Persuasion Strategies in Saudi Arabia Vision 2030 Document: A Critical Discourse Analysis Approach

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Abstract—By adopting a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach, this paper explores the strategies of persuasion employed in the Saudi Arabia Vision 2030 document. More specifically, the paper attempts to identify the various persuasion strategies used in the document of the 2030 Vision, the way through which these persuasion strategies are linguistically manifested, and the different modes of persuasion used in the document. The primary research questions of this study are: first, what are the different modes of persuasion employed in the Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision? Second, what are the strategies of persuasion used in the document under investigation? Third, how are these strategies linguistically manifested in the document at hand? Findings reveal that there are five strategies that are highly representative as persuasion conduits in the Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision. These include lexical choices, the inclusive 'we', religionization, future promises, and compositional summarization. The five strategies accentuate the assumption that the process of persuasion is successfully communicated at the various levels of linguistic analysis: lexically, semantically, pragmatically, and stylistically.

Index Terms—persuasion, Saudi Vision 2030, critical discourse analysis, lexicalization, religionization, compositional summarization

I. INTRODUCTION

Language plays a decisive role in shaping and reshaping politics and in directing the public towards the adoption of a specific argument. This function of language is totally based on the degree of the persuasive mode through which it is communicated to the addressees. The more persuasive language is, the more effective change it influences on the part of recipients. Accordingly, persuasion is the eventual target of politicians; they always aim for their views and meanings to be perceived and absorbed quite willingly (e.g., Mutz et al., 1996; Pardo, 2001; Khajavi & Rasti, 2020; Lu, 2021). Thus, it is very rare to find a political speech without specific intended meanings to be conveyed, and it is rare for these intended meanings to be successfully communicated without a dexterous use of persuasion strategies. Arguing from this point, approaching the theme of persuasion and the strategies employed to achieve it in political discourse is very essential for a comprehensive understanding of the way power is operated, manifested, exercised, and maintained in discourse and beyond discourse. This study, therefore, attempts to contribute to this type of political and ideological understanding by exploring the different persuasion strategies used in the Saudi Vision 2030 document. This is conducted by adopting a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to identify the various persuasion strategies used in the document of the 2030 Vision, the way through which these persuasion strategies are linguistically manifested, and the different modes of persuasion used in the document. In doing so, this study focuses on five strategies that are highly representative as persuasion conduits in the Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision. These include lexical choices, the inclusive 'we', religionization, future promises, and compositional summarization. Significantly, the five strategies accentuate the assumption that the process of persuasion is successfully communicated at the various levels of linguistic analysis: lexically, semantically, pragmatically, and stylistically.

This study is anticipated to contribute to the field of political and critical discourse analysis. Significantly, understanding the role of language in the political process, particularly its rhetorical dimension in communicating meanings and ideologies, is very crucial in managing interactions among interlocutors (Chilton & Schäffner, 2002). As alluded before, language users should use it persuasively to achieve their goals; politicians are no exception. They intentionally employ certain persuasive strategies in their speeches to guarantee a successful delivery of their political and ideological message (Charteris-Black, 2005). This study, therefore, provides some sort of linguistic illumination to the use and abuse of language to achieve particular purposes in discourse. For the sole reason that he wants as many people as possible to support him, a political speaker/ writer will always need the audience to embrace his beliefs. Therefore, politicians need to be particularly aware of persuasion strategies that serve to achieve his/her intended goals.

A. Research Questions

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The research questions of this study are:

RQ1. What are the different modes of persuasion employed in the Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision document?

RQ2. What are the strategies of persuasion used in the Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision document?

RQ3. How are the various strategies of persuasion linguistically manifested in the Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision document?

B. Research Objectives

This paper aims to achieve the following objectives

1. To explore the different modes of persuasion employed in the Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision document.

2. To identify the various strategies of persuasion used in the Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision document.

3. To highlight the various linguistic manifestations through which the persuasion strategies are communicated in the document of 2030 Vision.

4. To shed light on the lexical, semantic, pragmatic, and stylistic levels via which persuasion is communicated in the Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision document.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: Section 2 is the literature review, which provides theoretical preliminaries on the concepts of persuasion, persuasion in political discourse, and critical discourse analysis, as well as the previous studies relevant to the current study. Section 3 is the methodology, which offers the description and collection procedures of the data used in the study, and the analytical procedures followed in this study. Section 4 is the analysis of the selected data. Section 5 is the discussion of the obtained findings based on the analysis of the selected data. Section 6 is the conclusion, which is entailed by some recommendations for future research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Persuasion

Numerous scholars have come to terms that persuasion refers to the ability to influence others' attitudes and behavior in a way that guarantees the fulfillment of the persuader's views and desires (e.g., Pardo, 2001; Charteris-Black, 2005; Žmavc, 2018; Lu, 2021). For Lakoff (1982), persuasion is basically based on the ability to use the appropriate linguistic expressions to arrive at what one's needs are. Persuasion is one style of rhetoric, and its success is entirely based on the degree of using rhetoric in the process of argumentation and meaning communication. Persuasion in this sense can be said to be a site of power, wherein language is rhetorically employed as a conduit to communicate specific meanings that target the persuader's goals (Simons, 2001). For Pardo (2001), persuasion is perceived as a form of argumentation, with the exception that the element of intentionality is clearly representative of persuasion but is missing in argumentation.

