DEIXIS AND CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS INTERDISCIPLINARITY IN MITT ROMNEY AND BARACK OBAMA 2012 PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

علم الاشاة وتحليل الخطاب النقدي متعدد الآداب في المناظرات الرئاسية بين مت رومني وباراك اوباما ٢٠١٢

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المستخلص

تتناول هذه المقتلة الحملة الانتخابية الرئاسية الامريكية لعام ٢٠١٢ باستخدام تحليل الخطاب النقدي (من الان فصاعدا (CDA). تركز الدراسة على الخطابات السياسية لمت رومني وباراك اوياما. وبشكل اساسي، تتبع هذه المقالة دراسة منعددة الآداب لخطب الرؤساء وتحاول استكشاف الطريقة التي يستخدمون بها تعبيرات محددة لدعم حملاتهم. ان تعدد الآداب هذا هو لغوي ويتضمن مسارين نظريين اسلوبيين. اولا، تمت دراسة CDA جنبا الى جنب مع التعبيرات الاشارية ضمن اطار مفاهيمي براغمطيقي. وتم تحديد CDA لأقوال المرشحين المختارين. تعكس هذه الأقوال الرؤى والمهام السياسية التي يطمح من خلالها كل مرشح لتحقيق تجمعه الرئاسي. ثانيا، يتم تحليل انجاز هذا التجمع الرئاسي من خلال تطبيق ثلاثة تعبيرات اشارية وهي الكلمات الاشارية الشخصية والمكانية والزمانية. يتم تحليل الأقوال الشخصية لكشف الاهداف السياسية التي حددها الرؤساء. ويواصل كلا المرشحين استخدام الضمير "انا" للفت الانتباه الى رؤاهم ومهامهم الشخصية تجاه مستقبل علم الاشارة الشخصية الامريكية التي تؤدي الى تحليل علم الاشارة المكاني. ان استخدام علم الاشارة المكاني يتم للاشارة الى مكان او موقف حيث يؤكد المرشحون اهدافهم. هذا المكان هو على وجه التحديد الولايات المتحدة، حيث يقوم المرشحون بتدوين اهدهغهم فيما يتعلق بمستقبل الولايات المتحدة وكيف يمكن لكل منهم تعزيز القيادة الامريكية. يتم تطبيق علم الاشارة الزماني جنبا الى جنب مع علم الاشارة الشخصي والمكاني لتحليل وقت الحملة الرئاسية. وهكذا بتم تطبيق علم الاشارة مع CDA كدراسة متعددة الآداب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تحليل الخطاب النقدي (CDA)، علم الاشارة ، تعدد التخصصات، المناظرات الرئاسية.

ABSTRACT

This article examines the U.S. 2012 presidential election campaign by using Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA). The study focuses on Mitt Romney and Barack Obama political discourses. Mainly, the aticle follows an interdisciplinary study of the presidents' speeches. It tries to explore the way in which they use specific expressions to support their campaigns. This interdisciplinarity is linguistic involving two stylistic theoretical trajectories. First, CDA is studied together with deictic expressions within pragmatic conceptual framework. CDA is specified to the selected candidates' utterances. These utterances reflect the political visions and missions by which each candidate aspires to fulfill his presidential rally. Second, the fulfilling of this presidential rally is analyzed by applying three deictic expressions, namely, personal, spatial, and temporal deictic utterances. The personal utterances are analyzed to unravel the political objectives outlined by the presidents. Both candidates keep using the pronoun 'I' in order to draw attention to their personal visions and missions towards the future of the U.S. personal deixis leads to the analysis of spatial deixis. Spatial deixis are used to refer to a place, or situation, where the candidates assert their objectives. This place is specifically the U.S. the candidates jot down their objectives regarding the future of the U.S. and how each of them can enhance the American leadership. The temporal deixis are applied together with personal and spatial deixis to analyze the time of the presidential campaign. Thus, deixis are applied with CDA as an interdisciplinary study.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Deixis, Interdisciplinarity, Presidential debates.

