

The Representation of the Iraq Invasion in American Elite Newspapers Articles ,A critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

This study investigates the discourses that are created in three American newspapers articles tackle Iraq invasion (2003). The study aims to find out the semantic microstructures (syntactic, and rhetorical choices) that are employed in the articles, and exploring the semantic macrostructure (ideology) that are employed to reflect the writers' opinion about the Iraq invasion in(2003), besides, gives a description about American press coverage of Iraq Invasion.

1. Introduction

This study tries to investigate the famous discourses of the most internationally distributed National newspapers in the United States concerning. By employing the method of critical discourse analysis (CDA), newspaper articles is analyzed in order to understand and describe the constructions of meaning in USA newspapers articles about the USA attack on Iraq. The analysis that follows consists of recognizing, analyzing, and

distinguishing the dominant discourses in the American newspaper before and during Iraq war. The purpose of undertaking this analysis is to examine the linguistic structures of power and ideology and domination. In doing this, it is the aim of this study to represent and make clear the ideologies forming these discourses.

The following questions are addressed in this research:

- 1- In terms of syntactic, and rhetorical choices, what are the semantic microstructures used in American writings about the Iraq war in 2003?
- 2- What are the writers' main ideologies concerning Iraq war (in terms of macrostructures)?

2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA tries to discover the hidden ideologies in texts. On study by Widdsson (2007:70) reported that " those who follow this approach are particularly with the use of language for the exercise of socio-political power."The fundamental idea of CDA is about how texts include recurring expressions and structures, discursive practices ,which are subsumed in social practice, the forms of talking produce the ways of thinking ,thus ways of thinking are produced and reproduced by ways of talking and ways of thinking could be manipulated by choices about style , grammar ,wording and other elements of discourse. (Johnston .2008:53)

Basically, CDA, explores social aspect of society such as social power abuse ,dominance ,inequality ,and the way these aspects introduces legitimized ,reproduced and opposed by speech and text in political and social context.(Van dijk ,1993:34)

Fairclough and Wodak(1997: 271-280) provide in depth analysis of some basic principles of CDA:

- 1-The CDA tackles social issues,
- 2- CDA performs ideological work,

3- CDA constituted culture and society, and CDA is both interpretative and explanatory.

In the 1970, CDA was highly regarded as a field of study .During the 1980s and 1990s, Van Dijk (2004:17) suggested that "discourse analysis should have a critical dimension". Roger Fowler and his colleagues were the first to introduce the CDA at the East Anglia University. While they were working of ideology and language they come up with this approach. Concisely, CDA was primarily focused with critically exploring the relationship between language and social concepts.

Fairclough (2003:1) assumes that CDA is not a single method theorized in a single manner, rather it uses a number of related approaches and theories. For this reason, the best methodological approach for language analysis is CDA as it analyzes social issues, as well as focuses on power and especially problems related to abuse of power including discrimination and disempowerment. Such analysis considers the language in texts in relation to the larger social context, where they are made and received. Critical discourse analysts usually, carry out close readings of some texts, emphasizing on the ways that linguistics phenomena such as metaphors ,back-grounding ,agency ,evaluation and heading help to represent as sorted phenomena for numerous positions.

2.2 Discourse and Ideology

Ideological discourse analysis is frequently described as a subset of sociopolitical discourse analysis. Ideology is usually defined as a group's shared mental beliefs on a particular social topic. A single institution is usually the one to adopt this belief. As a result, it reflects a socially recognized position. The concept of ideology is concerned with how language is strategically manipulated to reflect a biased mental image of a concept. Lexical choices, for example, are viewed as a tactic for representing the ideology of a specific group or institution. The denial of goodness in others is

another example of strategic language use in reflecting a biased mental paradigm. This example demonstrates how to use the argumentative level of language (Van Dijk, 1995: 103).

Ideology is described as an overlapping set of ideas that form a social group's unique perspective. As a result, it is a mirror of the individuals' relationships with the realities of their lives. Ideologies take the form of a group schema in social memory, which leads to group identification. He (ibid) reminds out that ideology can be distinguished by specific characteristics. These characteristics are:

1-Ideologies should always be "false."

2-Ideologies are not only connected with dominant powers during conflicts, but also with institutions and journalists.

3-Ideologies can have simple principles since they are not formed in the same way that capitalism is.

Ideological discourse analysis is a sort of discourse analysis that focuses on identifying hidden notions in a text. Racism, identity, and politics are the key topics of these themes. Such conceptions are likewise concerned with the description of 'Us' (one's own self) and 'Them' (others) (Wodak, 2001: 68). Global ideologies have dominance over other types of ideas, particularly local ideologies. For example, worldwide conceptions of racism would unavoidably impact people's attitudes regarding immigration and lead to anti-immigrant sentiment (Van Dijk, 2006: 112).

