A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE DEBATES BETWEEN REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS OVER THE CONTINUATION OF WAR IN IRAQ

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Abstract

This paper is intended to show how a single reality, that is the continuation of war in Iraq by the American troops, is presented and viewed by the two major American political parties' (Republican and Democratic) candidates of the US presidential primaries of 2008.

In this study, van Dijk's (2004) framework adopted from *Politics, ideology and discourse* is used to detect discursive structures within the transcripts of the candidates' speeches and discover the ideologies underlying them. The macro strategies of 'positive self-representation' and 'negative other- representation' (which are intimately tied up with 'Polarization' of in group vs. out group ideologies or US-THEM) plus the other 25 more subtle strategies have turned out to be very accurate criteria for the evaluation of attitudes, and opinions. The findings of this study can be conducive to expanding readers' critical thinking abilities in comprehension and production of language.

Key words: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA); Political discourse.

Introduction

Like a coroner's office where a dead body, unable to speak, is dissected for the purpose of discovering the cause of death, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is the right place to perform an autopsy on the discourse, spoken or written, in order to find out about the ideologies underlying it. In fact, CDA, as an important branch of Discourse Analysis (DA), tries to focus on relations between ways of talking and ways of thinking, and highlights "the traces of cultural and ideological meaning in spoken and written texts" (O'Halloran 2005: 1946). CDA broadens the scope of linguistic analysis. It includes the larger sociopolitical and socio-cultural contexts within which discourse is embedded, as it is at this macro-level of analysis that we are able to unpack the ideological bases of discourse that have become naturalized overtime and are treated as common sense, acceptable and natural features of discourse (Fairclough 1995).

There are different fields and topics which invite CDA to perform its valuable job, however, if there is one social field that is most fitting here, it is that of politics. Demonstrations, parliaments, presidential campaigns and political debates are all the fields of ideological battles. This is not surprising because, as van Dijk (2004) contends, "it is eminently here that different and opposed groups, power, struggle and interests are at stake. In order to be able to compete, political groups need to be ideologically conscious and organized" (p. 11).

One of the key factors that determine the political figures' success in reaching their goals and winning the public consensus in this continuous power struggle is their ability to persuade and impress their audience. According to Teittinen (2000) "the winner is a party whose language, words, terms and symbolic expressions are dominant once reality and the context have been defined" (p.1). And this is where the need for critical listening and reading is felt more than any other time to realize what the reality is and how it is distorted through delicate and skillful use of language. Like the coroner, people have to dissect the discourse, find the distortion, go through it and discover the reality at last.

Following the same purpose, this paper is a critical discourse analysis of the US Democratic and Republican presidential candidates' speeches for presidential primaries of 2008 on the issue of the continuation of the war in Iraq. Using van Dijk's (2004) framework, this study investigates how the candidates of each political party try to justify their ideas and persuade their audience by utilizing subtle ideological discourse structures in their speech.

Literature Review

Critical Discourse Analysis: Theoretical Background

Since 1970s Discourse Analysis (DA) has developed into substantial sub-areas, notably Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which sees discourse as a form of social practice (Fairclough 1995, 1989) and argues that all linguistic usage encodes ideological positions, and studies how language mediates and represents the world from different points of view. It is the connection between ideas, language, power and the ordering of relationship within society that is important for those involved in CDA. While DA focuses on the relationship between language forms and a limited sense of context and tends to be oriented to a narrow understanding of the larger social, cultural and ideological forces that influence our lives, CDA goes much further toward addressing the ideological dimensions of discourse. It is a version of discourse that does not posit language use free of ideological conditions.

According to van Dijk (2007), CDA does not have a unitary theoretical framework. Van Dijk (2007) identifies four mainstream approaches to CDA. The first one is Critical Linguistics which was developed by Fowler, Kress, Hodge & Trew (1979); Fowler (1991, 1996); Kress (1985) and Kress & Hodge (1979). The second approach which was introduced by Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995) is the

Sociocultural approach. Wodak (1996, 2001) and Wodak et al. (1999) proposed the Discourse-Historical approach. And finally, van Dijk's (1998, 2002) framework was based on a sociocognitive approach. Van Dijk (2007) claims that these approaches are closely related by more general conceptual frameworks like van Dijk (2001).

The work of Fowler et al. (1979) has been cited as the starting point of Critical Linguistics (CL). CL is the earliest and one of the most influential linguistically-oriented critical approaches to discourse analysis. According to Fowler (1991), "critical linguistics simply means an enquiry into the relations between signs, meanings and the social and historical conditions which govern the semiotic structure of discourse, using a particular kind of linguistic analysis" (p. 90). It utilizes Halliday's Systemic-Functional Grammar as an analytic methodology, although very early works were based on transformational grammar. Fowler (1991) focuses on the media's representation of events, the linguistic analysis of that representation and the ideology encoded by it. He is primarily concerned with 'mystification' analysis of hard news texts. Mystification, it is argued, occurs with the use of certain grammatical structures which are thought to obscure certain aspects of reality, thus encoding ideology. Hodge and Kress (1993) provided some transformations such as transitivity, nominalization, negative incorporation and agentless passive with the last one having received most attention. They argued that drawing on these transformations, one can reveal intentions subtly disguised in complex structures, concealments and deceptions incorporated in transformationally derived sentences.

Having inherited the analytic methodologies of CL, Fairclough (1989) wrote about the social theories supporting CDA and developed his sociocultural analysis in his seminal work *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language* in 1995. Fairclough argues that language is linked to social realities and brings about social change. He states that government involves the manipulation and use of language in significant ways, and is particularly concerned with the linkage between discourse, ideology and power relations within society. Fairclough's linguistic orientation is that of systemic-function grammar of Halliday. But he does not limit DA to the study of texts and specific discursive practices. He emphasizes a text as the product of a process in which discourse is closely related to social structures in its production and interpretation. He critically examines specific situations where relations of power, dominance and inequality are instantiated in discourse. Fairclough's model of DA operates first with a dialectal relationship between the micro-structures of discourse (linguistic features) and the macro-structure of society (societal structures and ideology). He stresses that while macro-structures of society may determine the micro-structures of discourse, these in turn reproduce the larger social and ideological structures. Scrutinizing the language of mass media as a site of power, Fairclough shows the fallacy of such assumptions that media institutions are neutral.

Fairclough (2000) has been concerned with the "Language of New Labour" and the "Language of the New Capitalism". His grammatical tools also

relate to Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, as well as to Conversational Analysis.

