



The Representation of Immigrants  
A Critical Discourse Analysis of Donald Trump's Immigration  
Speech in the Presidential Campaign of 2016

Banan Bara

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Supervisor: Soraya Tharani

# Table of Contents

|          |   |           |
|----------|---|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b><i>Introduction</i></b> .....                        | <b>1</b>  |
| 1.1      | <b>The Aim</b> .....                                    | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>2</b> | <b><i>Background</i></b> .....                          | <b>3</b>  |
| 2.1      | <b>Situational Background</b> .....                     | <b>3</b>  |
| 2.2      | <b>Theoretical Background</b> .....                     | <b>6</b>  |
| 2.2.1    | The definition and origin of CDA .....                  | 6         |
| 2.2.2    | The principles of CDA .....                             | 6         |
| 2.2.3    | Fairclough’s three-dimensional model of discourse ..... | 7         |
| 2.2.4    | Van Dijk’s ideological square.....                      | 7         |
| 2.3      | <b>Specific background</b> .....                        | <b>11</b> |
| <b>3</b> | <b><i>Design of the Present Study</i></b> .....         | <b>13</b> |
| 3.1      | <b>Data</b> .....                                       | <b>13</b> |
| 3.2      | <b>Method</b> .....                                     | <b>14</b> |
| <b>4</b> | <b><i>Results and discussion</i></b> .....              | <b>14</b> |
| 4.1      | <b>Threat</b> .....                                     | <b>14</b> |
| 4.2      | <b>Economic burden</b> .....                            | <b>18</b> |
| 4.3      | <b>Different, deviance</b> .....                        | <b>19</b> |
| <b>5</b> | <b><i>Conclusion</i></b> .....                          | <b>23</b> |
| <b>6</b> | <b><i>References:</i></b> .....                         | <b>1</b>  |

## Abstract

CDA is a multi-disciplinary approach to discourse which study the relationship between discourse, power and ideology. This makes the application of it on political discourse very suitable since it can be applied to analyse the specific structures of language and ideologies used by politicians to influence the recipient's mind and hence their actions. This paper, based on a CDA's framework, investigates the connection between the discursive strategies and the ideological strategies used by Donald Trump to represent immigrants during the 2016 presidential campaign. In so doing this study utilizes Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model (2001) of doing CDA and Van Dijk's ideological Square (2006,2011) to analyse Trump's speech on immigration delivered in Phoenix, Arizona during the elections of 2016. The results have shown that when talking about immigrants Trump represents them only negatively by describing them as being a threat, economic burden and deviant. This is done by exploiting the strategies of actor description, polarization, victimization, empathy, topos, number game, illustrations, lexicalization, syntax, predicational strategies, comparison, evidentiality, local coherence, implication and generalization. This led to the conclusion that by choosing to emphasize the bad actions of immigrants and ignoring their positive actions, Trump was addressing and appealing to the White Americans only.

# 1 Introduction

It is known that the United States has long been a nation of immigrants that is made up of different nationalities from all over the globe. Throughout the history of the United States, immigration has played an important role as being the major source of population growth and cultural change (Hirschman,2005). Handlin (1973) demonstrates that immigration is not just a part of the American history; it is an essential cause which contributed much in originating America's dynamic character and identity (as cited in Hirschman,2005). Even though the attitudes of the American government and people towards immigrants have not always been positive this does not change the image of the United States as being a land of opportunities and refuge. This image has become America's prominent national identity at home and abroad (Hirschman, 2005). Throughout its history the United States has always been the land of hope and opportunity for many immigrants who in search for a better life and in an attempt to get away from the difficulties, hardships and the intolerable living conditions in their home countries may enter the States either legally or illegally.

Saying that the United States is a nation of immigrants is a truism since the United States was settled by successive waves of immigration throughout its history (Martin, 2011). Thus, the history of American immigration can be viewed in four periods: the colonial period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, the second period from around 1830 to 1860, the third period from 1880 to 1924 and the last period from 1965 to the present day (Martin, 2011). In each of these periods many different national groups, ethnicities and races entered the United States. Over the years and at every time the United States was receiving a new wave of immigrants, the attitudes toward newcomers by those who came before were vacillating between welcoming and restricting (Sellers, 1982). Maxine S. Sellers (1982) states that arguments used to advocate or oppose the arrival of new immigrants began with the establishment of the colonies and remained consistent to the present day.

The supporters of a liberal immigration policy (Seller, 1982) would argue that since America has always been a nation of immigrants, new immigrants, like their earlier predecessors, should also be given the right to new opportunities. They view immigrants as a cultural and economic asset that can enrich the American life through their diversity, rather than being a burden that weakens the economy. Their argument is built on the belief that the United States should always be the haven of the poor and the oppressed and that there are

enough resources for more people. Conversely, the defenders of a restrictive immigration policy (Seller, 1982) think that immigration poses a threat to the nation's economic, political and cultural welfare. According to them the immigrants' lack of knowledge about the American political system, their different ethnic, religious and ideological backgrounds might undermine the nation's unity and threaten its political institutions. The restrictionists support their argument (Seller, 1982) by assuming that the United States is receiving the worst people of the immigrants' nations not the best, and that the country is not able to support any additional people because its resources are limited.

Seller (1982) states that these two opposing arguments "have been voiced in varying fashions throughout American history" and they were "expressed in specific policy debates and embodied in America's immigration policy" (p.140). Thus, based on this view it can be said that these two arguments are now being voiced in the policies of the two main parties of the American political system; the Democratic party and the Republican Party. The Republican party prefers tighter immigration restrictions whereas the other party, the Democratic, leans toward a relaxed enforcement (Kafura & Hammer, 2019). These two arguments are also used by the candidates of USA presidential races to debate about the issue of immigration which sometimes constitutes a very important topic in presidential elections. In the 2016 presidential election, for example, immigration took a center stage and it was a signature part of the campaign of the Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump (Saine, 2016).

