



National Speeches on Notable Political Figures

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Abstract

This study highlighted the value and appropriateness of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in the examination of national speeches of political leaders for policy pronouncements. The purpose of this study was to investigate the interplay among power, ideology, and language and the mechanisms deployed in the national discourses of some notable political leaders to capture reality, manipulate, persuade and shape the audience (citizenry) to action. This study underscored the capability of Critical discourse analysis (CDA) to investigate the manner by which social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political contexts. The study revealed attempts at ideology legitimization and power dominance through the use of cognitive discourses. We are taken through the empowerment ability of discourse in diverse socio-political contexts and how power relies on discourse for multidisciplinary actions that convince the citizenry to acknowledge, sustain and advocate their leaders' ideologies. The study adopted a conceptual framework and relied on secondary and tertiary sources. The study also made recommendations to scholars on how to adopt discourse-related methodologies to enhance knowledge creation in political addresses. Lastly, the study acknowledged the limitations of the CDA approach.

Keywords: Agenda setting, National address, Power, Ideology, Language, Citizenry

Introduction

Effective policies derive from the recognition of policy problems, through a definition of the social problems and expressing the necessity of state intervention. Government policies thus represent carefully and purposely planned actions, in collaboration with the citizenry, to eradicate societal problems in order to meet the expectations of the citizens (Baumgartner et al., 2011; Ideobodo et al., 2018). Even though a government is unable to envisage the range of policy problems that it will encounter or those that will demand the greatest urgency in the eyes of the public, it behooves the government to ensure that subsisting problems and those envisaged are “put on the agenda for serious consideration of public action (agenda-setting)” (Fischer, 2007, p. 45;).

To this end, many politicians roll out agenda that outline the social issues or teething troubles that they identify and perceive as critical to value for their audience (citizenry). Thus, agenda setting which is the “selection between diverse problems and issues, involves a process of structuring the policy issue regarding potential strategies and instruments that shape the development of a policy in the subsequent stages of a policy cycle” (Fischer, 2007, p. 46). The policy is a “plan of action or program and a statement of objectives; in other words a map and a destination” on implementation of the agenda setting for the good of the society (Cochran & Malone, 2010, p. 7).

To structure policies (which encapsulate the vision and message of their personalities, their governments, and their party manifestoes), Presidents take over the “bully pulpit” through their national addresses and policy pronouncements. As “the most important agenda-setters among national political actors”, they regularly influence the news/media attention in order to mobilise collective efforts and support among the citizenry for the government’s policies.

Thus, national address has been described as a direct means of communication between the President of a country and the citizenry. It involves a national broadcast of the President’s self-delivered speech on major occasions like his inauguration into the office of President, New Year’s Day to unveil critical initiatives of the government, Independence Day, Democracy day, on the occasion of a President's departure from office, or during times of national emergency.

This study aims to decipher the national speeches of some notable political leaders (Presidents) and how the interplay among power, ideology, and language and the mechanisms are deployed to capture reality, manipulate, persuade, and shape the audience (citizenry) to action.

Conceptual framework

Attempts would be made in this paper to appraise the concepts of power, language, and ideology, the performative, cognitive, and interpretive role, and how these are negotiated in the themes of the national addresses of notable political leaders.

Power

Power has attracted a lot of arguments over the ages due to its primitiveness and intimacy to the notion of ‘interests’, its attendant controversial assumptions, and its performative role in discourse (Lukes, 2005). Foucault (1982) depicts it as a driving force for the relations that are at play between and among humans in any society. Foucault deviates from the previous studies on power, which presented power as a fixed structure instead of a social relationship. He denounces a "theory of power". Instead, Foucault proposes a "conceptualization" that is based on "our historical circumstances and motivations and the type of reality with which we are dealing". This discussion hammers on the influence and outcome of domination and exploitation on the individual in the modern state, and the need "to liberate us both from the state and from the type of individualization which is linked to the state"(Foucault, 1982, p. 785).

It can be inferred from Foucault’s argument that relationships between power and strategies of struggle are always linked. As such, these relationships guide us on how to resist power bases, especially those of the state which seeks to tell us what we are. Through Foucault’s expose of the interplay of power relations and relations of strategy in society, people learn how to identify the struggles and combat the powers that lead to domination and subjection.

