

مجلة الذكوات البيض المصححة
العدد ١٨ المجلد الأول

الذكوات البيض

اسم مشتق من الذكوة وهي الجمرة الملتهبة والمراد بالذكوات
الربوات البيض الصغيرة المحيطة بمقام أمير المؤمنين علي بن أبي
طالب {عليه السلام}

شبهها لضياؤها وتوهجها عند شروق الشمس عليها لما فيها
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{در النجف} فكأنها جمرات ملتهبة وهي المرتفع من الأرض، وهي ثلاثة
مرتفعات صغيرة نتوءات بارزة في أرض الغري وقد سميت الغري باسمها،
وكلمة بيض لبروزها عن الأرض. وفي رواية إنها موضع خلوته أو إنها
موضع عبادته وفي رواية أخرى في رواية المفضل عن الإمام الصادق
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الذكوات البيض

تُعنى بالبحوث والدراسات الإنسانية والفكرية والاجتماعية
تصدر عن دائرة البحوث والدراسات
ديوان الوقف الشيعي

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دليل المؤلف

- ١- أن يتسم البحث بالأصالة والجدة والقيمة العلمية والمعرفية الكبيرة وسلامة اللغة ودقة التوثيق.
- ٢- أن تحتوي الصفحة الأولى من البحث على:
 - أ. عنوان البحث باللغة العربية .
 - ب . اسم الباحث باللغة العربي، ودرجته العلمية وشهادته.
 - ت . بريد الباحث الإلكتروني.
 - ث . ملخصان: أحدهما باللغة العربية والآخر باللغة الإنكليزية.
 - ج . تدرج مفاتيح الكلمات باللغة العربية بعد الملخص العربي.
- ٣- أن يكون مطبوعاً على الحاسوب بنظام (office Word ٢٠٠٧ أو ٢٠١٠) وعلى قرص ليزري مدمج (CD) على شكل ملف واحد فقط (أي لا يُجزأ البحث بأكثر من ملف على القرص) وتُرَوَّد حياة التحرير بثلاث نسخ ورقية وتوضع الرسوم أو الأشكال، إن وُجدت، في مكانها من البحث، على أن تكون صالحة من الناحية الفنية للطباعة.
- ٤- أن لا يزيد عدد صفحات البحث على (٢٥) خمس وعشرين صفحة من الحجم (A4) .
- ٥ . يلتزم الباحث في ترتيب وتنسيق المصادر على الصيغة APA
- ٦- أن يلتزم الباحث بدفع أجور النشر المحددة البالغة (٧٥,٠٠٠) خمسة وسبعين ألف دينار عراقي، أو ما يعادلها بالعملة الأجنبية.
- ٧- أن يكون البحث خالياً من الأخطاء اللغوية والنحوية والإملائية.
- ٨- أن يلتزم الباحث بالخطوط وأحجامها على النحو الآتي:
 - أ. اللغة العربية: نوع الخط (Arabic Simplified) وحجم الخط (١٤) للمتن.
 - ب . اللغة الإنكليزية: نوع الخط (Times New Roman) عناوين البحث (١٦) . والملخصات (١٢) أما فقرات البحث الأخرى؛ فبحجم (١٤) .
- ٩- أن تكون هوامش البحث بالنظام الإلكتروني (تعليقات ختامية) في نهاية البحث. بحجم ١٢ .
- ١٠- تكون مسافة الحواشي الجانبية (٢,٥٤) سم، والمسافة بين الأسطر (١) .
- ١١- في حال استعمال برنامج مصحف المدينة للآيات القرآنية يتحمل الباحث ظهور هذه الآيات المباركة بالشكل الصحيح من عدمه، لذا يفضل النسخ من المصحف الإلكتروني المتوافر على شبكة الانترنت.
- ١٢- يبلغ الباحث بقرار صلاحية النشر أو عدمها في مدة لا تتجاوز شهرين من تاريخ وصوله إلى هيئة التحرير.
- ١٣- يلتزم الباحث بإجراء تعديلات المحكمين على بحثه وفق التقارير المرسلة إليه وموافاة المجلة بنسخة معدلة في مدة لا تتجاوز (١٥) خمسة عشر يوماً.
- ١٤- لا يحق للباحث المطالبة بمتطلبات البحث كافة بعد مرور سنة من تاريخ النشر.
- ١٥- لاتعاد البحوث الى أصحابها سواء قبلت أم لم تقبل.
- ١٦- تكون مصادر البحث وهوامشه في نهاية البحث، مع كتابة معلومات المصدر عندما يرد لأول مرة.
- ١٧- يخضع البحث للتقويم السري من ثلاثة خبراء لبيان صلاحيته للنشر.
- ١٨- يشترط على طلبة الدراسات العليا فضلاً عن الشروط السابقة جلب ما يثبت موافقة الأستاذ المشرف على البحث وفق النموذج المعتمد في المجلة.
- ١٩- يحصل الباحث على مستل واحد لبحثه، ونسخة من المجلة، وإذا رغب في الحصول على نسخة أخرى فعليه شراؤها بسعر (١٥) ألف دينار.
- ٢٠- تعبر الأبحاث المنشورة في المجلة عن آراء أصحابها لا عن رأي المجلة.
- ٢١- ترسل البحوث إلى مقر المجلة - دائرة البحوث والدراسات في ديوان الوقف الشيعي بغداد - باب المعظم)
أو البريد الإلكتروني: (hus65in@Gmail.com) (off reserch@sed.gov.iq) بعد دفع الأجر في مقر المجلة
- ٢٢- لا تلتزم المجلة بنشر البحوث التي تُخلُّ بشرط هذه الشروط .

