Critical Discourse Analysis of Adjectives Used with the Word Multiculturalism in British Print Media

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Abstract

The present paper critically analyses the ideological uses of the adjectives used to describe multiculturalism in opinion articles published by two British quality newspapers, *The Telegraph* and *The Times*, which politically lean to The Right. Methodologically, the sample on which this study is based has been retrieved from the websites of the two dailies by means of the Key Word In Context (KWIC) technique, which has been used to look for comment articles published between July 2005 and December 2015, and in which the search word, multiculturalism used with an adjective featured. Using Fairclough's theoretical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the study pinpoints the ideological underpinnings of the adjectives used with the word multiculturalism in the editorials. The study found out that all the adjectives are used in a derogative way to describe multiculturalism as being unreasonable, harmful and unsuccessful. Significantly, this paper provides critical insight into the peculiar uses of derogative adjectives in comment articles dealing with multiculturalism and avers that negative adjectives are not simply linguistic elements, but most importantly, ideological tools.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Textual Analysis, Fairclough, Adjectives Ideology, Multiculturalism, The Telegraph, The Times

1. Introduction

The public debate over multiculturalism in British print media, which started right from the beginning when the state started to devise multicultural policies in the late 1970s, has become a heated one particularly after the London tube terrorist attacks on 7 July 2005. An incredible number of articles on multiculturalism has been published since then, some in favor and some against. The British press has become polarized over this issue. Some dailies, politically leaning to The Left, like *The Guardian* and *The Independent* have backed state supported multiculturalism, arguing that it has culturally enriched society and fostered some sort of social equality by protecting the rights of ethnic groups. On the other hand, some dailies, politically leaning to The Right, like *The Telegraph* and *The Times*, have been involved in adamant campaign against multiculturalism, claiming that it has encouraged the appearance of segregated communities and terrorism and at the same time has depreciated national culture and identity.

The discourse on multiculturalism, therefore, differed according to the ideological stance of the broadsheet. Dailies in favor of multiculturalism have adopted a discourse that tends to approve of multiculturalism and to praise its qualities and to call for its promotion. However, dailies opposed to multiculturalism have tended to adopt a critical discourse that seeks to dismantle multiculturalism and to reconsider all those issues related to it like immigration and social integration. The present study will attempt to examine the use of adjectives with the word multiculturalism in a number of editorial articles published by *The Telegraph* and *The Times* in order to uncover the ideological implications of that use. To achieve this objective, the study will employ a critical discourse analysis based exclusively on Fairclough's theoretical framework to examine the use of adjectives in order to describe multiculturalism in a sample of comment articles published between July 2005 and December 2015 and retrieved from the websites of the above-mentioned broadsheets.

2. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical Discourse Analysis (often abbreviated to CDA), is a tool of research that appeared at the end of the 1980s. The most prominent scholars, who have significantly contributed to its development, are Norman Fairclough (1995), Teun Van Dijk (1993), Ruth Wodak (2001), to name but a few. This approach owes much to the Frankfurt School of critical theory, Gramsci, Habermas, Foucault Hallidayan systemic-functional grammar and Critical Linguistics. Though its main concern is to examine language in relation to such issues as social power, ideology and discursive practices, CDA has been developed within a number of approaches, as there are some differences between its theorists. CDA has been used in recent years to investigate in relation to language such issues as political discourse, ideology, racism, immigration, economic discourse, advertisement, media, gender, institutional discourse, education and literacy (Blommaert and Chris Bulcean, 2000).

CDA has been conceptualized in a number of ways. Wodak (2001) argues that the main concern of CDA is to examine the clear manifestation of those organic relations of control, discrimination, power and dominance in language discourse. Therefore, the aim of CDA, according to her, is to explore how social inequality is articulated and established by

discourse. She makes this clear when she says:

> "Thus, CL and CDA may be defined as fundamentally concerned with analyzing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language. In other words, CDA aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signaled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use (or in discourse)." (p. 2)

Wodak's conception is very helpful, as it gives insight into how social inequality and dominance are expressed and reinforced by means of language use.

