A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II SPEECH TO THE NATION ON CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

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Abstract

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) has been a crucial field in social sciences that aims to investigate the language structures in a social and cultural context. Furthermore, it scrutinizes the relationship between language, power, and ideology in political discourse as well as specific discourses such as media and literature. In other words, CDA is utilized to reveal the covert ideology in political speeches by focusing on language use. Various political speeches of significant politicians have been investigated by researchers so far. The common problem of different countries is coronavirus these days. Hence, the most popular speeches are generally about coronavirus. The purpose of this study is to investigate Queen Elizabeth II's speech to the nation on Coronavirus which is a call for unity. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar is used as a framework to analyze Queen's speech and raise readers' awareness in terms of comprehending the underlying messages in the speech based on three meta-functions: ideational function, interpersonal function, and textual function.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, political speech, ideology

Özet

Eleştirisel söylev analizi, sosyal ve kültürel bağlamlardaki dil yapılarını araştırmayı amaçlayan sosyal bilimlerin önemli dallarından bir tanesidir. Ayrıca medyadaki ve edebiyattaki belirli söylevlerin yanı sıra, politik söylevdeki dil, güç ve ideoloji arasındaki ilişkiyi sorgular. Diğer bir deyişle eleştirisel söylev analizi, dil kullanımına odaklanarak politik konuşmalardaki saklı ideolojiyi ortaya çıkarmak için yapılır. Bu zamana kadar önemli politikacıların konuşmaları incelenmiştir. Bu günlerde ülkelerin ortak problemi korona virüstür. Bu yüzden, popüler olan konuşmalar bu virüs hakkındadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Kraliçe ikinci Elizabeth'in birlik olmak için korona virüsle alakalı ulusa yaptığı konuşmayı incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Halliday'in Sistematik Fonksiyonel Gramer yapısı, kraliçenin konuşmasını incelemek ve sözlerinin altında yatan mesajları ortaya çıkararak okuyucunun farkındalığını arttırmak amacıyla kullanılmıştır. Bu yapının düşünsel fonksiyon, kişiler arası fonksiyon ve metinsel fonksiyon olmak üzere üç temel meta fonksiyonu vardır.

Anahtar kelimeler: eleştirisel söylev analizi, politik konuşma, ideoloji

INTRODUCTION

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a brunch of social sciences that has been taking sociolinguists' attention for decades. It is an interdisciplinary language study that explicates the social problems including various fields such as sociology, politics, and pedagogy. In CDA, language is seen as a social practice and it mirrors society. It emphasizes that discourse is affected by society. In addition, language has an indispensable role in the construction of social objects and social relations. (Chen, 2018). It examines the language in its social and cultural contexts and tries to reveal the hidden meanings both in written and spoken language. It illustrates how language reflects ideology, beliefs, and thoughts. Moreover, CDA investigates the relationships between language, power, ideology, identity, society, culture, and politics. It is problem-oriented. Therefore, it focuses on injustice, inequality, danger, suffers, and prejudice in specific areas (Rahimi and Riasati, 2011).

CDA has been being utilized in different contexts such as classroom, literature, media, etc. Political discourse is one of the most attractive fields to examine for CDA researchers since it includes society, power, ideology, etc. A political speech can reflect the ideology of the

authority and change the opinions of the audiences. (Chen, 2018). Through CDA, the speech can be analyzed systematically by using different frameworks. One of the reasons for investigating political speeches is helping people to understand the covert ideology and thinking analytically about the speech. This study aims to scrutinize Queen Elizabeth II's speech to the nation on Coronavirus which is a call for unity by utilizing Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar as a framework. It can assist readers to comprehend how Queen Elizabeth II uses the language in her speech to convince people that they can tackle Coronavirus and they can manage the process successfully.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
2.1 Discourse and Discourse Analysis

Discourse is a broad term that is used in different fields such as linguistics, philosophy, sociology, etc. There have been given various definitions for this term. According to Van Djik, discourse is any form of language use as written and spoken. It can be concluded that discourse not only consists of discussion and dialogues but also includes the written forms of the language such as books. Furthermore, Bayram (2010) states that it is a way to express oneself by using words. It means that one can comprehend the real opinion of the speaker via discourse. In addition, it has some main features. It cannot be considered as distinguished from the context since it is a kind of 'social practice' including written and spoken language. It shapes social situations but social situations also shape discourse. They affect each other ideologically such as determining unequal social positions, the relationships between people, cultural differences, unequal powers, etc. (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997).

