

## Exploring Political Discourse Through Fairclough's Lens: A CDA of Donald Trump's Speech

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### Abstract

The research relies on the assumption that language is a potent social tool, and drawing from the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, it examines how Donald Trump's political rhetoric leverages discursive strategies to build authority, mold ideology, and shape public opinion within particular socio-cultural and political circumstances. Speech of former President Donald Trump at the House GOP Issues Conference on January 27, 2025, this research utilizes Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model. The methodology used is the qualitative approach with descriptive type. This study examines how, through examining the speech in terms of Fairclough's three dimensions, Trump's language choices construct a populist identity, win over his base and delegitimize his adversaries. The paper analyzes some of the rhetorical strategies that are techniques used in Trump's speeches to produce power and solidify political allegiance, leading to ideological means of persuasion. It contributes to the a still emergent field of political discourse analysis which demonstrates that language is more than a communication medium, at least to some extent it is a means of power and ideological domination. It indicates that most of Trump's rhetoric followed patterns of populist rhetoric with emotional, simplistic language when framing complex issues in binary oppositions. Subsequent studies may compare and contrast Donald Trump's discursive tactics with others from populist leaders like Jair Bolsonaro, Narendra Modi, or Boris Johnson to look for cross-cultural tendencies in populist discourse.

**Key words:** CDA, political discourse, social polarization, populist rhetoric, power

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1. Background of the Study

Language operates several power mechanisms through its discourse systems which lends CDA frameworks power as political speech evaluation tools. Renowned scholars Norman Fairclough and Teun van Dijk together with Ruth Wodak developed CDA as an approach that acknowledges discourse as a tool for building power relations as well as understanding societal manifestations of

political relationships. Political orations maintain their role as critical institutional devices since they allow persuasion and legitimize as well as mobilizing public opinion. CDA allows scholars to recognize how rulers play with linguistic features and socio-cultural matrix by employing discursive means to construct public opinion and maintain their power position as per Fairclough (1995) and van Dijk (2006).

In CDA, textual analysis examines the language elements that involve vocabulary alongside grammar in the examination of rhetorical methods. Political figures achieve emotional reaction and supporter audience cohesion through polarizing terms alongside metaphors and repetition as per Chilton (2004). Discursive practice inquiry as per CDA deals with the mechanism applied to construct political discourse that both propagates through media and gets consumed by the audience. Political messages are designed to suit specific audiences and avoid traditional media to have full control over their narrative as per Enli (2017). Wodak (2015) illustrates how political discourse within socio-cultural structures displays speech analysis of inequality and nationalism and polarization between groups in society.

The use of CDA is effective to examine populist rhetoric particularly through political speeches of politicians like Donald Trump. Populist politicians win popular support through simple language along with emotion-oriented messages and anti-institutional discourse as per McDonnell and Ondelli (2020) and Ott and Dickinson (2019). CDAs method assists researchers in finding crucial approaches politicians adapt in their communication that not only describes democratic processes but also influences unity among society.

The research makes significant contributions to political discourse analysis as a research field. Through Fairclough's model the research formulates a systematic and complex approach which describes the interactive relationships between language together with power and society (1995). Through the model researchers learn about how populist leaders such as Trump employ discourse to gain support as well as legitimize their ruling authority and influence public attitudes (Wodak, 2015).

## **1.2. Statement of the Research Problem**

The research is concerned with analyzing through what linguistic characteristics and socio-cultural spheres Donald Trump exercises power and ideological stances through discursive practices in his political speech. The research looks at the way Trump constructs his authority through linguistic components with rhetorical devices while articulating ideological stances. The analysis researches the discursive practices which facilitate Donald Trump's rhetorical influence on audience resonance while enhancing his political authority. The studies examine Trump's speeches because they both reflect on and choose socio-political and cultural conditions to analyze democratic-social results as well as societal integration.

## **1.3. Objectives of the study**

Following are the main objectives of the study:

- To identify the ways in which Trump's use of linguistic features in his speech contribute to the construction of power and ideology.
- To explore the discursive practices which enable Trump's rhetoric to resonate with specific audiences and reinforce his political authority.
- To investigate Trump's speech for his reflection and shaping of broader socio-cultural and political contexts.

## **1.4. Research Questions**

The proposed study will try to answer the given research questions:

- In what ways does Trump's usage of discourse features in his speech contribute to the construction of power and ideology?
- What are the discursive practices which enable Trump's rhetoric to resonate with audiences and reinforce his political power and authority?

- How does Trump's speak for his reflection and shaping of broader socio-cultural and political contexts?

