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CDA UNDERTAKEN THROUGH SFL: EMPLOYMENT OF APPRAISAL
IN CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE NEWS

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ABSTRACT

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is concerned with power relations enacted through discourse and discursive ideological load of texts. Such power is realized through discourse of people in power; i.e. people who have access to scarce social resources, and therefore has a powerful discourse as well. CDA endeavors to lay bare such power relations and hidden ideologies. On the other hand, Appraisal is a framework belonging to interpersonal, social metafiction of language in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). This framework deals with how evaluations are realized through discourse. Appraisal encompasses three subsystems, one of them being Attitude – the subsystem employed in this study. The present research aims at suggesting Appraisal, more precisely its Attitude, as a linguistic tool to conduct CDA more objectively and more scientists; and fill the gap Van Dijk had pointed out regarding the need for a linguistically-oriented tool for CDA, since almost all CDA has been conducted subjectively to date. To demonstrate the extent to which this tool works in CDA, three news reports about November 2015 Paris attacks were chosen and analyzed employing Attitude. These reports were chosen due to the critical nature of the event, and also since journalists in any society are regarded as discursively powerful individuals, who can impress their audience ideologically. Each of these three reports represented a specific situation considering how journalists reporting various aspects of the same event might use or might not use the power they have and in what direction. The data obtained out of the Attitudinal analysis of these reports were totally in line with what was inferred in subjective analysis of them – the classic method of conducting CDA. It would be concluded that the employment of Appraisal in CDA as a linguistic tool works well, and more objective CDA practices would be feasible by doing so. This suggested a new method of CDA is worthy of being used as a supportive method at least (beside the subjective classic methods).

KEYWORDS: Text Analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis, Attitude, Appraisal

INTRODUCTION

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a kind of discourse analytical approach concerned with demonstration of how social power, dominance and abuse are accomplished or apposed through text and talk; and by doing so, its ultimate ambition is to withstand social discrimination (Van Dijk, 2001). CDA is neither taken as a homogenous model nor a distinctive approach, and particular theory of discourse analysis (and is considered a perspective or attitude at best) as Van Dijk has put, since holding a tinge of critical perspective is viable in all sorts of discourse analysis practices; and as Fairclough mentions, the most outstanding aspect differentiating CDA from another discourse analysis method is its clinch on the distinctive "critical" attitude of analysis and contemplation. "Critical" means laying bare hidden sides and causes, which are challenging to confront directly due to being covert and implied.

CDA- whose theory formerly known as Critical Linguistics (CA) – is problem-oriented; and contrary to the prevalent misconception, CDA does not have to cover merely political or highly serious social problems. It is capable of utilising in almost every text and talk with every topic so as to exhibit its hidden dimensions, especially regarding power relations alive all through the spoken or written text. As Van Dijk (1998) puts, power is defined in terms of access to scares social resources, e.g. knowledge, money, fame, etc., and control – control of discourse in every aspect as well. Thus, since discourse affects mental models and social demonstrations, control of discourse could result in control of individuals' minds. Social communities usually resist such power abuses; however, sometimes such power abuses would be accepted by social groups in the form of "hegemony" – legitimized power – and people might advertently or inadvertently accept such power abuses of the dominant groups integrated in their daily habits, norms, and laws.

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the discipline out of which the Appraisal framework has evolved, favors the possibility of a more profound exposition of linguistic phenomena in the light of references to the functional demands put upon the language by its users, plus social functions performed by the language (Zienkowski, Ostman, & Verschueren, 2011). These social meta-functions are attributable to three broad categories. Through the "ideational" meta-function, language reflects the totality of experiences. The "interpersonal" meta-function fashions, social roles and relationships; and the "textual" meta-function molds both internal and contextual coherence of texts.

