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MARIJANA SIVRIĆ – ŽELJANA MIHALJEVIĆ

Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Mostaru

POLITICAL DISCOURSE – IDEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF G.W. BUSH'S SPEECHES

Summary

The paper deals with the ideological analysis of G.W. Bush's political speeches delivered during the war in Iraq. The speeches were analyzed as a sort of political discourse with the purpose of recognizing lexical, semantic, rhetorical and grammatical structures used in the strategy of polarization when representing the actions of two confronted parties – Iraqi regime and American military.

Polarization strategy is one of the basic principles of the T.van Dijk's Critical discourse analysis, which is expressed through ideological square. This means that in a kind of political discourse, as these speeches are, in which the interests of two confronted states, ideologies, nations etc. are presented, we can expect good actions of in-group to be emphasized and bad ones to be mitigated, whereas the good actions of out-group will be mitigated and bad ones will be emphasized.

Critical discourse analysis offers the basic tools for recognizing such structures in different discourses, but in these political speeches it questions the function and influence which these structures have on Bush's political plan and on society as a whole.

Key words: *critical discourse analysis, ideological analysis, ideological square, in-group, out-group, political discourse.*

Introduction

In political discourse in general, and in political speeches in particular, when two conflicting parties, nations or ideologies are in question, polarization in representing each of these sides is expected.

This paper presents the analysis of several political speeches delivered by the USA President G.W. Bush regarding the operation Iraqi Freedom, in order to outline discourse structures used in representing American military actions as opposed to the actions of the Iraqi regime members.

In this case, on one side, there are coalition forces led by the USA, and on the other, the Iraqi regime. The coalition forces, from the perspective of the speaker G.W. Bush, are in-group, and the Iraqi regime is the out-group. In discourse, such polarization is marked usually by pronouns *We, Us* – used to refer to in-group and its friends and allies, and *They, Them* – used to refer to out-group, and its friends and allies.

What is expected is the positive in-group description and negative out-group description, i.e. positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. In the speeches in question, we can expect the good actions of coalition forces to be emphasized and their bad actions to be mitigated. On the other hand, good actions of the Iraqi regime will be mitigated and the bad ones will be emphasized.

Polarization, as one of the strategies for the expression of shared, group-based attitudes and ideologies, is in this way presented through, what Teun van Dijk calls, ‘ideological square’. This strategy of polarization is one of the basic principles of van Dijk’s Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach upon which this paper is based.

As a critical discourse analyst, he is interested in investigating the relation between societal structures and discourse. He argues that societal structures can be related to discourse only through the minds of social actors – mental models link ideology and discourse.

The analysis of the speeches will focus on extracting these ideologically colored structures used in positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation, but we are also interested in investigating the fun-

ction of these structures in the political agenda of G.W. Bush concerning the war in Iraq. Van Dijk claims that the analysis of political discourse should not be limited to structural features of text and talk, but also account for their conditions and functions in the political process.¹ The discourse structures used by G.W. Bush not only enact ideological positions but also act as a means of persuasion in order to influence preferred mental models.² In this case, the assumption is that these speeches regarding the operation Iraqi Freedom are continuation of his efforts to justify invasion of Iraq as a necessity for the peace of the world even though there was no indication that Iraq posed a serious threat for America.

The first of the speeches included in our analysis was delivered on March 19, 2003, and it marked the commencement of the invasion of Iraq. Other speeches were delivered in the period of one year – from March 26, 2003 to March 26, 2004.

As we look at these speeches as a form of discourse, in the first chapter more will be said about how critical discourse analysts see discourse as well as how they define texts. The first chapter also includes the definition of Fairclough's concept of order of discourse and basic information regarding the political order of discourse. Although most of this paper is based on Teun van Dijk's framework of ideology and discourse, some of the basic principles of Fairclough's critical discourse analysis approach have been included. This is done to show that CDA is not a unitary approach, even though the agenda of exploring the tensions between society and discourse is what links these approaches. The differences between frameworks of these two analysts will be discussed in the second chapter where more will be said about CDA approach itself.