Ideological discourse analysis, in addition to focusing on language usage, also considers language abuse. An interdisciplinary approach is required to explore the use of language. Different dimensions, such as cognitive, political, and social, are frequently included in such an approach. When a politician speaks about a specific social issue, he is expected to

represent an ideological conviction, whereas when a worker speaks about his job, he is expected to represent an ideological believe (Van Dijk, 1998: 98).

2.3 Discourse and Power

Language does not gain power by itself, it gains power through the use of powerful people. This is why the critical discourse analysis often adopts the view point of those who suffer and critically analyzes the language use of those powerful people ,who are blamed for inequality and have the ability to improve conditions .Power does not come from language ,but language can be employ to change power, subvert it and change power distributions in short and long period, (Woddak,2002 :10)

Van Dijk (2001: 354) presents power as a central term in major critical work and discourse, and more precisely the social power of institutions or groups. He uses the term 'control' to define social power. Therefore, groups have power when they have the ability of controlling the acts and intellects of other groups. Such control, perhaps, related to action and cognition: a powerful group can restrict others' freedom of action and impact their thoughts. Beside force and violence, an effective and modern power is the cognitive one, that is legitimated by dissimulation, coercion, and manipulation as well as other systematic ways to alter others' mind for one's own purpose .Controlling the mind of others is basically the function of talk and text ,and that is why the CDA come in.CDA are engaged in the braches of rules ,laws ,democratic principles, justice and inequality by powerful groups, i.e. power abuse, (Van dijk,1993 :254)

Additionally, Mayer (2008:1) ,in his study about language and power ,highlighted that institutions are shaped by discourses and have the capacity to create and enforce discourse .They also have substantial control on shaping our routine experiences of the world and how we classify that world,

as they have power to create and develop a particular forms of identities to meet their needs.

As Weber (1914) observes, the democratic systems legitimize and justify the power of institutions in order to be accepted by people . A good example of this process is when government and military justified the invasion of Iraq "rhetoric of military humanism" (Chomsky,1999)

Scott (2002:3) makes a comparison between 'mainstream' and second stream traditions of power research. Mainstream tradition concentrated on disciplinary forms of the power of the state and institutions ,while the second stream has been primarily focused on the importance of its persuasive impact.

2. 4The American Press coverage of Iraq invasion

Numerous studies have reported that US elite newspapers have taken the lead in investigative reporting to reveal corruption ,abuse of power and offence. (Nacos, Bloach–Elocon and Shapiro ,2011:99) News papers are a powerful opinion makers ,as well as very effective in establishing news frames and setting–up news agendas, not just for their own institution, but also ,for a wide range of news organization.(ibid:198)

It is irrefutable that invasion of Iraq has gotten a lot of media attention in and aroused the researchers' interest. It can be stated that the shifting in the media coverage and focus has appeared in 9/11 coincided with Bush administration's cruel critiques of Iraq. Bush used newspapers to employ seditious attack against Iraq government. (Gurdian(online),2002,82)

The war in Iraq was very intensive in 2003, and there were many motives supported by the American army. Most Americans thought that the war in

Iraq is essential, and a rising rate of American people agreed with the American President in conquering Iraq.

The newspapers of *New York Times* and *Boston Globe* were against war. At the beginning of the war, they expected that the war against Iraq needs powerful economy and army by the USA. There was a need for examination before declaring the war, and the government of the USA should have discussed the idea of the war against Iraq with the Security Council before declaring it. According to the journalists of *Boston Globe*, more data should be collected about the needs for the war against the Iraqi president in order to persuade the world with the importance of war showing that there would not be dangerous effects for the USA military after the war (*New York Times*,2003:22). Some television channels like CNN and CBS showed the oppositions within Bush administration in the beginning of 2003. These channels and other types of media had a systematic way in showing the events of the war against Iraq including the destruction of the Iraqi weapons. The television channels did not highlight the illegitimacy of the war against Iraq, but there was a lot of concern about the weapon that were used in the war (Guardino and Hayes,2008).

