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(UN)WELCOME TO AMERICA: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF
ANTI-IMMIGRANT RHETORIC IN TRUMP'S SPEECHES AND
CONSERVATIVE MAINSTREAM MEDIA

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
English Composition:
Applied Linguistics and Teaching English as a Second Language

by
Erika Sabrina Quiñonez

June 2018

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ABSTRACT

This project makes the empirical assertion that U.S. President Donald Trump and conservative news media outlets contribute to a national narrative of xenophobia that frames immigrants, particularly those of color, as parasitic and dangerous to the American way of life. Through this study, I assert that the use of demagogic and dehumanizing language along with more subtle discursive strategies, such as positive representation of 'us', negative representation of 'them,' and metaphorical constructions are being used to stoke fear and anti-immigrant sentiment and to strip individuals of their humanity for the purpose of rendering them unworthy of dignity and of the same rights and benefits as those to which groups considered *insiders* and 'real Americans' are entitled.

Through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus Linguistics, I analyze a collection of transcriptions selected from among 100+ speeches, addresses and remarks delivered by Donald Trump both before and after the 2016 U.S. Presidential Elections, along with a set of ten news stories featuring issues surrounding immigration collected from FoxNews.com, Breitbart.com, and Bill O'Reilly.com. Concordancing software is used to reveal and quantify discursive patterns that contribute to this national narrative of xenophobia.

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DEDICATION

Lovingly dedicated to Gabby. I miss you so much.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Introduction

Looking back through U.S. history, immigrants have often been made targets as the root of American society's ills. During times of social uncertainty they have been looked upon with suspicion in association with issues such as high unemployment rates, economic downturns, and a sense of weak national security. While in reality immigrants have contributed much to this country both economically and culturally, they are often perceived as a source of fear and concern, "a threat to national unity and the cultural integrity of the nation" (Cisneros, 2011 p. 29). Despite having been founded by immigrants, the United States has long held an ambivalent relationship with those settling here from other countries.

The number of immigrants coming to the United States has been steadily growing since the 1960s and represents an influx that "matches or exceeds most historical periods" (Sohoni, 2006, p. 829). Prior to the 1960s, a vast majority of immigrants settled in the United States from European countries. Today, however, "immigrants from Asia and Latin America make up the largest percentage of newcomers," with large numbers of immigrants also coming to the United States from Africa and the Middle East (Sohoni, 2006, p. 829). This rapid demographic shift in the composition of the nation's population has been a cause of much uncertainty, particularly as it affects the creating of "shared notions of

citizenship and consensus on what ‘America’ represents” (Sohoni, 2006, p. 825). The growing ‘brown population,’ as it is sometimes referred to, has also resulted in an increased sense of discomfort and insecurity within the mainstream dominant society— typically described as White of European-Christian cultural heritage (Lugo-Lugo & Bloodsworth-Lugo, 2014, p. 16)—and in a proliferation of anti-immigrant sentiment and rhetoric.

Growing public discomfort in light of the changing face of America, coupled with anxiety over economic and national security issues, has prompted those with exclusionary attitudes toward ‘foreigners’ to seek ways to reinforce their own status by underpinning a national narrative of xenophobia – sometimes through the use of unmitigated, bald-on-record pejoratives and, equally damagingly, through the use of more veiled metaphorical constructions rooted in anti-immigrant sentiments. These strategies can be polarizing and emotionally charged, and the only way they persist is that they parallel at least some segment of popular sentiment. That is, the only way comments such as those used in these rhetorical strategies are not immediately rejected as exclusionary and unacceptable is that they align with what at least one large segment of society has established as its shared and accepted norms with regard to immigrants. These pejoratives and metaphorical structures resonate with and reinforce some deeply held biases that frame immigrants as dangerous. As Cisneros (2011) describes it, “popular discourses of immigration – whether emanating from political leaders, mainstream media, or radical groups (...) rely

on ‘deeply embedded’ stereotypes and dominant logics of immigration as a social problem and of immigrants as threats to the nation” (p. 28-29).