### **1.5. Significance of the study**

This research gains value through its implementation of Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model to Donald Trump's speech that allows a structured examination of language interactions between power and ideology structures. The investigation into Trump's rhetorical methods combined with his discursive tactics plus his social environment produces enhanced knowledge about populist rhetoric strategies that build power relations and influence public awareness. This research tackles present-day issues including public separation as well as social inequality alongside weakened democratic values to uncover Trump's ideological foundations in his public statements. This research provides tools to the audience regarding political communication analysis which enhances media literacy abilities to create an informed and engaged public. The research contributes further developments to discourse analysis techniques together with strengthening populism research while identifying the complete societal effects of political discourse on democracy and communal unity.

## **2. Literature Review**

Fairclough (1995) explains critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a way to investigate the presence of language, power and ideology in discourse. Discourse is not just a means of communication, but also a method of performing, reproducing and challenging relations of power in society, he explains. Therefore, CDA is not limited to the mere linguistic examination on such a surface level but is broadened to the fact that discourse makes power one of its enabling factors. Political leaders are especially interested in this since they perceive language as an instrument for constructing authority, legitimizing policies, and convincing audiences. This is elaborated on by Van Dijk (2008) who describes that political discourse is an instrument of elite domination which trickles its way into the mind of a public opinion through the force of convincing language strategies. Trump's speeches thus present themselves as a willing site of analysis because they indeed demonstrate a penchant of political leaders to use discourse as an instrument of domination and ideological manipulation.

Fairclough's (1992) three dimensional model is one of the most used frameworks of the CDA. Three levels constitute its institutional makeup: micro-level (textual analysis), meso level (discursive practice) and macro level (social practice). At the discursive practice level, the question is what makes texts come into being, circulate, and finally disappear, whereas at the textual level questions of vocabulary, grammar, and rhetoric are raised. The final level of social practice analyzes how discourse is situated in larger social and political contexts. According to Wodak and Meyer (2009), the Fairclough model is especially helpful to political speech study since it reveals the possible power relations encoded in language implicitly. This model assists in breaking down Trump's deployment of repetition, populist language and nationalist appeals to legitimize ideological stances and drive support preparation of his discourse.

According to the books of linguistics, there are students of political discourse who practice political science and communication studies. It is positive that for centuries, linguists have verified that language has the capacity to restructure perception, create ideologies as well as rule the human social conduct. Fairclough (1995) presents complete insights into discourse operations in sociopolitical frameworks through the textual evaluation as well as discursive methods and societal cultural background given in the form of Fairclough three dimensional model. The reasoning behind studying political actors who authorize their decisions through language is also examined as well as how they debase other factions (Chilton, 2004), and similarly, discourse mechanisms for maintaining social divisions are studied (Van Dijk, 2006). The analysis of populist discourse captures researchers' serious academic interest throughout the recent years. According to officials

from Mudde (2004) and Wodak (2015), such language tactics are used by populist leaders to create the dual identity and to delegate with regular citizens and against the existing authorities.

There are many academic investigations which closely study Donald Trump's rhetorical style. Grand exaggeration and emotional communication are easy for a person to speak language that can be easily understood for research studies indicate that Trump speaks easily understandable language as he executes both grand exaggerations and emotional communication to reach his listeners (Ott & Dickinson, 2019). According to McDonnell & Ondeli (2020), his public speeches engaged his supporter base thus making the core themes of populism: nationalist rhetoric and anti-establishment view shapes. As it has been widely discussed in academia, the usage of social media by Trump to interact directly with his audience via emergence has particularly been discussed because of help Trump give it messages without depending on the traditional media outlets they control which message to deliver (Enli, 2017). The studies on Trump's speech have its importance to give but not sound in its total systematic use of Fairclough CDA mode of their talk. With the help of the Fairclough's framework this study fills the research void by examining the linguistic as well as the discursive and socio cultural features of Trump's rhetoric. The application of this method is intended to increase the knowledge of how populists employ language in order to position power, shape worldviews, and shape public perception.

According to Mudde (2004), populism is a political ideology which contrasts 'the pure people' with 'the corrupt elite', in which the populist leader becomes a voice for the people. It is this definition that is essential in analyzing Trump's speech, given that populist rhetoric has been frequently used in Trump's speeches to build up a cordial relationship with his people. Just like populist leaders, Moffitt (2016) argues that populist leaders use crisis narratives, direct communication style, and emotional appeals to supply their legitimacy. Political issues that Trump speaks about are often presented through his rhetoric as existential threats, one of them being the need for a strong leader to "drain the swamp" and make the nation great, again. Through CDA, this study exposes this language to observe how Trump uses language to create a populist identity and bolster his political legitimacy.

