جامعة عين شمس

كلية الآداب

قسم اللغة الإنجليزية وآدابها

التفاعلات اللغوية بين موظفي الحكومة وأفراد الجمهور في السياق المصري
دراسة تحليلية نقدية للخطاب

دراسة مقدمة لنيل درجة الماجستير في اللغويات من الطالبة

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أستاذ اللغويات المساعد بالقسم

٢٠٠٧

Table of Contents

References

Acknowledgements

The writing of this thesis has been one of the most significant academic challenges I have ever had to face. Without the support, patience and

guidance of a number of people this study would not have been completed. It is to them that I owe my deepest gratitude.

First of all, I would like to express my deep indebtedness to my supervisor, Dr. Adil Inani, for initially guiding me to the rich and challenging field of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and providing me with the necessary reading materials. He has been wonderfully generous with his time, spending hours and hours clarifying things and answering my questions. Without his encouragement and sound advice I could not have finished this thesis.

I must also extend my many thanks to my family, whose love, support and faith in my abilities motivated me through this difficult journey.

I also wish to express my thanks to my colleagues at the Faculty of Arts, Menofia University, who have always believed in me and inspired my efforts despite the enormous work pressures we face together.

Abbreviations

BL   bureaucrat letter

CDA   critical discourse analysis

CL	client letter
D	social distance
DA	discourse analysis
FN	first name
FTA	face threatening act
H	hearer/addressee
LN	last name
P	relative power
R	absolute ranking of imposition
S	speaker/addressor
SFL	systemic functional linguistics
T	*tu*
TFN	title + first name
TLN	title + last name
V	*vous*

(Many of the above abbreviations are borrowed from Brown and Levinson (١٩٨٧)).

Abstract

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a type of research that primarily scrutinizes how social power relations, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by means of the text and talk of dominant groups or institutions. By adopting this approach to discourse analysis, the present study

explores how written bureaucratic discursive practices involving clients and bureaucrats in the Egyptian community encode asymmetrical power relations, control and domination.

For this purpose a linguistic toolkit is used to analyze a corpus of ٩٢ letters written by clients and bureaucrats. The corpus is examined pragmatically (e.g. politeness theory), lexically (e.g. terms of address) and syntactically (e.g. impersonalization mechanisms) by means of a CDA framework. The aim is to detect some of the discursive structures that lead to naturalized or no longer visible dominant ideological stances and manipulations adopted by both clients and bureaucrats.

The study is divided into three chapters. Chapter ١ offers definitions of the term 'bureaucracy' and its related concepts, a general overview of the theory of critical discourse analysis and eventually the methodology adopted for the analysis of the corpus of letters. Chapters ٢ and ٣ examine critically client and bureaucrat letters respectively.

The results of this study provide insights into the complex network of relations that exist between bureaucratic discourse and power. The most important conclusion to be drawn from the analysis is that bureaucratic discourse is used as a tool of social inequality and control since bureaucrats distance themselves from clients and maintain the power and authority which constrain the clients' freedom of action.

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Bureaucrat-Client Interactions in an Egyptian Setting

A Critical Discourse Analysis

An M.A. Thesis in Linguistics

Submitted to

The Department of English Language and Literature

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٢٠٠٧

Chapter ١

INTRODUCTION

١،٠ Introductory

Since the study at hand is concerned with investigating some of the interconnections between bureaucracy and discourse in the Egyptian setting, mainly in terms of critical discourse analysis (CDA), the present chapter is intended, among other things, to give an overview of the part of CDA literature directly relevant to the purposes of the study together with an eclectic definition of the term 'bureaucracy' and other related concepts. Along these lines, the chapter attempts to describe in detail the methodology to be employed in analyzing the corpus (a sample of formal correspondence between bureaucrats and clients). The ultimate objective of my analysis is to examine, in Chapters ٢ and ٣, selected features of the language of power used in this social context. The analysis will be done on four levels: pragmatic (politeness and face, speech acts, etc.), lexical (terms of address, etc.), and syntactic (nominalization and passivization). Each one of these features will now be dealt with individually at some length.

١،١ Bureaucracy

١،١،٠ Introductory

The main concern of this study is to demonstrate how 'bureaucratic language' is used as "a form of social control to organize social life in various areas of activity" (Sarangi & Slembrouck ١٩٩٦: ٤-٦). It is therefore useful to start with an

examination of the different meanings generally attached to the word 'bureaucracy' in order to show the interconnections between bureaucracy and social control and how bureaucratic power is manifested through language. The definitions to be reviewed will contribute to our understanding of related concepts like 'bureaucrats' and 'clients' as well as how the two social groups relate to each other. Besides, the discussion will also serve to characterize that kind of language customarily associated with bureaucracy and commonly referred to as 'bureaucratic language'.

The above points (definitions of 'bureaucracy', 'bureaucrats' and 'clients', and 'bureaucratic language') will be the focus of the next three subsections.

١.١.١ Defining bureaucracy

As an overworked term, 'bureaucracy' has come to have "a confusing diversity of definitions" (Ayubi ١٩٨٠: ٩). This arises in part from "the diversion between the academic uses of the term and its popular or pejorative[1] connotations" (Ayubi ١٩٨٠: ٨). When we think of the term 'bureaucracy' we think of words like 'hierarchy', 'rules and regulations', 'impersonality', and 'career bureaucrats' sitting in specialized offices performing their tasks and duties according to stable formal rules (Farazmand ١٩٩٤: ٣٧-٩). Apart from whatever positive or negative connotations it carries, the term 'bureaucracy' denotes "a particular form of organization comprised of bureaus or agencies, such that the overall bureaucracy is a system of consciously coordinated activities which has been explicitly created to achieve specific ends" (Jackson ١٩٨٢: ١٢١).

A good starting point for defining bureaucracy is the Weberian position that bureaucracy is an impersonal, rational, and efficient routine (Weber ١٩٢٢, ١٩٣٠, ١٩٤٧, cited in Sarangi and Slembrouck ١٩٩٦: ٢). Weber holds bureaucracy to be

the most rational form of organization that is superior to all other forms with its emphasis on a rational and efficient way of performing tasks. An organization with these characteristics is, in his view,

> capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency and is in this sense formally the most rational known means of carrying out imperative control over human beings. It is superior to any other form in precision, in stability, in the stringency of its discipline, and its reliability. It thus makes possible a particularly high degree of calculability of results […] it is finally superior both in intensive efficiency and in the scope of its operations, and is formally capable of application to all kinds of administrative tasks. (Weber ١٩٤٧: ٣٣٤, cited in Smith ١٩٨٨: ٤)

Coordination in bureaucracy, which for Weber, aims at efficiency, takes place on the basis of an "impersonal, hierarchical delegation of functions" (Kamenka ١٩٨٩: ٩٥).

Bureaucracy can also be taken to mean a specialized administrative staff, trained to perform specific tasks and to act within the powers delegated to it or ascribed to each particular office (Smith ١٩٨٨, Kamenka ١٩٨٩). As such, bureaucracy is a sociological concept of government, and its institutions as an 'organizational structure' are characterized by regularized procedures, division of responsibility, hierarchy, and impersonal relationships (Garston ١٩٩٣: ٤-٥). The term, thus, denotes "the type of organization designed to accomplish large-scale administrative tasks by coordinating the work of many people systematically" (Blau and Meyer ١٩٨٧: ٣). So bureaucracy is "the rational and clearly defined arrangement of activities which are directed towards fulfilling the purposes of the organization" (Leonard ١٩٦٦, cited in Smith ١٩٨٨: ٥).