Wodak's (1996, 2001) discourse-historical approach advocated by the Vienna School in critical discourse analysis has focused on the impact of historical socio-political contextual factors since the 1980s. Wodak (2000) states:

> In investigating historical, organizational and political topics and texts, the discourse-historical approach attempts to integrate much available knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive "events" are embedded. Further, it analyzes the historical dimension of discursive actions by exploring the ways in which particular genres of discourse are subject to diachronic change (Wodak 1996). Lastly, and most importantly, this is not only viewed as 'information': at this point we integrate social theories to be able to explain the so-called context. (p. 187)

Having recognized the importance of context to the meaning of the text, CD analysts began to pay attention to the contribution of non-verbal aspects of texts, that is semiotic devices. Van Leeuwen (1996) was the first who proposed a useful framework for considering the possible role of visual devices in the media. In fact, he doesn't start with linguistic operations such as nominalizations and passive agent deletion or linguistic category such as transitivity, as many other critical analysts do. Instead, he says: "I seek to draw up a semiosemantic inventory of the ways in which social actors can be represented, and to establish the sociological and critical relevance of my categories before I turn in the question of how they are realized linguistically". (1996: 32)

Van Dijk (1985) holds that texts are not used just to inform us of some reality. They, additionally, based on the ideological standpoints of the person, organization, etc. involved in their production, construct the reality. One of the main tenets of CDA, then, is to reveal the sources of dominance and inequality observed in the society by analyzing texts (written or spoken). It is to find the discursive strategies utilized to construct or maintain such inequality or bias in different contexts.

The socio-cognitive model by van Dijk is based on the assumptions that cognition mediates between "society" and "discourse". Both long-term and short-term memories as well as certain mental models shape our perception and comprehension of discursive practices and also imply stereotypes and prejudices, if such mental models become rigid and over-generalized. The methodology used is eclectic, based primarily on argumentation theory and semantic theories.

The basic conceptual and theoretical concepts worked out and used by van Dijk (2000) in his CDA studies are as follows: Macro v. Micro- power as control; access and discourse control; context control; the control of text and talk and mind control. The micro level comprises language, discourse, verbal interaction and so on, while macro level has to do with power relation, such as inequality and dominance. And CDA plans to wed these two levels, since in actual interaction one

can not separate them from each other; social power, in this approach, is viewed as a means of controlling the mind and actions of other group(s). The social power by itself may not be negative, but what in fact is of significance to CDA is the inappropriate use of power, which would bring about inequality in the society. Van Dijk (2002) takes ideology as the attitude a group of people hold towards certain issues; hence the analysis of ideology is one of the main concerns of discourse analysis. In order to uncover ideology generated in discourse, van Dijk resorts to social analysis, cognitive analysis and discourse analysis of the text.

Van Dijk's (2004) seminal work, *Politics, Ideology and Discourse*, proposes a worthwhile framework for political discourse analysis. This work which is a section of the *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics,* describes the political discourse as the most ideological. Van Dijk (2004) argues that

> The social organization of the field of politics, and hence of politicians and political groups, is largely based on ideological differences, alliances and similarities. The overall organization of social beliefs as a struggle between the Left and the Right is the result of the underlying polarization of political ideologies that has permeated society as a whole … Indeed, political ideologies not only are involved in the production or understanding of political discourses and other political practices, but are also (re)produced by them. In a sense, discourses make ideologies 'observable' in the sense that it is only in discourse that they may be *explicitly* 'expressed' and 'formulated'. Other political practices only implicitly show or experience ideologies, for instance in practices of discrimination on the basis of sexist, racist or political ideologies. (p. 11)

Van Dijk (2004) defines political discourse not only in terms of discourse structures but also in terms of political contexts. He contends that

> It is not sufficient to observe, for instance, that political discourse often features the well-known 'political' pronoun *we.* It is crucial to relate such use to such categories as *who is speaking, when, where and with/to whom,* that is, to specific aspects of the *political situation.* (p. 13)

Van Dijk's (2004) framework consists of two main discursive strategies of 'positive self-representation' (semantic macro-strategy of in-group favouritism) and 'negative other-representation' (semantic macro-strategy of derogation of out-group) which are materialized through some other discursive moves such as 'actor description', 'authority', 'burden' ('Topos'), 'categorization', 'comparison, 'consensus', 'counterfactuals', 'disclaimer', 'euphemism', 'evidentiality', 'example'/'illustration', 'generalization', 'hyperbole', 'implication', 'irony', 'lexicalization', 'metaphor', 'self-glorification', 'norm expression', 'number game', 'polarization', 'Us-Them', 'populism', 'presupposition', 'vagueness', 'victimization .

More recently, distinguished figures in CDA have made some innovations in the frameworks utilized in this field. Van Leeuwen (2005) outlined three models of interdisciplinarity, i.e., 'centralist', 'pluralist' and 'integrationist'. The idea of 'discipline' is in effect narrowed down to 'skill' in the integrationist model (p. 8).

According to van Leeuwen, the main feature that distinguishes the integrationist model from the others is its interdependent disciplines. Moreover, disciplines in the pluralist and integrationist models are equally valued - that is, one discipline is not seen as subsidiary to another - but it is not the case for the centralist model. In the pluralist and integrationist models issues and problems are central, while methods are oriented in the centralist model. Because of the newness of integrationist model, van Leeuwen particularly leaves much space for the discussion of why and how discourse analysis can be integrated with other disciplines. Some of the pitfalls of the integrationist model are also acknowledged. However, because such forms do not exist in practice, the proposed interdisciplinary models can be only understood as 'pure' or 'ideal' forms.

Chilton (2005a) introduced the reader to a cognitive approach to the analysis of discourse in social and political contexts. This innovative idea was fairly heuristic and thought-provoking, and could easily motivate further debate. Specifically, Chilton highlights three main problems of current research in CDA in a broad sense and then the incorporation of a cognitive perspective is proposed. He believes that a possible cognitive approach combined with cognitive evolutionary psychology and cognitive linguistics, specifically blending theory, to the analysis of discourse in social and political contexts is fairly needed for CDA if it is going to be genuinely interdisciplinary. To illustrate this, he applies the combined cognitive framework to a racist discourse, exploring the work largely ignored by CDA account, and concludes that "the framework can go beyond description (of CDA) and put forward suggestive explanatory stories" (p. 44). Based on cognitive evolutionary psychology, he also explicates initially a core empirical and theoretical question that CDA has never addressed before about to what extent language can trick, deceive or manipulate the human mind. He claims that because of its little attention paid to the human mind, "CDA in its later manifestation has made no contribution to scientific understanding of the language capacity" (p. 22) and could not achieve the goal of answering questions regarding the nature of the human mind, of human language, of human language use and of human society. His argument guides us to the issue of the status and direction of CDA.

