



Thesis Defense Discourse in a Ghanaian University: A Show of Power or an Examination of Ideas?

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Abstract

Thesis proposal defence is geared towards the transformation of a novice academic into an academia, where presenting and defending research claims is a key part of the discourse. This paper studies the engagement section of a thesis proposal defence in a Ghanaian university. It examines whether the content, the format of the questions and the choice of words point to exploration of ideas, ideology or power?. A sample discourse of PhD thesis proposal defence illustrates the phenomenon, drawing from Fairclough's (1995) model for analyzing text as discourse and social practice. Findings show how questioning generates inequality, manipulation and power at proposal defence.

Key Words: Thesis Defence Proposal, Discourse, Examination, Questioning, Ghanaian Universities

Introduction

In communication, interlocutors employ various means and strategies to obtain information from each other. One of such strategies is the use of questioning. Questioning can be classified as a speech act because the meaning is somewhat not in the sum total of meaning of words used but sometimes gained from the linguistic or rhetorical context. Questions have interrogative structures and functions at both semantic and pragmatic levels, and though there are different types of questions, each mode have different discursal functions. The context of questioning requires an interrogator and a hearer and the

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relationship between these interlocutors in questioning is influenced by the intention of intimacy, social distance and authority. Though there are many discursual functions and implications for questioning, its fundamental use is to request for information. The request can be made in different forms and each form has its own intended meaning.

This paper examines the ideological formations present in the verbal behaviour of the engagement stage because of the extensive use of questions. The paper looks at questioning in an academic discourse; specifically, at thesis proposal defence. With different discourse communities and domains, there may be a number of genre chains that are created to achieve certain communicative functions (Nodoushan, 2011). The body of genre chains of thesis begins with a choice of research topic, a thesis proposal and its defence, the actual research, and the thesis defence. Both the thesis proposal defence and the thesis defence are oral examinations that mostly employ the use of questions as major tools to engage the candidate in order to establish the quality of the topic for research and the quality of the research thesis, respectively. In the defence of the proposal, questions are extensively used to scrutinize the candidate's knowledge in the area of intended research. Since graduate studies in any discipline are a process of socializing the candidate into an academia, the proposal defence provides an avenue for a rigorous orientation of the novice towards becoming an expert. As Tracy & Robles (2009) indicates, questioning is a discursive practice that plays a key role as a vehicle that constructs our social worlds and also reflects existing cultures and ways of life.

The part of a thesis proposal defence in focus is the intended discursive function of the questions asked by the experts. It is assumed that the process of questioning the candidate is to determine the competency and capabilities of a novice (a graduate student) to join the academic discourse community. The paper identifies the syntactic structures that are employed in the data and then examines the intended pragmatic functions of the questions. The aim of the paper is to question whether the function of questioning in a thesis proposal defense is to elicit information, to project an

ideology or to show power?. As Fairclough (1995) intimates, there is power behind language in discourse, hence the need not to consider any language use as neutral.

Fairclough's Theory of Discourse as Social Practice

Fairclough has worked extensively in discourse studies. He has deconstructed discourse as a social practice in many of his works (Fairclough, 1995; 2003). In Fairclough (1995) he defines discourse as social practice to mean "a relatively stabilised form of social activity". He maintains that every social practice includes the following dialectically related elements: activities, subjects and their social relations, instruments, objects, time and place, forms of consciousness, values, and discourse. In Fairclough, (2003), social practices are seen as "articulations of different types of social element which are associated with particular areas of social life". This means discourse, or use of language work with non-discoursal social elements to produce social practices. He further asserts that discourse functions as social practice in three ways: first as part of the social activity within a practice, then as representation in the practice and finally in the constitution of identities of those in the discourse. By this, he means that discourse is a social activity with participants who, as social actors, produce that practice and other practices and in the activity construct their identities of who they are or their ways of being.

Discourse as a social practice connotes that genre such as thesis proposal defence, by all descriptions and definitions given by Fairclough constitutes a social practice. Thesis proposal defence can be described as a social practice because it employs the use of the elements identified in Fairclough's theory. From the data, we are able to identify the relationship between the elements and to indicate, especially, the social relationship between the candidate and the examiners from the Engagement section. The discussion shows the social activity within the practice, marks the actors in the social practice and constructs the identities of those in the discourse. Fairclough's theory of discourse as social practice forms the theoretical framework or background theory of the current paper.

