



A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON THE LIFTING OF THE IMMUNITY OF THE FOURTH ZAMBIAN REPUBLICAN PRESIDENT IN 2013

Clare Mwiinga

School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Chalimbana University

Abstract

This study examined the discursual features of the parliamentary debate session of 15th March 2013 in which the immunity of the Fourth Zambian Republican President was lifted, in order to establish the ideological implications of these features. The study was guided by the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) theory, which is an ensemble of techniques for the study of textual practices and language use as social and cultural practices. The data were collected by employing a purposive sampling technique to select the debate session of 15th March, 2013. The recordings of this debate session, which were transcribed verbatim, constituted the sample for the study. Being a qualitative study, it solely relied on document analysis by identifying themes which emerged from the debate session. The results of the study indicate that the rhetorical structure of the arguments of the parliamentary debate follows a particular sequence and that the discourse of individual Members of Parliament is reasonable as well as persuasive. Furthermore, the idea of the relationship between the discursive event and discursive structure was established. The immunity lifting, which is the discursive event shaped the debate session, the discursive structure. The overall theme of the debate session which is 'respect for the rule of law, good governance and service to the people', calls for those serving in public offices to possess and uphold certain values which include honesty, integrity, accountability, and patriotism. The study concludes that the debate session was characterised by discursive polarisation in which members of parliament presented a world-view of 'Us' versus 'Them', where 'Us' positive self-presentation is juxtaposed with a negative presentation of 'Them' thereby creating in-groups and out-groups. The study further demonstrates that the debate was characterised by unequal power relations with the members supporting the motion enjoying more freedom than those of the opposing side.

Key Words: *covert ideologies, critical discourse analysis, discursive polarisation, social practice*

Full article available: Subscribe to Chalimbana University Multi-disciplinary Journal of Research: <http://journal.chalimbanauniversity.net>