

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Joe Biden's Inaugural Speech

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines the inaugural speech of the new American President Joe Biden. It depends on two frameworks: Critical discourse analysis and political discourse analysis employing Fairclough's (1995) and Halliday's (1976) systematic functional grammar to analyze an inaugural speech of the American president. It has been found in this paper that the language used by the president is simple sentences compounded with expressive speech acts including unity, love, hope, challenge and promises. In addition, his speech seems to involve fewer adjectives and more models.

Keywords: *Inaugural Speech, Critical Discourse, Political Discourse, Systematic Functional Grammar*

INTRODUCTION

Critical Discourse Analysis

Over the last few decades, discourse analysis (CDA) has gained a unique area among communication research. Simultaneously, CDA's capacity to examine a shifted extent of discourse just as language corpora has allowed its more noteworthy cases of scientificity. As both hypothesis and methodology, CDA enters into a pragmatist social domain (which respects both unique social constructions and social reality), a commonly constitutive perspective on the connections among construction and organization, and among discourse and social practice (Fairclough, 1995).

There are a few ways-to communication identified by well-known researchers that train discourse examiners on doing CDA, just as significant different varieties and review articles in significant communication journals, a yearly international conference (Critical Discourse Analysis Across the Disciplines), and noticeable source for distribution that are either devoted to CDA or kind to its grant (as, for instance, Critical Discourse Studies, Discourse and Society, and The Journal of Language and Politics). However, expansion and prominence did not advance methodological clarity or acknowledgment. In correspondence, CDA is viewed as a broke structure, yet hazardous as it very well might be stimulating, and as full with plausibility as it is overflowing with

trouble and inconsistency. As the supporters of an impending workshop for the National Communication Association contend, CDA's quality in communication remains fairly suspicious, in a liminal space between conceivably incongruent customs, particularly as they are perceived in the United States—a feeling that has made significant obstructions to its solidification as an attractive enough "brand" of exploration in correspondence. However, should marking and combination be the targets of CDA? Addressing this matter, van Dijk (2001, p. 25) issues a "supplication for variety," placing not what CDA should be but, rather, what it should not be. It should not, he fights, be a "school," nor "an instant technique."

As indicated by Williamson et al. (2018), CDA manages linguistics and psychosocial approaches in an alternate manner by investigating the information from a basic scope. These investigations look at the discourse yet in addition get some information about the job of the individual who expresses or composes that discourse. Williamson et al expressed that "CDA examines the prevailing and subordinate discourses on proposal in the public field, and investigates thoughts of obstruction and appointment of discourses among different social entertainers" (p. 455). The beginning of CDA lies in Rhetoric, Text semantics, Humanities, Philosophy, Socio-Psychology, Cognitive Science, Literary Studies as well as, Sociolinguistics, just as in Applied Linguistics and Pragmatics.

In the same area, Wodak (2001) states that:

“CDA essentially is worried about breaking down hazy too as straightforward primary connections of strength, separation, force and control as showed in language. At the end of the day, CDA means to examine fundamentally friendly disparity as it is communicated, flagged, established, legitimized, etc by language use (or in discourse). Three ideas figure imperatively in all CDA: the idea of force, the idea of history, and the idea of belief system” (pp. 2-3)

As indicated by Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000), Sheyholislami (2015), and North (2014), the latest principles of CDA during the 1970s are for the most part dependent on Michael Halliday's Methodology of "foundational useful and social-semiotic linguistics (Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000). Thus, the examination follows the Hallidayan foundational useful syntax approach which expects that language in messages consistently works ideationally in the portrayal of involvement and the world, relationally concerning social communication between members in discourse, and literarily in associating portions of a book together into an entirety furthermore, interfacing writings to its situational contexts.

