



Transitivity and Power in the 2024 U.S. Presidential Debate: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The plan of research is to analyse a political debate that held in United States of America. U.S. Presidential Debate held between two political figures namely Donald Trump and Kamala Harris has been chosen for the purpose. Systems Functional Linguistics of Halliday has been chosen as a frame of study to discover the processes used by the politician in order to convince the public and dominate the opponents, exploiting the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), particularly Fairclough's three-dimensional theory. Specifically, it will examine the transitivity processes—material, mental, relational, and verbal—employed by the candidates to represent participants, actions, and relationships in the debate. The primary objectives are to analyze the transitivity choices made by the candidates, measure how these picks establish political power and agency, and investigate how they reflect implicit ideological positions. Moreover, the research will assess how Fairclough's model unfolds power structures and manipulative techniques in the candidates' discourse. This study is important in raising the understanding of political discourse, power relations, and ideological manipulation in the framework of electoral communication, with allegations for linguistics, political communication, and media literacy. Through this study, the part of language in the development of political philosophies and the strategies used in political activities will be critically observed, contributing cherished insights to the field of discourse analysis and political statements.



Introduction

The use of different of different components of stylistics to gain superiority and edge in political conflicts is a born-out fact among the politicians of the world, particularly in the context of political debates, where rhetoric and communication strategies are fundamental to the presentation of ideologies, policies, and leadership qualities. American presidential report is an source of political discourse. This event offers an opportunity to the politician to interact with public. Thus use of power and agency may be sought in such events.

Transitivity analysis of language spoken by different persons parses the phrases and clauses into different process which include participants processes and goals helps a lot in determining the approaches of people along with their aptitude. It examines the roles that participants take in processes (such as 'actor,' 'goal,' 'beneficiary'), thus allowing for a detailed exploration of power dynamics, agency, and responsibility. In political debates, the way in which speakers construct and manipulate these roles can significantly influence public perception and understanding of Political realities. The choices that these Politian's make also represent their view points. On the other hand, they also try to influence and convince their voter in their own favors. A combination of Critical Discourse Analysis and SFL's transitivity patterns in political debates, which have their own influential impact on the supporters as well as non-supporters may reveal how do these politicians use language to construct power relations, identify Ideological alignments, and communicate political agendas. The study will consider debates from the US election campaign, with a particular focus on the linguistic strategies employed by candidates in their speeches, responses, and confrontations. This search seeks to provide insights into the subtle mechanisms by which language functions in the political arena, offering a more nuanced understanding of how debates contribute to the shaping of political discourse and public opinion. It may be a valuable contribution to the stylistic linguistics, politics, and communication, that denotes the significance of linguistic tools that politicians employ to develop as well as exploit public narratives and substantiate agency in the highly competitive and symbolic space of presidential debates.

Statement of the Research Problem

In order to engage with public and to convince the public political debates hold a significant role the value of these activities cannot be underestimated from the perspective of stylistics as well. . In these high-profile events, the language used by candidates is not merely a vehicle for communication, but a strategic tool that shapes public perception, constructs political realities, and reinforces or challenges power dynamics. Among the various linguistic mechanisms at play in such debates, Transitivity—the grammatical structuring of actions, participants, and relationships in discourse—holds particular significance. Transitivity analysis, rooted in systemic functional linguistics, provides insight into how participants in a discourse are assigned roles (e.g., actors, goals, or recipients of actions) and how these roles reflect broader power relations, ideologies, and rhetorical intentions. As regards the political between two figures of internal reputes like Donald Trump and Kamal Harris who contested for the seat American Presidents may provide an ample scope for linguistic analysis from the perspective of stylistics, hence the political debate has been selected for the purpose, where the stakes are high and every linguistic choice can carry substantial consequences. While much research has focused on rhetorical strategies, persuasion techniques, and the framing of issues in political discourse, there remains a lot to understand how transitivity specifically functions to shape the political discourse, build Political identities, and inspire public opinion during these debates. For example, to explore how do candidates position themselves as active agents in certain processes while concurrently giving responsibility or shifting blame onto the opposition or external forces? It is investigated how different transitivity processes help them

formulate strategies. It would also be source to highlight how do they gain dominance in their debate over the opponents.

