Dear Dr. Shakkour,

Thank you for submitting your manuscript TEXT.2023.0025 entitled "Metaphorical language in the speeches of Yasser Arafat, former president of the Palestinian National Authority" to Text & Talk: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Language, Discourse & Communication Studies (TEXT & TALK).

Please find attached 3 reviewers’ reports. As you will see, although Reviewer 2's comments are minimalist, the other two reviewers are very critical about the quality of the ms. The main concerns include: inadequacy of the study design and engagement with the research questions; poor contextualisation of relevant literature; inexplicit methodological considerations; a lack of conceptual clarity as well as rigorous textual analysis in support of the claims made. In addition, the structure of presentation/argumentation is weak.

In light of the above, I am afraid the paper cannot be considered for publication in TEXT & TALK. I hope that you are not too disappointed with this outcome and that you will benefit from the constructive comments from the reviewers in rethinking your work.

Kind regards
Prof. Srikant Sarangi
Editor-in-Chief
Text & Talk: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Language, Discourse & Communication Studies

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:

Reviewer: 1

The manuscript offers an interesting analysis of a key political figure’s metaphor use for persuasive purposes. All in all, it is well written and easy to follow. This said, whilst not denying the virtues of the article, to me, these seem to be outweighed by a wide range of major gaps or weaknesses, which ought to be carefully and conscientiously addressed before the paper may be considered for publication. These issues and questions are outlined and described below.

1. In the introduction and throughout the paper, the author argues metaphorical realisations are key to Arafat’s political discourse. Whilst this appears to make sense in light of the examples presented, one cannot help but wonder whether this is a generalisable claim or rather one that perhaps pertains or applies to the handful of rather ‘cherry-picked’ instances presented and discussed. The author would thus be encouraged to offer more explanatory detail on the communicative and persuasive strategies typical of Arafat’s political speeches and then perhaps offer more evidence as to the relevance or importance of conceptual metaphors therein.

2. In Section 2.1, the author appears to present CDA as a rather all-encompassing ‘conglomerate’, treating it as a single monolithic school (i.e. “this school”). In this regard, the author should specify which school(s) of CDA his/her analysis mostly adheres to (discourse-historical approach, socio-cognitive approach, etc.) and how this is evident in his/her analysis. Besides, the author should avoid such highly contentious and misguided statements as “CDA scholars tend to argue that the academic description traditional scholars offer is sterile” – is CDA therefore ‘non-academic’?; why should linguistic description be removed from CDA, when, in actual fact, for example, Fairclough’s model draws upon one such model of linguistic description (i.e. Systemic Functional Linguistics)?; can researchers not address or tackle the subjectivity inherent in CDA through corpus linguistics (i.e. Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis)?; what role (if any) did corpus techniques play in the author’s analysis?

3. The author’s discussion of the sample selected and the analytical procedure applied is highly limited, vague and confusing. The author must offer greater descriptive detail concerning the make-up/composition of his/her corpus or analytical sample. The author should also elaborate on the tagging protocol applied to the identification of relevant examples; for example, was the Pragglejaz protocol/method employed? How were metaphorical markables identified? Why are these not highlighted in the examples presented? Which sources or tools did the author draw on to endow his/her analysis with greater objectivity? Did the author check the realiability of his/her analysis through intra- and inter-rater reliability measures? Were the examples originally in English or were they in Arabic and subsequently translated? Was the English translation fully faithful to the original? How so? Additionally, the author should from the very beginning specify what the source and target domains are in each case and not leave this till the very end of the article.

4. As for the analysis and discussion section, this rests upon the discussion of just 21 examples. Does this mean the texts analysed contained no other instances of metaphorical usage? How were the percentages in Table 1 calculated in light of the fact that the numbers outlined do not add up to 100%? Can such broad generalisations be derived from such a limited set of examples? Are these really representative of Arafat’s rhetorical strategies? How similar or different is Arafat’s metaphor use to that of other political leaders? Be that as it may, the author is encouraged to offer greater descriptive and explanatory detail in the discussion of the examples presented and, for the sake of greater objectivity, whenever possible, support/substantiate his/her interpretation through, for example, corpus data (e.g. semantic prosodies) or lexicographical sources.

5. Sections 3.2 and 4 should be restructured and rewritten to ensure a thorough discussion is offered of the results obtained through a greater engagement with prior literature on the topic. As they stand, they only repeat what was said in previous sections without really digging or delving deep into the roots of Arafat’s communicative strategies.

Reviewer: 2

It lacks identification and systematisation of proper and updated references in abstract. Some statements are treated as givens and lacks some meta-linguistic reflection.
Expressions that do not reflect a strictly scientific approach should be avoided, such as, "Arabic is a musical language, meant to be evocative, to affect listeners, and touch their hearts"
The Critical Discourse Analysis(CDA) is a term that has been largely substituted with CDS in recent research studies by prominent scholars.
Avoid quoting authors from other authors' texts. For example in the lines 30-46 (p.7), Foucault is quoted from the text of Livnat (2014, vol. 2: 362).

Reviewer: 3

Thank you for your paper. This paper focuses metaphors in Arafat's speech. This is an interesting question. Unfortunately, from my perspective, the study lacks analytical depth and distance, the results are not surprising.

- Personally, I also appreciate Arafat as an impressive politician and Palestinian leader, but this personal assessment must not be the starting point and at the same time the goal of a discourse analysis, otherwise there is a danger of circular reasoning. But this seems to be the case in this study. The bias - admiration for Arafat - seems to lead the analysis and the results, too. The interpretation of the metaphors in section 3.1.1 is not only descriptive, but always seems to evaluate at the same time. Assessments are legitimate, but they require a yardstick that is not apparent here.

- Section 2.1 about rhetorics is very broad and a little trivial ("While spoken and written words are used primarily for the exchange of information, virtually all people, rulers, and ordinary citizens alike, have an instinctive urge to persuade others to accept their opinions, inclinations, and preferred lifestyle", 3 and following)

- The theoretical and methodological introduction (CDA, conceptual metaphors) is comprehensible.

- It would be very interesting to learn something about the specifics of arabic rhetoric, but the given chapter does not provide a comparison (differences between arabic and non-arabic rhetoric?). Hyperbolic speech and lies are very common in every rhetoric.

- The data basis (number and selection criteria of the speeches) is unclear; you write only: "a number of examples from Arafat's speeches from the following Palestinian newspapers from 1995 to 1998" (2)

- Against this background: To make an assessment on the basis of a total of 21 metaphors in the corpus is at least in need of justification.

- The output of the study is basically just: Arafat uses metaphors. But this is quite typical for political speeches. There is no comparison either with other Palestinian politicians from Arafat's time or with other cultures, etc.

Minor issues:
- There is section 2.1 without 2.
- What is the "total" (basis) in the table at page 11? Token in general? The values cannot be percent.

If you have any questions, please let me know (write to the editor of the journal anonymously, I will also answer them anonymously).