

تحليل دلالي-براغماتي للخطاب القومي في خطابات دونالد ترامب

*"A Semantic-Pragmatic Analysis of Nationalistic Discourse in Donald Trump's
Speeches "*

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Abstract

This research explores the nationalistic discourse in Donald Trump's speeches, focusing on the micro and macro levels of language. Nationalist discourse is a form of communication that uses silences to shape specific subjects, such as Trump's speeches, which often emphasize the culture, identity, and interest of one nation versus another. The study investigates Trump's language through different linguistic strategies such as modality, lexicalization, and ideological framing to show how his linguistic strategies reflect nationalistic outlooks. It investigates how Trump's language of self-assurance, anger, and cultural framing fosters cohesion among supporters while producing internal conflict. The research aims to answer questions about how Trump's modality in his speeches reflects his certainty and authority in promoting a

nationalistic agenda, how lexical choices facilitate the construction of an "us vs. them" dichotomy, and how Trump uses strategies to reinforce political polarization. The findings of this research shows that Donald Trump employs nationalistic language in his speeches to mobilize audiences and unify identities. He uses high modality, lexicalisation, and ideological framing to distinguish between "us" and "them," emphasizing American exceptionalism and unity among supporters. Trump uses cultural symbols and historical references to reinforce American identity and belonging, and uses loaded language to deepen the divide between supporters and enemies. This study underscores the importance of better perceptiveness about language as a tool in political discourse, as it can bring people together and divide them based on imagined identities.

Key words: Nationalistic, Trump, Semantic, Pragmatics, Ideology

المخلص

يستكشف هذا البحث الخطاب القومي في خطاب دونالد ترامب، مع التركيز على الجوانب الدقيقة والعامية للغة. يُعتبر الخطاب القومي نوعاً من التواصل الذي يستخدم الصمت لتحديد مواضيع معينة، مثل خطاب ترامب التي تسلط الضوء على الثقافة والهوية الاجتماعية ومصالح أمةً مقابل أخرى. تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل لغة ترامب من خلال استراتيجيات لغوية متنوعة مثل تعبير الحاله، والمعجمية او التأصيل اللغوي، والإطار الإيديولوجي، لتوضيح كيف تعكس هذه الاستراتيجيات وجهات نظر قومية.

تبحث الدراسة في كيفية انعكاس أسلوب ترامب في خطبه على ثقته وسلطته في تعزيز أجندة وطنية، وكيف تسهم اختياراته اللغوية في بناء ثنائية "نحن مقابل هم"، وكيف يستخدم ترامب الاستراتيجيات اللغوية لتعزيز الاستقطاب السياسي. تُظهر نتائج هذا البحث أن دونالد ترامب يستخدم لغة وطنية في خطبه لتحريك الجماهير وتوحيد الهويات. يستخدم مستوى عالٍ من التعديل، والتسمية، والإطار الإيديولوجي لتمييز بين "نحن" و"هم"، مؤكداً على الاستثنائية الأمريكية والوحدة بين المؤيدين. كما يستعين ترامب بالرموز الثقافية والمراجع التاريخية

لتعزيز الهوية والانتماء الأمريكي، ويستخدم لغة مشحونة لتعميق الفجوة بين المؤيدين والأعداء. تؤكد هذه الدراسة على أهمية فهم اللغة كأداة في الخطاب السياسي، حيث يمكن أن تجمع الناس أو تفرقهم بناءً على هويات خيالية.

الكلمات المفتاحية : قومي - ترامب - دلالي - براغمات - ايديولوجيا

1. The Problem

All across the diverse landscape of the world, expressions highlighting distinctive national qualities play an essential role in determining political climates and public opinions. The expression often emphasizes a particular national interest, culture and identity while contrasting to other nations or groups. Such speech is particularly common in political contexts; mobilizing around a single identity helps leaders and movements bind their followers into ideological strongholds while marking out the boundaries of "us" vs. "them" (Van Dijk, 1995).

The addressing of Donald Trump, especially his emphasizing of nationalism, have significantly impacted the political environment in the United States. His rhetoric often stirs debate, prompting careful scrutiny of the words that give shape to political discussion as explored by (Baker, 2019).