However, it is observable that there is an over-emphasis on the reproduction of existing power relations via the ideological shaping of texts while language’s role (its production, interpretation, and interactivity) is undermined as secondary to power. Norman Fairclough argues against this gap in Foucault’s conceptualization. Fairclough posits that discourse and language are very critical in the social processes of modern societies. As such, any analysis of power relations requires understanding and analysing the discursive practices. Texts and textual analysis (practice) are key to the power struggles/acts (structures) because it is in action/speech that they are constantly being maintained and renewed (Fairclough, 1992).

In a reaction to Norman Fairclough’s position that power is not ‘an explicit top-down relationship’, Van Dijk (1993; cited in Wodak & Kendall, 2007, p.10) argues that “power and dominance are subtle, indirect, and in many situations, they are jointly produced when dominated groups are persuaded that dominance is natural and it is therefore legitimized”. This socio-cognitive description of power by Van Dijk revealed the import of

cognition on power and discourse. “If the minds of the dominated accept dominance and act in the interest of the powerful, dominance turn into hegemony” (Wodak & Kendall, 2007, p.10). The persuasion is negotiated by and takes place ‘in discourse and by genre’, as a site of contending ideologies (Wodak, & Meyer, 2009).

In essence, power is a function of social relationships that results in a relational phenomenon (shared system of values), depicting power as both ‘capability and effect’ for the enactment of resistance and cooperation (Berenskoetter, 2007). Kazemian (2014) buttresses that in the interplay of power relations, discourse plays a vital role. The authors reveal that the choice of discourse (‘power in discourse’), public prominence of the discourse actors (‘power over discourse’), and the cognitive meanings and influence exerted by the discourse actors (‘power of discourse’) are three different dimensions of power that promote the ‘ideological-hegemonic aspects of power’.

From the foregoing, it is observed that two major schools of thought conceptualised power both as a structure (act) and an element of practice (discourse). Foucault (1982) and Van Dijk (1993), as proponents’ of structure, look at power as a driving force for human relations. This results in the dominance of one over the other (top to bottom) and/or acceptance / joint production of dominance through persuasion. The second school of thought consists of Fairclough (1992), Wodak (2012), Lukes (2005), and the like who emphasise the importance of practice (text and talk analysis) in power relations. This school of thought suggests that to attain a balance in power relations, a discourse has to be constantly maintained and renewed between the actors and the audience (leaders/ Presidents and citizenry).

An overview of the current realities in society would depict a fusion of both structure and practice in power relations. Neither of the two functions alone. The citizenry cannot be manipulated by a power without discourse. Discourse allows for ideological projections of power and dominance as well as acceptance or rejection of dominance.

Language

Language, as a dialectical element of the social process, is a dynamic human system of meaning and the greatest source of power that evolves constantly through interactive exchanges with the environment, to construe social and natural order (Fairclough, 2013b; Halliday, 2003). “It is the principal means through which we create the world in which we live” (Halliday, 2003, p.114). It involves conversational and semiotic activities as a means of communication and as collectively shared meaning-structures in the establishment and persistence of intersubjective power relations (Holzscheiter, 2005).

Halliday (1978, as cited in Wodak & Kendall, 2007) posits that language depicts speakers' experiences of the natural order (ideational function), depicts the speaker's attitudes and evaluations, and establishes a relationship between them and listeners (interpersonal function). It allows speakers to produce texts that are understood by listeners and, furthermore, connects discourse to its co-text and context (textual function). Inherent in the language is the ideology it propagates. Without ideology, language will be meaningless and without form.

Thus, it is characteristic of language in discourse to enable dynamism and fluidity to the extent that rather than a modification of its previous positions, language ideologically continues to evolve into new spheres of sociocultural activity (Halliday, 2003). Its embodiment of values, ideals, and attitudes positions it as an “emblem of nationhood, cultural identity, progress, modernity, democracy, freedom, equality, pluralism, socialism and many such” (Rubdy, 2008, p. 1)

In critical discourse analysis, particularly political discourse, language as a phenomenon is essential to the delivery of the carefully mapped-out goals of the actors to the audience. It prepares the goals, and influences, and describes them to ‘legitimize the axiom of the governing and guarantee the consent of the governed’ (Rubic-Remorosa, 2018, p.72). It is used by the actors to inflame, condition, and convince the audience of the goals and their intended interpretations. It is at this level of language use that power is acquired to manifest ideology for social change. Dallamyr (1984, as cited in Dunmire, 2012, p.737) describes this as the “architectonic role” of language which serves as “a cast or grid for an entire way of life, that is, for preferred manners of thinking, speaking or acting”.

