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Reclaiming the Narrative: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Donald Trump's 2024 Super Tuesday Campaign Speech

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ABSTRACT

This study critically analyzes Donald Trump's 2024 campaign speech using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework to explore how his rhetorical strategies construct power relations and reinforce ideological divisions. By examining key rhetorical devices such as pronouns, metaphors, hyperbole, and Repetition, the study reveals how Trump's language fosters a collective identity among his supporters, positioning them as defenders of "true" American values. The analysis also demonstrates how Trump employs a problem-solution structure to portray himself as the sole solution to issues like immigration, economic instability, and national security. The study further contextualizes Trump's rhetoric within broader discursive practices, showing how the speech resonates with populist themes of institutional distrust and nationalism. By drawing on socio-cultural trends such as the rise of populism and media fragmentation, Trump effectively mobilizes his base while deepening ideological divides. The "us versus them" narrative, a hallmark of populist discourse, is examined in light of Fairclough's and van Dijk's theories, highlighting the role of language in shaping social realities and power dynamics. Through this analysis, the research aims to shed light on the broader implications of political discourse in maintaining and challenging power structures within a divided society.

INTRODUCTION

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been pivotal in understanding the interplay between language and power within political contexts (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1993). It reveals how political figures use language to shape public perception and reinforce ideologies. Fairclough's three-dimensional model has been extensively applied to analyze Trump's speeches, such as in Handayani et al. (2018), who examined the discourse on Jerusalem as Israel's capital. This study aims to build on these existing works by utilizing Fairclough's CDA framework (Fairclough, 2010) to provide a deeper understanding of Trump's discourse within the context of recent political, social, and economic developments.

Charteris-Black's (2019) study, "Trump and his Twitter army: The weaponisation of social media in 2016 US presidential election," examined how Trump utilized social media platforms, particularly Twitter, to craft a populist discourse during the 2016 presidential campaign. The research employed CDA to uncover the linguistic strategies Trump used to appeal to his base and undermine his political opponents. Benford and

Snow's (2000) work on "Framing processes and social movements" provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how Trump's rhetoric constructs particular frames to mobilize support. This research is relevant in analyzing how Trump's discourse in 2024 may seek to (re)define political and social issues to align with his populist agenda.

While much has been written about Trump's rhetoric during his presidency (Bacevic, 2018; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017), there is a dearth of research exploring his post-presidency discourse. The 2024 campaign presents a novel context for analysis, as Trump's rhetorical strategies may have adapted to new challenges and opportunities. This study aims to fill this gap by applying CDA to Trump's 2024 campaign speech, thereby capturing the evolution of his discourse strategies. By doing so, it sheds light on how Trump continues to influence and mobilize his base amidst shifting political landscapes. This research not only contributes to the literature on political discourse but also provides insights into the ongoing impact of Trump's rhetoric on American politics.

Wodak's (2015), "The politics of fear: What right-wing populist discourses mean," offers insights into the discursive strategies employed by right-wing populist leaders, such as Trump. This research is valuable in situating Trump's 2024 campaign speech within the broader context of populist discourse and its implications for political and social dynamics. Chouliaraki and Fairclough's (1999) work, "Discourse in late modernity: Rethinking critical discourse analysis," provides a theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between discourse, power, and social change. This research is particularly relevant in analyzing how Trump's evolving rhetoric may reflect and shape the socio-cultural context of the 2024 election.

CDA is a multidisciplinary approach that investigates the relationship between language, power, and ideology. It seeks to uncover how language constructs and is constructed by social structures and power relations (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 1992). Fairclough's model of CDA is particularly influential, comprising three levels of analysis: text, discourse practice, and socio-cultural practice (Fairclough, 2003, 2013). This tripartite framework thoroughly examines how discursive events are produced, distributed, and consumed within their specific contexts. By applying this model to Trump's 2024 campaign speech, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of his rhetorical strategies and their broader social implications.

The title of this study, "A Critical Discourse Analysis of Donald Trump's 2024 Campaign Speech," encapsulates the core components of the research. "Donald Trump's 2024 Campaign Speech" refers to the primary text under analysis, highlighting the study's specific context and temporal frame. "Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)" denotes the methodological approach used to dissect the speech, emphasizing the focus on language and power. Lastly, "Fairclough's Three Levels of Analysis" indicates the study's theoretical framework, ensuring a comprehensive examination of the text, discourse practices, and socio-cultural context. Previous research on Trump's rhetoric has underscored his adept use of populist discourse, characterized by its simplicity, directness, and emotional appeal (Davis, 2019; Moffitt, 2016). Studies have highlighted how Trump effectively mobilizes support by tapping into the anxieties and aspirations of his base (Laclau, 2005; Wodak, 2015). However, there has been limited exploration of how these rhetorical strategies might have evolved in his 2024 campaign. This study seeks to build on existing literature by investigating how Trump's discourse has adapted in his bid to return to power, reflecting and shaping social realities in the process.

