CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF DONALD TRUMP'S AND JOE BIDEN'S LANGUAGE IN USE IN THE 2020 UNITED STATES PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

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ABSTRACT

Presidential debate is actually a crutial part of political campaign to attract public sympathy. The candidates do various debate techniques to persuade the audience to know the true personality. This project is purposed to analyse the political discourse through the examination of four representative linguistic features of van Dijk employed by two candidates (Donald Trump and Joe Biden) in the 2020 United States Presidential Debates. Aspects that observed are: personal pronouns, three part-list,,, fillers, and interruprions.. Those four structures are used to analyze the reproduction of 6 issues : Trump's and Biden's record, The Coronavirus, The Economy, The Supreme Court, Race and Violence in American Cities, and Election Integrity. The result indicates that both of them mock each other using sarcasm. Trump made lots of interruptions while Biden was expressing his opinion, so Biden rebuked him by saying "Will you shut up, man?" Otherwise, Trump mocks Biden much more, such as : "You graduated last in your class not first in your class." etc. Both used repetition of sentences as a form of emphasis on their political views. Trump and Biden use Personal Pronoun "I and we" as positive self-presentation and use "you and he" as negative other-presentation. One interesting thing, Trump called his rival with his nick name, Joe, an unsual habit in formal speech or debate, both in first and final debate. To conclude, the findings of this study appeared to be in harmony inequality and justifying social power ditribution, the researcher recommends futher investigation of presidential debates in varying culture based on Van Dijk 's model or other models of CDA.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Political Discourse, Presidential Debates, Spoken Languange, Linguistic Features

INTRODUCTION

The presidential debate is one of a series of presidential candidates' campaigns in presenting their self-image and efforts to attract sympathy for potential voters. US Presidential debate is one of the most outstanding political events in the world. As a superpower country, United States has become the center of world's attention, including in determining presidential candidates. This is quite understandable, because as the number one-person, the political policies of an American president will have a big impact on many countries, both their allies and the opponents.

The news media also has contributed a lot to the ongoing debate over the presidential candidates. America's presidential candidate debate was first broadcast on television in 1960, between young Democratic senator John F. Kennedy and incumbent Republican vice president Richard Nixon. The Kennedy-Nixon debate had a tremendous impact on American political history. Polling showed that half of the voters were influenced by the event and raised a new era that places public image and media exposure as one of the keys to success in political campaign. The hypothesis of this study refers to the belief that each presidential candidate has their own style and way of inviting the public to vote for them. Therefore, our aim is to analyse the style adopted by the two candidates through four representative language features of van Dijk (2004) used in the context of a formal political debates.

A mix approach has been applied to identify the linguistic features in each presidential debate to quantify them later and provide an objective explanation. This study has been structured in two sections : theoretical framework and practical analysis. The theoretical framework contains an overview of the most relevant concepts in the study of political discourse. Then, the four linguistic features have been explained claiming the importance of analysing these ones in presidential debates. This research is expected to impart some benefits with recent information and possible to be useful for: Learners who desire to comprehend analyzing presidential debate text using Critical Discourse Analysis of Teun A. van Dijk and the readers of this paper reach a general perception about the way both candidates employ the linguistic features to persuade the audience in each presidential debate.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS
Critical Discourse Analysis
Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) appeared from critical linguistics at the University of East Anglia in the 1970s and since 1990s was widely developed by some linguists, such as Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak and Teun Van Dijk.

Fairclough (2001) suggests a three-dimentional model taking into consideration the following dimensions: *text, interaction* and *context.* Meanwhile, Wodak (2001,p.65) has an opinion that a discourse-historical approach to CDA examining the ways in which particular genres of discourse are subject to diachronic change." Van Dijk states that Critical Discourse Analysis combines three dimensions: *discourse, cognition* and *society.* He also argued that CDA specifically focuses on the strategies of manipulation, legitimation, the manufacture of consent and other discourse ways to influence the minds of people in the interest of the powerful. As a conclusion, CDA has not a specific theoretical framework or methodology. But CDA is a perspective that involves different approaches to analysis general discourse from a critical point of view.