In this project, I examine the specific discursive strategies used by U.S. President, Donald Trump in his speeches—both before and after his 2016 election—that help construct this national narrative of xenophobia in the United States. Taking a critical discourse analytical stance and using Corpus Linguistics (CL) as a tool, I explore the use of rhetorically-loaded and highly-inflammatory terms, such as “aliens,” “illegals,” and “anchor babies” along with more veiled linguistic strategies, such as positive ‘us’ framing, negative ‘them’ framing and metaphorical constructions, used to stoke fear and anti-immigrant sentiment. In an effort to understand the landscape in which these rhetorical moves and negative framing of immigrants are situated and having observed what appeared to be pervasive negative framing of immigrants on conservative news media, I also closely examine articles in popular conservative news media – Fox News, Breitbart News, and the O’Reilly Factor– that appear to fuel this narrative and serve to ‘deeply embed’ (to borrow Cisneros’ words) or at a minimum, to reinforce the powerful stereotypes that reify the image of the immigrant as a threat to be mitigated.

Cisneros (2011) argues that in order to make and keep “citizenship and American-ness ... a special and desired identity, it must not only be desirable but also exclusive and difficult to attain” (p.27) Immigrants, refugees, and other ethnic minorities have, therefore, served as the ‘them’ to the exclusive ‘us’ – the

'truly American' group through which U.S. identity is largely constituted. It is no surprise then to see how rhetoric in mainstream media, politics, marketing, and even popular culture attempt to "'border' the nation, shoring up the demarcations between citizen and alien" (Cisneros, 2011, p.27) in an effort to further solidify an exclusive American identity.

Politicians have long resorted to anti-immigrant rhetoric to appeal to their bases and reinforce shared conceptions of the American identity, but few have used such brazen, inflammatory, and hyperbolic language as Donald Trump has used. Still, his base has widely embraced his style of "telling it like it is," even when that has meant constructing an image of criminality and threat in association with a population that by and large has not earned the distinction. Studies on the effects of increased immigrant concentration on crime rates (McDonald, Hipp and Gil, 2013; Ousey and Kubrin, 2014; Sampson, 2008) refute the notion that immigrants can fairly be equated with criminality. Still, Trump and other politicians make sweeping statements that directly or metaphorically construct the immigrant as a threat to the United States and its citizens. This paper will be an exploration of these damaging rhetorical strategies and the surrounding landscape that 'normalize' and make more acceptable these baseless claims that immigrants equal threat.

1.1.1 A National Narrative of Xenophobia

“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.”

– Emma Lazarus, Poet

“We are a nation of immigrants, a quilt of many colors, and we’ve managed over more than two centuries to create a way of life that allows for a reasonable degree of upward mobility, that prizes individual liberty, promotes freedom of religion and genuinely values equal rights for all citizens.”

– Jay Parini, American Author

“Why are we having all these people from shithole countries come here?”

– Donald Trump, President of the United States of America

Our national narrative is a complicated and often contradictory one. Citizens of the United States of America swell with pride at the retelling of a nation of humble beginnings built through the hard work and determination of a

group of courageous trailblazers – immigrants bravely seeking freedom from an antiquated system of oppression and persecution. Simultaneously, the narrative remains mired in a tradition of diminishing ‘foreigners’ as unworthy, criminal, poor, uneducated, and parasitic. Chavez (2013) describes it as “a grand tradition of alarmist discourse about immigrants and their perceived negative impacts on society” (p. 3). Immigrants (particularly those of color) are consequently emblazoned with a scarlet letter “I,” not for ‘immigrant’ but for ‘illegal,’ marking them as criminals and “thus illegitimate members of society undeserving of social benefits, including citizenship” (Chavez, 2013, p. 3).

