

# Empowerment in T. D. Jakes' Motivational Discourse " Courage ": A Positive Discourse Analysis

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**Abstract:** Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA) as a new complementary direction of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) attempts to investigate how language is positively used by T.D Jakes in his well-known motivational speech "Courage", in which the ideology of empowerment is highly-expressed through motivating, encouraging and reinforcing every frustrated human being listening to his speech. Investigating the discursive strategies, by which empowerment is expressed, is the problem of the present study. Methodologically, there is a need for making a theoretical survey of PDA, developing an appropriate model, then doing a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the motivational speech "Courage". In conclusion, the discursive strategies are syntactic (sentence types/conditionals), rhetorical strategies (repetition/metaphor/personification) and ideological strategies ( emphasizing goods / de-emphasizing negatives ).

**Key words:** Positive Discourse Analysis, Empowerment, Courage, Motivational Discourse, Discursive Strategies.

## 1. Introduction

Positive discourse analysis (PDA, henceforth) is the field in which the present study is concerned. It attempts to find out the discursive strategies used positively by T.D Jakes in his motivational speech entitled "Courage", through which he empowers every frustrated and disappointed people motivating, inspiring and energizing them by using certain discursive strategies positively. Finding out such strategies is the problem of the present study. To solve that problem, there is a set of questions that need to be answered :

1. How is empowerment disclosed in T.D Jakes' "Courage" ?
2. What are the discursive strategies positively used in T.D Jakes' "Courage" to make positive social changes?
3. What are the functions of these strategies?

The present study aims at (1)investigating the way empowerment is reflected, and (2)finding out the discursive strategies positively used by T.D Jakes in his motivational speech (Courage) in addition to how frequently they are used and functioned positively.

It is hypothesized that empowerment is disclosed through various linguistic and extra-linguistic strategies that are used positively in order to make positive social changes. Those strategies are supposed to be syntactic, rhetorical and ideological.

The methodology of the present study encompasses (1)surveying PDA theoretically, (2)designing a suitable model for analysis, (3)analyzing the motivational speech "Courage" qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

## 2. Theoretical Background

### 2.1 PDA

In addition to CDA, there is another approach to DA that is, PDA which represents the cornerstone of the present study.

Martin (1999:51-52) believes that it is necessary for any discourse analyst to select discourses that motivate, energize and empower social group members in a particular society to emancipate their freedom from the domination of the oppressive behavior of the dominant powerful group in that society.

PDA is a linguistic term that is firstly established by James Martin in his paper (2004) entitled "Positive Discourse Analysis: Solidarity and Change".

Martin's (2004) PDA is suggested as a complementary perspective to CDA, whose main function is to make the surrounding world a better place to live. In other words, the relationship between CDA and PDA is complementary since PDA complements CDA in taking the positive aspect into consideration, rather than contradictory since they both aim at identifying the ideology embedded in speech.

Macgilchrist (2007: 74) refers to the point that PDA is a new direction of CDA that is concerned with describing what a given text does well and gets right in the eyes of participants. In addition, she points out that PDA depends on the same premises of critical approaches that is why it is not considered as a separate field, but a new complementary direction of CDA. In other words, positive discourse analysts are interested in doing analyses which have effects on the social world, i.e., making positive social changes.

### 2.2 Empowerment

The term 'empowerment' is defined in the Cambridge English Dictionary (2022) as "the process of having freedom and power to achieve what someone needs or desires, in addition to control what happens to him/her".

Patricia Lotich (2019) refers to the point that empowerment is "giving or granting power or authority enabling and authorizing someone to do something".

Holly Martinez (2022) asserts that the gist of empowerment theory is to empower, enable, motivate and energize individuals and whole societies to have personal, interpersonal and political authorized power in order to make their life better and their world a better place to live. In other words, the empowerment as ideology help social members to challenge the oppressive social as well as political systems that prevent these groups of social citizens from achieving their desires.

### 2.3 Motivational Discourse

Motivational discourse refers to a particular speech that publicly inspires an audience to make positive social changes in their lives. Motivational discourses are produced for a variety of uses such as reinforcing personal development, inspiring people to take a particular problem, giving a new suggestions to overcome a given challenge, creating confidence and developing the workers' performance. Once a motivational discourse is made influentially, the audience can be triggered to make serious social changes in their lives (Indeed Editorial Team:2021).