Persuasion has great significance in politics since it is used to influence people's attitudes (Pardo, 2001). It is employed to sway other people's actions and mold their reactions to fit the persuader's viewpoints. The persuader either aims to validate or refute the receiver's preexisting ideas, attitudes, and actions in order to exert such influence (Charteris-Black, 2005). Any persuasive speech's primary objective is still to get total cooperation and surrender from the audience. According to Heinrichs (2017), persuasion has three modes of rhetorical appeal: ethos, pathos, and logos. Ethos pertains to the manner in which a speaker presents themselves, their personal credibility, their moral qualities, their eligibility to speak, and their capacity to engage in discourse. In this type of communication, the speaker must be sufficiently trustworthy to ensure that the audience will understand what they are trying to say. Pathos requires the use of attractive and emotive language that appeals to the recipients' emotions. This is conducted through the use of expressive and straightforward language, which, in turn, facilitates the acceptance of any arguments on the part of the addressees without raising any objections. In terms of logos, it indicates the quality of the argument, reinforced by adequate evidence delivered by a competent speaker in a specific communicative situation. For Seraku (2022), in all its discursive modes, persuasion operates not only on the emotional part of personality by using specific types of emotive language, but it also aims at stimulating a state of shared values and views between interlocutors involved in the persuasion process. Furthermore, because it is closely linked to and depends on power, persuasion, according to van Dijk (1997), is perceived as one crucial factor that limits the degree of freedom on the part of the addressees and, therefore, decreases the discursive options available during the process of persuasiveness. Such limitations on options for actions are entirely the product of a successful argumentation process on the part of speakers. Persuasion, therefore, is a rhetorically argumentative process that is based on the power of the word (Khafaga et al., 2023).

B. Persuasion and Political Discourse

Numerous academics have examined the concept of persuasion in relation to political discourse. Their goal is to comprehend the many tactics that may be employed as a means of persuasion, as well as the ways in which a political discourse can be persuasive. Van Dijk (1997) defines persuasion as the process by which individuals are influenced to change their opinions as a result of a speech. According to Blommaert and Bulcaen (1997), persuasion, within the confines of political discourse, is the capacity to influence the audience's viewpoints while also ingraining the speaker's ideas into their minds. Additionally, he makes the point that text and talk inside institutional and political contexts are the true concerns of political discourse. Political speeches and persuasion are intimately related. Furthermore, some

contend that persuasion is the ultimate goal of all political conversation. According to Mutz et al. (1996, p. 1), "Persuasion is at the heart of politics". They also assert that persuasion has a central and dominant role in political discourse. In actuality, politicians frequently craft their discourse to grab listeners' attention by utilizing certain approaches, procedures, instruments, and strategies. According to Diamond and Cobb (1996), persuasion is a technique used to alter people's beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives on certain issues. Thus, the main goal of political discourse is to persuade someone to believe in something by providing them with a compelling argument to support their position. This is why political discourse is seen as a tool for influencing and ingraining ideas in people's brains, with the primary goal being persuasion rather than information or enjoyment. According to Swadley (2008), another important aspect to emphasize is that the goal of persuasion is not only to exert influence over the addressee but also to provide them with the freedom to decide whether or not to accept the suggested concept. Therefore, speakers can effectively convince individuals through the conviction that respects their right to free will. Thus, it is evident that the goal of political discourse is to grab people's interest and win them over.

C. Critical Discourse Analysis

Starting in the late 1970s, a number of linguists, including Fairclough (2013), Fairclough and Wodak (1997), van Dijk (2001), Weiss and Wodak (2003), Wodak and Meyer (2001), and Widdowson (2007), have discussed CDA as a branch of discourse analysis. According to Widdowson (2007), CDA is a socio-politically driven method of analyzing language in use that typically gives texts ideological value based on linguistic characteristics. Critical discourse analysis, according to van Dijk (2001), operates effectively in contexts of political and social texts as an analytical tool for uncovering the various strategic uses of language in the different discourse types. CDA has basic pillars within its analytical agenda, as it usually addresses issues related to power use and abuse, ideology, dominance, and inequality. The two fundamental components of discourse, production and reception, as well as significant CDA entities, demonstrate how dominance is expressed in the creation of a text through the use of lexical, syntactic, persuasive, and rhetorical choices, and semantic structures (van Dijk, 1993).

CDA seeks to illuminate the less obvious ways that language functions in ideology, power/dominance, and social life. It also highlights areas that may be changed (Weiss & Wodak, 2003); alternatively, it is grounded in a radical critique of social relations (Billig, 2003). According to Widdowson (2007), CDA is described as critical because it challenges beliefs and presumptions that are accepted as self-evidently true on the grounds that they actually uphold a status quo that, by giving preference to the wealthy and powerful at the expense of everyone else, effectively perpetuates inequality and injustice. Political and social concerns are the main topics of CDA. According to van Dijk (2001), CDA reveals the ways in which discourse structures legitimize, implement, affirm, perpetuate, or subvert power and dominance relations in society. Therefore, the primary goal of CDA is to demonstrate how language transmits ideas, reproduces domination, and reflects power relations.