مَجَلَّةُ عِلْمِيَّةِ فِكْرِيَّةِ فَصْلِيَّةِ مُحْكَمَةٍ تَصَدَّرُ عَنْ
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An Analysis of Binding Theory in Selected Political Transcripts

Hala Saad Mahmood

فصلية مُحَكِّمة تُعنى بالبحوث والدراسات العلمية والإنسانية والفكرية



Abstract

This study applies Binding Theory to political discourse, elucidating the role of syntactic structures in achieving persuasive objectives. The investigation focuses on the intentional deployment of pronouns, anaphors, and referring expressions across seven political transcripts featuring prominent leaders such as Thatcher, Reagan, Mandela, Obama, Trump, Putin, and Zelensky. The findings illustrate that binding principles are not merely adhered to for the sake of grammatical accuracy; instead, they are strategically manipulated to cultivate collective identities, establish ideological contrasts, and navigate rhetorical distance. This analysis reveals that political figures adeptly leverage coreference rules to build coalitions and polarize, as well as to frame ideological narratives. So, they effectively grammaticalize the political landscape, demonstrating the intricate interplay between language and political reality.

Keywords: Binding Theory, Discourse and Political.

المستخلص:

تتناول هذه الدراسة نظرية الربط على الخطاب السياسي، موضحة دور التراكيب النحوية في تحقيق الأهداف الإقناعية. ويركز البحث على الاستخدام المتعمد للضمائر والعوائد والتعابير الإشارية في سبع نصوص خطابية سياسية لقياديين بارزين مثل تاتشر وريجان وماندبلا وأوباما وترامب وبوتين وزيلينسكي. إذ أوضحت نتائج الدراسة إلى أن مبادئ الربط لا تلتزم فقط من أجل الدقة النحوية، بل يتم توظيفها استراتيجياً لتعزيز الهويات الجماعية وخلق تباينات أيديولوجية وإدارة المسافة البلاغية. ويُظهر هذا التحليل أن الشخصيات السياسية تستفيد ببراعة من قواعد الإحالة المشاركة لبناء تحالفات واستقطاب الجمهور، فضلاً عن صياغة السرديات الأيديولوجية. وبذلك، فإنهم يجعلون المشهد السياسي مُنظماً نحوياً، مما يوضح التفاعل المعقد بين اللغة والواقع السياسي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: نظرية الربط، الخطاب والسياسة.

I. Introduction:

Political rhetoric serves as a crucial tool for shaping social reality, influencing collective identity, and framing ideological conflicts. While many analyses tend to emphasize aspects such as semantic content, metaphorical language, or the style of delivery, its essential to recognize that the syntactic structure of political speech is a foundational yet often overlooked element of its persuasive power (Fairclough, 1989). This study posits that the formal structure of language is deliberately utilized to fulfill political aims. To explore this idea, it adopts the framework of Government and Binding Theory (Chomsky, 1981), which provides a comprehensive model

for understanding the relationships, particularly binding relationships between noun phrases, including pronouns, reflexives (anaphors), and names (R-expressions) within a given clause. The primary objective of this research is to illustrate how political figures strategically employ the syntactic principles of binding namely, Principles A, B, and C -- not just for grammatical accuracy but also as practical tools for political persuasion. The research aims to reveal the mechanisms through which the calculated manipulation of referring expressions creates in-groups and out-groups, objectifies opposition, and grammatically conveys ideological stances. This study tackles the existing divide between macro-level discursive analysis and the micro-level linguistic structures that underlie persuasion. It investigates how abstract political ideas are constructed through syntactic processes and examines the extent to which binding patterns may reflect particular ideologies. Additionally, it addresses methodological challenges, such as analyzing translated texts and distinguishing between strategic intent and unconscious linguistic behavior.

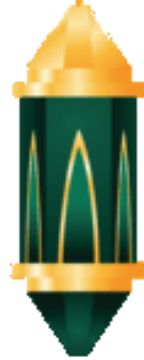
II. Literature Review

The proposed study is situated within the background of formal syntactic theory and empirical discourse analysis, as explained in this review. It aims to determine the theoretical basis of Binding Theory, review its use outside canonical contexts, and define political discourse as a strategic linguistic space.

1. The Nature of Political Discourse as a Linguistic Corpus

Political discourse is a specialized, pragmatic kind of language with distinctive features that render it a copious and challenging corpus for formal syntactic study. Its key characteristics are the ambiguity and vagueness of strategy, where the planned ambiguity of referents makes plausible deniability possible and inclusion in a coalition (Chomsky, 1981). This is fundamentally related to the very purpose of persuasion and the design of audiences, in terms of which speakers at dynamism shift deictic centers and build fluid identities, i.e., the inclusive «we the people» to suit various audiences. Moreover, political speech, by definition, is performative, full of face-threatening actions (e.g., accusations, criticism), which





are usually alleviated by the use of pronominal forms and other syntactic means to soften the impact or establish a coalition. The discourse ranges from highly prepared speeches, with potentially more polished syntactic structures, to spontaneous conversations during interviews and debates, where the pressures of real-time processes may lead to interesting deviations from standard grammatical patterns, providing a natural laboratory to study competence-performance interaction (Ibid).