In 2005, Norman Fairclough made an attempt to highlight and enrich a transdisciplinary approach to CDA that was first introduced into CDA by Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999). Central to Fairclough's approach is a feature of transdisciplinarity and dialectics of discourse in relation with other non-discoursal elements of social life. Fairclough contends that transdisciplinary research can be further developed and enhanced through dialogue of all the disciplines and theories involved, which has been exemplified by the treatment of genre and genre analysis in the version of CDA. Moreover, he claims that CDA can benefit from research in other disciplines and theories, and vise versa.

Wodak & Weiss (2005) drew upon their research on European Union discourses with a wide range of genres and critically discussed recent theory formation in some approaches of CDA and elaborated some thoughts on the mediation between the social activities and discourse through a particular focus on

the discursive construction of European identities. Although the plurality of theories and methodologies can be highlighted as a specific strength of CDA, they maintain, it is also crucial to develop an integrated theoretical framework for CDA capable of reconciling sociological and linguistic perspectives without reducing them to one another because a synthesis of theories illustrated by Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) is by no means "a monistic theory model' or 'more true than the individual theories" (p.125). Three basic steps for developing an integrated theoretical framework are proposed - clarifying the theoretical assumptions before the actual analysis, developing the conceptual tools capable of connecting both directions of sociology and linguistics, and finally defining categories. They argue that European identities are constructed differently in particular contexts and discursively re-negotiated and co-constructed, and propose for further study three perspectives – historical, communicative, and participation and representation.

Van Dijk (2005) drew a new theory of the way knowledge is managed in discourse processing as well as a new theory of context. Knowledge is defined pragmatically and socio-cognitively as 'shared beliefs satisfying the specific (epistemic) criteria of an (epistemic) community' (p.73). And the way knowledge in discourse production and comprehension is seen as a function of context. Van Dijk argues that social context and text are linked by a 'context model' (van Dijk 2001; Wodak 2000), "the mental representation of the participants about the relevant properties of the social situation in which participants interact, and produce and comprehend text or talk" (p.75). One of the crucial properties of such context models, he suggests, is the knowledge of language users, which is a cognitive device named the K-device, about the knowledge of the recipient. Because this K-device is crucial for the control of many important aspects of discourse, speakers need a number of K-device strategies of context models to manage in discourse production and comprehension of various kinds of knowledge. The overall K-device strategies are simple according to van Dijk, but more specific strategies are needed for special cases despite the presupposition of a common ground of shared general and sociocultural knowledge. He argues that K-strategies can be associated with CDA in the sense that "symbolic elites may impose their own beliefs as generally accepted knowledge, marginalize large audience segments by presupposing knowledge that is not generally known, or conversely by infravalorating non-dominant groups as ignorant" (p.96).

Research in political discourse

Given the role of political discourse in the enactment, reproduction and legitimization of power and domination, we may also expect many critical discourse studies of political text and talk. Different studies have utilized different frameworks as the basis of their analyses.

Using Halliday's systemic-functional framework, Dunmire's study (2005) demonstrated how representations of the future were embedded in and projected through political discourse and how the 'public' was implicated in those

representations. He focused on President Bush's speech on 7 October 2002, which presented his rationale for war against Iraq to a lay, public audience. The analysis showed that the nominalization 'threat' functions in multiple ways to construe a particular vision of future reality. Systematic contrasts in modality served to privilege that future reality over alternative visions and, simultaneously, to implicate the public in the Administration's vision. Dunmire also considered the speech within the context of the Bush Administration's National Security Strategy, particularly its 'policy of preemption'. He argued that the President's speech played a significant role in facilitating the conceptual, linguistic, and political change articulated through the preemption policy. In fact, this article posits that an important ideological component of political discourse derives from its representation of the future and the rhetorical functions those representations serve in implicating more immediate material and discursive actions.

Adetunji (2006) examined the use of deixis for personal, spatial and temporal anchorage of political discourse. Using two thematically and contextually different speeches of Nigeria's president Olusegun Obasanjo as its database, the paper established how politicians could associate with and dissociate from actions taken by them or their officers at different times and how they conscript their subjects into accepting their views on controversial issues or positions.

Drawing upon the work of the philosopher Carole Pateman and the critical discourse analyst Norman Fairclough, Walsch (1998) argued that fraternal networks operate within and between the institutional order of masculinist political discourse and the equally masculinist discourse of the print media, marginalizing female political actors. He argued further that the colonization of mediatized political discourse by market values had had a particularly detrimental effect on the representation of female politicians. A comparative analysis of press coverage of the three candidates in the 1994 British Labour leadership campaign reveals a distinct gender bias in the way in which they were treated. This was evident at the metadiscursive level in terms of patterns of discourse representation which suggested that the fraternity of media workers addressed an ideal reader who was gendered as male. The dominant metaphors and collocations used to describe Margaret Beckett's qualities as a potential party leader in both the national tabloids and broadsheets revealed the extent to which the genre of the political interview in particular, and news narratives in general, were premised on masculinist assumptions. There were, however, contradictory tendencies. For instance, much of the coverage addressed the issue of overt gender bias, while at the same time reproducing it in more covert forms.

Fairclough (2005) himself examined that time's move towards a new regime of international relations and international security from a discourse analytical perspective, focusing on speeches by Tony Blair. He discussed how Blair had contributed to the emergence of a new hegemonic discourse of international relations and international security in speeches given between 2000 and 2003.

Graham, Keenan and Dowd (2004) took Wodak's discourse-historical approach to illustrate the significance of George W. Bush's (2001) declaration of a "war on terror". They presented four exemplary "call to arms" speeches by Pope Urban II (1095), Queen Elizabeth I (1588), Adolf Hitler (1938) and George W. Bush (2001) to exemplify the structure, function, and historical significance of such texts in western societies over the last millennium. They identified four generic features that had endured in such texts throughout that period: (1) an appeal to a legitimate power source that is external to the orator, and which is presented as inherently good; (2) an appeal to the historical importance of the culture in which the discourse is situated; (3) the construction of a thoroughly evil Other; and, (4) an appeal for unification behind the legitimating external power source. They argued further that such texts typically appear in historical contexts characterised by deep crises in political legitimacy.

