Friend or Foe?

A Critical Discourse Analysis on the Portrayal of Immigrants in the US

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Abstract

In this thesis the author explores the portrayal of immigrants in the USA and more specifically how immigrants were portrayed by the last three presidents; Donald J. Trump, Barack Obama, and George W. Bush. By the means of a critical discourse analysis I explore in which way presidential rhetoric has portrayed immigrants, and what are the differences in how the selected presidents have led the debate on immigration. Through the concepts of the ‘Other’ and ‘enemy images, and with an application of social identity theory, the author of this thesis further discusses the processes of intergroup comparison and its effects on the relationship between immigrants and natives. The findings of this thesis imply that even though from opposing political blocks, Obama and his predecessor Bush have more in common than one might think. Both Obama and Bush are demonstrated to portray the immigrant as the ‘Other’ in quite a ‘positive’ way. Their strong sentiment for democratic values, which derives from the perception of the ‘self’ is shown to be one of the possible reasons as for why this is the case. As such the need for intergroup comparison is lessened. On the contrary, Trump is shown to effuse a strong sentiment for national identity that influences the perception of the ‘self’ and consequently portrays immigrants ‘negatively’, and as the ‘enemy’, and as a result the intergroup comparison is strengthened.

Keywords: presidential rhetoric, discourse, social identity, USA, immigrants, the ‘Other’, enemy images
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1 Introduction

This chapter is an introduction to this paper. Here, I will begin by introducing the topic with a brief contextual introduction of the research topic, followed by an introduction of the aim and research question, a passage on the delimitations, an elaboration of the contribution and a motivation behind the aim. Finally, this chapter ends with a section that explains the outline of this thesis. With this chapter I aim to inform the reader of the importance of the aim, and its relevance to the field of IMER.

1.1 Research Topic

The United States of America has long been considered a country made up of immigrants. With a rich history of migration dating back as far as to the 1600’s when communities of European immigrants would settle in the US, attitudes towards migration by those who settled before, have cycled from welcoming to exclusionary (History Editors, 2018). Today, in the 21st century an estimate of 13.9 percent of the American population is foreign born, which makes up 45.1 million people as reported in 2016. 76 percent of the immigrants in the US are documented (meaning that they have permission to stay in the country), which thus means that out of the 45.1 million immigrants, 24 percent are undocumented (Jones, 2019).

With such a vast history of immigration, even though there is a linger of prejudice and popular fear towards immigrants, there have been evidence that immigrants make positive contribution to the American society and economy (Massey, 2010: 124) and thus, a recent study by Gallup reveals that 75 percent of Americans believe that immigration is a positive contribution to the American society (Chokshi, 2018). Another study conducted by the Pew Research Center suggests that 62 percent Americans view immigration as a strength to the US society, which means that attitudes according to this data would be almost reversed to what they were in 1994, when 63 percent Americans saw immigration as a burden to society (Jones, 2019).

However, even though statistics somehow point to a general consensus in the American society, republicans and democrats have never been more divided and further apart in their attitudes towards immigration than they are as of today. Democrats and those who lean more to the Democratic Party mostly agree (83 percent) on that immigrants are a strength to the US nation with only 11 percent implying it is a burden. On the contrary, Republicans and Republican supporting independents, lean towards a
negative attitude towards migrants. 49 percent believe that migration is a burden while 38 percent mean that immigration strengthens the US nation (Jones, 2019).

While there seems to be some consensus in the society meaning that a larger portion of the society views immigration as something positive rather than negative, the difference within political blocks differ rather clearly, which is why this thesis will elaborate on which discourses on immigration derive from the last three majorly important figures in American political history, namely the last three presidents.

The president in the US is the most powerful public official. Their job is to execute or carry out the laws passed by congress. The president is not only the Chief Executive whose job it is to pass and enforce laws and bills, the Chief Diplomat who directs foreign policy of the US, the Commander in Chief of the military, the legislative leader who has the ability to influence law passing of Congress, the economic leader and party leader, but also the Head of the State, which means that the president is a living symbol of the Nation (Jantzen, 1989), which is why I find it particularly interesting to study the language of the president as I would claim that all these roles the President play are a reflection of the US society, since without support they would not be elected as president.

1.2 Aim and Research Question

In this thesis I will study in which way immigrants and immigration have been portrayed in the 21st century by the three last US presidents: George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and current US President Donald J. Trump. By applying a critical discourse analysis and contrasting and comparing how these three presidents have portrayed the issue of immigration, we can gain a deeper understanding in how it has been represented, but also in how it is discussed to affect the US society, and how the ruling blocks during each respective presidential era viewed the issue.

**Research questions:**

1. In which way did the last three US presidents portray immigrants and immigration?
2. What similarities and differences can be identified between the speeches?
1.3 Delimitations
In order to make this thesis as efficient as possible and reach the aim I have set out, certain delimitations had to be made. Firstly, I have chosen to only base my material on speeches that I believe are qualified as comparable (see motivation for this in section 4.2.), and not on official documents or policies that each president has instated. Secondly, the focus of this thesis lies on the representation each president puts forward in written speech (transcripts), and not on any visual aspects as it is not relevant to my aim.

Moreover, I also choose not to include representations of the matter that the presidents have made in social media. This might seem insignificant, but it was certainly of consideration, as social media has become one of the most powerful tools of modern age. In correlation with technological advances, Trump’s online presence overwhelms the social media presence of the previous presidents. While the other presidents have used social media as well, their online posts imply that they have been drafted with the assistance of publicists, which Trump on the other hand seems not to rely on (Trimmer, 2018). Therefore, in order to avoid any trade-off or bias this thesis does not analyze any statements made on social media.

Lastly, even though immigration is a matter that often lies close to the heart of children of immigrants, a delimitation has been made regarding the demographic that the aim revolves around. Therefore, although statements on immigration might imply consequences for more people than just immigrants, this study will only focus on immigrants in order to specify the scope of the aim.

1.4 Contribution & Motivation
I believe that it is utterly important to study major figures such as presidents, as it can reveal larger general attitudes, and highlight what is important in society during each presidential era. As a result, we can also pinpoint just how a certain matter was portrayed during respective era. Studying US immigration is valuable to the field of IMER, as the US has been the top destination for international migrants since at least the 1960’s. One fifth of the world’s migrants are living in the US as of 2017. The 2016 election revolved around the matter of immigration and has been significantly discussed in political and public debates and tied to discussion on US economy and global competition, national security and the role of the US in humanitarian protection (Zong et al. 2018). Therefore,
it would be interesting to see just how the matter of immigration has been represented in earlier presidential eras of recent time.

Further, the US is a peculiar case to academics within the field of IMER; on one hand generally, immigration has been viewed as a problem of public policy, but on the other hand the US has been referred to as a ‘nation of immigrants’. This makes it particularly interesting to study if there is a general discourse that is used to exclude new arrivals, and how leaders of this nation reason for either denying entry or accepting immigrants as a part of the US society (Beasly, 2006: 3).

Moreover, the integration of migrants poses a challenge to both immigrants and the host society, which is why immigration continues to be a major topic in public and political debate. Cross-culturally, immigrants continue to face negative attitudes and stereotypes, and such is often accompanied by discriminatory behavior or violence towards migrants, that continues to pave the way for right-wing extremism (Wagner et.al, 2010: 361).

As such, due to the US being a top destination for migrants, the large scope of migration there, and the impact the challenges of immigration have on human lives I believe that this paper can highlight important issues in the US society, and perhaps be a humble contribution to a further development of the subject, and perhaps could the findings even be applied to other regions of the world.

1.5 Thesis Outline
To begin with, the following chapter (2), starts with a discussion of previous research. This chapter is meant to provide on previous studies, as well as provide with some factual context of the current situation. Then, in order to further provide a fuller picture of the current debate, as well as introduce the concepts and theory that will used in order to analyze the results, the next chapter (3), provides a theoretical framework. Further, the next chapter (4), introduces the method, and states the material. Here, an elaborate description is provided as well as philosophical and ethical considerations. Next, the following chapter (5), moves onto a presentation of the results. In the subsequent chapter (6), a discussion is held on the relevance and definition of some of the findings that needed a deeper explanation as well as a discussion on how the theory could be seen as relevant to immigration in general. Second to last, the next chapter (7) serves as an analysis. Here, an application of the concepts, and the theory, as well as their connection is presented.
Lastly, in the concluding chapter (8), I sum up the main key aspects of my thesis, and the conclusions that came to be apparent in the analysis.
2 Previous Research

This chapter is meant to present previous research for the reader. By giving different types of examples, this chapter does not only provide previous research but works well as a contextual background of the current situation, and even highlights some information that was delimitated from the paper.

Vanessa B. Beasley presented rather interesting research in *Who belongs in America?* (2006), where Beasley’s work revolves around the notion of immigration being a matter in constant tension between hope and fear. Beasley poses the question of how a ‘nation of immigrants’, can justify exclusion of newcomers, and how leaders of the US, a nation that glorifies pilgrims and pioneers, explain their reasons for denying entry to today’s America, who are presumably driven by the same vision of a better life. The research continues with asking how the immigrant of yesterday can be coined as the foundation of this nation and its character, while immigrants today are often demonized and portrayed as a threat to US safety and stability (Beasley, 2006: 3).

Moreover, the author asks what has happened when such questions collided within the world of political communication, and in particular in presidential rhetoric. This is explored through case studies written by different authors but collected by Beasley. The authors examined selected parts of US immigration history by paying attention to how immigration history interplays with presidential discourse (Beasley, 2006:4).

In addition, the research proposes an interesting factor, namely the 9/11 terrorist attacks and their influence on presidential discourse around immigration. Despite some differences in the authors that Beasley included, when discussed among each other they all seemed to limit themselves to primarily historical insights and agreed that the topic of presidential rhetoric used to be limited to the academic realm. This changed later with the events of September 11th. As an example, Beasley uses Bush’s speech on September 20th, 2001. President Bush spoke about the attacks to Congress and the nation via a televised address and although the issue did not address immigration specifically, the president could not discuss the attacks without addressing what was perceived to be the most obvious consequence of US immigration history, namely, religious diversity. Beasley discusses how the rhetoric presented by Bush at that time, was something that pointed to the emerging tension between hope and fear. At one hand, Bush expressed his respect for the peace-loving Muslim citizens of the US, which by Beasley was presumed as a way to avoid backlash, and because to blame a specific group could provoke dangerous
consequences both on US soil and abroad, but on the other hand, the attacks could not be discussed in Bush’s speech without the mention of immigration and religion (Beasley, 2006: 4). Even if some US citizens were blinded by anger or fear, it is the president’s job to urge restraint against an anti-Arab, anti-immigrant backlash. Bush, therefore, continued with: “No one should be singled out for unfair treatment or unkind words because of their ethnic background or religious faith” (ibid).

Thus, Beasley claims that in these sentences Bush spelled out the most significant tests of citizenship in a post 9/11 America – to resist suspicion and distrust of a foreign newcomer based purely on him or her being foreign, simultaneously as the president was addressing immigration as the most recurrent challenges of the nation (Beasley, 2006: 4). *Who Belongs in America?,* (2006), therefore, explores how immigration has been represented by political elites, and how the political, social, rhetorical and economic circumstances have driven the American people’s need for a fear of immigrants (ibid: 5).

In summary, Beasley concluded that the history of political rhetoric on immigration in the US could be perceived as a persistent cultural argument and tension that illustrates the immigrant as a symbol of hope and a source of fear. Beasley’s research suggests that presidential rhetoric has at times done little to mediate, and even on occasion encouraged public fears about immigration and it being a perceived threat to the US. This has been repeated during history, even though presidents and other politicians have been aware of the economic benefits that migrants bring to their nation (Beasley, 2006: 272).