Billig (1995) explains "banal nationalism" as the everyday occurrence when national identity is asserted in talk. In his view, political leaders utilize nationalist language in a way such that people get a feeling of belongingness and unity. The Trump America First slogan is a perfect illustration of the strategy under which the nationalists feel they do America First and present foreigners (foreigners, foreign politics, and other political adversaries) as threat. Trump makes use of American exceptionalism in most of his speeches in order to reinforce a nationalist ideology that is well received by his political support base. This study examines the way Trump's language enacts nationalism to reinforce his political brand using CDA.

Referring to the 'us vs. Them' theme shared among political discourse, Van Dijk (1998) describes how political similar demarcates their group from the perceived enemies. The strategy generates the in group power while depicting the people as the opponents as threats to the society. This is a frequent refrain for Trump who labels the media as 'fake news,' political opponents as 'crooked,' and immigrants as 'dangerous.' Indeed, Laclau (2005) expounds that this form of political antagonism is a central characteristic of populism, since it mobilizes the supporters on the basis of a presumed common enemy. This research reveals the conclusions in the manner in which Trump frames his discourse as a means of generating opposition and polarized political climate.

Emotional appeal is what Aristotle's Rhetoric (trans. Roberts, 2008) addresses as his understanding of pathos rises to the surface. Trump's rhetoric greatly mirrors on the grounds of emotional triggers; initially fear, then anger, and later nostalgia. Political stories, according to Charland (1987), create "interpellated subjects," that is, speakers shape the audience identity by speaking. Trump's notorious speeches in the populist tone include building up an emotional narrative that a country is in decline and his base must reclaim it and make it their own. In her analysis of Trump's appeal

to emotion as a discursive tactic of power and persuasion, this study considers how appeals to emotion are used by Trump.

In 1972, McCombs and Shaw developed the agenda setting theory that the public opinion is shaped by media coverage by highlighting certain issues while downplaying the rest. Specifically, Trump's media relationship is relevant to this theory because he frequently attacks mainstream media in his speeches and encourages alternative sources himself. Herman and Chomsky (1988) expound on this with their (propaganda) model of explanation for the reasons that media caters to political and political economic interests. Trump plays on this dynamic in his speaking to the point where he is framing himself as an outsider battling the biased media establishment. This study examines how his speeches interact with the media narratives in a bid to unveil the role of discourse in framing media public opinion and demarcating ideological borders.

As per Bourdieu (1991), "symbolic power" is a matter of fact that language is able to transform social structures and symbolize the reality. The background of Trump's speeches forms broader social, political, and economic concern regarding race, tensions and polarization. Lakoff (2004) argues that political leaders use metaphorical framing in order to frame political matters in terms of how, people will see them. In order to illustrate how language creates social meaning, Trump employs metaphors (such as a "wall" to use to talk about national security) constantly. Utilizing these theoretical lenses, this research provides to comprehend how discourse is connected to social power relations by situating Trump's rhetoric in context.

Long, Aristotles (2008) three modes of persuasion (ethos, pathos, logos) have been used to analyze political rhetoric. Trump's speeches are infused with ethos and pathos, and often deals with himself as being an outsider, fighting against corrupt elites while using the emotions of his audience. More often than not, as part of his attempts to bespeak his own self image as a strong and successful businessman who knows what it's like to be an average person, his language choices reinforce his self image. Olbrechts-Tyteca and Perelman (1969) assert that political speakers invert the work conducive to persuasion by forming rhetorical arguments that are in sync with the audiences in which they are speaking thus has the tendency of making the message relevant. A consideration of how persuasion in political speech occurs beyond logical argumentation is provided for by Trump's use of his ability to compose his discourse within populist narratives, national identity, and economic grievances. This research on CDA looks at how Trump uses his rhetorical strategies to help him appeal to his political audience and get his authority.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) maintain that metaphors determine the way human thinks about and perceives world. Metaphorical language is frequently employed in political discourse to present issues in what proves to be useful to audiences. To symbolize national security and protection, Trump's speeches rely on the metaphors like "build the wall" creating a look and feel of threat and urgency. Charteris-Black (2011) remarks that metaphors are a part of political leaders' rhetorical tactics used to simplify difficult conditions or generate an emotional response. The metaphors that Trump uses often are aggressive and confrontational and the politics they support demonstrates ideas of strength and conflict and protectionism. This study uses Fairclough's three dimensional model to show how the use of metaphorical language in Trump's language effects political discourse and intensity of perception from the audience.

