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## Research Article

### OBAMA'S INAUGURATIONS SPEECH: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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#### ABSTRACT

This study is a Critical Discourse Analysis of Obama's inaugurations speech. To investigate the linguistics and grammatical elements those are used in Obama's inauguration speech. The study adopted eclectic method; descriptive analytical method, observational method and qualitative method. The researcher used a number of instruments to collect data from different sources; recorded video, a script and note taking technique. The study concluded that Barack Obama has been effective in his political career by virtue of his wonderful rhetorical abilities. The choice of expression in Obama's inauguration speech is investigated regarding lexical classes, syntactic classifications, figures of speech, and context and cohesion. The study recommended that Students of linguistics should make discussions about different speech practices and strategies.

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#### INTRODUCTION

In January 2009, President Barack Obama was inaugurated as the 44th President of the United States of America. Inaugurations are continually intriguing as they stamp the start of something new. However, the unique thing about Obama was that the first Afro-American to enter the White House as President. That alone was remarkable. What was more; this President knew how to convey a decent discourse and had become famous for it. Barack Obama's rhetorical style is extensively recognized to be a standout amongst the most remarkable cases of correspondence procedure in late political speech. His political achievement fortifies the proposition that language is an intense device to impact citizens.

##### Aims and Scope of the Study

The researcher had a genuine interest in gaining a deeper understanding of the mechanics Obama used to construct the eloquence within his speeches. The scope of the study on US president Barack Obama's orations, during his reign 2008 to present. The study will focus on Obama's inaugurations speech.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

##### What is Discourse Analysis?

According to Fairclough, (1989:7) Discourse analysis is an analysis of how texts work within social cultural practice- such analysis requires attention to textual form, structure and organization at all levels; phonological, grammatical, lexical...).

As cited in Schiffrin, Tannen, Hamilton ((eds)2001:353)critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context.

As stated in Jones, (1983: 2)Discourse analysis study the ways sentences and utterances go together to make texts and interactions and how those texts and interactions fit into our social world.

"Fairclough (1995: 4) describes the text traditionally understood to be a piece of written language – a whole work such as a poem or a novel, or a relatively discrete part of a work such as a chapter"

As mention in Brown and Yule (1983: 1) The analysis of discourse is, necessarily, the analysis of language in use...The discourse analysis is committed to an investigation of what that language is used for.

According to Fear (2004, 5) discourse is a network of relations between objects. Texts are objects. Discourse is an interrelated body of texts. Texts are symbolic expressions that are inscribed by being spoken, written, or depicted in some way.

According to Martinez (2011, 10) discourse analysis is a broad and fast-developing interdisciplinary field concern with the study of language use in context.

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### **Stages of critical discourse analysis**

As mention in Fairclough(1996:26) there are three dimensions or stages of critical discourse analysis:

- **Description** is the stage which is concerned with formal properties of the text.
- **Interpretation** is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction - with seeing the text as the product of a process of production, and as a resource in the process of interpretation ;notice that I use the ten interpretation for both the interactional process and a stage of analysis, for reasons which will emerge in Chapter
- **Explanation** is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context - with the social determination of the processes of production and interpretation, and their social effects.

### **Critical Discourse Analysis**

According to (Van Dijk 1998) critical Discourse Analysis is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context.

Fairclough and Wodak (199:271- 280) summarize the main tenets of CDA as follows:

1. CDA addresses social problems.
2. Power relations are discursive.
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture.
4. Discourse does ideological work.
5. The link between text and society is mediated.
6. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory.
7. Discourse is a form of social action.

### **Standards of Textuality**

According to De Beaugrade and Dressler (1981) in term of communicative function the text is supposed to realize. Textuality determined by some factors which depend on the participants, the intended message and the setting of occurrence... etc. Beaugrand and Dressler sum up these factors in seven standards of textuality in which they can fulfill the communicative function of any text. These standards are:

#### **Cohesion**

It is the first standard of textuality, it refers to surface relations between the sentences that create a text, i.e. to create connected sentences within a sequence. The formal surface of the text components works according to grammatical forms and conventions. It helps the reader/hearer to sort out meaning and uses.

According to Schiffrin, Tannen, Hamilton ((eds) 2001:36) cohesion is one aspect of the study of texture, which can be defined as the process whereby meaning is channeled into a digestible current of discourse "instead of spilling out formlessly in every possible direction"

As shown in Halliday (1994: 309) Cohesion can be defined as the set of resources for constructing relations in discourse which transcend grammatical structure.

As cited in Schiffrin, Tannen, Hamilton ((eds) 2001:36)in Halliday and Hasan (1976) the inventory of cohesive resources was organized as: reference ellipsis substitution conjunction lexical cohesion.

