



MEDIA@LSE Electronic MSc Dissertation Series

Compiled by Dr. Bart Cammaerts and Dr. Nick Anstead

The Discourse of Protest:

Using discourse analysis to identify speech acts in UK
broadsheet newspapers

Stefan Brambilla Hall,
MSc in Politics and Communication

Other dissertations of the series are available online here:
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/media@lse/mediaWorkingPapers/>

Dissertation submitted to the Department of Media and Communications,
London School of Economics and Political Science, August 2011, in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the MSc in

The Discourse of Protest

Using discourse analysis to identify speech acts in UK broadsheet newspapers

Stefan Brambilla Hall

ABSTRACT

Between November 10th and December 9th, thousands of students took to the streets of London, demonstrating over planned rises in university tuition fees. This dissertation explores the use of speech acts by newspapers in reporting the protests. Speech acts are linguistic practices that perform a specific function; in media and communications, these are: to inform, deliberate and witness. The first involves the provision of information; the second opens and facilitates debate; and the third produces moral judgements. All three affect the

INTRODUCTION

In 1956, Aldous Huxley penned an article in asking whether

It is also an example of three functions of news media. First,

Yet it is also recognised that this type of reporting has a short history. Its origins are in the beliefs of Walter Lippmann, who sought a move away from the propaganda of Western governments after World War One and towards objective and balanced reporting instead (Allan, 2010: 61). Over time, objectivity –

To fulfil the purpose of this dissertation, which is to investigate the use of speech acts in UK press, a somewhat under-theorised aspect of modern journalism must be addressed. Namely, it must be acknowledged that journalism does more than just report the 'truth'. It actively constructs the world and enables us to act on it by engaging with audiences. Indeed, the way news reports are constructed often places an emphasis on spec

enduring roles of journalism are 'the gathering, processing and delivery of important and interesting information' (Hachten, 2005: xiv). Fallows (1996) writes that journalists give information in order to satisfy the public's questions of 'what is going on?' and 'why?'. This, the 'media dependency theory', argues that audiences depend on media information to meet their needs (Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur, 1976). Essentially, the press are required to inform society so that democratic obligations can be met. They 'distribute information necessary for citizens to make informed choices at elections; facilitate the formation of public opinion by providing a forum of debate; and enable the people to shape the conduct of government by articulating their views' (Curran, 1997: 29). The dissemination of accurate information is believed to be crucial in sustaining democracy. Although questions remain over 'how well most citizens are informed', journalists 'see their job as supplying the news', and in this respect the informational speech act is the most central doctrine of journalism (Gans, 2010: 8).

Unsurprisingly, research focuses exclusively on these democratic credentials. Herbert Gans (2003) echoes his academic predecessors in a dissection of journalism's 'theory of democracy', which uses as its bedrock the journalist's role as gatherer and disseminator of information. However, as he explains, the provision of information 'is so widely accepted and taken for granted that it is not really discussed' (Ibid.: 55). In fact, the under-theorisation of the informing speech act leaves a gap in the literature, with studies concerned with whether media are contributing enough to democracy (Patterson, 1993), or whether the audience are listening (Cottle, 2009). This despite the acknowledgement that 'modern politics are mediated politics' (McNair, 2000: 1), and therefore any study in politics and journalism should also consider the techniques and practices in place to report and interpret issues. McNair has observed that, when 'information'

young people (Loader, 2007). This dissertation instead considers the linguistic processes by which newspapers deliberate, not publicly or for some democratic end, but within articles themselves. This is a move away from traditional debates over how the press serve as constituents of the public sphere. In this respect, the study hopes to contribute to a new field.