Fairclough (1995) develops a three-dimensional framework of analyzing discourse as *text*, *discursive practice*, and *social practice*. Text refers to the linguistic features such as grammar, vocabulary cohesion and text structure. Discourse as discursive practice refers to the production, distribution and consumption of text. This includes analyzing the text with close attention to practices such as speech acts, intertextuality, coherence (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000: 449). Discourse as social practice, which is the third strand implies ideological implications, manipulative and hegemonic processes through which discourse is operationalized

The paper is guided by two research questions: (i) what types of questions are used in the engagement section of thesis proposal defence; (ii) what discursual functions do questions perform in the engagement section of thesis proposal defence?

Data

The data for this study is a thirty-minute spoken data recording of a PhD thesis proposal defence in a public university in Ghana. This data was collected in 2017 and kept till now in order for it not to have any influence on the candidate's subsequent examinations. The department was later informed about the use of the recording of research purposes in order to satisfy any ethical consideration needs. Proposal defence at this university, like many others around the world, is an examination. Graduate students have to pass at a higher grade to qualify to move to the research stage of the graduate programme. The written thesis proposal is expected to be between 15 to 25 pages and must detail the research to be done. The document is expected to be lodged with the Department after the course work and at least two weeks before the date for the defence. The PhD proposal defence is open to faculty members and graduate students. A panel of five is constituted with the Head of Department as the Chair to moderate the defence, and four other senior lecturers; three from the Department and one from a cognate department. Other faculty and graduate students are welcome to attend but do not have the permission to ask questions.

Proposal defence at the department under study can be said to comprise three main sections: presentation, engagement and judgement / pronouncement sections. The presentation stage which takes about fifteen to twenty minutes is where the candidate presents his/her proposed research topic, the structure and methodology for the proposed research. It is at this point that the candidate has to show his or her knowledge in the area for research and how prepared he/she is for the task ahead. The engagement stage is the most crucial stage for the candidate as it involves questions and answers between the panel of examiners and the candidate. Through questioning, the examiners would have to convince themselves that the candidate is truly ready for the research part of the programme. The Head of Department or an assigned senior faculty chairing the oral examination will ask the panel members to take turns to question the candidate on the proposal-- both the written document and the oral paper. The engagement stage takes about forty-five minutes to an hour. In the third stage, which is the judgment or pronouncement section, the candidate and other students are asked to leave for the panel to decide on the candidate's performance. The panel of examiners gives their verdict on both the written and the oral paper. When the candidate passes, he/she is called back with all the students and informed on the decision of the panel. If the candidate fails, he/she alone is called and informed and given a second chance to defend a revised proposal at a later date. The three clear stages are realized by the use of specific syntactic structures. Whereas the presentation and pronouncement stages are mostly expository in form, the engagement stage uses questioning extensively and clearly brings out the depth of knowledge and skills of the student.

Athanasiadou (1991) asserts that the initial reflection on functions of questions will be about information seeking, making desire for knowledge the primary intent for asking questions. However, some questions are mainly rhetorical and do not call for content information. Questions also have ways of intimidating respondents and are tools through which power differentiation can be demonstrated in the elicitation of information in discourse (Edu-

Buandoh & Ahialey, 2012). Interlocutors may sometimes use questions as strategies to demonstrate authority over those without power, but the linguistic forms used to ask questions may carry more discursual functions than mere questioning.

Types of Questions Used in the Data Collection Process

From the data, five main question types emerged: yes- no questions, wh-questions, declarative + *wh* questions, rhetorical questions, and alternative questions. Within the transcription, of the 30-minutes data, thirty-seven occurrences of questions were recorded.

Table 1: Distribution of Types of Questions

Question Type	Frequency	Example
Yes-No	16	Do you have a data management plan//
Wh-	12	What is it//
Declarative + Wh-	4	You also have the student component //what do you mean//
Rhetorical	3	How are you going to be able to make such claims//
Alternative	2	Are you by this answer being influenced by the use of dialogicity//
Total	37	

It could be seen that yes-no questions recorded the highest frequency (43%) followed by wh-questions (32.4%), then declarative + wh question (10.8%), rhetorical questions (8.2%) and finally alternative questions (5.4%).