In Crystal (2003), the author discusses the importance of linguistic simplicity for effective communication such as clear and direct language which facilitates comprehension and involvement. Trump's speeches are easy to digest, short sentences, lots of repetition, simple vocabulary, and readily accessible to his audience which includes a broad spectrum of people. In her study, Tannen (2007) points out that repetition in speech plays rhetorical role: it summarizes the key points, helps memorize the message. Such phrases like "Make America Great Again" and "Fake News" are repeatedly repeated by Trump, and are becoming ingrained in the public's consciousness. This linguistic strategy not just increases his message but also universally unites his supporters. This study analyzes how language structure does political persuasion and

ideological reinforcement by looking into how language contributes to the political persuasion and ideological reinforcement of Trump's repetitive and simplistic speech patterns.

Opposition to elite corruption and shifting blame for the country's decline are among other features that populist leaders are particularly fond of, reasoning that it's populists who are the sole protectors of national identity against the external threats. Often Trump is seen as stressing an outstanding leadership, order, and boldness in action, as typical traits of authoritarian message. According to Wodak (2015), right wing populist discourse often presents an image of national decline and, puts its leader as the only options to solve all the problems of society. Trump's use of language that is so authoritarian is not just authoritarian but also in keeping with populist discourse. This study critically examines Trump's rhetoric in the intersection between populism and authoritarian to establish power and popularize political narratives through reapplying Fairclough's CDA model.

### **3. Methodology**

This study employs Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the prime analytical tool to assess an exemplary presidential speech by Donald Trump. Fairclough's model offers a systematic and detailed approach to studying how language operates in relations of power and ideology, particularly in political discourse. The model is divided into three connected dimensions—textual analysis, discursive practice, and socio-cultural practice—which collectively allow a multi-faceted study of political language. These dimensions allow the researcher to study not just the linguistic makeup of Trump's speech but also the processes involved in its production and consumption, as well as the wider socio-political systems that shape and are shaped by the discourse.

For gathering data, a transcript of a presidential speech by Trump is the main source, and analysis adopts a qualitative method through close reading and thematic interpretation. The study starts with a textual analysis that examines Trump's language use—vocabulary, rhetorical strategies like repetition and metaphor, and simplification of messages—to identify how these work to create meaning and convey ideological stances. The second phase, discursive practice, considers how the speech was built, circulated, and read by audiences, including references to intertextual connections and media tactics promoting Trump's populism. Lastly, the socio-cultural practice dimension situates the discourse within broader social environments, including economic cleavages, national identity, and cultural polarization, which are used to uncover how Trump's words strengthen political ideologies and shape public opinion. By this threefold analysis, the research hopes to unveil how Trump's rhetoric strategically creates power and advances ideological agendas in present-day American society.

Based on the theoretical framework of Fairclough, this research project puts forward a total multi-dimensional evaluation of Trump's discourse so as to examine how he used language to establish power, rethink ideologies and transform the political social dynamics. First, Trump's linguistic elements that are present in his speaking patterns are studied in the first stage. Trump's syntax should be evaluated together with his language and the use of metaphors, repetition techniques and his addressees, language analysts should have a look at. This phase studies linguistic factors to associate their functions in the formation, expression, and ideological presentation of meaning and power dynamics (Faircloth, 1995). According to Ott & Dickinson (2019), the research investigates how Trump utilizes polarizing language in combination with simplistic phrasing to bring his audience to his side and continue to push his populist message. The second stage investigates the production, distribution, and consumption of Trump's speech. The physical place where Trump addresses his audience and the channels of the communication he utilizes along with the audience's reactions to these messages shall be considered by the researchers (Fairclough, 1995). The research study the intertextual patterns to identify how Trump uses other texts – historical sentences political catchphrases and the news accounts (Wodak, 2015). In the actionable stage, we aim to show how, through linguistic and rhetorical means, Trump's

discourse can strengthen his leadership position through listening and how his discourse can connect with a particular reader in order to become effective. The final stage situates Trump's speech within its broader socio-cultural and political context. The analysis centre(s) around various societal matters to include the economic inequality and globalization and the polarization of the cultures based on the definitions of Fairclough (1995). The objective of this research is to examine how Trump's rhetorical strategies have altered public perception as well as validated his political program and reinforced existing socio-political frameworks (Wodak, 2015). The research aims at investigating Trump's discourse, studying social and cultural elements, and uncovering the ideology of Trump's discourse that changes the foundations of democracy and social cohesion within the United States.