Witnessing is a more complex technique. It is a 'performative act [that] affirms the reality of [an] event' (Guerin and Hallas, 2007: 10), presenting informative and deliberative speech acts in combination with a call to action. Witnessing involves the use of particular discourse or imagery in order to engage 'people's potential to care' (Chouliaraki, 2010a: 1). It transforms the journalist's 'experience into language' – a 'journey from experience (the seen) into words (the said)' – and at the same time implies 'responsibility' and 'complicity' in the event (Frosh and Pinchevski, 2009: 1; Peters, 2009: 24-26). These definitions explain that witnessing is the discursive act of stating one's experience with the intention of making a demand on the public: to solicit an opinion or concern, for example. A witness is needed to describe an event for the benefit of those not present, and to act as a moral influence demanding a response. Ellis (2000) has argued, persuasively, that the acceleration of communications over the last century makes it difficult to claim 'I did not know' as an excuse for missing global successes and failures. As he explains, 'we are accomplices because we have seen the evidence and the events ... we have seen the images and heard the sounds' (Ibid.: 9-10). We are witnesses. The mediation of witnessing is as important as the speech act itself. As agents of 'symbolic power', media 'portray and narrate' events in selective ways (Chouliaraki, 2008b: 329-330), with the aim of uniting audiences and spurring them into action. In sum, the way journalists 'manage' witnessing – what they show, what they tell – significantly influences the direction of public action. These considerations form a significant

large media organisations (Gans, 2010: 11; Reich, 2008), which to different degrees are able to 'manage' the visibility of suffering and witnessing (Chouliaraki, 2008b). Throughout the literature, there appears to be an emphasis on witnessing via visual means, perhaps because of the power and immediacy of images (Ellis, 2009: 68). For this reason it is considered relevant and interesting for media and communications to explore witnessing uniquely as part of newspaper text.

Academic inquiry into speech acts falls into several areas: the _____ under which informing, deliberating or witnessing (the three are rarely, if ever, found together) occur; their _____ in relation to normative questions about democracy,

acts perform the dual function of interpretation and provocation: they chronicle the world from a particular standpoint and give rise to different thoughts, opinions and actions. In other words, they and reality at the same time: 'journalists not only report reality but create it' (Schudson, 2003: 2). Within newspaper discourse, speech acts recount perceptions of the world, while through deliberation and witnessing they invite action, thus influencing the direction of debate and conflict.

This argument stems from the social constructionist belief that knowledge about the world cannot come from simply observing it; instead, understanding is also a product of social processes and interactions (Burr, 2000: 4). As Gergen and Gergen explain, 'social construction is the creation of meaning through collaborative activities' (2004: 7). Media, in particular, are regarded as central to these processes. Though this is not the place to answer Weber's question of whether 'media reflect reality or construct it in the first place?' (2002: 2), it is reasonable to accept Schudson's argument that 'newspapers participate in the construction of the mental worlds in which we live' (2000: 38). Just as Chouliaraki shows how media encourage '

Conceptual Framework

Linking these concepts – framing and the authority of journalism – is mediation. Mediation highlights the influences that affect the receipt of information (the way things are) and the role that media play in actually producing the connectivity between journalism and its publics (the act of). Mediation, the situation in which media are the most important source of information and communication in society (Strömbäck, 2008: 230), highlights the processes by which media discourses produce meaning and action. Choices about how to mediate speech acts – the way they are arranged, the practices used to communicate them – are intentional and invite particular dispositions in readers. The value of mediation is in its capacity to acknowledge the critical role that media adopt in describing and constructing reality, and therefore in influencing public perception.

In short, three concepts are used for this dissertation. Mediation is taken as a macro-level theory, building from its belief that widespread use of media for information and communication allows newspapers to influence readers' perceptions of reality. This is for answering questions about . On the meso-level, journalism's authority is considered in order to determine . Finally, the study uses framing as a micro-level concept for exploring specifically

Research Objectives

The rationale of this dissertation sits within the themes of mediation, journalism's authoritative voice, and framing. Generally speaking, the research attempts to answer the following question:

It should be noted that the study is not asking speech acts are used in certain ways. Instead, it aims to uncover speech acts are reported: their practices and consequences,

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter justifies the selection of critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a research method by outlining its relevance to the research questions, as well as considering its strengths and weaknesses as an analytical tool. The chapter also explains the procedures followed to obtain the sample of empirical data.

Research Strat

'recurrence' (Jensen, 2008: 255). Since CDA is considered a 'labour intensive' methodology (Gill, 1996: 156), the study devotes itself exclusively to CDA to avoid under-analysing the

the third protest – in particular an attack on a vehicle carrying members of the royal family – presented an exceptional opportunity to use eyewitness accounts and to question how and why events transpire as they did. What can be drawn from this, therefore, is that informing and deliberating frequently occur in newspaper discourse, while it takes a remarkable event before witnessing is justified.