1 T.A. VAN DIJK, "War rhetoric of a little ally: political implicatures and Aznar's legitimization of the war in Iraq", *Discourse in Society*, <www.discourses.org>, 2005.

2 T.A. VAN DIJK, "Ideological Discourse Analysis", *Discourse in Society*, <www.discourses.org>, 1995.

1. Method

1.1. Critical discourse analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis is an interdisciplinary approach to analysis of discourse. It investigates languages as a form of social practice. However, CDA is not a specific direction of research, it does not have a unitary theoretical framework but subsumes a variety of approaches which may be theoretically and analytically diverse.

But, what connects some of the critical discourse analysis approaches is that they will ask questions about the way specific discourse structures are deployed in the reproduction of social dominance, whether they are a part of conversation or a news report or other genres and contexts.³

Fairclough states that CDA is special because it explores the tension between socially shaped language use and socially constitutive language use, rather than opting for one or the other.⁴

According to Fairclough and Wodak⁵ the main principles of CDA may be summarized in the following:

- CDA addresses social problems; power relations are discursive; discourse constitutes society and culture; discourse does ideological work; discourse is historical; discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory; discourse is a form of social action.

Fairclough's framework for analysis of media discourse involves the analysis of a particular communicative event and the overall structure of the order of discourse. Following Fairclough's CDA framework when analyzing a particular communicative event, the analyst will be interested in the relationship between three dimensions of that communicative event. Those are text, discourse practice and socio-cultural practice. Discourse practice segment is the mediating link between other two dimensions, text and socio-cultural practice. Properties of socio-cultu-

3 T.A. VAN DIJK, "Critical discourse analysis", *Discourse in Society*, <www.discourses.org>, 2001.

4 N. FAIRCLOUGH, *Media Discourse*, Arnold-a member of the Hodder headline Group, London, p. 55.

5 N. FAIRCLOUGH, – R. WODAK, (1997) "Critical Discourse Analysis", in: T.A. VAN DIJK, (ed.), *Introduction to Discourse Analysis*, London, p. 258-284.

ral practice influence the nature of discourse practice which is later on reflected in text.

In this way, by analysis of media texts and their production, potential changes in culture can be monitored. “Heterogeneity of texts can be seen as materialization of social and cultural contradictions”.⁶

When analyzing a socio-cultural practice dimension of a communicative event, analyst may focus on immediate situational context, wider context of institutional practices the event is embedded within, or the society and the culture in general. All of these perspectives are relevant in understanding a particular event.

Whereas in Fairclough's CDA approach the mediating link between societal structures and discourse is the discourse practice dimension, in van Dijk's approach mental models are this mediating link. Mental models feature what individuals think about specific events, so they are subjective representation of the events or situation that discourse is about.

Mental models represent people's experiences, they are subjective and possibly biased representations of 'reality', and may also feature evaluations of events or situations – opinions. Although these models are personal, they are still a part of the social because the opinions and knowledge they embody are reflections of group opinion – ideology.

Alongside mental models of particular events, people also form context models – models of the communicative events in which they participate. Structure of the context model will include overall definition of the situation, subjective beliefs about participants, aims and goals, the setting etc. Like mental models, context models are also crucial in comprehension and production of discourse – they regulate for example how a certain communicative event is communicated.

6 N. FAIRCLOUGH, *Media discourse*, p. 60.

2. Political order of discourse

2.1. Discourse and text

The political speeches included in this paper are a form of discourse and are analyzed as such. The term discourse is used in various disciplines, thus in this segment we will give an account from the perspective of a critical discourse analyst.

It can be said that there are two predominant views of discourse. Linguists define discourse as language and its use, while social theorists and analysts see discourse as a construction of reality, a form of knowledge. Norman Fairclough, one of the pioneers of Critical Discourse Analysis approach gives a view of discourse that is in accordance with his linguistic background but is also informed by social theory. In that sense, he defines discourse as spoken or written language use but also includes other forms of semiotic activity, visual images and non-verbal communication in this definition. More importantly, Fairclough investigates discourse as a form of social practice and that is the segment influenced by social theory. This implies that language use is a mode of action and that it is socially shaped but that it is also socially shaping. "It is influenced by different aspects of the social but at the same time influences those aspects of social." ⁷

If we have defined discourse as spoken or written language use, what is text? The transcripts of the political speeches in question are texts and so are newspaper articles or a transcript of a broadcast. The traditional view of the text as words printed on paper does not fully apply. Modern texts are accompanied by visual images, music, sound effects and for this reason the definition of text has been extended to include all of these elements, which corresponds to Fairclough's view of text.