Emerging within the zone of the "interpersonal" social meta-function of language in Systemic Functional Linguistics, Appraisal is a framework for investigation of the mechanisms through which, language is put to use for evaluation and adaptation of stances by discourse producers. The medium for the realization of Appraisal is mainly lexical rather than grammatical, although the significant role grammatical structures play in such realization is unchallengeable (Matthiessen, Teruya, & Lam, 2010). Appraisal inquiries into how discursive productions of writers and speakers is a reflection of the way they pass judgment on other people, events, material objects, and in general, the way they see the world. The appraisal is the language of evaluation composed of three focal simultaneous subsystems, each of which consisting of the subcategories of their own: Attitude, Engagement and Graduation (Martin & White, 2005). This research has though been concerned with Attitude. Attitude negotiates the manner in which, feelings are explicated and demonstrated in English texts. Attitude in turn, is the crux of three semantic regions traditionally pointed out as emotion, ethics and aesthetics; also respectively known as Affect, Judgment and Appreciation:

- Affect displays positive and negative feelings engendered in discourse producers mainly through an external agent.

- Judgment establishes assessments about individuals, taking into account social norms and morality; i.e. passing judgment on individuals through checking them against current social norms as the optimal patterns in a particular context.

- Appreciation is concerned with passing judgments on natural and semiotic phenomena.

While CDA and SFL might appear two totally distinct areas, there are principles which are common between them. One of these common principles is that discourse affects social practices and social ideologies and this influence is bidirectional; i.e. social practices affect language as well. Another common principle in CDA and SFL is that discourse producers consciously or unconsciously make choices in their use of language regarding grammatical forms and vocabulary. These choices are systematic and ideologically-driven. Also, Halliday's belief regarding the social nature of

language could be considered as a key issue in CDA practices. Besides this susceptibility of interconnection, the researcher noticed a gap in CDA studies that Van Dijk has pointed out in his 1998 article. What he talks about is the need for a more linguistically oriented study of text and talk in CDA so as to diminish subjectivity in such studies.

Considering the statements above, this study aims at introducing Appraisal system, especially its Attitude subsystem, as the suitable linguistically oriented tool for conducting CDA studies more objectively and more scientifically. The application of Appraisal in CDA will be demonstrated through conducting CDA is employing Attitude subsystem of Appraisal in three news reports about a controversial event of recent years, the November 2015 Paris Attacks. Through demonstration of such analysis, this study hopes to contribute to both CDA and SFL fields by suggesting a new method of CDA and a new utilization of Appraisal, with a focus on its Attitude subsystem.

PROCEDURE

The three selected news reports were subjected to complete analysis as the corpus of this study. They were scrutinized manually and in a sentence-by-sentence fashion by the researcher, so as to extract and lay bare the Attitudinal patterns of the whole selected texts. The analysis carried out falls on the meticulous end of the scale. The analysis was also carried out in a context-dependent fashion; i.e. the contexts in which the Attitudinal incidents occurred were brought into play for the sake of more accurate discernment of the Attitudinal incidents, Type, Strategy and possible Polarity of them. The Attitudinal choices within the whole selected news reports, their Type (Affect, Judgment or Appreciation), the Strategy in which they had been realized (Inscribed or Invoked), and the possible Polarity they possessed (Positive or Negative) were identified by the researcher.

Having carried out Attitudinal analysis of the corpus, the numerical analysis of the data was conducted. The total number of Attitudinal choices and also the number of occurrences for each mode were counted using Microsoft Word software. Since the "total" numbers of the evaluated expressions for each mode were not equal, for a more tangible view of the results and finer interpretations and comparisons, the simple percentages of the total numbers and occurrences for each mode were also calculated manually so as to equalize the total numbers; therefore, the comparisons of Type, Polarity, and Strategy between the categories would be much easier; i.e. both occurrences and percentages of the frequencies were identified. These two paths of calculation and analysis were considered to be sufficient for the present research for the purposes of data analysis and following discussions on the issues engaged with.

DISCUSSIONS AND ANALYSIS

As it was mentioned above, in CDA "power" could be regarded as access to scarce social resources; and as Van Dijk has put in his 1998 article, journalists have also access to some kind of scarce social resource, which is public media. Through the media they have the power of imposing their own views about various issues with their audience or at least impress them, and by doing so, control their minds, whether these journalists aim for such impression or not. They have access to the media and they know the art of discourse manipulation; thus, they are powerful. They might use the power they have or not. Sometimes they decide to be a totally neutral reporter of events for any reason. However, there are occasions on which these journalists decide to shout out their views and openly impress their audience, e.g. in cases of advocacy, criticism, etc. A third case might be feasible as well, which is when journalists impress their audience covertly, they could be unconscious of doing so or they might do it purposefully and tactfully.