A conflict of interests, a clash for power occurrence, a craving for introducing the predominant perspectives as commonsensical and an inclination for teaching of explicit convictions in the brain of in/outgroup individuals are found across various social areas (e.g., a work environment discourse, a secondary school class with mainstream and disliked groups, and so forth) Notwithstanding, of the relative multitude of social circles, the universe of governmental issues includes the previously mentioned properties the most (Bayram, 2010; Sajjad 2015; Matic 2012). Viewed as a sub-classification of discourse (Schaffner, 1996), political discourse is worried about the (re)production of political strength, political authority, power misuse and legitimization or de-legitimization of social marvels (political occasions are considered as a piece of social wonders), and besides, with protection from any of these (Bello, 2013; Fairclough, 1995; Van Dijk, 1993). Politicians look to win power battles to meet their expected focuses, to set rules on the qualities formed in a general public and to get administrative approval over the assets dispersion and dynamic

interaction (Sajjad, 2015; Bayram, 2010). To accomplish this, politicians need their philosophy to win in philosophical contentions. Regarding this matter, Van Dijk (2005) states:

“If there is one social field that is ideological, it is that of politics. This is not surprising because it is eminently here that different and opposed groups, power, struggles, and interests are at stake. In order to be able to compete, political groups need to be ideologically conscious and organized. (p. 732)

The art of compelling language usage, by which politicians acquire their proposed political benefit, is of the substance in the realm of governmental issues: "the association among language and governmental issues is solid as political activity itself is brought out through language" (Bello, 2013, p. 86). Fairclough (2006) additionally features the significance of language to the governmental issues: "[language can] distort too as address real factors, it can weave dreams and imaginaries which can be executed to change real factors and, at times, improve human prosperity, yet it can also logically muddle real factors, and understand them philosophically to serve uncalled for power relations" (Fairclough, 2006, p. 1). Lastly, Van Dijk (2005) states that "it is to a great extent through discourse that political belief systems are obtained, communicated, learned, spread, and challenged" (p. 732).

As of late CDA has been used frequently to examine text and discourse. It rose up out of Critical Linguistics (consequently CL), basic semiotics and from a socio-politically cognizant and appositional method of researching language, discourse and correspondence. CDA endeavors at uncovering of certain belief systems in messages. As Widdowson (2007: 70) states, "the individuals who follow this methodology are especially worried about the utilization (and misuse) of language for the activity of socio-political force." There is no method of doing CDA. Examination in CDA changes in style and main interest. These distinctions may reflect the different theoretical or philosophical directions of scientists. The system followed by Teun A. van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak (cf. 3.3), to specify only not many, are unique. Notwithstanding these distinctions in research styles, all basic discourse experts attempt

to investigate the job of discourse in the creation and proliferation of force relations inside friendly constructions. Specifically, they center on the manners by which discourse supports and legitimizes social imbalances. Henceforth, CDA has an unmistakable political plan. The main idea of CDA is that writings contain repeating designs and articulations (verbose practices) that are themselves involved in 'social practice'. Basic discourse experts accept that "methods of discoursing create and imitate perspectives, and perspectives can be controlled through decisions about language, style, phrasing and each and every part of discourse", (Johnston, 2008: 53).

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS (CDA) AND METHODOLOGIES

CDA and discourse analysis both usually use qualitative method, with relatively small amount of ideological data. The claims they make are not about how often something occurs in a language, in a genre, in a debate or in a political speech. Though qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches all have their place in discourse analysis, the qualitative approach is more preferable, although people who do qualitative work are sometimes accused of being bias. Hence, they need to be careful and not to make unjustified generalizations about their findings. Though there are many similarities between CDA and discourse analysis, CDA is more critical and political.

CDA and discourse analysis both generally use subjective technique, with moderately limited quantity of information and ideologies. The cases they make are not about how frequently something happens in a language, in a class, in a discussion or in a political discourse. Despite the fact that subjective, quantitative and blended methodologies all have their place in discourse examination, the subjective methodology is more ideal, despite the fact that individuals who accomplish subjective work are at times accused for being inclination. That is the reason they should be cautious and not to make ridiculous speculations about their discoveries. In spite of the fact that there are numerous likenesses among CDA and discourse examination, CDA is more basic and political.

