# A Critical Discoursal Analysis of Obama's Political Speech at Cairo University[*]

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## Abstract

Critical discourse analysis studies how social power and inequality are expressed in text and talk in social and political contexts.

This study aims at showing the discoursal structure and linguistic features of President Obama's speech within the framework of functional linguistics.

The study hypothesizes that the relational process is the most dominant one. In addition, President Obama's discoursal strategies are short and simple. Moreover, personal pronouns are the most frequent and positive rather than negative modality is used. Finally, Obama's speech involves less offensive and metaphorical words.

The study has come up with the fact that the speech involves the use of relational verbs and spatial, temporal and reason circumstances, as well as other features that confirm the hypotheses rose.

# تحليل خطابي نقدي لحديث أوباما السياسي في جامعة القاهرة

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## المستخلص

يدرس تحليل الخطاب النقدي كيفية التعبير عن السلطة الاجتماعية وعدم المساواة في النص والحديث في المواقف السياسية والاجتماعية. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تبيان البنية الخطابية والخصائص اللغوية لخطاب الرئيس اوباما باتباع نموذج علم اللغة الوظيفي.

تفترض الدراسة إلى أن النوع العلاقاتي هو الأكثر استخداماً، فضلاً عن ذلك فإن نماذج اوباما الخطابية ووسائله قصيرة وذات تركيب بسيط. علاوةً على ذلك، فإن الضمائر الشخصية هي الأكثر استخداماً، والافعال الناقصة غير المنفية مستعملة بشكل أكثر من الأفعال التامة. وأخيراً، يتضمن حديث اوباما كلمات أقل إحراجاً وتعابير مجازية.

وتوصلت الدراسة إلى أن الحديث يتضمن استعمال الأفعال التي تعبر عن النوع العلاقاتي والظروف التي تشير إلى المكان والزمان والسبب، فضلاً عن خصائص أخرى والتي تتطابق مع الفرضيات المقترحة.

## 1. Introduction:

Politics is a struggle for power in order to put certain political, economic and social ideas into practice. In this process, language plays a crucial role because every political action is prepared, accompanied, influenced and expressed by language (Horvath, 2012, 45). For their part, (Jones, et.al., 2004: 36) argue that all issues in our age are political in the sense that since politics is concerned with power, which is used to make decisions, to control other people's behavior and often to control their values, so most everyday decisions and issues in our age are political.

## 2. The Problem:

Some political leaders have influenced their audience, whether positively or negatively, by the political well-formed linguistic expressions they choose to express their ideas and ideologies towards a certain stance. One of these leaders is President Obama where he delivered a speech at Cairo University. This speech was described by different media as "historical".

First, they claim, it raised hopes for new perspectives, relations and policies between America from one side and the Arabs and Muslim world from the other.

Second, the rich language expressions which, were described as very impressive, these media believe that Obama succeeded very well in achieving his goals. He even gained favor, encouragement, and support of his audience.

## 3. Aims of the Study:

The current study aims at showing the discoursal structure and formal linguistic features of President Obama's speech delivered at Cairo University. That is, the speech has been approached by adopting a critical discoursal procedure that

basically depends on Halliday's (1985) model for analyzing a text, i.e. systemic functional linguistics. Thus, the speech is going to be investigated according to the three meta-functions, with their various realizations, viz. the ideational, interpersonal and textual functions.

## 4. Hypotheses:

The current study hypothesizes that:

1- The relational process is the most dominant one among the other processes of the ideational meta-function.
2- President Obama's discoursal patterns and strategies are short and simple.
3- Personal pronouns are the most frequent among other pronouns.
4- Positive rather than negative modality is used.
5- Obama's speech involves the choice of less offensive words and the use of some metaphorical expressions.

## 5. Data Collection and Analytical Procedures:

The data, in this study, is collected from downloading president Obama's speech from the Internet (The official website of the White House).The speech was delivered on June 4, 2009 in Egypt at Cairo University , and lasted for 55 minutes.

The analytical procedure adopted is a critical discoursal one. It mainly depends on Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (Grammar)[1].

This speech, then, has been divided into clauses and analyzed according to the meta-functions of the model adopted.

