A Political Discourse Analysis of the Speeches of Iraqi Designated Prime Ministers

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Abstract

The present paper carries out a political discourse analysis of three Iraqi designation speeches which were delivered respectively by three different designated prime ministers Mohammad Alawi, Adnan Al-Zurfi, and Mustafa Al-Kadhimi in the first half of 2020 after the resignation of the then Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mehdi as a consequence of October 2019 Uprising which broke out as a reaction to corruption, social injustice and bad services. The analysis is based on the categories suggested by Van Dijk (1997) which include topics, superstructure, syntax, lexicon and rhetoric. The results of the analysis have revealed a great similarity in the overall structure of the speeches and some but interesting differences in some parts or aspects of the speeches. The similarity reflects the convergence in the topics as well the circumstances at the time of delivering the speeches while the differences indicate the approach each of the speakers adopts in identifying the problems and suggesting solutions as well his personal style of expressing things.

Keywords

73

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Introduction

Designation speeches are speeches which designated primes ministers deliver when they receive the letter of designation from the President of the Republic. Normally, there is only one designated prime minister in a parliamentary term who will start forming the government once he receives the designation letter. After he finishes the task of forming the government, he will go to the Council of Representatives (COR) along with his cabinet ministers to get an approval voting. After the resignation of Adel Abdul Mehdi, in 2020 there was no collective consensus among the political powers on Alawi and Al-Zurfi before they were designated by the president and that is why they could not complete the task, but this consensus was available for Al-Kadhimi who became then the prime minister after he got the approval from the COR.

1. Political Discourse

The criteria used in the definition of political discourse are hardly textual or structural, but rather contextual ones. Accordingly, Van Dijk (2002:225) argues that "political discourse is not primarily defined by topic or style, but rather by who speaks to whom, as what, on what occasion and with what goals." He maintains "whatever a politician says is a form of political discourse; and whatever anybody says with a political aim (viz., to influence the political process, e.g., decision making, policies) is also a form of political discourse" (Van Dijk, 2002:216). To put it briefly, political discourse is defined by its functions in the political process (Van Dijk,1997a). However, Chilton (2004:201) offers a definition of political discourse that is based on the use of language in ways that humans tend to recognize as 'political'. He argues that there are aspects of language, structural or lexical, that are frequently or typically associated with what can be interpreted as particular types of political behaviour.

Chilton (2004:14) states that political actors recognize the effects of language use and thus manipulate language and its resources to produce their desired effects. Consequently, Wilson (1990: 410) proposes that "one of the main aims of political discourse analysis is to identify the ways in which language choice is manipulated for specific political effects." Schaffner (1997:2 cited in Sharhan, 2017:458) suggests that "the most successful linguistic analysis of political discourse in general, and of political speeches in particular, is the one which interprets linguistic features in terms of political behaviour." This can take two forms: one form is the identification of certain linguistic features (e.g. word choice, a specific syntactic structure) and associating them with the functions they are used to perform. The other form is the reverse, i.e., the analysis begins with the identification of the function of a text and relates that function to the linguistic structures used to fulfil it.

2. Iraq: An overview

Iraq is an Arab country located in Western Asia. It is bordered by Turkey to the north, Iran to the east, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to the south and Jordan and Syria to the west. The capital of Iraq is Baghdad. The Iraqi state, which was established in 1921 as a monarchy backed by Britain, gained independence in 1932. In 1958 the monarchy was overthrown by a military coup whose leaders sized power and changed the monarchy into a republic. After two successive coups in 1963 and 1968, Iraq came under the rule of the Socialist Arab Ba'ath Party which remained in power until April, 9th 2003 when it was overthrown by the American-led invasion of the country.

Iraq's population comprises of diverse ethnic groups including Iraqi Arabs, Kurds, Turkmens, Assyrians, Armenians, Yazidis, Mandaeans, Persians and Shabakis .

The majority of the country's 40 million citizens are Muslims, and other recognized religions

include Christianity, Yazidism and Mandaeism. The official languages of Iraq are Arabic and Kurdish (cf. wiki on Iraq).

Nearly two-thirds of Iraq's people are Arabs, about one-fourth Kurds, and the remainder are small minority groups. Iraq's Arab population consists of Sunni Muslims and the more numerous Shiʿi Muslims. Iraq's Kurds are concentrated in the mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan, Followers of other religions include Christians and smaller groups of Yazīdīs, Mandaeans, Jews, and Bahāʾīs (Woods et al.2022).

Millions of Iraqis immigrated outside Iraq or were displaced inside the country as a result of 2003 war and terrorism which started with separate incidents and reached its climax with the terrorist group of ISIS taking over three major Iraqi cities of Mosul, Salahuddin and Anbar.