Furthermore, while this paper does not include presidential rhetoric uttered in social media, previous research does in fact discuss this. In a research article by Andrew S. Ross and Damian J. Rivers the researchers explore how Donald J. Trump utilized Twitter as a channel which through he could post information and opinion. Twitter is increasingly being utilized for this purpose within the sociopolitical domain. The use of Twitter has remained characteristic for Trump since his election and through his current presidency. It has drawn some criticism due to in which way he portrays different matters, including Hillary Clinton, the former Obama administration, and immigration and foreign policy (Ross & Rivers, 2018: pp.1-11).

Indeed, during the recent US presidential election in 2016, social media, especially Twitter, was used widely by both Clinton and Trump. What differed Trump from other presidential candidates was that Trump’s use was particularly unorthodox due to the fact that his tweets came directly from him, and thus not monitored by advisers or other staff.
This unorthodox presidential use of social media has resulted in widespread debate about the content, appropriateness, and motives of his tweets – in other words the discourses that derive from them (Ross & Rivers, 2018: pp.1-11).

Specifically, this article isolates those tweets in which Trump directly addresses the notion of fake news to demonstrate how his rhetoric corresponds with a deflection strategy, by focus on his social media behavior through a corpus analysis of his twitter discourse. The results reveal that Donald Trump is representative of this evolution of spreading discourse through social media. Trump introduced a new style of tweeting politically, which moves away from professionalism and towards amateurism and impulsive tweeting. Previously on the other hand, the general public had become familiarized to Twitter being used in political campaigns and also most importantly become accustomed to the tweets being carefully reviewed by campaign teams. For example, during Obamas election in 2008, only one percent were written by Obama himself (Ross & Rivers, 2018: pp.1-11).

Now, in contrast, the shift towards impulsivity and amateurism gives the general public a new type of discourse delivered by a person in a position of power and presents the people with a degree of uncertainty when new challenges arise as we must interpret those tweets. It could also be argued that a more hands on approach by the president is a reflection of a populist president that has a stronger connection to the citizens that share the same ideology which he presents, as he speaks to them through social media (Ross & Rivers, 2018: pp.1-11).

Through a comparative keyword analysis this study reveals that deflection is a dominant strategy used by Trump. Trump uses a focus on utilizing discursive acts of accusation in his tweets, which poses the public with the challenge of interpreting, comprehending and believing Trumps tweets. The study also found that the discourse of Trumps tweets reveals that accusations are used in different ways; directly in order to signal allegiance, or as a cover for the presidents spread of misinformation (Ross & Rivers, 2018: pp.1-11).

In another analysis, Jessica Autumn Brown explores how Republican presidential debate discourse during the 2008 and subsequent elections exhibited the use of ‘race baiting’ and crime frames. ‘Race-baiting’ is used to mobilize images of minorities as criminals, terrorists or as a group that is engaged in voter or welfare fraud (Autumn Brown, 2016: 315).
Even though referred to as a ‘nation of immigrants’, America has been filled with anxieties about crime and social disorder. Politicians have made careers built on ‘race baiting’, which is a rhetorical strategy where the speaker devalues a minority, creates a picture of this said minority as a threat, advocates restrictions against them, and reassures the audience (the ingroup) of their privileged position in society. Brown explains that ‘race baiting’ is aimed mainly at so called ‘backlash voters’ which are individuals who will act politically on the basis of fear or resentment of a minority (Autumn Brown, 2016: 315-316).

Firstly, Brown sections the analysis by providing an overview of historical and contemporary uses of nativist appeals, and secondly by examining if republican presidential candidates have continued to use race baiting. Lastly Brown determines to which extent these messages exploit anti-black sentiments or whether they have switched focus to a different group (Autumn Brown, 2016: 315-320).

In detail, the author analyzed a sample that compromised Republican primary and general election debate transcripts from the 2007-2008 and 2011-2012 presidential campaign cycles, and the first three debates from the 2015-2016 cycle. The author makes clear that ‘race baiting’ is not an exclusive tactic for Republicans, and Democrats were using them way before republicans did even though the analysis limits itself to republican political discourse, due to several motivations, one being that republican parties admitted to using race baiting to gain votes, and promised to abandon this tactic (Autumn Brown, 2016: 320-321).

With a complex coding analysis, the author came to the results. The results of the analysis show how the analysis of 45 republican primary and eight presidential and vice-presidential debates, exhibited 487 excerpts dealing with immigration, and 123 regarding race or ethnicity in a non-immigration context. 243 excerpts referred to crime, terrorism or threats to national security. Republican candidates were still mobilizing support from voters by ‘race baiting’ (Autumn Brown, 2016: 320-329).

However, while race baiting used to mainly involve black people as a focus of condemnation, the results shed light on the shift of the last few election cycles where focus was put on immigrants instead. The results point to how the discursive strategies by republican politicians portrayed immigrants as major sources of crime threats. Muslim Americans were represented as perpetrators of religiously motivated violent acts, and Latinos as related to cartels, and thus connected to drug and trafficking crimes. In some
cases, these were portrayed to be working together, bound by a mutual hatred of the US, towards some undefined goal (Autumn Brown, 2016: 320-329).

Further, other discourses that the republicans used in their portrayal of migrants, represented migrants as taking advantage of the system to gain access to political and social rights that are reserved for citizens. The author explores several reasons as for why this shift may have accounted; both civil rights gains and an apology by republicans for the Southern Strategy which may have made black people too politically dangerous to serve as a tool for mainstream candidates, are listed amongst the possible reasons. Other reasons listed are that perhaps are black people so firmly linked to terms like crime in the minds of backlash white voters that there is no need to further signify them as a threat to these matters, and instead there is a larger need to demonize those who are foreign-born. Another reason could be that after the 2008 election, President Obama could also possibly have served as a stand in figure to whom attacks were directed at as he in the minds of whites represented all blacks. Lastly, black people may just have become a less publicly visible minority group (Autumn Brown, 2016: 320-329).

In addition, Latinos have outnumbered black people as the largest non-white population in the US, while migrants from majority Muslim regions are the fastest growing minority group, and minority women of all foreign-born ethnicities have higher fertility rates than native born populations. That might be a fact that frightens backlash voters that desire to keep America white (Autumn Brown, 2016: 320-329).

To sum up, the shrinking and aging white populations imply that mainstream parties now need a way to find ways to attract minorities, but while doing so there is a risk that they may estrange native born white people, who for now still remain a majority. Facts indicate that the population of voters that are receptive to racially divisive discourse is neither small nor necessarily positioned on the extreme side of the ideological scale. This is why the analysis by Brown helps illustrating the consequences of a continued use of ‘race baiting’ in American politics. Racially divisive speech from mainstream candidates has the power to legitimize racist beliefs, and also to alter voters’ perception of social issues ranging from matters of immigration to poverty through an increasingly punishing criminalizing way to view these societal challenges (Autumn Brown, 2016: 320-329).
3 Theoretical Framework

This chapter elaborates on the two central theoretical aspects that will be analyzed in this paper. The first one is the concept of the ‘Other’ vs. the concept of ‘enemy images’. As it will be explained, ‘Othering’ is the first step in any intergroup comparison, which why it led me to the concept of enemy images. As such, these two concepts are largely the base for social identity theory, which was therefore naturally selected for the analysis of this thesis.

3.1 The ‘Other’ – An enemy or the unknown?

To understand in which way concepts as ‘the Other’ and ‘enemy images’ have such an influence on us it is important to know that through language we produce and exchange meaning. Language is a central tool to share meaning and culture, and through it we can sustain dialogue between participants. Language operates as a representational system, as we use signs and symbols; everything from written words to music notes. As such when we use language as a media to communicate, we can use it to represent a culture (Hall, 1997: 2).

Thus, language serves as a signifying practice, and through it we can express ideas of belonging to a culture or identify to a local community. Representation through language is therefore tied to identity and the knowledge we possess. In order to understand what it means to be ‘American’ for example, we take on signifying systems (such as celebrating certain holidays or using certain slogans or symbols) in order to take on an identity and to reject them (Hall, 1997: 2-5).

The ‘Other’s’ are often depicted to a binary form of representation, significantly different from the majority. ‘They’ are represented through polarized, binary extreme depictions such as: good/bad, civilized/primitive, attractive/ugly. They often found to be ‘exotic’ and can even be depicted as both extremes at the same time and depicted as very different from ‘Us’ (Hall, 1997: 229).

Indeed, does difference matters because of various reasons. One account comes from a linguistic approach. Difference matters here in the sense that it is essential to meaning, without it meaning could not exist. For example, we know what ‘black’ means because we compare it to ‘white’, and the difference between these is what carries meaning. In the same way we know what ‘American’ or ‘British’ means because we can mark its difference from its ‘Others’. Thus, meaning depends on difference between opposites. Problematically though, these binary oppositions tend to only capture the world through
a diversity of extremes, or ‘either or’s’, as well as the tendency to be crude and reductionist in establishing meaning. Sociologist Stuart Hall explains this with the metaphor of photography; even in white or black photography, there is no real ‘black’ or real ‘white’, rather than varying shades of gray. (Hall, 1997: 234).

In other words, difference is a tricky concept, as it can be both positive and negative. We need difference in order to produce meaning, to form language and culture, and for social identities and to create a ‘self’, but at the same time it can be seen as a threat, a negative feeling or hostility and aggression towards the ‘Other’ (Hall, 1997: 238).

Vilho Harle, professor of International Relations, proposes an interesting discussion towards a framework of analysis regarding the ‘Other’. Another special case of speaking of the ‘Other’ could be referred to as speaking of the enemy. Often, the ‘Other’ becomes stereotyped and dehumanized as an ‘outgroup’. The difference between the ‘Other’ and the ‘Enemy’ is that the ‘Other’ does not necessarily have to be an enemy, whereas an enemy, always is the ‘Other’. The ‘Other’ is defined by someone fundamentally different from us. For Greek philosopher Aristotle, the ‘Other’ is an excluded ‘alien’, who was unable to understand the common (Greek) language, and thus became an object of hunting, a slave. While, the ‘Other’ can remain nothing more than just a stranger or foreigner, Harle as well as Hall, pays attention to the fact that this is most often not the case. The relationship between the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’ often becomes hostile and violent, and the ‘Other’ becomes subject to the application of threatful characteristics (Harle, 2002: 9-23).

As we apply these threat-carrying attributes, the ‘Other’ changes into the enemy and thus creates a new concept, namely an ‘enemy image’. Enemy images can also be seen as negative stereotypes, and they are not only identity shaping, but also tools of persuasion when preparing for war, and more than often become a topic of discussion when it comes to genocide, racism, and discrimination (Oppenheimer, 2006: 269). They are crucial in legitimizing different types of harm against the outgroup, as they consist of dehumanizing stereotypes (Harle, 2002: 9-23).

What is more, while dehumanizing stereotypes are common in the construction of enemy images, it has been observed in a study by Steuter and Wills, that enemy images are also often created through dehumanizing metaphors. These often tend to be animal metaphors. With animal metaphors one can depict the outgroup as ‘savages’ and dangerous animals, or ‘filthy insects’. This can have an immense ideological impact, as it can result as a justification for racism, prisoner abuse or even genocide. This is due to
the fact that when we portray the enemy as an animal, we justify means or behavior in how we deal with the enemy. We thus handle the enemy, as we would handle an animal – by expressing a desire to capture and cage the outgroup as an animal (Steuter & Wills, 2009: 7-16).

Importantly, these images are central in maintaining and strengthening hostility and antagonism between different parts of the population. Enemy images are thought to represent sets of beliefs and assumptions about other individuals or groups, much like stereotypes, and from a psychological standpoint, much as the concept of ‘Othering’, it would seem that they are according to academics in psychology, a natural reaction to the process of identify formations or groups (Oppenheimer, 2006: 271).

Concretely, it has been demonstrated that when different groups are subjects of inter-group comparisons, there is an evident line drawn between the ingroup and the outgroup. The ingroup becomes a subject of positive descriptions, while the outgroup has negative characteristics appointed to it. This points to the fact that the ingroup favoritism and outgroup devaluation can in fact be manipulated by either intensifying or weakening the need for a comparison between the groups. Thus, an outgroup can be more intensely devalued, by comparing them increasingly to the ingroup, and by ‘Othering’ them through negative attributes (Oppenheimer, 2006, 270-272).