As it has been noted, these speeches are analyzed as discourse. This means that discourse analysis will be applied, within which linguistic analysis of text will be accompanied by social and cultural analysis. Formalist linguistic analysis that does not take into consideration the social context of discourse is not sufficient.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

2.2. Order of discourse

In the CDA framework that Fairclough proposes, the analysis of a certain communicative should include the overview of the order of discourse. Fairclough states that “...adequate analysis of communicative events as forms of social practice...does need to locate them within fields of social practice and in relation to the social and cultural forces and processes which shape and transform these fields.”⁸

The ‘fields of social practice’ in question are called orders of discourse. Thus, the order of discourse of a social domain or social institution is constituted by all the genres and discourses used there. The term discourse in this case is a count noun and it signifies the language used in representing a given social practice from a particular point of view. So, politics as a social practice is differently signified in liberal or socialist political discourses. On the other hand, genre is used of language associated with and constituting part of some particular social practice, interviewing people - interview genre.

Other than outlining these different discursive practices, we are interested in investigating the relationship and boundaries between discursive practices of a particular order of discourse, but also the relationship between local orders of discourse.

The order of discourse we are interested in here is political order of discourse. The concept of order of discourse is included in this paper to give more insight into the difference between the frameworks of CDA, but also because this way of looking at ordering of fields of social practice contributes to better understanding of certain areas in which different forms of social practice intersect.

2.3. Political discourse

The speeches analyzed in this paper are political speeches and as such, they are one genre within the political order of discourse. Before

8 N. FAIRCLOUGH, N., “Political Discourse in the Media: an analytical framework“, in: ALLAN BELL – PETER GARRET (eds.), *Approaches to Media Discourse*, Blackwell Publishers Ltd., Oxford, p. 143.

discussing some of the properties of political discourse, an important issue is to define politics.

Fairclough applies Held's⁹ characterization of politics as interaction of different societal systems – the political system, the social system and the economy. The interaction of three systems varies in different times and places and this affects the politics and from this can be concluded that the limits of political are always at issue.¹⁰ And “that shifting nature of politics can be characterized in terms of shifting relationships between - shifting articulations of - orders of discourse”.¹¹ Thus, contemporary political discourse is comprised out of orders of discourse of the political system, of the media, of science, private life etc.

Fairclough also applies Bourdieu's¹² suggestion that political discourse of professional politicians is double determined, internally and externally.¹³ Internally, political discourse of politicians is determined by its relationship to orders of discourse outside politics, to the people they represent, but also to the media.

3. Ideological analysis of G.W. Bush's speeches

3.1. Scope of the analysis

The analysis was conducted on eight speeches delivered by G.W. Bush. The first of the speeches included was delivered on March 19, 2003, and other speeches were delivered in the period of one year – from March 26, 2003 to March 26, 2004.

The basic goal of the analysis is to outline discourse structures and semantic moves Bush used when describing the actions of the in-group and the out-group. Discourse structures used to exhibit positive and ne-

9 David Held – British political theorist. More on his view of politics can be found in: *Political theory and the modern state: essays on state, power and democracy* (1989), London: Polity Press.

10 N. FAIRCLOUGH, N., “Political Discourse...” p. 146.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 146.

12 Pierre Bourdieu – French sociologist and philosopher.

13 N. FAIRCLOUGH, “Political Discourse...”, p. 147.

gative judgments about groups apply to different levels and dimensions of text and talk.

Also the goal is to comment on how these structures contribute to the political agenda of G.W. Bush, his efforts to legitimize and justify the invasion of Iraq.

