

Donald Trump's Denial Speeches of the 2020 United States Presidential Election's Results: A Critical Discourse Analysis Perspective

Mohammad Saadeen¹, Naser N. AlBzour²

¹Al Albayt University, AABU, Mafraq, Jordan

²English Department, Al Albayt University, AABU, Mafraq, Jordan

Corresponding Author: Naser N. AlBzour, E-mail: bbbzoor@yahoo.com

Disclaimer: In accordance with AABU's academic regulations and guidelines, this paper has been extracted from an MA thesis supervised by dr. Naser AlBzour, the second author of this study, and successfully written and defended by the first author of this paper, Mohammad Al-Saideen, at AABU in 2021.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: October 01, 2021

Accepted: December 26, 2021

Published: February 28, 2022

Volume: 13 Issue: 1

Advance access: February 2022

Conflicts of interest: None

Funding: None

Key words:

Actor Description,

Authority,

Categorization,

Critical Discourse Analysis,

Discursive Devices,

Evidentiality,

Illustration,

Hyperbole,

Ideologies,

Lexicalization,

Number Game,

Polarization,

Victimization

ABSTRACT

The primary concern of the present study is to provide a critical discourse analysis of Donald Trump's denial speeches of the 2020 United States presidential election's results. Using Van Dijk's framework of critical discourse analysis, this study investigates the linguistic features in five speeches of Donald Trump delivered after announcing the results of the US presidential election. The data analysis is conducted focusing on the use of 25 discursive devices presented by Van Dijk (2006), which represent the micro-level of text analysis to reveal the ideologies of positive self-representation and negative other-representation which represent the macro-level of text analysis. The findings of the study show that Trump made use of the majority of the discursive devices, with a special emphasis on using the following: *lexicalization, evidentiality, example/illustration, number game, polarization, actor description, hyperbole, categorization, victimization, and authority*. Furthermore, the analysis at the macro-level shows that Donald Trump used the ideologies of positive self-representation and negative other-representation, but he relied more on using negative other-representation. The findings also show that Trump used these discursive devices to justify his denial of the election results and gain the empathy of American people by showing a positive image of himself and his supporters while portraying others negatively by emphasizing their bad deeds during the election.

INTRODUCTION

The 2020 presidential election in the United States took place on Tuesday, November 3, 2020, and it was the United States of America's 59th quadrennial Presidential election. In this election, the Democratic candidate, Joe Biden defeated the Republican candidate, Donald Trump, the then incumbent President of the United States. However, Donald Trump gave several speeches after the Election Day in which he denied and questioned the election's results, and he attempted to overturn the election's results by claiming a widespread voter fraud, as well as by interfering with the vote-counting process. This study follows a qualitative and quantitative approach in analyzing the speeches of Donald Trump, which are delivered after the United States Presidential Election. The framework of critical discourse analysis

proposed by Teun A. van Dijk (2006) is adopted in order to unveil the discursive devices and the embedded ideologies used in the language of Donald Trump.

This study sheds light on the way Donald Trump expresses his denial of the United States Presidential election results by using different linguistic discursive devices, and various embedded ideologies in terms of Critical Discourse Analysis. Therefore, it integrates micro-level text analysis in accordance with Van Dijk's (2006) 25 discursive devices with macro-level text analysis based on the employment of positive self-representation and negative other-representation.

Based on the literature review, it is found that many research papers have tackled Donald Trump's speeches in terms of Critical Discourse Analysis. These papers shed light

on the speeches that were delivered in different occasions, such as Presidential campaign speeches, announcement speeches, and so forth, while no research papers conduct the task of investigating the Trump's speeches which he delivered after the Presidential Election as a denial of the election results. Accordingly, this point has sparked the researchers to investigate this significant topic. Generally, the study's primary objective is to investigate the discursive devices used in Donald Trump's denial speeches of the election results in terms of Critical Discourse Analysis, considering the fact that these speeches received no linguistic attention to begin with.

The aim of this study is to point out the linguistic discursive devices involved in Donald Trump's denial speeches of election's results. Furthermore, the study aims to elucidate the primary intended ideologies presented in the language under analysis. As a result, the current paper aims at investigating Donald Trump's language in relation to the CDA's central tenets and principles, as well as the linguistic discursive devices used to identify how Trump convinces his addresses to believe in his ideas. In addition, the study attempts to Uncover the primary ideologies expressed in Donald Trump's speeches.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA OF THE STUDY

The corpus of this study includes the transcripts of five speeches delivered by Donald Trump after the 2020 presidential elections as a denial of the results of the elections. These speeches were delivered in English language. The speeches are named and ordered according to their chronological delivery. The corpus involves a total of 23284 words. The transcripts of speeches were retrieved from the internet, on the following website: (<https://www.rev.com/blog/transcript-category/donald-trump-transcripts>).

