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The Representation of the Iraq War in Chomsky's Articles: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study is a critical discourse analysis to some of Chomsky's articles. These articles tackle the Iraq war in (2003), and considered as an interesting case study. The study sheds light on the following problematic question, such as: what are the microstructures, the mesostructures, the macrostructures that are utilized to reflect the writer's (Chomsky's) concepts about the Iraqi war in 2003? The study tries to identify the grammatical, lexical, rhetorical choices, the intertextuality, speech acts, themes that are used in Chomsky's articles of the Iraqi War, and to identify the ideology of the writer. This study is limited to analyse the representation of the Iraq War (2003) in Chomsky's articles to show how the writer represents his rejection concerning the war against Iraq. Six political articles written during (2003-2008) are selected for analysis using an eclectic model that embraces Searle's speech act (1979), Quirk et.al's passivation and modality (1985), Fairclough's lexicalization, intertextuality and ideology (1992), Harris's (2013) rhetorical device and Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) transitivity.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, ideology, political language

1. INTRODUCTION

The field of critical discourse analysis, main approaches of critical discourse analysis, some related concepts to critical discourse analysis, such as ideology, and political language have been stated in this study. In addition, eclectic modal for the analysis will be discussed and adopted to reach to the required conclusions and results. After the analysis, there will be some results which are either verified the hypotheses or rejected them in conclusion.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

In this section, a brief overview of the theories and approaches that are related in one way or another with the present study is introduced in this section.

2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

The following section sheds light on some crucial issues related to critical discourse analysis, such as:

2.1.1 Historical Development of Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis (henceforth, CDA), can be understood as a developing area of language study (Van Dijk 1993b:231). It was established and developed as a method to analyse texts or discourses to figure out or discover matters of inequality, power, the relation between language and power, and the way language is used to represent ideologies (Fowler,2013: 10). The emergence of CDA may be traced back to some of the theories that have been generated before the Second World War at the Frankfurt School (Van Dijk, 2001: 352). Theorists of Frankfurt School were concerned with the conditions that were conducive to social change and the creation of rational institutions (Ezeifeka, 2013: 176). At that time, the general work of Frankfurt school focused on language and discourse. This orientation about language and discourse was started with Critical Linguistics (henceforth CL), and later, it became CDA (ibid). CDA has appeared in the late 1980s and rapidly developed to be one of the most important approaches to social sciences in general and discourse analysis in particular (Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 2)

The appearance of CDA was to cover the lost things in previous approaches and to add theories and methods that could reveal the hidden ideologies and motivations behind texts (Machin & Mayer, 2012: 4). Van Dijk (2001: 352) explains that the emergence of the CDA could be seen as a reaction against the dominant formal paradigms in the 1960s and 1970s because they were not critical, and instead, they simply explained the dominant orders and preserved the current system at that time.

2.1.2 Definitions of Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA is a branch of Applied Linguistics connected to prominent scholars like Fairclough who is inspired by Foucault, especially by the use of discourse order and discourse formation, Ruth Wodak, whose approach to analysis language in use derives from different aspects of sociolinguistics and ethnography, and by Van Dijk, whose approach always has a cognitive orientation (Chilton, 2005: 20).

CDA proponents offer different interpretations of the term to help understand the concept. For instance, Wodak (2011: 38) provides a broad perspective of the approach by saying that CDA is "a problem-oriented interdisciplinary research program, subsuming a variety of approaches, each with different theoretical models, research methods and agendas" (. A detailed but more straightforward definition is given by Fairclough in which he states that CDA involves "integrating analysis of text, analysis of processes of text production, consumption and distribution, and sociocultural analysis of the discursive event" (Fairclough, 1995:23). As indicated by Fairclough, the definition of CDA is recognized in terms of its constituents. An important component is a text that relates to "the spoken or written discourse" (ibid). According to Van Dijk (2001: 353), CDA "is a type of analytical discourse research that primarily studies how abuse, dominance, and inequality of social power are enacted, reproduced, and resisted in the social and political context by text and speech". It might be complicated to find one specific definition for the field of CDA due to its broad range of approaches and orientations. Furthermore, it is not the study of specific trending issues; instead of that, it is an approach which deals with many trends. However, the trends under CDA can defined by their goals and not by their techniques and tools of analysis.