During the 2016 election cycle, Donald Trump took a hard-line immigration stance making the opposition to immigration a key issue to his political strategy (Klinkner, 2017). Throughout the campaign he used inflammatory language and rhetoric to talk about immigrants. At many times during the campaign he talked about immigrants as being "killers" drug smugglers" and "rapists" presenting them as a threat to America's safety and American values. Adopting a critical discourse analysis approach, this study is going to investigate the discourse structures and ideological structures of Donald Trump's speech on immigration during the 2016 presidential campaign.

## 1.1 The Aim

Critical discourse analysis, CDA, explores the relationships between language, ideology and power, and because of this the application of it on political discourse, specially to analyse political speeches, is very suitable. CDA as a theory and a methodology can be used to

analyse the specific language structures and ideologies used by politicians as a means to influence the recipients' minds in the speaker's own interest.

Using Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA (2001) as a framework and also utilizing Van Dijk's ideological square of representation (2006,2011) this paper explores the connection between the linguistic structures and the ideological structures embedded in Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign's rhetoric. The aim of this study is to reveal how the discourse of Trump's presidential campaign represents immigrants. Thus, this paper will try to answer the following questions:

1. What are the linguistic strategies used by Donald Trump to represent immigrants?
2. How do these linguistics strategies relate to the ideology of the republican party?
3. How do the political ideologies and power relations visible in the representation of immigrants in the speech relate to the context of the American society?

## 2 Background

### 2.1 Situational Background

Through the 2016 election season Trump made a handful of promises that he was going to do in relation to the issue of immigration if elected as the president of the United States. Among these promises was to build a wall on the southern border with Mexico and to deport all illegal immigrants. Other promises were to establish a ban on Muslims entering the U.S., to limit legal immigration, and to severely limit the Syrian refugees into the country. He also promised to immediately terminate Barack Obama's two executive amnesties; Deferred Action for Parents of Americans ( a plan by Obama administration which grants deferred action status to undocumented immigrants who have lived in USA since 2010 or who have children who are American citizens or permanent residents of USA), and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals ( an immigration policy by Barack Obama which allows eligible immigrants youth who came to the United States when they were children to receive a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation and a work permit in the U.S.), (Pierce and Capps, 2016).

Despite making opposition to immigration central to his political strategy, which manifested itself in his campaign that was characterized by prejudiced and hostile rhetoric toward immigrants, Trump won the 2016 elections. This made many media commentators and political analysts wonder whether he won despite of this strategy or because of it. In fact, this strategy of opposing immigration by Trump is not a new one and it is not a sudden

drastic divergence from traditional Republican policy and ideology. It is a tried and successful strategy that has been developed by the Republican party over decades (Hajnal & Abrajano, 2016). Steve Jonas (2019) contends that the xenophobic part of the Republican party is not something new rather it is something that has been in the DNA of the party since its beginnings. According to Jonas (2019), Millard Fillmore was the 13<sup>th</sup> president of the United States and the last Whig to hold that office. In 1851, Fillmore denied his party's presidential nomination and joined the American Party which was known then as the "Know Nothing" party (a far-right nativist political party in the US which flourished in the mid-1850s and was known as an anti-immigrants, and xenophobic party) and became their presidential candidate that same year. Fillmore's party was known for its hostility towards the Irish Catholic immigrants who from the 1830s to the mid-1840s were fleeing poverty and famine in their homeland. Later Fillmore became one of the founding fathers of the Republican Party and brought with him the ideology of the Know Nothing Party where it aggravated over the years (Jonas, 2019). After this, the restrictive policy of the Republican Party became so clear and manifested itself in the many laws and acts legislated by the party. In 1875 for example, the first anti-immigrant law the Page Act was enacted by the Republicans and it prevented Chinese women to enter the country. In 1882 they passed the Chinese Exclusion Act and later the Immigration Act of 1924 which prohibited immigration from all Asian countries and set quotas on the number of immigrants coming from Eastern and Southern Europe (Jonas, 2019). This xenophobic part of the party continued until the mid-1960s when the party accepted to pass the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 which is now considered to be as an extraordinary liberal policy of the Republican Party. But "with xenophobia gradually rearing its ugly head in portions of the Republican Party in this century Trump has put it back to the head of the line of Republican policy" (Jonas,2019).

In recent times, the policy gap between the Democratic party and the Republican party on the issue of immigration has become very clear. And despite the fact that elites in both parties have various views on this issue the political figures who have been most vocal about threat imposed by immigrants come from the Republican side (Abrajano and Hajnal, 2017). Many Republican politicians like Mike Huckabee and Tom Tancredo and many conservative commentators like Bill O'Reilly, Ann Coulter and Rush Limbaugh have regularly called attention to the troubles of undocumented immigrants and have called for reforms to deport all the existing illegal immigrants and to limit new immigration (Abrajano and Hajnal,2017). Even representatives of the moderate bloc of the party such as Mitt Romney have sometimes borrowed elements from the anti-immigrant platform like self-deportation (an approach

supported by many conservatives as the main means to reduce the numbers of illegal immigrants in USA. It means that illegal immigrants will voluntarily choose to leave the country if the living conditions for them have been made unbearable), and dissent to the Dream Act (a bill in Congress that proposes to give undocumented students a chance to become permanent residents and provides them with a path to citizenship regardless of the status they got from their undocumented parents), (Abrajano and Hajnal,2017). The Democratic leaders on the other hand have either voiced their support for a limited number of immigrants' rights or they stayed away from the issue completely. Abrajano and Hajnal (2017) state that these two different policy stances of the two main parties of the American political system are reflected in votes in Congress and at the state level.

Due to the growing numbers of immigrants, the importance of immigration, the divide between the Democratic and Republican party on the issues of immigration and the relation of Latino voters with the democratic party, the whites of America are now considering these issues as threatening factors that are pushing them to the right politically (Abrajano and Hajnal, 2017). Long before the arrival of Trump on the presidential scene the Republican party has been resorting to the strategy of scapegoating immigrants. By presenting immigrants as the reason that is causing much of America's ills and by promising to restrict the flow of immigration, the Republican party has been able to garner white voters (Abrajano and Hajnal 2015 as cited in Abrajano and Hajnal 2016). According to exit polls of 2016 elections, white voters who made up 69% of the total voters, voted 58% for Trump and 37% for Clinton (Henley, 2016). More specifically, many media analysts and commentators explained the success of Donald trump as a result of the support that he garnered from the white-working class. According to these analysts Trump appealed to the whites of the working class because his political rhetoric addressed issues of concerns to them like economy, and immigration (Prysby, 2017). One of the many explanations of Trump's appeal to the white working class (Prysby,2017) could be seen in terms of cultural resentments. Based on this view, white working-class voters are more likely to have negative views and feelings toward immigrants and they were supportive to Trump because they saw in him the political leader who would reconfirm the values of the white identity or because they felt that he would not be the one who would support the benefits that immigrants were receiving (Confessore 2016; Freedman 2015; McElwee 2016 as cited in Prysby, 2017).



