



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES AND IDEOLOGIES IN MOHAMMAD AL-
AREFE'S SPEECHES**

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AL-AREFE'S SPEECHES**

By

MARYAM ENJAVINEZHAD

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra
Malaysia, in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

June 2017

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Dedicated to:

My Beloved Father and Mother

Who have provided me with care and compassion throughout my life,

and My Beloved Husband, Hamid Reza,

*Who without his endless love, support, and encouragement, I would have never
been able to complete this important step in my life.*



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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MARYAM ENJAVINEZHAD

June 2017

Chairman : Shamala a/p Paramasivam, PhD
Faculty : Modern Languages and Communication

Manipulation is the exercise of illegitimate influence and authority towards others by means of discourse, so that people believe, accept, behave, and act according to the ideologies of a manipulator and against the interest of themselves (Van Dijk, 2006a). Moreover, texts and talks are not neutral; they are ideologically loaded and discourse “plays a fundamental role in the daily expression and reproduction of ideologies” (Van Dijk, 2003b, p. 4). The objective of any critical discourse analysis (CDA) is to unravel the underlying hidden agenda which is left implicit in the discourse. Indeed, public speakers and leaders can socially reconstruct reality based on own ideologies and change the social cognition through discourse. Following a qualitative research methodology, this research analyzed the ideologies and discursive practices of Mohammad Al-Arefe’s discourse, the well-known Saudi preacher, to unveil the ideologies in his discourse with regard to the current civil war in Syria. Van Dijk’s (2003b; 2006a) framework of semantic strategies for positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation and ‘ideological square’ model were adopted as analytical tools to explore the underlying ideologies related to ingroup and outgroup presentation at the levels of meaning, formal structures, and actions and interactions. Three of Al-Arefe’s Friday sermons delivered between 2009 and 2013 in Saudi Arabia and Egypt were selected and critically analyzed at the textual and contextual levels.

The findings revealed that Al-Arefe’s discourse is indexed by strong polarization between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ and construction of an exaggerated dichotomy that divides the social groups into the two opposing poles of ‘Good’ versus ‘Evil.’ It was revealed that positive self-presentation in Al-Arefe’s discourse is manifested through lexicalization, self-glorification, victimization, euphemism, and propaganda techniques. The negative other-presentation in his discourse is also

enhanced through the discursive structures of derogation, demonization, and construction of Non-Muslim identity for the Other in order to create fear and hostility towards the Other. Furthermore, the findings showed that Al-Arefe's discourse encourages a non-human view of the 'Other' and legitimize violence against them based on their faith and identity. It was also argued that Al-Arefe's discourse is heavily emotional and is featured with hyperbolic assertions, stereotyping, appeal to angers, fallacious reasoning, and repetition of ideological themes and Quranic references which contextually makes it hard for the Muslim audience, and specifically the youth, to resist manipulation. Finally, it was concluded that Al-Arefe has taken advantage of the mood of time and the context of Syria war to promote his group's political agenda.

The findings of this study offers insights into understanding how religious figures construct hate speeches and polarization in the Muslim world context and create or activate 'preferred mental models' which can lead to discrimination and violent social actions of worldwide impact. Indeed, this study provides an example of the way new practices are justified, legitimized, and naturalized through looking at the radical discourses that emerged in the genre of preaching. Also, it is argued that Muslim preachers' discourse can strongly influence the social cognition, and hence, preachers have a crucial role in reproduction of social practices, attitudes, and ideologies; they can deify or satanize a cause and direct collective actions through propaganda. Finally, it is concluded that Al-Arefe's discourse is representative of mainstream radical and extremist discourses and such discourses should be counted as dangerous speech, since they can highly affect the safety and security of multi-ethnic societies. In sum, this study can provide help with finding solutions to the major issues that the Muslim world is facing today.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**STRATEGI DISKURSIF DAN IDEOLOGI DALAM UCAPAN
MOHAMMAD AL-AREFE**

Oleh

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Fkculiti : Bahasa Moden Dan Komunikasi

Manipulasi merupakan latihan pengaruh dan kuasa yang tidak sah terhadap orang lain melalui saluran wacana, supaya orang percaya, menerima, bertingkah laku dan bertindak mengikut idea kepunyaan ideologi seseorang manipulator dan bertentangan dengan kepentingan mereka (Van Dijk, 2006a). Tambahan pula, teks dan pertuturan adalah tidak neutral; mereka dibebani secara ideologi dan wacana “memainkan peranan penting dalam ekspresi harian dan reproduksi ideologi” (Van Dijk, 2003b, p. 4). Objektif bagi sebarang analisis wacana kritikal (CDA) adalah untuk mengungkap agenda tersembunyi tersirat yang dinyatakan secara implisit dalam wacana. Sesungguhnya, pemedato umum dan pemimpin boleh merekonstruksi secara sosial kebenaran berdasarkan ideologi masing-masing dan mengubah kognisi sosial melalui wacana. Berdasarkan metodologi penyelidikan kualitatif, penyelidikan ini menganalisis ideologi dan amalan diskursif wacana Mohammad Al-Arefe, pengkhutbah Saudi tersohor, bagi mengungkap ideologi dalam wacananya berhubung dengan peperangan sivil semasa di Syria. Kerangka strategi semantik Van Dijk’s (2003b; 2006a) untuk presentasi sendiri positif dan presentasi lain yang negatif dan model ‘medan ideologikal’ telah digunakan sebagai alat analitikal bagi menghurai ideologi tersirat berkaitan dengan presentasi kelompok dalaman dan kelompok luar pada tahap makna, struktur formal, serta tindakan dan interaksi. Tiga khutbah Jumaat Al-Arefe yang disampaikan antara 2009 dan 2013 di Arab Saudi dan di Mesir telah dipilih dan dianalisis secara kritikal pada tahap tekstual dan kontekstual. Dapatan menunjukkan bahawa wacana Al-Arefe telah diindekskan oleh polarisasi yang kuat antara ‘Kita’ dan ‘Mereka’ dan oleh konstruksi dikotomi yang diperburuk yang membahagikan kumpulan sosial kepada dua khutub yang bertentangan ‘Baik’ lawan ‘Jahat’. Kajian ini telah memperlihatkan bahawa presentasi sendiri positif dalam wacana Al-Arefe telah dimanifestasikan melalui teknik leksikalisasi, glorifikasi sendiri, pemangsaan, eufemisme, dan propaganda. Presentasi lain yang negatif dalam wacananya telah

diperkukuh melalui struktur diskursif derogasi, demonisasi, dan konstruksi identiti bukan Islam bagi Lain untuk menimbulkan ketakutan dan hostiliti terhadap yang Lain. Tambahan pula, dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa wacana Al-Arefe menggalakkan pandangan bukan manusia tentang yang 'Lain' dan mengesahkan keganasan terhadap mereka berdasarkan kepercayaan dan identiti mereka. Dapatan juga mendapati bahawa wacana Al-Arefe telah dibebani dengan emosi yang kuat dan digambarkan dengan asersi hiperbolik, pengstereotaipan, tarikan pada kemarahan, taakulan mengelirukan, dan perulangan tema ideologikal dan rujukan al Quran yang secara kontekstual sukar bagi audiens Islam, dan khususnya para belia, bagi menolak manipulasi. Kesimpulannya, kajian ini merumuskan bahawa Al-Arefe telah mengambil kesempatan ke atas mod masa dan konteks peperangan Syria bagi mempromosikan agenda politik kumpulannya. Dapatan kajian ini memberikan tanggapan dari segi pemahaman cara tokoh agama mengkonstruksikan ucapan kebencian dan polarisasi dalam konteks dunia Islam dan membina atau mengaktifkan 'model mental digemari' yang membawa kepada diskriminasi dan tindakan sosial keganasan bagi impak sejagat. Sesungguhnya, kajian ini memberikan contoh cara amalan baharu yang dijustifikasikan, disahkan dan disemulajadikan dengan melihat pada wacana radikal yang wujud dalam genre perkhutbah. Di samping itu, dipersoalkan bahawa wacana pengkhotbah Islam amat mempengaruhi kognisi sosial, dan oleh itu, pengkhotbah mempunyai peranan yang penting dalam penghasilan semula amalan sosial, sikap, dan ideologi; mereka dapat mendewakan atau mengagungkan penyebab dan mengarah tindakan yang kolektif melalui propaganda. Akhirnya, kajian ini menyimpulkan bahawa wacana Al-Arefe merupakan representasi radikal arus utama dan wacana ekstremis dan wacana tersebut harus dikira sebagai ucapan yang berbahaya, disebabkan wacana tersebut dapat memberikan kesan yang besar terhadap keselamatan dan sekuriti masyarakat multietnik. Ringkasnya, kajian ini dapat memberikan bantuan dengan mencari penyelesaian bagi isu major yang dihadapi oleh dunia Islam kini.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	Page
ABSTRAK	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
APPROVAL	v
DECLARATION	vi
LISTS OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the study and research focus	1
1.2 Mohammad Al-Arefe's background	4
1.3 Problem statement	5
1.4 Research aim	7
1.5 Research objectives	8
1.6 Research questions	8
1.7 Theoretical underpinning	8
1.7.1 Contextual constrains of manipulation	12
1.7.2 Ideological manipulation	14
1.7.3 Polarization	16
1.7.4 Theoretical framework	17
1.7.5 Conceptual framework	20
1.8 Scope of the study	22
1.9 Significance of the study	22
1.10 Definition of key terms	23
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	25
2.1 Introduction	25
2.2 Socio-cognitive Approach to Manipulation	25
2.2.1 Manipulation as a form of social power abuse	25
2.2.2 Manipulation as a form of cognitive mind control	26
2.2.3 Manipulation as a form of discursive interaction	30
2.3 Manipulation and mind control	31
2.4 Ideology and CDA	34
2.4.1 Ideology and social cognition	35
2.4.2 Ideology and society	38
2.4.3 Ideology and discourse structures	39
2.4.3.1 Meaning	40
2.4.3.2 Topoi	43
2.4.3.3 Argumentation	44
2.4.3.4 Rhetoric	47

