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美国总统就职演说中《圣经》语言的批评性分析

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## 摘要

批评语篇分析旨在透过表面的语言形式，从语言学、社会学、心理学和传播学的角度揭示意识形态对语篇的影响，语篇对意识形态的反作用，以及两者是如何源于社会结构和权力关系并为之服务的。批评语言学家认为意识形态普遍存在于语言之中，因此语言同时也是社会控制和权力关系得以实现的一种重要手段，并直接参与社会现实和社会关系的构成。语言使用建立在一般常识的基础上，而社会权力关系则能通过意识形态影响人们的常识形成过程。批评语篇分析联系相关的历史和社会语境，揭示语篇中所隐含的意识形态领域的控制和统治关系，研究语篇在再现和加强控制、统治中的具体作用。

在批评语篇分析的认知体系中，作为拥有控制和支配的权势群体通常以法律、规范、制度等形式把权势表现出来。因为篇章和谈话会影响人们的心理，使行为受到心理的控制，影响人们的心理就会间接控制人们的心理和行为，故而批评语篇分析强调语言和语篇结构如何通过影响心理控制，达到在意识形态领域对社会进行控制的目的。

宗教作为实现社会控制和社会整合的一种有效手段，通过诉诸超自然的力量，为现存的社会秩序涂上神圣化的色彩，达到维系社会稳定和统治的目的。作为一种具有鲜明思想性和政治鼓动性的政治演说，美国总统就职演说辞毫无例外的利用了基督教圣经文化在西方社会根深蒂固的社会影响力，在社会历史语境中把《圣经》语言广泛运用到演说中，同时利用美国特有的“国民宗教”这一特殊社会背景，试图通过把自己的施政纲领，政治观点和履行上帝的召唤，为拯救人类而努力联系起来，借助《圣经》语言来弱化或隐藏意识形态领域对民众的心理控制，从而达到权势阶级利用意识形态维护统治的作用。

本文从批评语篇分析的角度对二战后十位美国总统的十五篇就职演说中的《圣经》语言进行分析，探明语篇不同层次的各种成分，包括词汇、句子都潜在地反映了说话人的信念、思想和价值观，而这些《圣经》语言则反映了美国总统利用西方民众笃信上帝以及上帝会拯救社会这一认知语境，一方面使自己的话语带有浓郁的圣经色彩，让民众以为是在接受上帝的召唤完成上帝赋予的使命；另一方面则掩盖了其企图向受话人施加影响的目的，同时这种方式会消

除或降低听话人的反感这个副作用，消除或减轻来自听话人的抵触情绪，而且甚至能够让听话人按照发话人预设理解机制来理解语篇的观点和思想，从而起到维持现存社会权力关系这个目的。

本文结合分析宗教和社会的关系、《圣经》语言在文学和政治语篇中的不同作用，揭示了《圣经》语言在美国总统就职演说这个特殊历史社会语境中产生的政治语篇中的作用，提示人们在阅读时要有批评意识，带着鉴赏和批评的眼光来看待所阅读文献的语言文字，尤其是带有强烈国家意识形态的政治语篇。

本文共有六部分组成。第一部分是引言；第二部分是相关批评语篇分析的理论和方法论；第三部分探讨宗教和社会的关系；第四部分是对美国总统就职演说中的《圣经》语言的定量分析和定性分析；第五部分涉及到《圣经》语言在文学和美国总统就职演说中的不同功能；最后一部分是本文的结束语，再一次重申了本文的主旨。

**关键词：**语篇，批评语篇分析，意识形态，美国总统就职演说，《圣经》语言，宗教和“国民宗教”

## Abstract

Critical discourse analysis, in the perspective of linguistics, sociology, psychology and communication, aims to disclose the influence of ideology upon discourses, the retroaction of discourses upon ideology, how ideology and discourses originate from social structure and power relationship, and how they serve society. Critical linguists assume that ideology exists universally in language, thus language is an important means of the realization of social control and power relationship and it is directly concerned with the composition of social reality and social relationship. Language use is on the basis of common sense, while social power relationship has an impact upon the formation of common sense through ideology. In a word, critical discourse analysis exposes the ideological control and domination relationship embedded in the discourses and studies the specific function of discourses in reproducing and reinforcing social control and domination under relative historical and social context.

In the cognition of critical discourse analysis, the powerful group, who control and dominate society, usually demonstrate their power in laws, regulations and systems. Discourse has an influence on people's psychology while the addressee's behaviors are under the control of psychology, and the addresser can indirectly manipulate the psychology and behavior of the addressee through influencing the psychology of the addressee. Hence critical discourse analysis focuses on how the linguistic forms and discourse structures achieve the aim to control society in ideology via psychological control.

As an effective means of social control and social integration, religion spreads a holy color on the existing social system to maintain the stability and domination of society via supernatural power. As a specific political discourse, American inaugural address, with no exception, takes advantage of the huge influence of Christianity and the Bible to apply a wide range of biblical languages in his address in the historical

and social context. What's more, American "Civil Religion" is a unique phenomenon in the United States and has played an important role in American daily life. Under this social context, it's natural for the presidents to associate his own political stands and administrative programs with the mission of God to save the whole world and the entire human beings, and thus to weaken or hide the psychological control of the masses in ideology via the biblical languages so as to help the powerful group to maintain their domination through ideology.

This paper analyzes the biblical languages in fifteen inaugural addresses of ten American presidents after the Second World War in the perspective of critical discourse analysis. Critical linguists assume that the various constituents of the different layers of a discourse, including lexicon, sentence etc., latently reflect the faith, ideology and values of the speaker. Hence the biblical languages in the American presidential inaugural address reflect the cognitive context that the presidents make good of the fact that the western people believe in God and believe in the illusion that God will save the world. Via these biblical languages the presidents put a biblical color in his discourse to make the masses assume that they are summoned by God to complete his mission; on the other hand, the presidents cover his purpose to impact the psychology of the addressee, meanwhile to eliminate or to reduce the side effect, that is, the disgusting and the resistance of the addressee, and even to make the addressee understand the discourse as the addresser has presupposed so as to maintain the existing social power relationship.

Through the analysis of the relationship between religion and society, and of the different functions of biblical languages in literature and political discourse, this paper reveals the specific functions of biblical languages in American presidential inaugural addresses which are produced in the specific historical and social context in order to promote the critical ideology in reading of the masses and to remind the masses that they should treat all kinds of discourses and texts, especially the political discourses of high national ideologies, in an appreciative and critical perspective.

This thesis consists of six parts. Part one is the introduction of this thesis. Part two offers the theories and methodologies of critical discourse analysis. Part three discusses the relationship between religion and society. Part four includes the quantitative analysis and the qualitative analysis of the biblical languages in American presidential inaugural addresses. Part five involves the different functions of biblical languages in literature and American presidential inaugural addresses. Part six, the last part is the conclusion of this thesis and emphasizes the theme of this thesis.

**Key words:** discourse, critical discourse analysis, ideology, American presidential inaugural address, biblical languages, religion and American “Civil Religion”

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# 1. Introduction

As an important cultural phenomenon in western countries, English political speeches concern the domestic affairs of a country or the diplomatic relations between countries. They are delivered to voice the country's diplomatic strategies and governmental stands, state the political attitudes or publicize the policies of the country as well as an important weapon in political struggles. American presidential inaugural addresses are typical English political speeches and are addressed to the whole country and to the world as a whole by the American President at his inauguration ceremony to state his administrative programs and persuade the public into accepting and supporting his administration. With strong worldwide influence and important historic significance, American presidential inaugural address is a kind of unique discourse which provides a new perspective for the understanding of the United States.

Christianity plays an important role in Western culture; therefore the majority of the Western people have a strong belief in God. As the main canon and spiritual pillar of Christianity, the Holy Bible has a profound and lasting impact on Western society and culture, and has permeated all the aspects of people's daily life. Accordingly, English political speeches apply Biblical languages with a high frequency to strengthen its own charisma through the mighty influence of God. As a unique kind of English political speeches, American presidential inaugural addresses are of no exception, so that they bear much more Biblical languages and much stronger Biblical color, which are of distinct political purpose and ideological meanings. Hence, a critical discourse analysis of the Biblical languages in American presidential inaugural addresses provides a way of exposing the national power will and ideologies embedded in the discourses.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA), also called critical linguistics or critical linguistic study, is a new discourse analysis method and analyzes social phenomenon through linguistic theories. It originated from Frankfurt school's critical theory in

1930s and was first put forward and established in the book *Language and Control* written by Fowler, Hodge, Kress and Trew in 1979. Critical discourse analysis, in the perspective of linguistics, sociology, psychology and communication, aims to disclose, through the surface linguistic forms, the influence of ideology upon discourses, the retroaction of discourses upon ideology as well as how ideology and discourses originate from social structure and power relationship and how they serve society. A decade later, Fairclough writes in his books *Language and Power* and *Critical Discourse Analysis* that ideology exists universally in language, and thus language is an important means of the realization of social control and power relationship, and it is directly concerned with the composition of social reality and social relationship. Language use is on the basis of common sense, while social power relationship has an impact upon the formation of common sense through ideology. In a word, critical discourse analysis exposes the ideological control and domination relationship embedded in the discourses, and studies the specific function of discourses in reproducing and reinforcing social control and domination.

Critical discourse analysis explores the relationship between language, power and ideology. According to critical linguists, the various constituents of different language layers in the discourses, including vocabulary and sentences, indicate the speaker's beliefs, thought patterns and values potentially. Power concerns the asymmetric relationship between the participants of a discourse. What's more, under different social and cultural contexts, the participants of a discourse enjoy different controlling power towards the generation, transmission and interpretation of the discourse. Thereby the ruling class usually propagates its own ideologies through language use to influence the ideologies of the public in order to maintain its own power and interests.

This paper analyzes the function of the Biblical languages in American presidential inaugural addresses in the perspective of critical discourse analysis and focuses on how these Biblical languages demonstrate the relationship between

language, power and ideology in American presidential inaugural addresses and the function of the Biblical languages in weakening and disguising how the ruling class maintains its domination through ideology.

First, this paper will state the concerning theories and methodologies of critical discourse analysis, such as the relations between language, power, and ideology, common sense and context as well as Halliday's systemic- functional theories and methodologies in part 2. Second, this paper expounds the relations between religion and society in part 3; then it will give a quantitative analysis and a qualitative analysis of the Biblical languages in American presidential inaugural addresses respectively; last but not two, it gives a contrast of the different functions of the Biblical languages in literature and American presidential inaugural addresses; finally, the conclusion is that American presidents make an utilization of all kinds of Biblical languages in their inaugural addresses by which they underlie the ideologies of not only their own but also their parties and the ruling class to the public and gains the support of the people to maintain the domination and boosts up the centripetal force of the nation by putting the whole nation in the same psychological context.

## **2. Theories and Methodologies of Critical Discourse Analysis**

Though the study of critical discourse analysis has not a very long history and there are no systematic theories as other linguistic schools, the theories and methodologies of critical discourse analysis also provide a very useful method for linguists to study discourses and texts, to make a good understanding of the discourses and texts.

### **2.1 Theories of Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical discourse analysis studies the relations between language, power and ideology and aims to discover the social meanings expressed in discourse by analyzing the linguistic structures in the light of their interactional and wider social contexts. Critical linguists believe that language reproduces ideology or even constructs ideology. The purpose of CDA is to expose the hidden ideologies in language and how it is out into effect.

#### **2.1.1 Historical Reviews of Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical discourse analysis (CDA), also called critical linguistics or critical literacy, is a new branch of modern linguistics. Through development of decades, nowadays critical discourse analysis has reached a new height and formed a new tendency giving rise to an inter-discipline—critical applied linguistics including critical linguistics, critical language awareness, critical pedagogy, critical sociology, critical sociolinguistics and critical literacy.