## 4. Analysis and discussion

### 4.1. Analysis

In his January 27, 2025 address to the House GOP Issues Conference in Miami, former President Donald Trump uses various rhetorical strategies that can be analyzed with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Fairclough's model focuses upon discourse at (micro level): text, (meso level): discursive practice, and (macro level): social practice. In this analysis, each dimension is delved into and the way by which Trump's language builds power, ideology and identity is explored.

#### 4.1.1. Textual Analysis

Notable at the micro level of Trump's lexical choices and use of repetition are his lexical choices and repetition. "We can have so many businesses moving back," he stressed. Mark 1): The use of the vaguer phrase "so many" and the repetitious phrase 'we are going to' is not vague but positively condescending; the use of the latter 'we' is confident and sure. In turn, according to Fairclough (1995), such linguistic features can naturalize some ideologies becoming a common sense for the audience.

On the micro level, Trump's repetitive choice of lexical terms emphasizes his key messages. He stated, "We are going to have so many businesses moving back." It is deliberately vague in that "so many", but indicates a huge positive change, and the repetition of 'we are going to' inspires confidence and certainty. Given transform such linguistic features into naturalize specific ideology, so they seem to be the table common sense with the audience, writes Fairclough

Trump's use of metaphors helps simplify complex political issues making them easier to understand for his audience. According to him, he described the Republican Party as "the proud voice of hardworking American citizens." This metaphor is used to give human qualities to the party that appeals to the audience. As Fairclough notes, metaphors can shape perceptions, can lead to interpretations of different forms of social reality.

The speech contains direct commands for Trump's supporters to act. He proclaimed, "We will take our country back and restore American greatness!" It is a call to action and active participation, as well as mobilization. According to Fairclough (2003), direct commands in political speech are urgent and they place responsibility on the speaker and the heard. By pitching his message as a movement but not just a political stand, Trump creates deeper emotional engagement among what is, at least in principle, one of the most crucial polling segments: influencers. Such language is common in persuasive political speech, which means to ensnare and mobilize a collective.

There's also heaps of hyperbole in Trump's rhetoric. He proclaimed, "No administration in history has done more for the American people than mine." It is this absolute claim, which completely disregards history, and as a result gives a uniquely clear picture of his presidency. According to Fairclough (1989), such exaggerated language in the discourse of politics gives flesh to a leader's image as being exceptional in order to make his work seem unique. The objective here is to create this perception of unmatched competence, to allow his backers to view his leadership as indispensable, and that requires a certain amount of absolutist statements.

Much of Trump's speech consists of emotional appeals: anger and patriotism. He passionately stated, "We love our country, and we will fight to save it!" Such emotionally charged language is consistent with Fairclough's (1989) point that political discourse tends to draw as much on affective techniques to influence beliefs and actions as it does on the logic of argument. Trump appeals to his audience in love for the nation and a calling to struggle, thereby creating his movement as a patriotic duty and a duty to continue to be politically active. Such appeals make his message more memorable and more persuasive.

#### **4.1.2. Discursive Practice**

Trump's speech at the meso level includes intertextuality as it references past political narratives, and combines genres. He stated, "Under our leadership, the Republican Party has become the proud voice of hardworking American citizens of every race, religion, color, and creed." It's a unifying speech with accents of a political rhetoric. For example, Fairclough argues that mixing of genres can also change a listener's expectations toward the discourse and at the same time adopt ideological positions.

Trump categorizes individuals into specific social types that he then constructs as social actors. According to him, the hardworking American citizens of every race, religion, color and creed. It is inclusive language that strives to bring people from different groups in one common identity. In fact, according to Fairclough (2003) the way social actors in discourse are presented can alter social relations and power relations.

For instance, Trump categorizes individuals into certain groups to construct social actors. He mentioned, "hardworking American citizens of every race, religion, color, and creed." Such language is inclusive language to unite people from diverse backgrounds under the same identity. Fairclough provides us with an insight that representation of social actors in discourse could animate social relations and power dynamics

Trump sells himself as a conveyor of their own success and the national progress. By stating, "We are going to have so many businesses moving back," he implies that the audience shares responsibility for this outcome. According to Fairclough, messages can be received and acted upon differently depending on the way in which messages are positioned towards an audience.

Although Trump is not riddled with grammatical errors just as his press secretary, Sean Spicer, isn't either, Trump often uses his speech to make rhetorical attacks on the media in order to put his story in the black and frame himself as the only truthful source. He stated, "The fake news media lies about me every single day, and they will never tell you the truth." Trump continuously delegitimizes the media and he becomes the only trustworthy figure. According to Fairclough (1995) it is controlling discourse the means of controlling public perception. This discredits alternative viewpoints, something Trump seeks in order to make critical viewpoints sound absurd which in turn reinforces ideological homogeneity among Trump's supporters. In political rhetoric, this reworking of media discourse helps him to further control the narrative.