3. Iraqi Political Scene

After the American invasion and removal of Saddam Hussein from power in 2003, Iraq passed through a political governance transitional period starting with the Iraq Governing Council (IGC) established by and served under the United States-led Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). IGC consisted of twenty-five Iraqi politicians representing different Iraqi regions, sects and ethnicities. Twelve of these politicians served as the president of the council for a month (Iraqi Governing Council). Almost a year after that, namely in June 2004 the Americans transformed the authority to the Iraqi politicians who chose a president and a prime minister with his cabinet ministers. There was care to represent as many parties, sects and regions as possible in that interim government.

Among other things, the government had the task of preparing for general elections for electing members of The National Assembly which were held in January 2005. The main job of the National Assembly was to form a transitional government and write a new constitution. The government also prepared for other elections which were held in October 2005 to elect members of the COR whose mandate would be to vote to choose the Council speaker and his deputies as well as the president of the country. According to the constitution the president would designate, by an official letter, the candidate of the biggest parliament group to form the government. This process was repeated every four years, 2010, 2014, 2018.

4. The October 2019 Uprising

Iraq witnessed an uprising in October 2019 against the political system as a whole and the then government as its representatives because of the bad performance of the successive governments from 2006 till that time. People went out to the streets in Baghdad and other governorates demanding the resignation of the government and even the dissolution of the COR because these two institutions, they felt, were behind the failures and corruption the country suffered for almost two decades after the fall of Saddam's regime. The demonstrators were gathering in streets and squares in Baghdad and in central and southern cities using slogans and chants that condemned the political parties who were in power and called for their immediate and unconditional stepping aside. The government responded violently and thousands of demonstrators were injured or killed as a result. There were also casualties among the security forces due to counter violence from some demonstrators.

With time, pressure mounted on the government and the political parties leading to the resignation of the government as announced by its head the then Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mehdi. This resignation prompted the search for a new prime minister who would take the responsibility of forming the government and stand up to the challenges of the day. According to the constitution,

75

the President of the Republic officially designates a candidate of the biggest group in the parliament as a prospective prime minister. First the President designated Mohamad Alawi, a former minister of telecommunication to form the new government and he delivered a televised speech to the people. He spent a month in selecting the members of his cabinet, but when he went to the COR to present the cabinet for voting, the session was not held due to inadequate presence on the part of the COR members.

After a consensus of some political groups in the COR, a new candidate, Adnan Al-zurfi, a member of the COR and a former governor of the City of Najaf, received the letter of designation from the President of the Republic. He also delivered a televised speech to the people. But during the period of selecting his cabinet members he had to resign. Finally, the major political parties agreed to choose Al-Kadhimi, the then Iraqi intelligence director, as a candidate and he received the letter of designation from the President in the presence of representatives of those parties. He also delivered a televised speech to the people.

5. Methodology

The data of the study consist of three speeches delivered successively in the first half of 2020 by Iraqi designated prime ministers as a replacement of the then Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mehdi who resigned as a consequence of October 2019 Uprising. Alawi gave his speech on February 1st 2020, and it lasted for 6 minutes and 58 seconds. Al-Zurfi delivered his 7 minutes and 8 seconds speech on March 17th 2002, and finally, Al-Kadhimi gave his speech on April 9th 2020, and it lasted 7 minutes and 49 seconds. The extracts used in the analysis and cited as examples have been translated from Arabic into English by the author.

In analyzing the speeches, the paper adopts a mixed research design, i.e., qualitative and quantitative. The analysis is basically qualitative but some quantitative facts are cited to support the qualitative descriptions. The framework of analysis employed in this paper uses tools suggested by van Dijk (1997) especially those related to topics, superstructure, syntax, rhetoric and speech acts. These analytical categories are presented below.

According to Van Dijk (1980), topics are also known as semantic macropropositions. Political discourse has politics as its core theme, although it usually includes in combination topics from other societal domains. "Political topics will be mainly about political actors (politicians, elites, public figures and social institutions and organizations) and their typical actions, in past, present and especially the future" (Van Dijk,1997a:29). The analysis of the superstructure is concerned with the overall organization of the discourse. As far as political discourse is concerned, there is considerable variation because each genre may have its 'own canonical schematic structure', as is illustrated in parliamentary debates, political speeches, propaganda leaflets or slogans in demonstrations (Van Dijk,1997a:29). "Some of these categories are obligatory (as in legally binding Openings and Closings of official sessions of parliament), whereas others are merely conventional or strategic, as in political speeches or propaganda" (Van Dijk,1997a:29).

In terms of syntax, political discourse analysis considers a variety of features and structures such as the use of pronouns, the use of specific syntactic categories such as active and passive constructions and nominalizations. Some political functions such as emphasis or mitigation can be fulfilled through more or less prominent placement of words and phrases. "Syntactic topicalization by fronting a word may draw special attention to such a word" (Dijk, 1997a:34).
Rhetoric is another tool suggested by van Dijk and will be used in the analysis. It is well-know that rhetorical operations are generally optional. Thus, they are used for persuasive purposes which make them politically significant in a political context of communication (Van Dijk,1997a:34).