Generally, emphasis may apply to the following levels:

- phonological structures (stress, pitch, volume, intonation)
- graphical structures (headline, bold letters)
- overall ordering and size (first and later, higher and lower, bigger and smaller)
- syntactic structures (word order, topicalization, clausal relations main and subordinate, fronted or embedded; split constructions)
- semantic structures (explicit vs. implicit, detail and level of description, semantic macrostructures vs. details)
- lexical style (positive vs. negative opinion words)
- rhetoric (under and overstatement, euphemism, litotes, repetition)
- schematic or superstructures (expressed or not in prominent conventional category, e.g. headline or conclusion; storytelling and argumentation)
- pragmatics (assertion vs. denial; self-congratulation vs. accusation)
- interactive (turn-taking; self-selection and dominance; topic maintenance and change);
- non-verbal communication: face, gestures, etc.¹⁴

3.2. G.W. Bush and War on Terror

To get an insight into the background of the overall situation preceding the speeches Bush delivered, we are going to give a short account of Bush's political framework and presidency.

Bush was the 43rd President of the United States. In his presidency he ran on the platform that opposed to any types of involvement in foreign

14 T.A. VAN DIJK, "Ideological...".

conflicts. But, all this changed on September 11, 2001. On that day 19 Al' Qaeda terrorists hijacked four passenger planes, two of which crashed into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City killing everyone on board and many others working in the buildings.

What followed was President Bush's military response. It began in October 2001 with the deployment of 11, 000 thousand troops to invade Afghanistan, the base of Al' Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden who have claimed responsibility for the attacks. The initial attack removed the Taliban from power but Taliban forces have since regained some strength. Osama Bin Laden is in hiding, American forces are still present in Afghanistan.

During 2002 Bush's administration began announcing that officials had supposedly discovered weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. There was no concrete evidence that Saddam Hussein was in possession of weapons of mass destruction at that moment even though Iraqi regime was in possession of such weapons until 1991. American government had attempted to gain a United Nations Security Council authorization for the use of force to remove Hussein from power, but they were unsuccessful.

Bush was preemptively attacking a country that had never attacked the United States or threatened and he disregarded the opinion of the UN.

Operation Iraqi Freedom began on March 20, 2003, with the invasion of Iraq by a multinational force led by troops from the United States and the United Kingdom.

The U.S. government reported that 139 American military personnel were killed before May 1, 2003, while over 4,000 have been killed since 2003. Estimates of civil casualties are more variable than those for the military personnel. According to Iraq Body Count, a group that relies on western press reports to measure civilian casualties, approximately 7,500 civilians were killed during the invasion phase.

3.3. Discussion

3.3.1. Positive self-presentation

The tendency of positive self-presentation is a part of socio-cognitive strategy to present oneself in positive light, or at least to avoid a negative impression. In the given speeches, the following structures and moves have been used to positively describe the in-group.

3.3.1.1. Positive lexicalization

Use of lexical items is one of the most common ways to positively describe actions of the members of the in-group.

Here is how George Bush uses certain lexical items to refer to American military and coalition forces and their actions:

- *The enemies you confront will come to know your **skill** and **bravery**.*
- *...your nation appreciates your **commitment** and your **sacrifice** in the cause of peace and freedom.*
- *Coalition forces are **skilled** and **courageous** and we are honored to have them by our side.*

Or to refer to Operation Iraqi Freedom:

- *Operation Iraqi Freedom was carried out with a combination of **precision** and **speed** and **boldness** that enemy did not expect.*
- *....in one of the **swiftest** and **most humane military campaigns** in history*

The choice of vocabulary confirms only the best characteristics and qualities of the in-group, they are carefully chosen to diminish the values of the out-group. Some examples show the contrast between *Us* and *Them* in different propositions of the same sentence or of the sequence of sentences, which even more emphasizes these differences.

3.3.1.2. Euphemisms

In his speeches G.W. Bush also uses a lot of euphemisms - mild and less offensive expressions used instead of expressions that are considered offensive and harsh.

In the speeches Bush defines the war as conflict which is a euphemistic use of the term, e.g.