As such, this means that the concept of enemy images is based on the concept of ‘Othering’. The outstanding difference between the two, is that the concept of the ‘Other’ belongs to the field of psychology, while ‘enemy images’ belong to peace and conflict studies. The reason behind this is due to the fact that the ‘Other’ does not have to imply a negative depiction. The ‘Other’ can be a referral to a ‘foreigner’ or a neighboring country, while the concept of enemy images not only ‘other’s’, but also refers to ‘Us’ as good and ‘Them’ as evil. ‘Us’ are the heroes, and ‘them’ are the villains, criminals, and suchlike (Harle, 2002: 10-13).

Furthermore, Bo Petersson, describes it as the ‘Other’ not having to be wholly negative, but the enemy does have to be so, and thus to clarify what separates these concepts is that the concept of enemy images implies a threatful character description (Petersson, 2009: 461). This could both imply a threat towards values of the ingroup, and a threat that implies a possibility of violence. Therefore, the matter of survival of the ingroup is often discussed when the concept of enemy images is used, and when it is not, it usually at least implies a threat to the security and values of the ingroup (Loustarinen, 1989: 125).
3.2 Social Identity Theory

The above-mentioned concepts and processes largely rely on social identity, which brings us to social identity theory which I will use in this thesis to answer my research questions. Social identity theory was one of Henri Tajfel’s most prominent contribution to psychology. A person’s sense of who they are is largely based on social identity which is based on group membership/s. Tajfel (1979) put forward the notion of that the groups which people belong to are an important sense of pride and self-esteem, and that groups give us a sense of belonging to the social world (McLeod, 2008).

In order to increase our self-image, we can enhance the status of our group. Thus, as a result we divide the world into ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ as a result of the process of social categorization. Tajfel further claims that social identity theory explains that the ingroup will discriminate the outgroup in order to enhance self-esteem of the self, and as such the central hypothesis in this theory is that the ingroup will find and point out negative aspects of the outgroup, which can result in prejudiced views and racism, and in extreme forms racism may result in genocide, (for example Germany vs. the Jews or Rwanda: Hutu vs. Tutsi). Tajfel proposes that it is a normal cognitive process to stereotype and to group things together, and we do so by exaggerating the differences between the groups, and by exaggerating the similarities within the same group (McLeod, 2008).

In detail, Tajfel proposes that there are three mental processes that social identity theory describes to explain in how we process people in ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ (McLeod, 2008). The first process is categorization. In this step we categorize objects in order to understand them and identify what they are. In such way we also categorize people, including ourselves. We do so to understand the environment around us, and thus we use social categories such as Muslim, student, Christian, Australian, bus driver, and so on. Those categories that we assign to people, tell us about them, and we could not function without them. In the same way, we understand ourselves by categorizing our own persona. As a result, we define appropriate behavior by adapting to the norms of the groups that we belong to (McLeod, 2008). According to this theory we automatically engage in self-categorization, and Tajfel thus means that it is natural to think in group terms, and thus to position themselves in a social group and further believing in the positive aspects of our group (Mangum & Block, 2018: 3).
Moving on, the second part of the process is referred to as social identification. Social identification is a psychological attachment, and there is no real formal procedure for gaining entry to the group. The social group in which we position ourselves are called ingroups and the other groups are called outgroups (Mangum & Block, 2018: 3). Here we adopt the identity of the group we categorized our own self to belong to. For example, if you categorize yourself as a student, you are most likely going to adopt the behavior according to the norm of a student. Thus, you adopt the identity of a student and begin to act in the ways you believe a student acts and conform to the norms of the group. Emotional ties are significant to the identification of the group, and your self-esteem is bound to the membership of the group (McLeod, 2008).

Subsequently, after the particular order of these two processes, people engage in something called social comparisons. As we have categorized ourselves, and identified with the group, we then have a tendency of comparing our group with another group. To maintain our self-esteem, or a collective self-esteem of the group, we need to compare favorably with other groups. This is a critical process in understanding prejudice. Once two groups identify as rivals, they are left to compete in order for the members to maintain their self-esteem. This means that competition and hostility between groups is not only a matter of a competition for resources, like jobs, but also a result of identities that compete against each other (McLeod, 2008).

When the in-group possesses what the out-group desires, the differences between the groups intensify. Social identity theory suggests that the ingroups withhold benefits from the outgroups and compile them for themselves. The ingroup also opposes efforts to equalize the groups (Mangum & Block, 2018: 6).
4 Method & Methodology

The following chapter is an elaboration on the method and methodology. Here I present the method, its relevance, and in which way such method is conducted. I also present the material, the role of the researcher, a philosophical consideration of methodology, and ethical considerations.

4.1 Method

4.1.1 A Qualitative Inductive Approach

In order to reach the aim of this thesis an appropriate method must be utilized. To fulfill this ambition a qualitative method will be applied. A qualitative method will allow me to focus on context of and relation between language, discourse and society, and it further allows a researcher to study something “less structured” but rather something in need of an interpretation and context and therefore grants me as a researcher the right tools to gather and interpret data (Tracy, 2012: 4-5). The method of choice will therefore be Critical Discourse Analysis as I believe it is the better method for this thesis, as it allows me to critically analyze selected speeches and compare and contrast them. Since discourse analysis usually leaves the researcher with unexpected findings it can result in some findings being inductive (Williams, 2014: 7), meaning that the data was collected first, and a theory was built accordingly, and therefore the main premise of the research will be inductive (Bradford, 2017). This is due to that the thesis will be driven by its material, which will be three political speeches by the recent US Presidents, one each respectively, where I as a researcher form fitting theories and concepts accordingly as I start my analysis. Inductive research thus, starts with a question and focuses on developing a statement from an unknown position. The trade-off that inductive research carries is the fact that there are always several patterns, regression lines or hypotheses that could be developed to fit the same set of data. The strength of inductive research however lies in the ability to look at a previously research topic from a different angle and therefore contribute to a more all-encompassing view (Perri 6 & Bellamy, 2012: 76-79).

4.1.2 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), makes the better method for an aim such as mine, as it distinctively differs from other discourse analyses as it does not only explore power, injustice, abuse, and political-economic or cultural change in society, but also the relation between
language and society and because it has a critical approach to methodology (van Dijk, 2011: 394). Exploring the relation between language and society is essentially what I am doing as I am exploring the language of major figures of the American society.

Moving on, CDA sees discourse as a form of social practice. This refers to the relationship between a particular event and all the elements of the situations, institutions and social elements which frame it. Important to note is that this is not a one-way street, but a two-way relationship which means that the discursive event is shaped by situations, institutions, and social structures but also shapes them. This means that a discourse is not only socially shaped but also socially constitutive, as it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. This means that discourse can not only be created and sustained but also reproduced (van Dijk, 2011: 394-395).

Additionally, since discourse is so socially influential, it can result in important issues of power inequalities and have major ideological effects, such is that it can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between for example, social classes, women and men, ethnic groups in the way they represent things and people and how they position people (van Dijk, 2011: 394-395).

Moreover, discourse refers to the knowledge we have about the world which is what shapes how the world is understood and how things are done (Rose, 2001: 136). This notion could be applicable to any society as the popular discourses in each society form their own regime of ‘truth’ which is a system of ordered procedure for, for example, procedures of regulation which are in relation to systems of power that reproduce and sustain it (Lorenzini, 2015: 1-5).

In fact, our everyday experiences are created, expressed and mediated by discourse, from talking to texting with our friends, and posting things on social media, and reading advertisements, to immersing ourselves in politics, education, welfare, health, and discussing local and national news (Strauss & Feiz, 2013: 312-328).

### 4.1.3 CDA Micro Analysis

In order to do a critical discourse analysis of a text, I have to do a micro level analysis of words, phrases, and conceptual metaphors to reveal an underlying discourse and uncover if there are any underlying processes by which ideologies of power abuse, injustice, control, hegemony, dominance, exclusion, could be created and recreated, and perpetuated in social life. These are processes that are often granted as common-sense notions. The aim of CDA is to uncover those and make them clear and visible (Strauss & Feiz, 2013: 312-328).
I will therefore, conduct a micro level analysis of my material to observe linguistic patterns, with focus on the following linguistic patterns (Strauss & Feiz, 2013: 312-328), and the ones I do identify and find relevant to include, will be presented in this paper.

- Positive representation of US, (the dominant, elite, majority), and negative representation of THEM (the marginalized, the powerless, the opposition)
- Hyperboles – exaggeration to strengthen argumentation
- Metaphors and analogies (that reflect positive self-representation and negative other representation) – the self for example, as a ‘savior’, ‘benefactor’, ‘normal’, and the other as ‘vermin’, ‘gluttons’, ‘different’ and ‘abnormal’
- Creating opinions and contrasts
- Granularity of detail - vague or precise, specific or general
- Incorporating others’ voices (whose, which quotes, where and how)
- Naming and wording (such as: ‘person’, ‘human being’, ‘permanent resident’, ‘aliens’, ‘lawful resident’)
- Euphemisms (military terms for example, such as ‘friendly fire’ or ‘collateral damage’ that serve to minimize or legitimizing unintended destruction of property or unintentionally caused death or injury)
- Dysphemism (the opposite of euphemisms, using derogatory terms in place of more neutral ones, for example disparaging racial terms, disparaging gender terms, vulgar lexical items: “pissed off” instead of “angry”, “crap” instead of “stuff”, etc.)

As noticed by Fairclough (2003), van Dijk (1993), (2006), and Strauss and Feiz (2013), these patterns when made visible clearly are linguistic means that are used to justify, rationalize, legitimate and perpetuate power relations in society and a means to controlling social cognition. Although, such patterns are identified on a micro level, they form macro-level messages of power, control, racism, hegemony, dominance, and discrimination (Strauss & Feiz, 2013: 312-328).

Further, Van Dijk pinpoints that these patterns affect the social cognition of the audience, and supports the framework of triangulation, which takes account to the three crucial elements; discourse, society and cognition. Social power is typically associated with privilege, status, class, education, and profession, and it involves control through action but also on a subtler level through cognition. Patterns as the abovementioned, are
thus often used to promote ideologies of power that are discursively achieved, through contextual features of the discourse as well as linguistic forms (Strauss & Feiz, 2013: 312-328). I will therefore, analyze the selected speeches, and attempt to identify the abovementioned patterns, while asking appropriate questions in order to identify the pattern, such as “How are the people in the text represented?”, “Are there underlying polarizations framed in the discourse?”, “Who is constructed as powerful and powerless, and is there any manipulation of how people are represented?”, and “What is the message of the text?”. By manually (without a software), analyzing the material, I will make these patterns apparent, which would not be possible with a software (Strauss & Feiz, 2013: 312-328).

4.2 Material
The material will consist of three speeches which make up the primary source. One each respectively by the last three US Presidents: George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald J. Trump. In order to deliver a solid answer supported by academic sources and statistics, appropriate secondary sources such as academic literature, journals, research studies, etc.

Bush
Bush held a significant speech on May 15\textsuperscript{th} 2006, addressing immigration. The speech was held from the Oval Office. In the speech President Bush urged Congress to pass legislation that would find a ‘rational middle ground’ on immigration what would provide undocumented workers a new route to citizenship (Bush, 2006). The speech will be studied as a published transcript and video.

Obama
Obama used a televised address to the nation on November 20\textsuperscript{th}, 2014. The speech was held from the White House, where the President revealed a controversial executive action that would make millions of undocumented migrants eligible to live and work in the US, ‘a nation of immigrants’, according to the then current president (Obama, 2014). The speech will be studied as a published transcript and video.
Trump
As recent as of January 8th, 2019, President Trump addressed the nation regarding immigration. The speech was delivered from the Oval office. Trump’s main points were to address the ‘crisis at the boarder’, the desire to build a wall and criminal undocumented immigrants (Trump, 2019). The speech will be studied as a published transcript and video.