Trump's 2024 campaign speech offers a rich site for examining the evolution of his rhetorical strategies. Post-presidency, Trump faces a different political landscape with new challenges and dynamics. This study aims to explore how his discourse has shifted in response to these changes. Has Trump maintained his populist approach or adapted his strategies to address new issues and audiences? By analyzing his speech through the lens of Fairclough's CDA framework, this research seeks to uncover the nuances of Trump's evolving rhetoric.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Previous Related Studies

In recent years, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been widely applied to the study of political rhetoric, particularly in understanding how language is used to convey and reinforce ideological positions. This approach has been instrumental in dissecting the speeches of influential political figures, revealing the underlying power dynamics and strategies employed to sway public opinion. Among the most analyzed subjects is Donald Trump, whose speeches have become a focal point for researchers interested in the intersection of language, power, and ideology. The following studies provide a detailed examination of Trump's rhetorical strategies, each contributing to a broader understanding of how his discourse has shaped and reflected the political landscape. These analyses, from his 2015 campaign announcements to his 2017 inauguration speech, highlight the evolving nature of Trump's rhetoric and its impact on various audiences.

Handayani et al. (2018) conducted a study titled "Fairclough's Three-Dimension Framework Used on Trump's Political Speech: A Critical Discourse Analysis (A Case Study of Historic Speech Related to Jerusalem as Israel's Capital)," applying Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA framework to analyze Donald Trump's 2017 speech about Jerusalem being the capital of Israel. This study, which employed a descriptive qualitative method, focused on how Trump strategically used language to reinforce his political stance by emphasizing religious and national identity. Their findings revealed that Trump's rhetoric was carefully designed to legitimize his political decisions, positioning him as a defender of religious values. This research highlights the effectiveness of Trump's discourse in appealing to specific ideological stances within his audience.

Similarly, Faiz et al. (2020) examined Trump's speech at the Israel Museum on May 23, 2017, in their study titled "The Ideology of Donald Trump on His Speech at the Israel Museum: Fairclough's Three Models of CDA." The conflict between Israel and Palestine, which dates back to 1948, is often framed as a religious struggle between Jews and Muslims, and Trump's speech reflected these tensions. The authors analyzed Trump's language, which expressed sympathy for the conflict in Jerusalem, a city sacred to Jews, Muslims, and Christians alike. By emphasizing Jerusalem's religious significance and supporting Israel's claims, Trump's rhetoric implicitly supported Israel's controversial stance on East Jerusalem. Faiz and colleagues concluded that Trump's use of language in this speech reinforced ideological and religious alignments, showing the strategic deployment of CDA in political contexts involving international conflicts.

One significant study by Nurhaliza and Tanto (2020), titled "Representation of Indonesia's Judiciary of Ahok's Blasphemy Verdict in The New York Times Article," focused on the representation of Indonesia's judiciary through the lens of Ahok's blasphemy trial. Using van Dijk's CDA framework (2015), the study explored how social-power abuse and inequality are conveyed through the media. The analysis, centered on micro-level structures—macrostructures, microstructures, and superstructures—revealed that The New York Times article portrayed Indonesia's judiciary in a negative light, highlighting issues of social power and inequality. This research is crucial in understanding how media discourse can influence perceptions of legal and political institutions on a global scale.

Meanwhile, Indriyani and Widyastuti (2023) took a closer look at news media discourse in their study "Attitude Realization in Omicron News Reporting: Appraisal in Critical Discourse Analysis," focusing on how The Jakarta Post framed news about the Omicron variant. By applying the appraisal system in conjunction with CDA, they revealed how language is used to express evaluative stances, showing that The Jakarta Post strategically positions itself to appear politically neutral while simultaneously catering to economic interests. This study highlights how media discourses are shaped by ideological stances, particularly those linked to

socio-political and economic pressures, further revealing how news outlets balance content to maximize readership and advertising revenue.

Continuing this line of inquiry, Tian (2021), in the paper "Critical Discourse Analysis of Political Discourse — A Case Study of Trump's TV Speech," examined the relationship between power and ideology in Trump's TV speeches using Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar and Fairclough's CDA framework. The study used a qualitative method to analyze linguistic features such as transitivity, modality, and personal pronouns, revealing how Trump's strategic use of language reduced the perceived distance between himself and his audience. The findings suggested that Trump effectively manipulated language to foster support and loyalty, showcasing the adaptability of his rhetorical strategies in maintaining his political influence. This analysis reinforced the idea that Trump's discourse was a powerful tool for persuasion, particularly in the context of television as a medium.

In line with this idea, N Erisha (2023), in her study titled "Binocular of CDA at Selena Gomez's Speech in YouTube," applied Teun A. Van Dijk's CDA framework to explore the discourse in Selena Gomez's speeches. Erisha's research found three key elements of CDA in Gomez's speeches: thematic, syntactic style, and style semantics, which were divided into various categories, such as persuasion, cohesion, and presupposition. Additionally, she highlighted the presence of social cognition elements, including person schemas, self-schemes, and role schemes. This study demonstrates how CDA can be used beyond political discourse to analyze the strategic use of language in shaping public perceptions in different contexts.