## 2.2 Theoretical Background

### 2.2.1 The definition and origin of CDA

According to Van Dijk (2015) critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an analytical approach that investigates how social power abuse, dominance and inequalities are reproduced and enacted through text and talk in a social and political context. CDA is a body of works that follows the functionalist definition of discourse which takes into consideration the social ideas and knowledge that people unconsciously use to interpret language (Richardson, 2007).

Richardson (2007) states that “Research which adopts this definition of discourse assumes that language is used to mean something and to do something and that ‘meaning’ and ‘doing’ are linked to context of its usage” (p.24). This means that in order to be able to understand discourse it is not enough to analyse how sentences are interconnected and related to each other in a way that forms a coherent and cohesive text. Rather it is important to link this doing and meaning of discourse to the wider socio-cultural, political, institutional and material contexts of a specific communicative act which is the exact aim of CDA. Gee (1999) illustrates that a dialogical relationship exists between discourse and society and thus language both reflects the social reality and contributes to the construction of it. Since language both shapes and is shaped by societies, it would be reasonable to say that language in use or discourse also contributes to the reproductions of social inequalities (Richardson, 2007). Being a form of challenge and resistance that examines the connection between language, power and ideology, CDA tries to respond to and uncover these social inequalities (Richardson, 2007).

### 2.2.2 The principles of CDA

Fairclough and Wodak’s (1997) define the main theoretical and methodological principles of CDA. As stated in the first principle, CDA is a problem-oriented interdisciplinary approach that intervenes on the side of the dominated group against the dominating one. The second principle states that “power relations are discursive” (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) and this means that these relations are exercised and negotiated in discourse. The third principle indicates that discourse constitutes society and culture because there is a two-way relationship between society/culture and discourse. This denotes that every instance of language use helps to reproduce or change social realities and thus power relations too. Fairclough and Wodak (1997) refer to three broad domains of social life that are constituted by discourse; “representations of the world, social relations between people, and people’s social and personal identities” (p.370). Another principle of CDA is that discourse does

ideological work. According to this principle ideologies are “particular ways of representing and constructing society which reproduce unequal relations of power, relation of domination and exploitation” (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 371). In addition to the previous principles discourse is intertextual and historical. In order for a text to be understood, it must be interpreted and discussed in relation to socio-cultural historical knowledge and intertextuality (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Last but not least is the principle that considers discourse as a form of social action. CDA in relation to this mode is a “socially committed scientific paradigm” whose application can contribute to a change in discourse and power patterns in certain institutions like the use of non-racist language (Fairclough & Wodak, 1991).

### 2.2.3 Fairclough’s three-dimensional model of discourse

There are many approaches for doing CDA such as Teun A. Van Dijk’s, Ruth Wodak’s and Norman Fairclough’s. For the purpose of this study I chose to use Fairclough’s three-dimensional model of doing CDA because of its suitability to this study. Norman Fairclough (2001) explains how this model analyses discourse in relation to three main dimensions. The first one is the “text dimension” which corresponds to the analysis of the linguistic elements of a text and this includes the examination of the choices and patterns in vocabulary, grammar and cohesion (Fairclough, 2001). The second dimension is the “discursive practice”. In this dimension the analyst tries to study the conditions around a text production, distribution and consumption in society. It is also at this stage where the attention should be paid to intertextuality. The last dimension in Fairclough’s framework is the “social practice” which is concerned with how discourse (re)produces, challenges or transfers power relations and ideologies in society (Fairclough, 2001).

### 2.2.4 Van Dijk’s ideological square

According to Van Dijk (2011) ideological discourse is defined as a discourse based on underlying ideologies and because of this it often exhibits some of the structures of these ideologies. But it should be noticed that the structures of ideologies are different from the ways in which these ideologies are expressed in discourse. In a specific communicative situation and because the context models of this situation prevent direct ideological expressions as being inappropriate or bad, ideologies may not be expressed at all in discourse or they may be expressed indirectly. As demonstrated by Van Dijk (2011), there are general categories of the structure of ideologies such as the identity, actions, goals, norms and values, group relations and resources of a group. These categories form a general schema that shows the way groups develop a self-concept as a result of their collective and shared experiences in

society. Thus, the ideological structures of discourse are the structures that focus on what expresses or reproduces the identity, goals, actions, norms and values, group relations and the resources of a group (Van Dijk, 2011). One main category of ideology structures that is manifested in ideological discourse and that is relevant to this study is the category of group relations which is the representation of the relations between our own (in-) group and the other (out-) group represented by the pronouns *Us* and *Them* (Van Dijk,201). Group relations or membership is about who belongs or does not belong to us, how we distinguish ourselves from others and what position do we have in relation to others. Thus, the overall strategy of ideological discourse explained by Van Dijk (2011) characterizes the way we talk about ourselves and others and how we interact with them through a process of positive self-presentation and negative other presentation. This works through the following four principles:

- Emphasize positive things about Us.
- Emphasize negative things about Them.
- De-emphasize negative things about Us.
- De-emphasize positive things about Them.

These four principles form a conceptual square which Van Dijk calls the “ideological square” and they can be applied to the analysis of all levels of discourse structures like meaning, propositional structures, formal structures, sentence syntax, discourse forms, argumentation, rhetoric and action and interaction (Van Dijk, 2000).