Some theories of CDA have a philosophical foundation of the critical theories of Frankfurt school with representatives of Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse and Max Horkheimer in 1930s who insisted on opposing all kinds of ideologies and opposing that ideology controls and dominates the psychology of the people.

Modern critical discourse analysis came into being in the late of 1970s from the research of critical linguistics started mainly in Britain and Australia. In 1979, R.

Fowler, B. Hodge, G. Kress and T. Trew published *Language and Control* in which they first put forward the concept of critical linguistics and the methodologies of discourse analysis, which unveils the prelude for the studies of critical discourse analysis. They aim at uncovering the influence of ideology upon discourse and the retroaction of discourse upon ideology through the analysis of public discourses.

One decade later, Fairclough published his influential book *Language and Power* in 1989 and *Critical Discourse Analysis* in 1995 in which he elaborates the interrelations between language, power and ideology, the historical development of discourse and social change, discourse analysis in social studies and critical language awareness as well. According to Fairclough (1989), ideology exists universally in language; hence language is not, as traditional linguistics claims, an objective, rational and transparent medium, nor it is merely a reflection of the objective outside world, but is a kind of social practice and directly gets involved in social process. Therefore language is an important means of the realization of social control and power relationship and it is directly concerned with the formation of social reality and social relationship. Language use is on the basis of common sense, while social power relationship has an impact upon the formation of common sense through ideology. That is to say, critical discourse analysis, taking the linguistic analysis as its main analytical method, studies the ideologies behind the discourse and revealing the relationship between language, power and ideology concerning with the characteristics and the social-historical context of the discourse.

Obviously, CDA is different from the previous discourse analysis; it is the criticism of discourse analysis. Fairclough (1992) defines the distinctions as follows: Critical approaches differ from non-critical approaches in not just describing discursive practice, but also showing how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies, and the constructive effects discourse has upon social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief, neither of which is normally apparent to discourse participants.

(Fairclough, 1992: 13)

van Dijk(1998) even claimed that:

CDA is a type discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context with such dissent research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose and ultimately to resist social inequality.

(van Dijk, 1998: 1)

In a word, CDA exposes the implicit control and domination relationship of ideology embedded in the discourses and studies the specific function of discourses in reproducing and strengthening social control and domination.

### 2.1.2 Language and Ideology

What is a language? Webster's *New World Dictionary* offers several most frequently used senses of the word "language", namely,

[1] (a) human speech; (b) the ability to communicate by this means; (c) a system of vocal sounds and combinations of such sounds to which meaning is attributed, used for the expressions or communication of thoughts and feelings; (d) the written representation of such a system; [2] (a) any means of expressing or communicating, as gestures, signs, or animal sounds; (b) a special set of symbols, letters, numerals, rules etc. used for the transmission of information, as in a computer; ...

(p. 759; quoted from 胡壮麟, 2001: 3)

Traditionally, linguists believed that language is an objective, rational and transparent medium for people to communicate and perceive the outside world. In the book *Linguistics: A Course Book*, the author defines that "language is a means of verbal communication" (胡壮麟, 2001: 3). According to the author, language "is instrumental in that communicating by speaking or writing is a purposeful act" and "is social and conventional in that language is a social semiotic and communication can only take place effectively if all the users share a broad understanding of human interaction including such associated factors as nonverbal cues, motivation, and

social-cultural roles” and “language learning and use are determined by the intervention of biological, cognitive, psychosocial, and environmental factors.” (胡壮麟, 2001: 3)

That is to say, language is a series of semiotics used by people to communicate and reflect the objective outside world which is unique to a nation or country with relations to their social and historical context. Approached from this perspective, the critical linguists draw upon the “Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis” advocated by American anthropologist and linguist Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf which states that there is “a systematic relationship between the grammatical categories of the language a person speaks and how that person both understands the world and behaves in it. Linguistic structures affect the speakers’ perceptions of reality and thus influence their thought patterns and worldviews”. (*Wikipedia*) Just as Whorf once also said:

It was found that the background linguistic system (in other words, the grammar) of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas, but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual’s mental activity, for his analysis of impression, for his synthesis of his mental stock in trade.

(Whorf, 1956: 212)

Simply speaking, according to Sapir and Whorf, language is not transparent; it reflects the exterior world and simultaneously moulds people’s way of thinking. It may even distort the reality, thus influencing and controlling people’s thought patterns and worldviews including ideology. Thereby CDA upholds that human beings hold some characteristics in common but they use different languages, i.e. linguistic structures to reflect their common culture. What’s more, even within the same language, language use demonstrates some differences due to the discrepancy of the users’ cultural background and ideology.

CDA draws its theories and methodologies mainly from M. A. K. Halliday’s systemic-functional grammar. Halliday assumes that language is a system network or

meaning potential, which is composed of sets of sub-systems available for option. His systemic-functional grammar asserts that the options or alternatives of linguistic forms that can be used by language users depend on their social functions. Accordingly, it believes that discourse analysis not only should analyze the language itself and language use but also should evaluate the discourse associating the concerned social and cultural context and ideology as well. Similarly, CDA combines discourse, language use and speech communication which are on the micro-level and power, control and the inequality between social communities which are on the macro-level because they assume that linguistic forms reflect the social functions of language, thus language is multifunctional and is a social behavior or even a social practice as a discourse which performs various functions through its realization in different context.

Hence, CDA upholds that language is a social practice (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) and discourse as the realization of language is a specific social practice, “conveying the significance and values of social institutions” (Fowler, 1991a). Obviously, discourse is the specific realization of language thus consisting of a system of viewpoints which determines the subjectivity of discourse. Consequently, discourse contains ideology, i.e. discourse is ideological and ideology is universal in discourse.

Ideology was first put forward by French philosopher Destutt de Tracy in 1796 and referred to “a science of ideas”. (Thompson, 1990: 30) In the evolution of over 200 years, the concept of ideology becomes more and more controversial. Marx and Engels regard ideology as a negative concept: ideology is the product of thought determined by material production, the system of values imposed on the governed by the governing class and the tool, used by the governing class consciously or unconsciously, to strengthen its power and ruling status. Ideology covers the reality in substance; it is a distorted and mysterious reflect of social reality. (俞金吾, 1993: 161) Frankfurt school inherits this concept of ideology and believes that ideology is



deceptive and its aim is to consolidate and reinforce the existing social order. According to Althusser, a representative of Frankfurt school, ideology is always penetrated by class prejudice and relates closely to people's interests which determine that ideology can not reflect the objective world truthfully. (Althusser, 1969: 233-234)

Different from the Frankfurt school, Antonio Gramsci, a representative of western-Marxism, holds that ideology is neutral or even positive. Gramsci objects to regarding ideology just as a series of false ideas; he assumes that ideology represents a kind of thought or worldview and an entity of worldview and its corresponding standards of behavior: ideology is "a worldview displayed implicitly in arts, laws, economic operations and all the individual and collective life". (Gramsci, 1971: 328)

Within critical linguistics, Fowler regards ideology as a neutral concept and points out that ideology "is a neutral definition and relates to the life style arranged and proofed by people". (Fowler, 1991a: 92) Kress and Hodge also believe ideology as a descriptive concept and assume that ideology is a system of ideas organized from a particular point of view and includes political attitudes or theories that distort the reality and science and metaphysics as well. (Kress & Hodge, 1979: 6)

Thompson defines ideology from the perspective of the relations between ideology and power: "ideology can indicate the way of which signification serves the power, and help to establish and maintain the asymmetric relationship of power in specific circumstance. In a broad sense, ideology is the signification serving the power." (Thompson, 1990: 7)

Veron (1971) dose not view ideology as images or concepts. He holds that ideologies are not the contents demonstrated in the discourse but are sets of rules determining the organization and function of images and concepts: "ideology is not a kind of specific message or a class of social discourses, but it is one of the many layers of organization of the messages from the perspective of it semantic features. Ideology is thereby a layer of signification that can exist in any kind of discourse,

even in the scientific discourse. Any material for social communication is accessible to an ideological reading. ” This kind of reading of ideology aims to find the organization and structure of message embedded in the discourse. While in order to analyze this potential organization and structure, it is of necessity to study its operation mechanism, i.e. the rules of option and combination. “Viewing from this point, we can define ideology as a system of semantic rules conveying a certain layer of the organization and structure of signification.” (Veron, 1971)

Accordingly, Fairclough defines that “ideology is significations of society generated within power relations as a dimension of the exercise of power and struggle over power.” (Fairclough, 1992: 67) Wodak offers a similar definition: “ideologies are particular ways of representing and constructing society which reproduce unequal relations of power, relations of domination and exploitation.” (Wodak, 1996: 18) van Dijk regards ideology as “the basis of the social representations shared by the members of social groups.” (van Dijk, 2004)

In a word, language users apply social meanings, many of which are shaped by ideology and embedded in the lexical and syntactic structures of natural language, to establish, manipulate, naturalize and maintain social relationships including the asymmetrical relationships of power. That is to say, a kind of ideology always displays itself by a kind of language and terms. The linguistic property of ideology determines its sociality, because since ideology reflects people’s life via language which is a universal medium of the highest sociality, ideology is by no means private but social. (俞金吾, 1993: 65) As we can only perceive the outside world via language; and we can only think in language. Hence understanding of language means understand of the world. Language is the premise that we perceive the world; and language exists in the world prior to us, just as the world exists in the universe prior to us. Ideology therefore always imposes itself to each person through language. Thus CDA regards ideology as an important instrument for establishing and maintaining unequal power relations and studies ideology through investigating the

social contexts to understand the ways in which particular forms are used by particular groups to construct and convey particular meanings.

### 2.1.3 Language and Power

According to what we have discussed about language and ideology in the former part, the analysis of ideologies in language and discourses means analyzing that how linguistic significations are used to serve the power relations and power struggle in society. Foucault points out that where there is a discourse, there is a power; power is the universal dominant force of discourse operation. Barthes even holds an ultra opinion: as a dominant force, power is hidden in all kinds of discourses; language is the medium in which power is embedded. (王一川, 1994: 241) Barthes believes that power particularly penetrates in the part which Saussure defines as language: “language, from its own structure, contains a kind of inevitable dissimulation. Utterance, more strictly, discourse is not used to communicate as people often emphasize, but to submit the people: language is a universal dominant force.” (王一川, 1994: 241) Thus power cannot be ignored in discourse analysis, especially in critical discourse analysis.

The word “power” contains two levels of meanings: power to and power over. The former refers to the ability by which people take measures to pursue their own purposes and interests: that is, individual or institution have the capacity to take actions, to interfere in the orders of the event and to change the process of the event. (辛斌, 2005: 21-22) The second meaning of power means the ability to control and dominate others and to demonstrate the power as a kind of relationship. In CDA, power refers to the second meaning and is a central concept as the controlling and dominant force. Just as Fairclough states two types of relationships between discourse and power, that is, power in discourse and power behind discourse: As for power in discourse, it is concerned with discourse as a place where relations of power are actually exercised and enacted. It occurs in our everyday conversations and speeches. While power behind discourse shifts the focus to how orders of discourse, as dimensions of the social

institutions or societies, are themselves shaped and constituted by relations of power. Power behind discourse is a hidden power... The ways conventions are shaped by those who have the power behind discourse are achieved through ideology.

(Fairclough, 1989:36)

Thus in the cognitive system of CDA, the concept of power is formed according to the asymmetric relationship between the participants of communication or discourse events and the unequal abilities of controlling the formation, distribution and use of discourses in concrete social and cultural contexts. Different formation, distribution and use of discourses bring on different forms of discourses.