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[1] (Van Dijk, 2001: 352) defines **critical discourse analysis** as a type of analytical research that primarily studies the way by which social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political contexts.

In each meta-function, the analysis of a clause gives a different kind of structure which is, in turn, composed of a different set of elements. In the ideational meta-function, a clause is analyzed into different process types. In the interpersonal meta-function, the clause is analyzed into mood, pronouns and modality. As for the textual meta-function, it involves "vocabulary, cohesion and text structure".

## 6. Critical Discourse Analysis: Definitions and Historical Backgrounds:

(Fairclough, 1993: 135) believes that critical discourse analysis is an analysis which aims at systemically exploring opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices , events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power, and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony. In other words, critical discourse analysis aims at clarifying the ambiguous and hazy statements to expose their potentially effective role in the imbalanced power of structures of the society. In a similar vein, (Wodak, 2001: 2) depicts the concept of critical discourse analysis in the following manner: "critical discourse analysis may be defined as fundamentally analyzing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language as it is expressed, signaled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use (or in discourse)".

In order to achieve its aims effectively, critical discourse analysis needs to satisfy a number of requirements which (Van Dijk, 1998: 353) points out as follows:

- As is often the case for more marginal research traditions, critical discourse analysis research has to be "better" than other research in order to be accepted.
- It focuses primarily on social problems and political issues, rather than on current paradigms and fashions.
- Empirically adequate critical discourse analysis of social problems is usually multidisciplinary.
- Rather than merely describing discourse structure, it tries to explain them in terms of properties of social interaction and especially social structures.
- More specifically, critical discourse analysis focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimize, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society.

Furthermore, critical discourse analysis is concerned with many issues which can be summarized by presenting the principle of critical discourse analysis discipline. Fairclough and Wodak (1997, cited in Van Dijk, ibid) emphasize the following:

1. Critical discourse analysis addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture
4. Discourse does ideological work
5. Discourse is historical
6. The link between text and society is mediated
7. Discourse analysis is interpretive and explanatory
8. Discourse is a form of social action

Hence, the object of critical discourse analysis is public speech, such as advertisements, newspapers, political propagandas, official documents, laws and regularities and so on. According to (Fairclough, 1992: 9), the one element of critical

discourse analysis which differentiates it from other forms of discourse analysis lies in its attribute of "critical". He says:

*"Critical" implies showing connections and causes which are hidden; it also implies intervention, for example providing resources for those who may be disadvantaged through change".*

These connections and causes might be social or political represented by good use or abuse of power.

Few pages later, Fairclough (ibid: 12) gives more explanations concerning this difference. He maintains that they differ not just in describing discursive practices, but also in showing how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies, and the constructive effects that discourse has upon social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief, neither of which is normally apparent to discourse participants. Thus, it is clear that its aim is to explore the relationships among language, ideology and power.

The emergence of critical discourse analysis is dated back to the end of the 1970s in the UK and Australia where many attempts to recognizing the role of language in structuring power relations in society have been initiated. Van Dijk (2001: 352) sees critical discourse analysis as a reaction against the dominant formal (often, "social" or "uncritical") paradigms (aspects) of the 1960s and 1970s. Since those aspects constitute the linguistic competence of speakers, many researchers aimed at describing and explaining language variation, and the structure of communicative interactions, but with limited attention to issues of social hierarchy and power. However, in the 1970s, a new approach for describing language was developed by Fowler et al. (1979), Kress and Hodge (1979) at the University of East Anglia. They, according to Fairclough (1992: 25-26), tried to marry a method of linguistic text analysis with a social theory of

functioning of language in political and ideological processes, drawing upon the functional linguistic theory associated with Halliday (1971, 1985) and known as "systemic linguistics".

Fairclough (ibid) states that critical linguistics [1] has a great will to distinguish itself from mainstream linguistics and sociolinguistics. Therefore, there was a rejection for two prevalent and related dualisms in linguistic theory: the treatment of systems as autonomous and independent of the "use" of language, and the separation of "*meaning*" from "*style*" or "*expression*" (or "*content*" from "*form*").