### Categories of Ideological Discourse Analysis:

Van Dijk (2000,2006, 2011,2013), identified many strategies and techniques that could be used for the analysis of ideological discourse. In this study I choose to use only 16 of these strategies due to their suitability to the selected data and hence they suit the topic of the present study. The following is a brief description of these 16 selected strategies:

**Actor Descriptions:** People in discourses are defined and described according to our ideologies. Thus, members of the in-group tend to be described in neutral or positive terms whereas those of out-group in negative terms (Van Dijk, 2006). People in discourses also appear in many ways as individuals or members of groups and as the agents or the receivers of an action. They can be identified by their names, function or profession and in personal or impersonal roles (Van Dijk, 2000).

**Topos:** They are standardized and publicized topics which are used as “ready-mades” arguments in ideological discourse. The use of topoi as standard arguments serves as basic

criteria in argumentation as they do not need to be defended. Discourses against immigration replete with topoi that represent immigrants as being a “burden” to the country or a “threat” to welfare system or Western Culture (Van Dijk, 2000).

**Syntax:** the use of certain types of sentence structures could be ideological like the use of passive sentences which allows for the agent of an action to be implicit. The ideological use of passive and active sentences is that it mitigates the active role of in-group members in negative action whereas it emphasizes the active role of out-group members in negative actions (Van Dijk, 2013).

**Local Coherence:** Is how a sequence of actions, events, or situations are mutually related. This coherence could be either referential and this is when propositions are related to each other in a cause and consequence relation, or functional, and this is when one proposition has a specific relation in respect to another one as being a “Generalization, Specification, Explanation or Example”. Referential coherence is controlled by the subjective mental model that language users have of a communicative event and these models are ideologically based (Van Dijk, 2013).

**Lexicalization:** The choice of lexical items is a very clear and direct way of expressing ideological based opinions and attitudes. Thus, the choice of words being used to refer to the same thing or same meaning depend on the position, role, goals and point of view of the producer. Conservative discourse that opposes liberal immigration policies repletes with explicit negative expression about immigrants and their actions and thus applying the overall strategy of negative other presentation on the level of lexicon (Van Dijk, 2006).

**Victimization:** The representation of immigrants and ethnic minorities by the binary US-THEM pairs of ingroups-outgroups. In such a binary the others are usually represented in negative terms like being a threat or danger and the ingroups as victims to this threat (Van Dijk, 2006).

**Polarization:** Is the division of people into categories like ingroup (us) and out group (them). This can be rhetorically reinforced by using attributes and properties of us and them that are semantically each other’s opposites (Van Dijk, 2000).

**Implication:** is a strategy by which speakers can leave large parts of discourse implicit to be inferred by the recipients from their shared knowledge or attitudes. In discourse about immigration this strategy could be used to communicate meanings whose explicit expression could be understood as biased or racist (Van Dijk, 2006).

**Propositional Structures (Predicational Strategies):** Local discourse meaning is arranged in propositions and the internal structures of these propositions have some interesting properties. For example, depending on the underlying ideologies of discourse, the predicates of propositions may be more or less negative or positive. In conservative political discourse, for instance, the selected words to talk about minorities, immigrants or refugees express underlying negative predicates about the Other (Van Dijk, 2006).

**Evidentiality:** Is the references to authority figures or institutions in order to make the opinions and claims expressed by the speaker seem more plausible. Evidentials provide objectivity, reliability and hence credibility (Van Dijk, 2006).

**Openness and Honesty:** the argumentative claim or norm that “we should talk openly (honestly) about these things” is becoming nearly a topos in current immigration debates. When using this strategy speakers are suggesting that their arguments satisfies the positive values of honesty and openness and at the same time they would be involved in negative other presentation or explicit derogation (Van Dijk, 2000).

**Empathy:** it is the showing of empathy with the plight of refugees or with the in-group members (the poor taxpayers) depending on the ideological and political point of view of the speakers (Van Dijk, 2000).

**Illustrations and Examples:** In order to explain the ideas they support and make them more plausible, speakers usually give concrete examples in the form of a vignette or short story. These concrete stories are a powerful argumentative move which have a more emotional impact on the audience and are better memorized (Van Dijk, 2006).

**Comparison:** It is different from rhetorical similes and it typically occurs in talk about refugees and minorities. It can be manifested when speakers compare ingroups and outgroups (Van Dijk, 2006).

**Number Game:** The frequent use of numbers in discourse about immigration is a well-known strategy to represent credibility and objectivity. And since numbers and statistics are the primary means by which objectivity can be conveyed, they are used by speakers to represents their points as being facts and not mere opinions or impressions (Van Dijk, 2006).

**Generalization:** avoiding giving concrete stories about immigrants, speakers in racist discourses may also make generalizations and by so doing formulating prejudices about generalized negative properties of immigrants (Van Dijk, 2000).

### 2.3 Specific background

The present study is not the first of its kind. Many similar studies have been carried out to investigate the connection between language, power and ideology. By also utilizing a CDA approach, these studies were trying to uncover the relationships between the discursive strategies and ideological strategies impeded in some political speeches and news reports. For example, Akbar and Abbas (2019) have critically examined the representation of two categories of minority groups, namely, immigrants and Syrian refugees in two speeches by Donald Trump delivered across two periods of time; pre-and post-presidency. By means of adopting eight strategies out of Van Dijk's fourteen Strategies of Critical Epistemic Discourse Analysis (2011) and by using Van Dijk's Ideological Square (2011) they wanted to examine how knowledge in relation to these two groups is being expressed and to identify the local ideologies related to negative representation of these two groups. The results showed that rather than being a mere persuasive means to win the 2016 elections, Trump's negative statements of immigrants and Syrian Refugees is owing to a racist and discriminatory ideology that Trump adopts against them. This is supported by the lack of credibility in Trump's statements to support his negative representation of these two groups (Akbar & Abbas, 2019).