2.1.3 Critical Discourse Analysis Approaches

In analysing a discourse, different CDA scholars offer some approaches, the most prominent scholars are Fairclough, Van Dijk, and Wodak. However, there are theoretical and methodological differences between these three scholars (Herzog, 2016:53). While Van Dijk focuses on the social cognition and mental models in investigating a discourse, Wodak employs the analysis of the historical context to understand the power of discourse better. On the other hand, the relation between discourse and social practice becomes the centre of Fairclough's approach to discourse. Nevertheless, all of them claim that their approaches allow researchers to reveal the inherent power of discourse for the sake of understanding social reality.

2.1.4 Ideology

The term ideology was initially invented by French philosopher Destutt de Tracy in 18th

century. He defines it as a new " science of ideas " (Vighi & Feldner, 2007:144). Tracy believed that ideologies have something to do with' the system of ideas,' and in particular with the religious, political, or social ideas expressed by a social group or movement. So, Tracy stressed that ideology does not refer to an individual but is a shared belief among his people in a society (Muqit, 2012:558). In the nineteenth century, the term ideology gained new meaning from a different perspective in Karl Marx's writing. For Marx,

> Ideologies are systems of 'false ideas' representing the consciousness of the ruling class and used to promote and legitimize its power. The ideas are 'false' because they promote the interest of a particular class while pretending to be in the interest of society as a whole. (Ponzio, 1993: 8-9)

This definition of ideology as 'false consciousness' was widely used until the later part of the twentieth century when the word ' ideology ' was seen not merely as a false consciousness but as a real or scientific understanding (Bracher,1984:44)

Van Dijk (1997: 29) defines ideologies as "the mental representations that form the basis of social cognition, which is the shared knowledge and attitudes of a group". For example, people may have racist or sexual beliefs based on racial prejudices or sexism shared by group members, which affects their way of life, their social discourse, and other practices (Van Dijk, 2004: 27)

Fairclough (2003: 9) sees ideologies as "representations of aspects of the world which can be shown to contribute in establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination, and exploitation". He conceptualizes ideology as a "modality of power": a way for preserving or challenging power relations (often unequal relations) in a particular society (ibid.).

2.2 Political Language

The study of language and politics is an important part of understanding the topic at hand. It will be of great importance from a linguistic point of view, how is power used in political debate by language rather than what is power, what is the struggle for dominance and what are the roots of this struggle for control? Language cannot be completely innocent and apolitical. Politics is not limited to states, organizations, and voices, but also to relationships related to language and which have power (Dahl,1965:9)

The relationship between politics and language is an institutional and ideological relationship, that means political language does not reflect the political situation only, but rather shapes it. Joseph (2006:264) added that examining one's use of language can be very useful for identifying specific attitudes and beliefs in addition to forming certain positions.

3. DATA COLLECTION

3.1 Data Collection

Six political articles written by Chomsky during (2003- 2008) are selected for analysis. These articles are taken from Chomsky's formal

website (Chomsky.info), they are as follows: *The Case against Us Adventurism in Iraq* (2003), *the Iraq War and Contempt for Democracy* (2003), *on the Occupation of Iraq and the Trial of Saddam* (2004), *the Future of Iraq and the U.S* (2005), *Its Imperialism, Stupid* (2005), *Its Oil, stupid* (2008).

3.2 The Eclectic Model

The eclectic model consists of three level/dimensions depending on Fairclough's model as a main model. These three levels consist of textual analysis (Micro-level), discursive practice (Meso-level), social practice (Macro-level). Each level consists of items have been taken from different models which have been mentioned before. First, the micro level includes the analysis of: Grammar (passivation & activation, transitivity, modality), Vocabulary (over-wording), and rhetorical devices (rhetorical question, metaphor). Second, Meso level includes: intertextuality and speech acts. Finally, Macro analysis includes theme and ideology. This eclectic model has been chosen to cover the necessary items needed in the analysis of text under investigation**.**

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Data Analysis

The analysis includes three level according to the adapted model, namely: micro, meso and macro levels. Each article analyses separately at each level to know the whole result of all these articles.

4.2 The Results

The following section is concerned with the result of analysis

4.2.1The Results of Micro level

A. Passive and Active Voice

The total number of active sentences is 203 while the number of passive sentences is (35) out of the whole number of the sentences which is (238). The following figure illustrates the frequency and the percentage of occurrence of active and passive sentences.

