembly to stop massacres by dictators. (General Assambly assures the legality of intervention "under UN") -
	Concerns about military action	- 9 AND 11: Iraq and Afghanistan have given intervention a bad name. (the social imaginary towards the meaning of intervention) - 13 AND 17: The horrific images remind us that atrocities have been committed by both sides. But the risk of armed intervention, particularly without a UN resolution, is that it makes a bad situation very much worse. (intervention without UN resolution will have negative consequences) - 15: We've seen the unwinnable nature of the Afghan conflict. The terrible sores of the Balkan civil wars are still raw enough to remind us what little effect our intervention had there. (the social imaginary towards the meaning of intervention) - 19 AND 21: General Sir David Richards has advised David Cameron, pictured, any form of intervention by Britain in Syria would serve little

		purpose. (Richard suggests that intervention will not achieve all goals)
		- 20 AND 22: One told The Sun: "The Government has still not made the case that intervention will make anything better." (the Government has not justified the pros of intervention)
		- 23: He (The SNP's Angus Robertson) said: "One has to make sure one has exhausted all possible routes to get a resolution in circumstances which don't involve military intervention." (Robertson suggests military intervention should not be a UK option)
		- (the current intervention would repeat Iraq mistakes)
		- 27 AND 31: Yet Britain and the West have long ruled out direct military intervention - terrified of repeating the horrors of Iraq and wary of Syria's complex web of fighting groups and national alliances which some commentators have likened to Europe before the First World War. (the current intervention would repeat Iraq mistakes)
		- 28 AND 32: But one thing that was proposed - intervention - won't be happening, because the British Parliament reflected the great scepticism of the British people. (UK intervention will not be happening because of parliament stance)
		- 37: Each time, in the run-up to the vote, television, radio and the Press used expressions like "armed intervention". No wonder people got the impression it was intended to be far bigger and more serious than it was. (the use of "armed intervention" term has raised concerns around intervention)
		- 43 AND 44: Mr Blair, left, admitted intervention "can be uncertain, expensive and bloody" but inaction was to "postpone the reckoning". (evaluation for UK intervention by Blair)
		- 46 AND 47: Intervention in Syria could be "uncertain, expensive and bloody", admitted Mr Blair. (Blair highlights concerns about UK intervention)
		- 48: SUSAN DURRANT … We are still paying a price for that intervention. (criticism of UK past interventions).
International stance	**Voices support military action**	- 3: But he (Obama) has stopped short of committing to direct intervention in the troubled country - a step that would risk inflaming tensions with Russia. (Obama recognises the role of Russia in the region)
		- 7: Hollande spoke with Barack Obama on Sunday

		and told him France would support him in a targeted military intervention. (France would support US intervention in Syria)
		- 8: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also confirmed the West's move towards intervention. (Ban Ki-moon represents the Western intentions towards Syrian crisis)
		- 10: General Sir David Richards, ex-Chief of the Defence Staff, said only a massive Western intervention would have an effect. (if there is intervention, it should be massive Western intervention according to Richards)
		- 12: ISRAEL: Occupies Golan Heights just 60 miles from Damascus but knows any open collaboration with Western intervention could draw in Iran. (Israel suggests any Western intervention should deal with Iran)
		- 35 AND 39: Obama said … "This would not be an open ended intervention. We would not put boots on the ground." (Obama provides concepts around the meaning of US intervention)
		- 38: US President Barack Obama outlined his plan to launch military intervention in Syria yesterday, but said he would seek approval from Congress first. (Obama outlined the program, but he still wanted approval from Congress)
		- 42: Mr Kerry said the case for US intervention in Syria's two-year civil war was strengthening by the day. (Kerry suggests that intervention is imminent at this stage)
		- 45: The announcement comes as campaigners accused the West of continuing to dither over military intervention in the wake of a Damascus chemical attack that killed 1,400 people. (campaigners support West intervention)
		- 49: So maybe that's why, while the US Senate was deep in debate over military action against Assad's vicious regime this week, a main supporter of military intervention was caught playing poker on his iPhone. (Other: the decision is shown as to not been taken seriously by some leaders).
	Concerns about military action	- 2: But the reality is unless Syria's powerful ally Russia can be won over by the West, talk of intervention is just that - talk. (Russia is shown as obstacle for Western intervention)
		- 4: Iran, a Syrian ally with no love for the West, warned US intervention could turn the region into an inferno. (Iran warns the US for any intervention).

		- 5: "If the US leads a military intervention, it will have dangerous consequences. It will bring chaos and the region will burn." (negative consequences of US intervention) - 6: "If the US leads a military intervention, it will have dangerous consequences." The US Navy has three " destroyers "pre-positioned" in the Med. (negative consequences of US intervention) - 25: Yet the West have ruled out direct military intervention - terrified of repeating the horrors of Iraq and wary of Syria's complex web of fighting groups and national alliances.
Evaluation of the Syrian attack		- 40: And 5,000 members of the Syria Protest Stop the War coalition gathered in London's Trafalgar Square to claim victory by stopping UK intervention. (Syrian protests stand against intervention)
Syrian government stance		- 24: Assad's government has denied carrying out the chemical attack, blaming rebels who it suggested were trying to provoke intervention. (Assad blames rebels as those who used chemical weapons to provoke intervention)

The Mirror and Sunday Mirror

Table 1.13: Chemical

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
UK response and Local context	**Engagement for military action**	- 2@6: He (Hague) added: "If verified, this would mark a shocking escalation in the use of chemical weapons in Syria." (Hague evaluates the Syrian situation) - 8@37: "We do believe this is a chemical attack by the Assad regime on a large scale but we would like the UN to be able to assess that so for those who don't believe that, evidence can be gathered." (Hague evaluates the situation, and showing who is directly responsible) - 10@45: BRITAIN was last night poised to bomb Syria over the suspected chemical weapons atrocity which killed hundreds of children. (British military action is imminent) - 11@49: He (Hague) added: "We cannot in the 21st century allow the idea that chemical weapons can be used with impunity, that people can be killed in this way, and there are no consequences. (Hague evaluates the UK stance towards the use of chemical weapons) - 12@53: A Downing Street spokesman: "A chemical weapons attack against the Syrian people on the scale emerging demanded a firm response from the international community" (the need for urgent international action) - 13@57: Hague… "We cannot in the 21st century allow the idea that chemical weapons can be used with impunity" (the need for response against the use of chemical weapons) - 16@71: A GOVERNMENT sources stress any attack must take place soon - - otherwise there is a risk President Assad will think he can get away with chemical attacks on his own people. (the need for urgent military attack against Assad regime) - 20@93: British Prime Minister David Cameron said: "This regime has huge stocks of chemical weapons. (Cameron evaluates available chemical weapons with the Assad regime) - 21@98: He (Cameron) said: "If there is no action following this big use of chemical weapons is it going to be more likely in future that more and more regimes will use chemical weapons?

(Cameron suggests negative consequences of not acting against the use of chemical weapons)

- 24@111: A government motion said "a strong humanitarian response is required from the international community and that this may, if necessary, require military action that is legal, proportionate and focused on saving lives by preventing and deterring further use of Syria's chemical weapons". (The government motion calls for the military action, and it clarifies the goals)
- 26@119: ADAM HOLLOWAY MP Former officer… "I AM yet to be convinced there is a strong and clear-cut case that military action will deter the Syrian government from using chemical weapons" (supporting the UK intervention).
- 30@142: But today's government motion says any response must be "proportionate and focused on saving lives by preventing and deterring further use of Syria's chemical weapons." (Government's evaluation for the response against the use of chemical weapons)
- 31@147: Mr Cameron said it "agreed unanimously the use of chemical weapons by Assad was unacceptable (Cameron neglects the use of chemical weapons by Assad regime)
- 33@156: But Mr Cameron insisted attacks would only target Assad's chemical weapons. (Cameron reassures that the goal is limited)
- 34@160: Senior Tory MP David Davis… "Any intervention must be effective in preventing any further use of chemical weapons". (any military action should be effective)
- 36@169: Earlier the PM had appealed to politicians saying it was "beyond doubt" that the Syrian regime had used chemical weapons. (PM highlighted the evidence for the use of chemical weapons)
- 42@197: On Friday, the BBC's Panorama team released footage of a new attack -possibly agonising chemical napalm. (according to the BBC, there is high possibility of another chemical attack)
- 50@240: He (Cameron) said: "My view is we have to look at chemical weapons as something different, something awful. Those pictures of children being gassed on our television screens are something the world must not turn away from." (Cameron suggests that UK should deal with the use of chemical weapons seriously by

333

		doing something).
	Concerns around military action	- 23@106: There were signs that last week's chemical attack had hardened opinion against President Assad. But 40% opposed sending in the Army, even if it emerges Assad was behind the attacks, against 30% who favoured ground action. (the majority do not support military action) - 27@124: Britain tabled a resolution at the UN security council authorising "all necessary measures" to protect civilians from chemical weapons. (UK supports the UN to do their jobs). -
	Internal politics	- 32@151: Global tensions were last night mounting over the possibility of Western air strikes in response to the chemical attacks, which killed hundreds of civilians. (the situation of parliament towards the votes) - 37@174: I (Blair) don't doubt that sofa soldiers like Captain Cameron, Private Hague and General Paddy "Pants Down" Ashdown are genuinely moved when they see children in Syria dying from the fallout of chemical weapons. (Blair evaluates the stance of some political leaders) - 39@183: Mr Cameron had only himself to blame for the Commons disaster in which 39 Tory and Lib Dem backbenchers voted against military action to deter the use of chemical weapons (Cameron struggles to persuade MPs for supporting the motion). - 41@192: THE British people are genuinely divided over what to do about the murderous use of chemical weapons in Syria (the public is divided). - 45@214: But his ally Chancellor George Osborne ruled it out, even if there was another chemical attack, saying: "I think Parliament has spoken." (political leaders respect the decision of parliament) - 49@235: But Mr Cameron - facing claims he has been sidelined at the summit after Parliament voted against military action - said: "I don't accept that for a moment. It's right to make a stand on chemical weapons, it's right to take that to Parliament, it's right to respect Parliament. (Cameron respects the result of the debate even when he did not achieve his goal of attacking Assad regime)

		-
International participants	**Engagement for military action**	- 1@2: If the attacks have taken place, this would affect the "red line" established by Obama about the use of chemical weapons, (Obama's red line has been crossed because of the use of chemical weapons) - 5@23: Mr Davutoglu demanded sanctions against the Syria regime, while Turkey's deputy PM Bekir Bozdag said it was "clear as day" that Assad had used chemical weapons on his people. (it was clear that Assad had used chemical weapons) - 7@32: Within 24 hours of the alleged chemical weapons attack taking place in the eastern suburbs of the Syrian capital Damascus, I counted no fewer than 130 different videos of the horror uploaded on to YouTube. (open sources as evidence for the bad situation of Syrian people) - 9@41: Mr Hagel said he expected US intelligence to "swiftly" assess whether the Syrian government had used chemical weapons. (Hagel suggests the US intelligence will provide information) - 14@62: But British, American and French governments already believe the Syrian government is responsible for any chemical attack. (International stance assures the responsibility of the Syrian regime for the use of chemical weapons) - 15@66 AND 18@84: Hague… "There is a clear reason the world had banned entirely the use of chemical weapons." (use of chemical weapons is internationally prohibited) - 17@75: EVIDENCE of Syrian leader Bashar al Assad's butchery emerged yesterday as a UN team came under fire in Damascus. (there is evidence would be provided from the UN) - 19@88: BAN KI-MOON'S SPOKESMAN The use of chemical weapons is a moral obscenity... there must be accountability. (Ban Ki-Moon's spokesman evaluates the use of chemical weapons, and urges for response) - 22@102: The Arab League gave him some cover yesterday by blaming Assad for the "heinous" chemical attacks on the outskirts of capital Damascus which are being investigated by the United Nations. (The Arab League blames Assad for the chemical attack) - 35@165: Josh Earnest, White House deputy spokesman, repeatedly said it was in US "core

		national security interests" to enforce chemical weapons norms. (deterring any further use of chemical weapons is as US national interest) - 38@178: THE US was preparing to strike against Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad last night after its spies officially blamed last week's deadly chemical weapons atrocity on his regime. (The US is prepared for attacking Syrian regime) - 46@218: John Kerry announced on Sunday the government now has its own hard, scientific evidence that Assad launched a chemical attack last month (the reports are complete and the evidence is clear) - 47@227: Obama urged the world to enforce the ban on chemical warfare set out in the Chemical Weapons Convention. (Obama calls for strong international stance against chemical weapons) - 48@231: Yesterday a Senate panel voted by 10 to seven to give Mr Obama the authority to use military force against Syria in response to a chemical weapons attack (US political leaders support Obama's call for military action).
	Concerns around rush military action	- 3@11: Charles Lister, an analyst at IHS Jane's Terrorism and Insurgency Centre, said it seemed to make little sense for the government to use chemical agents now. (the possibility of Assad regime to use chemical weapons is low) -
	Other ideas of showing international stance	- 6@27: Russia and China are beginning to air concern over the use of chemical weapons. Their support has to go before there is any hope of an end to the war. (Assad's allies should be persuaded to not support Assad as a step to end the war in Syria). -
Evaluation of the Syrian people		- 4@19: OUR (the Mirror) front page picture of nine dead Syrian children gassed in a suspected chemical weapons attack by President Assad's regime sparked worldwide shock yesterday. (the Mirror evaluates the Syrian situation) - 25@115: CRISIS IN SYRIA ALISON PHILLIPS ON THE SYRIAN BORDER WITH SURVIVORS OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS ATTACK (some Survivors of chemical attack will provide information for Phillips) - 28@133: (civilian): "The children were all asleep in bed and I was just going off to sleep when I heard people outside saying chemical bombs

		were being dropped around us". (situation of people during the chemical attack from one of the witnesses) - 40@187: She (Syrian civilian) wrote yesterday, ahead of Mr Obama's announcement: "I really worry about an American attack. What if they hit a chemical dump? "They could kill us all. There's nothing that we can do to prepare, though. (possible negative consequences of US military attack) - 43@201: Relief flooded in for Jannah as she heard that the UK had voted against bombing Assad's chemical weapons sites (Syrian lady describing the general situation of Syria in her diary).
Syrian government stance		- 44@210: Reports say the ruthless leather-jacketed head of the Republican Guard ordered a junior captain to fire chemical shells under threat of being shot in the head. (the one who fired chemical shells was under threat).
Representation of response to the use of chemical weapons		- 29@138: There must be a robust response to the use of banned chemical weapons. (the need to act without showing who is responsible for that)

Table 1.14: Military

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
UK stance and local context	**Concerns around military action**	- 7@28: PM David Cameron faced flak from MPs at home and internationally from Bashar al Assad's regime and its allies over any decision to take military action (PM under pressure towards supporting military intervention) - 8@32: "Mr Cameron will chair a National Security Council meeting tomorrow with military chiefs and senior Cabinet ministers to decide what action will be taken…" (this shows the type of action was not clear until the day before the vote). - 9@36: But as Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya prove, military intervention releases deadly forces and risks even more carnage (the negative side of military action). - 10@40: The key question he (Cameron) faces from home and abroad is whether any military action without a UN resolution would be legal (Cameron faced the question of legality as the main concern). - 14@56: Tony Blair's "dodgy dossier"… had raised the bar for evidence to justify military strikes (concern of repeating mistakes of Iraq war) - 20@80: Former Tory former defence minister Gerald Howarth MP said: "We have to be realistic about what it is we can achieve. Where will this military intervention lead on?" (the need for clear plan before military action) - 21@84: Former officer in the Grenadier Guards: I AM yet to be convinced there is a strong and clear-cut case that military action will deter the Syrian government from using chemical weapons (the need for considering the consequences of military intervention, and the plan should be clear). - 23@92: Former Tory former defence minister Gerald Howarth MP said: "We have to be realistic about what it is we can achieve. Where will this military intervention lead on? (the need for considering the consequences of military intervention, and the plan should be clear) - 24@96: MPs will regret any rush to judgment on military intervention (MPs do not want to make rush judgment). - 25@100: The move by Syrian president Bashar

al-Assad came as David Cameron hammered home the case for military action with an emotional appeal to MPs in an emergency Commons debate. (Cameron called for military action with an emotional appeal to MPs in an emergency Commons debate)

- 26@104: Ed Miliband is in the right place by refusing to endorse military action now. (evaluating Miliband's stance positively at the time of the debate)
- 27@108: The Prime Minister immediately climbed down and said: "It is clear to me that the British parliament, reflecting the views of the British people, does not want to see British military action. I get that and the Government will act accordingly." (Parliament stood against military intervention, and Cameron respects the view of parliament that reflects the view of British people)
- 28@112: He said it was clear Parliament "does not want to see British military action". He added: "I get that. The Government will act accordingly." (Parliament stood against military intervention, and Cameron respects the view of parliament towards military intervention)
- 30@120: Mr Cameron is paying a high political price for presenting military action as the only option when it should always be the last resort. (criticising Cameron's stance for his foolish rush to war backfired)
- 31@124: Tory MPs said Mr Cameron had only himself to blame for the disaster in which nearly 40 Tory and Lib Dem backbenchers voted against military action. (Tory MPs criticise Cameron, and voted against military action)
- 32@128: And after the PM's humiliating defeat over Syria, the US last night continued to prepare for military strikes - with France at its side (UK did not stand with allies, and did not support international stance for military action).
- 34@136: But last night he (Miliband) added blocking any military intervention in Syria was not the result he wanted. (Miliband raises his view of supporting military action with conditions)
- 36@144: What the people of this country saw last week was Britain, yet again, getting ready to march into a military scrap which would have achieved nothing except to kill a few more innocents. (Britain has chosen the right option because military action will participate to kill

339

		innocents)
		- 37@148: Overall 65 per cent of people were opposed to military strikes while 19 per cent backed them. (majority of people in Britain stands against military action) - 39@156: The sickening and inescapable truth about MPs' voting against military action is that many more innocent Syrians may die. (possible negative consequences: innocent Syrians may die) - 41@164: The premier offering a second vote and UN involvement gave ground to close the gap. Defeated Cameron ruling out military involvement - as Miliband maintained that wasn't his intention - bequeaths a British conflict the UN would struggle to resolve. (there is high possibility of closing the gap between the different views in UK towards supporting military action) - 43@172: The Government made its case and Parliament expressed its view and made clear its will that there be no British involvement in military action and we will respect that." (The Government displays its stance after the debate and the respect of parliament rejection) - 44@180: Ed Miliband, who beat his brother to the Labour leadership, said there should be no re-run of last week's Commons vote on military action. (Miliband did not support military action at the time of the debate) - 47@192: The BIG issue: FOLLOWING the House of Commons vote against military intervention in Syria, the US is poised to launch limited strikes to degrade President Assad's capabilities. (highlighting the difference between UK and US towards military action, and Parliament did not support military action)
	Voices support military action	- 2@8: He (General Sir Nick Houghton) revealed no decisions have been made on military involvement in Syria. But he said it was "the duty" of the Ministry of Defence to provide options for the use of military force if needed. (no clear stance at that time, but there is implicit support for military action) - 3@12: We (MPs) remind him of the need to seek United Nations approval for military action (general evaluation of the MPs' stance, and their support for military intervention under UN). - 4@17: MILITARY chiefs were last night identifying targets in Syria as David Cameron

		considered ordering a military strike against a regime he believes gassed its own people. (Military chiefs are shown to show their preparation for military attack in Syria with the concerns raised in media)
		- 5@20: Military strikes likely to happen within a week, and could be limited - and designed to act as a warning to the Syrian regime (military action is imminent and should be limited).
		- 13@52: Military sources here said British forces were in position to join US (Britain would back US call for military action before the vote).
		- 16@64: A government motion said "a strong humanitarian response is required from the international community and that this may, if necessary, require military action that is legal…". (intervention is humanitarian and legal)
		- 18@72: ADAM HOLLOWAY MP: "I AM yet to be convinced there is a strong and clear-cut case that military action will deter the Syrian government from using chemical weapons" (the military intervention is supported by Adam (an MP), and it will deter any use of chemical weapons)
International stance	**several ideas show various international participants without clear focus on one idea**	- 6@24: WESTERN military intervention in Syria is increasingly likely but not a foregone conclusion. (western intervention is imminent)
		- 11@44: Voice of the Mirror… JOHN KERRY If anybody thinks that destroying Syrian military infrastructure would end this - that is an illusion. (Kerry disagrees about the solution that suggests destroying Syrian military infrastructure)
		- 15@60: If diplomacy and economic sanctions fail, the international community can resort to military force (legality of military force, and it is shown as the last solution).
		- 19@76: US secret services are reported to have received a recording of the call - in which the Syrian official demands information about the attack in a Damascus suburb last week - from Israeli military spies. (the US received information from Israel)
		- 22@88: US secret services are reported to have received a recording of the call - in which the Syrian official demands information about the attack in a Damascus suburb last week - from Israeli military spies. (US secret services are

		reported to have received a recording from Israel)
		- 33@132: The New York Times offered "Like nearly all presidents since the Vietnam War, he has relied on Britain to be shoulder-to-shoulder with Washington in any serious military or security engagement." (US and UK share the foreign policy for a long time).
		- 40@160: BARACK Obama will go to war with Syria even if the US Congress does not back him, his foreign policy chief suggested yesterday. The President dramatically put military action on hold on Saturday night, saying he wanted to consult politicians. (Obama supports strongly the military action, but he wants to consult politicians)
		- 42@168: OUR "special relationship" with the United States is again being invoked to deplore Parliament's rejection of military action in Syria. (the relationship between the UK and US has been affected by the rejection of supporting the military intervention)
		- 46@188: Russia - Assad's closest ally - remains opposed to military action and Downing Street suggested Russia would be persuaded to change track (Russia would change its stance under pressure).
		- 48@196: In a pre-summit gambit, the US ramped up pressure for military action by warning Syrian leader Bashar al Assad (warning has positive effect on Bashar stance towards further use of chemical weapons).
		- 49@200: In a blow to President Obama, the Pope intervened to urge world leaders to "lay aside the futile pursuit of a military solution". (the Pope urges leaders to support military action)
		- 50@204: But China backed those opposing military intervention, warning it could badly affect the global economy. (China opposed military intervention because it may affect the global economy)
Evaluation of the Syrian people		- 1@4: Survivor Farah al-Shami, from the town of Mouadamiya, southwest of the capital, said she thought her region was too close to a military encampment to be affected (circumstance shows confirmation for the use of chemical weapons).
		- 17@68: using those pictures to assume a moral responsibility to lead the world into military

		action (pictures of victims are used to persuade people for supporting military action). - 29@116: One woman said: "People are scared the US will attack places where the prisoners are held. They are afraid as military bases are in built-up areas so civilians may be caught in attacks (Syrian people fears from rush military action) - 35@140 AND 38@152: British mum Jannah Reid, 52, is trapped in the country, where she lives with her three boys. But she insisted that Syrians did not want any military action from America. (Syrian people raise fears from any US military action) - 45@184: Of course, we (Syrian people) don't want another prolonged military conflict but short, sharp action would have sent a clear signal to Assad - and ideally destroyed his chemical capability. (Syrian people raise fears of making the conflict complicated)
Others		- 12@48: It is thought nuclear submarine HMS Tireless has been repositioned in the Mediterranean in readiness to launch Tomahawk cruise missiles against Assad's military.

Table 1.15: Vote

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
UK stance and local context	**Concerns around military action**	- 1@1: We will hold the Prime Minister to his pledge, given reluctantly, to seek the approval of the country by giving MPs a Commons vote before firing a shot or missile in anger. (the need of parliament consensus before any military action) - 2@3: Britain's involvement will require a Commons vote which, with Iraq in mind, will need tough political manoeuvring - particularly in the absence of a UN resolution. (the need of parliament approval with the consideration of Iraq war) - 14@82: The shock vote came as it was claimed thousands of Syrian prisoners had been moved to military targets to be used as human shields against Western air strikes. (the possibility of killing Syrian prisoners) - 19@44: That (not going to war against Syria any time) is the most important consequence of last night's unprecedented vote in the House of Commons against authorising military strikes. (concerns of being involved in any conflict in Syria) - 20@47: Cameron is the first Premier to lose a war vote since Lord North in 1782. (Cameron is the first leader lost the vote in war) - 22@51: But the PM accepted that Britain would not be joining the US in attacks on Assad, adding that the vote reflected the "great scepticism of the British people about any involvement in the Middle East". (Cameron recognises the British scepticism about military action) - 29@69 & 34@80: HEADLINE: Yacht Tory misses boat on PM vote. (Tories did not support Cameron's vote) - 40@97: Yet Cameron's greatest miscalculation was an inability to vote for both his own and Labour's motion. (the Government motion and Opposition amendment were both rejected in the vote) - 45@109: The calls for a rethink came as an ICM poll for the BBC found 71% of the public said MPs were right to vote against military action last week. (the public support the decision of the UK parliament)

		- 48@116: Fellow Old Etonian Jesse Norman MP abstained in the crunch Commons vote that left the Prime Minister defeated over his plans for war. (Norman abstained to vote) - 50@121: The vote came amid Russia sent missile-bearing warship Moskva to the Mediterranean. (this can show the Russian preparation for any attack in Syria)
	Voices support military action	- 7@15: He (Cameron) allowed the UN four more days for weapons inspectors to complete tests. And he agreed MPs would have a second vote before Britain launched any missiles. (Cameron argues for another vote if this one proceed) - 8@18 & 11@25: Downing Street announced MPs will now vote tonight on the principle of taking military action. But they will be offered a further vote, possibly next week, on "any direct British involvement". (the Government suggests this vote is for the principles of military action, and will be another vote if this one proceeds) - 10@23: He (Cameron) allowed the UN four more days for weapons inspectors to complete tests. And he agreed MPs would have a second vote before Britain launched any missiles. (Cameron suggests the second vote to urge MPs for supporting the current vote) - 14@33: Hoping last week to attack Syria with no vote, he had to offer two. (Cameron was hoping to attack Syria without vote, but because of strong stance from MPs he offered two votes to participate in attacking Syria) - 39@94: Tory grandees yesterday said the sarin find meant the situation had changed and urged Mr Cameron to use America's delay to hold a second vote on whether we joined the fight. (Tories call for another vote after the stance of USA) - 47@114: Meanwhile, the fallout in Britain from last week's vote continued as Education Secretary Michael Gove accused Labour of "celebrating" like "football fans" after the PM's motion was defeated. (Gove accuses Labour for their way of celebrating the vote) - 49@118: AFTER the vote in the House of Commons, it has been suggested we have damaged our so-called special relationship with the United States. (the decision could affect the relationship with the USA)

345

	Internal politics	- 3@6: David Cameron returned early from holiday as MPs called for a vote before any attack on Syria. (Cameron came from his holiday to attend the vote)
		- 4@8: And backbench Tory Andrew Bridgen, who sent a letter signed by more than 80 of his Conservative colleagues demanding a vote on any escalation of Britain's involvement earlier this year, said a recall should be announced and the PM or William Hague should make the case for action. (there are attempts to take military action before the current vote)
		- 5@10: Labour has refused to say whether it would back Mr Cameron in the Commons until it sees the motion that will be put to a vote. (Labour preferred to not show its stance until the call for the vote)
		- 6@13: THE Daily Mirror demanded Parliament be recalled to allow MPs to decide if Britain attacks Syria - so we welcome tomorrow's vote. (the Mirror waits for the result of parliament)
		- 9@20 & 12@28: Labour said the PM had ruled out offering MPs a second vote at 5.15pm and only changed his mind two hours later after Mr Miliband's decision to table his own opposing amendment. (Opposition amendment affected the stance of Cameron towards his support of military action)
		- 13@31: As a result, yesterday's debate was on the principle of using force and the Government - which backs the idea - was hoping to get Parliament's support with a vote late last night. (the Government lost the vote)
		- 15@35: HEADLINE: WE DON'T WANT YOUR WAR; Cameron humiliated as MPs vote against bombing Syria (Cameron lost the vote).
		- 16@37: DAVID Cameron lost the first battle over Syria last night without a single shot being fired after he was defeated in a Commons vote over military action. (Cameron lost the vote because he faces strong stance from MPs)
		- 17@40: And there were scenes of farce when two Tories, Justine Greening and Mark Simmonds, apparently missed the key vote by mistake after not hearing division bell. (two Tories missed the key vote)
		- 24@55: Labour leader Ed Miliband said the PM's "cavalier" stance lay behind his failure to win the vote. (failure of Cameron)
		- 27@63: Even non-rebel Tories were angry with the leadership. One said: "The one time I vote

		for the Government at a crunch division, the b******s lose." (conflict among leaders in parliament)
		- 28@66: The DUP's David Simpson, William McCrea and Ian Paisley were also absent their colleagues Nigel Dodds, Gregory Campbell, Jeffrey Donaldson, Sammy Wilson Jim Shannon did vote. (MPs voted in the Parliament)
		- 30@71 & 35@82: HEADLINE: Cam's 'Red Ed' blast over vote (strong stance against military action).
		- 31@74: But there can be little disagreement about David Cameron's behaviour before and after the extraordinary Commons vote on Thursday night. (this can show criticism of Cameron's stance before and after the debate).
		- 32@76 & 38@91: But the bottom line is that the Commons vote against military action in Syria was democracy in action. (evaluating positively the result of military action)
		- 33@78: HEADLINE: OBAMA SET TO BOMB SYRI. BODY: BUT HE'LL PUT IT TO VOTE. (Britain will not go with America)
		- 37@88: Thursday's remarkable Commons vote against military intervention showed Ed Miliband's true leadership skills, speaking for a country massively against joining the US in air strikes. (positive evaluation for ~~Cameron's~~ Miliband's stance)
		- 41@99: We don't want your war: Cameron humiliated as MPs vote against bombing Syria... (Cameron lost the vote).
		- 42@101: DOWNING Street dismisses a fresh vote on attacking Syria because a second defeat would be fatal for David Cameron's premiership. (Downing street streets dismisses any another vote)
		- 43@103: HEADLINE: PM: NO NEW SYRIA VOTE; Cam warns Tory hawks rematch is a non-starter. (there will be no new vote)
		- 44@106: And deputy PM Nick Clegg said he could not "foresee any circumstances for another vote on military action". (possibility for another vote)
		- 46@112: PM Mr Cameron also stressed there would be no second vote. (according to Cameron, there will be no another vote)
USA stance towards the		- 21@49: USA Today said the vote was "a huge blow" to David Cameron's "foreign policy

UK parliament vote		credibility". (USA criticises Cameron's stance) - 23@3: In America, John Bolton, the former US ambassador to the UN, said the Commons vote would not have "much of an impact" on Mr Obama's thinking. (Bolton suggests the decision of USA would not be affected by the vote) - 25@58: "The British aren't coming! the British aren't coming!" While the big-selling USA Today concluded the vote was "a huge blow to" Mr Cameron's "foreign policy credibility". (USA criticises Cameron's failure) - 36@85: he (Obama) did admit Congress should vote on his plans before he ordered air strikes. (Obama seeks approval from Congress) -
Others		- 26@61: Russia, the strongest supporter of the Syrian regime, pounced on the vote as evidence of the growing international opposition to strikes. (Russia is happy about the decision of the vote) -

Table 1.16: Intervention

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
UK stance and local context	**Concerns around military action**	- 9: COMMENT… In that case your intervention has to be strictly limited - targeting Syrian held chemical weapons. (a comment published by the Mirror shows that UK intervention should be limited and has clear goal) - 10: COMMENT… When you are arguing the case for humanitarian intervention your targeting has to be very well judged (it should be pre-planned intervention) - 14: Clegg… "We are not considering an open-ended military intervention with boots on the ground like we saw in Iraq" (there are other considerations by UK politicians in relation to the previous lessons). - 16: Britons ask: … How many other parliaments are being recalled today to debate intervention in a far-off, religious civil war?" (criticising the UK of being in the front line on calling for intervention). - 17: An interesting aspect of the poll is that 62% of over-65s don't want intervention. They've seen war and its consequences, and don't want to know. (sharing imaginaries of previous intervention, and this experience is regarded as the reason for the fears from any intervention). - 18, 20: Indeed, there is a danger that such an intervention could spread the conflict to neighbouring countries (fears from negative consequences). - 19, 21: Former Tory former defence minister Gerald Howarth MP said: … "Where will this military intervention lead on?" (fears from negative consequences). - 22: If a suicide bomber strikes at Westminster Tube station, MPs will regret any rush to judgment on military intervention (negative consequences for any rush to judgment on military intervention) - 23: And the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rev Justin Welby, also spoke out against the UK launching air strikes (Welby stands against UK military intervention) - 24 AND 26: But he (Miliband) said last night blocking any military intervention in Syria was not the result he wanted (he wants to support intervention with suggested conditions).

		- 27: ALL 10 of the Northern Ireland MPs who voted in the Commons on military action in Syria opposed UK intervention (the Northern Ireland MPs voted against military action) - 29, 31: until we know what Western intervention would mean for the countries around Syria; until there is an effective plan to protect the Syrian people… (the Mirror evaluates the ambiguity of UK participation with western intervention). - 32: As tragic as the Syrian conflict is, it should be resolved by the two warring factions. Neither side would be grateful for Western intervention, except the extremists who would win a propaganda coup and stir up a wider conflict in the area… (two negative points for making intervention that are the role of the Syrian regime and the role of extremist groups) - 33: message from our Parliament Shame on us. I (the journalist) accept we are weary of wars in hot, dusty countries. I accept we cannot know what retaliation a military strike may cause. I accept more people may die as a result of military intervention (these are some reasons suggested by the Mirror as to show the stance of parliament). -
	Internal politics	- 28, 30: Thursday's remarkable Commons vote against military intervention showed Ed Miliband's true leadership skills, speaking for a country massively against joining the US in air strikes. But can we please stop fretting about how this will affect the "special relationship" with America? (Miliband is shown with good skills about standing against military action, but there should be consideration of the relationship between UK and US). - 35: NOT only was last week's Parliamentary vote rejecting military intervention in Syria a great day for democracy, it can also be seen as a historic evolutionary jump for all humanity (the Parliament did the right thing of not supporting military action). - 36: The BIG issue FOLLOWING the House of Commons vote against military intervention in Syria, the US is poised to launch limited strikes to degrade President Assad's capabilities (parliament stance evaluated negatively).
	Voices support	- 11, 13: he (Hague) said any intervention would

	military action	be "in accordance with international law". (legality of action). - 12: Cameron… But as Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya prove, military intervention releases deadly forces and risks even more carnage (previous military actions evaluated positively). - 34: We have turned our backs on military intervention to help the children (the journalist highlights the purpose of military intervention). -
International participants	**Several ideas reflect the role of several international participants without clear focus on a central idea.**	- 4, 6: WESTERN military intervention in Syria is increasingly likely but not a foregone conclusion (Western intervention is about to happen, but there is no clear meaning of west intervention). - 5, 7: And more seriously, Western intervention will have to be squared with the Russians (considering the stance of Assad's allies). - 8: If the Russians go on as they are and won't work with us then we have to rely on "humanitarian" intervention (intervention is supported because it is shown to be as humanitarian) - 15: The UN has a legal framework - the Responsibility to Protect - that paves the way for military intervention on humanitarian grounds (the UN supports military intervention on humanitarian ground). - 25: When asked whether America should intervene if Assad's government used chemical weapons on civilians, 29% said yes - up from 25% last week - while 44% opposed any kind of intervention, even if deadly and illegal chemicals had been used (the US may not back military action against Syria). - 37: China rowed in behind those opposing military intervention, warning it could be disastrous for the world economy (China raises a concern about military action that could affect the market). - 38: But China backed those opposing military intervention, warning it could badly affect the global economy. (China raises concern about military action that could affect the market).
Evaluation of the Syrian people		- 1: But as shocking pictures of the carnage were beamed around the world last night there were mounting calls for military intervention (evaluating the situation and showing the need for military intervention).

		- 2: it's even being suggested that rebel fighters could have staged the attack themselves to try to provoke intervention by the West (rebels might use chemical weapons to provoke the West intervention). - 3: Any suggestion of intervention by bombing or invasion could ignite an even wider conflict (possibility of negative consequences).
		-

Appendix Two:

Cameron's speech of the first debate[33]

Lines	Parts of the speech	Element of argument
1-3	May I thank you, Mr Speaker, for agreeing to our request to recall the House of Commons for this important debate?	Other
4-6	The question before the House today is how to respond to one of the most abhorrent uses of chemical weapons in a century, which has slaughtered innocent men, women and children in Syria.	Circumstances: describing the problem which is the use of chemical weapons
6-9	It is not about taking sides in the Syrian conflict, it is not about invading, it is not about regime change, and it is not even about working more closely with the opposition; it is about the large-scale use of chemical weapons and our response to a war crime—nothing else.	Negation anticipated construal: Cameron used this strategy before the denial of some MPs for his motion.
10-12	Let me set out what the House has in front of it today in respect of how we reached our conclusions. We have a summary of the Government's legal position, which makes it explicit that military action would have a clear legal basis.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): legality of the response to the chemical attacks
16-17	We have the key independent judgments of the Joint Intelligence Committee, which make clear its view of what happened and who is responsible.	Argument from authority: this authority supports the proposed circumstances
17-21	We have a motion from the Government that sets out a careful path of steps that would need to be taken before Britain could participate in any direct military action. Those include the weapons inspectors reporting, further action at the United Nations and another vote in this House of Commons.	Means-goal: steps support before the main action and the together will achieve the goals.
21-24	The motion also makes it clear that even if all those steps were taken, anything that we did would have to be "legal, proportionate and focused on…preventing and deterring further use of Syria's chemical weapons"	Circumstances of the GM (circumstantial value): legality of action in Syria
31-35	There had been a long-standing convention, backed by Attorney-Generals of all parties and all Governments, not to publish any legal advice at all. This Government changed that. With the Libya	Argument from authority that supports proposed circumstantial value (legality of

	conflict, we published a summary of the legal advice. On this issue, we have published a very clear summary of the legal advice and I urge all right hon. and hon. Members to read it.	action)
40-43	I am deeply mindful of the lessons of previous conflicts and, in particular, of the deep concerns in the country that were caused by what went wrong with the Iraq conflict in 2003. However, this situation is not like Iraq. What we are seeing in Syria is fundamentally different.	Circumstances: distancing the current situation in Syria from the Iraq invasion.
43-46	We are not invading a country. We are not searching for chemical or biological weapons. The case for ultimately supporting action—I say "ultimately" because there would have to be another vote in this House—is not based on a specific piece or pieces of intelligence.	Negation anticipated construal: (like lines 6-9): denial of possible linking the Syrian situation to the Iraq invasion.
46-53	The fact that the Syrian Government have, and have used, chemical weapons is beyond doubt. The fact that the most recent attack took place is not seriously doubted. The Syrian Government have said it took place. Even the Iranian President said that it took place. The evidence that the Syrian regime has used these weapons, in the early hours of 21 August, is right in front of our eyes. We have multiple eye-witness accounts of chemical-filled rockets being used against opposition-controlled areas. We have thousands of social media reports and at least 95 different videos—horrific videos—documenting the evidence.	Circumstances: clarity of the Syrian situation and the availability of the evidence about the chemical attacks.
54-61	The differences with 2003 and the situation with Iraq go wider. Then, Europe was divided over what should be done; now, Europe is united in the view that we should not let this chemical weapons use stand. Then, NATO was divided; today, NATO has made a very clear statement that those who are responsible should be held accountable. Back in 2003, the Arab League was opposed to action; now, it is calling for it. It has issued a statement holding the Syrian regime fully responsible and asking the international community to overcome internal disagreements and to take action against those who committed this crime.	Circumstances: differences between current situation and the Iraq invasion regarding the international consensus towards supporting action in Syria
67-70	I am grateful to my right hon. Friend. In drawing up my motion I want to unite as much of the country and of this House as possible. I think it is right, on these vital issues of national and international importance, to seek the greatest possible consensus. That is the right thing for the Government to do and we will continue to do it.	Value: uniting the country towards international and national interest.
71-74	The President of the United States, Barack Obama, is a man who opposed the action in Iraq. No one	Circumstances: Stance of international

354

	could in any way describe him as a President who wants to involve America in more wars in the middle east, but he profoundly believes that an important red line has been crossed in an appalling way, and that is why he supports action in this case	authority: Obama was against the Iraq war, but now he supports intervention in Syria
74-80	When I spoke to President Obama last weekend I said we shared his view about the despicable nature of this use of chemical weapons and that we must not stand aside, but I also explained to him that, because of the damage done to public confidence by Iraq, we would have to follow a series of incremental steps, including at the United Nations, to build public confidence and ensure the maximum possible legitimacy for any action. These steps are all set out in the motion before the House today.	Means-goal: the need for steps before direct intervention because of public concerns; the public concern here is a circumstance under the means-goal
81-86	I remember 2003. I was sitting two rows from the back on the Opposition Benches. It was just after my son had been born and he was not well, but I was determined to be here. I wanted to listen to the man who was standing right here and believe everything that he told me. We are not here to debate those issues today, but one thing is indisputable: the well of public opinion was well and truly poisoned by the Iraq episode and we need to understand the public scepticism.	Circumstances: relating the personal situation to the public feeling as they share the concerns of the damage caused by the Iraq invasion
93-94	I wanted the recall of this House in order to debate these absolutely vital national and international issues	Value: this clause shows the personal interest of Cameron
94-99	I will answer the right hon. Lady's question directly: it is this House that will decide what steps we next take. If Members agree to the motion I have set down, no action can be taken until we have heard from the UN weapons inspectors, until there has been further action at the United Nations and until there is another vote in this House. Those are the conditions that we—the British Government, the British Parliament—are setting and it is absolutely right that we do so.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: GM does not call for immediate action while there are steps before intervention
103-111	The deep public cynicism imposes particular responsibilities on me as Prime Minister to try to carry people in the country and people in this House with me. I feel that very deeply. That was why I wanted Parliament recalled, and I want this debate to bring the country together, not divide it. That is why I included in my motion, the Government motion, all the issues I could that were raised with me by the Leader of the Opposition and by many colleagues in all parts of the House—from the Liberal Democrat party, the Conservative party and others. I want us to try to have the greatest possible unity on the issue.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): obligation upon the PM to unite the country