#### **Coherence**

It refers to the relation held between the under surface text, which is made of concepts and relations and amount of their relevance to central thought of the text. Moreover, the concepts refer to the knowledge, which can be activated in the mind whereas relations refer to the connection between the surface texts (concept).

According Schiffrin, Tannen, Hamilton ((eds)2001:36)Texture is one aspect of the study of coherence, which can be thought of as the process whereby a reading position is naturalized by texts for listener/readers.

#### **Intentionality**

It refers to the text producer's attitudes that the set of linguistic resources of the text should handle the text in a way that fulfill the procedures intension and communicates the message to be conveyed in an appropriate and successful way.

#### **Acceptability**

It concerns to the text receiver's attitude that the set of linguistic resources of the text should provide the receiver with an a ability to perceive any relevance of the text in question.

#### **Informativity**

It refers to all extent to which the presented information is known or not to the text receiver; i.e., it refer to the newness or the givenness of the information presented in the text. A text is said to be informative, no matter to its form and content.

#### **Situationality**

It refers to the factors that make a text relevant to a situation of occurrence; i.e., it is crucial for a text where it can determine what is said, by why, when and where.

#### **Intertextuality**

It concerns the factors which make the use of one text dependent upon knowledge of one or more a text, in fact, belongs to a wider receiver is actually able to encounter the intended message.

#### **Cohesive devices**

According to Guy Cook (1990:21) Cohesive devices is formal links between sentences and between clauses.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study adopted eclectic method; descriptive analytical method, observational method and qualitative method. to analyze and describe US president Obama's oration. The researcher employs inference from the texts deductively and inductively. The researcher uses Obama's inaugurations speech as a sample.

#### **Tools of the Study**

The source of the data is taken from the recorded video and a script of Obama's inauguration speeches. In collecting the data, the researcher used observational method, which is the method

of collecting data by doing an observation of the language that is used in this research directly. The researcher also used note-taking technique, which is a technique by taking note for all the data that is found.

In the process of collecting the data, here are some procedures which have been done. The researcher has attempted to use transcripts of the U.S Presidential Speech. Then, the researcher listens and watches the recorded video of Obama's inauguration speeches. Also the researcher reads the transcript of the speech repeatedly in several times.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Obama uses change as an abstraction of himself and his victory when he says:

*"It's been a long time coming, but tonight, because of what we did on this day, in this election, at this defining moment, **change** has come to America. This victory alone is not the **change** we seek -- it is only the chance for us to make that **change**. For that is the true genius of America -- that America can **change**" (Obama 2008).*

However, in light of the fact that Obama has won the election, change must be sent in new way in the event that it is to keep up its currency. Obama names a normal American by means of arrangement, who in light of her age has really seen battle for the duration of her life as an American. Nixon, while genuine, is used by means of symbolization for change.

*"But one that's on my mind tonight is about **a woman** who cast **her** ballot in Atlanta She's a lot like the millions of others who stood in line to make their voice heard in this election except for one thing -- **Ann Nixon Cooper is 106 years old**. And this year, in this election, she touched her finger to a screen, and cast her vote, because after 106 years in America, through the best of times and the darkest of hours, she knows how America can **change**. So tonight, let us ask ourselves -- if our children should live to see the next century; if my daughters should be so lucky to live as long as Ann Nixon Cooper, what **change** will they see? " (Obama 2008).*

Inside of Obama's discourse the social activities of **promise** and **believe** are used to make importance inside of his content as methods for increasing Obama's character that has as of now been dreamy as change. This usage is critical on the grounds that a **promise** must be made with someone else, however **believe** can be acknowledged through somebody or something, for example, a thought or higher force. usage of **promise** appear to be used as semiotic activity acknowledged as intuitive on account of the more profound importance the occasions pass on and the need of a human operators, while **believe** is used as semiotic activity acknowledged as instrumental due to its compatibility with human or item objectives.

*"This moment - this election - is our chance to keep, in the 21st century, the American **promise** alive. And it is on their behalf that I intend to win this election and keep our **promise** alive as President of the United States. Let us keep that **promise** - that American promise - and in the words of Scripture hold firmly, without wavering, to the hope that we confess. Instead, it is that American spirit - that American **promise** - that pushes us forward even when the path is uncertain; (Obama 2008).*

Obama uses promise to not just give crisp intending to the picture of the American Dream, yet to additionally enroll his voters in finding more noteworthy importance inside of government as acknowledged through him. Through this usage, promise is executed to connote change that Obama will achieve as president. Furthermore, while promise is chosen as a methods for giving more profound importance inside of the race, it is acknowledged by usage of material procedures. Such choice permits the delineation of promise to be experienced not as a thought, but rather as an apparently unmistakable, yet still unique, activity that the voter must take part in. In the accompanying illustrations, accept is actualized in conjunction with Obamas' confirmations of the American promise as an insightful response to substantiate the reasons or importance for voter backing of Obama and their dismissal of Republican government. Are voters required to vote, as well as have confidence in the promise that will come to fruition as change through Obama's administration, even after he has left office.