Van Dijk (1993) postulates that the main goal of CDA is to talk about the discourse aspect of power abuse and the injustice and inequality that follow. To differentiate it from other types of valid and acceptable power, such as the authority of parents over their children and instructors over their pupils, power abuse in this context is defined as dominance. Van Dijk maintains that discourse analysis is appealing to CDA because it seeks to provide a deeper understanding of urgent social concerns. In this sense, CDA focuses on a basic comprehension of social issues like inequality and power. It also gives the public access to various persuasion techniques used by politicians, presenters, authors, and leaders to sway public opinion in favor of their own agendas. For Fairclough and Wodak (1997), critical discourse analysts' job is essentially political because they aspire to bring about change. Such a type of change targets the cognitive background of recipients by affecting their unit of knowledge in a way that serves the persuader's purposes.

D. Related Studies

Much previous research has approached the theme of persuasion in various discourse genres. Al-Khawaldeh et al. (2023) investigated the strategies of persuasion employed in President Biden's inauguration speech. Al-Khawaldeh et al.'s study is entirely based on Fairclough's (2013) approach of using CDA to analyze discourse by focusing on both micro and macro structures of discourse in the selected speech. Their study concludes that some persuasion strategies have dexterously been utilized in Biden's speech to communicate specific presidential meanings. These persuasion strategies include creativity, metaphor, contrast, indirectness, reference, and intertextuality. Khafaga (2021) also drew on CDA to investigate the ideological meanings of function words, particularly pronouns and modals, in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. Khafaga's study also demonstrated that CDA contributes to revealing the ways in which language can be used and/or abused to persuade and/or manipulate. Almahasees and Mahmoud (2022) examined the persuasive techniques King Abdullah II of Jordan employed in seven speeches he gave between 2007 and 2021 to the UN, European Parliament, Arab League, and Islamic Countries Cooperation. Their study focused on certain persuasive tactics to determine how the King used rhetorical/persuasive techniques in his speeches, including intertextuality, creativity and metaphor, references, and circumlocution. Khajavi and Rasti (2020) also explored the different persuasive strategies used by Mitt Romney and Barack Obama and concluded that whereas Romney largely employed the other candidates' negative representation tactic, Obama regularly concentrated on appealing to the notion of the 'American dream', which, in turn, shows that Obama used certain persuasive strategies to successfully implement and

communicate his agenda.

In terms of the Saudi Vision 2030, some studies have approached the document of the Saudi Vision 2030 from different perspectives, by providing an explanation of current problems in the education system that do not align with the new Vision (Yusuf, 2017); examining the document's objectives and the policies outlined to attain them in light of the reformation plan (Moshashai et al., 2018); demonstrating the differences between the Saudi Vision 2030 and the Saudi Arabian National Transformation Program 2020 in order to ascertain the goals of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and how it intended to fulfill these ambitions through educational advancements (Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2018); exploring the extent to which Saudi Vision 2030's implementation of the value-added tax and higher gasoline costs affected traffic accidents, injuries, and fatalities (Dahim, 2018); demonstrating the adaptability of the Saudi healthcare system within the framework of Vision 2030 (Alharbi, 2018); looking at whether the increase in life expectancy suggested in the Vision 2030 manifesto might actually happen (Bah, 2018); investigating the way the 2030 vision affected the Saudi stock market's performance (Daghestani et al., 2018); conducting a critical discourse analysis of news articles pertaining to Vision 2030 by highlighting the primary Vision 2030-related topics found in the Saudi News corpus spanning the years 2013 through 2018 (Mohammad & Alshahrani, 2019); and discussing the persuasive use of public relations in Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision (Alqahtani, 2023).

Despite the fact that previous research has approached the Saudi Vision 2030 from various perspectives, no study has been done that focuses on the Saudi Vision document itself from the standpoint of the persuasion strategies encoded linguistically in the document. This, in turn, sheds light on the research gap that the current study attempts to fulfill, particularly in terms of the five persuasion strategies under investigation.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Data

The data of this study constitute the Saudi Arabia Vision 2030 document issued in April, 2016. This document has been produced in 85 pages and addresses many aspects at the social, political, economic, societal, and cultural levels. The rationale for selecting this document in particular to be linguistically investigated here is due to the fact that it abounds in many persuasion strategies that are linguistically manifested to communicate the various ideological meanings pertaining to the different issues presented in the document. The document has been structured around three main pillars: (i) a vibrant society, (ii) a thriving economy, and (iii) an ambitious nation. These three pillars constitute the main macro-propositions, encompassing the whole discourse production of the document. A link to the Saudi Vision 2030 is attached at the end of this paper (see **Appendix A**).

B. Research Procedures

This study will follow three procedural stages. First, the stage of collecting data, in which the Saudi Vision 2030 was downloaded and then prepared in a Word Office file to be ready for analysis. The second stage involves the identification of the various persuasion strategies that are employed in the document under investigation. This stage has resulted in identifying five main strategies to undergo the linguistic analysis in this study. These include lexical choices, the inclusive 'we', religionization, future promises, and compositional summarization. The third stage encompasses the work of CDA, wherein CDA's analytical tools will be employed to reveal the way the five persuasion strategies identified in this study have been linguistically manifested to communicate the meanings pertaining to the document persuasively. Crucially, throughout the analysis conducted here, both quantitative and qualitative methods are employed to achieve the objectives of the current study and to answer its research questions.

IV. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This part is divided into two main subsections. The first discusses the macro-propositions presented in the Saudi Vision 2030, which functions to clarify the thematic framework of the document under investigation, and, the second provides an analysis of the five strategies that are highly representative as persuasion conduits in the Saudi Vision 2030 document. These strategies include lexical choices, the inclusive 'we', religionization, future promises, and compositional summarization.