112-129	I have read the Opposition amendment carefully, and it has much to commend it. The need for the UN investigators to report—quite right. The importance of the process at the United Nations—quite right. The commitment to another vote in this House before any British participation in direct action—that is in our motion too. However, I believe that the Opposition motion is deficient in two vital respects. First, it refers to the deaths on 21 August but does not in any way refer to the fact that they were caused by chemical weapons. That fact is accepted by almost everyone across the world, and for the House to ignore it would send a very bad message to the world. Secondly, in no way does the Opposition motion even begin to point the finger of blame at President Assad. That is at odds with what has been said by NATO, President Obama and every European and regional leader I have spoken to; by the Governments of Australia, Canada, Turkey and India, to name but a few; and by the whole Arab League. It is at odds with the judgment of the independent Joint Intelligence Committee, and I think the Opposition amendment would be the wrong message for this House to send to the world. For that reason, I will recommend that my hon. Friends vote against it.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: Cameron highlights the tension between the GM and Opposition amendment (OA). He suggests the OA neglects the seriousness of the chemical attack because it does not support the GM
134-135	I think it would be unthinkable to proceed if there were overwhelming opposition in the Security Council.	Dealing with objections: Cameron reassures that the GM supports action with the approval from the Security Council
136-138	Let me set out for the House why I think this issue is so important. The very best route to follow is to have a chapter VII resolution, take it to the UN Security Council, have it passed and then think about taking action. That was the path we followed with Libya.	Means-goal: steps before military action
141-149	However, it cannot be the case ~~that~~ that is the only way to have a legal basis for action, and we should consider for a moment what the consequences would be if that were the case. We could have a situation where a country's Government were literally annihilating half the people in that country, but because of one veto on the Security Council we would be hampered from taking any action. I cannot think of any Member from any party who would want to sign up to that. That is why it is important that we have the doctrine of humanitarian	Dealing with objections and alternatives: the GM calls for humanitarian intervention, and this is supported by argument from authority

	intervention, which is set out in the Attorney-General's excellent legal advice to the House.	
155-161	My hon. Friend makes a good point, and let us be clear that no decision about military action has been taken. It would require another vote of this House. However, if we wanted to see action that was purely about deterring and degrading future chemical weapons use by Syria—that is the only basis on which I would support any action—we would need countries that have the capabilities to take that action, of which the United States and the United Kingdom are two. There are very few other countries that would be able to do that.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: military action is not immediate. Within this strategy there are: *goal* (deterring any use of chemical weapons); and *circumstantial value* (the UK's capability to take action)
169-175	My hon. Friend makes a very important point that relates to what happened in Kosovo and elsewhere, but let me be clear about what we are talking about today: yes it is about that doctrine, but it is also about chemical weapons. It is about a treaty the whole world agreed to almost 100 years ago, after the horrors of the first world war. The question before us is this: is Britain a country that wants to uphold that international taboo against the use of chemical weapons? My argument is that yes, it should be that sort of country.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): obligation upon the UK to protect the international prohibition of using chemical weapons
180-184	What I would say to the right hon. Gentleman is that the case I am making is that the House of Commons needs to consider purely and simply this issue of massive chemical weapons use by this regime. I am not arguing that we should become more involved in this conflict. I am not arguing that we should arm the rebels. I am not making any of those arguments.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: military action is specific about the use of chemical weapons without being directly involved in Syria
184-188	The question before us—as a Government, as a House of Commons, as a world—is that there is the 1925 post-first world war agreement that these weapons are morally reprehensible, so do we want to try to maintain that law?	Circumstances (circumstantial value): obligation of protecting international law regarding use of CW
188-191	Put simply, is it in Britain's national interest to maintain an international taboo about the use of chemical weapons on the battlefield? My argument is: yes, it is. Britain played a part in drawing up that vital protocol—which, incidentally, Syria signed—and I think we have an interest in maintaining it.	Value: Britain's interest to protect the international law
200-207	The point for considering this tougher approach is that we know there are the 14 uses of chemical weapons on a smaller scale—at least 14—and now we have this much larger use. This seems to me—and to President Obama, to President Hollande and to many others—an appropriate moment to ask whether it is time to do something to stand up for the prohibition against the use of chemical weapons. I cannot be accused on the one hand of rushing into	Circumstances: the use of CW is a consequence of not putting pressure against Assad government in his previous actions in Syria

	something, while, on the other hand, being asked, "Why have you waited for 14 chemical weapons attacks before you do something?"	
210-213	In my speech I want to do three things: explain what we know; set out the path we will follow; and try to answer all of the difficult questions that have been put to me. Let me try to make some progress and I promise I will take interventions as I go along. Let me set out what we know about what happened.	Not part of the argument because this part shows the structure of the following speech
214-220	Médecins sans Frontières reported that in just three hours, on the morning of 21 August, three hospitals in the Damascus area received approximately 3,600 patients with symptoms consistent with chemical weapons attacks. At least 350 of those innocent people died. The video footage illustrates some of the most sickening human suffering imaginable. Expert video analysis can find no way that this wide array of footage could have been fabricated, particularly the behaviour of small children in those shocking videos.	Argument from authority that supports the proposed circumstances with the evaluation of the incident
221-226	There are pictures of bodies with symptoms consistent with that of nerve agent exposure, including muscle spasms and foaming at the nose and mouth. I believe that anyone in this Chamber who has not seen these videos should force themselves to watch them. One can never forget the sight of children's bodies stored in ice, and young men and women gasping for air and suffering the most agonising deaths—all inflicted by weapons that have been outlawed for nearly a century.	Circumstances: situation in Syrian chemical attacks, and this is available at the open sources
228-232	The Syrian regime has publicly admitted that it was conducting a major military operation in the area at that time. The regime resisted calls for immediate and unrestricted access for UN inspectors, while artillery and rocket fire in the area reached a level about four times higher than in the preceding 10 days. There is intelligence that Syrian regime forces took precautions normally associated with chemical weapons use.	Circumstances: situation in Syria at the time of the chemical attacks and the position of the Assad government
233-252	Examining all this evidence, together with the available intelligence, the Joint Intelligence Committee has made its judgments, and has done so in line with the reforms put in place after the Iraq war by Sir Robin Butler. Today, we are publishing the key judgments in a letter from the Chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee. The letter states that "there is little serious dispute that chemical attacks causing mass casualties on a larger scale than hitherto…took place on 21 August". On the Syrian opposition, the letter states: "There is no credible intelligence or other evidence to substantiate the	Argument from authority supports the proposed circumstances in the Government motion

	claims or the possession of CW"— that is, chemical weapons— "by the opposition." The Joint Intelligence Committee therefore concludes: "It is not possible for the opposition to have carried out a CW attack on this scale." It says this: "The regime has used CW on a smaller scale on at least 14 occasions in the past. There is some intelligence to suggest regime culpability in this attack. These factors make it highly likely that the Syrian regime was responsible." Crucially, the JIC Chairman, in his letter to me, makes this point absolutely clear. He says "there are no plausible alternative scenarios to regime responsibility."	
253-260	I am not standing here and saying that there is some piece or pieces of intelligence that I have seen, or the JIC has seen, that the world will not see, that convince me that I am right and anyone who disagrees with me is wrong. I am saying that this is a judgment; we all have to reach a judgment about what happened and who was responsible. But I would put it to hon. Members that all the evidence we have—the fact that the opposition do not have chemical weapons and the regime does, the fact that it has used them and was attacking the area at the time, and the intelligence that I have reported—is enough to conclude that the regime is responsible and should be held accountable.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: Cameron reinforces the existence of the chemical attacks committed by the Assad government
267-278	The hon. Lady makes an extremely serious point. As I have just said, in the end there is no 100% certainty about who is responsible; you have to make a judgment. There is also no 100% certainty about what path of action might succeed or fail. But let me say this to the hon. Lady. I think we can be as certain as possible that a regime that has used chemical weapons on 14 occasions and is most likely responsible for this large-scale attack, will conclude, if nothing is done, that it can use these weapons again and again on a larger scale and with impunity. People talk about escalation; to me, the biggest danger of escalation is if the world community—not just Britain, but America and others—stands back and does nothing. I think Assad will draw very clear conclusions from that.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: exitance of evidence about the Syrian situation and possible negative consequences of inaction
283-288	That is a very good question. If my hon. Friend reads the JIC conclusions, he will see that this is where it finds the greatest difficulty—ascribing motives. Lots of motives have been ascribed. For my part, I think the most likely possibility is that Assad has been testing the boundaries. At least 14 uses and no response—he wants to know whether the world will respond to the use of these weapons,	Circumstances: the chemical attacks are important because the Assad government test the international response

	which I suspect, tragically and repulsively, are proving quite effective on the battlefield.	
289-292	But in the end we cannot know the mind of this brutal dictator; all we can do is make a judgment about whether it is better to act or not to act and whether he is responsible or not responsible. In the end, these are all issues of judgment and as Members of Parliament, we all have to make them.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): obligation upon the MPs to evaluate the ideal response against the chemical attacks
298-308	One obviously cannot discuss the details of potential action in detail in front of this House, but I can tell the House that the American President and I have had discussions, which have been reported in the newspapers, about potential military action. We have had those discussions and the American President would like to have allies alongside the United States with the capability and partnership that Britain and America have. But we have set out, very clearly, what Britain would need to see happen for us to take part in that—more action at the UN, a report by the UN inspectors and a further vote in this House. Our actions will not be determined by my good friend and ally the American President; they will be decided by this Government and votes in this House of Commons.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: the current vote is not about direct general military action while there are various steps precede any military action. Cameron considers the reports of the newspapers that highlight the potential of military action by the UK and US
317-323	It is a good question, but I am afraid that I cannot make any of those assurances. Obviously, we have not made that decision, but were we to make a decision to join the Americans and others in military action, it would have to be action, in my view, that was solely about deterring and degrading the future use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime—full stop, end of story. By the way, if we were aware of large-scale use of chemical weapons by the opposition, I would be making the same argument from the same Dispatch Box and making the same recommendations.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: the main claim is action against the use of chemical weapons and the goal is specific (deterring any further use of CW)
329-332	I applaud my hon. Friend for always standing up against genocide, wherever it takes place in the world. It may well be that the fact that no action was taken over Halabja was one of the things that convinced President Assad that it was okay to build up an arsenal of chemical weapons.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: negative consequences of inaction that is another use of chemical weapons
334-336	I am going to make some progress. As I said, the second part of my speech deals with the actions set out in our motion. I want to address those and then I will take some more interventions.	Structure of the speech: this is not part of the argumentation structure
337-346	Whatever disagreements there are over the complex situation in Syria, I believe that there should be no disagreement that the use of chemical weapons is wrong. As I said, almost a century ago the world	Dealing with objections and alternatives: seriousness of the chemical attacks, and

	came together to agree the 1925 treaty and to outlaw the use of chemical weapons, and international law since that time has reflected a determination that the events of that war should never be repeated. It put a line in the sand; it said that, whatever happens, these weapons must not be used. President Assad has, in my view, crossed that line and there should now be consequences. This was the first significant use of chemical weapons this century and, taken together with the previous 14 small-scale attacks, it is the only instance of the regular and indiscriminate use of chemical weapons by a state against its own people for at least 100 years.	the importance of protecting the international prohibition of using chemical weapons
347-349	Interfering in another country's affairs should not be undertaken except in the most exceptional circumstances. There must be, as my hon. Friend has just said, a humanitarian catastrophe, and the action must be a last resort.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: military action is humanitarian and not immediate while it is the last choice
349-358	By any standards, this is a humanitarian catastrophe and if there are no consequences for it, there will be nothing to stop Assad and other dictators using these weapons again and again. As I have said, doing nothing is a choice—it is a choice with consequences. These consequences would not just be about President Assad and his future use of chemical weapons; decades of painstaking work to construct an international system of rules and checks to prevent the use of chemical weapons and to destroy stockpiles will be undone. The global consensus against the use of chemical weapons will be fatally unravelled. A 100-year taboo will be breached.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: negative consequences of inaction
358-260	People ask about the British national interest. Is it not in the British national interest that rules about chemical weapons are upheld? In my view, of course it is, and that is why I believe we should not stand idly by.	Value: response against the use of chemical weapons is a national interest
368-371	I certainly agree that people should be subject to the ICC and, of course, possession and use of chemical weapons is a crime and can be prosecuted, but we have to recognise the slowness of those wheels and the fact that Syria is not even a signatory to that treaty.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: slowness of ICC
374-475	As I have said, I have consulted the Attorney-General and he has confirmed that the use of chemical weapons in Syria constitutes both a war crime and a crime against humanity.	Argument from authority: the Attorney-General supports the proposed circumstances
376-380	I want to be very clear about the process that we follow—the motion is clear about that. The weapons investigators in Damascus **must** complete their	Means-goal: steps before any direct military action, and

		action is not imminent
	work. They **should** brief the United Nations Security Council. A genuine attempt **should be** made at a condemnatory chapter VII resolution, backing all necessary measures. Then, and only then, could we have another vote of this House and British involvement in direct military action.	action is not imminent
380-385	I have explained, again, the legal position and I do not need to repeat it, but I urge colleagues to read this legal advice, which I have put in the Library of the House of Commons. But let me repeat, one more time, that we have not reached that point—we have not made the decision to act—but were there to be a decision to act, this advice proves that it would be legal.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): the GM follows legal steps
391-397	I completely agree with my hon. Friend. I am fully aware of the deep public scepticism and war-weariness in our country, linked to the difficult economic times people have had to deal with, and that they are asking why Britain has to do so much in the world. I totally understand that, and we should reassure our constituents that this is about chemical weapons, not intervention or getting involved in another middle eastern war.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: the GM focuses on the use of chemical weapons as the central issue rather than being involved in the conflict
414-426	The right hon. Gentleman makes a very good point, however. I think that the Dempsey letter was addressing the point that if we wanted entirely to dismantle, or to attempt to dismantle, Syria's weapons arsenal, that would be an enormous undertaking which would involve ground troops and all sorts of things, **but that is not what is being proposed**; the proposal, were we to take part, would be to attempt to deter and degrade the future use of chemical weapons. **That is very different**. I do not want to set out at the Dispatch Box a list of targets, but it is perfectly simple and straightforward to think of actions that we could take relating to the command and control of the use of chemical weapons, and the people and buildings involved, that would indeed deter and degrade. Hon. Members will ask this point in several different ways: how can we be certain that any action will work and would not have to be repeated? Frankly, these are judgment issues, and the only firm judgment I think we can all come to is that if nothing is done, we are more likely to see more chemical weapons used.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: supporting action against the use of CW does not mean direct military intervention. The main action is limited and focused on deterring any further use of chemical weapons. Inaction has negative consequences
436-446	I am happy to consider that request, because the ISC plays a very important role, but I do not want to raise, as perhaps happened in the Iraq debate, the status of individual or groups of pieces of intelligence into some sort of quasi-religious cult. That would not be appropriate. I have told the	Dealing with objections and alternatives: the current situation is different from the Iraq war because various sources are available

	House that there is an enormous amount of open-source reporting, including videos that we can all see. Furthermore, we know that the regime has an enormous arsenal, that it has used it before and that it was attacking that area. Then, of course, there is the fact that the opposition does not have those weapons or delivery systems and that the attack took place in an area that it was holding. So, yes, intelligence is part of this picture, but let us not pretend that there is one smoking piece of intelligence that can solve the whole problem. This is a judgment issue; hon. Members will have to make a judgment.	that display the situation in Syria
455-461	I have not agreed on every aspect of Syrian policy, as is well known. If we were to take action, it would be purely and simply about degrading and deterring chemical weapons use. We worry about escalation, but the greatest potential escalation is the danger of additional chemical weapons use because nothing has been done. This debate and this motion are not about arming the rebels or intervening in the conflict, or about invasion or changing our approach to Syria. They are about chemical weapons— something in which everyone in this House has an interest.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: the goal of the action is specific (deterring the use of CWs); negative consequences of inaction; action of GM does not mean direct involvement in the Syria conflict
467-470	My hon. Friend makes an important point. One of the questions our constituents ask most is where the British national interest is in all of this. I would argue that a stable middle east is in the national interest, but there is a specific national interest relating to the use of chemical weapons and preventing its escalation.	Value: acting against the use of CW is a personal interest for Cameron and British national interest
475-480	In this section of my speech, I have tried to address the questions that people have. Let me take the next one: whether we would be in danger of undermining our ambitions for a political solution in Syria. There is not some choice between, on the one hand, acting to prevent chemical weapons being used against the Syrian people and, on the other, continuing to push for a long-term political solution. We need to do both. We remain absolutely committed to using diplomacy to end this war with a political solution.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: making action in Syria and political process should act together
481-486	Let me make this point. For as long as Assad is able to defy international will and get away with chemical attacks on his people, I believe that he will feel little if any pressure to come to the negotiating table. He is happy to go on killing and maiming his own people as part of his strategy for winning that brutal civil war. Far from undermining the political	Means-goal: the response against the use of CW will achieve the short-term and long-term goals

	process, a strong response over the use of chemical weapons in my view could strengthen it.	
492-498	I have taken advice from all of the experts about all the potential impacts on the region, which in fact is the next question in my list of questions that need to be answered. The region has already been profoundly endangered by the conflict in Syria. Lebanon is facing sectarian tensions as refugees pile across the border. Jordan is coping with a massive influx of refugees. Our NATO ally Turkey has suffered terrorist attacks and shelling from across the border. Standing by as a new chemical weapons threat emerges in Syria will not alleviate those challenges; it will deepen them.	Argument from authority supports the negative impact of the chemical attacks upon the Syrian crisis
498-503	That is why the Arab League has been so clear in condemning the action, in attributing it precisely to President Assad and in calling for international action. This is a major difference from past crises in the middle east, and a region long beset by conflict and aggression **needs** above all clear international laws and people and countries who are prepared to stand up for them.	Circumstances: international consensus ~~if~~ of supporting response against the use of chemical weapons.
511-519	I absolutely agree with my right hon. Friend that we must continue the process of diplomatic engagement. Even after I had spoken to President Obama before the weekend, I called President Putin on Monday and had a long discussion with him about this issue. We are a long way apart, but the one issue about which we do agree is the need to get the Geneva II process going. The assurance I can give my right hon. Friend is that any action would be immediately taken over by running a political process once again and that Britain will do everything in its power to help make that happen.	Dealing with objections and alternatives:
520-526	Let me answer a final question that has been put in the debate over recent days: whether this will risk radicalising more young Muslims, including people here in Britain. This is a vital question, and it is one that was not asked enough in 2003. This question was asked at the National Security Council yesterday, and we have received considered analysis from our counter-terrorism experts. Their assessment is that, while as ever there is no room for complacency, the legal, proportionate and focused actions that would be proposed will not be a significant new cause of radicalisation and extremism.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: response against the use of CW will not have a backlash
526-530	I would make this point: young Muslims in the region and here in Britain are looking at the pictures of Muslims suffering in Syria, seeing the most horrific deaths from chemical weapons and many of	Circumstances: young Muslims support international response against the use of CW

	them may be asking whether the world is going to step up and respond, and I believe that the right message to give to them is that we should.	
540-547	The right hon. Gentleman makes an extremely important point, and we should be proud in the House and this country of the massive role that aid agencies and British aid money are playing in relieving this disastrous humanitarian situation. We are one of the largest donors, and we will go on making that investment because we are saving lives and helping people every day. But we have to ask ourselves whether the unfettered use of chemical weapons by the regime will make the humanitarian situation worse, and I believe that it will. If we believed that there was a way to deter and degrade future chemical weapons action, it would be irresponsible not to do it.	Circumstances: the positive role of the UK towards the general situation in Syria, but the chemical attacks require important response because this incident deepened the humanitarian crisis
549-553	Let me just make this point. When people study the legal advice published by the Government, they will see that it makes the point that the intervention on the basis of humanitarian protection has to be about saving lives. Let me conclude where I began. The question before us is how to respond to one of the worst uses of chemical weapons in a hundred years.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): action against the use of CW is legal and humanitarian
553-558	The answer is that we must do the right thing and in the right way. We **must** be sure to learn the lessons of previous conflicts. We **must pursue** every avenue at the United Nations, every diplomatic channel and every option for securing the greatest possible legitimacy with the steps that we take	Means-goal: additional steps alongside the support of the GM
558-561	and we **must recognise** the scepticism and concerns that many people in the country will have after Iraq, by explaining carefully and consistently all the ways in which this situation and the actions that we take are so very different.	Means-goal: the MPs should do extra step because of public concerns towards any intervention
561-564	We must ensure that any action, if it is to be taken, is proportionate, legal and specifically designed to deter the use of chemical weapons. We must ensure that any action supports and is accompanied by a renewed effort to forge a political solution and relieve humanitarian suffering in Syria.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): any action should be legal and humanitarian
565-567	But at the same time, we must not let the spectre of previous mistakes paralyse our ability to stand up for what is right. We must not be so afraid of doing anything that we end up doing nothing.	Circumstances: the stance of the public is affected by the previous mistakes
568-569	Let me repeat that there will be no action without a further vote in the House of Commons	Dealing with objections and alternatives: supporting the vote does not mean immediate action
569-	but on this issue Britain should not stand aside. We	Claim: supporting the

571	must play our part in a strong international response; we must be prepared to take decisive action to do so. That is what today's motion is about, and I commend it to the House.	action is rephrased in another way

Syria and the Use of Chemical Weapons

2 May I thank you, Mr Speaker, for agreeing to our request to recall the House of
3 Commons for this important debate?

4 The question before the House today is how to respond to one of the most abhorrent
5 uses of chemical weapons in a century, which has slaughtered innocent men, women
6 and children in Syria. It is not about taking sides in the Syrian conflict, it is not about
7 invading, it is not about regime change, and it is not even about working more closely
8 with the opposition; it is about the large-scale use of chemical weapons and our
9 response to a war crime—nothing else.

10 Let me set out what the House has in front of it today in respect of how we reached
11 our conclusions. We have a summary of the Government's legal position, which
12 makes it explicit that military action would have a clear legal basis.

13 **Caroline Lucas (Brighton, Pavilion) (Green):** Will the Prime Minister give way on
14 that point?

15 **The Prime Minister:** In a moment.

16 We have the key independent judgments of the Joint Intelligence Committee, which
17 make clear its view of what happened and who is responsible. We have a motion from
18 the Government that sets out a careful path of steps that would need to be taken before
19 Britain could participate in any direct military action. Those include the weapons
20 inspectors reporting, further action at the United Nations and another vote in this
21 House of Commons. The motion also makes it clear that even if all those steps were
22 taken, anything that we did would have to be

23 "legal, proportionate and focused on…preventing and deterring further use of Syria's
24 chemical weapons".

25 **Caroline Lucas:** I am very grateful to the Prime Minister for giving way. Will he tell
26 the House why he has refused to publish the Attorney-General's full advice?

27 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1427**

28 Why has he instead published just a one-and-a-half-side summary of it, especially
29 when so many legal experts are saying that without explicit UN Security Council
30 reinforcement, military action simply would not be legal under international law?

31 **The Prime Minister:** There had been a long-standing convention, backed by
32 Attorney-Generals of all parties and all Governments, not to publish any legal advice
33 at all. This Government changed that. With the Libya conflict, we published a
34 summary of the legal advice. On this issue, we have published a very clear summary
35 of the legal advice and I urge all right hon. and hon. Members to read it.

36 **Mr James Arbuthnot (North East Hampshire) (Con):** Will the Prime Minister give
37 way?

38   **The Prime Minister:** I will make some progress and then I will take a huge number
39   of interventions.

40   I am deeply mindful of the lessons of previous conflicts and, in particular, of the deep
41   concerns in the country that were caused by what went wrong with the Iraq conflict in
42   2003. However, this situation is not like Iraq. What we are seeing in Syria is
43   fundamentally different. We are not invading a country. We are not searching for
44   chemical or biological weapons. The case for ultimately supporting action—I say
45   "ultimately" because there would have to be another vote in this House—is not based
46   on a specific piece or pieces of intelligence. The fact that the Syrian Government
47   have, and have used, chemical weapons is beyond doubt. The fact that the most recent
48   attack took place is not seriously doubted. The Syrian Government have said it took
49   place. Even the Iranian President said that it took place. The evidence that the Syrian
50   regime has used these weapons, in the early hours of 21 August, is right in front of our
51   eyes. We have multiple eye-witness accounts of chemical-filled rockets being used
52   against opposition-controlled areas. We have thousands of social media reports and at
53   least 95 different videos—horrific videos—documenting the evidence.

54   The differences with 2003 and the situation with Iraq go wider. Then, Europe was
55   divided over what should be done; now, Europe is united in the view that we should
56   not let this chemical weapons use stand. Then, NATO was divided; today, NATO has
57   made a very clear statement that those who are responsible should be held
58   accountable. Back in 2003, the Arab League was opposed to action; now, it is calling
59   for it. It has issued a statement holding the Syrian regime fully responsible and asking
60   the international community to overcome internal disagreements and to take action
61   against those who committed this crime.

62   **Mr Arbuthnot:** I am grateful to my right hon. Friend for giving way. As he knows, a
63   couple of days ago I expected to oppose the Government tonight, but is he aware that
64   his determination to go down the route of the United Nations and his willingness to
65   hold a further vote in this House will be extremely helpful to me in making up my
66   mind tonight?

67   **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1428**

68   **The Prime Minister:** I am grateful to my right hon. Friend. In drawing up my motion
69   I want to unite as much of the country and of this House as possible. I think it is right,
70   on these vital issues of national and international importance, to seek the greatest
71   possible consensus. That is the right thing for the Government to do and we will
72   continue to do it.

73   The President of the United States, Barack Obama, is a man who opposed the action
74   in Iraq. No one could in any way describe him as a President who wants to involve
75   America in more wars in the middle east, but he profoundly believes that an important
76   red line has been crossed in an appalling way, and that is why he supports action in
77   this case. When I spoke to President Obama last weekend I said we shared his view
78   about the despicable nature of this use of chemical weapons and that we must not
79   stand aside, but I also explained to him that, because of the damage done to public
80   confidence by Iraq, we would have to follow a series of incremental steps, including at
81   the United Nations, to build public confidence and ensure the maximum possible

82 legitimacy for any action. These steps are all set out in the motion before the House
83 today.

84 I remember 2003. I was sitting two rows from the back on the Opposition Benches. It
85 was just after my son had been born and he was not well, but I was determined to be
86 here. I wanted to listen to the man who was standing right here and believe everything
87 that he told me. We are not here to debate those issues today, but one thing is
88 indisputable: the well of public opinion was well and truly poisoned by the Iraq
89 episode and we need to understand the public scepticism.

90 **Dame Joan Ruddock (Lewisham, Deptford) (Lab):** I am most grateful to the Prime
91 Minister for giving way. My reading of his motion tells me that everything in it could
92 have been debated on Monday. I believe that this House has been recalled in order to
93 give cover for possible military action this weekend. Has the Prime Minister made it
94 clear to President Obama that in no way does this country support any attack that
95 could come before the UN inspectors have done their job?

96 **The Prime Minister:** I wanted the recall of this House in order to debate these
97 absolutely vital national and international issues. I will answer the right hon. Lady's
98 question directly: it is this House that will decide what steps we next take. If Members
99 agree to the motion I have set down, no action can be taken until we have heard from
100 the UN weapons inspectors, until there has been further action at the United Nations
101 and until there is another vote in this House. Those are the conditions that we—the
102 British Government, the British Parliament—are setting and it is absolutely right that
103 we do so.

104 **Several hon. Members** *rose—*

105 **The Prime Minister:** Let me make a little more progress and then I will take
106 interventions from across the House.

107 The deep public cynicism imposes particular responsibilities on me as Prime Minister
108 to try to carry people in the country and people in this House with me. I feel that very
109 deeply. That was why I wanted Parliament recalled, and I want this debate to bring the
110 country together, not divide it. That is why I included in my motion, the Government
111 motion, all the issues I could

112 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1429**

113 that were raised with me by the Leader of the Opposition and by many colleagues in
114 all parts of the House—from the Liberal Democrat party, the Conservative party and
115 others. I want us to try to have the greatest possible unity on the issue.

116 I have read the Opposition amendment carefully, and it has much to commend it. The
117 need for the UN investigators to report—quite right. The importance of the process at
118 the United Nations—quite right. The commitment to another vote in this House before
119 any British participation in direct action—that is in our motion too.

120 **Mr Angus Brendan MacNeil (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (SNP):** Will the Prime
121 Minister give way?

122 **The Prime Minister:** This is important; let me make this point.

123 However, I believe that the Opposition motion is deficient in two vital respects. First,
124 it refers to the deaths on 21 August but does not in any way refer to the fact that they
125 were caused by chemical weapons. That fact is accepted by almost everyone across
126 the world, and for the House to ignore it would send a very bad message to the world.

127 Secondly, in no way does the Opposition motion even begin to point the finger of
128 blame at President Assad. That is at odds with what has been said by NATO,
129 President Obama and every European and regional leader I have spoken to; by the
130 Governments of Australia, Canada, Turkey and India, to name but a few; and by the
131 whole Arab League. It is at odds with the judgment of the independent Joint
132 Intelligence Committee, and I think the Opposition amendment would be the wrong
133 message for this House to send to the world. For that reason, I will recommend that
134 my hon. Friends vote against it.

135 **Mr Julian Brazier (Canterbury) (Con):** I welcome my right hon. Friend's decision
136 to go through the UN process, but will he confirm to the House that were we to find
137 during that process overwhelming opposition in the General Assembly and a majority
138 against in the Security Council, as occurred 10 years ago, we would not then just
139 motor on?

140 **The Prime Minister:** I think it would be unthinkable to proceed if there were
141 overwhelming opposition in the Security Council.

142 Let me set out for the House why I think this issue is so important. The very best route
143 to follow is to have a chapter VII resolution, take it to the UN Security Council, have
144 it passed and then think about taking action. That was the path we followed with
145 Libya.

146 **Several hon. Members** *rose—*

147 **The Prime Minister:** I want to make this point, because I think it is very important.

148 However, it cannot be the case that that is the only way to have a legal basis for
149 action, and we should consider for a moment what the consequences would be if that
150 were the case. We could have a situation where a country's Government were literally
151 annihilating half the people in that country, but because of one veto on the Security
152 Council we would be hampered from taking

153 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1430**

154 any action. I cannot think of any Member from any party who would want to sign up
155 to that. That is why it is important that we have the doctrine of humanitarian
156 intervention, which is set out in the Attorney-General's excellent legal advice to the
157 House.

158 **Daniel Kawczynski (Shrewsbury and Atcham) (Con):** I am extremely grateful to
159 my right hon. Friend for taking the time to listen to the concerns of residents of
160 Shrewsbury about yet further British military intervention in the middle east.

161 However, why cannot our allies in the middle east, such as Saudi Arabia, the
162 Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait, take military action? Why does it fall on us yet again?

163 **The Prime Minister:** My hon. Friend makes a good point, and let us be clear that no
164 decision about military action has been taken. It would require another vote of this
165 House. However, if we wanted to see action that was purely about deterring and
166 degrading future chemical weapons use by Syria—that is the only basis on which I
167 would support any action—we would need countries that have the capabilities to take
168 that action, of which the United States and the United Kingdom are two. There are
169 very few other countries that would be able to do that.

170 **Sir Tony Baldry (Banbury) (Con):** On the matter of international law, did not the
171 world leaders and the UN sign up unanimously in 2005 to the doctrine of the
172 responsibility to protect, which means that if countries default on their responsibility
173 to defend their own citizens, the international community as a whole has a
174 responsibility to do so? Syria has defaulted on its responsibility to protect its own
175 citizens, so surely now the international community and ourselves have a
176 responsibility to undertake what we agreed to do as recently as 2005.

177 **The Prime Minister:** My hon. Friend makes a very important point that relates to
178 what happened in Kosovo and elsewhere, but let me be clear about what we are
179 talking about today: yes it is about that doctrine, but it is also about chemical
180 weapons. It is about a treaty the whole world agreed to almost 100 years ago, after the
181 horrors of the first world war. The question before us is this: is Britain a country that
182 wants to uphold that international taboo against the use of chemical weapons? My
183 argument is that yes, it should be that sort of country.

184 **Mr Bob Ainsworth (Coventry North East) (Lab):** The Prime Minister cites the
185 issues relating to Iraq and the impact they have on decisions today, but the
186 perception—a justifiable perception in my opinion—of his own preparedness to get
187 involved in this conflict long before the current incident surely has an impact on the
188 decisions of today.

189 **The Prime Minister:** What I would say to the right hon. Gentleman is that the case I
190 am making is that the House of Commons **needs** to consider purely and simply this
191 issue of massive chemical weapons use by this regime. I am not arguing that we
192 should become more involved in this conflict. I am not arguing that we should arm the
193 rebels. I am not making any of those arguments. The question before us—as a
194 Government, as a House of Commons, as a world—is that there is the

195 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1431**

196 1925 post-first world war agreement that these weapons are morally reprehensible, so
197 do we want to try to maintain that law? Put simply, is it in Britain's national interest to
198 maintain an international taboo about the use of chemical weapons on the battlefield?
199 My argument is: yes, it is. Britain played a part in drawing up that vital protocol—
200 which, incidentally, Syria signed—and I think we have an interest in maintaining it.

201 **Several hon. Members** *rose*—

202   **The Prime Minister:** Let me take an intervention from the Democratic Unionist
203   party.

204   **Sammy Wilson (East Antrim) (DUP):** I thank the Prime Minister for giving way. I
205   doubt there are many people in this House who do not believe that the debate is a
206   prelude to a decision that will eventually see us involved in Syria. Will he explain why
207   if, as the briefing states there have already been 14 instances of chemical weapons use,
208   100,000 people dead and 1.2 million people displaced, it is only now that the Prime
209   Minister thinks that this is the time for greater intervention?

210   **The Prime Minister:** The point for considering this tougher approach is that we know
211   there are the 14 uses of chemical weapons on a smaller scale—at least 14—and now
212   we have this much larger use. This seems to me—and to President Obama, to
213   President Hollande and to many others—an appropriate moment to ask whether it is
214   time to do something to stand up for the prohibition against the use of chemical
215   weapons. I cannot be accused on the one hand of rushing into something, while, on the
216   other hand, being asked, "Why have you waited for 14 chemical weapons attacks
217   before you do something?"

218   **Several hon. Members** *rose—*

219   **The Prime Minister:** Let me make a little progress.

220   In my speech I want to do three things: explain what we know; set out the path we will
221   follow; and try to answer all of the difficult questions that have been put to me. Let me
222   try to make some progress and I promise I will take interventions as I go along. Let
223   me set out what we know about what happened.

224   Médecins sans Frontières reported that in just three hours, on the morning of 21
225   August, three hospitals in the Damascus area received approximately 3,600 patients
226   with symptoms consistent with chemical weapons attacks. At least 350 of those
227   innocent people died. The video footage illustrates some of the most sickening human
228   suffering imaginable. Expert video analysis can find no way that this wide array of
229   footage could have been fabricated, particularly the behaviour of small children in
230   those shocking videos.

231   There are pictures of bodies with symptoms consistent with that of nerve agent
232   exposure, including muscle spasms and foaming at the nose and mouth. I believe that
233   anyone in this Chamber who has not seen these videos should force themselves to
234   watch them. One can never forget the sight of children's bodies stored in ice, and
235   young men and women gasping for air and suffering the most agonising deaths—all
236   inflicted by weapons that have been outlawed for nearly a century.

237   **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1432**

238   The Syrian regime has publicly admitted that it was conducting a major military
239   operation in the area at that time. The regime resisted calls for immediate and
240   unrestricted access for UN inspectors, while artillery and rocket fire in the area
241   reached a level about four times higher than in the preceding 10 days. There is
242   intelligence that Syrian regime forces took precautions normally associated with
243   chemical weapons use.

244 Examining all this evidence, together with the available intelligence, the Joint
245 Intelligence Committee has made its judgments, and has done so in line with the
246 reforms put in place after the Iraq war by Sir Robin Butler. Today, we are publishing
247 the key judgments in a letter from the Chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee. The
248 letter states that

249 "there is little serious dispute that chemical attacks causing mass casualties on a larger
250 scale than hitherto…took place on 21 August".

251 On the Syrian opposition, the letter states:

252 "There is no credible intelligence or other evidence to substantiate the claims or the
253 possession of CW"—

254 that is, chemical weapons—

255 "by the opposition."

256 The Joint Intelligence Committee therefore concludes:

257 "It is not possible for the opposition to have carried out a CW attack on this scale."

258 It says this:

259 "The regime has used CW on a smaller scale on at least 14 occasions in the past.
260 There is some intelligence to suggest regime culpability in this attack. These factors
261 make it highly likely that the Syrian regime was responsible."

262 Crucially, the JIC Chairman, in his letter to me, makes this point absolutely clear. He
263 says

264 "there are no plausible alternative scenarios to regime responsibility."

265 I am not standing here and saying that there is some piece or pieces of intelligence that
266 I have seen, or the JIC has seen, that the world will not see, that convince me that I am
267 right and anyone who disagrees with me is wrong. I am saying that this is a judgment;
268 we all have to reach a judgment about what happened and who was responsible. But I
269 would put it to hon. Members that all the evidence we have—the fact that the
270 opposition do not have chemical weapons and the regime does, the fact that it has used
271 them and was attacking the area at the time, and the intelligence that I have reported—
272 is enough to conclude that the regime is responsible and should be held accountable.

273 **Glenda Jackson (Hampstead and Kilburn) (Lab):** I am most grateful to the Prime
274 Minister. What has convinced him—where is the evidence?—that an action by the
275 international community would cease the use of chemical weapons within Syria, a
276 country where the combatants have accepted 100,000 dead, millions of refugees and
277 the continuing action that is totally destroying that country? Where is the evidence
278 that convinces the Prime Minister that the external world can prevent this?

279 **The Prime Minister:** The hon. Lady makes an extremely serious point. As I have just
280 said, in the end there is no 100% certainty about who is responsible; you have to make

281   a judgment. There is also no 100% certainty about what path of action might succeed
282   or fail. But let me say this to the hon. Lady. I think **we can be as certain as possible**
283   that a regime that has used chemical weapons on 14 occasions and is most likely
284   responsible for this

285   **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1433**

286   large-scale attack, will conclude, if nothing is done, that it can use these weapons
287   again and again on a larger scale and with impunity.

288   People talk about escalation; to me, the biggest danger of escalation is if the world
289   community—not just Britain, but America and others—stands back and does nothing.
290   I think Assad will draw very clear conclusions from that.

291   **Mr Peter Bone (Wellingborough) (Con):** The Prime Minister is making a very
292   powerful and heartfelt speech. Could he explain to the House why he thinks President
293   Assad did this? There seems to be no logic to this chemical attack and that is what is
294   worrying some people.

295   **The Prime Minister:** That is a very good question. If my hon. Friend reads the JIC
296   conclusions, he will see that this is where it finds the greatest difficulty—ascribing
297   motives. Lots of motives have been ascribed. For my part, I think the most likely
298   possibility is that Assad has been testing the boundaries. At least 14 uses and no
299   response—he wants to know whether the world will respond to the use of these
300   weapons, which I suspect, tragically and repulsively, are proving quite effective on the
301   battlefield. But in the end we cannot know the mind of this brutal dictator; all we can
302   do is make a judgment about whether it is better to act or not to act and whether he is
303   responsible or not responsible. In the end, these are all issues of judgment and as
304   Members of Parliament, we all have to make them.

305   **Several hon. Members** *rose—*

306   **The Prime Minister:** I will take a question from the Scottish National party.

307   **Mr MacNeil:** I am very grateful to the Prime Minister. Does he know whether there
308   were any plans over the last few days for any military action, before next week,
309   planned at all against Syria?

310   **The Prime Minister:** One obviously cannot discuss the details of potential action in
311   detail in front of this House, but I can tell the House that the American President and I
312   have had discussions, which have been reported in the newspapers, about potential
313   military action.

314   We have had those discussions and the American President would like to have allies
315   alongside the United States with the capability and partnership that Britain and
316   America have. But we have set out, very clearly, what Britain would need to see
317   happen for us to take part in that—more action at the UN, a report by the UN
318   inspectors and a further vote in this House. Our actions will not be determined by my
319   good friend and ally the American President; they will be decided by this Government
320   and votes in this House of Commons.

321 **Hugh Bayley (York Central) (Lab):** I agree with the Prime Minister about the horror
322 of chemical weapons, but the vast majority of the 100,000 killed so far in this civil
323 war in Syria have died as a result of conventional weapons. Can he convince the
324 House that military

325 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1434**

326 action by our country would shorten the civil war and help herald a post-war
327 Government who could create stability?

328

329 **The Prime Minister:** It is a good question, but I am afraid that I cannot make any of
330 those assurances. Obviously, we have not made that decision, but were we to make a
331 decision to join the Americans and others in military action, it would have to be
332 action, in my view, that was solely about deterring and degrading the future use of
333 chemical weapons by the Syrian regime—full stop, end of story. By the way, if we
334 were aware of large-scale use of chemical weapons by the opposition, I would be
335 making the same argument from the same Dispatch Box and making the same
336 recommendations.

337 **Robert Halfon (Harlow) (Con):** I am grateful to my right hon. Friend for standing
338 tall and for supporting Britain's historical tradition of always standing against mass
339 murder by dictators and tyrants. Does he not agree that there is a humanitarian case for
340 intervention, especially given what happened in recent history in Halabja in 1988,
341 when 5,000 Kurds were killed with mustard gas?

342 **The Prime Minister:** I applaud my hon. Friend for always standing up against
343 genocide, wherever it takes place in the world. It may well be that the fact that no
344 action was taken over Halabja was one of the things that convinced President Assad
345 that it was okay to build up an arsenal of chemical weapons.

346 **Several hon. Members** *rose—*

347 **The Prime Minister:** I am going to make some progress. As I said, the second part of
348 my speech deals with the actions set out in our motion. I want to address those and
349 then I will take some more interventions.

350 Whatever disagreements there are over the complex situation in Syria, I believe that
351 there should be no disagreement that the use of chemical weapons is wrong. As I said,
352 almost a century ago the world came together to agree the 1925 treaty and to outlaw
353 the use of chemical weapons, and international law since that time has reflected a
354 determination that the events of that war should never be repeated. It put a line in the
355 sand; it said that, whatever happens, these weapons must not be used. President Assad
356 has, in my view, crossed that line and there should now be consequences. This was the
357 first significant use of chemical weapons this century and, taken together with the
358 previous 14 small-scale attacks, it is the only instance of the regular and
359 indiscriminate use of chemical weapons by a state against its own people for at least
360 100 years.

361 Interfering in another country's affairs should not be undertaken except in the most
362 exceptional circumstances. There must be, as my hon. Friend has just said, a
363 humanitarian catastrophe, and the action must be a last resort. By any standards, this is
364 a humanitarian catastrophe and if there are no consequences for it, there will be
365 nothing to stop Assad and other dictators using these weapons again and again. As I
366 have said, doing nothing is a choice—it is a choice with consequences. These
367 consequences would not just be about President Assad and his future use of chemical
368 weapons; decades of painstaking work to construct an international system

369 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1435**

370 of rules and checks to prevent the use of chemical weapons and to destroy stockpiles
371 will be undone. The global consensus against the use of chemical weapons will be
372 fatally unravelled. A 100-year taboo will be breached. People ask about the British
373 national interest. Is it not in the British national interest that rules about chemical
374 weapons are upheld? In my view, of course it is, and that is why I believe we should
375 not stand idly by.

376 **Angus Robertson (Moray) (SNP):** Notwithstanding the differences I have with the
377 Prime Minister on the issue of timing and his approach to conflict, may I raise the
378 issue of consequences? Does he agree that whoever is responsible for a chemical
379 weapons attack should know that they will face a court, be it the International
380 Criminal Court or a specially convened war crimes tribunal in the future, because
381 whether there is military intervention or not, somebody is responsible for a heinous
382 crime and they should face the law?

383 **The Prime Minister:** I certainly agree that people should be subject to the ICC and,
384 of course, possession and use of chemical weapons is a crime and can be prosecuted,
385 but we have to recognise the slowness of those wheels and the fact that Syria is not
386 even a signatory to that treaty.

387 **Several hon. Members** *rose—*

388 **The Prime Minister:** Let me make a little more progress and then I will give way.

389 As I have said, I have consulted the Attorney-General and he has confirmed that the
390 use of chemical weapons in Syria constitutes both a war crime and a crime against
391 humanity. I want to be very clear about the process that we follow—the motion is
392 clear about that. The weapons investigators in Damascus **must** complete their work.
393 They **should** brief the United Nations Security Council. A genuine attempt **should be**
394 made at a condemnatory chapter VII resolution, backing all necessary measures. Then,
395 and only then, could we have another vote of this House and British involvement in
396 direct military action. I have explained, again, the legal position and I do not need to
397 repeat it, but I urge colleagues to read this legal advice, which I have put in the
398 Library of the House of Commons. But let me repeat, one more time, that we have not
399 reached that point—we have not made the decision to act—but were there to be a
400 decision to act, this advice proves that it would be legal.

401 **Andrew Selous (South West Bedfordshire) (Con):** Does the Prime Minister agree
402 that our constituents are concerned about Britain's becoming involved in another
403 middle eastern conflict, whereas he is focusing specifically on the war-crimes use of

404 chemical weapons, which is a very different matter from Britain's being involved in a
405 protracted middle eastern war?

406 **The Prime Minister:** I completely agree with my hon. Friend. I am fully aware of the
407 deep public scepticism and war-weariness in our country, linked to the difficult
408 economic times people have had to deal with, and that they are asking why Britain has
409 to do so much in the world. I totally understand that, and we should reassure

410 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1436**

411 our constituents that this is about chemical weapons, not intervention or getting
412 involved in another middle eastern war.

413 **Mr Jack Straw (Blackburn) (Lab):** Will the Prime Minister give way?

414 **The Prime Minister:** I give way to the former Home Secretary.

415 **Hon. Members:** And former Foreign Secretary, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of
416 State for Justice.

417 **Mr Straw:** And Member of Parliament for Blackburn.

418 The Prime Minister said a moment ago, within the hearing of the House, that one of
419 the purposes of any action would be the "degrading" of the Assad regime's chemical
420 weapons capability. In a letter that General Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint
421 Chiefs of Staff, sent to Carl Levin, of the United States Congress, a couple of months
422 ago, he spelt out that fully to do that would involve hundreds of ships and aircraft and
423 thousands of ground troops, at a cost of $1 billion a month. Given that the Prime
424 Minister is not proposing that, could he say what his objective would be in degrading
425 the chemical weapons capability?

426 **The Prime Minister:** Of course, the right hon. Gentleman has had many jobs—Home
427 Secretary, Foreign Secretary and so on—so perhaps I should just refer to him as "my
428 constituent". That is probably safer.

429 The right hon. Gentleman makes a very good point, however. I think that the
430 Dempsey letter was addressing the point that if we wanted entirely to dismantle, or to
431 attempt to dismantle, Syria's weapons arsenal, that would be an enormous undertaking
432 which would involve ground troops and all sorts of things, **but that is not what is**
433 **being proposed**; the proposal, were we to take part, would be to attempt to deter and
434 degrade the future use of chemical weapons. **That is very different**. I do not want to
435 set out at the Dispatch Box a list of targets, but it is perfectly simple and
436 straightforward to think of actions that we could take relating to the command and
437 control of the use of chemical weapons, and the people and buildings involved, that
438 would indeed deter and degrade. Hon. Members will ask this point in several different
439 ways: how can we be certain that any action will work and would not have to be
440 repeated? Frankly, these are judgment issues, and the only firm judgment I think we
441 can all come to is that if nothing is done, we are more likely to see more chemical
442 weapons used.

Dr Julian Lewis (New Forest East) (Con): Although the Joint Intelligence Committee says it is baffled about the motivation for Assad's use of chemical weapons, it says it has

"a limited but growing body of intelligence which supports the judgment that the regime was responsible".

I appreciate that the Prime Minister cannot share such intelligence with the House as a whole, but members of the all-party Intelligence and Security Committee have top-secret clearance to look at precisely this sort of material. As some of its members support and others oppose military intervention, would he be willing for them to see that material?

29 Aug 2013 : Column 1437

The Prime Minister: I am happy to consider that request, because the ISC plays a very important role, but I do not want to raise, as perhaps happened in the Iraq debate, the status of individual or groups of pieces of intelligence into some sort of quasi-religious cult. That would not be appropriate. I have told the House that there is an enormous amount of open-source reporting, including videos that we can all see. Furthermore, we know that the regime has an enormous arsenal, that it has used it before and that it was attacking that area. Then, of course, there is the fact that the opposition does not have those weapons or delivery systems and that the attack took place in an area that it was holding. So, yes, intelligence is part of this picture, but let us not pretend that there is one smoking piece of intelligence that can solve the whole problem. This is a judgment issue; hon. Members will have to make a judgment.

Mr John Baron (Basildon and Billericay) (Con): I thank the Prime Minister for being generous in giving way.

The reason many of us in Parliament oppose arming the rebels is not only that atrocities have been committed by both sides in this vicious civil war, but that there is a real risk of escalating the violence and therefore the suffering. No matter how clinical the strikes, there is a real risk that they would result only in escalating the violence. What assurances can the Prime Minister give, therefore, that this will not escalate violence either within the country or beyond Syria's borders?

The Prime Minister: My hon. Friend and I have not agreed on every aspect of Syrian policy, as is well known. If we were to take action, it would be purely and simply about degrading and deterring chemical weapons use. We worry about escalation, but the greatest potential escalation is the danger of additional chemical weapons use because nothing has been done. This debate and this motion are not about arming the rebels or intervening in the conflict, or about invasion or changing our approach to Syria. They are about chemical weapons—something in which everyone in this House has an interest.

Penny Mordaunt (Portsmouth North) (Con): The use of chemical weapons has made Syria our business. Does the Prime Minister agree that to miss the opportunity we have today to send a strong message to Assad and others that this House condemns this war crime, the use of chemical weapons, and will stand by our obligations to deter them would be to undermine our own national security?

378

486 **The Prime Minister:** My hon. Friend makes an important point. One of the questions
487 our constituents ask most is where the British national interest is in all of this. I would
488 argue that a stable middle east is in the national interest, but there is a specific national
489 interest relating to the use of chemical weapons and preventing its escalation.

490 **Several hon. Members** *rose—*

491 **The Prime Minister:** I will give way a bit more in a minute, but I want to make some
492 further progress and leave plenty of time for Back-Bench speeches.

493 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1438**

494 In this section of my speech, I have tried to address the questions that people have. Let
495 me take the next one: whether we would be in danger of undermining our ambitions
496 for a political solution in Syria. There is not some choice between, on the one hand,
497 acting to prevent chemical weapons being used against the Syrian people and, on the
498 other, continuing to push for a long-term political solution. We need to do both. We
499 remain absolutely committed to using diplomacy to end this war with a political
500 solution.

501 Let me make this point. For as long as Assad is able to defy international will and get
502 away with chemical attacks on his people, I believe that he will feel little if any
503 pressure to come to the negotiating table. He is happy to go on killing and maiming
504 his own people as part of his strategy for winning that brutal civil war. Far from
505 undermining the political process, a strong response over the use of chemical weapons
506 in my view could strengthen it.

507 **Keith Vaz (Leicester East) (Lab):** One of the consequences of intervening will be
508 the effect that it will have on other countries in the region, and my particular
509 concern—as the Prime Minister knows—is Yemen, the most unstable country in the
510 area. Has he looked at the possible consequences of intervention and the effect that it
511 will have on the stability of a country such as Yemen?

512 **The Prime Minister:** I have taken advice from all of the experts about all the
513 potential impacts on the region, which in fact is the next question in my list of
514 questions that need to be answered. The region has already been profoundly
515 endangered by the conflict in Syria. Lebanon is facing sectarian tensions as refugees
516 pile across the border. Jordan is coping with a massive influx of refugees. Our NATO
517 ally Turkey has suffered terrorist attacks and shelling from across the border. Standing
518 by as a new chemical weapons threat emerges in Syria will not alleviate those
519 challenges; it will deepen them. That is why the Arab League has been so clear in
520 condemning the action, in attributing it precisely to President Assad and in calling for
521 international action. This is a major difference from past crises in the middle east, and
522 a region long beset by conflict and aggression **needs** above all clear international laws
523 and people and countries who are prepared to stand up for them.

524 **Simon Hughes (Bermondsey and Old Southwark) (LD):** I believe that my
525 constituents, like those of the rest of the House, want the Prime Minister to make clear
526 on behalf of this country that we will not turn away from the illegal use of chemical
527 weapons, but that we will give peace a chance. Will he assure us that he will continue
528 to engage—however difficult it is—with Russia and the other key countries to try to

529 make sure that the UN route is productive and that the diplomatic process is engaged
530 again as soon as possible?

531 **The Prime Minister:** I absolutely agree with my right hon. Friend that we must
532 continue the process of diplomatic engagement. Even after I had spoken to President
533 Obama before the weekend, I called President Putin on Monday and had a long
534 discussion with him about this issue. We are a long way apart, but the one issue about
535 which we do agree is the need to get the Geneva II process going.

536 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1439**

537 The assurance I can give my right hon. Friend is that any action would be immediately
538 taken over by running a political process once again and that Britain will do
539 everything in its power to help make that happen.

540 Let me answer a final question that has been put in the debate over recent days:
541 whether this will risk radicalising more young Muslims, including people here in
542 Britain. This is a vital question, and it is one that was not asked enough in 2003. This
543 question was asked at the National Security Council yesterday, and we have received
544 considered analysis from our counter-terrorism experts. Their assessment is that, while
545 as ever there is no room for complacency, the legal, proportionate and focused actions
546 that would be proposed will not be a significant new cause of radicalisation and
547 extremism. I would make this point: young Muslims in the region and here in Britain
548 are looking at the pictures of Muslims suffering in Syria, seeing the most horrific
549 deaths from chemical weapons and many of them may be asking whether the world is
550 going to step up and respond, and I believe that the right message to give to them is
551 that we should.

552 **Several hon. Members** *rose—*

553 **The Prime Minister:** I will take one more intervention.

554 **Mr Tom Clarke (Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill) (Lab):** Will the Prime
555 Minister reflect on the question from my right hon. Friend the Member for Leicester
556 East (Keith Vaz) on the humanitarian situation, not just as it might appear in the
557 future, but as it happens now, with thousands of refugees going to neighbouring
558 countries? Given that aid agencies such as CAFOD have said that this is the worst
559 situation of the 21st century, how can we be absolutely sure that we will not add in the
560 neighbouring countries, including those in north Africa, to the problems that we are
561 facing?

562 **The Prime Minister:** The right hon. Gentleman makes an extremely important point,
563 and we should be proud in the House and this country of the massive role that aid
564 agencies and British aid money are playing in relieving this disastrous humanitarian
565 situation. We are one of the largest donors, and we will go on making that investment
566 because we are saving lives and helping people every day. But we have to ask
567 ourselves whether the unfettered use of chemical weapons by the regime will make
568 the humanitarian situation worse, and I believe that it will. If we believed that there
569 was a way to deter and degrade future chemical weapons action, it would be
570 irresponsible not to do it.

571 **Several hon. Members** *rose—*

572 **The Prime Minister:** Let me just make this point. When people study the legal advice
573 published by the Government, they will see that it makes the point that the
574 intervention on the basis of humanitarian protection has to be about saving lives.

575 Let me conclude where I began. The question before us is how to respond to one of
576 the worst uses of chemical weapons in a hundred years. The answer is that we must do
577 the right thing and in the right way. We **must** be sure to learn the lessons of previous
578 conflicts.

579 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1440**

580 We **must pursue** every avenue at the United Nations, every diplomatic channel and
581 every option for securing the greatest possible legitimacy with the steps that we take,
582 and we **must recognise** the scepticism and concerns that many people in the country
583 will have after Iraq, by explaining carefully and consistently all the ways in which this
584 situation and the actions that we take are so very different. We must ensure that any
585 action, if it is to be taken, is proportionate, legal and specifically designed to deter the
586 use of chemical weapons. We must ensure that any action supports and is
587 accompanied by a renewed effort to forge a political solution and relieve humanitarian
588 suffering in Syria. But at the same time, we must not let the spectre of previous
589 mistakes paralyse our ability to stand up for what is right. We must not be so afraid of
590 doing anything that we end up doing nothing.

591 Let me repeat that there will be no action without a further vote in the House of
592 Commons, but on this issue Britain should not stand aside. We must play our part in a
593 strong international response; we must be prepared to take decisive action to do so.
594 That is what today's motion is about, and I commend it to the House.

