

تناص في لغة المناقشات الرئاسية الأمريكية

تحليل الخطاب

Intertextuality in the Language of the US Presidential Debates

(Discourse analysis)

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الكلمات المفتاحية: التناص، المناظرات الرئاسية، تحليل الخطاب السياسي، نهج
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المخلص

ان المناقشات الرئاسية الأمريكية غنية في الكشف عن السياسات الوطنية / الدولية للسياسيين. وبشكل أكثر تحديداً، تعد المناظرات الرئاسية الأمريكية لعام 2012 بين باراك أوباما وميت رومني فريدة من نوعها في موازنة نتائج الانتخابات والتنبؤ بها من خلال خطابات المرشحين. تم دمج تحليل الخطاب السياسي في نهج روث ودك التاريخي للخطاب (2011) للتحقيق في كيفية استخدام الممارسات التناسية في لغة المرشحين للكشف عن التلاعب بالسلطة والأيدولوجية من أجل الفوز في الاقتراع. الدراسة الحالية هي دراسة نوعية تحلل خطابات المرشحين. المواد هي مقتطفات خاصة تم اختيارها من نصوص مناظرة رئاسية واحدة في عام 2012. والغرض من الدراسة هو الكشف عن التناس في خطابات المرشحين عندما يناقشون أهم القضايا في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية. يستخدم كلا المرشحين التناس ويطلقان سلاسل مختلفة من الممارسات التناسية من أجل إقناع الجمهور. تشير النتائج إلى أن طبيعة المناظرين الاستدلالية والإقناعية تميل إلى الإشارة من أجل حشد الدعم تجاه الخصم. مثل هذه الإشارة إما تاريخية أو مكررة.

Abstract

The U.S. presidential debates are rich in revealing national/international policies of the politicians. More specifically, the 2012 U.S. presidential debates between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney are unique in balancing and predicting the election outcome through the candidates' discourses. A Political Discourse Analysis is integrated to Ruth Wadak's (2011) Discourse-Historical Approach to investigate how intertextual practices are used in the language of the two candidates to reveal power manipulation and ideology in order to win the poll. The current study is a qualitative study which analyzes the candidates' speeches. The materials are particular extracts selected from the transcripts of one presidential debate in 2012. The purpose of the study is to uncover the intertextuality in the candidates' speeches when they debate the most important issues of USA. Both candidates utilize intertextuality and utter various chains of intertextual practices in order to persuade the public. The findings indicate that the manipulative and persuasive nature of the debaters tends to the reference in order to mobilize the support towards opponent. Such a reference is either historical or repetition.



1. Introduction

Presidential campaigns are partly won through debate battles, called presidential debates. These debates include vital issues that are of essence to US citizens. It is not surprising that any candidate would tackle these issues for election purposes. The trick is how these issues are geared to influence the public opinion of the voters as well as to serve the candidates' personal interest. Presidential debates attract the greatest media coverage and public interest more than any other single campaign event (McKinney and Carlin, 2004, p. 204), because they are effective in presenting the candidates' agenda and domestic/foreign policy. After each debate, there are many political and media analyses concerning the candidates' performance. The analyses conducted are based on the effect of the presidential debates on citizens' choice of the candidate. Moreover, they are based on the normative democratic outcomes of the debates (Warner and McKinney, 2013, p. 508). Though the media analyses following the presidential debates focus more on the performance of the candidates than on their stands on issues (Hwang, et.al, 2007, p. 40), a political discourse analysis of the presidential debates is also important to find out the factors that determine the candidate's success. Thus, the most important factor that helps the candidate win the voters' support is his/her language. The current study is a political discourse analysis of the language of the US presidential debates of 2012. Three debates were held in three different states between President Barack Obama and Governor Mitt Romney. Focusing on some intertextual practices, the study traces how the two candidates use language to reveal power manipulation and ideology in order to win the polls.