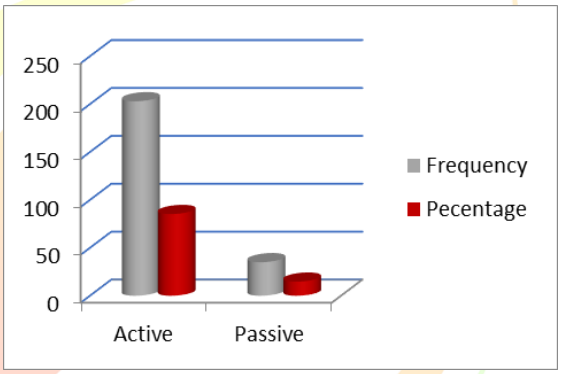

Figure (4-1): Active and Passive Voice of Chomsky's six Article.

The figure clarifies that the active sentences have the highest percentage (85.29%), and the passive sentences have low percentage (14.70 %).

B. Transitivity:

Process

The following figure illustrates the frequency and percentage of the whole process that is used in all six articles.

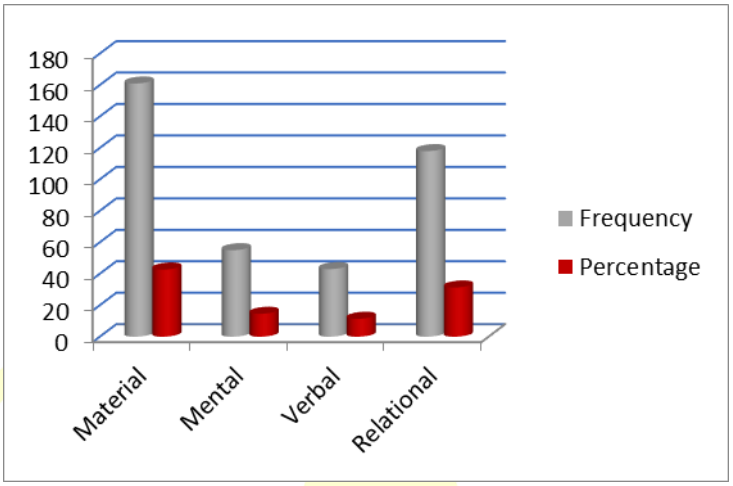

Figure (4-2): Transitivity Analysis (Process) of Chomsky's six Articles

The figure shows that material process has the highest frequency and percentage since it is used (161) times out of (377) making (42.70%). Similarly, relational processes have the second-high frequency and percentage in the figure after material process. It is repeated (118) out of the whole number making (31.29 %). Then, mental and verbal processes are used (14.58%) and (11.40 %) respectively.

Participants

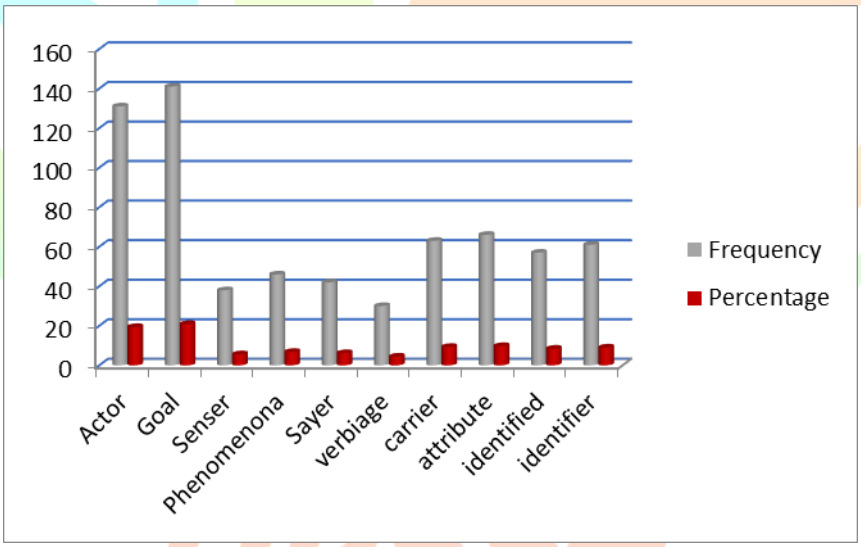

Figure (4-3): Transitivity Analysis (Participants)of Chomsky's Six Articles

Material process indicates either the physical action or event and it needs the participant to be one of many types as directly involved such as actor and goal. The role of participant as actor constitutes (131) out of (675) making (19.40%), while the participant as goal constitutes (141) making (20.88%) out of the whole percentage.

The second type according to its frequency of occurrence in the analysis is the relational process which is repeated fourteen times making (18.6%) of the whole percentage. The participants role which are found within relational clauses are: carrier, identifier, and identified. Their percentages are: the carrier (9.33%), attribute (9.77), identified (8.44) and identifier (9.03%).