Krzyzanowski (2005) examined the various discursive constructions, negotiations and reformulations of political and institutional identity of the EU within the recently completed European Convention within the discourse-historical framework developed by Ruth Wodak. The study explored characteristics of the EU discourse about the future of Europe by illustrating the discursive realization of the 'mainstream voice' in the European Convention, its dissolution of national standpoints, and the characteristics of discourse of convention members from the EU-Candidate countries.

Within the same framework (discourse-historical framework), Florian Oberhuber (2005) specially focused on the phenomenological reality of the European Convention process in the context of the on-going constitutional debates in Europe. Based on the empirical study, he critically discussed the application of a model of deliberation for describing and interpreting the Convention process, and doubted its capacity in grasping the essence of the Convention process. It was argued that deliberation, being inherent to human communication under particular ideal condition, was not a best solution to interpreting the Convention process.

Utilizing a framework for the analysis of metaphor that combines a cognitive and a discourse approach, Chilton & Ilyin (1993) analyzed sample texts from Russian, German and French sources in order to obtain an understanding of how the metaphor passed between linguistic and political cultures.

Similarly, Lakoff, as an outstanding political discourse analyst and a 'cognitive activist', emphasized the salient role of metaphors in political discourses and stated that

> One of the fundamental findings of cognitive science is that people think in terms of frames and metaphors -- conceptual structures like those we have been describing. The frames are in the synapses of our brains -- physically present in the form of neural circuitry. When the facts don't fit the frames, the frames are kept and the facts ignored. … I think it is crucially important to understand the cognitive dimensions of politics -- especially when most of our conceptual framing is unconscious and we may not be aware of our own metaphorical thought. (2003: 2-3)

Lakoff (2003) believes that "metaphors can kill" (p.1). In this study, he investigated the effect of such metaphors as 'National As Person metaphor', 'International Community metaphor', plus two narratives that have the structure of classical fairy tales: 'The Self Defense Story' and 'The Rescue Story' in political discourses. He also elaborated on 'Rational Actor Model' which says that "it is irrational to act against your interests and that nations act as if they were 'rational actors' -- individual people trying to maximize their 'gains' and 'assets' and minimize their 'costs' and 'losses'" (p.1). In fact, Lakoff wants to show how political figures, through metaphors, try to justify what they say in order to win the public consensus.

Considering the fact that the study of metaphors in political discourse provides an excellent opportunity to introduce discourse analysis to theories of European integration and international relations, Drulak (2006) suggested a framework of analysis for linking the study of metaphors with the literatures. In a first step, the article connects the International Relations concepts of macro-structure, micro-structure and internalization with the analogous concepts of conceptual metaphors, metaphorical expressions and sedimentation as used in the study of metaphors. In a second step, it examines key metaphors used in discourses on the future of the EU. The empirical analysis suggests that the metaphors of MOTION, CONTAINER and EQUILIBRIUM OF CONTAINERS are the most significant discursive representations of the EU.

Charteris-Black (2006) explored how metaphors contribute to the formation of legitimacy in right-wing political communication on immigration policy in the 2005 British election campaign. It investigated the role played by metaphors in the formation of right-wing political legitimacy and the differences in how metaphor was used by the far and centre-right. The two main types identified were 'natural disaster' metaphors - predominantly relating to fluids - and 'container' metaphors concerning a build up of pressure within or outside a container. The container metaphor is persuasive in political communication because it merges a fourth dimension of *time* with *spatially* based concepts of two or three dimensions. It implies that controlling immigration through maintaining the security of borders (a spatially-based concept) will ensure control over the rate of social change in Britain (a time-based concept). It also heightens emotional fears associated with the penetration of a container.

Presenting a framework for a metaphor-based critical analysis of persuasion in political discourse, Ferrari (2007) examined George W. Bush's public speeches to the nation in April, 2001. More specifically, the analysis was focused on the persuasion strategy enacted to promote the preventive war in Iraq. In his approach, conceptual metaphor as related to emotion constitutes the fundamental argumentative feature and crucial tool to address the matter of persuasion in text, contributing to identifying both the ideological root and the persuasive strategy of a given discourse in the long run. Synthesis of the results showed the potentialities of

metaphor as a privileged cognitive tool for abstracting and constructing discourse strategies.

As the issue of multidisciplinary CDA gained significance, CD analysts conducted various studies using the new framework. For example, van Dijk (2005) examined some of the properties of the speeches by Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar held in the Spanish Parliament in 2003 legitimating his support of the USA and the threatening war against Iraq through a multidisciplinary CDA approach relating discursive, cognitive and sociopolitical aspects of parliamentary debates. It was argued that speeches in parliament should not only be defined in terms of their textual properties, but also in terms of a contextual analysis. Besides an analysis of the usual properties of ideological and political discourse, such as positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation and other rhetoric devices, special attention was paid to *political implicatures* defined as inferences based on general and particular political knowledge as well as on the context models of Aznar's speeches.

In another study, considering 'Manipulation' as one of the crucial notions of Critical Discourse Analysis that requires further theoretical analysis, van Dijk (2006b) offered a triangulated approach to manipulation as a form of social power abuse, cognitive mind control and discursive interaction. Socially, manipulation was defined as illegitimate domination confirming social inequality. Cognitively, manipulation as mind control involved the interference with processes of understanding, the formation of biased mental models and social representations such as knowledge and ideologies. Discursively, manipulation generally involved the usual forms and formats of ideological discourse, such as emphasizing 'Our' good things, and emphasizing 'Their' bad things. At all these levels of analysis it was shown how manipulation was different from legitimate mind control in persuasion and providing information, for instance by stipulating that manipulation is in the best interest of the dominated group and against the best interests of dominated groups. Finally, the theory was illustrated by a partial analysis of a speech by Tony Blair in the House of Commons legitimating the participation of the UK in the US-led war against Iraq in 2003.

Similarly, Wodak (2007) discussed important and fruitful links between (Critical) Discourse Analysis and Pragmatics. In a detailed analysis of three utterances of an election speech by the Austrian rightwing politician Jorg Haider, it was illustrated in which ways a combined discourse-analytical and pragmatic approach grasped the intricacy of anti-Semitic meanings, directed towards the President of the Viennese Jewish Community. The necessity of in-depth context-analysis in multiple layers (from the socio-political context up to the co-text of each utterance) moreover emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary approaches when investigating such complex issues as racism and anti-Semitism as produced and reproduced in discourse. More specifically, the relevance of pragmatic devices such as insinuations, presuppositions and implicatures, was discussed when analyzing instances of 'coded language', i.e., utterances with

indirect and latent racist and anti-Semitic meanings as common in official discourses in Western Europe.