The language of reporters in three news reports exemplifying each case has been analyzed employing the Attitude subsystem of Appraisal to see, to what extent this method works to conduct a more scientific and a more objective CDA.

The first news report entitled as *Authorities missed many 'red flags' before Paris shootings*, is a good sample representing a situation in which journalists try to overtly express their own beliefs, impress the audience, and manipulate their minds through their discursive power. The news report is a lengthy critical report in which the two reporters overtly criticize the authorities responsible for the disastrous results of the attacks. They start with how lax these French authorities have appeared while receiving continuous warnings from Turkey about the terrorists who have planned and executed the attacks later; pointing out "On any one of these occasions, police, intelligence and security services had an opportunity to detain at least some of the men who launched the attacks." Then, they continue their criticisms referring to other culprits of the attacks, such as Belgium "as a weak link in European security". The report continues with criticizing authorities of the European Union, and even other countries such as Syria – "Missteps did not just happen in France and Belgium" The reporters also talk about how at large these ISIS felons still are. As it would be inferred from this summary, the journalists are criticizing and also highlighting the negative aspects of people in power and what they have and have not done. The report could be considered as a *report of failures*.

What has obtained out of the Attitudinal analysis of the report, reflects what goes on in the report perfectly. Type and Strategy of Attitudinal choices of these news reports would be discarded, and the emphasis for CDA should be put on Polarity. As it was verified by previous studies of the researcher, it was discussed in detail that since our discourse in any situation and any genre is replete with descriptions of things and events, and then description of people; the usual pattern is that Appreciation is the most frequent type, and then Judgment and Affect respectively. Also, it was pointed out the typical evaluative discourse production Strategy is Inscribed evaluative expressions. These are true for these reports as well and the same pattern among all these three reports. This is the reason Polarity is the part that should receive the greatest focus here and in general in CDA.

The polarity of the journalists' evaluate expressions in the first news report, exhibits a definite negative attitude with almost 21% of negative and only 3% of positive evaluative expressions in their report (the remaining percentage belongs to neutral expressions). This is perfectly in line with what goes on in the report – counting the authorities' failures starting from *before* the attacks up to *after* the attacks, without even a single reference to a positive aspect regarding them, and talking about ISIS felons engaged in the attacks. For any reason, the reporters are trying to impress the readers and make them believe how reckless these people in power are. They try to convince their audience by referring to any related part or considerable recklessness background of the people in power. These journalists are overtly using their power, and what is inferred from the results of the Attitudinal analysis of this report is, so in line with what (even a novice) discourse analyst can subjectively infer from this lengthy report of criticism.

Table 1: Distribution of Type of Attitudinal Choices in News Report 1

Type	Affect	Judgment	Appreciation
Instances	1	215	366
Percentages	0.17%	36.94%	62.88%

Table 2: Distribution of Polarity of Attitudinal Choices in News Report 1

Polarity	Positive	Negative
Instances	20	123
Percentages	3.43%	21.13%

Table 3: Distribution of Strategy of Attitudinal Choices in News Report 1

Strategy	Inscribed	Invoked
Instances	503	79
Percentages	86.42%	13.57%

The second news report is about president Hollande's "modest poll boost" after the attacks. The report says that the "unpopular" president's handling of the terrorist attacks has given him a better reputation among the French. Discarding Type and Strategy of evaluative expressions of the reporter and focusing on Polarity, it is clearly evident that the reporter is communicating some kind of negates regarding president Hollande and his actions. In the reporter' s discourse there are only 2 instances of positive evaluation, while there are 18 instances of negative evaluation; i.e. almost 2% of positive and almost 21% of negative evaluative expressions in her discourse (with the remaining 77% of neutral expressions). Besides, these data obtained through Attitudinal analysis, and referring to the classical subjective analysis method of CDA, there are points that attract an astute reader's attention. On the surface of it, the reports is indicating that president Holland's reputation has improved after the attacks; the report seems to be neutral and a mere reporting of the event, while it is not. Besides reporting these matters about president Holland's reputation improvement, the reporter mentions out some marginal (and even unnecessary) issues regarding "France's high unemployment, social problems and stagnant economy", all of which are considered by critics as the president's failure in handling them. Actually, the reporter is not criticizing the president, but tactfully refers to other critics' ideas. Although in her report she (the reporter) talks about president's success in handling the attacks, by mentioning out other people's negative ideas about the president and referring indirectly to his previous failures in other areas, intentionally or unintentionally she is conveying her negative attitude about the president. Whether she is aware of it or not, the reporter is impressing her audience in this way; i.e. at least to some extent, she is controlling the readers' minds and using the power she has as a journalist to convince them president Hollande cannot wash out the failures he had by his good leadership in handling the attacks. This has been reflected even in the title she has chosen for the report – *Unpopular Hollande gets modest poll boost after Paris attacks*. This report could be considered as a case exemplifying when a journalist uses his/her power to manipulate the audience covertly through discourse. The findings of the subjective and Attitudinal analyses were in line here as well.