From discourse to consequence: identifying speech acts and their implications

The newspapers make clear choices about how to organise the news. Each article begins by reporting a fact, demonstrating the importance of presenting an authoritative, non-speculative voice early on. Rosen (1999: 54) and Singer (2010: 93) underline the 'emphasis' on detachment regarded as 'core' to journalism. Following this style, words stating a date, time, place, or event – or usually some combinations of these – are the most common and easily identifiable techniques in place that are used to inform. It is these features that constitute the informing speech act, which is the most widespread across all the newspapers. For example:

The predominance of the informing speech act is indicative of ideas about the 'inverted pyramid' approach to news construction, where the most important facts are placed at the top of reports. Indeed, its prevalence suggests that dissemination of information remains the most critical function of journalism, and suggestions that this may change (Stephens, 2010) are so far unfounded.

Authors diverge on the nature of quoting in news reports. Tuchman (1978) argues that informing via official sources provides journalistic legitimacy, but it is all quoted speech, according to Van Dijk (1988), which gives a newspaper report its authority. Nonetheless, words such as 'said', 'believes' and 'told' are frequently used for recounting the remarks of students, police and politicians. Perhaps the validity gained here allows the journalists to also provide information through description. Common phrases included 'hurled', 'thrown' and

Deliberation is also found in the evaluation of an opinion or statement. This occurs in single word choices or across entire phrases. While the newspapers do not conduct rigorous examinations, there is a notable use of grammatical terms – including conjunctions and prepositions – that, when combined with sensitive phrases enact a deliberative assessment of opinions and actions. Cohesive words such as ‘but’, ‘while’, ‘although’, ‘despite’, and ‘meanwhile’ are found in the articles alongside others holding positive or negative connotations:

audience what they 'said', 'saw', 'heard' or 'reported'. There is evidence of Peters' (2009: 26-27) conception of the witness as 'notoriously contradictory' and 'evidently fallible' in , where witnesses reporting an attack on a royal vehicle contradict each other, highlighting the tension between testimony and veracity inherent in the speech act:

Textual difference as political perspective

Ignoring differences in writing style and observation that are subjective to individual journalists, variations are observable in the way that the newspapers use speech acts. In the informing speech act, words vary across the newspapers: [redacted] and [redacted] include the politically loaded terms 'mob' and 'rioters' among their descriptions, while [redacted] merely notes 'protesters' and 'demonstrators'. In addition, the controversial police tactic of confining protestors and releasing them slowly is described by [redacted] in a neutral, bureaucratic way – 'containment' – while both [redacted] and [redacted] applied the more populist and partisan term of 'kettling'. The naming strategy is noteworthy – it acts as a categorising function – and 'is an integral part of the reproduction of ideology in newspapers' (Fowler, 1991: 84). These examples provide evidence that [redacted] pursues a more liberal ideology than both [redacted] and [redacted].

The deliberating speech act also appears consistent. We have seen that there are several methods by which newspapers deliberate. One example, 'second-layer' deliberation, is used

The rarity of witnessing highlights its influence as a tool for engaging with audiences. The ordering of voices is significant (Fairclough, 1995: 84). The fact that eyewitnesses are quoted only in certain situations, when direct experience provides greater value than official speech, demonstrates that it needs more than an ordinary occurrence for the witnessing speech act to be used. Indeed, the moralising function of the witness is used to question how and why something happened in such a way: it takes a remarkable event before witnessing is justified. From this we can infer that witnessing is a special technique in journalism, used only during reports of great significance.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation's objective was to analyse the use of speech acts by three broadsheet newspapers in the context of the 2010 student protests. It aimed to identify the linguistic and discursive practices that constitute three speech acts –

articles are subtly critical of political and social issues, using Fairclough's (2007) intertextuality to make certain arguments and debates more significant than others. The consequences of the deliberating speech acts are clearer. There is a plain attempt at engagement with audiences. Using contrasts, the newspapers set up 'framing contests' for readers to judge on the better argument (Ferree et al., 2002b). At the same time, the combination of intertextual and critical words steer readers in certain directions; this is 'second-layer' deliberating, where newspapers situate the audience in debates before they properly begin.