In Van Dijk's view (2003), CDA "should describe and explain how power abuse is enacted, reproduced or legitimized by the text and talk of dominant groups or institutions." (p. 84) Van Dijk (1993) also argues that social power is related to both action and cognition. The latter is more effective for him than the former because "it is enacted by persuasion, dissimulation or manipulation, among other strategic ways to change the minds of others in one own's interests." (p. 254)

In introducing CDA, Norman Fairclough (2005) argues that CDA has the aim of exploring how discourse is ideologically formed by power relations and struggle and examining the way unclear relationships between discourse and society play their role in securing the power and dominance of some groups and institutions. He makes this clear when he (1995) says:

> By 'critical' discourse analysis I mean discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often 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 (pp. 132-133).

Given that this study will be conducted within Fairclough's model of analysis, this paper provides a brief account of the main principles of this theoretical framework.

3. Fairclough CDA Model

According to Richardson (2007), Fairclough's three dimensional model, also known as the socio-cultural model "provides a more accessible method of doing CDA than alternative theoretical methods" (p. 37). It has three dimensions: the text (written and spoken), discourse practice (the processes of producing, distributing and consuming texts) and discursive events (instances of socio-cultural practice) (Fairclough, 1995, p. 2). The model's dimensions can be explained by Fairclough's assumption that language is firstly part of society, secondly a social process and thirdly a socially conditioned process (Fairclough 1989, p. 22). Fairclough's practical aim behind this approach is "to make a contribution to the general raising of consciousness of exploitative social relations, through focusing upon language." (Fairclough, 1989, p. 4). He explains the elements of his model as follows:

3.1 Text

In this model, Fairclough (1995, p. 4) states that the analysis should go beyond mere commentaries on texts, which ignore texture and take into account the texture of texts, their form and their organization. He argues that only texture, which is both linguistic and intertextual, can enrich social and cultural analysis. In his view, texts should be linguistically analyzed as many of their properties are "potentially ideological" like vocabulary and metaphors, grammar, generic structure, style, etc. For him, it is not possible to analyze "content properly without simultaneously analyzing form because contents are always necessarily realized in forms, and different contents entail different forms and vice versa. In brief, form is a part of content." (p. 188)

3.2 Discourse Practice

Discourse practice, according to Fairclough (1995), shows how the producers and the interpreters of texts make use of "available resources that constitute the order of discourse." (p. 10) The order of discourse refers to those discursive practices related to a specific social domain or institution, and the boundaries and relationships existing between them. He cites the example of a lecture and an informal conversation in an academic institution. In his view, language and the order of discourse are the two integral forces in any discursive event. Discursive events are at the same time dependent and shaped by language and restructure them (p. 10). The text and discourse practice are linked by the intertextual analysis, which shows the location of the text in relation to the social network of orders of discourse. In other words, it shows how a given text realizes and goes beyond the potential within orders of discourse. The concern of discourse practice, therefore, is to produce, consume and distribute texts. The distribution of texts, which means the way texts circulate within orders of discourse "can be investigated in terms of 'chain' relationships (as opposed to paradigmatic or 'choice' relationships) within orders of discourse." (p. 13)

3.3 Discursive Events

According to Fairclough (1995, p. 133), each discursive event is three dimensional. First, it is a spoken or written text. Second, it is an illustration of discourse practice, which involves the production and the interpretation of text. Third, it is an instance of social practice. In reading a complex social event, the analysist can adopt these three complementary dimensions. If the focus within social practice is on politics, within the discursive event it is on relations of power and domination. In Fairclough's framework, the analysis seeks to bring together "a theory of power based upon Gramsci's concept of hegemony with a theory of discourse practice based upon the concept of intertextuality." (p. 133). Therefore, discourse practice mediates the connection between text and social practice. This implies that "processes of text production and interpretation are shaped by (and help shape) the nature of the social practice, and on the other hand the production process shapes (and leaves 'traces' in) the text, and the interpretative process operates upon 'cues' in the text." (p. 133)

4. Research Questions

1. How do adjectives describe multiculturalism in in the comment articles published by *The*

Telegraph and *The Times*?

2. Why do the two dailies use adjectives to describe multiculturalism?

5. Research Objectives

The actual study has two main objectives:

1. To explore the image of multiculturalism which the two dailies seek to convey to the audience by analyzing the adjectives used to describe multiculturalism.