These specific speeches were chosen for the sake of validity. They were all held from Washington, addressing the nation, where the Presidents calmly speak to their nation, clearly prepared beforehand. They are therefore comparable, as they were chosen to be as ‘equal’ as possible, meaning that they were all held under similar circumstances. The respective president in each speech was prepared and most likely read from a teleprompter, and it is probable that the speeches were revised by a publicist or adviser. These speeches all address one thing solely, namely immigration, where the presidents proposed how to handle the issue, and what needs to be done. These speeches are there for their official immigration addresses that propose a plan on how to deal with immigration. I chose these speeches for my analysis with those aspects in mind.

4.2.1 Handling the material: The Steps of Conducting CDA

In every methods and material chapter in a qualitative thesis paper the author needs to specify the steps in analyzing data, which is what the following section will elaborate on. The material consists of three speeches that will serve as the main basis of this theme. These will be analyzed in order to identify the necessary patterns to identify discourse. The material will be hand coded for the sake of validity (Creswell, 2014:194-196).

In order to identify the relevant codes/categories and patterns I will utilize the following steps that are based on my own method design which consists of a combination of John W. Creswell’s model on coding (Creswell, 2014: 194-201) and Florian Schneider’s model on working with discourse analysis and coding (Schneider, 2013).

Step 1
This step revolves around establishing the context. As a researcher, in this step you need to ask yourself where your material is coming from, and in what context. Here it is important to narrow down to who wrote it and when. Here it is important to also in my case as I am analyzing political speeches to establish what is their general political position and their target audience. In this step the researcher should also define what categories or patterns will be explored for
transparency reasons. Moreover, it is important to define what medium genre you are working with. In this step it is important to consider the medium genres impact on the discourse (Creswell, 2014: 194-201 & Schneider, 2013).

Step 2
In this step I will begin collecting and preparing my data which I found relevant by reading my material through to get a brief understanding of the content and what themes/discourses could be identified (Creswell, 2014: 194-201 & Schneider, 2013).

Step 3
This is the process of organizing the data and writing a word representing a category/pattern. This means that in practice you take your material, in my case a speech, and segment these into categories and labeling those categories with a term. The coding process depends on what tools you use. It can be everything from using a colored marker and highlighting identified themes while hand coding, to using a software program (Creswell, 2014: 194-201 & Schneider, 2013).

Step 4
In this step you look at the structural features of the material. Do parts of the material deal overwhelmingly with one particular discourse? Are there ways in discourses overlap in the material? Does the speaker go through many different issues one by one and then make a main argument? (Creswell, 2014: 194-201 & Schneider, 2013).

Step 5
This step is conducted once the researcher has an overview of the macro features of the material. As my aim focuses on a micro-level analysis, I continue by collecting all statements with a specific code and to examine what they have to say on respective discursive standpoint. Here you map out the ‘truth’s the text establishes on each major topic (Creswell, 2014: 194-201 & Schneider, 2013).

Step 6
In this step it is important to consider how the context of the material informs the argument. Does the material contain references or sources? Or does it simply imply knowledge of another subject matter? This allows me to as a researcher find out if intertextuality serves a purpose in the overall argument (Creswell, 2014: 194-201 & Schneider, 2013).
Step 7
This step is where I search for the above-mentioned patterns and other linguistic features. I thus explore word groups, grammar features, rhetorical and literal figures, direct and indirect speech, modalities, and evidentialities (Creswell, 2014: 194-201 & Schneider, 2013).

Step 8
My last step will focus on interpreting the data and tying everything together and putting them into broader context, that you have established in the beginning or during the process, for example by applying your selected theories. In this step you will also present your data and if you have conducted a good analysis you should have a large amount of notes and interpretations now to build your thesis (Creswell, 2014: 194-201 & Schneider, 2013).

4.3 Role of the Researcher
I am aware that my background has an influence on this thesis. I have a Bachelor’s Degree in International Migration and Ethnic Relations, and this thesis is a part of my Master’s Degree in the same field. My bachelor thesis was written on the topic of involuntary medical repatriation perpetrated in the US, which mainly affects immigrants of color, in particular Mexican immigrants. This together with my interest for anything that affects Mexico and Mexicans, due to the fact that I am planning on moving there next year, has influenced the design of this thesis as I have followed issues that affect immigrants in the US. By having this interest it allowed me to form a research problem that I could investigate as it is something that I am passionate about, but it could also affect the result, as another researcher maybe would have found importance in other aspects than I due to a different background, and might have chosen different material, or theories and approached the matter differently.

Therefore, as author Alexander Rosenberg highlights, it is crucial for the researcher to be aware of their philosophical positioning (Rosenberg, 2012: 304-305). Of course, I would like to claim that I am a hundred percent objective, but as Rosenberg points out, taking both sides can lead to an intolerable result where both sides are incompatible (ibid). For example, as I clearly approach this research as a constructivist due to the nature of my method, I cannot claim that this thesis produces a one certain truth, but rather that because I use a structured method and relevant theoretical and conceptual framework I increase the construct validity of this thesis and therefore make a more of a qualified argument. The truth that this thesis produces is relative
to a paradigm and conceptual framework, which will be elaborated in the next paragraph (Perri

4.4 Validity, Reliability and a Philosophical Consideration

In order to increase the validity of this thesis, I have chosen an appropriate method. Due to the qualitative nature of my research question, this method makes a better option, rather than a quantitative method. By sticking to a structured method and framework, I increase the validity of this thesis. In this thesis I am not claiming to produce one certain ‘truth’, as CDA relies on interpretation. Instead this method makes it possible for the researcher to produce just one of the many valid truths that could be identified (Perri 6 & Bellamy, 2012: 22-23).

Social scientists take sides on philosophical matters inevitably, which is why I wanted to be as transparent as I could in my result, theories and methods, which must correspond and inform the reader of my position (Rosenberg, 2012: 304-305). It is therefore important for me to be aware of my ontological standpoint. Ontology refers to how something exists, what exists, and what status we ascribe to it when we speak of something existing (Perri 6 & Bellamy, 2012: 60). Epistemology on the other hand is about the information that counts as acceptable knowledge, and how it should be acquired and interpreted. Once a researcher accepts a particular epistemology, they adopt methods that are characteristic of that position (Vanson, 2014).

In my case, ontology and epistemology wise, I am simply aiming to set out what the research was meant to do by a relevant method and theoretical approach, and it is therefore I am applying a constructivist approach. Constructivism emphasizes how people understand issues and situations by factors such as biases, frames, theories, narratives and framework and this is essentially what discourse analysis is built on. (Perri 6 & Bellamy, 2012: 55-58). It also relates to constructionist accounts of social institutions and practices (ibid: 57-58), and also explains how social institutions exist only due to the beliefs and desires of human agents – social institutions are real because we believe in them. Human language reflects the beliefs and desires that make up a human culture, and thus, when many people believe or desire something, it creates a collective that consist of individual actions that constitute institutions. Such belief is clearly illustrated by me, when I make the claim that perhaps the elite, the President (in this sense the ruling institution), reflect
the society which in essence is individual action that forms a collective through human language and culture. The social constructionist perspective also reveals that in a way this thesis is my truth, according to how I understand reality (Rosenberg, 2012: 129-131). Being transparent in my philosophical position is important for me, so that the reader can understand what kinds of warrants we can claim for conclusions, since different philosophical positions can lead to different conclusions (Rosenberg, 2012: 304-305).

Regarding the reliability, meaning could the study be redone by someone else in the same manner with the same results, is where I admit to my study having a trade-off and suffers in these aspects, as it builds on interpretation. In comparison to quantitative research, qualitative research does not always generate consistent results (Perri 6 & Bellamy, 2012: 22-23). However, since I apply a constructivist approach and do not claim an absolute truth, which according to Leung contributes in making research feasible (Leung, 2017: 324-327).

Lastly, I do believe I will have sufficient material and with my method and material I will be able to make qualified generalizations and reasonable conclusions which strengthens my internal validity. As the material represents the main view of each president, I believe it is sufficient enough to answer my aim. (Perri 6 & Bellamy, 2012: 22-23).

4.5 Ethical Considerations

While conducting a research study with a CDA method, the ethical considerations and issues might be less than with observations and interviews where you work directly with subjects of interest, often in sensitive context. Interviews, meeting respondents, or even transcribing implies ethical implications (University of Glasgow, Ethics Committee) that discourse analysis does not.

Instead I am using public speeches from official persons that are free for anyone to use. Since these speeches were by presidents, these are not people that need their identity protected. The speeches are known to belong to these presidents which is why it is not an ethical implication to reveal their identity. This is why my method ensures less ethical issues.

However, one consideration to have in mind is not to actually reproduce the discourse you study and being careful with your wording and framing of things in order to avoid contributing to for example stereotyping. As such, I try to avoid using any words that
could include a negative discursive meaning, and an uneven distribution of power. Many words that today’s politicians use can imply such uneven power distribution, and some terms could even be seen as derogatory, and as such I keep in mind to use as neutral language as possible. Moreover, I do choose to use the term ‘immigrants of color’ to differentiate between immigrants. While that term might be seen as discursively inherent of a power dynamic, I choose to use it still as I have not yet to see this term with a negative connotation.
5 Results

In this section I will focus on presenting the findings. The findings consist of a breakdown of representations of ‘Us’ and ‘Them’, naming of people, hyperboles, metaphors, and a summary of a coding process where several themes were identified. Out of the patterns that Strauss and Feiz (2013) suggested for a CDA micro analysis (section 4.1.3), these were the ones that were identified in the speeches.

5.1 Representation of ‘Us’ and ‘Them’

Firstly, I looked at how ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ were separated and represented, and how many times ‘Us’ were represented in a positive manner, and how many times ‘Them’ were represented in a ‘negative’ and respectively a ‘positive’ way. Further in this section follows a deeper description of what ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ refers to and how this was interpreted. Looking at this allowed me to get a deeper insight on the ‘codes’ that will be presented further in this chapter and gave me a deeper understanding in what kind of political ideology each president has. This section therefore also presents the reader with a detailed presentation of what terms the presidents used to represent immigrants and their opinion on immigration. As such, the results follow as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRUMP</th>
<th>Positive Framing of 'Us'</th>
<th>Negative Framing of 'Them'</th>
<th>Positive Framing of 'Them'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBAMA</th>
<th>Positive Framing of 'Us'</th>
<th>Negative Framing of 'Them'</th>
<th>Positive Framing of 'Them'</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUSH</th>
<th>Positive Framing of 'Us'</th>
<th>Negative Framing of 'Them'</th>
<th>Positive Framing of 'Them'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 – Representation of ‘Us’ and ‘Them’

This table illustrate the count of how many times immigrants, and thus immigration as well, was portrayed as positive or negative. It further also illustrates how the US society was portrayed in order to create a distinction between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’
**Trump**

*Disclaimer: All the facts in the following section derive from Trump’s speech held January 8th, 2019 (see section 4.2 or chapter 10 for source).*

The main points regarding this section that can be drawn from Trump’s speech, is that immigrants were mainly represented as ‘criminals’, ‘gang members’, as well as people who commit sexual assaults and ‘brutal killings’, and ‘and immigration was represented as the main reason for ‘brutal’ murders of US citizens as well as responsible for drug overdoses in the US. The ‘Us’-group, was represented as a proud nation, that is proudly welcoming immigrants. Trump continues by portraying the ‘US’ identifying group as well as victims of brutal crimes, and as a group that has ‘brave’ members of the society that protect the border against the ‘illegals’ with grave criminal records, ‘gang members’, ‘human traffickers’ and ‘drug smugglers’ on the outside. The ‘brave boarder agents’ are also represented as victims of a lack of resources against the fight towards ‘illegal’ migration.

In the last two years, ICE officers made 266,000 arrests of aliens with criminal records including those charged or convicted of 100,000 assaults, 30,000 crimes, and 4,000 violent killings (Trump, 2019).

And they have refused to provide our brave boarder agents with the tools they desperately need to protect our families and our nation (Trump, 2019).