Finally, Yousfi and Mouhadjer (2024) extended the analysis of Trump's rhetoric by applying CDA to his 2017 inaugural speech in their study "A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Inaugural Speech of Trump and its Perception by the American Society." This research utilized Fairclough's model to examine the linguistic and thematic elements of the speech, focusing on the power dynamics and the public's perception. The study found that Trump's speech was crafted to challenge the political establishment and galvanize his base by positioning himself as an outsider championing the interests of ordinary Americans. The conclusion drawn from this study underscored how Trump's inaugural speech was not just a moment of political theater but a deliberate attempt to reshape the political narrative, further cementing his identity as a populist leader. Together, these studies provide a comprehensive view of Trump's rhetorical strategies across different contexts and moments in his political career.

The previous research on Donald Trump's speeches has extensively utilized Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework to explore various aspects of his rhetoric, including his ideological stance, persuasive strategies, and the impact of his discourse on different audiences. Handayani et al. (2018) focused on Trump's Jerusalem speech, revealing how he leveraged religious and national identities to support his political agenda. Tian (2021) provided insights into how Trump employed linguistic features like transitivity and personal pronouns to manipulate his audience's perception and foster support. Yousfi and Mouhadjer (2024) further explored Trump's inaugural speech, emphasizing his rhetorical strategies in challenging the political establishment. While these studies have contributed significantly to understanding Trump's discourse, they primarily focus on specific speeches and contexts, leaving a gap in the analysis of how Trump's rhetorical strategies have evolved in the broader context of his 2024 campaign.

This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing Trump's 2024 campaign speeches using Fairclough's CDA framework, focusing on how his discourse strategies have adapted in response to the changing political, social, and economic landscape post-presidency. Unlike previous research that concentrated on isolated speeches, this study provides a more comprehensive analysis of Trump's evolving rhetoric as he attempts to return to power. By examining his speeches within the context of his 2024 campaign, this research will offer new insights into

how Trump continues to shape public perception and reinforce his ideological stance amidst the current polarized political environment.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a multidisciplinary approach that examines the intricate relationships between language, power, and ideology within various social and political contexts (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2001; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). By scrutinizing how language is used, CDA aims to uncover the underlying power dynamics, ideological representations, and social inequalities that are often obscured or naturalized within discourse.

CDA has been widely applied across diverse fields, including political science, media studies, education, and organizational communication (Flowerdew & Richardson, 2018; van Dijk, 2015; Wodak & Meyer, 2016). In the realm of politics, CDA has proven particularly valuable in analyzing political speeches, campaign rhetoric, and policy debates, revealing how language is strategically employed to construct and perpetuate specific narratives, identities, and ideological stances (Chilton, 2004; Dunmire, 2012; Reyes, 2011).

At the core of CDA lies a tripartite framework that encompasses textual analysis, discursive practice, and socio-cultural practice (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1997; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). This framework recognizes that language use and discourse are multidimensional phenomena that cannot be fully understood without considering their textual, discursive, and socio-cultural dimensions.

Textual analysis within CDA focuses on the linguistic features and rhetorical strategies employed in texts, such as the use of pronouns, metaphors, Repetition, argumentative structures, and evaluative language (Machin & Mayr, 2012; Richardson, 2007). By examining these textual elements, CDA scholars can unravel how language is used to construct and disseminate particular narratives, identities, and ideologies.

Discursive practice in CDA addresses texts' production, distribution, and consumption and the immediate responses and interpretations they elicit (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1997). This aspect of CDA recognizes that texts do not exist in isolation but are shaped by various contextual factors, such as rhetorical styles, distribution strategies, and existing power relations within the public sphere.

Finally, socio-cultural practice in CDA situates discourse within broader societal contexts and power structures (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2008; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). CDA scholars examine how political rhetoric and discursive practices both reflect and contribute to larger socio-political trends, ideological currents, and the construction of social realities.

By synthesizing these three dimensions, CDA offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the complex interplay between language, power, and ideology in various contexts, including political discourse. The following sections will delve deeper into each of these three aspects, drawing from relevant literature to elucidate their significance and applications within CDA.

Textual Analyses in Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) places a strong emphasis on the examination of linguistic features within texts and how these features contribute to the construction of particular discourses and ideologies. Through a close analysis of textual elements, CDA aims to uncover the underlying power dynamics and social representations embedded within language use (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2001; Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

One key aspect of textual analysis in CDA is the study of pronouns and their role in shaping personal and collective identities. The strategic use of first-person pronouns like "I" and "we" can foster a sense of personal connection and unity with the audience (Pennycook, 1994; Wilson, 1990). By employing these pronouns, political leaders can position themselves as relatable figures while simultaneously creating a sense of shared identity and purpose with their followers.

Metaphors and figurative language are also widely explored in CDA, as they can serve to dramatize and amplify particular issues or perspectives (Charteris-Black, 2004; Musolff, 2012). Through vivid metaphorical expressions, political actors can paint compelling narratives that resonate with their supporters' values and concerns. This rhetorical device has been shown to be effective in shaping public perceptions and mobilizing political support (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Semino, 2008).

Repetition is another linguistic feature that has garnered significant attention in CDA studies (Atkinson, 1984; Johnstone, 1994). By repeating certain phrases or ideas, political speakers can reinforce their central messages and ensure that these points are not only heard but also remembered. This technique can create a sense of momentum and conviction, making promises or proposed solutions appear more concrete and attainable.