Political Discourse Analysis
 A certain part of CDA is Political Discourse Analysis (PDA). Fairclough & Fairclough (2012, p. 17) state that PDA is a perspective wich focuses on the reproduction and contestation of political power through political discourse. On the other hand, Van Dijk (1997, p. 12) reckons that political discourse is a discourse uttered by professional politicians. However, they are not the only ones who take part in politics. In fact, the audience is also involved in the domain of politics from an inractional point of view. Furthermore, context is decisive to classify a discourse as political or not (Van Dijk, 1997, p. 14).

Van Dijk (1997) also states that discourse structures are employed not only because of an official criterion of decorum, but also because it helps politicians to manipulate official opinion, garner support or emphasize or de-emphasize specific words. As result, PDA is studied in two levels : micro and macro level. This binary distiction takes into consideration a racist speech uttered in a parliamentarian debate, where a politician expresses his or her personal political beliefs employing certain strategies of talk (micro level), but at the same time this person talks as a member of a group expressing the ideologies of a certain political party (macro level) (Van Dijk, 2008).

Presidential Debate
According to Chilton (2004, pp. 72-73), presidential debates incorporate political contxtual references and past political history references which are identified by the audience. Presidential debates have the aim of showing the opinions and goals of the candidates. Presidential debates also have particular rules, in which candidates must convey their opinions and objectives within a predetermined time.

However, the most interesting part of the presidential debate is the face-to-face interaction between the interviewer, the interviewee and the audience. The interviewer will usually ask some important issues and ask the candidates to reply their answers within a predetermined time. According to Levinson (1983, p. 304), a question-answer is one type of adjacency pair which is considered to be a fundamental unit of conversational organization formed by two different

speakers who utter two different utterances in a particular context. In fact, presidential debates do not only have a definitive question-answer format; there is also an open debate and diacussion between candidates where the opponents attack each other verbally, as Van Dijk (1997, p. 25) suggests:

Campaining politicians speak about themselves as candidates, about the elections, about voting for them, and the policies they promise to support when elected. They speak about opponents and political enemies and about the bad politics of previous presidents, govenments or parliaments. Talking about verbal attacks, Brown and Levinson (1987) state that face is considered a public image which every person wishes to claim. It can be positive or negative. Positive face deals with the hope to be approved and accepted by others, negative face shows the freedom of action and do not to be imposed by others. So, face-to-face interaction in political debates is based on the highlight and protection of the positive face and the threat the others positive face through a clever use of language.

Linguistic Features
Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns have important role in political speech because they allow political actors to construct a positive appearance of *them* and a negative representation of the *other*. Trask (1992) states that personal pronouns constitute a small and closed set of lexical items with the principal function of distinguishing among individuals in terms of the deictic category of person but often also expressing certain additional distinctions of number, sex or anymacy.

Van Dijk (2008) and Wodak (2009) state that political discourse analysis have centred on the binary distinction between *us* and *them,* which is related to the subject personal pronouns *we* and *they* and the effects they have on the audience. Fairclough (2001, p. 106) differentiates between inclusive and exclusive *we,* whereas inclusive *we* involves not only to the politician but also the audience, exclusive *we* includes the politician but not the audience. Moreover, pronoun *I* is also employed by politicians to present themselves as individuals and talk from their subjective point of view. Beard (2000, p. 45) states, first person singular shows a clear sense of personal involvement on the part of the speaker, which is especially useful when good news is delivered.

In political debates, personal pronouns *he* or *she* are essential because they are mostly employed by politicians with the aim to provide a statement which attack verbally the adversary. Proper name are also used in the debates to attack the opponent more directly and to sound more convincing to the audience by giving the real name of the opponent.

Three-Part Lists

Atkinson (1984, p. 57) states that three-part lists consist on the repetition of an item three times in order to give an air of unity and completeness to the discourse.