The study started by gathering the data needed for qualitative and quantitative analysis. To accomplish this, the scripts of five speeches delivered by Donald Trump were collected from the internet. To double-check the accuracy and authenticity of the speeches, the video files of the five speeches were downloaded and reviewed.

To carry out the qualitative analysis on the scale of micro-level, the researchers read each script in order to identify how frequently Donald Trump employed Van Dijk's 25 discursive devices. To determine which phrases or words are considered to be one of the Van Dijk's discursive devices, the researchers depended mainly on the definitions of these devices introduced by Van Dijk (2006) and several researches. Furthermore, the researchers used AntConc software tool to identify keywords and study their linguistic context in which they occur. Moreover, the researchers read several articles and papers that adopt these 25 devices for analyzing different speeches. Using these resources, the researchers were able to determine which phrases or words fit into each of these discursive devices. Furthermore, for the qualitative analysis at the macro-level, the researcher investigated how these devices are used by Donald Trump to spread the ideologies of positive self-representation and negative other-representation of his group and out-groups.

For the quantitative analysis, the researchers used Microsoft Word 2010 tables to show the results of data analysis regarding the 25 discursive devices and the ideologies of positive/negative representation. The first data set involves the frequency of each discursive device in each of the five speeches, the total number of discursive devices used in each speech, and the overall frequency of the 25 devices used in the five speeches. The second data set involves the frequency of using the ideologies of positive/negative representation in each speech, and the overall frequency of these two ideologies utilized in all the five speeches. Moreover, the quantitative analysis includes the percentage of the use of the ideologies of positive/negative representation in each speech and in all five speeches.

The researchers in this study limit themselves to five speeches only delivered by Donald Trump. Actually, the researchers left a lot of other issues that merit significant attention and academic investigation, such as the tweets and Facebook posts of Donald Trump. Additionally, the study's central theme is geared toward linguistic objectives apart from political ones. Therefore, this study is never intended to make any political allegations.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis was introduced in the late 1980s and become a well-established domain within the social sciences. Wodak states that CDA can be viewed as a problem-oriented interdisciplinary research program that encompasses a range of approaches, each based on a distinct set of epistemological principles and using a distinct set of theoretical models, researches, methods, and agendas (Wodak, 2001). According to Van Dijk (1993) CDA should focus specifically on the discourse aspects of power abuse and the resulting oppression and inequality. In other words, CDA, unlike other areas of discourse analysis is characterized by an overemphasis on domination and inequality since it is mainly concerned with social issues that it hopes to better comprehend via discourse analysis. Van Dijk also states that critical discourse analysis is concerned with the strategies and the characteristics of text, talk, verbal actions, and communicative events that contribute to discourse production. Furthermore, CDA's goal is to explain, interpret and investigate the language's form and function. That is to say, grammar, morphology, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics all contribute to the form of language while language's function encompasses how people employ language in a variety of situations in order to accomplish their goals (Rogers, 2004).

Coffin (2001) argues that CDA's primary objective is to demonstrate the use of language within the confines of text to create particular ideological views characterized by unequal power relations. As a result, CDA is concerned not only with the linguistic characteristics of language but also with its use. According to Orpin (2005), CDA may offer useful insights into language relationships because it provides a Hallidayan view of language, in which language is indivisibly linked to its sociolinguistic context, its ideological

mediation, and its relationship to social power structures. Therefore, through recognizing the linguistic mechanisms or semantic frameworks used to create ideology, CDA may illuminate the hidden strategy an author might use through discourse to construct views of the world, either consciously or unconsciously (Orpin, 2005, cited in Post, 2009, p. 15).

Wodak (1997) states that critical discourse analysis “studies real, and often extended, instances of social interaction which take (partially) linguistic form. The critical approach is distinctive in its view of (a) the relationship between language and society, and (b) the relationship between analysis and the practices analyzed” (1997, p. 174). According to her, CDA aims to decode the opaque and obvious structural connections among domination, discrimination, control, and hegemony whether they are manifested in written or spoken discourse, and also the social context underlying the discourse.

To conclude, CDA is an effective tool for dismantling the ideological plan formed through discourse, which enables its participants to view the actual world through unique and often biased lenses, therefore preferring the dominant group’s desires (Coffin, 2001). Therefore, CDA is theoretically needed to link the eminent “distance” between micro and macro levels of discourse, that is, obviously, a sociological framework in and of itself (Van Dijk, 2003).

