
Rationalization in Media Discourse

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ABSTRACT: We will analyze how women subject to violence in Morocco legitimize their discourse through the use of one legitimation techniques called rationalization, the aim of which is to establish a mode of argumentation that victimizes them and demonizes the violent husbands. The site from which the data is extracted is Medi 1TV's show "Qesset Nnass" (the story of people). This will be done within the framework of critical discourse analysis in which we will decompose the women's narratives by referring to Fairclough's three elements: the text, discursive practice, and context and to Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model.

KEYWORDS: legitimation, discourse of women, rationalization, media, domestic violence, Morocco

I. INTRODUCTION

This article deals with the discourse of women subject to violence (WSV) in Morocco. We will analyze these women's narratives in a Moroccan TV talk show "Qesset Nnass" (the story of people) within critical discourse analysis. We will deconstruct the narratives in terms of the text they comprise, the discursive practice they implement and the context they are embedded in. Our main focus will be on the legitimation tactic called rationalization used by the women to persuade the Moroccan audience with the legitimacy of their cause and the violent character of the wrongdoers. To reach the desired results, we focused on the above show from a Moroccan TV station (Medi 1 TV), which deals with different social and personal issues on a thematic basis. Specifically, we covered the shows that dealt with marital violence from the period that started from September 4, 2013 to October 2, 2015.

II. DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Discourse Analysis (DA), which is a generic name for a set of methodological approaches utilized to scrutinize language in use, either written or oral, in various social sciences, namely psychology, sociology, linguistics, anthropology and communication studies, is interdisciplinary (Wiggins, 2009; Brown & Yule, 1983); however, DA originates in ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967; Wiggins, 2009). For Wiggins (2009), DA has "developed from work within speech act theory, ethnomethodology and semiology as well as post-structuralism theorists such as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, and the later works of philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein" (p. 427). Gee (1991, cited in Shartiely, 2013, p. 36), conceptualizes DA as "an instrument of social construction of experience", where the language functions are pivotal together with the pattern and structure of the discourse (Brown and Yule, 1983; Jalali & Sadeghi 2014; Sharififar & Rahimi, 2015; Van Dijk, 2003).

The text as a unit is one of the innovations brought by DA. Brown and Yule (1983, p. 6) define it as "the verbal record of a communicative act, both written and spoken". Additionally, De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981, p. 3) see the text as "a communicative occurrence which meets seven standards of textuality." These standards are: (1) cohesion: the way linguistic elements connect to each other; (2) coherence: the way elements are mutually relevant and accessible; (3) intentionality: the aim to achieve behind the communication (be it transactional or interactional); (4) acceptability: the extent to which the recipient will understand the message and to whatever level; (5) informativity: the degree of anticipation and satisfaction on the part of the recipient in terms of the content of the message (is the information new and is the event interesting or frustrating?); (6) situationality: what gives the text its contextual relevance; (7) intertextuality: the way and the extent to which a text is a continuity of other previously produced texts.

Louw (1992, p. 18) lists major categories of features that discourse analysis studies which are extra-linguistic features: time, place, typography, format, medium of presentation, the background, history of a text; and the para-linguistic features: punctuations, intonation, pause, speech acts, genre; and finally discourse types (narrative, exposition, etc...). We can say that discourse analysis goes beyond microlinguistic levels: phonology, morphology, and syntax toward a wider view of language (Brown and Yule, 1983, pp. 20-22).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), on the other hand, is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political

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context. To Fairclough (1993, p. 135), CDA 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.

In CDA, Van Dijk's (1985, 1988, 1989) socio-cognitive model provides a theorization of the sociocognitive aspects of discourse, where he analyzes discourse production and comprehension within wider social practices and where people map their resources to text production and consumption. In terms of the cognitive model, Van Dijk (2009) proposes an analysis to account for the mental representations and processes of language users and the knowledge, ideologies and beliefs within the participants' community. For Van Dijk, discourse-cognition-society is a triangle where cognitive models play the role of a mediator between the other two. The basis of Van Dijk's position finds its roots in Van Dijk and Kinch (1983), which assumes that it is hard for people to remember all propositions of a longer discourse and therefore they alternatively choose selected propositions to store, recall, and use them as "recognition cues" (van Dijk, 1977).

