



# A Critical Discourse Analysis of Macro Structures in Speeches of President Bush and President Obama

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## Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the strategic construction of discourse in the speeches of President Bush and President Obama, with a focus on identifying linguistic devices and discursive practices used to legitimize their war strategies. A qualitative approach was employed, and data were collected from six selected speeches delivered by Bush and Obama between 2001 and 2013 concerning the War on Terrorism. Data analysis and interpretation utilized Huckin's analytical toolkit (1997), focusing on a macro-level analysis of the speeches. The findings revealed that while Bush and Obama employed many similar linguistic devices and techniques, there were significant differences in their application. These differences pointed to shifts in their strategies for addressing the War on Terror. Bush's language appeared more aggressive compared to Obama's. The study's results may inspire future researchers to investigate the speeches of Pakistani politicians, exploring linguistic strategies for manipulation through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

**Keywords:** American political discourse, CDA, macro structures, Huckin's analytical toolkit

## 1. Introduction

Discourse is a social practice rooted in dialectical relationships between a discursive event and a situation or institution. It shapes situations, social identities, and relationships, thereby perpetuating and transforming the prevailing social order. Discourse and discursive practices also grapple with critical power dynamics, perpetuating unequal power structures related to class, race, gender, and culture (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). In this research, the researcher adopts CDA and Huckin's analytical toolkit (1997) to examine the strategic construction of discourse in the speeches of Presidents Bush and Obama. The study delves into how these presidents employed discourse and linguistic techniques to present, legitimize, and assert their strategies in the War on Terror. Furthermore, the research investigates how language and discourse contributed to the production and perpetuation of unequal power relations.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Political discussions among the people of Pakistan often lean toward emotional responses. These discussions tend to prioritize explicit meanings and hasty decisions, particularly in matters involving the United States. Judgments, whether in favor of or against America, are frequently driven by emotions and sentiments rather than grounded in facts and figures. To address this issue, this research aims to enhance the understanding and decision-making of the Pakistani public concerning America. The speeches delivered by American Presidents Bush and Obama were not impulsive or neutral; rather, they were deliberate, strategic, and focused on specific subjects. This study offers a comparative analysis of the two American presidents to unveil and comprehend their underlying objectives and goals.

### 1.2 Objectives of the Study

The analysis of President George Bush's and President Barack Obama's speeches pursues the following objectives:

1. To identify the linguistic devices employed in conveying strategies in the War on Terrorism within the speeches of Bush and Obama.
2. To examine linguistic elements reflecting shifts in the American strategy for the War on Terrorism from the Bush administration to the Obama administration, as evident in their speeches.
3. To uncover how Bush and Obama justified the War on Terrorism within the context of their speeches.

### 1.3 Research Question

The data for this study were collected from selected speeches in order to address the following research question:

- How have linguistic devices been employed to convey strategies in the War on Terrorism within the speeches of Presidents Bush and Obama?

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

This study delved into the strategic construction of discourse using linguistic devices within the analyzed speeches. It holds significance in enhancing the critical thinking abilities of general readers, empowering them to analyze speeches critically and shield themselves from emotional reactions. This heightened awareness can reduce the potential for speaker-induced mind control and manipulation of the audience. Additionally, the study equips researchers with insights from CDA to analyze speeches by Pakistani politicians.



## 1.5 Delimitations

The present research primarily focused on the critical analysis of macro-level structures within three speeches delivered by American President George W. Bush between 2001 and 2005 and three speeches by President Barack Hussein Obama between 2009 and 2013, all pertaining to the War on Terrorism.

## 2. Literature Review

Discourse, as a unit of language study, transcends individual sentences, exhibiting high cohesion and coherence. It serves the purpose of uncovering the intentions behind text creation, thereby contributing to meaning-making as a social practice (Widdowson, 2007).

### 2.1 CDA

CDA made its debut in the influential book "Language and Control" (1979) authored by Fowler, Kress, Hodge, and Trew. Further developments in CDA were led by scholars such as Fairclough (1989), Wodak (1989), and Dijk (2009), with contributions from Wodak and Meyer (2001).