In addition to the above-mentioned tools, speech acts are also used in the analysis as a pragmatic tool that investigates the interaction between the politicians and their audience, the people in the case of the present paper. The types of speech acts to be investigated in the data of the study are representatives, expressives, commissives, directives and declarations (Simpson,1993).

6. Results and Discussion
6.1 Topics

In each of the three speeches being analyzed, the speaker is addressing current problems and challenges of different kinds and promising future actions that he and his government will take to solve or lessen the effect of these problems and challenges. So, the actors are mostly the speaker as a prospective prime minister and his ministerial cabinet; although the identity of the actors is either implicit through the use of nominalization or explicit in which case it takes the form of first-person singular or plural. Other actors refer to the people, or other entities which have created the complexities in the Iraqis' life. The predicates are represented by the actions and events which are promised by the speaker as an essential part of his job as a prime minister.
They are also represented by the actions and events related to the people, or other entities. Below are some illustrating examples,
(1) I pledge diligent work to prepare for early elections. (Alwai's speech).
(2) Returning the displaced people to their cities and villages and providing the means of the safe living and the demands of the dignified life. (Alzurfi's speech).
(3) The government pledges to be on the first defensive line to protect the Iraqis from the danger of coronavirus. (Al-Kadhimi's speech).

6.2 Superstructure or textual schemata

Designation speeches represent a subgenre of political speeches. They bear resemblance to the political speeches in terms of their openings and closings. Whereas the former comprise introductory remarks that prepare the audience for the topic of the speech, the latter consist of concluding remarks that mark the end of the speech.

The designation speeches under investigation can be then divided into three parts which are the introductory remarks, the core of the speech and the concluding remarks. As for the introductory remarks in the three speeches, they seem to be generally similar in terms of content and different in terms of expression. They contain the greeting of the Iraqi people; expressing gratitude to all the relevant participants in the political process. These included politicians, the President for designating the speaker to be the next prime minister, the members of COR, the Religious Institution as well the demonstrators whose uprising caused the resignation of the government and the designation of a prime minister to form a new one.

Alawi cites Quranic verse in which Allah orders people to work and do useful things because He and His messenger as well as believers will see their work. By doing this he alludes to the Holy Book, Qur'an, to give an implied promise that he will work to meet the demands of the people. Al-Kadhimi congratulates the people on the anniversary of the mid-Sha'ban (on the Islamic Calendar) a religious Shiʿi celebration and the anniversary of the fall of the Ba'ath's regime on April 9th 2003. He does so to convey solidarity with the Shiʿi majority of the population and to remind the whole people of the dramatic change they have experienced from dictatorship to democracy. Al-Zurfi does not use any similar expressions with religious or political implications.

In the core of the speech, the three designated prime ministers seem to have a consensus on the type of problems they need to address in the speech and the promises or pledges they should give to overcome these problems and challenges. However, each has his own way of presenting the problems and suggesting the solutions to these problems. Alawi chooses to begin with pledging to hold accountable the killers of the martyrs from the demonstrators and the security forces and prohibiting the use of weapons against the people. For him this will assure demonstrators and security forces as well as the whole people that their safety is a priority and it is the first step to launch from. The other points he talks about are forming a government free from sharing, the preparation for early elections, the creation of job opportunities, fighting the rampant corruption, achieving safety and security, and confining weapons to the hands of the state and protecting Iraq from any external interference.

Al-zurfi puts forward as a top priority the preparation for free, impartial and transparent elections. He wants to indicate this is the solid base upon which all other steps can reside. Other points come as follows: dedicating the greatest effort to encounter the outbreak of Corona pandemic, sending the 2020 budget to the parliament, confining weapons to the hands of the State, protecting the security of the demonstrators and responding to their demands, adopting external policy based on the principle of Iraq first and not allowing Iraq to be an area for settling accounts, seeking openness with all neigbouring countries with the right of being a sovereign state, returning the displaced to their homes, confronting decisively widespread corruption, investment, seeking solutions for the problems with Kurdistan Province, developing the military and security institutions and confronting the remnants of terrorist ISIS.

Al-Kadhimi puts Coronavirus pandemic at the top of his government agenda. For him the first and most important step is to combat the dangerous threat that the pandemic poses to the people's health. The other tasks in the agenda are sovereignty, prohibiting weapon uncontrolled use by decisive procedures with the help of security forces including Al-Hashad Sha'bi and Pishmirga, economy and its development with investment and varying the sources of public income, responding to the demands of people in the demonstration squares, protecting the rights of the demonstrators, foreign affairs, fighting corruption and corrupts, returning the displaced to their homes.

The concluding remarks in the three speeches are mainly wishes for success in the job undertaken and calls for support from the politicians and the people.