American presidential debates are most followed, viewed, controlled and most well-known televised action that has come to accompany each presidential election. They are often considered crucial in determining the outcome of the election. Presidential debates are also a very important message in modern campaigns because they allow voters to compare and assess the leading candidates and their issues and positions simultaneously as they appear side by side. Furthermore, debates allow for an extended opportunity to learn about the candidate. There are critical criteria that should be found in the candidates to win the public support. First, candidates should be highly educated and well-prepared. They can answer direct questions during the debates whether these questions are directed by the moderator or by the people. Furthermore, they should be conformable, since they face each other, i.e. the candidate should be competitive and persuasive to win the public support. Second, in each election campaign, the candidates are nominated by their political parties. There are two parties in the United States of America: Democrats and Republicans. Both of the nominated candidates should be of matched characteristics in order to face each other in the direct and live debates. Third, the candidates



prepare their political program before the debates, in addition to solutions to the most critical issues in the country. For example, finding solutions to the issue of the huge percentage of the unemployment. This also helps both candidates present their future policy clearly. Fourth, debates are held to gain the decision of the audience: in this case the candidate should be convincing in order to win the people's support, since the audience cast their votes for the most convincing nominee. The voters should be aware of how beneficial these debates are to decide who the candidate they elect (Gee, 2011, p. 131).

The U.S. presidential debates of 2012 enable the candidates to express their policies directly to the people. Millions of people watch the debate. Thus, a candidate must have a special strategy in order to convince people to vote for him/her. Topics of the debate are scheduled according to specific time segments (90 minutes) to allow each candidate to answer the questions directed to him/her. On the other hand, candidates in the debates may encounter an unexpected question or attack from an opponent (Benoit and Klyukovski, 2006, p. 210). Candidates have to carefully choose what to say in debates because whatever they say, it will grasp the attention of the American public. They aim to express their policies in the best way possible and as such, to satisfy the voters' needs. This is because the debates may change the elections outcomes and may even change the candidates' constituency. Accordingly, debates are a competition and how a candidate would win public support. Jim Lehrer (2011), the moderator of the first presidential debate of 2012, which was held on the 3rd of October in Denver, compares the presidential debates to the "Ultimate Rashomon", i.e. the Japanese combat (p. 16). Thus, the candidate presents his/her agenda to the public. In addition to the public knowledge about the candidate and his/her agenda, the context of the debate carries clear information about the candidate's priorities by observing which aspects the candidate discusses most often, which frames are used to present each field, and what strategies s/he will follow to present his/her policies. In 2012, Obama (the Democratic nominee) and Romney (the Republican nominee) discussed the most important issues of the American society in three debates. In 90 minutes, they debated the most important domestic and foreign issues. The candidates' goal is to win the public consensus by persuading and impressing them. Each debate includes intertextual practices which are used by the candidates in order to reveal specific agenda or to present themselves positively in front of the public. Such practices are very important in the presidential debates because they help the candidate in determining the course s/he follows in the campaign by persuading the voters to think in a different way about important topics. This will lead the candidates to change their relative evaluation and give this persuasion more concern. As a result, the candidates manipulate the



public, spread the ideological orientation of the candidates and their organizations, and gain support of the public.

The current study is a political discourse analysis of the language of the US presidential debates of 2012. Three debates were held in three different states between President Barack Obama and Governor Mitt Romney. Selecting one of these debates, the current study focused on how the two candidates use language to reveal power manipulation and ideology in order to win the elections. Specifically, the study aims at investigating the intertextuality utilized by the two candidates in the debate and to illustrate how do these practices of the two candidates contrast with each other. Therefore, the extracts and corpus of this study are taken from the first debate because of its importance in terms of discussing the national issues that concern the public.

2. Methodology

This study is a qualitative analysis based on Ruth Wodak's (2011) Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA). This approach is designed to integrate systematically all available background information in the analysis and interpretation of the many layers of a written or spoken text. DHA is used to trace the impact of particular intertextual practices that serve to introduce arguments of an individual or a group either positively or negatively (Kwon, Clarke and Wodak, 2009, p. 279). According to Wodak (2011), DHA also provides a method of analysis to show the latent power dynamics and the range of potentials in agents. That is, it enables the analysis of implicit, coded prejudiced utterances, as well as identifying and exposing the allusions contained in prejudiced discourse (pp. 43-4). The material of this study is the U.S presidential debate of 2012 between Obama and Romney. This study tries to apply the DHA (Wodak, 2011) to the presidential debate to reveal manipulation of elements of power and ideology. In this study, the analysis is based on two steps. Step one investigates the candidates' use of intertextuality according to DHA which is called Macro-topic-relatedness. Step two illustrates how the candidates use certain devices to reveal power manipulation and ideology in order to gain public support. This step is called pluri-perspectivity.

3. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Intertextuality

Intertextuality in the candidates' language will be traced through topics of the debate. Accordingly, intertextuality can be established through the continued reference to a topic or its main actors, through reference to the same events as other texts, or through the reappearance of a text's main arguments in another text (Wodak, 2011, p. 39).

This section is organized in different steps. First, pinpointing the most sonorant extracts of the two candidates that include intertextuality from each topic of the debate. Second, at the end, there is a brief discussion of the extracts in order to detect why these practices are employed by the



candidates. Third, there are tables that illustrate more specifically how these practices are discerned by the two candidates. The tables identify where intertextuality occurs as well as the purpose of its usage.

The debate

The debate deals with the most critical domestic issues of the American Society. The debate format is designated by the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD). The debate is divided into segments in which the candidates debate the issues whether they are domestic or foreign and attempt to gain the public support. It is important to mention that the arrangement of the topics and the turn-taking of the candidates in the analysis are dictated by their appearance in the debate. The debate was held at Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York in October 16, 2012. The moderator was Candy Crowley. The debate is of a special format where 82 undecided voters are selected by the Gallup Organization. The voters direct questions to the candidates in order to construct eleven important issues for discussion. Each question represents a critical issue that concerns the American people which are: jobs, gas prices, tax code on the middle-class, gender, bipartisan, high prices, immigration, terrorism and national security, assault weapons(??????), jobs inside USA and overseas, and misperception about candidates. The candidates' role is to answer these questions and give a convincing plan to solve the issues. Increasingly, intertextuality, ideology, and power are produced and reproduced through debating. Therefore, those aspects will be traced according to the selected issues mentioned during the presidential debate. It is remarkable that the candidates' debating of the issues of jobs and tax code on the middle-class became explicit and salient. They repeated what they had mentioned in the previous debate two weeks ago. The policy of 'reinstating' America to work again and 'employment policy' (Richardson and Wodak, 2009) to keep people occupied is also repeated in the second debate. In this sense, the focus will be on the other issues that the candidates and the undecided voters concentrated on during the debate. Five topics are selected to be analyzed. There will be two extracts taken from the segments mentioned above according to their importance in tracing the four aspects of PDA. It is noteworthy that the extracts will be taken from both candidates' speeches who debate the same issue. The researcher will first trace the micro aspects (intertextuality) in the first part. In the second part, the researcher will explain how topoi can establish ideology, power relation and persuasion through the use of intertextuality.

Topic 1. Jobs

Millions of Americans lost their jobs or houses in the crisis of 2008. In 2011 there were roughly thirteen million people out of work. There was an economy growth but the global financial crisis still casted a long shadow on the American economy (Sides and Vavrek, 2013, p. 4). Both candidates



want to create jobs, but each one of them may follow a different policy in terms of job increasing (Benoit, 2014, p. 11).

Obama

Obama utilizes intertextuality to defend his previous policy. He implicitly attributes the financial crisis in 2008 to the reckless policies of the previous president George W. Bush. Obama describes the financial crisis as the worst since the "Great Depression" in 1929, when there was a downswing in the business cycle which was characterized by sharply reduced industrial production and widespread unemployment (www.britannica.com). By alluding to the past (Paltridge, 2012), Obama wants the American people to recall the great financial crisis and compare it to the achievement he has done. Therefore, Obama says, "we've begun to fight our way back...we've seen 5 million jobs in the private sector created. The auto industry has come roaring back". The gradual increase of creating jobs is regarded an achievement, where Obama labels himself positively as a successful president. On the other hand, he presents Romney negatively when he claims that Romney's tax cut plan will not create jobs, "Governor Romney has a perspective that says if we cut taxes, skewed towards the wealthy, and roll back regulations, that we'll be better off. I've got a different view". Also, Obama motivates his citizens when he releases a set of combined motivating processes (Zinken, 2003) that may create jobs in the future. Such processes include investing in "education and training", developing "new source of energy", changing the "tax code", "helping small businesses and companies", and reducing the deficit. Obama alludes to the notion that all these points can be achieved if he is reelected.