Van Dijk’s 2006 Framework on Analyzing Political Discourse

Van Dijk’s (2006) framework has been approved as a detailed and accurate conceptual framework to provide researchers with the aspects of ideological manipulation. In contrast to other frameworks introduced in the field of CDA, Van Dijk’s (2006) design incorporates argumentation, political strategies, rhetorical devices, semantic strategies, and stylistic information, making it an effective framework for identifying reality distortions during the discourse production process (Sardabi, Biria, & Azin, 2014). Political discourse is established in order to achieve political objectives, such as power, dominance, and hegemony. Additionally, politicians produce or reproduce political language in order to engage in political abuse, justify their political pleas, and increase their public approval (Bayram, 2010). Therefore, the use of language in the realm of politics is to encapsulate the people’s vision, interpretation, and worldview, and its intended perlocutionary influence is to have the views expressed or lines of action taken directly believed or adopted (Bello, 2013). In this respect, Van Dijk (2006) claims that it is essential to link such use to particular aspects of the political situation, such as who is speaking, where, where, and with/to whom. He also states that, a cognitive interface between such a situation and talk or text is needed, namely, a political situation’s mental model. These mental models describe how participants experience, interpret and reflect the political situation that is significant for them.

Normally, the relationship between discourse and political ideologies is examined based on political discourse structure, as with the usage of biased lexical items, syntactic structures like active and passive, the use of pronouns like

we and them, metaphors or topoi, argumentation, implication, and a variety of other discourse characteristics (Van Dijk, 2006). Van Dijk (2002) states that, even though the defining properties of political discourse are primarily contextual, this does not mean we can abandon our analysis of political discourse structures: analysis of “topics, topoi, coherence, arguments, lexical style, disclaimers, and several rhetorical features (metaphors, euphemisms, hyperbolas, etc)” (Van Dijk, 2002, p. 214).

Thus, politicians through political discourse can legitimize their own actions, and delegitimize others’ actions. Legitimization which is typically directed to the self involves acts of positive self-representation, like self-praise, self-apology, self-justification, and so forth. On the other hand, delegitimization can take the forms of negative other-representation, marginalization, excluding, and so forth (Chilton, 2004).

Van Dijk (2006) states that, Ideologies are usually polarized in their structure, especially in representing or categorizing a competing or conflicting group membership between ingroups and outgroups. Furthermore, these structures often manifest themselves in more specific political views, and essentially in group members’ personal mental models. Thus, discourse contents are influenced by these mental models i.e. if they are polarized; discourse is likely to exhibit different forms of polarization as well.

The framework developed by Van Dijk (2006) appears to be a systematic practical method for investigating such ideological polarization of political discourses. In this framework, Van Dijk introduced what he called the “**ideological square**”, which has different strategies for analyzing ideological discourses. These strategies are the following:

- Emphasize Our good things
- Emphasize Their bad things
- De-emphasize Our bad things
- De-emphasize Their good things (Van Dijk, 2006, p.734).

Rashidi & Souzandehfar (2010) described this square as a fundamental dichotomy, with an emphasis on “positive self-representation and negative other-representation”. Bello (2013) states that actors are polarized by this square into ingroups and outgroups in which the former emphasizes their positive characteristics and ignores their negative ones; while the latter emphasizes their negative characteristics and ignores their positive ones (Bello, 2013, p.86). Therefore, the main focus of political speeches, interviews, programs, etc. is devoted to the favored issues of group or party i.e. our well-done achievements, while issues like war, violence, drugs, and a lack of liberty and so are associated with political opponents (Van Dijk, 2006).

In addition to the general strategies of positive self-representation and negative other-representation that represent the macro-strategy of investigating discourses, Van Dijk (2006) adds more 25 discursive devices or strategies which represent the micro-strategy of investigating discourses as well: *Actor description, Authority, Burden(topos), Categorization, Comparison, Counterfactuals, Disclaimers, Euphemism, Evidentiality, Example/Illustration, Generalization, Hyperbole, Implication, Irony, Lexicalization, Metaphor,*

National self-glorification, Norm expression, Number game, Polarization, Populism, Presupposition, Vagueness, Victimization,

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Quantitative Analysis

This part represents the findings of the quantitative analysis of Donald Trump's five speeches at micro and macro levels of analysis. The analysis is summarized in the tables which are accompanied by some explanations. The descriptive

statistics presented in Tables 2-3 illustrate the results of the two levels of analysis of Donald Trump's five speeches; the analysis of the 25 discursive devices (micro-level), and the ideologies of positive/negative representation (mac-ro-level).