CDA revolves around the interplay of discourse, critical analysis, and ideologies:

- Discourse represents a social perspective on language, involving the process of extracting meaning through the reader's interaction with text and its connection to elements of social life (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997).
- Critical analysis entails a critical examination of a social event to assess its potential for effecting societal change. Its objective is to liberate individuals from domination, injustice, and inequality (Fairclough, 1995).
- Ideologies encompass sets of beliefs and values shaping one's worldview. They play a significant role in discursive events and serve as a means for establishing and perpetuating power relations, dominance, and exploitation (Fairclough, 2003; Dijk, 2009).
- Language is employed to control the context and assert dominance. Various strategies such as marginalization, exclusion, authorization, denial, and more are used to exercise power, with reactions ranging from subjugation (resisting power) to submissiveness (accepting power without resistance) (Dijk, 2009).

CDA's theoretical and analytical applications vary across different genres; for instance, the analysis of a speech differs from that of a news report. However, the underlying conceptual and theoretical frameworks remain closely interconnected. Three prominent models of CDA have been proposed by Norman Fairclough, Teun A. van Dijk, and Ruth Wodak. While these researchers share the core concept of CDA, their analytical models differ. This study employs Huckin's Toolkit for the analysis and interpretation of data.

## 2.2 Previous Research

### 2.2.1 Analysis of Bush's Speeches

Ibrahim A. El-Hussari conducted a CDA of President Bush's speeches related to America's war policy in Iraq. This research focused on the influential role of political language as a means to garner public support and consent. CDA was employed to dissect the portrayal of American policy in the war against Iraq as articulated in President Bush's speeches (2007). The study specifically scrutinized the utilization of repetition techniques as tools for manipulation.

### 2.2.2 Analysis of Obama's Speeches

A critical analytical research project explored the persuasive strategies within President Obama's political discourse and his underlying ideological stance, utilizing Fairclough's model. Grounded in Fairclough's assertion that ideologies are embedded in texts, and that texts can be subject to diverse interpretations (Fairclough, 1995), the study selected President Obama's inaugural speech as a case study. The research aimed to demonstrate how politicians manipulate language to achieve their objectives.

### 2.2.3 Comparative Analysis of Both Presidents' Speeches

G. Matthew Bonham and Daniel Heradstveit conducted research focused on two metaphors employed in the speeches of Presidents Bush and Obama. The first metaphor, "axis of evil," was used by President Bush in 2002 to characterize fascism, Nazism, and Satanic forces, later extending it to Iran, Iraq, and North Korea collectively. This research investigated the impact of this metaphor on Iran's international image. The second metaphor, "a new beginning," was used by President Obama at Cairo University, aiming to bridge the gap between different groups and change Muslims' perceptions of America and the West.

This research incorporated the principles of Heradstveit, including consistency theory, attribution theory, and the operational code approach. Through interviews, Heradstveit identified that individuals resistant to change often held negative or hostile views of their opponents. Any change observed in the opponent was typically viewed as temporary and circumstantial rather than permanent. Two belief patterns, innovator and traditionalist, were identified: innovators believed in the possibility of new relationships, while traditionalists resisted change (Heradstveit, 1979).

Additionally, a research project conducted at the University of Gothenburg's Institute for Language & Literature by Bjorn Viberg examined the CDA of the political discourse in the inaugural speeches of Presidents Bush and Obama from a post-colonial perspective. This study analyzed the public discourses of both leaders from a post-colonial viewpoint using CDA. The research focused on two linguistic features: pronouns and ideologically contested words. Qualitative analysis of the speeches was carried out to compare and explore the underlying thoughts and ideas from a post-colonial perspective.

## 2.3 Rationale for the Current Research

While individual analyses of Bush's and Obama's speeches have been conducted within the realm of CDA, there is a dearth of comparative studies examining their strategies related to war through speeches, particularly when employing Huckin's toolkit. This toolkit offers a unique perspective, allowing an exploration of how these speeches are framed at the macro level using devices such as foregrounding, backgrounding, omission, and presupposition.