Appendix Three:

Miliband's speech of the first debate

Lines	Parts of the speech	Element of argument
2-3	I start by joining the Prime Minister in expressing revulsion at the killing of hundreds of innocent civilians in Ghutah on 21 August.	Circumstances: the situation in Syria
3-4	This was a moral outrage, and the international community is right to condemn it.	Circumstances: situation of international stance
5-12	As the Prime Minister said, everyone in the House and Most people in the country will have seen the pictures of men, women and children gasping for breath and dying as a result of this heinous attack. I can assure hon. Members that the divide that exists does not exist over the condemnation of the use of chemical weapons and the fact that it breaches international law; nor does it lie in the willingness to condemn the regime of President Assad. The question facing this is House is what, if any, military action we should take and what criteria should determine that decision. That is what I want to focus on in my speech today.	Circumstances: the situation of parliament in relation to the use of chemical weapons
13-21	It is right to say at the beginning of my remarks that the Prime Minister said a couple of times in his speech words to the effect that, "We are not going to get further involved in that conflict. This does not change our stance in Syria." I have got to say to the Prime Minister, with the greatest respect, that is simply not the case. For me that does not rule out military intervention—I want to be clear about this—but I do not think anybody in this House or in the country should be under any illusions about the effect on our relationship to the conflict in Syria if we were to intervene militarily. As I say, and as I shall develop in my remarks, that does not, for me, rule out intervention, but we need to be clear-eyed about the impact that this would have.	Dealing with Cameron's claim: ambiguity of the GM and the plan of response to the use of CW
22-27	Let me also say that this is one of the most solemn duties that this House possesses, and in our minds should be this simple question: in upholding	Circumstances (circumstantial value): MPs have two duties:

	international law and legitimacy, how can me make the lives of the Syrian people better? We should also have in our minds—it is right to remember it on this occasion—the duty we owe to the exceptional men and women of our armed forces and their families, who will face the direct consequences of any decision we make.	(1) thinking about making the situation in Syria better; (2) and protecting armed forces from possible negative consequences
28-33	The basis on which we make this decision is of fundamental importance, because the basis of making the decision determines the legitimacy and moral authority of any action that we undertake. That is why our amendment asks the House to support a clear and legitimate road map to decision on this issue—a set of steps that will enable us to judge any recommended international action. I want to develop the argument about why I believe this sequential road map is the right thing for the House to support today.	The main claim: conditions and steps before the support of military action
34-41	Most of all, if we follow this road map, it can assure the country and the international community that if we take action, we will follow the right, legitimate and legal course, not an artificial timetable or a political timetable set elsewhere. I think that is very important for any decision we make. This is fundamental to the principles of Britain: a belief in the rule of law and a belief that any military action we take must be justified in terms of the cause and also the potential consequences. We should strain every sinew to make the **international institutions** that we have in our world work to deal with the outrages in Syria.	The main claim: the meaning of main claim is expanded here and rephrased to distance the UK from supporting immediate action in Syria. There is also implicit negation of Cameron's claim. These ideas are developed in the means-goal strategy
42-48	Let me turn to the conditions in our amendment. First—this is where the Prime Minister and I now agree—we must let the UN weapons inspectors do their work and let them report to the Security Council. Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary-General, yesterday said about the weapons inspectors: "Let them conclude their work for four days and then we will have to analyse scientifically with experts and then…we will have to report to the Security Council for any actions."	Means-goal: the first central step before intervention (activating the role of international community). This is also supported by argument from authority.
50-54	The weapons inspectors are in the midst of their work and will be reporting in the coming days. That is why today could not have been the day on which the House was asked to decide on military action. It	Dealing with Cameron's argument: reports of inspectors should be provided

	is surely a basic point for this House that evidence should precede decision, not decision precede evidence. I am glad that, on reflection, the Prime Minister accepted this yesterday.	before Cameron's call for the vote
55-62	Now it is true—some have already raised this issue—that the weapons inspectors cannot reach a judgment on the attribution of blame. That is beyond their mandate. Some might think that makes their work essentially irrelevant. I disagree. If the UN weapons inspectors conclude that chemical weapons have been used, in the eyes of this country and of the world that will confer legitimacy on the finding beyond the view of any individual country or any intelligence agency. What is more, it is possible that what the weapons inspectors discover could give the world greater confidence in identifying the perpetrators of this horrific attack.	Dealing with Cameron's claim: the importance of activating the role of the UN and wait for the full reports
63-71	The second step in our road map makes it clear that there must be compelling evidence that the Syrian regime was responsible for the attack. I welcome the letter from the Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee today, and I note the Arab League's view of President Assad's culpability. Of course, as the Prime Minister said, in conflict there is always reason for doubt, but the greater the weight of evidence the better. On Tuesday we were promised the release of American intelligence to prove the regime's culpability. We await publication of that evidence, which I gather will be later today. That evidence, too, will be important in building up the body of evidence to show that President Assad was responsible.	Means-goal: compelling evidence. Within this strategy: (1) dealing with Cameron's claim (more reports about the situation needed); (2) and value (evidence is a personal interest for Miliband as he suggests this is a public concern in other parts of his speech)
78-82	I will develop in my remarks why I do not think that in the case. In particular, I would point to the fact that the Government's motion does not mention compelling evidence against President Assad, and I will develop later in my remarks the fifth point in our amendment, which is very, very important—the basis on which we judge whether action can be justified in terms of the consequences.	Means-goal: any action should be examined in terms of the possible negative consequences. There is also dealing with Cameron's claim as the motion does not mention compelling evidence
83-85	The third step is that, in the light of the weapons inspectors' findings and this other evidence, and as the Secretary-General said, the UN Security Council	Means-goal: after the full reports, the MPs should debate the type

	should then debate what action should be taken, and indeed should vote on action.	of action
85-89	I have heard it suggested that we should have "a United Nations moment". They are certainly not my words; they are words which do no justice to the seriousness with which we must take the United Nations. The UN is not some inconvenient sideshow, and we do not want to engineer a "moment". Instead, we want to adhere to the principles of international law.	Dealing with Cameron's claim: the UK and UN must not work at the same time
95-102	I think it is important evidence, but we need to gather further evidence over the coming days. That is part of persuading the international community and people in this country of President Assad's culpability, and I think that is important. Let me also come to the hon. Gentleman's earlier point, though, because the Prime Minister raised it too. I am very clear about the fact that we have got to learn the lessons of Iraq. Of course we have got to learn those lessons, and one of the most important lessons was indeed about respect for the United Nations, and that is part of our amendment today.	Dealing with Cameron's claim: the need for considering the reports of the UN among other sources because this is a lesson from the Iraq war
103-108	On the question of the Security Council, I am also clear that it is incumbent on us to try to build the widest support among the 15 members of the Security Council, whatever the intentions of particular countries. The level of international support is vital, should we decide to take military action. It is vital in the eyes of the world. That is why it cannot be seen as some sideshow or some "moment", but is an essential part of building the case, if intervention takes place.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): duty upon MPs to seek the international consensus. There is implicit refer to means-goal, but here Miliband highlights the obligation upon MPs towards the international stance
118-125	I will come directly to that question. It is because there will be those who argue that in the event of Russia and China vetoing a Security Council resolution, any military action would necessarily not be legitimate. I understand that view but I do not agree with it. I believe that if a proper case is made, there is scope in international law—our fourth condition—for action to be taken even without a chapter VII Security Council resolution. Kosovo in 1999 is the precedent cited in the Prime Minister's speech and in the Attorney-General's legal advice;	Dealing with objections and alternatives: intervention is legitimate by following the full Attorney-General's advice even before the full Security Council resolution

	but the Prime Minister did not go into much detail on that advice.	
126-142	It is worth noting that in the Attorney-General's legal advice there are three very important conditions. The first condition is that there must be "convincing evidence, generally accepted by the international community as a whole, of extreme humanitarian distress". The second is that "it must be objectively clear that there is no practicable alternative to the use of force if lives are to be saved". That is a testing condition, which we need to test out in the coming days and the coming period. Thirdly, "the proposed use of force must be…proportionate…and…strictly limited in time". So the Attorney-General concludes in his advice—it is very important for the House to understand this—that there could be circumstances, in the absence of a chapter VII Security Council resolution, for action to be taken, but subject to those three conditions. That is the case that must be built over the coming period. These principles reflect the responsibility to protect, a doctrine developed since Kosovo which commands widespread support.	Argument from authority that supports the means-goal
149-151	Well, that is the Attorney-General's view— *[Interruption.]* That is the view that needs to be tested out over the coming period. Of course that is the case and a judgment will have to be made.	Negating Cameron's intervention about how his claim meets the Attorney-General's advice: importance of evaluating the Attorney-General's advice
151-154	Additionally, the responsibility to protect also demands a reasonable prospect of success in improving the plight of the Syrian people, and that responsibility is an essential part of making this case. That takes me to the final point of the road map we propose.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): responsibility upon the MPs for evaluating the available evidence
159-166	I am coming exactly to that point, which is that the Government need to set that out in the coming days. That takes me precisely to the final point of the road map. Any military action must be specifically designed to deter the future use of chemical weapons; it must be time-limited with specific purpose and scope so that future action would require further recourse to this House; and it must have	Means-goal: the MPs should ~~designing~~ design the road map by considering these issues. There are goals within this strategy (deterring the use of CW; protecting the UK

	regard for the consequences of any action. We must ensure that every effort is made to bring the civil war in Syria to an end, and principal responsibility for that rests, of course, with the parties in that conflict, and in particular President Assad.	from negative consequences; participating in ending the Syrian situation)
169-172	The international community also has a duty to do everything it can to support the Geneva II process, and any action we take—this is the key point—must assist that process and not hinder it. That is the responsibility that lies on the Government and their allies—to set out that case in the coming period.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): obligations upon international community and MPs
174-181	There will be some in this House who say that Britain should not contemplate action even when it is limited, because we do not know precisely the consequences that will follow. As I said, I am not with those who rule out action, and the horrific events unfolding in Syria ask us to consider all available options, but we owe it to the Syrian people, to our own country and to the future security of our world to scrutinise any plans on the basis of the consequences they will have. By setting a framework today, we give ourselves time and space to scrutinise what is being proposed by the Government, to see what the implications are.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: Miliband supports intervention with conditions
185-191	It depends on the case that has been set out and the extent to which international support has been developed—*[Interruption.]* I say to hon. Members on the Government Benches who are making strange noises that it is right to go about this process in a calm and measured way. If people are asking me today to say, "Yes, now, let us take military action," I am not going to say that, but neither am I going to rule out military action, because we have to proceed on the basis of evidence and the consensus and support that can be built.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: Miliband is against any immediate action
197-203	Yes I can, because the amendment goes on to say, "designed to deter the future use of prohibited chemical weapons in Syria". Paragraph (e) also states that "such action must have regard to the potential consequences in the region", so any proposed action to deter the use of chemical weapons must be judged against the consequences that will follow. Further work by the Government is necessary to set out what those consequences would be.	Means-goal: Miliband gives more detail here about the steps and conditions. There are goals: deterring further use of CW; protecting the country from negative consequences.

210-215	I am saying to the hon. Gentleman and the House that over the coming period, we have to assess in a calm and measured way—not in a knee-jerk way, and not on a political timetable—the advantages of potential action, whether such action can be taken on the basis of legitimacy and international law, and what the consequences would be.	Dealing with objections and alternatives and implicitly negating Cameron's claim: the amendment does not call for immediate action
219-226	That intervention is not worthy of the hon. Gentleman. I am merely trying to set out a framework for decision for the House. My interest all along has been to ensure that the House of the Commons can make the decision, and do so **when the evidence is available**. Some in the House believe that the decision is simple—clearly there are such Members on the Government Benches. Some think we can make the decision now to engage in military conflict. Equally, others believe we can rule out military conflict now. I happen to think that we must assess the **evidence** over the coming **period**. That is the right thing to do, and our road map sets out how we would do it.	Dealing with objections and alternatives: evidence is a key aspect in making the decision of the UK. There is also a value of Miliband (availability of evidence)
231-235	I say to my hon. Friend and the House that this morning, it was noticeable that the Government motion would be presented, if it was voted for—this is an important point—as the House **endorsing** the principle of military action. That is why I do not feel ready to support the Government motion, and why I believe the Opposition amendment, which sets out a framework for decision, is the right thing to vote for.	Dealing with Camron's claim with the negation of objections and alternatives
245-247	I have had the benefit of briefings with the Prime Minister, but I am sure that he, having heard the hon. Gentleman's intervention, will want to extend that facility to him and other minority parties.	Circumstance: the general position of parliament and the Government towards the Syrian crisis
251-257	As I was saying, by setting this framework today, we will **give ourselves the time** and space to assess the impact that any intervention will have on the Syrian people, and to assess the framework of international law and legitimacy. As I have said, I do not believe that we should be rushed to judgment on this question on a political timetable set elsewhere. **In the coming days**, the Government have a responsibility, building on what the Prime Minister did today—but it is also more than what he did **today**—to set out	Means-goal: steps before the vote on intervention. Also, there is a negation for the GM as it calls for possible immediate action

	their case on why the benefits of intervention and action outweigh the benefits of not acting.	
260-263	I do not rule out supporting the Prime Minister, but I believe he must make a better case than he has made **today** on this question. Frankly, he cannot say to the House and to the country that the Government motion would not change our stance on Syria or our involvement in the Syrian conflict. It would, and the House needs to assess that.	Dealing with objections, alternatives and Cameron's claim
264-269	Our amendment sets out a roadmap from evidence to decision that I believe can command the confidence of the House and the British public. Crucially, the amendment would place responsibility for the judgment on the achievement of the criteria for action—reporting by the weapons inspectors; compelling evidence; the vote in the Security Council; the legal base; and the prospect of successful action—with this House in a subsequent vote.	Means-goal: the central proposed steps by the amendment before any intervention
270-272	I hope the House can unite around our amendment, because I believe it captures a view shared on both sides of the House, both about our anger at the attack on innocent civilians, and about a coherent framework for making the decision on how we respond.	The claim: rephrased to show the support of intervention with conditions
279-280	That is why there must not be a rush to judgment— my hon. Friend is entirely right.	Reinforcing the intervention of the MP
287-308	We will not support a Government motion that was briefed this morning as setting out an in-principle decision to take military action. That would be the wrong thing to do, and on that basis we will oppose the motion. We could only support military action, and should only make the decision to do so, when and if the conditions of our amendment were met. We all know that stability cannot be achieved by military means alone. The continued turmoil in the country and the region in recent months and years further demonstrates the need to ensure that we uphold the fate of innocent civilians, the national interest and the security and future prosperity of the whole region and the world. I know that the whole House recognises that this will not and cannot be achieved through a military solution. Whatever our disagreements today, Labour Members stand ready to	Summary of the central ideas proposed by Miliband. These ideas include: the central tension between the GM and the amendment; military intervention should not be the only strategy; and protecting the UK from negative consequences

| | play our part in supporting measures to improve the prospects for peace in Syria and the middle east: it is what the people of Britain and the world have the right to expect. But this is a very grave decision, and it should be treated as such by this House, and it will be treated as such by this country. The fundamental test will be this: as we think about the men, women and children who have been subjected to this atrocity and about the prospects for other citizens in Syria, can the international community act in a lawful and legitimate way that will help them and prevent further suffering? The seriousness of our deliberations should match the significance of the decision we face, which is why I urge the House to support our amendment. | |

1   **Edward Miliband (Doncaster North) (Lab):**

2   I start by joining the Prime Minister in expressing revulsion at the killing of hundreds of
3   innocent civilians in Ghutah on 21 August. This was a moral outrage, and the
4   international community is right to condemn it.

5   As the Prime Minister said, everyone in the House and Most people in the country will
6   have seen the pictures of men, women and children gasping for breath and dying as a
7   result of this heinous attack. I can assure hon. Members that the divide that exists does not
8   exist over the condemnation of the use of chemical weapons and the fact that it breaches
9   international law; nor does it lie in the willingness to condemn the regime of President
10   Assad. The question facing this is House is what, if any, military action we should take
11   and what criteria should determine that decision. That is what I want to focus on in my
12   speech today.

13   It is right to say at the beginning of my remarks that the Prime Minister said a couple of
14   times in his speech words to the effect that, "We are not going to get further involved in
15   that conflict. This does not change our stance in Syria." I have got to say to the Prime
16   Minister, with the greatest respect, that is simply not the case. For me that does not rule
17   out military intervention—I want to be clear about this—but I do not think anybody in
18   this House or in the country should be under any illusions about the effect on our
19   relationship to the conflict in Syria if we were to intervene militarily. As I say, and as I
20   shall develop in my remarks, that does not, for me, rule out intervention, but we need to
21   be clear-eyed about the impact that this would have.

22   Let me also say that this is one of the most solemn duties that this House possesses, and
23   in our minds should be this simple question: in upholding international law and
24   legitimacy, how can me make the lives of the Syrian people better? We should also have
25   in our minds—it is right to remember it on this occasion—the duty we owe to the
26   exceptional men and women of our armed forces and their families, who will face the
27   direct consequences of any decision we make.

28   The basis on which we make this decision is of fundamental importance, because the
29   basis of making the decision determines the legitimacy and moral authority of any action
30   that we undertake. That is why our amendment asks the House to support a clear and
31   legitimate road map to decision on this issue—a set of steps that will enable us to judge
32   any recommended **international action**. I want to develop the argument about why I
33   believe this sequential road map is the right thing for the House to support today.

34   Most of all, if we follow this road map, it can assure the country and the international
35   community that if we take action, we will follow the right, legitimate and legal course,
36   not an artificial timetable or a political timetable set elsewhere. I think that is very
37   important for any decision we make. This is fundamental to the principles of Britain: a
38   belief in the rule of law and a belief that any military action we take must be justified in

39   terms of the cause and also the potential consequences. We should strain every sinew to
40   make the **international institutions** that we have in our world work to deal with the
41   outrages in Syria.

42   Let me turn to the conditions in our amendment. First—this is where the Prime Minister
43   and I now agree—we must let the UN weapons inspectors do their work and let them
44   report to the Security Council. Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary-General, yesterday said
45   about the weapons inspectors:

46   "Let them conclude their work for four days and then we will have to analyse
47   scientifically with experts and then…we will have to report to the Security Council for
48   any actions."

49   **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1442**

50   The weapons inspectors are in the midst of their work and will be reporting in the coming
51   days. That is why today could not have been the day on which the House was asked to
52   decide on military action. It is surely a basic point for this House that evidence should
53   precede decision, not decision precede evidence. I am glad that, on reflection, the Prime
54   Minister accepted this yesterday.

55   Now it is true—some have already raised this issue—that the weapons inspectors cannot
56   reach a judgment on the attribution of blame. That is beyond their mandate. Some might
57   think that makes their work essentially irrelevant. I disagree. If the UN weapons
58   inspectors conclude that chemical weapons have been used, in the eyes of this country
59   and of the world that will confer legitimacy on the finding beyond the view of any
60   individual country or any intelligence agency. What is more, it is possible that what the
61   weapons inspectors discover could give the world greater confidence in identifying the
62   perpetrators of this horrific attack.

63   The second step in our road map makes it clear that there must be compelling evidence
64   that the Syrian regime was responsible for the attack. I welcome the letter from the
65   Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee today, and I note the Arab League's view
66   of President Assad's culpability. Of course, as the Prime Minister said, in conflict there is
67   always reason for doubt, but the greater the weight of evidence the better. On Tuesday we
68   were promised the release of American intelligence to prove the regime's culpability. We
69   await publication of that evidence, which I gather will be later today. That evidence, too,
70   will be important in building up the body of evidence to show that President Assad was
71   responsible.

72   **Sir Malcolm Rifkind (Kensington) (Con):** The Leader of the Opposition has said that
73   he might be able to support military action of the kind that the Government are
74   contemplating. He has put in his amendment a list of the requirements, virtually all of
75   which, as far as I can tell, appear in the Government's own motion. Why can he not,

76 therefore, support the Government's motion, in order that this House could speak with a
77 united voice to the world on this matter?

78 **Edward Miliband:** I will develop in my remarks why I do not think that in the case. In
79 particular, I would point to the fact that the Government's motion does not mention
80 compelling evidence against President Assad, and I will develop later in my remarks the
81 fifth point in our amendment, which is very, very important—the basis on which we
82 judge whether action can be justified in terms of the consequences.

83 The third step is that, in the light of the weapons inspectors' findings and this other
84 evidence, and as the Secretary-General said, the UN Security Council should then debate
85 what action should be taken, and indeed should vote on action. I have heard it suggested
86 that we should have "a United Nations moment". They are certainly not my words; they
87 are words which do no justice to the seriousness with which we must take the United
88 Nations. The UN is not some inconvenient sideshow, and we do not want to engineer a
89 "moment". Instead, we want to adhere to the principles of international law.

90 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1443**

91 **Martin Horwood (Cheltenham) (LD):** I very much welcome the right hon. Gentleman's
92 doctrine that evidence should precede decision; that is a stark change from at least one of
93 his predecessors. [Hon. Members: "Hear, hear."] Does he believe that the evidence that
94 has been presented to us today by the Joint Intelligence Committee is compelling or not?

95 **Edward Miliband:** I think it is important evidence, but we need to gather further
96 evidence over the coming days. That is part of persuading the international community
97 and people in this country of President Assad's culpability, and I think that is important.
98 Let me also come to the hon. Gentleman's earlier point, though, because the Prime
99 Minister raised it too. I am very clear about the fact that we have got to learn the lessons
100 of Iraq. Of course we have got to learn those lessons, and one of the most important
101 lessons was indeed about respect for the United Nations, and that is part of our
102 amendment today.

103 On the question of the Security Council, I am also clear that it is incumbent on us to try to
104 build the widest support among the 15 members of the Security Council, whatever the
105 intentions of particular countries. The level of international support is vital, should we
106 decide to take military action. It is vital in the eyes of the world. That is why it cannot be
107 seen as some sideshow or some "moment", but is an essential part of building the case, if
108 intervention takes place.

109 **Andrew Selous** *rose*—

110 **Mr MacNeil** *rose*—

393

111   **Dr Julian Huppert (Cambridge) (LD)** *rose—*

112   **Toby Perkins (Chesterfield) (Lab)** *rose—*

113   **Edward Miliband:** I give way to the hon. Member for Cambridge (Dr Huppert).

114   **Dr Huppert:** The Leader of the Opposition is right that the UN Security Council should
115   not be just a sideshow, but why does his amendment merely say that the Security Council
116   should have voted on the matter, rather than that it should have voted in favour of some
117   intervention?

118   **Edward Miliband:** I will come directly to that question. It is because there will be those
119   who argue that in the event of Russia and China vetoing a Security Council resolution,
120   any military action would necessarily not be legitimate. I understand that view but I do
121   not agree with it. I believe that if a proper case is made, there is scope in international
122   law—our fourth condition—for action to be taken even without a chapter VII Security
123   Council resolution. Kosovo in 1999 is the precedent cited in the Prime Minister's speech
124   and in the Attorney-General's legal advice; but the Prime Minister did not go into much
125   detail on that advice.

126   It is worth noting that in the Attorney-General's legal advice there are three very
127   important conditions. The first condition is that there must be

128   "convincing evidence, generally accepted by the international community as a whole, of
129   extreme humanitarian distress".

130   **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1444**

131   The second is that

132   "it must be objectively clear that there is no practicable alternative to the use of force if
133   lives are to be saved".

134   That is a testing condition, which we need to test out in the coming days and the coming
135   period. Thirdly,

136   "the proposed use of force must be…proportionate…and…strictly limited in time".

137   So the Attorney-General concludes in his advice—it is very important for the House to
138   understand this—that there could be circumstances, in the absence of a chapter VII
139   Security Council resolution, for action to be taken, but subject to those three conditions.
140   That is the case that must be built over the coming period. These principles reflect the
141   responsibility to protect, a doctrine developed since Kosovo which commands widespread
142   support.

143 **The Prime Minister:** The right hon. Gentleman is right; I did not cover everything in my
144 speech. I could have gone into more detail on the Attorney-General's advice. The Leader
145 of the Opposition mentioned the three conditions. I just thought for the clarity of the
146 House, for those who might not have had time to read it, I would point out that the very
147 next sentence of the Attorney-General's advice is:

148 "All three conditions would clearly be met in this case".

149 **Edward Miliband:** Well, that is the Attorney-General's view—*[Interruption.]* That is
150 the view that needs to be tested out over the coming period. Of course that is the case and
151 a judgment will have to be made. Additionally, the responsibility to protect also demands
152 a reasonable prospect of success in improving the plight of the Syrian people, and that
153 responsibility is an essential part of making this case. That takes me to the final point of
154 the road map we propose.

155 **Glenda Jackson:** I am referring to the fourth paragraph of our road map. My right hon.
156 Friend has already touched on the fact that any action must be legal, proportionate and
157 time-limited, but the amendment goes on to say that it must have "precise and achievable
158 objectives". Will he detail what those objectives are?

159 **Edward Miliband:** I am coming exactly to that point, which is that the Government need
160 to set that out in **the coming days**. That takes me precisely to the final point of the road
161 map. Any military action must be specifically designed to deter the future use of chemical
162 weapons; it must be time-limited with specific purpose and scope so that future action
163 would require further recourse to this House; and it **must have regard for the**
164 **consequences** of any action. We must ensure that every effort is made to bring the civil
165 war in Syria to an end, and principal responsibility for that rests, of course, with the
166 parties in that conflict, and in particular President Assad.

167 **Mr Brazier:** Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

168 **Edward Miliband:** I want to make a bit more progress.

169 The international community also has a duty to do everything it can to support the
170 Geneva II process, and any action we take—this is the key point—must assist that process
171 and not hinder it. That is the responsibility that lies on the Government and their allies—
172 to set out that case in the coming period.

173 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1445**

174 There will be some in this House who say that Britain should not contemplate action even
175 when it is limited, because we do not know precisely the consequences that will follow.
176 As I said, I am not with those who rule out action, and the horrific events unfolding in
177 Syria ask us to consider all available options, but we owe it to the Syrian people, to our

178 own country and to the future security of our world to scrutinise any plans on the basis of
179 the **consequences** they will have. By setting a framework today, we give ourselves **time**
180 **and space** to scrutinise what is being proposed by the Government, to see what the
181 implications are.

182 **Mr Baron:** For the sake of clarity for the House, can the right hon. Gentleman tell us
183 whether, if there was no UN Security Council resolution, the Labour Opposition would
184 back military intervention?

185 **Edward Miliband:** It depends on the case that has been set out and the extent to which
186 international support has been developed—*[Interruption.]* I say to hon. Members on the
187 Government Benches who are making strange noises that it is right to go about this
188 process in a calm and measured way. If people are asking me **today** to say, "Yes, now, let
189 us take military action," I am not going to say that, but neither am I going to rule out
190 military action, because we have to proceed on the basis of **evidence** and the consensus
191 and support that can be built.

192 **Paul Maynard (Blackpool North and Cleveleys) (Con):** The hon. Member for
193 Hampstead and Kilburn (Glenda Jackson) asked an important question that I feel the right
194 hon. Gentleman did not answer fully. Paragraph (e) of the Opposition amendment refers
195 to "precise and achievable objectives", which I assume means that he has in mind precise
196 and achievable objectives. Can he please detail what they would be?

197 **Edward Miliband:** Yes I can, because the amendment goes on to say,

198 "designed to deter the future use of prohibited chemical weapons in Syria".

199 Paragraph (e) also states that

200 "such action must have regard to the potential consequences in the region",

201 so any proposed action to deter the use of chemical weapons **must be judged against the**
202 **consequences that will follow**. Further work by the Government is necessary to set out
203 what those consequences would be.

204 **Mr Crispin Blunt (Reigate) (Con):** On consequences, I am listening carefully to the
205 Leader of the Opposition and he is effectively making a strong case against military
206 action. The consequences of the military action envisaged are very unquantifiable,
207 because the objectives are, frankly, pretty soft in terms of degrading and deterring and of
208 the link between military effect and the actual effect on the ground. He has also linked
209 this to the consequences for the Geneva II process, which can only be negative.

210 **Edward Miliband:** I am saying to the hon. Gentleman and the House that over the
211 coming period, we have to assess in a calm and **measured way**—not in a knee-jerk way,
212 and not on a political timetable—the advantages

213 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1446**

214 of potential action, whether such action can be taken on the basis of legitimacy and
215 international law, and what the **consequences would be**.

216 **Nadhim Zahawi (Stratford-on-Avon) (Con):** Listening to the right hon. Gentleman's
217 speech, any reasonable human being would assume that he is looking to divide the House
218 for political advantage. What has happened to the national interest?

219 **Edward Miliband:** That intervention is not worthy of the hon. Gentleman. I am merely
220 trying to set out a framework for decision for the House. My interest all along has been to
221 ensure that the House of the Commons can make the decision, and do so **when the**
222 **evidence is available**. Some in the House believe that the decision is simple—clearly
223 there are such Members on the Government Benches. Some think we can make the
224 decision now to engage in military conflict. Equally, others believe we can rule out
225 military conflict now. I happen to think that we must assess the **evidence** over the coming
226 **period**. That is the right thing to do, and our road map sets out how we would do it.

227 **Steve McCabe (Birmingham, Selly Oak) (Lab):** It is one thing to not rule out military
228 action, but is not the problem with the Government's motion that it asks for an in-
229 principle vote for military action now, before we hear what the inspectors say and before
230 the UN processes take place?

231 **Edward Miliband:** I say to my hon. Friend and the House that this morning, it was
232 noticeable that the Government motion would be presented, if it was voted for—this is an
233 important point—as the House **endorsing** the principle of military action. That is why I
234 do not feel ready to support the Government motion, and why I believe the Opposition
235 amendment, which sets out a framework for decision, is the right thing to vote for.

236 **Penny Mordaunt:** Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

237 **Edward Miliband:** I am going to make a bit more progress.

238 **Angus Robertson:** Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

239 **Edward Miliband:** I will give way.

240 **Angus Robertson:** Will the right hon. Gentleman confirm that in advance of previous
241 conflicts, such as the intervention in Afghanistan, political parties in the House were
242 briefed in detail, and on Privy Council terms, on the nature of the evidence on why there

243 should be intervention? Can he confirm that there have been no such briefings in advance
244 of this vote?

245 **Edward Miliband:** I have had the benefit of briefings with the Prime Minister, but I am
246 sure that he, having heard the hon. Gentleman's intervention, will want to extend that
247 facility to him and other minority parties.

248 **Penny Mordaunt:** Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

249 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1447**

250 **Edward Miliband:** I will not give way.

251 As I was saying, by setting this framework today, we will **give ourselves the time** and
252 space to assess the impact that any intervention will have on the Syrian people, and to
253 assess the framework of international law and legitimacy. As I have said, I do not believe
254 that we should be rushed to judgment on this question on a political timetable set
255 elsewhere. **In the coming days**, the Government have a responsibility, building on what
256 the Prime Minister did today—but it is also more than what he did **today**—to set out their
257 case on why the benefits of intervention and action outweigh the benefits of not acting.

258 **Penny Mordaunt:** Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

259 **Edward Miliband:** No, I want to make this point.

260 I do not rule out supporting the Prime Minister, but I believe he must make a better case
261 than he has made **today** on this question. Frankly, he cannot say to the House and to the
262 country that the Government motion would not change our stance on Syria or our
263 involvement in the Syrian conflict. It would, and the House needs to assess that.

264 Our amendment sets out a roadmap from evidence to decision that I believe can command
265 the confidence of the House and the British public. Crucially, the amendment would place
266 responsibility for the judgment on the achievement of the criteria for action—reporting by
267 the weapons inspectors; compelling evidence; the vote in the Security Council; the legal
268 base; and the prospect of successful action—with this House in a subsequent vote.

269 I hope the House can unite around our amendment, because I believe it captures a view
270 shared on both sides of the House, both about our anger at the attack on innocent
271 civilians, and about a coherent framework for making the decision on how we respond.

272 **Jim Sheridan (Paisley and Renfrewshire North) (Lab):** May I thank my right hon.
273 Friend and the shadow Foreign Secretary for the measured approach that they are taking
274 on this very serious issue? Does my right hon. Friend agree that any reckless or
275 irresponsible action could lead to full war in that area? We must understand from

276 previous conflicts that war is not some sort of hokey-cokey concept; once you're in,
277 you're in.

278 **Edward Miliband:** That is why there must not be a rush to judgment—my hon. Friend is
279 entirely right.

280 **Penny Mordaunt:** The right hon. Gentleman speaks of a road map. Does he not
281 appreciate that the first stage in our response to the atrocities is what we do in the
282 Chamber this afternoon? Given that his perfectly legitimate concerns about consequences,
283 evidence and so on are met by the Government motion, may I urge him to support the
284 motion so that we can send a united, strong message to Assad and others? Otherwise, we
285 will undermine our national security.

286 **Edward Miliband:** We will not support a Government motion that was briefed this
287 morning as setting out an in-principle decision to take military action. That would be the
288 wrong thing to do, and on that basis we will

289 **29 Aug 2013 : Column 1448**

290 oppose the motion. We could only support military action, and should only make the
291 decision to do so, when and if the conditions of our amendment were met.

292 We all know that stability cannot be achieved by military means alone. The continued
293 turmoil in the country and the region in recent months and years further demonstrates the
294 need to ensure that we uphold the fate of innocent civilians, the national interest and the
295 security and future prosperity of the whole region and the world. I know that the whole
296 House recognises that this will not and cannot be achieved through a military solution.

297 Whatever our disagreements today, Labour Members stand ready to play our part in
298 supporting measures to improve the prospects for peace in Syria and the middle east: it is
299 what the people of Britain and the world have the right to expect. But this is a very grave
300 decision, and it should be treated as such by this House, and it will be treated as such by
301 this country.

302 The fundamental test will be this: as we think about the men, women and children who
303 have been subjected to this atrocity and about the prospects for other citizens in Syria, can
304 the international community act in a lawful and legitimate way that will help them and
305 prevent further suffering? The seriousness of our deliberations should match the
306 significance of the decision we face, which is why I urge the House to support our
307 amendment.

308 **Several hon. Members** *rose—*

Appendix Four:

Analysing the concordance lines of the keywords press coverage of Time (2)

The Telegraph

Table 2.1: ISIL

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
UK stance and local context	*Internal politics and British leaders' stances around the British response*	2@36: Members of the shadow cabinet have to go to Mr Corbyn and tell him squarely to his face that unless he joins with them in backing military action against Isil they will resign. (Members of the shadow cabinet have strong stance against Corbyn) 9@159: POLITICAL SKETCH: In the Commons, the Prime Minister is unusually respectful of his opponents as he makes the case for air strikes against Isil. (politeness of Cameron) 15@269: He (Mr Fallon) discloses that he has ordered the Royal Air Force not to "presume" that Parliament will support military action but calls on Labour MPs to back the plan to send British jets to bomb Isil in their Syrian strongholds. (Mr Fallon urges Labour MPs to support military action) 17@306: Three senior allies of Mr Corbyn have told The Telegraph that the Labour leader wants to use an extraordinary meeting of the shadow cabinet today to impose a whip on his MPs in an attempt to force them to vote against David Cameron's plans to bomb Isil. (Mr Corbyn suffers to persuade Labour MPs for supporting him) 21@376: "If Mr Corbyn still believes that if we do not bomb Isil, they will not commit acts of terrorism here, then let him go to the leaders of Isil to negotiate a non aggression pact." (criticising Mr Corbyn's stance) 23@412: The shift in tone came as Mr Cameron prepared to host a 10 hour Commons debate, setting out the plan to attack Isil. (Mr Cameron called the House to support military action) 24@429: Mr Corbyn could have done more to

		press the government to help cut off weapons and funding bestowed on Isil by rich individuals in states such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar, had his wider case not been occluded by Labour turmoil. (Mr Corbyn suggests UK should not support rich country as they may support ISIL indirectly) 31@555: Instead of discussing the rights and wrongs of military action against Isil, MPs began with a playground spat about name-calling. (situation f MPs in the debate) 33@608: This time, even if the objections of MPs who voted to bomb Isil in Iraq seem irrational, Mr Cameron has gone out of his way to acknowledge and address concerns that are felt on the Tory benches as well as in a section of the Labour Party. (Mr Cameron's strategy for supporting military action) 41@752: Sensible MPs, such as those who voted for air strikes on Isil in Syria this week, radiate a despair that must be witnessed to be believed. (those who support military action ask for the clarity of Syrian situation) 46@842: The group (anti-war group) have also claimed Isil has greater "internationalism and solidarity" than Britain's bombing campaign. (criticising UK's bombing campaign by anti-war group)
	Evaluating the effectiveness of UK action against ISIL	8@142: "It is clear that Isil's campaign against the UK and our allies has reached the level of an 'armed attack' such that force may lawfully be used in self-defence to prevent further atrocities being committed by Isil. (ISIL's campaign makes UK action to protect itself legal) 10@177: Cameron… Now the third pillar is the military action I am describing to degrade ISIL and reduce the threat they pose. 14@250: Mr Cameron said that he had "examined his conscience" and determined that urgent action was needed to protect Britain from "military attacks" by Isil. (military action is needed to protect UK) 18@324: He (the Defence Secretary) discloses that Army specialists could be sent to train local fighters inside Syria; and cautions that the battle to defeat the Isil "death cult" could take a decade to win. (the Defence Secretary urges MPs for supporting military action because it is important, and this participation

		may take decade) 20@358: "Isil is thriving in Raqqa. It is not yet under sufficient pressure - and Raqqa is the heart of this self-proclaimed caliphate. We need to hit Isil there," Mr Fallon says. (ISIL has to be bombed in Raqqa because of its thriving ideology in Raqqa) 28@501: There appears to be little doubt that Britain will shortly join fully the battle against Isil with airstrikes extending into Syria as well as Iraq. (Britain almost will support military action) 36@662: Among the UK's military hardware to be used against Isil are eight Tornado GR4 bombers, two Sentinel reconnaissance aircraft and one Voyager aircraft for air-to-air refuelling. (describing UK's military action) 44@806: Sixteen months into the air campaign against the jihadists, daily bombing runs have "significantly degraded" Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's (Isil) capacity to refine oil at the network of refineries it controls in Iraq and Syria, said IHS, a global intelligence firm. (effectiveness of bombing)
Stances of international governments towards the existence of ISIL		4@71: The killings have led to the international community passing a UN Security Council resolution which vows to defeat Isil by whatever means necessary. (UN calls for urgent action to defeat ISIL) 7@125: "Shame on you. Those who claim we buy oil from Daesh are obliged to prove it. If not, you are a slanderer," Mr Erdogan said, using the Arabic acronym for Isil. (Mr Erdogan criticizes Putin for his claim that Turkey buys oil from ISIL) 13@231: "At this time, Turkey remains fully committed to fighting Isil as part of the international coalition," the official said. (Turkey shows intentions of fighting ISIL) 16@288: Mr Fallon… "We have made a huge contribution to the training effort, mainly on counter IED, which is a big problem for the Iraqi forces because the towns Isil has been holding have been heavily booby trapped." (Iraq forces have been trained by UK to fight ISIL) 19@341: John Kerry estimated it might take three years to push Isil out of Iraq. (the international action may take three years to achieve the goals) 22@394: The Kurds are fighting against Isil on

		the ground. The US and France are bombing Isil from above. (participation of different countries against ISIL)
		26@465: Although the exact number of aircrafts involved in striking Isil targets in Syria is unknown, Saudi Arabia has a total of 313 combat aircraft in its force, while United Arab Emirates has 157 and Bahrain has 39. (the role of neighbouring countries against ISIL)
		29@519: The US is an active player in using airstrikes against Isil in Syria, with the first bombing taking place in September 2014. (the effective role of US against ISIL)
		30@537: Wednesday's open accusations of aiding and abetting Isil is the closest Russia has come to declaring Turkey a hostile state, although the generals stopped short of announcing military action against the country. (Russia accuses Turkey for its negative role in the region)
		35@644: The war of words continues after Turkey shot down a Moscow warplane with Recep Tayyip Erdogan attacking Russia's accusations that it bought oil from Isil. (conflict of words between Turkey and Russia)
		39@716: "Anyone who votes in favour is leading Germany into a war with completely unclear risks of escalation. Instead of combating Isil, you're strengthening it," Sahra Wagenknecht, of the opposition Left Party, said. (Germany debate around military action against ISIL)
		49@895: Swiss media reported that a photograph of four bearded men suspected of being members of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil) had been circulated to police patrols, following a tip-off from American intelligence. (four men in Swiss are suspected to be members of ISIL)
Threat of ISIL		1@18: It emerged they (Kesinovic and Selimovic were both children of Bosnian refugees who fled to Austria from the war in their country during the nineties) had joined Isil after Kesinovic telephoned her sister from Syria to let her know she was alright. (some children have joined ISIL)
		5@90: With utmost urgency, we need to counter the morbidly brilliant Isil psychological terror campaign in order to win back the hearts and

		minds of the Syrian people and all who oppose Isil. (ISIL threatens people in the region)
		6@10: Kevin Swanson, who recently hosted a conference attended by Republican presidential candidates, made the incendiary remarks on a radio show, saying he sides neither with Isil nor the "humanist devil worshippers" at the concert. (suspicion about ISIL's ability to threaten the world)
		11@195: The attacks in Paris, the attempted attacks in London and elsewhere are not an add-on, they are not opportunistic or simply propaganda. They are part of the Isil core theology. (threat of ISIL)
		12@213: Isil engages in a 'political game' where 'rough violence in times of need' is a necessary part of the policy of 'paying the price'. (threat of ISIL and the need for action)
		25@447: Welcomes United Nations Security Council Resolution 2249 which determines that ISIL constitutes an 'unprecedented threat to international peace and security' and calls on states to take 'all necessary measures' to prevent terrorist acts by ISIL and to 'eradicated the safe haven they have established over significant parts of Iraq and Syria'; (threat of ISIL, and the need for action)
		27@483: The 24-page report, presented to the UN Security council by a committee charged with monitoring sanctions against al-Qaeda and other groups, concluded: "The Isil central command in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic views Libya as the 'best' opportunity to expand its so-called caliphate." (ISIL attempts to increase members in Libya)
		32@572: The city (Ramadi) fell in just a number of hours as the jihadists unleashed a wave of suicide bombings, stunning the city's defenders and causing them to flee. By the end of the day, Isil militants had raised their black banner over the main government headquarters. (the strength of ISIL in Iraq)
		34@626: Of course, some Isil oil is sold within Syria to people who have no choice but to deal with the militants and pay their inflated prices. (Some ISIL oil is sold in Syria because people in Syria do not have an option)
		42@770: Existing radical groups, including the Haqqani network and factions of the Taliban,

		have declared allegiance to Isil. One training camp is named after "Sheikh Jalaluddin" - or Jalaluddin Haqqani, the founder of the extremist network that carries his surname, who died last year. (allegiance between ISIL and Taliban) 43@788: HEADLINE: Isil fundraiser flees UK despite terror watch. (ISIL receives funding) 45@824: Assad strains every sinew to fight the non-Islamist rebels, but Isil has generally been immune from his barrel bombs and poison gas. (Assad avoided bombing ISIL)
Syrian people		48@877: If you ask them (Syrian rebels) to focus on Isil, they would understandably reply: but who will protect our people from Assad? (concerns of Syrian rebels for fighting Assad and ISIL)
Other		37@680: Meanwhile, Vladimir Putin's reassertion of Russian irredentism in the Caucasus, China's emergence as a major power in East Asia, and the rise of ISIL across the Middle East revealed it as manifestly implausible. (significant changes in the world, and the need for doing something)

Table 2.2: Iraq

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
UK stance and local context	*Relationship between previous interventions and current intervention*	1@3: "Our recent history in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya has shown us we that we should embark on interventions with the understanding that we rarely get what we expect". (the results of recent interventions were not expected and has negative imaginaries) 2@10, 7@47: There are other monuments to lives lost in Iraq, but this one will contain a small pile of ruined reputations rather than a large one of broken bodies, and we can expect it to teach us a very different point: that military interventions, even those that are well-intentioned and promoted by democratic political leaders, can go seriously wrong. (there are considerations of previous lessons, but there might be some possible negative consequences) 9@62: Airstrikes in Iraq, which Britain is part of, had helped in the recovery of 30 per cent of territory seized by Isil, he (Cameron) said. (UK airstrikes is effective in Iraq and this will be the same to Syria). 10@68: Post-conflict planning is also crucial if the UK and its allies are to learn the lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan, the paper warned. (the need of avoiding past mistakes). 13@90: Lessons from Iraq: how to make the case for bombing Syria; There are three compelling reasons for attacking Isil in Syria, but making us safer isn't one of them. (how lessons from previous interventions can help to understand the situation) 16@112: The RAF is making a difference in Iraq and we need to hit Isil harder and deal with this death cult once and for all. (RAF has effective role in Iraq) 29@209: However, having been involved in both Gulf Wars and having been in both Syria and Iraq this year, I see very few similarities except for the WMD issue. (the current situation is different from Iraq war in 2003) 33@247: Tony Blair's big lie, before the war in Iraq, was that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. David Cameron's big

		lie is that there are 70,000 "moderate" Syrian ground troops. (Blair and Cameron created lies to legitimise military action)
		35@262: Plenty of Western blood and treasure was spilt in Iraq but creating an inclusive new regime proved, in the end, beyond the ability (or attention spans) or Western governments. (Iraq intervention did not achieve the goals of actions)
		42@315: SIR - For policy on Syria, the unlearnt lesson from Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya is that premature disengagement negates the original good intent (not least when Western leaders start trumpeting to the enemy that their forces will be leaving, come what may, by a certain date). (previous military action could affect the decision around military action against ISIL in Syria)
		47@353: PM: We are not entering into another Iraq war. (Cameron highlights the consideration of previous mistakes)
	Evaluating effectiveness of UK action	8@54: There is still an imperative for all sides to destroy Isil in Syria and Iraq; but common rules need to be agreed. (the need for acting against ISIL)
		15@105: Last September, the House of Commons voted by an overwhelming majority of 480 to deploy the RAF to attack Isil targets in Iraq. (UK supported action against ISIL in Iraq last September)
		17@119: the former Mayor of London told LBC radio: "We cannot put British troops on the ground because they are too discredited after Iraq and Afghanistan. (there would not be troops in the ground)
		18@126: Military sources suggested between two and six extra jets are being lined up to join the eight-strong force already carrying out strikes in Iraq. (airstrikes in Iraq are continuing)
		19@135: And he (Mr Fallon) is equally clear that the public must be prepared for "a long campaign" in which British forces are in action in Syria and Iraq for years. (the public should be prepared for UK intervention that could take years)
		20@142: Mr Fallon… "What is needed in and around Raqqa is precision - the capability to take out command and control posts, to hit logistics and supply depots, to disrupt the oil distribution network that Isil relies on for its

		revenue and to cut off the supply routes between North East Syria and Iraq." (series of actions against ISIL)
		21@149: There is another Bataclan, one that stretches across the Syrian desert for hundreds of miles and deep down into Iraq. (the difficult situation in Iraq and Syria that could make the intervention complicated)
		22@157: Conservative whips have spent the weekend ringing MPs to establish how they will vote if David Cameron asks Parliament to support the extension of British air strikes against Isil targets from Iraq into Syria. (airstrikes would be supported by MPs if Cameron calls for that)
		25@180: particularly as MPs on all sides of the House now seem to have satisfied themselves as to the rationale for extending British military operations from Iraq into neighbouring Syria. (majority of MPS would support extending UK military action into Syria)
		27@194: Mr Davies… "It depends where they are. If we are airborne in Iraq and the vote is yes we could be targeting on that mission." (the vote should be supported by recognising what people in the region want)
		40@300: "Because we have to remember them and remember that the price of war, the price of intervention, the price of jingoism is somebody else's son and somebody else's daughter either being killed or being killed by somebody else." (there could be negative consequences for UK military action)
		43@322: The latest RAF operations were intended to damage the supply of funds to the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Isil), also known as Daesh. (the positive military action by RAF)
		45@337: Following the attacks in Paris, thousands of British Muslim organisations put their names to a statement unequivocally condemning the violence and the group responsible, Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil). (many British Muslims condemn Paris attack, and show their implicit support for action against ISIL)
ISIL's threat		4@24: Up until the Paris attacks, US intelligence agencies widely believed Isil was focused almost exclusively on its wars in Iraq and in Syria, leaving attacks against

Western nations up to "inspired" volunteers. (ISIL focuses mainly on Iraq and Syria, but there might be some terrorist attacks in Western nations)

6@39: The huge security operation comes as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil) released a video threatening what it described as a "coalition of devils". (there are threats from ISIL)

12@83: They are not what the people of Iraq and Syria want. (Syrian and Iraqi people do not want ISIL)

23@165: we have painfully seen, these terrorists and outlaws threaten the entire world. They target all of us… One that is not limited to Syria and Iraq, but extends to Africa, Asia, with its flames reaching Europe and the rest of the world. (ISIL threatens the whole world, and it has to be defeated in any place)

24@172: Twitter is the "platform of choice" most widely used by the active core of American supporters of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil), it said. (ISIL uses Twitter as their strong media)

26@187: Welcomes United Nations Security Council Resolution 2249 which determines that ISIL constitutes an 'unprecedented threat to international peace and security' and calls on states to take 'all necessary measures' to prevent terrorist acts by ISIL and to 'eradicated the safe haven they have established over significant parts of Iraq and Syria'. (ISIL threatens the security of whole world)