A. The Macro-Propositions in the Saudi Vision 2030 Document

The macro-propositions refer to the global meaning presented in discourse or, in other words, what discourse is about. They are mostly deliberate and deliberately shaped by the speaker, convey the general content of mental models of events, and embody the subjectively most significant information of a text (van Dijk, 2009). The Saudi Vision 2030 document can be said to revolve around four main macro-propositions:

MP1. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be a strong country with a vibrant society.

MP2. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will possess a thriving economy.

MP3. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be an ambitious nation.

MP4. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is preparing to launch and will continue to launch a group of executive programs that will contribute to implementing the Saudi Vision 2030.

Each of these macro-propositions consists of further ancillary propositions pertinent to the global meanings persuasively presented in the document. Crucially, the four main macro-propositions are preceded by three opening statements: one by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, the second by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and the third constitutes a summary statement for the whole 2030 Vision. Table I shows the macro-propositions presented in the Saudi Vision 2030 document as well as the subsidiary propositions pertinent to each one.

TABLE 1
MACRO-PROPOSITIONS IN THE SAUDI VISION 2030 DOCUMENT

No.	Macro-proposition	Ancillary propositions
MP1	The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be a strong country with a vibrant society	A vibrant society with strong roots
		A vibrant society with fulfilling lives
		A vibrant society with strong foundations
MP2	The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will possess a thriving economy	A thriving economy with rewarding opportunities
		A thriving economy with investment for the long-term
		A thriving economy that is open for business
		A thriving economy that leverage its unique position
MP3	The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be an ambitious nation	An ambitious nation that is effectively governed
		An ambitious nation with enabled responsibility
MP4	The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is preparing to launch and will continue to launch a group of executive programs that will contribute to implementing the Saudi Vision 2030.	A number of great t projects will be executed to help and guarantee the implementation of Vision 2030

Table 1 clarifies the four macro-propositions pertaining to the Saudi Vision 2030 document as well as the ancillary propositions related to each macro-proposition. Significantly, the table accentuates the assumption that the socio-cognitive model of macro-propositions, as described in van Dijk and Kintsch (1983), allows for the analytical possibility of all textual propositions possibly being reduced to a single macro-proposition. Consequently, macro-propositions, in their role as discourse macrostructures, can, in principle, function as a socio-cognitive milieu in which the political or religious connotations of a linguistic signal are ingrained as global meanings that are consciously managed by the speaker and/or writer. This, in turn, emphasizes the fact that identifying the macro-propositions in discourse contributes to identifying the extent to which these global meanings, i.e., macro-propositions, are linguistically communicated and structured in a persuasive way.

B. Persuasion Strategies in the Saudi Vision 2030 Document

(a). Lexical Choices

One of the crucial strategies of persuasion that is used in the Saudi Vision 2030 document is the skillful employment of lexis. According to Fairclough (2013), words and phrases always have meanings that are formed from their regular usage. He maintains that carefully chosen language may be used to express and communicate an ideology in a persuasive way. Abdi and Basarati (2016) also argue that every word and/or phrase has an underlying meaning and a latent power that allows speakers to influence the behavior of their addressees. For Fowler (1996), the use of lexis is a basic structural component of language through which the use component of language can be revealed. In the Saudi Vision 2030 document, words are dexterously selected to convey the targeted meanings constituting the four macro-propositions persuasively. Table 2 displays the most indicative lexis used in the document under investigation.

TABLE 2
LEXICAL CHOICES IN THE SAUDI VISION 2030 DOCUMENT

Word	No. of occurrences	Examples of the word in context
future(s)	24	our future; Kingdom's future; diversified future; the best future; future projects; brighter future
success/ful	13	the bedrock of our success; the main principles of success; the path to commercial success
work/s/ing	36	we will work tirelessly; working in partnership; we will work closely with the private sector
economy	46	our economy grows and flourishes; thriving economy; sustainable economy; prosperous economy
industry/ industrial	9	a global industrial conglomerate; industrial projects; industrial activities
entertainment	14	entertainment opportunities; entertainment corporations; entertainment projects
investment(s)	39	a global investment powerhouse; strong investment capabilities; investment fund
women	6	women's participation; young men and women are equipped for the jobs of the future
project(s)	20	future projects; recycling projects; entertainment projects; industrial projects
ambition(s)/ ambitious	20	ambitious nation; ambitious vision; the ambition of our people
Islam(ic)	27	Islamic principles; Islamic faith; Islamic values; Islamic heritage
business	21	we will improve the business environment; business regulations; new business incubators
family(ies)	22	caring for our families; families are the key building block of a society
job(s)	17	create more job opportunities for citizens; jobs of the future
health/y	26	health care system; living healthy; caring for our health; health care centers
improve/ improvements	25	year-on-year improvements; improve education planning; improve visa issuance; improve our productivity

Table 2 shows a number of words dexterously selected and used in the Saudi Vision 2030 document. It is obvious that the persuasive and ideological significance of each word is not completely attained without careful consideration of the accompanying words and/or phrases that are attached to each word in the discourse of the document. For example, the ideologically persuasive significance of the lexeme 'future', which has a total frequency of 24 occurrences in the document, is better perceived when it is collocated and combined with other words, such as in *our future, the Kingdom's future, diversified future, the best future, future projects, brighter future, future generations,* and *leaders of the future*. In all these combinations, the significance of the word 'future' is clearly evident as a carrier of persuasion that indicates particular meanings pertinent to the political goals targeted beyond the Saudi Vision 2030 document, either at the semantic or pragmatic level of making meaning. Despite the fact that the selected word in itself has a specific referential sense, its meaning is pragmatically extended when combined with other words to communicate further pragmatic meaning targeting persuasion.