1) The Yes-No Questions

The most common type of questions used by the panel in the data were Yes-No questions which has a syntactic form of subject-verb inversion and seeks a response in the affirmative or negative (Greenbaum and Nelson, 2002; Kirkpatrick, 2007). There were questions such as

- a. Do you think that you have personal pronouns ¹¹ rather than . . . I mean a selected number. . for instance *We You and I* //
- b. ... are you by this answer being ¹⁰⁶influenced by the use of dialogicity or interpersonality//
- c. Erm is it correct to say that your ¹²⁹study is interested in both form and function of the use of personal pronouns//

These and other yes-no questions syntactically and semantically demanded yes or no for response, although in most cases the candidate treated them as open questions. There were also wh-questions in the data.

2) The Wh-questions

The form of a wh-question is wh- word +subject verb inversion clause. It is an open-ended question and according to Greenbaum and Nelson (2002) it requires the responder to provide information. Such questions allow the responder to explain himself or herself to an extent to remove doubts and ambiguities in the mind of the questioner. The following samples were recorded in the data:

- a. ⁴⁷How do you conceptualise the word *lecture*
- b. Why do you do disciplinary ²⁴⁵ variation
- c. What is the essence// Why do you want to look at the picture across the ²⁴⁶[inaudible]
- d. What ²⁹⁶would you say ... if I tell you that you are actually looking at analytical framework

3) Declarative + Wh-Questions

Another question form identified in the data was the combination of a declarative and a wh-question. The linguistic structure of this type of question is a declarative clause followed by a wh-question. It is a leading question because the initial component

response is in the options given in the question. In the data, only two were identified:

- a. ... are you by this answer being ¹⁰⁶influenced by the use of dialogicity or interpersonality// So are you focusing on the lecturer or the student . . .//

Both examples used the alternative conjunction *or* to present alternatives to the student to choose from. (a) could be expanded as are you a by this answer being influenced by the use of dialogicity or (are you being influenced by) interpersonality? The questioner expects the responder to select one of the alternatives to respond to the question.

In addition to the question forms used, the interlocutors used other elicitation forms to draw out responses from the student.

Other Elicitation Forms Used

Forms such as declaratives, conditional clauses and imperatives were also used as strategies to elicit information from the candidate in the engagement stage. These other forms are illustrated as

- a. But I'd also like you to tell us how you conceptualise the word lecture (imperative)
I mean if you can show us// (if conditional clause)
- b. Well I asked this question because in your paper you did say and I'm sure that I ⁶⁴heard you ... clearly ... you made reference to a lecture and said that there is a ⁶⁵lecturer component// that was the expression you used// (declaratives)

It is worth noting that these questions were not the only forms used in eliciting information from the candidate. The if-clauses were geared towards affirmation of the content of the clause and not as requesting for content information. The declaratives were not done with rising intonations and so cannot be described as declarative questions. The forms, however, semantically elicited information or affirmation from the candidate and formed part of the information seeking process. Since the focus of this paper is questioning, these other forms were not analysed for power or ideology.

Discussion

Fairclough's second tier of analysis looks at *discourse as discursive practice* where the production and consumption of the *text* is geared towards some discursive functions such as speech acts. The *text*, as have been described earlier in the paper, shows different categories of questions that are marked for specific grammatical functions in the language. For example, the primary function of a yes-no question is to seek affirmation or otherwise. The questions found in the data themselves, seem not to provide any discursive practice other than the grammatical functions ascribed to them in the language. However, a critical look at them draws attention to the underlying tones whose meanings could be ascribed to certain discursive functions. For example,

Excerpt 1

- a. Do you think that you have personal pronouns ¹¹ rather than . . . I mean a select number. . for instance *We You* and *I* //
- b. ... are you by this answer being ¹⁰⁶influenced by the use of dialogicity or interpersonality//
- c. Erm is it correct to say that your ¹²⁹study is interested in both form and function of the use of personal pronouns//

In (a), the preface of the question "do you think" is an intimidating token: an indirect phrase that leads the responder to commit himself to information he is not sure of, thereby presenting himself as an inexperienced academic. The form of the question carries a meaning of doubt in the intellectual capacity of the student. Any relevant answer given by the student could still expose the student. Apart from questions his intellectual capabilities, the questioner also leaves the second part of what would have been an alternative question blank, leaving the student to guess what could be the appropriate response. In (b), the use of *influence* suggests that the candidate should not be influenced by any of the theorists. Being influenced by somebody connotes the inability of the candidate to think for himself. In addition, the questioner directs the student to choose from two alternatives; a situation that can lead the student to choose a wrong answer. Again, the candidate is asked in question (c) to declare the veracity of information he seems not to be sure off.