6.3 Syntax

6.3.1 The use of pronouns

Table 1 The distribution of personal pronouns used in the speeches

No	Type of personal pronouns	Alawi's	Al-Zurfi's	Al-Kadhimi
1	First-person singular	29	6	7
2	First-person plural	2	2	16
3	Second person	2	1	9

A close look at table 1 shows clearly the difference with regard to the use of personal pronouns especially the first-person pronouns. Of the three speeches, Alawi's speech is characterized by the overuse of the first-person singular pronoun *I* which occurs twenty-nine times in different contexts and with different verbs, but eleven of these occurrences are with the verb 'pledge'. Other verbs include 'promise', 'emphasize', 'greet', 'will try', 'face', 'indicate', 'call', 'will supervise', 'am wishing'. Alawi chooses to address the Iraqi people mostly through the first-person singular

pronoun with regard to the components of his governmental program which may convey some sort of confidence implicit in the verbs he uses with the pronoun. Also, this may be taken as a sign of assurance to the people that he is wholeheartedly committed to achieve their demands and aspirations. However, this may be something he is criticized for because the responsibility and the execution of the program of any government should be collective, of all the ministers, rather than individual, of the prime minister alone. Below are some examples,

(4) *I* pledge the Almighty Allah and *I* pledge the Iraqi people that *I* will try my best to serve the country.

(5) *I* promise the Iraqi people that the bloods of the demonstrators and the security forces will not go in vain.

(6)*I* emphasize the commitment to create as many job opportunities as possible.

The first- person plural pronoun *we* is used two times, one is exclusive and another is inclusive as the following two examples illustrate respectively,

(7) *We* will pay back the right of the pure bloods.

(8) *We* are still facing an enemy who is lurking on *us*.

Where in (7) *we* denotes the prospective government in (8) *we* means the whole people.

As for the possessive first-person plural, there are three instances in Alawi's speech, two of them are inclusive *our security forces*, *our dear homeland* and one is exclusive, referring to himself,

(9) *Our* wish for the injured to be cured.

The second-person plural occurs twice, once as part of the greeting in the opening and the second occurrence which has some significance is in the following sentence,

(10) I pledge the people not to accept any candidate from the political parties and in case I face pressure I will tell *you* that very explicitly.

Here, Alawi considers the people as a partner in the job he will be doing; he will even tell them about things that may happen behind the scene.

In Al-Zurfi's speech, the occurrences of the first-person singular pronoun are six, five of them are used in the introductory part of the speech in complimentary remarks and gratitude expressions for politicians, demonstrators and armed forces. The sixth one is used in the conclusion,

(11) *I* wish sincerely all the sons of our country and in their advance the protesting youth and brothers and sisters in the and the political forces will help us in executing these tasks.

The small number of the first-person singular pronoun is justified by Al-Zurfi's preferring an impersonal style by using nominalized constructions. There is one occurrence of possessive first-person singular pronoun,

(12)…my sisters and brothers who have garrisoned in the strike and demonstration areas for months ……..

which shows intimacy and solidarity with the demonstrators. The first-person plural pronoun occurs twice,

(13) With *our* care to perform the responsibility assigned to us and *our* confirmation of the duty honour which *we* have been assigned, *we* will show care and give all what can be given to achieve the following….

Here the two uses of *we* are attributed to the designated prime minister which is a style used by Arab speakers either as a sign of modesty to avoid talking about oneself or to give some weight to the position one is holding. The same can be said about the two uses of the possessive form *our* in the same extract. Other uses of *our* as in *our people* are intended to show intimacy with the audience, i.e., the Iraqi people. The remaining instances of *our* are used to indicate the common things that the speaker shares with his audience, e.g., *our armed forces*, *our security forces*, *our country*, *our dear country, our Iraqi identity*. The second-person pronoun has only one occurrence in the greeting.

Al-Kadhimi's speech has seven occurrences of the first-person singular pronoun. Three of these are used in the introductory remarks in expressions of gratitude, two are used in hedging expressions and the other two seem to have a significant function in speech as the following examples indicate,

(14) The ministerial cabinet which *I* will submit to the esteemed COR as soon as possible along with the governmental program will be serving the people.

(15)……returning the displaced to their homes is an aim *I* will not give up.

In (14) he refers to his job as a prime minister which is to choose the cabinet and submit it to the COR while in (15) he wants to assure the displaced people that he himself will take care of their returning to their homes.

The first-person plural pronoun occurs sixteen times, nine of which refer to the government to be formed,

(16) *We* will exert the maximum efforts and exploit all the internal and external relations to protect Iraq in encountering this global pandemic.

(17) Yes, *we* will take care of those affected by the curfew and support the health and medical staffs and the security services.

(18) *We* will work to confine weapons by decisive procedures.

This gives Al-Kadhimi's style some impersonal flavour when he views himself as a member in a group or a team who are responsible for implementing the program of the future government. Five occurrences of the first-person plural pronoun refer to Iraqi people, which are inclusive, i.e., they include both the speaker and the audience and the aim is to show solidarity, intimacy and common interests,

(19)Yes, *we* have seen failures at several levels and all are responsible.

(20) *We* have to work together to protect Iraq from the crises, conflicts and useless wars.