According to van Dijk, if a social group enjoys the privilege of acquiring rare social resources, such as fame, money, status, knowledge, information and force, etc., and it has the ability to control other groups' thought and behavior, then we can say this group possessed power (van Dijk, 1998). In terms of different sources of power, discourses can be categorized as military discourse, political discourse, media discourse and scientific discourse. Obviously, power also includes different types, such as power based on violence or force, power based on authoritative persuasion and power based on general agreement of public opinion.

It's certain that power is not absolute but demonstrates itself in some specific situation or specific social domain and it may be accepted, observed or resisted by the controlled groups. Hence the social group of power usually manipulates and displays its power through laws, rules and regulations or systems and institutions, which is called "hegemony" by A. Gramsci, such as class dominance, sexual discrimination and racial discrimination, etc. (Gramsci, 1971) However, we should keep in mind that the concept of power in CDA refers to the whole group rather than the individuals of the group. This powerful group has greater access to persuasion through language and discourse by which they can draw on strategies to affect the psychology of others and control the behavior of others in the end in their own interests.

Nowadays, the exercise of power is growingly put into practice through ideologies instead of forces. Ideology is the primary means of achieving acceptance and consent even support. According to critical linguists, the ruling class tries to manipulate the mind of the people through linguistic forms which is an essential function of discourse and text, just as Fowler argued “real power is exercised through discourse, and that this power has real effects” (Fowler, 1985: 65).

#### **2.1.4 Relations between Language, Power and Ideology**

CDA studies the relations between language, power and ideology, thus aiming to “discover the social meanings expressed in discourse by analyzing the linguistic structures in the light of their interactional and wider social contexts” (Fowler et al., 1979: 195-196). According to CDA, language, as the form or appearance of discourse, is a social behavior and imposed by a series of social values or beliefs in origin. Ideology, as the content of discourse, is represented by language and a system of linguistic forms in specific historical and social contexts. A central content of CDA is the belief that language reproduces ideology or even constructs ideology. Ideology also affects the use of language and the production of discourse. Thus the powerful class establishes, manage and control the psychology of the less powerful class through all kinds of discourse which is embedded the ideologies of the powerful class. In this way, ideology, especially dominant ideology, can generate power. On the other hand, discourse is ideological because it helps to maintain the power relations and existing social domination.

In a word, language, power and ideology are the indispensable part of a discourse. The powerful group hides their own ideologies through language to manipulate the mind of the public so as to safeguard their own interests, power domination and the existing social structures. Accordingly the purpose of CDA is to expose the hidden ideologies and how it is put into effect.

#### **2.1.5 Discourse, Common Sense and Ideology**

Discourse shapes and is shaped by society. In the shaping of discourse by

society and of society by discourse, discourse plays an important role in constituting and changing the society and is shaped by power relationships and invested with ideologies. During this process, a number of discourse practice and conventions may achieve a high degree of naturalization or even automation. (cf. Fairclough, 1992: 8-10) Through loading values, historical concept and political attitudes to the information it transmits, language exerts influence beyond people's awareness.

Socialist Garfinkel once wrote that our daily life is a common sense world which is constructed completely on the basis of "assumptions" and "expectations". In his opinion, those assumptions and expectations are usually implied in the cultural background knowledge of a society and usually not recognized by the people and taken for granted by them as well as seldom surveyed or challenged by them. However, those assumptions and expectations not only control the code of behavior of the members of a society to a large extent, but also manage their understanding of others' behaviors.

#### **2.1.5.1 Legitimation and Habitualization of Signification**

Critical linguists assumes that all the rules and regulations on which the formation of a discourse depends contain the ideological meaning like common sense; the reason for how all kinds of ideological meanings carry into effect is that these ideological meanings have become a part of the commonsensible background knowledge to which the public have become accustomed. Hence the people will find it difficult to comprehend that their conventions have been invested specific ideology.

However, ideologies inscribed into conventions, through the process of naturalization and automation, become common ideological sense. Consequently, the discourses which embody those ideologies become naturalized and seem to lose its connection with particular ideologies and interests. And if the ideology of a particular powerful social group becomes a common sense, it is apparently coming to be the dominant ideology in the society. (cf. Simpson, 1993) Just as Gramsci

defines that common sense is the habitual attitudes assimilated from ruling class ideas and highlighted the dominant nature of ideologies.

According to Whorf's studies, "presupposition" of cognition implied in language is basically belonging to a kind of background knowledge and usually neglected by the public. Language can affect the thought and behaviors of the user indirectly to some extent through the large amount of presupposition information contained in the language. And the conventionalized linguistic system and its signification system of encoding induce the "legitimation" and "habitualization" of ideology. The signification expressed by a user always exists in the linguistic system prior to the user, because the language of the user is not his / her individual language but the common language inherited and enjoyed by all the social members of his / her society or speech community. Meanwhile, each individual understands the society and outside world in which he / she lives just through the medium of language in his process of socialization. This kind of common language of a society is generally called "standard language" or "official language" because the structure and signification of the language are mainly determined by the interests of the leading group in the society or culture which can be understood as the language and signification of the main stream society. That is to say, the language and concept system which a person gets access to all his life in modern society are basically in accordance with the interests of the advantaged groups approved by the official society or the main stream society. Moreover, the signification of the standard language and its code is intensified and extended in this way in the process of socialization from generation to generation. (辛斌, 2005: 39-41)

What we have explained above is in correspondence with what Flower once has elaborated: "The signification of language is not produced naturally but conventionalized. During the long history of a society, a certain lexical system or diction will developed into a system suiting the needs of the society—those needs are the ones of the privileged group of dominant status. Those important social

groups control the means for the legitimation of signification system which they prefer: schools and universities, libraries and mass media, etc. In this way, language becomes a part of social practice and the tool for maintaining the main social order.” (Flower, 1987: 31) This is the “legitimation” of ideology inevitably induced by the conventionalized language and signification system in the whole society.

Habitualization is another outcome of the conventionalization of language and signification system. Code has a mysterious capacity to simplify knowledge and behavior through the process of summarizing the concrete into general which can make our behavior habitualized and make our cognition automatized and not analytical. The habitualization of cognition and behavior conducted by linguistic semiotics and language use is probably of great danger because a person may not realized what he is speaking or doing just as a habit. “The answers people make in church belong to this situation. Though this kind of weakened ideology is not necessary for winning the political observance, it is still of great advantage.” (Orwell, 1946)

Pecheux (1982) defines what Orwell called “familiar phrases” as “pre-constructed”. The concept or signification expressed by such kind of constituents are usually regarded as uncontroversial and accepted by the public widely, and belonging to a part of common sense. Hence in the formation or understanding of discourse, those pre-constructed are usually taken as a part of background knowledge. That is to say, those significations with ideological features essentially have come into people’s subconsciousness as general linguistic significations and become a component of common sense. Fairclough calls this process as the naturalization of ideology. Similarly, the biblical languages of scriptures of the Bible have naturalized as people’s common sense as the preaching of Christianity, and have blended into the believers’ subconsciousness and identified extensively by the westerners in the Christian world.

#### **2.1.5.2 Ideological Function of Common Sense**



Fairclough (1989: Ch. 4) points out that our daily life is established on the assumptions and expectations which control the behaviors of the members of a society and how they understand others' behaviors as well. The commonsensible significations contained in the discourse or text play an important part in the common sense of daily life, while the validity of ideology depends on the way of which ideology permeates into the commonsensible background knowledge of discourse and other forms of social behavior to a large extent.

One of the effective means of imposing some ideas into others is that the author of the discourse can provide some clues in the discourse to guide the reader to hold or produce some associations or ideas because, in the process of understanding the discourse, it is the reader but not the author who puts the commonsensible assumptions and background knowledge into the understanding of the discourse. In English, every definite noun contains an existence proposition, for instance, if a person says "The king of France is bald", the use of the phrase of "the king of France" in the sentence means the speaker believes that "There is a king in France". What's more, the use of this type of definite noun usually indicates the speaker considers an existence proposition implied in the definite noun as an uncontroversial fact. As a result, it is of great importance and validity to imply some significations or information with ideologies in the discourse through some linguistic tools to make them a part of the commonsensible background knowledge, which usually produces an ideal imperceptible influence to make the readers affected or accept them unconsciously. (辛斌, 2005: 46)

Fairlough even assumes that ideology is most effective when it is invisible: "The function of ideology is most effective when it is of least conspicuousness. If the public realize that a certain part of common sense is being used to maintain the inequality of power in sacrifice of their interests, this part is no longer belonging to common sense and having the ability to maintain the inequality of power, i.e. having ideological function. On one hand, ideology which is not made clearly in the

discourse but as background knowledge guides the producer of the discourse to portray the world in specific way; on the other hand, it guides the readers to understand the discourse in specific way; thereby ideology becomes invisible. Discourse usually doesn't break forth ideology but puts ideology into the process of understanding the discourse by providing some useful clues and reproduces those ideologies in this process." (Fairlough, 1989: 85) In this way, discourse control not only is a form of social action control, but also implies the conditions of control over the minds of other people, i.e., the management of social representations. Powerful groups are inclined to make utilization of language and discourses to reinforce dominant ideologies by a set of economic, cultural and semiotic strategy that is united to manipulate knowledge and information, transmitting mainstream values. Christianity, as a religious control, and its holy scripture—the Bible and its Biblical languages help to make the dominant ideologies invisible.

CDA underlines how discourse structures have an impact on psychological control. Psychological control through discourse and communication concerns our belief and acquirement of the world surrounding us. "If discourse control is the uppermost form of power, thus controlling the public's psychology is another basic means of reproducing dominance and hegemony." (van Dijk, 1989) That is to say, discursive psychological control is another form of power and dominance; it can be defined as a control of others' psychological mode and social depict. This kind of control can influence the knowledge of a group, i.e. factual belief and the social common ideas, i.e. evaluative creed, such as attitude and ideology. Political discourse is eminently ideological of no exception. In order not to arouse the audience's revolt, the speaker, i.e. the so called power elites must make the invested ideologies invisible. The use of Biblical languages is a good way to achieve this purpose.

### **2.1.6 Language, Ideology and Context**

In the cognitive system of CDA, context control is also very important apart

from power control and psychological control. In CDA, context refers to the structures of the features of social situation in the formation and understanding of discourse which are expressed in psychology, which consists of such kind of categories as situation, environment (time & place), participants in all kinds of communicative, social or institutional roles as well as their psychological description (purpose, knowledge, view, attitude and ideology) which define context comprehensively. Context control is not only on the basis of how the reader understands and describes the discourse but also how the reader understands and depicts the whole communicative environment.

CDA typically studies how the features of environment (e.g. the features of language users of the powerful group) affect the members of the powerless group to make clear the communicative situation in a more favorable context mode. Hence critical linguists must understand the discourse and uncover the hidden ideology in a broader social and political situation in which a linguistic form is used. Biblical languages preferred by most of American presidents have an inevitable social, political and historical context, that is, the Christian Culture and the “Civil Religion” of the United States of America which will be discussed in part 5.

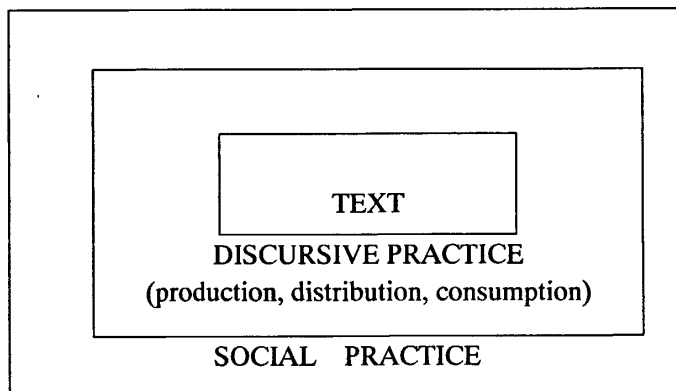
## **2.2 Methodologies of Critical Discourse Analysis**

Many critical linguists have proposed their own models and methodologies for critical discourse analysis, which have composed the general framework and principles of CDA. CDA also regards the theories and methodologies of Halliday’s Systemic-Functional Linguistics as its theoretical foundation.