On many occasions, Trump portrays his political views as being morally superior to his adversaries. He stated, "We stand for law, order, and the hardworking American people, while the radical left wants chaos and destruction." By turning his policies as a binary, good versus evil moral framework, he compares his policies to an exaggerated depiction of the other side. According to Fairclough (1995), this is one way in which political discourse so frequently establishes such dichotomies for the purposes of its shaping public perception. Using his political movement to frame himself as defender of national values, Trump creates the impression that ideological divisions are permanent and make obligatory the loyalty of his supporters.

Trump's speech slightly undermines faith in democratic institutions by subtly implying that the system isn't working for him and his people. He went on to say the establishment doesn't want us to win. He is trying to do everything to stop us." This sort of rhetoric gives rise to trust in government institutions as corrupt and biased institutions. Fairclough (2001) discusses how



political discourse can dilute institutional legitimacy in order to boost radical political transformation. Tragically, Trump casts himself as a victim of an unfair system and he does just what he does best: polarizes political discourse even more when he mobilizes his people against perceived institutional corruption.

Typically, Trump is not afraid to simplify complex policy issues into simple slogans that you can understand. He asserted, “America First—no more bad deals, no more open borders!” This matches up with Fairclough’s (1992) notion that political discourse simplifies complicated issues for the sake of ideological tales. Trump makes concise policy discussions more manageable through clear politics to retain messages and emotionally. Yet, there are potential cost in terms of engagement, as it also prevents savvy analysis of policy implications.

Throughout his speech, he frequently repeated phrases such as “America First” and “We will win.” Fairclough (1992) points out that repeating in the discourse naturalises ideological claims and makes them appear obvious to the audience. Trump affirms again and again his key messages so that they get ingrained in public consciousness. This technique thickens his politics, giving the appearance of certainty and inevitability, which makes it less likely to be scrutinized.

#### **4.1.3. Social Practice**

Compared to the macro level, one of the effective messages that Trump’s discourse gives is promoting free market principles and the small government. “We are going to have so many of our businesses move back,” he asserted. It is a reflection of faith in the self regulating market and importance of the domestic enterprise. As Fairclough (2001) states, such macro level ideologies are maintained and legitimized through discourse.

On the macro level, Trump’s discourse supports neoliberal ideology by leading to the promotion of free market principles and limited government intervention. He asserted, “We are going to have so many businesses moving back.” It is a recognition of the belief in the self regulating market and the importance of domestic enterprise. According to fairclough, such macro level ideologies (of course they don’t extend up to levels of states but still...) do use discourse to justify and maintain. Trump tries to legitimize the actions of the political arena through his discourse and to do so with values we share. He stated, “Under our leadership, the Republican Party has become the proud voice of hardworking American citizens.” This claim presents his leadership as the one that takes into account the interests of the common citizen and whose action is therefore legitimate. Legitimization is a key function of political discourse according to Fairclough, since policy should be aligned with the societal norms.

A lot of Trump’s discourse includes implicit challenges against political opponents. His assertion of the Republican Party as “the proud voice of hardworking American citizens” suggests that other parties do not represent these citizens. Fairclough looks at how discourse can be employed for building up adversarial relationships and creating in-groups and out-groups

Trump’s rhetoric creates a certain idea of what it means to be a citizen of the nation. By highlighting the Republican Party as representing “hardworking American citizens,” he associates American identity with hard work and industriousness. According to Fairclough, discourse helps to institute a national identity by propagating some kinds of stories and values.

The appeal to populist nationalism is frequent in Trump, where he portrays himself as a leader who is battling a corrupt elite. ‘Well, Washington insiders have been selling you all out, all these years,’ he declared. I am here fighting for YOU.” Fairclough’s (1989) idea of discourse furthering existing social structures is expressed in this statement. One of the elements going on in rightistic populism is resentment of political elites, cue Trump positioning himself as an outsider who is battling a fixated political establishment. This further reinforces the belief that he is the only person who can restore power to the people and further undermine the opposition.

Trump’s discourse is highly fear based rhetoric . In this apocalyptic frame, neglect will result in a national decline that is too irreversible to undertake. As fear appeals are a prime mechanism for

shaping public opinion, as they create a crisis demanding instant reaction (Fairclough, 1992), fear appeals can be used to control people's opinions. Trump takes advantage of this by running as the only way of avoiding catastrophe, reinforcing his clout and persuading those to remain on the sidelines, those against him. Reactions to fearful discourse tend to arise in increased loyalty among followers if the perceived outlook is existential.