In the latter quote Trump exclaims a frustration due to ‘brave’ boarder agents not having the proper resources to protect the families of the American citizens and to protect the nation from immigrants that mainly enter through the southern border. When Trump portrays the ingroup (‘Us’) he tends to follow with a rather extreme comparison of ‘Them’. The majority of his statements are therefore built overall in the same way. To get his point across he therefore begins with describing ‘Us’ as ‘brave’, ‘innocent’, and ‘victims’, and then continues by portraying the outgroup as the opposite, in this speech, for example as ‘criminals’, and ‘illegals’ who are able to commit cold blooded savage acts, and ‘vicious coyotes’.

The only thing that is immoral is for the politicians to do nothing and continue to allow more innocent people to be so horribly victimized. America’s heart broke the day after Christmas when a young police officer in California was savagely murdered in cold blood by an illegal alien who just came across the border. The life of an American hero was stolen by someone who had no right to be in our country (Trump, 2019).
‘Us’ are the victimized heroes and ‘Them’ are the cold-blooded illegal aliens who savagely murder. Such pattern was repeatedly used. The main examples of this sort were the following: 1) an Air Force veteran who was raped, murdered, and beaten to death with a hammer by an ‘illegal alien’ with a long criminal history, 2) when an ‘illegal alien’ was charged with the murder for killing, beheading, and dismembering his neighbor, and finally 3) the example of MS-13 gang members who arrived in the United states as unaccompanied minors who were arrested and charged after ‘viciously stabbing’ a 16 year old girl. Most of his examples of immigrants are extreme and portrays them as evil.

As mentioned, according to Trump immigration is also the reason as for why there is a serious drug problem in the US. Immigration is portrayed as a reason as for why 300 US citizens die from drugs each week as he states that “90 percent of drugs floods across from the southern boarder”. Immigration is also “hurting all Americans” as much of it is “uncontrolled illegal migration” that “strains public resources and drives down jobs and wages”. Trump urges the ‘Us’-identifying group to act in order so more lives will not be lost, as “thousands more lives will be lost if we don’t act now”.

Obama

Disclaimer: All the facts in the following section derive from Obama’s speech held November 20th, 2014 (see section 4.2 or chapter 10 for source).

Obamas opening statement, simultaneously portrays ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ in a positive way. He explains how the US is a welcoming nation with advantages over other nations due to their welcoming nature and contribution from immigrants. As such, both immigrants and the US society is portrayed in a positive manner. The US society is portrayed as ‘youthful’, ‘dynamic’, and ‘entrepreneurial’ due to immigration, and immigration is portrayed as a key in shaping the characters of Americans as a people with limitless possibilities.

While he states that some immigrants deflect from the rules, the majority are good people, and that the ones that do deflect from following the law, indirectly hurt the majority of the lawful immigrants. The blame is not put on one side solely by Obama, as he urges that it is rather the system that is broken. He states that undocumented immigrants are exploited by business owners that pay low wages, and that a lot of undocumented immigrants “remain in the shadows” and cannot embrace the responsibilities of living in America, even though they want to, due to the risk of having
their family torn apart. Obama differentiates the immigrants (even the undocumented ones), from criminals, and while they have broken immigration laws, Obama still separates them from people who have committed grave crimes.

…and that’s why we’re going to keep focusing enforcement resources on actual threats to our security. Felons, not families. Criminals, not children. Gang members, not a mom who’s working hard to provide for her kids. We’ll prioritize just like law enforcement does every day (Obama, 2014).

Further, undocumented immigrants in the US are by Obama portrayed as not so different from the rest of society. Obama points out that they work hard, in tough low paid jobs, go to the same churches as the Americans, often have American born children and have spent a lot of time in the US, and have the same hopes, dreams and patriotism for the US as the Americans, but are forced to ‘stay in the shadows’ and cannot get right with the law as they fear deportation.

Obama makes less of a distinction between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ as he points out that millions, himself included go back generations to where their ancestors also had to go through the “painstaking work” to become citizens, and how US citizens were once strangers too. He further points out how immigration is a positive contribution to US economy and society. The main trend in Obama’s speech is the tendency to both praise ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ through explaining how America is a welcoming nation, through immigration has advantages, and lastly through using more humanizing terms and illustrating similarities between immigrants and US citizens.

Over the past years I’ve seen the determination of immigrant fathers who worked two or three jobs without taking a dime from the government, and at risk any moment of losing it all just to build a better life for their kids. I’ve seen the heartbreak and anxiety of children whose mothers might be taken away from them just because they didn’t have the right papers. I’ve seen the courage of students who except for the circumstances of their birth are as American as Malia or Sasha, students who bravely come out as undocumented in hopes they could make a difference in the country they love (Obama, 2014).

By comparing undocumented students to his own children, Obama portrays the distinction between ‘Them’ and ‘Us’, as something more ambiguous and not clear cut. Immigrants are portrayed as hardworking, courageous and brave and as a contribution to society. The next quote also demonstrates how according to Obama immigrants are able to one day become ‘American’ and maybe even are so already in a symbolic way due to
their love for the nation, and belief in shared values. In such way being American is here not demonstrated as being dependent on citizenship, but rather dependent on love for the nation and common values. In such way they are portrayed as more able to be assimilated and be to become ‘American’.

…to be an American is about something more than what we look like or what our last names are, or who we worship. What makes us Americans is our shared commitment to an ideal, that all of us are created equal, and all of us have the chance to make of our lives what we will (Obama, 2014).

Further, Obama highlights the low skilled undocumented immigrants as hard workers and vital to the US society. He also sheds light on that many undocumented immigrants are high skilled, and high educated people, and gave examples of such. They are also portrayed as a part of the military, serving to protect America. Lastly, future immigration is portrayed in regards as something positive, as Obama urges his people to be acceptive and open to it.

**Bush**

_Disclaimer: All the facts in the following section derive from Bush’s speech held May 15th, 2006 (see section 4.2 or chapter 10 for source)._

Bush mainly portrays immigrants in a positive way as well. There are examples however of migrants “sneaking across the border” which is portrayed as a problem; however, it is rather blamed on a broken immigration system. Immigrants are portrayed as having to forge documents and break laws to get jobs and thus immigration puts a strain on public schools and hospitals and brings crime to American communities. However, while this is something Bush claims, he also calls upon his people to remember that the majority of “illegal immigrants” are “decent people who work hard, support their families, practice their faith and lead responsible lives”.

Moreover, immigrants are also portrayed as hard workers, that have to live in the shadow due to the system. They come to the US for a better life and are willing to do almost everything to succeed and are portrayed as people who perform tough low skilled jobs but often climb their way up to high skilled jobs, and able to attain diplomas and open businesses. Bush believes that those who have been in America for long and pass a criminal check should have the possibility to come out of the shadows.
Furthermore, ‘Us’ – the American society is portrayed as a nation welcoming to immigrants, and immigration as a strength to the American society. America is a society portrayed as a melting pot, which is why according to Bush, America is so successful.

The success of our country depends upon helping newcomers assimilate into our society, and embrace our common identity as Americans. Americans are bound together by our shared ideals, an appreciation of our history, respect for the flag we fly, and an ability to speak and write the English language (Bush, 2006).

For Bush American equals someone that wants to assimilate and embrace the American life and identity, and immigrants are thus here portrayed as able to do so if they learn the language. The distinction of ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ is hereby drawn as a language barrier.

When immigrants assimilate and advance in our society, they realize their dreams, they renew our spirit and they add to the unity of America (Bush, 2006).

Consequently, Bush continues with using an example of a Marine to portray immigrants in a positive manner. Master Gunnery Sergeant Denogean came to the US from Mexico as a little boy and volunteered as a US Marine Corps as soon as he was able to. While deployed Sergeant Denogean was badly injured, and when he was asked of any requests, he asked for the chance to become a US citizen. Bush stated that he was proud to be there when the Sergeant swore his oath and became a citizen.

In sum, immigration is portrayed as a strength to the US society, and through positive attributions of immigrants, America is portrayed in a positive manner. While there are some negative attributions to immigrants and immigration in Bush’s speech, those are mainly explained as due to a broken system, and thus Bush makes the immigrants into victims rather than criminals.

5.2 Naming of people
The following section focuses on illustrating what terms were used to describe the migrant’s legal status. As Strauss and Feiz (2013) claimed, naming of people helps us understand the discourse behind the words and reveal a larger debate on power dynamic. Results are compiled from Trump’s, Obama’s and Bush’s immigration addresses (see section 4.2 or chapter 10 for sources). To demonstrate the result tables were created to compile concrete results. As such, follow table 2-4 with the result.
## TRUMP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Terms</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Non-legal terms</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Immigrant</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Undocumented Immigration</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Undocumented workers or workers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Newcomers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unaccompanied minors</td>
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**Total: 11**

## BUSH

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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal alien or alien</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Undocumented Immigration</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawful immigrant</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Undocumented workers or workers</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Newcomers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Unaccompanied minors</td>
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**Total: 20**

## OBAMA

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawful immigrant</td>
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<td>Undocumented workers or workers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Newcomers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unaccompanied minors</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total: 1**

**Total: 12**
5.3 The use of hyperboles

In this section I aim to present the reader of the identified hyperboles. While some hyperboles are obvious others are more subtle. In order to identify a subtle hyperbole it is necessary to analyze it and compare it to real life facts due to the issue that if we do not have the proper information or know the context behind it we cannot understand or identify a hyperbole. As such, hyperboles often go unnoticed.

Trump

Disclaimer: All the facts in the following section derive from Trump’s speech held January 8th, 2019 (see section 4.2 or chapter 10 for source).

Trump’s speech is driven by an anti-immigration discourse. While the majority of his speech has an anti-immigration hyperbolic tendency, the following sample has been picked out to showcase in which way Trumps uses hyperboles.

In fact, while analyzing this speech, I came across a similar analysis on Enoch Powell’s speech in 1968 regarding anti-immigration in Britain. I noticed these two speeches have some similarities in the structure of their hyperbolic exaggerations, where Claudia Claridge namely demonstrated that Powell’s speech is divided in three fields, 1) the situation and sentiments of the natives, 2) the amount and character of immigration and 3), the effects of immigration (Claridge, 2011: 225-227). I observed a similarity in Trump’s speech.

Specifically, the first section works as a legitimizing tool (Claridge, 2011: 225-227) where in this case Trump borrows authority from the public to put forward his argument. “But, all Americans are hurt by uncontrolled illegal migration”, Trump claims. In this sense, Trump claims that uncontrolled undocumented migration is hurtful to all Americans, which is an amount that is hard to prove.

Interestingly, Claridge explains how exaggerating the amount of popularity for backing a view or a sentiment is a natural use of hyperboles in democracy. This way the politician can demonstrate a high level of agreement from the voters (Claridge, 2011: 225-227). Another similar use of a hyperbole by Trump is using the example of parents of children who were murdered by people who happened to be undocumented migrants for the same reason.
In fact, the second group that namely aims to frame the character of immigration or the amount of it, is where the speaker can do so by underlining the importance and urgency of the problem. One method which Claridge speaks of is to provide numerical evidence, which can often be vague, and hard to refute. At the same time by providing numbers the impression of the politician becomes more credible and well informed (Claridge, 2011: 225-227)

*Over the years, thousands* of Americans have been brutally killed by those who illegally entered our country (Trump, 2019).

“Over the years” as well as “thousands” are both very vague and not precise which at first glance can give credibility to the speaker, and since both the timespan and number of victims remain so unprecise it is hard to prove that Trump is correct or incorrect. Reports point to this being unlikely however, as studies show that immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than natives. In June 2018, a report by the Cato Institute found that immigrants who entered the country documented were approximately one fifth as likely to be incarcerated as native-born Americans, and immigrants who were undocumented were half as likely to be incarcerated (Hesson, 2019).

Another way to achieve this, is to portray the matter as unique of great import, to portray it as historic. In either of these cases, points are made to build on existing fears, which can be used to justify political demands and action (Claridge, 2011: 225-227)

This is a humanitarian *crisis*, a *crisis* of the heart and a *crisis* of the soul (Trump, 2019).