Considering that the questioner is an expert (a senior faculty member) in the discipline, asking the novice (candidate) to declare the veracity of the information is a tricky request likely to make the candidate slip.

Excerpt 2

¹³⁶QC: Title//

¹³⁷QA: Yeah// I'm asking precisely because of the title so I mean if you can go back to the

¹³⁸title... Yes// You see the title//

¹³⁹R: So the ... so the reference there speaks to the semantics like I pointed out ... so the//

¹⁴⁰QA: Ok//

¹⁴¹R: The

¹⁴²and then the functions... that's the discourse function possibly the//

¹⁴³QA: ***I mean would you ¹⁴⁴lose anything if you decided to have corpus based study of personal pronouns//***

¹⁴⁵R: ... errm... well.. no ...//

It could be seen from the dialogue that although the examiner (QA) used the form of a yes/no question, he was not asking for a yes or no response. He was rather communicating to the candidate to accept reviewing his work in line with what he, the expert, judges as appropriate. The dialogue shows that the candidate reluctantly accepted to revise, perhaps recognizing the power behind the question. In a similar way, other questions were used as tools to manipulate and discredit the knowledge base of the candidate. For example

Excerpt 3

¹⁰¹QA: I still have some issues// I don't think we should [inaudible]// I mean my concern

is ¹⁰²that you are using the term dialogicity//

¹⁰³R: Yeah//

¹⁰⁴QA: I mean ... ***are you by this answer being ¹⁰⁶influenced by the use of dialogicity or interpersonalilty//***

¹⁰⁶R: Well well I mean dialogicity ... well there are several views// I'm not going the

¹⁰⁷way of Bakhtin...erm the view of Bakhtin// I'm I'm looking at dialogicity as ¹⁰⁸making reference to

interaction ... as found in metadiscourse¹⁰⁹ scholarship [inaudible]// Hyland and all that who make use of the word dialogic¹⁰ and make reference to interaction between scholars in for instance writing and all¹¹¹ that// So when I use dialogicity ... I'm not making reference to for instance like¹¹² Bakhtin [inaudible] ... I'm looking at it in the form of interaction//

¹¹³QA: Well... I think we can talk about it later// But am not too convinced about that. But erm¹¹⁴ you've been using the term *super communities*... **what is it// I mean is it your own¹¹⁵ coinage//What is it//**

This dialogue in Excerpt 3 shows questions that are used with intent to discredit the candidate. The examiner asked the candidate to choose from the options of *dialogicity* and *interpersonality* and when the candidate does, the examiner pushes it aside and defers the discussion on it to another date. One would question whether the examiner really wanted to understand the candidate's reason for choosing *dialogicity* or the examiner just wanted to put the candidate on the spot and present him as a student who knew very little of what he purports to be doing. The exchange marks the examiner as powerful and the student as one without power, although the research is supposed to be the student's work. Further questioning looks to discredit the student. For example,

Excerpt 4

QB: My concern is about the fact²³² that you used hard science// I think that probably you could even simplify²³³ things for yourself **even if you want work at super communities why don't you look at²³⁴ soft sciences against hard sciences because if you say hard sciences and you really²³⁵ are interested in in the three broad communities then probably is should be natural** ... humanities²³⁶ sciences because that's what you normally find in the literature ... the hard sciences that²³⁷ social sciences and natural science// But once you were

using hard sciences that ²³⁸goes with soft sciences in the literature// That's what you normally find// But well ... ²³⁹so you think about that// I think//

²⁴⁰CHAIR: Mr QB ... even before Mr QB moves on ... ***is there any reason why you prefer***

²⁴¹to use hard sciences and humanities and social sciences// is it so important that if ²⁴²you change it ... is it going to affect anything that you need to do//

²⁴³QB: Erm the other thing about ... the disciplinary variation thing you want to look at/I haven't seen anything relating to that in your research. ***Why do you do disciplinary variation// what is the essence// Why do you want to look at the picture across the ²⁴⁶[inaudible] ... for what purpose//***

The marked questions were used to discredit and manipulate the respondent to change the foundation of his proposal. Asking for the "essence" of the focus of his proposal and questioning his reason cast doubts about the candidate's knowledge base. In the earlier excerpt, the candidate tries to stand his grounds; however, the examiner does not accept his explanation but rather reschedules the discussion for later. The examiner does not value the response to his earlier question so he just sets it aside, indicating that he has the power to determine what should be said when and for what purpose. Excerpt 5 shows another use of questioning to intimidate the candidate.