Since discourse consists of “the set of norms, preferences, and expectations relating language to context, which language users draw on and modify in producing and making sense out of language in context” (Saville-Troike, 1994, as cited in Bilá & Ivanova, 2020, p.222), it is expedient in this study to uncover the contextual (pragmatic and situational) interpretations and meanings deducible from the language of the notable political figures’ discourses. The values, ideals, and attitudes inherent in their language are critical to the understanding of their national addresses.

Ideology

Many scholars have come up with varied definitions of ideology. These scholars have been classified into two schools of thought; the “theories of ideology (today most prominently present in the field of Discourse Studies) and, on the other hand, critiques of ideology (often in the tradition of Critical Theory and the Frankfurt School). One makes claims about the functioning of ideology and processes of subjectivation in general, while the other focuses

more on the (normative) critique of particular ideologies” (Beetz, 2021, p. 105).

Proponents of the first school of thought include Gramsci, Foucault, and Lacan. The second school of thought, premised on Freudian; Marxist and Hegelian postulates, includes Adorno, Pollock, and Horkheimer. It is inferred from both schools of thought that ideology is critical to the understanding of discourse. Ideology evolved in discourse and as well defines discourse (Beetz, 2021; Fairclough, 1992)

Ideology is a body of ideas peculiar to a people, society, strata and involves the production of semiotics as a major theme of modern social sciences. It functions as a social and cognitive phenomenon, impacts social attitudes, and is discursive. Van Dijk (2006, as cited in Wodak & Kendall, 2007) declares that ideology refers to a set of ideas that appears in the form of a belief-system; it is more a cognitive composition and less an act of ideological practices and social performances. Ideology is a mark of identity with a particular social group, and it does not require any verification on both deep (structure) and surface (structure) levels. It is not only a belief socially partaken but is also instinctively fundamental and unavoidably axiomatic in nature. It is acquired and not learned and can change through life time(s) or generations.

In addition, ideology construes an interplay between discourse and power, as well as between language and power for stability and durability of meaning in social practices and social structures (Fairclough, 2013b). Its main functions include identifying how different ideas are formed, how truth is distorted, how we can overcome distortions to discover true knowledge, self-representing of a particular social group; maintaining the identity and membership of its members, prescribing and influencing their socio-cultural practices and struggles and promoting the interests of its members against the other social (ideological) groups (Devrari, 2019; Wodak & Kendall, 2007).

Since language lacks meaning when it conveys no idea or ideology, it behooves the researchers to examine the conceptual underpinnings of ideology in the critical discourse analysis of the notable politicians’ addresses. Ideology is essential to this study for the understanding of the acquired belief systems and the set of ideas motivating the speeches. Through the linguistic frames, the authors hope to determine how they address the citizenry’s expectations.

Theoretical framework

Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory

This theory is built on a broad foundation of which language and social reality, language and human development, and language in the machine are very vital. It upholds language as a system of meanings. The systemic functional linguistics theory is a “system for interpreting texts as ideological

documents, bringing out their significance for the construction of the social semiotic” (Halliday, 2003, p. 185). It posits that the text is more functional than merely a fusion of words and sentences. The text helps to understand how phrases and words are used to convey meaning and functions as both product (studying linguistic structures) and process (encoding meaning) (Sharififar & Rahimi, 2015). Among the many functions of the systemic theory as listed by Halliday are

“interpreting the nature, the functions and the development of language; understanding the nature of discourse, and of functional variation in language (register); understanding the nature of ‘value’ in a text, and the concepts of verbal art, rhetoric, and literary genres; gaining access to literature” (Halliday, 2003 p.186).