According to Jones and Peccei (1999, p. 39), repeating certain phrases contributes towards making the ideas contained in them seem common sense. Besides, as Jones and Peccei state (1999, p. 51) this structural device is used by politicians when they only have statement to claim, but they want to reinforce it by repeating it.

There are three different structures three-part lists in political discourses.
1. Repetition of a single word at the beginning of a cluse of a sentence three times.
2. Repetition of a single word at the end of a clause or sentence three times.
3. Repetition of different words with similar general meaning three times.

Fillers

Baalen (2001) states tha fillers are sounds or phrases that could appear anywhere in the sentence and that could be deleted from the sentence. Stenström (1994, p. 1) mentions that there are two types of fillers: silent or filled pauses and verbal fillers (*well, I mean, you know*).

Stenström (1994) divides verbal fillers into two categories according to their properties : interactional signals and discourse makers by appealing (*e.g. right*) and giving feedback (*I see*), responding (*Yes, that's right*) and involving the listener in the conversation *(You know)*.

Interruptions

According to Levinson (1983, p. 296), conversations are characterised by turn-taking: one participant, A, talks, stops; another, B, starts, talks, stops; obtaining an A-B-A-B-A-B ditribution of talk between two different participants.

Bettie (1982, p. 95) mentioned that turn-taking and interruptions are affected by social and personality variables. Moreover, Robinson and Reis (1989) state that interruptions are related to negative personality.

The United States Presidential Debates Of 2020

This paper consists of the presidential debates of the United States presidential election of 2020 represented by the candidates of the two major political parties, Donald Trump the Republican and Joe Biden the Democratic. There are 3 rounds in the debates. The first round took place on September 29, 2020. While the second round, which was supposed to be scheduled for October 15, 2020, was canceled because the presidential candidate -who is also the incumbent president- Donald Trump tested positively for Covid-19, two days after the first round of presidential candidate debates. The final round of presidential debate was held on October 22, 2020. The presidential debates spread along three different meetings with around fifteen days between each other before the election on 3rd November 2020.

Entering into the debate, Biden had a significant and persistent lead in the polls. Biden's lead was compounded by a funding shortage inTrump's campaign, with Biden's campaign donations improving significantly. Unfortunately, this is the worst presidential debates ever, because of high numbers of interruption and mocking.

THE DEBATES
THE FIRST PRESENDIAL DEBATE

It took place on September 29th 2020 at Western Reserve University's Health Education Campus in Cleveland, Ohio. (Previous schedule at Notre Dame, Indiana was cancelled because of Covid-19 reason). The interviewer was Chris Wallace of Fox News.. The debate lasted 95 minutes. Trump and Biden were positioned in front of the interviewer with a podium in front of them. The debate was divided into six segments : Trump's and Biden records, The Supreme Court, The Coronavirus pandemic, race and violence in cities, election integrity and the economy. Each was approximately 15 minutes in length. Wallace introduced each topic and gave each candidate two minutes to speak, followed by facilitated discussion between them.

THE SECOND PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

On October 8th, 2020, the Commission on Presidential Debates announced that, due to Trump's positive COVID diagnosis, the second debate would be held virtually, with the interviewer in Miami and the candidates participating remotely. Biden agreed to participate in the debate baut Trump said he would not take part in a virtual debata and would instead hold a rally.
The commission announced on October 9th, 2020 that the second debate had been canceled while the final debate would still proceed as originally planned, with Kristen Welker moderating.

THE THIRD (FINAL) PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

The final debate took place on Thursday, October 22th, 2020. The debate lasted 93 minute, at the club Event Center at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee, with Kristen Welker of NBC moderating. The Commission on Presidential Debates announced on October 19th, 2020, that each candidate's microphone would be muted during the other's initial two-minute response to each question, in rseponse to the interruptions that occured during the first debate. The announcement also stated that after each candidate gave his two-minut response, the microphones would be muted. The muting was performed by production staff instead of the interviewer. The debate was divided into six segments : fighting Covid-19, American families, race in America, climate change, national security, and leadership.