Van Dijk (2009) locates context models between the mental information level and the meanings processed in discourse; hence, they are in charge of how language users adapt their language to fit in the social context. He highlights the fact that contexts are subjective participants' interpretations, not objective constraints of society, which is itself a direct response to opponents who criticize CDA's lack of objectivity. Van Dijk, in fact, thinks that subjectivity is an inherent characteristic of the speaker or the audience who at times overlook particular information when constructing their context model making context models subjective and imperfect. The basic premise that texts do not inherently have meanings in them but that they are rather assigned meanings was the reason behind Van Dijk's use of the term mental models to describe the interface between context and cognition. Van Dijk's mental models are shaped both socially and cognitively

To conclude, Van Dijk posits that cognitive models are definitely impacted by society as they are influenced by social practices. It is true that Many CDA researchers have mentioned the dialectal relationship between discourse and society (e.g., Fairclough, 1989, 1992; Luke, 2002; Van Leeuwen, 2007; Wodak and Busch, 2004), but van Dijk's (2009a) cognitive explanation of how discourse production is impacted by both the personal and social variable and how the latter are influenced by the different discourses prevalent in society remains the most explicit and the most thorough.

Context models explain the modalities of knowledge and ideologies making through the lens of discourse. Van Dijk exposed some aspects of discourse that can explain what we mentioned before about how people mentally represent the different situations of interaction and how discourse itself is influenced and constrained by the context models, among which we find semantic macrostructures or "local meanings" (van Dijk, 2009a). Semantic macrostructures are key to complex information processing as the language user is enabled to understand discourse through macrostructures that allow him to organize complex information and package it into a manageable schema because although he does not manage to process every proposition in isolation, at the end he succeeds to figure out the main information needed to comprehend any piece of discourse. (Van Dijk, 2009b).

III. OUR MODEL

The analysis of the media texts we adopt will be heavily based on Fairclough's three dimensional concept of text-interaction-context, together with Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach, which takes into account the cognitive dimensions of language. Part of our sociocognitive endeavor, we will use narrative as a reference point. We have incorporated the notion "narrative" in our analysis, which was mentioned by Van Dijk and Fairclough but without formalizing its role in discourse, because its adoption affords an opportunity for the construction of the world of human experience. The term "narrative" is abundant in research literatures, and as a result has various definitions (Juswik, 2012). We will use Van Dijk's (Van Dijk and Kintsch, 1983) conception that consists of dealing with narratives as macrostructures that act as cognitive models which mediate society and discourse.

We will rely on narratives as they construct and legitimate ideas about WSV in particular. The mixture between Fairclough's approach to text-interaction-context and sociocognitive focus has been very beneficial in analyzing the corpus of the WSV media texts as we start with a narrow textual analysis across the data to identify the key participants in the texts and their respective actions. This analysis of key participants and their actions leads to narratives emergence. Accordingly, the analysis takes a step further in describing how narrative builds social practices related to WSV. The subsequent stage of analysis then studies the way in which the media texts under investigation establish legitimation for social practices.

Text analysis tackles the issue of the linguistic tools utilized by the speaker. Generally, these linguistic features can enclose both explicit and implicit signals; can be consciously and unconsciously controlled by the speaker; the linguistic choices made by speakers are context-bound and shows how the language user adapts her discourse the social context in a tolerable manner. At the textual level, we will focus on the semantic macrostructures prevalent in the discourse of WSV to spot the main propositions

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articulated by these women. The purpose will mainly to identify the common propositions that unite their discourse in order to find the main unifying structure of the discourse of this category.