This dehumanizing perspective creates a troubling, irredeemable ‘non-place’ for immigrants, as this discourse reinvents the identity of all immigrants as illegitimate and destructive to the American way of life. In his book, *The Latino Threat*, Chavez (2013) describes a conflation of ‘immigrants’ with ‘illegal immigrants’ and with ‘Latinos’ at large. They are seen as “part of an invading force from south of the border that is bent on reconquering land that was formerly theirs (the U.S. Southwest) and destroying the American way of life.” (p. 2) Muslims and people of Middle Eastern decent have suffered a similar fate. Islam, according to Esposito, (1999) has filled a “threat vacuum” created by the end of the Cold War, a situation which has only been exacerbated since the attacks on 9/11. “American policymakers, like the media, have too often proved surprisingly myopic, viewing the Muslim world and Islamic movements as a monolith and seeing them solely in terms of extremism and terrorism” (Esposito, 1999, p.3).

This approach fails to consider the multi-faceted realities of Islam and works to conflate 'Muslim' with 'terrorist'. As a result, politicians have been able to exploit media to represent immigrants as unworthy criminals and potential terrorists in an attempt to curtail immigration from certain regions of the world. A similar merging, though one with the opposite effect, where 'white' and 'American' are conflated "also suggests a more poignant conflation between the categories non-white and non-American, with "immigration as terrorism" (Feagin, 2010, p.6).

Chavez (2013) warns that this xenophobic narrative is inescapable and deeply embedded in the American psyche – "It is the cultural dark matter filling space with taken-for-granted 'truths' in debates over immigration on radio and TV talk shows, in newspaper editorials, and on Internet blogs" (p. 3). It becomes the narrative that defines the *insiders* from the *outsiders* – *us* versus *them*. As Chavez (2013) suggests:

Who we let into the nation as immigrants and allow to become citizens defines who we are as a people. Conversely, looking at who we ban from entry, or for whom we create obstacles to integration into society and to memberships in the community of citizens, also reveals how we imagine ourselves as a nation—that is, a group of people with intertwined destinies despite our differences. (p. 9)

This selective inclusion and exclusion becomes the discourse, the stories we tell that not only shape the immigrant experience, but that have lasting and material consequences in terms of policy and access to public services. Wodak (2009)

explains the power of these stories warning that often, “ethnic stereotypes articulated in discourse accompany or even determine political decision making” (p. 1). By merging all immigrants into a one-dimensional group of criminals, the narrative effectively erases “the collective and individual experiences” (Carter, 2014, p. 210) of immigrants, making them seem more like nameless, faceless, objects than the complex, multi-dimensional individuals they actually are. It silences their voices as “we not only distinguish insider from outsider, indeed construct the difference between familiar and foreign, but identify the voices worthy of participation in deliberation and governance” (Hartelius, 2015, p.1).

It is the argument of this project that the linguistic choices made by Donald Trump and conservative media outlets collectively contribute to a national narrative of xenophobia – one that would see the humanity stripped from countless immigrants and their families, as they are objectified, reduced to an identity of criminality and threat, and effectively silenced.

Often considered among society’s elite, political figures wield a tremendous amount of power and have access to a unique platform. Not only do politicians have great literal power in the sense that they can draft laws and make legislative decisions with widespread consequences, but they also carry substantial social power. They are often responsible for setting or strengthening the standards that society accepts as norms. Through news coverage and other public speeches, they are given a platform that few others are afforded. What they say (or don’t say) has a tremendous impact on society and may greatly

influence the way others think and act. Similarly, news outlets enjoy tremendous power, having direct access to people's homes via their televisions, cell phones and computers. Pundits are given a stage on which to express and drive their ideologies forward. As Fairclough, Mulderrig, and Wodak (2011) explain, "politicians now have unprecedented access to huge audiences on a regular basis, providing [...] better opportunities for them to shape opinion and win support..." (p. 359)

Supporters have defended Trump as simply "telling it like it is." Frequently expressing a disdain for what he describes as excessively "politically correct" media, Trump defends his proclivity for what others consider offensive and reductive language by citing economy of time: "I think the big problem this country has is being politically correct. I've been challenged by so many people, and I don't frankly have time for total political correctness. And to be honest with you, this country doesn't have time, either" (Caesar, 2017).

