

Investigating TV viewers' Views and Perceptions of Culture and Linguistic Features Impact on shaping their Political Stances in Arab World

Boshra Alamen Omer¹, Mahmoud Ali Ahmed². - Ph.D. Candidate at College of Languages
Sudan University of science and technology - Associate professor at College of Languages,
Sudan University of Science and Technology.

Abstract:

This study aimed at investigating T.V viewers' views about the impact of culture and linguistic features in shaping political stances. The study adopted the descriptive analytical method, the researcher collected data by using a questionnaire for (30) T.V viewers. To analyze the data the researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings of the study revealed that culture and linguistic features play a great role in shaping political stances. In the light of the findings of the study, the researcher recommended that culture is an important aspect that T.V viewers need to be aware of, in addition, lexical, semantic and syntactic features of western culture shape the political stances of Arab and non-Arab participants on T.V show talk. Moreover, The economic dominance of western culture shape the political stances of non-Arab participants on T.V show talk,

Key words: Culture, political stances, semantic features.

المستخلص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تقصي آراء مشاهدي التلفاز حول أثر الثقافة و السمات اللغوية في تشكيل مواقفهم السياسية . استخدم الباحث المنهج الوصفي التحليلي وجمع البيانات بواسطة الاستبانة التي وزعت علي (30) من مشاهدي التلفزيون . استخدم الباحث برنامج الحزم الإحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية لتحليل البيانات. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن الثقافة و السمات اللغوية تلعب دورا كبيرا في تشكيل المواقف السياسية. بناء على تلك النتائج فإن الباحث أوصى ان الثقافة هي جانب مهم يجب علي مشاهدي التلفزيون أن يكونوا على دراية به، إضافة إلى ذلك تشكل السمات المعجمية و الدلالية والنحوية للثقافة الغربية المواقف السياسية للمشاركين العرب وغير العرب في عرض الحديث بالتلفزيون. علاوة على ذلك تشكل الهيمنة الاقتصادية للثقافة الغربية المواقف السياسية للمشاركين غير العرب في عرض الحديث بالتلفزيون.

Introduction

Culture is not only understood as the advanced intellectual development of mankind as reflected in the arts, but it refers to all socially conditioned aspects of human life. A society's culture consists of whatever one's has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves (Brelt 1995 P.7).

Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage, must

consist of the end product of learning : knowledge, in a most general sense; this means that culture is not material phenomenon: it does not consist of things, people, behavior, or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things. It is the forms of things that people have in mind, their models of perceiving and dealing with their circumstances. To one who knows their culture, these things and events are also signs signifying the cultural forms or models of which they are material representations.

Statement of the problem

The researcher has noticed that many T.V. viewers who are keen to follow either CNN or Al-Jazzier may not recognize some aspects of the cultural values and linguistic features that can shape the political stances of T.V. participants or the host of talk show. This is especially obvious when they listen to Arab or non-Arab participants. Klaus (1992) remarked that among the cultural norms that shape political stances are linguistic features such as choice of vocabulary, use of idioms, metaphors, passivization and nominalization.

So, the researcher finds it important to explore these hurdles with the intention of suggesting the appropriate rectifications. .

Objectives of the Study

The study is carried out to achieve the following objectives:

1. To highlight how culture values or norms shape our political stance.
2. To shed light on linguistic features that shape political stances of T.V viewers.

Questions of the Study

The following research questions formed the basis of the study:

1. To what extent can the cultural values shape the political stance of the Arab participants in T.V show talk I?
2. How can linguistic features shape political stances of T.V viewers?

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses are postulated:

1. Cultural values can shape the political stance of the Arab participants in TV show talk.
2. Linguistic features shape political stances of T.V viewers.

Significance of the Study

This study provides an insight and helps in unmasking political dialogue to show the

extent to which it can be shaped by cultural values or norms.

The study will benefit educators in the field of CDA.

Researchers who are interested in investigating political discourses to use the findings of the study as a basis for further study in the area as the current study paves the way for other researchers to conduct further studies .

The study will also contribute to the existing literature in the field of linguistics and culture.