He explains the rejection saying: "against the first dualism, critical linguistics asserts with Halliday that language is as it is because of its function in social structure, and argues that language, that people have access to, depends upon their position in the social system". Meanwhile, against the second dualism, he states that: "critical linguistics supports Halliday's view of the grammar of a language as a system of "options" among which speakers make "selections" according to their social circumstances, assuming that the formal options have contrasting meanings and that the choices of form are always meaningful". That is why, it is clear that critical linguistics is not as so much direction or school next to the many other approaches in discourse studies. Rather, it aims at offering a different mode or perspective of theorizing, analysis, and application through the whole field (Van Dijk, 2001: 352).

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(1) Critical linguistics is a term, Kress (1990; 88) indicates, that was quite self-consciously adapted from social-philosophical counterpart, as a label by the group of scholar working at University of East Anglia in the 1970s. By the 1990s the label Critical Discourse Analysis came to be used more consistently to describe this particular approach of linguistic analysis.

## 7. The Model:

Halliday (1985) originated systemic functional linguistics. It represents the main foundation of critical discourse analysis.

(Alvi & Basser, 2011: 1) state that it is based on grammatical systems and considers these systems to be a way through which humans interact with each other. It presents the tools for understanding texts in terms of why and how they are so. They add, it uses traditional class labels, i.e. noun, adjective, verb, etc. as well as the function labels like actor, process, goal, theme, rheme, deictic, etc. These functional labels help the analysts in the process of text interpretation. In his systematic functional linguistics (grammar), Halliday presents three meta-functions for analyzing a text. This grammar is based on the idea that language performs two major functions: it reflects things and it acts things (ibid). So, the present study applies Halliday's three meta-functions of language as a model for analyzing the data.

These three meta-functions are:

a. Ideational (content) function: *expressing the objective world around the speaker as well as his own inner world (subjective world)*

b. Interpersonal function: *communicating with others*.
Both of these two functions depend on a third which is:

c. Textual function: *using coherent utterances*.
(Alvi & Basser, 2011: 1) argue that this function ensures relevance of the language used of the other two functions.

### 7.1 Ideational Function

The ideational function conveys new information and communicates a content that is unknown to the hearer. (Halliday, 1971: 332) points out that it is through this function that the speaker or writer expresses in language his experience of the

phenomena of the real world and his experience of the internal world of his own consciousness (imagination): his reactions, cognitions, and perceptions, and also his linguistic acts of speaking and understanding.

The ideational function mainly consists of "*transitivity*", "*voice*" [1] and "*polarity*" [2]. In this research, the focus will be on "*transitivity*" because it is simply the grammar of the clause in its ideational aspect. In other words, the meaningful grammatical unit in the transitivity system in grammar is the clause, which expresses what is going on in the world.

(Alvi & Basser, 2011: 1) point out that functional linguistics (grammar) indicates that the users of language often choose from different linguistic choices when they speak or write. Thus, functional grammar provides the system of transitivity choices that operate at the clausal level. Transitivity systems analyze the flux of experience. These are represented as a configuration of a process, participants involved, and attendant circumstances. That is, the analysis of the transitivity systems of the clause of a certain language is concerned with how the ideational function of that particular clause is structured in terms of processes, participants and circumstances.

Thus, transitivity systems choose from choices in the three following components: 1) the process, 2) participants, and 3) circumstances. These three elements of a clause are recognized as follows: verbal groups which realize the processes, nominal groups which realize the participants and adverbial groups or prepositional phrases which realize the circumstances (ibid).

Transitivity system consists of six processes (Fairclough

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(1) It refers to the case when a verb is "active" or "passive".
(2) Polarity is the distinction of affirmative and negative.

(1992: 179 & 2003: 141-12), which differ in their key (naming), meaning, participants and in the types of circumstances [1] associated with them.