The analysis of argumentative structures and rhetorical strategies is also crucial in CDA. Political speeches often employ problem-solution formats, where issues are identified, and specific policies are presented as the solutions (Reyes, 2011; van Dijk, 2006). This structure can effectively frame political leaders as proactive problem-solvers capable of addressing the concerns of their constituents.

Furthermore, the examination of lexical choices and evaluative language is a cornerstone of textual analysis in CDA (Machin & Mayr, 2012; Richardson, 2007). Political actors frequently employ words and phrases with strong emotional or ideological connotations to evoke particular responses and reinforce specific worldviews. By analyzing these linguistic choices, CDA scholars can uncover the underlying ideologies and power dynamics at play within political discourse.

In summary, textual analyses in CDA focus on various linguistic features, such as pronouns, metaphors, Repetition, argumentative structures, and lexical choices. These elements are scrutinized to reveal how language is used strategically to construct and disseminate particular narratives, identities, and ideologies within the political sphere. By examining these textual aspects, CDA scholars can shed light on the complex interplay between language, power, and social representations in political discourse.

Discursive Practice in Critical Discourse Analysis

In addition to textual analyses, critical discourse analysis (CDA) pays close attention to the discursive practices surrounding texts' production, distribution, and consumption (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1997; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). This aspect of CDA recognizes that texts are not created or received in a vacuum but are shaped by various contextual factors and existing power relations.

One area of discursive practice that has been extensively studied is the strategic use of rhetorical styles and persona in political discourse (Charteris-Black, 2011; Pels, 2003). Political leaders often cultivate specific leadership images and rhetorical personas to appeal to their target audiences and reinforce their authority. By analyzing these stylistic choices, CDA scholars can uncover the underlying motivations and ideological underpinnings that inform a particular discursive practice.

The distribution and dissemination strategies employed by political actors are also of great interest in CDA research (Richardson, 2007; Wodak, 2009). With the advent of new media technologies and the fragmentation

of traditional media landscapes, the ways in which political messages are circulated and consumed have become increasingly complex. CDA scholars examine how the choice of distribution channels and the reach of these messages can impact their reception and influence within various segments of society.

Closely tied to distribution strategies is the analysis of immediate media response and audience reactions to political rhetoric (Carvalho, 2008; van Dijk, 1998). CDA recognizes that texts do not exist in isolation but are subject to interpretation and engagement by various stakeholders. By examining the diverse reactions and interpretations of political discourse, CDA scholars can gain insights into the existing ideological divides and power dynamics that shape the public sphere.

Furthermore, CDA emphasizes the importance of situating discursive practices within broader socio-political contexts (Fairclough, 2003; Wodak & Meyer, 2016). Political rhetoric is not produced or received in a vacuum but is influenced by and contributes to larger societal trends and power relations. CDA scholars explore how discursive practices both reflect and shape these broader contexts, shedding light on the complex interplay between language, ideology, and social structures.

In summary, the study of discursive practice in CDA encompasses various aspects, including rhetorical styles and persona, distribution and dissemination strategies, immediate media response and audience reactions, and the situating of discursive practices within broader socio-political contexts. By analyzing these elements, CDA scholars can unravel the complex relationships between language, power, and social representations that underlie political discourse and its production, circulation, and reception.

Socio-cultural Practice in Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) recognizes that language use and discourse are inherently embedded within larger socio-cultural contexts and power structures (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2008; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). As such, CDA scholars pay close attention to the socio-cultural practices that inform and are shaped by political rhetoric and discursive practices.

One area of interest within this domain is the role of political rhetoric in tapping into broader socio-political trends and sentiments (Krzyżanowski, 2020; Wodak, 2015). Political actors often strategically align their rhetoric with prevailing societal currents, such as the rise of populism, distrust of institutions, or the erosion of national unity. By examining how political discourse engages with these trends, CDA scholars can uncover the underlying motivations and ideological underpinnings driving these discursive practices.

The use of "us versus them" narratives in political discourse has also been extensively studied within the context of socio-cultural practices (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001; van Dijk, 2006). These narratives often serve to mobilize support by reinforcing in-group identities and delegitimizing perceived opponents. CDA scholars analyze how these divisive narratives are constructed, disseminated, and ultimately shape societal perceptions and power relations.

Furthermore, CDA places a strong emphasis on exploring the relationship between political rhetoric, power relations, and the construction of social realities (Fairclough, 2010; van Dijk, 2008; Wodak, 2011). Political discourse is not merely a reflection of existing power structures but plays an active role in shaping and reinforcing them. CDA scholars examine how language is used to legitimize or challenge particular ideologies, identities, and power dynamics within society.

By situating political rhetoric within its socio-cultural context, CDA scholars can shed light on the complex interplay between language, ideology, and social structures. This approach recognizes that discourse does not

operate in isolation but is deeply intertwined with broader societal forces and power relations (Fairclough, 2003; van Dijk, 2009; Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

In summary, the study of socio-cultural practice in CDA involves examining how political rhetoric engages with broader socio-political trends, the use of divisive "us versus them" narratives, and the relationship between discourse, power relations, and the construction of social realities. By analyzing these elements, CDA scholars can unravel the intricate connections between language, ideology, and the larger socio-cultural contexts in which political discourse is produced, consumed, and interpreted.