(21)*We* have to confirm that we are worthy of Iraq by actions not by words.

(22) Yes, *we* have to cooperate and trust each other and trust the state.

Another instance of the first-person plural refers to Iraqi politicians,

(23)Today *we* must have the duty of review, frankness and direct dialogue with our people and ourselves.

and the last one to Iraq,

(24)*We* are a match to our adversaries and brothers to our neigbours and friends.

The possessive first-person plural pronouns are eight in number. Four appear in the expression *our people* and the other four refer to the country as a whole as in *our external relations*, *our national sovereignty*, *our adversaries* and *our neighbour*.

The second-person plural pronoun occurs nine times, one in the greeting, another in a hedging expression *as you know* and the other seven occurrences are used by the speaker to remind people of their important role in the building and performance of the state,

(25) The state is *you*, *your* unsleeping eyes for the safety and stability.

(26) The state is *your* voices defending sovereignty, rights and national decision.

(27) The state is *your* hands in the field of work.

Another use of the second-person pronoun is also to stress the glorious history of the country and its people in terms of the civilizations which existed in the country a long time ago,

(28) *We* and *you* are the legacy of Sumer, Babylon and Ashur.

6.4 Lexicon

The three designated prime ministers use certain words and expressions to describe the problems and challenges they pledge to address in their governmental program. First of all, Allawi describes his designation as a *great historical responsibility* which indicates the significance of the job he is assigned. In his speech terrorism is referred to as *an enemy lurking on us* which means the

80

country should be alert. He also talks about restoring Iraq's *positive* and *neutral* role in foreign policy which reassures the world community about the attitude and the stance of the prospective government. Corruption is described as *rampant* which indicates it is challenging. Those who killed demonstrators and security forces are described as *criminals* and *aggressors* which implies they should be sued and sentenced. As for elections, he pledges to stand against any interference that might affect the *solidity*, *impartiality* and *transparency* of their results and *restore the public trust in it*. Here there is an implication that elections before lacked these features, thus had lost the public trust. Politically, he does not want Iraq to be *an area for settling accounts and struggles*, an allusion to what is often said about Iraq being a place for a struggle between America and Iran. With regard to economy, he talks about initiating an *investment renaissance* changing the economy from *rentier* which is mostly dependent on oil to *investment*, which means developing the country through reforms and investment.

In Al-Zurfi's speech, designation is described as a *moral* and *national* responsibility which means that he should be loyal to his morals and nation. As for terrorism, it is *global* and Iraq is a *major* and *effective* partner in fighting it, which indicates terrorism is not targeting Iraq only and the role of Iraq in fighting terrorism should be recognized. In the context of security, he talks about continuing fighting the *remnants* of terrorist ISIS where the word *remnants* implies the remains of the defeated terrorist organization in Iraq. Those who killed the demonstrators and security forces are described as *killers* which means they will be brought to justice. Elections are to be *free*, *fair and transparent* to remove any worries and doubts about its results. Corruption is described as *rampant* which means it is widespread and needs a great effort; corrupts are threatened by the expression *cutting off the roots of the corrupts*, which gives an impression that the government will take deterrent actions against them. As for economy the expressions used are an *attractive investment environment* and *moving the wheel of the economy* which both give some hope of developing the economy. As for foreign policy, he is against making Iraq *an area for settling accounts*, which refers to the long-term American and Iranian struggle and its effects on Iraq. Also, he sets the criteria for Iraq's international relations by making the high Iraqi interests the *compass* for the direction of those attitudes and relations.

Al-Kadhimi describes the designation as a *national test* which indicates it is a very difficult job. He considers fighting corruption and corrupts a *national mission*, that is, a highly important mission. As for his government he says it will not be an *isolated government*, or a government of *closed rooms* and *secrets*, an implication of transparent government which is close to its people. In talking about sovereignty, he describes it as a *red line* which means it does not accept any compromise or indulgence. He also says sovereignty will not be a *controversial* issue which implies that no contrasting views are allowed about it. He considers Iraq a *highborn* country which indicates Iraq's long history of existence. He also addresses the problem of *uncontrolled* weapon which means the weapons used by armed groups; he says the government will work to confine by *decisive* procedures, which means procedures that are effective and never give the chance to this problem to happen again. The Iraqi economy is described by him *as exhausted* and job *unwieldiness* has *run down* the state, which means that economy needs reforms. He says the Iraqi is not a *subordinate*, the Iraqi is a *decedent of civilizations* and his strength comes from his *pride of his patriotism* which suggests having civilizations and patriotism would never put one in the subordinate position. We are a *match* to our adversaries, which indicates strength against any aggression and *brothers* to our neigbours and friends, which means love and kindness.