THE OBJECTIVES OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS (CDA)

Basic discourse analysis (CDA) is a multidisciplinary way to deal with discourse that accentuates on language as "a type of social practice" (Fairclough, 1995, 2010). CDA by and large demonstrates that social practice and etymological practice altogether affect one another and underscores on this reality that how cultural force relations are developed and built up through language use (Fairclough, 1995, 2010). Basic discourse examination rose up out of basic etymology created at the University of East Anglia during the 1970s, (Fowler et al, 1979). In additional progression, Norman Fairclough as the most noticeable etymologist at Lancaster school, created and offered various models for text examination dependent on CDA. Two other famous figures are Teun A. van Dijk and Ruth Wodak also made a remarkable endeavor to basic discourse examination. At the end of the day: Critical discourse analysis is a contemporary way to deal with the analysis of language and discourses in friendly organizations. Drawing on poststructuralist discourse hypothesis and basic etymology, it centers on how friendly relations, character, information and force are developed through composed and spoken writings in networks, schools (Luke A., 2000).

POLITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The phrase "political discourse analysis" focuses to the Janus-confronted character of both the ostensible and its undertaking. As van Dijk (1997) clarifies, PDA can allude either to the analysis of political discourse, characterized as the content and discuss politicians inside obviously political contexts, or to a political, i.e., basic, way to deal with discourse analysis (15, 11).

PDA, then, is concerned with understanding the nature and function of political discourse and with critiquing the role discourse plays in producing, maintaining, abusing, and resisting power in contemporary society. Such work, van Dijk (1997) insists, "should be able to answer genuine and relevant political questions and deal with issues that are discussed in political science" (11–12). Chilton (2004) grounds his approach in a fundamental

question: "What does the use of language in contexts we call 'political' tell us about humans in general?" (xi).

This question expects a connection between language, legislative issues, culture, and cognizance and involves a "socially concerned" linguistic structure for analyzing those linkages and the complexities of political idea and conduct (x)". Such work is worried about understanding the language rehearses through which political speakers "saturate their expressions with proof, authority, and truth" and, subsequently, accomplishes authenticity specifically political contexts. Chilton arranges the development of this linguistic methodology in a change by a partner of language specialists from Chomsky's generative structure to Halliday's (1978, 1994) "social semiotic and foundational semantic system" (x).

Political discourse is an instrumental device in the possession of politicians to build up specific goals for their crowd, enlist support, place esteem on their political perspectives, secure force, shape the overall deportment of the general public, and all the more critically, to spread the prevailing belief system. Thusly, political discourse empowers lawmakers to instill their considerations and thoughts into the psyche of society and subsequently, convince the general public to trust in whatever the politicians need (Bayram, 2010; Bello, 2013; Jones and Peccei, 2004; Matic 2012).

FAIRCLOUGH APPROACH TO CDA

Depending upon Fairclough (1995: 7), discourse is acknowledged as the use of realized language like type of social practice, and discourse examination is a method of investigating how text functions inside sociocultural strategy. As indicated by this definition, breaking down discourse should not be taken out from the encompassing setting where writings are introduced. Obviously, and as per this perspective, three components should be considered over in basic linguistic examinations, viz. discourse practice: text, text formation and sociocultural strategy.

The British sociolinguist, Norman Fairclough is one of the main establisher in the locale of CDA. He presents CDA as a method of assessing social and social deviation that can be coordinated in dismissing the force and control of an ability people on different

countries. Fairclough imagines that our language, which frames our social realities and argumentations, getting foundation, and beliefs, is influenced by them too. Equivalent to Kress and Hodge (1979:67), he centers in his investigations around Halliday's Systemic-Functional Grammar. In *Language and Power* (1989), he identifies his technique for Critical Language Study. The principal objective of his technique is to address the complete inconsistency as associated with the incredible impact of language in setting up, keeping and moving the social elements of force. This first objective seems, by all accounts, to be the theoretical aspect of Fairclough's methodology. The second objective which helps to bring up perception to the issue that makes reference to what language can mean for the dependence of specific speakers over the others can be assessed as the useful wonder of his strategy. He accepts that perception is the main thought towards acquiring basic freedom. To get to the objective, Fairclough pays an incredible significance to understand speakers' mindfulness. He accepts that already when speakers say something, they don't know about the thing they are saying or doing, so, they are ignorant of the social impacts of what they do or say.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Inaugural Speech and Discourse Analysis