These processes are:

a- **Material Processes**: They refer to the processes in which something is done i.e. processes of doing having actor and goal. They are expressed by an action verb (e.g. *eat, go, give*), an Actor (one who does something, viz. a logical subject: a proper noun or pronoun) and the Goal of the action (an entity where process is extended, viz. a logical direct object, usually a noun "proper, abstract, or material" or a pronoun).

   e.g. *Marry* (Actor) *is eating a banana* (Goal).

b- **Mental Processes**: They are processes of thinking, feeling and perceiving. These processes express such mental phenomena as "perception" (see, look), "reaction" (*like, please*) and "cognition" (*know, believe, convince*). A mental process involves two participants, Sensor (the person who senses) and Phenomenon (the object involved in the process).

   e.g. *Tom* (sensor) *likes his brother* (phenomenon).

c- **Relational Processes:** They are processes of being. They are classified into two types: Attributive and Identifying. The former expresses what attributes a certain object has, or what type it belongs to. It contains two participants: Carrier and Attribute.

   **e.**g. *The temperature is high* or *I prefer coffee black*.

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(1) The main elements of circumstance of clause are:
   1. Extent and location in terms of place and time.
   2. Manner [means, quality, comparison.
   3. cause [purpose, reason, behalf
   4. Accompaniment.
   5. Role. (Alvi & Basser, 2011: 2).

The latter expresses the identical properties of two entities. It contains two participants: Token and Value.

e.g. *Ann is a girl; the girl is Ann.*

**d- Verbal Processes**: They refer to those processes of exchanging information. That is, they represent human experience in the form of language. Commonly used verbs are *saying, tell, talk, praise, boast, describe,* etc. These processes have Sayer and Receiver as their participants. For example:

*Jack* (sayer) *said the truth.*
*Jack (sayer) told the truth.*
*James* (sayer) *told his friend* (receiver) *the truth.*

**e- Behavioral Processes**: They represent the outer manifestations of the inner workings (Alvi & Basser, 2011: 2). Thus, they refer to physiological and psychological behavior such as breathing, coughing, smiling, laughing, crying, staring, dreaming, etc. Generally there is only one obligatory participant, viz. Behaver, which is often a human. Behavioral process may sometimes be hardly distinguished from a material process that has only one participant. This depends on whether the activity concerned is physiological or psychological. When Behavioral process has two participants, we may take it as material process, for example, *His father beats the disobedient boy*.

**f- Existential Processes:** They indicate that something exists or happens. In other words, they are the processes through which every kind of phenomenon is considered to 'be', to exist, or to happen (Alvi and Basser, 2011:2). In every existential process, there is an Existent as its obligatory participant.

e.g. *There is a girl in the garden.*

e.g. *Does ghost exist on earth?*

The above-mentioned processes are presented in the following table:

**Table (1)**
**Types of processes**

| Process type | Participants | Circumstances |
|---|---|---|
| Material | actor, goal | Time, place, purpose, reason, manner, means |
| Mental | sensor (experiencer), phenomenon | Time, place, reason |
| Relational | carrier , attribute/ token/ value | |
| Verbal | sayer, receiver | |
| Behavioral | Behavar | |
| Existential | Existent | |

adopted from (Fairclough, 2003: 141)

## 7.2 Interpersonal Function

(Halliday, 1971: 333) uses this function of language to refer to the state in which the speaker uses language as the means of his own intrusion into the speech event; i.e. his own comments, attitudes and evaluations, and also the relationship that he sets up between himself and the listener—in particular, the communication role that he/ she adopts of informing, questioning, greeting, persuading, and the like.

(Alvi & Basser, 2011: 2) argue that it deals with meaning as a form of action in which the transmitter of language does something to the receiver of language by means of laguage.

The interpersonal function is mainly achieved through: mood, pronoun and modality. Mood shows what role the speaker selects in the speech situation and what role he assigns to the addressee. If the speaker selects the imperative mood, he/she assumes the role of one giving commands and puts the addressee in the role of one expected to obey orders. As for "Pronoun", it refers to the type of the pronoun used whether personal or

possessives, and their meanings and roles in utterances. Modality, in turns, refers to the speakers' attitudes towards (or opinion about) the truth of the proposition expressed by a sentence. It also extends to the speaker's attitude towards the situation or event described by a sentence.