In the same vein, words such as *economy, investment, projects, successful, entertainment, and jobs* summon further pragmatic meaning to their referential and semantic sense when collocated and combined with words such as *prosperous, strong, future, model, activities, and opportunities*, respectively. Crucially, content words, i.e., those representing the four major parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs), are ideology-loaded categories, which, in turn, can be classified as persuasion carriers, given the reciprocal connection and influence between ideology and persuasion. Consequently, the strategy of lexical choices aims to use lexical elements from various register fields. These lexical elements reveal the text producer's ideology, attitude, values, and thematic focus, whether explicitly or implicitly.

(b). Inclusive 'We'

One of the most recurrent and influential strategies of persuasion that is used in the Saudi Vision 2030 document is the inclusive 'we' and its linguistic variants, i.e., 'our' and 'us'. In political discourse, Fairclough (2013) argues, the inclusive 'we' is employed to refer to both speakers/writers and listeners/readers. In this regard, the first-person plural pronoun is used to create an atmosphere of solidarity and cooperation between discourse interactants.

TABLE 3
FREQUENCY OF INCLUSIVE 'WE' AND ITS VARIANTS IN THE SAUDI VISION 2030 DOCUMENT

MPs and Opening Statements	We	Our	Us	Total
Opening Statements	43	55	2	100
MP1	61	106	7	174
MP2	125	101	2	228
MP3	52	49	2	103
MP4	33	27	2	62
Total	314	338	15	667

Table 3 indicates that the first-person plural pronoun 'we' and its two variants 'our' and 'us' have been frequently used in the Saudi Vision 2030 document with a total frequency of 314, 338, and 15, respectively. In all its uses, the first-person pronoun and its variants are utilized inclusively to refer to the speaker/writer as a government/leadership. This inclusiveness further targets the creation of solidarity and cooperation, and persuasively conveys a feeling of the in-group that works for the benefit of the whole. The inclusive 'we' is employed to create an ongoing intention to establish a society characterized by unity, cooperation and solidarity. This further stimulates the potential of the public to work as a cooperative team so as to achieve the targeted goals of the Vision. The use of the inclusive 'we' also serves to create an atmosphere of mutual knowledge and reciprocal responsibility between the government and the public, which functions to make the latter effectively work in accordance with the former's plans. Unlike some of its uses to spread responsibility, particularly when the political decisions and plans are perceived negatively, inclusive 'we' and its variants in the document under investigation are employed to establish group unity, solidarity, and cooperation (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

One of the observations noticed from Table 3 is that the majority of the occurrences of the first-person pronouns are related to the pronoun in the possessive case (338 occurrences) and the subjective case (314 occurrences), whereas the fewest occurrences are related to the use of the pronoun in the objective case. The indication of this is that the Saudi leadership, when laying down the document of Vision 2030, has put itself in the position of an agent, doer, and possessor rather than in the position of a receiver or patient. This in turn emphasizes the ability of the Kingdom to execute the goals of its Vision, and also transfer a positive feeling to the public, which also facilitates the persuasiveness process in terms of what is listed in the document.

The use of the inclusive 'we', 'our', and 'us' in the document at hand functions to position the Saudi leadership in the position relative to the addressees, a position that indicates the collectivity of the in-group. This inclusive usage has entirely specific persuasive purposes on the part of language users. That is why language is perceived as an effective conduit for carrying ideologies and political goals (Toska & Bello, 2018). According to Chilton and Schäffner (2002), such particular usages of the personal pronoun, specifically the first-person plural pronouns activate the cognitive background of language interpreters to summon specific conceptualizations pertaining to the persuasion purposes targeted on the part of speakers and/or writers.

(c). Religionization

A further persuasion strategy that is dexterously employed in the Saudi 2030 Vision document is Religionization. According to Sarfati (2014), politicians usually use religious sources pertaining to the culture of their addressees in order to influence their cognitive background towards the acceptance of what they say without any objection. Since they are considered a tool of control, religious scriptures have always been a source of discursive statements intentionally used to persuade because they activate dictation and understanding. The Saudi Vision 2030 document abounds in religious expressions that characterize its persuasive discourse. Consider the following extracts:

(1) We take pride in what makes our nation exceptional: our *Islamic faith* and our national unity.

(2) *Islam* and its teachings are *our way of life*. They are the basis of all our laws, decisions, actions and goals.

(3) *The principles of Islam* will be *the driving force for us* to realize our Vision.

(4) We have been given the privilege to serve the *Two Holy Mosques*, the pilgrims and all visitors to the blessed holy sites.

(5) We are honored *to attend to pilgrims and Umrah visitors' needs*, fulfilling a role bestowed on us by Allah.