2. Binding Theory in Linguistics

The Binding Theory, one of the most valuable pillars of syntactic theory, is the formal framework that accounts for the referential dependencies among noun phrases in sentence construction (Chomsky, 1981). Its primary purpose is to describe the systematic circumstances in which expressions consisting of reflexes, pronouns, and names can or cannot be co-referenced with the rest of the sentence. This theory is constructed on three fundamentals, A, B, and C, in which the distribution of anaphors, pronouns, and referring expressions (R-expressions), respectively, is governed. Such principles do not merely exist as instances of abstract grammar; they provide the very structure within which meaning is built up in language through coreference (Chomsky, 1986). To analyze political texts, this model provides a specific linguistic perspective on decoding through which speakers can negotiate referential meaning to meet rhetorical purposes, whether constructing solidarity or developing a strategic distance.

The Binding Theory, as the principle requires strictly, that anaphors, such as herself and reciprocals such as each other, must be bound in their local governing category (Chomsky, 1981). This implies that a c-commanding antecedent has to be close to an anaphor, which usually is in the same clause, compelling a referential relationship meaning interdependence or reflexive action. The semantic meaning of this type of bound relationship plays a vital role because it requires the reader or listener to recognize the antecedent unambiguously so that the sentence can be made grammatical (Reinhart, 1983). This concept is frequently employed strategically in the political discourse to support in-group identity

and collective responsibility. An example of this, such as «We must hold ourselves accountable,» is a statement that takes advantage of Principle A to bind the anaphorous «ourselves» closely to the subject of action, We and thus build up a single political figure. Such grammatical binding is reflected in the rhetorical formation of a coherent group identity, where actions and results are distributed to the localized realm of the political (we).

Unlike anaphors, Principle B in turn applies a prohibitory condition on the existence of pronouns in that they must be free inside their local binding scope (Chomsky, 1981). In simple terms, a pronoun cannot refer to the subject of its immediate clause, which necessitates it to search for an antecedent beyond that local area or be referentially ambiguous. This forms an essential referential contrast between the pronouns and anaphors occupying identical structural position, which is both fundamental to the semantic understanding and prevents ambiguity (Reinhart, 1983). In political circles, the principle forms one of the standard strategies of tactical demarcation. A politician can say, The senator confessed his opponent attacked him, in which case the correct interpretation of the subordinate clause is to provide the referent of the local subject, who is the opponent, giving the pronoun a sense of referring respectively to the senator and to his opponent. Nonetheless, it is possible that skilled speakers can exploit the regions of potential vagueness around the edges of the binding domain, where they rely on a pronoun to purposely introduce vagueness, either in terms of agency or criticism, thereby avoiding accountability syntactically.

Principle C, which is the most restrictive of the three, states that referring expressions (R-expressions) (i.e., proper names, definite descriptive noun phrases (e.g., the president, Minister Jones)) should be free throughout the syntactic structure (Chomsky, 1981). They cannot be bound to any c-commanding antecedent since their reference has to be assumed as having been established in the context of the discourse, and not have a grammatical basis. This rule preserves the distinctive, definite referential position of names and titles in the structure of the sentence (Chomsky, 1986).





In the sphere of political oratory, it is Principle C that is done with a sense of apparent, formal reference. Nevertheless, intentional infractions are rhetorically strong. Such an utterance as, he, the so-called reformer, has failed us, in which the c-commanding pronoun He is bound by the R-expression the so-called reformer, is a grave violation of Principle C. This is an immensely marked structure, and frequently a vehicle of contempt, sarcasm, or dramatic emphasis, which altogether places the individual absolutely in the speaker's pejorative perspective.

To extend the Binding Theory to the dynamic process of political language, it will be necessary to combine the formal implications of the Binding Theory with pragmatic communication models. Although the principles (A, B, C) constitute grammatical facts and their unorthodox use in transcripts, it is necessary to examine them and situate them within a broader framework of speech acts, where meaning is determined by context and purpose (Sbisa, 2002). To illustrate, an act of collective pledge, made using a Principle-A-compliant reflexive (we commit ourselves), is associated with acts of othering performed using a Principle-B-compliant pronoun. Political Transcript analysis thus entails consideration of how speakers choose among the grammatical alternatives made available by the workings of Universal Grammar (as explained by the Binding Theory) to perform discourse acts that are specific to the circumstances, persuasive or unifying, or attacking or avoiding.

Binder theory offers a method for deconstructing the strategies of proximization and polarization in practical application to political transcripts. The proximization theory studies how speakers represent threats and allies, both close and far away. In this case, Principles A and B play an instrumental part. Bound anaphors (Principle A) internalize and bring actions in-group (We defend ourselves) closer together. Conversely, the use of pronouns (Principle B) can maintain or control distance with out-group actors («They cannot control us»). The work on the discourse of politics shows that such systematic referential decisions are at the core of construing political reality, whereby binding and releasing noun

phrases are directly linked to the ideological task of forming alliances, including the selection of enemies (Bullock & Cokely, 2021). A Binding Theory interpretation can therefore be used to see that there is a syntactic frame of a speaker trying to polarize a political situation to come with a bound/freed us versus an unbound/liberated them.