Witnessing is identified in two forms. *Explicit witnessing* uses first-person testimony to verify and confirm an event, needed when it was unlikely the reporter had seen it live. As Zelizer writes, eye witnessing is sanctioned as one of the most effective methods of accounting for reality (2007: 424). *Implicit witnessing* combines eyewitness accounts with deliberative phrases in order to make moral judgements. This occurs rarely in the articles and is only seen after the most serious incidents, for example when children were 'kettled' by police or when rioters attacked a royal vehicle. As with deliberation, the witnessing speech act has implications for readers. The articles engage with the audience's 'potential to care' (Chouliaraki, 2010a) by using eyewitnesses as a tool for empathising and building rapport, especially when the newspapers appear critical, for example of police. Implicit witnessing thus acts as a moralising function. Information is mediated to 'promote a particular ... moral evaluation', in line with Entman's (1993) argument that framing takes place in news discourse.

This is not to say that all the newspapers inform, deliberate and witness in exactly the same ways. Though the

analyses. It is essential, however, that they are verified using further critical discourse analyses before large-scale studies take shape. This would provide a fuller insight into any trends and changes in speech act use. Research could explore the effects of speech acts on particular audiences. For example, through the use of focus groups, surveys and interviews it might be possible to determine how students, police and politicians interpret media texts. This dissertation also examined media coverage of protests from a new perspective, and avenues into further research may have been opened in this regard. One opportunity might involve a comparative analysis between protests in London against those in other countries.

REFERENCES

ABC. (2011) , URL:
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/table/2011/may/13/abcs-national-newspapers> [last consulted 26

- Chouliaraki, L. (2008a) *The Mediation of Suffering and the Vision of a Cosmopolitan Public*,
: pp 371-391.
- Chouliaraki, L. (2008b) *The Symbolic Power of Transnational Media: Managing the Visibility of Suffering*,
: pp 329-351.
- Chouliaraki, L. (2010a) *Ordinary Witnessing in Post-Television News: Towards a New Moral Imagination*,
: pp 305-19.
- Chouliaraki, L. (2010b) *Journalism and the Visual Politics of War*, in Stuart Allan (ed.)
, pp 520-532. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Cottle, S. (2009) *Journalism and the Public Sphere*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Creswell, J. (1994) *Qualitative Inquiry*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Curran, J. (1997) *Rethinking the Media as a Public Sphere*, in Peter Dahlgren & Colin Sparks (eds.)
, pp 27-57. London: Routledge.
- Curran, J. (2003) *Press History*, in James Curran & Jean Seaton (eds.)
London: Routledge. , pp 1-105.
- Dean, J. (2003) *Why the Net is not a Public Sphere*, : pp 95-112.
- Dzur, A. (2002) *Public Journalism and Deliberative Democracy*, : pp 313-336.
- Ellis, J. (2000) *Journalism and the Public Sphere* London: I.B. Tauris.
- Ellis, J. (2009) *What are we Expected to Feel?*, : pp 67-76.
- Entman, R. (1993) *Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm*, : pp
51-58.
- Evans, H. (2009) *Journalism and the Public Sphere*

- Gill, R. (1996) Discourse Analysis: Practical Implementation, in J. Richardson (ed.)
pp 141-158. Leicester: BPS Books.
- Gillmor, D. (2006) , Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly.
- Green, M. (2009) Speech Acts, in Edward Zalta (ed.) , URL:
<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2009/entries/speech-acts/>

Mouffe, C. (1999) *Deliberative Democracy or Agonistic Pluralism*, : pp 746-758.

Muhlmann, G. (2008) , Cambridge: Polity Press.

National Campaign Against Fees & Cuts (2010) , URL:
<http://anticuts.com/2010/11/23/press-release-24-november-2010-walkout-and-day-of-action-latest-updates/> [last consulted 26 August 2011].

National Union of Students (2010a) , URL:
<http://www.nus.org.uk/cy/news/news/NUS-and-UCU-national-demo-for-November/> [last consulted 26 August 2011].

APPENDICES

Newspaper	1992	1997	2001	2005	2010
The Daily Telegraph	Con	Con	Con	Con	Con
The Guardian	Lab/Lib	Lab	Lab	Lab/Lib	Lib
The Times	Con	Con	Lab	Lab	Con

GDN1

The Guardian (London) - Final Edition
November 11, 2010 Thursday

our future before it has even begun. They're proposing barbaric cuts that would brutalise our colleges and universities."