- *In this **conflict**, America faces an enemy who has no regard for conventions of war and rules of morality.*
- *...now that the **conflict** has come.*

Also he uses euphemisms to refer to dead American soldiers, thus instead of *dead* and *death* he uses the term *fallen*, e.g.

- *We pray that God will bless and receive each of **the fallen**.*

There is also a number of euphemisms used for invasion to avoid the exact terms of *invasion* and *occupation*, e.g.

- ***military operations** to disarm Iraq; **broad and concerted campaign**; **a fierce struggle** to protect the world from a grave danger and to bring freedom to an oppressed people; **noble cause** etc.*

Usage of euphemisms is the most important aspect of the application of political correctness. In his political speeches Bush uses euphemisms to disguise the real goals and characteristics of the war in Iraq, which was really a war, not just a conflict. He has at least two reasons to do so: first, to hide the real politics which stands behind his words and second, to give a different perception of the war to his countrymen, listeners and media in general.

3.3.1.3. Overstatements and understatements

The next move used frequently in these speeches shows obvious exaggeration regarding the actions of our forces, in this case coalition forces. The term *coalition forces* itself is used for countries supporting the invasion. President Bush stated that 35 countries were giving crucial support. However, only four besides the United States contributed tro-

ops to the invasion force – the United Kingdom, Australia, Poland and Denmark. Therefore, the usage of this term, gives the appearance that the invasion was approved by many countries of the world.

Furthermore, Bush stated that *military combat operations in Iraq have ended*, although military operations were still in progress or that *these nineteen months changed the world*. These are also obvious examples of exaggeration or overstatements whose main idea is to create the impression that what in-group forces are doing is right and correct.

On the other hand, by using some vague expressions of understatement, an impression is created that there is no actual fighting, and if there is, that it is mild, e.g.

- *our forces are clearing southern cities; we are taking command of coastal area; coalition forces pushed back the enemy etc.*

These examples mostly refer to some negative actions performed by our group or in-group during which a lot of people were killed or the goal was not completely achieved. The chosen constructions give an impression that the actions were not so comprehensive, therefore, the results were rather modest.

3.3.1.4. Positive comparison

This is one of the most interesting semantic moves which is used purposefully to boost the morale and actions of our group, e.g. American military is compared with previous, historical successes of the military, e.g. *the daring of Normandy; the fierce courage of Iwo Jima; our commitment to liberty is America's tradition*.

Bush also gives some examples as a proof that reconstruction of a state like Iraq after war is possible, e.g. *following World War II, we lifted up the defeated nations of Japan and Germany and stood with them as they built representative governments, or in the 1970s, the advance of democracy in Lisbon and Madrid inspired democratic change in Latin America*.

Bush purposefully chooses only positive examples in order to characterize the American actions or those of the coalition forces as the

only possible and worth comparing to the greatest historical battles or victories.

3.3.1.5. *Emphasizing American values*

The emphasis of values that the in-group holds dear is one of the basic ways of establishing the distinction between the in-group and the out-group, e.g.

- *...treating Iraqi prisoners of war according to the highest standards of law and decency.*
- We stand for human liberty...
- ...dedicated to the defense of our collective security and to the advance of human rights.
- We recognize a moral law that stands above men and nations which must be defended and enforced by men and nations.

Apart from the fact that with this semantic move the American values are emphasized and promoted, Bush wants to persuade the out-group members that the American values are the only real values and as such should be recognized by all people, including their enemies.

3.3.1.6. *Positive self-presentation in grammar*

The examples of positive self-presentation can be found on the level of grammar as well. Although these elements are not so obviously emphasized, there are also present and influence the overall impression of the text.

One of the typical examples we can find in political speeches of this kind is the overusage of personal pronouns, especially insisting on the personal pronoun *We* (inclusive *We*). One of the things we can mention regarding the use of the pronoun *We* is insistence on the positive things the in-group has made. On the other hand, inclusive *We* refers to the idea that all of *Us* are in this together, i.e. the Americans as well as other forces. Even if that is not true, Bush, by frequent using of *We*, wants to

emphasize that what *We* are doing is the only good and correct thing to do, e.g.