The American newspapers like *New York Times* and *USA Today* were prejudiced for the claim that Iraq forms a danger in the world. The photos in the *New York Times* concentrated on the preparation for the war (DiMaggio,2008:57-70.). Seventy-five percent of its articles were about the dangers of the weapons of the Iraqi army. However, nine percent of its articles showed that Iraq does not have dangerous weapons and fourteen percent of its articles are related to positive and negative attitudes towards having dangerous weapons. (ibid:76). The administration of the American president produced nine to eleven declarations about the war against Iraq showing the dangers of having weapons by the Iraqi army. As a result, the public agreed with the American administration which invited to conquer Iraq. \according to ABC-Washington Post poll, many people were affected by the

American president's speech about the necessity of conquering Iraq. Since a large percent of people in the world thought that there were some connections between Iraq and al-Qaeda, many people agreed with the idea of force attack against Iraq. The media had an important effect in inviting to the war when it showed that the Iraqi government refused the interference of the observers who wanted to search about the dangerous weapons in Iraq. (Dimaggio, 2009:246)

3.Method

The current study analyzes its data in both qualitative and quantitative ways. The analysis is based on two levels/dimensions that are based on Fairclough's core model. Textual analysis (Micro-level), and social practice are the two stages (Macro-level). Each level is made up of items that were taken from various models. Grammar (modality) and rhetorical techniques(rhetorical question, metaphor) are examined at the micro level, ideology is included in macro analysis.

The data for this study was gathered by reading three web publications from American newspapers' official sites interested in Iraq's affair. They are as follows:

Article1 "Iraq War will divide the World for the Better"(2003),Wall street Journal

Article2"Decision on Iraq Has Puzzling Past"(2003),Washington Post

Article3"Threats and Responses: The Iraqis; U.S. says Hussein Intensifiers Quest for A-Bomb Parts"(2002) New York Times.

According to Patton (2002: 230), the key reason for selecting particular samples over others is their potential to generate insight and in-depth understanding of the study issue. The following are the reasons for selecting these articles: they all deal with the Iraq war in some way, the amount of data is relatively similar, all of these articles are published in the media, so no

changes can be made to any of them, the articles are chosen based on their thematic content (i.e., Iraq War) and whether they show any ideological assumptions and tendencies toward this issue, and they are worthy of being investigated in this piece of work from a critical perspective. Following are the relevant items for analyzing the text under examination.

3.1 Modality

Murphy and Koskela (2010: 105) define modality as the expression of a speaker's attitude toward a proposition. Some of the principles involved are obligation, permission, possibility, necessity, and capacity. To communicate these notions, the modal verbs may, must, can, will, shall, might, could, and should, as well as semi-grammaticalized idioms like have to, need to, and had better, are often employed in English. A modality distinction — the difference between the actuality and irreality of a proposition — can also be conveyed using mood expressions. For example, in "you must come home at nine," the notion of responsibility is extended to the phrase "must come home at nine."

Halliday (1987: 123) integrates three key modal interpretations: probability, possibility, and certainty. The modals "will," "would," and "could" are used to express likelihood. The modals "may," "might," "can," and "could" are used to express potential. The modals "must" and "should" are used with certainty. "Willingness, capacity, permission, and obligation" are the four primary definitions of modulation. "Will," "would," and "can," "could" are the modals for willingness. The modals used for ability are "could," "could," "could," "could," "Can," "could," "may," and "might" are permission modals, but "must," "should," and "ought to" are not "Obligation modals are modals. Modality is an epistemic concept, whereas modulation is a deontic one (ibid).

Palmer (1990:36) divides modalities into three categories: epistemic, deontic, and dynamic. The epistemic modality is concerned with opinions, the deontic modality with the speaker's attitudes, and the dynamic modality with

the sentence's subject's ability or will. Quirk et al. distinguish "intrinsic" permission, responsibility, and volition from "extrinsic" possibility, necessity, and prediction (1985: 219). Extrinsic modality entails human evaluation of what is or is not likely to occur, whereas intrinsic modality entails human control over events. Halliday (1476) divides modality into two categories: modulation and modality. As a result, Murphy and Koskela (2010) and Palmer (1990) typologies will be used in this study.

Murphy and Koskela (2010: 105) classify modality as follows:

3.2 Rhetorical Analysis by Harris (2013)

The objective of writing, according to Harris, is to express a certain idea to the reader or recipient, and one of the conditions for successful writing is that it be clear, compelling, fascinating, and conspicuous. To achieve these goals, the writer employs clear arguments, persuasive methods, and a persuasive style to support his point of view (Harris, 2013:2). Harris (2013:3) divides rhetorical techniques into three categories:

1. Those that need the use of focus, contrast, interpretation, and attention
2. Those that have to do with the physical structure, transmission, and organization of things.
3. Those that require a lot of decoration and variation.

Often, a gadget will fall primarily into one of three categories: single, multiple, or all three. Because it is directly related to data analysis, the researcher will simply explain (Rhetorical inquiry, and Metaphor).