Excerpt 5

QB: You might go ahead to demonstrate how the variation reflects ²⁹⁰disciplinary knowledge// So you probably want to also add that to be ²⁹¹reminded so that when it comes to your analysis you don't just show us the ²⁹²variation without making an effort to demonstrate this// It's very very important for ²⁹³me// Alright erm ... I've several concerns but I'll just limit them to erm a few// So ²⁹⁴let me touch on the very important ones for you// What you call ... theoretical ²⁹⁵frameworks and I didn't see them// What you call theoretical framework ... ***what ²⁹⁶would you say ... if I tell you that you are actually looking at analytical***

***framework ²⁹⁷they are not theoretical framework//
What do you say to that ... especially when ²⁹⁸you say
you are doing a corpus-based study//***

The repeated questioning form and the sarcastic question that doubts the type of research design the candidate has offered to use point to intimidation. These shake the candidate's confidence.

In most cases, the framing of the question, the preamble to the question and the stance of the examiners make it difficult for the candidate to resist and contest some of the questions from the examiners. The candidate shows at times that he is confused and does not have control over his own proposal. At a point, he seems to be succumbing to all directives that point him to modify the core basis of his proposed research, perhaps in a bid to please the examiners and pass the oral examination. He is sometimes able to read hidden intentions in the questions, especially when they are repeated for emphasis, recast and reframed with the intention of subjecting the candidate to accept to modify his work; and he shows that in hesitating before accepting to modify the questioned part. In addition, some of the alternative questions were used to manipulate the candidate to choose one of the options for the examiner to counter or refute his choice, while some of the yes- no questions sought affirmation only for the examiner to use that as a bait to discredit the candidate.

In a study on how judges' questioning practices during oral argument connect to their political beliefs and invariably influence them in their decision making, Tracy & Park (2012) identified the use of "tough questions" to intimidate parties. They define "tough questions" in relation to six features of question sequence that come together to ideologically influence judgements. These are: (a) The sheer number of questions addressed to a party; (b)The complexity (length) of question; (c) The number of turns across which an issue was pursued; (d) Interruptive beginnings ; (e) Beginnings with disagreement tokens; and (f)Hypothetical questions. (12-13)

The data produces some of these features as seen from the excerpts: sheer number of questions, addressed to the candidate, the complexity and length of some of the questions, number of turns across an issue, interruptive beginnings from the examiners and beginnings with disagreement tokens. The presence of so many tough questions point to the difficulty the discourse poses to the candidate in the Engagement stage of the proposal. Excerpt 6 below shows an example of beginnings with disagreement tokens.

Excerpt 6

¹⁰¹QA: **I still have some issues**// I don't think we should [inaudible]// I mean my concern is ¹⁰² that you are using the term dialogicity//

QA: . . . but **not too convinced about that**. But erm

¹¹⁴you've been using the term super communities

²⁴⁰CHAIR: Mr QB ... even before Mr QB moves on ... **is there any reason why you prefer** ²⁴¹to use hard sciences and humanities and social science

By saying “I still have some issues”, “(I am) not too convinced about that” and “is there any reason why you prefer” the examiner indicates that he disagrees with something the candidate had said earlier. Starting the sentence with a disagreement token unsettles the candidate, reduces the candidate’s control over his proposal and creates lack of self-esteem in the candidate. The questions could be described as text but performed different discursive functions in the data. The next section brings the analysis to the ideological implications of using the text to perform different discursive functions.