	2.4.3.5	Lexical style	49
	2.4.3.6	Action and interaction	49
	2.4.3.7	Political strategies	50
2.5		Ideology and propaganda	51
2.6		Literature perspectives	55
	2.6.1	Politics, ideologies, and social power	56
	2.6.2	Ideologies in public speeches	60
	2.6.3	Construction of ‘Other’ through public speeches	62
	2.6.4	Hate speech act and power	65
	2.6.5	War propaganda	68
2.7		Delimitations of CDA and Van Dijk’s model	72
2.8		CDA analytical approach	74
	2.8.1	Analytical guideline of the study	77
	2.8.2	Maintaining a balance between objectivity and sensitivity	81
2.9		Sectarianism, Wahhabism, and Saudi social power	82
	2.9.1	Syria’s Political Climate and the Syrian Uprising	86
3		METHODOLOGY	92
	3.1	Introduction	92
	3.2	Research design	92
	3.3	Data collection and sampling	94
	3.4	Data analysis procedure	96
	3.5	Validity and reliability	99
4		ANALYSIS, FINDINGS, AND DISCUSSION	101
	4.1	Introduction	101
	4.2	Textual and contextual analyses of the three speeches	101
	4.2.1	Al-Arefe’s first speech	101
	4.2.2	Al-Arefe’s second speech	133
	4.2.3	Al-Arefe’s third speech	143
	4.3	Findings and analysis of Al-Arefe’s discourse	152
	4.3.1	Meaning	152
	4.3.2	Formal structures	161
	4.3.3	Actions and interactions	164
	4.4	Discussion on the findings of the study	166
5		SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH, AND CONCLUSION	176
	5.1	Introduction	176
	5.2	Summary of the Major Findings of the Study	176
	5.2.1	Ideological discourse structures	176
	5.2.2	Ideologies in Al-Arefe’s discourse	177
	5.2.3	Performance of manipulation	178
	5.3	Contribution to the field	179

5.4	Limitations	180
5.5	Recommendations for future studies	181
5.6	Conclusion	182
REFERENCES		184
APPENDICES		218
BIODATA OF STUDENT		242
LIST OF PUBLICATIONS		243



LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
2.1	Summary of analytical framework based on Van Dijk's model	80
4.1	Rhetorical questions and their implication in Al-Arefe's first speech	129
4.2	Global meaning in Al-Arefe's discourse	153
4.3	Summary of actor description in Al-Arefe's discourse: Negative other-presentation	155
4.4	Summary of actor description in Al-Arefe's discourse: Positive self-presentation	158
4.5	Comparing major themes in ISIS propaganda and Mohammad Al-Arefe's speeches	169

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDA

Critical Discourse Analysis

ISIS

Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

pbuh

Peace be upon him



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Manipulation is defined as illegitimate authority and influence towards others through discourse, so as to make people accept, believe, behave, or act according to the ideas and interests of a manipulator and against the interest of themselves (Van Dijk, 2003b; Van Dijk, 2006a). Socio-political manipulation happens when the elites in a society abuse their social power to control the masses and change public opinion for political ends through discourse; such manipulation is likely to be ideological since they entail power abuse or domination (Van Dijk, 2006a). Van Dijk (2006a) suggests that “social-political manipulation always involves ideologies, ideological attitudes and ideological discourse structures” (p. 374). Language has an important role in creating oppression and discrimination since ideologies are concerned with communication of ideas. In other words, texts and talk are not neutral, but ideologically loaded and discourse “plays a fundamental role in the daily expression and reproduction of ideologies” (Van Dijk, 2003b, p. 4). Once people’s attitudes are influenced, little or no further manipulation attempts may be necessary for people to act according to these attitudes. Therefore, social dominant groups can abuse their power to inculcate ideologies in their audiences (Van Dijk, 2003a). A critical linguist’s job is to uncover the “covert ideological intent in texts” and therefore the exercise of power in texts (H. Widdowson, 2014). Ideologies are indeed linked to groupness and polarization. Thus, political speakers and preachers create and naturalize power relationships, ideologies and identities through the manipulative styles of language, that is, socially reconstructing reality based on groups’ ideologies. Consequently, polarization is developed because of emphasizing the differences between ‘US’ and ‘THEM’ and preferred and unpreferred identities are constructed which leads to discrimination and inequality in society based on identity. This study investigates how ideologies and discursive practices lead to manipulation and social inequality through discourse.

1.1 Background of the Study and Research Focus

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an approach to discourse analysis that provides answers for questions about the relations between power, politics, ideology, identity, culture, society, and language (F. Rahimi & Riasati, 2011). Van Dijk (1997a), being a leading scholar in this field, defines CDA as a new multidisciplinary discipline to analyze text and talk in social science and humanities. Indeed, CDA plays a critical role in understanding social practices. Discourse and ‘language use’ are the “critical social practices influenced by ideologies”, which in turn, also influence “how we acquire, learn or change ideologies” (Van Dijk, 2003b, p. 9). Thus, special attention needs to be paid to discourse and ideologies and the way they can contribute to manipulation. It is,

indeed, through text and talk that manipulation and social power abuse are exerted that lead to social inequality and discrimination. In other words, social actors can exert their powers through discourse and control the minds of people. They do this in a discursive manner; ideologies, identities, and power relationships are constructed and naturalized through manipulation and the traces of strategies and processes that are being used by the manipulators are hidden in the discourse (Van Dijk, 2003b; Van Dijk, 2006a). Therefore, manipulation and power abuse are critical issues that should be taken into account.

As a matter of fact, text and talk are not neutral, because they link people's social and personal worlds; they are ideologically loaded (Smitherman & Van Dijk, 1988). Thus, politicians can socially reconstruct reality based on their own ideologies. Indeed, political messages can have powerful but coded meanings which maintain individuals' behaviors, beliefs, and collective ideologies that inevitably lead to the formation of new political and social practices. Politicians reveal their ideologies in their use of language. Religious and political figures usually have certain ideologies that they believe they need to transfer to their audiences and they do this through language (David & Dumanig, 2011). The final goal of any CDA research is to decode the underlying hidden messages and ideologies which are implicit in the discourse.

Therefore, manipulation involves exerting illegitimate authority and influence on people through discourse, so that people support, accept, behave, believe, and do actions according to the ideology of the manipulator and in favor of the manipulator's interest, while it is against the people's interests (Van Dijk, 2006a). Accordingly, manipulation is not only concerned with power, but also with misuse of power or domination that leads to social inequalities. CDA can highlight the extent to which a political or religious figure's mind is filled with ideological considerations and reveal the underlying ideologies, biases, and power relations in his/her discourse.