Inside parliament the deputy prime minister, Nick Clegg - the focus of much anger among protesters for his now abandoned pledge to scrap all **tuition** fees - came under sustained attack, facing 10 questions on **tuition** fees during his stand-in performance during prime minister's questions. He said there was consensus across the parties about the need to reform the system.

Labour's deputy leader, Harriet Harman, said the rise in fees was not part of the effort to tackle the deficit but about Clegg "going along with Tory plans to shove the cost of higher education on to **students** and their families". She said: "We all know what it's like: you are at freshers' week, you meet up with a dodgy bloke and you do things that you regret. Isn't it true he has been led astray by the Tories, isn't that the truth of it?"

Meanwhile one **student** won an unexpected concession from the coalition yesterday. In answer to a question from a Chinese **student** during his trip to China, David Cameron said: "Raising **tuition** fees will do two things. It will make sure our universities are well funded and we won't go on increasing so fast the fees for overseas **students** . . . We have done the difficult thing. We have put up contributions for British **students**. Yes, foreign **students** will still pay a significant amount of money, but we should now be able to keep that growth under control."

"It must have been an awful time for the people inside that building and I'm terribly sorry for what must have been a traumatic experience. We cannot allow thuggish behaviour like this again."

The way police deal with public **protests** was overhauled after criticism of the "heavy-handed" controls used in the G20 demonstrations last year, during which Ian Tomlinson, a newspaper vendor, died.

Sir Paul said that the post-incident review would have to look at whether the fallout from several damning reports into the G20 response had adversely affected public order policing. About 300 workers were evacuated from 30 Millbank as rioters broke into offices on two floors, but 80 Conservative Party staff, including Baroness Warsi, the party chairman, stayed at their desks, and the protesters failed to get inside their HQ.

Lady Warsi refused to bl

£6,000 and £9,000 in two years, despite the Liberal Democrats' election pledge to oppose any such rise.

It must be approved by the Commons and Lords next month - votes that will test the nerve of each of the coalition parties. Nick Clegg was again forced to justify his party's about-turn as he stood in at Prime Minister's Questions while David Cameron his trade mission to China. The Deputy Prime Minister called it an "extraordinarily difficult issue" and admitted that he had not been able to deliver the policy his party held in opposition, owing to the deficit and the "compromises of the coalition Government". Mr Cameron told **students** at Peking University yesterday that overseas **students** coming to Britain would benefit as higher **tuition** fees for English undergraduates would mean that fees for international **students** need not rise as fast. Mr Clegg later withdrew from a talk to Lib Dem **students** at Oxford on November 17, citing a diary clash.

The Liberal Democrats were singled out for particular vitriol at the demonstration, which had been planned months in advance by the National Union of **Students** and University and College Union. As well as protesting about higher fees, the marchers were opposing the announced withdrawal of educational maintenance allowance for poorer pupils in sixth forms and colleges, and over adult learning grants. **Students** and lecturers travelled from across the country, some on coaches. They met at Horse Guards Avenue and were scheduled to march to Tate Britain for speeches. The first hour of the march passed peacefully, but when

GDN2

The Guardian (**London**) - Final Edition
November 25, 2010 Thursday

Front: School's out: children take to the streets: **Student protests** across UK:
Isolated breakouts of violence: Clegg's 'regret' over fees pledge
BYLINE: Peter Walker Paul Lewis Matthew Taylor Patrick Wintour
SECTION: GUARDIAN HOME PAGES; Pg. 1
LENGTH: 686 words

Tens of thousands of **students** and school pupils walked out of class, marched, and occupied buildings around the country yesterday in the second day of mass action within a fortnight to **protest** at education cuts and higher **tuition**

TLG2

The Daily Telegraph (London)
November 25, 2010 Thursday

- 14 Children as young as 13 or 14 abandoned their lessons to join the marches held across the country. It is thought that groups were set up on the Facebook website to co-ordinate their movements.
- 15 Last night, some of the **student** protesters claimed that the violence in **London** was directed by truanting schoolchildren.
- 16 Lydia Wright, 22, of the School of Oriental and African Studies, said: "It's all gone terribly wrong. It started off as two small groups from my university and University College **London**. As soon as we got down to Whitehall, we were joined by some other people, but I think it was mostly the school kids who were creating the trouble.
- 17 "They weren't really supporting the cause. Quite a few of them were just wanting to cause a disturbance."
- 18 The Metropolitan Police responded to the **protests** in central **London** by deploying more than 1,500 officers, after being caught out by the riots at Conservative Party headquarters a fortnight ago.