Romney

Romney has assigned some historical events to assert that people are out of work because of Obama's previous policy. He mentions the story of two women. The first met him in Ohio, grabbed his arms and said, "I've been out of work since May. Can you help me?". The other woman met his wife (Ann) in Denver and told Ann that they lost most of their jobs, "Can you help us?". Romney implicitly discloses (Bhatia, 2012) that Obama failed in helping those people. Therefore, the new path should replace the old one that does not work. That's why Romney says, "the answer is, yes, we can help, but it's going to take a different path". The word path is intertextual because it represents the policy which the Americans follow whether it is active or not. Romney also utilizes intertextuality to assert his leitmotif, which is creating new jobs, and he repeatedly says that. He links creating jobs to the vitality of America. Moreover, the pronouns *I* and *my* are used to represent Romney positively as the one who is capable of bringing new jobs, "I'll restore the vitality that gets America work again...My priority is jobs". This can be achieved by following his five-point plan which may develop the American economy.



Topic 2. Gas Prices

Phillip Tricolla poses a question directly to Obama: "Your energy secretary, Steven Chu, has now been on record three times stating it's not policy of his department to help lower gas prices. Do you agree with Secretary Chu that this is not the job of energy department?"

Obama

The question starts with an auxiliary verb 'do' which requires yes/no answer with justification. However, Obama prefers rather to use rhetoric in answering the question. When he does, it would be important to notice that he is promoting his agenda by using the persuasive rhetoric. Intertextuality are constructed when he manifests his leitmotifs (anchor-points), i.e. controlling energy in USA, "The most important thing we can do is to make sure we control our own energy". Obama focuses on the achievements of his government during the previous four years. The pronouns *I* (as a president) and *we* (as a government system) are linked to the ruling period as an achievement. By mentioning that production is up to the highest level in 16 years, "So here's what I've done since I've been president. We have increased oil production to the highest level in 16 years", an intertextual/historical relationship is constructed between the present speech and the achievement (Richardson and Wodak, 2014, p. 23). A further intertextual dimension can be observed in allusions and evocations when Obama assumes that Romney's plan is based on allowing oil companies to write the energy policies, "but basically his plan is to let the oil companies write the energy policies". He presupposes that the Republicans do not care about clean energy, "...but he doesn't have the clean energy part. And if we are...not thinking about 10 years from now, we're not going to control our economic future". Moreover, they do not plan to manage a future energy plan as he highlights the topos of threat (Wodak et. al., 2009).

Romney

Romney shows opposition to the rhetorical style that Obama uses in answering the question to persuade the audience, "...as opposed to the rhetoric". Romney's speech intertextually conflates (Graham, 2003) his opposition to Obama's policy, his political economic expertise, and bringing jobs for middle-class people. He tries to produce a negative other-representation. Romney mentions that the Americans have had "four years of policies being played out". He opposes rhetoric being used by Obama, yet he represents himself as a debater who can deliver specific words that may produce negative idea about the opponent. Romney's phrase 'being played out' means that Obama and his government pretend that many things are really happening, especially in oil production. He claims that oil production decreased sharply 14% in 2012 and gas production also decreased 9%, "As a matter of fact, oil production is down 14 percent this year on federal land, and gas production was down 9 percent". He attributes this decrease to Obama's policy that cut 50% of permits for drilling on



federal lands and in federal waters, "Because the president cut in half the number of licenses and permits for drilling on federal lands, and in federal waters"

Topic 3. Immigration

Immigration is one of the important aspects that can be studied from many perspectives. Immigrants are usually represented as 'strangers' who are not comprised in the original community. The concepts of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers are conflated into one large category of "others", where topoi of criminality, danger and burdening are triggered (Wodak, 2015, p. 5-7). This makes them outcasts. Nevertheless, in presidential contexts, the issue of migrants can serve the candidates' good to gain migrants' support like the Hispanic community who represents a huge population of immigrants in USA, who voted for Obama in 2008 (Cirugeda and Ruiz, 2013, p. 85). Moreover, the candidates' language serves to show a competence in taking on the role of "gatekeeper" to legal immigration (Wodak and Boukala, 2015, p. 254-5). The question about immigration is raised by Lorraine Osorio: "Mr. Romney what do you plan on doing with immigrants without their green cards that are currently living here as productive members of society?"