In fact, the aim of language of politics is to persuade people to adapt to the viewpoints of the manipulator (Kamalu & Agangan, 2011). Beard (2000) asserts that it is crucial to study the language of politics, since it helps us to "understand how language is used by those who wish to gain power, those who wish to exercise power and those who wish to keep power" (p. 2). Van Dijk (1995a) and De Wet (2010) see discourses with political structures as a way to control minds and inculcate the dominant ideology into public opinion. Reality is usually constructed through manipulation of language by politicians. Accordingly, politicians can employ language as a means to promote their political agendas. Politicians do this through discursive interactions; they develop polarization and contrast between social groups through emphasizing the differences between US and THEM and this will contribute to discrimination and inequality in society based on identity where the preferred and unpreferred identities are formed. Van Dijk (2012) and Wodak, De Cillia, Reisigl, and Liebhart (2009) focused on decoding the racist ideologies and pointed out that, in racist discourse, SELF or US is constructed as ingroup

identity, while OTHER or THEM as outgroup. This polarization comes under the two macro-semantic strategies of *positive self-presentation* and *negative other-presentation*; the two general overall strategies that cover all the political and ideological moves in this research.

Indeed, categorizing people into ingroup and outgroup and labeling them as ‘good’ and ‘bad’ is not value-free; it is ideological and based on norms and values (Van Dijk, 2006c). Van Dijk (2006c) explains that in the context of public speaking on minorities, positive self-presentation is manifested through emphasizing own support for human rights, hospitality, lack of bias, empathy, etc. Positive self-presentation is actually basically ideological, since it is associated with the positive self-schema that describes the group’s ideology (Van Dijk, 2006c). Moreover, the representation of outgroup is performed through derogation or negative other-presentation, in discourses on immigrants and minorities (Van Dijk, 2000e). Negative presentation of ‘other’ indeed marks Other as outgroup and undesirable. In political and ideological discourses, positive self-presentation often comes with negative other-presentation. Accordingly, in the speeches that aim to legitimize or justify war, derogation of the other and identification of ‘Other’ as outgroup and ‘enemy’ is of utmost importance, as it has been shown in the research on the speeches of American presidents and their allies (Chouliaraki, 2007).

Additionally, the political atmosphere and discourse in the Middle East is changing and radicalization and dichotomous ideologies are attracting the attention of the researchers in the fields of linguistics, sociology, and politics. The Middle East in the contemporary world is now concerned with many issues that are threatening the security of the region and have highly affected the life of millions of people. The Middle East is “faced with interconnected internal and external security concerns, forming a ‘regional security complex’, which manifests itself through soft power (e.g. sectarian politics) and hard power (proxy wars), such as the complicated case of the Syrian civil war” (Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015a, p. 545). This regional security issue is manifested through the interactions between the regional and international actors who employ dichotomized and polarized discourses in the form of US versus THEM for the purpose of attracting public support for their political goals. As a result, this has led to violent conflicts where “socio-political groups, such as sectarian, religious, nationalist, or ideological groups are increasingly inclined to depict themselves (us) as protectors of an authentic identity threatened by outsiders framed as the Other (them) within a larger discourse” (Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015a, p. 545). Accordingly, learning the ideologies behind manipulative discourse can help in dealing with complicated emotional arguments, explain the important issues, and manage the problems facing societies.

1.2 Mohammad Al-Arefe's Background

This section presents an introduction to Mohammad Al-Arefe as the main speaker in this research whose speeches were critically analyzed. It is useful to highlight some worldwide political and ideological issues regarding this specific speaker in terms of his speeches and the ideological group he is associated with. Mohammad Al-Arefe (also spelled as Al-Arifi, Arabic: محمد العريفي), the 46-year-old Saudi cleric, is one of the most popular Muslim preachers worldwide and especially in the Middle East. He holds the status of Imam [a high-status leader] in the Mosque of King Fahd Academy in Saudi Arabia. He also delivers lectures at King Saud University as a university professor in Saudi Arabia. He has a large amount of followers among Muslims and especially the Arab world. He is actually very active in social media, posting on Facebook and Twitter on a daily basis. As of January 2017, Al-Arefe had over 16 million followers on Twitter, and his Twitter account is among the top 100 in the world, and number one in the Middle East (Top Twitter User Ranking, 2017). Apart from preaching the Salafist¹ interpretation of Islam, he is known to regularly weigh in on the social and political issues du jour (Al-Araby al-Jadeed Staff, 2015).

As a strong supporter of the Syrian revolution, Al-Arefe has often encouraged his followers to go to Syria and fight in the war. He is a controversial and highly divisive world figure. In March 2014, he delivered a series of sermons in Cardiff, UK after which the UK Home Office considered him a threat to the society and banned him from returning to Britain. Al-Arefe was accused of radicalizing young British citizens and encouraging them to go to Syria by the British media. Al-Arefe was also banned from entering Switzerland due to holding extreme views. Some media have accused him of brainwashing Muslim youth into accepting radical ideologies and increasing the tensions among sects (Abdo, 2015; Al Arabiya, 2013; Al-Nafjan, 2008; Elgot, 2013; Milmo, 2013; United States Department of State, 2014). Al-Arefe is known as a leading religious figure and charismatic speaker in Saudi Arabia and the Muslim world by the media (BBC, 2016). His odd and aggressive comments, such as talking about how to beat a wife or smashing the skull of the infidels and shedding their blood as favorite Muslim practices, has made him known as a Saudi hate preacher and entailed him to a ban from entering the Netherlands as well (Jones, 2014; Kanal von SiratAlmustaqim1, 2012; MEMRI, 2007). In another speech, he accused Saudi women who go abroad to study of being corrupted and suggest women to stay at home instead of working outside (Dankowitz, 2004). Moreover, in a show produced by Saudi Ministry of Religious Endowments, Al-Arefe claimed that Western women marry dogs and donkeys and half of Danish women do not know the father of their children (MEMRI, 2006).

¹ Salafi Muslims believe in a return to the original approaches in Islam. They believe in a united Islamic state and Sharia law and regard political involvement as not Islamic. Salafism includes a large range of beliefs, extending from non-violent religious devotion at one extreme, to Salafi Jihadism at the other end. Salafi Jihadists consider themselves the only true Muslims and other sects as infidels (Moghadam, 2008).

Indeed, Al-Arefe has a Wahhabi²-Salafi approach and highly advocates this ideology. He is interested in politics and gets himself involved in the politics of the region. Al-Arefe clearly expresses his hateful viewpoints and gives out verdicts on killing the Shia minorities who he considers are “nonbelievers who must be killed” (An-Nour News, 2014). However, Al-Arefe has shown contradictory viewpoints regarding the Jihadist groups (BBC, 2016). His worldwide call in Cairo for ‘Jihad’ in Syria ‘in every possible way’ is very popular and well-known to all Muslims. He has great influence on public opinion in Egypt and Saudi Arabia and on the youth in particular (Admon, 2013). In January 19, 2014, the MBC Channel’s Weekly Show run by the Saudi journalist Daoud Al-Shiryman showed a program on the topic of preachers who encourage Saudi youth to go for Jihad and the difficulties that their families face. Al-Shiryman identified four senior Saudi clerics, including Muhammad Al-Arefe, whom he charged for deceiving the youth and sending them to unnecessary wars in the name of Islam (Admon, 2014).

1.3 Problem Statement

Indeed, language is a powerful tool in discourse; it can be used to bring peace and happiness to the world or it can be used by unscrupulous speakers to launch wars in favor of their interests. Moreover, discourse can be ideological and these ideologies are a summary of beliefs that are used for self and other representation, and hence, they are the criteria to identify group members (Van Dijk, 2003b). On the other hand, the ‘elites’ in a society (e.g., politicians, scholars, journalists, etc.) have privileged access and control over discourse (Van Dijk, 1996). This control comes from their social power as the dominant group. Such powerful groups can abuse their social power to discursively influence the mind of the receivers. In other words, they can ideologically manipulate the audience into accepting the ideologies and doing actions that are in the interest of manipulators and against the interest of those being manipulated. Hence, public discourse becomes a means of the social reproduction of power and dominance (Van Dijk, 2006a). As a result, public speaking matters, since it offers evidences of the ideologies of actors producing it, or because it is likely to create certain effects in the audiences.

Thus, discourses produce and reproduce ideologies and polarization in societies and this in turn will create social actions. In other words, public speakers can construct the identity of ‘Other’ for the undesired group through discourse and this can lead to policy makings and social actions that discriminate against the social groups who are considered ‘Outsiders or’ ‘Other’. This social inequality and discrimination can become normalized or naturalized through discourse by the powerful groups. The social actions that follow such propaganda can range from abusive language against Others to violent actions and slaughter of the members of the group who are considered ‘Other’ based on prejudice and racism created

² Wahhabis are followers of Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab, the Saudi preacher who used to live in the 18th century. He is associated with radical and extremist ideologies.

through discourse. On the other hand, speakers make use of certain manipulative strategies that make it hard for the audience to know that they are being manipulated. They cognitively influence the mind of the audience through manipulation strategies, such as fallacious argumentation and appeal to the emotions of the audience to block their reasoning abilities. The function of CDA is to analyze such discourse structures and decode the messages behind them.