In order to study discourse in different social situations, a field came up in social sciences which is 'discourse analysis' (DA). DA handles the issue that the language becomes meaningful in its social and psychological context (Cook, 1990). In other words, discourse analysis takes written and spoken communication into consideration to study by spotlighting the content of texts and conversations in social contexts. The main purpose of DA is to analyze the communication from different perspectives to be able to obtain a new perception by using various methods such as Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar, Fairclough's three-dimensional framework, Van Djik's framework, etc.

2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis in Political Context

The language is an effective way of transferring ideas to the people. It reflects people's thoughts and beliefs. Therefore, it is the core of political discourse. The political discourse handles the use of discourse analysis in political sciences including speeches, declarations, slogans, etc. (Chen, 2018). It is basically about politics and it deals with the politicians and political events in general. It is actually a part of CDA. As stated earlier, CDA investigates the relationships between power, ideology, and language. Political speeches include hidden ideologies. Politicians try to use the language effectively to be able to take people's attention, to manipulate them, and to get approval from them. The main point is to accomplish political aims (Van Djik, 1997). CDA uncovers the ideologies by analyzing the politicians' speeches systematically based on various methods. There is an important thing to take into consideration while analyzing these speeches which is 'context'. According to Adjei (2013), people's attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions associate with the context, and their discourses are influenced

by the socio-cultural and historical context. Thus, CDA scrutinizes the political speeches by regarding them with the context.

2.3 Coronavirus Discourse

Coronaviruses are a kind of virus that gives rise to illnesses in people and animals. They cause serious respiratory infections such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The well-known type of these viruses is COVID-19 recently. COVID-19 broke out first in Wuhan, China and it is infectious. It has brought about so many deaths around the world. Therefore, it is seen as a pandemic. There are some symptoms of this virus such as fever, dry cough, and tiredness. It spreads mostly through the nose or mouth from person to person. A cure has not been found yet for COVID-19 (WHO, 2020) Some vaccinates have been tried but none of them has given an absolute cure for the infected people. Serious precautions have been taken by governments around the world. All kinds of travels are stopped which were done by planes, trains, buses, etc. Working places began to get precautions as well. The workers are using masks and few people work in the same environment. Furthermore, most shopping malls were closed. It was banned to shop without masks in even groceries. As for education, all of the schools started the distance learning process. Online courses were opened for students of all levels. Curfews are being applied from time to time especially for elderly people and young. Politicians have some strategies to manage this Pandemic process effectively and they get some precautions in their countries. They inform the citizens regularly and call them for unity against this epidemic.

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF HALLIDAY'S SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

Different frameworks are used in critical discourse analysis. They regard context as a part of communication. One of those frameworks is M.A.K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar which is used in this study. It consists of three meta-functions: ideational function, interpersonal function, and textual function.

A. Ideational Function:

People reflect their experiences which are unknown to the audience in the real world through ideational function. Their experiences consist of different processes and they convey them through the language. Their choice of process mirrors their views about their experiences. The ideational function is based on 'transitivity' which provides to express what's happening through clauses. The transitivity system includes six processes which are the material, mental, relational, behavioral, verbal, and existential process.

The material process is related to what is done. It is utilized to explicate events. Action verbs, the actor, and the goal of action are expressed in this process.

The mental process is about the perception of the world and it includes two participants: the sensor and the phenomenon. It consists of three sub-categories: perception (seeing, looking), affection (loving, hating), and cognition (knowing, believing).