Romney

Legal immigration is the anchor-point in Romney's policy, "this is a nation of immigrants... We welcome legal immigrants into this country". The intertextual practice in this extract is produced through the continuous reference to the legal immigration which leads to legitimize the issue of migrants. He starts the extract by mentioning that he welcomes legal immigration. Romney emphatically illustrates that his dad and his wife's dad were born in other countries. This means that the topos of justice is highlighted to show that Romney and his wife support legal immigration and they are all equal. The intertextual/historical relation is constructed when Romney says that USA is a nation of immigrants that welcome people every day, "...this is a nation of immigrants. We welcome people coming to this country as immigrants". He shows positive self-representation when he supports the legal immigration to the country. Accordingly, Romney opposes the notion that people come illegally to USA. On the other hand, negative presentation of the other is emphasized when he claims that Obama would give driver's licenses to the undocumented immigrants, "I would not give driver's licenses to those that have come here illegally as the president would"

Obama

There are different kinds of intertextual practices included in this extract. By saying "we are just a few miles from Ellis Island", Obama announces that he follows the open door policy. Ellis Island immigration station represented the symbol of welcoming people for more than 60 years



in the previous century. Ellis Island opened in 1895 and closed in 1954 (www.britannica.com). This historical intertextuality is important because Obama uses persuasive rhetoric to convince people that his government is willing to receive people in places like Ellis Island station, which received millions of newly arrived immigrants and passed through its gate, seeking a better life. In this expression, Obama emphasizes the positive self-representation as a strategy of persuading voters. Obama also supports legal immigration and defends his previous policy by mentioning that four points are very important in improving the legal system of immigration, "But we're also a nation of laws...we need to fix a broken immigration system and I've done everything that I can on my own and sought cooperation from Congress to make sure that we fix the system". One of them is "reducing the backlog" as he repeatedly mentions the previous wrong policies of Bush. There is another intertextual practice in this extract. Obama emphasizes the negative representation of the other when he quotes Romney, to criticize his opposition to the undocumented productive people in America, "I will veto the DREAM Act". He shows the topos of fallacy by saying that Romney wants to help those people is the same one who said that he would veto the DREAM Act. Moreover, encouraging self-deportation is another strategy to make their life so miserable, because they will leave America, "We're going to encourage self-deportation." Making life so miserable on folks that they'll leave".

Topic 4. Gender Discrimination

Gender-specific language and behavior hold many contradictions where the speaker's assumptions about gender and sex are implicitly oriented (Wodak, 1997). Although more women have achieved higher status in their professions, there are still subtle procedures of discrimination. This is mainly because many organizations are still characterized by a culture dominated by males (Wodak, 2005). The issue of gender can be an essential element of representative democracy, which candidates may positively employ to gain the voters' support (Benoit, 2014). For example, when the candidates try to tackle gender gaps in un/employment issues, a discursive practice of un/employment will be involved into the topic of gender (Weiss, 2000). The question about gender (females) is directed to the candidates by Katherine Fenton, "In what new ways to you intend to rectify the inequalities in the workplace, specifically regarding females making only 72 percent of what their male counterparts earn?". Obama does not want to answer the question directly; rather, he prefers to use rhetoric.