2. To uncover the ideological implications for drawing a particular image of multiculturalism.

6. Research Methodology

The key Word in Context (KWIC) technique has been used to retrieve articles from the web sites of two British dailies, *The Telegraph* and *The Times*. The search word used is multiculturalism. It concerned the period stretching from 8 July 2005, a day after the London tube attacks up to the end of December 2015. The choice of this period stems from the desire to examine how a section of British media has dealt with multiculturalism in the light of growing terrorist attacks over the last decade. After retrieving articles containing the term multiculturalism, I excluded all the articles which either are irrelevant to the context of the study or are not opinion ones. Only opinion articles in which the term multiculturalism was used with an adjective have been selected for analysis to examine how it is described.

The selection of comment articles can be explained by the fact that newspapers in their opinion section publish items that more or less express the particular editorial line of their editing boards and that have to varying degrees an ideological color. The search yielded 23 articles for *The Telegraph* and 11 articles for *The Times*. The choice of the above mentioned broadsheets can be explained by three reasons. First, the objective of the study is to examine how multiculturalism is described by two newspapers that politically lean to The Right. Second, the two broadsheets have a large readership as in July 2011 *The Telegraph* had a daily circulation of about 634,113 copies and *The Times* 393,814 copies (www. en. wikipedia.org/wiki/) and therefore can be influential on a great number of people., Third, they have regularly published 'opinion' pieces on multiculturalism over the last decade, which gives an insight into the two newspapers' discourse on multiculturalism.

The methodology of critical discourse analysis has been used quantitatively and qualitatively to achieve the objectives of the study and to answer the research questions. This method is very helpful in showing how print media can be geared towards 'constructing social reality' for particular issues by means of language use (Fairclough, 1992, p. 169). For this aim, Fairclough's theoretical framework will be used. Our choice of this framework stems from the conviction that it is very useful as a tool for CDA. Only the textual analysis dimension is used in this study and the main focus is on the use of vocabulary and the reasons for the choice of particular words to describe multiculturalism. The other two dimensions will not be applied.

7. Data

7.1 The Telegraph Sentences

1. "Our political class, media and civil society are dominated by good-hearted, middle-class people who do not wish to admit that a well-intentioned idea - multiculturalism - can have such devastating effects." (Husain, 2008, para. 3)

2. "Labour's multiculturalism was divisive and wasteful at the best of times; its legacy in a period of economic crisis poses a dangerous threat to social cohesion." ("Britain's betrayed tribe," 2009, para. 8)

3. "Livingstone's form of multiculturalism is as dangerous as outright racism; in the interests of achieving harmony, people of every ethnicity should reject it." ("Defeating racism," 2006, para. 5)

4. "Multiculturalism is more than a failed ideology: it threatens our safety." ("Stop these useful idiots," 2011, para, 3)

5. "This was not the first time that Honeyford had gone public with his views. In November 1982 he had written an article for The Times Educational Supplement (TES) attacking misplaced multiculturalism and political correctness in schools." ("Ray Honeyford," 2012, para, 8)

6. "As a member of the Law Society, I hope that this will reopen discussions about this and preceding governments' dangerous flirting with misguided multiculturalism." ("Sharia in Britain," 2014, para.1)

7. "But having dismissed "old Britain" in a phrase, Mr Blair turned to grapple with the plain inadequacies of new Britain, and in particular of the ludicrous doctrine of multiculturalism. You think that it is foolish, unreasonable and unsuitable." (Gimson, 2006, para. 4)

8. "Trevor Phillips, the black chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, was accused by London mayor Ken Livingstone of heading towards the BNP, simply for warning that rigid multiculturalism was sleepwalking Britain into a deeply segregated society." (Randall, 2007, para. 12)

9. "For years, the exit of the white working class from the capital was celebrated by many a "progressive", as they were seen as a blot on the landscape of a utopian multiculturalism." (Collins, 2008, para. 4)

10. "There is a good chance that he will have worked in Eccleston Square, the bishops' HQ, where lay ideologues promote naïve multiculturalism." (Thompson, 2006, para. 5)

11. "The teaching profession, for example, has shown little desire to re-examine the sort of sloppy multiculturalism that, without much discernible encouragement from parents." (Mount, 2005, para. 10)

12. "The upshot is that the United Kingdom's authority as a sovereign nation has been greatly eroded, our democratic traditions trashed, and the make-up of our society put through the

mangle of enforced multiculturalism - all without anything so vulgar as a plebiscite." (Randall, 2007, para. 17)

13. "The most generous interpretation of multiculturalism has become unacceptable." (Hastings, 2005, para. 6)

14. "Multiculturalism is hard enough to practise; but multi-faithism seems impossible." (Woods, 2005, para. 9)