Similarly, KhosraviNik (2010) has carried out a CDA study to investigate the discursive strategies employed by the British newspapers between 1996-2006 to represent refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants (RASIM). The project used both a quantitative and qualitative down sampling technique in order to get a manageable number of articles (439) that take into consideration the newspapers' ideological strands, types and the relevant world events. His aim was trying to discover some macro scale typical qualities associated with RASIM in the British newspapers between 1996-2006 and the relations of these qualities to socio-political developments in Britain and the world. In addition, he wanted to see if there are any differences in the representation of RASIM in different British newspapers. To analyse these texts, KhosraviNik applied the analytical categories of Discourse-Historical Approach to CDA by Ruth Wodak (2001), some linguistic categories of Van Leeuwen's (1996) socio-semantic approach to discourse analysis, many analytical categories of Van Dijk's (1991) and Lakoff and Johnson's (2003) metaphors and Chilton's (2004) political metaphors. The result of the study showed that the general macro-structure surrounding the representation of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants bear overall identical evaluations and discourses on these three groups are influenced by the similar negative macro-structures.

The study also found that there is a variety of differences in the representation of RASIMM among various British newspapers. After comparing the representation of RASIM in the quality newspapers and in the tabloids' the analyses showed that the referential, the predicational and argumentation strategies were the most common strategies adopted by the tabloid. And most references to negative common topoi in the tabloid are implied through the use of metaphors. Whereas the quality conservative relied basically on argumentation and predicational strategies. These strategies help to construct a very clear "us" vs. "them" categorisation and by this attributing negative evaluation to all people perceived as "the other". In general, the quality conservative newspapers create a less obviously xenophobic impression of RASIM while the tabloid easily reproduces the general existing prejudices and presents itself as "a consumer and proliferators of negativity". When it comes to the liberal and conservative's account of RASIM the difference lies in the degree of aggregation and collectivisation vs. humanisation and individualisation. That is the conservative always constructs a unanimous identity for RASIM and does not construct a normal human account of them, and this is by avoiding addressing different aspects of their lives. The liberal's account on the other hand constructs a picture for RASIM where they are involved in many activities and it accounts for the differences among them. Another difference between the liberal and the conservative is discourse topics. The liberal includes a wider variety of topics related to RASIM while the conservative ignores any topic that does not fit into the macro structure of negativisation of RASIM.

Mohammadi and Javadi (2017) conducted a critical discourse analysis of Donald Trump's language use in the presidential campaign of 2016. They wanted to discover the interrelation of discourse structures and ideological structures in the acceptance speech of Donald Trump in the 2016 Presidential Election. Using Fairclough's three-dimensional approach of doing CDA (2010), Fairclough's (1996) ten questions model for text analysis, and Van Dijk's ideological square they wanted to unmask the use of power and hidden strategies implied in language use. Out of Fairclough's ten questions they used only the first seven ones since the study is pertained only to the levels of vocabulary and grammar. They analysed relational, expressive and experiential values of the wordings, metaphors and grammatical structures of Trump's language use in this speech. After carrying out the analysis they found that the language is simple and easy to understand but very provocative, powerful and persuasive. It contains simple words and short sentences connected by conjunctions "and" and "but". The simple language of Trump is the simplest way to show power and it can help him minimize the distance between himself and the audience. The

relational, experiential and expressive values in the text are expressed in the way how Trump tries to appear very sympathetic and responsible for the problems of the American people and in the form of parallelism which can help him stand in a good position. The study also showed that through the use of wording, rewording and over wording Trump wanted to show that his rival Hilary Clinton is a careless and negligent person who is responsible for the catastrophic events in the country. Mohammadi and Javadi's study found that oppositional statements and negative evaluation are the experiential and expressive values of the text and that Trump de-emphasizes the bad actions of in-group and emphasizes the bad actions of out-group. This is done by the use of emphatic words and sentences in an attempt by Trump to present a dystopian view of America and by so doing presenting himself as the only saviour of the country. At the macro level the study came to the conclusion that Trump's language use marks him as the representative of big domestic businessmen and entrepreneurs who are affected badly by the current economic situation and who are also suffering from the antisocial behaviour of migrants. The present study differs from Mohammadi & Javadi's study in that the data used to conduct the analysis is different. The present study uses Trump's speech on immigration delivered in Phoenix, Arizona in 2016. It also differs in that it uses Fairclough's three-dimensional model to do the analysis. In addition, the analysis of this study is applied to all levels of discourse whereas Mohammadi & Javadi's study is pertained to the level of vocabulary and grammar.

### 3 Design of the Present Study

#### 3.1 Data

The Data selected for this study is the transcript of Donald Trump's speech on Immigration delivered at the Phoenix Convention Center, in Phoenix Arizona on August 31, 2016. The speech was one hour and thirteen minutes long which comprised 6851 words and was delivered in front of a live audience mostly formed by Trump and Republican supporters. When gathering the data, I decided to gather all the speeches and remarks which deal with the issue of immigration and which were delivered between June 16, 2015, when Trump announced his candidacy, and January 20, 2017, when he delivered his inaugural address. I could then get three, two remarks and one Address. After that I read very carefully all these three speeches and decided to use the one on immigration. The reason for why I chose this speech is because it is very comprehensive and detailed when it comes to the topic of immigration and revealed for the first time a series of plans and policies that Trump would



undertake on immigration if he wins the election. I had access to the data via *The American Presidency Project* at the University of California, Santa Barbara which is an internet source for presidential documents.

### 3.2 Method

The present study is designed according to the principles of qualitative approach of researching. This approach is an interpretive approach based on words rather than on numbers to provide a better understanding of concepts, thoughts and experiences (Streefkerk,2020). It helps to give a deeper insight of topics in order to gain knowledge about people's motivations, thinking and attitudes (Streefkerk,2020). Thus, the qualitative approach is appropriate for this study because it suits its data, which is not a large number of data, and its aim, which is to investigate and interpret the patterns of language used by Trump to talk about immigrants. To answer the research questions proposed in the aim this paper utilizes an interpretive analytical method of research based on Fairclough's model of CDA (2001) and Van Dijk's ideological square (2006,2011). In order to carry out the analysis I divided the transcript into three parts. Each part of them represents one specific theme and consists of several utterances. Then I gave numbers to the utterances to make it possible to refer to them as examples in the analysis.

## 4 Results and discussion

The results are three extracts taken from Trump's speech on immigration delivered on August 31, 2016 in Phoenix Arizona. The first numbered extracts in each section represent the examples taken from this speech and which I will analyse by applying the strategies explained in the theoretical part.