In the above mentioned context the role of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective in inseparable especially in combination with transitivity analysis of presidential debates that allows a deeper exploration of how language is not only used to construct meaning but also to disseminate ideological positions and social inequalities. CDA, with its focus on the juncture of language, power, and ideology, delivers the tools to examine how transitivity choices in political debate can expose underlying power structures and reproduce the ways in which candidates seek to influence public narratives and align voters with their political plans. In the backdrop of stylistic analysis The SFL may be of great help to find out how these political figures use different components of language to negotiate. How do they construct ideologies. How do they challenge power relationships as well as how do they establish their political positions in society. Moreover, choices they make to influence the understanding of the public regarding political authority, accountability, and leadership may a worthwhile effort to raise the awareness among the masses. By filling the gap between transitivity analysis and critical discourse perspectives, this study aims to offer valuable insights into the role of language in shaping political realities and influencing electoral results.

Research Objectives

The primary objective of this research is the stylistic analysis of political debate. For the purpose Fairclough's three-dimensional approach has been planned to utilize. With help of this frame work it is hoped that we would be able to find out how is language used to construct power politics. How word in specific combinations play their part in the attainment of social dominance. Specifically, the study will apply the transitivity processes described in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) by Halliday to examine how participants, actions, and relationships are represented in the debates.

The following are the key objectives of this Research:

1. To analyze the transitivity processes used by presidential candidates in American presidential debates.
2. To assess how Transitivity Analysis aided by Fairclough's Three dimensional Theory, reveals underlying power structures and manipulative strategies.
3. To examine how transitivity choices construct political power and agency in the discourse to reflect ideological positions in the debates.

Research Questions

The study will seek to answer the following key questions:

1. How do the 2024 US Election Presidential candidates Donald Trump and Kamila Haris depict transitivity processes (material, mental, relational, etc.) employed in their debates?
2. How do transitivity choices of Donald Trump and Kamila Haris construct political power and agency in the discourse to reflect ideological positions in the debates.
3. How does Transitivity Analysis aided by Fairclough's Three-dimensional Theory, reveal underlying power structures and manipulative strategies in the candidates' debates?

Significance of the Study

Efforts in this research may serve many purposes in real life practices. As the main focus remains the stylistics so it has its specific significance or this branch of linguistics. Political being the delimited part of it may contribute significantly to political discourse.. The application of the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), especially the concept of transitivity processes, to American presidential debates will allow valuable insights into how language shapes political discourse, constructs power relations, and influences public perception. The research is very likely to contribute to Linguistic Research in Political Discourse, enhancing the understanding of Power and Agency in political communication, applying Critical Discourse Analysis to political discourse, enhance public awareness and media literacy. It also has insinuations for political communication as well as campaign Strategies, and finally, it develops our understanding of methodological approaches in Discourse Analysis.

Delimitation of the Study

The political debate held in Sep 2024 between two figures of international repute namely Donald Trump and Kamala Harris has been selected and delimited for the research.. Former President Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris who contest in 2024 Presidential election partook in a presidential debate in Philadelphia, Sept. 10, 2024. The debate renders a focused case study of the linguistic strategies used by these two political figures of high Profile. Delimiting the scope to this specific debate, the study aims to conduct a detailed and in-depth examination of the transitivity processes in their discourse, offering insights into how each candidate use language to construct power, agency, and ideological stands within the Political context of the 2024 election. As the American Presidential Elections have their own worldwide significance. Media throughout the world covers the related events extensively. Hence it provides an appropriate case for stylistic study. Analyzing this debate will allow for a focused study of the transitivity choices made by both candidates in their efforts to setting key issues, challenge each other's ideological position, and engage with the broader electorate. This specific event serves as valuable example of creating political rhetoric, where linguistic strategies are used to frame perceptions of the leadership, policy, and national identity. There have been lots of discussions and speeches related this election. These contents may provide a lot of information for depth analysis. There is no doubt political complains provide such a vast canvas for linguistic analysis as it becomes impossible to cover all aspect in a single study. Therefore, this study does not attempt to explore all debates across the 2024 election cycle nor compare them to other historical debates. The study also does not explore other candidates or political parties involved in the election, which could offer a wider context for understanding transitivity choices in political discourse. This delimitation would help to attain a focus. It would be easily organizable then. In order to achieve practicable and realistic outcomes from the linguistic analysis such delimiting remains inevitable. Hence exclusive findings may only be specific to this debate and the linguistic strategies employed by Donald Trump and Kamala Harris in this context. As far as findings are concerned such an approach would of great help to reach realistic and rational finding keeping in view the set objectives.