Copyright 2010 Telegraph Media Group Limited
All Rights Reserved

TMS2

The Times (London)
November 25, 2010 Thursday
Edition 2;
National Edition

Student anger flares up as police control the protesters with 'kettling';
Student protest

BYLINE: Fiona Hamilton; Steve Bird; Alexi Mostrous

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1,4,5

LENGTH: 682 words

Students vandalised government buildings and lit fires near Downing Street last night as **protests** over **tuition** fees brought Whitehall to a standstill.

Although a heavy police presence prevented chaos on the scale of the Millbank riots a fortnight ago, 17 people were injured, including two police officers, and 32 were arrested.

Up to 10,000 **students**, lecturers and others had marched towards Parliament after lunch. The Metropolitan Police used its controversial "kettling" technique, criticised after the G20 **protests**, to contain the crowds at the southern end of Whitehall, near Big Ben.

Whitehall was shut down as protesters sprayed graffiti on the Foreign Office and ransacked an abandoned police van, stealing body armour and riot helmets.

Thousands of **students** across the country protested against the planned rise in university fees, Westminster bore the brunt of the lawlessness.

and four in Manchester for public order offences and obstruction. There were scuffles with police in Leeds and Bristol but most protesters were not violent, merely waving placards and chanting.

14 The occasion had been called Day X, with parents, teachers and trade unionists invited to join **students** at rallies organised by the Education Activist Network and the campaign group Youth Fight For Jobs.

15 Aaron Porter, president of the National Union of **Students**, which organised the November 10 **protest**, said "peaceful **protest**" was vital but violence would not win over hearts and minds. "There are no conditions in which violence is acceptable," he said.


16 Chief Inspector Jane Connors, of the Metropolitan Police, said it was a last resort. "Police officers came under attack and we needed to make sure the violence didn't spread out across the **London** streets," she said.

17 A female police officer had a hand broken and a male officer was knocked unconscious and sustained leg injuries. Fifteen civilians injured sustained during the **protests**. Eleven of them requiring hospital treatment. None of the injuries was believed to be serious. The Met arrested 15 people, eight on suspicion of violent disorder, theft and criminal damage. Four were arrested on suspicion of public order offences, one for burglary and two on suspicion of violent disorder.

18 By 11pm all protesters had been removed from the containment area.

Copyright 2010 Times Newspapers Limited
All Rights Reserved

TLG3


The Daily Telegraph (London)
December 10, 2010 Friday
Edition 3;
National Edition

Rioters attack Prince in car;
Paint thrown and bottles hurled at royal couple's Rolls-Royce as **student protest** turns ugly A minority 'came to attack police'
BYLINE: Anita Singh; Martin Evans
SECTION: NEWS; FRONT PAGE; Pg. 1,2
LENGTH: 831 words

1 THE Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall came under a sustained attack from rioters rampaging through **London** last night in **protest** at the Government's rise in **tuition** fees.

2 A mob of **student** protesters surrounded their car, kicking the doors and shattering a passenger window as the couple travelled to the Royal Variety Performance.

3 Rioters threw white paint across the Rolls-Royce Phantom VI and pounded it with missiles, including placards, bottles and rubbish bins, as it was driven up Regent Street towards the **London** Palladium.

4 A witness said the Prince was so concerned for his wife that at one stage he pushed her head down to ensure she would not be hit by a missile.

5 The couple were unharmed in the attack, but the Duchess appeared shaken as they arrived at the venue.

6 They went ahead with their official duties and the Duchess later made light of the events, saying: "I'm fine, there is a first time for everything."

After the performance, which featured Kylie Minogue and Take That, the royal couple were driven back to Clarence House in a police van.

The attack came after a day of widespread violence which saw 12 police officers injured and rioters attacking the heart of government.

Windows were smashed at the Treasury and the Supreme Court, slogans were daubed on the walls of many of Whitehall's buildings and a statue of Sir Winston Churchill opposite Parliament was vandalised. Witnesses described astonishing scenes as rioters realised they were surrounding the royal vehicle containing the Prince and Duchess.

Matthew Maclachlan, a **student** at King's College **London**, said: "The police cars at the front of the convoy drove straight into crowds at the top of Regent Street.