### **2.2.1 Fairclough’s model**

Critical Linguistics studies the relations between language, power and ideology. According to CDA, discourse is the result of the producer choosing from both the formal structure and ideology; ideology is a type of social space in which exist two kinds of basic social process simultaneously: cognition and description of the outside world and social interactions. Thus the analysis of discourse practice itself and the

social context in which discourse is produced is an indispensable part of discourse analysis. (辛斌, 2005: 54) Fairclough illustrates the above ideas as the following chart (Fairclough, 1992: 73) :



In this chart, “text” is the product of interaction process or discursive practice which consists of the production, distribution and consumption of text determined by particular social practice conditions. On this basis, Fairclough proposed the three aspects or three steps of critical discourse analysis:

- (1) Describe the formal structure of text;
- (2) Interpret the relations between text and the interaction practice in which the text is produced, distributed and consumed;
- (3) Explain the relations between interaction practice and its social context. (辛斌, 2005: 55)

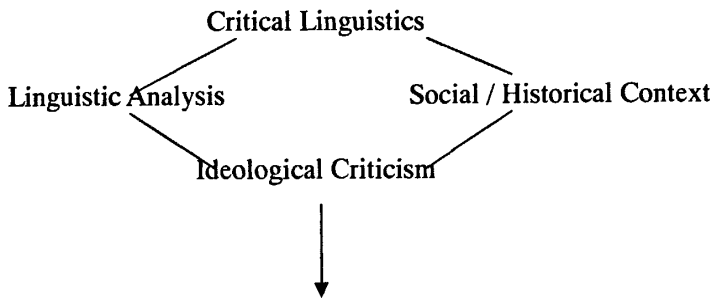
### 2.2.2 General Framework and Principles of CDA

From the very start, critical linguistics regards itself as an “instrumental linguistics” (Flower, 1987: 481) which focuses on the analysis of the relations between the semiotics (e.g. word, phrase, sentence etc.) created by human beings and the signification of their interactions. The purpose of the analysis is to disclose the implicit ideologies embedded in the discourse, especially the habitualized bias, discrimination and distortion of reality and to interpret the social conditions by which those ideologies exist and the function of the ideologies in power struggle. (辛

斌, 2005: 57)

Up to now, critical linguistics pays special attention to two non-literary areas. One is mass discourse and official discourse, including the discourses produced by government, executive or managerial officials, judicial officials, commercial organizations as well as press institutions, etc. Such kind of discourses come from the authority and play a direct role in shaping the attitude, signification and ideology of a society, thus they are worthy to be studied; meanwhile, ordinary people usually accept such kind of discourses passively, and they seldom directly react to the producer of the discourse. The other is individual discourse, that is, the formal or informal conversation between individuals. It's easy for people to habituate themselves to individual discourse and not to realize the ideological signification in the discourse. The main themes studied by critical linguists include sex discrimination, racial discrimination; the inequality in education, employment and judicature; war, nuclear weapons and nuclear power; political strategies and commercial operations. Critical linguists often attach great importance to the production and operation of ideology. In their opinion, it's ideology that makes the reproduction and resume of the existing social relations possible. (辛斌, 2005: 58)

As we mentioned above, critical linguistics particularly concentrates on studying the living context in which the discourse is produced, distributed and consumed and the social and historical context (Fairclough, 1989, 1992), Flower claims that critical linguistics is much closer to history other than sociology in the perspective of purpose and methodology (Flower, 1987). We can represent the general process of critical discourse analysis as follows:



To Unveil:  
Power Relations & Interests of Powerful Groups

Critical linguistics investigates the ideological signification behind the linguistic structures through the analysis of the linguistic features of discourse and the social and historical context in which the discourse is produced, accordingly reveals the complicated relations between language, power and ideology. The general process is: firstly, analyzing the structural features of discourse and connecting those features with some producing skills or processes; secondly, the analysts demonstrate that those skills or processes possibly have some relationship with a certain ideology in the specific context of the production and interpretation of the discourse; finally, the analysts can claim that those embedded ideologies behind the linguistic process have a significant social function, that is, to intervene or meddle in some social processes, such as helping to establish, maintain or subvert a type of power relationship. Critical linguists lay emphasis on implicit assumptions, beliefs or value views behind the linguistic expressions in the discourse. Thus critical discourse analysis uncovers the various assumptions and beliefs in the discourse which is hard to be perceived by the readers and how those assumptions and beliefs are covertly conveyed through linguistic means: “Critical linguistics devotes to studying the linguistic structures in detail referring to the social and historical context of the discourse so as to expose the belief and value mode embedded in language” (Flower, 1991b: 67). (cf. 辛斌, 2005: 58-59)

N. Fairclough and R. Wodak summarize the main principles of CDA as follows:

- (1) Critical Discourse Analysis deals with social problems;
- (2) Power relationship is inferred;
- (3) Discourses constitute the society and culture;
- (4) Discourse serves ideology;
- (5) Discourse is historic;
- (6) The relations between discourse and society are indirect;
- (7) Discourse analysis is interpretative;

(8) Discourse is a form of social behavior.

(Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 271-280)

In a word, those principles attach great importance on that discourse is social and the specific social practice as well. However, the relations between discourse and society are not direct but in direct; language serves ideology and discourse displays ideology and ideology is the content of discourse; power relations are of great importance in critical discourse analysis but they are inferred through analysis; critical discourse analysis is not descriptive but interpretative.

### 2.2.3 Halliday's theories and methodologies

Critical linguists regard language as a multi-functional system and have draw much upon M. A. K. Halliday's Systemic-Functional Linguistics in theories and methodologies. Halliday believes that language must satisfy the three needs of the language user, that is, to express the experience of the objective world and the subjective world; to reflect the relationship among the social members; to choose words and sentences and organize the discourse. This is the well-known three metafunctions language: ideational metafunction, interpersonal metafunction and textual metafunction. (辛斌, 2005: 55-56) According to Halliday (1985), the three metafunctions deal with different aspect of the world respectively:

- (1) The ideational function "serves for the expression of context", and is of the speaker's experience of the real world, including the inner world of his own consciousness;
- (2) The interpersonal function serves to establish and maintain social relations. Language works for the expression of social roles, which include the communication roles created by language itself for---for example the roles of questioner or respondent, which we take on by asking or answering a question; and also for getting things done, by means of the interaction between one person and another;
- (3) The textual function provides links with itself and with features of the

situation in which it is used. This is what enable the speaker or writer to construct “text”, or connected passages of discourse that is situationally relevant; and enable the listener or reader to distinguish a text form random set of sentences.

(cf. 徐蕾, 2002: 17)

Systemic-Functional Linguistics is beneficial for critical discourse analysis to achieve its aim at interpreting discourses at least in three aspects. Firstly, Systemic-Functional Linguistics is on the basis of semantics but not syntax, i.e. it explores the semantic function of all kinds of linguistic constituents of the discourse in the perspective of semantics. Halliday (1973) divides speech act into three layers: action, meaning and grammar. According to Halliday, each layer is composed of a set of options. Action layer includes the various actions of human beings, and speech act is one type of it; meaning layer includes all the meanings that can be expressed by humans; grammar layer includes all the means used by a language to express meanings. When people are talking, they are making choices again and again from the behavior layer to the meaning layer and then to the grammar layer. For instance, two kids played with each other and one of them took away the other’s toy when he came back to home. The mother of the former found it and wanted to let her child know that his mother doesn’t like such kind of behavior and he should stop doing such things from then on. Suppose the mother chose to attain her aim via language, thus she can choose to use different linguistic forms to express her ideas:

- a. That’s very naughty of you.
- b. I’ll smack you if you do that again.
- c. I don’t like you to do that.
- d. That thing doesn’t belong to you.
- e. Daddy would be very cross.

In this example, the mother has the will to speak at first because she has something to express, then she searches for the suitable linguistic means to express



her ideas. Halliday's such kind of views on linguistics is in line with the ideas of critical linguists in that meaning works for power and language works for ideology. (辛斌, 2005: 56)

Secondly, Halliday's systemic-functional theories are of socio-semiotics characteristics in nature which is closely correlative to the first point. Halliday defines language as a kind of meaning potential, i.e. a series of meaning options that can be used by language users. What's more, "such kind of meaning potential is the realization of behavior potential via language. 'be able to signify meaning' means 'be able to do' in language. Meaning potential is realized as lexicon and grammar potential in the linguistic system, i.e. 'what the speaker can express'." (Halliday, 1973: 51) In a word, what the speaker can express, that is, the whole lexicon and grammar system, operates as the realization of semantic system; semantic system is what the speaker can signify, that is, "semantic potential". Halliday assumes language as a semantic potential system basically. However, once we get rid of the linguistic cover, we can see that this semantic system essentially is the realization of a certain thing of a higher level, that is what the speaker can do, i.e. "behavior potential". (Halliday, 1978:39) The meaning options made by the language user have double significations; on the one hand, these meaning potentials have linguistic signification because the option made in linguistic system can be interpreted as a realization of meaning options; on the other hand, they have sociological signification because they can help the reader to observe the behavior modes which are not only the expressive forms of social structure but also determined by social structure. (辛斌, 2005: 56-57)

Finally, Halliday's systemic-functional grammar, especially his theories of register, context, cohesion coherence, provides theoretical framework and specific methodologies for the macro-study of 'the structure of discourse and the relations between discourse and context, which is beneficial to the critical discourse analysts to have an integral understanding of the communicative purpose of the discourse and

the possible ideological effect. (辛斌, 2005: 57)

Apparently, a text can be analyzed at different levels. However, it's hard and there is no need to study every linguistic component in a discourse. Usually we tend to pay more attention to the discursive context, function and the relevant social relationship. Then the critical linguists analyze some linguistic structures that may convey social or cultural meaning so as to summarize the implicit ideologies.

Since discourse is considered as a social practice in critical discourse analysis, this paper will study the ideological functions of the Biblical languages in American presidential inaugural addresses from the perspective of critical discourse analysis combined with the three metafunctions of language.

### 3. Religion and Society

Religion is a world-wide historic phenomenon which exists objectively in the world. Religion had played a very important and extensive role in history and permeated through every aspect of people's life. Up to now, religion still is an important element in today's world and has a close relationship with the peace and stability of the whole world.

#### 3.1 Religion and Social Control

Social control concerns that the controller applies various means to restrict and regulate the psychology and behavior of the social members so as to mold an orderly society as a whole. The application of social control is omnifarious. However, it mainly includes two ways: control by force and control via ideology. Contrasted with politics or law which makes much more use of force, religious control inclines to mainly focus on the regulation and restriction on ideology and emotion. Historically, religion has a huge impact on social control. Religion not only moralizes the whole society in ideology but also sometimes participates directly in the operation of secular power and has a close connection with politics, law or even war which is the extreme form of force. Serena Nanda, a modern American anthropologist, points out clearly that religious belief, in fact, brings forth the realization of social control via supernatural and mysterious means.