28@202: The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant has as many as 3000 fighters in Libya and sees the country as a retreat zone and strategic hub for recruits unable to reach its Syrian heartland, according to a new United Nations report. (the number of ISIL fighters is huge)

31@232: Isil grew out of the invasion of Iraq. But it has flourished in Syria in the chaos and horror of a multi-front civil war. (ISIL flourished in Syria after Iraq invasion, and this may show the need for action)

34@255: It said the group's rapid growth was fuelled by its notoriety in Iraq and Syria, as well as weak security structures in Libya, and risked bringing more sophisticated

		bombmaking techniques to Africa. (ISIL's growth threatens the security, and there is a need for action)
		36@270: Yemen has not been widely covered in Western media, yet Isil and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) are taking advantage of the chaos there to strengthen their presence - just as they have done in Syria and Iraq, with such devastating consequences. (ISIL takes advantages of chaos in the region)
		39@293: In Iraq airpower could be directed by Iraqi security forces on the ground but in Syria targets have to be found using aerial reconnaissance, a much harder task. (how ISIL can be directed on the ground)
		44@330: The latest pictures of terrorists from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil) are familiar except for one twist. (ISIL is one of the terrorist groups)
		48@369: Number of foreign fighters in Iraq and Syria 'has doubled in past year'. (number of ISIL fighters had been increasing)
		50@384: On the upside, this record cushion should protect the world from adverse supply shocks, as geopolitical risks still loom large in Iraq and Syria. (there is a risk from ISIL in the region even within the time of attacking ISIL)
International participants		3@17: Putin… Turkey of turning a blind eye to vast quantities of Isil-produced oil crossing its territory, implying that it is one of the main sources of funding for Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant Isil). (Putin accuses Turkey for supporting ISIL)
		5@32: Mr Harvey, who worked for the Defence Intelligence Agency in Iraq, and later as the director of Afghanistan-Pakistan for the Pentagon's Central Command said he had quit in frustration at the intelligence community's "lack of creativity". (Harvey criticises intelligence community for the way they deal with terrorist groups)
		11@75: The US and other forces have been bombing ISIL targets in Iraq and Syria for more than a year, but in that time although ISIL has lost some territory, it has gained ground elsewhere. (positive and negative side of American intervention)
		14@97: SIR - Russia, which is an ally in the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and

the Levant (Isil), has been subject to an act of aggression by Turkey. (Russia stands against ISIL, and Turkey accuses Russia for its negative role in the region)

30@217: Russia 's top generals said on Wednesday that Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the president of Turkey, and his family of personally involvement in a multi-million dollar oil smuggling operation that is funding terrorists from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Isil). (Russia accuses Turkey for supporting ISIL)

32@240: On Tuesday, one of the most powerful Shia militias, Kata'ib Hezbollah, pledged to fight any American forces deployed in Iraq, after the US said it was sending an elite special unit to help combat Islamic State. (this may show Hezbollah supports terrorist groups)

37@277: UN Security Council resolution… "to redouble and coordinate their efforts to prevent and suppress terrorist acts committed specifically by ISIL... and to eradicate the safe haven they have established over significant parts of Iraq and Syria". (the UN urges to rebut points highlighted by ISIL to their followers)

38@286: Mr Putin told the country that Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil) was a "barbaric ideology", suggesting the group were like Nazis that the world must come together and fight against. (Putin criticises ISIL's action)

41@307: Germany has reportedly drawn up plans to prevent sharing intelligence with its NATO ally Turkey as it prepares to support international air strikes against Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil). (Germany's stance)

46@345: He (Obama) gave a detailed defence of his strategy to defeat Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil) and warned against being "drawn into a long and costly ground war in Iraq or Syria". (Obama provides his strategy for fighting ISIL)

49@377: Russia launched a bombing campaign in Syria on September 30, saying it needed to target the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant - but the West has accused Moscow of seeking to prop up Mr Assad's regime and hitting moderate rebels. (Russia claims

		that it targets ISIL while the West accused Moscow of attacking moderate rebels)

Table 2.3: Military

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Stance of UK and local context	**Evaluating the possible British action**	1@2: Our recent history has demonstrated a catastrophic lack of clarity and understanding by our political leaders whilst wielding their military power (the clarity issue is a central mistake for the previous interventions) 2@10, 12@119: It is important to have defined military objectives and a coherent plan for the political leadership and system that will come afterwards, such as in the brilliant British rescue of Sierra Leone from civil war in 2000. (the plan of military should be clear and the need for post-intervention plan) 11@108: It comes with David Cameron outlining the case for extending air strikes into Syria today with a vote on the military action expected next week. (British airstrikes is imminent) 14@141: A concerned Labour MP said: "I am very worried that this could lead us to a position where Britain is not able to mount a military response if needed." (the participation in action would affect the British ability to protect itself when this is needed) 15@151: "Britain's military have the experience and expertise to sustain our role in the campaign for as long as required to get the job done. (the British efficiency to attack ISIL) 16@173: September 2014 Cameron: "Strong case" for UK military intervention in Syria The Prime Minister says military intervention in Syria would be lawful on the grounds of intervening to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe. (military action is legal) 18@195: But he (Corbyn) warned of "unintended consequences" if Britain got involved in military action in Syria in the same way it had in Iraq and Afghanistan. (Corbyn warns for any possible negative consequences) 19@206: Mr Speaker, I (Cameron) am also clear that any motion we bring before this

		House will explicitly recognise that military action is not the whole answer. (Cameron suggests intervention is a part of defeating ISIL in the region)
		21@228: Hilary Benn, the shadow foreign secretary, have said they will not step down over Syria despite backing military intervention. (Benn suggests the need to make the action limited)
		24@261: At the time, Assad was teetering. His national security headquarters had been penetrated and bombed. High-level aides were defecting. Military officers were forming a Free Syrian Army. (military officers suggest the possibility of cooperating with FSA instead of Assad regime)
		28@305, 36@394: "Strong case" for UK military intervention in Syria The Prime Minister says military intervention in Syria would be lawful on the grounds of intervening to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe. (military action is strongly supported, and it is a legal action)
		32@349: Of course, military action is only part of the answer in delivering a secure future for all of us. (military action is only a part of the plan to secure societies)
		33@361, 34@372: Cameron… Notes that military action against ISIL is only one component of a broader strategy to bring peace and stability to Syria. (military action is only a step to bring peace to Syria)
		37@405: Mr Cameron insists that an extension of military action to Syria would be part of a broader plan, including a renewed diplomatic push against Mr Assad. (military action would help to achieve other goals in the Syrian crisis)
	Internal politics	4@32: August 2013MPs reject military action in Syria After eight hours of parliamentary debate, MPs reject the government's motion in support of military action in Syria. (comparing the current vote with the one held in 2013 to make intervention against the use of chemical weapons)
		6@54, 17@184: Following the vote, Mr Miliband said: "Military intervention is now off the agenda for Britain. (Miliband confirms the British rejection for intervention in 2013)

		10@98: He also repeatedly focused on reports police funding could be cut later this week in his response - despite the SDSR being about military spending rather than police stations. (Corbyn attempts to shift the focus by talking about police funding)
		13@130: David Cameron will seek to commit RAF warplanes when he puts his case to the House of Commons for extending Britain's current military action against Isil into Syria. (Cameron seeks approval from parliament)
		22@239: August 2013MPs reject military action in Syria After eight hours of parliamentary debate, MPs reject the government's motion in support of military action in Syria. (MPs rejected the previous vote for intervention in Syria in 2013)
		25@272: If Mr Corbyn tries to whip Labour MPs to oppose the military action, would the Prime Minister could be forced to abandon the vote. (conflict between Cameron and Corbyn)
		26@283: This would expose the full scale of opposition to Mr Corbyn among his senior colleagues and allow them to call for MPs to be whipped in favour of military action. (Corbyn suffers to persuade his party)
		30@327: But he is convinced that there is a moral as well as military imperative for Britain to act, rather than "relying on American or Australian or French aircraft to keep us safe". (Fallon is convinced about the British military action)
		31@338: The majority of the shadow cabinet is in favour of backing the Prime Minister's plans for military action. (shadow cabinet supports intervention).
		40@438: He (Corbyn) described the plan for military action as a "reckless and half-baked intervention". (Corbyn attempts to criticise intervention)
		41@449: For a Prime Minister, there is no greater test of leadership than setting out a case for military intervention. (Cameron's leadership is examined when he called for intervention)
		42@461: Thousands took to the streets of London to protest against military intervention in Syria for the second time in four days. (there is a British opposition

		toward military action)
		47@516: David Cameron 'warned by military chiefs not to claim there were 70,000 friendly Syrian troops'. (Military chiefs warns Cameron from statements like this)
		48@527: Mr Fallon told the Press Association: "They (the military) have the support of Parliament, (military action is supported by parliament)
		49@539: The Prime Minister had referred to the figure in parliament earlier this month while making the case for military action against Isil in Syria. (Cameron showed his support for intervention before the vote)
International stance		3@21: Mr Putin should have realised that, this time, NATO was serious, especially as Turkey is deeply unhappy about Russia's military intervention in support of Assad. (the different ideologies of Russia and Turkey in the region)
		5@43: Video shows the moment that Turkey shot down a military plane on the Syrian border, according to local media reports. (the conflict between Russia and Turkey)
		7@65: Earlier Turkish military officials said their air force had downed an unidentified warplane after it violated Turkey's airspace. (Turkey declares the reason behind attacking the warplane).
		8@76: Turkey shoots down 'Russian military plane' on Syria border. (the bad relationship between Russia and Turkey).
		9@87: Turkey has shot down a military plane on the Syrian border, local media reported, citing military sources. (reporting the Turkish attack for the warplane)
		20@217: Turkey releases audio of 'warning' sent to Russian military plane it shot down… (Tukey shows its warning to Russia before attacking the plane)
		23@250: Mr Putin said on Tuesday that Isil was "protected by the military of an entire nation", alluding to Turkey as he said Ankara had "stabbed Russia in the back". (Putin argues that Turkey supports ISIL)
		27@294: It is yet to be decided how long German military involvement will last. (German's plan for intervention)
		29@316: The Prime Minister is scarred by his defeat in the Commons over a different

		proposal for military action in Syria in 2013, after Ed Miliband withdrew support for bombing the Assad regime over its use of chemical weapons. (showing Cameron's stance at the vote in 2013) 35@383: Neighbouring Arab countries have also dedicated military hardware to strike Isil. (Arab countries support attacking ISIL) 38@416: With the prospect of UK airstrikes being launched against Islamic State in Syria, we look at the military hardware used by several foreign powers in the developing conflict. (there are various international participants defeat ISIL) 39@427: Key players in the conflict in Syria, like the US, Russia and Turkey, want different outcomes from their military involvement. (international participants have different ideologies in Syria) 43@472: After Russian military chiefs publicly accused the Turkish government of funnelling millions of dollars in illicit oil revenues to Isil terrorists in Syria and Iraq… (Russia accuses Turkey for supporting ISIL) 44@483: With UK airstrikes launched against Islamic State in Syria, we look at the military hardware used by several foreign powers in the developing conflict. (several international participants develop the conflict in Syria) 46@505: Germany joins fight against Isil after parliament approves military action in Syria. (Germany joins fight against Isil) 50@550: 1987 Gorbachev The Soviet premier further condemns Assad's military approach as "completely discredited". (The Soviet premier criticises Assad regime)
Other		45@494: The struggle to contain Baghdadi is now the task of one of the broadest military coalitions in history. (this quote is part of article talks about Baghdadi as the persons of the year in Times)

Table 2.4: Air-strikes

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Stance of UK and local context	**Internal politics**	3@19: the former Labour leadership contender, defies Mr Corbyn by saying it is "absolutely fundamental" MPs have a free vote over Syrian air strikes. Lord Reid indicates he thinks Mr Corbyn is providing neither "competent", "coherent" or "sensible" leadership (evaluation for Corbyn's statement towards MPs vote)
		4@28: The Prime Minister will today set out his seven points case for air strikes in Syria as he seeks to win round Tory rebels and Labour MPs. (Cameron attempts to gain the debate of supporting airstrikes)
		6@47: However, in the debate following his (Cameron) statement, a number of previous Tory rebels including Crispin Blunt and Sarah Wollaston, said that they were now in favour of strikes (example of Tory MPs who stood against UK intervention in 2013, and they now support UK intervention)
		8@66: Simeon Andrews, who co-ordinates Labour's links with the trade unions, sent MPs an incendiary email overnight calling on them to vote against military strikes (strong stance against military strikes by Andrews)
		14@123: What is Mr Fallon's message to Labour MPs, many of whom want to back air strikes, especially now there is a UN resolution authorising international action? (Fallon highlights that UN resolution supports UK air strikes)
		15@133: One shadow cabinet minister who is in favour of air strikes said: "Labour should reach a collective position. A free vote will seriously damage our standing in the eyes of the public. But we are so obviously divided, what else can we do?" (Labour MPs do not have collective voice)
		16@142: On Thursday night Corbyn wrote to

all Labour MPs explaining that he could not support David Cameron's proposal for air strikes in Syria. (Corbyn urges Labour MPs to stand against Cameron's proposal)

17@152: It came as the Stop the War Coalition - once chaired by Mr Corbyn - launched a renewed lobbying drive to convince Labour MPs to vote against air strikes (Corbyn urges Labour MPs to stand against Cameron's proposal)

20@181: All that is required before the first bomb can be dropped is for a majority of MPs in the House of Commons to back the Prime Minister's call to arms. A parliamentary vote on air strikes in Syria is expected later this week. (the time of parliamentary debate)

21@190: Government ministers called Labour MPs to make the case for war ahead of a vote on a motion authorising air strikes, expected on Wednesday, with bombing set to begin hours later. (Government ministers urge Labour MPs to support air strikes)

22@200: Speaking to the BBC, Lord Falconer, the shadow justice secretary who supports air strikes, appeared to suggest that resignations will only be "avoided" if MPs are offered a free vote. (implicit negative evaluation for MPs who stand against military air strikes)

23@209: Others have been threatened with deselection and one MP was sent a picture of a dead baby alongside a message demanding they vote against strikes, one senior Labour source said (some Labour MPs are encouraged to stand against air strikes through pictures that reflect possible negative consequences)

24@218: Instead he (Corbyn) has pulled off the considerable feat of alienating both those colleagues who favour air strikes and the activists who elected Mr Corbyn for his anti-war credentials. (Corbyn's stance towards colleagues and activists)

25@227, 27@245: Accordingly supports Her Majesty's Government in taking military action, specifically airstrikes, exclusively against ISIL in Syria and offers its wholehearted support to Her Majesty's Armed Forces. (strong support for military action against ISIL)

26@236: Mr Corbyn convened the shadow cabinet meeting. He began by reading out a prepared statement offering ministers a free vote -but said it would be Labour's formal position to oppose strikes. (Corbyn's strong stance against military air strikes)

28@255: David Ackerman… Mr Corbyn's stance on air strikes in Syria may be causing divisions in the parliamentary Labour Party and the shadow cabinet, but the grass roots of the Labour movement are on the same wavelength as the Labour leader: we are against bombing in Syria. (Corbyn's stance could cause deepe divisions in the Labour Party)

29@264: UK airstrikes against Islamic State in Syria backed by MPs (airstrikes supported by majority of MPs)

32@292: On Tuesday night David Cameron described Mr Corbyn and his allies as "a bunch of terrorist sympathisers" as the debate over air strikes in Syria descended into acrimony. (Cameron evaluates negatively Corbyn's stance)

34@311: Syria airstrikes debate: Parliament's playground spat has let the voters down; Instead of discussing the rights and wrongs of military action against Isil, MPs began with a playground spat about name-calling (the debate shifts to discuss how to name things)

35@320: The emergency protest was called by the Stop the War coalition ahead of Wednesday's vote on air strikes. (pressures upon supporting air strikes from protesters before the debate)

36@329: The first jets could be in the air over Syria as early as Thursday morning if, as expected, Mr Cameron secures the votes necessary for air strikes. (Cameron does his best to support air strikes)

39@357: Pacifist Mr Corbyn was forced to offer his MPs a free vote and allowed Mr Benn to wrap up the debate arguing in favour of air strikes, in a messy compromise to stop the party from falling apart. (Corbyn failed to unite the party for specific stance)

48@441: The charge comes after a number of MPs, many of them in the Labour Party, complained to police that they had received death threats after voting in favour of

421

		airstrikes on Islamic State (ISIL) in Syria. (some MPs received death threats after voting in favour of airstrikes on ISIL) 45@413: Syria vote proved that the PM can behave like a bully. He will live to regret it; There were many reasons for not backing air strikes, and sympathy with Isil was only one of them (criticising Cameron's stance) 49@451: Once you accept that, then the magnificent speech by Hilary Benn or just the very act of voting for air strikes becomes not just a crime but a confession of guilt too. (criticising those who supported air strikes)
	Impact of British response against ISIL	7@57: July 2015Public learn that British pilots have been killing ISIL fighters British military pilots conduct air strikes over Syria for first time British ministers are accused of deceiving the public after it emerged that at least three Royal Navy pilots had been killing ISIL fighters in Syria (there has been UK participation for killing ISIL fighters in Syria before the debate) 10@85: Cameron should say that British participation in airstrikes is right for three reasons. First, as an act of solidarity against barbarism. Symbolic it may be, but symbolism is important right now. Second, because airstrikes are working, and we might as well collect some of the credit. (airstrikes is effective to achieve UK goals according to Cameron) 11@95, 13@114: "I do not believe the Prime Minister's current proposal for air strikes in Syria will protect our security and therefore cannot support it.", Jeremy Corbyn. (Corbyn attempts to rebut Cameron's argument by highlighting the alleged goals of airstrikes) 12@104: Britain set to join air strikes against Isil in Syria before Christmas (time of UK military strikes) 18@162: Britain will have to put soldiers on the ground in Syria if it wants to defeat Isil even if David Cameron wins a parliamentary vote for airstrikes, one of the UK's most senior military figures has signalled (UK air strikes could be extended to put soldiers on ground) 19@171: The defiant appearance on BBC One's Andrew Marr programme escalates the public row at the top of the Labour Party about whether to back Syrian air strikes.

		(Labour is shown to put public opinion as the norm of not supporting military strikes)
		31@283: Mr Cameron told parliament last week that air strikes had helped to recapture 30 per cent of the territory seized by Isil, but analysts said the number did not account for strategically vital gains made by the terror group elsewhere. (debating the effectiveness of air strikes)
		33@302: Secondly, with the major offensive about to begin to drive Isil out of Mosul and Iraq, perhaps precipitated by the UK vote on airstrikes. (part of UK's action against ISIL)
		37@338: The RAF bombed six targets in its first day of authorised air strikes, following up the 2,700 previous air strikes the Americans have carried out since the campaign started last year. (first UK air strikes and it is described as authorised and effective)
		38@348: On Wednesday, Parliament voted in favour of launching airstrikes in Syria, with the first bombings taking place against Islamic State later that evening. (UK air strikes started after the debate directly)
		40@366: Pop stars do politics: Little Mix criticised for having opinion on Syria airstrikes. (Jade Thirlwall has come under fire on twitter because she criticised the result of MPs' vote)
		41@375: Despite the flexibility of the Tornado there is still a big question over whether airstrikes without ground forces can have a meaningful effect either on the conflict in Syria or on ISIL's operations in the area. (questions about the effectiveness of UK air strikes)
		44@403: Mr Cameron published a 36-page dossier earlier this week detailing a series of arguments as to why it was militarily, legally and morally right to launch air strikes against Isil in Syria. (Cameron's dossier of showing legality of military action)
		46@422: Air strikes against Isil in Syria began just hours after David Cameron won a vote in the Commons authorising the action (UK air strikes started after the debate directly)
International participants		1@1: Mr Cameron says he wants to launch air strikes against Isil in Syria. But, after

		yesterday, Mr Cameron can be in no doubt that, however he views Mr Putin's role in the conflict, it will most certainly not be that of an ally (Russia does not have strong stance towards UK intervention against ISIL) 2@9: Today's downing of an SU-24 fighter bomber is the first serious loss suffered by Russia since it launched air strikes in support of Bashar Assad's government nearly two months ago (Russia faces difficulty in supporting Assad regime, and this may show the strength of opponents to Assad either Syrian rebels or terrorist groups) 5@38: Neither is there any doubt that British participation in military strikes in Syria would be warmly welcomed by our closest allies and our friends in the Arab world (UK military action is welcomed by allies in the Arab world) 42@384: Russia has denied that it is extending its Syrian war effort beyond air strikes and maintains that its troops are not engaged in ground combat. (Russia support Assad by using only air strikes) 47@432: The airstrikes come on the heels of Russian officials accusing Turkey of aiding the Islamic State's oil trade. (Russia accuses Turkey for supporting ISIL) 50@460: The deal comes amid Syrian army offensives in central and northern parts of the country, supported by Russian air strikes that have improved the position of Assad's forces. (this may show that the Russia fight rebels as well as ISIL because they are Assad's ally and they work to protect the regime)
ISIL's threat		9@76: Addressing fears that British involvement might increase the danger of terror attacks at home, he said: "The reality is that the threat posed by Isil to the UK is already very high. Isil already views the UK, along with other Western countries, as a legitimate target for its attacks." (existence of ISIL causes fears to UK) 30@274: It is the first video from the (ISIL) to show the apparent execution of a Russian since Moscow began air strikes in support of Syria's government on September 30. (power of ISIL by executing a Russian soldier in Syria)

424

		43@394: In his speech to convince the Commons of airstrikes in Syria, David Cameron talked of ISIL/Daesh's plot "to kill us and to radicalise our children right now". (ISIL threatens the UK community)

The Guardian

Table 2.5: airstrikes

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Stance of UK and local context	**Internal politics**	2@20: There is said to be a large middle ground in the parliamentary party and the shadow cabinet who have yet to come to a view on whether airstrikes will hasten a solution or are a Downing Street tactic to bring military and diplomatic prestige. (debating the effectiveness of airstrikes)
		9@160: The Conservatives are for the most part united behind David Cameron on the plan to extend airstrikes to Syria. (conservative party is united in supporting Cameron's plan)
		10@180: However Labour's leader, Jeremy Corbyn, has made it clear that he is not in favour of airstrikes, while shadow foreign secretary Hilary Benn has sounded more open to the idea. (Labour party does not have united voice towards UK airstrikes)
		16@300: The MP was on the programme to discuss possible airstrikes against Islamic State in Syria. The interviews he was referring to were with Labour supporters in Slough, who expressed concerns about divisions within the party. (Labour may not have clear stance towards supporting airstrikes)
		17@320: Tom Watson backs airstrikes against Isis, joining opposition to Corbyn. (Tom supports Cameron's statement)
		18@340: Labour leader makes clear only he will decide whether to whip his MPs to vote against extending airstrikes against Isis. (Corbyn is shown to urge his party for not extending airstrikes from Iraq to Syria)
		19@360: About 60 Labour MPs support airstrikes, enough to ensure the prime minister has a Commons majority of more than 100. (majority of House of Commons support airstrikes)
		22@420: His (Corbyn) decision averts the threat of a mass shadow cabinet walkout while making it clear that his own firmly held opposition to airstrikes is official

Labour party policy, backed by the membership. (Corbyn stands against airstrikes, and relates his stance to be a part of Labour policy)

23@440: ON Sunday night, the Labour leader wrote to members of the National Executive Committee (NEC) asking for their views about airstrikes, in the hope that they will also back his position. (Corbyn seeks support from other MPs)

24@460: Prime minister urges Tory MPs not to vote with Labour leader and 'a bunch of terrorist sympathisers' against Syria airstrikes. (Cameron urges his party to support him and his evaluation for the opposition to the GM)

25@480: Cabinet approves Syria airstrikes motion. Senior military staff accompanying Fallon at the defence committee hearing said the aim of UK attacks would be to hit the Isis leadership in areas where it feels comfortable and secure. (Cabinet supports UK airstrikes with clear goals)

26@500: David Cameron's cabinet has approved a 12-point motion designed to pave the way for Britain to extend its involvement in airstrikes on Islamic State targets from Iraq to Syria. (Cameron's stance is supported)

28@540: The Tory rebels are likely to be strongly outweighed by as many as 60 Labour MPs who are prepared to vote in favour of airstrikes. (60 Labour MPs would support airstrikes, and there is likely similar number of Tory MPs would stand against airstrikes)

32@640, 36@720: A YouGov poll published on Wednesday showed declining public confidence in the case for airstrikes. Last week, 59% of Britons backed the action but now the figure has declined to 48% - this is 5 million voters. (votes of supporting airstrikes declined over a week)

35@700: Wes Streeting, the Ilford North MP… "It's completely inconceivable for anyone to argue that there hasn't been a well-organised, systematic and well-resourced attempt to bully MPs into voting against airstrikes on Syria." (criticising those who stand against UK airstrikes)

37@740: Labour's leader, Jeremy Corbyn, saw

		66 members of his own parliamentary party vote in favour of airstrikes, while 7 Conservative MPs defied the whip to vote against military action. (many Labour MPs support UK air strikes)
		39@780: Syria airstrikes: Miliband attacks 'demonisation' of Labour MPs who support action (Miliband criticises Labour MPs who support airstrikes)
		41@820: Cameron, aware his partisan remarks had infuriated Labour MPs planning to vote in favour of airstrikes, ceded some ground saying: "There is honour in voting for, there is honour voting against. This is about how we fight terrorism not whether we fight it." (a Labour MP justifies supporting airstrikes).
		42@840: He (Corbyn) won over a majority of the shadow cabinet, whose members voted by 17 to 11 against the strikes; he won support among two thirds of Labour MPs, with 66 voting for airstrikes against Isis in Syria; and opinion polls have shown a decisive majority of party members oppose the airstrikes. (Labour party is shown without a united voice towards UK airstrikes)
		44@880: But as he (Corbyn) says, first comes Syria. He pointedly won't criticise the deselection threats made against MPs who used their free vote to support airstrikes. (Corbyn criticises MPs who vote to support airstrikes)
		47@940: In remarks which appear to have been aimed at Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell, who oppose the extension of RAF airstrikes from Iraq to Syria, the former prime minister warned of an "uneasy parallel" with that time. (Blair criticises those who stand against airstrikes)
		48@960: The chairman of the parliamentary Labour party has said it would be dangerous to link the "barbaric" knife attack on the London underground with the decision by parliament to sanction airstrikes against Islamic State targets in Syria. (the chairman shows significance of understanding the situation in specific way)
	Impact of British action	3@38: Speaking on the eve of David Cameron's Commons statement on airstrikes against Isis, Gen Stanley McChrystal said defence

	against ISIL	infrastructure could justifiably be targeted by Britain's enemies. (possible negative consequences of airstrikes)
		4@60: "I do not believe the prime minister's current proposal for airstrikes in Syria will protect our security and therefore cannot support it," Corbyn wrote. (Corbyn criticises Cameron's stance, and raises concerns about the goals of airstrikes)
		5@80: "The RAF has significant capabilities for precision airstrikes, aerial reconnaissance and air-to-air refuelling support," he (Le Drian) says. (RAF has significant role in airstrikes)
		6@100: Cameron accepted the UN Resolution had Chapter VII language, even though it was not brought under Chapter VII of the UN charter, the clearest legal base for strikes. (Cameron highlights legality of airstrikes)
		7@120: And what does the government expect will be the result of extending airstrikes to Syria? (questions around the possibility of extending the airstrikes)
		8@140: Cameron's reply also acknowledges that airstrikes have their limits and that ground troops would be necessary to defeat Isis. (possibility of extending the airstrikes through sending ground troops according to Cameron).
		12@220: Cameron published a written response to the Commons foreign affairs committee on Thursday making his case for airstrikes against Isis. He also told MPs: "I am in no doubt that it is in our national interest to stop them. (Cameron provides values around UK foreign affairs support his argument)
		13@240: Readers' view: airstrikes over Syria will do more harm than good. (negative evaluation for airstrikes)
		14@260: The Times thought David Cameron had made a convincing case for Britain to attack Isis's headquarters in Raqqa but wondered what would happen after air strikes. (concerns of negative consequences)
		15@280: Cameron sets out 'moral case' for airstrikes against Isis in Syria - Politics live. (evaluation for Cameron's statement)
		29@560: He (Benn) said that the UK was already bombing Isis in Iraq and doing "all but" air strikes in Syria (because the RAF is

providing the US and others with surveillance and refuelling support). (the UK airstrikes have ~~effective~~ positive role in attacking ISIL in Iraq)

30@600: Mann said he was on the receiving end of abuse despite making clear he will vote against bombing, blaming inaccurate lists of supposed rebels being circulated among opponents of airstrikes. (Mann shows ambiguity around supporting airstrikes)

31@620: Should Parliament endorse UK air strikes in Syria? In Labour's collective memory, Iraq is the war justified by intelligence twisted into headline-grabbing spin - intelligence that proved to be wrong. (Labour party wonders about the intelligence justification for airstrikes)

33@660: MoD confirms that jets carried out 'first offensive operation over Syria and have conducted strikes' hours after MPs voted in favour of military action. (UK airstrikes began after the debate directly)

34@680: The airstrikes came just hours after the Commons voted decisively by 397 to 223 in favour of military action after an impassioned and sometimes heated debate lasting nearly 11 hours. (UK airstrikes began after the debate directly)

38@760: Ramadan, who works with Raqqa Is Being Slaughtered Silently, a group documenting Isis crimes, added: "The airstrikes have become routine and people believe the international community does not want to end Daesh [the Arabic acronym for the group], they just want to weaken it." (a civilian's view towards international airstrikes)

40@800: Labour supporters and Tory MPs broke convention to clap and shout "more" after Benn appealed to MPs to authorise an extension of RAF airstrikes from Iraq to Syria in response to the "clear and present danger" posed by Isis. (Benn highlights the need for airstrikes because of ISIL's danger)

43@860: David Cameron told the Commons there had been "no reports of civilian casualties", and the defence secretary, Michael Fallon, told the BBC: "Our estimate is that there hasn't yet been a single civilian casualty because of the precision of their

		strikes." (Cameron assures that airstrikes would not have any causalities on civilians) 45@900: Air strikes may be able to "degrade" the enemy but it would be a long, long, war of attrition as £100,000 Brimstone missiles are aimed at Isis vehicles. (the possible cost for airstrikes) 46@920: Britain carries out first Syria airstrikes after MPs approve action against Isis. (UK airstrikes began after the debate directly) 49@980: On 2 December, MPs voted by 397 to 223 in favour of carrying out airstrikes on Islamic State targets in Syria. The Ministry of Defence confirmed the next day that the first strikes against Isis had been taken. (UK airstrikes began after the debate directly "move to internal politics")
International participants		1@1: Obama described the attacks in Paris as an assault on the world itself and claimed that 8,000 airstrikes have pushed back Isis. (two points: the need to stand against Paris attack; and effectiveness of air strikes) 11@200: Airstrikes on Raqqa on Thursday are reported to have killed at least 12 people, including five children, when bombs fell near a school. It was not clear whether the bombs were dropped by Russian, American or French planes. (possible negative consequences of international airstrikes) 21@400: Kurdish fighters say US special forces have been fighting Isis for months. They also said that Russian airstrikes on anti-government rebels are sapping their ability to take on Isis in its self-declared capital, Raqqa. (US fights ISIL and Russian airstrikes have an effect in the region) 27@520: In 2014 the CIA estimated its strength at up to 31,500 fighters in both Iraq and Syria. Since airstrikes began the US says it has killed at least 10,000 militants in both countries. (US has effective role against ISIL in Iraq and Syria) 50@1000: At least 26 Syrian civilians killed in suspected US-led airstrike. (negative consequences for airstrikes in Syria)
Other		20@380: HEADLINE: Truth bombs: eight alternatives to airstrikes on Isis; (suggested alternatives to airstrikes)

Table 2.6: ISIL

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Stances of international governments and their strategies of defeating ISIL	**American stance**	2@66: The US has repeatedly condemned Russia's intervention in Syria for propping up President Bashar al-Assad, whom it says has lost popular support, and for becoming a recruiting tool for Isis. (The US condemned Russian's stance in the region that could strengthen ISIL) 16@514: The US has been bombing Isis for a year and admits that Isis is as strong as ever and has continued recruiting. (America would need support from other countries) 17@546: Hillary Clinton calls for more ground troops as part of hawkish Isis strategy. (Clinton supports ground troops) 31@996: Their orders (US forces near to Raqqa) are to aggressively pursue the Isis leadership, aiming to decapitate its leadership. (forces aim to pursue leaders in ISIL) 46@1512: Obama's speech reminded Americans that the war with Isis is still illegal. (this could highlight Obama's concerns about legality against ISIL) 48@1576: 'Degrade and destroy': a look back at Obama's evolution on Isis. (Obama evaluates ISIL)
	Russian stance	6@194: Putin has said the best way to defeat Isis is to support the "legitimate government" of Assad and not to allow the institutions of state to crumble, as in Iraq and Libya. (Putin calls for supporting Assad to defeat ISIL) 12@386: There is simply no agreement with Putin on what a ground strategy against Isis should look like. (there is no agreement between Russia and UK about the strategy of defeating ISIL) 14@450: On Thursday, France and Russia agreed to exchange intelligence on Isis and other rebel groups to improve the effectiveness of their bombing campaigns in Syria, after talks between Hollande and Vladimir Putin in Moscow. (agreement between France and Russia about the strategy of defeating ISIL)

		15@482: Russian prime minister Dmitry Medvedev alleged on Wednesday that Turkish officials were benefiting from Isis oil sales… (Russia accuses Turkey for buying ISIL's oil)
	Others	20@643: As investigations of the most recent French attacks have shown, some of the attackers were recruited and trained by Isis in the Middle East, and their attack was probably conceived by Isis personnel in Iraq and Syria. (fighters of Paris attack came from ISIL, and they are trained in Middle East) 23@739: This has alarmed Turkey, which has its own Kurdish population. In the infamous battle for Kobane, Kurdish fighters resisted Isis with help of US airstrikes, while Ankara stood by and refused to allow Kurdish fighters to cross into Syria. (Turkish negative stance towards the Kurdish fighters) 34@1092: In addition, while the coalition campaign has been effective in helping local ground forces retake lost territory - including the destruction of Isis forces last year at the Kurdish border town of Kobani - they failed to stop Isis conquering the historic city of Palmyra. (the coalition has achieved some goals but also failed to defeat ISIL as a whole) 38@1222: With Germany playing just a supporting role, and the continent facing multiple crises, the war on Isis could define how Europe rebuilds itself. (the decision towards defeating ISIL reflects the situation of European countries)
UK stance and local context	**Evaluating the effectiveness of military action against ISIL**	1@34: HEADLINE: Five tests for action in Syria that fail the challenge of beating Isis. (military action will not achieve the goals) 5@162: Writing in the Telegraph, Hague argues that the destruction of Isis would require a military presence on the ground "where state failure has allowed a terrorist organisation to roam free". (ground troops are needed to prevent ISIL's prevalence) 7@226: Le Drian writes: "Just like France, the United Kingdom is working to defeat Isis, training local forces, striking targets in Iraq and providing vital intelligence support. (criticising UK participating in Syria) 8@258: Again, it is plausible that hitting Isis

| | | | bases disrupts terrorist plotting, not least by killing potential plotters, but airstrikes are a blunt and unproven instrument on that front. (military action is significant to destroy disrupt terrorist plotting, but it is unproven instrument)
18@578: Do those in favour of bombing Isis in Syria therefore also support extending further assistance to the Syrian opposition, even to the extent of arming them? And how would such a move avoid drawing the UK deeper into the Syrian civil war, with all the risks this would run of direct conflict with Russia and Iran? (concerns about the effectiveness of UK bombing)
21@675: Defeating Isis won't make terrorism go away… Before Isis, there was al-Qaida and before that there was Hezbollah and Hamas... and before that there was Abu Nidal, Black September and various other PLO factions. And it's not just Islam. (military action will not defeat terrorism)
24@771: Last night Clive Lewis, a Corbyn-supporting Labour MP, said that any of his colleagues who voted for air strikes against Isis in Syria would have to take the blame if there were further terrorist atrocities. (Mr Lewis puts blame on MPs towards any possible backlash because of military action)
25@803: David Cameron will stage a Commons vote on Wednesday on whether to extend UK airstrikes against Islamic State targets to Syria, meaning that RAF crews could be bombing the Isis headquarters in Raqqa by the end of the week. (RAF airstrikes in Syria is imminent)
26@836: HEADLINE: David Cameron: it is Britain's duty to attack Isis in Syria; (Cameron evaluates UK's stance towards participating in Syria)
28@900: Al-Monitor reports that the senior military leadership of Isis has already moved from Syria to Libya. (military airstrikes might not be effective because of the ISIL's movement in the region)
29@932: Tornado fighter bombers have been attacking Isis targets in Iraq since September last year, when MPs gave the green light for airstrikes. (RAF has achieved goals since airstrikes started in Iraq) |
|---|---|---|---|

		30@964: There is a plan of sorts - helping both the Iraqi army and the Kurds - for retaking Iraqi territory held by Isis. (possible action in Iraq) 39@1254: MPs' committee says… We can put pressure on countries which allow TV stations to operate that support Isis. And we can work with Turkey to strengthen monitoring of its border with Syria, through which personnel. (a suggested path by MPs' committee) 43@1416: But Cameron, in striving to convince MPs to back his call for airstrikes against Isis in Syria, used it anyway by telling the Commons that "around 70,000 opposition fighters" were on the ground ready to attack Isis following British bombing attacks. (UK would focus on airstrikes to defeat ISIL)
	Representing leaders' stances around the debate (internal politics)	3@98: Ben Page, chief executive of Ipsos Mori, said: "The main issue with this poll is the reporting, which made it appear that one in five of those sampled supported Isis, when in fact they were expressing sympathy with people going to fight in Syria, as I understand it… (issues around reporting the situation in Syria) 11@354: In particular, they want an explanation from Cameron about his claim that around 75,000 moderate rebel troops could be ready to secure the territory if Isis is defeated, and an explicit promise that there will be no boots on the ground. (the situation of moderate rebels has to be justified by Cameron) 22@707: Cameron made an appeal to MPs across the House of Commons to support him in his attempt to defeat Isis as part of what he described as a "broader strategy" to build a political settlement in Syria. (Cameron's claim towards supporting military action) 33@1060: Other former ministers usually associated with Labour's Blairite wing - Liam Byrne, Ivan Lewis - made equally cogent cases against action, prefacing their remarks with denunciations of Isis before querying the viability of a government plan that appeared long on moral purpose but short on strategic clarity. (Byrne and Lewis criticise the logic of government plan) 35@1124: She (Margaret Beckett, former

		Labour cabinet minister) also said the UN had urged states to combat Isis "by all means". (MRs Beckett supports military action)
Threat of ISIL		4@130: One of its key aims, after all, is to separate western societies and their Muslim communities: if Muslims are left feeling rejected, besieged and hated, Isis believes, then the recruitment potential will only multiply. (ISIL would take advantage for the situation of Muslims in western societies)
		10@322: Islamophobia plays right into the hands of Isis (ISIL exploits the situation in the region)
		32@1028: Isis was created six months after the start of the invasion: it is Bush's baby. (existence of ISIL shown as a result of Bush's war in Iraq)
		37@1189: At the moment, there's no evidence Isis directed the couple to launch the attacks, officials have told media, remarking that "we believe they were more self-radicalized and inspired by the group than actually told to do the shooting". (even when ISIL is causing threat, there are doubts about their participating in attacks)
		40@1286: For more than a year both (Maqdisi and Abu Qatada) say they have worked behind the scenes, negotiating with Isis - including with Baghdadi himself - to bring the group back into the al-Qaida fold, to no avail. (attempts to make ISIL be under al-Qaida and within the group)
		41@1351: Before any deal could be brokered, the Jordanians instructed Maqdisi to obtain proof that the pilot was still alive. In response, the Isis negotiators sent Maqdisi an electronic file that they claimed would provide proof of life - but the file was password protected. (long evaluation for ISIL in the region, and their deal with Jordan about the arrested pilot)
		42@1384: Other parts of this strategy include finding ways of stemming the flow of foreign fighters, who have joined Isis from 100 countries: sealing the border with Turkey would help. (foreign fighters join ISIL through Turkish border with Syria)
		44@1448: A video circulates online depicting the beheading by Isis militants of American journalist James Foley. (American journalist

		as a victim by ISIL) 45@1480: In trying to assert its jurisdiction across what were once two separate countries, Isis is engaged in a programme of unification. (ISIL tries to appear as united community) 47@1544: The Isis papers: leaked documents show how Isis is building its state. (ISIL would threaten the world by its intentions)
Syrian people		19@611: Free Syrian Army (FSA)… ""Fighting Isis is about 50% of our job, because we are fighting on two fronts. Once we finish one side we will be free to fight the other." (they suffer from fighting Assad regime and ISIL) 27@868: Syrian fighters… "We will not beat Isis if we waver in our view that ultimately Assad must go." (Syrian fighters put their priority to defeat Assad first) 36@1156: Such a future would require a peace settlement between President Bashar al-Assad's Syrian army and the Free Syrian Army, freeing them all up to unite in the fight against Isis. (the need of coalition between Assad regime and Free Syrian Army) 49@1608: Rami Abdel Rahman of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Isis is in control of Al-Khan but is only on its outskirts, "which is why all of the deaths were civilians". (Syrian civilians suffer from ISIL) 50@1640: It portrays Isis as the main threat to Syrians, despite Assad killing at least six times more civilians. (Syrian civilians suffer from ISIL in addition to the negative role of Assad regime)
Others		13@418: They (Choudary and Rahman) are both charged with inviting support for the banned terror group Isis between 29 June 2014 and 6 March 2015, by posting on social media. (some UK citizens support ISIL, and this can show security issue) 9@290: Lavrov has backed Hollande's proposal to close off the Syria-Turkey border, considered the main crossing point for foreign fighters seeking to join Isis. (Syria-Turkey border is the main access for foreign fighters join ISIL)

Table 2.7: Iraq

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
UK stance and local context	**Effectiveness of British intervention**	11@148: So when Isil are driven out (by whom?), who occupies the land taken back? It's relatively simple in Iraq but horrendously complex in Syria. (after the attack, it is difficult to manage the situation in Syria)
		24@322: He (Benn) said that the UK was already bombing Isis in Iraq and doing "all but" air strikes in Syria (because the RAF is providing the US and others with surveillance and refuelling support). (UK airstrikes have positive effect through supporting allies)
		25@335: Jonathan Powell… If I were an MP I would vote for bombing in Syria as in Iraq. But I would also want to know who is really going to provide the boots on the ground to fight Isis; and be assured of a serious political strategy to address Sunni grievances in Iraq and Syria. (Jonathan supports action with conditions)
		26@349: He (Cameron) also said it made "no sense" for the UK to respect the border between Iraq and Syria when Isis did not. (UK airstrikes should be extended to Syria because UK deals with ISIL rather than borders)
		29@389, 41@550: Ministers, relieved by the diplomatic leverage given to Britain by the large Commons vote, admit the key domestic political risk is that the RAF becomes committed to a long bombing campaign in Iraq and Syria without a parallel diplomatic process that would create a viable ground force in Syria. (concerns about bombing that may take long time without diplomatic solution)
		30@402: Fallon said the raids targeted the Omar oilfield in eastern Syria, dealing a "real blow" to the financing of Isis and confirmed that he personally approved the targets in the Omar oilfield before Wednesday night's House of Commons vote, and gave final permission for the raid to go ahead after MPs had given their

		approval for the extension of airstrikes from Iraq into Syria. (there were effective airstrikes before the vote, and then they are legitimised after the debate)
		32@429: The UK has 200 troops in Iraq. (number of troops in Iraq)
		33@442: Taking back Iraq and Syria and reducing the influence of Isis elsewhere around the world is going to be hard and bloody. (achieving the goals of military action is difficult)
		35@469: "The current campaign has not been doing much to root out Isis beyond containing it militarily in some areas in north-eastern Iraq and Syria," said Hassan Hassan, associate fellow at Chatham House and co-author of a bestselling book on the group. (airstrikes are not effective)
		36@482: Other speakers included Peter Brierley, whose son, L/Cpl Shaun Brierley, died in Iraq. "We are coming up to Christmas. We are going to have packed shopping malls and little children going out on to the streets," he said, warning of possible terrorist attacks on the UK in retaliation for airstrikes. (warning from backlash because of UK airstrikes)
		42@564: The Commons vote enabling British pilots to bomb targets across the border in Syria as well as in Iraq was significant politically and diplomatically (especially in face of appeals from the French government). It will not make our streets any safer. (UK airstrikes may have a backlash)
	Internal politics and leaders' conflict around making the decision.	4@53: In Britain, a vote of MPs is due next week on the extension of airstrikes from Iraq to Syria. (the time of the vote)
		10@134: In the light of all this history, the prime minister's push to extend British bombing into Syria was always likely to cause Labour pains. The divisive legacy of Iraq made it certain. (the motion of PM would cause division within Labour party)
		27@362: The row erupted before Wednesday's scheduled 10-and-a-half-hour House of Commons debate on whether to authorise the RAF to extend its airstrikes against Islamic State targets from Iraq to Syria. (the time of the debate)
		37@496: The Labour leader struggled in his

		own speech as he refused under challenge from his own side to say whether he still opposed airstrikes not just in Syria, but in Iraq as well. (it was not clear that Corbyn if he still stands against airstrikes in both countries: Iraq and Syria) 44@591: The Labour leadership dismissed Blair's remarks, which echoed comments he made on the eve of the Iraq war in 2003. (Cordyn stands strongly against intervention) 49@656: They remember that Charles Kennedy was somewhat bounced into his position against the Iraq war by the party's federal executive. They also note that Tim Farron did not actually consult the federal executive or policy committee this time. (conflict among leaders towards the decision)
Relationship between previous interventions and current campaign		1@13: Instead we'll probably see our esteemed leaders marching as to war into Iraq and Syria, thereby repeating the mistakes of recent Middle East history. (dealing with previous attacks as mistakes) 3@40: Just one, passionate plea: if we must go in, let us remember the lessons of Tony Blair's catastrophic interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq - and Mr Cameron's own ill-fated bombing of Libya. (it is essential to think about previous mistakes before going to this conflict) 6@80: The removal of Saddam Hussein in Iraq and Muammar Gaddafi in Libya are not models for the advance of peace and democracy in either of those countries. (previous actions did not achieve the goals) 7@94: Even today, what remains of Iraq is a basketcase of blood and war and a school of festering hatred. (negative consequences of previous actions) 12@161: In Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya, windy rhetoric and strategic waffle have substituted for rational argument. Cameron's statement yesterday, full of talk of values, ways of life and examined consciences, was a classic of the genre. (previous action legitimised by the use of rhetoric) 13@174: It can also be tempting to think, especially in a media and online culture that so disdains politicians, that the MPs have learned nothing from the experience. From Afghanistan to Iraq and Libya to Syria, MPs

have had to grapple with the risks each time. (MPs have not gotten the experience of pervious actions)

14@188: British troops have been discredited after Iraq and Afghanistan, Labour's Ken Livingstone has said, causing fresh controversy following his comments on the London 7/7 bombings. (British troops did not achieve the goals of previous attacks)

17@227: Tony Blair's big lie, before the war in Iraq, was that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. David Cameron's big lie is that there are 70,000 "moderate" Syrian ground troops (Blair and Cameron created lies to legitimise military action)

18@241: Islamic State and associated franchises are certainly engaged in asymmetrical forms of warfare against us and have been since well before Tony Blair learned where Iraq was on the map. Islamist supremacist fantasy has a long pedigree. (general talk about the role of Islamic State)

19@254: It haunts leadership contests still (Jeremy Corbyn may have been a backbencher, but he was also national chair of the Stop the War Coalition). "Iraq" is shorthand for national shame. (Corbyn criticises the previous Iraq war, and it is shown as a shame)

22@295: She (Eliza Manningham-Buller) added: "Although the media has suggested that in July 2005, the attacks on 7/7, we were surprised these were British citizens, that is not the case because really there had been an increasing number of British-born individuals living and brought up in this country, some of them third generation, who ... saw the west's activities in Iraq and Afghanistan as threatening their fellow religionists and the Muslim world." She added: "So it undoubtedly increased the threat.". (Terrorist attacks can be regarded as a backlash of Britain's invasion in the region)

23@308: Admittedly, the bar is higher now, the public more sceptical after Iraq than before. But as things stand, we believe MPs should say no. (the MPs should reflect the voice of the public scepticism)

28@376: In Labour's collective memory, Iraq is the war justified by intelligence twisted into

		headline-grabbing spin - intelligence that proved to be wrong. (the main mistake of Iraq invasion)
		34@455: Blair… because we can't intervene everywhere that's no reason not to rescue people from oppression when we can - but he soon found how hard it is to know when we can: good quick wins in Kosovo and Sierra Leone misled him into the Iraq catastrophe with these unending consequences. (Blair's stance evaluated negatively)
		38@509: officials in the Ministry of Defence were concerned that the claim would be a hostage to fortune and would revive memories of the 45 minutes claim in the Downing Street dossier in September 2002 that preceded the Iraq war. (concerns about repeating the mistakes).
		39@523: Shehzad Tanweer, one of the bombers, cited injustices in "Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq and Chechnya" in his suicide video… To my surprise, Livingstone concedes the point. "Not the only one. If you look now at what motivates men to go off and fight in Syria with Isis, I'm sure the endless horrors between Israel and Palestine, all the other interventions - it's not just that this started with Afghanistan and Iraq. (evaluating negatively UK's interventions to other countries, and the importance of understanding all aspects about the reasons behind terrorism)
		43@577: Have we not learnt our lessons from military intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan? Escalation is not the solution, it merely fans the flames of an already explosive situation. (UK airstrikes may have a backlash)
Evaluation for ISIL		2@26: Liberals decry the instinctual Islamophobia of populists. But their solution is to organise a reasonably invisible Islamophobia that lets Syria and Iraq burn out of sight while they obsess over Isis which, apparently weak, is still strong enough to know every single one of their minor racisms and transgressions. (ISIL may appear as weak, but fighting them is complicated issue)
		9@121: Isis will continue to try to launch attacks against the UK whether or not we

		are involved in the air campaigns in Iraq and Syria. (ISIL would cause threat for UK whether Britain would participate in attacking ISIL or not) 31@416: Isis seized the oil fields, Syria's largest, during its surge into Iraq last summer. (ISIL has become stronger and more dangerous in the region) 40@536: In fact, al-Qaida's main branch in the Middle East, the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). (ISIL is al-Qaida's branch in the Middle East) 48@644: One in seven is a woman, while women were rarely if ever represented in the ranks of earlier jihadis. The average age is only 24, with one fifth teenagers, and about a third had been active online. Almost half of the male foreign fighters to have gone to Syria and Iraq have been killed. (number of ISIL fighters killed in the region) 50@682: Al-Qaida in 2001 was a tiny cell in an Afghan mountain. By overreacting, the west turned it into a global force. It proceeded to sow anarchy across Afghanistan and Iraq and then attempted, after 2012, to destabilise President Assad in Syria. (terrorist groups appear in anarchy)
International affairs		5@67: General John Allen, who was in overall charge of the US campaign in Syria and Iraq, has quit after a year. (US action in Syria and Iraq shown as the reason for John to quit) 8@107: The US-led coalition engaged in air attacks in Syria and Iraq had by the middle of last month conducted 7,600 attacks (4,900 in Iraq and 2,700 in Syria). Their main problem is finding targets to hit. (the main problem faces US-led coalition) 16@214: Yanis Varoufakis… "From a European perspective, we have a lot to answer for. Countries such as Iraq and Syria are creations of western imperialism and the cynicism of the west's treatment of the region in the past has caused a backlash. (the situation of the region is a result of West's role) 20@268: Meanwhile, the US defence secretary, Ash Carter, announced that a permanent new US "expeditionary" force would operate independently of local troops in Iraq and Syria for the first time. (the high

		possibility of US to participate with troops) 21@281: Joseph Dunford, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, also revealed that he was encouraging US military commanders in Iraq to go beyond the president's current force limit of 3,500 troops in the country. (Joseph encourages US to increase the number of troops in Iraq) 45@604: He (Obama) insisted the current mix of airstrikes, support for local allies, diplomacy and a steadily increasing use of US special forces was the best way to defeat the threat in Iraq and Syria in a way that did not further radicalise Muslims living in the west. (Obama suggests not only depending on airstrikes while there are other strategies should be applied) 46@617: US president backs existing collaborative strategy to battle Islamic State in Iraq and Syria in rare national address from Oval Office. (there could be some changes on the path of attacking ISIL)
Others		15@201: The vast majority of migrants arriving from Turkey are from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, few of whom qualify as "illegal migrants", are eligible for asylum in Europe and cannot be deported. (several migrants from the above-mentioned countries) 47@631: British weapons sales were sold to Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Qatar, Iraq, Egypt, Kuwait, and Lebanon. (sales of British weapons)

Table 2.8: Bombing

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Local context of UK	**Evaluating the effectiveness of bombing either positively or negatively**	1@3: the government will pretend we are still a world power and try to look strong by bombing people at no real risk to the lives of our military personnel; more people will be radicalised, abroad and at home (negation of the Government's claim and highlight the possible negative consequences)
		2@13: YouGov also asked about Britain taking part in air strikes against Islamic State in Syria. A majority of adults (58%) are in favour, and 49% of Labour voters support bombing. (general British support for bombing).
		3@23: And let's be realistic - bombing will achieve little or nothing without boots on the ground to enforce a settlement. (limitation of bombing alone)
		4@33: Dave thought he should make his position a little clearer. "There is no point in bombing Syria," he explained gently, "unless afterwards we can help establish a democratic government in the region… (Dave highlights the need for diplomatic solution)
		5@43: It continues: "The alternative to more bombing is to accelerate the Vienna talks, under the auspices of the UN (diplomatic solution is alternative for bombing)
		10@93: We're already bombing Daesh in Iraq: why not extend it to Syria now that we have UN authority? (bombing is supported by UN)
		11@103: How will anyone decide when the bombing should stop? When all the towns the jihadis have been hiding in are reduced to rubble? When Isis leaders come out waving white flags? (questions about the validity of intervention)
		12@113: The refugee crisis is inherently linked to solutions towards peace and also Isis. Bombing Syria is like killing a mosquito with a bulldozer. (criticising the military strategy)
		13@123: Bombing is vanity on our part, gives status to murderous cults, directs effort away from a political way forward and

money away from a humanitarian response to relieve Syrian suffering. (negative consequences of bombing)

16@153: She (Daisy) said she was worried that bombing in Syria would foster greater division among British society. (bombing will have direct negative impact on British society)

17@163: McDonnell… "I believe that, actually, the solution in Syria, and in Iraq as well, is in the hands of the regional powers. The bombing will ensure those regional powers will not step up to the plate." (alternative to bombing).