Literature Review

How does language play its part in development of particular narratives and discourses which ultimately lead to the formation of particular culture and traditions has always been a field of interest for researchers and analysts. Not only in linguistics but also in other disciplines analysis have been conducting researches to reach the facts generally hidden from the eyes of generic. In the field of stylistics the transitivity processes, as classified by Halliday (2004), allow for a

nuanced examination of the ways in which language represents actions, experiences, and relationships. Material processes, which describe physical actions (e.g., running, cooking), are key in understanding the dynamics of power and agency in a text. Mental processes, encompassing perception, cognition, and affection (e.g., seeing, thinking, fearing), shed light on how characters or speakers internalize and leave impact on their environment. Then there are linguistic choices which highlight relationships they are described as relational processes. This is applicable to different models of researches to scrutinize hypotheses. An inclusive frame and model may be had in the these six processes of transitivity analysis, as outlined in systemic functional linguistics, relationships between participants, processes, and circumstances in language. These processes not only provide insight into the structural patterns of language but also reveal perspectives that shape human experience. In this context physical actions or the material process are the first process which significance, events, or states of being. From a varied perspective, Material Processes relate to observable behaviors, actions, and physical events, which hold significance in a speech. This perspective emphasizes the importance of environment and external stimuli in shaping behavior, highlighting the role of Material Processes in influencing human action. On the other hand, mental process of transitivity analysis refers to thought, feelings and emotion. The corresponding different perspective, focuses on internal mental states, such as thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. This perspective recognizes the significance of mental processes in shaping human experience, underscoring the importance of cognitive factors in influencing behavior and decision-making. The link between different segment and objects is maintained, as per the SFL's transitivity analysis, through relational processes. This perspective emphasizes the role of relationships and social interactions in shaping human behavior and experience. By examining Relational Processes, researchers can gain insight into the complex dynamics of relationships and their impact on human behavior. Then there is another category of verbal processes. This category of verbal processes has a close affinity with political discourse. It includes speech, verbal as well as written communication. This perspective explores the factors underlying language use and communication, highlighting the complex relationships between language, thought, and behavior. As far as existential processes are concerned, they refer to the feelings and emotions of the speaker which ultimately reveal the human motives and aspiration through linguistic components. Thus they stand for existential processes that highlights emphasize the importance of subjective experience and the individual's experience of existence, presence, or being. By examining Existential Processes, researchers can gain insight into the fundamental nature of human existence and experience. Last but not the least come the process that called Behavioral Processes. This process is supposed to describe physiological behaviors. It also includes the psychological behaviors, as a part of communicative and discursive patterns. They are also tied to political discourse. This perspective recognizes the significance of human development in shaping human experience. By examining Behavioral Processes, researchers can gain insight into the complex dynamics of human development and its impact on behavior and cognition. Thus, in the field of stylistics transitivity analysis help us in building a frame of reference for linguistic investigation where with we can establish a relationship between humans and a specific language. By recognizing the corresponding perspectives underlying each process, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the complex factors shaping human behavior and experience.

The comprehensive and all-inclusive survey of the processes of transitivity analysis namely Material, Mental, Relational, Verbal, Existential, and Behavioral, we may develop a particular perspective into the approaches of the people who cherish specific ideologies and beliefs to meet the needs of their respective fields of interest as an individual as well as a community. The choices people make in selecting one transitivity process over another can reveal underlying attitudes, values, and beliefs. For instance, a person who frequently uses Material Processes may have a more practical and action-oriented mind-set, focusing on tangible goals and outcomes. In contrast,