The particular function of religion on social control lies in spreading a holy color on the existing social system to maintain the stability of the society via supernatural power. Thereby, when religion is not in contradiction with the main ideologies, that is, during the period in which religion and the existing society system are on friendly terms, the ruler is generally willing to regard religion as a means of social control, because religion can make the secular power of the ruler obtain the supernal divine authority, and religion can permeate through the various aspects of social life so as to achieve the effective control of the society. (陈浩, 曾琦云, 2006: 9-10)

### **3.2 Religion and Social confirmation**

Social confirmation refers to that religion makes the believers consciously maintain and stabilize the status quo through their acceptance and confirmation of the existing social relations, social order and their own social status and roles. Religion sanctifies the social ideologies and values through its particular religious rites to cultivate and consolidate the compliance of the believers so as to play a role in the maintenance of the existing social order. When the religious rites integrate into the customs of a country, it can make the believers observe the rites and domination by instinct. Meanwhile, religion can make the believers confirm and accept their roles in the reality. What's more, religious rites help to promote the integration of values of different interests groups to some extent. Under the guidelines of "god", all the interests groups observe the common norms which are established by the "god". If the social production mode which the religion serves and upholds is advanced, the confirmative function of religion can play a positive role in the social stability and accelerate the social progress and development. (钱振勤, 钱湘弘, 2005: 51-52)

### **3.3 Religion and Social Integration**

From a certain perspective, social integration is one aspect of social control; however, social integration assembles social members and integrates them into a social community mainly by all means. Religion plays an extremely important part in the formation of a national community. One of the reasons of the existence of primitive religion lies in its great role in the promotion of the internal solidarity of the primitive clans and tribes. Such kind of social integrative function of religion is realized by religious belief. Due to religious belief, individuals and social groups mold into a spiritual community which then comes into being a community of organization and boosts up and promotes the internal solidarity of the community. What' more, if religion community is in accordance with national or state community, such social integrative function of religion will facilitate the internal centripetal force of a nation or state. Hegel believes that, from the perspective of the relations of

religion and nationality, “religion keeps the closest relationship with political principles”, because religion is connected with the secular political power from its birthday. (陈浩, 曾琦云, 2006: 11-12)

### **3.4 Religion and Moral Civilization**

Morality is the summarization of norm of conduction used to regulate the relations among people and the relations between individuals and society, belonging to the social superstructure; religion has the function of adjusting the interrelations among people to some extent, either, also belonging to the social superstructure. In the process of development of human society, religion and morality influence each other; religious morality is the result of the bidirectional interaction of the moralization of religion and the religionization of morality. Religion puts its social function of moral civilization into practice through religious morality.

The moral civilization of religion can be carried out in two aspects as follows: On the one hand, religion transforms the secular morality into religious belief and regulates people’s individual behavior and social role through this morality as belief; on the other hand, the particular education of religion is beneficial to restrict, control and influence people’s behavior to realize moral civilization. Religion tells its believers the concept of kindness and evil and the result of praising kindness and punishing evil via some religious believers in order to warn them and require them to observe some religious morals and social morals of the society. The moralization of religion usually can play a role beyond the general moral education of school, society and family and have a pretty strong restrictive power upon believers so as to stimulate the believers to behave according to the morals of religion and promote the moral standard of the whole society. (钱振勤, 钱湘弘, 2005: 57-58)

### **3.5 Religion and Critical Discourse Analysis**

As one of the means of the realization of social control and social integration of religion, religious discourse not only includes various religious works, such as the Holy Bible, the Koran, the Buddhist Scripture and the sermons and prayers of

Christianity etc., but also includes lots of political discourses, for instance, news report, public speech and interview of statesmen and so on. Making use of people's religious belief and the enormous function of religion in the realization of social control and psychological control, the authors of these political discourses apply religious language to the discourses in order to give the public a sense of kindness and conviction, thus having an influence on people's ideology and behavior through their power and making the social control come true at last.

Critical discourse analysis mainly studies the relation between discourse, power and ideology. Critical linguists assume that the various constituents of the different layers of a discourse, including lexicon, sentence etc., latently reflects the faith, ideology and values of the speaker. Power concerns the asymmetric relations of the participants of a discourse and their different control towards the production, distribution and consumption of a discourse under a particular social and cultural context. The powerful class transmits its ideologies via language to have an influence upon the ideologies of the public so as to maintain its own interests.

Taking a perspective of critical discourse analysis, this paper studies how the Biblical languages in the American presidential inaugural addresses reflect the relations between language, power and ideology and its functions in weakening and veiling that the powerful class maintains its domination via ideology.

## **4. Case Study of the Biblical Language in American Presidential Inaugural Addresses**

The Bible and Christianity have great influence on the western society. Accordingly American presidents make use of all kinds of biblical languages in their inaugural addresses and other speeches to cater to the psychology of the western people, and thus to win the support of the public.

### **4.1 The Quantitative Analysis of the Biblical Languages in American Presidential Inaugural Addresses**

As a representative kind of political speeches, American presidential inaugural addresses are delivered by the American president to the home and abroad at his inaugural ceremony to promulgate his administrative programs and persuade the public into accepting and supporting his administration, thus having a strong worldwide influence and important historic significance. Accordingly, the Biblical languages used in the American presidential inaugural addresses with brightly ideological and politically loaded characteristics have a well-defined purpose and rich religious color and are deeply branded by the social conditions.

Christianity is an important part of Western culture; inheriting the tradition of the ancient Roman Christianity, the majority of the Western people have a strong belief of God. As the main canon and spiritual pillar of Christianity, the Holy Bible has a profound and lasting impact on Western society and culture and has permeate all the aspects of people's daily life. Accordingly, English political speeches apply Biblical languages with a high frequency to strengthen its own charisma through the mighty influence of which is prominently embodied in the American presidential inaugural addresses.

As we all know, at the beginning of the inaugural ceremony, American president puts his hand on the Bible while swearing an oath of office, and then delivers his inaugural address. Taking a specific analysis of the American

presidential inaugural addresses, we find that the inaugural addresses of most American presidents apply the Biblical languages to different extent. From the foundation of the United States, there are forty-three presidents up to now. There are five presidents who didn't deliver addresses because they acceded to office as vice-president after the death of the president. The other thirty-eight presidents, from George Washington to George W. Bush, have delivered their inaugural addresses. And among these thirty-eight presidents, other than William Henry Harrison, Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes and Benjamin Harrison who didn't apply any Biblical languages, the rest thirty-four presidents had used Biblical languages to different extent.

Taking an analysis of fifteen inaugural addresses of ten American presidents after the Second World War, this paper sums up the Biblical language points of these inaugural addresses and concludes the following table:

addresses	T	E	K	J	N	C <sub>1</sub>	R	G.B	C <sub>2</sub>	W.B	A
Language points	4	9	6	5	12	5	10	11	6	8	7.6

Notes: T=Truman, 1949; E=Eisenhower, 1953, 1957; K=Kennedy, 1961; J=Johnson, 1965; N=Nixon, 1969, 1973; C<sub>1</sub>=Carter, 1977; R=Reagan, 1981, 1985; G.B=G. Bush, 1989; C<sub>2</sub>=Clinton, 1993, 1997; W.B=G. W. Bush, 2001, 2005; A=average.

This table reflects that the average Biblical language points in the selected American inaugural addresses equals to 7.6. What's more, the Biblical language points in the inaugural addresses of President Eisenhower, Nixon, Reagan and G. Bush respectively reach more than ten, and the words of the highest frequency are "Almighty", "God", "bless" which are used mostly in the Bible. This indicates that: under the social and cultural background that most Americans believe Christianity, American presidents are always inclined to put Biblical languages into his own inaugural addresses to amplify the appeal and persuasion of the address, thus taking advantage of religion and moral beliefs to illustrate his political opinion. These presidents make use of the occasion of delivering political speeches openly to the



whole country and the world as a whole which is a political context that can attract the attention of the whole world and the social background with almost the same ideology of the western country to attain their aim at having an impact upon people's ideology and behavior via Biblical languages.

Although the demonstrations of Biblical languages in each president's inaugural address are not identical, yet there are generally several forms as follows:

Firstly, the beginnings of the inaugural addresses usually follow the oath and are accompanied by invocations now and then. President Eisenhower is the first one who applies invocation into his address and President G. Bush is the second one. There is an invocation as follows in the beginning of the inaugural address of President Bush in 1989:

And my first act as President is a prayer and I ask you to bow your heads:

Heavenly father, we bow our heads and thank you for your love. Accept our thanks for the peace that yields this day and the shared faith that makes its continuance likely. Make us strong to do your work, willing to heed and hear your will, and write on our hearts these words: "Use power to help people." For we are given power not to advance our own purposes, nor to make a great show in the world, nor a name. There is but one just use of power, and it is to serve people. Help us to remember, Lord. Amen.

At first, President Bush claims that his first identity as a president is a prayer. Then by praying the "Heavenly Father" for His Blessing, he elaborates his responsibility as the president is to work with the people to serve the people under the summons of God ("Use power to help people." "There is but one just use of power, and it is to serve people."). Meanwhile, he make use of the common word in invocations "we, us, our" which are the plural forms of the first personal pronouns as well as "the shared faith" such kind of words to abridge the distance between himself and the audience. He regards himself as a member of the people and creates a sense of equal participation and solidarity, attempting to impose his own purpose and ideology on the public by drawing on the common ideology of Christianity in

western countries. “Lord. Amen.” in the close of the invocation can further manifest his devoutness and make the masses feel that the government is to serve the people summoned by God not to dominate, thus to conceal the real purpose to control the society and the people of the ruling groups.

Not only in the invocation, but also in the whole address, each president applies a large number of the inclusive “we”. This paper analyzes all these fifteen addresses and makes a summary of the frequency of “we” in each address and concludes in a table as follows:

address	T	E <sup>1</sup>	E <sup>2</sup>	K	J	N <sup>1</sup>	N <sup>2</sup>	C <sub>1</sub>	R <sup>1</sup>	R <sup>2</sup>	G.B	C <sub>2</sub> <sup>1</sup>	C <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup>	W.B <sup>1</sup>	W.B <sup>2</sup>
we	58	66	51	30	34	64	47	42	57	66	58	51	42	46	35
our	33	57	37	20	36	48	32	36	58	54	44	59	64	51	50
us	5	10	2	11	12	19	25	8	24	20	12	13	27	9	3
bless	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	4	3	1	1	2	1
God	3	9	1	5	4	6	5	2	5	11	13	2	1	6	7

Notes: ① T=Truman, 1949; E<sup>1</sup>=Eisenhower, 1953; E<sup>2</sup>=Eisenhower, 1957; K=Kennedy, 1961; J=Johnson, 1965; N<sup>1</sup>=Nixon, 1969; N<sup>2</sup>=Nixon, 1973; C<sub>1</sub>=Carter, 1977; R<sup>1</sup>=Reagan, 1981; R<sup>2</sup>=Reagan, 1985; G.B=G. Bush, 1989; C<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>=Clinton, 1993; C<sub>2</sub><sup>2</sup>=Clinton, 1997; W.B<sup>1</sup>=G. W. Bush, 2001; W.B<sup>2</sup>=G. W. Bush, 2005; A=average. ② God = God and other words referring to God, such as Almighty Being, Great Author, Creator, Maker, Ruler, Heavenly Father, He, His, Power, Invisible Hand, etc.

The large amount of the plural form of the first person pronoun, that is, “we”, “us” and “our”, demonstrates a kind of language skill of the author. Especially the word “we”, in pragmatics, includes two kinds of signifiers. One is inclusive, the other is exclusive. Obviously the word “we” plentifully used in the American presidential inaugural addresses should include both the addresser and the addressee. In other words, the use of “we” is equal to put the addresser into the foot of the addressee, or more exactly to win the addressee over to the addresser’s stand. In this way the addressee will have a feeling of kindness and it is much easier to obtain the

public's support.