Indeed, we are in a critical period where manipulative discourses can create great chaos and bloodshed among Muslims and especially in the Middle East. Generally speaking, Muslims are peace loving and tolerant. However, some Muslim preachers, knowingly or unknowingly, abuse their power which comes from their position as prominent Islamic scholars to brainwash the youth and propagate their own ideology of war, followed by more hatred, chaos, and bloodshed which highly affect Muslim and non-Muslim communities. The Islamic State terror group (ISIS) is a creation of this kind of discourse. Indeed, such discourses used by the extremists are far from reality and is constructed based on their own interest to enforce and encourage hatred toward other sects and religions.

On the other hand, radical discourses and extremism are associated with ideologies of Salafism and Wahhabism; such ideologies construct an evil enemy identity of the 'Other' and specifically the Shia minorities and justify violence against them (Abou El Fadl, 2003; Alvi, 2014; Shukla, 2014; Ungureanu, 2011). Omar Ashour (2009) points out that Jihadism, Takfirism, and Salafism are the three 'violence-prone' ideologies. Alvi (2014) suggests that the 'Arab Spring' in 2011 also empowered the Salafi and Wahhabi movements in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, and elsewhere who both "have a long track record of killing fellow Muslims in the name of Jihad" (p. 49). She emphasizes the role of 'radical clerics' whose sermons are widely circulated worldwide through social media in promoting hatred, extremism, and violence among Muslim communities.

Saleh and Kraetzschmar (2015b) pointed out that the sectarian rhetoric of Salafi groups in Egypt had a major role in mobilizing the masses and increasing violence against minority Shia Muslims in Egypt and elsewhere. They warn against the new Salafi's rhetoric in the Middle East that threatens the security of the region and explain that, "Salafi preachers and activists have increasingly portrayed local Shi'a as a threat to the Egyptian Sunni religious identity, thus inciting antagonism against the Shi'a community in the country" (p. 11). In other words, there is a new wave of 'Othering' discourse in the Middle East promoted by some Muslim preachers which increases the tensions between Shia and Sunnis in the region. Jocey (2010) emphasizes the crucial need to analyze hate speeches, since most of the studies in this area have analyzed the racialized speeches that rest "in the area of implicit or covert racism", and hence, a large body of racialized language is unexplained, that is, "the openly racist discourses of hate groups" (p. 28).

On the other hand, research show that political and religious leaders have been successful in manipulation public opinion and launching unnecessary wars, such as the case of war in Iraq in 2003 (Hummadi, 2009; Sahlane, 2012; Tekaya, 2014). Kellner (2007) studied Bin Laden's and Bush's discourses after the 9/11 terror attack and reported that extremists and radical Islamists also produce a simplistic binary discourse that construct an evil out of the 'Other to legitimize terrorism. He pointed out that religion can be used to justify and legitimize lying which is very dangerous.

Today, we are witnessing catastrophic human tragedies in Syria which has dramatically affected the life of millions of innocent people, mostly Muslims. The emergence of ISIS and other terrorist groups around the world has also raised concerns worldwide about the discourses that promote extremism, hatred, and violence. The role of Muslim leaders, scholars, preachers, ideologues, researchers, etc., is of utmost importance in dealing with the current issues. Friday Sermons and public speeches by Muslim scholars play a crucial role in the production of social practices and construction of preferred models and identities in the context of religious discourses. Especially the speeches delivered by Mohammad Al-Arefe have been widely translated into many languages and circulated on social media worldwide. While his manipulative discourse can easily be identified by non-Muslim audience, the contextual constraints, such as Al-Arefe's high status as a well-known Muslim scholar, the religious context of the speeches and the shared values between the speaker and the audience, as well as, the emotional atmosphere regarding the Syria issue make it unnoticed by a huge population of Muslim audience. Therefore, this study systematically analyzes such discourses and provides some insights into such issues that have worldwide impact.

1.4 Research Aim

The aim of this study is to critically scrutinize and analyze the selected speeches delivered by Mohammad Al-Arefe in order to (i) decode the ideological messages and (ii) reveal his discursive practices which can contribute to the reproduction and construction of ideologies and formation or change of 'mental models' for the purpose of manipulation.

1.5 Research Objectives

This research takes three objectives which are explained below.

- To analyze the discourse structures and highlight those that show traces of ideologies.
- To examine Al-Arefe's speeches and identify the discursive strategies employed by the speaker.
- To explore how Al-Arefe's discourse contributes to the formation or change of social representations, such as ideologies, attitudes, knowledge, and norms and values.

1.6 Research Questions

1. What ideologies are manifested in Al-Arefe's discourse?
2. What discursive strategies are present in Al-Arefe's speeches for manipulation purpose?
3. How does Al-Arefe's discourse show traces of manipulation of minds and control of actions?

1.7 Theoretical Underpinning

Van Dijk (2003a; 2008a; 2009a; 2009b) as a prominent scholar in the field of CDA introduces socio-cognitive approach to CDA which entails the relation between society, mind, and discursive interaction. In other words, Van Dijk suggests a triangulation network that explicitly connects society, discourse, and cognition. What distinguishes Van Dijk's approach from other approaches to critical discourse studies (CDS) is that other CDS studies only look at the relations between discourse and society while the socio-cognitive approach assumes such relations to be cognitively-oriented. In other words, social structures and discourse structures are different in nature and can be related only through the language users' cognition (Van Dijk, 2009b). Van Dijk (2014) explains:

Local and global social structures condition discourse but they do so through the cognitive mediation of the socially shared knowledge, ideologies and personal mental models of social members as they subjectively define communicative events as context models. We are thus able to account both for the social, political and cultural aspects of discourse and for the subjective ways individual social actors produce and reproduce social representations as well as social structure (pp. 12-13).

Van Dijk (2009b) asserts that a triangular socio-cognitive account of CDA can be applied to all discourses and especially racist discourses. The discursive feature of the model is associated with “many structures of racist text and talk, such as specific topics, negative descriptions of minorities or immigrants, disclaimers, the lexicon and other grammatical structures, topoi, argumentation”, as well as, “structures of ideological polarization between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’” (p. 64). Furthermore, these discourse structures are explained in terms of the “underlying, socially shared ethnic prejudices and racist ideologies and the ways they influence the mental models of individual language users” (p. 64). Finally, such discourses and their cognitive bases politically and socially create production of inequality and domination by the dominant groups against the minorities. The powerful elites and institutions have privileged access to the public discourses and control such discourses (Van Dijk, 2009b).

Van Dijk (2003a) considers language users as ‘social actors’ with both social and personal cognitions. Personal cognitions refer to the subjective representations or experiences called ‘mental models’. These mental models contain the beliefs and knowledge people have acquired during their life. The experiences related to discourse, ongoing situations, and interactions are reproduced in a mental model called ‘context model’ (Van Dijk, 2001a). Moreover, there is social memory or cognition which refers to the “social representations, such as more general and abstract socio-cultural knowledge, attitudes or ideologies, people share with other members of a group” (Van Dijk, 1998a, p. 9). The two individual forms of cognition both affect discourses and interactions of people, while the ‘shared social representations’ control groups’ collective actions. Accordingly, cognition is the important interface that links personal to social, as well as, individual discourse to social structure (Van Dijk, 2003a).

Furthermore, people use language to enact power. Van Dijk (2003a) defines the approach of enacting power as controlling the context or the minds of people through text and talk. In this sense, dominance of power is explained as control of others’ actions. CDA examines the strategies, structures, or other properties of text, talk, communicative events and verbal interactions to find out their role in these modes of reproduction. The link between power and discourse assumes the following points: First, having access to certain types of discourses, such as, politics, science, or media, is a resource of power. Second, actions are controlled by the minds. Finally, discourse can control the actions of people directly or indirectly, because people’s minds are affected by text and talk, for example, in the cases of persuasion and manipulation. In other words, discourse structures influence cognition, for instance, in manipulation and the possible result is that people get things done by language use. Accordingly, those who are in control of the discourse would be able to control the mind and actions of other people as well (Van Dijk, 2003a). Dominance is considered illegitimate in this sense. The main duty of CDA is to reveal the way powerful groups can control public discourses and abuse their power to manage people’s opinions and actions (Van Dijk, 2003a). In the following example Van Dijk explains the “socio-cognitive interface between dominance and production”:

(1) A white speaker perceives, interprets and represents the present communicative situation in a mental context model, including also a representation of him/herself (as being white) and of the black addressee. (2) To do this, general attitudes about blacks will be activated. If these are negative, this will also show in the representation of the black addressee in the context model: the addressee may be assigned lower status, for instance. (3) This biased context model will monitor production and, all other things being equal (e.g. if there is no fear of retaliation, or there are no moral accusations), this may result in the production of discourse structures that signal such underlying bias (Van Dijk, 1993b, p. 262).