- *We come to Iraq with respect for its citizens...*
- *We have no ambition in Iraq...*
- *We will meet that threat now with our Army, Air Force, Navy...*
- *We will pass through this time of peril...*
- *We will defend our freedom.... We will bring freedom to others.*
- *We will overcome every danger and we will prevail.*

It is significant that personal pronoun *We* is used at the beginning of almost each sentence in a paragraph of 10 sentences, one after another. In combination with modal verbs (e.g. *will* in the given examples), it reinforces the promise of the President to the people, which could mean that there are many other things he is hiding.

Another grammatical level which is significant regarding the ideological coloring is usage of passive transformations. In such transformations agents are usually omitted, a method which is used if some actions of our group are considered bad and negative. On the other hand, if the actions are positive and good, either active voice is used or passive voice with agent expressed.

Bush prefers the usage of active voice in his speeches, which means that he is sure about positive actions of American forces – what they are doing is what has to be done, e.g.

- *We **destroyed** the Taliban, many terrorists and the campus where they trained.*
- *We **are taking** direct action against the terrorists in the Iraqi theater.*

The killing of the terrorists or destruction of their bases is seen as positive action of the American military and there is no need to leave out the agent.

Apart from passive transformations, there is another type of transformation which is used with in political discourse - nominalization.

It has the same purpose as passivization because it allows the avoidance of agent, especially if bad actions of our group are presented.

In the process of nominalization, several changes happen¹⁵:

- a new noun is created, complex verbal structures are turned into deverbal ones, precisely nominalizations.
- one or more agents are omitted
- nominalizations are not marked for time, which means that they are out of time or modality markedness.
- such constructions are subject to other changes, so they can appear in active-passive transformations, passing thus through two transformation processes.

E.g.

- *The **liberation** of millions is the fulfillment of America's founding promise.*

However, like with passive, nominalizations are not frequently used in Bush's speeches, because he wants to underline the right cause the American forces are fighting for, which is done by using the complete verbal phrase structures.

3.3.2. Negative other-presentation

Another aspect within the ideological square analysis is negative other-presentation, achieving the same goal as positive self-presentation, but with much more effect. In the type of political discourse that has the purpose of justifying and legitimizing a war, derogation of out-group is inevitable.

3.3.2.1. Negative lexicalization

The most striking is the effect of the negative lexemes used to describe the Iraqi regime, e.g.

¹⁵ N. FAIRCLOUGH, N., *Critical...*

- *outlaw regime; ruthless enemies; dangerous enemy; the evil; grave danger; one of the cruelest regimes on Earth; brutal regime.*

The function of such legitimization is not just to describe Saddam's regime as dangerous and evil, but more to legitimize the actions of the American and coalition forces.

3.3.2.2. *Warning*

The *warning* move is used to emphasize threats the in-group might face from the out-group even though there might not be solid evidence to confirm this position. In this way out-group is negatively presented, atmosphere of constant fear is created and in-group is thus called to action.

Bush says that

- *Outlaw regime threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder to attack America and Europe with deadly poisons;*
- *We will meet that threat now..., so that we do not have to meet it later with armies of firefighters and police and doctors on the streets of our cities.*
- *Free nations will not sit and wait, leaving enemies free to plot another September the 11th.*
- *The enemies of freedom are not idle.*

One of the main reasons behind the invasion of Iraq was to prevent Saddam Hussein from using the weapons of mass destruction. In 2003, however, there was no concrete evidence that Hussein was in possession of such weapons. Another reason was that human rights and the lives of Iraqi people were threatened under Saddam's dictatorship, which could not have been a valid argument for invasion because it could apply to other dictatorships in the world. Therefore, the argument concerning the weapons of mass destruction became prominent and the alleged threat from it became justification for all further military actions.

3.3.2.3. Compassion

Compassion move is also very significant in negative presentation of the out-group. By showing sympathy or empathy for the victims, in this case Iraqi people, brutality of the out-group is emphasized, e.g.