## 3. Research Methodology

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the utilization of linguistic devices in the speeches of Presidents Bush and Obama to convey and legitimize their strategies in the War on Terrorism. Additionally, it aimed to assess the degree of linguistic aggression in their speeches. To accomplish this, Huckin's (1997) analytical toolkit for CDA was applied for the interpretation of the selected speeches, guided by the principles of CDA.

### 3.1 Research Nature

This research adopted a qualitative approach, delving into the qualitative aspects of President Bush's and President Obama's strategies in the War on Terrorism as presented in their speeches.

### 3.2 Population and Sampling

The population for this study encompassed all speeches delivered by Presidents Bush and Obama after the events of 9/11, focusing on the topic of the War on Terrorism. A random sampling method was employed to select six speeches, three from each president, spaced approximately two years apart. The selection of six speeches was designed to facilitate a comprehensive critical analysis.

### 3.3 Data Collection

Data for this study were sourced from transcribed speeches of President Bush and President Obama, retrieved from official sources, including the White House website and American Rhetoric website.

- White House website: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>
- American Rhetoric website: <http://www.americanrhetoric.com>

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The research employed Huckin's toolkit, complemented by insights from scholars such as Fairclough, Wodak, and van Dijk, to critically analyze the selected speeches at the macro-level structures. The analysis encompassed the following elements: framing, foregrounding, backgrounding, omissions, and presupposition.

#### 3.4.1 Comprehensive Analysis

- **Genre Analysis:** This analysis facilitated an understanding of why specific types of statements were used and how they served the text producer's objectives. It revealed how different genres were manipulated and how the writer or speaker ventured beyond genre boundaries to create particular effects.
- **Framing:** The analysis of framing allowed for an evaluation of the text producer's perspective by examining the presentation of content within the text.
- **Foregrounding Techniques:** This aspect of the analysis assessed which concepts were emphasized by the writer or speaker.
- **Omission Analysis:** Omission analysis aimed to uncover how certain facts and realities were deliberately excluded to achieve specific goals, attitudes, and reactions. Omission allowed certain concepts to remain unscrutinized and unchallenged, avoiding particular questions.
- **Presupposition Analysis:** This analysis revealed how the writer or speaker manipulated the reader or listener into accepting specific ideas as given, without considering alternatives. Presupposition served to shape perceptions and assumptions.

#### 3.4.2 Data Analysis and Findings

The present research focused on the strategic construction of discourse within the speeches delivered by President Bush and President Obama. The analysis of the data aimed to address the research questions and was conducted employing Huckin's analytical toolkit, as detailed in section 3.2.3.

### 4.1 Text Analysis of the Speeches of President Bush

The current research analyzed three speeches delivered by President Bush, spanning from 2001 to 2005, in order to address the research questions. These speeches are referred to as Bush1, Bush2, and Bush3, respectively. The analysis aimed to provide insights into President Bush's strategic communication.

#### 4.1.1 On the Whole

These speeches were comprehensively examined to gain a holistic understanding of President Bush's strategies.

##### 4.1.1.1 Genre

The selected speeches by President Bush took the form of scripted persuasive addresses. These speeches were crafted to persuade the audience to change their perspectives, beliefs, and actions in favor of American strategies.

##### 4.1.1.2 Framing

In this research, President Bush's use of framing techniques in his speeches was closely analyzed. Framing allowed him to convey a specific point of view, angle, and perspective. President Bush effectively used framing to control the interpretation of his speeches, limiting the conveyed meanings to those he intended to communicate. This technique played a significant role in influencing the minds of the audience. The content of these speeches was analyzed at both macro and micro levels using Huckin's analytical toolkit (1997). This dual-level analysis considered framing, foregrounding, omission, and presupposition to provide a comprehensive overview of how these speeches were constructed and represented.

##### 4.1.1.3 Foregrounding

The researcher found out that Bush employed the techniques of foregrounding and backgrounding successfully, to emphasize and de-emphasize the certain elements in his speeches. The following examples can be seen from the speeches:

1. In the very beginning of his speech, Bush focused and emphasized the abnormal or extraordinary situation in America and therefore justified the demand of an extraordinary strategy to meet that situation as well.
 