The Inaugural Speech Outline

The first part

- 1- Starting the speech by presenting America as victorious for electing him president.
- 2- Describing the day of electing as a triumph rather than a simple election showing the democratic way America has followed.
- 3- Recalling the past history of America
- 4- Making promises to repair
- 5- Fighting racism
- 6- Calling for unity and justice

"It is noted that President Biden's discourse there was one primary element that stood apart regardless of anything else: which is democracy. This was repeated early and rehashed frequently all through his discourse. Democracy, then again, was not a concentration by President Trump's discourse. This

comes as a result of his campaign slogan "Make America Great Again" served as his essential element".

The inaugural speech can be utilized to address numerous things — past, present or future — however President Biden decided to focus on the present. Almost 60% of his discourse was spoken in a straightforward current state, which aligned up with the immediacy of recent concerns, for example, COVID-19. Biden's negligible use of past and future tense was telling also and was a reasonable differentiation to President Trump's message.

There was a clear different in linguistic style between President Biden and President Trump. President Biden’s speech rated “very difficult” on our readability index (speaking to a collegiate audience) while President Trump’s readability was “average” and catered to more of a high school audience.

There was a reasonable difference in linguistic style between President Biden and President Trump. President Biden's discourse evaluated "exceptionally difficult" while President Trump's lucidness was "normal".

President Biden, however just representing five minutes longer than President Trump, expressed almost 800 words more (2,411 versus 1,433) than his archetype intriguing that Biden talked in marginally more limited sentences (15 words for every sentence versus 17 words for every sentence) than President Trump.

The general tone of inaugural speech is set for the nature and policies of the incoming USA administration by depending on sentiments in terms of expressing some ideas, hope, desire, action, spirituality and love, as shown in the following table (1):

Sentiments themes	Speech quotes
Hope	"Much to repair". "Much to restore". "Much to heal". "Much to build. And much to gain.
Action	"To overcome these challenges – to restore the soul and to secure the future of America – requires more than words" It requires that most elusive of things in a democracy: "Unity". "Unity".
Promises	"We can right wrongs". "We can put people to work in good jobs". "We can teach our children in safe schools". "We can overcome this deadly virus". "We can reward work, rebuild the middle class, and make health care secure for all". "We can deliver racial justice". "We can make America, once again, the leading force for good in the world".
Solidification	Let us listen to one another. Hear one another. See one another. Show respect to one another.

	<p>Politics need not be a raging fire destroying everything in its path. Every disagreement doesn't have to be a cause for total war. And, we must reject a culture in which facts themselves are manipulated and even manufactured.</p>
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CONCLUSION

By drawing on diverse conceptual frameworks, methods, and data, PDA has made important contributions to this discursive turn by elucidating the role discourse plays in a range of political contexts and practices, as well as the intrinsically political nature of discursive practice. This work has explicated the structure and function of political discourse, the connections between political cognition, behavior, and discourse, and the ways in which properties of text and talk bear on political processes and systems and vice versa. Moreover, by attending to discourses and issues outside the domain of politics proper, PDA has participated in the politicization of social life more broadly.

Critical discourse analysis has been applied to a political discourse for revealing the motives and ideologies behind the inaugural speech. It has been found that Biden's speech differs from his predecessors in terms of his simple language and soft tone of voice filled with hope and desire and love as well promises. The speech includes so many models and short sentences as a strategy for convincing and drawing the US audience attention and love.

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Appendix (1)

Joe Biden's Inaugural Speech is available on

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/01/20/inaugural-address-by-president-joseph-r-biden-jr/>