METHOD

This study utilizes a qualitative approach to analyze former President Donald Trump's rhetorical strategies and discursive practices in his 2024 campaign speech delivered after his dominant Super Tuesday performance. By employing a critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework, this investigation aims to uncover the underlying social, political, and ideological dimensions within Trump's speech, going beyond a mere descriptive analysis of the language used.

The primary data for this study is a transcript of Donald Trump's speech, sourced from a reputable media outlet, Rev.com. This transcript provides a verbatim account of Trump's remarks, ensuring the accuracy and authenticity of the data. The selection of this particular speech is significant, as it represents a pivotal moment in Trump's 2024 campaign, capturing his rhetoric and messaging at a critical juncture in the electoral process (Rev.com, 2024; https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/trump-delivers-remarks-after-dominant-super-tuesday-performance).

The analytical framework underpinning this study is rooted in Norman Fairclough's CDA approach, which encompasses three interrelated dimensions of discourse: textual analysis, discursive practice, and socio-cultural practice. This multifaceted approach allows for a comprehensive examination of the speech, exploring the linguistic features and the broader contextual factors that shape and inform the discourse.

The data collection process involved transcribing the speech, ensuring the verbatim capture of Trump's rhetoric. This primary data was then subjected to a thorough textual analysis, examining the linguistic elements, such as vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and rhetorical devices, to uncover the underlying patterns and strategies employed by the former president.

The data analysis follows Fairclough's three-dimensional framework, with the first stage focusing on the description of the textual features, the second stage examining the discursive practices surrounding the production, distribution, and consumption of the speech, and the final stage explaining how the discourse relates to and shapes the broader socio-cultural and political contexts. This comprehensive approach aims to provide a nuanced understanding of Trump's 2024 campaign speech, contributing to the broader field of political discourse analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Textual Analysis

In Donald Trump's 2024 campaign speech, using pronouns plays a crucial role in constructing a sense of personal connection and collective identity. Trump frequently employs first-person pronouns like "I" and "we,"

which personalize his message and foster a sense of unity among his listeners. Fairclough's (2010) theory of language as a form of social practice explains that pronouns like "we" can construct group identity, positioning Trump and his supporters as a unified force. For example, phrases such as "I said" and "We had" serve to position Trump as both a relatable leader and a part of his audience, reinforcing a sense of shared purpose. This strategic use of pronouns creates a bond with the audience, making them feel directly involved in the narrative he presents. Handayani et al. (2018) observed a similar pattern in Trump's 2017 speech about Jerusalem, where the pronouns "we" and "our" emphasized collective religious and national identity.

Metaphors and hyperbole are also prominent features of Trump's rhetoric, adding dramatic flair and emphasizing the gravity of the issues he discusses. These linguistic devices align with Fairclough's idea that metaphors shape reality by framing issues in a particular light, simplifying complex social phenomena into emotionally charged narratives. For instance, describing the current president as "the worst president in the history of our country" and referring to immigration issues as a "flood of migrants" amplifies the perceived severity of these problems. Such exaggerated language serves to heighten the emotional impact of his speech, galvanizing his supporters by presenting the issues in stark, urgent terms. Tian (2021) highlighted a similar use of hyperbole in Trump's TV speeches, where crises were magnified to rally public support and reinforce Trump's role as the necessary solution to these threats. In both cases, the metaphors and hyperbole not only dramatize the issues but also strengthen the ideological divides between Trump's supporters and his opponents.

Repetition is another key element in Trump's speech, used to underscore and reinforce his main points. According to Fairclough (1995), Repetition in discourse is a tool for constructing ideology, embedding certain values and ideas in the audience's minds. By repeating phrases like "We're going to take it," "We're going to make it," and "We're going to drill, baby drill," Trump ensures that these messages are not only heard but also remembered. This technique is particularly effective in rallying his base, as it creates a rhythm and momentum that resonate well in a speech setting. Similarly, in the 2024 campaign, Repetition helps solidify Trump's policy promises, making them seem more concrete and attainable, thereby instilling confidence and determination among his audience.

The **argumentative structures** within Trump's speech often follow a problem-solution format, a key feature in Fairclough's notion of discourse as social practice. He identifies a range of issues, such as economic instability and immigration, and then presents his policies as the solutions. For example, he contrasts the current state of inflation, which he describes as "destroying the middle class," with his own plans to "get the inflation down." This structure is persuasive because it frames Trump as a proactive and capable leader who can fix the problems he outlines. This kind of discursive construction is a common theme in Trump's rhetoric, as seen in previous studies like Yousfi and Mouhadjer (2024), where Trump's inaugural speech followed a similar pattern of outlining crises before presenting his leadership as the solution. This problem-solution format helps create a clear narrative that is easy for the audience to follow and support, while also reinforcing Trump's positioning as a leader who offers direct and tangible solutions to the problems he identifies.

Trump's **lexical choices** are carefully selected to carry strong emotional or evaluative charges, which enhance the persuasive power of his speech. Words and phrases like "horrible surrender," "magnificent country," and "massive invasion" are loaded with connotations that evoke strong emotional responses. Fairclough (2010) suggests that such choices serve to consolidate power relations by aligning the audience's emotions with the speaker's ideological stance. These choices help to frame the narrative in a way that resonates with the listeners' values and concerns, making the issues feel more immediate and personal. By using such charged language, Trump can effectively convey the seriousness of the situation and the necessity of his proposed solutions. Handayani et al. (2018) similarly noted the strategic use of evaluative language in Trump's speeches, emphasizing how lexical choices can be used to polarize issues and drive political agendas.