Limits of the Study

This study is limited to investigate how culture values or norms can affect our political stances and shed light on linguistic features that shape political stances of T.V viewers. Also it limits to Sudanese's T.V viewers and to Sudan University .

Methodology of the Study

As has been mentioned, the purpose of this study is to investigate how culture values or norms and linguistic feature can affect political stances, to achieve this goal and in an attempt to answer the study questions, data has been collected through using a questionnaire which was administered to (30) T.V viewers. Then the data has been analyzed statistically by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS.

Culture definitions

According to Anderson and Michel (1989:1) culture is the totally of social transmitted behavior pattern, arts, believes, institution and all other products of human work and though the culture framework must be viewed as a set of tendencies of possibilities from which to choose speech and language acquisition does not occur in vacuum but is mediated by the culture from which the child come.

There is a strong relationship between the culture we produce and the language and the discursive practices by which we produce it, culture and language (discourse) are connected together and the analysis of discourse to analysis of culture in which it raised. Clifford (1988:66) defines culture as:

“While there are many times when we still need to be able to speak holistically of a specific culture in the confidence that we are designating something real and differentially coherent. It is increasingly clear that the concrete activity of representing a culture, subculture, or indeed only coherent domain of collective activity is always strategic and selective, the world’s societies are too systematically interconnected to permit any easy isolation of separate or independently functioning system.

Any analysis of any discourse follows the original culture aspects in which it arises. The specific coherent principles of any culture affects all the coherent and the meaningful aspects of that discourse.

Because of the economic and army factors, the American culture is the most prominent culture in what is being called “the globalization era” Nowadays, there seem to be an existing culture and political conflict between Arabs and Americans unlike the previous few years, because the political of American in Middle East and the effect of the Islamic groups which speak Arabic and have emerged from the Arab culture.

According to Brett (1995:55) the social and historical origins of television discourse, in any culture are complex attempts, however, can be made to integrate diverse disciplines, concepts and tradition in order to expose the taken-for-

grantees of language and the way in which it is used.

The Arab television discourse has progressed during these few previous years which has led to real changes in the Arab culture, politics and society.

Culture should be considered as a set of distinctive features inherent to society or to a social group spiritual and material, intellectual and emotional ones. Apart from art and literature it comprises the way of life, the ability to coexist systems of values, traditions and beliefs.

Role of Culture in Shaping Political Stances:

The concept of stance refers to a significant and complex area of language use in which we express our own personal thoughts and feelings about any given entity or proposition and engaging in various ways with others are the overarching themes. This concept cannot be seen simply as “a matter of private opinion or attitude” (Du Bois, 2007: 171); rather, it is a phenomenon of considerable importance vis-à-vis everyday communication, on the one hand, and as an area of interest in social sciences, on the other.

Hyland (2012:1) stated that ‘stance’ alongside ‘voice’ is one of “the most significant concepts in applied linguistics today”.

Bednarek(2006) remarked that it is an important part of human cognitive development as it involves making sense of the world and sharing that sense with others. This inevitably involves evaluating either positively or negatively other people, entities, propositions or anything we may encounter.

Moreover, stance has a key role in giving readers/listeners a derived sense of the authorial subjective voice in any piece of communication and in tracing that voice hence stance taking is one of the most prevalent aspects of language production, as no text or talk is entirely free from subjective voice. There is a strong relationship between the culture we produce and the language (discourse) are connected together and the analysis of discourse and the analysis of culture in which it raised as culture plays a significant role in shaping political stances; lack of knowledge of the target culture often leads to misunderstanding the target message.

Clifford (1988) argued that "While there are many times when we still need to be able to speak holistically something real and differentially coherent. It is increasingly clear that the concrete activity of representing a culture, subculture, or indeed only coherent domain of collective activity is always strategic and selective. The word's societies are too systematically interconnected to permit any easy isolation of separate or independently functioning system. The increased pace of historical change forces a new self- consciousness about the way culture wholes and boundaries are constructed and translated". This suggests that culture plays a great role in our understanding of the world.

