LANGUAGE AND RACISM PART 2

Kambhampati Rajesh, Doctoral Scholar

Department of English Literature

English and Foreign Languages University

Hyderabad, India.

Email:cclrajesh@gmail.com,

Mobile no: 98857 66461.

Introduction:

Discourse analysis stresses that context of discourse is necessary to understand the role of discourse in society because discourse of the dominant groups exercised their influence in particular context. Discourse is a communicative event and we should consider time, circumstances, place and other participants engaged, their ethnic group, beliefs and also their goals. Such properties of social circumstances of communicative event will influence discourse that is text and talk and all its properties, particularly variable properties like style which shows how it is said.

Prejudices may be formed in various ways depending on the context properties. Therefore, in society various types of racist discourse reflects the various existing social representations and also how they adapt to various contexts such as who said with goals, when, where. Study of role of context partly explains why all text and talk on minorities are not same despite consensus among the dominant ethnic group

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We will now consider few examples to see the way various genres involved in racism and reproduction of racism. Genre is defined by particular discourse and context structures. Example for discourse genre is parliamentary debate, defined by particular style, forms of verbal interaction taking place under particular limitations of time, speaker under control, in the area of politics, parliament as institution, members of party, representations of their local constituencies, engage with an intention to either oppose or support the bills with

different style of speech, arguments supporting a particular political view point. This above is an example in short where both textual and contextual structures are discussed.

In the same manner, even our everyday interaction is also a basic fundamental genre of human discourse. This may not have similar constraints as parliamentary debate but all do not have access to parliamentary debate except Member of Parliament. Most of the things we learn about the world are from daily conversations with friends, colleagues and family members. In the same way we also learn for ideologies and prejudices. Researchers who have studied conversations about immigrants (Dijk, 1987) point out few important characteristics. Even in casual conversation about neighborhood, many speak instantaneously negative about foreign origin or immigrants (Wetherell and Potter, 1992).

Everyday conversations about immigrants or minorities are mostly limited to few negative topic types such as of difference, threat and nonconformity. As a result conversations about ethnic outgroups are in terms of their appearance and actions such as different language, religion, habits or values. Although such conversations may not be necessarily considered negative and may be neutral. Certainly conversations about such differences may be considered as enriching, interesting, motivational in a positive way.

However, mostly difference can be presented in negative way when compared to the native. And conversations about immigrants and minorities may be more negative when it comes to values and breaking of rules. Lastly, conversation about minorities, immigrants may be even more negative for example when elite discourse about crime, housing, unemployment when viewed at threat to dominant culture. Study of everyday conversation about immigrants or minorities show that full complete conversations or most part is characterized by the topics and analysis of semantics shows other important features. Disclaimers are one of the popular among them. Semantic presents positive about self and negative presentations about minorities in one sentence.

Further analysis of everyday conversations about minorities or immigrants found narrative structures of stories presented in negative lack resolution. In other words, structural device increases particularly negative features of the complicated story about minorities or immigrants. With negative resolutions of complaint stories are more efficient than stories about them with positive resolution. Similarly premises play a crucial role in stories to present facts of experience in arguments that result in negative conclusions about minorities or immigrants. We can also see at the surface level of conversations for example in fluency, turn taking and may also notice speakers indicating discomfort or insecurity by the pauses, hesitations when they need to identify or name minorities. Therefore, derogation is a discriminatory practice and its manifestations reveal prejudice which in turn adds to developing of prejudices with receivers.

Everyday talks are essentially center of everyday racism. Generally ordinary people cannot exercise control over elite discourse, they do have their say against them but to talk negatively. In this way, ethnic prejudices and stereotypes spread fast like rumors. However, speakers are mostly inspired by media in their everyday conversation about ethnic minorities and their source of beliefs or knowledge is often referred to as newspaper or television particularly for the topics that are not seen directly in everyday talk. The noticeable example is immigration; most people refer to mass media which depends on politicians, agencies of state, the police department or officeholders.

In countries, regions or cities with less minorities also knowledge or opinions come from television, newspaper, studies, textbook, literature or various types of elite discourse. Therefore, mass media such as newspaper, television and movies have been comprehensively investigated because of their representations of minorities (Dates and Barlow, 1990; van Dijk, 1991). Such studies give insight into role of media in reproduction of racism and show how media represents ethnic minorities and how it influences the minds of people who are the recipients. To be more specific, news is a media genre that is source of opinions about

ethnic minorities. For example, in press media, new reports have conservative structure containing headline plus lead as summary, main events, history, and context as background, evaluation and comments.

When it comes to headlines, several research studies show that headlines are different for minorities when compared with that of dominant groups. In a particular study, it was found that not even a single positive headline about minorities or about minorities issues are involved was present among 1500 headlines about them. And such things are very normal when headlines are negative about them. Headlines are the summary of main content and important information of news report.

In addition, analysis of discourse and its meanings substantiate that everyday talk is influenced by the representation of media. For instance topics are categorized as being about threat, difference or irregularity. Some of the standard topics that feature in new about minorities in different countries are immigration, unemployment, discrimination, culture difference, social economic issues, crime, violence and drugs. From many such topics, a few are stereotypical and are mostly presented in a negative way. For instance, immigration is considered as fundamental issue and not as challenge, commonly referred to as burden on the economy. This is also true about topics particularly cultural differences, discrimination and racism. Cultural differences are over stressed and positive thing such as similarities between different cultures are ignored.

When it comes to discrimination and racism, even though 'negative' features of society are presented in balanced view, widespread discrimination and racism in society is rarely reported. Very few individual cases like on the job or popular resentment like extremist parties are very rarely get reported and never about elite racism. Local structure are directed by the strategy that causes to concentrate on presenting self as positive and other are negative. We may notice 'discrimination' being mentioned but never notice about who discriminates against whom because it is considered as natural process in society and not as practices of elite group.

In addition to the above forms, it is specially the meaning expressed by the beliefs representing the mental models or shared representations of ethnic events, groups or relations. In general, we find positive information about minorities which means that information is explicit, specific and precise instead of implicit, general and

vague. Therefore, everyday racism, intolerance will hardly be reported in detail particularly about their violence and crimes.

Besides mass media, textbooks play key role influencing the society, communication the beliefs or opinions that are not expressed in media or everyday talk. Children, teen and young adults daily get to spend many hours reading textbooks, lessons which must be read according to our culture. Negative aspect is that lessons about minorities, immigrants and refugees are prejudiced and stereotypical. While the positive thing about education, which is the domain in society that allows other alternative discourses to develop. Several studies on, the way minorities and people in third world countries are portrayed time and again show that such presentations are stereotypical and biased and also racist in textbooks (Blondin, 1990, Dijk, 1993).

These and also other properties of textbooks seldom provide adequate training and knowledge of ethnic opinions to children growing in diverse and multicultural societies. Lessons and textbooks about them in education contribute to reproduction of racism. In this way racism is developed and not a natural process.

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