The speech also exhibits a clear strategic aim to resonate with Trump's core supporters through its **production**. The themes of economic prowess, national security, and anti-immigration sentiment are recurring motifs that have previously been effective in rallying his base. This deliberate focus indicates a keen understanding of his audience's priorities and a calculated effort to reinforce those themes. Fairclough's CDA framework highlights how the production of discourse reflects power relations and ideological goals, and Trump's use of these themes suggests an ongoing effort to position himself as a protector of national interests. The familiar rhetorical style and content strengthen his followers' loyalty, ensuring their continued support. This strategy aligns with Tian's (2021) findings that Trump's rhetorical consistency reinforces his base's attachment to his political platform, enabling him to maintain influence across different campaign cycles.

In terms of **distribution**, the speech was disseminated through various media channels, including television, social media, and news websites. This wide reach ensured that Trump's message could penetrate multiple layers of the public sphere, engaging both supporters and critics. The immediate media response highlighted the polarized nature of its reception, with differing interpretations and reactions that underscored the divisive impact of his rhetoric. This broad dissemination strategy is typical of Trump's approach, ensuring maximum visibility and engagement. Fairclough (1995) emphasizes the importance of media in the distribution of discourse, as it amplifies the message and shapes public perception. In this case, Trump's use of multiple media platforms maximized his reach, enabling his speech to resonate with different audiences, much like in his previous campaigns.

Audience reactions to the speech ranged from enthusiastic support to critical disapproval, reflecting the highly polarized nature of the current political climate. Supporters often echoed the sentiments expressed in the speech, participating in chants and displaying approval, while opponents and media commentators pointed out perceived inaccuracies and inflammatory language. This split in reception not only illustrates the existing ideological divides but also reinforces Trump's position as a polarizing figure who thrives on controversy and strong reactions. As Fairclough (2010) notes, discourse has the power to both reflect and shape social divisions, and Trump's speech exemplifies how language can solidify the boundaries between opposing ideological groups. His speech serves as a site of ideological struggle, where language is used to maintain power relations and mobilize support.

The **political context** within which the speech operates is characterized by significant polarization and widespread dissatisfaction with the current administration. Trump's rhetoric aims to tap into these sentiments, presenting himself as the solution to the perceived failures of the existing government. By focusing on issues such as immigration, economic instability, and national security, Trump addresses the concerns that resonate most with his supporters. This alignment with their anxieties and aspirations is a strategic move designed to mobilize his base and attract undecided voters with similar concerns. This rhetorical strategy reflects Fairclough's idea that discourse is shaped by and shapes social structures, as Trump's language mirrors and influences his audience's socio-political realities.

Finally, the speech reflects broader **socio-political trends**, such as the rise of populism and the erosion of trust in mainstream media and institutions. By positioning himself as an outsider fighting against a corrupt establishment, Trump's rhetoric appeals to a sense of disenfranchisement and a longing for a return to a perceived past glory. This "us versus them" narrative is a common feature of populist discourse, and it serves to reinforce the power dynamics between Trump and his supporters versus the political elite. Through this narrative, Trump can effectively galvanize his base and maintain his position as a leading figure in the political landscape. Fairclough (2010) highlights the role of discourse in constructing social identities, and Trump's use of populist language fosters a collective identity that aligns with his political objectives.

Discursive Practice

The production of Donald Trump's 2024 campaign speech reflects his strategic understanding of his core supporters and their values, aligning with Fairclough's (2010) theory of discourse as a form of social practice. By focusing on themes like economic prowess, national security, and anti-immigration sentiment, Trump taps into key concerns of his base. This strategic focus indicates what Charteris-Black (2014) describes as the use of political rhetoric to construct a leader's persona as a decisive and authoritative figure. In this context, Trump's speech is designed to reinforce the loyalty of his followers by addressing their primary concerns and presenting himself as the solution to the issues they face. This tactic not only maintains his political power but also positions him as the essential leader capable of restoring order and prosperity, a role that resonates with his supporters' anxieties about the current political landscape.

Trump's rhetorical style in this speech is consistent with his established persona, which has been a hallmark of his approach since his 2015 campaign. Through the use of strong, definitive language, Trump creates an image of a leader unafraid to tackle tough issues head-on, a strategy that Charteris-Black (2014) notes is common among populist leaders who seek to project strength. Phrases like "We're going to take it" and "We're going to make it" are not only motivational but also contribute to what Fairclough (1995) calls "modal authority"—the speaker's ability to assert control and certainty in uncertain times. This stylistic choice bolsters Trump's image as a capable leader who can restore order while simultaneously reinforcing the existing power dynamics between his supporters and the political elite.