The theory depicts language as a social process that is functional in explanations, representations, and applications. Schleppegrell (as cited in Fairclough, 2013 p. 21) affirms that it “facilitates exploration of meaning in context through a comprehensive text-based grammar that enables analysts to recognize the choices speakers and writers make from linguistic systems and to explore how those choices are functional for construing meanings of different kinds”. The systemic functional linguistics theory is one of the major theoretical foundations of critical discourse analysis which also doubles as a tool for it.

It enables the development of linguistic analysis and the treatment of language texts in discourse for the construction of social identities, social relationships, and systems of knowledge and belief (Fairclough, 1992). Its importance to discourse analysis cannot be undermined. It is a very flexible and vital utility that helps to expose how language shapes and is conversely shaped by social situations. Through the use of modes such as genre and register analysis, analysis of intertextuality, multimodal analysis, nominalization, and grammatical metaphor, and more, the ideologies at play in discourse can be revealed (Christie, 2002; Fairclough, 2013a).

The relevance of systemic functional linguistics theory to this research cannot be downplayed. It has been suggested that it offers a clear agenda for analysis, “a principled examination of the choices made by the speakers from the lexico-grammatical resources of the language, in a way which allows these choices to be related to the immediate situation and the wider socio-cultural context in which the communication takes place and makes sense”(Thompson & Muntigl, 2008, p. 2). This theory will provide an explicit, multilayered, and detailed model for explicating the notable politicians’ national discourses to the context they construe. It will not only espouse how the socio-political context determines the language, but also how the politicians’ language construes their socio-political contexts (Hunston, 2013).

Methodology

Critical discourse analysis (CDA)

CDA is “an evolution from the Critical Linguistics developed in the late 1970s by several theorists at the University of East Anglia, following Halliday’s (1978) functional view of language, but it has been influenced by other critical theorists such as Foucault, Gramsci, Pêcheux and Habermas” (Wodak & Kendall, 2007, p. 9). Teun van Dijk argues that CDA “is not a method, nor a theory that simply can be applied to social problems. CDA can be conducted in, and combined with any approach and sub discipline in the humanities and the social sciences... it is, so to speak, discourse analysis ‘with an attitude’. It focuses on social problems, and especially on the role of discourse in the production and reproduction of power abuse or domination” (2001, p. 93).

According to Wodak and Meyer (2009, p. 2), it is “*a constitutive problem-oriented, interdisciplinary approach... which is not interested in investigating a linguistic unit per se but in studying social phenomena which are necessarily complex and thus require a multidisciplinary and multi-methodical approach*”.

This multidisciplinary approach uses intertextual and interdiscursive analyses to examine how text and talk legislate, replicate and repel social power abuse, dominance, and inequality in the socio-political milieu (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2015; Jahedi, 2014; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012; Van Dijk, 2016). CDA has been said to have its origin in varied “theoretical backgrounds, oriented towards different data and methodologies” (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

In this study, the authors’ consideration of CDA has its roots in Halliday’s systemic theory *which*

“...gives prominence to discourse, or ‘text’; not — or not only — as evidence for the system, but valued, rather, as constitutive of the culture. The mechanism proposed for this constitutive power of discourse has been referred to as the ‘metafunctional hookup’: the hypothesis that (a) social contexts are organic — dynamic configurations of three components, called ‘field’, ‘tenor’, and ‘mode’: respectively, the nature of the social activity, the relations among the interactants, and the status accorded to the language (what is going on, who are taking part, and what they are doing with their discourse); and (b) there is a relationship between these and the metafunctions such that these components are construed, respectively, as experiential, as interpersonal, and as textual meanings” (Halliday, 2003, p.437).

Leveraging on Halliday’s systemic theory, Michel Foucault, a social theorist who has been a major influence in the development of discourse

analysis as a form of social analysis, proposes ‘structuralism explanations of discursive phenomena’. Foucault upholds that discourse, which entails complex power struggles within and over it, is constitutive of objects and social subjects, defined by its interplay with others to enable social change. Foucault believes that much attention should be given to the complex power struggles as they reflect the high importance of discourse and language; how they are constituted, determined, and interpreted in any situational context they occur (Fairclough, 1992; Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Some gaps have been identified in this Foucauldian model of CDA. They include the stringent objectification of power and overhyping its manipulative influence on the ‘social subjects’ in the process of social change; the non-inclusion of discursive and linguistic analysis of real texts in the analysis of discourse and ‘the absence of a concept of practice, text and textual analysis’, “in order to explore and trace the power/knowledge networks which are evident in social policy”(Alba-Juez, 2007, p. 162).