someone who prefers Mental Processes may be more introspective and contemplative, emphasizing thoughts, feelings, and perceptions in order to dominate the opponent. Hence the selection of words, phrases and clauses by the speakers not only stand for their intentions and goals but also reflect their status in society as well as their status in a particular culture and belief system. For example, individuals from collectivist cultures may favor Relational Processes, emphasizing the importance of social harmony and group cohesion as well as gaining power over the same. On the other hand some may prefer a particular instead of the other to gain dominance through particular discursive practice. Thus, perceiving from psychological perspective scrutiny of text from transitivity process serves as a valuable tool for understanding the different bents of minds of the people belonging to different social groups and communities like co-workers and colleagues. The choice of the transitivity processes by the people reflects their approaches and ideologies which are served well by these choices. Then we come to the connection or the link that this research tends to establish between Transitivity Analysis can play a crucial role in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA is a methodology used to examine the relationship between language, power, and ideology. Such an analysis would help understand the link between linguistic choices and power dynamics. Firstly, we might take a particular process from the text and analyze it and later on after having determined the process it involves like Material Processes, can be used to construct a discourse. Such a discourse may be of action that may work as an agency or control. In a text that promotes a particular ideology or policy, Material Processes can be used to create a sense of urgency, necessity, or inevitability. As we can a member of a political party or a government official may utilize these process in order to introduce new policies and also may indicate the plans and schemes they are going to initiate in the time to come. On the same analytical pattern discourse of rationality and moral authority can be deduced from the use of mental processes that an individual may opt to achieve his personal goals and motives. In a text that aims to persuade or convince, Mental Processes may highlight the inevitability of certain steps that they plan to initiate. It may also demonstrate the worth of their policies as self-evident and obvious. In order to detect how relationships are built upon linguistic components this analysis may also offer ample support in the form of Relational Processes. Such processes are generally used to construct a discourse of social relationships, identity, or community. In a text that aims to create a sense of belonging or shared values, Relational Processes can be used to emphasize the connections between individuals, groups, or institutions. Verbal Processes can be used to construct a discourse of communication, dialogue, or negotiation. In a text that aims to create a sense of transparency, accountability, or cooperation, Verbal Processes can be used to emphasize the exchange of information, ideas, or opinions. The choice of verbal processes by a politician may boost the confidence of supports. Thus their credibility is also enhanced. Eventually they become trustworthy for their voters in general and for their supporters in particular. In order to spread the feelings of stability or inevitability SFL's Existential Processes is generally used by the influential person in social and political aspects of life. Existential processes may be conducive to stability and certainly in a particular social set up.

In Critical Discourse Analysis, accountability and determination of responsibility plays a very significant role. For the purpose Behavioral Processes provide an appropriate model of analysis to find out how do people construct a discourse of behavior, action, or performance. In a text that aims to create a sense of accountability, responsibility, or achievement, Behavioral Processes can be used to emphasize the actions, behaviors, or performance of individuals or groups. These processes may be used by a particular politician to pinpoint the shortcomings of the opponents' performance and can raise the value of the achievements of own leaders.

In conclusion, the six transitivity processes may be linked with Critical Discourse Analysis, for uncovering the underlying power dynamics, social relationships, and ideological positions that

shape the discourse. Through such an examination of transitivity processes used in a text, researchers have the opportunity to develop a fair understanding regarding language which is used to construct and maintain social reality. They may also uncover the linguistic mechanism exploited to gain supremacy.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), is widely used as a methodology. With framework of CDA analysts explore the relationship between language and power . With this perspective of CDA they primarily focus on how different discursive practices reflects and perpetuates societal ideologies. Fairclough's (2003) three-dimensional model of CDA is a widely adopted framework for analyzing discourse. This model consists of three stages: Description, Interpretation, and Explanation. In the first stage, linguistic features of a text are described, focusing on grammatical structures and processes like Transitivity., At the stage of Interpretation, we delve deep into the covert ideological assertions of the discourse, to explore a view of the world presented through language. At the Explanation stage, it connects the discourse to the social as well as political backgrounds to point out power play through language. Having developed a strong bond between Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and CDA a researcher may use both of them as tools. These tools have the ability to trace the grammatical structures in texts and their social functions. SFL's focus on Transitivity processes helps to dissect how language represents actions, relationships, and experiences, allowing for a deeper understanding of the ideological underpinnings of a text (Halliday, 2004). While CDA provides a broader framework is of great help to reveal the power relations and social ideologies, SFL's focus on the lexico-grammatical features of a text helps to uncover the specific linguistic choices that contribute to these larger societal narratives. Thus, stylistics and discourse analysis together investigate the social realities. Having analyzed the Transitivity choices in texts, it becomes possible to gain insights. A person may judge the way how speakers or characters position themselves. It may also be very helpful to find out others in relation to social roles, power, and agency. Hence the passivity and activity may be determined through the these processes of transitivity analysis. When the discourses are analyzed the approached of critical discourse analyses are used. These approaches are used in wide range of texts. These texts may include political speeches and media content. For instance, Fairclough (2003) applied CDA to the analysis of political discourse, highlighting how language in political speeches serves to construct and legitimize power. In a similar vein, SFL and CDA have been employed in analyzing texts related to global ideologies, such as jihadist propaganda (Rusdianto & Llewellyn, 2021). Here are examples of literary text which have been investigated with the help of both the approaches. These researches have shown significant results.