3. Evolution and Revisions of the Theory

The development of the Binding Theory may be characterized by a shift from a less central role in the Government and Binding (GB) structure to more restricted specifications in the Minimalist Program. The theory was initially developed as part of a set of independent grammatical modules, the principles of which acted as clear filters over the syntactic representations in an intricately structured grammatical mechanism (Chomsky, 1981). The Minimalist movement, under the influence of the desire for theoretical lean and the effort to capture linguistic phenomena by the onset of interface environments, attempted to remove sub-theories. It resulted in the rethinking of binding conditions, no longer as primitives but as possible outcomes of more basic operations, such as Agree and feature valuation. It was a fundamental challenge to the GB-era notion of a standalone binding module (Chomsky, 1995). This development marks a shift from a description of constraints by taxonomy to an explanatory question about whether coreferential relationships can be determined using the structure of the syntactic computational system itself.

A. Main Debates Surrounding the Binding Framework

Much substantive academic debating has continued to explore the multiple complexities of the Binding Theory, the main issues being the correct fulfillment of the binding domain, the long-distance anaphorical phenomenon, and the invading discourse parameters. Cross-linguistic issues strongly challenged the classical account of the concept of a governing category, because some languages, such as Chinese, Japanese, and Icelandic, have reflexes that seem to be licensed by antecedents beyond their immediate clause, thus undermining a purely structural, locality-based theory of Principle A (Huang, 2000). These empirical facts have spawned





crucial concerns about whether grammar is modular and have led to theorizing that may be logophoric, discourse-based, or syntactic, either via operator-movement or head-raising. In the Minimalist school, some scholars have proposed that the consequences of binding principles (especially of anaphors) can be reduced to movement to object position, and that the concept of a special Principle A is therefore dispensed with (Hornstein, 2001). These arguments indicate disagreement between an entirely syntactically based account, on the one hand, and the need to consider interpretive and discourse-pragmatic information, on the other, to provide a complete picture of anaphoric options.

B. The Foundational Abstraction of «Ideal» Speaker-Hearer Competence

An important epistemological basis of classical Binding Theory is its overt, explicit assumption of a competence-performance distinction, which models the knowledge of a perfect speaker-hearer abstracted from all performance variables. This methodological volition centres the analytical method on decontextual, intuitively committed judgements of grammaticality, deliberately ignoring the effects of actual-world processing, socially activated memory, and rhetorical goals (Chomsky, 1965). In turn, the theory formalizes a cognitive abstraction: a system of tacit principles that regulate the possible relations of coreference, rather than the actual use of language in the communicative situation. In applied linguistic analysis, this assumption provides a strong, formal foundation for grammatical possibility and simultaneously introduces an important limitation. There is no inherently non-performative nature in data of political transcripts, or even any naturalistic discourse. Strategic divergences of the competency model foretellances are not errors but tend to have rhetorical reasons. Thus, to thoroughly analyse, it is necessary to fill this gap and apply the formal theory to identify the marked structure, and then apply the pragmatic theory, including speech act theory, to understand how it serves strategically in communication (Sbisa, 2002). Thus, the idealization can only be seen as the definitive word on referential behavior in discourse. However, it becomes a necessary point of departure

for understanding how rhetorical strategy is moved around and occasionally gambles with the grammatical system beneath it.

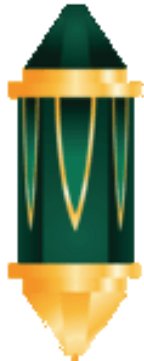
4. Applications and Extensions of Binding Theory Beyond the Sentence

The appropriate principles of the Binding Theory, which are bound to sentence-level syntax, have been fruitfully applied to the analysis of the phenomena in the broader context of communication. In discourse and pragmatics, the model has been extended to explain «discourse-binding» or perspective-binding, in which coreference is controlled across sentence boundaries and is point-of-view sensitive, rather than based on c-command. Studies in this direction consider how strict syntactic schemata can be used in conjunction with more pragmatic coreference decision-making, which acknowledge that real-world interpretation frequently relies on inferences that go beyond the syntactic web (Reinhart & Reuland, 1993). The play of these depends not only on discussing the extended discourse, where pronouns and other referring expressions are held together through thematic coherence across turns and paragraphs, but is regulated by discourse prominence and alignment of mental models as much as grammatical principle.

In literary and stylistic criticism, Binding Theory has been a valuable instrument for deconstructing narrative technique. Scholars have used its principles to analyze how patterns of pronominal and reflexive use construct the narrative's point of view, form or dissolve character, and fabricate purposeful ambiguity. As an example, linguistic expressions of a fragmented psyche of a character or the unreliability of a narrator can be linguistically reflected in a strategy failure of Principle C or making a reflexive Reflexive in a non-standard context, and thus, grammatical as well as stylistic effect is based on such instances (Yoshimoto, 2008). The applications in this way reveal how the abstract rules of coreference can be applied to artistic control over the reader's interpretation and the alignment of characters in fictional literature.

Moreover, Binding Theory has been helpful in the research of non-standard language performance as a diagnostic model. It has





been exploited to study aphasic speech and slips of the tongue, as well as children learning language, demonstrating a relationship between the acquisition of grammatical competence and dissociations. In the case of Broca aphasia, for example, good performance on applying Principle A with impairment on Principle B helps us understand that syntactic knowledge modularity can be neural (Grodzinsky et al., 1993). Equally, the child's developmental progression in learning to bind constraints provides a frame through which the maturation of syntactic cognition can be viewed. Another available area of application of this framework to performance data is noted to be quite wide, namely, strategic oratory. Although political speech is highly performative, designed and full of referential strategies, it has received little attention in specific studies under the Binding Theory, and there is a clear opportunity for research. The application, so construed, would help bridge the gap between theoretical syntax and the study of political discourse by further examining how adherence to, or linguistic disobedience from, the principles of grammatical binding can be calculated and serve rhetorical purposes of persuasion, coalition-building, and ideological framing.