Obama

Obama releases a special chain of intertextual practices (Fairclough, Pardoe and Szerszynski, 2006). Intertextuality is produced through the mentioning of his mother who scarified a lot to raise him, his grandmother



who hit the glass ceiling and the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, "I was raised by a single mom who had to put herself through school while looking after two kids... My grandmother...she worked her way up to become a vice president of a local bank, but she hit the glass ceiling...the first bill I signed was something called the Lily Ledbetter bill". Discursive practice is also produced when Obama mentions the Pell Grants education system of Massachusetts. They are utilized to show the positive self-representation of Obama. His grandmother was also mentioned in the first debate. He regards her as a symbol of sacrifice, support and independence. That's why she had become a vice president in a bank and she hit the glass ceiling which is regarded an unfair system that limits women's access to positions of responsibility (Martin Rojo and Gomez Esteban, 2005). As a result, Obama signed the Lily Ledbetter bill which paved the way for equal paycheck claim. Obama's words about equality between women and men are very sonorous so that he gains women's support.

Romney

Romney's speech contains intertextual and discursive practices. The first intertextual practice is that Romney again repeats the phrase "my state" instead of saying 'Massachusetts'. This means that as a governor, he brought to the state many achievements. This is one of the positive self-representation messages that Romney tries to deliver to the audience. Repetition can also be regarded as an intertextual aspect (Lee, 2008 and Wodak and Fairclough, 2010). Speaking about women and their rights of paycheck equity, Romney intertextually links it to the notion that it should not be acceptable that all members of the working cabinet are men. Therefore, he asks to hire qualified women instead. He emphasizes that there are qualified women and he supports them, "can't we -- can't we find some -- some women that are also qualified?". In addition to being a governor, Romney shows that he is a man of sympathy when he mentions the woman who has to leave early to be at home for her kids. He also suggests that everyone must have a flexible schedule for working women, "Let's have a flexible schedule so you can have hours that work for you

Topic 5. Bipartisan Subject

The independents (undecided voters) represent a huge population in USA. They do not vote as partisans to a specific political party. Rather they need to be convinced by the candidates (Benoit, 2014,). Such voters are afraid of "durable party-based trait stereotypes" (Hayes, 2005,) that extend to other candidates of the same party. Susan Katz is an undecided voter who is disappointed with the lack of progress during Obama's term. However, she attributes much of America's economic and international problems to the failing and missteps of the Bush administration. She asks Romney, "Since both of you and President Bush are Republicans, I fear a return to the policies of those years should you win this election. What is



the biggest difference between you and George W. Bush, and how do you differentiate yourself from George W. Bush?"

Romney

Romney's answer leads to the production of intertextual practice by mentioning his economic plan once more which he calls "my five point plan". There are positive-self and negative-other intertextual references used either to support his situation or criticize Obama's previous policy. However, the question itself is intertextual. George W. Bush, the Republican President, who represents all the negative traits, led USA to the economic disaster by putting the American Army into two endless wars. Therefore, Romney tries to differentiate himself from Bush by saying that he is not President Bush and those were different times, "President Bush and I are -- are different people and these are different times". Romney's five points plan is mentioned many times to become a promise that is viewed in the light of pledges (Woods, 2006) made by the candidate. He makes a comparison to emphasize the difference between himself and Bush, i.e. to emphasize the positive self-representation and negative representation of Bush. Another negative other-representation is produced when Romney mentions Obamacare as an obstacle that prevents small business owners to hire people, "...I find the most troubling Obama Care...when you go out and talk to small businesses and ask them what they think about it, they tell you it keeps them from hiring more people". This intertextual reference results in the discursive practice of jobs where Romney says "My priority is jobs". Romney talks about Bush and Obama at the same time to show a negative representation of others. On the other hand, the intertextual relation of the two presidents is produced to give Romney the role of a 'gatekeeper' who defends the rights of middle-class families and helps in bridging all economic issues (Tardy, 2013).

Obama

In this topic, there are many intertextual sources that Obama uses to reinforce his rhetoric as well as the embedded discursive practice (Wodak, 2012, p.529). First, he produces a historical intertextuality when comparing the hard times of the economic crisis during the period of George W. Bush and the achievements he accomplished when he became a president four years ago, "...we did come in during some tough times. We were losing 800,000 jobs a month when I started". This helps Obama to establish an attitude that is totally different from that of Bush. He also states that middle-class families were not doing well, so America was not doing well too, "middle class folks not doing well". Intertextuality is used here to focus on the middle-class people as one of the most important values and means to fulfill the purpose of winning the elections (Hernandez-Guerra, 2013). Obama attacks Romney's five points plan again and explains that it will bring the American economy to deficit again, "...his economic plan



