

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS: A FUNCTIONAL RESEARCH TOOL FOR ANALYSING NEWS REPORTS

Fatma Zohra Amari

Ms. Department of English, Badji-Mokhtar Annaba University, ALGERIA,
amarifatimazohra@hotmail.fr

Abstract

The present paper is an attempt to investigate how Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) can be used to reveal the relationship between the linguistic choices and socio-ideological context in news reports. CDA is an interdisciplinary approach to discourse analysis that encompasses not only the linguistic analysis, but also the broader social, political, historical, cultural and ideological contexts of language use. Media texts are a common subject of analysis in CDA as media and more specifically news, are ideologically driven and have a great influence on readers 'or audiences' view of the world. Readers /audiences interpret texts against their background knowledge and the information they already have about events. More significantly one of the main sources of information and beliefs used to form such interpretations are the news media.

For that purpose, the study adopts Fairclough's (2001) CDA framework: description, interpretation and explanation to analyse the news reports. To do so Al-Jazeera English coverage of the Iraq war issue is undertaken. At the descriptive stage, the linguistic features of the news texts are described, focusing on the experiential meaning of vocabulary items. The systematic linguistic description is followed by a critical interpretation of their socio-ideological functions. Finally at the level of explanation, the situational and institutional contexts of the news reports are explored to justify the interpretations.

The findings from this investigation reveal that the systematic linguistic choices in Al-Jazeera news reports basically reflect and correspond to the network's social and ideological practices. Accordingly CDA can be an effective research tool to uncover the hidden and ideological meaning of news texts in particular and language use in general. More importantly it can be used to raise readers' awareness towards language power.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Fairclough's CDA framework, news media, language and ideology.