A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYLSIS OF PRESIDENT RODRIGO DUTERTE'S SPEECH IN COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

President Duterte whenever he gives speeches has never been exempted to different pangs of criticisms from media and his critiques. His unique styles in proving and uttering ideas and his unpretentious and fearless remarks on susceptible issues are either admired or hated by some. Following the framework for Critical Discourse Analysis by Norman Fairclough (1995), five transcripts of the President's nation addresses retrieved from the official website of the Presidential Communication Operations Office (PCOO) were analyzed. So, this study is intended to investigate textual features used by President Duterte in his speeches and to explain how his discursive strategies reflect his beliefs and views about leading his people. The findings indicated that Duterte uses different linguistic devices to maintain contact, convince, and impose power. Finally, it shows in his speeches that not only by inducing fear through implicit and explicit threats but also by establishing positive representations in front and creating direct relationship with his people can help him manipulate his audiences and make it easy for him to achieve his purposes.

KEY WORDS: *Critical Discourse Analysis, Duterte, media, linguistic strategies*

INTRODUCTION

The first few weeks, when COVID-19 pandemic has entered the Philippines that eventually calls for total lockdowns in some parts of the country, majority of the Filipinos waited for the President's strategic preparations and plans both for the country and the people. Probably because of panics and anxieties, hatred against what President Duterte uttered escalated during those weeks in various social media platforms, which came to a point where he trended worldwide. Commonly, it was because of what and how he says things that caused him to be talked about. Politician's speech conveys information-building and ideology (Kordowe, 2014 as cited in Salayo, 2020). Sipra and Rashid (2013) postulates that political discourses are influential in the sense that it is socially vital and socially shaped. However, Fairclough (1995) believes political discourse as a type of discourse is complex distribution in a way that it can be depicted from the type of audience the speaker has. It basically implies that constructing a political speech should be well-thought-of because it is vulnerable to criticism.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a linguistic approach that deals mainly with how social power is abused and inequality is expressed, reproduced, represented, or legitimated as opposed by text and talk in both political and social context (Van Dijk, 2015). Van Dijk (2009) noted that in addition to investigation of power and ideology, current approaches to CDA also examines the way discourses (whether spoken or written) are reproduced. According to Locke (2004), CDA is also concerned as to how power relations revealed in discourses are challenged, or maintained through practices and texts, which can eventually affect their production reception and dissemination". Thus, CDA can help construct and reproduced unequal power relations in different ethnicities, social classes, ages, professional groups, and genders. It also focuses on the relationship between power, ideology, and language (Coffins, et al., 2010) which can be in the form of a public speech. With this,

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the researcher will utilize critical discourse approach in the study to determine how president Duterte construct his speeches and how he makes us of language in meaning making to earn public support.

OBJECTIVES

The present study applied the framework for Critical Discourse Analysis by Norman Fairclough (1995), five transcripts of the President's nation address that are retrieved from the official website of the Presidential Communication Operations Office (PCOO) were analyzed. Fairclough's framework (1989) is used to show the connection between the properties of the text and the nature of social practices. With these means, this paper specifically aimed to investigate textual features used by President Duterte in his speeches and to explain to what extent the ideology of President Rodrigo Duterte is reflected through the discursive styles in the speech.

METHODOLOGY

Norman Fairclough (1989) suggested three dimensions for critical discourse analysis, particularly a written or spoken text, a discursive practice, and a social practice. Each dimension has a different type of analysis, such as for textual dimension. Textual dimension is a descriptive examination of linguistic features of the speech is required. In this phrase, the focus lies on the pronouns, imperatives, vocabularies, rhetorical devices, and relational values of words. The second phrase would be the interpretation, or the contexts where the object is addressed and received in society. Finally, the last phase is the emphasis of power behind the discourse where an explanation on the social ideologies of the subject is done.

RESULT

Textual Analysis

This section provides an analysis focusing on the linguistic features. The President is known for using ordinary words and for using strategies that may intensify his statements (Sabio & Lintao, 2018).

President Duterte in his speeches directly addressed the people who pertain to different categories – he himself, the government, the public, the medical teams and the violators – through pronouns. The use of first-person personal and possessive pronouns 'I', 'we' and 'our' 'my' and of second-person personal pronoun 'you' seek to address the public personally and directly. In his speech this help create a friendly environment to persuade the viewers. Smith (as cited in Kaur, Arumugam, & Yunus, 2013) said that the use of

personal pronouns in spoken or written texts establishes a specific relationship between the writer and reader. For example, the pronoun 'we' suggests power and is viewed as authoritative, while 'you' exhibits a special engagement when the audience is addressed directly. Examples of pronouns used by the President are:

"As your President, I am now invoking the sanctity of my oath of office – to help people and my country men."