III. Analysis and Discussion

1. Methodology

In this study, the formal syntactic structure of Government and Binding Theory (Chomsky, 1981) is used to analyze the political persuasion. The study's sample includes seven political transcripts. The analysis will be further undertaken by first determining the governing category (the minimal clause) of each utterance. The anaphors (e.g., of ourselves) are subject to principle A in a study of how obligatory local binding of anaphor constructs the collective identity and likeness. Principle B applies to the study of pronominals (e.g., <we>, <they>), which involves the strategic binding and/or non-binding of pronominals analyzed as part of the larger discourse to create in-groups, out-groups, and ideological antagonists. Principle C regulates the analysis of R-expressions and how the necessity of such to be free performed determines fixed, shared, or externalized concepts that the speaker is appealing to in

their rhetoric.

2. Data Analysis:

In order to derive the conceptual basis of our theory in the realms of discourse, the seven examples of political speeches are subjected to a restraining analysis of arrangement wherein every pronoun, anaphor, and R-expression is examined in the context of the three binding principles by Chomsky (1981).

Sample (1):

«You turn if you want to. The lady's not for turning. We are controlling borrowing, not letting it control us. We have steadied ourselves on our course. Let us not waste our time.» (Margaret Thatcher (1980): Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104431>).

Margaret Thatcher uses the Binding Theory in this statement of political determination to create an uncompromising group identity based on control and self-sufficiency. She instantly creates a syntactic partition between the generic, permissive you and the iconic R-expression lady, applying Principle C to establish her persona as a separate, third-person figure beyond the audience's decisions. This has a strong association with the flexible person (you) and the rigid head. Her argument is centrally determined at this point by her gifted reflexive infolding: We are not allowing borrowing to rule us; we are controlling it. In these two sentences, the use of the pronoun it appropriately satisfies Principle B by binding the pronoun it to the antecedent borrowing, objectifying an economic force into an approachable opponent. The opposition between active we controls and passive it controls us is followed by the opposition between the two: active rule over and passive be ruled by, which is a form of domination but also a committed decision reflected in her ideological attitude. It is further supported by the reflexivity of ourselves steadying ourselves, which, on Principle A, needs to be tied to the subject we, stressing an internally derived, self-correcting stabilization. This strictly circumscribed, agentic we is stretched up to the nation, but on the proviso that it acquiesces in her specified course. In such a way, with reflexives of self-reliance, object pronouns of domination,





and possessive pronouns of ownership of policy, the syntax of Thatcher develops a grammatical structure of undeterred power, where the collective becomes tied to a direction in which its leader will never deviate.

Sample (2):

«While they preach the supremacy of the state, declare its omnipotence over individual man, and predict its eventual domination of all peoples on the earth, they are the focus of evil. I urge you to beware the temptation [...] to remove yourself from the struggle.» (Ronald Reagan (1983): President of the United States, <https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/speech/march-8-1983-remarks-national-association-evangelicals>).

Ronald Reagan, in this continued speech about the Cold War, used the Binding Theory to create a highly charged moral dichotomy between a despot-ridden «them» and a moral watchdog, «us.» The passage begins with an unbroken anaphoric chain in which the pronoun they is consistently attached to an unnamed but definitely present antecedent: the Soviet leadership or the evil empire itself. It is this they on which a trilogy of activities, preach, declare, predict, forms a grammatically united menacing agency. More importantly, the possessive pronoun its in declaring its omnipotence is bound to the state, which is once again semantically possessed by they. This complex attachment (they own the state, which confers omnipotence) is syntactically reflective of the totalitarian form of government that Reagan describes, in which he has concentrated power in a centralized, absolute form. After creating such a grammatically coherent enemy, Reagan can now switch to first-level address, in which he refers to the audience using the terms «you» and «yourself» more directly. The application of yourself is a correct application of Principle A—the reflexive of his mode is in an accurate form of his imperative clause indirectly by the understood subject you. This syntactic action makes the fight more personal, turning such a battle from a geopolitical struggle into a moral mission. Bonding the audience to the act through reflexive grammar creates a connection between Reagan and the audience, highlighting that the decision to become

involved or withdraw is a defining and personal exercise. In this way, with a rhetorical use of pronouns, the speech makes a remote, impersonal «they» part of the image of evil, and every listener, through a first-person address and reflexivity, is drawn into the irrevocable task of resistance.

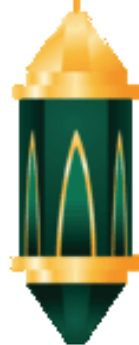
Sample (3):

«We, ourselves twice daily, remind ourselves of the wounds. We must act together as a united people. We commit ourselves to the construction of a complete, just and lasting peace. We enter into a covenant that we shall build a society in which all South Africans [...] will be able to walk tall, without any fear in their hearts.»

(Nelson Mandela (1994): President of South Africa, «<https://www.nelsonmandela.org/news/entry/inauguration-speech-1994>).