Table 2 illustrates the frequency of use of each 25 discursive devices in Donald Trump's five speeches that represent the micro-level analysis.

At the macro-level of analysis, Table 3 illustrates the frequency of use of the ideologies, positive self-representation, and negative other-representation in Donald Trump's five speeches.

Table 1. Outlines the relevant information of Donald Trump's speeches

	The first speech	The second speech	The third speech	The fourth speech	The fifth speech
Year	2020	2020	2020	2020	2021
Date	4/11	5/11	25/11	2/12	6/1
Number of words	1325	2634	1952	6238	11135
Duration	9':51"	16':50"	10':52"	45':40"	1:13':19"

Table 2. Frequency of discursive devices in Donald Trump's five speeches

Discursive devices	The first speech	The second speech	The third speech	The fourth speech	The fifth speech	Total
Actor description	4	14	8	21	16	63
Authority	2	5	4	17	7	35
Burden	0	1	0	1	0	2
Categorization	2	13	4	9	13	41
Comparison	0	5	1	3	8	17
Consensus	0	0	0	0	0	0
Counterfactual	0	2	1	3	9	15
Disclaimers	0	4	0	2	1	7
Euphemism	0	1	0	0	0	1
Evidentiality	13	26	12	59	46	156
Example/Illustration	13	26	12	59	46	156
Generalization	3	4	3	3	1	14
Hyperbole	5	10	3	14	11	43
Implication	3	4	0	8	2	17
Irony	0	2	3	5	13	23
Lexicalization	13	28	18	55	65	179
Metaphor	0	2	3	7	4	16
Norm-expression	2	7	1	11	6	27
Number game	21	12	4	28	55	120
National self-glorification	0	0	1	1	4	6
Polarization	8	17	7	22	32	86
Populism	2	6	1	7	5	21
Presupposition	3	9	1	6	6	25
Vagueness	3	4	0	4	0	11
Victimization	1	11	9	6	10	37
Total	98	213	96	351	360	1118

Table 3. frequency of use of the ideologies, positive self-representation and negative other-representation in Donald Trump's five speeches (macro-level)

Name of the speech	Positive self-representation	Negative other-representation
The first speech	12	5
The second speech	21	50
The third speech	10	31
The fourth speech	18	74
The fifth speech	48	85
Total	109	245
Percentage	30.79%	69.21%

Qualitative Analysis

This part is devoted to the qualitative analysis of Donald Trump's five speeches at micro and macro-levels of analysis. Therefore, the quantitative analysis illustrated in the previous part and some illustrative examples of the five speeches will be used to investigate the most frequent discursive devices used by Donald Trump at the micro level, and how they are used to invalidate Biden's victory. Furthermore, these results and examples will be used to investigate the employment of the ideologies; positive self-representation and negative other-representation at the macro level.

Lexicalization

As illustrated in table 2, lexicalization is used 179 times as the most frequent device utilized by Donald Trump in his five speeches. As mentioned in chapter two, lexicalization is defined as the process of using the semantic qualities of words in order to positively or negatively depict someone or something. The reason for Donald Trump's increased usage of lexicalization is that political speakers frequently employ lexicalization to ingrain their ideas in the minds of people (Van Dijk, 2006; Matic, 2012). This is specifically apparent when speakers have a tendency to portray themselves positively while portraying others negatively. Matic (2012) states that lexicalization is the primary means of achieving positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. Therefore, lexicalization is utilized to represent others negatively or to delegitimize their behaviors through using strongly negative words (Van Dijk, 1995).

As shown in Table 3, Trump employs the ideology of negative other-representation more frequently than positive self-representation. This means that he used more negative words to describe others in his speeches. In his five speeches, Trump focused on using some negative words such as, fraud (43 times), corrupt (24 times), illegal (22 times), bad (18 times), fraudulent (13 times), horrible (12 times), steal (11 times), suppression (10 times) to describe Democrats, and those who are responsible for the elections process negatively in order to invalidate Biden's victory in the presidential election. It is worth noting that using one word many times can be considered as *circumlocution* strategy by which politicians emphasize some messages and deepen the

understanding of these messages. The following are some examples that show the use of **lexicalization** device in the five speeches.

1. *"Democrat officials never believed they could win this election honestly. I really believe that. That's why they did the mail-in ballots, where there's tremendous corruption and fraud going on."* (Donald Trump's second speech)

In this example, lexicalization device is used through using the negative words "fraud" and "corruption" to describe the way by which Democrats won the elections by using mail-in ballots negatively as having corruption and fraud.