There is a *growing* humanitarian and security *crisis* at our southern border (Trump, 2019).

This could be seen as examples of portraying the matter of great import. According to Trump, the matter is historic he portrays it as having reached its peak, and unlike anything before.

But facts speak differently, and the notion of a new crisis, distorts the truth. The number of undocumented crossings remain under the annual levels of President Obama, and much below the higher levels of the 1990’s and early 2000s. In the fiscal year of 2018, Boarder Patrol arrested 396 579 people at the US-Mexico border. The average per year over the previous decade was 400 751 (Hesson, 2019).
Lastly, when it comes to the last group, the effects of immigration, just as Claridge observed in Powell’s speech (Claridge, 2011: 225-227), Trump also talks in regard to this topic by discussing the future consequences of immigration.

Our southern border is a pipeline for vast quantities of illegal drugs, including meth, heroin, cocaine and fentanyl. Every week 300 of our citizens are killed by heroin alone, 90 percent of which floods across from our southern border. More Americans will die from drugs this year than were killed in the entire Vietnam War (Trump, 2019).

Thousands more lives will be lost if we don’t act now (Trump, 2019).

Immigration and immigrants (in particular the ones entering from the southern border) are made responsible in Trump’s speech for the drug use in the US and undocumented immigrants will continue to bring death to US citizens if America does not act now, according to Trump. The situation however does not license such speculations as firstly, undocumented migrants are less likely to be incarcerated, and secondly, a lot of the facts are inaccurate.

Migrants from the southern border bringing all these drugs is quite a misleading statement. While most heroin does enter from the US-Mexico border, most of it is intercepted at legal ports of entry, according to a 2018 report by the Drug Enforcement Administration. The hyperbolic statement that the border is a pipeline where migrants sneak across with drugs, is thus misleading as Mexican cartels do not operate in this way, and move drugs through legal ports of entry, typically hidden in secret compartments in vehicles, and it is also worth to note that most fentanyl comes from China (Hesson, 2019).

While this concludes a sample of Trumps use of hyperboles, it is worth to note that there were more, with additional inaccurate facts.

Bush and Obama

Disclaimer: All the facts in the following section derive from Obama’s speech held November 20th, 2014 and Bush’s speech held May 15th, 2006 (see section 4.2 or chapter 10 for sources).

Bush and Obama’s hyperboles will be presented in this following section together, as their speeches had much less of a hyperbolic tendency. The hyperboles in Obamas speech were a means of strengthening his argument, namely that immigration is a contribution to the US society, with a secondary purpose of arguing for better boarder security.
It has kept us youthful, dynamic, and entrepreneurial. It has shaped our character as a people with **limitless** possibilities. People not trapped by our past, but able to remake ourselves as we choose (Obama, 2014).

As we all know, every person is somewhat limited by something. Stating that the US society is limitless and has become so because of the contribution that immigration makes to the society, is a way of strengthening his argument. In reality there are always limits to what oneself can do, but by attributing the positive effect of becoming limitless due to how immigration shapes the character of the people in the US, it serves as a way to both shine positive light on immigration and immigrants (‘Them’) and on the US and its citizens (‘Us’).

We will *always* be proud to welcome people like Guadalupe Denogean as fellow Americans. Our new immigrants are just what they have *always* been, people willing to risk *everything* for the dream of freedom. And America remains what she has *always* been, the great hope on the horizon, an open door to the future, a blessed and promised land (Bush, 2006).

In this quote by Bush, the use of the word “always” in a hyperbolic way is demonstrated to be used to strengthen his argument, namely the same argument that Obama has. Firstly, in reality, predicting immigration attitudes is hard, and thus assuming that a majority of the US will *always* be proud to welcome immigrants is not possible, especially with the tendency that the US has, namely having a historically characterized negative response to immigration that has been demonstrated in for example strong support for anti-immigrant legislation (Sobczak, 2007: 1).

The second “always” is used as a way to positively describe immigrants, but in reality once again it is hard to know if this has always been the case and moreover it is quite a generalization of people’s thoughts and as such it is impossible to know just what people are willing to risk.

The last “always” is used as a positive description of the US society, but in fact history shows that America has not always been the safe haven it is described to be for immigrants. Historically, the US government has enacted anti-immigration laws on the basis of race for almost one hundred years, namely roughly from the Chinese exclusion laws during the 1880’s that were based on the belief that Chinese people were unable to assimilate (López, 2006: 37-47) to mass deportations of people with Mexican roots, which resulted in about 500 000 people being returned to Mexico by force (ibid). Even today hundreds of hate crimes are committed every year on the basis of national origin (Sobczak, 2007: 1).
5.4 The Use of Metaphors

This section will consist of a sample of metaphors. Metaphors were not used generously, but the ones that did imply strong underlying ideological motivation. As follows are the metaphors Trump, Obama and Bush (see section 4.2 for sources of the speeches), used.

**Metaphor 1: “Living in the shadows”**
Both Bush and Obama describe undocumented immigrants as living in the shadows. This metaphor is used to describe a life of hiding and living with fear of being deported. Both Obama and Bush called for a change in the immigration system that would enable undocumented immigrants to come forward and stop hiding without risking deportation. Living in the shadows is described to be harmful to both the US society and the immigrant. Since they cannot come forward, they cannot pay taxes, and both these presidents called for a change in this since they believed many immigrants were honest people that wanted to ‘get right’ with the law but could not do so.

You can come out of the shadows and get right with the law (Obama, 2014)

Once here, illegal immigrants live in the shadows of our society (Bush, 2006)

She mostly lived in the shadows until her grandmother, who visited every year from Mexico, passed away, and she couldn’t travel to the funeral without the risk of being found out and deported (Obama, 2014)

**Metaphor 2: “Coyotes”**
This word was used to describe the people who bring migrant children to the US. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) spokeswoman Katie Waldman explained that 19 313 children were apprehended at the southwest border in December. This number, however, refers to all children, not only those the administration suspects as not traveling with a guardian or parent. However, according to statistics, suspected cases of fraudulent child-parent relationships have been a smaller fraction of all the family unit apprehensions (Hesson, 2019). Trump however suggested that all these approximately 20 000 children were brought to the US by “vicious coyotes” that use the children’s as “pawns”.

Last month, 20 000 migrant children were illegally brought into the United States, a dramatic increase. These children are used as human pawns by vicious coyotes and ruthless gangs (Trump, 2019).
Metaphor 3: America’s heart

“America’s heart” is a metaphorical term that Trump uses in order to explain a national grief that occurred in the USA, when a police officer was murdered by an undocumented immigrant. It is a way to express a sentiment and strengthen an argument of keeping the others on the other side.

America’s heart broke the day after Christmas when a young police officer in California was savagely murdered in cold blood by an illegal alien who just came across the border (Trump, 2019).

Metaphor 4: Waves of immigration

“Waves” is a way to describe immigrants as flood waters that flood in through the boarder. Immigrants come in large quantities and flood through the gates. This term was used by Bush. It draws a distinction between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’.

This is amnesty, and I oppose it. Amnesty would be unfair to those who are here lawfully and it would invite further waves of illegal immigration (Bush, 2006)
5.5 Summary and General Themes (codes)

This section illustrates the major themes of the speeches that were analyzed (see section 4.2). To simplify the major discourses the following table was created based on codes that were identified. The table illustrates times that a certain code was identified. The following table helps us understand the central argument(s) of each speech.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Trump</th>
<th>Obama</th>
<th>Bush</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Boarder Security</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation of codes:
- Boarder security – Immigrants/immigration as a reason for increased border security or threat against border security
- Crime – Immigration/immigrants linked to grave crimes such as murder
- Economy – Immigration/immigrants as a strain on the economy and societal system
- Drugs – Immigration/immigrants as a reason for drug usage/presence

This table illustrates that for Trump and Bush increasing border security was quite pressing and undocumented migration was the reason for it, while Obama’s speech focused about half as much on the matter. Trump overwhelmingly blamed the immigrants for crime, while Obama briefly mentioned it once and Bush not at all. Economy was mentioned by all three presidents but was not a main pressing issue. Drugs, although only mentioned twice by Trump was mentioned in a way to blame immigrants for a whole 300 deaths per week in the US.
6 Discussion

This last chapter before chapter 7 which is the analysis, aims to discuss crucial findings and their importance. Without a discussion, they would be hard to understand, and their importance and relevance would go unnoticed. Naming of people, hyperboles, and metaphors are a part of Strauss and Feiz’s (2013) CDA micro-analysis, and their definition and meaning will be discussed here, as well as how social identity theory would be applicable to immigration in genera and has been used to view the matter. This section is purposely placed before the analysis in order for the reader to build their own opinion right before they reach my analysis.

6.1 A brief discussion of the findings and their relevance

After presenting the findings, I find it rather necessary to have a brief discussion on some of them, and their relevance. Since this paper is an analysis of discourses and aims to answer how the discourse on immigration is painted, it is necessary to elaborate on some of the discursive tools the presidents that are mentioned, use while creating their discourse on immigration. While positive versus negative representations are quite clear and upfront, the importance of ‘legal and non-legal’ terms and their discursive use might not be so evident.

The debate on how to name migrants has been heated, with some in support of using terms such as ‘illegal’ or ‘alien’, and some opposed to it. Today, it is rare to enter a discussion regarding immigration without hearing these terms. The basic discourse in the US has grown to accept these terms. According to Shahid Haque-Hausrath, immigration attorney, terms like these are highly inaccurate and pejorative as they imply a criminalization of the individual. The attorney claims that these have shaped public opinion on immigration policy and contributed to a stigmatization of undocumented immigrants (Haque-Hausrath, 2008).

Henceforth, Shahid Haque-Hausrath, claims that when one refers to an immigrant as an ‘illegal alien’, they are using the term as a noun, and thus saying that the individual is illegal instead of their actions being illegal. Their existence is therefore made criminal. The immigration attorney continues with explaining that ‘illegal alien’ is not a legal term. An alien is defined as anyone who is not a citizen or national of the US, but an ‘illegal alien’ is not a legal term in the Immigration and Nationality Act. Haque-Hausrath states that for some the term ‘illegal alien’ is probably based on the misconception that an immigrants presence in the US is a criminal violation, but explains that the while act of entering the country without inspection is a federal misdemeanor and for repeat offenders
it could be a felony, the status of being present in the US without a visa is not an ongoing criminal violation, and further explains that about fifty percent of undocumented migrants have entered the US lawfully but overstayed their visas which is not a criminal offense but a civil infraction (Haque-Hausrath, 2008).

As such, the attorney therefore states that these terms are inaccurate and dehumanizing, and that to criminalize immigrants is a violation of human rights. By using this term to refer those without a visa or I-94, the speaker that uses these terms assigns guilt before a judge can consider the evidence and make a determination on the individual’s status, and thus immigrants are in a way convicted in the media before ever standing trial. These terms also overlook and mislabel migrants who are in the US against their will, such as victims of trafficking (Haque-Hausrath, 2008).

On the contrary, others, believe that these terms are the right way to name immigrants that are present in the country without permission. Hans A. von Spakovsky, Election Law Reform Initiative and Senior Legal Fellow, believes that using terms such as ‘undocumented immigrant’, is intended to blur and extinguish the line between ‘legal and illegal immigration’, and is a ‘made up’ term that ignores the law. Spakovsky believes this is a politically correct, made up term that is used to ignore the fact that ‘aliens’ have violated U.S. immigration law. He states that the Supreme Court, uses the ‘correct’ precise legal term of ‘illegal alien’ and that the Justice Department has a constitutional duty to enforce the immigration laws passed by congress against ‘illegal aliens’ (von Spakovsky, 2018).