The first speech given by Nelson Mandela is a genius in the application of Binding Theory because it constructed a new national identity based on shared responsibility and embraced potential. The speech begins with a syntactically sound reflexive sentence—We, ourselves twice a day, remind ourselves of the wounds—in which an anaphor, *ourselves*, is properly bound under Principle A by a subject, *we*, and under which a collective, self-imposed responsibility of remembering the pain of the past is accentuated. It is through this reflexive binding that a *we*, both agent and object of itself, is formed, which makes the national unity a process and active and inward-looking. This broadens its scope as the passage continues, promising future peace, but the tie remains very narrow and focused. More importantly, in the last phrase, Mandela avers the reflexive attitude we take toward the object pronoun *their* in their hearts. Under Principle B, there is local freedom of *theirs*; however, its antecedent is in the R-expression of the higher clause, *all South Africans*. It is a syntactic operation that is rhetorically deep. Through it, the inclusive «we» (the new government and its advocates) can make the promise to construct a society on behalf of a particular but inclusive «they» (every citizen). Mandela therefore applies binding not to confuse the government and the people, but to put us as a committed constructor of the *they*, grammaticalizing the covenant of service and present at the very





centre of the new South Africa.

Sample (4):

«This is where we are right now. Its a racial stalemate we've been stuck in for years. The profound mistake of Reverend Wright's sermons is not that he spoke about racism in our society. Its that he spoke as if our society was static. But what we know-what we have seen-is that America can change.» (Barack Obama: President of the United States (2008), <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=8847846>)

Barack Obama applies the Binding Theory in his contractual 2008 speech on race, navigating a complex rhetorical environment: on the one hand, he recognizes that we are divided; on the other hand, he syntactically constructs a narrative of mutual progress. He begins by using an inclusive we, uniting the speaker and the audience to a challenging moment of the present (where we are right now), and by using an anaphoric pronoun it, he captures the problem in a commercial phrase (a racial stalemate). This is a grammatical vessel of some collective national burden. His mastery of the Reverend Wright scandal demonstrates an accurate application of the Principle of Pronominal distance: the personal pronoun he correctly applies Principle B by classifying him as free in his local clause to be able to have a grammatical distance between himself and the agent, and at the same time agree with the contents of the sermons given by Wright. The possessive «our society» is the strategic pivot repeated twice. It is this owning of a social construct that unites all the people listening, irrespective of their racial disparities. Obama employs the same pronoun to say that it is changing when he contends that Wright was wrongly passionate about assuming that we live in a static society when the subject that we, as a united community, hold isn't incapable of change. The last change to the R-expression America serves: Principle C removes the idea of direct pronominal reference, defining it as a detached and stable sign. Therefore, Obama's syntax is a gesture of reconciliation, as the inclusive adjectives («we,» «our») indicate a sense of imperfect past. In contrast, the careful application of grammatical space increases the distance between a problematic

person and the community process (he, it).

Sample (5):

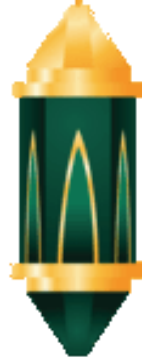
«For too long, a small group in our nation's capital has reaped the rewards while the people have borne the cost. Washington flourished—but the people did not share in its wealth. Their victories have not been your victories; their triumphs have not been your triumphs.» (Donald Trump (2017): President of the United States, <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/the-inaugural-address/>).

In this very first text, Donald Trump has used the Binding Theory to strategically create a populist dichotomy between the elite and the American people as being corrupt, image guidance. The start of the speech is vague, bound to the capital of our nation, where the possessive our establishes the beginning and an inclusive connection with the audience. But the trick is in putting what makes it a vague R-expression: a small group. The phrase is also specially underspecified, meeting Principle C, which ensures that it is a free, nameless entity, making listeners able to transfer their own grievances onto it. This few is then spliced syntactically together with the personified object, Washington, by the possessive pronoun its in its riches, and the two become one, corrupted and collectively agent, which had bloomed with the corruption of the people. The rhetorical climax is a shutting out, rigid, contrasting binding of pronouns: The triumphs of theirs have not been the triumphs of yours. In this instance, there is grammatically attached to the already built small group /Washington, and you are directly connected to the listeners. It is such a parallel construction that makes a binary, zero-sum world based on syntax itself. Trump employs Principle B not to his advantage to clarify reference, but by imposing an irreconstructible divide, one that endangers the severing of politics into winners and losers, so that the fortunes of one rigidly defined group, principally the winners, require the downfall of the others.

Sample (6):

“For centuries, Russia has been and remains a guarantor of the sovereignty of our native land, the stability and security of society,





the unity and true solidarity of our peoples. Today we are fighting for the freedom and safe future of our people, for the independence and sovereignty of Russia. We will defend this with all the forces and means at our disposal.” (Vladimir Putin (September 30, 2022): President of Russia, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/69465>)

When the Binding Theory of Sample (1) is applied, strategic linguistic construction can be noted. The only type of rule that one will have is the single extended sense. In the scanning of Principle A, it is revealed that the anaphor our of the sentence our native land, our people is localized on the antecedent attribute of Russia, creating a fixed and collective self (we = Russia). Principle B analyses the pronominal we. It is disengaged in its clause but co-referential with «Russia» of the preceding sentence, a tie which the speaker and state into an inseparable agent. This supports in-group cohesiveness and responsibility. This is the R-expression Principle C «Russia.» It is willfully emancipated, echoed to locate the discourse, to construct the notion of sovereignty, of independence, as unchangeable, as a common idea. The binding patterns are designed to create a separation between the leader, the people, and the state, strategically wiped out, resulting in an image of a monolithic entity that protects itself against an external threat.