What's more, the plural form of the first person pronoun can also arouse a group consciousness which can minimize the difference inside the group so as to lay emphasis on the difference outside the group, that is, the differences among groups. (Michael Osborn: 1988: 243)

Secondly, those presidents often directly cite the lections of the Bible in their addresses to elaborate his administrative policies and political stands and to make those policies and stands more persuasive as well. For instance, when President Clinton assumed office at the beginning of 1993, he faced the economic depression of America in the beginning of 1990s: Lots of large factories went bankrupt and the unemployment reached as high as 7.8% of the population of America. As a result, President Clinton claims in his inaugural address that he will rejuvenate the United States through reform. He cites a sentence from the ninth section of the sixth chapter of Galatians in the New Testament of the Holy Bible to mobilize the American people not to lose heart in such an urgent moment and to persevere to an end for a victory.

And so, my fellow Americans, as we stand at the edge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, let us begin anew with energy and hope, with faith and discipline. And let us work until our work is done. The Scripture says, "And let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

Galatians is written by Saint Paul aiming to take the believers who have accepted false messages back to the correct belief and life. In the sixth chapter of Galatians Paul defines the responsibility that a true Christian should undertake. Citing this section of the Bible, Clinton evokes the same feeling of mission of the mass of Christians and makes them believe that the president's administrative policies are under the guidelines of God to help the people to get rid of the plights. Accordingly, President Clinton can obtain the support of the people and their acceptance to his administration.

Other presidents also cite the lections of the Bible in his inaugural address to make his address more persuasive. Under the social background of Christianity, those statesmen take advantages of the citations of the Bible to pretext his own ideologies and policies as God's purpose, thus making "those significations with ideological characteristics come into people's subconscioueness as the common linguistic meanings and become a part of common sense" (辛斌, 2005: 41). Consequently, the ideologies of the ruling group which has permeated into the discourses can control the psychology of the assumptions and presuppositions of the public used to understand others' behaviors; thereby it is beneficial to win the sympathy, understanding and support of the American people. What's more, as the powerful class, the presidents have a certain extent of domination towards the public; therefore it is easier to make the public accept and submit to his political theories if the president cites the lections of the Bible into his inaugural address so as to attain his political goal, that is, while maintaining the existing social order, he can shorten the psychological distance between himself and the people, draw over the people and make the public accept his administration via religion.

President Kennedy also cites the sixth section of the 58<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah in the New Testament of the Holy Bible in the eighteenth paragraph to achieve his anticipative purpose.

Let both sides unite to heed in all corners of the earth the command of Isaiah—to "undo the heavy burdens and to let the oppressed go free."

When President Kennedy entered upon office, it was the period during which the United States and the Soviet Union competed with each other in politics and military. When President Kennedy cited the quotation of "let the oppressed go free", he has presupposed that there were still some nations or countries which were oppressed by other countries (indicating the Soviet Union) and the poverty, disease and war arisen from tyranny. Hence he made the audience believe that those situations stated in the address were real and that they were striving for the liberation

and the peace of the entire human race under the will of God. Accordingly, President Kennedy finally won the sympathy and support of the masses psychologically and made the public be willing to share weal and woe and fight with him. Consequently he concealed his real purpose of intervening in the domestic affairs of other country.

Thirdly, some American presidents imitate the linguistic structure of the Bible in diction and sentences in his inaugural address, which is common in each president's address.

(1) Imitating the Bible to use archaisms, for example, in the vocation at the beginning of his first inaugural address, President Eisenhower doesn't use "You" but use "Thou", not "Your glory" but "Thy glory" to demonstrate his religiosity;

(2) Using the ancient negative form of "verb + not" in ancient English widely used in the Bible, for instance, in the second paragraph of his inaugural address, President Kennedy uses "...the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state,..." and the negative forms in 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> paragraphs :

And so, my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you; Ask what you can do for your country.

My fellow citizens of the world: Ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

(3) Using the formal and appropriate words which are common in the Bible, for example, in the eighteenth paragraph of President Bush's inaugural address in 1989 "This is a fact, the final lesson of Vietnam is that no great nation can long afford to be sundered by a memory.", he doesn't use "separate" but "sunder";

(4) Imitating the beginning structure of the Bible, the presidents usually use repeat or conjunction in the beginning of some paragraphs. The paragraphs in the inaugural address are brief and short and have a good distribution of stress and weak syllables and lots of symmetrical sentence structures as well which are common features of the lessons of the Bible. For instance, President Truman uses "We are abided by all who ..." as the beginning of five continuous paragraphs in his

inaugural address in 1949 to state his stands:

“We are aided by all who wish to live in freedom from fear--even by those who live today in fear under their own governments.

We are aided by all who want relief from the lies of propaganda-- who desire truth and sincerity.

We are aided by all who desire self-government and a voice in deciding their own affairs.

We are aided by all who long for economic security--for the security and abundance that men in free societies can enjoy.

We are aided by all who desire freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom to live their own lives for useful ends.”

(Harry S. Truman, 1949)

President Eisenhower also uses four continuous “May we ...” to pray God for His Blessing in his second inaugural address in 1957:

“May we pursue the right--without self-righteousness.

May we know unity--without conformity.

May we grow in strength--without pride in self.

May we, in our dealings with all peoples of the earth, ever speak truth and serve justice.”

(Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1957)

Such kind of Biblical languages and sentence structures can make the languages of the inaugural address solemn so as to protrude and underline the address and

make the address have an effect of sermon. It appears as if the speaker is conveying God's words and help to make the address more agitational.

Finally, in the closing part of the inaugural addresses, all the American presidents pray God for His Blessings and appeal to the people for action in the name of God. Such kind of closing exists nearly in the closing part of every American president's inaugural address. Such as:

- (1) ...let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own. (Kennedy, 1961)
- (2) ...with God's help, we can and will resolve the problems which now confront us.  
God bless you, and thank you. (Reagan, 1981)
- (3) Thank you. God bless you. And God bless the United States of America. (George Bush, 1989)
- (4) ...And now each in our own way, and with God's help, we must answer the call.  
Thank you, and God bless you all. (Clinton, 1993)

Such kind of closing is filled with "God", "help", "bless" etc. which are the praying words used in the Bible. It's these words that make the people feel as if they are listening respectfully to the edification in the church and the summons of God. The use of this kind of words can adapt to the psychology of respecting God of the audience and make the address have a strong charisma. From the structure of the language, both the beginning and the closing are praying God for His power and blessings. Such kind of closings echo to the invocation and oath at the beginning, cater to the psychology of the masses and make the masses blur out their awareness of being ruled. That is to say, the ruling class further reinforces their ideological control of the people in language and textural structure and makes the public be willing to accept the leadership of the powerful class so as to maintain the existing social order.

## 4.2 The Qualitative Analysis of Systemic-Functional Grammar of the Biblical Languages in American Presidential Inaugural Addresses

Taking a qualitative analysis of the biblical languages in American presidential inaugural addresses, we apply the methodologies of the three steps of critical discourse analysis, that is, description, interpretation and explanation. We find that all the presidents attach great importance to how to apply the biblical language to make the people believe that they are undertaking the mission of God and serving God. That is to say, they know how to make full use of the religious ideology which is the foundation of American ideologies.

Firstly, almost all the presidents proclaim that they are swearing their oaths in front of God as well as the public, and all the rights and power come from God but not from the government, and all men are equal before God. For example:

(1) This faith defines our full view of life. It establishes, beyond debate, *those gifts of the Creator that are man's inalienable rights, and that make all men equal in His sight.* (Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953)

(2) What remains is to give life to what is in the law: *to ensure at last that as all are born equal in dignity before God, all are born equal in dignity before man.* (Richard Nixon, 1969)

(3) We have the chance today to do more than ever before in our history to make life better in America--to ensure better education, better health, better housing, better transportation, a cleaner environment--to restore respect for law, to make our communities more livable--and to insure *the God-given right of every American to full and equal opportunity.* (Richard Nixon, 1973)

(4) And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe--*the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state, but from the hand of God.* (John F. Kennedy, 1961)

(5) I know this is in our reach because *we are guided by a power larger than ourselves who creates us equal in His image* and we are confident in principles that unite and lead us onward. (George W. Bush, 2001)



(6) From the day of our Founding, *we have proclaimed that every man and woman on this earth has rights, and dignity, and matchless value, because they bear the image of the Maker of Heaven and earth.* (George W. Bush, 2005)

Though there are other labels of God, such as “the Creator”, “the Maker of Heaven and earth” in the addresses, the presidents focus on that human rights come from God and all men are equal, aiming to use such kind of lexical choice to arouse the public’s respect to the government, which is the representative of God in secular society as they have claimed. In this way, they accomplish its national power will in the name of God. Other examples are as follows:

(1) *With God’s help*, the future of mankind will be assured in a world of justice, harmony, and peace. (Harry Truman, 1949)

(2) With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, *asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God’s work must truly be our own.* (John F. Kennedy, 1961)

(3) Our destiny offers, not the cup of despair, but the chalice of opportunity. So let us seize it, not in fear, but in gladness-- and, “riders on the earth together,” let us go forward, firm in our faith, steadfast in our purpose, cautious of the dangers; *but sustained by our confidence in the will of God and the promise of man.* (Richard Nixon, 1969)

(4) Let us go forward from here confident in hope, strong in our faith in one another, *sustained by our faith in God who created us, and striving always to serve His purpose.* (Richard Nixon, 1973)

(5) We are not this story’s author, who fills time and eternity with His purpose. *Yet His purpose is achieved in our duty, and our duty is fulfilled in service to one another.* Never tiring, never yielding, never finishing, we renew that purpose today; to make our country more just and generous; to affirm the dignity of our lives and every life. (George W. Bush, 2001)

The presidents claim that they, the Americans, are the only people chosen by God and granted the holy mission to protect and save the whole world and to put the world into the order set by God. As a result, “responsibility” or “duty” is an important concept in America. They view the responsibility or duty as serving to God as well as to their country and to the whole world, thus playing a role of world policemen. Taking advantage of the American belief in God, the presidents, or the governors, try to speak in the voice of God and try to state a fact that it is God who guides America or America is doing under the guidance of God. Whatever the Americans do, they are observing God’s instruction and direction to save the entire human beings. Thus the governors ascribe their motives to the religious scope or to the great mission of America, that is, serving God and saving the world, which has inscribed into the concept of Americans and will be easily accepted.

In addition to praying the blessing of God in the end of the address, almost all the presidents pray the help and support of God throughout his address, for example:

(1) In the swift rush of great events, we find ourselves groping to know the full sense and meaning of these times in which we live. *In our quest of understanding, we beseech God's guidance.* We summon all our knowledge of the past and we scan all signs of the future. We bring all our wit and all our will to meet the question: (Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953)

(2) *Before all else, we seek, upon our common labor as a nation, the blessings of Almighty God.* And the hopes in our hearts fashion the deepest prayers of our whole people. (Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1957)

(3) *Today, I ask your prayers that in the years ahead I may have God's help in making decisions that are right for America,* and I pray for your help so that together we may be worthy of our challenge. (Richard Nixon, 1973)

(4) The time has come for a new American emancipation--a great national drive to tear down economic barriers and liberate the spirit of enterprise in the most distressed areas of our country.

*My friends, together we can do this, and do it we must, so help me God.*-- From new freedom will spring new opportunities for growth, a more productive, fulfilled and united people, and a stronger America--an America that will lead the technological revolution, and also open its mind and heart and soul to the treasures of literature, music, and poetry, and the values of faith, courage, and love. (Ronald Reagan, 1985)

Not only within the single address or text but also between addresses or texts the authors produce the cohesion within the discourse and among the discourses so as to promote the textual function, that is the belief in God is an idea which succeeds through the history and the whole America, including every president, by which the governors succeed in putting their ideologies into the whole Americans' common knowledge. For example, this kind of cohesion can be found in the addresses of the father George Bush and the son George W. Bush.