"I am saddened by the news that the virus has claimed the lives of our doctors along the way."

"We are now procuring medical supplies, devices and personal protective equipment."

"But we are here to serve you and every day we are meeting and in contact with the rest of the country."

Imperatives are also evident in the President's speeches. These imperatives are directives, which mean they possessed an illocutionary force that facilitates in persuading the audience to take certain actions. For example,

"Avoid trouble with the law, avoid trouble with anybody, just in the meantime, follow."

"Do not try to overdo things or think that you can do what you want to do because that is not allowed."

"Follow government at this time because it is really critical that we have order."

Moreover, vocabulary usage reflects the ideological opinions of someone about people and events (Kaur, Arumugam, & Yunus, 2013). In President Duterte's speech, his use of the words, such as 'peace' and 'order' are signified by 'task force,' 'military,' 'police,' government,' and 'law,' and 'obedience'. For example,

"The purpose: to protect and defend you. From what? From COVID-19. Then what's the purpose of the government? The purpose of the government is see to it that things are in order. To do that, if things deteriorate, I said, the military and the police will maintain order.

The underlined words above are part of his persuasive style embedded in the sentential structure of the text. Persuasion is mostly evident, which helps him convince the audiences to follow orders, however, it is not in a friendly but in an intimidating approach even though pronouns are present to establish friendly atmosphere. Consequently, the use of *military, death, jailing, police* can establish fear because these words connote a direct military control that his audiences were traumatized by during Ferdinand Marcus' term.

Also, the textual devices, such as pronouns and imperatives serve as a bridge between him and his audiences. These certainly help create a pleasant

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environment and a trust-worthy leadership. These also are common among politicians and political speeches since it could help establish relationship and trust. Creating a friendly relationship and environment among audiences and discreetly enforcing rule over them are part of the President's persuasive strategies characterized in the context and structure of his speeches.

Discursive Practice Analysis

Fairclough (1989) said that discourse practice refers to the implementation of social practice through a discourse. In this section, it examines the discursive strategies or styles, which relate to the expressive value of the speech, used by the President in his speeches that are shown in the table below.

Strategies employed	Examples
1. Phrasal/Lexical repetition	*Avoid trouble with the law, avoid trouble with anybody, just in the meantime, follow.* *I will not hesitate my soldiers to shoot you. I will not hesitate to order the police to arrest and detain you.* *Equally is equally*
2. implicit threats	*You know, the only reason why you can impose these quarantine restrictions and impose it on everyone passing your areas, is because the national government is allowing you to do so. But if you go beyond the standards that we have set, you are abusing your authority, and you know that it can lead to administrative cases or even worse, unless you stop what you are doing and cooperate fully. Criminal cases cannot be far behind.* *Ayaw ko na masita kayo ng pulis pati military [I don't want that you'd be confronted by the military]. It could be messy. Kasi mga—'yung iba sa inyo suplado [Because they – others feel superior] . And itong mga pulis pati military [The police and the military], they have their orders to enforce.*
3. explicit threats	*You better implement this because if not, then you will also go to prison for dereliction of duty or simply not enforcing a rule imposed by government.* *Huhulihin ko kayo [I will arrest you] and I will detain you. Makalabas lang kayo pagkatapos ng COVID dadating [You will get off when COVID ends].*
4. deductive reasoning	*Kung makikipag-away ka [If you fight], it becomes—baka mag—masuntok mo o ano [probably you punch them or whatever] then it becomes an assault on an agent of a person in authority In which case, from a simple violation of a rule, it will now ripen into a crime that is punishable by law and you can go to prison.*
5. inductive reasoning	*To do that, if things deteriorate, I said, the military and the police will maintain order. Kaya nga tawag diyan peace and order. There has to be peace and that peace nakalagay na orderly. There must be order in the country.*
6. positive self-representation	*I --- my heart bleeds for them.* *We are now procuring medical supplies, devices and personal protective equipment.* *To our farmers and our fisherfolk: We have not forgotten you.*
7. promises	*Gagawin namin ang lahat. Hindi naming kayo pababayaan.* *As President, I assure you --- I assure the public that the government will be on top of this situation at all times. We will not leave anyone behind.*
8. chiasmus	*But let our country lead the way in imposing a lockdown [that] is strict enough to effectively kill COVID-19, liberal enough so that our people will not die of hunger, and orderly enough, so that our country will not be driven towards chaos during this difficult time.*