The above socio-cognitive processes underlie the racist discourse production. Van Dijk (1993b) explains that, “these various mental strategies and representations of individual speakers are of course premised on the condition that white speakers share their attitudes and more fundamental anti-black ideologies with other whites” (p. 262). Additionally, this is the reason behind the whites’ engagement in similar behaviors in similar contexts.

An important point in the socio-cognitive approach is that discourse properties must be aimed at activation or production of “mental models” about ethnic minorities, so that these models promote negative ideologies and attitudes in the audience. Accordingly, these negative social representations will in turn form models that justify discriminatory actions and discourses against those minorities. General attitudes include general opinions and can be acquired directly through general statements, such as “blacks are more involved in criminal activities”, which is a general negative attitudes on black people. Moreover, they can be acquired indirectly through news reports and biased storytelling, that is, taking few decontextualizing and unrepresentative cases and generalizing the model (Van Dijk, 1993b).

Additionally, reproduction of dominance is realized through legitimization or justification of the privileged social access or denial of the existence of inequality; the powerful groups claim that it is natural or necessary for them to have the privileged access or totally deny the existence of social inequality. These socio-cognitive strategies appear in discourse as well. There are two overall strategies to justify inequality: Positive Self-Presentation and Negative Other-Presentation. These two strategies are especially found in discourses on minorities. Semantic moves, arguments, stories, and other structures are employed to serve this purpose. Therefore, the aim will be to form models that show the contrast between US and THEM through emphasizing OUR good attributes and THEIR negative attributes and showing THEM as deviated or a threat. These *polarized* models are either consistent with already existed negative ideologies or create new negative models. Such generalized models are then strategically shown to be ‘typical’ and not exceptional. Then, speakers try to convince the audience that there are no other

alternatives or interpretations of the “deviant actions of the Others” and it “is always like that” (Van Dijk, 1993b).

Additionally, some discourse structures are more conducive in the formation of models of events where US is represented versus THEM. The most obvious structure is the semantic content, that is, statements that directly evaluate US as positive and OTHERS as negative (Van Dijk, 1993b). However, there is a need to show these statements as credible. Therefore, the following persuasive strategies are being employed:

- Argumentation; reasoning to represent Others negatively
- Rhetorical figures; hyperbolic statements of the negative actions of Others
- Lexical Styles; choice of words with positive or negative loads
- Storytelling; telling negative stories and negative details of the events
- Structural emphasis of negative actions of Others
- Quoting credible sources, experts, or witnesses (Van Dijk, 1993b).

Van Dijk (1993b) explains that these strategies create a ‘preferred model’ in the mind of the audience. He refers to this process as “discursive marginalization of dominated groups.” Accordingly, the dominant discourse is expected to focus on many forms of positive self-representation and negative other-representation. One of the common techniques is to focus extensively on the possible threat of the Others to the interests of the powerful group. It can happen in either an overt and blatant way or in a subtle way by elites. Moreover, the elites commonly employ humanitarian norms and values to discredit the Others.

Therefore, these structures may signal the underlying attitude or position of the speaker that he tries to hide. “Discursive mind control” is, thus, described as controlling the mental models and/or social representations. In case this control is in favor of the dominant group and against the interests of the recipients who are being manipulated, it is considered a form of power abuse and domination. Accordingly, it can influence both the group’s beliefs and knowledge and the socially shared ideologies of the group (Van Dijk, 2003a).

In fact, dominance comes in many forms with different cultural, social, historical, and political properties, and therefore, has different discursive reproductions. However, the above mentioned strategies hold true for all domains of language, gender, politics, religion, and so on, where groups are being marginalized, differentiated, or oppressed. Thus, in discourses whose audience belong to the powerful group, it is expected that the discourse focuses on the “persuasive marginalization of the ‘Other’ by manipulation of event models and the generalized negative attitudes derived from them” (Van Dijk, 1993b, p. 265).

1.7.1 Contextual Constrains of Manipulation

Manipulating people is indeed concerned with manipulating their minds, beliefs, knowledge, and ideologies which in turn leads to the control of their actions. The purpose of CDA is to analyze the relation between discourse and social power, as well as, discourse and cognition in detail and figure out the way mind control is exercised and exerted. Therefore, CDA investigates both the details of the text and talk, as well as the political aspects of discursive manipulation (T. Huckin, 2002). Manipulation is an important notion in CDA that has both social and cognitive dimensions. Van Dijk (2006a) asserts that special attentions should be paid to Manipulation, since it implies “discursive power abuse” (p. 359). In other words, it can lead to illegitimate domination and social inequality in a society. Van Dijk (2008b) suggests that manipulators’ final goal is to influence the mind of the receivers through discursive manipulation. He explains that discursive practices “are geared towards the control of the minds of participants, recipients, or the audience at large, in such a way that the resulting mental changes are those preferred by those in power, and generally in their interest” (p. 70).

In other words, manipulation strategies are geared towards “the formation or activation of ‘preferred’ models” by powerful groups through discursively emphasizing “those properties of models that are consistent with our interests (e.g. details of our good deeds),” and discursively deemphasizing “those properties that are inconsistent with our interests (e.g. details of our bad deeds)” (Van Dijk, 2006a, pp. 367-368). For example, *blaming the victim* is a manipulative strategy where the powerful group discursively influences the audience’s mental models through putting the blame for certain actions on the Other. Therefore, any discursive strategy that helps with the formation of ‘preferred models’ can be manipulative, because such formation and activation of models is considered control of mental models which is not even noticed by the recipients of the discourse, and hence, contribute to manipulation. Thus, manipulation is illegitimate, “because it (re)produces, or may reproduce, inequality: it is in the best interests of powerful groups and speakers, and hurts the interests of less powerful groups and speakers” (Van Dijk, 2006a, p. 364).

In fact, discursive manipulation is not limited to discourse properties; it can also be exerted contextually, since people understand text and talk through the whole communicative event. Thus, the perceived credibility, power, and authority of the speakers can contribute to manipulation (Giles & Coupland, 1991). In other words, the setting properties of an event, such as place, circumstances, time, and participants’ roles can contribute to the discursive control of mind and manipulation. Therefore, manipulation is highly context dependent, meaning that, some people may be more prone to manipulation and some others may be stronger in resistance to manipulation. Likewise, “many forms of commercial, political or religious persuasion may formally be ethically legitimate but people may still feel manipulated by it, or critical analysts may judge such communication to be

manipulating people” (Van Dijk, 2006a, p. 361). CDA examines the way contextual features affect the minds of dominated group members in their perception of the communicative event and creation of “preferred context models” (Rojo & Van Dijk, 1997).

Context is explained as the structure of social events that are relevant for the discourse comprehension and production (Duranti & Goodwin, 1992; Van Dijk, 2003a). Van Dijk (2003a) has divided the concept of context into the following categories: participants in different communicative or social roles, the ongoing actions, the overall definition of the situation, setting (place, time, etc.), and the mental representations of participants, that is, their knowledge, opinions, ideologies, attitudes, and goals. Controlling context means managing one or more of the above categories, for instance, identifying the form of the communicative event and setting the time and place of that event, the selection of audience with regard to their beliefs and knowledge, or the social actions that are aimed to reach through discourse (Diamond, 1996, as cited in Van Dijk, 2003a).