#### **4.1.4. Power through Crisis Narrative**

Trump uses emergency case narratives both to authorize his administrative choices and uphold his authority position. He stated, "Our country is being invaded at the southern border... This is a disaster, and it's getting worse every day." He portrays immigration as both an "invasion" and a "disaster" to create a pressing sense of emergency that suggests others cannot resolve the crisis. Political leaders employ crisis narratives for legitimization purposes as documented in Fairclough (1995) to warrant controversial measures through pretending to tackle emergencies. Through his disaster metaphor Trump portrays immigrants as threatening foreigners that increase nationalism within his base.

#### **4.1.5. Us vs. Them: Constructing Political Adversaries**

Trump uses a fundamental distinction between his devoted supporters who belong to "us" and his political rivals along with media organizations together with supposed security risks who fall into the opposing category of "them". He stated, "The radical left and the fake news media don't want to talk about the real problems. They are too busy attacking me and my supporters." that the media and Democrats are dishonest, antagonistic. According to Fairclough (2003), the use of this strategy generates ideological division by enunciating the enemy of other group.

Fairly nationalist in rhetoric and steeped with the idea of the United States' superiority, Trump's speech is. He declared, "We are bringing jobs back to America because no country on Earth does it better than the United States of America!" This statement underlined America's idea of being exceptional in economic way compared to other countries. The real reason for positioning the U.S. as the greatest economic power is to legitimise Trump's trade and immigration policies to those who have been left behind by the globalization

#### **4.1.6. Populist Appeals and Anti-Elitism**

The populist appeal is a central feature of Trump's discourse, that he sees himself as the voice of the common people versus the corrupt elite. He remarked, "Washington insiders have been selling you out for years. I am here fighting for YOU." Fairclough's (1992) assertion that populist leaders often define themselves as outsiders, challenging the established political order, is the case with this state of affairs. By downplaying his role and focusing on the fact that he alone is fighting for ordinary Americans, he does just that and ensures that he maintains legitimacy as a leader, while undermining traditional politicians.

#### **4.1.7. Repetition and Simplification for Persuasion**

On the whole, Trump repeats himself to highlight the most important points and create an easily grasped message. In his speech, he said, "We are going to win. We are going to win big. We are going to bring jobs back, and we are going to secure our borders." "We are going to" is repeated, thus making it sound like we are certain and that we will do it. According to Fairclough (1989), repetitive language in political discourse is used to reiterate ideological messages in such a way that they seem to be common sense. Trump's slogan is simple, direct, and therefore understandable to anyone, especially those who disbelieve in political rhetoric.

#### **4.1.8. Delegitimizing the Media as a Strategy for Control**

Trump continually belittles the media in order to get away with his own agenda. He claimed, “The fake news media lies about me every single day, and they will never tell you the truth.” By labelling critical journalism ‘fake news,’ he claims to be the sole source of truth, given that he discredits unfavorable coverage. Fairclough (1995) describes how political discourse makes use of such strategies because only by controlling the narrative can a leader demonstrate his or her authority. By practicing this rhetorical move, he removes his supporters from sources of independent information so that only pro-Trump narratives may be treated as legitimate in a media environment.

#### **4.1.9. Metaphors and Symbolism in Political Messaging**

Trump is fond of metaphors, which help make very complicated issues more understandable. He stated, “Our economy is roaring back like a rocket ship.” This metaphor equates economic growth with a quick launch at high speed, of unstoppable progress. As stated by Fairclough (1989), metaphorical language simplifies abstract concepts and shapes the audience perception of it. Trump invokes vivid imagery to create confidence in his policy even as the economic recovery reality is less so.

#### **4.1.10. Pronoun Usage to Construct Collective Identity**

Indeed, Trump’s speech contains many inclusive pronouns (e.g., “we” and “our”). He asserted, “We will not let them take our country away from us.” This construction encourages his supporters to identify with his cause. As Fairclough points out in 2003, pronoun usage in political discourse does not only provide clarity in communication, but also establishes solidarity between audience and leader to bond them in the leader’s vision. Trump magnifies emotional and collective responsibility with his base.

#### **4.1.11. Hyperbolic Claims to Strengthen Conviction**

He is known for talking about his achievements in skeletensional hyperbole. In this speech, he declared “No administration in history has done more for the American people than mine.” It is an absolute claim that eradicates historical context and despite its over dramatics, brings too much to the table! As per Fairclough (1995), political discourse uses hyperbole as one of its pivotal rhetorical strategies that appeal to emotion than facts. Even if the claim can’t be verified, it boosts an image of Trump as a big, successful leader.