(1) I am putting out my hand to you Mr. Majority Leader. For this is the thing: This is the age of *the offered hand*. We can't turn back clocks, and I don't want to. (George Bush, 1989)

(2) To the world, too, we offer new engagement and a renewed vow: We will stay strong to protect the peace. *The "offered hand"* is a reluctant fist; but once made, strong, and can be used with great effect. (George Bush, 1989)

(3) We have a place, all of us, in *a long story*. *A story* we continue, but whose end we will not see. It is *the story* of a new world that became a friend and liberator of the old, *a story* of a slave-holding society that became a servant of freedom, *the story* of a power that went into the world to protect but not possess, to defend but not to conquer. It is *the American story*. *A story* of flawed and fallible people, united across the generations by grand and enduring ideals. (George W. Bush, 2001)

(4) We are not *this story's author*, who fills time and eternity with His purpose. Yet His purpose is achieved in our duty, and our duty is fulfilled in service to one another. (George W. Bush, 2001)

(5) This work continues. *This story goes on*. And an angel still rides in the whirlwind and directs this storm. (George W. Bush, 2001)

George Bush's "the offered hand" and George W. Bush's "story" and "the story's author" demonstrate a cohesive chain of language or lexical choice implying an ideological chain or inheritance in discourse, that is, the America is undertaking and achieving the mission of God and whatever they do is right to the benefits of the world. Since cohesion can also work between texts, it is obviously expressed by this father and son presidents as following:

(1) I take as my guide the hope of *a saint*: In crucial things, unity; in important things, diversity; in all things, generosity. (George Bush, 1989)

(2) Sometimes in life we called to do great things. But as *a saint* of our times has said, every day we are called to do small things with great love. (George W. Bush, 2001)

Here "a saint" is another signifier of God, as "a saint" is a servant and believer of God. George W. Bush uses the word "a saint" as a successor or inheritance of his father's, George Bush's, religious ideology or even the whole American's religious ideology.

What's more, such kind of religious ideology not only goes through the history and the inaugural addresses of the American presidents, but also through the whole address of some presidents. For instance, as a religious Christian, President Eisenhower has input his religious idea of "God" throughout his 1953 inaugural address. First, in his invocation in the beginning, he prays to Almighty God for the power to "serve" the people:

*Almighty God*, as we stand here at this moment my future associates in the executive branch of government join me *in beseeching that Thou will make full and complete our dedication to the service of the people in this throng, and their fellow citizens everywhere.*

*Give us, we pray, the power to discern clearly right from wrong*, and allow all our words and actions to be governed thereby, and by the laws of this land. Especially we pray that our concern shall be for all the people regardless of station, race, or calling.

May cooperation be permitted and be the mutual aim of those who, under the concepts of our Constitution, hold to differing political faiths; *so that all may work for the good of our beloved country and Thy glory.* Amen. (Eisenhower, 1953)

When talking about his taking office, he stresses that he swore his oath before God which caters to the psychology of the public, that is, he is representing God to govern the country:

We are summoned by this honored and historic ceremony to witness more than the act of one citizen *swearing his oath of service, in the presence of God.* We are called as a people to give testimony in the sight of the world to our faith that the future shall belong to the free.

When discussing how to deal with the “great events”, he says:

In the swift rush of great events, we find ourselves groping to know the full sense and meaning of these times in which we live. *In our quest of understanding, we beseech God's guidance.* We summon all our knowledge of the past and we scan all signs of the future. We bring all our wit and all our will to meet the question:

When dealing with the faith of the Americans, he says:

This faith defines our full view of life. It establishes, beyond debate, *those gifts of the Creator* that are man's inalienable rights, and *that make all men equal in His sight.*

In this example, Eisenhower states that all the human rights are granted by God but not the government and that all men are created equally in the image of God.

Meanwhile, Eisenhower also emphasizes that the governors should serve the country under the guidance of God:

Rather this change expresses a purpose of strengthening our dedication and devotion to the precepts of our founding documents, a conscious renewal of faith in our country and *in the watchfulness of a Divine Providence.*

Finally, he claims his mission and prays to God again:

This is the hope that beckons us onward in this century of trial. This is the work that awaits us all, to be done with bravery, with charity, and *with prayer to Almighty God.*

This God chain illustrates that the religious ideology plays a key role in American's social practice and discourse; it is the basis of American ideology. It is God that surpasses all the human rights, laws, freedom and democracy which are granted by God who is "the Author of Liberty" (George Bush, 1989: para30, line10).

Ronald Reagan (1989) claims that in the end of his inaugural address:

It is the American sound. It is hopeful, big-hearted, idealistic, daring, decent, and fair. That's our heritage; that is our song. We sing it still. For all our problems, our differences, we are together as of old, *as we raise our voices to the God who is the Author of this most tender music. And may He continue to hold us close as we fill the world with our sound--sound in unity, affection, and love--one people under God, dedicated to the dream of freedom that He has placed in the human heart, called upon now to pass that dream on to a waiting and hopeful world.*

*God bless you and may God bless America.*

Reagan regards his mission as the “most tender music” and God is the “Author” and God has placed “freedom”, “unity”, “affection” and “love” “in the human heart” in order to create a “hopeful world”. It is obvious that he believes Americans are the chosen people and blessed land by God to complete this mission and to lead the world. Just as George W. Bush (2001) says:

Sometimes in life we called to *do great things*. But as a saint of our times has said, every day we are called to *do small things with great love*.

In this example, Bush first mentions “do great things”, which refers to “leading the world in American ideology”; next “do small things with great love” has the same meaning as “do great things”. As one of the major doctrines of Christianity, “Doing small things with great love” can be understood as “the love to God”, or “the love to the world and the people”. In a world, the Americans are achieving the mission of God by interfering with the domestic affairs of other countries and playing a role of world police.

All we discussed above tell us that the American presidents, or the governing class, take advantage of these biblical languages to make the address more persuasive, thus winning the support of the public. If we want to understand a discourse produced by an American, we must think highly of its religious ideology, the basis of American ideologies and lays the foundation of American ideologies.

## 5. A Contrast of Biblical Language in American Presidential Inaugural Addresses and Literature

As an important source of language and literature in western culture, the Holy Bible has gained the respect of all the Christianity and has been quoted frequently with different purpose in different genres, for instance, the quoted biblical languages have different functions in literature and political discourse, such as American presidential inaugural addresses.

### 5.1 The Functions of Biblical Languages in Literature

As an encyclopedia, the Holy Bible is a treasure for western writers. The scriptures, stories and characters are well-known for western people, therefore the western writers quote or make use of the scriptures, stories or characters of the Bible to build their own stories or characters, not only making it easier for the readers to accept them but also enriching the contents of the story and deepen the themes of the stories.

The Bible provides various subjects, languages and the quotations for the writers. For example, there are many citations from the Bible in Shakespeare's plays. As statistics reveals, the average number of the quotations from the Bible in each of Shakespeare's play is as many as 142. William Makepeace Thackeray, British novelist in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, mentioned many characters in the Bible, such as David, Samson, Cain, Judas, etc. And Thackeray makes advantage of the relationships between those characters to portray his own characters properly. And the title of Samuel Butler's novel, *The Way of All Flesh*, is combined by "all flesh" from Psalms and "the way of all the earth" from Joshua, which demonstrates the purpose of the writer appropriately. William Faulkner, the famous American writer in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, cited directly from the Bible as the titles for his works to express his feelings and ideas, such as *Absalom, Absalom*, and *Go Down, Moses* etc. Charlotte Bronte, the British woman novelist in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, had many subtle quotations



from the Bible in her famous *Jane Eyre*, for example, the fire in the novel, to some extent, means that Jesus Christ will christen the people with Holy Ghost and “fire” just as John the Baptist predicts.

In a word, the biblical languages, or the quotations from the Bible, and the use of the stories or characters from Bible have all made contributions to the success of the novels or works. The writers make use of these languages and stories from the Bible, an indispensable part of western life, to intensify the theme of the story and to widen the influence of the Bible and to attract the attention of the readers, thus catering to the psychology of the readers, especially the Christians.

The biblical languages in literature have played an important role different from that in political discourse. In literature, the writers apply the biblical languages to achieve their aims to serve for the development of the story while the authors of the political discourses aim to make the public to accept their ideologies and statements easily in the specific historical and social context.

## **5.2 The Function of Biblical Languages in American Presidential Inaugural Addresses**

God and the Bible are the indispensable part of the western people’s life. No matter whether the person believes Christianity, he or she is inclined to use God to express his or her feelings. Accordingly all the governors understand the importance of God and are willing to maintain their administration and domination in the name of God.

### **5.2.1 God in America**

Religion is an important composition of American social life. Originating from European culture, the United States inherited a double heritage of Europe when it became independent: one is the spirit of European Enlightenment embodied in American unique Constitution and Politics; the other is the religious tradition of Europe embodied in every aspect of American social life. From the very beginning,

America is a secular country and a society full of religious color as well. (林宏宇, 2006: 106-107)

Though America only has a history of over 200 years, yet religion, exactly speaking, Christianity has advanced in this land for more than 400 years. As early as 17<sup>th</sup> century before the foundation of the United States, the Puritans of England came across the Atlantic Ocean to North America and established the first North American colony for a chance to profess their own religious belief freely. Embracing a strong religious enthusiasm, they, as the elected people of God, began to carry the experiment of realizing their religious ideal in North American colony. After the establishment of the United States, though the Constitution clearly stipulates that Church and State is separated in America, and there is no State of Church in America, yet religion is closely connected with the progress of American history and has a strong impact on every aspect of America, such as politics, law, culture, diplomacy and ethics, etc. Richard Newhouse, American famous sociologist, says that, "A basic fact of America is that in the concept of American people the majority of them are Christians and they as well as many non-Christians all believe that the basis of American social ethics is the ethics of Judaism-Christian Ethics". Just as American famous theologian Niebuhr says America is "the most secular country in the world and the strongest religious country, either." (刘彭, 2001: 2-3)

Alexis de Tocqueville, French political scientist and historian, once said that, "In America, religion doesn't participate in social politics but it is regarded as the major part in the political institutions of the country." (R.G. 哈切森, 1992: 35) As a matter of fact, in America, to individuals, using religious ethics to guiding his own political activities and political stand is the natural representation of his religious belief in social life. To religious groups, having an impact on the maker of governmental and public policies and the legislative institutions not only maintains the traditional ethics but also represents the power of religious groups. The same as any other interests group, if it has no power, it has no influence at all. Once a social

group holds a mass of members and a strong economic power, the problem for them is to choose which means to make an impact on politics. (刘彭, 2001: 291-292)

As a Christian country, God is the utmost support of American civilization. The American people regard their own course as the holy mission granted by God. In a word, God has an unshaken position in the most American consciousness. "From the spiritual angle of view, God is the ideological provision of American nation; from the moral angle of view, God is the measure of value of American nation; from the rational angle of view, God is the protecting power of American liberalism; from the philosophical and ethical angle of view, God is the spiritual base of American pragmatism; from the national system of view, God is the conscious protective screen. The spiritual power of borne and sustaining of American civilization is God. God is the spiritual pillar of American civilization and the unshaken belief of Americans." (董小川, 2001: 56)

According to a Gallup poll in 1992, 90% Americans say they don't doubt the existence of God; 58% Americans believe that religion is very important for them; 42% say they have attend religious activities in seven days; 59% think that religion can resolve the problems of the society; only 2% Americans say they are atheists, and another 2% Americans think themselves as agnostics; 77% Americans say praying is an important component of their daily life. (董小川, 1999a: 24) According to another Gallup poll 1988, within ten Americans, nine say they don't doubt the existence of God; eight say they believe they will be called in front of God to confess on the doomsday; eight believe that God is still creating mighty works; seven believe there is eternity. In addition, 90% Americans pray, 88% Americans believe the love of God; 78% say they have spent "many" or "quite a lot of" time in the past two years to think the relations between people and God; 86% Americans say they hope their children can receive religious training. (裴孝贤, 1998: 42) Just as Tocqueville said "The most important is not what kind of church the whole citizen believe, but the whole citizen have religious beliefs. Still less in the society of

America, all the churches are under the unity of Christianity.” (维克多尔, 1993: 337)  
That is say, Christianity, or God, is the spiritual pillar of American society; American democracy and freedom don't exist if there is no religion.