18@173: In the name of enlightened atheism, you thus arrive at an old-fashioned imperialism: the people we just happen to be bombing are simple-minded savages, impervious to reason and civilisation. (the need for bombing in the region)

21@203: It is essential, before the vote on extending UK bombing to Syria, for the government and those members of the shadow cabinet and Labour party who support this, to clarify their position on the clear consequences of such a move. (the need for considering the possible negative consequences)

22@213: Bombing Isis oil infrastructure is already hitting its financial base, Hassoun said… (bombing oil infrastructure as a solution)

25@243 MSF, which operates and supports a number of health centres and field hospitals in Syria, said the attack bore the hallmark of a double-tap strike, whereby the first bombing is followed by a second one after paramedics have arrived to help the victims. (the negative impact of bombing on paramedics who attempt to help the victims)

26@253: The government is planning to hold a Commons vote on Wednesday on extending Britain's bombing campaign against Isis from Iraq to Syria as public alarm about the extremist group's continuing strength increases in the wake of the attacks in Paris. (the Government's case, and the British public concerns of any backlash)

27@263: I should imagine the security services are warning the prime minister that we are already at risk and that this bombing

exercise will almost certainly heighten that risk. (security services warn about the risk of military action in Syria)

29@283: And if the argument is that Isis will attack us here because we start bombing them in Syria, but not because we've already been bombing them in Iraq for a year, then that is absurd. (negation of the negative consequences and possible backlash)

31@313: In the light of that record of western military interventions, UK bombing of Syria risks yet more of what President Obama called "unintended consequences". (the risk of unintended consequences)

32@323: Cabinet ministers have warned in the aftermath of the first RAF Tornado bombing raids in Syria that it may take as long as two years to destroy Islamic State. (military action would take long time)

34@343: If advocates of intervention do not agree with the Labour conference's condition of "clear and unambiguous authorisation for such a bombing campaign from the United Nations", then they should simply say so, rather than trying to distort the very clear legal picture. (bombing might be illegal action).

34@353: "Just bombing Isis in Raqqa from the sky will not defeat Isis but it will make people suffer more," (the negative impact of bombing on people in the region)

36@363: The Daily Mirror was entirely unconvinced by Cameron's case for war: "None of the objections to bombing Syria have vanished and none of the questions about holes in the long-term strategy have been answered." (the plan of bombing Syria is not clear)

37@373: A bombing strategy will above all hit Syria's population. This will fill Isis fighters with joy (Syrian civilians are the victims of any bombing)

39@393: Activists and experts maintain that yet another force bombing the militants will do little if it is not part of a broader strategy to address the threat of the terror group and the violence perpetrated by the regime of the president, Bashar al-Assad. (bombing would not do anything alone)

40@403: A coalition action that rests wholly on bombing, they say, will have little effect.

		(bombing may not achieve the goals)
		43@433: In one of her (Raghat) last photographs, she holds a lit torch, and video her uncle says was shot soon after the bombing shows flames raging through the house against a dark sky. (bombing ~~could participate~~ had participated in civilian casualties)
		44@443: Cabinet ministers have warned in the aftermath of the first RAF Tornado bombing raids in Syria that it may take as long as two years to destroy Islamic State. (bombing may take a long time to achieve the goals)
		45@453: Then it asked two pertinent questions: "When does British bombing end? When can victory over Isis be declared?" (bombing may take a long time to achieve the goals)
		47@473: They are grateful for low cloud and, preferably, rainy days which discourage the bombing, much as besieged people always calculate, including Britons in the Blitz. (the bad situation for civilians in the region and British forces)
Internal politics		6@53: The SNP is sceptical about the need for UK involvement in the bombing of Syria and likely to vote against. (the SNP would vote against bombing)
		7@63: The party (Liberal Democrats) wants the government to meet five tests before it will agree to back the bombing (the Liberal Democrats sets conditions before any intervention)
		8@73: Then David Cameron is making his Commons statement making the case for bombing Islamic State (Isis) in Syria. (situation of Cameron to introduce his case)
		9@83: In contrast, when the Labour leader wrote to MPs on Thursday to set out his opposition to British bombing, he was enunciating a position that was out of step with most of the views that had been expressed at that day's shadow cabinet (the division among the Labour party)
		14@133: Meanwhile, the prime minister is trying to add to pressure on Labour MPs to vote in favour of extending the bombing campaign. (Cameron attempts to persuade MPs)
		15@143: By contrast, Maguire - characterising those in favour of bombing as members of a

			"Start the War Coalition" - rejected the argument for British air strikes. (criticism for those who support bombing)
			19@183: Jeremy Corbyn has warned plotters against his leadership that he is "not going anywhere" over his opposition to bombing Syria, as he urged MPs to listen to the Labour membership. (Corbyn attempts to persuade the MPs)
			20@193: Diane Abbott, the shadow international development secretary, and Jon Trickett, shadow communities secretary, both spoke up in favour of making it clear that Labour policy was against bombing. (standing against bombing)
			23@223: The Labour leader will also press Cameron to delay the vote until Labour's concerns about the justification for the bombing are addressed. (Corbyn's attempts to negate Cameron's case)
			24@233: David Cameron has failed to show that bombing Syria would work. (Cameron failed to justify bombing in Syria)
			28@273: David Cameron seems certain to win, and RAF jets are expected to launch bombing raids later this week. (Cameron seems certain to win)
			30@303: It is a very unusual format but Corbyn will speak first for Labour to make the case against airstrikes and Hilary Benn will be closing to put the arguments in favour of bombing. (Corbyn's suffering for persuading MPs to support his case)
			38@383: After a long and heated debate, David Cameron achieved a substantial majority for his plan to extend RAF bombing to targets in Syria. (Cameron seems to win the vote)
			41@413: UK decision to join Syria bombing is a boost for Barack Obama (the British decision is a support for Obama)
			42@423: Yvette Cooper had her own peculiar compromise. "How about just bombing Syria for six months and see how much we like it?" she suggested. Brilliant. A special offer on bombing campaigns. Next she'll come up with a "buy one bombing campaign, get one free". (Cooper shows a way of supporting bombing)
			48@483: David Smith, who served in the Royal Green Jackets, said he wanted to express "utter disgust" at what he described as the

		unlawful bombing of Syria. (Smith raises concerns around the legality)
Stance of international participants	**American stance**	33@333: Furthermore, what war against a guerrilla force has been won by bombing? None. America is already conducting more bombing runs then it needs to. (bombing has been increased by America without achieving any goals) 46@463: American warplanes begin bombing Isis militant targets outside the Kurdish city of Irbil on Friday, in the first offensive action by the US in Iraq since it withdrew ground troops in 2011. (describing the American bombing)
	Russian stance	50@513: Regional military officials continue to insist that Russia has focused at least 85% of its bombing raids on the armed opposition to Assad, instead of Isis further east. (Russia claims to defeat ISIL while it works to attack the opposition)
Stance of Syrian people		49@493: At the same time, the naming of Foued Mohamed-Aggad raises more questions over whether the principal western response - the bombing of Islamic State (Isis) targets in Syria - is either appropriate or effective. (Foued raises concerns about the effectiveness of bombing in the region)

The Sun

Table 2.9: ISIL

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Local context of UK	**Evaluating the effectiveness of military action against ISIL**	4@14: The PM announced the dramatic development as part of a huge defence and security shake-up to combat the spiralling threat of ISIL killers. (defeating ISIL is needed because it threatens the national security) 22@92: Gun cops' mock terror blitz in UK PM rallying cry for Syria ISIL attack ZONE (Cameron calls for urgent action against ISIL) 24@101: ISIL is against peace. If we don't act after the Paris attacks, when will we? (the need to attack ISIL, and possible negative consequences of not defeating ISIL) 25@105: By putting greater pressure on ISIL in its heartland of Raqqa we can reduce its ability to launch attacks against the UK and other Attacks - making us safer. (airstrikes would protect the British national security) 26@110: We can do nothing, for fear innocent lives may be lost. Or we can focus on the lives ISIL already take every day and the new horrors we could prevent. (the need for airstrikes against ISIL as it continues to kill people) 32@136: ADAM BARNES St Asaph, Denbighs BOMBING ISIL will not make things worse. (bombing ISIL is not worse than doing nothing against ISIL) 33@139: Providing ground troops to take ISIL territory was a key concern among MPs, so the vacuum from bombing is not filled by the Assad regime or worse. (sending ground troops is a concern among MPs) 34@143: But will any coalition actually be able to "destroy" ISIL and "cut the head off the snake", as the stated aim seems to be? I am doubtful because the tentacles of its brand of Islamic extremism and terror are spread across the world. (the difficulty of achieving the goals) 35@147: The terrorists will use human shields or hide in towns. We may get only one

451

		chance to take out an ISIL leader - we have to take it. (bombing ISIL may have casualties in Syria, but attacking ISIL is inevitable)
		40@169: One Tornado seen returning by The Sun carried a £6million Raptor, or Reconnaissance Airborne Pod, used to capture images of ISIL hideouts. (developed technologies are used to defeat ISIL)
		42@183: The terrible atrocities committed by ISIL are never mentioned. (critique for those who highlight the fears of negative consequences without highlighting the danger of ISIL)
	Internal politics	1@2: Meanwhile, British Prime Minister David Cameron said he'd make his case to parliament on Thursday to join the coalition striking ISIL in Syria. (Cameron urges the parliament to support his case)
		11@45: DAVID Cameron will today set out his plan for bombing ISIL terrorists in Syria. (Cameron will provide his case to parliament)
		15@62: LABOUR was in chaos last night - with Britain just days away from bombing ISIL in Syria. (division in Labour party)
		17@71: Sources told The Sun that despite huge pressure from leftie grassroots campaigners and union chiefs, as many as 80 Labour MPs are ready to back the PM when he puts the prospect of bombing ISIL in Syria to the vote. (majority of Labour MPs would back military action)
		18@75: **HEADLINE**: RAF set to strike ISIL after vote win (RAF is preparing for strikes after the parliamentary result)
		19@80: One senior Labour insider said he feared the number of party MPs willing to back the Government's Commons vote on bombing ISIL in Syria would drop from 80 to 40 if Mr Corbyn enforces a "whip". (large number of Labour MPs would support the case of the Government even when Corbyn enforces a "whip").
		20@84: JEREMY Corbyn was yesterday forced into a climbdown on air strikes against ISIL in Syria - meaning bombing raids could start within 36 hours. (Corbyn did not win the vote)
		30@128: The Labour leader refused to give full backing to the 13-month mission that has

		helped retake nearly a third of ISIL gains. (Corbyn not only stands against attacking ISIL in Syria, but he also calls for stopping the existing RAF bombing in Iraq) 41@178: AS I walked into the voting lobby on Wednesday night, I knew the easiest thing in the world would be to vote against airstrikes on ISIL in Syria. (criticism for opposing airstrikes against ISIL) 46@206: BRIAN ALDEN Bristol I GET so annoyed by people protesting to stop the bombing of Syria. I suggest these protesters go to Syria and march on the streets there to stop the ISIL atrocities and killing of innocent people. (critique of opponents against military action) 47@211: THE demonstrations started even before a plane took off to bomb ISIL in Syria. (demonstrations criticise military action without clear reason).
Threat of ISIL		3@10, 5@18: TWO sons of a nursery school teacher have joined ISIL in Syria after slipping out of the UK. (ISIL has a danger affect upon the ideology of some British people) 7@27: He (Mr Rowley: the police officer) said there were officers in France following the massacre "harvesting information" that could help Britain tackle ISIL radicals. (the high possibility of terrorist attack in Britain, and police officers prepare for any such action) 8@31: Samra Kesinovic, 17, below, and Sabina Selimovic, 16, became ISIL poster girls after their flit in April last year. (ISIL has the ability to affect the ideology of Western young people) 9@36: Aisha told The Sun: "It's really shocking that these women are supportive of ISIL but even more shocking now that I know what ISIL is capable of. (power of ISIL threatens the world) 10@40: You can see that from the polls. You can see it in the number of British Muslims leaving to fight for ISIL in Syria. (reports suggest the high number of people have joined ISIL) 16@66: ISIL are a clear threat to Britain, and have plotted attacks on us from their headquarters in Raqqa, Syria. (ISIL has a direct threat on Britain)

		36@152: Given that ISIL throws gay men off buildings, it is - tragically - hard to see how things could get any worse for them. (threat of ISIL against gay men)
		37@156: Freelance journalist Matt Carr's blog praised ISIL for showing "solidarity with oppressed Muslims". (ISIL shows solidarity with oppressed Muslims to increase their proponents)
		38@160: **HEADLINE**: Bodies of ISIL ...the Kurds 6 fighters were scooped up in a digger hate them too much to touch them 7. (threat of ISIL in the region)
		45@197: A SENIOR ISIL fundraiser has fled Britain to join the war in Syria. (~~Some terrorists travel from Britain to join ISIL, so ISIL could threaten the national security~~ ISIL's power had been increasing)
		48@216: **HEADLINE**: ISIL plans a nation. (the mission of ISIL)
		49@221: It is understood images of ISIL flags and the Paris massacre were found on Mire's mobile phone. (clear signs of ISIL's threat)
		50@226: THE mum of slain ISIL hostage David Haines has died, her family revealed. (ISIL killed a hostage mum).
International participants		2@6: This freedom of movement (the movement of ISIL's members from Turkey to Europe and vies versa) should never be granted to a country that has a large number of ISIL supporters and members. (the situation of Turkey is dangerous because ISIL has the freedom to get access to Syria and Europe through Turkey)
		6@23: As the international fight against ISIL was plunged into a fresh crisis, Mr Putin claimed Turkey has been funding the terror group by buying oil from them. (Putin accuses Turkey for supporting ISIL)
		12@49: The ever jovial Colonel Kharim… "Everyone is fighting us, in Turkey, ISIL here and now the Iraq government won't give us more money." (Peshmerga soldiers suffer from defeating ISIL)
		13@54: On Tuesday, ISIL sent missiles over the makeshift border - a mass of sandbanks and Kalashnikov rifles defined by a 35km mud wall. (ISIL attacks places for Kurds)
		14@58: Colonel Faraho, working in Telskuf, said foreign countries like Ireland need to support the Kurdish forces fighting ISIL on

		the frontline if they want to help people in the region. (Telskuf people seek support from international countries) 21@88, 23@97: WHY does David Cameron, right, want to fast-track Turkey into the EU? Turkey harbours ISIL and allows those wanting to join ISIL to cross its borders. (Cameron wants to fast-track Turkey into the EU that could help to control ISIL) 27@115, 29@123: Why not give Russia all the support they need to crush ISIL in Syria, using the Iraqi border as a demarcation line (a question about the validity of activating the role of Russia to defeat ISIL in the region) 39@164: This (the role of ISIL in the region) may make people more likely to rise up against ISIL when the push to liberate Raqqa and Mosul begins. (people in the region want to defeat ISIL)
Others		28@119, 31@132: DAVID Cameron will now call ISIL by its Arabic acronym Daesh which holds negative connotations in Arabic, referring to "one who sows discord". (How Cameron would call ISIL) 43@187: Also on the wanted list is Abu Suleiman al-Naser, the ISIL military chief and Abu Arkan al-Ameri, a strong candidate to replace Al-Baghdadi. (list of the wanted leaders in ISIL). 44@192: The document said the security services believe he (Mohammed Khaled, 45, the subject of a counter-terrorism finance order) has "gone to Syria in order to engage in terrorist activities". It adds: "His support and funding of ISIL were the basis of the order." (another wanted person)

Table 2.10: bombing

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Stance of UK and its local context	**Impact of British bombing**	1@1: It seems the only action that the UK can take is to join the Syria bombing club. This will inevitably fan the flames and put the UK right in the sights for some outrageous terrorist attack. (UK military action seems as the ideal decision)
		8@15: So will bombing Syria, as the Prime Minister asserts, REALLY make a terrorist attack less likely in the UK? (possible negative consequences of airstrikes are shown to be considered by Cameron)
		9@17: Bombing Syria will kill men who are plotting our destruction. (goals of airstrikes)
		10@19: If bombing Syria is to be more than a political gesture - or "recreational bombing" as one former British ambassador to Syria witheringly put it - then ground troops will have to confront Islamic State on the ground. (possibility of sending ground troops to confront ISIL)
		13@25: The Huffington Post, came after Mr Corbyn said bombing ISIL in Syria would achieve nothing except increasing the chances of a terror attack on UK soil. (debate around consequences of UK bombing)
		15@29: Yup, they're bombing them right now. So we'd be arming and sharing tactics with the very people our coalition partners have in their cross-hairs. (the need for supporting allies)
		17@33: SURELY there's an easy solution to the Syria bombing? Let Britain target ISIL in other countries - freeing the US and its allies for extra raids in Syria. (a suggestion for how the UK should bomb ISIL in Syria)
		19@37: The Prime Minister appealed for support to extend bombing raids from Iraq so Britain can join France and the US in destroying "these women-raping, Muslim-murdering, medieval monsters". (Mr Cameron suggests UK military action will support allies)
		21@41: It came an hour after MPs gave the controversial bombing campaign against ISIL a huge green light with a Commons

majority of 174. (bombing started directly after the agreement of the debate)

24@47: David Cameron appealed for support to extend bombing raids from Iraq so Britain can join France and the US in destroying "these womenraping, Muslim-murdering, medieval monsters". (Mr Cameron suggests UK military action will support allies)

25@49: BRITAIN joined the America-led bombing campaign over Syria www.yesterday.UK war planes targeted an oil field held by jihadists just hours after a decisive vote by MPs for air strikes. (UK bombing started directly after the debate)

27@53: NOT bombing Syria would have only allowed ISIL to expand in the region, then declare their territory an Islamic caliphate. (the need for bombing ISIL)

29@57: ADAM BARNES St Asaph, Denbighs BOMBING ISIL will not make things worse. (there will be no negative consequences more than not bombing ISIL)

30@59: JULIAN FIELD York DAVID CAMERON's bombing of Syria will have no effect because he has no final strategy after the bombing. (the plan would not achieve the goals because of unclear plan)

33@65: HEADLINE: It is tough but bombing is the only way in Syria. (bombing is the only option for UK)

35@69: Bombing may not bring an abrupt end to terrorism but it does stop the perpetrators in their tracks and leave them isolated. (bombing will achieve some goals at least)

36@71: MERVYN NUNLEY Address supplied IT is right that we are joining the bombing operation, but there are still many questions about how this will end. (concerns about the plan of UK action)

37@73: ADAM BARNES By email I AM sure everyone in this country hopes that civilians are not hurt by our bombing in Syria, but we know that they probably will. (public concerns about any causalities due to the British bombing in Syria)

38@77, 40@81: THE prize for the most absurd contribution in the Syria debate goes to the SNP MP Hannah Bardell, above, who warned that "further bombing will only make the situation worse" for the "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex

		community" in Syria. (possible negative consequences) 39@79, 41@83: But the article said Benn "does not even seem to realise" the jihadist movement that spawned ISIL is "far closer to the spirit of internationalism and solidarity that drove the International Brigades than Cameron's bombing campaign". (the need for understanding the nature of ISIL) 42@85: Yes, it is a monstrous group, but that doesn't mean that the best way to eliminate ISIL is by bombing it all over the place. (the need for clear plan to bombing ISIL) 43@87: Bombing other countries fosters a terrorist response. Even terrorists are killed, their ideology can't be defeated. (the difficulty of defeating the ideology of terrorists) 45@91: Bombing Syria will not be without risk. It will not make our country a safer place. (negative consequences for bombing Syria) 46@93: Mr Fallon said the RAF's "full might" had been unleashed in its "biggest night yet" of bombing since the start of raids on Syria last Wednesday. (showing the motivation of UK to bomb Syria) 47@95: **HEADLINE**: 'This is for Syria'; KNIFEMAN KNIFEMAN ATTACKS IN LONDON YELLS YELLS IT'S REVENGE FOR BOMBING. (negative consequences for the started UK bombing Syria) 50@101: DAVID BLEE By email… THERE is a lot of truth in the argument that bombing Syria will make the threat on our streets even greater. (possible negative consequences for UK bombing)
	Internal politics and positions of British leaders	2@3: The PM, who also visited RAF Northolt in West London yesterday, revealed to MPs that he would put his case for extending the RAF Tornadoes' bombing missions across the Iraq border into Syria. (Mr Cameron shows his interest in UK bombing in Syria) 4@7: DAVID Cameron will today set out his plan for bombing ISIL terrorists in Syria. (Cameron will set his plan) 6@11: LABOUR was in chaos last night - with Britain just days away from bombing ISIL in Syria. (division in Labour party) 7@13: The first calls for the Labour leader's head came as the party descended into chaos

over his outright opposition to bombing raids on ISIL. (the division in Labour party against Corbyn)

11@21: Joke Shadow Cabinet members are in open revolt over Mr Corbyn's refusal to back UK bombing raids against Islamic State fanatics in Syria. (Joke Shadow Cabinet members stand against Mr Corbyn)

12@23: But instead of arguing his case against bombing and winning over critics, Mr Corbyn seems to have deliberately stoked divisions inside his own party. (division in Labour party had increased)

14@27: Worried Labour sources said the intense pressure being placed on party MPs could completely blow the Government's bombing raid plans apart. (there is intense pressure on MPs to stand against bombing plan)

16@31: As the Shadow Cabinet meeting began, texts and emails arrived on their phones about the attempt to publicly bamboozle them into blocking the bombing. (the negative evaluation of the Guardian to its representation of bombing ISIL in Syria)

18@35: THE UK voted this week to take on Islamic State by bombing targets in Syria. (the MPs voted to bomb in Syria)

20@39: It was unclear last night whether the RAF jets were on a bombing or reconnaissance mission. (debate around participation of RAF jets)

22@43: A quick straw poll of eight colleagues here yesterday soon turned into a long and involved debate, ending in them being asked to vote Yes or No on a bombing campaign starting immediately. (situation of some MPs in the debate)

23@45: JEREMY Corbyn sparked outrage among his MPs yesterday by signalling he would stop the RAF bombing ISIL in Iraq. (stance of Corbyn towards the vote and Labour MPs)

26@51: But Labour's own chief foreign affairs spokesman Hilary Benn delivered an impassioned speech in favour of bombing, illustrating deep divisions in the party. (Benn supports strongly UK airstrikes)

28@55: KEITH CORNISH Exeter, Devon I AGREE we should be bombing Syria. But why have we delayed for so long? (an MP

		supports bombing Syria) 31@61: Providing ground troops to take ISIL territory was a key concern among MPs, so the vacuum from bombing is not filled by the Assad regime or worse. (concerns of MPs around the decision, and bombing could be the right option) 34@67: ROBIN HOWARD By email THERE are a lot of people who don't want Britain to join in the bombing in Syria. (Howard has received several emails from opponents against UK bombing) 48@97: BRIAN ALDEN Bristol I GET so annoyed by people protesting to stop the bombing of Syria. (strong stance to stop UK bombing of Syria)
	Security issues (should be moves to the impact because this subtheme evaluates the significance of military action)	32@63: A LABOUR MP called in cops yesterday after an online troll threatened to stab him for backing bombing in Syria. (a Labour MP is threatened because of his support for bombing Syria) 44@89: Second, police actions and detective work are useful to intercept terrorists before they strike but that's very different from a bombing campaign. (police detect very well any possible terrorist attack) 49@99: A MAN was charged last night with sending malicious communications to an MP after the Syria bombing vote. (attempts from an obscure person that puts pressure for MPs to persuade them not supporting bombing Syria)
International participants		3@5: During the North London meeting, Saalihah attacked the US-led coalition for bombing ISIL, telling an audience of women and children: "The cowards who are throwing air strikes on to the Khilafah [ISIL] and killing innocent people…" (negative consequences for US-led coalition bombing Syria) 5@9: Vladimir Putin also agreed to hit just ISIL and not civil war rebels his forces have been bombing. Mr Hollande said: "We'll strike only terrorists." (Putin assures the airstrikes of Russia target only terrorists)

Table 2.11: Iraq

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Local context of UK	**Impact of British intervention**	3@5: Home Office counter-terror chief Charles Farr then revealed that 70 British fighters had been killed in Syria and Iraq. (deaths of British fighters in Iraq and Syria) 7@12: TWO RAF jets had to refuse a life-saving mission eight minutes away as it was on the wrong side of the Iraq border. (RAF did a mistake) 10@18: He (Mr Fallon) insisted the RAF was making a difference in Iraq but Britain needed to hit ISIL harder in Syria to "deal with this death cult once and for all". (positive side of airstrikes and the need for expansion of the action) 11@20: Labour MP Stephen Timms was stabbed in the gut in 2010 at his surgery for voting for the Iraq war. (possible backlash of supporting military action) 12@22: The decision is not about declaring war on ISIL. We are at war. The terrorists murder Brits and our jets already bomb them in Iraq. (the need for action and the target is clear) 13@24: Atrocities including 9/11 were organised long before we invaded Iraq. Besides, we are already near the top of the target list, with seven plots foiled in a year. (the UK is targeted by terrorist group even before any military attack) 14@26: After Defence in Cypr Iraq to Syria. Ministry of instructed British pilots Cyprus flying missions over engage ISIL targets in Yesterday's motion also means British troops could be despatched to Syria to train Syrian forces. (possible UK actions in the region) 16@30: Minutes after the result of the debate, MoD instructions were issued to British pilots in Cyprus flying missions over Iraq to engage ISIL targets in Syria. (airstrikes started after the result of the debate) 17@32: In plans that have been in place for weeks, the MOD will swiftly double the number of war jets flying over Syria and Iraq today. (number of jets flying increased from the plan of the debate) 22@42: Crucially, the PM's motion yesterday kept the door open to despatching British

		troops to Syria to train and mentor Syrian forces. (UK action might be extended to train Syrian forces)
		23@44: Royal Air Force planes based in Cyprus carried out the bombings, which focused on Islamic State-held targets in the Omar oil field in eastern Syria, 48kilometres from the Iraq border. (~~some goals have been achieved~~ clear goal had been targeted in Syria immediately after the approval of parliament)
		28@53: RAF crews have already shown in Iraq that they can locate and kill ISIL fighters and destroy their military hardware, so I have no doubt they will continue in the same way. (UK airstrikes will be effective)
		31@59, 34@65: At the RAF base in Akrotiri, Cyprus, two Typhoons armed with four 500lb Paveway IV bombs roared into the night sky towards Iraq and Syria. (the existence of some bombs in Iraq and Syria)
		32@60, 35@66: Two Typhoons armed with four 500lb Paveway IV bombs joined the fight last night over Syria and Iraq. (some bombs in Iraq and Syria)
		33@63, 36@69: one of two Tornados wiped out an ISIL sniper team in Iraq, while another pair of Tornados patrolled eastern Syria. (~~there are some~~ bombs in Iraq and Syria had achieved goals)
		38@72: the buy Britain began military strikes in Iraq in September 2014 at a cost of £200million ((EURO)280 million). It costs £35,000 ((EURO)48,000) per hour to fly a Tornado or Typhoon jet. (the cost of UK airstrikes)
		42@80: Among the pilots is a woman who has been flying Tornado missions over Iraq. (there are women participating in the airstrikes)
		46@87: IT is good that Cameron won the vote to bomb Syria. It made no sense for us to respect a border between Syria and Iraq that I.S. didn't recognise. (Cameron suggests airstrikes prepared to fight ISIL either in Iraq or Syria)
	Internal politics and leaders' stances	4@7: A vote on extending RAF raids from Iraq could follow as soon as next week if enough MPs are won over, allowing bombs to fall within hours. (~~when~~ reporting the beginning of airstrike would start in Syria)

		18@34: JEREMY Corbyn sparked outrage among his MPs yesterday by signalling he would stop the RAF bombing ISIL in Iraq. (Corbyn wants to stop airstrikes not only in Syria, but also in Iraq)
		21@39: His (JEREMY Corbyn) official spokesman said Mr Corbyn believed the strategy for Iraq "is not working". The claim was immediately slammed by No10 and his own backbenchers. (Corbyn attempts to rebut Cameron's argument)
		25@48: The PM first made the full argument for extending the RAF mission from Iraq eight days ago. (Cameron made his full argument)
		26@50: The MoD was also swift to reinforce the extended operation across the Iraq border. (supporting airstrikes in Syria)
	Others	45@85: At least 700 UK-based jihadists have managed to travel to Syria and Iraq to join up with ISIL. (preparation for airstrikes)
Evaluation of ISIL		2@3: "The Islamic State will remain and expand God willing." In another, he wrote he (AN Algerian man has admitted writing online messages supporting ISIL while living in Scotland) was troubled to be "living in a country of blasphemy" and appeared to suggest he would be willing to fight in Iraq and Syria. (stance of an ISIL member)
		6@10: TROOPS holding back ISIL extremists in the Ninevah Plains region of Iraq claim they are fighting for "the whole of humanity" with limited outside support. (ISIL claims that they fight for humanity)
		15@28, 20@37: How do the politicians in Brussels think the Paris killings occurred? With no visa needed to travel from Turkey, ISIL can travel freely from Iraq, Syria and beyond, into the heart of Europe. (How ISIL members could get in Europe)
		24@46, 30@57: SANDRA QUEEN Harlow… They should be called Nisis - Non Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. (naming ISIL)
		39@74: Some Iraqi insurgents who later became ISIL leaders were incarcerated in an American prison in Iraq called Camp Bucca for a few years during the occupation. (some ISIL's leaders were at US prison in Iraq)
		41@78: Mr Fallon… "This is a very real threat to us in Britain and all were inspired or

		directed from Syria not from Iraq…" (threats of ISIL)
		43@82: ISIL makes as much as £33million per month from selling crude oil from the numerous wells it controls in Iraq and Syria. (ISIL gets financial power from oil)
		44@83: ISIL oil production in Syria currently stands at 30,000 barrels per day while between 10,000 and 20,000 were sourced from fields near Mosul in Iraq. (ISIL gets financial power from oil)
		47@89: In countries such as Syria, Iraq, Tunisia, Turkey, Egypt, Nigeria, Kenya and the Philippines, Christians are being slaughtered every day by Islamist extremists. (ISIL and terrorist groups cause threats in the world)
		48@91: Although between 27,000 and 31,000 foreign fighters are now in Syria and Iraq, the 40 who travelled from Ireland has not increased since the summer. (ISIL number from Ireland has not increased)
International participants		1@1: Fighter jets blitzed targets in Iraq in the first sorties from the Charles de Gaulle, newly-deployed in the eastern Med. (France fights ISIL)
		8@14: More than 720,000 migrants - mainly from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan - have arrived in Greece so far this year. (number of refugees from the above-mentioned countries)
		9@16: Turkey - with a population of 75million Muslims, despotic ruler and porous borders with Syria, Iran and Iraq. (negative stance of Turkey)
		19@36: CYRIL GILES By email DO politicians know what they are doing giving billions to Turkey to stem the flow of migrants from Iraq and Syria? Turkey will pocket the money and do little, at best, to secure its borders. (criticising Turkey's role for aiding refugees)
		27@52: The elite Hereford-based unit took a key role in a similar operation alongside its US counterparts, Delta Force and Seal Team 6, in Baghdad in 2006-7 to eradicate Daesh predecessor Islamic State in Iraq. (international actions before years against terrorist groups)
		37@70: if Since last year, the US-led coalition has unleashed 8,125 air strikes in Iraq and

		Syria. (US airstrikes since last year)
Relationship between previous interventions and current intervention		29@55: We do not want another Iraq. It may have been a good idea to remove Saddam Hussein but look at the mess we left behind. It may be the same with Assad in Syria. (the same mistake of Iraq war could be repeated) 40@76: Labour is haunted by Iraq. We are tortured by the mistakes made there and terrified of repeating them. (Labour party does not want to repeat the previous mistakes) 49@93: Wallace… "Close to two million citizens were killed in Iraq and Afghanistan alone between 2001 and 2013, and we have allowed Shannon to be used for that destruction. (number of victims because of previous invasions)
Others		5@9: one of the Peshmerga soldiers… "Everyone is fighting us, in Turkey, ISIL here and now the Iraq government won't give us more money." (situation in the region) 50@95: She (A MUM who plotted to abduct her kids to live under ISIL rule in Syria was facing jail last night) had planned to travel to Raqqa and then Iraq to join her brother, Leeds crown court heard. (displaying the mum's travelling between Syria and Iraq)

Table 2.12: airstrikes

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Local context of UK	**Internal politics and stances of leaders**	5@11: DAVID Cameron yesterday laid out his plans to extend RAF jet and drone strikes to ISIL terrorists in Syria - and triggered a Labour meltdown. (Cameron shows his plan for airstrikes in Syria)
		7@16: If Labour MPs are told to vote in favour of strikes, we would see something we have never seen before: A leader rebelling against his own party. (there could be tension between Labour MPs towards UK airstrikes)
		8@18: LABOUR MPs yesterday urged Jeremy Corbyn to quit as up to 80 prepared to defy him and back the Tories on Syria air strikes. (large number of Labour MPs would support military airstrikes)
		9@21: He infuriated his Shadow Cabinet on Thursday after writing to party MPs to spell out his opposition to air strikes without informing them first. (Corbyn attempts to persuade Labour MPs to support his stance)
		10@23: LABOUR MPs yesterday urged Jeremy Corbyn to quit as David Cameron told aides to plan for a Commons vote on Syria air strikes next Wednesday. (Labour MPs stand against Corbyn)
		13@31: Mr Corbyn will be forced into a humiliating climbdown tomorrow over his attempts to make his MPs oppose Syrian air strikes. (Corbyn seems to be suffering to persuade Labour MPs)
		14@33: This is despite support for strikes yesterday from both Labour's Deputy Leader Tom Watson and former Shadow Minister Chuka Umunna. (debate among MPs for supporting airstrikes)
		15@36: FREE VOTE PAVES WAY FOR BOMBINGS Syrian air strikes could start in 36hrsl Labour divided as Corbyn backs down. (Labour does not have united voice towards the vote)
		16@38: He (Corbyn) backed down after an intense power struggle with his top team to try to force them to block the strikes. (Corbyn seems to be suffering to persuade his party)
		17@41: But the PM refused the demand and

		insisted the long-expected Commons vote to authorise the strikes would go ahead tomorrow. (PM refuses Corbyn demands for his standing against rush to war)
		18@43: In an unprecedented scene, Mr Corbyn will open the Syria debate for Labour by making the anti-war case and Mr Benn will close it by arguing for the strikes. (Labour party seems to be divided towards the vote)
		20@51: Luckily, he (Corbyn) is thought to have been made to pull out of the visit after asking his MPs to vote against airstrikes in Syria. (presentation for Corbyn's stance)
		22@56: And he clashed with his (Corbyn) Shadow Foreign Secretary Hilary Benn, insisting it was wrong to believe ISIL could be defeated through strikes. (Labour party seems to be divided towards the effectiveness of airstrikes)
		24@61: But the Tories' ex-Coalition partners, the Liberal Democrats, revealed their eight MPs would back air strikes. (Liberal Democrats would support airstrikes)
		25@63: The vote comes two years after the biggest humiliation of Mr Cameron's reign in Downing Street, when Labour defeated his bid for air strikes against the Assad regime in Syria. (comparing this vote with the first vote about UK possible action in Syria)
		26@66: BRITISH MPs gave the green light to air strikes on Islamic State in Syria last night after David Cameron told them it was either kill or be killed by the terror group. (strong stance by MPs for supporting airstrikes)
		27@69: Two of the Lib Dems' eight MPs - Norman Lamb and Mark Williams - defied their party whip to vote against air strikes. (some MPs from Lib Dems' would stand against airstrikes)
		28@71: In a second vote last night, a bid tabled by rebel Tory MP John Baron to block air strikes was defeated by 390 to 211, giving the Government a majority of 179. (showing the result of the vote)
		30@76: The PM lost a similar dramatic vote to launch missile strikes on Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in August 2013. (comparing this vote with the first vote in 2013)
		33@84: ADRIAN OTTLEY Southend, Essex

		TWO things should have been required before the politicians started their macho fantasising about air strikes, on the far side of the world, from the rarefied atmosphere of Westminster. (Adrian suggests some points to be clarified, and there is a critique of war) 39@99 AND 43@109: Benn… What a passionate, eloquent and thoughtful speech in favour of air strikes in Syria. (evaluating the statement of supporting airstrikes in parliament) 46@117: That's probably Cameron felt he to come up frivolous claims try to convince parliament to approve the strikes. (evaluation of Cameron towards his support for airstrikes) 48@122: (TOM WATSON) His popularity in the party has taken a pummelling after he voted for airstrikes in Syria, defying his anti-war leader. (Tom's stance in parliament after supporting airstrikes)
	Impact of British airstrikes	11@26: With the backing of the British public and the United Nations, and after a direct appeal for support from our French allies, we must take the case for air strikes very seriously indeed. (the need for UK airstrikes to support allies) 12@28: MPs are expected to vote on Wednesday on a fourpoint action plan. On top of air strikes to degrade the terrorist threat it will include action to combat extremism, diplomacy and humanitarian aid. (degrading terrorist groups is one of the top points of airstrikes) 19@49: A vote to authorise air strikes on Syria will raise the threat. (Negative evaluation for airstrikes) 21@53: Chancellor George Osborne said air strikes could take place within hours of a vote in favour of action. (Osborne shows when airstrikes will start). 23@59: Chancellor George Osborne yesterday revealed the first air strikes could take place within hours of tonight's vote. (Osborne shows when airstrikes will start). 29@74: Mr Corbyn's spokesman also warned air strikes in Syria would increase the risk of an ISIL attack in the UK. (Corbyn's spokesman shows possible risk because of

		airstrikes)
		31@79: BRITAIN joined the America-led bombing campaign over Syria www.yesterday.UK war planes targeted an oil field held by jihadists just hours after a decisive vote by MPs for air strikes. (UK airstrikes target after the vote)
		32@81: Momentum to join the strikes grew after last month's terror attack on Paris in which 130 people were killed. (Paris attack is shown as a reason for supporting airstrikes)
		34@87: The Prime Minister spoke after British pilots launched their first air strikes on the warped movement in its heartlands - hitting one of its crucial cash-generating oil fields. (some goals have been achieved after early airstrikes)
		35@89: Defence Secretary Michael Fallon said yesterday's raid "strikes a very real blow to the oil and the revenue on which Daesh depend. (some goals have been achieved after early airstrikes)
		38@97 AND 42@107: Coalition air strikes have been less than effective in many parts of Iraq because the Iraqi Army has failed to capitalise on them. (talking about Iraq situation, and how that can be similar to the current situation that is extending airstrikes to Syria)
		45@115: the buy Britain began military strikes in Iraq in September 2014 at a cost of £200million ((EURO)280 million). It costs £35,000 ((EURO)48,000) per hour to fly a Tornado or Typhoon jet. (the high cost of airstrikes that show the negative side of extending airstrikes to Syria)
		49@124: Police confirmed they are treating the machete horror - which was caught on camera - as a terror-related attack following Britain's decision to begin air strikes on ISIL targets in the war-torn country. (positive role of police against terrorist attacks)
		50@126: And the situation for Syrian refugees is only getting worse as many who fled the air strikes against ISIL face an uncertain future in Turkey where refugee camps are full. (airstrikes could increase the number of refugees)
	Others	36@91: South London MP Mr Coyle, 36, was threatened by Twitter user Alexis

		(@77_icee) who posted pictures of knives and warned: "u voted for air strikes in Syria, if i see u round ends." (some MPs were threatened after their support for military airstrikes) 47@119: MP Simon Danczuk, left, who received a death threat after voting for air strikes in Syria, urged the leadership to rein in Momentum, the pressure group set up by Jeremy Corbyn. (Danczuk faces pressure after his support for airstrikes)
International participants		1@1: HEADLINE: French respond to ISIL. with jets blitz. (the way France deals with ISIL) 2@3: GEORGE HILL… Did nobody read ISIL's post-Paris statement saying the attacks were motivated by French airstrikes in Syria? If we seek a military solution it must involve a huge alliance including the Gulf states. (the need for international support for airstrikes against ISIL). 3@6: It is the first time a Russian plane has crashed in Syria since Moscow launched air strikes against militants fighting Assad in late September. (a Russian plane has been crashed by fighters against Assad) 4@8: Meanwhile Russian bombers were back launching more than a dozen airstrikes over mountains on the border, escorted by fighter jets. (Russian backlash for the crashed plane) 6@13: Until recently he (Turkish President Recep Tayyip) and Putin had enjoyed close relations, but tensions rose after Russian air strikes on ethnic Turkmen areas in Syria. (the tension between Russia and Turkey had increased after the crashed plane) 37@94 AND 41@104: The first of six Tornado reconnaissance jets will fly to Turkey as early as next week to support US, UK and French airstrikes. (there will be international support for UK's participation)
Threat of ISIL		40@102 AND 44@112: Insisting a big force was set to take ISIL ground was a key claim in the PM's argument for Syrian air strikes. He said the 70,000 fighters were "principally the Free Syrian Army" in a Commons statement on November 26. (Cameron's argument shows threat about ISIL that may control Syria after withdrawn

		of Assad regime)

The Mirror

Table 2.13: ISIL

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Local context of UK	**Evaluating the effectiveness of military action against ISIL**	11@49: Defeat would be a publicity coup for ISIL, he (Cameron) said. (Cameron suggests the positive effect of British military action against ISIL)
		12@53: HEADLINE: Should we start strikes in Syria to target ISIL? (the article suggests defeating ISIL is inevitable option)
		13@57: Not to mention the idiocy of the argument that it's OK to strike ISIL over Iraq but impossible a couple of kilometres to the south in Syria. (rebutting the argument that stands against attacking ISIL)
		14@61: Cameron's strikes on Libya to topple Colonel Gaddafi created a failed state swarming with jihadists. Iraq was a terrible error in 2003 and a midwife of ISIL. (intervention against ISIL will not defeat terrorism, and the past interventions are the reason of existing terrorist groups)
		15@66: We still haven't heard the findings of Chilcot's report into our disastrous intervention in Iraq, the chaotic aftermath of which helped create ISIL (intervention against ISIL will not defeat terrorism, and the past interventions are the reason of existing terrorist groups)
		16@70: Less than half of us support his plan to bomb ISIL strongholds as early as Tuesday. (the result of the Daily Mirror poll suggests most British people do not want to go to the war)
		17@57: HEADLINE: Mr Cameron, if you don't tackle Assad you'll never defeat ISIL evil (the need of a solution for the whole situation in Syria as procedure to defeat ISIL)
		23@101: This we are defending ourselves Is it that there's no 'big plan' to hold ground if/when ISIL is removed? (the need for big plan)
		25@110: If ISIL were defeated we create a vacuum which will surely be occupied by the Syrian tyrant. (defeating ISIL may help

			Assad government to attack civilians)
			26@114: We cannot commit to David Cameron's bombing campaign in Syria. He has offered no clear strategy, no coherent coalition, no credible ground forces and no proper plan to defeat ISIL. (the plan of defeating ISIL is obscure)
			27@119: Those like Jeremy Corbyn who want talks but no military action have lost the plot. People like ISIL do not negotiate. If they stop the killing, then is the time to talk. (negation and diplomacy with ISIL would not work)
			29@127: Every second counts as a £30million Tornado GR4 - capable of firing the deadly Brimstones - races to help friendly forces or to kill ISIL fighters as a terrible battle rages 20,000ft below. (update about the situation and how Tornado GR4 helps allies and attack ISIL)
			30@132: HEADLINE: CAM'S WAR; BRITAIN ENTERS SYRIA CONFLICT MPs back bombing with a majority of 174 RAF jets target ISIL killers in Raqqa (update about the situation and some goals achieved)
			37@164: The incident came hours after his party backed a Commons vote in favour of bombing ISIL targets in Syria. (negative consequences of airstrikes)
			38@168: We are already bombing ISIL in Iraq and so are just as likely to be a target. (the current airstrikes are the same British action in Iraq)
			39@173: Four Tornados obliterated parts of the Omar oil field, near Iraq, just hours after getting the green light to bomb ISIL in Syria. (some goals had been achieved)
			40@178: A Typhoon took out ISIL snipers in Ramadi, Iraq, that were pinning down Iraqi troops. (some goals have been achieved by killing ISIL snipers)
			41@182: We bombed Iraq, with no mandate from the United Nations, because we didn't like the way they were living. Isn't that dreadfully similar to the judgmental mania of ISIL? (possibility of repeating the same mistakes of Iraq invasion in 2003).
			46@205: And it is utterly pointless because this will not defeat ISIL. If that's what it's even about, not just about oil and money.