Concerning the discursive practices in the texts, Fairclough (1992) clarifies that they exhibit cognitive practices that are deeply anchored in internalized social practices and schematic conventions; that is why we need to discover how discourses come in concert to create social meanings so as account for these social and cognitive processes. To be more precise, our study of genre will submit the features of narrative across the texts dealing with WSV, and this way of dealing with narrative as discourse will help us scrutinize how the world is actually represented through the lens of narratives. We will also scrutinize how narrative construct social identities and by which strategies and mechanisms.

At this level, we will show how women legitimize their discourse by having recourse to one of Van Leuween' s (1978) four legitimation categories, which is our version of Fairclough's production practice, namely, rationalization. We will integrate the third level which is the sociocultural analytical tier with the level of discursive practice in order to unveil the way in which ideological positions are established and reflected in the media texts with respect to WSV. Our rationale is the identification of how the texts strengthen and consolidate ideologies and social practices related to WSV, which helps in the understanding of the ideological and material effects of the discourses; particularly attention is devoted to how the representative texts normalize social practices. The above two tiers will give us a chance to see how the different actors produce, legitimize and delegitimize within the sociocultural context where they live. Characterizing the context level will be done through explaining the different propositions made by producers by linking them to the Moroccan context and to some pieces of the body of literature accumulated on the issues in hand.

IV. ANALYSIS

A. Text

Unlike microstructures which are "those structures that are processed, or described, at the local or short-range level (viz., words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and connections between sentences), and that are the actually and directly 'expressed' structures of the discourse" (Van Dijk, 1980, p 29), macrostructures are created by deletion, generalization and construction , and are global textual structures that form the overall meaning of the text: macropropositions or, simply stated, the text in its bare form. Macrostructures were introduced by Van Dijk (1972, 1977, 1980) and further developed into psychological notions of discourse comprehension by Kintsch and Van Dijk (1978) and Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983).

In what follows we will analyze the macrostructures in the texts that feature in Qeset Nnass (the story of people). As pointed in Mullins (2012), Van Dijk (2009) has given the useful advice to proceed by starting CDA with an analysis of the semantic macrostructures in a text because they provide an overall picture of the global meanings, and the themes of a text. For this reason, a thorough exposition of the semantic macrostructures in the media texts to find the key themes with respect to the conditions of WSV is a necessary research step; in other words, the global themes will tell us about the common features that unites the different discourses of WSV that stand in an intertextual relationship between each other and render them one discourse due to the continuities that characterize the narratives.

Below we provide our minimization of the texts (narrated stories by WSV) to macrostructures by breaking down the oral statement to the bare minimum and by providing the key themes that are recurrent in the episodes dealing with WSV, and which constitute a master structure where we can fit all stories about violence against women in the analyzed shows:

- After a period of marriage, the husband starts beating the wife and disappears.
- In some cases, the husband runs away with his children.
- The woman is often fired from the house to find herself without basic necessities.
- Some women are unable to see their children.
- These women complain to the authorities, but no solutions are provided.
- Their families urge them to be patient and return back to the violent husband.
- Most of the time, women are beaten by the husband and his family or the husband beats the wife but the family just watches the violent scenes.
- Although some husbands are arrested by the police, they do not abstain from committing violence afterwards.
- Many women try to find the husband who escapes with children, but in vain.
- Many women want to return back to their husbands in spite of the violence either because they want to be with their children or because they love their violent husbands!
- Some husbands take their wives' salary or their money and start to be violent.
- Husbands exercise violence on even pregnant women and handicapped children.
- Many violent husbands are addicted to drugs and alcohol and they batter the wives and the children for no apparent reason.

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- The wives suffer from severe conditions of depression as a result of bad treatment, a situation that pushes many of them to attempt to commit suicide.
- The impact on the children ranges from suicide and homelessness to rape.
- Many other women get married without legal papers at an early age and find themselves with children begging in the streets after being beaten.
- Families refuse to take care of their daughters' children.