6.5 Rhetoric
6.5.1 Repetition in Alawi's speech

Alawi repeats *demonstrators* six times,
(29) I greet with appreciation and veneration the martyrs from *demonstrators* and I greet with them the martyrs from our security forces who sacrificed their souls defending the right of demonstration and safety of *demonstrators*.
(30) The bloods of martyrs from *demonstrators* and *security forces* will not be in vain …violence against peaceful demonstrators and against *security forces*.
In the above extract where *demonstrators* are mentioned there is also a mention of *security forces*. This is in fact a strategy used by the speaker to show that he stands at the same distance from both, and also to reduce the tension between them because the security forces were involved in killing and injuring thousands of demonstrators.
Other repeated words and phrases include *the Iraqi people* which is repeated five times in different parts of the speech,
(31)I pledge *the Iraqi people* that ……and I promise *the Iraqi people* that ……
where the adjective *Iraqi* is used just to emphasize the national identity and unity of the audience. In addition, the phrase *the people* is repeated four times as in
(32) Weaponry should not be used against *the people*; it is for protecting *the people*.
Here it is clear that repeating *the people* in the above extract and elsewhere is for the sake of emphasizing the idea that the people are the source of authorities.
Moreover, *all the sons of people* which is mentioned once to emphasize that the government is for all citizens all over the country with no distinction in terms of ethnicity, religion, region or sect,
(33)I pledge to achieve safety and security to *all the sons of people*.
Another important phrase which is repeated three times is *the state* used in different contexts to stress its presence and importance.
(34)….by starting the building of *the state* of institutions, justice, freedom, prosperity and peace.
(35)…*the state* actually commences the serious reformative work.
(36) I pledge to …….. to confine weaponry to the hands of *the state* and there is no authority above the authority of law.
Repeating *the state* comes in the speech to address an idea which is circulating in the Iraqi society that the state is weak and cannot exercise its power in the most important issues in the country.

6.5.2 Repetition Al-Zurfi's speech

Al-Zurfi mentions *demonstrators* three times and *activists* once.
(37) I bow with solemnity to the souls of the martyrs and with respect to the bloods of the injured from the *peaceful demonstrators* and *our armed forces* ………
(38) Protecting the security of the *demonstrators* and the *activists* ………..
(39) Working seriously to sue the killers and reveal the identity of those who were behind the fall of thousands of the injured from the *peaceful demonstrators* and *our armed forces* ………..

In the above extracts, *armed forces* cooccurs with *demonstrators*, a strategy adopted by the speaker to indicate the equal attention and appreciation that he gives to both. Another reference to demonstrators is in "*The sit-in youth* in the squares of demonstration".
The word *people* is used three times with the possessive first-person plural pronoun to emphasize solidarity and intimacy between the speaker and the people.
(40)…to protect *our people* from this danger…, our prayers that Allah save *our people* and the human community from this pandemic.

82

(41) I wish sincerely all …will help us in executing these tasks to pass together this current and critical circumstance which *our* dear country and generous *people* are experiencing.

Another phrase which occurs repeatedly in Al-Zurfi's speech is *the state* as in,

(42)… for the sake of change and demand of the legitimate rights to build *the state* of institutions.
(43) Working to confine weapon to the hand of *the state* and eliminating all the armed manifestations and extending the authority of *the state* …
(44) Seeking the openness to all the neigbouring countries, those of the region and all the international community so as to keep the independence of Iraq as a sovereign *state* ….
(45) Standing up firmly against the rampant corruption in *the ministries of state*…
(46) Let us start rebuilding *the state* on sound bases, *the state* of institutions and citizenship...

In the above extracts the phrase *the state* occurs in different contexts and in all of these there is an implication that the state has not been strong enough so far to carry out its duties effectively at the local level and at the international level. Locally, there are problems like corruption and uncontrolled weaponry and internationally some neighboring and friend countries do not respect Iraq sovereignty. Al-Zurfi repeats the phrase several times to give an indication that in his term the state will be stronger and more effective than ever.

6.5.3 Repetition in Al-Kadhimi's speech

Surprisingly, Al-Kadhimi does not use the terms *demonstrators* and *security forces*, but uses instead *people* or *Iraqis* and lets the linguistic context determine the intended referent as the following extracts show,

(47) Yes, there are demands of the *people who have expressed during the demonstrations*.
(48) The bloods and sacrifices that *Iraqis* gave in the war against ISIS are precious.
(49) The bloods and sacrifices that *Iraqis* gave in the squares of demonstrations and demanding the rights are precious too.

The word *people* occurs frequently in the speech in collocation with the possessive firs-person plural pronoun *our* as in,

(50)…but *our people* with great regret have not achieved their aspirations and dreams yet.
(51) We must have the duty of reviewing, frankness and direct dialogue with *our people* and ourselves.
(52)I repeat we are servants to *our people* only.

Needless to say that using *our* with *people* implies intimacy and solidarity and also combines a sense of regret with a desire to work to compensate the people with the services and dignified life they deserve.

In the following extract *people* appears with the definite article and in the context of promising that the government will try the best to serve *the people*.

