Ideological Strategies in Barack Obama’s Cairo Speech: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract:

This discourse analytical study attempts to explore the ideological strategies employed by Barack Obama in his Cairo speech. It applies Van Dijk’s (2006) model to the analysis of political discourse in that speech to uncover the ideologies hidden in it. The article is divided into five sections. The first section offers a theoretical background on critical discourse analysis. Section (2) introduces the approach that will be applied. Section (3) displays the study aim and technique. Section (4) applies the ideological framework to the chosen speech. The last section summarizes the main findings of the study. The study reveals that Obama uses a wide range of strategies and techniques in his speech to achieve his political objectives. These strategies unconsciously reflect his ideological agenda. He adopts two major ideological strategies: positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. The study explains the discursive tactics which he employs to create that ideological polarization represented in ‘Us’ vs. ‘Them’.

Keywords:

Critical Discourse Analysis, Barack Obama’s Cairo Speech, Van Dijk, Ideological Strategies, Positive Self-Presentation, Negative Other Presentation

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