B. Discursive Practice (Legitimation by WSV) and social context

We will exploit the semantic macrostructures of the main texts under study in line with Van Leeuwen's (2007), who posits that discourses legitimate, and deligitimate social practices. We will tackle the issue of how the show establishes legitimation by considering how the WSV argue in order to persuade by having recourse to rationalization, which is one of the four strategies used as discursive tactics. Van Leeuwen's (2007) four legitimation categories are distinguished as follows:

- 1) 'authorization' i.e., legitimation by reference to the authority of tradition, custom and law, and of persons in whom institutional authority is vested.
- 2) 'moral evaluation' i.e., legitimation by reference to discourses of value.
- 3) rationalization i.e., legitimation by reference to the goals and uses of institutionalized social action, and to the social knowledge that endows them with cognitive validity.
- 4) mythopoesis, i.e., legitimation by reference to the goals and uses of institutionalized social action and to the knowledge society has constructed to endow them with cognitive validity.

Rationalization, the third category which refers "to the goals and uses of institutionalized social action, and to the knowledge society has constructed to endow them with cognitive validity" (Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 91), justifies the decisions "by reference to their goals, uses and effects" (Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 91). It is usually couched in a cause-effect relationship. According to Lavrusheva (2013, p. 48), its features include reference to the utility / function of an action, common sense as a basis, rational explanations, and requests for further explanations. Its methods of application are the following:

- Overview of past practices' consequences.
- Criticism of earlier applied actions.
- Examples of already implemented beneficial practices.
- Projection of possible future benefits.
- Opposition of various parties' attitudes.
- Reference to open opinion / knowledge of influential persons.
- Research and analyses findings.

The utility/function of an action to rationalize behavior is inherent in statements like the one of Fatima (one of the WSVs) when she said that she was patient just for the sake of the baby as her husband used to leave her without money, which is clearly a form of rationalization. Likewise the issue of patience can also be seen from this angle as adopting silence in the case of battering four times and even forgiving the violent husband in the police station can be considered as a form of legitimation by reference to the utility/function of an action since the woman did so to achieve a purpose, namely to keep the baby with her. Having run out of solutions, a factor that compelled her to write a letter to the Prime Minister, Fatima provided all this to overview past practices' consequences and to criticize earlier applied actions which is a hopeless attempt on her part to convince us of the bleak outlook of her case in a rational manner. An overview of past practices' consequences and the criticism of earlier applied actions are also tactics used by these women to legitimize their discourse. The propositions built like the ones narrated by Fatima, who referred to her health state which was degrading because of what happened to her so much so that she took drugs to sleep, served this purpose.

Another element inherent in this type of rationalization, which is related to the reference to the utility/function of an action, is the expert's invitation to mobilize all associations and the ministry which has the program Tamkine (an official document) meant to fight violence committed against women in Morocco. Establishing a cause effect relation between past actions and the present situation reinforces rationalization in discourse. To illustrate, Habiba (another WSV) described the outcome of her husband's family rejection as catastrophic since she started to beg near a mosque days after her child birth. She finished her argument in an irrational manner as she confessed that she loved her husband despite being beaten on a regular basis, but her next statement made the picture clearer as she resisted pain for the sake of staying with her children, which is in itself a sort of reference to the utility/function of an action. Likewise, Ouafae's (yet another WSV) son and daughter's death were ascribed by her to the same source: the husband who took the first to see horses in a hot summer and the second to a psychiatric hospital. This overview of past practices' consequences and the criticism of earlier applied actions were meant to condemn her husband by rationalizing the whole picture in a cause effect manner.

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The same techniques were used by the other WSVs like Mina's daughter, who after few months, started to be beaten and became depressed. This is a varied mix of past practices' consequences overview, criticism of earlier applied actions, and a cause effect relationship establishment. All in all, the stories are characterized by a common denominator whereby all the women without exception tried to attribute their suffering and their awful state to past mistreatment which is logically articulated in a cause effect logic, the purpose of which is to rationalize their arguments and to represent themselves as victims of a gendered other who is a tyrant, wrongdoer and a "monster" to use Oufae's term.