“In the normal course of events, Presidents come to this chamber to report on the state of the Union. Tonight, no such report is needed. It has already been delivered by the American people.” (Bush1)
2. In order to construct any strategy and to fulfill it, the cooperation, help and unity of the nation are most important one, especially for such a strategy which is designed for a war. By keeping this view in mind, the speaker tried to bring harmony, unity and integrity among the people.

“We have seen it in the courage of passengers ...” (Bush1)

“We have seen the state of our Union in the endurance of rescuers...” (Bush1)

3. In order to get his desired goals, the cooperation of the whole world in this war and to legitimize America’s strategy in war on terror, the speaker tried to bring hegemony quite successfully through declaring it a war against freedom rather than America.

“...enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country...” (Bush1)

“...a world where freedom itself is under attack.” (Bush1)

4. In order to construct his strategy through discourse, the speaker has used a very tactic technique of rhetoric questions. By asking and then answering them, the speaker restricted the minds and understanding of the audience.

“Americans are asking: Who attacked our country?” (Bush1)

“Americans are asking, why do they hate us?” (Bush1)

5. Another technique which Bush applied for foregrounding is repetition. Many words and phrases were repeated to emphasize certain ideas and strategies.

“I will not yield; I will not rest; I will not relent in waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people.” (Bush1)

We’re determined...4 times (Bush3)

6. To make the world realize the dangers of Islamic radicals, Bush compared the murderous ideology of the Islamic radicals with the ideology of communism and pointed out many commonalities between the both.

“Like the ideology of communism, Islamic radicalism is elitist ... like the ideology of communism, our new enemy teaches that innocent individuals can be sacrificed ... And Islamic radicalism, like the ideology of communism, contains inherent contradictions that doom it to failure.” (Bush3)

7. Bush used the technique of enlisting to get attention on the works which America was determined to do to bring harmony, peace and security and to snub and defeat terrorism.

#### 4.1.1.4 Omission/Deletion

The researcher traced out that Bush employed the literary device of omission or deletion to avoid questions from the audience. Through his rhetoric questions, he presented an image of America and an image of Al-Qaeda in front of the world.

1. While presenting the image of Al-Qaeda, he denoted all negative things to it as if there was no possibility of any good or positive there, just an evil incarnate:

“The evidence we have gathered all points to a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as al Qaeda... same murderers indicted for bombing... imposing its radical beliefs... Islamic extremism... rejected by Muslim scholars... to kill Christians and Jews, to kill all Americans... civilians, including women and children...” (Bush1)

2. While referring the war on terror in Iraq, Bush called it the most humane military campaign in history. But Bush did not give any detail of the casualties during war and after the war.

“Our coalition enforced these international demands in one of the swiftest and most humane military campaigns in history.” (Bush2)

3. While talking about the reconstruction of Iraq, Bush skillfully referred America’s contribution in the reconstruction of Japan and Germany but he intentionally omitted the physical and financial loss which was caused there by America.

“Following World War II, we lifted up the defeated nations of Japan and Germany ... America today accepts the challenge of helping Iraq in the same spirit -- for their sake, and our own.” (Bush2)

#### 4.1.1.5 Presupposition

The researcher analyzed that President Bush used Presupposition very cleverly. His main aim was to ensure that the concepts, images and events which were told in the speech, would be accepted by the audience without raising any questions. It was done very successfully.

1. In order to settle the image of America as a good, strong and united nation, few references were given from surrounding. Bush had also used the strategy of referring the sincerity and pride of American military officials in participating in this war as a noble and right cause.

“The Americans who assume great risk overseas understand the great cause they are in.” (Bush2)

2. To legitimize American war on terror, the beliefs of the attackers are compared with a number of negative movements in history:

“They follow in the path of fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism. And they will follow that path all the way, to where it ends: in history's unmarked grave of discarded lies.” (Bush1)

3. Bush tried to give this image that there were only the members of Saddam’s regime who were plotting against America and Iraqi people otherwise Iraqis were happy and contented with America’s efforts and reforms there.

“Some of the attackers are members of the old Saddam regime, who fled the battlefield and now fight in the shadows.” (Bush2)

4. Another presupposition was that just as America had already done reconstructive works in Japan and Germany after World War II, it would repeat the same course of action in future.