These gaps in the corpus-linguistics approach of Foucault, birthed the dialectical-relational approach of Norman Fairclough which posits an interplay among ‘discourse, power, and social structure’. Fairclough (1992 p. 56), advocated a three-dimensional textual analysis in conjunction with another analysis vis a vis: “analysis of the text, analysis of discourse processes of text production and interpretation (including the question of which discourse types and genres are drawn upon, and how they are articulated), and social analysis of the discursive ‘event’ in terms of its social conditions and effects at various levels (situationally, institutionally, societally)”. Here, discourse is perceived as a form of ‘social practice’ that frames, shapes, and is shaped by the situations, institutions, and social structures they help to sustain, reproduce and contribute to transforming (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, as cited in Wodak & Meyer, 2009). It is in synergy with the society to constitute each other in shaping the thought processes of interactants, through the deployment of linguistic features that convey discourse ideologies and perceptions of the social world (Kazemian & Hashemi, 2014).

Lending further credence to the ‘social practice’ of discourse is the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) which focuses primarily on political texts and discourse practices to historically analyse (contextualize linguistic findings in terms of historical developments in the state) the exercise of governmental power in a specific policy field. The objects under investigation, like in general CDA, do not have to be related to negative or exceptionally ‘serious’ social or political experiences or events (Reisigl & Wodak, as cited in Boyd & Monacelli, 2010; Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Discourse historical analysis “examines the contents of text and talk, discursive strategies, and the linguistic means by which speakers enact these strategies. A multi-dimensional view of context is seen to operate on four

linguistic and non-linguistic levels: the immediate co-text; the intertextual; the extra-linguistic elements in terms of social variables and institutional frames; the broader sociolinguistic and historical domains” (Boyd & Monacelli, 2010, p.53).

In another vein, Teun Van Dijk approaches CDA from the socio-psychological perspective, triangulating discourse with cognition and society, upon identifying gaps in previous works on CDA. Van Dijk argues that socio-cognitive theory should be deployed in discourse analysis since “social actors involved in discourse do not only use their individual experiences and strategies, they rely mainly upon collective frames of perceptions, called social representations. These socially shared perceptions form the link between the social system and the individual cognitive system, and perform the translation, homogenization, and coordination between external requirements and subjective experience” (Dunmire, 2012; Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 26).

From the foregoing schools of thought, it is deducible that critical discourse analysis is socio-culturally oriented. It is not a theory, but a model that employs diverse theoretical backgrounds, different data, and methodologies. Thus, it conducts a multidisciplinary examination of social and political issues. It also depicts the historical nature of discourse, the discursive nature of power relations, and how discourse constitutes society and culture, as well as projects ideology, how the link between text and society is mediated, the interpretative and explanatory nature of discourse analysis and its nature as a form of social action (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; as cited in Jahedi, 2014).

It thus suffices for the authors to sum up that, critical discourse analysis can be regarded as the in-depth/forensic analysis of the spoken and or written language of socio-cultural cum, politico-economic interaction between or among parties (actors and audiences, writer and reader, speaker and listener, President and citizenry) in any given situational context, to create meaning that cognitively and pragmatically impact on the interplay between power and dominance, in social struggles.

Critical Discourse Analysis Studies

A review of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to describe the rhetorical strategies deployed in the September 18, 2010 speech of President Goodluck Jonathan, at the declaration of his candidacy for his Peoples Democratic Party’s (PDP) Presidential primaries, reveals that Kamalu and Agangan (2011) attempted to identify the ‘ideological orientation and persuasive strategies. It also depicts how the authors reflect the power relationship’ between President Jonathan and his audience. Through these strategies, scholars are inundated with a revelation of the interplay among power struggle for rulership of the nation, an ideology of the ‘outsider’

(minority tribesman) who deserves power irrespective of the historical context of the three major tribes, and language filled with cognition for persuasion and dominance, as functions of the socio-cognitive and discourse historical leaning of the President's text.