Discourse has various types, but the pivotal type for the present study is the "motivational discourse". Barot (2021) considers motivational discourse as a type of discourse that is used intentionally for persuading or motivating the audience to be energized for doing needs or desires.

The motivational speech aims at motivating, inspiring, energizing and empowering a particular audience to make them able to do something. In persuasive speech, the speaker attempts to persuade the addressee to believe in a certain ideology meanwhile the motivational speaker attempts to inspire and encourage the audience to do something seems impossible to do. So, the motivational speech is a specific form of persuasive speech. Slutsky and Aun (1997) refer to the point that the motivational speech is sub-categorized into four types: Hero, Survivor, Religious, and Success.

Motivational speeches can be analyzed critically because they aim at making positive social changes although there is no social inequality or injustice via concentrating on the positive side. In other words, there is no conflict between two contradictory social groups since there is no negative side at all, but there is only a positive one that can be analyzed positively to make the targeted positive social change. Trying to make social changes does not necessarily require having two conflicting groups (in-group and out-group) or different types of social inequality.

### 3. Data Analysis

The motivational speaker T.D. Jakes presented "Courage" in a conference where the audience includes only women, but he is also addressing the general public behind the camera all over the world via social media platforms. He talks about the courage, its vital role in our life and the consequences of its absence as well as presence. Concerning linguistics, T.D. Jakes used different discursive strategies in his speech in order to motivate the audience and to galvanize their will so as the social change happens. So, this motivational speech is going to be analyzed from a critical perspective positively.

As far as the data is concerned, PDA includes different levels, namely, micro level, macro level and ideological level.

#### 3.1 The Micro level

The first level of the analysis is the micro level. In this level, the discursive strategies that T.D. Jakes used to indicate positivity depend on the structures used by Jakes positively to reflect the ideology of empowerment.

##### 3.1.1 The Structural level

The analysis on the structural level encompasses conditionals and different sentence types such as declaratives, interrogatives, imperative and exclamatory. But, concerning the sentence types there are only interrogative in the motivational speech "Courage" as shown in table (1) :

**Table(1): Classifying Sentences Types according to Function**

Total no.	Declarative		Imperative		Interrogative		Exclamatory	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
31	26	84%	0	0	6	24%	0	0

As shown in table (1) above, the declarative sentences are used more than the interrogatives by T.D. Jakes in his "Courage" motivational speech while neither imperative nor exclamatory sentences are found. So, declaratives, then interrogatives are more useful for Jakes as a motivational speaker than the imperative and exclamatory ones. Declaratives are used by Jakes for (26) times (84 %). Syntactically speaking, the positive function of the declarative sentence is that it functions as a statement conveying a particular message to an audience. Since there is no intimate relationship between the speaker and the audience, the imperative sentences are of no influence in motivating the audience through conveying the targeted message. That's why, Jakes uses the declarative sentences more frequently than the interrogatives in that he uses interrogative sentences for (6) times only (24 %). As shown in Table (1), no imperative or exclamatory sentences are found (0 %) since the motivational speaker found that such types have no positive influential impact on the audience as far as the data is concerned. That is, the listener here doesn't want to be ordered or informed with exclamations.

##### 3.1.1.1 The Interrogative Sentences :

Asking questions is a discursive strategy that contributes in energizing the audience and attracting their attention. T.D. Jakes used the following questions in his motivational speech "Courage" to motivate the audience :

##### 1. Do you have the courage to act outwardly on what you see inwardly ?

In this question, Jakes attempts to motivate the audience through challenging their abilities to achieve the goals they desire to achieve. This is how empowerment is reflected in such question.

##### 2. Do you have the courage ?

This is a rhetorical question. Jakes is trying to energize the audience through asking them about whether they have courage or not. Definitely, the listener will go admit that he/she has courage. In this way, the ideology of empowerment is uncovered.

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##### 3. Do you have the courage to stand there to the storms keep raising?