In detail, Spakovsky means that precision in the law is an important principle, since the exact words used in regulations, contracts, guidance documents, policy statements, and statues can affect how they are applied and interpreted. Hans von Spakovsky uses federal immigration law as example; 8 U.S. Code § 1365 is a provision that regards a reimbursement program that the federal government has for states that incarcerate ‘illegal aliens’. He mentions that the very title refers to ‘illegal aliens’, and that ‘illegal alien’ is the correct term as it is defined in provision 8 U.S. Code § 1101, as ‘any person not a citizen or national of the United States’ (von Spakovsky, 2018).

In addition, according to von Spakovsky, ‘pro-illegal alien groups’ and politicians who support ‘sanctuary’ policies and open borders want to persuade the American public that those who are in the US ‘illegally’ are not different from the ones that enter ‘legally’, he points out that the term ‘illegal alien’ is not dehumanizing nor racist or demeaning (von Spakovsky, 2018).
Another key finding were hyperboles. Hyperboles are forms of sometimes more or less subtle or extreme exaggerations. It is often used in political rhetoric. As the metaphor, it is often wired in everyday common language. Hyperboles are used to magnify or to minimize things and their importance, or their insignificance (Claridge, 2011: 1). In the political world they are often used as a rhetorical tool. Aristotle identified three aspects that are involved in rhetorical persuasion. These are credibility (ethos, the show of good character and trustworthiness of the speaker), the arousal of emotions in the audience by the speech (pathos), and the construction of proof through logical arguments (logos) (ibid: 217).

Interestingly, hyperboles can in fact play a role in all these three aspects. In line with logos, hyperboles can be used to maximize some aspects or proof while downplaying others. In respect to pathos, hyperboles can make things appear more important, or frightening which can contribute to arousing certain attitudes. In fact, studies have shown that the choice of certain words can influence their perception and memory, as well as trigger strong feelings. For example, when we use semantically stronger words such as smash instead of hit, when discussing a car accident, it leads to people estimating the car’s speed as higher than when the word hit is used. Lastly, in respect to ethos, when a speaker constantly is identified as using hyperboles, he or she might come off as untrustworthy, while another speaker that constantly minimizes things might come off boring or not convincing. In order to identify more subtle hyperboles, it is necessary sometimes to fact check the speech, and understand the context (Claridge, 2011: 217).

Lastly, metaphors, that were also an important finding are important to understand in how they affect the human mind. For most people, metaphors are poetic imaginations and rhetorical flourish, and a matter of extraordinary language. As such, most people believe metaphors are not as significant as they are. Lakoff & Johnsen (2003), however found that metaphors are pervasive in ordinary life, not only in language but also in thought and action. The way we think, and act is in nature fundamentally metaphoric. The concepts that govern our thoughts are not just matters of the intellect but also govern our everyday functioning. The way we perceive things and get around in the world and relate to other people are based on these concepts (Lakoff & Johnsen, 2003: pp. 8-11).
6.2 Social Identity Theory, the element of the threat, and Immigration

Speaking of social identity, Tajfel extended the perspective on intergroup conflicts, in this case immigrants and natives, by proposing that it is not only a restriction on material sources that could be of reason to a conflict, but also group status and social identities which derive from group memberships (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363).

According to social identity theory group members seek to improve their status by comparing their group to relevant out-groups, in order to maintain or achieve a positive social identity. Thus, immigrants can become the target of prejudice when there is an indication of threat to the national in groups non-material status, such as important cultural values (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363).

Noteworthy, the element of the threat, or the perception of one, plays an important role in many contemporary theories explaining prejudice. By definition immigration implies, moving into a geographical area, and could by hosts seen as an intrusion. As such many scholars assume that the perception of immigrants as a threat plays a significant role as a mediator in intergroup attitudes and behavior towards one and other (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363-368).

More concretely, the element of the threat could be argued to be caused by limited access to economic resources within a society, and a perception of a potential competing outgroup as in this case immigrants, that could lead to a perception of competition and anxiety. As a result, feelings of prejudice emerge. Another reason could also be that the ingroup is afraid that the outgroup will undermine the distinctiveness from the outgroup (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363-368).

In addition, groups who are in an unjustified superior position can show a bias to outgroups, as a means to legitimize their position, as the outgroup is a threat to the ingroups societal norms and hierarchy. A prejudice is therefore created in order to justify the position of the ingroup. The effect of a threat is pervasive one. Scholars point out that if the immigrant will often be related the element of the threat, regardless of their immigration success. Immigrants who are unsuccessful, will be perceived as a threat to the economy, while immigrants who are in fact successful will be threats in the sense that they are ‘job stealers’, and other competitors of benefits (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363-368).

Moreover, national identity becomes of relevance when discussing social identity theory and migration. Attitudes towards immigrants can only be understood by
considering national group memberships, which works as a tool of defining group memberships and creates a psychological schema by assessing and understanding outgroup behavior. Research points to that ingroup identification agrees with outgroup derogation, especially in context where the groups clash in different interest and ideologies, which can result in exclusion (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363-368).

Thus, according to social identity theory national identity should be positively related to the rejection of immigrants, and indeed research does show that identification with one’s country does relate to the derogation of immigrants. However, it is worth to note that not all national identification is related to immigrant derogation. Research is also consistent with showing the difference between nationalism and patriotism. Nationalism has been shown, correlating with social identity theory, to have a positive effect with immigrant derogation, while patriotism rejects these sentiments, and seem to reduce them. It also seems that nationalism does not have to be a mediator of immigrant derogation when the national comparison is within the ingroup itself, for example historically. A derogation of immigrants, correlating once again with social identity theory, is most likely to happen when the ingroup compares itself with the outgroup (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363-368).

The difference between nationalism, is that patriotism consist of two components instead of one; national identification, that does indeed increase outgroup devaluation, but also of a general esteem for democratic values and norms that reduces the devaluation. These two as such have opposing effects. This is why scholars warn that the element of the threat can be used in any type of national identification, whether that be patriotism or nationalism, and any of these can be misused and turned onto outgroup devaluation. One example of such case could be the ‘war on terror’. The element of the threat is not only a mediator of national group identification and rejection of immigrants, but also a moderator of the relation between identification and derogation (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363-368).
7 Analysis

In this chapter, an analysis will be provided. This chapter focuses on tying the concepts, the theory and previous research together, in order to answer the two research questions. The analysis thus consists of an application of method and theoretical concepts to the results of the speeches (see section 4.2 or chapter 10 for reference of speeches).

7.1 Immigrants – the enemy, the other, or foundation of USA?

As mentioned in chapter 3, through language we produce meaning, and language becomes crucial in sharing meaning and culture, as well as values (Hall, 1997: 1). As such, according to Hall’s framework (1997: 5), language would have allowed Trump, Obama, and Bush to construct and share a discourse, and create a representational system for immigrants. Following Hall’s reasoning (ibid), Trump, Obama, and Bush could also express their idea of who belongs in the US and use language as a signifying practice in creating what it means to be American, and what characteristics American identity entails.

Firstly, all three presidents draw a clear distinction between the ingroup and the outgroup, between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’, and as such immigrants become the ‘Other’ in all of these instances. The way they do so is very different, however. As mentioned earlier, difference can be both negative or positive, and we need to differentiate between groups of people in order to create our own identity. This according to Hall (1997: 238) is a normal cognitive process that we need in order to form social identities.

For example, Trump’s distinction between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ is much more intense than the distinction Obama and Bush makes. Hall (1997: 229) explains, that the ‘Other’ is often left to a binary form of representation, where the ‘Other’ is represented through polarized extremes. It is through these extremes that Trump builds a picture of what it means to be an ‘immigrant’. As demonstrated in the results section (chapter 5), Trump’s representation of immigrants was overwhelmingly negative, compared to Obama and Bush.

In detail. Hall elaborates (1997: 238), on how people have a tendency to only capture the world through extremes and be reductionist and crude when we establish meaning. This is certainly applicable to Trump’s speech. As explained in chapter 5, Trump mainly portrays immigrants with terms such as ‘criminals ‘gang members’, ‘drug smugglers’, ‘human traffickers’, as well as describing them to be brutal killers and rapists. On the contrary, US citizens are described as a positive polar opposite with descriptions such as
‘heroes’ and as ‘brave’ people who protect the rest of the society against the evil immigrants.

Obama and Bush on the other hand, mainly portray immigrants in a positive manner. They are still the ‘Other’, but as Harle’s framework (2002: 9-23) sheds light on, the ‘Other’ can remain nothing more than a foreigner, although this is most often not the case. While the distinction between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ is for Obama and Bush both a matter of if one has US citizenship or not, such legal status is described very differently. Obama sticks to terms as ‘undocumented’, while Bush utilizes an overwhelming usage of terms such as “illegal”, and even describes immigrants coming in large “waves” – a similarity he shares with Trump. Although, Bush uses these terms in section where he speaks positively of immigrants, usage of such terms could have a criminalizing effect. As Hasque-Hausrath (2008) explains these can shape public opinion on immigration and contribute to stigmatization and are pejorative terms.

However, paired with Bush’s praise of immigrants, it seems unlikely that these were used with such motive, and perhaps was ‘political correctness’, not as ‘important’ or prevalent during the time of Bush’s presidency. Today, the debate is very heated regarding these terms (Haque-Hausrath, 2008), which would imply the possible desire in Trump’s speech to criminalize immigrants.

Further, as Oppenheimer (2006: 270-272) explains the antagonism and hostility between groups can be weakened or strengthened by the need for comparison. The more the outgroup is subjected to comparison, the more it will be devalued, while the ingroup will be subject of favoritism. Such is quite clear in the speeches analyzed in this paper. As Trump intensifies the comparison between Americans and immigrants, with extreme polarized characteristics, an increased antagonism can be observed. Instead, Bush and Obama, weaken the need for comparison, and immigrants are described as predecessors of today’s American’s, future American’s and a part of American life, and as positive contributors to the society. The perceived antagonism in Bush’s and Obama’s speech is thus non-existent, as lines between the known and the unknown (‘Other’), are blurred.

In a way, Bush and Obama demonstrate that identity is not permanent and can change – today’s immigrant, could be tomorrow’s citizen. With Trump, the comparison is of made of extreme polarizations and the general focus is on mass deportation and on keeping the ‘Other’ out of the US. The notion of being able to strengthen or weaken hostility would be supported by Beasley’s research (see chapter 2), that came to the conclusion that while presidential rhetoric has at times done little to mediate, and at times
encouraged public fears of immigration and the perception of it being a threat to the US, the president does indeed have the power and responsibility to mediate and weaken hostility towards migrants, and discourage fear and encourage hope (Beasley, 2006: 272). In this sense, this is just what Obama and Bush did with positive examples of immigration and its positive contribution, while Trump argues the contrary.

As a result, the extreme depictions by Trump are taken a step further than the initial process of ‘othering’ made by Obama and Bush. While of course there are segments in Obama’s and Bush’s speeches that could be described as anti-immigrant, the general discourse is positive. Trump on the other hand, transforms the process of ‘othering’ into the process of creating an enemy image, by intensifying the need for comparison, and thus intensifying the hostility towards migrants. This, in accordance with Harle’s framework on enemy images (2002: 9-23), is done by adding a threatful element when describing the ‘Other’, which Trump does by describing immigrants as reasons for brutal killings of good US citizens, that would have not happened if those immigrants were not residing ‘illegally’ in the country.

Trump suggests that immigrants are not only a threat towards resources and benefits that should belong to Americans, but also imply that there is a real threat of possible physical violence, which Loustarinen (1989: 125) explains to be a characteristic of an enemy image, which puts the survival of the ingroup as a central question when discussing the concept of enemy image. This is in fact the central question in Trump’s claims, where Trump means that if immigration is not stopped, many more American lives will be lost, and in addition, this serves as a justification for a physical barrier and mass deportation. In this way, Trump’s enemy image is used to legitimize his political ambitions, which according to Oppenheimer (2006) and Harle (2002), is one of the purposes of enemy images.