(53) The ministerial cabinet which I will submit to the esteemed Parliament as soon as possible along with the governmental program will be serving *the people*…..serving *the people* in actions not in words.
(54)…all without exception is responsible for supporting this government and make its steps successful and participating in serving *the people*.

In the following extract, Al-Kadhumi repeats the idea of serving the people but he expresses it in a nominalized construction and follows it with the word *only* because the word *servant* generally has unfavourable denotation, but here it indicates modesty which is only worthy of the people.

(55) We are servants to *the people* only, I repeat we are servants to *our people* only.

The people is also used two times more but in collocation with *Iraq* and *Iraqi* as in the following extracts,

(56)I also would like to congratulate *the Iraqi people* on this day, the anniversary of Sha'ban 15th.

83

(57)….superiority and honour to *the people of Iraq*.

In the first extract which is part of the introductory remarks, *the Iraqi people* in fact refers to Shia citizens as they only celebrate this anniversary and this in fact indicates his religious background, being a Shiʿi Muslim as well as his political background being the candidate of the parties representing the majority of the population, Shiʿi Muslims. In the second extract however, *the people of Iraq* which is used in the concluding remarks refers to all Iraqis.

The state is used repeatedly in connection to the most important issues which are security represented by weaponry possession and use, economy and trust in the state. In the extract about weaponry, the phrase is repeated three time as a way highlighting one of the most dangerous problems that Iraq experiences which is uncontrolled weaponry and hence the repetition of *the state*.

(58) Weapon, all weapon, the heavy, intermediate, the light is the affair of *the state*, none other than *the state*, *the state* only, the weapon is not the affair of the individuals.

(59) The Iraqi economy as you know is exhausted and job unwieldiness has run down *the state*.

(60) Yes, we have to cooperate and trust each other and trust *the state*.

In the concluding remarks and as a way of raising patriotism in the people he assigns the tasks of the state in terms of security, sovereignty and economy to the people implying it is their contribution in these fields and spheres of life that gives the state the power it should have.

(61) *The state* is nor a person, a side, a sect, or ethnic group. *The state* is you , your unsleeping eyes for the safety and stability. *The state* is your voices defending sovereignty, rights and the national decision. *The state* is your hands in the fields of work.

Other repeated expressions are,

(62) Iraq is a highborn country having its *sovereign* decision and the government will stay up for the national *sovereignty* and the Iraqis' interests. Yes, the *sovereignty* of Iraq with not be a controversial issue, I repeat and repeat the *sovereignty* of Iraq with not be a controversial issue.

(63) The equivalent relations(with other countries) on the basis of common interests only provide the stability and enhance the economy and more importantly save the Iraqis' *dignity*, yes they save the Iraqis' *dignity*.

In (62) and (63) he uses repetition to stress the issues of *sovereignty* of Iraq and the *dignity* of Iraqis in talking about 'the equivalent relations' between Iraq and the world.

He also uses this repeated expression *a duty on the shoulders of all*, yes, *a task on the shoulders of all* in talking about success in forming and leading a government in an invitation for all the political powers and even people to be an asset to the government in carrying out its obligations. Moreover, he uses the expression *in actions not in words* first in the introductory remarks with reference to the government he is to form as being "in the service of people" which is itself repeated, and second in the concluding remarks by saying,

(64) We have to confirm we deserve Iraq *in actions not in words*.

The first use of the phrase conveys a message of reassurance to the people that the prospective government is determined to keep its promises and respond to the people's demands and the second use of the phrase embeds a call for the people cooperate with the government in the execution of its program and in so doing all will prove their loyalty to their country.

Finally, Al-Kadhimi repeats the following sentence addressing the Iraqi people,

(65) You are Iraq, you are Iraq.

6.6 Speech Acts

Speech acts represent an important element in political speeches. They are classified into representatives, expressives, commissives, directives and declarations.

Table 2 The distribution of types of speech acts used in the speeches

No	Type of Speech Acts	Alawi's speech	Al-Zurfi's speech	Al-Kadhimi speech
1	Representatives	13	7	41
2	Expressives	6	7	3
3	Commissives	20	1	20
4	Directives	3	2	2
5	Declarations	-	-	-

As table 2 indicates Alawi's most used speech acts are commissives due to his introducing most of his sentences with the verb pledge or an equivalent one. Representatives come second in terms of frequency as he sometimes describes or presents some issues that serve the background for explaining his governmental program. Directives have only three occurrences as in,
(66)I hereby indicate that the peaceful demonstration supporting the reformation must continue until the legitimate demands are achieved and the state actually commences the serious reformative work.

Al-Zurfi, according to the table, uses seven representatives and seven expressives. Surprisingly, commissives are the least used category. This is due to the impersonal style that he adopts in delivering his governmental program through using nominal constructions rather than the normal subject+ verb (Object) construction.
(67) *Protecting* the security of the demonstrators and the activists, *emphasizing* forbidding encountering them, *responding* to their legitimate demands in achieving social justice and *creating* job opportunities.