In sum, the structures of discourse are not considered manipulative by themselves; they have manipulative effects in certain communicative events or in the way they are understood by the hearers in their context models (Van Dijk, 2006a). Thus, successful manipulation happens when the speaker knows about the mental models of the audience and their insufficient knowledge and is also aware of their earlier experiences, emotions, and ideologies. However, not all the members of the group need to have the ideal conditions for manipulation; it is enough that a large group of them have such properties. If majority are able to resist the manipulation through counter arguments and correct information, then manipulation would not be effective (Van Dijk, 2006a). Taking these conditions into account, Van Dijk (2006a) introduces a contextual criterion where the receivers of manipulation can be considered as victims, because they lack the main properties to identify, avoid, or resist manipulation. These conditions include:

- not having enough relevant knowledge to come up with counter arguments to identify biased or false information,
- current group norms, values, and ideologies that are impossible to be ignored or rejected,
- highly emotional atmosphere or drama which affects people’s emotional state,
- social power, credibility, or status of the speaker which makes people to trust and accept the arguments and discourses of the elites or powerful groups.

However, manipulating the mind of people is not always involved with negative association. Many forms of manipulation are legitimate, such as, teaching and instruction through persuasive strategies. Manipulation is considered illegitimate

when it goes beyond persuasion to control the minds and actions of the recipients of the discourse in a desired way in favor of the manipulator and against the benefits of those being manipulated. Moreover, in persuasion the recipients are free to think and act, while in manipulation there are contextual constraints that prevent the recipients to understand the real intentions of the manipulator or to resist manipulation, and hence, they are considered victims (Wodak, 1987).

1.7.2 Ideological Manipulation

Indeed, socio-political manipulation assumes power abuse and domination, and hence, such manipulation is likely to be ideological (Van Dijk, 2008b). Emphasizing the role of ideologies in manipulation, Van Dijk (2006a) points out that, “socio-political manipulation always involves ideologies, ideological attitudes and ideological discourse structures” (p. 374). Political and social elites in a society can manipulate through abuse of their social power (Van Dijk, 1995d). Accordingly, “ideologies may be critically examined when (unjustly) legitimating power abuse or domination” (Van Dijk, 1998b, p. 11). Thus, CDA analyst needs to analyze ideologies and the way they are being used in discourse by manipulators.

Ideologies are the fundamental frameworks that manage the social cognitions shared by members of groups or institutions and work as the interface between the cognition processes that underlie “discourse and action, and the societal position and interests of groups” (Van Dijk, 1995b, p. 17). Thus, ideologies are abstract and general and are defined in groups. Van Dijk (2003b) asserts that ideologies are associated with the groups’ properties, for example, the groups’ status, identity, natural setting, interests and goals, or their relations with other groups (Van Dijk, 1998b). Furthermore, ideologies have both social and cognitive functions; their social function is to maintain the group’s interests and their cognitive function is to produce the group’s social representations, knowledge, and attitudes. Therefore, ideologies “indirectly monitor the group-related social practices, and hence also the text and talk of its members” (Van Dijk, 1995c, p. 248).

On the other hand, the group that has more social power, will also have more chances to represent own group and other groups in the way they prefer. In other words, the powerful group can control the discourse and the representations through managing the ordering of social events and blurring or highlighting their preferred social actors (Tenorio, 2011). Ideologies work as the mental aspect of this type of control, meaning that, ideologies are the basis for the practices of the members of dominant groups. In other words, these ideologies provide the principles through which such abuses of power are accepted, legitimized, or justified. Van Dijk suggests the phrase “dominant ideologies” to refer to the ideologies used by the dominant group in legitimization and reproduction of their dominance (Van Dijk, 2003b).

Indeed, social or political groups can create and reproduce discursive acquisition of ideologies through a variety of forms, such as indoctrination, catechesis, education, and so on. This is performed by professional group members or elites in the group, such as priests, teachers, politicians, or ideologues. However, not all ideological discourses are manipulative. Manipulation happens when there exists some contextual constraints that prevent the audience to think freely, such as fallacious and emotional argumentation or making use of lies and deception. The dominant groups are usually associated with some kinds of “ideological manipulation,” such as biased information through text and talk; they make use of ideological discourse structures to construct reality based on their own interests (Van Dijk, 1998b). Moreover, manipulation discursively is related to the ideological discourse forms, that is, “emphasizing ‘Our’ good things, and emphasizing ‘Their’ bad things” and differs from legitimate mind control, such as instruction and persuasion” (Van Dijk, 2006a, p. 359).

In other words, ideologies can be “‘invented’ in the appropriate historical and social circumstances and explicitly propagated among group members” (Van Dijk, 1998b, p. 98). The issue arises when the group members have biased or incomplete mental models and those elites in control of public discourse “manufacture ideologies that have no ‘grounding’, but which members acquire as a result of propaganda” (p. 88). Then, such manufactured ideologies are shared, propagated, and instructed in seminars, lectures, sermons, and so on through powerful group. In other words, they are produced and reproduced by the elites through discourse. For example, elites can produce and reproduce racist ideologies which favor their own interests, since “racism as a system of inequality” is in the interest of the dominant groups (p. 174). Such propaganda legitimize certain actions that lead to discrimination against minorities.

Sometimes such propaganda happens in the context of religion and through religious institutions. Van Dijk (1998b) suggests that ideologies can be constructed from direct ideological statements in religious and political discourses through propaganda. The function of propaganda is thus to directly affect group members’ ideologies and attitudes. This is performed through making use of many strategies such as *evidentiality* and *examples* which give a sense of validity to the ideologies for purpose of manipulation (Van Dijk, 1998b). For example, the propagandist brings about many real-time stories, evidences, narrations, and quotes to associate the ‘Other’ with negative attributes and put the blame for all issues on them.

In sum, the powerful groups can produce and reproduce ideologies through discourse and transmit it to the public. The transmitted ideologies can be “ethically doubtful or socially unacceptable beliefs.” Such ideologies are then shared and manipulated by the group members and “once shared, ideas may thus become part of the public domain, and thereby acquire a more social or cultural dimension” (Van Dijk, 1998b, p. 16). Therefore, propaganda is an ideological discourse, because it has the immoral or illegitimate ideological function of the exercise of power (Van Dijk, 1995c; Van Dijk, 2003b; Van Dijk, 2006b). Propaganda is not

only about ‘unethical ideas’, but also about ‘unethical ways of conveying ideas,’ that is manipulating the mind of audience through appealing to their emotions or fallacious argumentation which block reasoning. In Chapter 2, there is a discussion on propaganda techniques and the way powerful groups use propaganda to ideologically manipulate their audience.

1.7.3 Polarization

The concept of *polarization* is central to ideological analysis in CDA. Polarization is indeed constructed through discourse and for manipulation purposes. Van Dijk (2008b) introduces the notion of “discursive group polarization (de-emphasize good/bad things of Us/Them)” as the main discursive practices that are found in all ideologically manipulative discourses (p. 227). He explains that, “sociopolitical manipulation is usually ideological, and manipulative discourses often feature the usual ideological polarization patterns at all levels of analysis” (p. 228).

In other words, Van Dijk (2003b) considers ideology as the collective beliefs of a group that forms Self and Other; they are directly expressed in the form of “what WE think about THEM” in propaganda discourse (Van Dijk, 2000d, p. 17). Moreover, ideologies are irrelevant, if there is no disagreement between groups over the interests or goals or there is no fight over resources and power; ideologies make sense only between and within the groups and groups’ conflicts. For instance, ‘cultures’ can share common ground knowledge, norms, and values, but they cannot share ideologies; one can talk about religious or political ideologies, but not “cultural ideologies.” As a result, ideologies are group members’ identification tool, that is, once someone speaks as a group member, his discourse can show it. For example, when he speaks about Themselves and Others, then the discourse would show polarization of ingroup-outgroup in the form of US versus THEM. Accordingly, ideology is concerned with power, and hence, there is a need for a ‘power base’ e.g., knowledge, money, force, status, etc. Critical researchers analyze the dominance and power abuse, as well as, the way ideologies are abused to legitimate such dominance (Van Dijk, 2003b).

In sum, ideologies are polarized; they show that the groups are in conflict and that there is a division between ingroup and outgroup. These fundamental structures of ideologies are manifested in political opinions, such as racist attitudes, and are found in the group members’ biased mental models. On the other hand, such mental models control the discourse features, meaning that, in case they are polarized, there is a high possibility that the discourse also shows many forms of polarization. Van Dijk suggests that majority of ideological discourses show the following general overall strategies:

- “Emphasize positive things about Us.
- Emphasize negative things about Them.
- De-emphasize negative things about Us.
- De-emphasize positive things about Them” (Van Dijk, 2003b, p. 44).