Most recently, Rojecky (2008) analysed commentaries and editorials in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* prior to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to isolate the mechanism underlying the success of Bush administration's appeals and the implications of its success for media elites' support of post-9/11 U.S. foreign policy.

Related studies carried out in Iran

Iranian researchers have conducted relevant researches to manifest the close link between discourse and ideological manipulations. In this regard, Yarmohammadi (2000, 2001) has scrutinized the relationship between the text and context to detect the hidden ideologies of the texts analyzed.

Yarmohammadi (2000) demonstrated how particular discursive structures utilized in a text manifested the producer's ideology. He also elaborated on the representation of social actors. Yarmohammadi (2001) states that particular attitudes towards power relations and ideological functions reside in the people's minds, causing them to think, speak and look at the world in certain manners. He believes that language tends to hide rather than reveal. Hence, the CDA researchers are supposed to delineate these hidden aspects.

Utilizing Hodge & Kress's framework, Yarmohammadi & Rashidi (2003) investigated the degree of explicitness and implicitness of editorials in the Iranian newspapers. In fact, this study was intended to find a relationship between discursive structures and underlying ideologies.

Khosravi Nik (2000) studied Iranian newspapers to show how political ideologies are produced and spread in texts in a covert way. He used four linguistic features, namely, nominalization, active/passive, transactive/ nontransactive and naming. He categorized and critically analyzed them to prove how they are manipulated to serve the goals of certain political parties.

Ghane (2001), in an attempt to illustrate the role of language in disseminating certain ideologies, compared some English and Persian plays and film scripts. He showed the interaction existing between the language thought across males and females.

Another CDA research was conducted by Namjoo (2003). She tried to illustrate how one single issue, that is, terrorism is viewed and represented differently by Khatami, the president of Iran, and Bush, the president of USA. They both provided their own definitions of terrorism and offered some measures to crack down on it. Namjoo made use of particular discursive structures to show how the underlying ideology of the speaker influences the representation of realities.

In the same line of research, Bagheinpur (2002) points out that CDA is intended to show the role of language in manifesting and creating power relations, as well as the ideological structures of societies. These power relations are created,

enacted and legitimated by the application of certain linguistic devices. Hence, it is the role of the CDA researchers to create an awareness about the hidden ideologies in the texts.

By the same token, Ghanbari (2004) applying van Leeuwen's framework, studied 20 children's and adults' short stories to disclose how language is manipulated. She came to the conclusion that, while in political texts discursive structures were mainly used for concealment, in literature, they were mostly used to reveal and emphasize reality. Moreover, she showed that compared to children's literature, in adults' short stories more incursive structures were used.

Another CDA study was carried out by Amalsaleh (2004). It investigated how language as a social practice has been employed in EFL high school and university textbook to expose the underlying ideology, representing certain social groups. It aimed to find out how representations, used in texts, construct certain social and normative realities, such as subjectivity and objectivity and identity. The study intended to see whether the curriculum developers or the authors of the textbooks, consciously or unconsciously, have given a special priority to a particular social group, such as a special gender, social class, or race in developing the content of the texts. The study examined the representation of social actors in three types of textbooks used to teach English at junior and senior high schools and universities. The texts demonstrated a differential representation of social actors. All the books examined in this study revealed their tendency toward making normative views of gender, class and ethnicity relations, in which middle- class urban male was considered to be the norm.

Dealing with the essential linguistic, social and political information, van Dijk's (2004) framework has been approved to be a comprehensive and precise conceptual framework in providing the researcher with the nuances of ideological manipulation. Unlike other frameworks proposed in the field of CDA, van Dijk's (2004) design is a combination of argumentation, political strategies, rhetorical devices, semantic strategies, and stylistic information and consequently an accurate tool for discovering the distortion of realities in the process of discourse production. Furthermore, taking such disciplines as politics, sociology, and history into consideration, van Dijk's Framework (2004) has become a thorough, all-purpose and worthwhile design with respect to the value attached to the concept of 'interdisciplinary' recently.

Considering all of its above-mentioned advantages, this study selects van Dijk's (2004) framework for the purpose of analyzing the materials. Besides, since most of the previous research carried out in Iran utilized syntactic oriented approaches, particularly that of Hodge & Kress (1979), the need for a study using the semantic and rhetorical devices is obvious. Hence, the present paper, making use of van Dijk's (2004) model with its emphasis on rhetorical and semantic strategies, could be considered as an attempt to fulfill this demand.

The situation

During the US presidential primary elections of 2008, one of the main controversies between the major political parties (Democratic and Republican) was the issue of the continuation of the war in Iraq. After about six or seven years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq during the eight-year administration of George W. Bush, and the uncertain future of Iraq, the question whether to continue the war in Iraq or end it became an important subject in the candidates' presidential campaigns in Democratic and Republican parties. The candidates in each party tried to justify their claims and persuade the whole nation to accept them. The speeches, debates, mottos, sentences and even the words they utilized in their campaigns were laden with their political ideologies.

Objective of the Study

Utilizing Van Dijk's (2004) framework, this study intends to examine the US Democratic and Republican presidential candidates' speeches in the presidential primaries for 2008 on the issue of the continuation of the war in Iraq in order to find out how the candidates of each political party try to justify their ideas and persuade their audience by utilizing subtle ideological discourse structures in their speech. In fact, this study is an attempt to show how one single issue, that is, the continuation of war in Iraq is viewed and represented differently by three Republican and three Democratic presidential candidates of the USA. Particularly, this study tries to answer the following questions:

1. What is the underlying ideology of each political party (Republican and Democratic) with respect to the issue of the continuation of war in Iraq?
2. Based on van Dijk's (2004) framework, how do the candidates in each party try to justify themselves and persuade the nation in order to win their consensus?

Methodology

The data and data sources

The materials used in this study are the transcripts of the candidates' speeches in presidential primaries of the USA for 2008. There are six texts, three of which are the transcripts of three Republican candidates' and the other three are the transcripts of three Democratic candidates' speeches. Only that part of each transcript which is related to the issue of war in Iraq was selected as the representative of each candidate's speech. All the transcripts were taken from the internet. The speeches selected here were given by the candidates in a range of

time from September 5, 2007 to February 7, 2008. At the time when the transcripts were selected, Senator John McCain, Senator Mike Huckabee and Governer Mitt Romney were the three forerunner Republican candidates and Senator Obama, Senator Hillary Clinton and senator John Edwards were the three forerunner Democratic nominees whose speeches were chosen for the purpose of this study.