The above extracts demonstrate the great extent to which the whole document of Vision 2030 is shaped by many religious concepts that are inherited in the Islamic culture pertaining to the Kingdom. The document has emphasized that *Islamic faith* is one of two pillars that makes the Kingdom an *exceptional* nation. The *teachings* of Islam are the *basis* of all laws, decisions, and goals to be targeted in the Kingdom and the *principles of Islam* are the *driving force* to achieve the Vision. To communicate a persuasive message, the document sheds light on the services the Kingdom has been providing to serve the Two Holy Mosques as well as to serve the pilgrims and visitors of the holy sites throughout the year. Such a religiously Islamic nature that features the discourse of the document in many of its parts reaches its persuasive climax by linking all services related to the Two Holy Mosques to be something bestowed on the Kingdom by Allah (God), which further functions to add honor to the Kingdom and its leadership. Again, this ultimately serves to communicate the goals and principles of the document persuasively to readers as well as to the public.

Another linguistic manifestation of religionization is intertextuality, which is realized by using one of the Prophet Muhammad's traditions (Hadith) as an intertext to quote something related to the execution of the Vision: "*following Islam's guidance on the values of hard work, dedication, and excellence, Prophet Mohammed, Peace Be Upon Him, said: "that Allah loves us to master our work.*" Such intertexuality adds more religious spirit to the document in a way that contributes to not only the understanding of the rules and goals of the 2030 Vision but also the complete acceptance of its foundations. Relating issues to religion has always been a successful way to communicate ideological meanings persuasively and, therefore, serves to achieve the targeted meanings of the language users.

Proceeding with the same religionization process in the whole discourse, the Vision document is entailed by a religious statement that carries wishes and hopes by seeking support and guidance from God to implement the listed goals of the 2030 Vision: *May Allah bless us and guide us to the right path.* This concluding sentence accentuates the extent to which the Saudi Vision 2030 document is textually religionized in many of its parts, which, in turn, sheds light on the assumption that religion is always employed by politicians to facilitate the absorption of what is said and/ or argued for/against without any further thinking.

TABLE 4
LEXIS CARRYING LITERAL OR ASSOCIATIVE MEANING OF RELIGION IN VISION 2030 DOCUMENT

The word	No. of occurrence	The word	No. of occurrence
Allah	10	God	2
Islam	7	Islamic	20
religious	1	Prophet(s)	2
Holy	10	Mosques	7
Umrah	8	pilgrimage	2
pilgrims	9	Makkah	2
Medina	1	faith	1

Table 4 demonstrates that the Saudi Vision 2030 document abounds in words that carry the literal and associative meanings of religion. These words contribute to the process of religionisation, which, in turn, serves to communicate the meanings, goals, and principles of the document persuasively. These words are also collocated with other words to strengthen their religious meanings. For example, the adjective *Islamic* occurs in combination with words like *principles*, *faith*, *values*, *heritage*, *sites*, *mosques*, *civilization*, *duties*, and *society*. Such collocational combinations shed light on the religious atmosphere characterizing the document of Vision 2030.

(d). Future Promises

One fundamental fact about the Saudi Vision 2030 document is that it is highly a promise-bearer document. These promises are usually delivered to presage brilliant and better conditions in the future. This, in turn, makes it easy for language users to persuade their addressees of what they want and to make them acknowledge the availability and consistency of their policies. In the document under investigation, promises are employed as carriers of persuasion and manifested linguistically in the use of the truth modal 'will'. Crucially, one observation about the Saudi Vision 2030 document is that many of its meanings at the level of the sentence have been structured around the future operator 'will'.

TABLE 5
'WILL' AS FUTURE PROMISES OPERATOR IN THE SAUDI VISION 2030 DOCUMENT

Opening Statements & MPs.	Will	Examples of 'will' in context
Opening Statements	21	- I will work with you to achieve that. - We will harness to stimulate our economy and diversify our revenues.
MP 1	77	- We will endeavor to strengthen, preserve and highlight our national identity - We will seek to offer a variety of cultural venue
MP 2	126	- we will create an environment attractive to both local and foreign investors - We will fully support our national industries,
MP 3	49	- We will set up a regulatory framework that empowers the non-profit sector. - We will promote greater financial independence.
MP4	16	- We will continuously review and assess our performance in achieving this Vision. - We will also establish a Decision Support Center
Total Occurrences	289	

Table 5 clarifies that the future operator 'will' is frequently used in the discourse of the document to communicate future promises to addresses, with a total frequency of 289 distributed among the four macro-propositions that constitute the whole compositionality of the Saudi Vision 2030 document. In all its uses throughout the four macro-propositions, the future operator 'will' is employed in the document to communicate a high degree of trustworthiness, certitude, and credibility in the arguments delivered. It is, therefore, used to convey future promises that guarantee better conditions for the Kingdom. This in turn serves to make the public accept the document's principles and goals persuasively.

The very high frequency of 'will' in the document of the Saudi Vision accentuates the assumption that promises are produced in the discourse of the Saudi Vision 2030 document to persuasively motivate the potential energies of the public so as to work effectively to achieve the goals of the Vision and to face any difficulties for the sake of making these goals come to reality. Such an atmosphere of brilliant future is linguistically heightened by the combination of the first-person plural 'we' and the modal 'will' in almost all the occurrences of the document. This syntactic structure of 'we+will+verb' in the majority of the expressions carrying the future operator 'will' functions to emphasize collectivity, unity, and cooperation. Such collective solidarity can be clearly shown by King Salman's future pledge that he *will work with you to achieve th*at, in which 'that' refers to the goals of Vision 2030, and in Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's emphasis that *we will harness to stimulate our economy and diversify our revenues*. These characteristics, i.e., unity, cooperation, and solidarity, are the required conditions to achieve the goals of the 2030 Vision. In political discourse, promises stimulate the potentialities of the public to work hard and overcome any hindrances (Khafaga, 2017).