1. Introduction

Discourse analysis has a contiguous affinity with linguistic interpolations with human communicative relations. It invokes a sense of integrity and coherence regarding the semantic and pragmatic nuances of human language. Such coherence helps discern the intended meaning ensuing a specific or general discourse. Being that so, discourse has a systematic function which needs a critical analysis by which a latent meaning can be deduced. As such, a critical discourse comprises **"a number of potentially confusing or at least overlapping terms. In a field, particularly a new field such as discourse analysis, in which there are always likely to be a number of contesting orientations it would be unlikely for there to be an agreed metalanguage"** (Carter and Simpson, 1989: 9). The metalinguistic peculiarity of any discourse endeavors "to assert a proposition rhetorically. However, discourse analysis is generally concerned not with isolated decontextualized sentences but with uncovering the patterns and regularities which occur between and across sentences or conversational turns as they are *used* in real contexts of language" (ibid.).

Carter and Simpson's (1989) assertion of the rhetorical feature of critical discourse encompasses the inherent, yet meticulous, spoken language

raised about the relationship between language and the world, and an assumedly unproblematic 'referential' fit between words and meanings [in which these meanings] were problematized, then analysis would have to confront issues such as the arbitrariness of the sign, the fit between language, representation and cultural

relativity, as well as the sorts of theories of language advanced by poststructuralists and by deconstructionism" (ibid.: p. 7).

Here, a critical analysis accompanying discourse is of paramount importance since between social structure and language there is a dialectical interconnectedness in which Fowler (1981: 21) states that "the varieties of linguistic usage are both *products* of socioeconomic forces and institutions—reflexes of such factors as power relations, occupation roles, social stratifications, etc., and *practices* which are instrumental in forming and legitimating these same social forces and institutions". As such, the conspicuous discourse's efficiency is the proper conveyance of meaning in a comprehensible context which could be grasped by both a specialized and lay audience.

Discourse analysis provides an accessible entry to discourse messages. There is an automatic response to the hidden meaning by virtue of stylistic implication discourse. Stylistics is thus "regarded simply as the variety of discourse analysis dealing with literary discourse" (Leech, 1983: 151). Stylistics, hence, exemplifies the core conceptual ramification of discourse connotation within the pertaining context. It is "also done at the expense of representation. From the point of view of critical discourse analysis, texts should be studied as representations as well as interactions" (van Leeuwen, 2008: 4). Analytical interactions among discourse contexts is "the most abstract and theoretical aspects of human thought and verbal usage [further it is] the real understanding of words ultimately derives from active experience of those aspects of reality to which the words belong" (Malinowski, 1935: 58). In essence, discourse exposes certain reality attained by experience projected in the discourse fabrics. These fabrics of discourses are social ways of expressing social practices, where they are employed as means for representing social practices in manuscript. That is, it is potential to recreate discourses from the texts that draw on them (van Leeuwen, 2008: 6).

As a social 'action', discourse is the heart of any social practice which entails

a set of actions performed in a sequence, which may be fixed to a greater or lesser degree and which may or may not allow for choice, that is, for alternatives with regard to a greater or lesser number of the actions of some or all of the participants, and for concurrence, that is, for the simultaneity of different actions during part or all of the sequence (ibid.: 8).

By the same token, CDA is a category of discourse analysis. It is set out as social practice transforming legitimate ideologies into proposed agendas. In the long run, CDA brings about a political implication concerning ideological agendas. In a like manner, the social dimension of discourse analysis has a political characteristic because CDA "is essentially political in intent with its practitioners acting upon the world in order to transform it and thereby help create a world where people are not discriminated against because of sex, colour, creed, age or social class" (Coulthard and Coulthard, 1996: xi).

The purpose of this article, henceforth, is to apply CDA to the USA presidential campaign in 2012 rallied by Barack Obama and Mitt Romney. The main focus is the political insights of both candidates, as well as the deictic expressions used in their speeches. Therefore, the speech's discourse reveals the political background in which they propose and sustain their campaign ideology. This ideology is referential and subjective i.e., it refers to each candidate's political vision. For this reason, the analysis of deictic expressions unravels this subjectivity within the speeches contexts.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this article, the main focus of CDA is political interdisciplinarity between discourse and deixis. In *Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory and Interdisciplinarity*, Weiss and Wodak (2003) argue that CDA is one "of an all-embracing, causal natural relation against the background of a number of individual observations. The humanities and social sciences do not have to take this bypass but have direct access to the nexus of conscious life and culture because we are supposed to understand our own conscious life and our own cultural products 'from within'" (p. 2). As such, CDA is a theory which has understood as a logical reasoning system involving definitions, ideologies, final intentions and inferential speeches. CDA involves the notions of social power abuse, ideology, inequality, hierarchy, dominance, gender and sociological variables which are relevant to a text interpretation or explanation.