Al-Kadhimi uses more representative speech acts than any other speech acts and this is attributed to his mentioning the problems and challenges Iraqis are experiencing in detail and sometimes repeats them for emphasis. The second category of speech acts is commissives which are realized by promises he makes sometimes individually using the first-person singular pronoun or on behalf of the government to be formed using the first-person plural pronoun. What is interesting is the cooccurrence of the representatives and commissives as in,
(68) Sovereignty is a red line, compliment is not possible at the expense of Iraqi sovereignty ……. the government will stay up for the national sovereignty and the Iraqis' interests.
(69) The Iraqi economy …is exhausted and job unwieldiness has run down the state, we will move the wheel of the economy to expand the investment, vary the income and encourage industry, agriculture and trade.
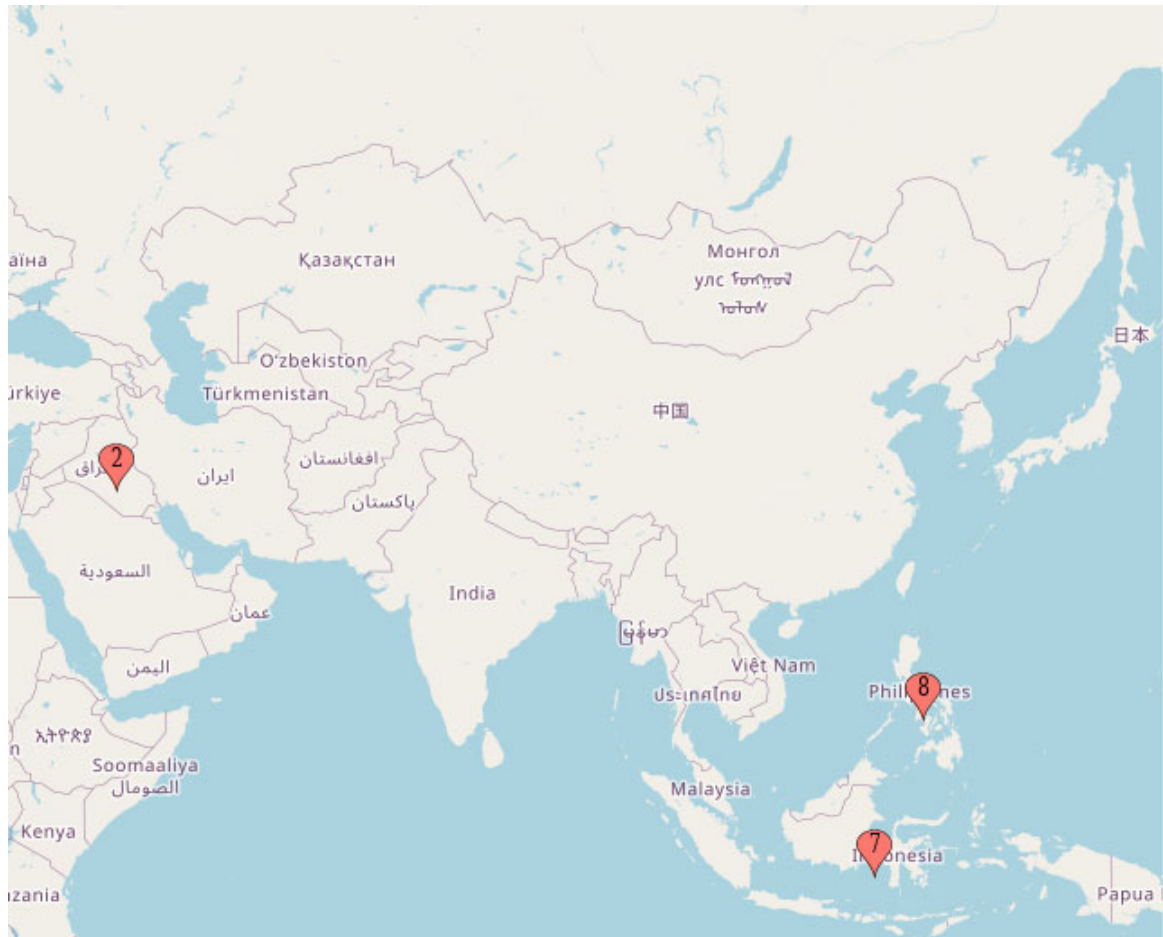
Conclusion

Designation speeches represent a subgenre of political speeches which have a well-defined structure and topics. These are normally given at long intervals of about four years. But the ones being investigated in the paper were delivered within a little than two months due to special political circumstances that prevailed Iraqi political scene after the resignation of the government in 2020 following the uprising that started near the end of the previous year.

The paper has applied the approach of political discourse analysis and used a framework of analysis which is based mostly on the tools of analysis suggested by Van Dijk (1997).
The detailed analysis has shown a great deal of similar features regarding the overall organization and the points mentioned in the different parts of the speeches. Differences have been found in terms of the arrangement of some points as well as the ways used in presenting them.

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