The ideology of empowerment is expressed by Jakes when he refers to the point that having courage is not enough, but the courage that you have should empower him/her to face bravely the difficulties as if he/she was standing in front of a storm.

### 3.1.1.2 Conditionals :

Conditional clauses also are used as discursive strategies by T.D. Jakes to reinforce the audience. He uses the following conditionals :

1. **If you don't want to make waves be mediocre be normal and fit in.**
2. **If you're more concerned about people than you are god then neutralize everything.**
3. **once you neutralize your uniqueness you don't need courage.**
4. **If you win, they're going to talk about you.**

Jakes uses these conditional sentences in order to create choices for the audience to choose. Normally, these choices are crucial and the listener feels that he/she must choose the right choice even he/she is unable to do it. Here is the role of the motivational speaker in that he empowers the audience by presenting such choices through using conditional sentences. This is how conditionals can be used positively to reflect the ideology of empowerment.

## 3.2 Macro level

The second level of the analysis is the macro level in which we are more concerned with the discursive strategies that are pertained to the text in relevance to the context in which it is said. T.D. Jakes used in his motivational speech "Courage" rhetorical strategies such as repetition, metaphor and personification, as follows :

### 3.2.1 Rhetorical level

T.D Jakes uses different rhetorical strategies such as repetition, metaphor and personification to enhance the sense of motivation in the audience and to affect their emotions positively.

#### 3.2.1.1 Repetition :

One of the rhetorical strategies that are used by T.D. Jakes is repetition. There are certain words that are repeated frequently in his motivational speech "Courage" to indicate the importance of such words in making the audience self-confident enough. These words are :

##### 1. **Courage.**

The term ( courage ) is used more than once for encouraging and motivating the audience to reach their targeted goals. These goals will not be achieved without being courageous.

##### 2. **Do you have the courage ?**

Repeating such a rhetorical question is surely not for no reason. Instead, jakes asks this question not to be answered, but to make the concept of courage deeply-rooted in the listener's mind.

##### 3. **Successful.**

The term (successful) is used many times to energize and reinforce the audience for empowering them to reach success through working harder.

#### 3.2.1.2 Metaphor

Metaphor is a figure of speech that refers to a sort of comparison between two different things. T.D Jakes uses metaphor as a rhetorical strategy in his motivational speech "Courage" to provide the audience with imaginative conceptions that help them be reinforced and be willing to do the impossible. Such metaphor in this motivational speech is :

##### 1. **(make waves)**

Jakes uses the image of making waves in order to motivate the audience to be more active in the society and not to be sluggish. The metaphorical image here is comparing the idea of making waves with being controversial with a huge amount of activity in the society in which the listener lives.

#### 3.2.1.3 Personification

The personification is a figure of speech or a literary device that refers to giving a human feature to a non-human entity. T.D Jakes in his motivational speech "Courage" uses such literary device as a discursive strategy to motivate the audience.

##### 1. **Misery will always have company.**

## 2. Success breeds contempt.

T.D Jakes uses personification to help the audience conceptualize that being miserable in life will make them have so many miserable mates because successful people are less than the miserable ones. Also he refers to that being successful means

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to be scorned by miserable people who failed in their life.

### 3.3 Ideological level

The first level of the analysis is concerned with the ideological tools used in this T.D. Jakes' motivational speech "Courage". These ideological tools are said to be positive ones since they seek to motivate the audience. The positive ideological tools found in "Courage" are as follows :

#### 3.3.1 Emphasizing goods

##### - It takes courage to be successful.

In this extract, Jakes attempts to emphasize a positive point which is being successful needs courage. In other words, without courage a man cannot reach his targeted goals.

#### 3.3.2 De-emphasizing negatives

##### 1. It is far easier not to be successful.

In this extract, Jakes is de-emphasizing the easiness of failure and the difficulty of success. In other words, it is easy to fail but hard to succeed. That's why Jakes encourages and motivated the listeners through inviting them to endure the difficulties they may face to reach success.

##### 2. Success breeds contempt.

Jakes is motivating the audience through declaring that the successful men are deride by people. So, Jakes here is de-emphasizing the disdain of people toward successful figures.