2. *"While it has long been understood that the Democrat political machine engages in voter fraud from Detroit to Philadelphia, to Milwaukee, Atlanta, so many other places."* (Donald Trump's fourth speech)

In this example, Trump also uses the word "fraud" to represent the democrats negatively by alleging that Democrats commit voting fraud in different states.

On the other hand, Trump uses lexicalization by using positive words to represent himself or his supporters **positively**. In the following example, Trump uses the words "fantastic" and "great patriots" to describe those people who defended his right to win the presidential election. Therefore, he tries to indicate that those people who supported him are the ones who love and support their country.

3. *"I want to thank all of the people that signed affidavits and all of the speakers. You fantastic people. You're great Patriots."* (Donald Trump's third speech)

Example/illustration & Evidentiality

Example/illustration device is defined in chapter two as the process of giving evidences by discourse producers in order to justify their opinions. On the other hand, evidentiality is defined as a discourse producer's use of evidences or facts to reinforce their views, beliefs. Example/illustration and evidentiality are the second most frequent devices used by Donald Trump in his five speeches. As table 2 illustrates, both of these devices are used 156 times in the speeches. It is worth noting that these two devices are regarded as one device through the analysis since all the examples mentioned by Trump were given for the purpose of showing his evidentiality and credibility for the American people, and also to make them believe his ideas and beliefs regarding his denial of the election results. Furthermore, Trump tries to represent the achievements of others (Biden's victory) **negatively** by mentioning many examples that show the irregularities happened in the election to invalidate his victory. The following are some examples that show the use of these two devices in Donald Trump's speeches.

4. *"I won the largest share of non-white voters of any Republican in 60 years, including historic numbers of Latino, African American, Asian American, and Native American voters — the largest ever in our history. We grew our party by 4 million voters, the greatest turnout in Republican Party history."* (Donald Trump's second speech)

In this example, Trump represents himself **positively** by mentioning examples of his achievements in gaining the votes of some American society groups, such as African Americans and Asian Americans. Also, he mentions his achievement of growing the Republican Party's voters by 4 million voters. By giving this example, Trump tries to indicate the high number of votes that he gained in the election, implying that he actually won this election.

5. *"In Pennsylvania, partisan Democrats have allowed ballots in the state to be received three days after the election, and we think much more than that. And they are counting those without even postmarks or any identification whatsoever. So you don't have postmarks; you don't have identification. There have been a number of disturbing irregularities across the nation."* (Donald Trump's second speech)

In this example, Trump gives an example of the fraud that happened during the election in the state of Pennsylvania. He again focuses on the case of ballots counting after the end of the Election Day. Furthermore, Trump implies that these ballots were fake by stating that they lack any postmark or identification.

Number game

Number game is defined in chapter two as the use of numbers in discourse to bolster the credibility or legitimacy of the discourse producers' views or beliefs. As illustrated in table 2, Donald Trump used number 120 times in his five speeches.

Politicians use numbers in their political speeches to enhance the credibility of their speeches and show objectivity (Van Dijk, 2004). Therefore, Trump used numbers in most examples that he mentioned regarding the election results to increase the credibility of these examples, and enhance the legitimacy of his demand to overturn the election results. The following is an example that shows the use of this device by Donald Trump in his five speeches.

6. *"We won Texas by 700,000 votes and they don't even include it in the tabulations. It's also clear that we have won Georgia. We're up by 2.5% or 117,000 votes with only 7% left. They're never going to catch us. They can't catch us. Likewise we've clearly won North Carolina. Where we're up 1.4%. We're 77,000 votes with only approximately 5% left. They can't catch us."* (Donald Trump's first speech)

This example is taken from the first speech which was delivered by Trump on the election night. In these two examples, Trump presents the names of the states that he won and the number of votes that he gained in these states until that moment. Therefore, he does not only mention the names of these states, but he gives the accurate numbers of votes that he gained and the percentage of remaining votes to point out that Biden does not have any chance to catch him in votes numbers. By giving these numbers and percentages.

Polarization

As mentioned in chapter two, polarization is defined as the process of classifying discourse participants into a positively

represented 'US' and a negatively represented 'THEM'. Table 2 shows that Donald Trump used polarization 86 times in his five speeches. It is worth noting that Trump uses polarization in most cases in order to represent Democrats **negatively** by focusing on the irregularities that they made in the election to make him lose it. On the other hand, he uses polarization to represent himself **positively** by focusing on his achievements of gaining a lot of votes and winning many states. The following are some examples that show the use of this device in Trump's speeches.