### 4.1 Threat

- 1) But if we're going to make our immigration system work, then we have to be prepared to talk honestly and without fear about these important and very sensitive issues. For instance, we have to listen to the concerns that working people, our forgotten working people, have over the record pace of immigration and its impact on their jobs, wages, housing, schools, tax bills and general living conditions.
- 2) These are valid concerns expressed by decent and patriotic citizens from all backgrounds, all over. We also have to be honest about the fact that not everyone who

seeks to join our country will be able to successfully assimilate. Sometimes it's just not going to work out. It's our right, as a sovereign nation to choose immigrants that we think are the likeliest to thrive and flourish and love us.

3) Then there is the issue of security. Countless innocent American lives have been stolen because our politicians have failed in their duty to secure our borders and enforce our laws like they have to be enforced. I have met with many of the great parents who lost their children to sanctuary cities and open borders. So many people, so many, many people. So sad. They will be joining me on this stage in a little while and I look forward to introducing, these are amazing, amazing people.

Countless Americans who have died in recent years would be alive today if not for the open border policies of this administration and the administration that causes this horrible, horrible thought process, called Hillary Clinton.

4) This includes incredible Americans like 21-year-old Sarah Root. The man who killed her arrived at the border, entered Federal custody and then was released into the U.S., think of it, into the U.S. community under the policies of the White House Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. Weak, weak policies. Weak and foolish policies.

5) He was released again after the crime, and now he's out there at large. Sarah had graduated from college with a 4.0, top student in her class one day before her death.

6) Then there is the case of 90-year-old Earl Olander, who was brutally beaten and left to bleed to death in his home, 90 years old and defenseless. The perpetrators were illegal immigrants with criminal records a mile long, who did not meet Obama administration standards for removal. And they knew it was going to happen.

7) A 2011 report from the Government Accountability Office found that illegal immigrants and other non-citizens, in our prisons and jails together, had around 25,000 homicide arrests to their names, 25,000.

The above extract of the speech is framed by the macro strategy of US vs Them through the use of polarization strategy which is enhanced by the use of argumentation and predicational strategies. In this part Trump effectively establishes the American citizens as the in-group members and represents them in positive terms as a direct contrast to the negative representation of immigrants, the out-group members. In the first two examples there is a manifestation of the “burden” topoi where immigrants are implicitly being represented as a

burden to the country's economy, education, housing and social services. This is done through the strategy of victimization by which Trump depicts the working American people as the real sufferers of the impacts of immigration policies. The social actors that can be identified in the first three examples are the in-group members, who are described by positive lexical items such as the noun phrases "forgotten working people" "great parents" "amazing people" and the adjectives "decent" "patriotic", and those who will be allowed to join the U.S. In example (2) Trump uses the strategy of honesty and openness to clearly categorizes people seeking to enter the country into two different categories; those who can assimilate and those who cannot as it is clear in the sentence "We also have to be honest about the fact that not everyone who seeks to join our country will be able to successfully assimilate". Then he specifies the ones who can belong to the in group and defines them positively by the relative clause "that we think are the likeliest to thrive and flourish and love us". And this can work as a legitimation and justification for the restrictionist biased immigration policies that he and his party want to enforce.

Example (3) exhibits another topos which is the topoi of danger and threat that immigrants impose to public safety. Also, as part of the general macro strategy of positive self-representation and negative other representation, the American citizens here are being victimized because they are the ones who lose their lives as a result to the current immigration policies. In the following sentence: "countless innocent American lives have been stolen..." Trump displays the American lives as the done tos who are affected by the criminality of the doers. The doers are not mentioned here but they could be clearly inferred by the recipients, from their shared knowledge that they have about this communicative event, as being the immigrants. The omitting of the doers here could be intentionally because Trump wants to focus on the failure of politicians to protect the innocent Americans and by so doing presenting himself in a positive way which can help him to persuade the audience to elect him. Through the strategy of showing empathy for the victimized in-group members he wants to represent himself as the direct contrast to these careless politicians in an attempt to situate himself as the agent of change who is going to save the Americans from the criminality of immigrants. This is somehow similar to the results of Mohammadi and Javadi (2017) study which showed that Trump wanted to represent a horrible image of America in order to present himself as the only salvation. This is also done through emphasizing the bad actions of the out-group and de-emphasizing the bad actions of the in-group by the use of emphatic words and sentences.

To defend the point that he makes in example (3) Trump gives concrete examples in the form of short stories (4), (5), (6) telling about the victimized Americans who were killed by illegal immigrants. Trump here utilizes the strategy of comparison to compare the in-group members with the out-group members and this is evident in the way how he describes the social actors in these examples. For instance, in examples (4) and (5) the American victim is being individualized as she is represented by her full name “Sarah Root” and her age “21 old”. She is also being functionalized through the representation of her in terms of her activities; a “student” and is also given the positive attribute of being smart through the prepositional phrase “with a 4.0,” and the noun phrase “top student in her class”. Whereas her killer is represented only in terms of his identity as being a “man”, and in terms of his negative actions as it is evident in the relative clause “who killed her” and the predicates “arrived at the border” and “entered federal custody”. Trump uses these lexical items that reflect crime and violence to enhance the association of illegal immigrants with criminality and by so doing contributing to the overall strategy of negative other representation.

These negative attitudes and beliefs which Trump has about immigrants in this speech could be understood by the recipients as biased and xenophobic. To avoid this misunderstanding and to represent himself as an objective and credible person he resorts to the strategy of evidentiality in example (7) by referring to a report from the Government Accountability Office. When referring to this report Trump only mentions that illegal immigrants and non-citizens had around 25000 homicide arrests to their names which according to Hee Lee and Kessler (2016) is correct but is at the same time misleading and lacks context. Hee Lee and Kessler (2016) state that this report that Trump cites collected reports from 2003 to 2009 to the Department of Justice’s State Criminal Alien Assistance Program which reimburses states and localities for convicting and incarcerating inmates of illegal or unknown immigration status. Five states with largest populations of such inmates (Arizona, California, Florida, New York and Texas) were involved in this study. The homicide arrests for this population were 25,064, which is what Trump states, but it comprised only 1 percent of the 2.9 million arrests they tracked in the study (Hee Lee & Kessler, 2016). The analysis of these examples shows some similarities with the results of Khosravini’s (2010) study. One of these similarities is the use of argumentation and predicational strategies in Conservative newspapers to talk about immigrants. And this works to construct the us vs them binary which represents all those perceived as the others in

negative terms. Another similarity is the choice to use only negative topics to talk about immigrants while avoiding at the same time to mention any positive attributes about them.