Sample (7):

«I speak to you in Russian because you have been deceived. You are being told that we are a threat to you, that we are Nazis. But we are on our land, we are defending our country. We are fighting for our freedom. And we are not going to give it up.» (Volodymyr Zelenskyy (February 24, 2023): President of Ukraine, <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/zvernennya-prezidenta-ukrayini-volodimira-zelenskogo-73073>)

Volodymyr Zelenskyy uses Binding Theory in this speech when the full-scale war was declared, thus performing a critical rhetorical move: confronting an enemy audience and establishing national resolve at the same time. He starts by encasing the Russian people as you in another sphere of discourse– «I am talking to you... you have been lied to» where Principle B is taken advantage

of to create them as a separate addressable group apart from the Ukrainian we. This gives a two-audience setup, as the person is always the one being deceived, while the group is always the one being slandered (that we are a threat... that we are Nazis). Then he strengthens the in-group binding with Principle A-type cohesion, but not with reflexes, but with the possessive pronoun «our» in a chain-like succession- «our land, our country, our freedom» in which sentences grammatically bind the speaker and his compatriots inseparably to the cause and the land. The last pronoun avoidance, it, in give it up, is therefore tactically ambiguous, being an anaphor; it might be freedom, country, land, or struggle itself, in which case the pronoun takes on the meaning of all of the other preceding R-expressions and becomes a single, indefensible entity. In this way, Zelenskyy's syntax creates a clear-cut and oppositional world: a misled you, a protective we, and an integrated our, which needs to safeguard an encompassing it.

3. Findings and Discussion:

The occurrence of Binding Theory in seven samples of political speech demonstrates that pronouns, anaphors, and R-expressions are consistently patterned strategically. Leaders predictively create political reality by syntactically manipulating cognitive reference points to construct collective identities, delimit adversaries, and frame conflicts. The essential results in each sample have been contained in the following table:

Table (1): Strategic Use of Binding Principles in Political Transcript

Speech Samples	Main Pronoun/R-Expression	Binding Principle	Primary Rhetorical Function	Essential Mechanism
1. Thatcher (1980)	"we" / "ourselves" / "it" / "you" / "the lady" (R-exp)	Principle A (Reflexives) & Principle B (Pronominals)	Collective Agency & Iron Resolve: Constructs an agentic, self-correcting in-group ("we") bound to a fixed, iconic leader ("the lady"). Uses reflexives to emphasize internal control and objectifies	Reflexive "ourselves" (Principle A) binds the collective to acts of self-stabilization. "It" (Principle



			challenges ("it") to be dominated.	B) is bound to "borrowing," objectifying the economic threat. The R-expression "the lady" (Principle C) is free, elevating the leader to a symbolic, unturning figure.
2. Reagan (1983)	"they" / "its" / "you" / "yourself"	Principle B (Pronominals) & Principle A (Reflexive)	Moral Dichotomy & Personal Summons: Creates a grammatically coherent, evil out-group ("they"/"its") and personally binds the listener ("you") to the struggle via a reflexive, making resistance a moral imperative.	Anaphoric chain binds "they" to an implicit "evil empire." "Its" is bound to "the state," owned by "they," mimicking centralized power. The reflexive "yourself" (Principle A) personalizes the choice to engage, binding the audience to the action of the struggle.
3. Mandela (1994)	"we" / "ourselves" / "their"	Principle A (Reflexives) & Principle B (Pronominals)	Covenantal Unity & Servant Leadership: Uses reflexives to bind the new government ("we") to acts of self-imposed memory and commitment, then extends this "we" as a builder for a future "they" (all citizens).	Reflexive "ourselves" (Principle A) emphasizes collective, inward-looking responsibility. The shift to "their" hearts (Principle B, free in its clause) grammatically

				positions the acting "we" as servants building a society for an inclusive "they."
4. Obama (2008)	"we" / "our" / "it" / "he"	Principle B (Pronominals) & Principle C (R-expressions)	Navigated Reconciliation: Employs an inclusive "we"/"our" to claim shared societal ownership, while using pronominal distance ("he," "it") to manage divisive figures and abstract problems, facilitating a narrative of collective progress.	"We"/"our" binds speaker and audience to a shared society. "He" (Principle B) is correctly free from Obama, creating critical distance from Reverend Wright. "It" encapsulates "racial stalemate" as a shared burden. "America" (R-exp, Principle C) stands as a stable, external ideal.
5. Trump (2017)	"our" / "a small group" (R-exp) / "its" / "their" / "your"	Principle C (R-expressions) & Principle B (Pronominals)	Populist Dichotomy: Creates a projectable enemy via a vague R-expression ("a small group"), binds it to "Washington," and rigidly contrasts elite gains ("their") with public loss ("your") to forge a zero-sum world.	Vague R-expression "a small group" (Principle C) is a free, projectable enemy. Possessive chain ("its," "their") binds it to Washington. The contrast "their victories... your victories" (Principle B) syntactically