Mental clauses come third in the analysis. Mental clauses are of four types, perception, cognition, desideration, and emotion. The participants role which are used within mental clauses are senser and phenomenon. The percentage of senser is (5.62%) while the percentage of phenomenon is (6.81%).

Finally, the participants (sayer and verbiage) of verbal clauses come in the analysis. The percentage of sayer is (6.22%) while the percentage of verbiage is (4.44%)

C. Modality

The following figure shows the frequency and percentage modality in the whole six articles.

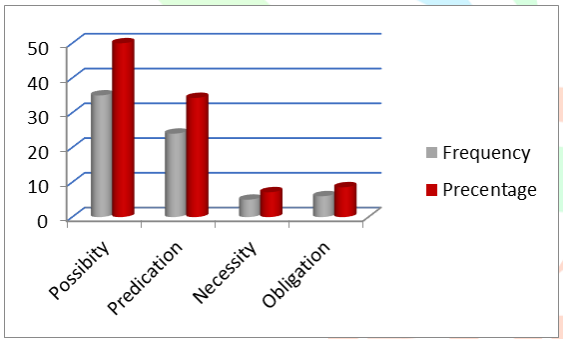

Figure (4-5): Modality Analysis of Chomsky's Six Articles

As it is clear in the figure above that possibility and predication have the high frequency and percentage, where the former is repeated (35) out of (70) making (50%) while predication repeated (24) making (34.28%). Then obligation and necessity are found with less percentage making (8.57%) and (7.14%)

D. Vocabulary: analysis shows that in all articles, there is expression of aggression.

E. Rhetorical device shows the dominant of metaphor

4.2.2 The Results of Meso Level

A. Intertextuality

The following figure illustrates the frequency and percentage of manifested Intertextuality

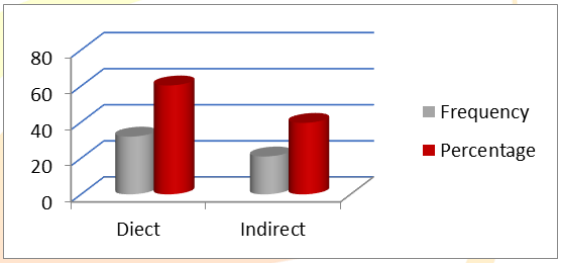

Figure (4-6): The Manifested analysis of Chomsky's Six Articles

The writer used the manifest intertextuality (53) times which divide into (32) times for direct quotation and (21) for indirect one. The direct quote, which represents (60.37 %), The indirect quotation, which represents (39.62%). These quotations all from Europe characters, Chomsky does not quote from any Arabic figure to focus on the contrast and the truth inside US itself.

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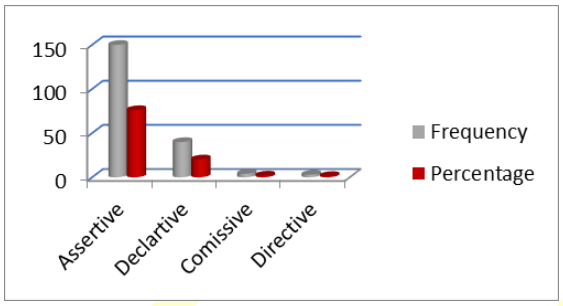

Figure (4-7): Speech Acts analysis of Chomsky's Six Articles

As it is clear in the figure above that the assertive speech act utterances having the highest percentage (76.14%), followed by the declarative (20.30%) and the commissive (2.03%). However, the directive speech act is the least in our data (1.52%). One could conclude from this that the assertive speech act is essentially used in Chomsky's articles.

4.2.3 The Result of Macro Level

A. Theme: the most repeated theme in the articles is the theme of contempt of democracy, violence, justice, dominance

B. Ideological analysis: the recognizable ideology of Chomsky is democracy, anti –war, liberalism. These ideologies are expressed through using different linguistic ways in terms of micro and meso levels.

5. CONCLUSIONS

After analysis the data the researcher has come to the conclusions that the writer has used different syntactic structures such as activation and transitivity, vocabulary like over-wording , and rhetorical devices like metaphor and rhetorical question respectively , he has used both types of explicit intertextuality (direct and indirect) and the most common speech acts is the assertive act , the writer has mentioned many themes in his articles concerning the Iraq war such as themes of democracy, violence, justice, dominance and deceive , and it seems clear that Chomsky's articles has represented his idea concerning liberalism, and anti-war ,democracy

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