LINGUSTIC ANALYSIS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

This section compares the way of talking of both candidates in the two presiential debates through the qualification of the linguistic devices. The two presidential debates have been considered as a whole, spread along two different moments where the politicians have the opportunity gain the vote of the citizens.

The following table unifies all the selected linguistic features to reflect objectively the amount of use by each candidate.

		DONALD J. TRUMP		JOE BIDEN	
		FIRST DEBATE	**FINAL DEBATE**	**FIRST DEBATE**	**FINAL DEBATE**
PERSONAL PRONOUNS & PROPER NAMES	I	181 times	261 times	87 times	143 times
	You	244 times	145 times	88 times	82 times
	He	78 times	228 times	139 times	101 times
	She	5 times	8 times	7 times	6 times
	We	125 times	166 times	91 times	134 times
	They	77 times	118 times	55 times	185 times
	Trump	6 times	3 times	4 times	3 times
	Biden	twice	3 times	twice	3 times
	Joe	28 times	33 times	-	-
	Donald	once	-	-	-
THREE-PART LISTS		8 times	17 times	7 times	18 times
FILLERS		78 times	60 times	81 times	68 times
INTERRUPTION		128 times	83 times	51 times	41 times

The most common linguistic feature used by Trump and Biden to attrack the voters in twice presidential debate is the use of personal pronouns. They try to create their self-image to answer six issues questioned in the debates.

The first person singular pronoun *I* is the most employed by them with the aim of defending their own position. Trump used this personal pronomen the most. Meantime, Biden, surprisingly, used the first personal plural pronoun *we* much more. It indicated that he didn't have enough self-confidence. On the other hand, both of them show negative representation of the other by using the pronouns *you, they, he, she* and the proper name Trump and Biden. Trump most often attacked his opponents using pronoun *you*, while Biden used *he* more often to mock Trump. An interesting things appeared when Trump called his opponent with his nickname. It's something unusual thing in official political event.

Three-part lists is used both candidates with the aim to emphasize the meaning of the utterance. This occurs when showing pride in yourself as well as mock the opponent. Both of them used balancing repetitions. Fillers are the most common linguistic feature used by the candidates. This feature is occured to hold the control of the turn while they are thinking and devise the trategy what to say next. Surprisingly, Biden used more fillers to deliver his thought. It's quite understandable, because he is the opponent of the incumbent president.

Finally, interruptions are the essential feature in political debates, because they show the dominance and power among the candidates. It's obvious that the candidate interrupts the opponent in purpose to gain the floor and redirect the converstaion to express his or her point of view about an issue. First in the historical US presidential debate, there have been many interruptions, especially in the first round. So that finally the Commission on Presitential Debates, made a rule to mute the microphone while a candidate is speaking. They also mocked each other and used some sarcastic utterances.

CONCLUSION

The hypothesis investigated in this research has been confirmed after the analysis of the selected linguistic aspects in two presidential debates. The candidates have a common purpose, that is to persuade the American citizen to vote them and win the election, eventhough they talk and behave differently.

We have found the three-part lists are used by Trump and Biden with almost the same frequency. This is due to the fact taht this linguistic feature is used to convince the audience that they have the ability to show their positive identity and personality and show a negative image of their opponent.

We also have found that Trump employs more personalpronouns with the purpose to attack his opponent directly and promote his position. And the most phenomenal way used by the candidates is the number of interruptions and attacking each other with insignificant sarcasm. Taking into consideration the way of talking the candidates, it was believed that Biden would win the precidency of United States according to his performance in presidential debates. Polling showed that Biden had significant and persistent lead. This is proven that Biden becomes the US President and defeats Trump.

To conclude, persuasion in politics is unattinable without language. Language allows political parties to manipulate the citizens because they employ professional speechwriters who are able to produce premediated speeches, which are just read by the candidates in a meeting. Although politicians are influenced by the liguistic features of concepted speeches uttered during the political campaign, they employ their particular ways of talking to convince the voters by producing positive self-image and negative image of the opponent.

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