As mentioned above the combination of CDA and SFL in this context offers opportunities for a detailed analysis of the ideological assumptions. These assumptions may not be over in texts. They may be covert due certain social and cultural constraints. But once are traced he may seek how they contribute to the construction of social realities. This approach has significant implications for understanding the role of language in both reinforcing and challenging broader political ideologies. In the case of political discourse, such as the 2024 American presidential debate between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris, an analysis can reveal the use of language in such a way that it constructs authority and power relations. In the contemporary society it may offer valuable understanding regarding prevalent discourses. How transitivity construct discourse remains the primary focus. A researcher tries to find how the choices of different process ultimately develop a particular critical discourse that leads to the process off opinion formation. In other words, Transitivity choices seem to work unconsciously behind the opinions of the general public as well as that of the opinion leader.

Research Methodology

Firstly, in this research, the transitivity analysis is based on Halliday's framework that becomes the part of SFL. Later on, Fairclough's Model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) will be also be employed in parallel. The focus of research would be to discover the use of transitivity processes. It would be later on pointed out how political power and agency are framed in discourse through SFL. Halliday's transitivity analysis focuses on the grammatical structures that denote participants (e.g., agents, goals, and recipients) and the actions they are involved in, helping to reveal how power dynamics and agency are depicted. On the other hand, Fairclough's CDA model observes the relationship between language and social power, pondering over how discourse reflects, reinforces, or challenges societal structures and ideologies. These two frameworks will be combined. Through these combinations of stylistics and discursive practices research intends to weigh the strengths of both. The transitivity analysis will offer a detailed linguistic account of how political actors are represented in discourse, while Fairclough's CDA model will offer an opportunity to have a broader understanding of the socio-political inferences of these depictions. Together, they will offer a wholesome approach to uncover how political ideologies are formed and communicated in debates, with both frameworks working synergistically to explore the nuances of power and agency in political discourse.

Halliday's Transitivity Theory (Systemic Functional Linguistics)

With the help of Halliday's Transitivity Theory, we can have detailed framework for analyzing actions, events. It also helps to demonstrate how the participants are represented in language. In political discourse, the way candidates represent actions and the participants involved (e.g., who is doing the action, who is affected by it, who benefits from it) play a crucial part in shaping political narratives and power relations. All the processes described in the Transitivity would be put into analysis with a particular perspective like material processes are going to be analyzed to identify how candidates depict themselves as agents of action (e.g., leading, achieving, controlling) or portray their opponents as responsible for failures or issues. Mental processes signify internal processes like thinking, feeling, and perceiving (e.g., "Harris believes the economy needs reform"). Relational processes represent the states of being and identification (e.g., "Trump is the leader of the free world"). Behavioral processes denote physiological or psychological processes that involve human behavior (e.g., "Harris smiled while explaining"). These processes will be explored to uncover how candidates' personal characteristics or actions are represented in the discourse and how these behaviors are used to construct public images. Verbal processes will be studied to determine how candidates use language to communicate key messages, challenge opponents, and persuade the electorate. Alongside transitivity processes, participants and circumstances (e.g., actor, goal, phenomenon, location, time) will be assessed to create a perception as how different participants (e.g., candidates, voters, the government, media) are represented in relation to various processes.

Halliday's Transitivity Theory and Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model

As mentioned above this study would adopt a two-fold methodology combining Michael Halliday's Transitivity Theory from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Norman Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The integration of these two frameworks renders a comprehensive analysis of the linguistic structures used in American presidential debates to construct political meaning, power relations, and ideological positions. Following is a detailed explanation of how these theoretical frameworks will guide the methodology of the study.

Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of Critical Discourse Analysis

Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model provides an ideal framework for analyzing the relationship between language, power, and ideology in discourse. There are three interconnected dimensions which may be applied for the aforesaid analysis.

Description

It's focused on the linguistic aspects of the text. It focuses on grammar and structure of the language like material, relational etc. This analysis leads to the aspects of transitivity theory to recognize how are the events and actions represented in the text. Especially in the present context the individual maybe Voters, candidates and other officials. How do the individual choses different processes of language express his viewpoints. This exploration would parse the technical devices they may include metaphors, similes and other rhetorical devices.

Interpretation

This dimension would focus how does language work as a social practice and at the same time choice of an individual. At this stage it would explore how do the transitivity choice influence and gets influenced in political debates. Moreover, it would be uncovered how language is used to accuse the opponents and how is it used to assume authority. How certain social aspects of language are taken for granted.

Explanation

This study would analyze how does language expose the power politics and how does it challenge the power politics it. During this stage it would be explored how do linguistic choices reflect, in the vast social structure the play of power relations and ideological forces. This study would focus that language is used not only for social interactions but also to impress upon the people, raise social status as well as to impose a particular political ideology in society.