To state that CDA is interdisciplinary, it could be applied with other linguistic theories to analyze discourse contexts. Moreover, CDA "interdisciplinary research uses images associated with innovation, progress and flexibility… it reveals the seemingly paradoxical mechanism that the more differentiation of knowledge production the more intense will be the call for interdisciplinarity'" (Weingart, 2000: 30). By applying CDA, linguists "seize interdisciplinary opportunities to produce new knowledge; practitioners grab these

opportunities as well and provide the necessary resources. From this perspective, specialization and interdisciplinarity complement each other; they are not opposites or new dichotomies, but rather they coexist" (Weiss and Wodak, 2003: 16). CDA, in this regard, is relied on a study of minor interjections that demonstrates how much extradisciplinary knowledge is needed to deduce individual interjections and their practice.

These individual interjections come into terms to systematically discover often cloudy relations of causality and resolution "between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power" (Fairclough, 1995: 132). Here, CDA and discourse in general unite "as an abstract noun denoting language in use as a social practice with particular emphasis on larger units such as paragraphs, utterances, whole texts or genres" (Locke, 2004, p.13). CDA, thereupon, brings about an emphasis on text creation that arouses questions concerns with both interdiscursivity and obvious intertextuality. The earlier is related to the way in which a text looks to contribute to one or more discourses (ibid.: 43). Interdisciplinarity, otherwise, is also an emphasis on text distribution which arouses questions concerns with the way a specified text turns into part of an intertextual chain in being converted into other text-types (ibid.). As argued earlier, CDA interdisciplinarity is annexed to deictic expressions.

The expression 'deictic' is derived "from the Greek word deixis, which means "pointing" via language" (Yule, 2020: 152). Accordingly, deixis are used to refer to things (it, this, these boxes) and people (him, us, those idiots), sometimes called personal deixis. Words and phrases used to indicate a place (overthere, here, near that) are examples of spatial deixis, and those used to indicate a time (now, then, last week) are examples of time deixis (ibid.). Furthermore, these expressions which refer to a person, place or time must be interpreted as the speakers have in minds. A broad distinction may make between what is marked as near the speaker (here, this, now) and what is far (there, that, then) also indicate whether movement is far from the speaker's position (go) or toward the speaker's position (come).

By perceiving deixis, deictic reference comprises, according to Zúñiga (2006)

some entities receiving preferential treatment in the grammar in some way or the other while others are given a less prominent place. However, in several languages, various morphological and syntactic processes reveal the sensitivity of linguistic structures to an underlying hierarchy of entities along semantic, referential, and/or pragmatic parameters (p. 1).

On the same boat, Yule (2020) pinpoints that reference can be defined "as an act by which a speaker (or writer) uses language to enable a listener (or reader) to identify something. To perform an act of reference, we can use proper nouns" (p. 153).

3. Analysis and Discussion

Thiesmeyer (2003) affirms that critical discourse analysis publicly comprises approachable language and additional forms of expression that widely spread and consistent through a society. These forms contain direct uses of language in interchanges of information in addition to forms that remark on, analyse, amuse, or disapprove other forms and their public situations.

In the quotations below, discursive CDA situation originates in Romney and Obama's usage of spatial deictic expressions, such as the Middle East and Afghanistan:

"ROMNEY: This is obviously an area of great concern to the entire world, and to America in particular, which is to see a - a complete change in the structure and the environment in the Middle East. With the Arab Spring, came a great deal of hope that there would be a change towards more moderation, and opportunity for greater participation on the part of women in public life, and in economic life in the Middle East. But instead, we've seen in nation after nation, a number of disturbing events. Of course we see in Syria, 30,000 civilians having been killed by the military there. We see in Libya, an attack apparently by, I think we know now, by terrorists of some kind against our people there, four people dead.

OBAMA: Well, my first job as commander in chief, Bob, is to keep the American people safe. And that's what we've done over the last four years. We ended the war in Iraq, refocused our attention on those who actually killed us on 9/11. And as a consequence, Al Qaeda's core leadership has been decimated. In addition, we're now able to transition out of Afghanistan in a responsible way, making sure that Afghans take responsibility for their own security. And that allows us also to rebuild alliances and make friends around the world to combat future threats. Now with respect to Libya, as I indicated in the last debate, when we received that phone call, I immediately made sure that, number one, that we did everything we could to

secure those Americans who were still in harm's way; number two, that we would investigate exactly what happened, and number three, most importantly, that we would go after those who killed Americans and we would bring them to justice. And that's exactly what we're going to do" (Commission on Presidential Debates, 2012).