(Van Dijk, 1977: 27) mentions various kinds of modalities:
1. Alethic: *necessary , possible*
2. Epistemic: *knowledge*
3. Doxastic: belief
4. Deontic: *obligation, permission*
5. Boulomaeic: *want , wish, preference*
6. Expression of time: *adverbs, tenses*

For (Verschueren, 1991: 129), these kinds of modality may be accomplished by means of one of the following ways:
a) Verbal mood: subjunctive..
b) Modal auxiliary: can, could, may, might….
c) Adjective: such as: probable, possible…
d) Adverb: such as: really, certainly, possibly, probably…
e) Sentence adverb such as: frankly, seriously, obviously…

Furthermore, McCarthy (1991: 85) claims that, in addition to the aforementioned types, verbs (such as: appear, assume, doubt, think, guess, suggest, etc.) can also express modality. He also believes that verbs and adverbs are used more than nouns and adjectives.

For his part, Fairclough (1992: 158-162) states that beyond all these possibilities, there is a further somewhat diffuse range of ways for manifesting various degrees of affinity: hedges such as "sort of", "a bit", "or something", intonation patterns, speaking hesitantly and so forth.

Moreover, modality, according to Fairclough (ibid), may be *subjective* or *objective*. In the case of subjective modality, it is clear that the speaker's own degree of affinity with a proposition is being expressed, whereas in the case of objective modality, it may not be clear whose perspective is being represented; whether, for example, the speaker is projecting his own perspective as a universal one, or is acting as a vehicle for the perspective of some other individual or group. The use of the objective modality often implies some form of power. Consequently, modality is regarded as one of the most important systems in social communication.

## 7.3 Textual Function

The textual function refers to the fact that language has mechanisms to change any stretch of spoken or written discourse into a coherent and unified text and make a living passage different from a random list of sentences (Fairclough, 1992: 75).

That is, the textual function is the function of constructing a message (Alvi and Basser, 2011:2).   It is the relation of meaning with the context. Fairclough (1992: 75) points out that textual analysis can be organized under four main headings: vocabulary, grammar, and cohesion and text structure. He notes that these headings can be thought of as ascending in scale. He says: "vocabulary *deals mainly with individual words;* grammar *deals with words combined into clauses and sentences;* cohesion *deals with how clauses and sentences are linked together;* and text structure *deals with large scale organizational properties of texts*".

Fairclough (ibid:76-77) contends that "vocabulary" can be investigated  in many ways, thus he prefers using the terms "wordings", "lexicalization" and "signification" to the term "vocabulary". Accordingly, these terms capture the different

domains, institutions, practices, values and perspectives of a "vocabulary". Hence, he suggests three points of focus for the analysis: the first is the use of the alternative wordings and their political and ideological significance. The second is word meaning, metaphor comes the third.

As for "grammar", its main unit is the clause (simple sentence) which consists of elements usually called "groups" or "phrases". Combining clauses creates complex sentences.

"Cohesion" refers to the way by which clauses are linked together to form sentences, which are in turning linked together to form larger units in texts. However, there are various ways for linkage:

1- Using vocabulary from a common semantic field, repeating words, using near-synonyms …etc.
2- Through a variety of referring and substituting devices, such as: using pronouns, definite articles, demonstratives, ellipsis of repeated words … etc.
3- Through using conjunctive words, such as: "therefore", "however", "hence", "and", "so", "but" …etc.

"Text structure", Fairclough adds, concerns the features of the different types of text; i.e. what elements or episodes are combined in what way and what order. There might be a monologue text or a dialogue text. As for the former, it refers to a speech of a single person with no interruption of any other person. The latter involves turn-taking systems and conventions for organizing the exchange of speaker turn, as well as conventions for opening and closing interviews or conversations.

## 8. Data Analysis

The analysis is based on the three meta-functions mentioned earlier. Within each a number of examples will be given to illustrate how they are used in Obama's speech. Then, through statistics, a percentage of the frequencies of the items involved in each meta-function are given.

## 8.1 The Ideational Meta-function

What follows is a detailed presentation of the different types of the processes used in President Obama's speech:

1- **Material Process:** It constitutes (17%) of the total number of the processes. This type is conveyed through using a number of verbs, like: provide, share, live, go, get, take, leave, denied, host, bring etc. Through the use of this type of processes of action and event, Obama has succeeded in arousing the people stand by his side.

   Let us consider the following examples:

a. "*…. Colonalism that <u>denied</u> rights and opportunities to many Muslims*"
b. "*We did not <u>go</u> by choice…*".
c. "*We would gladly <u>bring</u> every single one of our troops home…*".