Halliday's Transitivity and Fairclough's CDA

Here in this research we have combined two frameworks of study. The one is transitivity analysis and the other is the Fairclough's theory of Critical Discourse. This combination not only imparts beauty to the research but also develops a link between the two models. Examining the text itself through transitivity, the production and interpretation processes through CDA, and the larger social context through both CDA and the transitivity framework, this methodology offers a holistic approach to the understanding of language in presidential debates that constructs power, authority, as well as their status related to their political ideologies. Thus, through the mixture of frameworks we explore the intricacies of stylistics inherent in political debate. On the other hand, the explored linguistic aspects are further reviewed through the lens of critical discourse analysis. Thus, both the individual as well as the individual becomes the target of research. The analysis will reveal the fact how candidates make a rigorous use of transitivity processes to project power, construct political identities, And influences voter perceptions, while at the same time also situating these linguistic choices within the broader context of political power, media representation, and electoral strategy. Through this methodology, the study will contribute to understanding the complex role of language in shaping public opinion and political outcomes in the context of American president.

Research Design

The primary focus of study would be the transitivity analysis of American Presidential between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris. Their dialogues would be parsed into clauses and these clauses would further be parsed into processes. Later these clauses would be analyzed into different processes of transitivity analysis. It would be found out how many types of processes have been chosen by both the presidential candidates. Further it would also be traced which of the process has been chosen extensively by each of the speaker. These flow-charts would also help us reach certain conclusion regarding their verbal choices. The collection of these verbal and linguistic choices by both the speaker would provide us a clue to their choices of words and phrases and processes. Wherewith this analysis would a medium through which we could draw the results regarding the functions a language may perform as an effective tool of communication. The parameter of functional grammar would be applied and efforts would be made to reach the specific functions which have been used to achieve linguistic functions afterwards the same result that had been deduced through the parameters of functional grammar would be taken into consideration with a different perspective. That perspective would the critical discourse analysis technique. For the purpose different frameworks of critical discourse analysis are there and researchers have been using them to scrutinize different hypothesis.

In this study Fairclough three-dimensional model of critical discourse analysis has been chosen. First dimension refers to the description. In the present case the transitivity analysis would provide an ample scope for description. As the description involves the structural elements of the text so the given speech, as per plan, would initially be scrutinized structurally. Through this scrutiny clauses would be categorized into processes. These processes represent the linguistic choices made by the debaters.

Theoretical Framework

Halliday's (2004) concept of transitivity in SFL will be used to assess the types of processes in the candidates' discourse. Transitivity refers to the way actions (processes) are demonstrated in a text and Transitivity also involves the roles of participants (actors, goals, etc.). This analysis is going to focus on:

Clauses and phrases that represent actions and events involving physical actions (e.g., Trump or Harris making a claim, directing action, etc.) are called Material Processes.

All those processes that represent internal actions such as cognition, perception, and affection (e.g., thinking, feeling, or believing) are called Mental Processes.

Such linguistic features as represent states of being and relationships between entities (e.g., identifying, classifying, attributing qualities) are called Relational Processes.

Linguistic aspects which include processes of saying or communication (e.g., speeches, claims, accusations) are called Verbal Processes.

Existence of states or things are represented through existential processes. (e.g., "There is...") hence they are called Existential Processes: This model will offer an insight into how each candidate uses language to assert control, project power, and position themselves in relation to the opponent, the electorate, and political ideologies.

Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of CDA

Fairclough's (2003) three-dimensional model will be used as a framework in combination with transitivity analysis for analyzing the political discourse in a debate. The model comprises the following stages:

At the very outset stage, linguistic features of the debate are uncovered, focusing on the grammatical structure and the use of Transitivity. This would be the Description as per Fairclough's theory of Critical Discourse Analysis.

Exploration of the relationship between the text and the social context is adopted in order to find out the way linguistic choices reflect underlying power dynamics and Ideological positions. From the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, it would be the phase referred as Interpretation. This level the debate would be investigated as a discourse which is investigated within its broader socio-political context, explaining how the language used in the debate reflects and reinforce societal structures of power, authority, and gender. This would hence would work as the last stage namely as Explanation of Fairclough's theory of Critical Discourse Analysis.

Methodology

Data Collection

The primary data for this study will be the transcripts of the 2024 presidential debate between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris. This study will be delimited to the analysis of a single debate between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris as presidential candidates in the 2024. Former President Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris participated in a presidential debate in Philadelphia, Sept. 10, 2024. These transcripts will be sourced from reputable media outlets, official debate websites, or Government publications. Video recordings of the debate may also be put under investigation in conjunction with the transcripts for a fuller understanding of non-verbal cues and rhetorical strategies. As far as data sampling is concerned the debate will be divided into segments based on thematic shifts or significant interactions (e.g., opening statements, responses to questions, cross-examinations, closing statements). A representative sample of dialogue from both candidates will be selected for detailed analysis, ensuring coverage of various themes, issues, and rhetorical moments.