		(bombing the financial sources of ISIL are not the ideal option of defeating ISIL)
		47@209: During the Commons debate on whether to bomb ISIL I didn't hear any mention of the cost. (the parliament missed debating the cost of attacking ISIL)
		50@224: What is the alternative to bombing ISIL? (the context of this line shows the need for bombing ISIL)
	Internal politics	10@45: Writing to his MPs, the Labour chief accused the PM of failing to outline a "coherent strategy" for defeating ISIL. (Corbyn suffers to unite his party to stand against ISIL)
		21@92: HEADLINE: IT'S WAR; Corbyn is set to give his MPs free vote on Syria blitz PM preparing to launch RAF raids on ISIL thugs in days. (Corbyn gave his MPs free vote)
		22@96: Jeremy Corbyn's decision to offer a free vote on bombing ISIL in Syria removes the immediate risk of Shadow Cabinet resignations. (Corbyn gave his MPs free vote when he faced pressure from members in his party)
		31@136: the majority of MPs, including Labour and the Lib Dems voted to join the French and American bid to crush ISIL in its Syrian homeland from the air. (majority of MPs support action)
		32@141: AFTER 11 hours of fierce debate with passionate arguments on both sides, David Cameron got the go-ahead he needed to unleash RAF warplanes on ISIL targets in Syria. (majority of MPs support action)
		33@145: The Labour leader… "It's hard-headed common sense. It is to refuse to play into the hands of ISIL." (criticising being involved in the conflict with ISIL)
		35@155: RAF jets could now strike at ISIL targets within hours after the majority of MPs, including Labour and the Lib Dems, voted to join the French and American bid to crush ISIL in its Syrian homeland from the air. (majority of MPs back airstrikes against ISIL)
		36@160: The shocking revelations come as Britain joined the US and France to pound ISIL targets in Syria after David Cameron got the go-ahead he needed from MPs to launch airstrikes. (the context of this line suggests the negative evaluation of the MPs

		who support airstrikes in Syria)
Threat of ISIL		1@2: 70 Brit jihadis have died fighting for ISIL. (I put this under threat of ISIL because the effect of ISIL on the ideology of British people is represented as implicit threat) 3@10: Experts believe ISIL is raking in £300million-a-year from oil sales smuggled out along routes established by Saddam Hussain in the 90s. (financial source of ISIL) 18@79: As long as civilians in Syria have to face his (Assad) brutality, ISIL will continue to find a steady stream of recruits. (a reason of the existence of ISIL is the threat of Assad regime for civilians) 19@83: THIS ISIL THE WEEK THAT ISIL… Monday night promises a terrifying showdown as months of simmering tensions erupt in what promises to be a row of epic proportions. (reporting what happened in the day that ISIL promised to be terrifying) 20@88: Paris - like Ankara, Beirut, and the depressingly regular slaughters in Syria and Iraq - is grim evidence that the ISIL fanatics are bloodthirsty, medieval brutes. (brutality of ISIL) 24@105: What is undisputed by both sides in this argument is the grotesque brutality of ISIL. (the various views in Britain towards attacking ISIL agree about the brutality and threat of ISIL) 28@123: Terry Marriott Waterlooville, Hants After the ISIL downing of the Russian passenger jet over Egypt, both President Obama and David Cameron declared this outrage against innocent holidaymakers was due… (ISIL has been threatening people in the world, and the need for action against it) 44@195: If ISIL were going to bomb somewhere the underground would be the ideal place surely? But for a Muslim living in England fear is very real, blame and hate are becoming a reality manifesting in verbal and physical violence. (possible backlash of ISIL, but there is general agreement in the British society about blaming ISIL)
International participants		2@6: There must be more communication and co-operation between all those involved in the fight against ISIL. (co-operation between international participants to defeat ISIL)

		4@14: French jets yesterday destroyed an ISIL command centre in Tal Afar in Iraq, around 30 miles west of Mosul. (French jest achieved some goals in Iraq)
		5@18: WHILE the downing of a Russian fighter jet over Turkey was almost inevitable with the US, French and the Russians launching unco-ordinated airstrikes against ISIL in Syria, we must hope and pray it doesn't represent a serious escalation of the conflict. (the fears of escalation the conflict between Russia and Turkey)
		6@22: But it is more likely that the deaths of the Russian pilot and marine will bring all sides together to try to de-conflict the coalition's missions against ISIL forces. (the issue between Turkey and Russia about the deaths of the pilot will be solved)
		7@27: He (Putin) said the Turkish action came after Russian planes successfully targeted an oil intraframe structure used by ISIL, (Putin accuses Turkey for getting benefit from ISIL)
		8@36: He (Fine Gael Deputy Noel Coonan) actually compared demonstrators to terrorists, claiming the State was facing "what is potentially an ISIL situation" if anti-water rallies continued. (he criticises opponents to defeating ISIL)
		9@40: Special Forces will be on standby as a Combat Search and Rescue force at an air base in Diyarbakir, southern Turkey, just 250 miles north of Raqqa, the ISIL "capital" in Syria. (international preparation for attacking ISIL in Raqqa)
		48@214: He said David Cameron's claim that 70,000 moderate Syrian rebels are ready to fight ISIL may be "exaggerated", adding: "Who else is there? The answer is obvious. There is Assad and his army - and they are making some progress." (the opposition and Assad regime share the ideology of defeating ISIL)
Others		34@150: He (Cameron) also told MPs it was time to start referring to ISIL by the Arabic acronym Daesh - a term the group hates. (naming ISIL)
		42@186: Sources close to the investigation confirmed that they had found a message of support to ISIL chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

		- but did not explain how they knew Malik, 27, had made the post. (investigation about members of ISIL by the FBI) 43@190: High-profile Muslim Dr Raied Al-Wazzan, of the Belfast Islamlic Centre, who drew criticism when he said in a radio interview ISIL had been a positive force in his home city of Mosul, Iraq, was at the event. (Dr Raied's stance towards ISIL in Iraq) 45@200: HEADLINE:… THIS ISIL THE WEEK THAT ISIL… (updating the situation of ISIL) 49@219: HEADLINE: ISIL 'martyr text' to mum identifies Paris killer No 3 (reporting the text of martyr).

Table 2.14: airstrikes

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Local context of the UK	**Internal politics and stances of leaders**	1@3: Insiders now believe well over 100 Labour MPs - around half the Parliamentary party - are prepared to vote in favour of airstrikes in Syria, regardless of Mr Corbyn's wishes. (huge number of Labour MPs would support UK airstrikes) 2@6: David Cameron will tomorrow set out the case for airstrikes before the Commons vote next week. (Cameron provides the case for airstrikes before the debate) 3@8: LABOUR leader Jeremy Corbyn faces a major showdown with his Shadow Cabinet as the party considers whether to back airstrikes against Islamic State in Syria. (Labour party does not have united stance towards UK airstrikes) 4@11: A handful of Tories are opposed to airstrikes so Mr Cameron would probably need support from at least two dozen Labour MPs to get the vote through. (Cameron would need few voices to achieve supporting UK airstrikes) 5@13: ATTACK ON FREEDOM: WAR OF WORDS AS PM SETS STRIKES CASE Flier's account sends tensions rocketing. (Cameron is shown to manipulate others to agree on UK airstrikes) 6@16: But opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn is desperate to persuade his divided party to vote against extending airstrikes on ISIL. (Corbyn suffers to persuade Labour MPs for standing against UK airstrikes) 8@21: Up to 20 Tories plan to vote against extending airstrikes, meaning the PM would need support from some Labour MPs. (Cameron would need support from some Labour MPs to support UK airstrikes) 10@26 AND 11@28: But Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn is desperate to persuade his divided party to vote against extending airstrikes on ISIL. (Corbyn suffers to persuade Labour MPs for standing against UK airstrikes) 12@31: Labour divisions over backing the strikes grew yesterday, with two former ministers calling on Jeremy Corbyn to quit. (Labour party does not have united voice)

13@33: Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond said there was growing "momentum" among MPs in support of extending RAF strikes. (number of MPs who support RAF strikes had been growing)

14:36: No doubt Cameron thinks this will not only help him with strikes on Syria but also build support for Trident. (Cameron is happy to gain this political game)

16@41: HEADLINE: SORT OUT THIS MESS; SYRIA AIRSTRIKES: CORBYN TOLD TO LET MPs DECIDE EXCLUSIVE. (Corbyn is told to not put pressure on Labour MPs in order to choose their choice)

17@43: Mr Corbyn, who is adamant air strikes would be a mistake, is outnumbered in his Shadow Cabinet by as much as five-to-one. (criticising Corbyn's stance)

18@46: Mr Corbyn infuriated his Shadow ministers by agreeing to thinking time over the weekend - then writing a letter to MPs saying he will oppose strikes. (Corbyn would write a letter to support his stance)

20@51: The Mirror told last week how up to half his MPs, including most of the Shadow Cabinet, were considering defying him and voting for airstrikes. (majority of Labour MPs support airstrikes)

21@53: HEADLINE: WAR & PEACE; Corbyn poised to give MPs free vote on airstrikes on ISIL in Syria Move averts mutiny in party amid fears of a leadership coup. (Corbyn is told to not put pressure on Labour MPs to choose their choice)

22@56: He (Corbyn) slapped down hawkish Shadow Cabinet members who considered trying to overrule him and force a whipped vote backing airstrikes. (Corbyn attempts to persuade Shadow Cabinet members for supporting his stance)

23@59: PARLIAMENT will vote tomorrow night over taking Britain to war in Syria as the Labour Party was left bitterly divided over air strikes on Islamic State. (Labour party is bitterly divided)

24@61: To build backing for his position on air strikes Corbyn asked MPs to spend the weekend consulting constituents, and released a poll showing the majority of Labour members oppose military action.

(Corbyn attempts to persuade Labour party to support his stance)

28@71: HEADLINE: JAW JAW... THEN WAR? VOTE...THEN AIR STRIKES COULD HAPPEN TONIGHT Cameron's battle plans are attacked by his fellow Tories Fury after Corbyn is called 'terrorist sympathiser' by PM. (Cameron is criticised by Fury)

29@74: More than half the Shadow Cabinet said they will oppose the air strikes. Mr Corbyn said yesterday: "I think there will be a large majority of Labour MPs voting against the war." (Corbyn suggests the majority of Labour MPs would support his stance)

30@76: Jeremy Corbyn was right to give Labour MPs a free vote on air strikes against ISIL. If he hadn't it would have led to an irrevocable split in the party. (Corbyn did the right option for his party)

34@86: A deeply divided Commons finally voted in favour of airstrikes in a bid to combat Islamic extremists in their own heartlands after the PM convinced enough MPs of the moral case for bombing. (Cameron exploits the division in House of Commons to support UK airstrikes)

35@88: The vast majority of Tory MPs backed air strikes after the PM laid down a three-line whip. (majority of tory MPs supported Cameron's stance)

36@91: Senior Labour figures to vote against strikes included former leader Ed Miliband, Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell and Shadow Home Secretary Andy Burnham. (Some figure Labour MPs stand against airstrikes)

37@93: Labour MP Alison McGovern told Mr Cameron she was thinking of supporting his call for strikes, but declared: "I might not trust the Prime Minister, but the solution to that is in my hands. If I vote for his motion, I want him to know I will be here every week holding him to account. (Labour MP would support Cameron's motion with conditions)

38@98: The shocking revelations come as Britain joined the US and France to pound ISIL targets in Syria after David Cameron got the go-ahead he needed from MPs to

		launch airstrikes. (the vote on UK airstrikes was passed after the majority of MPs voted to back airstrikes) 43@110: SINN Fein's Martina Anderson has condemned the British air strikes on Syria. (Anderson criticises the UK airstrikes) 44@113: I was proud of those Labour MPs who defied the threats this week - NOT because they voted for air strikes but because they refused to be cowed into NOT voting for them by the Corbynista bully boys. (evaluation for Labour MPs who had free vote) 45@115: Now we can add Hilary Benn's brilliant speech in defence of British air strikes on Syria. I don't agree with them and would have voted against it if still in the Commons. (Benn criticises the decision of parliament) 46@118: While 66 Labour MPs may have voted for airstrikes the majority of the Shadow Cabinet opposed them. (Labour party and Cabinet do not have united voice)
	Impact of British airstrikes	7@18: The Prime Minister insisted the nation was duty-bound to extend airstrikes on the jihadists. (Cameron assures the need for UK airstrikes) 15@38: And if British air strikes go ahead, Tornados equipped with them are the best - and least risky - option for our RAF pilots and innocent civilians alike. (using Tornados is the best option for UK and civilians) 19@48: There are those who believe the RAF should join the nations already targeting the Islamic State in Syria. While others warn that such airstrikes would trigger a backlash. (UK airstrikes may have negative consequences) 25@64: Is it that the strikes will make little difference to what the US and French are already doing? No, it will - we have specialised weaponry for targeted attacks on the ISIL high command directing attacks on the west and it will show commitment to our allies. (UK airstrikes is unique and will support allies such as US and France) 26@66: No, come on, let's take a deep breath and be honest about what's really behind so much opposition to air strikes... It's the conflict that dare not speak its name... Tony

Blair's invasion of Iraq. (possible negative consequences of airstrikes)

27@69: There is a danger that airstrikes could embolden support for ISIL rather than reduce it. An unwelcome consequence of military action is we give weight to the warped narrative used to recruit supporters for a "holy war" with the West. (possible negative consequences of airstrikes through increasing the members of ISIL)

31@79: Politicians should remember it is innocent civilians who pay with their lives when terrorists www.strike.No to pointless air strikes in Syria. (possible negative consequences for airstrikes)

32@81: Britain's first airstrikes in Syria became possible as soon as the green light came from last night's Commons vote on extending the campaign against the terrorist group. (the near possibility of UK airstrikes after the vote of parliament)

33@84: RAF warplanes were last night poised to blitz ISIL in Syria after MPs backed David Cameron's call for airstrikes. (UK decision about airstrikes seems to be blitz)

39@100: Cameron put forward a good case for air strikes. If we want to show we are serious about taking on terrorists who have besmirched the good name of Islam, I don't think we have a choice. (Cameron responds to the fears from any backlash for UK airstrikes)

40@103: An MoD… The statement said: "The strikes will have a significant impact on Daesh's ability to extract the oil to fund their terrorism." (UK airstrikes will be effective)

41@105: LABOUR will draw up a new code of conduct to tackle online trolls after MPs who voted for air strikes on Syria were targeted, deputy leader Tom Watson said. (there might be a backlash of the MPs' decision after the vote)

42@108: RAF Typhoons dropped Paveway IV guided bombs on Syrian oil wells controlled by ISIL in a second round of strikes on Friday, Defence Secretary Michael Fallon said. (UK airstrikes work in a good way)

47@120: AIR strikes have pounded several positions in Islamic State's capital Raqqa in northern Syria. (airstrikes have attacked some places)

		48@123: HOW strange that the country has no money to help the needy, yet now Parliament has voted to join air strikes against ISIL in Syria, there is plenty of money for missiles which cost at least £100,000 each. (concerns around the cost of airstrikes)
International participants		49@125: The London Mayor said Assad's troops are the only ground force capable of tackling the fanatics - and that Russian airstrikes are also helping to turn the tide. (A suggestion for making Assad and Russia fight ISIL in Syria) 50@127: As the country's Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu yesterday confirmed the success of the first Syria missile strikes from a submarine, President Vladimir Putin added the missiles can be equipped with conventional and nuclear warheads "which, I hope, will never be needed". (Russia is shown to participate in airstrikes by supporting Assad, and Putin argues that they fight terrorist group)
Threat of ISIL		9@23: So airstrikes on Syria cannot increase the risk to us - we are already at terrible risk. (ISIL has been threating the UK even before any UK action, so it is needed)

Table 2.15: bombing

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Local context of UK	**Evaluating the effectiveness of military action against ISIL**	4@6: A J Cooney, Coventry… We need a coherent global strategy to defeat terrorism, not indiscriminate bombing which does more harm than good. (Cooney criticises bombing ISIL) 6@10: RAF Tornado GR4 warplanes will blitz ISIL camps throughout Syria in intense bombing runs from RAF Akritiri, Cyprus. (Bombing will target ISIL) 14@25: The nations already bombing ISIL don't just want Britain to join them because we would add strength to their alliance. (British bombing will strength the attacks of their allies) 15@27: DAVID Cameron seems poised to be granted his wish to lead our country into another war - this time a terrible civil war - by bombing in Syria. (negative evaluation for UK bombing in Syria) 20@36: This we are defending ourselves is it that there's no 'big plan' to hold ground if/when ISIL is removed? Maybe - and that is essential - but without immediate support for the moderates in Syria, starting with bombing, they're not going to need a plan. (the need for urgent bombing against ISIL) 22@40: DAVID Cameron's "consensus" for bombing ISIL targets in Syria was ebbing away as MPs on both sides of the Commons said the case for war has not been made. (final decision and plan of action has not been made yet) 25@46: BOMBING on its own will not stop the terrorists as they are moving into many countries. (bombing alone is not the ideal way to solve the Syrian problem) 26@48: Military chiefs know bombing alone is not enough to defeat these barbarians… (bombing alone is not the ideal way to solve the Syrian problem) 32@59: POLICE have been called in after Sinn Fein Repubican Youth posters condemning the bombing of Syria were put on an MLA's office. (a youth response to bombing Syria) 33@61: These include the loss of thousands of innocent lives in Syria and the fact that

bombing policies have rarely achieved anything. (negative consequences for bombing in Syria)

35@65: George Sargeson, Hull: Bombing Syria is not the answer. (criticising Bombing Syria)

37@68: Dr Richard House, Stroud, Glos… We are already bombing ISIL in Iraq and so are just as likely to be a target. (if there will be negative possible consequences, that will be because of the early bombing in Iraq not the current campaign)

38@70: The bombing run came as PM David Cameron warned: "We are going to need to be patient and persistent. This is going to take time. (Cameron is shown as to evaluate bombing Syria)

39@72: David Cameron… The sooner British bombing is over the better for Britain and the decisiveness of Parliament's vote should not rule out regular public reviews of military engagement. (UK military action should be soon)

40@74: Or is David Cameron's decision to get the bombing of Syria up to full speed by Christmas the best the state can do to bring flashes of light to our screens? (concerns around Cameron's plan)

43@80: Shadow foreign secretary Hilary Benn makes an impassioned case for bombing ISIL targets in Syria The fact that the British Government wanted to bomb first one side and then the other in the same civil war, and in such a short space of time, illustrates to my mind a vacuum in policy. (how the UK may bomb ISIL in Syria)

44@82: HEADLINE: I fear bombing is just the start of this misery. (evaluating bombing Syria negatively)

45@84: It remains to be seen if this extra bombing will make any difference. I have my doubts. (concerns about achieving the goals)

46@86: I just hope there are no terror attacks in Britain as a result of this bombing campaign. (concerns about backlash from UK's bombing Syria)

47@88: The meter's running and the price will only go up, perhaps matching in Syria the £200million a year cost of bombing the identical £5,000 battered pick-up trucks of

		ISIL in Iraq. (the cost of UK participation)
		50@93: #What is the alternative to bombing ISIL? To let them expand and take over Iraq and large parts of Syria not defended by Russia? And let them declare their territory as an Islamic caliphate… (bombing will save lives)
	Internal politics	1@1: Cameron knows he must convince MPs and the public of his case as he strains to join the bombing in Syria. (Cameron's attempts to persuade MPs)
		3@4: LABOUR leader Jeremy Corbyn faces a Shadow Cabinet showdown as the party considers backing bombing ISIL in Syria. (Mr Corbyn's stance against bombing ISIL)
		8@13: The Prime Minister set out his case for bombing Syria in the House of Commons, convincing some waverers while others want clearer answers about his strategy, goals and exit plan. (Cameron's attempts to persuade MPs)
		9@15: Many Labour frontbenchers want to vote for the bombing raids. (Many Labour MPs would support bombing)
		11@19: Those with a firm view do back bombing by 48% to 30% yet that isn't even a simple majority of the country. (percentage of those who back bombing)
		12@21: But Mr Corbyn faces a revolt Monday when he tries to convince his Shadow Cabinet to oppose bombing. (Mr Corbyn suffers from persuading his Shadow Cabinet)
		16@29: His Labour critics advocating bombing include principled politicians such as Hilary Benn, although suspicion grows he's on leadership manoeuvres as he confirms he's a Benn not a Bennite. (Corbyn's stance is criticised)
		17@30: And the winner of this divide and rule will be Captain Cameron, a Tory leader enjoying a double victory - bombing abroad and destroying the main opposition party at home. (Cameron is the winner for the debate)
		18@32: Although it seems certain Mr Cameron will get enough support for his plan to step up the war on ISIL and extend RAF bombing raids from Iraq to Syria, he faces dissent in his own ranks. (Cameron would win the support for bombing Syria even

			when there are some Tory MPs stand against his plan)
			19@34: Jeremy Corbyn's decision to offer a free vote on bombing ISIL in Syria removes the immediate risk of Shadow Cabinet resignations. (Corbyn would offer free vote for his party to vote)
			23@43: political leaders… We cannot commit to David Cameron's bombing campaign in Syria. He has offered no clear strategy, no coherent coalition, no credible ground forces and no proper plan to defeat ISIL. (not known political leaders show their stance against Cameron's motion)
			27@49: Military chiefs… so unless Cameron has plans to put boots on the ground what is the point in sending our ageing Tornado jets on bombing strikes? (there is no clear reason for bombing ISIL)
			28@51: HEADLINE: CAM'S WAR; BRITAIN ENTERS SYRIA CONFLICT MPs back bombing with a majority of 174. (majority of MPs support bombing in Syria)
			29@53: A deeply divided Commons finally voted in favour of airstrikes in a bid to combat Islamic extremists in their own heartlands after the PM convinced enough MPs of the moral case for bombing. (majority of MPs support bombing ISIL in Syria)
			31@57: None of the objections to bombing Syria have vanished and none of the questions about holes in the long-term strategy have been answered. (concerns around Cameron's plan)
			34@63: When David Cameron claimed those who argued against bombing ISIL sympathise with terrorists, he put his foot right in it. (evaluating Cameron's argument)
			36@67: David Cameron's labelling of anyone who doesn't agree with bombing #Syria as "terrorist sympathisers" is a disgusting remark. (evaluating Cameron's argument)
			41@76: She (SINN Fein's Martina Anderson) said: "David Cameron talks of 'Terrorist Sympathisers' as some form of distorted moral rationale for the bombing of many innocent civilians." (attempts to rebut Cameron's argument)
			42@78: A few short months ago after the election Labour supporters and trade unions

		fell over backwards to support Corbyn to lead Labour and now we see many of the MPs who endorsed him turning their backs on him over his stance on bombing Syria. (Corbyn's stance among MPs) 48@90: It came as frontbenchers warned against culling Mr Corbyn's critics and demanded an end to the trolling of MPs who backed bombing ISIL in Syria. (conflict among MPs towards the decision of UK's bombing) 49@91: Last Thursday's Oldham by-election victory, plus majority support for Mr Corbyn's opposition to RAF bombing raids in Syria (majority of MPs stand against Corbyn)
International participants		2@3: And last week Turkey complained about Russian bombing raids there (Turkish border with Syria). (conflict between Turkey and Russia) 5@8: Are we really surprised that a Russian plane has been shot down over Turkey when there are so many countries bombing in the same place? It was bound to happen sooner or later. (conflict between Turkey and Russia) 7@12: US, Russian and French jets are already bombing ISIL targets there. (international bombing against ISIL) 13@23: Russian bombers are simply dropping bombs on targets, many of them not guided, and Assad's army and air force are barrel bombing anyone who stands in his way. (Russia and Assad regime targets are not precise) 24@44: Russia is bombing non-ISIL groups fighting the Assad government. (Russia bombs any rebels stand against Assad regime)
Threat of ISIL		10@17: After Paris I understand why many people feel like bombing the hell out of ISIL. (criticising ISIL for its Paris attack)
Others		21@38: The Nobel Peace Prize winner urged those gathered to oppose the moves to launch bombing raids on Syria. (urging for support military action) 30@55: "They are in Raqqa right now. How can I carry on exposing my child to severed heads and hanging bodies on a daily basis?' Mr Farron added: "This is not just a case of

		bombing. (not clear representation for bombing Syria)

Table 2.16: Iraq

Theme	Subthemes	Concordance lines (serial number is used to refer to the line within the 50 sample of concordance lines in the excel file)
Local context of UK	**Impact of previous interventions**	5@8: The previous Labour government started all this bloodshed by joining with the US to bomb Iraq. Do the Conservatives want to do the same in Syria? (comparing the stances of MPs between Iraq invasion and current vote)
		11@16: Cameron's strikes on Libya to topple Colonel Gaddafi created a failed state swarming with jihadists. Iraq was a terrible error in 2003 and a midwife of ISIL. Cameron was an enthusiastic supporter of Blair's war. (Cameron has supported military action in each occasion)
		14@20: We still haven't heard the findings of Chilcot's report into our disastrous intervention in Iraq, the chaotic aftermath of which helped create ISIL. (pervious Iraq war can be a reason for creating ISIL)
		16@23: He (Labour MP, Mayor Ken) told BBC Question Time: "I remember when Tony Blair was told by the security services, 'If you go into Iraq we will be a target for terrorism'. (Ken suggests the problem was with Blair but not with the intelligence)
		18@26: This is particularly the case when a series of recent overseas operations in Muslim countries - Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya - had unintended consequences abroad and at home. (existence of terrorist groups can be regarded as backlash of previous western actions in Muslim countries)
		19@28: The approval of a sizeable chunk of Labour in Westminster provides political cover when this intervention goes badly wrong, as it surely will, following Britain's backfiring military excursions into Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya. (Labour party is shown negatively because of its failure for previous interventions)
		22@32: No, come on, let's take a deep breath and be honest about what's really behind so much opposition to air strikes... It's the conflict that dare not speak its name... Tony Blair's invasion of Iraq. (the main

reason for opposing airstrikes is the Iraq invasion)

23@34: Even Jeremy Corbyn said yesterday, the 'ghost of Iraq is still there'. But stop. Just stop. (Corbyn does not want to repeat mistakes of Iraq war)

24@35: Let's get this straight - apart from it being in the same neck of the woods there is nothing, NOTHING similar between the 2003 invasion of Iraq and air strikes on Syria. (the current call for airstrikes is different from Iraq invasion)

25@36: The 2003 attack of Iraq was a pre-emptive strike. Now, it's a defensive strike in response to a string of assaults on us only growing in their brutality. (difference between current airstrikes and Iraq invasion)

27@39: Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990 and nations came together to evict its forces in our last truly successful war. We had a precise aim. (military action at that time had clear aim)

28@41: HEADLINE: Iraq blunder is no excuse for inaction. (previous military actions should not be excuse for not acting)

30@44: We are in the 15th year of the War on Terror. The UK has taken part in wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. Given the current terror threat it is obvious that these wars have not achieved their aims. (previous military action against terrorism have not achieved the goals)

33@51: David Cameron failed his previous bid to pass RAF strikes on Syria in 2013. But the recent ISIL attacks in Paris, which killed 130 and injured more than 350, pushed the Prime Minister into asking for and winning last night's Commons approval to extend Britain's mission in Iraq to include Syria. (Paris attack used by Cameron to legitimise extending airstrikes in Syria)

35@54: Commons Defence Committee chairman Julian Lewis drew parallels with the discredited intelligence in the run-up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq. He said: "Instead of 'dodgy dossiers', we now have 'bogus battalions' of moderate fighters." (showing previous mistake and alleged

		current mistake for supporting military action)
		46@72: The MEP told how recent wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya caused immense suffering. (previous actions have caused suffering)
	Effectiveness of military action against ISIL	7@11: Chemical weapons expert Colonel Hamish de Bretton Gordon, who advises Non Government Organisations in Syria, warned: "If we don't address the complexities that come with attacking ISIL we will repeat the mistakes of Iraq." (the situation has to be considered carefully to avoid mistakes)
		9@13: If Mr Cameron wins, raids in Syria are likely to begin quickly. Britain currently targets ISIL in Iraq but not in Syria. (UK military action in Syria is imminent)
		15@22: British jets currently hit ISIL targets in Iraq, but Mr Cameron wants to widen action and pound militants in Syrian heartlands. (Cameron wants to extend military action to Syria as it is shown the main place for ISIL)
		21@31: HEADLINE: Hitting back at ISIL nothing like Iraq. (concerns about the decision of military action against ISIL)
		26@38: That episode was one of the most awful in this nation's military history. And if there is a ghost now is the time to exorcise it. For if it terrifies us into inaction the toxic legacy of the Iraq war will live on for ever. And costs even more lives. (the need for military action)
		31@45: Now two more Tornado warplanes and six Typhoons are being sent from Britain out to RAF Akritiri in Cyprus, from where the current squadron of eight Tornados is already flying missions against ISIL in Iraq. (the current UK airstrikes doing their jobs in Iraq)
		32@50: Coalition air forces led by the US have conducted airstrikes on ISIL in Syria and Iraq since last September, whereas the RAF has been limited to hitting targets only in Iraq. (RAF had been limited in Iraq territory)
		37@56, 41@63: Four Tornados obliterated parts of the Omar oil field, near Iraq, just hours after getting the green light to bomb ISIL in Syria. (airstrikes started after the

		green light provided by the House of Commons)
		38@59: We are already bombing ISIL in Iraq and so are just as likely to be a target. (there have been several British strikes against ISIL in Iraq)
		42@65: He (terrorism analyst Paul Cruickshank) said: '"Intelligence suggests British ISIL operatives in Syria and Iraq are being tasked to return to the UK to launch an attack. (there could be terrorist attacks in UK after airstrikes in Syria and Iraq)
		44@69: That's (We bombed Iraq, with no mandate from the United Nations) what the UK did in Iraq, alongside the well-known fundamental Christian, George Bush. (negative side of military action)
		50@81: What is the alternative to bombing ISIL? To let them expand and take over Iraq and large parts of Syria not defended by Russia? (bombs would act effectively for saving lives)
	Internal politics	1@2: David Cameron is set to call a Commons vote as early as next week on extending airstrikes against ISIL from Iraq into Syria. (preparation for the vote)
		17@25: David Cameron will call a Commons vote this week so MPs can authorise extending air strikes from Iraq into Syria. (Cameron would call a Commons vote)
		20@29: Although it seems certain Mr Cameron will get enough support for his plan to step up the war on ISIL and extend RAF bombing raids from Iraq to Syria, he faces dissent in his own ranks. (Cameron's situation by facing dissent)
		29@42: Labour crucify themselves on the altar of guilt over Iraq and right-wing Tories conjure up its ghosts to add to their agenda of isolationism. (conflict between the two parties)
		34@52: Wishful thinking and repeating the mistakes of Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya is the leadership of a PM treating war as a video game. (negative evaluation for Cameron's stance)
		36@55: The debate swung both ways through the day. Labour's Dame Margaret led the opposition call for strikes to be extended from Iraq into Syria. (division of Labour

		party)
		39@60: JOHN McDonnell has taken a swipe at Hilary Benn's widely praised speech on the Syria blitz - comparing it to Tony Blair's address ahead of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. (McDonnell compares Benn's stance to Blair)
		40@61: But the Shadow Chancellor said: "It (Benn's speech) reminded me of Tony Blair's speech taking us into the Iraq War. (Shadow Chancellor compares Benn's stance to Blair)
		48@77: Hilary Benn is wrong to cite - as did Tony Blair ahead of 2003's Iraq invasion - the unbelievably brave International Brigades to justify sending British armed forces to Syria. Will Benn himself go and fight? Thought not. (criticising Benn's stance)
Threat of ISIL		2@3: Whitehall security chief Charles Farr told MPs an estimated 750 radicalised Britons had travelled to Iraq and Syria in the past four years, and only about half had returned. (number of Britons who went to Syrian and Iraq, then returned)
		3@5: ISIL is the richest terror group in history after taking control of oil wells in Iraq and Syria and making huge profits on the black market. (danger of ISIL)
		8@12: BARBARIC terrorists and suicide bombers of the Islamic State are a death cult who pose a danger to Britain and other countries far from Syria and Iraq. (ISIL causes threats to Britain)
		10@15: ISIL are a terrifying and evil force. But they are not invincible - in fact they have recently suffered serious defeats in Iraq. (ISIL suffers from international beating)
		43@67: We're against it because it was our onslaught on Iraq in 2003 that - as well as killing 500,000 Iraqi civilians on the way to disposing of Saddam Hussein - led to the creation of ISIL. (Iraq invasion is the reason of creating ISIL)
		45@71: Terrorists are, carrying out beheadings and other atrocities like counterparts in Syria and Iraq and posting footage online. (ISIL threatens people by posting their actions online)
International		4@6: French jets yesterday destroyed an ISIL

| participants | | command centre in Tal Afar in Iraq, around 30 miles west of Mosul. (some goals achieved by France)
6@9: Mr Cameron will try to persuade MPs we need to send in more pilots and Tornado bombers for the mission against ISIL in Syria - as well as Iraq to show solidarity with France over the Paris attacks. (bombing ISIL is needed to show solidarity with allies "move to the effective impact of airstrikes" because it shows the positive side of British action rather than evaluating the international participants)
12@18: France also stayed out of our recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, because they knew at least one was immoral and both were unwinnable. (France's stance from previous Iraq war)
13@19: Did our decision to stand on the sidelines then, like the French and Russians in Iraq, diminish our standing? (concerns of standing aside would affect British international standing in such issues "move to the effective impact of airstrikes")
47@75: And US counterparts point out they have found it increasingly difficult after several thousand missions over Iraq and Syria to find relevant targets. (US faces difficulties in their airstrikes) |
| **Other** | | 49@80: Last night Aggad's devastated father Saïd told Le Parisien newspaper how he thought his son would have died in Syria or Iraq after fleeing the family home to join ISIL with his brother in 2013. (the family do not know the situation of the son) |

Appendix Five:

Cameron's speech of the second debate

Lines	Parts of the speech	Element of argument
2-3	The question before the House today is how we keep the British people safe from the threat posed by ISIL.	Circumstances: Britain is under ISIL's threat
3-4	Let me be clear from the outset that this is not about whether we want to fight terrorism but about how best we do that	Claim: general orientation of the claim
4-9	I respect that Governments of all political colours in this country have had to fight terrorism and have had to take the people with them as they do so. I respect people who come to a different view from the Government and from the one that I will set out today, and those who vote accordingly. I hope that provides some reassurance to Members across the House.	Negation possible construal: Cameron implicitly negates those who may criticise his statement before a night before the debate
14-17	I could not have been clearer in my opening remarks: I respect people who disagree; I respect the fact that Governments of all colours have had to fight terrorism; and I respect the fact that we are all discussing how to fight terrorism, not whether to fight terrorism.	Claim: Cameron shows his respect for others and states the general orientation of the argument
23-26	Mr Speaker, I will take dozens of interventions in the time that I have. I am conscious of not taking up too much time as so many people want to speak, but I promise that I will give way a lot during my speech. Let me make a bit of progress at the start.	Others: Cameron explains the situation of interventions in his speech
27-30	In moving this motion, I am not pretending that the answers are simple. The situation in Syria is incredibly complex. I am not overstating the contribution our incredible servicemen and women can make; nor am I ignoring the risks of military action or pretending that military action is any more than one part of the answer.	Circumstances: the situation in Syria and the UK
30-34	I am absolutely clear that we must pursue a comprehensive strategy that also includes political, diplomatic and humanitarian action, and I know that the long-term solution in Syria—as in Iraq—must ultimately be a Government that represents all of its people and one that can work with us to defeat the evil organisation of ISIL for good.	Means-goal: other actions in addition to intervention are considered as part of the main claim
37-42	Notwithstanding all of that, there is a simple question at the heart of the debate today. We face a fundamental threat to our security. ISIL has brutally	Circumstances: direct threat of ISIL upon national security

496

	murdered British hostages. They have inspired the worst terrorist attack against British people since 7/7 on the beaches of Tunisia, and they have plotted atrocities on the streets here at home. Since November last year our security services have foiled no fewer than seven different plots against our people, so this threat is very real.	
42-45	The question is this: do we work with our allies to degrade and destroy this threat, and do we go after these terrorists in their heartlands, from where they are plotting to kill British people, or do we sit back and wait for them to attack us?	Dealing with concerns around the claim: negative consequences of inaction
51-57	I completely agree with the hon. Gentleman. Everyone in this House should make up their mind based on the arguments in this House. There is honour in voting for; there is honour in voting against. That is the way the House should operate, and that is why I wanted to be absolutely clear, at the start of my speech, that this is about how we fight terrorism, not whether we fight it.	Claim: he specifies the type of deliberation
60-64	In answering this question, we should remember that 15 months ago, facing a threat from ISIL in Iraq, the House voted 524 to 43 to authorise airstrikes in Iraq. Since then, our brilliant RAF pilots have helped local forces to halt ISIL's advance and recover 30% of the territory ISIL had captured. On Monday, I spoke to the President of Iraq in Paris, and he expressed his gratitude for the vital work our forces were doing.	Emerging positive consequences of actions already taken: Cameron highlights the positive effect of previous airstrikes in Iraq against ISIL
64-67	Yet, when our planes reach the Syrian border—a border that ISIL itself does not recognise—we can no longer act to defend either his country or ours, even though ISIL's headquarters are in Raqqa in Syria and it is from there that many of the plots against our country are formed.	Circumstances: airstrikes have not attacked ISIL in Syria, and they are urgently needed
72-73	I have made it clear that this is about how we fight terrorism, and that there is honour in any vote.	Circumstances: Cameron negates his method of insulting those who oppose intervention
74-76	We possess the capabilities to reduce this threat to our security, and my argument today is that we should not wait any longer before doing so. We should answer the call from our allies.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): British capability to defeat ISIL
76-79	The action we propose is legal, necessary and the right thing to do to keep our country safe. My strong view is that the House should make it clear that we will take up our responsibilities, rather than pass them off and put our own national security in the hands of others.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): legality and duty to protect the value "national security"
86-	My hon. Friend makes an important point. The UN	Argument from

497

92	Security Council has set out very clearly that the fact that this so-called caliphate exists in Syria as well as Iraq is a direct threat to Iraq and its Government. He talks about some of the better news from Iraq. I would add to that what has happened in Tikrit since that has been taken from ISIL. We have seen 70% of its population return. I am sure we will talk later in this debate about the importance of humanitarian aid and reconstruction. That can work only with good government in those towns and in the absence of ISIL/Daesh.	authority: supports circumstances. Emerging positive consequences of actions already taken: these actions are supported by the UN Security Council
97-102	Since my statement last week, the House has had an opportunity to ask questions of our security experts. I have arranged a briefing for all Members, as well as more detailed briefings for Privy Counsellors. I have spoken further to our allies, including President Obama, Chancellor Merkel, President Hollande and the King of Jordan, the last of whom has written in *The Daily Telegraph* today expressing his wish for Britain to stand with Jordan in eliminating this global threat.	Argument from authorities support the means-goal. Emerging positive consequences of actions already taken: international consensus to eliminate ISIL
103-106	I have also listened carefully to the questions asked by Members on both sides of the House, and I hope that hon. Members can see the influence that the House has had on the motion before us: the stress on post-conflict stabilisation and reconstruction; the importance of standing by our allies	Circumstances (circumstantial value): responsibility upon the UK towards acting in the region
106-109	the importance of only targeting ISIL and not deploying ground troops in combat operations; the need to avoid civilian casualties; the importance of ceasefires and a political settlement; and the commitment to regular updates to the House.	Means-goal: steps should be considered within the main claim (attacking ISIL)
109-110	I have drawn these points from across the House and put them in the motion, because I want as many people as possible to feel able to support this action.	Value: these points are national interest
115-121	The right hon. Gentleman raises a very important point. In Iraq, for a year and three months there have been no reports of civilian casualties related to the strikes that Britain has taken. Our starting point is to avoid civilian casualties altogether, and I have argued, and will indeed do so again today, that our precision weapons and the skill of our pilots make civilian casualties less likely. So Britain being involved in the strikes in Iraq can both be effective in prosecuting the campaign against ISIL and help us to avoid civilian casualties.	Dealing with objections and alternatives Emerging positive consequences of action already taken: actions have positive impacts on ground
129-140	What I say to the right hon. Gentleman, for whom I have great respect, is that the motion says "exclusively" ISIL because that was a promise I made in this House in response to points made from both sides of the House. As far as I am concerned,	Means-goal: the action is specific and the UK will not be directly involved in ground troops

498

	wherever members of ISIL are, wherever they can be properly targeted, that is what we should do. Let me just make this point, because I think it is important when we come to the argument about ground troops. In my discussions with the King of Jordan, he made the point that in the south of Syria there is already not only co-operation among the Jordanian Government, the French and the Americans, and the Free Syrian Army, but a growing ceasefire between the regime troops and the Free Syrian Army so that they can turn their guns on ISIL. That is what I have said: this is an ISIL-first strategy.	
140-141	They are the threat. They are the ones we should be targeting. This is about our national security.	Value and goal
146-156	I believe the key questions that have been raised are these: first, could acting in this way actually increase the risk to our security by making an attack on Britain more likely? Secondly, does Britain really have the capability to make a significant difference? Thirdly—this is the question asked by a number of Members, including the right hon. Member for Gordon (Alex Salmond)—why do we not just increase our level of airstrikes in Iraq to free up capacity among other members of the coalition so that they can carry out more airstrikes in Syria? Fourthly, will there really be the ground forces needed to make this operation a success? Fifthly, what is the strategy for defeating ISIL and securing a lasting political settlement in Syria? Sixthly, is there a proper reconstruction and post-conflict stabilisation plan for Syria? I want to try, in the time I have available, to answer all of those in turn.	Others: key concepts that are discussed in the speech
162-172	This is something not only that I do not want to do, but that I think would be a mistake if we did it. The argument was made to us by the Iraqi Government that the presence of western ground troops can be a radicalising force and can be counterproductive, and that is our view. I would say to the hon. Gentleman, and to colleagues behind me who are concerned about this issue, that I accept that this means that our strategy takes longer to be successful, because we rely on Iraqi ground troops in Iraq, we rely on the patchwork of Free Syrian Army troops in Syria, and in time we hope for Syrian ground troops from a transitional regime. All of that takes longer, and one of the clear messages that has to come across today is that, yes, we do have a strategy, and although it is a complex picture and it will take time, we are acting in the right way.	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: distancing the possible British ground troops
174-	Let me make one more point before I take some	Others: Cameron

182	more interventions, because I want to say a word about the terminology we use to describe this evil death cult. Having carefully considered the strong representation made to me by my hon. Friend the Member for Gillingham and Rainham (Rehman Chishti) and having listened to many Members of Parliament across the House, I feel that it is time to join our key ally, France, the Arab League, and other members of the international community in using, as frequently as possible, the terminology "Daesh" rather than ISIL. This evil death cult is neither a true representation of Islam nor a state.	discusses the terminology use of naming ISIL. However, ISIL and "Daesh" have the same meaning because Daesh is used in Arabic to refer to "Islamic State in Iraq and Levante" as shown in the Background.
188-189	I have made my views clear about the importance of all of us fighting terrorism, and I think that it is time to move on.	Others: turning the answer of the question
194-203	First, could acting increase the risk to our security? That is one of the most important questions that we have to answer. Privy Counsellors across the House have had a briefing from the Chair of the independent Joint Intelligence Committee. Obviously, I cannot share all the classified material, but I can say this: Paris was different not just because it was so close to us or because it was so horrific in scale, but because it showed the extent of terror planning from Daesh in Syria and the approach of sending people back from Syria to Europe. This was the head of the snake in Raqqa in action, so it is not surprising that the judgment of the Chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee and of the director general of the Security Service is that the risk of a similar attack in the UK is real, and that the UK is already in the top tier of countries on ISIL's target list.	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: risk of inaction is greater than the risk of action
205-212	I want to make this point and then I will take some more interventions. If there is an attack on the UK in the coming weeks or months, there will be those who try to say that it has happened because of our airstrikes. I do not believe that will be the case. Daesh has been trying to attack us for the past year, as we know from the seven different plots that our security services have foiled. In the light of that threat from Daesh, the terrorist threat to the UK was raised to severe last August, which means that an attack is highly likely.	Circumstances: the UK is under a real threat of ISIL
217-221	I will give way in two minutes. Some 800 people, including families and children, have been radicalised to such an extent that they have travelled to this so-called caliphate. The House should be under no illusion: these terrorists are plotting to kill us and to radicalise our children right now. They attack us because of who we are, and not because of	Circumstances: radical people have been increasing by joining ISIL

	what we do.	
226-230	Everyone in this House can speak for themselves. What I am saying is that, when it comes to the risks of military action, the risks of inaction are far greater than the risks of what I propose. Next there are those who ask whether Britain conducting strikes in Syria will really make a difference.	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: the risk of inaction is greater than the risk of action
234-245	This point has been raised in briefing after briefing. I believe that we can make a real difference. I told the House last week about our dynamic targeting, our Brimstone missiles, the Raptor pod on our Tornados and the intelligence-gathering work of our Reaper drones. I will not repeat all that today, but there is another way of putting this, which is equally powerful. There is a lot of strike capacity in the coalition, but when it comes to precision-strike capability whether covering Iraq or Syria, let me say this: last week, the whole international coalition had some 26 aircraft available, eight of which were British tornadoes. Typically, the UK actually represents between a quarter and a third of the international coalition's precision bombing capability. We also have about a quarter of the unmanned strike capability flying in the region. Therefore, we have a significant proportion of high-precision strike capability, which is why this decision is so important.	Emerging positive consequences of already taken: the UK airstrikes are precise, and they will achieve the goals.
254-262	The hon. Gentleman is absolutely right to raise this issue, and I pay tribute to his constituent's son. We will be part of the de-confliction process that already exists between those coalition partners flying in Syria and the Russians. Of course, our own aeroplanes have the most advanced defensive air suites possible to make sure that they are kept safe. The argument that I was making is one reason why members of the international coalition, including President Obama and President Hollande, who made these points to me personally, believe that British planes would make a real difference in Syria, just as they are already doing in Iraq.	Emerging positive consequences of already taken: the safety of British aeroplanes and the effectiveness of actions in Iraq
167-274	We are going to vote either way tonight—either vote is an honourable vote. I suggest that we get on with the debate that the country wants to hear. In many ways, what I have just said helps to answer the next question that some Members have asked about why we do not simply increase our level of airstrikes in Iraq to free up coalition capacity for strikes in Syria. We have the capabilities that other members of the Coalition want to benefit from, and	Circumstances (circumstantial value): the British capability to defeat ISIL in Iraq and Syria

	it makes absolutely no sense to stop using these capabilities at a border between Iraq and Syria that Daesh simply does not recognise or respect.	
276-282	Let me make this argument, because it is an important, detailed point. There was a recent incident in which Syrian opposition forces needed urgent support in their fight against Daesh. British Tornadoes were eight minutes away, just over the border in Iraq—no one else was close—but Britain could not help, so the Syrian opposition forces had to wait 40 minutes in a perilous situation while other coalition forces were scrambled. That sort of delay endangers the lives of those fighting Daesh on the ground, and does nothing for our reputation with our vital allies.	Circumstances: delay of British airstrikes is a problem
295-301	Let me answer both of my hon. Friend's questions. The second question is perhaps answered with something in which I am sure the whole House will want to join me in, which is wishing the hon. Member for Ilford South (Mike Gapes) well, given his recent illness. He is normally always at the Foreign Affairs Committee, and always voting on non-party grounds on the basis of the arguments in which he believes.	Others: stances of some political leaders in the UK
302-303	Where my hon. Friend the Member for Basildon and Billericay and I disagree is on this: I believe that there is a strategy, of which military action is only one part.	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: the main action should be considered among other actions
302-309	Where my hon. Friend the Member for Basildon and Billericay and I disagree is on this: I believe that there is a strategy, of which military action is only one part. The key answer to his question is that we want to see a new Syrian transitional Government whose troops will then be our allies in squeezing out and destroying the so-called caliphate altogether. My disagreement with my hon. Friend is that I believe that we cannot wait for that happen. The threat is now; ISIL/Daesh is planning attacks now. We can act in Syria as we act in Iraq, and in doing so, we can enhance the long-term security and safety of our country, which is why we should act.	Means-goal: airstrikes are part of the long-term strategy. Within this strategy: *goals* of long-term (Syrian transitional Government); and *circumstances* (ISIL is targeting the UK).
320-323	I agree with my hon. Friend, and I have already corresponded with the BBC about its use of "IS"—Islamic State—which I think is even worse than either saying "so-called IS" or, indeed, "ISIL". "Daesh" is clearly an improvement, and it is important that we all try and use this language.	Others: the need for urging BBC to use Daesh instead of other names
326-330	There is a much more fundamental answer as to why we should carry out airstrikes in Syria ourselves, and it is this. Raqqa in Syria is the	Circumstances: threat of ISIL upon national security and the