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Expression of the speaker indicates the expressive value, which is regarded through his personal experiences (Sipra & Rashid, 2013). The table shows that the President used many rhetorical devices as tools for his informative-persuasive speeches. These devices are repetition, reasoning, chiasmus, promises, and positive self-representation. His use of reasoning, particularly by articulating claims as either cause or effect, is solely based on his own perceptions. Aside from that, the structure of the phrasal repetition found is parallelism. This is a strategy where the sentential structure elevates in repetition is also applied to another phrase or sentence. For example, "*Huwag kayong matakot, huwag kayong manerbiyos* [don't be afraid, don't be anxious]."

Additionally, the President is noticed how he would like to unify the people by making them think that there is no political agenda involved and that the government and the people should work together to fight the problem brought and caused by the pandemic. He is also open for the idea of being misinterpreted again because of what he says. These implications are based on the discursive styles found in his speeches and when he repeatedly said that "This is not a Martial law… our enemy here is not the government, but the COVID-19." His way for expressing his concern to the people and the country is crafted not only through the rhetoric he employed but also through his threats.

Involving threats in his speeches could show that his words express his militarism and hostile way of thinking and leading the country, but not oppressive. The threats found in the President speech could also be rhetoric in the sense that he used them for convincing the people to follow his orders. Threats are also his style of keeping the country in order and of unifying the audiences. The content of his threats are admittedly terrifying and somewhat believable; however, he uses threats just to create fear among the audiences. According to Gregory Kavka (1983) people are ruled by fear. This means that people generally obey orders when they believe that punishment may be inflected on them when they do not. Kavka (1983) also said that commonly people fear the lower-level authorities such as the policemen and military forces, who are also citizens in the state, because they are the ones that carry out directives and punish the disobedient.

In the thought of how 'peace and order' are achieved in a distressed country, the President, thus, employed implicit and explicit threats, such as jailing someone who disobeys, calling military officials to punish them, etc., which consequently show that he was only threatening the people, particularly those who violate the rules. The president, therefore, also believes that one should be ruled by fear to maintain stability and attain trouble-free transmission of his power.

SOCIAL PRACTICE ANALYSIS

The President who had been a mayor for over 22 years in Davao City was "allegedly tied to Davao Death Squad (DDS)" (Rodrigo Duterte Fast Facts, 2020) in support for his campaign on war against drug. He even outdoes some politicians for being blunt and fearless when he expresses his ideas. And during his term as a mayor, many had approved his hostility and unique leadership and had testified how he kept Davao city as one of the safest cities in Southeast Asia (Llemit, 2019, August 5). His unique strong use of language reflects his strong leadership style and method. And it leads him to be called a reflection of the ex-president Ferdinand Marcos' authoritarianism; but the President's methods are very far from the past era according to Syjuco (2018, December 7). Basing on his years of experience as a politician, the President has eventually identified and mastered how to run a country. Based on the analysis of his discourse, the linguistic features of the President's speeches show that there is manipulation, threats, and power. His beliefs on leading his people and the country are by operating a direct military control that could result to fear because of intimidation. Ferrari (as cited in Sabio & Lintao, 2018) said that inducing certain emotions (e.g., fear) to the people through stylistic language usage helps politicians manipulate them; and most of the time they succeeded.

CONCLUSION

As regards this study, the purpose was to identify the linguistic features in Duterte's speech and to explain how these discursive strategies his ideologies in leading the people and the country. The findings indicated that pronouns and imperatives played in the complexity of his speeches. Lexical repetition, implicit threats, explicit threats, deducting reasoning, inductive reasoning, positive self-representation, promises and chiamus are discursive strategies evident in Duterte's speech. The president said he wanted to express his own ideas when he engages in public interaction because he wants his audiences to understand his feelings. His beliefs, values, and set of knowledge are evidently manifested in his stylistic use of language that made him provoked much attention in local, even international scene. Thus, it is because of his unique and radical usage of language that make him continue to be the center of local and international media outlets.

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