The analysis is going to follow these steps:

1. Transitivity Analysis and Textual Description (Fairclough's First Dimension):
 - Each candidate's discourse will be analyzed in terms of their use of Transitivity processes. This involves identifying and categorizing the types of processes (material, mental, relational, etc.) present in their speech.
 - The frequency and distribution of these processes will be recorded, allowing for a comparison between Trump's and Harris's use of language.
2. Transitivity Choices and Their Interpretation (Fairclough's Second Dimension):
 - The Transitivity choices will be interpreted to reveal underlying ideological assumptions. For example, who is portrayed as the 'actor' (agent) of actions, and who is the 'goal' (recipient) or 'affected' by actions?
 - The focus will be on how these choices reflect power dynamics and political ideologies. For instance, are the candidates more likely to use material

- Processes to describe their own actions (asserting control), or are they depicted as passive recipients of external actions (reinforcing victimhood or Disempowerment)?
 - Special attention will be paid to how Harris's influence her linguistic choices compared to Trump, who has a longer history of presidential campaigns.
3. Types of Transitivity Processes and Explanation (Fairclough's Third Dimension):
- The discourse will be explored within the broader social and political context. This includes exploring the ideological implications of the candidates' linguistic strategies.
 - The analysis will consider the political context of the 2024 election, paying particular attention to how power is negotiated in public political discourse.

Tools and Techniques

As a tool of investigation Transitivity Analysis of SFL from the perspective stylistic linguistics would be exploited. The analysis of Transitivity will contain coding the speech segments to identify the types of processes and participants involved. This coding process will categorize each clause based on its transitivity type. It would be the part of the research that may be regarded Quantitative Analysis of the political debate. The occurrence of each process type will be counted and analyzed to determine which processes dominate each candidate's discourse. This will provide insight into how they position themselves and others in the debate. After having made a quantitative analysis, the results would be scrutinized in qualitative Interpretation. Each Transitivity choice will be interpreted in terms of its social, political, and ideological hints, particularly concerning power, and agency.

Fairclough's Model's Suitability for the Transitivity Analysis of Political Speeches

In the context of analyzing a political debate, where the primary focus remains on how language is used especially when examining a political debate through the lens of transitivity analysis. It helps to assess how different linguistics aspects are used to construct meaning and effect public perception. For the purpose Fairclough's model offers an appropriate framework. It allows for a detailed investigation of how discourse shapes reality through language, looking at the roles , processes, and relationships constructed within the text, without delving into the cognitive or psychological backdrops that Van Dijk's model takes into consideration to explore the discursive practice. With the help of Fairclough's approach an analysis can be had that peculiarly interpretative. In which there is a scope pure linguistic and stylistic analysis. The relationship between power and language can be established with Norman Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). And the general perception that language is unbiased is also put to question. Therefore, this model has been found a comprehensive model as a Lens to investigate linguistic and discursive practices.

Key Aspects of Fairclough's Model in Political Discourse: Text Analysis

Politicians carefully select words to narrate issues in ways that align with their ideological positions. For example, terms like "freedom," "security," or "economic growth" are often laden with ideological connotations. Technically that may be described as a part of research to find out the Lexical Choices made by the participants. The use of passive voice, modal verbs, or specific sentence structures can obscure agency, highlight responsibility, or create a sense of inevitability. In this regard Grammar and Syntax may provide ample information to reach the foregrounded meaning of a text. Politicians frequently use metaphors to simplify complex issues and evoke

emotional rejoinders (e.g., “war on terror,” “flood of immigrants”). Though Metaphors and Analogies help to understand the unknown with the help of the known still they reflect the mindset that provokes the choices related to these literary techniques.

Discursive practice

When we examine the mechanism through which political texts are produced (e.g., speeches, policies, media statements) and consumed by the public. It considers the context in which discourse is created and interpreted hence in the discourse it may be described as Production and Consumption of the text. Politicians often allude to other texts, such as historical events, religious texts, or popular culture, to legitimize their stances and develop a connect with their audience. That may be regarded as Intertextuality in discursive practice. The choice of genre (e.g., rally speech, press conference) and style (e.g., formal, conversational) can influence how the message is received and consumed. Genre and Style is an important part of discourse analysis.