*"And because of what you said—because you decided that change must come to Washington; because you **believed** that this year must be different than all the rest; because you chose to listen not to your doubts or your fears but to your greatest hopes and highest aspirations, tonight we mark the end of one historic journey with the beginning of another—a journey that will bring a new and better day to America. All of you chose to support a candidate you **believe** in deeply. Because if we are willing to work for it, and fight for it, and **believe** in it (Obama 2008).*

As a method for uniting the nation under one representation in the United State of America, Obama makes a solid purpose of foregrounding according to their cases by classifying them for what they are when he states:

*"It's the answer spoken by **young and old, rich and poor, Democrat and Republican, black, white, Latino, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, disabled and not disabled -- Americans** who sent a message to the world that we have never been a collection of Red States and Blue States: we are, and always will be, the United States of America" (Obama 2008).*

According to respondents, discussion and analysis in this study agreed on the statement of the first hypothesis. This proved the first hypothesis. The result of the hypothesis proved that linguistic mechanisms employed by Obama to manufacture discourse that endowed him.

The researcher is going to analyze Obama's use of the personal pronouns. The first interesting use of personal pronouns is discovered ahead of schedule in the discourse. Obama discusses the estimations of America and says;

*"Amy is right. This is not who we are. We are not a country that rewards hard work and perseverance with bankruptcies and foreclosures. We are not a country that allows major challenges to go unsolved and unaddressed while our people suffer needlessly" (Obama 2008).*

By using **we** here Obama in my opinion makes the audience feel a part of what is going on, part of the reality he is presenting. Obama also does something else and that is that he creates a common bond with the audience and I believe that by doing this Obama is not seen as a politician talking to ordinary

Americans, but as an American talking to other Americans. What this accomplishes, in my opinion is that the audience will see Obama in a more positive light and feel that Obama is one of them.

By using **we** here Obama makes the audience feel a part of what is going on, part of the truth he is exhibiting. Obama additionally accomplishes something else and that will be that he makes a typical bond with the audience and I trust that by doing this Obama is not seen as a politician talking to ordinary Americans, however as an American conversing with other Americans. What this fulfills, as I would like to think is that the audience will see Obama in a more positive light and feel that Obama is one of them. An example of this is when Obama says;

*"But we also have to demand greater efficiencies from our health care system. Today, we pay almost twice as much for health care per person than other industrialized nations, and too much of it has nothing to do with patient care" (Obama 2008).*

Here Obama says that we, which means Americans, pay a lot for health care, therefore Americans need to request more noteworthy efficiencies and Obama continues;

*"First, we will reduce costs for business and their workers by picking up the tab for some of the most expensive illnesses and conditions" (Obama 2008).*

Obama could have said I will reduce costs, yet he uses **we**. There is a decent association here between **we** pay a lot of and **we** will decrease costs. As I would see it Obama by using **we** proceeds with the thought that human services is an issue that influences all Americans and everyone is a piece of the solution.

There are quite not very many cases of Obama using the personal pronoun **I** as a part of the discourse. There is a section where Obama highlights his own beliefs;

*"But I also believe that every American has the right to affordable health care. I believe that the millions of Americans who can't take their children to a doctor when they get sick have that right. I believe that people like Amy and Lane who are on the brink of losing everything they own have that right. And I believe that no amount of industry profiteering and lobbying should stand in the way of that right any longer" (Obama 2008).*

The researcher believe that the essential reason Obama uses **I** here is on the grounds that it is a part of an ethos bid that is intended to demonstrate that he is a decent good individual, a great American that won't acknowledge that human services is making Americans endure. Alternate illustrations of Obama using **I** are again as a part of conjunction with ethos advances where it is essentially regular that Obama highlights himself.

The expression "**Yes, we can**" is a standout amongst the most persuasive expressions in the discourses of Barack Obama. He has uses this expression as a powerful rhetorical device in his presidential campaign:

*"Yes, we can, to opportunity and prosperity. Yes, we can heal this nation. Yes, we can repair this world. Yes, we can" (Obama 2009).*

**Third person (they)**

In Obama's discourse the third person references (**they**) are deliberately used with a specific end goal to portray you as an expanded element epitomizing distinctive parts in the society, an element who moved from uncertainty and apprehension towards the boldness of the present. Obama starts his discourse by speaking to the third person reference anybody which speaks to a social substance in uncertainty.

*"who still doubts, who still wonders, who still questions" (Obama 2008).*

Through the third person references, the content depicts the second individual as a patient person. (**people who waited**),

But convinced (**they believed**). The use of a double-sided transitivity structure of material and mental actions related by a causal relationship (**because**) contributes to enrich the second person as an agent of actions supported by a reflexive attitude.