				enacts a rigid, antagonistic divide.
6. Putin (2022)	"our" / "we" / "Russia" (R-exp)	Principle A (Anaphoric 'our') & Principle B/C	Monolithic Unification: Merges leader, people, and state into a single, defensible entity. Possessive "our" binds everything to the state, while "Russia" is externalized as a sacred, immutable concept.	"Our" in "our native land," "our people" is anaphorically bound to "Russia," creating an inseparable collective. "We" is co-referential with the state. "Russia" (Principle C) is a free, fixed R-expression representing an eternal, sovereign ideal.
7. Zelenskyy (2023)	"you" / "we" / "our" / "it"	Principle B (Pronominals) & Ambiguous "it"	Solidarity & Legitimization: Creates a clear dichotomy between a deceived "you" (Russian people) and a defending "we." Chains possessive "our" to land, country, and freedom, then uses a vague "it" to amalgamate them into a single, indefensible entity.	"You" is bound to the deceived audience. "We" is bound to defenders. The triplet "our land, our country, our freedom" (anaphoric possession) forges absolute in-group legitimacy. Ambiguous "it" subsumes all preceding concepts into a singular cause.

This analysis proves that political leaders are systematic in their use of syntactic binding rules, not only to achieve grammatical correctness but also as active persuasive tools. The patterns of strategy indicate that there are a few rhetorical fundamental functions:

Developing a Constructive Identity with Reflexives and Possesives: The most common way of creating narrative identity is the use of inclusive first-person plurals (we, our). But its effect is enhanced by bonding mechanisms. Thatcher and Mandela apply Principle A to use reflexes to define the group in relation to itself to make a decisive rhetorical move. This establishes an identity founded on internal agency, self-correcting, and sharing responsibility, not just being an opponent. The possessive our, in turn, ties the group to consequential notions (land, country, freedom, movement) and, in a very striking way, rhetorically proves that the group owns it and justifies its cause, in the case of Zelenskyy and Putin.

Forging Dichotomies depends on Pronominal Chains: Pronominal leaders establish so-called in- and out-groups by regulating the binding of pronouns (Principle B). Reagan instills a consistent fear that their destiny is bound up in a trio of repressive measures. Trump's syntax is constructed in contrast. Proposed grammar binds them to a constructed elite and you to the audience in order to grammaticalize a zero-sum conflict. Zelenskyy also creates a clear binary between you and us, yet his main emphasis is to reinforce in-group affiliations rather than dwell on the out-group.

Learning to Distance and Ambiguity: It is essential to have mastery over R-expressions (Principle C) and vague pronouns. Free R-expressions may iconize a leader (the lady, imposed by Thatcher), externalize an ideal (America, projected by Obama; Russia, by Putin), or develop an enemy one would like to project (a small group, as Trump projects). Unclear pronouns act as a conceptual container: the it in the speech by Obama is a 10-, 1-, 3-, and 4-second-long vessel holding a 10-, 1-, 3-, and 4-second-long 1, the 10-, 1-, 3-, and 4-second-long 2, and the 10-, 1-, 3-, 4-sec-





ond-long 3, that is, the 10-, 1-, 3-, and 4-second-long 1, and This flourishes in ambiguity and audience projection and semantic expansion.

Syntactic Modeling of Ideology: The binding patterns usually reflect ideological content. Centralized totalitarianism is the model of government that Reagan refers to, a state that owns (it has omnipotence). Servant leadership is grammatically enacted through the syntax of Mandela, in which the acting «we» pledges to create a society on behalf of their hearts, which does not see them as its creators. The binding created by Putin unites all these in a monolithic our, which shows an ideology of unity with the state.

The Binding Theory offers a more stringent analysis of the sentence construction of the political rhetoric. It shows that the manipulation of syntactic relationships, connecting a reflexive locally, freeing an R-expression, or forming a pronominal chain, is one of the basic instruments for forming the we, the they, and the nature of the clash between them. The syntax is not value-neutral: it is the construction of political reality. Nevertheless, such a micro-linguistic approach needs to be supplemented with a dissection of other discursive characteristics (metaphor, narrative, delivery) and consciousness of these limitations, especially through examination of translated text, so as to avoid attributing conscious design to unconscious rhetorical expertise.

Conclusion:

This study illustrates how Binding Theory serves as a compelling analytical lens for unpacking the intricate syntax found in political discourse. By examining seven political transcripts, it becomes evident that political leaders intentionally manipulate binding principles, specifically those governing anaphors, pronouns, and referring expressions, not just for the sake of grammatical correctness, but as active tools of persuasion. Consider Principle A, for instance, where reflexive constructions foster a sense of collective agency and internal accountability, as demonstrated by figures like Thatcher and Mandela. On the other hand, Principle

B is strategically employed to establish pronominal contrasts that clearly separate in-groups from out-groups, thus polarizing their audiences, as seen in the rhetoric of leaders such as Reagan and Trump. Furthermore, Principle C facilitates the externalization of ideals or the crafting of identifiable adversaries through free R-expressions, exemplified by Obama's reference to «America» and Trump's mention of «a small group.» Ultimately, this study affirms that the syntactic choices made in political discourse encode ideological constructs, thereby shaping political realities. These choices play a crucial role in constructing identities, framing conflicts, and managing rhetorical distances. So, the study effectively integrates formal syntactic analysis with pragmatic discourse examination, creating a valuable intersection between theoretical linguistics and the strategic analysis of political communication.

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