## 4.2 Economic burden

8) On top of that, illegal immigration costs our country more than \$113 billion dollars a year. While there are many illegal immigrants in our country who are good people, many, many, this doesn't change the fact that most illegal immigrants are lower skilled workers with less education, who compete directly against vulnerable American workers, and that these illegal workers draw much more out from the system than they can ever possibly pay back. And they're hurting a lot of our people that cannot get jobs under any circumstances.

9) And the same goes for government benefits. The Centre for Immigration Studies estimates that 62 percent of households headed by illegal immigrants use some form of cash or non-cash welfare programs like food stamps or housing assistance. Tremendous costs, by the way, to our country. Tremendous costs. This directly violates the federal public charge law designed to protect the United States Treasury. Those who abuse our welfare system will be priorities for immediate removal.

Here the negative representation of immigrants, specifically illegal immigrants, is done again through the topoi or the argument that they are a “burden” to the economy which is in line with the strategy of negative-other representation. The use of lexical items such as “costs”, “billion dollars”, “draw out”, “pay back”, “benefits”, and “welfare system” is a clear indication that illegal immigrants in these two examples are being discussed in terms of what they cost the country. To support the argument that illegal immigrants are being a financial burden Trump utilizes the rhetorical technique of number game. In a scientific culture that trusts in numbers and statistical thinking giving exact numbers like the noun phrase “\$113 billion dollars” showing the costs of illegal immigration on USA economy works to be a source of objectivity. This makes the recipient think of Trump as a reliable and trustworthy person who is not making biased or false judgements and opinions about immigrants. Additionally, the negative meanings associated with the out-group are being emphasized through the predicates of local propositions. In examples (8) and (9) there is a series of negative predicates with their negative implications such as “compete directly against vulnerable American workers”, “draw much more out”, “hurting a lot of our people”, use

some form of cash or non-cash welfare programs” and “abuse our welfare system” which construe the idea of criminality and abuse.

In example (8) the ideological polarization of *US* versus *Them* is very clear through the use of the possessive pronoun “our” that refers to the insiders, American people, and through the pronoun “they” which refers to the outsiders, illegal immigrants. The pronoun “our” in “our people” serves to show unity and empathy for the in-group members. This polarization is also enhanced through the different attributes given to the two groups’ social actors. For example, the American people are described in ways that make them appear as victims who are not able to lift up the harm fallen on them as the noun phrase “vulnerable American workers” and the relative clause “that cannot get jobs under any circumstances”. They are being passivized because they are represented as the party who receives the action and not the one who carries it out. Whereas illegal immigrants are presented as the doers who execute this harm as in the relative clause “who compete directly against vulnerable American workers”, and the predicate “hurting a lot of our people”. They are also presented in negative terms as being opportunistic and lazy people who can never contribute to the thriving of the economy. This is clear through the use of the following predicates “draw much more out from the system “can ever possibly pay back”, “use some form of cash or non-cash welfare programs”, and “abuse our welfare system”.

### 4.3 Different, deviance

10) According to data provided by the Senate Subcommittee on Immigration, and the national interest between 9/11 and the end of 2014, at least 380 foreign born individuals were convicted in terror cases inside the United States.

11) Our country is a mess. We don't even know what to look for anymore, folks. Our country has to straighten out. And we have to straighten out fast.

12) The number is likely higher. But the administration refuses to provide this information, even to Congress. As soon as I enter office I am going to ask the Department of State, which has been brutalized by Hillary Clinton, brutalized, Homeland Security and the Department of Justice to begin a comprehensive review of these cases in order to develop a list of regions and countries from which immigration must be suspended until proven and effective vetting mechanisms can be put in place.

13) And if people don't like it, we've got have a country folks. Got to have a country. Countries in which immigration will be suspended would include places like Syria and Libya. And we are going to stop the tens of thousands of people coming in from Syria. We have no idea who they are, where they come from.

14) Another reform involves new screening tests for all applicants that include, and this is so important, especially if you get the right people. And we will get the right people. An ideological certification to make sure that those we are admitting to our country share our values and love our people.

15) For instance, in the last five years, we've admitted nearly 100,000 immigrants from Iraq and Afghanistan. And these two countries according to Pew Research, a majority of residents say that the barbaric practice of honour killings against women are often or sometimes justified. That's what they say.

In this section Trump talks about another group of people namely “the foreign-born individuals”. When talking about this group it can be noticed that the topics around them are different from those around illegal immigrants. Here, the overall general topic or topoi in this section is difference and deviance. The out-group, the “other” or the “foreign-born individuals” are not like “us”, the American People. They are different and behave in a way that we feel amoral and deviant from our own values.

The examples (10, 11, 12, 13) in this extract are locally coherent. This coherence is ideologically controlled via the mental model on which it is based and in this case it is Trump’s current ideological mental model of the immigration situation in the USA, in which foreign born individuals and illegal immigrants are represented negatively as a means of justification and legitimation for the biased and xenophobic acts that he is to enact if elected as a president. These four examples are locally coherent due to the relationships between the propositions expressed in their respective sentences. For example, (10) works as a fact that asserts the association of “foreign born individuals” with terroristic acts inside USA and thus presenting them as a source of danger. As a result of this there is an urgent need to do something about this danger expressed in (11) in sentences like “Our country has to straighten out” and “we have to straighten out fast”. The pronouns “our” and “we” here are used by Trump to create a sense of unity among the in-group members. This is an attempt by Trump to indicate that we as a nation or the in-group members need to be united in order to be able to face the danger imposed on us by these “foreign born individuals”. It can be

noticed that here the coherence is referential since the relationship between the two examples is a relation of cause and sequence. Then, in (12) and (13) there is a functional coherence since (12) works as a specification for what is needed to be done to limit and prevent this danger and that is “to develop a list of regions and countries from which immigration must be suspended”. The propositions stated in (13) function as a concrete example of the places from which immigration must be suspended and that include “places like Syria and Libya”. Thus, the way how these examples (10, 11, 12, 13) are ordered and linked to each other work to help the audience unconsciously make a connection between people coming from these countries and terrorism which go in line with the strategy of negative other representation.