As we mentioned before, all the women who participated in the show attempted to convince the audience by an appeal to emotions. From our observation, we can easily deduce that this form of appeal is meant to evoke a sense of fear in the audience. To put these propositions in their context we have to understand that domestic violence is linked with the nature and structure of the family in the Moroccan society which is patriarchal. Domestic violence is not only a family effect as we find that the state also plays a role as studies have shown that state-building in the Maghreb has been based on family regulation (Charrad, 2007).

In a Gender Studies Report that dates back to March the 13th, 2017, Naciri attempted to enumerate factors behind gender-based violence in Morocco. She taxonomized these factors into societal and socio-economic ones. For her, at the social level, women are mistreated because violent husbands take drugs and drink alcohol. At the socioeconomic level, the dependence of women on their husbands financially leads also to violence, but she did not explain why. For the author, the direct outcome of this domestic violence is physical as it may lead to injuries like fractures, bruises, disabilities, and burns. The statistics she advanced are revealing as she found that "62.8% of women in Morocco of ages 18-64 had been victims of some form of violence during the year preceding the study and 48% have been subjected to psychological abuse", and that "this same study found that 55% of these acts of violence were committed by the victim's husband, and the violence was reported by the wife in only 3% of such cases"(p. 14).

As far as the psychological effect of violence is concerned, Naciri (2017) observed that it definitely contributes to the dehumanization and loss of the sense of worth of women, which in turn leads to fear and insecurity. It also takes from women their right of being effective members in their family and their community. The effect is even greater on children who undoubtedly suffer from behavioural problems. Naciri (2017) suggested few solutions to solve this problem. The first solution is legislative and it consists of narrowing the judicial gap and devise a redressive law that is able to incriminate the wrong doers. Second, religiously, she suggests that social and cultural modes that do not respect women under the label 'Islam' should be changed. Third, raising awareness is of paramount importance as this measure will use information, sensitization, and education to fight back, in addition to providing better job chances and structure nonviolent culture together with boosting women social networking and media.

It is clear that patriarchy contributes to the suffering of these women as it is a principal ideological, social, and cultural power that places gendered expectations on both sexes, a notion backed up strongly by conservatism or traditional trends that endorse basic differences between the two sexes socially and culturally in Morocco. The development and supremacy of ideological structures such as patriarchy has been accounted for under different approaches, one of which is the socialization process. This latter, based on psychology, tries to understand social norms and practices. For feminists, the process of the individual's socialization is of paramount importance in the process of initiating social change in favor of understanding women; for example, radical feminists are for a more 'radical' change in the socialization process via scrutinizing the operation of patriarchy at different stages of socialization through cultural institutions like school or religion (Fetsha, 1997). However, we think that the Moroccan society has to start with implementing the law, already existent, to punish the violent husbands, empowering women economically, and promoting gender equity.

CONCLUSIONS

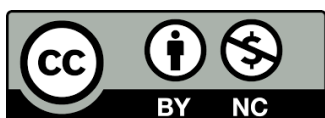
All in all, the above argumentative strategies made it possible for specific persons or social groups to justify and legitimize the exclusion, discrimination, suppression and exploitation of others in line with Wodak and Meyer (2001, p. 73). In our case, the women wanted to realize extremely persuasive utterances to delegitimize actions that have become naturalized into social practices of exclusion and discrimination through a description of what the 'other' did (c.f. Reyes (2011) for a similar argument about legitimacy). What the women exposed was meant to create a sense of fear in receptors since, for them, 'he' (the husband) or 'they' (the accomplices) are different from 'us'. This state of affairs prepared us for the next step in argumentation to accept the women's discourse which can be conceptualized in the results of the hypothetical circumstances. In other words, the women told us implicitly, "this is what will happen if there is no solution", which was another strategy adopted by the victims, and which implicitly or explicitly suggested circumstances that might transpire if the speaker's warnings or suggestions were not listened to.

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