Much as the authors have done a good job of using CDA to analyze President Goodluck Jonathan's declaration of interest in the PDP Presidential Primaries, it is observable that there is a stringent objectification of the 'outsider' President (power) and overhyping of his manipulative influence on the audience in the process of electing a Presidential candidate. Besides, little was done in the operationalization and integration of the linguistic features 'to reflect on issues of language and social structure' (Wodak & Meyer, 2008). The analysis could also have laid some emphasis on how the impediments to social wrong would be overcome. In essence, the emphasis on analyzing the socio-cognitive and historical context left little room for the analysis of text to identify the proposed social change structures, if any.

Similarly, the 2016 Presidential campaign discourses of both Hilary Clinton and Donald Trump were carefully examined by Javadi and Mohammadi (2019). They deployed the three-dimensional framework of Norman Fairclough's approach to critical discourse analysis in revealing how societal power relations are established and reinforced through language use. Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis of texts, they espoused the linguistic features and the underlying ideologies propagated by each speaker. Scholars clearly come in contact with the juxtaposition of Trump's 'Americanism' and Clinton's 'globalism'. The use of contrasting ideologies is very well revealed in the analysis. The study depicts these contrasting ideologies as a function of their discursive practices in the way the texts were produced and intended for consumption. The authors were able to deconstruct the deliberate power play, fueled by rhetoric, for the harnessing of voters' massive support in a bid for the office of President of the United States of America. The authors were also able to identify the third aspect of Fairclough's three-dimensional framework approach to CDA. The authors elucidated the social practice of the discourse. Readers are made to experience Trump's conservatives' social orientation of 'America for Americans' and 'America first, with a system that focuses only for Americans', while the democrats, to which Clinton belonged, were more permissive and focused on global inclusion.

The ideological underpinnings from the discursive events were well classified into four major themes of 'Americanism', 'Immigration', 'Economy', and 'Terrorism' to reveal the interplay among the discourse, the ideologies, and power, as socially contextualized. The figurative expressions, as well as simple vocabularies deployed, were revealed as strategic attempts to not only highlight their ideologies in relation to the social practice but also

to cognitively dominate their audiences and wrest political power. Nonetheless, the criticality of the socio-cognitive discourse deployed by both Presidential candidates is not clearly depicted in this attempt to deconstruct the deliberate power play of the candidates.

In the methodical analysis of the Republic of Philippine's President Rodrigo Roa Duterte's thirty (30) political speeches, Rubic-Remorosa (2018) explicated the linguistic choices of the President to depict the underlying social issues (power, context, and mind control) and ideologies. The author relied on the socio cognitive postulate of van Dijk, the three-dimensional framework of Norman Fairclough and Woods' discourse of politics (a function of persuasive linguistic techniques) to uncover the linguistic features (modality, transitivity, pronouns, etc.) deployed and the recurring socio-political issues (war on drugs, crime, and corruption). The author was able to conduct a good linguistic analysis using the critical discourse model to espouse such issues as heightening foreign relations, strengthening democracy, improving the condition of the citizens, and speedily resolving the fundamental challenges, which are pertinent to President Duterte's discourse. The President's discourse encompassed simple, easy words and short sentences that appealed to the consciousness and confidence of the citizenry towards him. His discourse was "... scrutinized as a site of power, of struggle and also as a site where language is often apparently transplanted" (p 82).

The political discourses (speeches) of President General Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan during his tenure, with emphasis on terrorism and the interest of the country, were reviewed by Khan (2019) through CDA. The authors used the socio-cognitive approach of critical discourse analysis, attributed to Van Dijk (2001), to propagate the President's ideology on the terrorism war and Pakistan's alliance with America. The discursive events of the period (1999 - 2008) analyzed were both micro and macro in context. The analysis of these discursive events identified the mediatory function of the socio-cognitive approach to CDA in the dialectical relations between social structures and discourse structures. Readers are made to experience the subjective characterizations, via a 'mental model', of the deconstruction of the hegemonic discourses that the analysis investigates. In this analysis, the authors present ten (10) macro structures and some microstructures for the deconstruction of varied misrepresentations and ideologies about Pakistan, the Islamic religion as a proponent of terrorism, the United States of America and its relationship with Pakistan, the local fight against terrorism and the causes of terrorism. Through these macro structures, there is a conscious focus on the social wrong in their semiotic aspects (misrepresentations and ideological hegemonies), exposing the impediments to deliberating on these social wrongs (the perception of Pakistanis about the US and the sincerity of support from the US in its relations with Pakistan). We also experience the analysis of the