2- **Mental Process:** (11%) is the percentage of this type of processes in the speech. It is made by using verbs which have mental meaning, as in: recognize, see, hear, know, focus, consider, think, believe, realize, etc. Through using the mental process of affection, Obama wants to strike to the emotional side of the audience and to gather them around him.

Let us look at the following examples:

a. *"I also <u>know</u> civilization's debt to Islam…".*

b. *"I <u>believe</u> that America holds within her the truth that regardless of race, religion, or station in life….".*

c. *"The Arab states must <u>recognize</u> that the Arab Peace Initiative was an important beginning…".*

**3- Behavioral Process:** these type forms (6%) of the processes number in the speech. It is expressed by verbs like: treat, promote, eradicate, learn, demonstrate, kill, create, ignore, violate, etc.

The following are some examples to illustrate this type of processes:

a. *"We will <u>create</u> a new corps of business volunteers to partner with counterparts in Muslim-majority countries."*

b. *"… that does not mean we should <u>ignore</u> sources of tension."*

c. *"The situation in Afghanistan <u>demonstrates</u> America's goals, and our need to work together…".*

**4- Verbal Process:** The percentage of using this type is (4%). A number of verbs are used to express this type of processes, for example: say, speak, tell, describe, answer, etc.

This type is clearly shown in the following examples:

a. *"… I am convinced that in order to move forward, we must <u>say</u> openly to each other the things we hold in our hearts…".*

b. *"… (al-Qaeda) <u>claimed</u> credit for the attack…".*

c. *"And the Holy Koran also <u>says</u> whoever saves a person, it is as if he has saved all mankind.".*

5- **Relational Process:** This type of processes is the most frequent one among others with a percentage of (61%). It is expressed mainly by verb to *be* as well as other verbs, viz.: include, engage, make, verb to *have*. By adopting this process, Obama aims at creating his positive image in the mind of the audience.

The following are examples for such type:
a. "*I _am_ a Christian, but my father came from a Kenyan family that _includes_ generations of Muslims*."
b. "*….. that some countries _have_ weapons that others do not*.".

6- **Existential Process:** It is the least frequent among all the types of processes with the percentage of (1%). It is expressed via using verbs like: exist, root and lie.

This can be presented in the following examples:
a. *"The dream of opportunity for all people has not come true for everyone in America, but its promise _exists_ for all who come to our shores…"*
b. "*.. the recognition    that the aspiration for a Jewish homeland is _rooted_ in a tragic history that cannot be denied*."

The results of all the processes are shown in table (2) below:

## Table (2)
## The Ideational Meta-functions

| Sample Speech | Total Number | Relational processes | Material processes | Mental processes | Behavioral processes | Verbal processes | Existential processes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NO. | 639 | 389 | 111 | 73 | 36 | 23 | 7 |
| % | - | 61 | 17 | 11 | 6 | 4 | 1 |

Obama seems interested in using the circumstance that refers to spatial, temporal and reason to make his ideas objective and reliable. Let us consider the following:

**Spatial:**
 - "I have come here to seek a new beginning between the united states and Muslims around the world".
- "I have made it clear to Iran's leaders and people that my country is prepared to move forward".

**Temporal:**
- "Today, America has a dual responsibility".
- "That's why; I ordered the removal of our combat brigades by next August".

**Reason:**
- "So let there be no doubt".
-"And I will host a Summit Entrepreneurship this year to identify how we can deepen ties between business leaders, foudations and social entrepreurs….".

**8.2 The Interpersonal Meta-function:**
The interpersonal meta-function implies three subdivisions; they are: mood, pronouns, and modality.

### 8.2.1 Mood:

Most of the sentences used in the speech are simple and short. In addition, the use of different types of tense is clearly noticed that is, the present and the past tenses with all their categories whether simple, progressive or perfect as well as the future aspect. All in all, the speech is a declarative one. Yet, it involves very few imperative structures, with informative force as in:

"*let me be clear*"  and  "*let me also address the issue of Iraq*".