Yet, persuaded (**they believed**). The use of a twofold sided transitivity structure of material and mental activities related by a causal relationship (**because**) adds to improve the second person as an agent of actions supported by a reflexive attitude.

*"People who waited three hours and four ... because they believed" (Obama 2008).*

Represent the **you** who despite their doubts, acted, that is, voted.

The diversified identity of the third person is characterized as far as of age, economic status, ideological and sexual orientation, race, nationality and physical conditions.

*"young, and old, rich and poor, Democrat and Republican, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, disabled and not disabled" (Obama 2008).*

Every one of them make up the national character of **you, Americans**, who transmit the principal direct depiction of the main person plural to the world.

*"Americans who sent a message to the world that we have never been just a collection of individuals or a collection of red states and blue states). A hesitant and frightened they (those who've been told ... to be cynical and fearful and doubtful" (Obama 2008).*

Advances until turning into a strong entity

*"working men and women, the young people who rejected the myth of the generation's apathy who left their homes and their families... the not-so-young people who braved." (Obama 2008).*

With a specific end goal to underline the experienced way of the second person, the discourse takes after an efficient transitivity development of mental procedures (**left, knock**) legitimating their part as operators of material activities (**rejected, braved**). The **you** of the past is likewise depicted as a devoted element strong determination.

*"from the millions of Americans who volunteered and organized and proved" (Obama 2008).*

The message continues by presenting key matters in American politics issues through the portrayal of **they**: a reference to war conflicts.

**“brave Americans waking up in the deserts of Iraq ... to risk their lives for us” (Obama 2008).**

and to issues of money, health and education

**“mothers and fathers who will lie awake ... and wonder how they’ll make the mortgage or pay their doctors’ bills or save enough for their child’s college education” (Obama 2008).**

Be that as it may, regardless of the eager extent of matters of concern, Obama is strategically wary, as he keeps alluding to the feeble doubtful **you** by presenting him periodically in the content.

**“Many who won’t agree with every decision or policy I make” (Obama 2008).**

This third person reference speaks to the powerless and doubtful **you** of the present and the future, who takes after the weak **you** of the past, yet restricts the genuine **you** of the present and what's to come.

### **Second person (you)**

The second person (**you**) in Obama's discourse speaks to the audience as a person who assumed a significant part in the past and later past, and added to the making of **we**. The second person shows up toward the start of the message as possessive adjective word **your (tonight is your answer)**. The start of the message endeavors to comprehend the questions of the second person and to place them in the present time, as the purpose of flight for what's to come (**tonight is your answer**). The second person as subject is introduced in

**“And I know you didn’t do this just to win an election. And I know you didn’t do it for me. You did it because you understand the enormity of the task that lies ahead” (Obama 2008).**

The text refutes the past keeping in mind the end goal to restore another request of things through the twofold sided transitivity example of material and mental procedures. The part of the second person as operators (**did**) is again bolstered by a cognitive verb (**understand**) which approves his activities and which depicts him a conscious entity. Subsequently, the second person **you** shows up as object pronoun in transitivity structures commanded by person singular **I** as agent

**“I promise you, I will listen to you, I will ask you...” (Obama 2008).** Through them, the speaker keeps up the informative association with the recipient, particularly by method for verbal procedures, and makes him share his sentiment gratefulness and backing. You is not an agent of material procedures of the present or the future; it is a specialists of the past who has added to the achievement of this evening's you, the you who turns into an intense specialists of the present and the future, not as a second individual, but rather through **we**. Yet, **you** is introduced as a wellspring of present reflection, mindful of his obligations in the present for the undertaking that lies ahead (**you understand**).

### **First person plural (we)**

In Obama's discourse the **you** of the present and the future has created another entity, the you in power who, related to the first person I, produces the first person plural (**we**). In its first sign, **we** shows up inside of a negative structure in the past so as to later strengthen its portrayal in the present:

**“We have never been just a collection of individuals or a collection of red states and blue states. We are, and always will be, the United States of America” (Obama 2008).**

A long way from being imagined as a minor gathering of people, **we** speaks to a national unit whose depiction regarding age, status, ideological and sexual orientation, colour, nation and physical conditions has been already given through the depiction of the third person.

The transitivity structures of **they** have arranged the domain for the primary appearance of **we** in its devoted part, however likewise, the negation of the past has additionally arranged the ground for the relationship of first person plural to the present and the future (**are, and always will be**).

## **REPORT DISCUSSION**

The results have been shown that Barack Obama has been effective in his political career by virtue of his wonderful rhetorical abilities. The choice of expression in Obama's inauguration speech is investigated regarding lexical classes, syntactic classifications, figures of speech, and context and cohesion.

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