

# **An Analysis of Independence Day Speeches Delivered by the Sri Lankan President from 2008 – 2013**

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**Abstract** – “*An analysis of Independence Day speeches delivered by the Sri Lankan president from 2008 – 2013*” is a research which examines the discourse produced by a former Sri Lankan president, Mahinda Rajapakse in six Independence Day presidential speeches delivered across six years from 2008 - 2013. It draws on political discourse analysis (van Dijk, 1997) and Austin-Searl’s speech act theory to investigate how the language has been used and manipulated by the political power holders. This paper also examines the strategies used by the politicians in their speeches to gain support and political advantages. The analysis provides an insight in the governing and leadership ideologies of the president. It is expected to unravel how the politicians manipulate language and to see how they use the language as a political tool to achieve their political agendas. Hence, this study will help the readers to have a more advanced perspective on the political speeches which ultimately assist them to understand how they are being persuaded and manipulated by the political power holders. And it will also help the readers to comprehend how rhetorically organized texts have been part and partial of the public. Finally, the study reveals that the politicians use the language to persuade the audience to accept their stance and to gain the support of the audience.

**Keywords:** Discourse Analysis, Political Speeches, Power