Despite its important, the nationalistic discourse in Donald Trumps speeches has and this means that the semantic and pragmatic aspects of nationalistic discourse have not been given their due attention. To bridge this gap, the present research makes its appeal to tackle it from a semantic – pragmatic angle. **Thus, the present study tries to answer the following questions:-**

1. How does Donald Trump's use of modality in his speeches reflect his certainty and authority in promoting a nationalistic agenda?
2. In what ways do lexical choices in Trump's discourse facilitate the construction of an "us vs. them" dichotomy?

3. What are the strategies employed by Trump in his speech to reinforce political polarization?

Consequently, this research aims to:

1. Finding out how Donald Trump's uses of modality in his speeches that reflect his certainty and authority in promoting a nationalistic agenda.
2. Discovering the way in which lexical choices in Trump's discourse facilitate the construction of an "us vs. them" dichotomy.
3. Shedding light on the strategies that are employed by Trump in his speech to reinforce political polarization.

Based on the aforementioned questions, it is hypothesized that:

1. Trump uses strong, assertive language to show confidence and authority, which helps him promote his nationalistic ideas and gain trust from his supporters.
2. The emotionally charged words Trump uses help create a clear "us vs. them" divide, strengthening his supporters' identity while pushing away opponents.
3. Trump uses positive language for his supporters and negative language for his opponents, along with fear-based messages, to increase political division and create a more polarized society.

2. Nationalistic Discourse

Nationalistic discourse is the use of language that highlights the interests, culture, and identity of a certain country or group highlights the interests, culture, and identity of a certain country or group, frequently contrasting it with others. This discourse can be seen in governmental speeches, media narratives and normal conversations where national pride and common identity are advanced by defining 'us' versus 'them' (Smith, 2018).

Much of nationalistic discourse roots itself in the definition of an "us" and a "them", most typically as we (the nation) against they (outsiders or subversives), such that political debate focuses on external threats. Immigrants and other countries are often portrayed from Donald Trump Former President in his speech as a threat to American safety and jobs. He classified illegal immigrants as "bad hombres," and called them "criminals" and "rapists," using typical techniques of in group–out grouping. This rhetoric is probably most notable during his campaign speeches and policy initiatives where he emphasized the need for tougher border security (Jones, 2020).

Nationalistic language uses cultural references, symbols, and historical narratives to create (Wodak, 2015) a single identity among the people of that nation. Nationalist narratives can rely on cultural references as well as historical ones. On national holidays, politicians may draw on the founding fathers or the Declaration of Independence to bolster a social identity. References to the American Dream or America itself in speeches help dictate us back to a common narrative of patriotism and communal memory.

3. Micro–Level Analysis

3.1 Ideological Discourse Analysis

Ideological discourse analysis (IDA) offers a good tool in this case to understand the way language constructs social ideology within political settings. IDA, as elucidated by Teun van Dijk, investigates the connection between discourse and the beliefs that it not just indicates but in addition shapes. It is crucial as a critical frame of analysis to understand the rhetorical tactics used by divisive figures seeking to polarize debate. In his work, Van Dijk looks at a number of features involving the language used in political speeches and media coverage as well as considering

contextual information that is believed to be relevant, as well many cognitive factors influencing interpretation. Through its exegesis of the language and framing of narratives around events, IDA reveals some predispositions which may be responsible for fueling political polarization (Brown, 2019).

Donald Trump's speaking style effectively frames opponents to evoke emotional reactions from his supporters, highlighting the power of language in shaping public opinion and political rhetoric. His portrayal of adversaries creates clear divisions that resonate with his audience, reflecting and reinforcing cultural norms. Analyzing Trump's rhetoric through ideological theories is crucial for understanding how speech reflects and constructs ideological perspectives, leading to new polarities in public discourse. Examining these dimensions reveals how ideologies are represented and produced through language, underscoring the profound impact of rhetoric in political contexts (Taylor, 2021).

3.2 Semantic Analysis

1. Modality

The significance of modality as a reflection of one's certainty is underscored by (Halliday, 2000). Modality involves the strength of an assertion as perceived by the speaker. It falls into high, medium and low–certainty.

1. **High Modality** is concerned with expressing certainty and authority, implying a strong decisiveness as in "the government *will* likely introduce new laws "suggests a confident expectation.

2. **Medium Modality** introduces some level of doubt or ambiguity, allowing for multiple interpretations as in "The government *might* approve the new legislation" that reflects this by suggesting possibility instead of certainty.
3. **Low Modality** minimizes certainty and leads to more hypothetical possibilities as in the following example,

"The government may or might introduce fresh regulations"

Elucidating these modalities can help a researcher to investigate the impact language impose on communication and how an audience receives information (Miller, 2017).