The relational process is related to being. A relation between two objects is demonstrated in this process. There are two types: attributive relation and identifying relation.

The behavioral process is related to physiological and psychological behavior such as breathing, coughing, smiling crying, etc.

The verbal process includes exchanging information. It consists of three participants: the sayer, the receiver, and the verbiage. The verbs which are utilized in general are "*say, tell, praise, talk, describe, etc.*"

The existential process demonstrates that something exists. The participant is existent in this process.

B. Interpersonal Function

It is a function that is used for social relations. It illustrates people's position and identity. It can be understood by modality, mood, and personal pronouns. It gives an idea about people's attitudes and cognition. First of all, modality can reflect probability, obligation, tendency, etc. (Chen, 2018). It can help to understand whether the situation is positive or negative. Second, mood shows the speaker's role which is selected. It can be imperative or declarative. Last, personal pronouns demonstrate the role of participants and their positions in the communication. It determines the relationship between the speaker and the listener. Personal pronouns can be inclusive or exclusive. For instance, 'we' and 'you'.

C. Textual Function

In the textual function, language is related to its context. Otherwise, it will not be different from random sentences in the dictionary. It becomes meaningful in its context. It is important to organize information coherently.

ANALYSIS OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II SPEECH TO THE NATION ON CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Queen Elizabeth II gave a speech on Coronavirus Pandemic on BBC on the 5th of April, 2020. She rarely gives a speech. It was her 4th speech during her 68-year reign. Britain has been experiencing bad times because of the epidemic. It is a very important speech for the people in Britain and also very meaningful since she tries to reassure them about fighting against the coronavirus epidemic in unity. She uses the language effectively to demonstrate to people that they have been managing the process and struggling for the people of the country.

Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar is utilized to analyze Queen II speech as a framework. The study focuses on transitivity, modality, personal pronouns, and coherence processes.

A. Transitivity Analysis

Transitivity is a representation of ideational function which illustrates people's views and attitudes (Chen, 2018). It consists of six types: material, mental, relational, behavioral, verbal, and existential process.

1. Material Process

It is a 'doing' process that action verbs are frequently used to express concrete and abstract actions. There are two participants in general: actor and goal which can be subject or object. It is a good way to show people what the government is doing to handle the epidemic. The instances from Queen's speech are given below:

Actor	Process	Goal
I	speak, reassure, thank, protect, stay	to you, you, those of you, everyone
You	do, carry out	in support of us
We, we as children	tackle with, overcome, speak, evacuate, send away, succeed, join, meet, send, face, use, succeed	this disease, it, to children, all nations, to you all, advances of science
United Kingdom	come together, applaud	its care
4 People	help, deliver, check on, respond, discover, reflect, slow down	others, neighbors, this challenge

Table 1: Examples for Material Process

Here are some examples from the speech for the material process:

"I *(actor)* am speaking *(material process)* to you *(goal)*."

"Together we *(actor)* are tackling *(material process)* this disease *(goal)*."

"I *(actor)* want to reassure *(material process)* you *(goal)* that if we *(actor)* remain *(material process)* united and resolute, then we *(actor)* will overcome *(material process)* it *(goal)*."

"The moments when the United Kingdom *(actor)* has come together *(material process)* to applaud its care *(goal)*."

"Stories of people *(actor)* coming together to help *(material process)* others *(goal),* be it through delivering *(material process)* food parcels and medicines, checking on *(material process)* neighbors *(goal),* or converting *(material process)* businesses to help (*material process)* the relief effort *(goal)*."

"This time we *(actor)* join *(material process*) with all nations *(goal)* across the globe in a common endeavor."

"We as children *(actor)* spoke *(material process)* from here at Windsor to children *(goal)* who had been evacuated *(material process)* from their homes and sent away *(material process)* for their own safety."

In this material process, Queen Elizabeth II uses 'we/I/you/United Kingdom' as an Actor in her speech. It boosts people's confidence in the government. Using action verbs and telling people what has been done so far as the government to be able to help them gives people hope and makes them feel the support of the government. Furthermore, she demonstrates a positive attitude by using positive action verbs to make people motivated in quarantine days. She also stresses being united against the epidemic. She shows the importance of solidarity through her words.