As for negative structures, they are rarely used. This is clearly shown in :

"*And America will not turn our backs on the legitimate Palestinian aspiration for dignity, opportunity, and a state of their own.*"

### 8.2.2 Pronouns:

In fact, a variety of pronouns are used in the speech. They are of two types: personal and possessive. The former involves subject and object pronouns. Meanwhile, the latter involves possessive pronouns.

The personal pronouns are used so frequently. Here are some examples for this type:

d. "*I am grateful for your hospitality.*"

e. "*I am proud to carry with me the goodwill of American people….*"

f. "*All of us share this world for but a brief moment in time. The question is whether we spend that time focused on what pushes us apart, or whether we commit ourselves to an effort- a sustained effort- to find common ground, …*"

The following table shows the frequencies of each pronoun of the personal ones and its percentage within the speech.

**Table (3)**
**The frequencies of personal pronouns**

| Personal pronouns | | Frequencies | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1st person | I (me) | 67 | 15 |
| | We (us) | 119 | 27 |
| 2nd person | You (you) | 17 | 4 |
| 3rd person | He (him) | 3 | 0.6 |
| | She (her) | 1 | o.2 |
| | It (it) | 66 | 15 |
| | They (them) | 34 | 8 |

As stated earlier, the speech involves examples of possessive pronouns. Let us look at the following examples:

a. " …. *They (American Muslims) have fought in our wars … they have taught in our universities*…."
b. "*My personal story is not so unique*…."
c. "*Israel must also live up to its obligation to ensure that Palestinians can live and work and develop their society*."

The frequencies of possessive pronouns are shown in table (4) below:

**Table (4)**
**The Frequencies of Possessive Pronouns**

| Possessive Pronouns | Frequencies | % |
|---|---|---|
| My (mine) | 16 | 4 |
| Our (ours) | 67 | 15 |
| Your (yours) | 5 | 1 |
| His (his) | 1 | 0.2 |
| Her (hers) | 1 | 0.2 |
| Its (its) | 16 | 4 |
| Their (theirs) | 20 | 5 |

### 8.2.3 Modality:

The analysis of the data has, through the following table, provided a guide to how modal verbs are used for expressing modality in terms of low, medium and high politeness. Let us consider the following examples:

Positive: "…. *Just as America <u>can</u> never tolerate violence by extremists, we <u>must</u> never alter or forget our principles*."

Negative: "*America <u>does not</u> presume to know what is best for everyone, just as we <u>would not</u> presume to pick the outcome of a peaceful election.*".

## Table (5)
## Types of Modality

|  | Low politeness | Medium politeness | High politeness |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Positive** | Can, may, could, might, dare | Will, would, shall, should | Must , ought to, need, has to, had to |
| **Negative** | Needn't, doesn't need to, doesn't have to, didn't need to, didn't have to | Won't, wouldn't, shouldn't, isn't to, wasn't to | Mustn't, can't, couldn't, mayn't, oughtn't to, mightn't to, hasn't to, hadn't to |

The analysis, consider table (6) below, shows a high tendency to using positive modality rather than negative. In addition, it is quite clear that Obama made use of modal auxiliaries which refer to medium politeness with an average of (40%) in the whole speech. Yet, he expressed high politeness with a percentage of (26%). Then, the low politeness ranks the third with a percentage of (25%).

## Table (6)
## Frequencies of Modality

|  | Low politeness | | Medium politeness | | High politeness | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| **Positive** | 30 | 25% | 48 | 40% | 32 | 26% |
| **Negative** | 3 | 2% | 4 | 3% | 4 | 3% |

## 8.3 Textual Meta-function:

Adopting textual analysis, the data shows that, in relation to "Vocabulary", president Obama picks up his vocabulary very carefully. He tends to use words of less offence, as when he chooses the term "tension" to describe the relation between the United States and Muslims around the world. Also, he never uses the terms "terror" or "terrorists" instead the expressions "violence" and "violent extremists" are used. He says: "*We meet at a time of tension between the United States and Muslims around the world-tension rooted in historical forces that go beyond any current policy debate.*" , and "*violent extremists have exploited these tensions in a small but potent minority of Muslims. The attacks of September 11th, 2001 and the continued efforts of these extremists to engage violence against civilians has led some in many countries .....*".