social order (ideology) and how it necessitates social wrong (terrorism), which now requires a change in the social order (a deconstruction of the hegemony and social representations) (Fairclough, 2013a; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). The triangulation between ‘society/culture/situation, cognition, and discourse/language’ is well articulated for the dissolution of hegemonic structures that portend social consequences. What the analysis is not able to clearly identify is the possible ways the impediments to social change can be achievable. The semiosis of the analysed text and talk overhypes the President’s capability to establish his dominance in power. There are no clear ways the social wrong will be addressed other than the propagation of the new ideology of the President to the citizens and “touching upon the shared social practices and identities in order to be close to them and convince them of his right to be the just ruler of the country”(Khan, 2019, p. 239).

The attention placed on corruption by Presidents Musa Yar’Adua and Goodluck Jonathan through their individual inaugural and Independence Day speeches, respectively was examined by Ogunmuyiwa (2015). The author adopted Critical Discourse Analysis using Michael Halliday’s system of Transitivity (an element of systemic functional linguistics) to describe their language patterns and Norman Fairclough’s three-tier analytical framework for text contextualization within the sphere of ideology and power relations. The study uncovers the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria and the recognition of the same in the speeches of both Presidents. It also elucidates how the context constructs the Presidents’ emphasis on the battle against corruption in their discourses, at the various periods studied. The sensitivity of the Presidents to the issue of corruption and their desire to fight it are well depicted.

In an analysis of Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe’s 2002 Earth Summit address, Chimbarange et al. (2013) focused on the persuasive strategies and covert ideology deployed to elicit support from their audience against the Western powers on the land reforms in Zimbabwe. A qualitative approach using Norman Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis elements was deployed. The authors revealed the concept of sustainable development as contextualized and redefined, via rhetorical tools, by the Zimbabwean President in accordance with his government’s ideology of reclaiming and redistributing land. The authors also revealed that language is a great tool in the hands of politicians to execute political battles.

An interdisciplinary framework theoretically grounded in Fairclough’s approach to CDA was adopted to analyze the religious, sociocultural, and political values and ideology embedded in the discourse of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani during his campaign for the presidency in 2013. The analysis by Mirzaei (2017), depicted the contrastive position (social struggle of moderates) of Rouhani in juxtaposition with that of his predecessor

(fundamentalist). Readers also observe the President's ideology, as representative of his party, in the carefully crafted rhetorical devices deployed to counter the status quo, chart a bond with the voters, and win them over. Little is shared in this analysis of the political and economic discourse for societal improvement. The majority of the emphasis in the analysis is on the import of rhetorical devices for the manipulation of voters to enhance his campaigns and win the elections.

Conclusion

The critical discourse analysis studies highlighted above were purposively chosen to explicate the interplay between the concepts of language and politics in text and talk for the enactment of socio-political dominance. The interplay among power, dominance, language, ideology, and relationships in the foreign studies examined are not dissimilar from that displayed in the studies by the authors, on the Presidential speeches reviewed. Their theoretical frameworks of critical discourse analysis, point in equivalent directions of ideology legitimization and power dominance through the use of cognitive discourses. Readers are taken through the empowerment ability of discourse in diverse socio-political contexts and how power relies on discourse for multidisciplinary actions that culminate in cognitive dominance.

The prominent distinguishing element in the studies is the peculiar context and discursive socio-political events. The depth of discursive frameworks employed also varies in terms of tools and devices applied, to explicate the import of these frameworks on the discursive events and the meanings deducible therefrom.

Recommendation

Much as the highlighted national addresses x-rayed the contextual social challenges peculiar to each case, there is insufficient analysis of the political and economic discourse for societal improvement.

This study therefore recommends that political leaders should ensure that subsisting problems and those envisaged as the foundation of social order in their societies; the value systems appropriate for social justice, wealth creation and distribution, social efficiency with moral sensitivity and concern for the common good as deduced from the knowledge of shared values with their citizenry are pragmatically tackled in the discourses. In essence, the concepts, agenda, and policies in political discourse must reflect the reality of the citizenry with a view to enabling the positive transformation of the society.

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