7. *"I'd like to provide the American people with an update on our efforts to protect the integrity of our very important 2020 election. If you count the legal votes, I easily win. If you count the illegal votes, they can try to steal the election from us."* (Donald Trump's second speech)

This example is taken from the second speech, in which Trump started it by using polarization to represent himself **positively** as protecting the integrity of the election "our efforts", and also to represent Democrats **negatively** by saying that the votes they got in the election were 'illegal'. Trump also uses the verb 'steal' to represent them **negatively** as criminals who want to steal the election, when he said that "if you count these illegal votes, they can steal the election". Therefore, positive representation comes after the pronoun "our" as shown in the example while the negative representation comes after the pronoun "they" which shows the use of polarization in separating discourse participants into a positively represented 'us' or 'our', and a negatively represented 'them' or 'they'. On the other hand, Trump often uses polarization to represent himself **positively** by using "We" whenever he talks about victory in many other instances.

Actor description

Actor description is defined in chapter two as the way in which members of a particular group are described or portrayed, whether positively or negatively. Therefore, discourse producers tend to portray their groups positively, while they portray the other groups negatively. In his five speeches, Donald Trump used actor description device to achieve the ideologies of **positive self-representation** and **negative other representation** by portraying his constituents and supporters positively, while portraying Democrats and poll workers negatively. The following are some examples that show the use of this device in Donald Trump's five speeches.

8. *"The officials overseeing the counting in Pennsylvania and other key states are all part of a corrupt Democrat machine."* (Donald Trump's second speech)

In this example, Donald Trump portrays the officials, who are in charge of ballots counting, **negatively**, by saying that they are involved in a fraudulent Democrats machine. It is worth noting that Trump tries to point out the irregularities that happened in the ballots counting by classifying those officials as a part of a corrupt Democrats machine.

9. *"In Michigan, a career employee of the city of Detroit, with the city workers, coaching voters to vote straight Democrat, while accompanying them to watch who they*

were voting for, violating the law and the sanctity of the secret ballot.” (Donald Trump’s fourth speech)

In this example, Donald Trump uses actor description device to represent an employee and Detroit workers **negatively**, by giving an example of how they were urging voters illegally to vote for Biden. It is worth noting that by giving this example, Trump tries to shed the light on the way Biden won the election illegally, and how the voters were treated and urged to vote for him.

Hyperbole

As mentioned in chapter two, hyperbole is defined as a semantic rhetorical strategy used to intensify meaning within the framework of positive self-representation and negative other-representation. Table 2 shows that Donald Trump used hyperbole strategy 43 times in his five speeches. It is worth noting that hyperbole is employed by Trump to exaggerate the positive qualities of himself and Republicans. Furthermore, it is used to exaggerate the negative qualities of Biden and Democrats regarding the irregularities that happened in the election. The following are some examples that show the use of this device in Donald Trump’s five speeches.

10. “*The results tonight have been phenomenal and we are getting ready... I mean, literally we were just all set to get outside and just celebrate something that was so beautiful, so good.*” (Donald Trump’s first speech)

In this example, Donald Trump uses the hyperbolic term ‘phenomenal’, that indicates something extraordinary, to intensify the **positive representation** of his achievement in gaining a high number of votes in the election.

Another example of using hyperbolic terms by Trump is the use of the hyperbolic term ‘tremendous’ that means extraordinarily large. Therefore, it was used in his five speeches 24 times; whether to represent (positively) his supporters or the votes that he gained in the election or his achievements as a president and to represent (negatively) the fraud and the irregularities of Democrats in the election.

Categorization

As mentioned in chapter two, Categorization is defined as the process of classifying people based on their political or religious beliefs and attitudes. Table 2 shows that Donald Trump used categorization 41 times in his five speeches. Categorization is utilized by Donald Trump to classify people involved in his speeches according to their political attitudes as Republicans and Democrats. Trump used the term ‘Democrats’ 35 times, and the term ‘Republicans’ 19 times in his five speeches. The main goal of using categorization is to represent people who are classified as Democrats (out-groups) **negatively** and represent people who are classified as Republicans (in-groups) **positively**. The following are some examples that show the use of this device in Donald Trump’s five speeches.

11. “*The Democrats are hopeless. They’re never voting for anything, not even one vote.*” (Donald Trump’s fifth speech)

12. “*But this year using the pretext of the China virus and the scam of mail-in ballots, Democrats attempted the*

most brazen and outrageous election theft.” (Donald Trump’s fifth speech)

13. “*all of us here today do not want to see our election victory stolen by emboldened radical left Democrats, which is what they’re doing and stolen by the fake news media.*” (Donald Trump’s fifth speech)

In the previous three examples, the **negative representation** of out-group is achieved by using the categorization device. In example (32), Trump represents Democrats negatively by using the word ‘hopeless’, indicating that there is not any possibility that they won the election. In example (33) he also represents the way by which they won the election as a theft, and by using the pejorative words ‘brazen’ and ‘outrageous’. In example (34), he represents Democrats negatively as “radical left Democrats” who stole his victory.