Does *how* Trump says things really matter? Why shouldn't everyone be allowed to say whatever they want to say however they choose to say it? The issue does not concern whether individuals should be allowed to express themselves in whatever way they choose. The First Amendment is in place to protect that. The issue at hand is that not everyone has the opportunity for their voice to be heard. Not everyone has an equal platform from which to share their ideology. Only those in control of the dominant discourse have a voice and it is their ideology that is disproportionately disseminated to the masses. The ability to

see and understand what is happening is the first step toward social justice. We cannot talk about an issue if we can't identify it. We can't fight it if we cannot see it. It is only through a close analysis of language that we can uncover the discursive patterns that contribute to such dangerous ideologies. Understanding that these strategies are being used to manipulate and further a dangerous and self-serving ideology, the type of careful analysis undertaken in this project is critical to increasing consciousness of "how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation" (Fairclough, 2001, p. 233).

1.2 Literature Review

Wodak and Fairclough (1997) regard 'language as social practice,' proposing that discourse is socially shaped and that it, in turn, shapes social structures and worldviews. Therefore, as stated by Fairclough (2011) "discursive practices may have major ideological effects: [...] they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic groups, through the ways in which they represent things and position people" (Fairclough, 2011, p.358). Critical Discourse Analysis aims to reveal the ways in which language is utilized to perpetuate the abuse of power generally achieved "under the guise of common-sense assumptions and everyday routine practices" (Strauss and Feiz, 2014, p. 315). It is through language that power structures are revealed, created and transferred or retained. This is critical, because as Fairclough (2001) describes, "the exercise of power,

in modern society, is increasingly achieved through ideology and more particularly through the ideological workings of language,” (p. 2) making it perhaps the primary medium of social power and control. Early work on Critical Discourse Analysis describes the importance of analyzing, understanding and revealing the relations of power and inequality in language. According to Fairclough (2001), there has been a tradition in language studies of underestimating the role that language plays in the production, manipulation and influence of social relations of power. Yet, it is through linguistic patterns that power relations and struggles emerge and are negotiated. Language is always imbued with ideology, and it plays a central role in the production, manipulation and influence of social power relations (Fairclough, 2001).

The observation that those in control of the dominant discourse use linguistic choices to frame immigrants as strangers and as dangerous ‘Others’ is not new. A number of studies utilizing CDA as a lens for analysis (Van Dijk, 1991; Mautner, 1995; Mehan, 1997; Santana, 1999; Baker and McEnery, 2005; Gabrielatos and Baker, 2008; Lugo-Lugo and Bloodsworth-Lugo 2014; Hardt-Yanow, 2015; Wodak, 2015) have examined the ways in which negative-framing, metaphor, hyperbole and a number of other discursive strategies used in political discourse contribute to a representation of immigrants as dangerous, unworthy objects, unfit for citizenship or for the rights and privileges that are associated with it. The CDA perspective is well suited for this type of analysis, as one of its primary aims is to bring to light subtle textual expressions of ideologically-

charged opinions and to bring about the “extension of linguistics beyond sentence grammar towards a study of action and interaction” (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 2).

Mehan (1997) found that discourse strategies and, more specifically, the ways in which immigrants are presented can have tangible consequences. The use of the term ‘illegal aliens’ versus ‘undocumented workers,’ for example, “invokes images of foreign, repulsive, threatening, even extra-terrestrial beings” (p. 258) – of ‘us’ versus ‘them.’ This strategy, along with the use of compelling anecdotes of immigrants stealing jobs and exhausting resources made possible the passing of the 1994 California Proposition 187, which denied undocumented immigrants schooling, healthcare and basic social services.