Language and Culture

Culture is not only understood as the advanced intellectual development of mankind as reflected in the arts, but it refers to all socially conditioned aspects of human life (of Snell – Hornby, 1988: Hymes, 1964). A society's culture consists of whatever one's has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to

its members, and do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves. Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage, must consist of the end product of learning: knowledge. This suggests that culture is not material phenomenon: it does not consist of things, people, behavior, or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things. It is the form of things that people have in mind, their models of perceiving of these things and dealing with their circumstances. To one who knows their culture, these things and events are also signs signifying the cultural forms or models of which they are material representation.

Culture and Society

Culture and society are not the same thing. While cultures are complexes of the learned behavior patterns and perceptions, societies are groups of interacting organisms.

People in human societies generally perceive that their society is distinct from other societies in terms of sharing traditions and expectation. While human societies and cultures are not the same thing they are inextricably connected because culture is created and transmitted to others through the society. Cultures are not the product of lone individuals. They are the continuous evolving products of people interacting with each other.

Factors Affecting Shaping People's Political Stances

According to Moore (1982) there are some factors that contribute to shaping political stances of Arab and non-Arab participants, he suggested the following factors:

1. Differences among ethnic groups cause difference in political stances.

2. Economic power as conflicting ideology cause difference in political stances.

3. Language typology among various culture cause difference in political stance.

4. The style of discourse used on T.V. show talk, cause difference in political stance.

5. Everyday terms of western culture shape the political stances of non-Arab participants on T.V show talk.

6. The use of technical terms of western culture shape the political stances of non-Arab participants on T.V show talk.

7. Syntactic, lexical and semantic features of western culture shape the political stances of non-Arab participants on T.V show talk as politicians tend to recycle the same word over and over again rather than have original thoughts a phrase like "Make America Great Again" and terms like "alt-right" are representative of hand-me-down political terminology that serves on discursive purpose.

Different languages have different lexicons, but the important point here is that the lexicon of different languages may classify things in different ways. For example, the color lexicon of some languages segment the color spectrum at different places.

8. The use of proverbs, idioms and metaphors as cultural value shape the political stances of the Arab participants on T.V show talk.

Proverbs, idioms and metaphors are frequently used in the language of politics, they are only one aspect of political discourse but they are useful starting points for looking at some of the ways in which political language operates.

9. Figures of speech as cultural values shape the political stances of the Arab participants on T.V show talk.

10. Nominalization as linguistic structures shape the political stances of the Arab participants on T.V show talk.

Nominalization is the most typical structure particularly in scientific, political discourses..etc..Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) pointed out that information density, and nominalization are the foremost lexicogrammatical features of academic and political language, they also stated that nominalization has been recognized as the sole most substantial resource for establishing political discourse.

11. Passivization as linguistic structures shape the political stances of the Arab participants on T.V show talk.

The English language is extremely rich as it includes numerous modes, forms and linguistic features that have developed over many centuries of its evolution. Passive voice is one of such features, it is an important language tool and refusing to use it only because fiction and political writing are without passive voice would be a hasty and reckless decision.

Passive voice has been a tool of political rhetoric for a long time. The most famous example of its utilization in modern politics is the United States declaration of independence, in the famous saying "all men are created equal" the passive form of the verb here was used for a great purpose, thus the founding fathers could have easily said "God created all people equal" but they preferred not to use such a formulation, as a result, did not turn a political statement into a religious proclamation.

12. Deities as linguistic structures shape the political stances, of the Arab participants on T.V show talk.

Methodology

This study was carried out at Sudan University of science and Technology with T.V viewers. A purposive sample used for this study includes (30) T.V viewers. This is a quantitative research method.

The researcher bases inquiry on the assumption that collecting data form questionnaire best provides an understanding of research problem. This study used a quantitative research design comprising quantitative method and technique during data collection analysis

The analysis of the questionnaire in relation to the hypothesis

Table (1) Differences among ethnic groups, cause difference in political stance.

Answer	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	12	40
Agree	12	40
Not sure	2	6.7
Disagree	2	6.7
Strongly Disagree	2	6.7
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the above table (1) that there are (12) respondents in the study's sample with percentage (40.0%) strongly agree with "Differences among ethnic groups, cause difference in political stance". There are (12) respondents with percentage (40.0%) agree with that and (2) respondents with percentage (6.7 %) are not sure. and (2) respondents with percentage (6.7%) disagree, while (2) persons with percentage (6.7%) strongly disagree.