Victimization

As mentioned in chapter two, victimization is defined as the process by which discourse producers portray people who are not members of their group negatively, while portraying members of their group as victims of bias or unfair treatment through the use of horrible stories about them. Table 2 shows that Donald Trump used victimization 37 times in his five speeches. It is worth noting that Donald Trump used victimization for two reasons; the first one is to represent Democrats negatively by showing how they treated the Republican voters and observers during the election. The second reason is to gain the empathy of American people by telling horrible stories about the bad treatment that the Republican voters got during the election. The following are some examples that show the use of this device in Trump’s five speeches.

14. “*But the poll watchers weren’t allowed to They were in many cases, whisked out of the room. Not only into pens watch. that were 20, 30, 40, 60, 100 feet away where you couldn’t even see. They were using binoculars. People are reporting that they had to use binoculars, and that didn’t work. If you were a Republican poll watcher, you were treated like a dog and the Democrats had no problem, but they were rough.*” (Donald Trump’s third speech)

In this example, Trump uses victimization strategy to shed the light on the way in which Republican poll watchers were treated while they were observing the election process as they were prevented from watching anything inside the election halls, and they had to use binoculars to observe the election process; therefore, Trump tries to point out that those observers were prevented intentionally in order to give Democrats a chance to steal the election by rigging the votes. Another point related to this part is the horrible image used by Trump to depict poll watchers as they “were treated like a dog”. By using victimization strategy, Trump represents Democrats **negatively** in order to invalidate Biden’s victory, and he also tries to gain the empathy of American people.

Authority

As mentioned in chapter two, Authority is defined as the discourse producers’ use of information given by authorities

to justify their views, beliefs, and claims in order to appeal to the audiences' emotions and increase their credibility. Table 2 shows that Authority was utilized 35 times by Donald Trump. It is worth noting that Trump used Authority strategy in his five speeches by referring to information given by different authorities such as media, officials, governors, etc. The use of this strategy gives Trump more credibility in the eyes of American people, and helps him to justify his denial of the election's results. The following are some examples that show the use of this device in Trump's five speeches.

15. "I spoke with the really wonderful governor of Texas just a little while ago, Greg Abbott, he said, "Congratulations." He called me to congratulate me on winning, he said, "By the way, what's going on? I've never seen anything like this." (Donald Trump's first speech)

In this example, Trump uses authority strategy by referring to Greg Abbott who is the governor of Texas. Therefore, he tries to imply that even governors congratulated him for winning the election, and they also denounce what happened in the election as what was said by Abbott "By the way, what's going on? I've never seen anything like this".

16. "we have to worry about what happened on November 3rd and previous to November 3rd. And by the way, after November 3rd, when people put votes in and they put them in illegally, they put them in after the polls closed. And one of our great Supreme Court Justices made mention of that. And I can't imagine that any Justice or anybody looking at it could be thrilled when they vote after the election is over." (Donald Trump's third speech)

In this example, Trump talks about the illegal votes that were counted after the end of the Election Day. To be more credible, Trump uses authority strategy by saying that these irregularities were mentioned by "one of our great Supreme Court Justices".

CONCLUSION

The study has presented a critical discourse analysis of Donald Trump's denial speeches of the 2020 United States presidential election's results based on Van Dijk's (2006) CDA framework. The researchers analyzed five speeches delivered by Donald Trump after the presidential election to unveil how Trump utilized discursive devices to convey his dogmatic ideological stance. To answer the research questions, the researchers analyzed the five speeches on two levels; the micro-level of analysis, with a particular emphasis on the use of Van Dijk's (2006) discursive devices, and the macro-level of analysis with an emphasis on Donald Trump's usage of the ideologies; positive self-representation and negative other-representation. The analysis of the five speeches revealed that Donald Trump made use of the majority of the discursive devices; 24 out of 25 discursive devices of Van Dijk's framework were relatively employed by Trump. The findings reveal that Trump oftentimes made greater use of some discursive devices such as *lexicalization, evidentiality, example/illustration, number game, polarization, actor description, hyperbole, categorization, victimization, and authority*. Regarding the micro-level of analysis, the results show that Donald Trump used the ideologies of positive