Social Practice

Fairclough’s model highlights the way discourse reinforces. It also highlights how does a particular discourse challenge existing power structure. Politicians may use language to legalize their authority, marginalize opponents, or mobilize support. Tracing the Power Relations remains a significant part of this study. Discourse is an instrument for promoting ideologies. For example, neoliberal ideologies might emphasize individualism and free markets, while socialist ideologies might focus on collective responsibility and social welfare. This model also provides a mechanism to explore the techniques and linguistic choices to propagate a particular Ideology political discourse can reflect the change that might have occurred. Certain discursive practices may also inspire certain social changes. By analyzing shifts in language over time, we can understand the way power dynamics and ideologies evolve Social Change.

Example: Analyzing a Political Speech

Utilizing the Fairclough’s model, a political speech could be analyzed as follows:

Text: Identify key terms, metaphors, and grammatical structures that carry specific ideologies (e.g., “building walls” to signify security).

Discursive Practice: Examine how the speech is delivered (e.g., tone, audience interaction) and how it alludes to other texts or events.

Social Practice: Explore the way the speech reinforces or contests power structures and ideologies as well as the way it might influence public opinion or policy.

By applying Fairclough’s model, researchers can uncover the subtle ways in which language shapes political realities and perpetuates or challenges power dynamics. This approach is particularly valuable for understanding the role of discourse in democratic processes, propaganda, and social movements.

Fairclough’s model thus provides contextual Depth to expose hidden ideologies and strategic intentions. At the same time, it also has scope to look into social factors.

As this study is related to a political debate hence power dynamics and political climate would remain the focus of investigation. It goes without saying that politics has close link with the

ideologies. Uncovering ideologies also through linguistic choices would be an important aspect of the investigation. Once the contextual analysis is made it also highlights the speakers' goals and strategies to strengthen their positions. Thus, the model offers a detailed Linguistic Analysis (Text Dimension) and focuses on specific linguistic features (e.g., word choice, metaphors, syntax) to reveal how language constructs meaning. For example, it analyzes passive voice ("Mistakes were made") to show how politicians' obscure responsibility. According to transitivity processes in the aforesaid example the material actions has been transformed into existential process. Thus, through such a choice effort seems to have been made to evade the responsibility. It also provides Broader Societal Critique (Social Practice Dimension) and connects language to power structures, ideologies, and social inequalities.

Conclusion

Fairclough's model of CDA works as appropriate lens for the political or ideological dimensions of speech. On the other hand Dijk's approach accentuate the mental processes behind a discursive practice. Hence in the present study Fairclough's model has been chosen because psychological factors into the mental processes underlying language use, accentuating the role of context, power dynamics, and social identity in shaping discourse. Through emphasis on the psychological aspects of communication, Van Dijk's model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) highlights the cognitive and social dimensions of discourse, focusing on the way power and ideology are embedded in language. As it is insightful and often relies on intricate rhetorical strategies and contextual nuances.

Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA is very comprehensive model for analysis. It not only examines text but also discursive practice as well as social practice. In collaboration with transitivity analysis Fairclough's model becomes effective and efficient all the more.

Transitivity analysis reveals the linguistics mechanism that the political speakers use to shape perceptions, assign agency, and manipulate interpretations. All the above-mentioned features of the approach make this combined approach particularly effective for dissecting the strategic and persuasive elements of political speeches. Thus, Fairclough's model, enhanced by transitivity analysis, provides a more nuanced and adaptable framework for analyzing political discourse compared to Van Dijk's model. Hence the Fairclough's model has been chosen for the transitivity analysis of American Political Debate.

Data Analysis and Interpretations

After coding and quantifying the Transitivity choices, the analysis is going to focus on interpreting the ideological implications of these choices. This will include:

Power Relations: Identifying the way and the mechanism through which language is used to assert control, challenge authority, or reinforce power structures.

Political Ideology: To understand the process through the discourse reflects and promotes particular political ideologies, values, and worldviews.

Transitivity Choices: Analyzing the transitivity choices Donald Trump and Kamila Haris utilized to construct political power and agency in the discourse to reflect ideological positions in the debates.

Conclusion

This study will provide a detailed critical analysis of the 2024 presidential debate using Fairclough's CDA and Halliday's Transitivity framework. The findings will shed light on how the candidates use language to construct power, identity, and political discourse. It will also foreground the ways in which the linguistic strategies employed by Trump and Harris reflect broader societal power relations and political ideologies, offering insights into the role of language in shaping electoral narratives and public opinion.

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