“America has done this kind of work before. Following World War II, we lifted up the defeated nations of Japan and Germany ... America today accepts the challenge of helping Iraq in the same spirit -- for their sake, and our own.” (Bush2)

5. In order to bring hegemony, Bush presupposed that the whole world was facing the threat of terrorism.

“Yet the evil of that morning has reappeared on other days, in other places -- in Mombasa, and Casablanca, and Riyadh, and Jakarta, and Istanbul, and Madrid, and Beslan, and Taba, and Netanya, and Baghdad, and elsewhere.” (Bush3)

#### 4.2 Text Analysis of the Speeches of President Obama

In current research, three speeches of President Obama were analyzed. First speech of Obama was at the National Archives Museum at Washington, DC, delivered on May 21, 2009. In analysis, it will be referred as Obama1. Second speech of Obama was On the Killing of Osama at Washington, DC, delivered on May 1, 2011. In analysis, it will be referred as Obama2. Third speech of Obama was at National Defense University at Washington, DC, delivered on May 23, 2013. In analysis, it will be referred as Obama3.

##### 4.2.1 On the Whole

These speeches were analyzed on the whole to observe how Obama employed linguistic devices to legitimize his strategy on war.

###### 4.2.1.1 Genre

The selected three speeches of President Obama were in a form of scripted persuasive speeches. Like any persuasive speech, these speeches were delivered to convince people, to change their thinking and to win their favours for American strategies of Obama and his Administration.

###### 4.2.1.2 Framing

The researcher analyzed the speeches of Obama at macro level and micro level of Huckin’s analytical toolkit. The researcher found out that Obama used the technique of framing very successfully to present his slant to manipulate people and to legitimize his strategy of war.

###### 4.2.1.3 Foregrounding

The researcher traced out that the speaker Obama used the technique of foregrounding to stress the things of his interest in his speech.

1. Obama used the tactic of mentioning the core issue of the people in the very beginning of his speech, the problem of historical economic crises in America.

“And we've begun to make progress ... The engines of our economy are slowly beginning to turn.” (Obama1)

2. In order to stress the importance of Osama’s death in the war on terror and how this death signified the success of American strategy in war on terror, Obama reminded the incident of 9/11, its losses, its chaos, the sufferings of people and especially of the families of the victims.

“It was nearly 10 years ago that a bright September day was darkened by the worst attack on the American people in our history.” (Obama2)

3. Another technique which he used for foregrounding was enlisting the actions which were taken by the government to face that problem. Enlisting draws the attention at once like the key points. The purpose of mentioning these issues was to focus them.
4. Obama had used the weak point of the Americans that was the American values in order to legitimize his strategy of war and to get the full support of the audience.

“We uphold our most cherished values not only because doing so is right, but because it strengthens our country and it keeps us safe.” (Obama1)

5. For foregrounding, Obama gave a long list of all American efforts including the sacrifices made by its military and counterterrorism professionals during the war on terror to legitimize American strategies which were adopted for the last 10 years in war on terror.

“Over the last 10 years, thanks to the tireless and heroic work of our military and our counterterrorism professionals, we’ve made great strides in that effort.” (Obama2)

6. Obama used cause and effect technique for foregrounding. For legitimizing the eventual end of war, Obama first mentioned that America had achieved its goal in war on terror and had put the enemy on defensive position so war should be ended.

“But this war, like all wars, must end.” (Obama3)

###### 4.2.1.4 Omission/Deletion

In the current research, the researcher observed that Obama omitted certain facts intentionally to keep them away from people because they could raise many questions in their minds:

1. For American strategy of war, Obama mentioned the economic crises in America but did not mention the cause of the crises.

“We're confronting a historic economic crisis.” (Obama1)

2. Obama had accepted the brutality of so-called enhanced interrogation technique and called it a recruitment tool for terrorists but intentionally he had avoided to give any detail of this enhanced interrogation technique.

“And I categorically reject the assertion that these are the most effective means of interrogation. (Applause) What's more, they undermine the rule of law.” (Obama1)

3. Obama accepted that some U.S. personnel had violated the rules of law in prison. They had been investigated and found guilty. But he did not tell that what type of punishment was given to them.

