The Representation of the Concepts of Power, legitimacy and Social Inequalities in Pahlavi I's Discourse in Addressing People

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Extended Abstract

1- Introduction

Discourse analysis is primarily concerned with not only investigating the formal features of discourse like syntax and phonology, but also considering the social functions of the discourse produced by language users in various social and cultural contexts (Van Dijk, 1997). A long history of literature in the field has examined various discourses including educational, scientific, literary, and political. However, comparative analysis of the literature reveals three ignored points: first, the study of the historical characteristics; second, the study of the discourse of those political leaders who have gained power based on an approach other than democracy; and third, the importance of analyzing the authorities' discourse in addressing people. Political leaders have always been concerned with gaining legitimacy since all governments are set to build their legitimacy on an intellectual principle (Fukuyama, 2015). Therefore, the current study employs Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) systemic functional grammar and aims to represent the concepts of power (authority), legitimacy, and social inequalities introduced by Max Weber (1968) in Rezashah's discourse in addressing the people.

2- Methodology

This research is founded on Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) systemic functional grammar. Since few speeches and messages have been left from Rezashah (Fardust, 1990), all Rezashah's speeches and messages (7 cases) delivered to people were collected using the library method and then analyzed based on the proposed framework. Consequently, the concepts of power, legitimacy, and social inequalities were represented in Rezasha's discourse.

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3- Discussion

The results of the study indicate that 56 and 51 clauses of Rezashah's discourse are structured by relational and material processes, respectively. As such, the relational process is used to describe features and compare the situation of the Iranian society in different issues before and after Pahlavi dynasty. The material process also aids audience experience various events like "providing people with happiness and welfare", "prescribing misery", "avoiding traitors", etc. Moreover, employing terms like "[people] have to know….", "[people] have to consider" and "[people] have to understand" all indicate Rezashah's attempt to let his audience be aware of the world in his mind. Examining the verbal process also reveals that Rezashah has used verbs like "announcing", "commanding" and "notifying" to express his wishes, desires and demands. In addition, the pronoun "I" with 35 cases, either overt or covert, is the most frequent subject of Rezashah's discourse, followed by the pronoun "you" and other noun phrases referring to his audience. It is interesting to note that "Ghoshoon"-army force- has a particular status in Rezashah's discourse as a subject, which seems to have its root in his military concerns. Mozar-e-Eltezami is the most frequent tense in his discourse. The analyses reveal that negative polarity is used to remind the women's problems and the disadvantaged status of the society in the past dynasty. Rezashah has never used the elements of suspicion in his discourse, yet has used Mozar-e-Eltezami and various terms like "never", "without exception", "undoubtedly", "always", "must", "mustn't" and "it is necessary…." to show a high degree of certainty and the importance of his messages and speeches. Conjunction together with conjunctive adjunct, which improves the coherence of texts, constitutes 28.88% of the thematic structure of his discourse. Passivization is another important factor that has enhanced the coherence of Rezashah's discourse. Conjunction with 18.27% (85 cases) has the major role in the cohesion of his discourse. Collocations (68 cases), ellipsis (13.97%), repetition (60 cases), and reference (9.46%) are the other cohesive devices that increase the cohesion of Rezashah's discourse.

4- Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, Rezashah always talks about "must" and "mustn't" and tries to remind his demands and desires to "you"-his audience. He portrays himself as the nation's savior from misery they had experienced in the past and threatens them not to support the traitors, otherwise they are doomed to death. In fact, Rezashah's ideology which has been depicted in the form of three major processes and 62 cases of Mozar-e-Eltezami has transformed his discourse into a saber-rattling field against "you". Accordingly, Rezashah's discourse involves idiosyncratic characteristics such as "punishment procedure", "obligation", "violence", "with us or against us", "impatience", and "exclusiveness". Regarding the concept of legitimacy, since Rezashah's power was not inherited, he himself was not a charismatic leader and he ascended to throne without a democratic election, his government was not consistent with any types of legitimated government described by Weber (1968). In fact, according to Van Dijk's (2001) idea, his leadership enjoys

a negative legitimacy. Finally, the most salient instances of social inequalities in his discourse are concluded as follows:

- Kashf-e-Hijab (unveiling) in a Shia'a society like Iran
- Compelling people to accept his son as his successor without any democratic election
- Forcing people to follow and support his dynasty and threatening the aggressors and traitors

Keywords: Systemic functional grammar, Power, Legitimacy, Social inequalities, Pahlavi.

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