502

	headquarters of this threat to our security. It is in Syria where they pump and sell the oil that does so much to help finance its evil acts, and as I have said, it is in Syria where many of the plots against our country are formed, so we must act in Syria to deal with these threats ourselves.	importance of attacking ISIL in Syria
342-344	Let me answer the hon. Gentleman very directly. On the sorts of targets that we can go after, clearly it is the leaders of this death cult itself, the training camps, the communications hubs and those who are plotting against us.	Dealing with concerns around the main action: the goals of airstrikes are specific
244-347	As I shall argue in a minute, the limited action that we took against Khan and Hussain, which was, if you like, an airstrike on Syria, has already had an impact on ISIL—on Daesh. That is a very important point.	Emerging positive consequences of action already taken: credibility of airstrikes
348-355	How do we avoid civilian casualties? We have a policy—a start point—of wanting zero civilian casualties. One year and three months into those Iraqi operations, we have not had any reports of civilian casualties. I am not saying that there are no casualties in war; of course there are. We are putting ourselves into a very difficult situation, which is hugely complex. In many ways it is a difficult argument to get across, but its heart is a simple point—will we be safer and better off in the long term if we can get rid of the so-called caliphate which is radicalising Muslims, turning people against us and plotting atrocities on the streets of Britain?	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: no civilian causalities. Although there is possibility of civilian causalities, inaction will have more negative impact
361-363	My hon. Friend puts it extremely clearly. That is one of the aims of what we are doing—to prevent this death cult from carrying out the ghastly acts it carries out daily.	Goals: protecting national security
365-375	Let me make some progress. Let me turn to the question of whether there will be ground forces to make this operation a success. Those who say that there are not as any ground troops as we would like, and that they are not all in the right places, are correct. We are not dealing with an ideal situation, but let me make a series of important points. First, we should be clear what airstrikes alone can achieve. We do not need ground troops to target the supply of oil which Daesh uses to fund terrorism. We do not need ground troops to hit Daesh's headquarters, its infrastructure, its supply routes, its training facilities and its weapons supplies. It is clear that airstrikes can have an effect, as in the case of Khan and Hussain that I just mentioned. Irrespective of ground forces, our RAF can do serious damage to Daesh's ability right now to bring	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: airstrikes will achieve the short-term goals (degrading ISIL)

	terror to our streets and we should give it that support.	
383-390	What the hon. Gentleman says is right. Of course Daesh has changed its tactics from the early days when airstrikes were even more effective, but that is not an argument for doing nothing. It is an argument for using airstrikes where we can, but having a longer-term strategy to deliver the necessary ground troops through the transition. The argument before the House is simple: do we wait for perfection, which is a transitional Government in Syria, or do we start the work now of degrading and destroying that organisation at the request of our allies, at the request of the Gulf states, in the knowledge from our security experts that it will make a difference?	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: strategy of military action is not ideal, but it is unavoidable option
394-497	As I said last week, the full answer to the question of ground forces cannot be achieved until there is a new Syrian Government who represent all the Syrian people—not just Sunni, Shi'a and Alawite, but Christian, Druze and others. It is this new Government who will be the natural partners for our forces in defeating Daesh for good.	Means-goal: condition of the possibility of sending ground troops
397-415	But there are some ground forces that we can work with in the meantime. Last week I told the House— **Several hon. Members** *rose*— **The Prime Minister:** Let me give the explanation, and then colleagues can intervene if they like. Last week I told the House that we believe that there are around 70,000 Syrian opposition fighters who do not belong to extremist groups and with whom we can co-ordinate attacks on Daesh. The House will appreciate that there are some limits on what I can say about these groups, not least because I cannot risk the safety of these courageous people, who are being targeted daily by the regime, by Daesh or by both. But I know that this is an area of great interest and concern to the House, so let me try to say a little more. The 70,000 figure is an estimate from our independent Joint Intelligence Committee, based on detailed analysis, updated daily and drawing on a wide range of open sources and intelligence. The majority of the 70,000 are from the Free Syrian Army. Alongside the 70,000, there are some 20,000 Kurdish fighters with whom we can also work. I am not arguing—this is a crucial point—that all of the 70,000 are somehow ideal partners. However, some	Means-goal: dealing with moderate fighters through attacking ISIL by airstrikes as these groups fight ISIL on ground. this cooperation will prepare these groups for the long-term strategies

	left the Syrian army because of Assad's brutality, and clearly they can play a role in the future of Syria. That view is also taken by the Russians, who are prepared to talk with these people.	
424-434	I have had those conversations with President Putin on many occasions, most recently at the G20 summit in Antalya, and President Obama had a meeting with him at the climate change conference in Paris. As I have said before in this House, there was an enormous gap between Britain, America, France and, indeed, Saudi Arabia on the one hand and Russia on the other hand; we wanted Assad to go instantly and they wanted him to stay, potentially forever. That gap has narrowed, and I think that it will narrow further as the vital talks in Vienna get under way. Let me make a point about the Vienna talks, because I think that some people worry that it is a process without an end. The clear ambition in the talks is to see a transitional Government within six months, and a new constitution and fresh elections within 18 months, so there is real momentum behind them.	Circumstances: political solutions and updates about the situation in Syria
439-443	I thank my hon. Friend for that intervention. I can certainly confirm that. We are the second largest bilateral donor in the world, after America, and we will keep that up, not least with the vital conference that we are co-chairing in London next year, when we will bring together the whole world to ensure that we fill the gap in the funding that is available.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): the capability of UK to participate in military action
451-459	Let me try to answer that as directly as possible, because it goes to the nub of the difficulty of this case. I do not think that we can separate the task of taking out the command and control of Daesh's operations against the UK, France, Belgium and elsewhere from the task of degrading and destroying the so-called caliphate that it has created; the two are intricately linked. Indeed, as I argued before the House last week, as long as the so-called caliphate exists, it is a threat to us, not least because it is radicalising Muslims from around the world who are going to fight for that organisation and potentially then return to attack us.	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: the necessity of destroying ISIL as this group threatens the western community
459-469	On the right hon. Gentleman's second question about ground troops, as I have explained, there are three parts to the argument. First, we must not underestimate the things we can do without ground troops. Secondly, although the ground troops that are there are not ideal and there are not as many of	Means-goal: steps of dealing with ISIL with the consideration of ground troops in Syria

	them as we would like, they are people we are working with and who we can work with more. Thirdly, the real plan is that as we get a transitional Government in Syria that can represent all the Syrian people, there will be more ground troops for us to work with to defeat Daesh and the caliphate, which will keep our country safe. I know that will take a long time and that it will be complex, but that is the strategy, and we need to start with the first step, which is going after these terrorists today.	
477-479	I am very happy to repeat what the hon. Lady said. As I have said, people who vote in either Division Lobby do so with honour. I could not have been clearer about that.	Circumstances: situation of MPs
479-481	If she is saying that there are not enough ground troops, she is right. If she is saying that they are not always in the right places, she is right. But the question for us is, should we act now in order to try to start to turn the tide?	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: The MPs should make the decision of how to fight ISIL rather than the nature of the ground troops.
483-488	Let me make some progress, but I will certainly give way to the leader of the SNP in a moment. I just want to be clear about the 70,000. That figure does not include a further 25,000 extremist fighters in groups which reject political participation and reject co-ordination with non-Muslims, so although they fight Daesh they cannot and will not be our partners. So there are ground forces who will take the fight to Daesh, and in many cases we can work with them and we can assist them.	Means-goal: a strategy of dealing with fighters and identifying the fighters that the UK will deal with.
492-494	If we do not act now, we should be clear that there will be even fewer ground forces over time as Daesh will get even stronger. In my view, we simply cannot afford to wait. We have to act now.	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: possible negative consequences of not supporting the claim.
499-507	On the 70,000, the advice I have is that the majority are made up of the Free Syrian Army, but of course the Free Syrian Army has different leadership in different parts of the country. The 70,000 excludes those in extremist groups like al-Nusra that we will not work with. As I have said very clearly, I am not arguing that the 70,000 are ideal partners; some of them do have views that we do not agree with. But the definition of the 70,000 is those people that we have been prepared to work with and continue to be prepared to work with.	Means-goal: a strategy of dealing with fighters and identifying the meaning of moderate fighters
506-510	Let me make this point again: if we do not take action against Daesh now, the number of ground forces we can work with will get less and less and less. If we want to end up with a situation where	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: possible negative consequences of not

	there is the butcher Assad on one side and a stronger ISIL on the other side, not acting is one of the things that will bring that about.	supporting the claim
518-522	My right hon. and learned Friend, who himself always thought about these things very carefully, is right. That is the end goal, and we should not take our eyes off the prize, which is a reconstructed Syria with a Government that can represent all the people; which is a Syria at peace so that we do not have the migration crisis and we do not have the terrorism crisis. That is the goal.	Goals: long-term goal
526-535	Let me say a little more about each of the non-military elements: counter-terrorism, counter-extremism, the political and diplomatic processes, and the vital humanitarian work that my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Harborough (Sir Edward Garnier) just referred to. Our counter-terrorism strategy gives Britain a comprehensive plan to prevent and foil plots at home and also to address the poisonous extremist ideology that is the root cause of the threat that we face. As part of this, I can announce today that we will establish a comprehensive review to root out any remaining funding of extremism within the UK. This will examine specifically the nature, scale and origin of the funding of Islamist extremist activity in the UK, including any overseas sources. It will report to myself and my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary next spring.	Means-goal: counter-terrorism strategy
537-548	I want to make this point before I give way again. I know there are some who suggest that military action could in some way undermine our counter-extremism strategy by radicalising British Muslims, so let me take this head on. British Muslims are appalled by Daesh. These women-raping, Muslim-murdering, medieval monsters are hijacking the peaceful religion of Islam for their warped ends. As the King of Jordan says in an article today, these people are not Muslims, they are "outlaws" from Islam. We must stand with our Muslim friends, here and around the world, as they reclaim their religion from these terrorists. Far from an attack on Islam, we are engaged in a defence of Islam, and far from a risk of radicalising British Muslims by acting, failing to act would actually be to betray British Muslims and the wider religion of Islam in its very hour of need.	Means-goal: within the representation of the means-goal, Cameron highlights circumstances of the negative role of ISIL, and the possibility of radicalising British Muslims
552-557	The Turks are taking part in this action and urging us to do the same. The Saudis are taking part in this action and urging us to do the same. The Jordanians have taken part in this action and urge us to do the	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: the UK does not act alone while there is

	same. I have in my notes quote after quote from leader after leader in the Gulf world begging and pleading with Britain to take part so that we can take the fight to this death cult that threatens us all so much.	international consensus about defeating ISIL
558-568	The second part of our strategy is our support for the diplomatic and political process. Let me say a word about how this process can lead to the ceasefires between the regime and the opposition that are so essential for the next stages of this political transition. It begins with identifying the right people to put around the table. Next week, we expect the Syrian regime to nominate a team of people to negotiate under the auspices of the United Nations. Over the last 18 months, political and armed opposition positions have converged. We know the main groups and their ideas. In the coming days, Saudi Arabia will host an inclusive meeting for opposition representatives in Riyadh. The United Nations will take forward discussions on steps towards a ceasefire, including at the next meeting of the International Syria Support Group, which we expect to take place before Christmas.	Means-goals: long-term strategy to achieve the goals
569-575	The aim is clear, as I have said—a transitional Government in six months, a new constitution, and free and fair elections within 18 months. I would argue that the key elements of a deal are emerging: ceasefires, opposition groups coming together, the regime looking at negotiation, and the key players— America and Russia, Saudi Arabia and Iran—and key regional players such as Turkey all in the room together. My argument is this: hitting Daesh does not hurt this process; it helps this process, which is the eventual goal.	Goals: proposed goals of the non-military strategy
581-582	My hon. Friend speaks for many. They attack us because of who we are, not because of what we do, and they want to attack us again and again.	Circumstances: ideology of ISIL
582-590	The question for us is, do we answer the call of our allies, some of our closest friends in the world—the French and the Americans—who want us to join them and Arab partners in this work, or do we ignore that call? If we ignore that call, think for a moment what that says about Britain as an ally. Think for a moment what it says to the countries in the region who will be asking themselves, "If Britain won't come to the aid of France, its neighbour, in these circumstances, just how reliable a neighbour, a friend and an ally is this country?"	Circumstances (circumstantial value): obligation upon the UK to support the shared international security with allies
592-596	Let me make some progress on the vital subjects of humanitarian relief and the longer-term stabilisation, because I am conscious of the time. I set out for the	Means-goal: financial supports for the Syrian transitional government

	House last week our support for refugees in the region, the extra £1 billion that we would be prepared to commit to Syria's reconstruction, and the broad international alliance that we would work with in the rebuilding phase.	to reconstruct Syria.
597-601	However, let us be clear—my hon. Friend the Member for North Dorset (Simon Hoare) made this point—that people will not return to Syria if part of it is under the control of an organisation that enslaves Yazidis, throws gay people off buildings, beheads aid workers and forces children to marry before they are even 10 years old. We cannot separate the humanitarian work and the reconstruction work from dealing with Daesh itself.	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: the possible negative consequences of not defeating ISIL. Syrian people will not go back to Syria with the existence extremist organisations
612-614	Let me turn to the plan for post-conflict reconstruction to support a new Syrian Government when they emerge. I have said that we would be prepared to commit at least £1 billion to Syria's reconstruction.	Means-goal: long-term strategy (the need to commit the money to Syria's reconstruction)
614-622	The initial priorities would be protection, security, stabilisation and confidence-building measures, including meeting basic humanitarian needs such as education, health and shelter, and, of course, helping refugees to return. Over time, the focus would shift to the longer-term rebuilding of Syria's shattered infrastructure, harnessing the expertise of the international financial institutions and the private sector. As I said last week, we are not in the business of trying to dismantle the Syrian state or its institutions. We would aim to allocate reconstruction funds against a plan agreed between a new, inclusive Syrian Government and the international community, once the conflict had ended. That is the absolute key.	Goals of long-term strategies
633-639	That is what our constituents want to know. What are we doing to strengthen our borders? What are we doing to exchange intelligence information across Europe? What are we doing to strengthen our intelligence and policing agencies, which the Chancellor spoke about so much last week? We should see all of this through the prism of national security. That is our first duty. When our allies are asking us to act, the intelligence is there and we have the knowledge that we can make a difference, I believe that we should act.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): duty upon the government
647-651	We have played a huge part in Europe as the biggest bilateral donor. No other European country has given as much as Britain. We are also going to take 20,000 refugees, with 1,000 arriving by Christmas. However, I am happy to look once again at the issue of orphans. I think that it is better to take orphans	From this part, Cameron summarises the central ideas. These lines show the circumstances: update about the situation and

	from the region, rather than those who come over, sometimes with their extended family.	UK's work
351-353	I am very happy to look at that issue again, both in Europe and out of Europe, to see whether Britain can do more to fulfil our moral responsibilities.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): British responsibilities
654-657	Let me conclude. This is not 2003. We must not use past mistakes as an excuse for indifference or inaction. Let us be clear: inaction does not amount to a strategy for our security or that of the Syrian people, but inaction is a choice. I believe that it is the wrong choice.	Dealing with concerns around the main claim: inaction has greater negative consequences than action
657-661	We have listened to our allies. We have taken legal advice. We have a unanimous United Nations resolution. We have discussed our proposed actions extensively at meetings of the National Security Council and the Cabinet. I have responded personally to the detailed report of the Foreign Affairs Committee. We have a proper motion before the House and we are having a 10 and a half hour debate today.	Circumstances: legality of action and steps already taken before intervention
662-668	In that spirit, I look forward to the rest of the debate and to listening to the contributions of Members from all parts of the House. I hope that at the end of it all, the House will come together in large numbers to vote for Britain to play its part in defeating these evil extremists and taking the action that is needed now to keep our country safe. In doing so, I pay tribute to the extraordinary bravery and service of our inspirational armed forces, who will once again put themselves in harm's way to protect our values and our way of life. I commend this motion to the House.	Engaging MPs to support the claim of the Government motion. The lines show Cameron's conclusion for his speech in that he summarises the same ideas shown above. At the end, he uses emotional language to engage the MPs for supporting his stance

1   The Prime Minister (Mr David Cameron): I beg to move,

2   The question before the House today is how we keep the British people safe from the
3   threat posed by ISIL. Let me be clear from the outset that this is not about whether we
4   want to fight terrorism but about how best we do that. I respect that Governments of
5   all political colours in this country have had to fight terrorism and have had to take the
6   people with them as they do so. I respect people who come to a different view from
7   the Government and from the one that I will set out today, and those who vote
8   accordingly. I hope that that provides some reassurance to Members across the House.

9   Caroline Flint (Don Valley) (Lab): I thank the Prime Minister for giving way. He is
10   right to say in his opening statement how important it is to respect opinion on all sides
11   of the House, so will he apologise for the remarks he made in a meeting last night
12   against my right hon. and hon. Friends on the Labour Benches?

13   2 Dec 2015 : Column 324

14   The Prime Minister: I could not have been clearer in my opening remarks: I respect
15   people who disagree; I respect the fact that Governments of all colours have had to
16   fight terrorism; and I respect the fact that we are all discussing how to fight terrorism,
17   not whether to fight terrorism.

18   In moving this motion, I am not pretending—

19   Several hon. Members *rose*—

20   The Prime Minister: I shall make some progress—*[Interruption.]*

21   Mr Speaker: Order. The Prime Minister is clearly not giving way at this stage. He has
22   the floor.

23   The Prime Minister: Mr Speaker, I will take dozens of interventions in the time that I
24   have. I am conscious of not taking up too much time as so many people want to speak,
25   but I promise that I will give way a lot during my speech. Let me make a bit of
26   progress at the start.

27   In moving this motion, I am not pretending that the answers are simple. The situation
28   in Syria is incredibly complex. I am not overstating the contribution our incredible
29   servicemen and women can make; nor am I ignoring the risks of military action or
30   pretending that military action is any more than one part of the answer. I am
31   absolutely clear that we must pursue a comprehensive strategy that also includes
32   political, diplomatic and humanitarian action, and I know that the long-term solution
33   in Syria—as in Iraq—must ultimately be a Government that represents all of its
34   people and one that can work with us to defeat the evil organisation of ISIL for good.

35   Alex Salmond (Gordon) (SNP): Will the Prime Minister give way?

36   The Prime Minister: In a moment.

511

37   Notwithstanding all of that, there is a simple question at the heart of the debate today.
38   We face a fundamental threat to our security. ISIL has brutally murdered British
39   hostages. They have inspired the worst terrorist attack against British people since 7/7
40   on the beaches of Tunisia, and they have plotted atrocities on the streets here at home.
41   Since November last year our security services have foiled no fewer than seven
42   different plots against our people, so this threat is very real. The question is this: do
43   we work with our allies to degrade and destroy this threat, and do we go after these
44   terrorists in their heartlands, from where they are plotting to kill British people, or do
45   we sit back and wait for them to attack us?

46   John Woodcock (Barrow and Furness) (Lab/Co-op): It would be helpful if the Prime
47   Minister could retract his inappropriate comments from last night, but will he be
48   reassured that no one on the Labour Benches will make a decision based on any such
49   remarks, or be threatened and not do what we believe is the right thing—whether
50   those threats come from online activists or, indeed, from our own Dispatch Box?

51   The Prime Minister: I completely agree with the hon. Gentleman. Everyone in this
52   House should make up their mind based on the arguments in this House. There is
53   honour in voting for; there is honour in voting

54   2 Dec 2015 : Column 325

55   against. That is the way the House should operate, and that is why I wanted to be
56   absolutely clear, at the start of my speech, that this is about how we fight terrorism,
57   not whether we fight it.

58   Several hon. Members *rose—*

59   The Prime Minister: I will make some progress, and then I will give way.

60   In answering this question, we should remember that 15 months ago, facing a threat
61   from ISIL in Iraq, the House voted 524 to 43 to authorise airstrikes in Iraq. Since then,
62   our brilliant RAF pilots have helped local forces to halt ISIL's advance and recover
63   30% of the territory ISIL had captured. On Monday, I spoke to the President of Iraq in
64   Paris, and he expressed his gratitude for the vital work our forces were doing. Yet,
65   when our planes reach the Syrian border—a border that ISIL itself does not
66   recognise—we can no longer act to defend either his country or ours, even though
67   ISIL's headquarters are in Raqqa in Syria and it is from there that many of the plots
68   against our country are formed.

69   Alex Salmond: The Prime Minister is facing an amendment signed by 110 Members
70   from six different political parties. I have examined that list very carefully, and I
71   cannot identify a single terrorist sympathiser among them. Will he now apologise for
72   his deeply insulting remarks?

73   The Prime Minister: I have made it clear that this is about how we fight terrorism, and
74   that there is honour in any vote.

75   We possess the capabilities to reduce this threat to our security, and my argument
76   today is that we should not wait any longer before doing so. We should answer the

77 call from our allies. The action we propose is legal, necessary and the right thing to do
78 to keep our country safe. My strong view is that the House should make it clear that
79 we will take up our responsibilities, rather than pass them off and put our own national
80 security in the hands of others.

81 Nadhim Zahawi (Stratford-on-Avon) (Con): I have just returned from Baghdad and
82 Irbil, where ISIL is on the back foot. Ramadi is surrounded, Sinjar has been liberated
83 and the route between Mosul and Raqqa has been cut off, but everyone on the ground
84 tells me that unless we attack ISIL in Syria, there is no point liberating Mosul or the
85 rest of Iraq, because all ISIL will do is regroup in Syria and come back to attack that
86 country and our country.

87 The Prime Minister: My hon. Friend makes an important point. The UN Security
88 Council has set out very clearly that the fact that this so-called caliphate exists in Syria
89 as well as Iraq is a direct threat to Iraq and its Government. He talks about some of the
90 better news from Iraq. I would add to that what has happened in Tikrit since that has
91 been taken from ISIL. We have seen 70% of its population return. I am sure we will
92 talk later in this debate about the importance of humanitarian aid and reconstruction.
93 That can work only with good government in those towns and in the absence of
94 ISIL/Daesh.

95 Several hon. Members *rose—*

96 2 Dec 2015 : Column 326

97 The Prime Minister: I will make a little more progress and then take some more
98 interventions from the different political parties.

99 Since my statement last week, the House has had an opportunity to ask questions of
100 our security experts. I have arranged a briefing for all Members, as well as more
101 detailed briefings for Privy Counsellors. I have spoken further to our allies, including
102 President Obama, Chancellor Merkel, President Hollande and the King of Jordan, the
103 last of whom has written in *The Daily Telegraph* today expressing his wish for Britain
104 to stand with Jordan in eliminating this global threat.

105 I have also listened carefully to the questions asked by Members on both sides of the
106 House, and I hope that hon. Members can see the influence that the House has had on
107 the motion before us: the stress on post-conflict stabilisation and reconstruction; the
108 importance of standing by our allies; the importance of only targeting ISIL and not
109 deploying ground troops in combat operations; the need to avoid civilian casualties;
110 the importance of ceasefires and a political settlement; and the commitment to regular
111 updates to the House. I have drawn these points from across the House and put them
112 in the motion, because I want as many people as possible to feel able to support this
113 action.

114 Tom Brake (Carshalton and Wallington) (LD): First, may I say that I will be
115 supporting the Prime Minister today, although I think he needs to apologise for his
116 comments about the Labour party? May I also ask him what the UK Government will
117 do to minimise the number of civilian casualties?

118 The Prime Minister: The right hon. Gentleman raises a very important point. In Iraq,
119 for a year and three months there have been no reports of civilian casualties related to
120 the strikes that Britain has taken. Our starting point is to avoid civilian casualties
121 altogether, and I have argued, and will indeed do so again today, that our precision
122 weapons and the skill of our pilots make civilian casualties less likely. So Britain
123 being involved in the strikes in Iraq can both be effective in prosecuting the campaign
124 against ISIL and help us to avoid civilian casualties.

125 Frank Field (Birkenhead) (Lab): Is the Prime Minister aware of press reports that in
126 the recent past 60,000 Syrian troops have been murdered by ISIL and our allies have
127 waited until after those murderous acts have taken place to attack? Therefore, a key
128 part of the motion for many of us is the reference to our action being "exclusively
129 against ISIL". If ISIL is involved in attacking Syrian Government troops, will we be
130 bombing ISIL in defence of those troops, or will we wait idly by, as our allies have
131 done up to now, for ISIL to kill those troops, and then bomb?

132 The Prime Minister: What I say to the right hon. Gentleman, for whom I have great
133 respect, is that the motion says "exclusively" ISIL because that was a promise I made
134 in this House in response to points made from both sides of the House. As far as I am
135 concerned, wherever members of ISIL are, wherever they can be properly targeted,
136 that is what we should do. Let me just make this point, because I think it is important
137 when we come to the argument about ground troops. In my discussions with the King
138 of Jordan, he made the point that in the south of Syria there is already not only

139 2 Dec 2015 : Column 327

140 co-operation among the Jordanian Government, the French and the Americans, and
141 the Free Syrian Army, but a growing ceasefire between the regime troops and the Free
142 Syrian Army so that they can turn their guns on ISIL. That is what I have said: this is
143 an ISIL-first strategy. They are the threat. They are the ones we should be targeting.
144 This is about our national security.

145 Several hon. Members *rose*—

146 The Prime Minister: Let me make a little progress and then I will take more
147 interventions. In my remarks, I want to address the most important points that are
148 being raised, and I will of course take as many interventions as I can.

149 I believe the key questions that have been raised are these: first, could acting in this
150 way actually increase the risk to our security by making an attack on Britain more
151 likely? Secondly, does Britain really have the capability to make a significant
152 difference? Thirdly—this is the question asked by a number of Members, including
153 the right hon. Member for Gordon (Alex Salmond)—why do we not just increase our
154 level of airstrikes in Iraq to free up capacity among other members of the coalition so
155 that they can carry out more airstrikes in Syria? Fourthly, will there really be the
156 ground forces needed to make this operation a success? Fifthly, what is the strategy
157 for defeating ISIL and securing a lasting political settlement in Syria? Sixthly, is there
158 a proper reconstruction and post-conflict stabilisation plan for Syria? I want to try, in
159 the time I have available, to answer all of those in turn.

160 Ian Paisley (North Antrim) (DUP): The Prime Minister will know how members of
161 my party feel when it comes to fighting and dealing with terrorism, and for that there
162 will always be support, no matter where terrorism raises its head. The motion states
163 that

164 "the Government will not deploy UK troops in ground combat operations".

165 If it becomes necessary at a later date to do that, will he guarantee that he will come
166 back to this House to seek approval for that?

167 The Prime Minister: This is something not only that I do not want to do, but that I
168 think would be a mistake if we did it. The argument was made to us by the Iraqi
169 Government that the presence of western ground troops can be a radicalising force and
170 can be counterproductive, and that is our view. I would say to the hon. Gentleman,
171 and to colleagues behind me who are concerned about this issue, that I accept that this
172 means that our strategy takes longer to be successful, because we rely on Iraqi ground
173 troops in Iraq, we rely on the patchwork of Free Syrian Army troops in Syria, and in
174 time we hope for Syrian ground troops from a transitional regime. All of that takes
175 longer, and one of the clear messages that has to come across today is that, yes, we do
176 have a strategy, and although it is a complex picture and it will take time, we are
177 acting in the right way.

178 Several hon. Members *rose—*

179 The Prime Minister: Let me make one more point before I take some more
180 interventions, because I want to say a word about the terminology we use to describe
181 this evil death cult. Having carefully considered the strong

182 2 Dec 2015 : Column 328

183 representation made to me by my hon. Friend the Member for Gillingham and
184 Rainham (Rehman Chishti) and having listened to many Members of Parliament
185 across the House, I feel that it is time to join our key ally, France, the Arab League,
186 and other members of the international community in using, as frequently as possible,
187 the terminology "Daesh" rather than ISIL. This evil death cult is neither a true
188 representation of Islam nor a state.

189 Emily Thornberry (Islington South and Finsbury) (Lab): I am very interested to hear
190 what the right hon. Gentleman says about what name we should call Daesh. If we are
191 talking about terminology, should he not take this opportunity to withdraw the names
192 that he is calling those who will not be voting with him tonight? Not only is it
193 offensive to use the words "a bunch of terrorist sympathisers", but it is dangerous and
194 untrue.

195 The Prime Minister: I have made my views clear about the importance of all of us
196 fighting terrorism, and I think that it is time to move on.

197 Stephen Doughty (Cardiff South and Penarth) (Lab/Co-op) *rose—*

198 Albert Owen (Ynys Môn) (Lab) *rose—*

199 The Prime Minister: Let me turn to the important questions, and I will take
200 interventions as I go through them.

201 First, could acting increase the risk to our security? That is one of the most important
202 questions that we have to answer. Privy Counsellors across the House have had a
203 briefing from the Chair of the independent Joint Intelligence Committee. Obviously, I
204 cannot share all the classified material, but I can say this: Paris was different not just
205 because it was so close to us or because it was so horrific in scale, but because it
206 showed the extent of terror planning from Daesh in Syria and the approach of sending
207 people back from Syria to Europe. This was the head of the snake in Raqqa in action,
208 so it is not surprising that the judgment of the Chair of the Joint Intelligence
209 Committee and of the director general of the Security Service is that the risk of a
210 similar attack in the UK is real, and that the UK is already in the top tier of countries
211 on ISIL's target list.

212 Several hon. Members *rose—*

213 The Prime Minister: I want to make this point and then I will take some more
214 interventions.

215 If there is an attack on the UK in the coming weeks or months, there will be those who
216 try to say that it has happened because of our airstrikes. I do not believe that that will
217 be the case. Daesh has been trying to attack us for the past year, as we know from the
218 seven different plots that our security services have foiled. In the light of that threat
219 from Daesh, the terrorist threat to the UK was raised to severe last August, which
220 means that an attack is highly likely.

221 Albert Owen *rose—*

222 Karl Turner (Kingston upon Hull East) (Lab) *rose—*

223 2 Dec 2015 : Column 329

224 Ian Blackford (Ross, Skye and Lochaber) (SNP) *rose—*

225 The Prime Minister: I will give way in two minutes. Some 800 people, including
226 families and children, have been radicalised to such an extent that they have travelled
227 to this so-called caliphate. The House should be under no illusion: these terrorists are
228 plotting to kill us and to radicalise our children right now. They attack us because of
229 who we are, and not because of what we do.

230 John Nicolson (East Dunbartonshire) (SNP): All of us on the Opposition Benches
231 share the Prime Minister's horror of Daesh and its death cult and abhor terrorism. Will
232 he take this further opportunity to identify which Members on these Benches he
233 regards as terrorist sympathisers?

234 The Prime Minister: Everyone in this House can speak for themselves. What I am
235 saying is that, when it comes to the risks of military action, the risks of inaction are far
236 greater than the risks of what I propose.

237 Next there are those who ask whether Britain conducting strikes in Syria will really
238 make a difference.

239 Albert Owen: On that point—

240 The Prime Minister: Let me make my argument, and then I will take the hon.
241 Gentleman's question.

242 This point has been raised in briefing after briefing. I believe that we can make a real
243 difference. I told the House last week about our dynamic targeting, our Brimstone
244 missiles, the Raptor pod on our Tornados and the intelligence-gathering work of our
245 Reaper drones. I will not repeat all that today, but there is another way of putting this,
246 which is equally powerful. There is a lot of strike capacity in the coalition, but when it
247 comes to precision-strike capability whether covering Iraq or Syria, let me say this:
248 last week, the whole international coalition had some 26 aircraft available, eight of
249 which were British tornadoes. Typically, the UK actually represents between a quarter
250 and a third of the international coalition's precision bombing capability. We also have
251 about a quarter of the unmanned strike capability flying in the region. Therefore, we
252 have a significant proportion of high-precision strike capability, which is why this
253 decision is so important.

254 Albert Owen *rose*—

255 The Prime Minister: The hon. Gentleman has been very persistent, so I will give way.

256 Albert Owen: The Prime Minister is right to sing the praises of the RAF pilots. The
257 son of my constituent, Mike Poole, was tragically killed in a Tornado, in 2012, while
258 training for the RAF. Mike Poole has specifically asked me this question: does the Air
259 Force have coalition warning systems to deal with the crowded airspace in northern
260 Iraq and in Syria, if we make that decision today? Such a system is absolutely
261 essential for the safety of our pilots.

262 The Prime Minister: The hon. Gentleman is absolutely right to raise this issue, and I
263 pay tribute to his constituent's son. We will be part of the de-confliction process that
264 already exists between those coalition partners flying in

265 2 Dec 2015 : Column 330

266 Syria and the Russians. Of course, our own aeroplanes have the most advanced
267 defensive air suites possible to make sure that they are kept safe. The argument that I
268 was making is one reason why members of the international coalition, including
269 President Obama and President Hollande, who made these points to me personally,
270 believe that British planes would make a real difference in Syria, just as they are
271 already doing in Iraq.

272 Ian Blackford: I am extremely grateful to the Prime Minister for giving way. It is
273 important in this debate that there is respect across the House. In that spirit of respect,
274 he must—he has been asked before—apologise for the slur that was put on every
275 Opposition Member last night. He should do it now, and let us have a proper debate.

517

276   The Prime Minister: We are going to vote either way tonight—either vote is an
277   honourable vote. I suggest that we get on with the debate that the country wants to
278   hear.

279   In many ways, what I have just said helps to answer the next question that some
280   Members have asked about why we do not simply increase our level of airstrikes in
281   Iraq to free up coalition capacity for strikes in Syria. We have the capabilities that
282   other members of the Coalition want to benefit from, and it makes absolutely no sense
283   to stop using these capabilities at a border between Iraq and Syria that Daesh simply
284   does not recognise or respect.

285   Several hon. Members *rose*—

286   The Prime Minister: Let me make this argument, because it is an important, detailed
287   point. There was a recent incident in which Syrian opposition forces needed urgent
288   support in their fight against Daesh. British Tornadoes were eight minutes away, just
289   over the border in Iraq—no one else was close—but Britain could not help, so the
290   Syrian opposition forces had to wait 40 minutes in a perilous situation while other
291   coalition forces were scrambled. That sort of delay endangers the lives of those
292   fighting Daesh on the ground, and does nothing for our reputation with our vital allies.

293   Several hon. Members *rose*—

294   The Prime Minister: Let me give way to my hon. Friend the Member for Basildon and
295   Billericay (Mr Baron)

296   Mr John Baron (Basildon and Billericay) (Con): I thank the Prime Minister for giving
297   way. Does he understand that at a time when too many aircraft are already chasing too
298   few targets, many of us are concerned about the lack of a comprehensive strategy,
299   both military and non-military, including an exit strategy? One of the fundamental
300   differences between Iraq and Syria is that in Iraq there are nearly 1 million personnel
301   on the Government payroll, and still we are having trouble pushing ISIL back. In
302   Syria, with the 70,000 moderates, we risk forgetting the lesson of Libya. What is the
303   Prime Minister's reaction to the decision yesterday by the Select Committee on
304   Foreign Affairs that he had not adequately addressed our concerns?

305   The Prime Minister: Let me answer both of my hon. Friend's questions. The second
306   question is perhaps answered

307   2 Dec 2015 : Column 331

308   with something in which I am sure the whole House will want to join me in, which is
309   wishing the hon. Member for Ilford South (Mike Gapes) well, given his recent illness.
310   He is normally always at the Foreign Affairs Committee, and always voting on non-
311   party grounds on the basis of the arguments in which he believes.

312   Where my hon. Friend the Member for Basildon and Billericay and I disagree is on
313   this: I believe that there is a strategy, of which military action is only one part. The
314   key answer to his question is that we want to see a new Syrian transitional
315   Government whose troops will then be our allies in squeezing out and destroying the

316 so-called caliphate altogether. My disagreement with my hon. Friend is that I believe
317 that we cannot wait for that happen. The threat is now; ISIL/Daesh is planning attacks
318 now. We can act in Syria as we act in Iraq, and in doing so, we can enhance the long-
319 term security and safety of our country, which is why we should act.

320 Several hon. Members *rose—*

321 The Prime Minister: Let me give way to my hon. Friend the Member for Gillingham
322 and Rainham (Rehman Chishti).

323 Rehman Chishti (Gillingham and Rainham) (Con): May I first of all thank the Prime
324 Minister for that change in terminology, and all Members of Parliament across the
325 House for their support? Will the Prime Minister join me in urging the BBC to review
326 its bizarre policy? It wrote to me to say that it cannot use the word "Daesh" because it
327 would breach its impartiality rules. We are at war with terrorists, and we have to
328 defeat their ideology and appeal: we have to be united. Will he join me in urging the
329 BBC to review its bizarre policy?

330 The Prime Minister: I agree with my hon. Friend, and I have already corresponded
331 with the BBC about its use of "IS"—Islamic State—which I think is even worse than
332 either saying "so-called IS" or, indeed, "ISIL". "Daesh" is clearly an improvement,
333 and it is important that we all try and use this language.

334 Several hon. Members *rose—*

335 The Prime Minister: Let me make some progress, then I will give way again.

336 There is a much more fundamental answer as to why we should carry out airstrikes in
337 Syria ourselves, and it is this. Raqqa in Syria is the headquarters of this threat to our
338 security. It is in Syria where they pump and sell the oil that does so much to help
339 finance its evil acts, and as I have said, it is in Syria where many of the plots against
340 our country are formed, so we must act in Syria to deal with these threats ourselves.

341 Several hon. Members *rose—*

342 The Prime Minister: I will give way to the hon. Member for Cardiff South and Penarth
343 (Stephen Doughty).

344 Stephen Doughty: I thank the Prime Minister for giving way. I would have preferred
345 to hear an apology, but I want to discuss the facts. The fact is that we are

346 2 Dec 2015 : Column 332

347 proposing to target very different things from those that we are targeting in northern
348 Iraq and I would like to ask the Prime Minister two questions. First, what practical
349 steps will be used to reduce civilian casualties? Secondly, what sorts of targets will we
350 be going against that will reduce the terrorist threat to the UK in terms of operations
351 directed against our citizens?

352 The Prime Minister: Let me answer the hon. Gentleman very directly. On the sorts of
353 targets that we can go after, clearly it is the leaders of this death cult itself, the training
354 camps, the communications hubs and those who are plotting against us. As I shall
355 argue in a minute, the limited action that we took against Khan and Hussain, which
356 was, if you like, an airstrikes on Syria, has already had an impact on ISIL—on Daesh.
357 That is a very important point.

358 How do we avoid civilian casualties? We have a policy—a start point—of wanting
359 zero civilian casualties. One year and three months into those Iraqi operations, we
360 have not had any reports of civilian casualties. I am not saying that there are no
361 casualties in war; of course there are. We are putting ourselves into a very difficult
362 situation, which is hugely complex. In many ways it is a difficult argument to get
363 across, but its heart is a simple point—will we be safer and better off in the long term
364 if we can get rid of the so-called caliphate which is radicalising Muslims, turning
365 people against us and plotting atrocities on the streets of Britain?

366 Simon Hoare (North Dorset) (Con): Does my right hon. Friend agree that there are
367 already hundreds, if not thousands, of civilian casualties—those who are thrown off
368 buildings, burned, decapitated, crucified, and those who have had to flee Syria, away
369 from their co-religionists who have so bastardised that religion? Those are the civilian
370 casualties we are trying to help.

371 The Prime Minister: My hon. Friend puts it extremely clearly. That is one of the aims
372 of what we are doing—to prevent this death cult from carrying out the ghastly acts it
373 carries out daily.

374 Several hon. Members *rose—*

375 The Prime Minister: Let me make some progress. Let me turn to the question of
376 whether there will be ground forces to make this operation a success. Those who say
377 that there are not as any ground troops as we would like, and that they are not all in
378 the right places, are correct. We are not dealing with an ideal situation, but let me
379 make a series of important points. First, we should be clear what airstrikes alone can
380 achieve. We do not need ground troops to target the supply of oil which Daesh uses to
381 fund terrorism. We do not need ground troops to hit Daesh's headquarters, its
382 infrastructure, its supply routes, its training facilities and its weapons supplies. It is
383 clear that airstrikes can have an effect, as in the case of Khan and Hussain that I just
384 mentioned. Irrespective of ground forces, our RAF can do serious damage to Daesh's
385 ability right now to bring terror to our streets and we should give it that support.

386 George Kerevan (East Lothian) (SNP): How would the Prime Minister respond to the
387 point that since Daesh's offensive against Baghdad was blunted by air power, it has
388 changed its tactics and dispersed its forces,

389 2 Dec 2015 : Column 333

390 and particularly in Raqqa, a town of 600,000 people at present, has dispersed its
391 operations all through that city into small units which make it impervious to attacks
392 from our Tornados, given the small number of Tornados we have?

393 The Prime Minister: What the hon. Gentleman says is right. Of course Daesh has
394 changed its tactics from the early days when airstrikes were even more effective, but
395 that is not an argument for doing nothing. It is an argument for using airstrikes where
396 we can, but having a longer-term strategy to deliver the necessary ground troops
397 through the transition. The argument before the House is simple: do we wait for
398 perfection, which is a transitional Government in Syria, or do we start the work now
399 of degrading and destroying that organisation at the request of our allies, at the request
400 of the Gulf states, in the knowledge from our security experts that it will make a
401 difference?

402 Several hon. Members *rose—*

403 The Prime Minister: Let me make a little progress, then I will take interventions from
404 both sides.

405 As I said last week, the full answer to the question of ground forces cannot be
406 achieved until there is a new Syrian Government who represent all the Syrian
407 people—not just Sunni, Shi'a and Alawite, but Christian, Druze and others. It is this
408 new Government who will be the natural partners for our forces in defeating Daesh for
409 good. But there are some ground forces that we can work with in the meantime. Last
410 week I told the House—

411 Several hon. Members *rose—*

412 The Prime Minister: Let me give the explanation, and then colleagues can intervene if
413 they like.

414 Last week I told the House that we believe that there are around 70,000 Syrian
415 opposition fighters who do not belong to extremist groups and with whom we can co-
416 ordinate attacks on Daesh. The House will appreciate that there are some limits on
417 what I can say about these groups, not least because I cannot risk the safety of these
418 courageous people, who are being targeted daily by the regime, by Daesh or by both.
419 But I know that this is an area of great interest and concern to the House, so let me try
420 to say a little more.

421 The 70,000 figure is an estimate from our independent Joint Intelligence Committee,
422 based on detailed analysis, updated daily and drawing on a wide range of open sources
423 and intelligence. The majority of the 70,000 are from the Free Syrian Army.
424 Alongside the 70,000, there are some 20,000 Kurdish fighters with whom we can also
425 work. I am not arguing—this is a crucial point—that all of the 70,000 are somehow
426 ideal partners. However, some left the Syrian army because of Assad's brutality, and
427 clearly they can play a role in the future of Syria. That view is also taken by the
428 Russians, who are prepared to talk with these people.

429 Steve Brine (Winchester) (Con): I thank the Prime Minister for giving way, and for
430 the helpful way he is explaining matters to colleagues across the House. He spoke
431 about a long-term strategy to see a new Government in Syria. There is wide agreement
432 on that among our allies, but possibly more of a challenge with Russia. What
433 conversations has he had with President Putin,

either directly or via the United States, on the short and longer-term prospects for
President Assad?

The Prime Minister: I have had those conversations with President Putin on many
occasions, most recently at the G20 summit in Antalya, and President Obama had a
meeting with him at the climate change conference in Paris. As I have said before in
this House, there was an enormous gap between Britain, America, France and, indeed,
Saudi Arabia on the one hand and Russia on the other hand; we wanted Assad to go
instantly and they wanted him to stay, potentially forever. That gap has narrowed, and
I think that it will narrow further as the vital talks in Vienna get under way.

Let me make a point about the Vienna talks, because I think that some people worry
that it is a process without an end. The clear ambition in the talks is to see a
transitional Government within six months, and a new constitution and fresh elections
within 18 months, so there is real momentum behind them.

Andrew Bridgen (North West Leicestershire) (Con): Will the Prime Minister confirm
that, alongside any military intervention in Syria that the House might authorise
tonight, he remains completely committed to the Government's huge humanitarian
effort, which has kept so many people alive in the region?

The Prime Minister: I thank my hon. Friend for that intervention. I can certainly
confirm that. We are the second largest bilateral donor in the world, after America,
and we will keep that up, not least with the vital conference that we are co-chairing in
London next year, when we will bring together the whole world to ensure that we fill
the gap in the funding that is available.

Liam Byrne (Birmingham, Hodge Hill) (Lab): I am grateful to the Prime Minister,
who is presenting his case well. Had he come to the House and asked for a very
narrow licence to take out ISIL's external planning capability, I think that would have
commanded widespread consent, but he is asking for a wider authority. I want to draw
him on the difference between Iraq and Syria. In Iraq there are ground forces in place,
but in Syria there are not. I invite him to say a little more at the very least about what
ground forces he envisages joining us in the seizure of Raqqa.

The Prime Minister: Let me try to answer that as directly as possible, because it goes
to the nub of the difficulty of this case. I do not think that we can separate the task of
taking out the command and control of Daesh's operations against the UK, France,
Belgium and elsewhere from the task of degrading and destroying the so-called
caliphate that it has created; the two are intricately linked. Indeed, as I argued before
the House last week, as long as the so-called caliphate exists, it is a threat to us, not
least because it is radicalising Muslims from around the world who are going to fight
for that organisation and potentially then return to attack us.

On the right hon. Gentleman's second question about ground troops, as I have
explained, there are three parts to the argument. First, we must not underestimate the
things we can do without ground troops. Secondly, although the ground troops that are
there are not ideal

and there are not as many of them as we would like, they are people we are working with and who we can work with more. Thirdly, the real plan is that as we get a transitional Government in Syria that can represent all the Syrian people, there will be more ground troops for us to work with to defeat Daesh and the caliphate, which will keep our country safe. I know that will take a long time and that it will be complex, but that is the strategy, and we need to start with the first step, which is going after these terrorists today.

Ms Gisela Stuart (Birmingham, Edgbaston) (Lab): I think the Prime Minister has to acknowledge that the ground troops that we can work with will be absolutely essential for his long-term strategy. At the moment he has not shown to me that as we defeat ISIL, we will not simply create a vacuum into which Assad will move and we will be fighting another enemy. Just a final word—perhaps I give him some motherly advice—if he got up now and said, "Whoever does not walk with me through the Division Lobby is not a terrorist sympathiser", he would improve his standing in this House enormously.

The Prime Minister: I am very happy to repeat what the hon. Lady said. As I have said, people who vote in either Division Lobby do so with honour. I could not have been clearer about that. If she is saying that there are not enough ground troops, she is right. If she is saying that they are not always in the right places, she is right. But the question for us is, should we act now in order to try to start to turn the tide?

Angus Robertson (Moray) (SNP) *rose—*

The Prime Minister: Let me make some progress, but I will certainly give way to the leader of the SNP in a moment. I just want to be clear about the 70,000. That figure does not include a further 25,000 extremist fighters in groups which reject political participation and reject co-ordination with non-Muslims, so although they fight Daesh they cannot and will not be our partners. So there are ground forces who will take the fight to Daesh, and in many cases we can work with them and we can assist them.

Several hon. Members *rose—*

The Prime Minister: I want to make one final point and then I will give way to the leader of the SNP.

If we do not act now, we should be clear that there will be even fewer ground forces over time as Daesh will get even stronger. In my view, we simply cannot afford to wait. We have to act now.

Angus Robertson: Would the Prime Minister clarify for every Member of the House the advice that he and others have been given in relation to the 70,000 forces that he speaks of? How many of those 70,000 are classified as moderate and how many of them are classified as fundamentalists with whom we can never work?

The Prime Minister: On the 70,000, the advice I have is that the majority are made up of the Free Syrian Army, but of course the Free Syrian Army has different leadership

516   in different parts of the country. The 70,000 excludes those in extremist groups like al-
517   Nusra that we

518   2 Dec 2015 : Column 336

519   will not work with. As I have said very clearly, I am not arguing that the 70,000 are
520   ideal partners; some of them do have views that we do not agree with. But the
521   definition of the 70,000 is those people that we have been prepared to work with and
522   continue to be prepared to work with. Let me make this point again: if we do not take
523   action against Daesh now, the number of ground forces we can work with will get less
524   and less and less. If we want to end up with a situation where there is the butcher
525   Assad on one side and a stronger ISIL on the other side, not acting is one of the things
526   that will bring that about.

527   Sir Edward Garnier (Harborough) (Con): I know from my time in government how
528   long, how hard and how anxiously the Prime Minister thinks about these questions,
529   but will he ensure that we complete the military aspect of this campaign, if at all
530   possible, so that we can then get on to the really important, but perhaps the most
531   difficult aspect of the questions that he has posed—namely, the post-conflict
532   stabilisation and the reconstruction of Syria, because without this early stage there will
533   not be a Syria left to reconstruct?

534   The Prime Minister: My right hon. and learned Friend, who himself always thought
535   about these things very carefully, is right. That is the end goal, and we should not take
536   our eyes off the prize, which is a reconstructed Syria with a Government that can
537   represent all the people; which is a Syria at peace so that we do not have the migration
538   crisis and we do not have the terrorism crisis. That is the goal.

539   Let me turn to the overall strategy. Again, I set this out in the House last week.

540   Several hon. Members *rose—*

541   The Prime Minister: I will make some progress.

542   Let me say a little more about each of the non-military elements: counter-terrorism,
543   counter-extremism, the political and diplomatic processes, and the vital humanitarian
544   work that my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Harborough (Sir Edward
545   Garnier) just referred to. Our counter-terrorism strategy gives Britain a comprehensive
546   plan to prevent and foil plots at home and also to address the poisonous extremist
547   ideology that is the root cause of the threat that we face. As part of this, I can
548   announce today that we will establish a comprehensive review to root out any
549   remaining funding of extremism within the UK. This will examine specifically the
550   nature, scale and origin of the funding of Islamist extremist activity in the UK,
551   including any overseas sources. It will report to myself and my right hon. Friend the
552   Home Secretary next spring.