3.2.1 Rhetorical Question

It's a persuasion tactic in the form of a question that doesn't need to be answered because the addresser assumes the response is too obvious to

require one, but it does serve as a statement. Rhetorical questions are used to emphasize, provoke, or influence the speech cited, according to Harris (2013: 21). The main goals of employing these questions are to change the speaker's impression and strengthen his or her argument (Petty and Cacioppo, 1983:5). It's also utilized to understand the information at hand and hence contribute to future debates.

3.2.2 Metaphor

According to Richard and Schmidt (2010: 362), metaphors are vital ways for words to transmit both semantic and cultural connotations, and each language has its unique set of metaphors that have developed over time and that second and foreign language learners must master.

In this regard, Löbner (2002: 50) defines metaphor as "concepts, notions, models, and pictures formed from the description of things in another domain, the target domain" from one domain, the source domain. Metaphor has the potential to generate a new concept in the target domain, one that is equal to the source domain's original concept in that it contains specific aspects, but not all, of the source concept (ibid).

In cognitive linguistics, metaphors are not simple poetic or rhetorical embellishments, but are counted a significant part of everyday speech. The concept of conceptual metaphor refers to the interpreting of one range of concepts (the target domain) in terms of another (the source domain), for instance, interpreting time in terms of space, the life is-a-journey metaphor (with a destination, paths chosen and not chosen, obstacles to be overcome), or the argument-is-war metaphor (arguments can be attacked, defended, won, or lost), (Richard and Schmidt, 2010: 362).

As a result, metaphor is the most common and widely used aspect of figurative language. It's an implicit comparison in which one concept is compared to another based on similarities or likenesses in traits, qualities, or attributes between the two. It's also a figure of speech in which a phrase or

statement is often used for one type of item or action and then extended to another (Matthews, 2003:224).

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Micro-Level

4.1.1 Modality

Data 1

1. "We will know pretty soon where that world is headed, and who will be its pilots".

The sense of prediction can be viewed by the notion of knowing that the world, i.e. countries, goes towards which way.

Data2

"Dusty agents can penetrate U.S. C.B.W. overgarments under certain conditions," the report warned"

Concerning the preceding example there is possibility to sneak U.S. C.B.W. overgarments by dusty agents.

Data3

"The Central Intelligence Agency still says it would take Iraq five to seven years to make a nuclear weapon if it must produce its own supply of highly enriched uranium for a bomb, an administration official said."

As for necessity, the above example explains the necessity to produce nuclear weapon.

Data4

"We will have to confront him sooner or later -- and sooner would be better," Khalilzad and Wolfowitz wrote".

The preceding example is a sample for the domain of prediction. Bush mentions that it is better to face Saddam and attack him today. It is not right to postpone such significant case.

Data 5

"Saddam Must Go"

Regarding the previous example, the meaning of necessity is observed via the modal auxiliary "must". America stresses to dismiss dethrone from his own position in order to control on Iraq.

Data 6

"Advocates for military action against Iraq say the process may appear mysterious only because the answer was so self-evident".

This example reflects the notion of possibility. It is said that declaring war on Iraq is not suitable in this time. That is, such decision may lead to difficulties and make the situation more complex than before.

4.1.2 Rhetorical Devices

Data7

"In fact, the whole invasion is a war crime — indeed the supreme international crime, differing from other war crimes in that it encompasses all the evil that follows, in the terms of the Nuremberg judgment".

Henninger calls the invasion of Iraq a crime and a disaster, claiming that the explanations were bogus, that the US invaded Iraq despite the size of the opposition, and that the invasion resulted in the destruction of Iraq rather than the liberation that the US promises.

Data 8

"Listing Iraq, Iran and North Korea, Bush declared, "States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world".

The author employs metaphor to convey that certain states are harmful, destructive, and have a stormy influence. Kressler accomplishes this by equating such states to the axis of evil.

Data 9

"The question is not, why now?"

The answer to this question is obvious, but Gorden and Miller explain to the audience how far the US has progressed and how it will not withdraw until the objectives are met. Being the winner is the most important part of any imperial state with strength and sovereignty.

Data 10

"The jewel in the crown is nuclear,"

They likened the nuclear program with the jewel existed in the crown. Such comparison denotes the significance and uniqueness of such program in all the world.

Macro-Level

4.2 Ideological analysis

Article 1

The writer made clear comments regarding both sides (Iraq and the United States), but he did not overlook the American side's tyranny. The installation of a Shiite administration, the actions that follow to build a new Iraq, and accepting the presence of the US in the region are the most visible weaknesses of the Iraqi side. On the American side, the US is attempting to impose its hegemony and using its methods to stifle the Iraqi government's ability to maneuver and make decisions freely. This means that Iraq is still an occupied country ruled by the occupying power, with limited sovereignty. One of the rights that Iraq seeks to achieve on its own is independence and sovereignty, but the United States despises this decision and justifies it by claiming that the government does not understand the interests of the people and that Iraq should be a democratic country where the people decide who governs it without regard for sect.

