A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF JOE BIDEN'S FIRST SPEECH AS PRESIDENT IN 2020

Mahnoor Ehsan *, Muhammad Salman Amin and Sonia Abdul Hameed

University of Education, Lahore, Pakistan

ABSTRACT

This research article endeavors to apply the CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) model by Norman Fairclough to reveal the political identities and distinct ideologies of the United States' political personalities. The U.S. has always been drowned in different leadership and especially race/color discrimination crises. This paper presents the CDA of the presidential-elect inaugural speech of Joe Biden after the historical U.S. election of 2020. This speech was delivered on 7th November 2020. Like all modified academic disciplines, CDA is developed as an advanced academic discipline. The present research article stands on the base of Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional analytical model. Applying Fairclough's 3D framework helps examine the ground political ideology of the speech. Analysis of linguistic choices has been examined at the first level and discourse practice of the text at the second level. The third level examined sociocultural practices. The underlying aim of this research paper was to examine the linguistic resources the speaker used. It also aims to examine Joe Biden's political ideology behind his speech. This study lays out an impetus for further research in this field by providing initial grounds for it.

INTRODUCTION

Fairclough (2013) stated that discourse is normally appropriated in different faculties, including (a) which means making a component of the communal interaction; (b) the language related to a specific area; (c) a mode of understanding particular sociable perspectives. Like other discourses, Van Dijk (1997) enunciated that the actual thought behind the analysis of political discourse (from now on PDA), is questionable. It is acknowledgeable that the purpose of PDA is to investigate the 'political talk', although we then, at that point, need to figure out first which discourse is specifically related to politics and then interpret it. Among famous political discourses recently is Biden's speech of victory at Delaware. After applying the CDA, this speech of Joe Biden exhibited power and language relationships. It pointed out that Biden became a president of all the residents of the United States and aimed towards deep divisions in the U.S. to heal. Language framework can be used to inseminate the ideologies towards the United States residents. Fairclough's model applied to this speech revealed the persuasive nature of the speaker.

Aldosari and Bader (2020) elaborated that CDA is used as a key tool of language that is used for ideological purposes. It elaborates on the ideologies with the help of language use. The theory discusses how certain words are used to show power in a particular social context. CDA also attempts to unveil hidden ideological perspectives with the help of particular words. Rachman and Yunianti (2017) examine Donald Trump's presidential campaign focusing on his discourse (illustrated political discourse in Trump's) and particularly on utterances and aims behind it. Analysis of some of his utterances during speech shows that he wants to control people and gain power. Sharndama and Mgbemena (2015) view critically President

Mohammadu Buhari's inaugural speech. The speech was delivered on May 29th, 2015. Norman's 3D model was adapted to carry out the analysis. It includes description, interpretation, and explanation. Analysis of his speech shows that President Buhari wants to employ fair management, multinational connections, and the economy of the country. Stobbs (2012) investigates the methods and lexis of Barack Obama's speech to create a sense of inclusion in the American public. In the analysis of Barack Obama's speech, the key focus was on the use of pronouns i.e. the frequency of pronouns he used in his speech, and how the pronouns are helpful to include the common people in the process of government. The analysis of Obama's speech shows how Obama's speech is more inclusive than previous presidents. The analysis further shows how some phrases and sentences are used to narrate his persona as well as his presidency.

According to Bayram (2010), the way we use language is dependent upon the perceptions we have about society which are reflected in our words. He further elaborated that the social life of the speaker can be described by his use of language in a social context. He also said that social identity is a big marker in analyzing the attitude of the speaker. Corson (1995) says CDA focuses on examining these practices concerning socio-economic and political viewpoints. Fairclough (1992) elaborates on the analysis of discourse from different levels, which are mainly three. Firstly, by keeping in view the speaker's beliefs, CDA deeply studies the speaker's experience and knowledge. According to Blommaert (2005) and Jorgensen and Phillips (2002), the second level is how the discourses are impacted by social relations, and the third level deals with reality and personality realization. The social identity and background of a speaker are revealed by the choices the speaker makes in his discourse. Fairclough (1992) made the point that individuals belonging to different social backgrounds are depicted by their speeches. The social theory of language functions under the CDA, and it is also one of its main purposes.

Fairclough (1993) says that CDA analyzes discourse by generating relationships between different ethnic and social groups. He emphasized texts that build power relations and then explained them with references to sociocultural views of the discourse of people. He also explains that the words of elites and power classes shaped the power in society. Noor et al. (2015) analyze the last address of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Under this search, a deep study of the Holy Prophet's last address has been done, with an explanation of the famous clauses he (S.A.W.W) used and how they functioned. Corson (1995) views that social relations and identities from a linguistic perspective can be elaborated by techniques under CDA. For example, textual & stylistic features can be applied. Discourses also reflect the power of the language they use, and it is the language related to institutions.