Table No (4.2) Differences among religious groups, cause difference in political stance

Answer	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	6	20.0%
Agree	18	60.0%
Not sure	1	3.3%
Disagree	3	10.0%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.6
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the above table (2) that there are (6) respondents in the study's sample with percentage (20.0%) strongly agree with "Differences among religious groups, cause difference in political stance ". There are (18) respondents with percentage (60.0%) agree, and

because the researcher wanted to come up with rich information which would improve the validity and reliability of the overall finding. Quantitatively.

Results and discussion:

The researcher used the questionnaire as the main tool for collecting the data related to this study. The researcher has designed a questionnaire to T.V viewers' views on the impact of culture and linguistic features in shaping their political stances. The tables and the percentages below illustrate what has been stated above.

(3) respondents with percentage (10.0%) are not sure and (2) persons with percentage (6.7%) disagree, while only one respondent with percentage (3.3%) strongly disagree.

Table No (4.3) various cultures, cause difference in political stance

Answer	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	7	23.2%
Agree	18	60.0%
Not sure	1	3.3%
Disagree	2	6.7%
Strongly Disagree	2	6.7%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the above table. (3) That there are (7) respondents in the study's sample with percentage (23.2%) strongly agree with "Various cultures, cause difference in political stance.". There are (18) respondents with percentage (50.0%) agreed with that and (1) respondent with percentage (3.3%) are not sure. and (2) respondents with percentage (6.7%) disagreed, while (2) respondents with percentage (6.7%) strongly disagree.

Table No (4.4) Economic power as conflicting ideology, causes difference in political stances.

Answer	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	6	20.0%
Agree	11	36.7%
Not sure	3	10.0%
Disagree	8	26.7%
Strongly Disagree	2	6.7%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the above table. (.4) that there are (6) respondents in the study's sample with percentage (20.0%) strongly agree with "Economic power as conflicting ideology causes difference in political stances.". There are (11) persons with percentage (36.7%) agree with that and (3) respondents with percentage (10.0 %) were not sure. and (8) respondents with percentage (26.7%) disagree, while (2) respondents with percentage (6.7%) strongly disagree.

Table No (4.5) Political power as conflicting ideology, causes difference in political stance.

Answer	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	39	37.5%
Agree	32	30.8%
Not sure	6	5.8%
Disagree	9	8.7%
Strongly Disagree	18	17.3%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the above table (5) that there are (3) respondents in the study's sample with percentage (13.3%) strongly agree with “**Political power as conflicting ideology, causes difference in political stances.**“. There are (6) respondents with percentage (20.0%) agree with that and (1) respondents with percentage (3.3 %) are not sure. and (13) respondents with percentage (43.3%) disagreed, while (6) respondents with percentage (20.0%) strongly disagree.

Table No (4.6) Language Typology among various cultures, causes difference in political stances.

Answer	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	3	13.3%
Agree	14	46.7%
Not sure	3	10.0%
Disagree	7	20.0%
Strongly Disagree	3	10.0%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the above table (6) that there are (3) respondents in the study's sample with percentage (13.3%) strongly agree with “**Language Typology among various cultures, causes difference in political stances...**” There are (14) respondents with percentage (46.7%) agreed with that and (3) respondents with percentage (10.0 %) were not sure. and (7) respondents with percentage (20%) disagree, while (3) respondents with percentage (10.0%) strongly disagree.

Table No (4.7) Misunderstanding of others religious, causes difference in political stance

Answer	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	13	34.4%
Agree	10	33.3%
Not sure	3	10.0%
Disagree	3	10.0%
Strongly Disagree	1	3.3%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the above table (7) and that there are (13) respondents in the study's sample with percentage (34.4%) strongly agree with “**Misunderstanding of others religious, causes difference in political stance.**“. There are (10) respondents with percentage (33.3%) (agree with that and (3) respondents with percentage (10,0 %) are not sure. and (3) respondents with percentage (10%) disagree, while (1) respondents with percentage (3.3%) strongly disagree

Table No (4.8) Stereotyping of customs and traditions among people, causes differences in political stances

Answer	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	18	60.0%
Agree	10	33.3%
Not sure	1	3.3%
Disagree	1	3.3%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the above table (8) that there are (18) respondents in the study's sample with percentage (60.0%) strongly agree with “**Stereotyping of customs and traditions among people causes differences in political stances.**”. There are (10) respondents with percentage (33.3%) agree with that and (1) respondents with percentage (3.3%) are not sure. and (1) respondents with percentage (3.3%) disagree, while (0) respondents with percentage (0.0%) strongly disagree.