15. "But Mr Blair could not bear to say that multiculturalism is rubbish." (Gimson, 2006, para. 6)

16. "The first is the cancer of multiculturalism, a creed subscribed to by ignorant politicians of all parties over the past 30 or 40 years but now discredited, not least by some of those whom it was meant to serve. (Heffer, 2007, para. 11)

17. This has been one of the worst effects of the pernicious doctrine of multiculturalism." (Rahman, 2007, para. 5)

18. "What is at the heart of the aggressive form of "multiculturalism", as most ordinary people suspect, is not tolerance but self-loathing: the deprecation of our own culture and history that elevates almost anybody else's values above our own." (Daley, 2008, para. 20)

7.2 The Times Sentences

1. "Mr Cameron is a thoughtful politician, which makes his views on the adoption issue particularly interesting. He said: "It is time to sweep away failed multiculturalism." (Rees-Mogg, 2007, para. 6)

2. "It's also a big part of the reason why America seems to have fewer problems with extremist Muslims than Britain, because for all our well-intentioned multiculturalism we do little to make anyone feel proud to be British." (Parsons, 2008)

3. "It is unworkable because Britain has no way of imposing our belief systems on Islam." (Rees-Mogg, 2007, para. 8)

4. "Pious multiculturalism and incompetent immigration controls have fractured the social consensus." (Purves, 2007, May 1, para. 4)

5. "Lady Prashar valiantly insists that a commitment to promoting "diversity" is compatible with selection "based solely on merit"; but diversity, that hobgoblin of political correctness and disabling multiculturalism, will be achieved only if the best are not always chosen." ("Judicial appointments," 2006, para. 2)

6. "Most working models of modern multiculturalism are flawed — the important thing is to find an acceptable balance." ("Multiculturalism," 2012, para. 2)

7. "It is further enmired in that discredited old concept, multiculturalism, which in effect amounted to a soft version of apartheid." (Liddle, 2012, para.7)

8. "It offered snapshots of Britain today that are depressing but unavoidable, and which need

to be faced rather than ignored: terror tip-offs and dawn raids; strained multiculturalism and community tensions; a mistrust of officialdom, its motives and its methods." ("Cool heads," 2006, para. 1)

9. "Would government have been less inclined to post-imperial guilt and anxious multiculturalism." (Purves, 2007, January 16, para.)

10. "Multiculturalism and positive discrimination have been divisive. They have promoted a culture of anxiety and resentment about race." (Marin, 2010, para. 15)

11. "Plenty of mainstream party members and MPs agree about exaggerated multiculturalism and dislike the EU." (Purves, 2012, para. 5)

8. Textual Analysis

All the adjectives used with the term multiculturalism in both newspapers are derogatory. They can be broadly classified into three categories of description:

1. Adjectives describing multiculturalism as being unreasonable

2. Adjectives describing multiculturalism as being harmful

3. Adjectives describing multiculturalism as being unsuccessful.

Table 1 shows that in *The Telegraph* the majority (about two thirds) of the adjectives describe multiculturalism as being unreasonable. However, in *The Times* the majority of adjectives (more than half) depict multiculturalism as being unsuccessful. The proportion of adjectives describing multiculturalism as being harmful is more or less the same for the two dailies. This implies that multiculturalism is presented to the public as being mainly unreasonable and unsuccessful.

Table 1. Adjectives used in *The Telegraph* and *The Times*

Category of adjectives	*The Telegraph*	Percentage	*The Times*	Percentage
Adjectives depicting multiculturalism as being unreasonable	misplaced rubbish unacceptable enforced sloppy naïve utopian unreasonable ludicrous misguided hard foolish unsuitable	62%	exaggerated unworkable	18%
Adjectives depicting multiculturalism as being harmful	aggressive pernicious dangerous divisive wasteful	24%	divisive disabling	27%
Adjectives depicting multiculturalism as being unsuccessful.	discredited well-intentioned failed	14%	anxious; strained discredited Pious well-intentioned failed flawed	55%
		100%		100%