The **distribution** of Trump's speech through various media channels is crucial for amplifying his message across a broad spectrum of society, a process that Fairclough (2010) highlights as essential for disseminating ideology. Television broadcasts, social media platforms, and news websites all play a role in ensuring that Trump's rhetoric reaches diverse audiences, from his staunch supporters to his critics. This multi-channel approach reflects the increasingly fragmented media landscape, where different population segments consume news from sources that align with their ideological leanings. Faiz et al. (2020) similarly observed that Trump's speeches often gain momentum through online platforms, where they are shared and discussed in echo chambers that reinforce existing political beliefs. By leveraging these channels, Trump maximizes the visibility of his speech and ensures that it resonates within the public sphere, engaging both supporters and critics alike.

The **immediate media response** to Trump's speech underscores the polarized nature of its reception, a reflection of the broader ideological divides within contemporary American politics. Supportive media outlets and commentators praise Trump's articulation of key issues and his proposed solutions, a reaction that reflects Fairclough's (1995) notion of "media mediation," where media narratives amplify specific ideological viewpoints. Conversely, critical media sources focus on perceived inaccuracies and the inflammatory nature of Trump's language, which illustrates the role of discourse in shaping public perception. This polarized response aligns with Faiz et al. (2020), who found that Trump's rhetoric often serves as a lightning rod for both fervent support and intense criticism, further reinforcing ideological divisions in society.

Audience **reactions** to the speech vary widely, further demonstrating the discursive power of Trump's rhetoric. Among his supporters, the speech was met with enthusiastic approval, which is evident in chants of "USA" and visible displays of support, which reflect the emotional connection Trump has cultivated with his base. This enthusiastic reception can be linked to Fairclough's (1992) idea of "audience positioning," where language is used to align the speaker's ideology with that of the listeners. Trump's rhetoric positions his supporters as true patriots who defend America from external threats, creating a shared sense of purpose and loyalty. Charteris-Black (2014) explains that this emotional connection is a powerful tool in populist discourse, as it reinforces the leader's authority while strengthening the group identity of the supporters.

On the other hand, **opponents and media commentators** offer critical responses to the speech, highlighting perceived inaccuracies and inflammatory language. This critical perspective plays an essential role in public discourse, as it provides a counterbalance to the positive reception among Trump's base. According to Fairclough (2010), such discursive struggles indicate how power is negotiated in society, with different groups attempting to assert control over the narrative. The broader societal debate about the role of rhetoric in politics and its impact on national unity is central to this dynamic, as Trump's speech serves as both a tool for mobilization and a source of division.

The **speech's production and distribution** also reflect broader socio-political trends, such as the rise of populism and the erosion of trust in mainstream media and institutions. Trump's rhetoric, much like his previous speeches, is characterized by a deep distrust of the political elite and the media, positioning him as an outsider fighting against a corrupt establishment. This "outsider" narrative resonates strongly with those who feel left behind by the current political and economic systems. As Fairclough (2010) notes, discourse plays a critical role in constructing social realities, and Trump's language taps into a collective sense of disenfranchisement, appealing to the frustrations of his supporters. By framing himself as the champion of ordinary Americans, Trump reinforces the populist idea that political power should be returned to the people, a theme that Charteris-Black (2014) identifies as central to populist movements worldwide.

The **"us versus them" narrative** in Trump's speech is a hallmark of populist discourse and reinforces the power dynamics between Trump and his supporters versus the political elite. By framing the political elite as out of touch and corrupt, Trump positions himself and his followers as the true representatives of the American people. This narrative not only galvanizes his base but also delegitimizes his opponents, a tactic that Fairclough (2010) identifies as a key feature of political discourse designed to maintain power. This dichotomy between the "people" and the "elite" creates a sense of urgency and necessity for change, a sentiment central to Trump's appeal as a populist leader.

In the context of **Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**, Trump's speech is a powerful example of how language constructs social realities. Through his choice of words, rhetorical strategies, and the framing of issues, Trump shapes the perceptions and attitudes of his audience. As Fairclough (1995) argues, political discourse is not merely reflective of existing power relations but actively constructs and reinforces them. The repetitive and emotionally charged language in Trump's speech serves to reinforce certain ideologies and perspectives, making them more salient in the minds of his listeners. This discursive practice is central to how political power is maintained and challenged through language, particularly in a highly polarized environment like contemporary America.

Ultimately, the **interpretation** of Trump's speech highlights the complex interplay between language, power, and ideology. By analyzing the speech through the lens of **discursive practice**, it becomes clear how Trump's rhetoric serves to mobilize support, reinforce existing beliefs, and shape the political landscape. The speech is not just a series of statements but a strategic tool that influences the dynamics of power and the direction of public discourse. This understanding is crucial for comprehending the broader impact of political rhetoric in shaping societal attitudes and behaviors, as demonstrated by both Fairclough's and Charteris-Black's analyses of political discourse.

Sociocultural Practice

Donald Trump's 2024 campaign speech is deeply rooted in the polarized political context of contemporary America. The speech reflects a nation divided along ideological lines, with Trump positioning himself as the

champion of those disillusioned with the current administration. By addressing the dissatisfaction and frustration many Americans feel, particularly his core supporters, Trump effectively taps into the widespread desire for significant political change. His rhetoric aims to galvanize his base by presenting himself as the antidote to the perceived failures of the current political leadership.