2. Lexicalization

Lexicalisation is the deliberate selection of vocabulary in conversation. It is a predefined action of term choosing in conversation, which is crucial for constructing narratives and framing audience perceptions Donald Trump's spoken word style for example significantly affects his nationalistic narrative. Distinct terms are used deliberately to produce feelings and make ideological claims more attractive. Certain terms are used to build up the emotions and strengthen Donald Trump's nationalistic narrative. Emotion-laden phrases have become so commonplace that they have started defining him with the people who support these themes while also shaping their very being. This deliberate diction conveys his political purpose and finds resonance among audiences, helping to isolate public opinion in accordance with nationalist ideologies (Wodak, 2015).

3. Macro-Level Analysis: Ideological Square

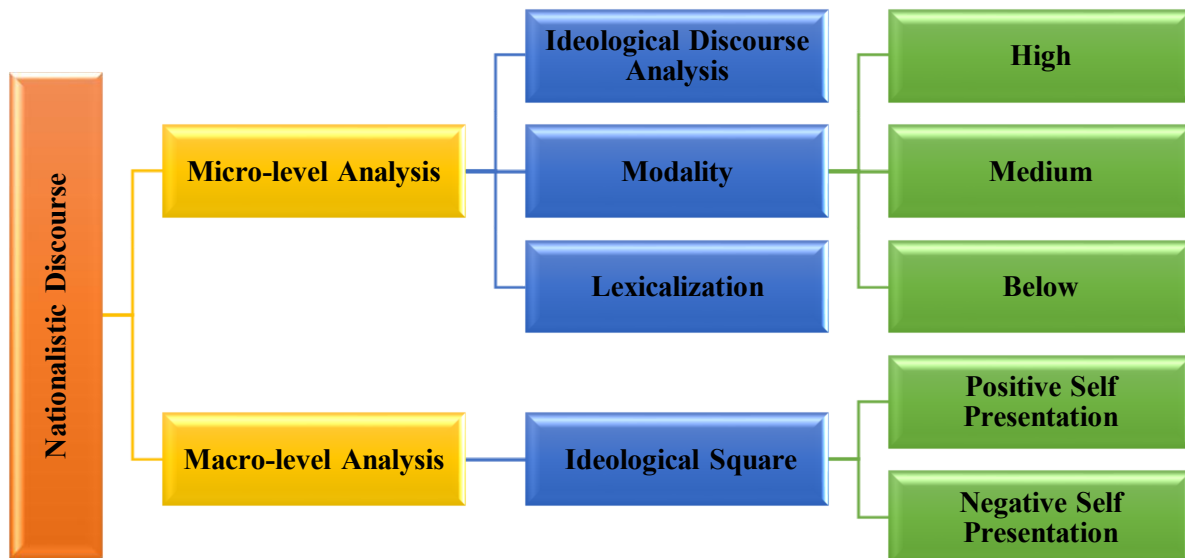
The theoretical square model of discourse by (Van Dijk, 1995) posits two main strategies: positive self-representation and negative other-representation in people's daily language. It is a necessary ingredient in exploring how these methods contribute to the creation of national identity, particularly within political discourse. A part of positive self-presentation is resonating the strengths and achievements of their contingent, making everyone feel proud in associating with it. In other-presentation (negatively), this separation is made greater by showing the oppositional group as unfavorable; us versus them. In executing such practices, political actors like Trump reinforce an exclusive national identity of loyalty and inclusion for some at the expense of others. It not only exerts a top-down effect on public opinion but also consolidates the boundaries of one's own social group, defining the national we identity in terms of values and goals shared by virtuous Europeans (Van Dijk, 1995).

4. Methodology

4.1 The data

This study draws upon data collected from an official event held by Donald Trump in North Carolina. Five extracts were consciously gathered from the campaign's websites to serve as primary sources. The selected data points present authentic dialog from real legal cases, offering a natural lens through which to view the evasive language employed. A qualitative methodology is applied, incorporating qualitative research strategies. Qualitatively, key attributes and unfolding situations are illuminated.