The above four strategies create a conceptual square that Van Dijk refers to as discursive strategies of “ideological square”; emphasizing ingroup’s good things and outgroup’s bad things (Van Dijk, 1998b; Van Dijk, 2003b; Van Dijk, 2006a; Van Dijk, 2010). He explains that these strategies can be applied to the analysis of all levels of discourse structures. For example, a variety of structures can be used to “emphasize” and “deemphasize” ideas; one can talk implicitly or explicitly, briefly or at length, or use euphemism or hyperbole about his group’s good things and Others’ bad things (Van Dijk, 2003b).

1.7.4 Theoretical Framework

Indeed, mind control can be legitimate, such as in teaching and instruction. Manipulation happens when mind control is considered illegitimate and lead to social inequality and dominance. Manipulators make use of many discursive strategies to influence the mind of their audience. Manipulation strategies are ideological since the ideological square of discursive group polarization, which is seen in all ideological discourse, can be applied to manipulation strategies as well (Van Dijk, 2003b; Van Dijk, 2005). Thus, discursive strategies are not only used for the purpose of manipulation, but also for different ideological intentions to obtain specific goals. Such goals may range from legitimization of certain social discriminatory practices at the level of local or attracting public consent for supporting a war at the international level. However, all of the discursive ideological strategies fall under the two general overall strategies of manipulation, that is, *positive self-presentation* and *negative other-presentation* (Van Dijk, 2006a).

Manipulative discourse can, thus, focus on many fundamental important issues, such as national and international solidarity, the global struggle between Good and Evil, and “positive self-presentation as a strong and morally superior leader, and negative other-presentation” (e.g. of the opposition) as corrupted and weak (Van Dijk, 2006a). Once a discourse proves to be ideologically-based, we can analyze the expression of ideology at many levels of the discourse, such as meaning, formal structure, and actions and interaction (Van Dijk, 2003b).

The theoretical account of discursive manipulation used in this study follows the overall multidisciplinary framework that Van Dijk has advocated, triangulating a discursive, cognitive, and social approach (Van Dijk, 2003b; Van Dijk, 2006a; Van Dijk, 2008a; Van Dijk, 2009b). The researcher adopted parts of Van Dijk’s

theories that best suited the objectives of the study with concern to ideological discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 2003b; Van Dijk, 2006a; Van Dijk, 2006c). Moreover, some insights from argumentation theory (Bennett, 2015; Hart, 2013), propaganda language (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012; Lee & Lee, 1972), and hate speech discourse (Benesch, 2012; Gagliardone, Patel, & Pohjonen, 2014; Woodward et al., 2014) were also employed for the analysis. As Van Dijk (2011) suggests, considering many approaches to CDA can help the researchers with the analysis and increases understanding of the discourse and its role in the society. Figure 1 shows the theoretical framework of this study.



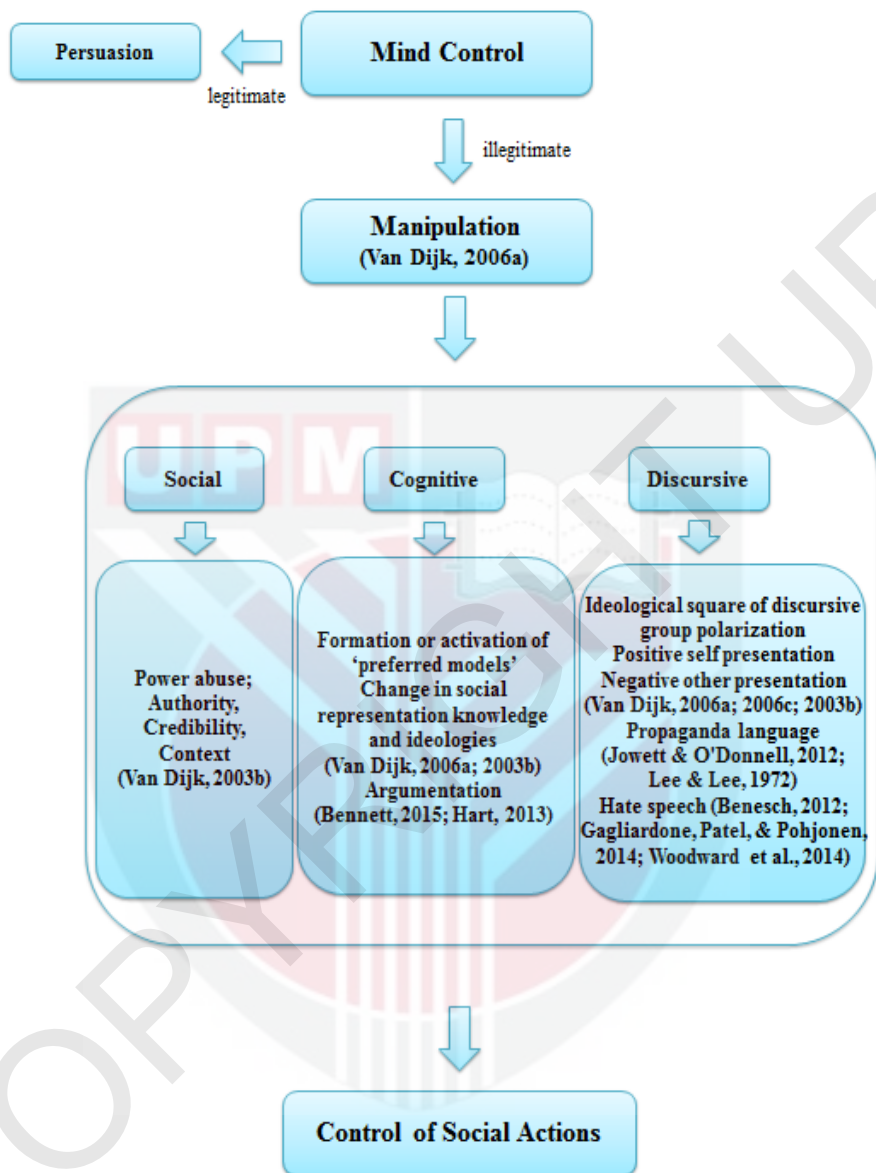


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

1.7.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is illustrated in Figure 2. As it is shown in the figure, this study started with analyzing the data within the broader socio-political context, that is, the political climate of Syria at the time of uprising and the conflicts aroused by the Wahhabi social group. Then, the data which include the transcripts of the three speeches delivered by Mohammad Al-Arefe were collected online and the texts of the speeches were critically analyzed through a CDA perspective and with regard to the social actors and power relations in the Muslim world, as well as, the Syria civil war and the ideological groups and conflict in the Middle East. Van Dijk's (2003b; 2006a; 2006c) theories on political, ideological, and manipulative discourses were taken as analytical tools. The main focus of the study was on Al-Arefe's ideologies and ingroup-outgroup representation and polarization.