The speech tackles several pressing social issues, notably immigration, economic instability, and national security. These topics are not randomly chosen; they are carefully selected to resonate with the primary concerns of Trump's supporters. Immigration, for instance, is framed as a critical threat to national security and economic stability, reinforcing fears of cultural and economic displacement. By highlighting these issues, Trump aims to rally his base around a common set of priorities that align with their anxieties and aspirations.

Economic instability is another major theme in Trump's speech. He portrays the current administration as inept in handling the economy, pointing to inflation and job losses as evidence of their failure. This portrayal is designed to resonate with those who feel economically insecure or have suffered financially in recent years. By promising to restore economic stability and growth, Trump positions himself as the solution to these economic woes, thus appealing to voters' desire for financial security and prosperity.

National security is presented in Trump's speech as a fundamental issue that requires strong, decisive leadership. By emphasizing threats from both within and outside the country, Trump creates a sense of urgency and danger. This emphasis on national security taps into his supporters' fears and concerns, presenting Trump as a leader capable of protecting the nation. This narrative reinforces the need for a robust and assertive approach to governance, which Trump promises to deliver.

The power relations articulated in Trump's speech reinforce existing dynamics by casting him and his supporters as the defenders of the "real" America. This narrative positions Trump's base as the true patriots, standing against a corrupt and incompetent political elite. This "us versus them" framing is a hallmark of populist discourse, creating a clear division between the righteous "people" and the nefarious "elite." This dichotomy is instrumental in mobilizing support by fostering a strong in-group identity among his followers.

The "us versus them" narrative is not merely a rhetorical device; it has significant implications for how power is perceived and contested in American society. By portraying himself and his supporters as the rightful guardians of American values and interests, Trump delegitimizes his political opponents. This narrative undermines the credibility and authority of the current administration and other political figures, thereby consolidating his power and influence among his base.

Trump's speech also reflects broader socio-cultural trends, particularly the rise of populism and the increasing polarization of American society. The speech's emphasis on populist themes—such as distrust of elites, nationalism, and protectionism—resonates with a significant segment of the population that feels alienated by globalization and economic change. This populist rhetoric is designed to tap into these sentiments, offering a vision of a strong, sovereign nation that prioritizes the interests of its citizens over global or elite agendas.

The socio-cultural context of Trump's speech is further underscored by the media landscape in which it is delivered. In an era of fragmented media consumption, where audiences often seek out news sources that align with their own views, Trump's speech is disseminated through platforms that cater to his supporters. This media environment amplifies his message, ensuring it reaches those most receptive to his rhetoric. It also contributes to the echo chamber effect, where like-minded individuals reinforce each other's beliefs and perceptions.

The reception of Trump's speech within this socio-cultural context reveals the deep divides in American society. The speech is celebrated among his supporters as a rallying cry for a return to strong, decisive leadership. They see Trump as a champion of their values and interests and his speech clearly articulates their grievances and aspirations. Conversely, critics view the speech as divisive and inflammatory, pointing to its harsh rhetoric and perceived distortions of facts. This polarized reception highlights the challenges of achieving a unified national discourse in a deeply divided society.

In summary, the socio-cultural practice surrounding Trump's speech illustrates the complex interplay between rhetoric, power, and societal values. The speech is a strategic tool designed to mobilize support by appealing to the anxieties and desires of a specific demographic. It reinforces existing power dynamics and social divisions, using a populist framework to frame political discourse. Understanding this context is crucial for comprehending the broader implications of Trump's rhetoric and the socio-political landscape in which it operates.

CONCLUSION

This study has explored the rhetorical strategies employed by Donald Trump in his 2024 campaign speech through the lens of Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, revealing how his language constructs power relations, reinforces ideological divides, and aligns with broader socio-cultural trends. By employing rhetorical devices such as pronouns, metaphors, hyperbole, and Repetition, Trump effectively galvanizes his base, fostering a collective identity that positions his supporters as the defenders of "true" American values. The use of problem-solving structures and emotionally charged language further strengthens his narrative, portraying him as the only leader capable of addressing the pressing issues of immigration, economic instability, and national security.

The discursive practices embedded in Trump's speech reflect both his understanding of his audience and his ability to leverage media channels for broad dissemination. Drawing on Fairclough's theory of discourse as social practice, the speech highlights how Trump strategically constructs a dichotomy between "the people" and the political elite, reinforcing populist ideals that resonate with his supporters. This "us versus them" framework, examined through studies like those of Yousfi and Mouhadjer (2024) and van Dijk (1998), underscores the deeper ideological divisions within American society.

Furthermore, the socio-cultural analysis reveals how Trump's rhetoric taps into the growing polarization and populist sentiments within the United States. By positioning himself as an outsider fighting against a corrupt establishment, Trump's speech reinforces distrust in institutions and appeals to a demographic that feels alienated by globalization and economic change. This aligns with broader socio-political trends of institutional distrust and rising nationalism, as seen in the work of Fairclough and van Dijk.

In conclusion, Trump's 2024 campaign speech serves not only as a political address but also as a strategic discursive tool that reflects and shapes the socio-political landscape of contemporary America. His language both mirrors and perpetuates the ideological divides in society, reinforcing his role as a populist leader. By analyzing his rhetoric through CDA and integrating insights from prior research, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how political discourse functions to maintain and challenge power in a polarized political environment.

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