Figure (1) The Model of the analysis



4.2 Data Analysis

Extract No.1

"Guys, this isn't about politics. This isn't about politics. We've all seen political campaigns. This has become a movement of absolute love. It started as politics, but this is no longer that. This is so much bigger than that. I want to tell a story that I'm not sure if I've ever told in front of a big crowd, but I'll never forget. It was the primaries of 2016. Mike Huckabee just came off the stage from one of the debates, and he comes up to me and he goes, "Eric, I'm going to drop out of this race because I feel the hand of God on your father's shoulders." And I'll never forget that. And honestly, I'm not sure if I knew what it meant at the time, but I certainly do today"

A micro-level examination of the speaker's speech reveals high modality via statements such as "this has become a movement of absolute love", indicating a

strong belief against conventional political narratives. The declarative attitude is underscored by the reiteration of "this isn't about politics", which accentuates the speaker's conviction and distinguishes their message from conventional political discourse. Crucial word selections, such as "movement" and "absolute love", imply a shared identity and elicit pleasant sentiments, presenting the discourse in a favourable manner.

At a macro level, the ideological square demonstrates a favourable self-representation of the movement, juxtaposed with the negative often linked to politics. This stance implies ethical superiority, while conventional politics are tacitly seen as divisive and disingenuous. The research underscores the influence of language on views of political speech, highlighting the speaker's intention to cultivate togetherness and affection.

Extract No. 2

"Between the dirty dossiers, between the fake impeachments, what they did to Brett Kavanaugh, the way they went after our family, the 111 subpoenas that I've personally gotten, the fact that they tried to throw him off the ballots in Colorado, they tried to throw him off the ballots in Maine, they raided his home, they raided Melania's closet, they raided Baron's room, they censored him, they tried to take away his First Amendment. They went on after him. They took him off of Twitter, they took him off of Facebook, they took him off of Instagram. They weaponized every district attorney, every attorney general in far left states against my father....."

A micro-level investigation of the speaker's speech reveals high modality in comments such as "they tried to take away his First Amendment", which suggest a

robust belief in the victimization narrative of the speaker's father. Declarative phrases express certainty, framing allegations as proven truths. Lexical selections, especially pejorative phrases such as "dirty dossiers" and "fake impeachments", function as loaded language that undermines the opposition, portraying them as corrupt and malevolent.

At a macro level, the ideological square portrays the opponent as deliberately undermining the speaker's family and bolstering a narrative of **victimisation** and injustice. The speaker's family, on the other hand, receives a favorable portrayal as victims of an inequitable system, which evokes empathy from the listener. This dichotomy in the presentation highlights the overarching themes of victimization and moral superiority throughout the discourse.

Extract No. 3

"We need God in our life. We need God in society. We need children to respect God. We need God in our schools. And if Kamala Harris won't say it, I will. We love God and we will always be a nation of faith. And so to all the incredible pastors in here, I'm so honored to have a small part in putting together this event because I don't think there's anything that's more important to us as a country than to have all of you stand here. Guys, we're going to win this. We're going to win this. We're no longer going to have Obama weaponizing the IRS to go after churches and to go after faith leaders. We're no longer going to try and remove the words "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance, or "In God We Trust" from our currency"

At the micro level, the speaker's discourse reveals high modality in statements like "We need God", which convey a deep need for the presence of God in society and imply that it is crucial for the welfare of society. Presenting God's place in society as an ethical necessity, the use of declarative statements bolsters this assurance. The use of evocative words like "faith", "respect", and "nation of faith" emphasizes strong religious and nationalistic ties throughout.

The ideology square shows that Americans are proud of being a religious country, which is very different from secular beliefs. Bringing up Kamala Harris implies that those who oppose religious expressions in public life face criticism, thereby presenting a negative image. This dual strategy portrays opponents as challenges to the speaker's objective of a religiously-based national identity, while concurrently solidifying the speaker's understanding of this identity.

Extract NO. 4

"Thank you very much. And a beautiful speaker, boy. He got up, and he would talk to groups of people and they were so jazzed up. They could do anything. He was very special, and a person, I have to say, the most special. We have to say has been the most special of them all, because he's my son. I mean, I'm saying how can he be more special than Ben Carson? But Ben, do you mind if I say, he's my son? Am I allowed to say just slightly more special? Oh, you're tied. Let's call it a tie, okay? But Eric has been amazing in business, and everything he has done has been so incredible. He has become a legend in the legal profession because he's the most subpoenaed human being in history"

A micro-level study of the speaker's language reveals high modality in the sentence "he's the most subpoenaed human being in history", which emphatically underscores

Eric's importance and singularity. The use of affirmative vocabulary selections like "special", "amazing", and "legend" amplifies this depiction, underscoring the speaker's delight in Eric's accomplishments. The allusion to Ben Carson acts as a contrasting point, therefore enhancing Eric's stature by positioning him as equally or more prominent.