Objective of the Study

The present research study aimed to investigate remote ideological meanings from the text of Joe Biden's presidential elect speech which he delivered on 7th November 2020 in Delaware through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The study aimed to find the linguistic resources the speaker used. This article also aimed to examine a linguistical evaluation of this specific speech and the context under which a political speech is delivered in the United States. It also aimed to investigate Joe Biden's political ideology behind his speech.

METHODOLOGY

The speech of Joe Biden is analyzed by Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It analyzes a particular sociocultural context of lexical and syntactic representation, having a perception that influences the audience. The researcher contributes to interpreting relational, meaningful, and illustrative values in the speech by focusing on the speaker's sociopolitical and economic perspectives.

The researcher perceived the previous knowledge by deeply evaluating Joe Biden's speech based on his sociocultural perspective, discursive practices, and choices of his linguistic knowledge. It also analyzes how Joe Biden delivers his message, his ideas, and his perceptions accurately by using certain linguistic structures in his speech.

The data is collected from the "ABC news-journal online". This speech is of the President-elect speech of Joe Biden, which was delivered on November 7th, 2020 after the historical win against Trump. He called for unity in his speech. The CDA model of Fairclough has been applied to this speech. Norman Fairclough's CDA model has been selected by the researcher.

For the critical analysis of any discourse, he has proposed three levels.

The three levels are the following:

The first is the textual level, the second level is about sociocultural practices, and the third one deals with the discursive practices in a society.

Rodgers et al. (2005) also explain three aspects of analysis, keeping in view Fairclough's 3D model.

1. The written or spoken discourse.
2. In the presentation and explanation of a text, it is the discourse practice that is involved.
3. Social practice is a fundamental part.

In the first dimension, the researcher investigates situations in a particular sociocultural framework. Secondly, the production, interpretation, and consumption processes have been analyzed. The third one is concerned with issues of power and practicing power related to sociocultural practice.

The research is done purely under the qualitative approach. For the analysis of the speech, the CDA model has been taken as a methodology to study at a wider and broader level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis

The researchers have collected this data from the ABC News online journal. A total of 1558 words of speech have been analyzed under Fairclough's 3D model. The researcher critically studied the whole text based on three levels of the 3D model of Fairclough. Under it, analysis of linguistic choices (text) has been studied at the first level, under the second one discourse practice of that particular text, and at the third level, we study social, economic, and political factors of sociocultural practices.

The researcher focuses on the text which shows social equality, unity, and discursive practices from a sociocultural perspective under CDA as a theoretical underpinning.

This approach of Fairclough focuses firstly on text analysis.

Text analysis

In the Fairclough model, the text is one of the integral parts. Text analysis is all about the analysis of the language used by people in that particular setting. In the origins of this field, the approach was named ''Critical Language Analysis" because this approach's main interest is the language used to raise voice against power exploitation. So this leads to the analysis beyond the sentence level.

Every text has so many important features that make the text worthy. One of these significant features, Vocabulary, is at the top of it. The idea's representation is only done through words. Because words carry our thoughts, our perceptions, our ideologies, and our backgrounds. As far as this speech is concerned, the use of words by the speaker is based on ideologies. e.g., "I will be an ally of the light, not of the darkness", "are we ready? I believe we are. We must be ", and "I will protect America ". These words show that Joe is ready to bring America out of the darkness and protect it.

There is also the repetition of so many words and phrases. Frequently used words and connotations in Joe Biden's speech were undertaken in this research more quantitatively, yielding the following results.

This speech under examination consists of 1588 words. Joe Biden used direct and plain language. A grammatical article "the" is the absolute champion of both frequently used words and connotations reaching 119 while the most used pronoun is "we".

Table 1 shows the word frequency of Joe's President-election speech in 2020. The table shows that America was the most used word in the speech of Joe Biden. The second most-used word was "our" which shows harmony and togetherness, "You" was the third most-used word which counted 21 times and the president was the least repeated word in the speech of Joe Biden's presidential election speech in 2020.

Table 1. Words frequency in the speech.