2. Relational Process

It is the process of 'being' that demonstrates two objects' relation. It can be utilized to explicate complex relations of abstract things. In addition, it includes two modes which are

attributive relation and identifying relation. The examples from Queen's speech are given below:

"Those who come after us will say the Britons of this generation were as strong as any."

"The pride in who we are is not a part of our past, it defines our present and our future."

"Its symbol will be the rainbows drawn by children"

"Though self-isolating may at times be hard, many people of all faiths and of none are discovering that it presents an opportunity to slow down, pause and reflect in prayer or meditation."

"While we have faced challenges before, this one is different."

In this relational process, Queen Elizabeth II takes people's attention to the faith. She tries to make people believe good days will come and the epidemic will pass. Despite the difficulties they have faced, the future will be bright for them. She describes Britons as 'strong people' in her utterances and refers to the past. She emphasizes that they tackled many problems in the past but they succeeded to remain strong. She makes a relation between the past and the present as well.

3. Mental Process

The mental process is a process of expressing inner experiences including perceptions, feelings, and cognitions. The actor senses the feeling here not the person who is 'doing' in contrast to the material process. The inner heart of audiences is connected with political beliefs. There are two participants in the mental process which are Senser and the phenomenon. The instances of the mental process from Queen II speech are given below:

"What I *(senser)* know *(mental process)* is an increasingly challenging time, a time of disruption in the life of our country, a disruption that has brought grief to some, financial difficulties to many, and enormous changes to the daily lives of us all."

"I'm *(senser)* sure *(mental process)* the nation will join me in assuring you that what you do is appreciated."

"I *(senser)* hope *(mental process)* in the years to come everyone will be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge."

"We *(senser)* have seen *(mental process)* heart-warming stories of people coming together to help others."

"Many *(senser)* will feel *(mental process)* a painful sense of separation from their loved ones, but now as then, we know deep down that it is the right thing to do."

"It *(senser)* reminds *(mental process)* me of the very first broadcast I made in 1940."

"Essential workers *(senser)* will be remembered *(mental process)* as an expression of our national spirit."

In the mental process, it can be understood that the Queen shares people's feelings and share her hopes in her heart with the audience. She empathizes with what people feel and reflects it to them. The audiences' power is strengthened to endure the disease and to stay at home in this way. She speaks on behalf of the public by saying 'the nation will join me' and thanks to this, she shows an example of being united as a country again in ideas and feelings.

Furthermore, she illustrates that they are together as a country and they share their happiness and bitterness.

4. Existential Process

The existential process shows that something 'exists'. The participant is the existence. The examples of this process are given below from Queen Elizabeth II speech:

"I want to thank everyone on the NHS frontline, as well as care workers and those carrying out essential roles who selflessly continue their day-to-day duties outside the home in support of us all."

In this sentence, the participants are the people who sacrifice themselves for the sake of the country. The Queen underlines their roles in difficult times.

"I also want to thank those of you who are staying at home, thereby helping to protect the vulnerable, and sparing many families the pain already felt by those who have lost loved ones."

In the sentence above, existence is the people who stay at home in quarantine because of the epidemic.

B. Interpersonal Function Analysis

In this part of the analysis, it will be focused on *modality* and *personal pronouns*.

1. Modality

Modality demonstrates the speaker's attitude towards the situation stated by a sentence. It can be divided into three categories according to their level of politeness: low modality (can, may, could), median modality (will, would, should), and high modality (must, ought to, need). High modality shows that the person is firm and authority while median modality shows the prediction about the future. Instances for modality from Queen Elizabeth II speech are given below:

"The nation *will* (median modality) join me in assuring you that what you do is appreciated."

"If we remain united and resolute, then we *will* (median modality) overcome it."

"Everyone *will* (median modality) be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge."