(e). Compositional Summarization

Compositional summarization is another persuasive strategy that is dexterously used in the Saudi Vision 2030 document. It refers to the way the document is textually structured to deliver its message. This strategy is clearly shown from the very beginning when the topics addressed in the document are topically framed in titles and subtitles that serve to facilitate understanding on the part of addressees. Crucially, according to Adaval and Wyer (1998), a textually well-structured discourse is perceived more persuasively than any other form. The compositionality pertaining to the document has been persuasively initiated by setting up the fundamental reason beyond laying down such a document: *To build the best future for our country, we have based our Vision for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on three pillars that represent our unique competitive advantages*. Crucially, offering the reasons why specific procedures will be conducted paves the addressees' cognitive background to perceive the arguments in a specific way that, in most cases, benefits the goals targeted by the speaker and/or writer. After providing a reasonable justification for the document, the process of compositionality continues to be a crucial ploy in the persuasion process. Such a persuasiveness process is textually enabled by a number of macro and micro summarizers that feature the whole written discourse of the document.

TABLE 6
FREQUENCY OF MACRO AND MICRO SUMMARIZERS IN THE SAUDI VISION 2030 DOCUMENT

MPs. No.	Macro-summarizers	Micro-summarizers	Total	Examples
MP 1	4	16	20	We have enormous untapped Opportunities and a rich blend Of natural resources, but our Real wealth lies in our people And our society.
MP 2	4	22	26	We will reinforce the ability of our economy to generate diverse job opportunities and institute a new paradigm in attracting global talents and qualifications.
MP 3	2	13	15	The roles and requirements of Government have grown Significantly since the kingdom of Saudi Arabia's founding.
MP4	3	13	16	We are preparing to launch a group of executive programs that will have a significant impact on implementation.
Total	13	64	77	

As indicated from Table 6, the Saudi Vision 2030 document contains 13 macro-summarizers and 64 micro-summarizers. These are distributed among the four macro-propositions of the document. These summarizers, irrespective of their form, are effective persuasion strategies in the document. Their persuasive task is clearly shown in the fact that they provide a summary of the fundamental points addressed in a specific part and/or paragraph of the document. Summarization facilitates understanding and directs attention towards the basic ideas targeted in a piece of discourse. This helps addressees receive any argument in a direct and easy way, which serves to strengthen the degree of getting them persuaded of what is argued for or against. Significantly, language users summarize their arguments to highlight important details, increase understanding, and give authority and credibility to their words and work. In politics, summaries simplify difficult arguments, syntax, and vocabulary while omitting details or instances that might divert the reader's attention from the most crucial information.

One crucial feature of summarization in the document at hand is the capitalization form and the font size that all macro and micro summarizers are delivered by. Both capitalization and the large font size by which all summarizers are written function to cast emphasis on particular ideas of the document, as well as to shed much more power and impact on the arguments they present. Throughout the document, capitalization and font size are inherent characteristics of the process of summarization.

V. DISCUSSION

The analysis of the Saudi Vision 2030 document shows that it is persuasively structured to communicate particular meanings. It is analytically demonstrated that the selected document is cohesively arranged in a way that makes it appear in a clearly perceivable persuasive pattern. In light of this study, this cohesive structure is realized both internally and externally. Internally, such cohesion is achieved by the skillful use of five persuasion strategies, including lexical choices, the inclusive 'we', religionization, future promises, and compositional summarization. The five strategies are dexterously utilized to persuasively communicate the four main macro-propositions constituting the whole discourse of the document. Externally, the Saudi Vision 2030 document has persuasively been textualized through the structure of the context in which it operates. From the very beginning of the selected document, the document highlights its topical themes: a vibrant society, a thriving economy, and an ambitious nation, around them the whole linguistic construction of the document revolves. These global meanings (macro-propositions) have been made explicit in the first page of the document, namely the contents page. Crucially, the topical themes of the Vision 2030 document have been textually developed throughout its parts. This topical development is termed Rheme (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). This textual rheme is persuasively structured to communicate particular political meanings pertinent to the Saudi leadership.

The analysis shows that the five strategies of persuasion discussed in this paper cover four levels of linguistic analysis: lexical, semantic, pragmatic, and stylistic. At the lexical level, the analysis displays that word selection plays an integral part in the persuasion process. Using words as persuasion conduits has proven useful in this study. This is clearly manifested in the strategy of lexical choices, which entirely depends on the extent to which particular words are used effectively to communicate persuasive meanings. Such usage of words is linguistically heightened by the combination of words around each selected word. This has previously been emphasized by many studies, including Fowler (1991), Jakobson (1997), and Khafaga (2023), who argue that the ideological and persuasive weight of words is clearly mirrored when these words are shown in combination with other words. A further significance of words lies in the strategy of religionization, where certain religious words and/or phrases are used to communicate the religious nature attributed to some of the Vision 2030 goals. As stated before, such a religionization process targets the emotional state of the Saudis, who are culturally religious, to accept the arguments quite willingly.