“Individuals who violated standards of behavior in these photos have been investigated and they have been held accountable.” (Obama1)

4. While narrating the whole incident of Osama bin Laden's killing in his compound in Pakistan's city Abbotabad, the American president omitted the issue of trespassing another sovereign's boundaries and to take action there without the permission of local authorities and the reaction of Pakistan. He slightly claimed that Pakistani president agreed that it was a good day.

"Tonight, I called President Zardari, and my team has also spoken with their Pakistani counterparts. They agree that this is a good and historic day for both of our nations." (Obama2)

#### 4.2.1.5 Presupposition

Obama used a number of presuppositions to gain his purpose.

1. In order to stress the need for a new strategy of war, Obama gave a comparison of the types of old and new wars. The war of present age is different than old wars. It is fought in minds and ideologies rather in fields and physical.

"And this responsibility is only magnified in an era when an extremist ideology threatens our people, and technology gives a handful of terrorists the potential to do us great harm." (Obama1)

2. Obama used cause and effect technique to give this presupposition that the faults of American strategy were due to this that this strategy was made out of fear and the decisions made out of fear always proved unwise, unconscious and unintentional.

"Unfortunately, faced with an uncertain threat, our government made a series of hasty decisions. I believe that many of these decisions were motivated by a sincere desire to protect the American people. But I also believe that all too often our government made decisions based on fear rather than foresight." (Obama1)

3. Obama used human emotions and past for presupposition. He mentioned the grief of American nation at the loss of 9/11 to empathize others. The casualties, deaths and departing from the dear and near ones are always a cause of great pain and suffering for a person. It cannot be challenged by anyone.

"And yet we know that the worst images are those that were unseen to the world. The empty seat at the dinner table. Children who were forced to grow up without their mother or their father. Nearly 3,000 citizens taken from us, leaving a gaping hole in our hearts." (Obama2)

4. Obama presupposed that due to technology, the war had taken a new shape. It was a war of ideas, faith and beliefs than the external war of force. Internet and media are the fastest way to spread ideas and beliefs throughout the world. So, without changing the minds of people, military war or the war of force could not defeat the terrorists.

"Nevertheless, this ideology persists, and in an age when ideas and images can travel the globe in an instant, our response to terrorism can't depend on military or law enforcement alone. We need all elements of national power to win a battle of wills, a battle of ideas." (Obama3)

## 5. Discussion

In the current research, the researcher examined six speeches delivered by American Presidents Bush and Obama—three by each—utilizing Huckin's analytical toolkit (1997). To interpret these speeches, the researcher applied the principles of CDA (see 2.1), which address power imbalances, power abuse, and social and political inequality (van Dijk, 1997, 353-371).

With these principles in mind, the researcher identified specific linguistic devices employed by Presidents Bush and Obama to convey and elucidate their strategies in the War on Terror. These linguistic devices served as tools to frame their ideologies and war strategies within the context of their speeches (van Dijk, 1988). While some of these devices were commonly employed by both Bush and Obama, they made distinct choices in others. Overall, Bush and Obama utilized devices and techniques such as foregrounding, omission or deletion, and presupposition throughout their speeches.

### 5.1 Analysis of Linguistic Devices in Speeches

In the examination of how Presidents Bush and Obama employed linguistic devices to convey their strategies in the War on Terrorism through their speeches, the researcher focused on the social practices structure and the strategies of social agents in speeches to achieve specific outcomes (Fairclough, 2010: 163). Both presidents used the linguistic device of foregrounding through various techniques to frame their strategies:

1. **Comparison:** Bush and Obama both utilized comparisons to elucidate their strategies in the War on Terror, although their approaches differed. Bush compared the ideology of Islamic radicals with communism, highlighting commonalities between the two ideologies. The aim was to stir anti-radical sentiments (see 4.1.1.3). Conversely, Obama compared ground warfare with drone strikes, emphasizing that ground wars could result in higher casualties and losses compared to drone strikes. This comparison aimed to legitimize the use of drones by seeking public approval. Obama also compared the cost of war with the foreign assistance budget to garner support for foreign assistance funding, which was highly unpopular in America (see 4.2.1.3).
2. **Enlisting:** Presidents Bush and Obama both employed the technique of enlisting key points in their speeches. Enlisting elements of their strategies allowed listeners and readers to immediately focus on the central ideas, aiding comprehension and retention.
3. **Stating Purpose Early:** Both presidents frequently stated the purpose of their speeches at the outset to capture the audience's attention and provide clarity regarding the speech's objectives.
4. **Rhetorical Questions (Bush):** President Bush employed rhetorical questions effectively as a linguistic device for foregrounding his war strategy. Rhetorical questions about the attackers, the reasons behind the attacks, the war strategy, and the expected behavior of Americans served to narrow the audience's focus and influence their attitudes toward the issues (see 4.1.1.3).
5. **Repetition (Bush):** In all three of his speeches, President Bush utilized repetition as a device for foregrounding. He repeated certain words and phrases to emphasize key ideas in his war strategy, ensuring the audience's attention remained focused.
6. **Cause and Effect (Obama):** To foreground his strategy and legitimize the eventual end of the war, President Obama employed the cause-and-effect technique. He emphasized that America had achieved its objectives in the War on Terror, placing the enemy on the defensive. Obama argued that with the elimination of most high-level threats and leadership within the enemy ranks, the war should conclude. He reiterated this cause-and-effect reasoning when justifying his shift in American strategy. Obama contended that the

Bush Administration's strategies were fear-based, suggesting that decisions driven by fear were inherently flawed and unsustainable. He advocated for decisions grounded in wisdom and rationality for long-term effectiveness (4.2.1.3).

These linguistic devices played a pivotal role in how Presidents Bush and Obama communicated and framed their strategies in the War on Terrorism in their respective speeches.

## 5.2 Discussion of the Findings

In the realm of textual analysis, which involves assessing both what is presented and what is omitted (Fairclough, 1995b), the researcher observed how Presidents Bush and Obama employed the linguistic device of omission or deletion to convey their strategies in the context of war. While they both used this device for similar purposes at times, there were distinctions in their approaches:

- **Deletion for Omission:** Bush and Obama both used deletions to omit certain details. For instance, Bush mentioned recent attacks in Iraq by opponents but intentionally avoided providing details of the damage and casualties, thereby creating a logical and evidential basis for continuing American activities in Iraq. Obama acknowledged incidents of violence by some U.S. personnel in prisons but omitted details regarding the punishment meted out to the responsible individuals.
- **Omission without Explanation:** Both presidents employed omission to avoid offering explanations. Bush referenced America's contributions to the reconstruction of Japan and Germany but omitted the physical and financial losses caused by America during World War II. When discussing the operation in which Osama bin Laden was killed, Obama skipped an explanation regarding civilian casualties.

Additionally, Bush and Obama utilized omission differently to achieve their objectives:

1. **Selective Omission:** Bush omitted certain characteristics to serve his purpose. In his first speech, he associated negative adjectives and verbs with Al-Qaeda and terrorists, while using exclusively positive language to describe America. This framing established a starkly negative image of Al-Qaeda and a highly positive image of America.
2. **Economic Crisis Omission:** Obama discussed the core problem of economic crises in America but omitted mentioning the possible connection to the cost of war.
3. **Operation Details Omission:** When mentioning the operation to eliminate Osama bin Laden, Obama intentionally omitted details about the trespassing and Pakistan's reaction to it.

Both presidents employed the linguistic device of presupposition to convey their war strategies, albeit with differences in devices and techniques:

1. **Comparison for Presupposition:** Bush and Obama both used comparison as a form of presupposition. Bush compared old and new wars based on geographical factors, highlighting that the U.S. had not fought wars on its own soil for 136 years. Conversely, Obama compared old and new wars based on technology and ideology, emphasizing that modern wars were more ideologically driven and reliant on technology.
2. **Historical References:** Both presidents drew upon historical references to legitimize their war strategies. Bush referred to incidents like the terrorist attacks in Beirut and Somalia in the 1980s, America's reconstruction efforts in Japan and Germany during World War II, bombings in American embassies in the 1990s, and terrorist activities in the Middle East over a generation. Obama cited a historical legacy of American war strategies, from the Civil War to the Cold War, asserting that these strategies adhered to rules even during times of conflict.
3. **Emotional Appeal:** Bush and Obama incorporated emotions into their presuppositions, although their approaches differed. Bush used fear and hypothetical future scenarios to evoke anti-terrorist and anti-Al-Qaeda sentiments, imbuing notions of power, dominance, ideology, race, and discrimination (Dijk, 2009). Obama, on the other hand, appealed to emotions to garner sympathy for the victims of 9/11 and their families. Bush painted a terrifying picture of Al-Qaeda by highlighting its evil ideology and radical vision for the future, while Obama emphasized the emotional toll on victims' families by mentioning empty chairs at dining tables and children who could no longer hug their parents.
4. **Logic and Justification:** Both Bush and Obama employed logic and justification to illustrate and legitimize their war strategies. They provided justification for the War on Terror by emphasizing that America did not initiate it but was responding to terrorist attacks. Obama justified that after concluding the war, America would withdraw from Afghanistan, similar to the troop withdrawal from Iraq.
5. **Ideology:** Bush and Obama utilized ideology differently. Bush focused on the ideology of terrorists, portraying it as inherently evil to generate opposition, while Obama emphasized American ideology and values to establish hegemony. One used ideology to turn people against it, while the other used it to gain favor among the people.
6. **Global References:** Bush referenced other countries to globalize his war strategy. He mentioned the nationalities of 9/11 victims, the presence of terrorists in more than 60 countries, the contributions of 29 countries to the war in Iraq, and terrorist attacks in different countries.

These findings illustrate how linguistic devices were strategically employed by Presidents Bush and Obama to shape and legitimize their respective strategies in the War on Terror.

## 6. Conclusion

The researcher conducted an analysis of the speeches delivered by Presidents Bush and Obama, revealing their utilization of specific linguistic devices to convey their strategies in the War on Terror. While both presidents employed several linguistic devices and techniques, there were notable distinctions in their usage, reflecting shifts in their strategies for the War on Terror.

Both Bush and Obama employed different techniques to emphasize their ideologies on war. Bush, for instance, compared terrorists to ideologies such as Nazism, fascism, and totalitarianism. He also drew parallels between radical ideologies and communism to elicit anti-terrorist sentiments. Conversely, Obama utilized comparisons between the consequences of ground wars and drone strikes to garner support for drone attacks. Both presidents outlined their objectives and actions to capture the audience's attention. Bush employed rhetorical questions and repetition in his strategic presentations, while Obama used cause-and-effect techniques to legitimize his plans and actions. Through this approach, Obama justified measures such as banning enhanced interrogation techniques, closing Guantanamo Bay detention center,

repealing the Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF), and ultimately ending the war. He argued that the policies of the Bush Administration, driven by fear, lacked long-term viability and needed to be replaced with a more enduring approach.

Furthermore, Bush and Obama employed deletion and omission strategies to selectively present details and explanations, often neglecting the negative aspects of war, its consequences, and the fallout from flawed American policies in warfare. They also utilized presupposition through comparison, with Bush comparing wars in terms of soil, and Obama emphasizing technological advancements. Emotion played a significant role in their speeches, with Bush invoking fear and hypothetical future scenarios to foster anti-terrorist sentiments, while Obama evoked sympathy for the victims of 9/11 and their families. Both presidents employed logic and justification to legitimize their strategies, although they did so in different ways. Bush portrayed terrorists as adhering to an evil ideology to generate opposition, while Obama sought to reshape American strategy on the War on Terror by invoking American ideals. Bush also referenced surrounding and foreign countries to globalize and legitimize his war strategies.

### 6.1 Recommendations

- It is advisable to apply CDA to study the speeches of Pakistani politicians, as this can unveil their true objectives. Such analysis can help mitigate the potential for speaker-induced mind control and manipulation of the audience.
- Specifically, public speeches by Pakistani leaders during times of crisis should undergo critical analysis to minimize the impact of manipulation.
- The speeches delivered by presidents and leaders of other countries should also be subjected to CDA, particularly those delivered on the international stage. This can provide insights into the potential effects of these speeches on Pakistan and its global standing.

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