"Its symbol *will* (median modality) be the rainbows drawn by children."

"Though self-isolating *may* (low modality) at times be hard."

"Many *will* (median modality) feel a painful sense of separation from their loved ones."

"Using the great advances of science and our instinctive compassion to heal, we *will* (median modality) succeed, and that success *will* (median modality) belong to every one of us."

"We *should* (median modality) take comfort that while we *may* (low modality) have more still to endure, better days *will* (median modality) return."

"We *will* (median modality) be with our friends again. We *will* (median modality) be with our families again. We *will* (median modality) meet again."

In her speech, Queen Elizabeth II uses modality in general to express her feelings and views. She utilizes the median modality 'will' in her speech most of the time. It indicates that she makes predictions that are related to the future of the country and shows some solutions for

the epidemic issue. In addition, she gives hope to audiences. She tries to illustrate that the Britons and the government tackle the epidemic all together and they will be successful. Thanks to this, she encourages morale in the people. She uses present tenses most of the time as well as a modality. All of them demonstrate how firm and authority she is. She rarely expresses things with a low modality such as 'may'. It is included in her speech just twice.

2. Personal Pronouns

The relationship between the speaker and the participant is determined by personal pronouns. It demonstrates the participant's position and power in communication (Chen, 2018). The use of 'we' as the personal pronoun reduces the distance between the speaker and the participant (Wang, 2018). In addition, 'you' can be utilized as an interactive function. The examples of personal pronouns from Queen Elizabeth II speech are given below:

"I'm speaking to you at what I know is an increasingly challenging time"

"I want to reassure you."

"The pride in who we are is not a part of our past, it defines our present and our future."

"We have seen heart-warming stories"

"We as children spoke from here at Windsor."

"We know deep down"

"While we have faced challenges before, this one is different."

"We will succeed."

"We will be with our friends again. We will be with our families again. We will meet again."

As you can see from the instances above, the Queen uses especially 'we' as a personal pronoun in her speech. It can be concluded that she creates a united and peaceful atmosphere while speaking and makes a close relationship with the audiences regardless of their status. She sees them as a significant part of the country and speaks on behalf of them. Moreover, she tries to control the audiences' ideology and makes things acceptable.

C. Textual Function

In the textual function, discourse structure and content are examined. It is important to highlight important issues in this function. When the Queen's speech is analyzed, it can be seen that the speech is all about the current situation of the country. She starts her speech by the definition of the situation they are in and how hard it is. Then, she mentions people's efforts to handle the epidemic. She appreciates people to encourage morale to them and expresses her feelings for whom they lost their families. Afterward, she talks about the importance of being united and fight against the epidemic. She relates the present situation with the past ones which were difficult times and how they overcame them. She indicates her country how to be united and successful at the end of her speech and presents her thanks to them.

We can see a good combination of discourse and the event itself. They are related to each other. She touches upon hot topics of the day such as staying at home, helping each other, and enduring difficulties. She increases her credibility by making connections between events from past to present. The people are encouraged to put in a great effort during the Pandemic.

"I want to thank everyone on the NHS frontline, as well as care workers and those carrying out essential roles who selflessly continue their day-to-day duties outside the home in support of us all."

She shows how important people care-workers are and appreciates them by using this sentence above.

In conclusion, the whole text has coherence. She can persuade the audience that they will overcome the epidemic together.

CONCLUSION

The critical discourse analysis of Queen Elizabeth II's speech on Coronavirus Pandemic was done based on Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar. The Queen's speech was analyzed in terms of transitivity, modality, personal pronouns, and coherence. It is concluded that language can change people's ideas and manipulate them. The use of certain words has a great importance while speaking since they reflect the speaker's ideology. The Queen uses the material process in general and also uses the modals and personal pronouns effectively. She generally uses simple words to be understood by everyone. Her speech has good coherence in terms of being related to the current epidemic situation. She connects the events to each other effectively. In conclusion, political speeches are crucial and the way of language use reflects the speaker's ideologies and manipulates the audiences.

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