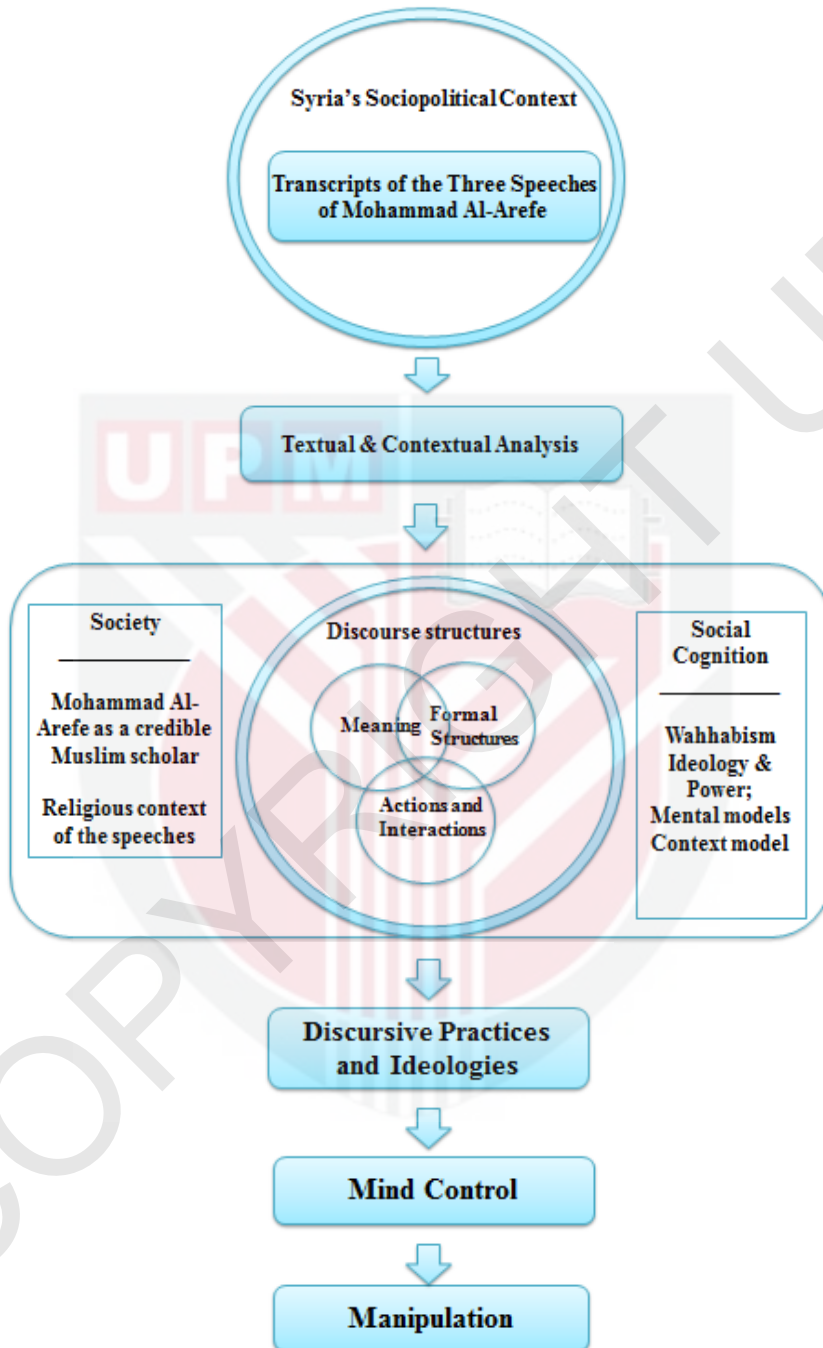


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

1.8 Scope of the Study

This study is limited to the written aspect of three speeches by Mohammad Al-Arefe, two of which were delivered in 2012 and 2013 during the unrest in Syria and the third one was delivered in the end of 2009, one year before the Syrian uprising. The first two speeches were selected based on their interpretation in the media as a clear call for Jihad in Syria. These two speeches were circulated widely in social media and the YouTube videos of the speeches show hundreds of thousands views. Additionally, Al-Arefe's speeches and his declaration of Jihad concerned the world and media accused him of radicalizing the youth and encouraging them to go to war in Syria (Al Arabiya News, 2014; Atwan, 2015; BBC, 2016; Channel 4 News, 2014; Murphy, 2014; Reuters, 2014; Spencer, 2013). In order to have a broader perspective in proceeding to discourse analysis, some socio-political aspects of the Middle East crisis and the civil war in Syria, including Wahhabism ideology, sectarianism, and Syria's ethnic composition are also discussed and elaborated.

1.9 Significance of the Study

In the recent decades, the study of political speeches of popular political figures has attracted the attention of both political scientists and linguists. The new developments in the world order and the emergence of new socio-political and cultural categorizations along with threats of war and terrorism have all contributed to the huge discourse analysis on political public speeches. The public speeches delivered by political figures and manipulation of language are highly affecting the socio-political situation of countries and influencing the welfare and life of people at large. Recent research in CDA show that political speeches have been successful in justifying wars that later happened to be unnecessary. Thus, political or religious leaders have the potential of manipulating public opinion based on their interest. They can construct realities based on preferred models which can be biased and ideological. Regarding the current events in the Middle East and the emergence of terrorist organizations, analyzing the discourse of Muslim leaders who appear to be manipulating their followers and supporting extremist ideologies is crucial. Kohl (2011) states that "literature on the use of religious speech in propaganda is scarce" (p. 15), and hence, signifying the importance of the current research. Indeed, religion can itself be used as a counter argument to resist manipulation, since the psychological status of a 'powerful God' is already filled. That is why religion often strictly rejects totalitarian regimes and is normally an issue to the dictators. However, religion can also be used as a fundamentalist ideology and manipulators take the support of religion to reach their goals, because religion makes some preferred actions to appear moral, and hence, people will easily accept to do the actions (de Saussure, 2005).

Furthermore, looking into the socio-political context of the Muslim world and especially the bloody wars that are going on in Syria and Iraq, one can see the crucial role of Muslim leaders' discourse in controlling the mind of audiences into accepting their ideologies. Regarding the fact that Muslims normally follow the viewpoints of their leaders, the importance of analyzing the discourse of Muslim leaders becomes clear. It is, thus, crucial to critically analyze the discourse of those Islamic leaders who have large audiences and a great impact in the social cognition to see the ideologies behind their discourse and how they manage to appeal to their audience. There is a scarcity of studies on the use of religious speech and propaganda (Kohl (Kohl, 2011 studied Nazi propaganda). Moreover, most of the research is done in the field of political sciences or international relations and there are few of such research with a focus on CDA.

In sum, ideological discourses are sometimes followed by ideological conflicts and violence. In fact, majority of Muslim leaders, authorities, and organizations are doing their best to prevent ideological conflicts and extremism. However, a few Muslim preachers are abusing their power to propagate their own radical ideologies onto the masses of the youth who are not sufficiently knowledgeable to resist manipulation. Therefore, it is crucial to analyze the discourses of Muslim preachers who have great impact in the Muslim world to find the ideologies underlying their speeches, as well as, the contextual criteria that makes the manipulation go unnoticed by the receivers. Indeed, most of the research on the current Syria war are in the fields of political sciences and international relations; there have been few CDA studies on radical discourses with regard to the Syria war because of the novelty of the issue, and hence, highlighting the necessity and rationale of the current study.

1.10 Definition of Key Terms

Discourse Structures: Ideologies are reproduced and expressed through discourse in a variety of discourse structures, such as argumentation, examples, topics, speech acts, and so on. Van Dijk (2003b) categorizes 'discourse structures' into the three levels of meaning, formal structures, and actions and interactions.

Discursive strategy: Discursive strategy refers to the way social actors manipulate and create realities through text and talk. Van Dijk (2006a) refers to discursive strategies as the construction of meanings that explain what the social actors do while using language.

Ideology: Ideologies are the "fundamental social cognitions that reflect the basic aims, interests and values of groups." Ideologies can be regarded "as the fundamental cognitive programs or operating systems that organize and monitor

the more specific social attitudes of groups and their members” (Van Dijk, 1993b, p. 258).

Illegitimization: The discursive strategy used by the dominant group in a society to delegitimize the ideas or principles of the opposition group or even “challenge the very existence or identity of the other group,” such as the case of delegitimizing minorities and immigrants (Van Dijk, 1998b, p. 258).

Legitimization: It refers to the discursive strategies employed by a powerful group or the elites in a society to justify certain ideologies, policies, or courses of actions. Through legitimization, the powerful group tries to show that such actions are legal, normative, and consistent with the moral order of society or agreed upon by the majority (Rojo & Van Dijk, 1997).

Manipulation: Manipulation refers to an illegitimate alteration of a certain reality. It is defined as “a discursive form of elite power reproduction that is against the best interests of dominated groups and (re)produces social inequality” (Van Dijk, 2006a).

Polarization: The concept of polarization is central to ideological analysis in CDA and refers to discursive construction of preferred and unpreferred identities through emphasizing the differences between US and THEM for the purpose of manipulation. Polarization is realized through the two macro-semantic strategies of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation (Van Dijk, 2003b).

Power: The term, ‘power’ in this study refers to the political, social, or religious status of the elites or dominant groups in a society. ‘Powerful group’ also refers to those social groups who have privileged access to and control over discourse in a given society (Van Dijk, 1993b).

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BIODATA OF STUDENT

Maryam Enjavinezhad was born in Tehran, Iran. She obtained her first degree in bachelor of art in 'English Language and Literature' at Shiraz University in Iran. She also achieved her Master of Art in 'Persian Linguistics' from Shiraz University. After completion of her master, she worked as a senior lecturer in Islamic Azad University and Quranic Sciences University for ten years in Shiraz, Iran. Then, she enrolled in University Putra Malaysia to pursue a PhD in Linguistics. She performed research in Second Language Acquisition at UPM and published her first article titled, "Interlanguage syntax of 12 Persian speakers: The case of resumptive pronouns in English relative clauses." Then, she developed interest in Critical Discourse Analysis and shifted her research area to CDA. She did a qualitative research on manipulative discourse in the context of Islamic world. Her research is a multidisciplinary study integrating cognitive linguistics and political language. She successfully completed her PhD in 'Critical Discourse Analysis' at UPM.

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