Table 4: Distribution of Type of Attitudinal Choices in News Report 2

Type	Affect	Judgment	Appreciation
Instances	1	18	68
Percentages	1.14%	20.68%	78.16%

Table 5: Distribution of Polarity of Attitudinal Choices in News Report 2

Polarity	Positive	Negative
Instances	2	18
Percentages	2.29%	20.68%

Table 6: Distribution of Strategy of Attitudinal Choices in News Report 2

Strategy	Inscribed	Invoked
Instances	78	8
Percentages	89.65%	9.19%

The third news report – *Obama: We won't relent against ISIS, Paris attacks will not be 'new normal'* – is about president Obama's statements regarding viciousness of ISIS. He condemns Paris attacks and any other terrorism in the speech he made on his trip to Asia after the attacks. Also, he states that neither US nor France is afraid of ISIS, and such

attacks are not going to be allowed anymore since ISIS will be defeated eventually. What Attitudinal analysis of the reporter's discourse demonstrates is a totally neutral tone. While presidents, Obama clearly does his best to appear strong and give hope to his audience, it seems that the reporter neither tries to advocate nor to oppose the president. Interestingly enough, according to table number 8 the number of positive and negative evaluative expressions of the reporter is exactly the same, 15. This means that the reporter tries to merely report the event, without any personal connotations, and without any reference to other marginal issues. It seems that for whatever reason, the reporter tries not to use the power he has to manipulate the minds of the audience, and maybe tries to stay on the safe side by doing so. This totally neutral tone is clearly evident subjectively, looking at the report as well, even without any reference to the results of Attitudinal analysis; i.e. the reporter neither praises the president, nor criticizes him. Thus, Attitudinal analysis worked here as well for a more efficient CDA practice.

Table 7: Distribution of Type of Attitudinal Choices in News Report 3

Type	Affect	Judgment	Appreciation
Instances	5	15	53
Percentages	6.84%	20.54%	72.60%

Table 8: Distribution of Polarity of Attitudinal Choices in News Report 3

Polarity	Positive	Negative
Instances	15	15
Percentages	20.54%	20.54%

Table 9: Distribution of Strategy of Attitudinal Choices in News Report 3

Strategy	Inscribed	Invoked
Instances	57	15
Percentages	78.08%	20.54%

CONCLUSIONS

What was investigated in this study, was a new method to conduct CDA. The method suggested by the researcher was to use Appraisal, more precisely the Attitude subsystem of Appraisal framework, as a linguistic tool to conduct CDA more objectively and more scientifically. To demonstrate how this method could work, and to see to what extent the findings obtained out of the Attitudinal analysis could be in line with what could be inferred through the subjective classic method of CDA, three news reports, each of which exemplifying three situations in which journalists can use their discursive power to impress their audience were analyzed employing Attitude, with a more focus on Polarity of evaluative expressions in the reporters' discourse. It was discussed and verified the findings obtained out of the suggested new method were in line to a great extent with what could be inferred in a subjective method of analysis used in CDA for years. Thus, SFL and its Appraisal system could be employed as an objective linguistic tool, so as to conduct CDA more efficiently, at least as a support for the subjective method of analysis. The gap pointed out by Van Dijk years ago regarding the need for a linguistic tool for CDA would be filled at least to some extent by doing so.

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