are tax cuts. That's what took us from surplus to deficit". Getting tough on China is one of Romney's five points plan. Obama uses this point to criticize Romney who invests in companies that are pioneers of outsourcing on China. By saying "keep in mind" and "Governor, you're the last person who's going to get tough on China", Obama believes that Romney also invests in companies that manufacture surveillance equipment for China to spy on people, "...and is currently investing in countries - - in companies that are building surveillance equipment for China to spy on its own folks". Obama highlights the negative representation of others here. Finally, Obama answers the question by mentioning many differences between Romney and Bush. Since Romney is the rival here, it would be convincing that Obama attacks Romney though both of them are Republicans

Topic 6. National Security

One of the natural rights of the society is security. The security of America, as well as other domestic issues like taxes, high prices, Medicare etc., is taken into account by the candidates as one of the important values they rival about (Gunnel, 2004 and Lakoff, 2004). In 2012, there was an attack on the American embassy in Benghazi and four people were killed. The question is about the issue of national security and why the government did not enhance the security of the American embassy in Benghazi before the attack. Kerry Ladka asks Obama, "We were sitting around, talking about Libya, and we were reading and became aware of reports that the State Department refused extra security for our embassy in Benghazi, Libya, prior to the attacks that killed four Americans. Who was it that denied enhanced security and why?"

Obama

Obama wants to show his responsibility for what happens to the embassy in Benghazi, "...And these aren't just representatives of the United States, they are my representatives...So nobody is more concerned about their safety and security than I am". Intertextuality is represented by using a narrative style to explain what he did after the attack. Then he attacks Romney's exploitation of this issue for his political purposes and names his achievements in fighting terrorism and National Security by giving it a prior consideration, "You don't turn national security into political issue...not everybody agrees with some of the decisions I've made. But when it comes to our national security, I mean what I say". Finally he has the chance to tell audience that he did what he promised about Iraq, Afghanistan and about going after Ben Laden.

Romney

By saying "the buck does stop at his desk", Romney states that the president takes the direct responsibility for what happened in Benghazi and he must not pass the responsibility to other authorities because he is the



commander-in-chief. The above phrase has an intertextual value that it was first used in the US presidential and political speech by the Democratic president Harry Truman who used to put a sign on his desk which says, "The Buck Stops Here" (www.britannica.com). Romney tries to attack Obama with this phrase even though Obama admits that he is the only one who is responsible for what happened in Benghazi. Romney also depends on allusions and evocations to attack Obama's policy where another intertextual dimension appears in his speech, "There were many days that passed before we knew whether this was a spontaneous demonstration, or actually whether it was a terrorist attack". There are discursive strategies in Romney's speech concerning the national security. First, it is noteworthy that he uses the negative representation of others in both intertextuality and discursive practice to criticize the failure of Obama's previous policies in the Middle East.

Table 1: Intertextuality Used By the Candidates in the Debate

Topics	Candidate	Utterances	Representation	Function
Jobs	Obama	<i>Great Depression</i>	Negative other-representation	Historical
		<i>We've begun to fight our way back...we've seen 5 million jobs in the private sector created. The auto industry has come roaring back</i>	Positive self-representation	Historical
	Romney	<i>I've been out of work since May. Can you help me?", "the answer is, yes, we can help, but it's going to take a different path</i>	Negative/positive self/other representation	Historical/reference
		<i>My priority is job</i>	Positive self-representation	Repetition
Gas price	Obama	<i>we control our own energy</i>	Positive self-representation	Reference
		<i>We have increased oil production to the highest level in 16 years</i>	Positive self-representation	Historical/reference
		<i>But basically his plan is to let the oil</i>	Negative other-	Reference