Analytical framework

The framework employed in this study was that of van Dijk's (2004). In the framework, he elaborates on 27 ideological strategies among which the fundamental dichotomy of 'self positive-representation' and 'other negative-representation' stand out. Positive self-representation or in-group favouritism is a semantic macro- strategy used for the purpose of 'face keeping' or 'impression management' (van Dijk 2004). Negative other-representation is another semantic macro-strategy regarding in-groups and out groups, that is, their division between 'good' and 'bad', superior and inferior, US and THEM. Van Dijk (2004) introduces these two major strategies in the form of an 'ideological square':

> Emphasize *Our* good things
> Emphasize *Their* bad things
> De-emphasize *Our* bad things
> De-emphasize *Their* good things (p. 18).

Besides the general strategies of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation, van Dijk (2004) introduces 25 more detailed and subtle ideological discourse structures. The selected key terms of the framework are defined in the following:

Actor description: The way we describe actors or members of a particular society either in a negative or positive way.

Authority: Mentioning authorities to support one's claims.

Categorization: Assigning people to different groups.

Consensus: Creating agreement and solidarity

Disclaimer: Presenting an idea as something positive and then rejecting it by the use of terms such as 'but' in the second sentence.

Evidentiality: Using hard facts to support one's ideas.

Hyperbole: A device for enhancing and exaggerating meaning.

Implication: Deducing or inferring implicit information.

Irony: Saying something and meaning something else.

Lexicalization: an overall ideological strategy for negative other-representation through the semantic features of the words.

National Self Glorification: A device to create positive self representation by glorifying one's country.

Number Game: Using numbers and statistics to appear credible.

Polarization: Categorizing people as belonging to US with good attributes and THEM with bad attributes.

Presupposition: The common shared knowledge between people or the ideas taken for granted in a proposition.

Vagueness: Creating uncertainty and ambiguity.

Victimization: Telling bad stories about people who do not belong to US

In analyzing the texts, those strategies used in the speeches are presented in **bold face**.

Sample Analysis and Discussion

Republican Candidates

Text 1 Transcript of Senator John McCain's CPAC Speech on February 7th, 2008

...
Senator Clinton and Senator Obama will withdraw our forces from Iraq based on an arbitrary timetable designed for the sake of political expediency, and which recklessly ignores the profound human calamity and dire threats to our security that would ensue.
I intend to win the war, and trust in the proven judgment of our commanders there and the courage and selflessness of the Americans they have the honor to command. I share the grief over the terrible losses we have suffered in its prosecution. There is no other candidate for this office who appreciates more than I do just how awful war is. But I know that the costs in lives and treasure we would incur should we fail in Iraq will be far greater than the heartbreaking losses we have suffered to date. And I will not allow that to happen.
...

CDA of Text 1

The whole first paragraph of Sen. McCain's speech is **negative other-presentation**, with this 'Other' being the forerunner democratic presidential candidates, Sen. Clinton and Sen. Obama. He does so by using such **lexicalizations** as 'arbitrary timetable' which is designed for the sake of 'political expediency'. In fact, by using terms 'arbitrary' and 'expediency', Sen. McCain wants to show the democrats' lack of a well-organized plan for the withdrawal of the troops from Iraq. He continues **presenting** democrats **negatively** through a negative **description** of the timetable as one which 'recklessly ignores' the difficulty of the present situation. He tries to exaggerate the gravity of the situation by using **hyperbolic** phrases such as 'profound human calamity' and 'dire threats' **implying** that the continuation of the war in Iraq is inevitable. He shows the troops and the American people as his, and consequently the republicans' friends and allies through **polarized** terms like 'our forces' in the first line and 'our security' in the last line of the first paragraph. Particularly, the phrase 'dire threats to our security' could be considered as a political strategy to win the consensus of the whole nation. In fact, he **presupposes** that such threats still exist and every body knows that. As a result, war should still continue.

After criticizing democrats in the first paragraph of the transcript, Sen. McCain employs **positive self-presentation** to glorify his own measures which will be taken in the future ('I intend to win the war') and his party's activities which have been done so far ('the proven judgment of our commanders'). In fact, he admits and confirms the soundness and plausibility of George W. Bush's and his government's decisions, as group members of the Republican Party, with respect to war in Iraq. Considering the Americans and the forces fighting in Iraq as supporters and proponents of the republicans and consequently group members in the previous part of his speech, McCain **describes** the Americans **positively** by referring to their 'courage' and 'selflessness'. In the second and third line of the second paragraph, McCain shows **empathy** for those who have had hard times during the war by 'sharing the grief over the terrible losses' they had suffered in the prosecution of the war and in this way wants to prove his humanitarian sense. More obviously, he **presents himself positively** when he claims himself as being the one who more than others 'appreciates … how awful war is'. However, in line 8, through **rhetoric**, he warns foreshadows 'far greater' losses 'in lives and treasure' if they fail in Iraq. And he explicitly and forcefully states that he 'will not allow that to happen'. In fact, through **empathy**, McCain first draws the nation's attention towards himself and then in a decisive manner threatens them and very delicately justifies the inevitability of the continuation of the war in Iraq.

Text 2 Transcript of Senator Mike Huckabee vs Senator Ron Paul Exchange (From the transcript of the New Hampshire GOP Debate) September 5, 2007

…
MR. HUCKABEE: We have to continue the surge. And let me explain why, Chris. When I was a little kid, if I went into a store with my mother, she had a simple rule for me. If I picked something off the shelf of the store and I broke it, I bought it.

I learned don't pick something off the shelf I can't afford to buy.