## 4. Conclusions

In conclusion, the following remarks are taken into consideration:

1. The ideology of empowerment is reflected through several strategies including both linguistic and non-linguistic. These strategies are used positively in order to be an attempt to make positive social changes. They are syntactic strategies (sentence types / conditionals ), rhetorical strategies (repetition / metaphor / personification) and ideological strategies ( emphasizing goods and de-emphasizing negatives ).

2. The discursive strategies mentioned in conclusion (1) are used frequently for a variety of specific positive functions. The function of :

A - declarative sentences is conveying particular messages through statements in order to change the others' beliefs ( Persuasion ).

B - Conditionals are used in order to create choices for the audience to choose. The motivational speaker empowers the audience by presenting such choices through using conditional sentences.

C - repetition is persuasion through making things deeply-rooted in the minds of the addressees.

D - emphasizing goods is focusing on what contributes to achieve the ideology of empowerment.

E - de-emphasizing negatives is underestimating all what may abolish the ways in which the motivational speaker empowers the audience.

F - Metaphor is used by the motivational speaker to provide the audience with imaginative conceptions that help them be reinforced and be willing to do the impossible.

G- Personification is used to help the audience conceptualize some images that can empower them through imagining some ideas for reaching success.

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#### مستخلص البحث

يحاول تحليل الخطاب الإيجابي (PDA) باعتباره اتجاهاً تكميلياً جديداً لتحليل الخطاب النقدي (CDA) التحقيق في كيفية استخدام اللغة بشكل إيجابي من قبل تي دي جايس من خلال تحفيز وتشجيع وتقوية كل إنسان محبط يستمع إلى حديثه. التحقيق في الاستراتيجيات الخطابية ، التي من خلالها يتم التعبير عن ايدولوجية التمكين ، هي مشكلة الدراسة الحالية. منهجياً ، هناك حاجة لإجراء عرض نظري لتحليل الخطاب الإيجابي ، وتطوير لإنموذج تحليلي مناسب ، ثم إجراء تحليل نوعي وكمي للخطاب التحفيزي "الشجاعة". في الختام ، فإن الاستراتيجيات الخطابية هي نحوية (أنواع الجمل / الشرطية) ، و بلاغية (التكرار / الاستعارة / التجسيد) أيديولوجية (التأكيد على الايجابيات / عدم التركيز على السلبيات).

الكلمات المفتاحية : تحليل الخطاب الإيجابي ، التمكين ، الشجاعة ، الخطاب التحفيزي ، الإستراتيجيات الخطابية.

#### Appendix

<https://youtu.be/OIxIBF1zPp4>

**You got to have the courage. Do you have the courage to act outwardly on what you see inwardly or you will die dreamer? When you die on the verge and on the edge and off in the land of could would and should. Do you have the courage? I'm gonna drop some on you. It takes courage to be successful. It is far easier not to be successful. Misery will always have company. Success breeds contempt. If you don't want to make waves, be mediocre, be normal and fit in. And if you're more concerned about people than you are god, then neutralize everything he put in you. Just fit in with everybody else dress like them walk like them act like them eat like them, go where they go, think like they think, do what they do and once you neutralize your uniqueness, you don't need courage. It takes courage to be different. It takes courage to go where you've never gone before. For some of you it took courage to come to this conference. It takes courage to get you outside of the bar. It takes courage to be successful. It takes courage to win. People don't talk about people that don't win. If you win they're gonna talk about you. Do you have the courage to stand there to the storms keep raising and the people get to talk and you stand yourself too far to turn around? Do you have the courage? Unless I'm gonna say sup to you. It takes courage to be exceptional. It takes courage to be wise. It takes courage to be rich. It takes courage to be educated. It takes courage to be knowledgeable because the moment we you don't talk like you know you don't doubt for that where you take a look at the attacked it takes**

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**courage. And I'm just wondering in this weak water down mediocre society that we live in today, in this reality TV world we live in today. I'm wondering if there's anybody that's got the courage to say after all I've been through and all my ancestors have been through all of that just to fit in with normalcy. I have the courage to go after my dream. Is there one in live this entire Coliseum that got some courage ?**