In a time when the Syrian civil war was intensifying resulting in a very large refugee and displacement crisis for the Syrian people, many republican politicians were calling to prevent the Syrian refugees from entering the U.S. This was translated into acts as many congressional republicans voted on a bill to make it more difficult for refugees from Syria to enter the States (Gambino et al., 2015). This backlash against refugees during the 2015 refugee crisis was motivated by the fear that if the U.S started to receive refugees from places like Syria, Libya or Iraq, a “Paris-style attack could be replicated in America” because terrorists could infiltrate refugees (Gambino et al., 2015). Trump here, just like other republicans, is tapping into Americans’ anxieties about the national security and the danger of terrorism as an attempt to justify the biased and xenophobic stances of the republican party from the issue of refugees.

In example (13) people coming from Syria are represented in terms of their numbers only and this is done by the noun phrase “the tens of thousands”. This quantification of the Syrian Refugees suggests that the number of refugees is troublesome because they represent a source of unknown danger to the United states expressed in the predicate “have no idea” and the relative clauses “who they are” and “where they come from”. And here Trump is implicitly voicing the argument of other republican politicians that if we accept refugees into our country, we might expose our country to great danger because terrorists could enter the country in the disguise as refugees. Furthermore, the danger expected from the coming of this group of people is expressed in terms of generalizations with no effort by Trump to explain that not all Syrian refugees represent a source of threat and many of them have left their country and come to USA because of the serious conditions that threaten their lives and in search for a better life. This result is like that of Khosravinik’s (2010) study which shows how the conservative newspapers provide an aggregated collective image of the RASIM and



avoid representing any individualised image of them. Thus, by using generalization and implication strategies Trump is constructing a negative image of the Syrian Refugees which is in accordance with the macro strategy of negative-other presentation of this speech.

In examples (14) and (15) there is a clear comparison between the people that the current democratic administration is admitting to the country and the kind of people that Trump and his republican administration is going to admit if he wins. This is done through the use of many strategies. For instance, in example (14) the clause “especially if you get the right people” is an implication which indirectly expresses that the people being admitted to the country right now under the democratic administration are not the right people. Then through the predicates “share our values” and “love our people” he assigns specific qualities to those who will be admitted to the country and positively defines them. Trump here explicitly states that those who will be allowed to enter our country need to be similar to us and have the same values as ours. In contrast to this he represents the people being admitted right now as being different and behave in an immoral way. This is clear in the choice of the negative lexical items exploited in example (15) like the noun phrase “barbaric practice” and the prepositional phrases “of honour killings” and “against women” which enforce the idea of abnormality and deviance from the American values and norms.

Through the use of these discursive strategies to negatively represent immigrants, it can be said that Trump’s discourse on immigration does ideological work. Using the framework of CDA to analyse this speech allows us to discover the relations of power and the hidden ideologies impeded in Trump’s discourse about immigrants. Thus, this negative representation of immigrants by Trump is a reproduction of the biased and xenophobic conservative ideologies of the Republican party, which from the beginning of its foundation adopted restrictive immigration policies as stated by (Jonas, 2019). By emphasizing the negative actions of the Other, immigrants, and by presenting them as a source of different kinds of threats, Trump wants the in-group members, Americans, to feel threatened. He wants them to feel that the American public safety, the American economy and the American way of living are all threatened by the presence of these people who are not right for the ingroup. Clearly this xenophobic and hostile rhetoric by Trump about immigrants is meant to help him appeal to the White American people by appealing to the economic, cultural and safety concerns of this group. This in its turn can lead to increased prejudices among these group members which will eventually result in the support of the restrictive biased policies of the Republican party.

Trump's rhetoric about immigrants works to construct a self-concept of who we are as a nation and defines the social relations that this nation has in relation to others. For example, through this speech he positively talked about the people who can join this nation and be members of it. He also claimed that it is a right to be able to choose only the people who are similar to us to enter the country which reflects the restrictive anti-immigrants' stance of the Republican party. While at the same time he criticises the immigration policies of Hilary Clinton administration and negatively represents the democratic politicians and the kind of people these politicians are allowing in the country.

## 5 Conclusion

The Results of this study demonstrate that Trump's Phoenix speech on immigration during the 2016 presidential campaign exhibits many discursive strategies used by Trump to negatively represent immigrants. In the first extract of the results Trump constructs the negative image of immigrants by presenting them as a threat to the victimized American people. This is done by the strategies of polarization, topoi, victimization, empathy, comparison, lexicalization and predicational strategies. The negative representation of immigrants in the second extract is manifested through the topic of being an economic burden. In this extract, and through the strategies of lexicalization, polarization, number game, the structures of propositions (predicational strategies) and sentence syntax, the immigrants are represented as the responsible for the bad economic conditions of American people. The last extract in the results represents another group of people who can be perceived as the Other. This group is the "foreign born" individuals who are also represented negatively by the topic of being different and deviant from Us. The discursive strategies exploited in the representation of this group are; local coherence, generalisation, implication, comparison, lexicalization and predicational strategies. When talking about the in-group members in this speech Trump either represents them positively or represents them as victims of immigration policies of the Democratic party and the criminality of immigrants.

This negative rhetoric about immigrants by Trump is not something new to the republican party. It is a reproduction and confirmation of the xenophobic restrictive republican ideology which has manifested itself in the restrictive immigration policies of the party at different times throughout history.

Obviously, through this negative representation of immigrants which works to make the American people feel threatened, the study came to the conclusion that Trump, in his 2016 presidential campaign, does not address the minority groups in USA. Rather he addresses and

appeals to the white Americans only by talking about issues of concerns to them and making promises to them. This is reflected in the elections results which showed that the white voters voted 58% for Trump and 37% for Clinton (Henley, 2016).

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