On a macro level, the ideological square illustrates a favorable self-representation of Eric, highlighting his distinctive attributes and achievements. The comparable reference to Ben Carson recognizes another esteemed individual while also establishing Eric's preeminence, appealing to the audience's allegiance and family pride. This dual framing not only elevates Eric's image but also cultivates a feeling of community among supporters who resonate with the speaker's appreciation.

Extract NO. 5

" This election is about whether we are a secular nation or are we one nation under God. It was a long time ago, but Benjamin Franklin, when he came out of that Constitution Hall after vigorous arguments over how our nation was going to be run, he was asked, "Sir, what do we have here, a monarchy or a republic?" And he said, "A republic, if you can keep it." We've kept it for 240 years, but we're as close to losing it right now as we have ever been at any point in time"

A micro-level study of the speaker's speech reveals strong modality in the sentence, "We're as close to losing it right now as we have ever been", which implies urgency and conviction about the election's implications. The use of the declarative mood creates a clear distinction between a "secular nation" and "one nation under God", presenting the matter as a critical decision that requires consideration.

Lexicalization presents opposing phrases that underscore the ideological division, notably the opposition of a "secular nation" to "one nation under God", evoking historical allusions to American identity.

At a macro level, the ideological square demonstrates a favorable self-representation of the speaker's traditionalist perspective as a legitimate interpretation of American principles. The speaker portrays the secular position unfavourably, characterizing it as a danger to the nation's basic identity, thereby eliciting anxiety and urgency among the audience. This framing strengthens the speaker's appeal for action and the perceived need to safeguard traditional values.

5. Results and Discussion

Examining Trump's talks shows that he uses a number of common rhetorical techniques for pestering a nationalist agenda. At the micro level, Trump often uses high modality—language that expresses a strong degree of certainty—to show that he is in charge and gives his audience trust. By repeatedly making confident statements, Trump not only reassures his supporters but also conveys a sense of unwavering determination to achieve his goals. The words Trump uses shape his nationalist narrative. This is called "lexicalisation". He uses strong words in his talks, such as "criminals" and "rapists", to clearly distinguish between "Americans" and perceived outsiders (Extract 2). This language supports the "us vs. them" mindset that is at the heart of nationalist speech. According to van Dijk's ideological square, this method is known as positive self-presentation, which emphasizes the positive aspects of the in-group, and negative other-presentation, which emphasizes the negative aspects or risks of the outside group. Trump frequently refers to his followers as "patriots"

defending the country in his speeches, while he labels immigration, political opponents, and foreign groups as "threats to American safety, values, or jobs".

Trump uses cultural symbols and historical references to reinforce American identity and belonging, connecting his message with traditional values. He uses loaded language, such as portraying his family as victims of a corrupt system, to deepen the divide between supporters and enemies. These emotional appeals are a hallmark of nationalistic discourse, mobilizing support by emphasizing the need to protect the nation from threats. Trump's speeches align with van Dijk's concept of the ideological square, where positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation work together to strengthen group identity and loyalty.

6. Conclusion

The research reveals that Donald Trump uses nationalistic language in his speeches to mobilize audiences and unify identities. He uses techniques like high modality, lexical choices, and ideological framing to distinguish between "us" and "them". His rhetoric often portrays immigrants and political opponents as enemies, emphasizing American exceptionalism and unity among supporters. Trump's language not only mirrors nationalistic trends but also shapes them. It demonstrates that political language allows leaders like Trump to rally support and shape opinions on specific issues.

From the viewpoint of semantics and pragmatics, Trump's language is not only mirrors nationalistic trends but shapes them. The research shows that political language allows leaders like Trump, the ability to rally support and help citizens feel they are part of a constituency as well shaping opinion toward specific issues. Furthermore, this study highlights the significance of better perceptiveness about

language as a tool in political discourse that can bring people together and divide them against one another based on imagined identities.

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