"They got trapped in that mob and it meant that Charles and Camilla were on their own further down the road except for a Jaguar travelling behind them. Charles and Camilla's car ran into such a concentration of people that it had to stop.

"It was stationary for a lot of the time, then would squeeze forward an inch. They had just one bodyguard in the car with them and a chauffeur.

"We couldn't believe it. The car had really big windows so Charles was very much on display.

"People were trying to talk to him about **tuition** fees at first but when more people realised what was happening, the crowds swelled and people were throwing glass bottles and picking up litter bins and throwing them at the car.

"You could hear all this smashing. "There was one protection officer in the Jaguar behind, dressed in a tuxedo, and he was opening the car doors and using them to bash people away. His car took a real pummelling.

"It must have been frightening for them but, throughout it all, Charles was really calm and smiling at everyone.

Camilla was beaming too. He was holding his hands out towards them in a gesture that said, 'I'm innocent'."

Mr Maclachlan, who insisted that he was not involved in the **protest**, said he was astonished that the police had taken that route. "I don't know why they went that way," he said. "There were so many protesters and they drove right into the middle of them."

Although the rear window on the Prince's side of the car was shattered, it did not break completely.

The claret Rolls-Royce, sometimes used by the Queen, is fitted with toughened glass as a security measure. However, as rioters surrounded the car the Prince had to be warned by a police officer to wind up his window.

Witnesses reported seeing rioters trying to throw objects into the car, before the window was cracked by a hail of blows. David Cameron said that those responsible for the "appalling scenes of violence would feel the full force of the law".

He said: "It is clear that a minority of protesters came determined to scenes of violence would feel the full force of the law.

He said: "It is clear that a minority of protesters came determined to provoke violence, attack the police and cause as much damage to property as possible. "They must face the full force of the law.

"It is shocking and regrettable that the car carrying the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall was caught up and attacked in the violence." Police rejected suggestions that kettling, used to contain demonstrators, may have provoked some of the violence.

Sir Paul Stephenson, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, described the events as a "very disappointing day for **London**". A source close to Sir Paul said: "This is not just a tiny minority. There are a large number of people involved in this violence."

Police were repeatedly attacked by surges from a hard core of mask-wearing anarchists. Several police horses were repeatedly struck by missiles.

Denied access there, protesters made their way to the Supreme Court and began smashing glass.

The statue of Sir Winston Churchill in Parliament Square was defaced with graffiti that read "f*** police" and "Clegg eat s***".

Benches and other street furniture, including a security guards' shelter, were set ablaze as police imposed a containment, or "kettle", on the volatile crowd outside the Palace of Westminster.

Snooker balls, flares, paintballs, crowd barriers, fireworks and placard poles were hurled at the police lines.

Officers responded by first pushing protesters back then drawing their batons and hitting out at the surging crowds. Mounted police were brought in to reinforce police lines, then drive back the angry crowds.

As the evening progressed, splinter groups became increasingly violent, culminating in the attack on the royal couple. When the show ended they left the London Palladium inside a police van. The Duchess said: "I'm fine, thanks. First time for everything."

After the attack the same group of protesters cornered three police officers at Marble Arch and threw bottles and objects at them. The officers retreated under the barrage until dozens of reinforcements arrived on the scene.

Many protesters blamed the kettling tactic for the trouble and some accused officers of brutality. Several said they had been hit by police while on the ground or having their hands in the air.

Jody McIntyre, who has cerebral palsy, said that he was dragged across the street in his wheelchair by police. "One policeman batoned me on my shoulder and it's now injured," Mr McIntyre, 20, said. "I was participating in the protests. We're trying to show in a peaceful manner that we disagree with the Government trying to create a two-tier education system.

"I've been on a lot of marches before and I've not seen the police this brutal."

Although Scotland Yard and the National Union of Students had planned and agreed a route, which should have taken the students from the University of London Union at Malet Street through Central London

Electronic MSc Dissertation Series

Media@LSE Electronic MSc Dissertations will:

Present high quality MSc Dissertations which received a mark of Distinction (72% and above).

Selected dissertations will be published electronically as pdf files, subject to review and approval by the Editors.

Authors retain copyright, and publication here does not preclude the subsequent development of the paper for publication elsewhere.