As such enemy images are dehumanizing stereotypes (Harle, 2002: 9-23) that in Trump's speech are motivation for legitimization. This would be supported by Beasley’s claim of how immigrants in the US are demonized and made into threats in order for politicians to justify exclusion and denial of entry (Beasley 2006: 272) and could also be a demonstration of the phenomenon of ‘race baiting’ that Autumn Brown elaborates on (see chapter 2). Autumn Brown’s research (2016: 315-329) came to the conclusion that portraying immigrants as a threat, for example by labeling them as ‘murderers’ or ‘criminals’, is a political strategy in order to gain backlash voters, which has been shown to be a successful tactic. By analyzing Trump’s speech, there is definitely reason to claim
that there is a possibility that Trump utilizes this tactic, as his depiction of immigrants is the same sort of depiction done by politicians that have been proven to ‘race bait’. Moreover, the study found that Latinos were often linked by politicians to serious crimes and cartels (Autumn Brown, 2016: 315-329), which is consistent with Trump’s speech where the main target seems to be Hispanic immigrants that cross the southern border. They are depicted as part of cartels and dangerous gangs.

What is more is that Trump further reinforces an enemy image of immigrants, by naming them with animal terms, such as ‘coyotes’. As mentioned, Steuter and Wills (2009: 7-16), explained how these are used as a justification to treat the group subjected to these terms to handle this group as one would handle an animal. In this way, Trump’s wall could be seen as a cage for South America, a barrier between USA and the rest of the countries beyond the Mexican border to keep the ‘animals’ away from the US. Further according to this study, the use of animal terms could be a demonstration of the desire to ‘capture the animals’ (Steuter & Wills, 2009: 7-16), in this case through mass deportation.

In sum, while Obama portrays immigrants as the ‘Other’ he does not do so negatively. Bush seems to have a similar reasoning, but his labeling of immigrants as ‘illegals’ (even though this seems to be done unconsciously as it is paired with praise for immigrants), does give away a discourse of where immigrants are criminalized. Trump on the other hand take it a step further and does not portray immigrants as the ‘Other’, but rather as the enemy. This correlates with the notion presented by Bo Petersson, (2009: 461) who proposes that the ‘Other’ does not have to be wholly negative, which it is not in Obama’s and Bush’s case, but the enemy does (ibid), which it is in the case of Trump, where immigrants are subjects of dehumanizing terms and stereotypes and also made into scapegoats.

7.2 Three presidents, three different speeches?

While ‘othering’ helps us to understand a difference between us and them, Tajfel extends this concept and elaborates on how we understand what ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ really implies. As mentioned, the first process in Tajfel’s social identity theory belongs to the process of categorization (Mangum & Block, 2018: 3). While it is quite clear that Trump, Obama, and Bush categorize themselves as Americans and the ‘others’ as non-citizens, they do so in varying terms which create different ideological impacts.
I would like to argue that when the three presidents categorize themselves and the American people, they have very different perception of what it means to be American, and as a result this influences the remaining two processes of the theory.

Specifically, while Trump focuses on mass deportation and building a physical barrier to keep American’s and the ‘others’ separated, Bush and Obama focus on doing what is best for the American people and the rest of the people that live in America that contribute to the society, in other words immigrants (undocumented and documented).

Perhaps is this the difference between patriotism and nationalism that Tajfel observed (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363-368). Obama and Bush clearly categorized themselves and the American people, as a warm welcoming society that is not afraid and not much unlike immigrants, exclaim a patriotic sentiment with everyone’s interest in mind, while Trump presented the American ‘self’ as victims of immigrant crime and focused on the ‘burdens’ created by immigration and as a result exclaim a strong sentiment of nationalism that focuses on who belongs and who does not, and thus who should be removed and kept out.

Thus, in the second step of Tajfel’s theory where we adopt the category and the social identity that we observed as characteristic for our group and adopt the behavior of what we perceive belongs to the group we identify with, will differ depending on how we perceive oneself (McLeod, 2008). As such, as all the three presidents categorize themselves as Americans, what it means to be American is clearly different for them, and as such their behavior, and political ideology will differ. Obama and Bush exclaim strong ties to their national identification just as well as Trump does, but they also exclaim a strong sentiment for democratic values that built the US. The strong sentiment for democratic values is what differs nationalism from patriotism (Wagner, 2003: 363-368).

In detail, the strong attachment to democratic values is demonstrated in quotes such as ‘we are a nation of immigrants’ where the two presidents highlight the importance of a democratic society with equal treatment for all. Trump on the other hand only exclaims a sentiment to national identification as focus is largely on exclusion, in forms of deportation, a physical barrier, and scapegoating. No forms of inclusion are mentioned, while Obama’s and Bush’s central premise revolves on in which way the American society could come up with a plan for all.

As such when we reach Tajfel’s last step, namely social comparison, it is quite clear that the perception of the ‘self’, determines (McLeod, 2008), how Trump, Obama and Bush compare themselves and the US society, to immigrants. Trump’s strong identification with American national identity does as with accordance to Tajfel’s theory
As mentioned, a lot of Trump’s discourse focuses on the matter of intrusion. He mentions that crimes would not happen if ‘illegal’ immigrants had not been residing ‘illegally’ on American soil. As such according to social identity theory immigration poses a threat due to the fact that it by nature could be seen as an intrusion into a geographical area (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363-368), which it seems to be to Trump.

Moreover, Tajfel’s theory proposes that one of the reasons for intergroup conflict could be a competition and restriction of resources (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363-368), and while all three presidents argue that undocumented migration strains the American economy, only one of them blames the immigrants themselves. Obama and Bush saw this as a matter of a broken system and argued that many undocumented immigrants would like the chance to pay taxes and ‘get right’ with the law.

Trump however used a hyperbolic tendency to 1) exaggerate the sentiments of the society, 2) exaggerate the amount and character of immigration and 3) exaggerate the effects of it in accordance to Claridge’s discussion (2011: 225-227), that he also further pairs with metaphors such as “America’s heart” to paint a stronger picture as metaphors allow the speaker to let people relate to him and his thoughts (Lakoff & Johnsen, 2003: pp. 8-11).

As we established in section 5.1.3 the first group of hyperboles works as a legitimizing tool, and as according to Tajfel’s theory legitimization is done when the ingroup wants to justify their position in society, and thus exclaims a bias to outgroups as a result (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363-368).

As such, in line with social identity theory (Wagner et. al., 2003: 363-368), Trump perception of immigrants being a threat, plays a significant role as a mediator in intergroup attitude and behavior. Naturally, in accordance to this theory immigration could be seen as a threat for many reasons (ibid), but Obama and Bush step away from this, and embrace immigrants as a contribution. The element of the threat (whether that be a threat of lack of resources or a possibility of violence) is according to Tajfel often a reason for anxiety, and thus as a result prejudice emerges (ibid).

This would in fact covert with Trump’s discourse, as the element of the threat does in fact seem to be the cause for many stereotypes that revolve around immigrants being a cause for anxiety in society, and perhaps is this prejudice also the reason for many factual
errors in his speech often delivered through a hyperbolic tendency, which are utilized to serve as a justification for his ideology. It would also suggest that as in accordance with Oppenheimer (2006: 270-272) hostility can be intensified by increasing comparison, in this case by using the element of the threat as a mediator to increase differences between the ingroup and the outgroup, and would point to how Trump’s perception of immigrants as a threat, is reproduced by himself and utilized as a justification.

Reverting back to Tajfel’s central hypothesis of social identity theory, namely that the ingroup will discriminate the outgroup in order to enhance the self-esteem of the ‘self’, which can result in racism (McLeod, 2008), is where Tajfel’s theory seems to be more applicable to Trump, rather than Bush and Obama. The central discourse in Trump’s speech is to devaluate the outgroup (as criminals, rapists, murderer etc.) while uplifting the ingroup (as heroes, brave), while Obama and Bush uplift the ‘self’, by making the outgroup a part of the ingroup. An example would be how immigration has made the US a society with advantages over other.
8 Conclusion

In this thesis I asked, how immigrants were portrayed by the three recent presidents of the US, in which way the speeches differed. To achieve this aim I used the concepts of the ‘Other’ and enemy images, and social identity theory.

Firstly, I found that while statistics of previous research pointed to a large division between the political blocks, Obama, a democrat - and Bush - a republican, had similar portrayal. In fact, Obama built his portrayal on his predecessor. While Bush did focus very much on increasing border security, he devoted most of his speech to praising immigrants, and giving way to undocumented immigrants to get right with the law. Obama followed this mindset, and as Bush included examples of success stories among undocumented immigrants and even compared them to his own children.

On the contrary, Trump had a rather drastic approach. Descriptions were polarized and captured through extremes and as such ended up being reductionist. No plan was given for undocumented immigrants, other than mass-deportation and building a wall, as a solution to shut immigrants out completely. What followed was also derogatory terms, scapegoating and extreme comparisons. Immigrants were portrayed as criminals, rapists, brutal murderers and the reason for the many deaths of American citizens due to crime and drug trafficking. Through language the presidents created their discourses on immigrants, that came to be a representational system for immigrants.

The results came to be conclusive with previous research and did covert with the concepts and theory. As such this thesis came to the conclusion that while ‘Othering’ is a psychological process that we all engage in, Trump takes that concept and adds the element of the threat to it. While Obama and Bush saw immigrants as the ‘Other’, they did so in positive ways, and in many cases even blurred the distinction between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’. As in accordance to the concept of enemy images, Trump added a threatful element to the description he provided of immigrants. It became clear that antagonism and hostility towards immigrants is largely influenced by the representation the president of the host country provides and could be either weakened or strengthened by the need for polarized comparisons. While the immigrant remained the ‘Other’, in a harmless way to Obama and Bush, Trump added a threat through the different tools of language such as a certain way to name people, hyperboles, and metaphors, and thus contributes to sustaining an enemy image, to further his political ideology.
Moreover, social identity theory allowed me to understand the possible processes the president’s engaged in while portraying immigrants. Through social identity theory, the author of this thesis came to conclude that perhaps in the initial step (categorization) of the process, we determine how the remaining processes will play out and how we will view the ‘Other’. Perhaps, does the ‘self’, and in this case the attachment to either patriotism or nationalism, decide the remaining steps in the process, as the perception of the ‘self’ influences our behavior when we adapt the identity that we believe belongs to us through step two (social identification), and as such decides in which way we portray immigrants, when we reach the last step of the process – social comparison.

Specifically, the author concluded that Obama’s and Bush’s speeches demonstrated a sentiment for democratic values, as well as national identification, and as a result when it came to the second step of the process proposed in social identity theory, the strong sentiment to democratic values could not covert with outgroup derogation, where in Trump’s case on the other hand it did. The strong attachment to national identity demonstrated by the desire to separate, mass-deport, and build a physical barrier in order to intensify who is American and who is not, results in a stronger comparison of the ingroup and outgroup, and ends up strengthening the antagonism towards the outgroup by utilizing the element of the threat delivered through certain wording, hyperbolic tendencies and metaphors.

Therefore, it is clear that three different presidents deliver three different speeches, all influenced by their perception of who a true American is, but two of them, on opposing political blocks had more similarities than one might initially assume. For two of them, America is ‘a nation of immigrants’ and always will be so, while for one America’s heart continues to break due to immigration. One might wonder, is America then still a society for immigrants and what does the future entail?
9 Future Research

While conducting this research I observed that most of the discourse in the analyzed speeches were targeting Latin American immigrants. For future research I would suggest to elaborate on how the concepts of ‘race’ and ‘ethnicity’ interlink with the findings of this paper. After analyzed the speeches, I asked myself, ‘are all immigrants equal?’, and which ones suffer the most as a consequence of discursively derogatory claims? Previous research in this paper pointed to a shift in ‘race baiting’ (from targeting black people to targeting Latinos), and the findings of this paper did in fact mostly revolve around immigrants crossing the Southern Border (therefore focus was mainly on Latinos), and thus, a further deeper research on this topic would be of value to the field of IMER. Also, the psychological approach to the matter of this thesis certainly is of value, but perhaps could future research build on this topic through different approaches such as more sociological, or economic. In this way future research could complement my humble contribution by adding different points of views.
10 Works cited

10.1 Literature and webpages


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