The grammatical quality of Romney and Obama corresponds to the fact that they use rhetorical and metalanguage, such as body language and voice pitches to accentuate their political agendas. They explicate that in their exposition of American foreign affairs there is a threat to the national security of America. This agenda is conveyed through the use of 'we' pronoun as a deictic expression referring to the national unity of America.

"ROMNEY: Well, my strategy is pretty straightforward, which is to go after the bad guys, to make sure we do our very best to interrupt them, to kill them, to take them out of the picture. But my strategy is broader than that. That's important, of course. But the key that we're going to have to pursue is a pathway to get the Muslim world to be able to reject extremism on its own. We don't want another Iraq, we don't want another Afghanistan. That's not the right course for us. The right course for us is to make sure that we go after the -- the people who are leaders of these various anti-American groups and these -- these jihadists, but also help the Muslim world.

OBAMA: Governor Romney, I'm glad that you recognize that Al Qaida is a threat, because a few months ago when you were asked what's the biggest geopolitical threat facing America, you said Russia, not Al Qaida; you said Russia, in the 1980s, they're now calling to ask for their foreign policy back because, you know, the Cold War's been over for 20 years. But Governor, when it comes to our foreign policy, you seem to want to import the foreign policies of the 1980s, just like the social policies of the 1950s and the economic policies of the 1920s. You say that you're not interested in duplicating what happened in Iraq. But just a few weeks ago, you said you think we should have more troops in Iraq right now. And the challenge we have I know you haven't been in a position to actually execute foreign policy but every time you've offered an opinion, you've been wrong. You said we should have gone into Iraq, despite that fact that there were no weapons of mass destruction" (Commission on Presidential Debates, 2012).

Since politics is one 'cultural' representation of 'globalization', it is indicative of Romney-Obama's debate. Both presidents utilize certain cultural connotations to win the presidential rally. To achieve their cultural goals, they tend to use some deictic expressions in their speeches. In Romney-Obama presidential discourse, the meaning is produced by using the personal, or subjective, pronoun 'I' to indicate the unique and individual discourse used to negotiate the American foreign affairs. This pronoun is a deictic token exemplifying the subjective speech initiated by the candidates:

"ROMNEY: Well, of course I don't concur with what the president said about my own record and the things that I've said. They don't happen to be accurate. But I can say this, that we're talking about the Middle East and how to help the Middle East reject the kind of terrorism we're seeing, and the rising tide of tumult and confusion. And attacking me is not an agenda. Attacking me is not talking about how we're going to deal with the challenges that exist in the Middle East, and take advantage of the opportunity there, and stem the tide of this violence.

OBAMA: You've got to be clear, both to our allies and our enemies, about where you stand and what you mean. You just gave a speech a few weeks ago in which you said we should still have troops in Iraq. That is not a recipe for making sure that we are taking advantage of the opportunities and meeting the challenges of the Middle East. Now, it is absolutely true that we cannot just meet these challenges militarily. And so what I've done throughout my presidency and will continue to do is, number one, make sure that these countries are supporting our counterterrorism efforts" (Commission on Presidential Debates, 2012).

CDA is relative to persons because it is "attributed to a particular person" (Hezaveh et al., 2014: 3). Persons use language and symbols and their connection with the fragmentation of identity in characters. Thus, CDA identifies the personality of individuals and their relative way of delivering discourse. Similarly, Romney and Obama use their own way of speech, accompanied by body language, to affect the audience.

To discuss the last point, strategic modes are used in Romney and Obama's speeches as authoritarian regimes. This linguistic strategy originates in the hegemonic visions of the rival candidates. That is, they discuss the international crises in Syria and the Arab World to maintain a sense of hegemonic American leadership in the world. Both of them use the possessive deictic pronoun 'our' alongside 'we' to affirm and ratify such leadership:

"ROMNEY: Syria is Iran's only ally in the Arab world. It's their route to the sea. It's the route for them to arm Hezbollah in Lebanon, which threatens, of course, our ally, Israel. And so seeing Syria remove Assad is a very high priority for us. Number two, seeing a replacement government being responsible people is critical for us. And finally, we don't want to have military involvement there. We don't want to get drawn into a military conflict.