Well, what we did in Iraq, we essentially broke it. It's our responsibility to do the best we can to try to fix it before we just turn away because something is at stake. Senator McCain made a great point, and let me make this clear. If there's anybody on this stage that understands the word honor, I've got to say Senator McCain understands that word -- (applause, cheers) -- because he has given his country a sacrifice the rest of us don't even comprehend. (Continued applause)

And on this issue, when he says we can't leave until we've left with honor, I 100 percent agree with him because, Congressman, whether or not we should have gone to Iraq is a discussion that historians can have, but we're there. We bought it because we broke it. We've got a responsibility to the honor of this country and to the honor of every man and woman who has served in Iraq and ever served in our military to not leave them with anything less than the honor that they deserve. (Cheers, applause)
…

CDA of Text 2

In the first four lines, Huckabee wants to persuade people that war should be continued by recounting a **short story** about his own childhood. In this story, **euphemistically**, he **compares** the war in Iraq to an object that they have broken in the store and the only way to fix it is to buy it; that is, the only way to compensate for this broken war is to continue the surge and complete it rather than turning away. And his reason is that something is 'at stake'. He uses **lexicalization** and the phrase 'at stake' to emphasize that something of importance and value will be lost if their plan or action is not successful. And when he says, 'I learned don't pick something off the shelf I can't afford to buy,' he **implies** that they should have known that they couldn't afford the war in Iraq, but now that they have broken it they have to buy it; that is complete it with 'honor'. Confirming what Sen. McCain has said about leaving Iraq with honor, he once again tries to justify the continuation of war.

Using **rhetoric,** he says, 'I 100 percent agree with him ….' Huckkabee **rhetorically repeats** his motto, 'We bought it because we broke it' to emphasize the necessity of the continuation of war in Iraq. Then he **compares** the continuation of the surge to a "responsibility to the honor of this country and to the honor of every man and woman who has served in Iraq and ever served in our military to not

leave them with anything less than the honor that they deserve". By this **comparison** he **implies** that withdrawal from Iraq at this point of time means treating those who have served in Iraq and in the America's military with dishonor, disrespect and something they do not deserve.

Text 3 Transcript of Governor Mitt Romney's CPAC speech on Thursday, February 07, 2008

...
And Barack and Hillary have made their intentions clear regarding Iraq and the war on terror. They would retreat and declare defeat. And the consequence of that would be devastating. It would mean attacks on America, launched from safe havens that make Afghanistan under the Taliban look like child's play. About this, I have no doubt.

I disagree with Senator McCain on a number of issues, as you know. But I agree with him on doing whatever it takes to be successful in Iraq, on finding and executing Osama bin Laden, and on eliminating Al Qaeda and terror. If I fight on in my campaign, all the way to the convention, I would forestall the launch of a national campaign and make it more likely that Senator Clinton or Obama would win. And in this time of war, I simply cannot let my campaign, be a part of aiding surrender to terror.
...

CDA of Text 3

Romney **presents** the two forerunner democratic candidates, Obama and Clinton, **negatively** in the way they are going to deal with the war in Iraq. He considers this war as 'war on terror' and in this way, he wants to show the necessity of such a war. Then he utilizes **lexicalization** and expresses Obama's and Clinton's intention that they would 'retreat' and 'declare defeat'. Using such terms, he tries to humiliate the democratic candidates in front of the American nation and at the same time he condemns the idea of withdrawing the forces from Iraq at this point of time. In fact, he considers withdrawal as a declaration of defeat. He continues disagreeing with Obama's and Clinton's plan by addressing the consequences of such a measure as 'devastating'. This **lexicalization** gives an extremely sad and shocking impression in such a way that makes the continuation of war an inevitable task. Then, very confidently and decisively, he begins recounting those devastating consequences, one of which is 'attacks on America'. In fact, he is making use of **evidentiality** by reminding people of the terrorist attack of September 11, in a threatening tone to justify the continuation of 'war on terror'.

In the second paragraph, Romney refers to Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda and links 'finding Osama' and 'eliminating Al Qaeda' to the success in Iraq. In this way, he might want to remind people of what the missions were in the first place; execution of Saddam Hussein and Osama, and the elimination of Al Qaeda. And that war does not end unless these goals are attained. Then he says, 'If I fight on in my campaign, all the way to the convention, I would forestall the launch of a national campaign and make it more likely that Senator Clinton or Obama would

win'. By this sentence Romney **implies** that if either Obama or Clinton wins the election, this cannot be the result of a national campaign. In fact, very delicately, he wants to say that the whole nation agrees with his idea of the continuation of war in Iraq and not with Clinton's or Obama's withdrawal plan. Finally, when he says, '… in this time of war, I simply cannot let my campaign, be a part of aiding surrender to terror', he, through **lexicalization**, equals retreating to surrender to terror'. In fact, he **implies** that the democrats' campaigns who encourage withdrawal are 'aiding surrender to terror'

Democratic Candidates

Text 1 Transcript of Thursday's Democratic presidential debate (Senator Barack Obama) on January 31, 2008

…
I have to hug mothers in rope lines during town hall meetings as they weep over their fallen sons and daughters. I want to get our troops home safely, and I want us as a country to have this mission completed honorably.
…
And in the meantime, we have spent billions of dollars, lost thousands of lives.
Thousands more have been maimed and injured as a consequence and are going to have difficulty putting their lives back together again.
So understand that this has undermined our security. In the meantime, Afghanistan has slid into more chaos than existed before we went into Iraq.
…

CDA of Text 1

Empathy ('I have to hug mothers … weep over their fallen sons and daughters') is the most obvious strategy Sen. Obama utilizes in the first paragraph of the transcript to show his disagreement with the war. His disagreement becomes clear when he explicitly says, 'I want to get our troops home safely.' In this sentence, Obama makes use of **polarization** by addressing the American soldiers as 'our troops', and in this way considers them as his own party's (democrats) friends and allies. The word 'safely' at the end of this sentence **implies** that the troops are not safe in Iraq now that they are at war and that they will be secure when they are at home. He **compares** what he intends to do, that is, getting the troops home, to a 'mission' and gives importance to it. He also asks the whole nation which he addresses as 'us as a country' that this mission be completed 'honorably'. Here again Obama considers the Americans as democrats' allies through **polarization**. He **presupposes** that all the Americans agree with him and his party. He also **describes** the getting back of the troops as an honorable measure which should be completed 'honourably' and in this way justifies his idea of putting an end to this war and the withdrawal of the forces.

In line 4, Obama speaks **rhetorically** utilizing the **number game** when he says that they have spent 'billions of dollars', 'lost thousands of lives' and

'thousands more have been maimed and injured'. In fact, he tries to condemn the war in Iraq as the cause of all the **burden** it imposes on the country. Then he continues criticizing war through **lexicalization** ('undermined') and **polarization** ('our security') when he says, 'this has undermined our security'. Obama addresses the whole nation as democrats' group members and allies. And in this way tries to win the Americans' consensus about ending the war. Then he refers to Afghanistan as one example of the result of the war. When he says that 'Afghanistan has slid into more chaos …,' Obama tries to **present** the republicans **negatively** and implies that by this war not only weren't they able to solve the problem of Afghanistan, but also they made the situation even worse and caused 'more chaos'.