- *Saddam Hussein has placed Iraqi troops and equipment in civilian areas to use innocent men and women and children as shields for his own military.*
- *Saddam's thugs shield themselves with women and children.*
- *They (Iraqi people) deserve better than a life spent bowing before a dictator.*
- *We are helping the long suffering people of that country to build a decent and democratic society at the center of the Middle East.*

This is a very frequent move in Bush's speeches. Of course, it is far from showing compassion, as it is usually used in the same sentence with negative proposition, reminding the listeners of the cruelty of Saddam's regime.

On the other hand, the Americans, the in-group, are seen as saviors whose actions are planned only for the purpose of helping and protecting Iraqi people.

3.3.2.4. Value violation

Bush speeches frequently emphasize value violation meaning that the out-group has no regards for the values that the in-group holds dear, e.g.

- *...no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality.*
- *They've waged attacks under the white flag of truce.*
- *Terrorists hold nothing sacred and have no home in any religion.*
- *Those who incite murder and celebrate suicide reveal their contempt for life itself.*

The purpose of such wording is to draw listeners' attention to two completely different systems of values, one completely positive and

worth fighting for – in-group values, the other totally negative which deserves to be eradicated.

3.3.2.5. Disclaimers

Disclaimers are semantic moves frequently used to negatively describe the out-group, but at the same time emphasize a certain good quality of the speaker. In this way a good impression is made on the reader. Disclaimers are sentences or sequence of sentences in which one clause or one sentence realizes one strategy and the next realizes other strategy. “The positive first part may thus be interpreted as expressing a general socio-cultural value (like tolerance), but it at the same time functions as the enactment of a strategy of face-keeping and impression management that allows for the expression of prejudice in a normative situation in which the expression of prejudices is officially prohibited.”¹⁶

E.g.

- *We have no ambition in Iraq, except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people.*
- *Our country enters this conflict reluctantly, yet our purpose is sure.*
- *We cannot know the duration of this war, but we are prepared for the battle ahead.*
- *We did not choose this war. Yet, with the safety of the American people at stake, we will continue to wage this war with all our might.*

The disclaimers used in George W. Bush's speeches range from apparent tolerance and compassion to apparent reluctance and lack of choice.

Conclusion

As we have seen, a variety of discourse structures and strategies may be used to express ideological beliefs, and also these discourse structu-

¹⁶ T.A. VAN DIJK, *Ideological...*

res may apply to different dimensions and levels of text and talk. In this paper the emphasis was put on investigation of lexical style, rhetorical and semantic structures. It can be said that George W. Bush uses typical structures in strategy of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. By the use of euphemisms and understatements, negative actions of the American military were mitigated, these structures helped in creating an impression that no serious fighting was done.

Bush was also successful in avoiding the use of the term invasion or occupation, and most often the euphemistic term *liberation* was used.

Also, he emphasized the fact that America was simply defending itself, and that the military actions were undertaken in the effort of keeping the world's peace.

But, in reality, Iraq did not pose immediate and serious threat to the world's peace. The use of lexical items to positively describe the actions of the military was also common, as well as the emphasis of American values and comparison to the previous successes of the military.

In negative other-presentation, the use of negative lexical items to describe the members of Iraqi regime was common, as well as the emphasis of value violation. The major part of negative other-presentation of the Iraqi regime was done through the use of warning move and compassion move. By showing sympathy for the victims, the Iraqi people, Bush was emphasizing the brutality of the Iraqi regime members. Liberation of oppressed people was one of the goals of the invasion, so this move, and other negative terms were used often to describe the Iraqi regime. But in order not to break international war conventions, the main pretext for the invasion was the weapons of mass destruction that was, in the opinion of the American administration, a serious threat. For this reason, Bush stated on many occasions that the world was in serious danger from these weapons and warning move was repeatedly used in his political discourse.

In this way, Bush managed to sustain the atmosphere of fear from future terrorist attacks, new military action was justified in this way, and he was getting the support from the American people who were still under the impression of September 11 events.

The use of such structures, not only in political speeches like these, but in other types of discourse, is common. By using the principles of critical discourse analysis, one can become more aware of these structures and the functions they have in creating political agenda or in other forms of social practice.

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