8.1 Adjectives Describing Multiculturalism as Being Unreasonable

About 60 per cent of the adjectives used with multiculturalism in *The Telegraph* articles and 20 per cent in *The Times* describe it as being unreasonable. The adjectives can be ideologically explained as an expression of blaming sometimes implicitly and some other times explicitly, the British Left for opting for multiculturalism. The Left is blamed for imposing multiculturalism on British society. The adjective "enforced" expresses the idea that multiculturalism was imposed on a democratic society and was not reached by means of a societal consensus. The adjective "utopian," a term traditionally associated with The Left expresses the idea that a multicultural society in Britain is something ideally impossible. On the other hand, the adjective "foolish" expresses a lack of good sense and judgement from the part of the multiculturalists and that multiculturalism is ridiculous and absurd and therefore unworthy of consideration. The adjective "misplaced" implies that the political choice of The Left to install multiculturalism was a wrong one because of incompatibility with Britishness. The adjective "naïve" implies that multiculturalism as a policy or project is an idealistic vision but not realistic and well thought. The adjective "misguided" is used to imply that multiculturalism is led by wrong ideals and values. The adjective "sloppy" implies that the project of multiculturalism was advocated with little care and thought. The adjective "ludicrous" is used to mean that the idea of multiculturalism is so absurd to the extent of laughter. The adjective "hard" means that multiculturalism is something hard to achieve and accomplish. The adjective "unworkable" implies that multiculturalism is not practicable or feasible. The adjective "exaggerated" implies that multiculturalism was unduly magnified and enlarged beyond reasonableness.

8.2 Adjectives Describing Multiculturalism as Being Harmful

In many of the articles on multiculturalism published by the two broadsheets, there is much emphasis on the harmful nature of multiculturalism. A number of adjectives has been used for this purpose. The adjective "divisive" has been used to say that multiculturalism destroyed the fabric of society by dividing society into small and isolated communities not interacting with one another, each having its own values and culture. The adjective "aggressive" also implies that multiculturalism is destructive in that it has aggressed the values of Britishness and depreciated national identity. The adjective "pernicious" is used to imply that multiculturalism has caused huge irreparable damage to society. The adjective "dangerous" implies that multiculturalism poses a threat to social fabric, security and British culture and values. The adjective "disabling" implies that multiculturalism has caused insidious harm to society. The adjective "wasteful" implies that multiculturalism is socially and culturally destructive.

8.3 Adjectives Describing Multiculturalism as Being Unsuccessful

The other dimension in the description of multiculturalism is failure. The adjectives used have ideological implications. The adjective "failed" implies that multiculturalism as a policy and a vision of the left in Britain did not achieve a united and harmonious society and did not integrate ethnic group within mainstream society. The adjectives "well-intentioned" and "pious" imply that state policies of multiculturalism had good intentions, but were

unsuccessful and caused many problems. The adjective "discredited" implies that the failure of multiculturalism has become a fact as even its supporters no longer consider it a good choice. The adjectives "strained" and "anxious" imply that multiculturalism is in difficult times and therefore is not working easily with success. The adjective "flawed" implies that deficiency and failure are an inherent part of multiculturalism and therefore it cannot be successful.

The adjectives used with multiculturalism in a derogatory way clearly show an ideological campaign against multiculturalism. They also show what Fowler (1991, p. 87) calls the desirability of the authors to get rid of multiculturalism in favor of mono-culturalism as embodied in Britishness. There is an effort among the writers of the articles to draw among the readership a negative image in order to gain public support for dismantling multiculturalism or taking the necessary measures against it. The description of multiculturalism as being unreasonable, dangerous and unsuccessful serves the anti-multiculturalists in gaining support in their ideological conflict with the multiculturalists. It also shows that there is a flagrant bias to New Right thought, which has always opposed multiculturalism.

The adjectives are better understood in the context of the anti-multicultural campaign led by Right wing writers against multiculturalism that started to become fierce after the London tube attacks. The alleged unreasonableness, harm and failure of multiculturalism have been raised and discussed though not logically and coherently in relation to four main themes: extremism and terrorism, the loss of identity, the loss of unity and the change in demographic composition. Therefore, the adjectives provide a clear idea about how multiculturalism is looked at in relation to the above mentioned themes.

9. Conclusion

This study carried out a discourse analysis of adjectives employed to describe multiculturalism in opinion articles in two British broadsheets, *The Telegraph* and *The Times*, that have been published since the July2005 London attacks. It found out that the adjectives describe multiculturalism derogatively. Their use indicates the bitter ideological criticism and disapproval of the editorials of past choices. Their use also indicates that there is a desire to draw among the public a negative image of multiculturalism that can be utilized for future political action. They also reveal a hidden ideological conflict over such issues as identity and culture in British society.

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