Table No (4.9) culturally choice expressions, causes differences in political stances.

Answer	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	17	35.3%
Agree	11	36.7%
Not sure	2	6.7%
Disagree	1	3.3%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the above table (9) that there are (17) respondents in the study's sample with percentage (35.3%) strongly agree with” **Culturally choice expressions, causes differences in political stances...**” There are (11) respondents with percentage (36.7%) agree with that and (2) respondents with percentage (6.7 %) were not sure. and (1) respondent with percentage (3.3%) disagree, while (0) respondent with percentage (0.0%) strongly disagree.

Table No (4.10) the style of discourse used on T.V show talk, causes differences in political stances

Answer	Number	Percent
Strongly Agree	15	50.0%
Agree	13	43.4%
Not sure	1	3.3%
Disagree	1	3.3%
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0%
Total	30	100%

It is clear from the above table no.(4.10) that there are (15) respondents in the study's sample with percentage (50.0%) strongly agreed with " **The style of discourse used on T.V show talk, causes differences in political stances** ". There are (13) respondents with percentage (43.4%) agree with that and (1) respondents with percentage (3.3 %) are not sure. and (1) respondent with percentage (3.3%) disagree, while (0) respondent with percentage (0.0%) strongly disagreed.

Discussion:

The data collected was analyzed in relation to the hypothesis of the study. The data was collected via questionnaire which had been administered to T.V viewers.

Having analyzed and compare the results with the main hypothesis, the results have shown that culture and linguistic features cause differences in political stances of people.

Recommendations and Conclusion:

The following are some recommendations:

- Culture is an important aspect that T.V viewers need to be aware of.
- Lexical, semantic and syntactic features of western culture shape the political stances of non-Arab participants on T.V show talk.
- The economic dominance of western culture shape the political stances of non-Arab participants on T.V show talk.
- Linguistic features shape political stances of T.V viewers.
- Cultural values can linguistically shape the political stance of the Arab participants in TV show talk.

Bibliography:

Anderson,H& Michel,J. (1989).). Revealing Stances Through Passive Voice. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41, pp. 1406-1421.
Brelt,D. (1995). *Finish Views of CNN Television News . A culture – cross cultural of the American Commercial Discourse*. Longman: London and New York.
Benmark, A. (2012). *The Language of News Media*. Oxford: Blackwell

Clifford , J. (1998). *The Culture Studies Readers* (second edition) New York.

Du Bois, J. W. (2007). *The Stance Triangle*. In R. Englebretson (Ed.), *Stancetaking in Discourse: Subjectivity, Evaluation, Interaction* (pp. 139-182). Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Fairclough,Y. (1989). *Language and Power*. London ,Longman.

Fanault,H. (1971). *Order of Discourse .Integrated Lecture Delivered at the Collage de franch .*

Hall,H. (1983). *Cohesion in English* London. Longman.

Halliday,H. (1967). *Cohesion in English*. London. Longman.

Hawkesworth, M. (2004). *Political Science in a New Millennium: Issues of Knowledge and Power*. In M. Hawkesworth & M. Kogan (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Government and Politics* (pp. 3-34) (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Leech ,G.(1991) .*The State on the Art in Corpus Linguistic . Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum*.

Klaus,K.(1992).*Analyzing Discourse and Approach from the Sociology of Knowledge*. University of Augsburg.

Mohamed,A. (2001). *American Style of Journalism and Arab World Television “Anti-polarimetry “ Study of News Selection of Six World Satellite Television Channel .Rowley Mass ,Newbury House*.

Moore,P.(1982). *The Stronomy Encyclopedia*, Oxford University Press