Keywords	Repeated	Density
America	31	1.9%
Our	25	1.5%
You	21	1.3%
Us	19	1.19%
Time	17	1.07%
Nation	15	0.9%
My	15	0.9%
People	15	0.9%
President	10	0.6%

Table 2 shows the phrase frequency in the Joe Biden presidential speech of election 2020. The table shows that "Time to" was the most used phrase in Joe Biden's election speech. "We can" was the second most used phrase used by Joe Biden to give people confidence that they can do everything. "The battle" was the third most used phrase and "To an America" was the least used phrase in the presidential election speech of Joe Biden 2020.

Table 2. Phrases frequency in the speech.

Keywords	Repeated	Density
Time to	12	0.7%
We can	7	0.4%
The battle	7	0.4%
This nation	6	0.3%
To an America	5	0.3%

Synonymy, hyponymy, and antonym are the relations in this text which are related to meaning. Synonymy refers to the same meaning of words. In this text, examples of synonyms are "convincing, compelling, persuasive, gripping/united, together/ healed, strengthened / comfort, solace ". When the meaning of one word is included within the meaning of another word is called hyponymy. Examples of some hyponyms are "Red and Blue states (United States), Democrats, Republicans, Independents/Progressives, moderates, and conservatives. /Young and old. /Urban, suburban, and rural. /Gay, straight, transgender/White. Latino. Asian. American. (Americans)". Antonymy refers to opposite meanings of words. Various antonyms in this text are "young/old, wide/narrow, rural/urban, straight/gay, moderates /conservatives". The ideology of Joe behind these mentioned words is to show and mark the differences prevailing in society, and the speaker wanted to mention them.

The whole speech of Joe Biden does not show any euphemistic point. A political language has readability as its key. Joe Biden used impactful language in his speech to create an empathetic impression. He uses straightforward words to deliver his idea without deemphasizing words. He uses clear words like "racial injustice, racism, economic injustice, inequality, economic crisis" to highlight the underlying evils of society. Furthermore, he is bold in his language as well as in his ideas.

It is the first address after the President-elect, so the speech must be formal, but the speech is not so formal. It has simple and plain language. Joe Biden started the speech with "My fellow Americans" and also used words like "folks".

He mostly uses the words "we", "us" and "our" to show unity. There is also formal talk in the speech to the audience. Most words are persuasive and appealing.

The participants and their identities are revealed by the investigation of grammatical features of the text. SVO sentences consisting of two participants are present in this speech. One is an agent and the other one is known as a patient. The text contains some examples:

"They have delivered us a clear victory"

"I am humbled by the trust and confidence you have placed in me."

Attribution (SVC) sentences which have one participant, verb, and attribution are also present in the text:

"I pledge to be a President who seeks not to divide, but to unify."

To be direct, clear, and straightforward, Joe Biden's sentences are active voice. Only 1% of passive voice is in this text. The speech is a dynamic one. He places a clear onus on the government by using the remark "Our work begins with getting COVID-19 under control".

In the speech, there are also some adverbs and clichés, but Biden enhances direct and clear communication by using active voices more frequently.

Most of the sentences used in the speech are positive. Most of the speech of Joe carried hope. He used active verbs like "i", and "will" to describe the present and the future of America.

The conversion of verbs into nouns is known as nominalization. Words like "convincing, treating, promising, pledging," etc. have been nominalized.

For relational and expressive values in grammar, the concept of modality is important in the text. Modal auxiliary verbs like"may, might, can, could, should, ought to," expressed modality. In this text, the speaker used "could, should, may, must'' etc have been used to signal commitment, recommendation, consent, etc." These modal verbs give a very powerful impression.

Discourse Practices and socio-political aspect of speech

Institutional process and discourse process are two facets of discourse practice, said Fairclough (1995). Discourse practices are the execution of social practices through discourse. Social context always constitutes the discourse. sociocultural and political aspects are equally of vital importance.

Genre, discourse analysis, and style are three major areas under which the analysis of social practices and sociopolitical has been done. Concerning this speech, each of the major areas is discussed, and how they are linked with each other.

Genre analysis of the speaker's lexical choices in a particular sociocultural context and analysis of it. The particular identification of the patterns of speech also has been studied under it. At the very start of the speech, Joe emphasized the unity of the United States as he placed words like "we, the people, to unify, who don't see red and blue states but, United States ". He also used words like "rebuild, restore, raise you" which indicates that his stance is to build the nation again in a better way. He used the word "battle" 9 times, referring to that there is so much evil in the nation to battle with, and he is good to go to contest with all of it.