Display of Ideological Functions and Intentions

In describing the relationship that exists among language, ideology and power in discourse, Fairclough (2002) maintains that there are ideological-discursive formations (IDFs) that strive to affiliate with different forces, such as participants in institutions in group discourse connected to the position they occupy in the institution. He explains that in any institution, there is usually a group whose ideological norms is dominant and aligned to the institutional norm thus giving its members power to naturalise other ideological norms and making

theirs the acceptable norm. From their position, the members of the dominant IDFs acquire a way of seeing, of understanding and of speaking, shaped by ideological formatives that make their speeches “non-ideological common sense”. It is from the IDFs of what a thesis proposal defence is institutionally expected to be that strengthens the examiners to use questions in particular ways. It could be said that the examiners consider themselves as the domain group with the dominant IDF because they are the experts.

Using questions with ideological underpinnings may not be out of place in critical discourse studies. It is often probable to find in discourse that the form of a linguistic item does not necessarily perform the function that is marked for it in the grammar. Chaudron (1988) mentions that although some linguistic forms can be easily identified with assigned linguistic functions in the grammars and in language use, there are usually “finer nuances of meaning and tacit rules of discourse implicit in even the simplest expression” (p.39). Predicting how a linguistic form can be made to function in its expected function does not come easily. As Nunan (1991 p. 42) maintains, the “predictability will depend on whether the discourse or text type contains predictable patterns, and also the extent to which we are familiar with these patterns...” In most discourses and genres, there are direct correlations between the linguistic form and the functions, but the association between the structure of questions and their discourse functions or pragmatic functions do not always correlate (Quirk et al, 1985). A study of the data showed that in place of requesting for information, the contexts and use of specific questions displayed ideological formations.

Ideology, a term coined by Claude Destutt de Tracy in the 19th century initially pointed to the science of ideas, but it has been used to refer to ideas that call for action, to political ideas. In contemporary times, it has been used in reference to ideas and actions that point to inequality and masks the authority of the powerful so that even if they are marking power, the less powerful sees it as part of the rightful discourse. Language ideology is usually used to refer to beliefs about the rightness or appropriateness of a language choice or way of

speaking during discourse (Gal 2005; Woolard and Schieffelin 1994). The discussions that follow will look at the ideological implications of the use of questioning in the discourse.

In critical discourse studies “the power behind the conventions of a discourse type belongs not to the institution itself, but to the power-holders in the institution” (Fairclough, 1989, p.61); although most of the time the kind of power wielded and exercised by individuals or group is often defined by factors such as “group membership, institution, position, profession, material or symbolic resources” (van Dijk, 2006, p.362). It is possible that the examiners drew from both the institutional as well as their individual power-holding positions to question the candidate the way they did. The analysis of the data showed that the examiners were more dominant, using tough question features. It is important for examiners to recognize that a dominating social structuring of the orders of discourse of a genre may become hegemonic thereby creating an institutional pattern for actors to be dominant. When such dominant patterns become legitimized as *the orders of discourse* for thesis proposal defence in any institution, then candidates will see the practice as the common sense practice. That position will reproduce dominance and hegemony which in turn will lead to reproduction of power positions and even resistance at some point when that power cannot be sustained anymore.

The academic discourse of thesis proposal defence is governed by orders of discourse of the genre. Examiners have institutional authority and power to examine the candidate. In examining the candidate, the examiners can choose to carry out the orders of discourse in a dominant way or in a “democratic” way. From the data analysed, it could be deduced that the questioning were mostly not geared towards information seeking which would have enabled the examiners to lead the novice researcher into expertise, but rather, they demonstrated power, inequality and control.

Conclusion

Discourses are diverse ways of representing social life and institutional discourse provides actors with the orders of discourse through which they can activate the social practice. Questions can be conceptualised by their forms and functions as stipulated in the grammars of the language but there is another way to look at questions as “a demarcated social practice that exists in particular institutional scene” (Tracy & Robles, 2009, p. 134). This third way of looking at questions is supported by the discussion of the discourse following Fairclough’s three tier approach. The thesis proposal defence, as recorded in the data, showed that though the examiners used questioning as a tool to explore the ideas in the proposals, the way they used the questions showed power differential and domination on the part of examiners rather than request for information. This finding has implications for the genre of thesis proposal defence because if candidates are cowed into accepting every modification because examiners say so, the end product will be the examiners’ research proposal rather than the candidates. Such situation will defeat the purpose of leading novice researchers into expert academics. This paper adds credence to the assertion that language is never neutral and discourse should be examined to bring out discursive functions and implications that impact our social lives whenever we use language.

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