At the pragmatic level, the first-person plural pronouns are used to communicate solidarity and closeness between discourse participants. In this sense, the first-person plural pronouns go beyond their ordinary semantic function to convey another pragmatic purpose, which in turn functions to achieve persuasion. At the semantic level, the document abounds in global meanings that are analytically listed in this paper as macro-propositions that constitute the whole semantic compositionality of the document. These semantic macro-propositions are closely linked to the strategies of persuasion discussed in the paper to produce a comprehensive interpretation of the way the Saudi Vision 2030 document is persuasively formed. Also, the truth modal 'will' is frequently employed as a persuasion carrier, as it serves to add the meanings of certitude, trustworthiness, and credibility to the presented argument, which, in turn, function to facilitate the process of persuasion on the part of the addresses. As for the stylistic level, it is obviously shown via three linguistic manifestations: summarization, which comprises two types: macro-summarizers and micro-summarizers; capitalization, which serves to cast emphasis on particular statements throughout the document; and the font size by which all summarized statements are written in the document at hand.

The analysis clarifies that texts reflecting political life can be described, analyzed, interpreted, and critiqued using critical discourse analysis (CDA). This goes in accordance with Fairclough's (2013) and van Dijk's (1993, 2006) contention that the goal of CDA is to methodically investigate the connections between discursive practices, texts, and events and more general political, social, and cultural interactions. CDA's main concern, therefore, is the detailed examination and explanation of language's materiality. CDA strives to explore the different relations of power in discourse, and because persuasion is entirely based on the rhetorical side of power, that is, the power of the word, it can

be concluded that CDA is also concerned with revealing the hidden strategies of persuasion that are linguistically manifested in talks and texts (van Dijk, 2004). The analysis further clarifies that language is a crucial tool in the hands of its users, as it can be used and/or abused to achieve persuasion. This correlates with Jowett and O'Donnell's (1992) argument that language can be employed persuasively and/or manipulatively to achieve the goals of its users in discourse.

Furthermore, the four macro-propositions constituting the global meanings of the whole discourse of the Saudi Vision 2030 document are analytically linked to the five strategies discussed in this study. To clarify, the analysis demonstrates that the five persuasion strategies are indicatively represented in each macro-proposition (global meaning) addressed by the document. This mirrors the effective way the four macro-propositions are discursively structured and the effectively persuasive way they are presented in the discourse of the document. Consequently, the five persuasion strategies are reflected in the macro-propositional content of the document. This reconciles with van Dijk's (1995) argument that there should be a correlation between the macro-propositions of discourse and the significations of the linguistic expression. This also accentuates Khafaga's (2017) argument that the connection between the textual and contextual features of discourse as well as between the different levels of linguistic analysis contributes to producing a comprehensive interpretation that can be perceived persuasively on the part of addressees.

The findings revealed in this paper also reconcile with many previous studies in the field of CDA (e.g., van Dijk, 1997; Chilton & Schäffner, 2002; Billig, 2003; Fairclough, 2013; Khajavi & Rasti, 2020; Khafaga et al., 2023) in the sense that the connection between CDA and persuasion demonstrates the applicability of CDA to the linguistic investigation of persuasion in political documents. The reason for this association is that both methods rely heavily on the concepts of ideology and power as fundamental elements of their frameworks. Revealing the different strategies of persuasion by analytically drawing on CDA seeks to modify the public's viewpoints and convictions as well as political ideals. With the use of CDA, the public has become proficient critical analysts capable of deciphering meanings beyond words. Additionally, CDA prepares the public to evaluate the ideological arguments they will encounter and to recognize and celebrate anything that supports their opinions, while also being prepared to refute any claims and assertions that run counter to those opinions.

VI. CONCLUSION

This paper adopted a critical discourse analysis (CDA) to provide a linguistic analysis of persuasion strategies in the Saudi Vision 2030 document. The study identified and analyzed five persuasion strategies that are employed to communicate the targeted meanings persuasively. These are lexical choices, the inclusive 'we', religionization, future promises, and compositional summarization. The five strategies constitute the lexical, semantic, pragmatic, and stylistic levels of analysis. Lexically, the targeted meanings of the document are intended to be persuasively communicated by the skillful selection of specific words that operate effectively as persuasion conduits, particularly in combination with other lexical items. Semantically, the analysis identified four basic macro-propositions representing the global meanings of the whole discourse of the document. Pragmatically, it is analytically shown that solidarity and closeness are both conveyed by the pragmatically inclusive use of the first-person plural pronouns 'we', 'our', and 'us'. Stylistically, the analysis has displayed that persuasion can be achieved stylistically by means of summarization, capitalization, and font size, through which arguments are presented in discourse to cast emphasis on specific meanings and facilitate understanding on the part of addresses. Furthermore, the analysis showed that language is a powerful weapon in the hands of politicians, through which they can communicate their intended meanings persuasively. This, in turn, accentuates the assumption that CDA proves useful in revealing the various strategies of persuasion used in texts and talks, both theoretically and analytically.

For future research, this study recommends other linguistic investigations for the Saudi Vision 2030 document that focus on other strategies of persuasion at the various levels of linguistic analysis. For example, by exploring the ideological significance communicated by both the lexical and functional categories employed in the document. These recommended studies might reveal findings similar or different to the findings revealed in this study in a way that provides a further linguistic understanding of the way the document of Vision 2030 is linguistically structured.

APPENDIX

The link to the Saudi Vision 2030 document:
https://vision2030.gov.sa/en/download/file/fid/353

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