Text 2 Transcript of Democratic presidential debate (Senator Hillary Clinton) on January 21, 2008

...
CLINTON: I'm looking to bring our troops home, starting within 60 days of my becoming president, and here's why, Joe. I have the greatest admiration for the American military. I serve on the Senate Armed Services Committee. I've been to Iraq three times. I've met with the leaders of the various factions. But there is no military solution, and our young men and women should not remain as the referees of their conflict.

I believe what you're seeing happen is twofold. Of course the surge, the so-called surge, was able to pacify certain parts of Iraq. If we put enough of our men and women and equipment in, we're going to be able to have some tactical military success. But the whole purpose of the surge was to force the Iraqi government to move quickly towards the kind of resolution that only it can bring about.

I think what is motivating the Iraqi government is the debate in the political campaign here. They know they will no longer have a blank check from George Bush, that I will with draw troops from Iraq. And I believe that will put even more pressure on the Iraqis to finally make the decisions that they have to make.
...

CDA of Text 2

Clinton starts her speech by going straight to her intention that is, bringing the American troops home. She talks very decisively that she starts withdrawal within 60 days of her becoming president. Then she gives her reasons for doing so. After the admiration of the American military and admitting that she herself has served in the army, she denies military actions as a solution through a **disclaimer**, when she says 'But there is no military solution, and our young men and women should not remain as the referees of their conflict.' She also invokes the audience's **empathy** by referring to the American troops as 'our young men and women'. Furthermore, by utilizing the possessive pronoun 'our' she is making use of **polarization** and considers the American forces as her allies. In the same sentence she makes a **comparison** in which American soldiers have become like referees of

the conflict of various factions' leaders as a result of this war and in this way she **negatively presents** the republicans as the agents of this situation.

In the second paragraph, once again Clinton makes use of a **disclaimer** in which she first gives credit to the war to some extent by saying this sentence, 'Of course the surge, the so-called surge, was able to pacify certain parts of Iraq.' In the same line, she continues that 'If we put enough of our men and women and equipment in, we're going to be able to have some tactical military success.' However, this second sentence looks like an **irony** for those who think that the United States has put even too much so far into this war let alone putting 'enough' of lives and treasure into it. Maybe she intentionally wants to ridicule those republicans who believe the cost paid for this war is not enough yet. Then in the rest of her speech, she reminds everybody of the 'whole purpose of the surge' and that is 'to force the Iraqi government to move quickly towards the kind of resolution that only it can bring about'. By this sentence she **implies** that unless the Iraqi government moves towards a resolution, the continuation of the war will be useless.

In the third paragraph, Clinton claims that the present debate in her campaign is the motivating factor for the Iraqi government towards this resolution. And her reason for her claim is that 'They know they will no longer have a blank check from George Bush'. Through this **metaphor**, Clinton **implies** that staying in Iraq without the announcement of a deadline acts as a blank check without any written amount on it. And this does not force the Iraqi government to move quickly towards a decision. In fact, she is **presenting** George Bush, a republican, **negatively** by this sentence.

Text 3 Transcript of Democratic presidential debate (Senator John Edwards) on January 21, 2008

...
EDWARDS: Even President Bush recognizes that unless the Sunni and Shia reach some political reconciliation, there cannot be stability in Iraq. And the problem with this definition and evaluation of where the progress has been made is that there has been no meaningful political progress.

There has been a little bit, in fairness. A little bit, but very little. And I don't think it changes anything.

The one thing I would say is -- and I would actually like for both of them [Sen McCain and George Bush] to have a chance to respond to is this -- what I have said very clearly, all of us has said, we would end the war. And I don't have any doubt that all of us are committed to that, I don't doubt that. But how aggressively and how quickly is an important question.

And I have said in the first year that I am president, I will have all combat troops out of Iraq. All combat missions will end in Iraq, and there will be no permanent military bases in Iraq.
(APPLAUSE)

CDA of Text 3

By the first sentence, 'Even President Bush recognizes that unless the Sunni and Shia reach some political reconciliation, there cannot be stability in Iraq', Edwards **implies** that the continuation of war is worthless unless Sunni and Shia make a compromise. And when he says "even president Bush recognizes that …", he makes use of **rhetoric** and emphasizes that republicans themselves recognize the uselessness of the continuation of war in Iraq. When he says '… there has been no meaningful political progress. There has been a little bit, in fairness. A little bit, but very little. And I don't think it changes anything', he tries to **present** the republicans **negatively** by belittling and in fact underestimating their measures.

In the third paragraph, Edwards, very decisively, expresses his intention that 'we would end the war'. He utilizes **polarization** by using the personal pronoun 'we'. In fact, he is expressing the idea of the Democratic Party. He goes further in the next sentence 'And I don't have any doubt that all of us are committed to that, I don't doubt that', and very confidently, addresses the whole audience as his allies through **polarization**. In this way he is naturalizing the issue of stopping the war by showing it as a fact accepted by everyone.

Conclusions

A close examination of the transcripts through van Dijk's (2004) comprehensive framework revealed that the Republican candidates tend to be against the withdrawal of the American troops from Iraq. However, the Democratic candidates showed the opposite tendency. To justify their claims, the candidates of each party utilized different subtle ideological discourse structures all of which could be classified under the two major strategies of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. Lexicalization, polarization and rhetoric were frequently used as effective devices in persuasion and justification. The candidates, as political figures, seek 'legitimization', which according to Cap (2008) is "a major objective pursued by a political speaker seeking justification of the proclaimed actions". Van Dijk's (2004) framework, as a cognitive approach out of which the 27 ideological discourse structures arise, proved to be an appropriate design which has paid attention to many of the techniques by which political figures try to control and penetrate into the mind of their audience to reach their goal. These are discursive structures applied to enhance, mitigate, avoid or exacerbate an issue. Republican tries to legitimize but Democratic candidates delegitimize the issue.

The results of this study showed that, particularly in political discourses, CDA provides a great opportunity to discover the realities which according to Fairclough (1995) has been distorted and naturalized as "non-ideological common sense" (p.27).

It also helps critical discourse scholars to make a more specific contribution to get more insights into the crucial role of discourse in the reproduction of dominance and inequality.

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