OBAMA: We are playing the leadership role. We organized the Friends of Syria. We are mobilizing humanitarian support, and support for the opposition. And we are making sure that those we help are those who will be friends of ours in the long term and friends of our allies in the region over the long term. But going back to Libya because this is an example of how we make choices. When we went in to Libya, and we were able to immediately stop the massacre there, because of the unique circumstances and the coalition that we had helped to organize. We also had to make sure that Moammar Gadhafi didn't stay there" (Commission on Presidential Debates, 2012).

CDA quality is pertinent to Romney and Obama discourse, especially when they use personal deictic expressions. They refer persistently to their allies and partners in different world regions to sustain their positions and potentials to be the right US president. They use spatial deictic expressions referring to some countries like Syria and America to enhance their political and presidential credibility:

"ROMNEY: And this isn't -- this isn't going to be necessary. We have, with our partners in the region, we have sufficient resources to support those groups. But look, this has been going on for a year. This is a time -- this should have been a time for American leadership. We should have taken a leading role, not militarily, but a leading role organizationally, governmentally to bring together the parties; to find responsible parties. As you hear from intelligence sources even today, the insurgents are highly disparate. They haven't come together. They haven't formed a unity group, a council of some kind. That needs to happen. America can help that happen. And we need to make sure they have the arms they need to carry out the very important role which is getting rid of Assad.

OBAMA: Well, I'll be very quick. What you just heard Governor Romney said is he doesn't have different ideas. And that's because we're doing exactly what we should be doing to try to promote a moderate Syrian leadership and an effective transition so that we get Assad out. That's the kind of leadership we've shown. That's the kind of leadership we'll continue to show" (Commission on Presidential Debates, 2012).

The synthetic construction and projecting implicit meanings are frequent in Romney-Obama presidential debates. In addition, the syntactic peculiarity of CDA has a semantic correlation with the speaker's intended meaning because "the correlation is only evident in lexical complexity production and no correlation was found for any of the syntactic complexity measures" (Masrom et al. 2015: 33). In this regard, Romney and Obama enunciate political messages to be deduced by their audience. For example, Romney expresses his vision regarding the future of energy, and Obama talks about the American unity which is essential for sustaining the American leadership in the world. For this reason, they use the pronoun 'I' as a deictic personal expression to endorse such latent political messages:

"ROMNEY: No. I believe, as the president indicated, and said at the time that I supported his action there. I felt that I wish we'd have had a better vision of the future. I wish that, looking back at the beginning of the president's term and even further back than that, that we'd have recognized that there was a growing energy and passion for freedom in that part of the world, and that we would have worked more aggressively with our friend and with other friends in the region to have them make the transition towards a more representative form of government, such that it didn't explode in the way that it did. But once it exploded, I felt the same as the president did, which is these freedom voices and the streets of Egypt, where the people who were speaking of our principles and the President Mubarak had done things which were unimaginable and the idea of him crushing his people was not something that we could possibly support.

OBAMA: America remains the one indispensable nation. And the world needs a strong America, and it is stronger now than when I came into office. Because we ended the war in Iraq, we were able to refocus our attention on not only the terrorist threat, but also beginning a transition process in Afghanistan. It also allowed us to refocus on alliances and relationships that had been neglected for a decade. And Governor Romney, our alliances have never been stronger, in Asia, in Europe, in Africa, with Israel, where we have unprecedented military and intelligence cooperation, including dealing with the Iranian threat" (Commission on Presidential Debates, 2012).

4. **Conclusion**

This article has applied CDA to analyze the presidential USA campaign run in 2012 between Romney and Obama. The main focus has been on the political presidential discourse delivered by the two candidates in their rally for the presidential election. Both candidates used a unique and individual discourse to sustain their political ability to win the presidential campaign. Notwithstanding, this article has emphasized the similarities between the candidates regarding the way they use political expressions in their speeches to deliver their campaign's messages.

These expressions entail a deictic quality. Deixis, therefore, is used to incorporate an interdisciplinary study of the candidates' speeches. In so doing, the article has revealed the referential entities to which both of them indicate the spatial and personal references they want to discuss. Thus, the article accentuates the use of spatial deixis used by them to indicate the American leadership in world countries; and they use personal, or subjective pronouns to refer to their individual way to prove and maintain the American leadership.

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