self-representation and negative other-representation, with more emphasis on using negative other-representation. It is worth noting that Trump used these discursive devices and ideologies to achieve several communicative goals. The first one is that Trump tried to be more credible in the eyes of American people and to justify his denial and invalidation of the election results; therefore, he used devices like example/illustration, evidentiality, number game, and authority to persuade his audience and make them adopt his ideas and beliefs regarding the election results. Furthermore, Trump used devices such as victimization, actor description, hyperbole, and categorization to gain the empathy of American people by showing the negative image of the other group. Moreover, Negative other-representation was achieved through the negative use of lexicalization, polarization, actor description, hyperbole and categorization in which Trump focused on using negative terms to portray the out-groups. On the basis of the study's findings, the researchers recommend for future research to incorporate both linguistic and psychiatric studies in order to strictly analyze and understand the role of potential linguistic and psychological discourse in such political speeches. Accordingly, holding Discourse and Language training workshops for politicians, statesmen and senior leaders can be of paramount importance in order to enhance their overall performance in public speeches.

REFERENCES

- Alhumaidi, M. (2013). *A critical discourse analysis of Al-Ahram and Aljazeera's online coverage of Egypt's revolution*, Doctoral dissertation. University of Florida.
- Al-Saideen, Mohammad A. (2021). *Donald Trump's Denial Speeches of the 2020 United States Presidential Election's Results: A Critical Discourse Analysis Perspective*. (Unpublished MA Thesis, AABU), Mafrqa: AlAl-Bayt University.
- Bayram, F. (2010). Ideology and political discourse: a critical discourse analysis of erdogan's political speech. *Annual Review of Education, Communication and Language Sciences*, Vol.7, 23-40.
- Bello, U. (2013). "If I could make It, you too can make it!" Personal pronouns in political discourse: a CDA of President Jonathan's presidential declaration speech. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 3(6), 84-96.
- Chilton, P. A. (2004). *Analyzing political discourse: Theory and practice*. London: Routledge.
- Coffin, C. (2001). 'Theoretical Approaches to Written Language—A TESOL Perspective.' Burns, A. and Coffin, C. (eds.) *Analyzing English in a Global Context: A Reader*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Darweesh, A. D., & Muzhir, H. D. (2016). Representation of the Syrian crisis in the American political speeches: A critical discourse Analysis. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 3(1), 40-48.
- Matić, D. (2012). *Ideological Discourse Structure in Political Speeches*. *Komunikacija i kultura online*, Godina III, broj 3, 54-78.
- Post, M. D. (2009). *Representations of Meaning Within Textual Personas: An Analysis of 2008 US Presidential*

- Campaign Speeches*. Master Thesis. University of Birmingham.
- Rashidi, N., & Souzandehfar, M. (2010). A critical discourse analysis of the debates between Republicans and Democrats over the contribution of war in Iraq. *JoLIE*, 3, 54-81.
- Rogers, R. (2004). *An Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis In Education*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers Mahwah, New Jersey.
- Sardabi, N., Biriya, R., & Azin, N. (2014). Rouhan's UN speech: A change in ideology or strategy. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World (IJLLALW)*, 7(3), 84-97.
- Shakoury, K. (2018). Critical Discourse Analysis of Iranian Presidents' addresses to the United Nations General Assembly (2007-2016), master thesis, University of Saskatchewan.
- Van Dijk, T. (1993). Principles of critical discourse analysis. *Discourse and Society*, 4(2), 249-83.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1995). Discourse analysis as ideology analysis. In Christiina Schaffner and Anita L. Wenden (Eds.). *Language and Peace*. Dartmouth: Aldershot. (pp.17-33).
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2002). Political discourse and ideology. In Clara Ubaldina Lorda & Montserrat Ribas (Eds.), *Anàlisi del discurs polític*. Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Institut Universitari de Lingüística Aplicada (IULA), Barcelona, 207-225.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2003). Critical discourse analysis. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen, & H. E. Hamilton (Eds.), *The handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 352-371). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2004). Ideology and Discourse. Pompeu Fabra, University, Barcelona. Retrieved from <http://www.discourses.org/UnpublishedArticles/Ideology%20and%20discourse.pdf>
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2006). Politics, ideology and discourse. In: Ruth Wodak, (Ed.), *Elsevier Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics. Volume on Politics and Language*, 728-740.
- Wodak R. (1997). *Critical discourse analysis and the study of doctor-patient interaction*. See Gunnarsson et al 1997, pp. 173–200
- Wodak, R. & Meyer, M. (Eds.). (2001). *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. London, England: Sage.