Misr University for Science and Technology
Faculty of Foreign Languages & Translation
Department of English

Ain Shams University
Faculty of Arts
Department of English

A Linguistic Analysis of Racist Discourse in Some Speeches of Donald Trump and Martin Luther King: A Contrastive Study

M.A. Thesis in Linguistics

Submitted by

Radwa Zakaria El-Sheikh

To the Department of English Language and Literature,
Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University

Under the supervision of

Prof. Hesham Mohammad Hasan
Head of English Department
Faculty of Arts
Benha University

Dr. Zakaria Kamal Alssiefy
Associate professor of Linguistics
Faculty of Education
Ain Shams University

Dr. Marwa Abdel-Azim
Lecturer of Linguistics
Faculty of Foreign Languages & Translation
Misr University for Science and Technology

2019

Abstract

This study explores the intertwined relationship between language and ideology through a critical analysis of some political speeches selected for two influential American leaders in two different eras. Thus, it is an interdisciplinary study where linguistics, politics and socio-culture are essential constituents. By conducting a contrastive study between the political discourse of the contemporary American President Donald Trump and the late American civil rights movement leader Martin Luther King, the researcher attempts to explore the discursive strategies that each of them employs while presenting the issue of the racial minorities in the American society. In this regard, the ideology of racism is the focus of the researcher whose objective is to uncover the underlying ideology that lies beneath each speaker's discourse and to show how far each speaker can successfully manipulate his language to serve his ideological intentions and political purposes. Therefore, van Dijk's ideological square model is applied as the measuring unit that distinguishes between the racist and anti-racist discourse while using the Self and Other presentations as the major criteria. In addition, van Dijk's model of ideological structures is also integrated to provide a sufficient linguistic analysis that covers the main discourse structures for both Donald Trump and Luther King. Finally, the study concludes that Trump's discourse, being characterized by both elements of self-glorification and Other-derogation, falls under the category of the racist discourse while Luther King's discourse can be classified as anti-racist mainly through the dominance of the negative self-presentation together with the positive Other-presentation.

Keywords: ideological discourse analysis, Martin Luther King, Donald Trump, racist discourse, anti-racist discourse.

Acknowledgments

First of all, I would like start thanking God for giving me the strength and potentials to be able to achieve this work. I also wish to express my sincerest gratitude to the supervising professors for their guidance, patience and support during the writing of this thesis. I would like to thank Prof. Hesham Mohammad Hasan, Dr. Zakaria Kamal Alssiefy and Dr. Marwa Abdel-Azim for their time and input which deserve my recognition and gratitude. Their support during the writing of this dissertation is much appreciated.

I would also love to dedicate special thanks to all my family members who have truly supported me. I totally appreciate the encouraging and supportive role of my husband who used to push me forward, and I want to thank my children for their patience and understanding. Meanwhile, my special thanks go to my father whose prayers and wishes have given me power and positive energy. Finally, I would love to dedicate this whole work to the soul of my mother who would have been proud of me as she used to be.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

ACAPS: Assessment Capacities Projects

AntConc: Anthony concordance

CDA: critical discourse analysis

DHA: discourse-historical analysis

ENAR: European Network Against Racism

IDA: ideological discourse analysis

PDA: political discourse analysis

Chapter one

Introduction