The style of the speech is also important in critical discourse analysis. Relational and expressive value is related to speech analysis. In Joe's Presidential debate, his style of speech is fluent and dominant. From nightmare surroundings to the end, he maintained his focus and verbal coordination. The relation between the speaker and the audience is discussed under relational value. He used the pronouns "we" and "ours" many times in the speech, which indicates unity. He considers himself to be part of that group.

Analyzing context

The complete contextual background was revealed with the spellbinding speech of Joe Biden. This speech was given right after winning the President-elect against Trump on the 7th of November 2020. In the past years, Joe Biden has been campaigning and has been eyed in the white house for three decades. Finally, on Nov 8, 2020, Biden was nominated as the country's 46th president by securing 290 electoral votes in opposition to Mr. Trump got 214 and was defeated by Donald Trump. Presidential-elect Joe Biden addressed the scattered nation by grounding his victory speech. After his victory, he called on all Americans to turn the page from what he described as a "grim era of demonization." he pledged to "be a resident who seeks not to divide, but to unify". He also said to the supporters of Donald Trump to give him a second chance.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the present research is to analyze Biden's first speech to investigate his political ideology, and to discover the linguistic resources used by the speaker. Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis was employed to analyze the content of Biden's speech. The current study stands on the notion provided by scholars such as Dijk and O'Halloran. As far as the CDA model is concerned, Joe's viewpoint regarding race and social ills in the United States is represented by textual analysis i.e. vocabulary (choice of words), rewording, hypernym, synonymy, etc. His goals are to sermonize equality, unity, and impartiality for the whole nation represented by his use of words. He articulates very open and clear sentences that are proved through his grammatical features' analysis. The discourse practice revealed that contextual connections, and to make the text cohesive and coherent logical connectors have been utilized. It was Joe's first speech after President-elect 2020 and by his influential and impressive address he tried to take the entire nation, his voters, and also Trump voters into confidence. He wanted to rebuild the nation and restore the soul of the nation. For the implication of the study two aspects, i.e., theoretical and practical, are being discussed. Present research study has an imputation for the theory of (CDA) Critical Discourse Analysis. For the theoretical stance of the speaker to achieve a certain purpose, political discourses are underpinned with linguistic expressions deeply. It was evident in the study that to make a specific influence on their listeners, Joe very meticulously and deliberately selected specific words and forms. The study has also implications for the theory of Political Discourse Analysis. This study provides an impetus for further research in this field.

Conflict of Interest

The author/s declared that they have no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

Aldosari, N., & Bader, A. (2020). Critical discourse analysis of Nelson Mandela's defense speech: I am prepared to die. Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Volume 11. Number2. http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3649220.

Bayram, F. (2010). Ideology and political discourse: A critical discourse analysis of Erdogan's political speech. Arecls, 7(1), 18.

Blommaert, J. (2005). Discourse. A critical introduction. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511610295.

Corson, D. (1995). Discourse and Power in Educational Organizations, Creskill: Hampton Press, N.J.

Fairclough, A. (1995). Martin Luther King, Jr. University of Georgia Press.

Fairclough, N. (1992). Discourse and text: Linguistic and intertextual analysis within discourse analysis. Discourse & society, 3(2), 193-217.

Fairclough, N. (1993). Critical discourse analysis and the marketization of public discourse: The universities. Discourse & Society, 4(2), 133-168.

Fairclough, N. (2013). Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language. Routledge.

Jorgensen, M & Phillips, L. (2002). Discourse analysis as theory and method. London: Sage Publications

Noor, D. M., Ali, M., Muhabat, F., & Kazemian, B. (2015). Systemic functional linguistics mood analysis of the last address of the holy prophet (PBUH). International Journal of Language and Linguistics. Special Issue: Critical Discourse Analysis, Rhetoric, and Grammatical Metaphor in Political and Advertisement Discourses, 3(5-1), 1-9.

Rachman, A., & Yunianti, S. (2017). Critical discourse analysis in Donald Trump presidential campaign to win American's heart. TELL, 5(2), 8-17.

Rodgers, R., Malancharavil-Berkes, M., Mosley, M., Hui, D., & O' Garro J. G. (2005). Critical discourse analysis in education: A review of the literature. Review of Educational Research, 75(3), 365-416.

Sharndama, E. C., & Mgbemena, J. A. (2015). The language of political discourse: A study of acceptance speeches of two presidential aspirants in Nigeria. Research Journal of English Language and Literature, 3(2), 19-37.

Stobbs, G. J. (2012). Critical discourse analysis of Barack Obama's 1st inaugural speech. Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University.

Van Dijk, T. A. (1997). What is political discourse analysis. Belgian Journal of linguistics, 11(1), 11-52.