The expression "New beginning", which is used three times in the speech and which is given as a title for the speech, conveys the will of the president to start a new era between the two worlds, he says: "*I have come here to seek a new beginning between the United states and Muslims around the world..*".

In addition, the speech involves an implied admission of some issues; for example, the use of the term "occupation" to refer to the nature of Israeli existence on the Palestinian lands, he says: "They (Palestinians) *endure the daily humiliations -large and small- that come with occupation*". Also, he admits that Palestinians has "legitimate" right to have their own country. He says: "*America will not turn our backs on the legitimate Palestinian aspiration for dignity, opportunity, and a state of their own.*".

Moreover, some metaphorical expressions are included within the speech. Let us look at the following examples:
- "We must not be prisoners of it (*past*)" (i.e. We should look forward and not to be bound to past)
- "A tumultuous history" : (It refers to the history of the United States and Muslims which is full of tensioned events)
- "The face of globalization" (The spread of technology around all the world)
- "Education and innovation will be the currency of the 21st century" (Education and creativity will be the base of the prosperity for all societies in the 21st century)
- "Green jobs" (It means ,according to the United Nations Environment Program, working in agricultural, manufacturing, research and development, administrative, and service activities that contribute substantially to preserving or restoring environmental quality.
- "Some are eager to stoke the flames of division" (The desire of some to keep hatred between US and Muslim world) … etc.

As for grammar, most of the sentences are simple, and sometimes they are combined with each other via cohesive devices. Yet, some complex sentences still exist. The cohesive devices used are characterized by diversity. In addition to pronouns, definite articles and demonstratives, some conjunctions, like "and"," but", "so", "yet", indeed", "however", etc., are used, as in:

"*I'm honored to be in the timeless city of Cairo and to be hosted by two remarkable institutions.*", and in:
"*I am Christian, but my father came….*".

Furthermore, since no turn-takings are available, the text-structure of the speech is, of course, a monologue. The president delivers the speech in a very attractive way. He , cleverly, succeeds to convince his audience with his view. It is clear that he supports this view with different religious views, that go with what he wants to express, from the different Holy books (i.e. Holy Koran, Holy Bible, and Talmud), a matter which meets with the publics' approval.

The last part of the speech provides an example for the extraction from the Holy books. Through these extractions, he brilliantly wants to encourage his audience and all those who hear his speech that people of all nations and of all religions can have the peaceful world that they all seek:

"…The Holy Koran tells us: "*O mankind! We have created you male and a female; and we have made you into nations and tribes so that you may know each other.*"

The Talmud tells us: "*The whole of the Torah is for the purpose of promoting peace.*"

The Holy Bible tells us: "*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God*".

## 9. Conclusions:

The study has come up with some conclusions that validate the hypotheses raised. According to the model adopted, the results show that Obama has made use of the transitivity choices in the use of his clauses. Thus, he has used verbs which express a relational process, a process of being, more than other verbs. This means that he focuses on the relationship between the traditional ideals and modern beliefs. His aim in using this process is to create a very positive image of himself in the mind of the audience. As for circumstances, he is more interested in using the circumstance of location, both spatial and temporal. He

also used the circumstance of reason. It seems that he wanted to make his account more objective by providing the information to the audience in spatial and temporal terms. The same can be said about his use of the circumstance of reason. In addition, Obama's speech is characterized by simplicity. In other words, he tends to use simple words and short positive sentences. Consequently, his language is easily understood; a matter which has shortened the distance between him and his audience. Furthermore, the 1$^{st}$ pronoun (we-us) is used most. Using this pronoun, no doubt, shortens the distance between the speaker and the audience, regardless of their age, social status, profession, etc. It includes both the speaker and the listener, and thus, it makes the audience feel close to the speaker and to his points. The analysis also shows a high tendency to using positive modality rather than negative. Finally, the study reveals that Obama's speech involves choosing words of less offence as well as expressions that involve metaphorical senses.

Indeed, he has succeeded in making his audience more easily understand and accept his views; he does arouse their confidence towards him. He has planted hope in the hearts of his audience. So, he has brilliantly succeeded to persuade and influence them to support his policy.

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