#### **4.1.12. Economic Promises and Future-Oriented Discourse**

Time and again, Trump promises hope for a better future to maintain the optimism of his supporters. He stated, “We are bringing back manufacturing, and we will make America the economic powerhouse of the world again.” Fairclough (2001) describes future-oriented discourse as a persuasive device since it persuades audience loyalty through the instilling of optimism. But it’s not always the case that pushing past policies that have not yet delivered the goods will, however inclined action, achieve their goal; projecting the confidence that they will succeed at least helps maintain support.

#### **4.1.13. Constructing a Strong Leadership Persona**

On numerous occasions, Trump describes himself as a strong, decisive leader. He said, “They tried to stop me, but I never backed down, and I never will.” This defiance shows the resilience. According to Fairclough (1989), political leaders often build heroic self image in order to increase their legitimacy. Trump focuses on personal determination to ensure supporters that he will continue helping their cause.

## 4.2. Discussion

Based on Donald Trump's speech to the House GOP Issues Conference, Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used to examine the power politics of the speech, the construction of identity and ideology. Language from the view of Trump is used strategically, to mobilize his audience, to legitimise his policies, and delegitimise opponents and institutions. We delved into the micro level analysis and observed the first his reliance on repetition, emotional appeals and their pronoun usage to enjoin fellow people and push the message of similar struggle. By focusing on the meso level analysis, the intertextuality, genre mixing and audience positioning of his speech were put together to show his speech also contained populist rhetoric spiced with traditional political rhetoric. From a macro perspective, Trump's rhetor is in alignment with nationalist and neoliberal ideologies, which promote an image of a national self sufficient by way of an economy, law and order, and against political elites. That Trump's speech is persuasive rhetoric, rather than propaganda by definition, is not what Fairclough's framework shows. Rather it is a powerful instrument of ideology, instrumental in shaping the perception of our society and the way things can be. He has chosen his language because it reinforces a view of the world in which his leadership is necessary for national survival.

## 5. Conclusion and Suggestions

### 5.1. Conclusion

This research critically examined Donald Trump's political rhetoric through Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), unearthing the way language is a strategic resource for building power, ideology, and social identities. Utilizing the textual analysis, the study pointed out Trump's ubiquitous employment of rhetorical devices like repetition, hyperbole, crisis narratives, and metaphor to condense multifaceted issues and emotionally connect with his audience. His speeches routinely invoked populist appeals, inclusive pronouns, and promises of the future to create a robust collective identity and sense of purpose among his constituency. Furthermore, his deliberate delegitimization of the media and polarization of political opponents illustrate how discourse is used as a tool for exerting power and excluding opposing forces.

Discursively and socio-culturally, Trump's rhetoric represents larger ideological trends such as nationalism, neoliberalism, and anti-elitism. His rhetoric is precisely designed to speak to certain groups of the population, commonly by building a line of "us vs. them" division that both creates unity among his base and excludes dissent. Far from providing objective or neutral communication, his rhetoric operates ideologically, affirming discourses that legitimize his rule as critical to national reconstruction and stability. Fairclough's CDA model is therefore a useful guide for demystifying how political language functions not only to inform, but to construct public opinion, sanction power, and determine the sociopolitical environment. This study shows how political language operates to express dominance, persuasiveness and ideological reinforcement by taking Trump's discourse into some of these frames. Furthermore, the analysis argues over the fact that the media and the digital platforms play a big role in amplifying the political discourses, the shaping of the public opinion, and the influencing of democratic processes. Finally, this research illustrates that Trump's speech is not merely rhetorical appeal; rather it is a calculated tool of ideological control deeply ingrained in the political and cultural institutions of modern American society.

### 5.2. Suggestions

Future research in political discourse should study comparing at least different political leaders for what kind of patterns and variations in rhetorical strategies from one ideological spectrum to another one. Speeches of multiple political figures could be an example to look into to understand how discursive styles affects public perception as well as how voters behave. In addition to this,

researchers should take into account the effects of digital media with a strong presence on social media on the spread and amplification of political rhetoric. Trump has been using Twitter as well as his formal speeches to speak thus the politician's discourse beyond speeches especially in the field of digital political communication may hold some important information on how a political figure interacts with the public, how narratives are shaped and controversies were handled in real time. On the one hand, such interdisciplinary approaches as political science, linguistics, psychology, and media studies would contribute to enriching the analysis of political discourse by means of a polyphonic prism, so to speak, on how language, cognition, and the public sentiment are joint products of 21st century political life.

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