553   Several hon. Members *rose—*

554   The Prime Minister: I want to make this point before I give way again. I know there
555   are some who suggest that military action could in some way undermine our counter-

556 extremism strategy by radicalising British Muslims, so let me take this head on.
557 British Muslims are appalled by Daesh. These women-raping, Muslim-murdering,
558 medieval monsters are hijacking the peaceful religion of Islam for their warped ends.
559 As the King of Jordan says in an article today, these people are not Muslims, they are
560 "outlaws" from Islam. We must stand with our Muslim friends, here and around the
561 world, as they

562 2 Dec 2015 : Column 337

563 reclaim their religion from these terrorists. Far from an attack on Islam, we are
564 engaged in a defence of Islam, and far from a risk of radicalising British Muslims by
565 acting, failing to act would actually be to betray British Muslims and the wider
566 religion of Islam in its very hour of need.

567 Mr Ronnie Campbell (Blyth Valley) (Lab): The Prime Minister said that this country
568 would fight all the time. Why do the Iranians, the Saudis and the Turks not fight these
569 people? Why has it always got to be us who fight them?

570 The Prime Minister: The Turks are taking part in this action and urging us to do the
571 same. The Saudis are taking part in this action and urging us to do the same. The
572 Jordanians have taken part in this action and urge us to do the same. I have in my
573 notes quote after quote from leader after leader in the Gulf world begging and
574 pleading with Britain to take part so that we can take the fight to this death cult that
575 threatens us all so much.

576 The second part of our strategy is our support for the diplomatic and political process.
577 Let me say a word about how this process can lead to the ceasefires between the
578 regime and the opposition that are so essential for the next stages of this political
579 transition. It begins with identifying the right people to put around the table. Next
580 week, we expect the Syrian regime to nominate a team of people to negotiate under
581 the auspices of the United Nations. Over the last 18 months, political and armed
582 opposition positions have converged. We know the main groups and their ideas. In the
583 coming days, Saudi Arabia will host an inclusive meeting for opposition
584 representatives in Riyadh. The United Nations will take forward discussions on steps
585 towards a ceasefire, including at the next meeting of the International Syria Support
586 Group, which we expect to take place before Christmas.

587 The aim is clear, as I have said—a transitional Government in six months, a new
588 constitution, and free and fair elections within 18 months. I would argue that the key
589 elements of a deal are emerging: ceasefires, opposition groups coming together, the
590 regime looking at negotiation, and the key players—America and Russia, Saudi
591 Arabia and Iran—and key regional players such as Turkey all in the room together.
592 My argument is this: hitting Daesh does not hurt this process; it helps this process,
593 which is the eventual goal.

594 Mr Nigel Evans (Ribble Valley) (Con): Does the Prime Minister agree that the
595 murders on the beach in Tunisia and the carnage in Paris on 13 November have
596 changed everything, and that the British people would find it rather odd if it took more
597 than that for Britain to stand shoulder to shoulder with a number of other countries
598 and take on Daesh?

599　The Prime Minister: My hon. Friend speaks for many. They attack us because of who
600　we are, not because of what we do, and they want to attack us again and again. The
601　question for us is, do we answer the call of our allies, some of our closest friends in
602　the world—the French and the Americans—who want us to join them and Arab
603　partners in this work, or do we ignore that call? If we ignore that call, think for a
604　moment what that says about Britain as an ally. Think for a moment what it says to the
605　countries in the region who will be

606　2 Dec 2015 : Column 338

607　asking themselves, "If Britain won't come to the aid of France, its neighbour, in these
608　circumstances, just how reliable a neighbour, a friend and an ally is this country?"

609　Several hon. Members *rose*—

610　The Prime Minister: Let me make some progress on the vital subjects of humanitarian
611　relief and the longer-term stabilisation, because I am conscious of the time. I set out
612　for the House last week our support for refugees in the region, the extra £1 billion that
613　we would be prepared to commit to Syria's reconstruction, and the broad international
614　alliance that we would work with in the rebuilding phase. However, let us be clear—
615　my hon. Friend the Member for North Dorset (Simon Hoare) made this point—that
616　people will not return to Syria if part of it is under the control of an organisation that
617　enslaves Yazidis, throws gay people off buildings, beheads aid workers and forces
618　children to marry before they are even 10 years old. We cannot separate the
619　humanitarian work and the reconstruction work from dealing with Daesh itself.

620　Ms Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh (Ochil and South Perthshire) (SNP): I welcome any
621　comments that distance British Muslims and Muslims in Scotland from Daesh. I also
622　welcome the Prime Minister's use of that terminology. I ask him this question as a
623　new Member of the House who is looking to seasoned parliamentarians and those who
624　have been in this Chamber for some time, as new Members do on such occasions.
625　Given that the language that is being used could be considered unbecoming of a
626　parliamentarian, for the benefit of new Members, will the Prime Minister withdraw his
627　remarks in relation to terrorist sympathisers?

628　The Prime Minister: I think everyone is now focused on the main issues in front of us.
629　That is what we should be focused on.

630　Let me turn to the plan for post-conflict reconstruction to support a new Syrian
631　Government when they emerge. I have said that we would be prepared to commit at
632　least £1 billion to Syria's reconstruction. The initial priorities would be protection,
633　security, stabilisation and confidence-building measures, including meeting basic
634　humanitarian needs such as education, health and shelter, and, of course, helping
635　refugees to return. Over time, the focus would shift to the longer-term rebuilding of
636　Syria's shattered infrastructure, harnessing the expertise of the international financial
637　institutions and the private sector. As I said last week, we are not in the business of
638　trying to dismantle the Syrian state or its institutions. We would aim to allocate
639　reconstruction funds against a plan agreed between a new, inclusive Syrian
640　Government and the international community, once the conflict had ended. That is the
641　absolute key.

526

642 Several hon. Members *rose*—

643 The Prime Minister: I will take interventions from my hon. Friend the Member for
644 Sherwood (Mark Spencer) and then another Opposition Member before drawing my
645 remarks to a close.

646 Mark Spencer (Sherwood) (Con): What really matters to my constituents is whether
647 they will be safer after this process. The Prime Minister is making a strong case for
648 attacking the heart of this terrorist organisation. Will

649 2 Dec 2015 : Column 339

650 he assure the House that, as well as taking action in Syria, he will shore up security
651 services and policing in the United Kingdom?

652 The Prime Minister: That is what our constituents want to know. What are we doing to
653 strengthen our borders? What are we doing to exchange intelligence information
654 across Europe? What are we doing to strengthen our intelligence and policing
655 agencies, which the Chancellor spoke about so much last week? We should see all of
656 this through the prism of national security. That is our first duty. When our allies are
657 asking us to act, the intelligence is there and we have the knowledge that we can make
658 a difference, I believe that we should act.

659 Let me take an intervention from the leader of the Liberal Democrats.

660 Tim Farron (Westmorland and Lonsdale) (LD): The Prime Minister rightly says how
661 important it is that we not only stand with our allies and friends in Europe, but are
662 seen to stand with them. However, he has not so far stood with those European allies
663 on the matter of taking our fair share of refugees from this crisis and other crises. Will
664 he look again at the request from Save the Children that this country take 3,000
665 orphaned child refugees who are currently in Europe?

666 The Prime Minister: We have played a huge part in Europe as the biggest bilateral
667 donor. No other European country has given as much as Britain. We are also going to
668 take 20,000 refugees, with 1,000 arriving by Christmas. However, I am happy to look
669 once again at the issue of orphans. I think that it is better to take orphans from the
670 region, rather than those who come over, sometimes with their extended family. I am
671 very happy to look at that issue again, both in Europe and out of Europe, to see
672 whether Britain can do more to fulfil our moral responsibilities.

673 Let me conclude. This is not 2003. We must not use past mistakes as an excuse for
674 indifference or inaction. Let us be clear: inaction does not amount to a strategy for our
675 security or that of the Syrian people, but inaction is a choice. I believe that it is the
676 wrong choice. We face a clear threat. We have listened to our allies. We have taken
677 legal advice. We have a unanimous United Nations resolution. We have discussed our
678 proposed actions extensively at meetings of the National Security Council and the
679 Cabinet. I have responded personally to the detailed report of the Foreign Affairs
680 Committee. We have a proper motion before the House and we are having a 10 and a
681 half hour debate today.

682 In that spirit, I look forward to the rest of the debate and to listening to the
683 contributions of Members from all parts of the House. I hope that at the end of it all,
684 the House will come together in large numbers to vote for Britain to play its part in
685 defeating these evil extremists and taking the action that is needed now to keep our
686 country safe. In doing so, I pay tribute to the extraordinary bravery and service of our
687 inspirational armed forces, who will once again put themselves in harm's way to
688 protect our values and our way of life. I commend this motion to the House.

Appendix Six:

Corbyn's speech of the second debate

Lines	Parts of the speech	Element of argument
1-10	The whole House recognises that decisions to send British forces to war are the most serious, solemn and morally challenging of any that we have to take as Members of Parliament. The motion brought before the House by the Government, authorising military action in Syria against ISIL, faces us with exactly that decision. It is a decision with potentially far-reaching consequences for us all here in Britain, as well as for the people of Syria and the wider middle east. For all Members, taking a decision that will put British servicemen and women in harm's way, and almost inevitably lead to the deaths of innocents, is a heavy responsibility. It must be treated with the utmost seriousness, with respect given to those who make a different judgment about the right course of action to take.	Possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim: military action will have negative consequences upon British and Syrian people
10-18	That is why the Prime Minister's attempt to brand those who plan to vote against the Government as "terrorist sympathisers", both demeans the office of the Prime Minister and, I believe, undermines the seriousness of the deliberations we are having today. If he now wants to apologise for those remarks, I would be happy to give way to him. Since the Prime Minister is unmoved, we will have to move on with the debate. I hope that he will be stronger later and recognise that, yes, he made an unfortunate remark last night, and that apologising for it would be very helpful and improve the atmosphere of this debate.	Negation proposed construal by Cameron: Corbyn rejects Cameron's description of those who do not support the motion as "terrorist sympathisers". Corbyn asks Cameron if he wants to apologise
24-26	Abuse has no part in responsible democratic political dialogue, and I believe that very strongly. That is the way I wish to conduct myself, and I wish others to conduct themselves in that way.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): morality of the debate, and he negates Cameron's construal

30-33	As he often does on these occasions, the Prime Minister appears to be taking advice from the Chancellor of the Exchequer on this matter. If he wants to apologise now that is fine. If he does not, well, the whole world can note that he is not apologising.	Negation proposed construal by Cameron: Corbyn suggests this issue is serious and Cameron should apologise
34-40	Since the Prime Minister first made his case for extending British bombing to Syria in the House last week, the doubts and unanswered questions expressed on both sides of the House have only grown and multiplied. That is why it is a matter of such concern that the Government have decided to push this vote through Parliament today. It would have been far better to allow a full two-day debate that would have given all Members the chance to make a proper contribution—you informed us, Mr Speaker, that 157 Members have applied to speak in this debate.	Circumstances: the MPs have concerns about the support of intervention and their situation in the debate
47-52	The hon. Gentleman may have to wait a few moments to hear the answer to that, but I promise that it will be in my speech. I am pleased that he made that intervention about the Kurdish people, because at some point over the whole middle east and the whole of this settlement, there must be a recognition of the rights of Kurdish people, whichever country they live in. The hon. Gentleman and I have shared that view for more than 30 years, and my view on that has not changed.	Circumstances: situation of Kurds in the region
57-58	I thank my hon. Friend for that intervention. That is not part of the motion today, so we move on with this debate.	Others: turning to the focus of his speech
59-65	It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the Prime Minister understands that public opinion is moving increasingly against what I believe to be an ill-thought-out rush to war. He wants to hold this vote before opinion against it grows even further. Whether it is a lack of strategy worth the name, the absence of credible ground troops, the missing diplomatic plan for a Syrian settlement, the failure to address the impact of the terrorist threat or the refugee crisis and civilian casualties, it is becoming increasingly clear that the Prime Minister's proposals for military action simply do not stack up.	Circumstances: updating the situation and at the same time countering Cameron's circumstances
71-	Every MP has to make a decision today, every MP	Circumstances

75	has a vote today, every MP has a constituency, and every MP should be aware of what constituents' and public opinion is. They will make up their own mind. Obviously, I am proposing that we do not support the Government's motion tonight and I encourage all colleagues on all sides to join me in the Lobby tonight to oppose the Government's proposals.	(circumstantial values): obligation of MPs to reflect the voice of constituents
76-80	Last week, the Prime Minister focused his case for bombing in Syria on the critical test set by the very respected cross-party Foreign Affairs Committee. Given the holes in the Government's case, it is scarcely surprising that last night the Committee reported that the Prime Minister had not "adequately addressed concerns". In other words, the Committee judged that the Prime Minister's case for bombing has failed its tests.	Argument from authority: Foreign Affairs Committee raises concerns around the claim of Cameron because he does not refer to the public concern
91-97	I thank the hon. Gentleman for his intervention. He and I have often had very amicable discussions on many of these issues and I am sure we will again. The fact is, however, that at a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee the verdict was that the Prime Minister had not adequately addressed concerns. Obviously, I understand there are differences of opinion. Goodness, there are plenty of differences of opinion all around this House, on both the Government and Opposition Benches. I therefore ask the Chair of the Select Committee to recognise that a decision has been made by his Committee.	Circumstances: public concerns about the possible intervention and that defeats the proposed circumstances by Cameron
98-100	After the despicable and horrific attacks in Paris last month, the question of whether the Government's proposals for military action in Syria strengthen or undermine our own national security must be at the centre of our deliberations.	General orientation of Corbyn's claim
105-111	There is no doubt that the so-call Islamic State has imposed a reign of sectarian and inhuman terror in Iraq, Syria and Libya. There is no question but that it also poses a threat to our own people. The issue now is whether extending British bombing from Iraq to Syria is likely to reduce or increase that threat to Britain, and whether it will counter or spread the terror campaign ISIL is waging across the middle east. The answers do not make the case for the Government motion. On the contrary, they are a warning to step back and vote against yet another ill-	Circumstances: ISIL threatens national and international security. But the current situation of attacking ISIL is a problem because the military action increases ISIL's threat

	fated twist in this never-ending war on terror.	
112-121	Let us start with a military dimension. The Prime Minister has been unable to explain why extending airstrikes to Syria will make a significant military impact on the existing campaign. ISIL is already being bombed in Syria or Iraq by the United States, France, Britain, Russia and other powers. Interestingly, Canada has withdrawn from this campaign and no longer takes part in it. During more than a year of bombing, ISIL has expanded as well as lost territory. ISIL gains included the Iraqi city of Ramadi and the Syrian city of Palmyra. The claim that superior British missiles will make the difference is hard to credit when the US and other states are, as mentioned in an earlier intervention, struggling to find suitable targets. In other words, extending British bombing is unlikely to make a huge difference.	Emerging negative consequences of action already taken: concerns around the timeline of the action
123-137	Secondly, the Prime Minister has failed to convince almost anyone that, even if British participation in the air campaign were to tip the balance, there are credible ground forces able to take back territory now held by ISIL. In fact, it is quite clear that there are no such forces. Last week, the Prime Minister suggested that a combination of Kurdish militias and the Free Syrian Army would be able to fill the gap. He even claimed that a 70,000-strong force of moderate FSA fighters was ready to co-ordinate action against ISIL with the western air campaign. That claim has not remotely stood up to scrutiny. Kurdish forces are a distance away, so will be of little assistance in the Sunni Arab areas that ISIL controls. Neither will the FSA, which includes a wide range of groups that few, if any, would regard as moderate and which mostly operates in other parts of the country. The only ground forces able to take advantage of a successful anti-ISIL air campaign are stronger jihadist and Salafist groups close to the ISIL-controlled areas. I think that these are serious issues that need to be thought through very carefully, as I believe the Prime Minister's bombing campaign could well lead to that.	Possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim: it is difficult to guarantee that Kurdish and FSA fighters to coordinate with Britain in the region for defeating ISIL. Corbyn raises the concern of how we can define the moderate fighters.
141-143	That is why the logic of an extended air campaign is, in fact, towards mission creep and western boots on	Possible negative consequences of

	the ground. Whatever the Prime Minister may say now about keeping British combat troops out of the way, that is a real possibility.	Cameron's claim: possibility of sending ground troops
144-151	Thirdly, the military aim of attacking ISIL targets in Syria is not really part of a coherent diplomatic strategy. UN Security Council resolution 2249, passed after the Paris atrocities and cited in today's Government motion, does not give clear and unambiguous authorisation for UK bombing in Syria. To do so, it would have had to be passed under chapter 7 of the UN charter, to which the Security Council could not agree. The UN resolution is certainly a welcome framework for joint action to cut off funding, oil revenues and arms supplies from ISIL, but I wonder whether there are many signs of that happening.	Circumstances: concerns around the UN Security Council resolution and implicitly rebut Cameron's claim of using UN reports as argument from authority
157-163	The problem is that the oil supplies sold by ISIL go into Turkey and other countries, and I think we need to know exactly who is buying that oil, who is funding it, what banks are involved in the financial transactions that ultimately benefit ISIL, and which other countries in the region either are or are not involved. That is despite the clear risk of potentially disastrous incidents. The shooting down of a Russian military aircraft by Turkish forces is a sign of the danger of a serious escalation of this whole issue.	Means-goal: proposed actions instead of military action
174-183	Fourthly, the Prime Minister has avoided spelling out to the British people the warnings that he has surely been given about the likely impact of UK air strikes in Syria on the threat of terrorist attacks in the UK. That is something that everyone who backs the Government's motion should weigh and think about very carefully before we vote on whether or not to send RAF pilots into action over Syria. It is critically important that we, as a House, are honest with the British people about the potential consequences of the action that the Prime Minister is proposing today. I am aware that there are those with military experience—Conservative as well as Labour Members—who have argued that extending UK bombing will "increase the short-term risks of terrorist attacks in Britain."	Possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim: military action will increase ISIL's threat upon national security
184-189	We should also remember the impact on communities here in Britain. Sadly, since the Paris	Possible negative consequences of

	attacks there has been a sharp increase in Islamophobic incidents and physical attacks. I have discussed them with people in my local mosque, in my constituency, and they are horrific. Surely this message must go out from all of us in the House today: none of us—we can say this together—will tolerate any form of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia or racism in any form in this country.	Cameron's claim: air campaign may increase the racism within British communities
190-196	In my view, the Prime Minister has offered no serious assessment of the impact of an intensified air campaign on civilian casualties in ISIL-held Syrian territory, or on the wider Syrian refugee crisis. At least 250,000 have already been killed in Syria's terrible civil war, 11 million have been made homeless, and 4 million have been forced to leave the country. Many more have been killed by the Assad regime than by ISIL itself. Yet more bombing in Syria will kill innocent civilians—there is no doubt about that—and will turn many more Syrians into refugees.	Possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim: air campaign will increase civilian causalities
198-207	I will give way in a moment. Yesterday I was sent this message from a constituent of mine who comes from Syria. *(Laughter.)* I am sorry, but it is not funny. This is about a family who are suffering. My constituent's name is Abdulaziz Almashi. "I'm a Syrian from Manbij city, which is now controlled by ISIL", he wrote. "Members of my family still live there and Isil didn't kill them. My question to David Cameron is: 'Can you guarantee the safety of my family when your air forces bomb my city?'" *[Interruption.]* It is a fair question, from a family who are very concerned.	Possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim: Situation of Syrian witness that oppose the airstrikes due to the negative consequences
215-219	Yes, of course security on the streets of this country, in all our communities, is very important. That is why we have supported the Government's action in no longer pursuing the strategy of cutting the police, and also increasing security in this country. Clearly, none of us wants an atrocity on the streets of this country. My borough was deeply affected by 7/7 in 2005	Possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim: Corbyn suggests the need to improve the security inside Britain instead of airstrikes
221-233	**Mr Speaker:** Order. The Member who has the Floor cannot be expected to give way to a further intervention when he is in the process of answering an existing one. The hon. Gentlemen are experienced	Others: discussions around MPs' requests to have a chance of talking in the debate

534

	enough denizens of this House to be aware of that. **Jeremy Corbyn:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to give way to my right hon. Friend the Member for Tottenham (Mr Lammy). **Mr David Lammy (Tottenham) (Lab):** I am grateful to the Leader of the Opposition for giving way. Does he accept that the 70,000 moderate Sunnis who the Prime Minister claims are in Syria comprise many different jihadist groups? There is concern across the House that in degrading ISIL/Daesh, which is possible, we might create a vacuum into which other jihadists would come, over time. Surely that would not make the streets of Britain safer. **Jeremy Corbyn:** For the sake of north London geography, I shall now give way to the hon. Member for Enfield, Southgate (Mr Burrowes).	
241-250	I thank both Members for their interventions. My right hon. Friend the Member for Tottenham (Mr Lammy) makes a serious point. We have to be careful about what will happen in the future. As the Prime Minister and others have said, we must be aware of the danger that some people, mainly young people, will become deeply radicalised and end up doing very dangerous things. Is the radicalisation of a small but significant number of young people across Europe a product of the war or of something else? We need to think very deeply about that, about what has happened **2 Dec 2015 : Column 346** in this world since 2001, and about the increasing number of people who are suffering because of that. I rest my case at that point.	Corbyn's claim: before he clearly states the main claim, he rebuts Cameron's claim by dealing with intervention as a problem
251-256	There is no EU-wide strategy to provide humanitarian assistance to the victims. Perhaps most importantly of all, is the Prime Minister able to explain how British bombing in Syria will contribute to a comprehensive negotiated political settlement of the Syrian war? Such a settlement is widely accepted to be the only way to ensure the isolation and defeat	Possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim: military action will not achieve the long-term goals of the Syrian situation, and the

535

	of ISIL. ISIL grew out of the invasion of Iraq, and it has flourished in Syria in the chaos and horror of a multi-fronted civil war.	problem is military action increases threat of ISIL (circumstances)
262-268	We absolutely need action to ensure that there is a diplomatic and political solution to the crisis. I welcome what the Prime Minister said about speeding up the process in Vienna, but surely the message ought to be, "Let's speed that up," rather than sending the bombers in now, if we are to bring about a political settlement. We need the involvement of all the main regional and international powers. I know that that has been attempted. I know that there have been discussions in Vienna, and we welcome that, but it is regrettable that Geneva II	Corbyn's claim: political and diplomatic solution instead military action
270-272	Mr Speaker, I will try to make some progress with my speech, if I may. Over 150 Members wish to speak, and long speeches from the Front Benches will take time away from the Back-Benchers' speeches.	Others
272-277	The aim must be to establish a broad-based Government in Syria who have the support of the majority of their people, difficult as that is to envisage at the present time. Such a settlement— **Sir Simon Burns (Chelmsford) (Con):** Will the right hon. Gentleman give way? **Jeremy Corbyn:** No. Such a settlement could help to take back territory from ISIL and bring about its lasting defeat in Syria…	Goal: the central goal of political and diplomatic procedures is establishing the new Syria government
279-281	Mr Speaker, I am really sorry to have to tell Conservative Members that I have given way quite a lot to Members on both sides of the House, and I am now going to continue with my speech.	Others
288-290	The point I was making was that ultimately, the solution has to be brought about by all the people of Syria themselves. On that, surely, we are all agreed.	Possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim: strategies of direct dealing with ISIL should be determined by Syrian people
292-301	I thought I had made it clear, and that the Speaker had made it clear, that at the moment I am not giving	Others: discussions around MPs' requests

	way; I am really sorry, but I am not. Okay? The Government's proposals for—	to have a chance of talking in the debate
	Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg (North East Somerset) (Con): On a point of order, Mr Speaker. Though it is indeed customary that he who holds the Floor decides whether to give way, is it not also customary to answer questions when they are put in interventions? We are waiting for the right hon. Gentleman's answer on Iraq. **Mr Speaker:** The hon. Member for North East Somerset (Mr Rees-Mogg) is a sufficiently experienced parliamentarian to know that he has made his own point in his own way, and it is on the record.	
304-307	The Government's proposal for military action in Syria is not backed by clear and unambiguous authorisation by the United Nations. It does not meet the seven tests set down by the Foreign Affairs Committee, and it does not fulfil three of the four conditions laid down in my own party conference resolution of a couple of months ago.	Possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim: the proposed intervention does not meet the conditions
308-314	In the past week, voice has been given to the growing opposition to the Government's bombing plans—across the country, in Parliament, outside in the media, and indeed in my own party. I believe that this is in consideration of all the wars that we have been involved in over the last 14 years. These matters were debated a great deal during my campaign to be elected leader of the Labour party, and many people think very deeply about these matters. In the light of that record of western military interventions, these matters have to be analysed.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): Corbyn suggests he is reflecting the British concerns
314-317	British bombing in Syria risks yet more of what President Obama, in a very thoughtful moment, called the "unintended consequences" of the war in Iraq, which he himself opposed at the time. The spectre of Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya looms over this debate.	Emerging negative consequences of action already taken: repeating "unintended consequences"
319-321	To oppose another war and intervention is not pacifism; it is hard-headed common sense. That is what we should be thinking about today in the House.	Circumstances: difficulty of taking the decision of defeating ISIL

121-125	To resist ISIL's determination to draw the western powers back into the heart of the middle east is not to turn our backs on allies; it is to refuse to play into the hands of ISIL as I suspect some of its members want us to. Is it wrong for us here in Westminster to see a problem, pass a motion, and drop bombs, pretending we are doing something to solve it?	Possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim: military action will not achieve the goals
225-235	That is what we did in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. Has terrorism increased or decreased as a result of all that? The Prime Minister said he was looking to build a consensus around the military action he wants to take. I do not believe he has achieved anything of the kind. He has failed, in my view, to make the case for another bombing campaign. All of our efforts should instead go into bringing the Syrian civil war to an end. Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya: I ask Members to think very carefully about the previous decisions we have made. *[Interruption.]* What we are proposing to do today is send British bombers	Emerging negative consequences of previous military actions: previous actions have increased terrorism
345-349	Thank you, Mr Speaker. Sometimes in this House we get carried away with the theatricals of the place, and forget there are millions of people who have sent us to this House to represent them. We should be able to conduct our debates in a decent, respectful and civilised manner. Short as this debate is, given the number of Members who want to speak, I hope all those Members who have applied to speak get called.	Circumstances (circumstantial value): morality stance of MPs in the debate that they should reflect the voice of their constituents
350-355	I conclude with this point: in my view, only a negotiated political and diplomatic endeavour to bring about an end to the civil war in Syria will bring some hope to the millions who have lost their homes, who are refugees, and who are camped out in various points all across Europe, dreaming of a day when they can go home. I think our overriding goal should be to end that civil war in Syria, and obviously also to protect the people of this country.	Corbyn's claim: the main action of defeating ISIL should be diplomatic and political procedures, and these strategies will achieve the long-term strategies
355-358	I do not believe that the motion put forward by the Prime Minister achieves that, because it seems to put the emphasis on bombing now, whereas I think it should be not on bombing now, but on bringing all our endeavours, all our intelligence and all our efforts	Possible negative consequences of Cameron's claim: bombing is not the ideal choice of dealing with ISIL
358-360	It is very strange that Members do not seem to understand that there are millions who watch these	Others: Corbyn's suffering of

	debates who want to hear what is being said, and do not want to hear people shouting at each other.	interventions from some MPs
361-362	For those reasons, I urge Members on all sides of the House to think very carefully about the responsibility that lies with them today.	Circumstances (circumstantial value: duty upon MPs
362-365	Do we send in bombers, not totally aware of what all the consequences will be, or do we pause, not send them in, and instead put all our efforts into bringing about a peaceful humanitarian and just political settlement to the terrible situation faced by the people in Syria?	Corbyn's claim: military action should be excluded

Jeremy Corbyn (Islington North) (Lab): The whole House recognises that decisions to send British forces to war are the most serious, solemn and morally challenging of any that we have to take as Members of Parliament. The motion brought before the House by the Government, authorising military action in Syria against ISIL, faces us with exactly that decision. It is a decision with potentially far-reaching consequences for us all here in Britain, as well as for the people of Syria and the wider middle east.

For all Members, taking a decision that will put British servicemen and women in harm's way, and almost inevitably lead to the deaths of innocents, is a heavy responsibility. It must be treated with the utmost seriousness, with respect given to those who make a different judgment about the right course of action to take. That is why the Prime Minister's attempt to brand those who plan to vote against the Government as "terrorist sympathisers", both demeans the office of the Prime Minister and, I believe, undermines the seriousness of the deliberations we are having today. If he now wants to apologise for those remarks, I would be happy to give way to him.

Since the Prime Minister is unmoved, we will have to move on with the debate. I hope that he will be stronger later and recognise that, yes, he made an unfortunate remark last night, and that apologising for it would be very helpful and improve the atmosphere of this debate.

John Mann (Bassetlaw) (Lab): My right hon. Friend is appropriately pointing out that by not withdrawing his slur on me and others, the Prime Minister is not showing leadership. Does he also agree that there is no place whatsoever in the Labour party for anybody who has been abusing those Labour Members who choose to vote with the Government on this resolution?

Jeremy Corbyn: Abuse has no part in responsible democratic political dialogue, and I believe that very strongly. That is the way I wish to conduct myself, and I wish others to conduct themselves in that way.

Andy McDonald (Middlesbrough) (Lab): Does my right hon. Friend agree that if the Prime Minister came to the Dispatch Box and made a clear apology with a simple "I'm sorry", he would clear the air immediately and we could move on with this debate?

Jeremy Corbyn: As he often does on these occasions, the Prime Minister appears to be taking advice from the Chancellor of the Exchequer on this matter. If he wants to apologise now that is fine. If he does not, well, the whole world can note that he is not apologising.

Since the Prime Minister first made his case for extending British bombing to Syria in the House last week, the doubts and unanswered questions expressed on both sides of the House have only grown and multiplied. That is why it is a matter of such concern that the Government have decided to push this vote through Parliament today. It would have been far better to allow a full two-day debate that would have given all Members the chance to make a proper contribution—you informed us, Mr Speaker, that 157 Members have applied to speak in this debate.

2 Dec 2015 : Column 341

540

Nadhim Zahawi: The right hon. Gentleman and I have worked together on the Kurdish issue, and he knows how tough the Kurds are finding it fighting ISIL in both Iraq and Syria. The shadow Foreign Secretary believes that the four conditions debated at the Labour party conference for taking action in Syria have been met. Why does the Leader of the Opposition disagree with him?

Jeremy Corbyn: The hon. Gentleman may have to wait a few moments to hear the answer to that, but I promise that it will be in my speech. I am pleased that he made that intervention about the Kurdish people, because at some point over the whole middle east and the whole of this settlement, there must be a recognition of the rights of Kurdish people, whichever country they live in. The hon. Gentleman and I have shared that view for more than 30 years, and my view on that has not changed.

John Woodcock: I am glad that my right hon. Friend has mentioned the Kurds. Could he be clear at the Dispatch Box that neither he, nor anyone on these Benches, will in any way want to remove the air protection that was voted on with an overwhelming majority in the House 14 months ago?

Jeremy Corbyn: I thank my hon. Friend for that intervention. That is not part of the motion today, so we move on with this debate.

It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the Prime Minister understands that public opinion is moving increasingly against what I believe to be an ill-thought-out rush to war. He wants to hold this vote before opinion against it grows even further. Whether it is a lack of strategy worth the name, the absence of credible ground troops, the missing diplomatic plan for a Syrian settlement, the failure to address the impact of the terrorist threat or the refugee crisis and civilian casualties, it is becoming increasingly clear that the Prime Minister's proposals for military action simply do not stack up.

Ian Blackford: I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the case has not been made. Under the circumstances and the slur on Opposition Members, will he reconsider the importance of the Labour party, in its entirety, joining those on the Scottish National party Benches in opposing the Government, and whip the Labour MPs to make sure the Government are defeated on the motion?

Jeremy Corbyn: Every MP has to make a decision today, every MP has a vote today, every MP has a constituency, and every MP should be aware of what constituents' and public opinion is. They will make up their own mind. Obviously, I am proposing that we do not support the Government's motion tonight and I encourage all colleagues on all sides to join me in the Lobby tonight to oppose the Government's proposals.

Last week, the Prime Minister focused his case for bombing in Syria on the critical test set by the very respected cross-party Foreign Affairs Committee. Given the holes in the Government's case, it is scarcely surprising that last night the Committee reported that the Prime Minister had not "adequately addressed concerns". In other words, the Committee judged that the Prime Minister's case for bombing has failed its tests.

2 Dec 2015 : Column 342

Crispin Blunt (Reigate) (Con): The Committee resolved four to three that the Prime Minister

"has not adequately addressed concerns"

contained in the Committee's second report. The right hon. Member for Cynon Valley (Ann Clwyd) and the hon. Member for Ilford South (Mike Gapes), who would have resisted, were absent. It is on a narrow point where, logically, it is almost impossible for the Prime Minister to adequately meet those concerns, given the fact he is not in a position to produce sufficient detail to satisfy some of my colleagues. It is a very weak point for the Leader of the Opposition to rely on. He needs to go to the substance.

Jeremy Corbyn: I thank the hon. Gentleman for his intervention. He and I have often had very amicable discussions on many of these issues and I am sure we will again. The fact is, however, that at a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee the verdict was that the Prime Minister had not adequately addressed concerns. Obviously, I understand there are differences of opinion. Goodness, there are plenty of differences of opinion all around this House, on both the Government and Opposition Benches. I therefore ask the Chair of the Select Committee to recognise that a decision has been made by his Committee.

After the despicable and horrific attacks in Paris last month, the question of whether the Government's proposals for military action in Syria strengthen or undermine our own national security must be at the centre of our deliberations.

Several hon. Members *rose*—

Jeremy Corbyn: I have given way quite a lot of times already. There are 157 Members who wish to take part in the debate. I should try to move on and speed it up slightly, something which appears to meet with your approval, Mr Speaker.

There is no doubt that the so-call Islamic State has imposed a reign of sectarian and inhuman terror in Iraq, Syria and Libya. There is no question but that it also poses a threat to our own people. The issue now is whether extending British bombing from Iraq to Syria is likely to reduce or increase that threat to Britain, and whether it will counter or spread the terror campaign ISIL is waging across the middle east. The answers do not make the case for the Government motion. On the contrary, they are a warning to step back and vote against yet another ill-fated twist in this never-ending war on terror.

Let us start with a military dimension. The Prime Minister has been unable to explain why extending airstrikes to Syria will make a significant military impact on the existing campaign. ISIL is already being bombed in Syria or Iraq by the United States, France, Britain, Russia and other powers. Interestingly, Canada has withdrawn from this campaign and no longer takes part in it. During more than a year of bombing, ISIL has expanded as well as lost territory. ISIL gains included the Iraqi city of Ramadi and the Syrian city of Palmyra. The claim that superior British missiles will make the difference is hard to credit when the US and other states are, as mentioned in an earlier intervention, struggling to find suitable targets. In other words, extending British bombing is unlikely to make a huge difference.

Secondly, the Prime Minister has failed to convince almost anyone that, even if British participation in the air campaign were to tip the balance, there are credible ground forces able to take back territory now held by ISIL. In fact, it is quite clear that there are no such forces.

Last week, the Prime Minister suggested that a combination of Kurdish militias and the Free Syrian Army would be able to fill the gap. He even claimed that a 70,000-strong force of moderate FSA fighters was ready to co-ordinate action against ISIL with the western air campaign. That claim has not remotely stood up to scrutiny. Kurdish forces are a distance away, so will be of little assistance in the Sunni Arab areas that ISIL controls. Neither will the FSA, which includes a wide range of groups that few, if any, would regard as moderate and which mostly operates in other parts of the country. The only ground forces able to take advantage of a successful anti-ISIL air campaign are stronger jihadist and Salafist groups close to the ISIL-controlled areas. I think that these are serious issues that need to be thought through very carefully, as I believe the Prime Minister's bombing campaign could well lead to that.

Several hon. Members *rose*—

Jeremy Corbyn: I will give way again later in my contribution, but I should be allowed to make what I think is an important contribution to the debate.

That is why the logic of an extended air campaign is, in fact, towards mission creep and western boots on the ground. Whatever the Prime Minister may say now about keeping British combat troops out of the way, that is a real possibility.

Thirdly, the military aim of attacking ISIL targets in Syria is not really part of a coherent diplomatic strategy. UN Security Council resolution 2249, passed after the Paris atrocities and cited in today's Government motion, does not give clear and unambiguous authorisation for UK bombing in Syria. To do so, it would have had to be passed under chapter 7 of the UN charter, to which the Security Council could not agree. The UN resolution is certainly a welcome framework for joint action to cut off funding, oil revenues and arms supplies from ISIL, but I wonder whether there are many signs of that happening.

Charlotte Leslie (Bristol North West) (Con): The right hon. Gentleman and I do not agree on very much, but I very much agree with him on the necessity to cut off oil supplies. I am therefore at a complete loss when it comes to understanding why he would oppose airstrikes, which play such a crucial part in targeting the oil supplies that provide funding for ISIL/Daesh.

Jeremy Corbyn: The problem is that the oil supplies sold by ISIL go into Turkey and other countries, and I think we need to know exactly who is buying that oil, who is funding it, what banks are involved in the financial transactions that ultimately benefit ISIL, and which other countries in the region either are or are not involved. That is despite the clear risk of potentially disastrous incidents. The shooting down of a Russian military aircraft by Turkish forces is a sign of the danger of a serious escalation of this whole issue.

Caroline Lucas (Brighton, Pavilion) (Green): The number of ground troops is, as my right hon. Friend says, unknown, and their composition is also unknown, but what we do know is that they are, by definition, opposition fighters: they are anti-Assad. Does my right hon. Friend agree that the Prime Minister still has a question to answer about how we can work with them to retake ground from Daesh without becoming drawn into a wider conflict with Russia, given that they are on the other side?

Jeremy Corbyn: That is an important point. The hon. Lady has been very active in trying to promote peace and humanitarian resolutions to the many conflicts that exist around the world.

Fourthly, the Prime Minister has avoided spelling out to the British people the warnings that he has surely been given about the likely impact of UK air strikes in Syria on the threat of terrorist attacks in the UK. That is something that everyone who backs the Government's motion should weigh and think about very carefully before we vote on whether or not to send RAF pilots into action over Syria.

It is critically important that we, as a House, are honest with the British people about the potential consequences of the action that the Prime Minister is proposing today. I am aware that there are those with military experience—Conservative as well as Labour Members—who have argued that extending UK bombing will

"increase the short-term risks of terrorist attacks in Britain."

We should also remember the impact on communities here in Britain. Sadly, since the Paris attacks there has been a sharp increase in Islamophobic incidents and physical attacks. I have discussed them with people in my local mosque, in my constituency, and they are horrific. Surely this message must go out from all of us in the House today: none of us—we can say this together—will tolerate any form of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia or racism in any form in this country.

In my view, the Prime Minister has offered no serious assessment of the impact of an intensified air campaign on civilian casualties in ISIL-held Syrian territory, or on the wider Syrian refugee crisis. At least 250,000 have already been killed in Syria's terrible civil war, 11 million have been made homeless, and 4 million have been forced to leave the country. Many more have been killed by the Assad regime than by ISIL itself. Yet more bombing in Syria will kill innocent civilians—there is no doubt about that—and will turn many more Syrians into refugees.

Several hon. Members *rose*—

Jeremy Corbyn: I will give way in a moment.

Yesterday I was sent this message from a constituent of mine who comes from Syria. *(Laughter.)* I am sorry, but it is not funny. This is about a family who are suffering.

My constituent's name is Abdulaziz Almashi.

"I'm a Syrian from Manbij city, which is now controlled by ISIL",

he wrote.

"Members of my family still live there and Isil didn't kill them. My question to David Cameron is: 'Can you guarantee the safety of my family when your air forces bomb my city?'"

[Interruption.] It is a fair question, from a family who are very concerned.

2 Dec 2015 : Column 345

Johnny Mercer (Plymouth, Moor View) (Con): I speak as someone who was a member of the military but has left. It seems to us that the Leader of the Opposition is making a fundamental point, namely that this is about national security. It is extremely difficult to deal with all the conflicting arguments and complex situations, but this comes down to national security, and the need to inhibit what these people are trying to do on the streets of this country.

Jeremy Corbyn: Yes, of course security on the streets of this country, in all our communities, is very important. That is why we have supported the Government's action in no longer pursuing the strategy of cutting the police, and also increasing security in this country. Clearly, none of us wants an atrocity on the streets of this country. My borough was deeply affected by 7/7 in 2005—

Several hon. Members *rose—*

Mr Speaker: Order. The Member who has the Floor cannot be expected to give way to a further intervention when he is in the process of answering an existing one. The hon. Gentlemen are experienced enough denizens of this House to be aware of that.

Jeremy Corbyn: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to give way to my right hon. Friend the Member for Tottenham (Mr Lammy).

Mr David Lammy (Tottenham) (Lab): I am grateful to the Leader of the Opposition for giving way. Does he accept that the 70,000 moderate Sunnis who the Prime Minister claims are in Syria comprise many different jihadist groups? There is concern across the House that in degrading ISIL/Daesh, which is possible, we might create a vacuum into which other jihadists would come, over time. Surely that would not make the streets of Britain safer.

Jeremy Corbyn: For the sake of north London geography, I shall now give way to the hon. Member for Enfield, Southgate (Mr Burrowes).

Mr David Burrowes (Enfield, Southgate) (Con): The right hon. Gentleman has maintained a consistent position in this House on airstrikes. On 26 September 2014, when he voted against airstrikes against ISIL in Iraq, he said:

"I do not believe that further air strikes and the deepening of our involvement will solve the problem."—[*Official Report*, 26 September 2014; Vol. 585, c. 1332.]

Does he maintain his opposition to airstrikes in Iraq, as well as to extending them to Syria?

Jeremy Corbyn: I thank both Members for their interventions. My right hon. Friend the Member for Tottenham (Mr Lammy) makes a serious point. We have to be careful about what will happen in the future. As the Prime Minister and others have said, we must be aware of the danger that some people, mainly young people, will become deeply radicalised and end up doing very dangerous things. Is the radicalisation of a small but significant number of young people across Europe a product of the war or of something else? We need to think very deeply about that, about what has happened

2 Dec 2015 : Column 346

in this world since 2001, and about the increasing number of people who are suffering because of that. I rest my case at that point.

There is no EU-wide strategy to provide humanitarian assistance to the victims. Perhaps most importantly of all, is the Prime Minister able to explain how British bombing in Syria will contribute to a comprehensive negotiated political settlement of the Syrian war? Such a settlement is widely accepted to be the only way to ensure the isolation and defeat of ISIL. ISIL grew out of the invasion of Iraq, and it has flourished in Syria in the chaos and horror of a multi-fronted civil war.

Chi Onwurah (Newcastle upon Tyne Central) (Lab): The Prime Minister spoke often of the choice between action and inaction, but those of us who will be voting against the airstrikes also want to see action. The Prime Minister said almost nothing about cutting off the financial supplies to Daesh that buy the bombs and help to radicalise recruits. Does my right hon. Friend agree that we need action on that matter?

Jeremy Corbyn: We absolutely need action to ensure that there is a diplomatic and political solution to the crisis. I welcome what the Prime Minister said about speeding up the process in Vienna, but surely the message ought to be, "Let's speed that up," rather than sending the bombers in now, if we are to bring about a political settlement.

We need the involvement of all the main regional and international powers. I know that that has been attempted. I know that there have been discussions in Vienna, and we welcome that, but it is regrettable that Geneva II—

Several hon. Members *rose*—

Jeremy Corbyn: Mr Speaker, I will try to make some progress with my speech, if I may. Over 150 Members wish to speak, and long speeches from the Front Benches will take time away from the Back-Benchers' speeches. The aim must be to establish a broad-based Government in Syria who have the support of the majority of their people, difficult as that is to envisage at the present time. Such a settlement—

Sir Simon Burns (Chelmsford) (Con): Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Jeremy Corbyn: No. Such a settlement could help to take back territory from ISIL and bring about its lasting defeat in Syria, but—

Several hon. Members *rose*—

Jeremy Corbyn: Mr Speaker, I am really sorry to have to tell Conservative Members that I have given way quite a lot to Members on both sides of the House, and I am now going to continue with my speech. Ultimately—

Several hon. Members *rose*—

Mr Speaker: Order. It is a long-established convention of this House that the Member who has the Floor gives way, or not, as he or she chooses. The Leader of the Opposition has made it clear that, for now, he is not giving way. The appropriate response is not, then, for a Member to jump and shout, "Give way!" That is just not terribly sensible.

2 Dec 2015 : Column 347

Jeremy Corbyn: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The point I was making was that ultimately, the solution has to be brought about by all the people of Syria themselves. On that, surely, we are all agreed. The Government—

Sir Simon Burns: Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Jeremy Corbyn: I thought I had made it clear, and that the Speaker had made it clear, that at the moment I am not giving way; I am really sorry, but I am not. Okay? The Government's proposals for—

Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg (North East Somerset) (Con): On a point of order, Mr Speaker. Though it is indeed customary that he who holds the Floor decides whether to give way, is it not also customary to answer questions when they are put in interventions? We are waiting for the right hon. Gentleman's answer on Iraq.

Mr Speaker: The hon. Member for North East Somerset (Mr Rees-Mogg) is a sufficiently experienced parliamentarian to know that he has made his own point in his own way, and it is on the record.

Jeremy Corbyn: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The Government's—[Hon. Members: "Answer!"] Mr Speaker, if I could move on with my speech, I would be most grateful. The Government's proposal for military action in Syria is not backed by clear and unambiguous authorisation by the United Nations. It does not meet the seven tests set down by the Foreign Affairs Committee, and it does not fulfil three of the four conditions laid down in my own party conference resolution of a couple of months ago.

In the past week, voice has been given to the growing opposition to the Government's bombing plans—across the country, in Parliament, outside in the media, and indeed in my own party. I believe that this is in consideration of all the wars that we have been involved in over the last 14 years. These matters were debated a great deal during my campaign to be elected leader of the Labour party, and many people think very deeply about these matters. In the light of that record of western military interventions, these matters have to be analysed. British bombing in Syria risks yet more of what President Obama, in a very thoughtful moment, called the "unintended consequences" of the war in Iraq, which he himself opposed at the time. The spectre of Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya looms over this debate.

547

Graham Evans (Weaver Vale) (Con): Will the right hon. Gentleman give way?

Jeremy Corbyn: No, I will not give way; I will carry on with my speech. To oppose another war and intervention is not pacifism; it is hard-headed common sense. That is what we should be thinking about today in the House. To resist ISIL's determination to draw the western powers back into the heart of the middle east is not to turn our backs on allies; it is to refuse to play into the hands of ISIL as I suspect some of its members want us to. Is it wrong for us here in Westminster to see a problem, pass a motion, and drop bombs, pretending we are doing something to solve it? That is what we did in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. Has terrorism increased or decreased as a result of all that? The Prime Minister said he was looking to build a consensus around the military action

2 Dec 2015 : Column 348

he wants to take. I do not believe he has achieved anything of the kind. He has failed, in my view, to make the case for another bombing campaign.

Several hon. Members *rose—*

Jeremy Corbyn: All of our efforts should instead go into bringing the Syrian civil war to an end. Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya: I ask Members to think very carefully about the previous decisions we have made. *[Interruption.]* What we are proposing to do today is send British bombers—

Mr David Winnick (Walsall North) (Lab): On a point of order, Mr Speaker. On a number of occasions complaints have been received from the public, particularly about Prime Minister's questions. What do you think the public make of it when my right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition is shouted down constantly by those on the Government Benches?

Mr Speaker: I think what the public want is a civilised, although robust, debate by Members on both sides of the House. I thank the hon. Gentleman, a very experienced Member, for that point of order. Let us proceed without fear or favour. I call Mr Jeremy Corbyn.

Jeremy Corbyn: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Sometimes in this House we get carried away with the theatricals of the place, and forget there are millions of people who have sent us to this House to represent them. We should be able to conduct our debates in a decent, respectful and civilised manner. Short as this debate is, given the number of Members who want to speak, I hope all those Members who have applied to speak get called.

I conclude with this point: in my view, only a negotiated political and diplomatic endeavour to bring about an end to the civil war in Syria will bring some hope to the millions who have lost their homes, who are refugees, and who are camped out in various points all across Europe, dreaming of a day when they can go home. I think our overriding goal should be to end that civil war in Syria, and obviously also to protect the people of this country. I do not believe that the motion put forward by the Prime Minister achieves that, because it seems to put the emphasis on bombing now, whereas I think it should be not on bombing now, but on bringing all our endeavours,

all our intelligence and all our efforts—*[Interruption.]* It is very strange that Members do not seem to understand that there are millions who watch these debates who want to hear what is being said, and do not want to hear people shouting at each other.

For those reasons, I urge Members on all sides of the House to think very carefully about the responsibility that lies with them today. Do we send in bombers, not totally aware of what all the consequences will be, or do we pause, not send them in, and instead put all our efforts into bringing about a peaceful humanitarian and just political settlement to the terrible situation faced by the people in Syria?