		<i>companies write the energy policies</i>	representation	
	Romney	<i>Four years of policies being played out</i>	Negative other-representation	Historical/reference
		<i>As a matter of fact, oil production is down 14 percent this year on federal land, and gas production was down 9 percent</i>	Negative other-representation	Historical, reference, attribution
		<i>This is about bringing good jobs for the middle class of America</i>	Positive other-representation	reference
Immigration	Romney	<i>We welcome legal immigrants into this country</i>	Positive self-representation	Reference
		<i>I would not give driver's licenses to those that have come here illegally as the president would</i>	Negative other-representation	Reference, attribution
	Obama	<i>We are just a few miles from Ellis Island</i>	Positive self-representation	Historical/reference
		<i>We're also a nation of laws...we need to fix a broken immigration system</i>	Positive self-representation	Reference/defence
		Romney: <i>We're going to encourage self-deportation</i>	Negative other-representation	Reference
Gender Discrimination	Obama	<i>Single mom, My grandmother, Lily Ledbetter bill</i>	Positive self-representation	Historical/reference
		<i>We've expanded Pell Grants for millions of people, including millions of young women</i>	Positive self-representation	Reference
	Romney	<i>My state</i>	Positive self-representation	Reference/repetition



		<i>Women and their rights of paycheck equity</i>	Positive self-representation	Reference
Bipartisan Subject	Romney	<i>My five point plan</i>	Positive self-representation	Reference/repetition
		<i>President Bush and I are – are different people and these are different times</i>	Negative other-representation	Historical/reference
		<i>I find the most troubling Obama Care</i>	Negative other-representation	Reference/attribution
	Obama	<i>We did come in during some tough times</i>	Negative other-representation	Historical/attribution
		<i>Middle class folks not doing well</i>	Negative other-representation	Reference/attribution
		<i>His economic plan are tax cuts. That's what took us from surplus to deficit</i>	Negative other-representation	Reference
National Security	Obama	<i>These aren't just representatives of the United States, they are my representatives...So nobody is more concerned about their safety and security than I am</i>	Positive self-representation	Reference/defense
		<i>You don't turn national security into political issue</i>	Negative other-representation	Reference
	Romney	<i>The buck does stop at his desk many days that passed before</i>	Negative other-representation	Reference
		<i>We knew whether this was a spontaneous demonstration, or actually whether it was a terrorist attack</i>	Negative other-representation	Reference/attribution



Conclusion

The analysis showed that the debate harbor a variety of discourses which uncover elements of power struggle and ideological orientation through the use of intertextuality. The candidates have employed various DHA tools to persuade and manipulate the public opinion. The manipulative and persuasive nature of the debaters tends to the reference in order to mobilize the support towards opponent. Such a reference is either historical or repetition. Historical reference helps in the positive self-presentation, while repetition presents the other in a negative light. Accordingly, intertextuality is highly influential in manipulating the public opinion, especially while debating the domestic issues. Both candidates utilize intertextuality and utter various chains of intertextual practices in order to persuade the public. For instance, Obama always utters a variety of intertextual sources to reinforce his rhetoric as well as manipulate the public opinion. The reference to history is clear in his speech in order to present himself in a positive light.

Romney utilizes intertextuality, especially in the domestic issues, to repeat his viewpoint. Repetition enables Romney to assert his leitmotif, concentrate on positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation, and deploy his persuasive strategies. For example, Romney repeatedly uses the pronouns "I" and "my" in order to present himself in a positive light and act as the 'gatekeeper' of the middle-class people. Concerning the issue of the American foreign policy, both candidates produce intertextual practice to convince the public that they are able to lead America to the right path. Obama presents himself positively as a man of politics who always resorts to the political methods to achieve what is good for the country. At the same time, his is "the commander-in-chief", the organized and the strong president who can act to protect the American citizens. Romney produces intertextuality in the issue of foreign policy in order to criticize and attack Obama's way of leading the country. Romney believes that Obama's weak policy and his 'tours of apology' make the world think of America as a weak state. As a result, the American embassy in Benghazi was attacked and four American people were killed there. Consequently, intertextuality in Romney's speech is utilized to manipulate and persuade the public and to reveal that America should be strong. Such strength will not be achieved since the country is led by a weak president and it is time to change that.

Ideology and power manipulation are embedded in the candidates' discourses. Both candidates focus on the discourse community to disseminate their ideologies and persuasive strategies, especially in the domestic issues. The candidates produce specific expressions to address various groups of the American people such as middle-class, teachers, women and seniors.



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