From the day of the foundation of the United States, American leaders have a clear understanding of the religious situation of the country. All the American presidents, no matter what kind of church they believe or how they believe, all of them are masters of religious diction and terms. They hope religion or Christianity can be the basis of social ethics and the cohesion of society. It is counted that in the 43 presidents of America from Washington to G. W. Bush, 39 of them are members of church, and the other 4 also have close relationship with church. Thus we can conclude that the majority of Americans don't want an atheist to be the president, because they hope there is a person who shares the same ethics and values with them to be the president. Just as the 25<sup>th</sup> President William Mackinley of American once described the presidency of America as that none of the persons who deny the existence of God can take this seat. In a word, from the election campaign to the inaugural address and to the administrative policies, each American president applies Biblical languages to please and convince the people and declares that their power comes from God and they are working for God to realize God's will. The whole nation has a deep belief in God and the Bible, leading to the mass usage of Biblical languages in every one's daily life from the ruling class to the grass. Therefore Christianity is the social, cultural and historical context of the Biblical languages in American presidential inaugural addresses and the factor that can not be ignored when have a study of in American presidential inaugural addresses.

### **5.2.2 American Civil Religion**

The important role of religion or Christianity in American daily is thanks to the function of “Civil Religion”. The theory of “Civil Religion” was first proposed by American sociologist Robert N. Bellah in 1967. “Civil Religion” can also be called “Public Religion”, “Religion of the Public”, “Folk Religion”, “Civil Faith”,

“National Religion”, “Civil Piety” or “Civic Religion” etc. (董小川, 1999b: 136)

According to Bellah, there is a religion in American which is different from the Christian churches. We call it “Civil Religion”. It has no temples, no disciples or no tenets. It is the common belief of the American nation. Church is individual, while “Civil Religion” is national; church concerns psychology, while “Civil Religion” concerns secularity and ethics; church belongs to future, while “Civil Religion” belongs to this day. Church and “Civil Religion” don’t contradict with each other; on the contrary, they interconnect and coordinate with each other, sometimes they overlap with each other. Thus American “Civil Religion” is the common belief of American people, the united ethics of American nation, the cultural phenomenon of American civilization, the ideology of American government; it is the combination of religious renaissance and capitalist democracy and the combination of Church and State as well; it is the ordered religion and political religion; it is the tie between individuals and the state and the bridge between nationalization and belief diversity. The strong cohesion, centripetal force, adaptability, reforming force, revolutionary force, developmental force and pervasive force come from the unshaken position of God in the consciousness of American people. And the American people are freewill to establish such kind of unshaken position, because there is no preach of the government nor a representation in the Constitution. (董小川, 2001: 54)

The most important element in American “Civil Religion” is God. According to Dong Xiaochuan, we can explore the importance of God in American “Civil Religion” in two aspects.

(1) God, commonly worshiped by the whole American people, is the soul of American “Civil Religion”.

God is the god of American “Civil Religion”. The God of American “Civil Religion” is completely different from the God of Judaism-Christian-Catholicism. The latter refers to the spiritual belief and worship, while the former refers to everything in the world; from spirit to secularism, from politics to economics,

nothing is excluded. From the point of view of American people, the Almighty God of “Civil Religion” is unshaken and irreplaceable, because there is nothing without God. God of American “Civil Religion” includes several meanings as follows:

Firstly, it is God who creates man and determines the destiny of man. Up to now, all the American presidents believe and worship God. Despite some of them are not members of church, they all attach great importance to religion. The most important for American people is to respect God from the heart.

Secondly, it is God who elects America and American nation. God grants America the historical responsibility, and thus the American cause is the completion of God’s mission.

Thirdly, the upmost sovereignty of America belongs to God. Not only American’s conscience should be judged by God, but also whether the American cause is right or not should also be judged by God. Bellah assumes that “People’s desire is not the standard for whether it is right or not. There is a higher standard to judge whether people’s desire is right or not. People may be wrong. As a result, the responsibility of the president is to serve this higher standard.” (Bellah & Hammond, 1982: 25; 董小川, 1999b: 142) This higher standard is God.

Finally, God of American “Civil Religion” is the splendid combination of the tangible God and the intangible God. When the *Declaration of Independence* states that the innate rights of man of “are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights”, God is tangible as an idol; when “In God We Trust” is engraved in American coin, God is intangible as the ethics and values.

(2) President is the central representative of American “Civil Religion”. According to Bellah et alii, “from some signification, American president creates and maintains the American ‘Civil Religion’.” (R. G. 哈切森, 1992: 41) Most of American presidents mention God and use Biblical languages in their inaugural addresses and other speeches. The purpose is not to emphasize the importance of God in the heart of Christians, but to sanctify president or to regard president as

anthropomorphized god, thus stressing the core position of president in American cause. In American “Civil Religion”, president is the core character who organically combines God and the state, religiosity of heart and patriotism, loving-kindness of God and happiness of the state, church and state, etc. holy and secular concepts. Meanwhile, presidents take advantage of “Civil Religion” to fulfill his responsibility, to carry out his power into practice. It is deemed from a certain signification that it is American president who is in charge of American “Civil Religion”. As the ruling class, all the American presidents claim that they are religiously worshipping God and implementing God’s mission and it is God who grants their power and rights to govern the whole country. President Kennedy even states that “the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state, but from the hand of God.” However, all of those beliefs and statements serve for the political purposes of the president, or exactly the ruling class in the name of God. (董小川, 1999b: 141-144)

### **5.2.3 Common Sense, Context, Ideology and American Presidential Inaugural Addresses**

The Biblical languages have various forms and a high frequency in the American presidential inaugural address. To understand the reason for each American president choosing these linguistic forms, we should not neglect the social background of the United States which is the social, linguistic and cultural context in which the address is delivered. Under the influence of Christianity, though the Americans uphold secularization between Church and State, it is actually the separation of institutions between Church and State. In the United States, religion or exactly church has always permeated deeply into the every aspect of American social life. Especially in order to protect its own interests, religion participates in various political activities and the operation of secular power widely.

Though the United States only has a history of over 200 years, as an immigrant country with its immigrants mainly from Britain and Europe, it is under the deep

influence of the Bible from the very beginning of its first immigration. During the early hard immigrant life, those immigrants had drawn power from the belief of God and the Bible. As a result, the Bible has deeply come into the ideology of the American people and become an indispensable part of their life. The Bible is not only the pillar of spiritual belief and the fountain of moral and ethics of the American people, but also the basis of their political ideology and the support of their political activities. Especially the Civil Religion is “the theme of the American ideology with both the features of traditional religion and the representation of social politics” (董小川, 1999a: 29). Specifically speaking, in the American presidential inaugural address, the presidents make the people believe that they are the chosen people of God via Civil Religion and put the American religious ideology into the common sense of the American people. Hence “it is easier for the American people to accept the political preach taken in the religious belief” (雷雨田, 1994: 119). The American presidents apply the quotations of the Bible or Biblical languages into his inaugural address to “make use of religion and moral beliefs to state his own stands and invite God to ascend office”, “so as to deify his power and please the chosen people of God”. (雷雨田, 1994: 119-120). In this way, the American presidents “imply some significations or information with ideologies in the discourse through some linguistic tools to make them a part of the commonsensible background knowledge”, which produces an ideal imperceptible influence, “to make the readers affected or accept them unconsciously”. (辛斌, 2005: 46)

According to Fairclough, “ideology is not made clearly in the discourse but as background knowledge. On the one hand, ideology guides the producer of the discourse to portray the world in specific way; on the other hand, it guides the readers to understand the discourse in specific way; thereby ideology becomes invisible. Discourse usually doesn’t break forth ideology but puts ideology into the process of understanding the discourse by providing some useful clues and reproduces those ideologies in this process.” (Fairclough, 1989: 85) For this reason,



the American presidents use a large amount of Biblical languages in his inaugural address to make the receivers understand the discourse or text according to the ideological clues premade by the president on the basis of common sense of Christianity and the Bible. Thus the American people will confirm and agree with the president's opinions and show their understanding and support to the president, which is beneficial to the domination of the ruling class.

## 6. Conclusion

Language is universally ideological; meanwhile language is an important means of the realization of social control and power relationship, and power relationship can have an impact on the formation of common sense via ideology. What's more, the common sense of a country or society, as a kind of secularized ideology, has deeply penetrated into the psychology of the people and should be accepted widely and willingly. With the wide and deep influence of Christianity and the Holy Bible, the western countries and people have regarded God and the Bible and its scriptures as holy and almighty and have profound religious belief in God and the Bible, especially the United States and the American people though there is no state church in America. As we have discussed above, the close relationship with Britain in history, the supremacy of God in America and the importance and influence of American "Civil Religion", all have laid a solid foundation to the social acceptance of God and the Bible in public, thus American people, either the governing class or the ordinary people, are inclined to mention God frequently and to quote or cite the scriptures of the Bible in a high frequency. It's no doubt that we can read or hear the scriptures of the Bible, or the biblical languages from instant to instant, here and there, and thus the use of biblical languages has become a kind of common sense and won the acceptance of all the American people.

As a kind of political discourse, American presidential inaugural address, with no exception, ideologically aims at persuading the public to accept and support the dominance of the governor. Therefore, this kind of discourse is full of preaching. In order to attract the attention of the public without arousing their disliking, the addresser must apply various linguistic forms skillfully to avoid the resistance of the addressee; meanwhile, the addresser has to win the trust of the public and their acceptance, thus concealing his or her real purpose via specific context and language. As a result, almost all the public tend to use the biblical languages to divert the attention of the American people as they try to announce their political purpose in

the voice of God, the super god in the heart of the American people. In this way, those presidents input their dominant ideology into the common sense of the public, which is the cognition of respect for God and belief in God, thus reducing the compelling force of the inaugural addresses and catering to the psychology of the public so as to court their acceptance and support.

This paper having analyzed fifteen American presidential inaugural addresses after the Second World War via the theories and methodologies of Critical Discourse Analysis, and through the quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis of the biblical languages in American presidential inaugural addresses, this paper finds that almost all the American presidents are inclined to apply the biblical languages to their addresses in different extent and try to air their political statements in the voice of God and to arouse the acceptance and the sense of mission of the American people, concealing their real goal to control the psychology of the public and the whole country via God or Christian religious ideology, the foundation of all the ideologies of the American people or even the whole western world. The great function of and influence of religion on society and American “Civil Religion” to the United States and the different functions of biblical languages in literature and in political discourse, that is, the American presidential address in this paper, state that those politicians deliberately adapt the biblical languages into his discourse in order to attain the attention and acceptance of the Christians by taking advantage of the Christian social context of the western countries, in which the cognition and belief in God has deeply penetrated into the psychology and ideology of the mass and has become an indispensable part of the western life. As a result, it is easy to arouse the response of the public and is beneficial to the social control and social integration.

The paper aims to arouse the attention of the public to the real purpose of the speaker when he or she use some specific kind of linguistic forms in his or her discourse, such as the biblical languages in the American presidential addresses, the purpose of which is to remain the social control via religious ideology. Consequently

it's no doubt that those biblical languages in the American presidential addresses are not just a kind of reflection of personal belief; they are the legitimated and habitualized ideology as common sense widely accepted by the public of which are difficult to be aware. Thus the readers must possess a critical language sense of reading, especially the public or political discourses, promote their appreciation of reading and have a clear recognition of the western ideology.

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## Publications

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