Article 2

According to Kessler, America is an imperial power that wants to rule the world, with Iraq as a minor component. This conflict, according to Kessler, has created a huge door for the expansion of terrorism around the world and the downfall of Iraq. Saddam Hussein, according to Kessler, is a true tyrant. Despite the fact that he would not use mass destruction weapons against the globe or even his adversaries, America takes these weapons as a form of protest against the war. Kessler opposes the war, accuses the US of aggression, and expresses sympathy for the Iraqi people. Kessler removes both the Iraqis and the Americans from the blame game.

Article 3

All what is mentioned in this article can summarize the writers' ideology concerning Bush and his threats against Saddam. They see America as an imperial power with intentions to rule the entire world, of which Iraq is only a small part. They take charges like "a massive gate opened to occupy and collapse Iraq" seriously. Saddam Hussein is seen as a true tyrant by them. Despite the fact that he would not use mass destruction weapons on the globe or even his adversaries, America uses them as a pretext to declare war. The authors are adamantly opposed to the war, accuse the US of aggression, and express compassion for the Iraqi people. They are able to remove the Iraqis and Americans from the circle of accountability.

5. Results and Discussion

Concerning the article 1, auxiliary verb (may, can, could) is the most commonly used for potential, accounting for 53% of the data, then it is found the prediction modal by (will, would, going to) which form (38%)

,and the last type is the necessity by using "ought to" which form (7%). Concerning modality, in Article 2 the writer used two types of extrinsic modality prediction with (34%), possibility with (43%) and one for intrinsic modality (necessity) with (21%). In article 3, the most common usage of modality in the chart above appears to be 'possibility' making (27). Then, the second frequent usage is the prediction which is used (2) times out of (33) at (6). As for necessity, it forms (4) with (13%) out of (33). The following figure illustrates the frequency and percentage of modality in the three articles:

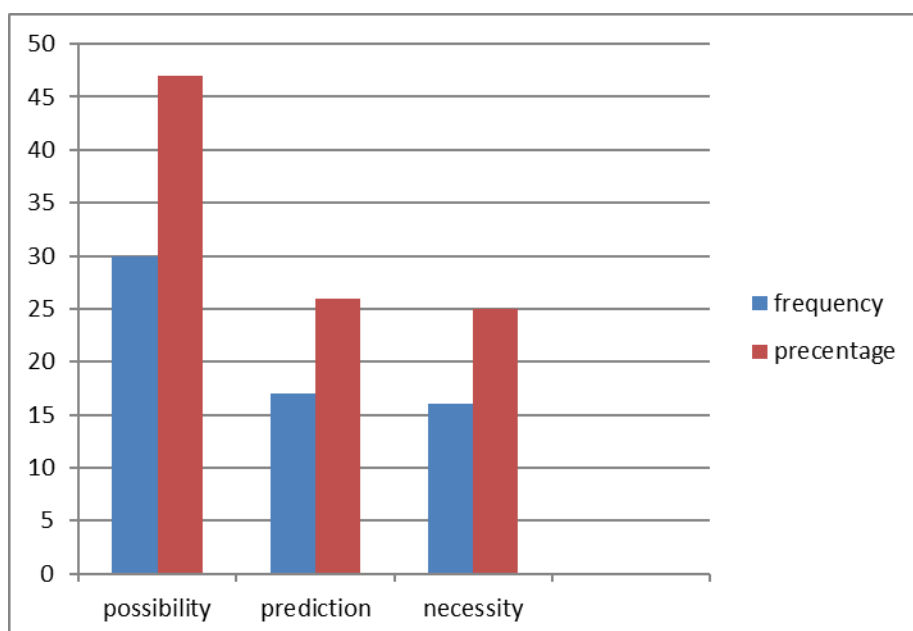


Figure (2)Frequency and percentage of modality

Rhetorical advice reflects the dominant of metaphor, and concerning the ideological analysis, the writers' recognizable ideologies include democracy, hegemony, and liberalism .

6. Conclusion

Media discourse contributes in spreading and supporting ideologies. The most popular way to interpret media discourse is by applying critical discourse analysis. According to this field, the assumption of news makers' ideology are represented in media discourse. This

process is mainly social, cultural and political experience. It is necessary that we constantly evaluate the messages that we receive from our processed mass media.

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