CDA differs from other branches of linguistics in that it does not carry an embedded set of fixed research methods. Instead, as Fairclough, Mulderrig and Wodak explain, CDA might best be understood as “a problem-oriented interdisciplinary research movement, subsuming a variety of approaches” (2011, p. 357) all with the aim of examining “the semiotic dimensions of power, injustice, abuse, and political-economic or cultural change in society” (Fairclough, Mulderrig and Wodak, 2011, p. 357). To strengthen the validity and relevance of this study, Corpus Linguistics methods were used to help guide and/or quantify some of its findings. Hardt-Mautner (1995) describes CDA as “an essentially holistic approach to text as well as a concern for the discourse/society interface” (p. 3). That is, it requires a nuanced understanding of context, history, and

paralinguistic features that cannot (yet) be achieved by computers. On the other hand, the Corpus Linguistics (CL) methodological tradition involves the computer-aided processing and analysis of large data sets – a “quantitative dissection of text” (Hardt-Mautner, 1995, p. 3). So, while some approaches to CDA analysis provide great depth, they may sometimes lack in breadth, as it becomes difficult to execute such a holistic approach on large data sets. Meanwhile, the CL approach alone lacks the ability to execute the type of nuanced qualitative analysis that only a human analyst can complete.

Baker et al (2008) engage CL methodology in conjunction with approaches traditionally associated with CDA to bolster findings that are more closely grounded in social theory with quantitative evidence. Analyzing concordances and collocations allowed them to identify and categorize distinct classifications of representation of refugees, asylum-seekers, immigrants and migrants. It also guided qualitative analysis by pointing to segments of text relevant to their study. Hardt-Mautner (1995) conducted an analysis of discourse surrounding the European Commission and European Union using concordancing and other CL techniques. CL helped the analyst quantify and corroborate observations and intuitions regarding data. Hardt-Mautner asserts that “even the crudest techniques of corpus linguistics can make useful contributions to the study of discourse from a critical perspective” (p. 5)

Gabrielatos and Baker (2008) conducted a study of a 140-million-word corpus of UK press articles, where they identified a number of categories of

representation – most of which were negative – and a tendency toward conflating terms associated with immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers. Baker and McEnery (2005) conducted a corpus-based analysis of British newspapers, finding that refugees were frequently framed as “packages, invaders, pests or water” and found quantitative evidence of patterned linguistic choices being made to negatively frame refugees. The approach undertaken for this project, which is discussed in greater detail in the Methodology section below, considers aspects of both CL and CDA in an attempt to analyze various aspects of the two data sets in a more robust manner. This study similarly concerns itself with the construction of immigrants in the press, but also takes the additional step of examining the linguistic choices of the U.S. President.

CHAPTER TWO

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Data

For this project I used two primary sources of data: 1) speeches delivered by Donald Trump both before and after the 2016 U.S. presidential election, and 2) news articles and reports published by conservative news outlets, Fox News, Breitbart News Network, and the O'Reilly Factor. The reason for collecting and analyzing these two data sets is that collectively they represent powerful forms of discourse that are widely circulated among large audiences, giving them the potential to have a huge impact in shaping the public's perceptions and ideologies. Having observed what appeared to be a pervasive use of negative framing of immigrants on conservative news media, I selected these highly-rated shows to explore the use of rhetorically-loaded and highly-inflammatory terms, such as "aliens," "illegals," and "anchor babies" along with equally damaging, but more veiled linguistic strategies, such as metaphorical constructions rooted in anti-immigrant sentiments, to vilify, dehumanize and objectify immigrants and further a nationalist agenda.

2.1.1 Trump Speeches

I collected and analyzed transcriptions of ten speeches delivered by Donald Trump both before and after the 2016 U.S. Presidential Elections. Speeches were selected from among 100+ speeches, addresses and remarks delivered by Donald Trump and archived by University of California, Santa

Barbara's *The American Presidency Project*. The speeches covered a number of topics ranging from foreign policy to gun control, but because the primary focus of this study was to analyze anti-immigrant rhetoric, only speeches that included immigration as a theme were included in the corpus for analysis. The ten speeches comprised 37,285 word tokens and 3,826 word types, collectively, and were delivered between June 16, 2015, when Trump announced his candidacy for President, and February 28, 2017, when he delivered his first State of the Union Address.

2.1.2 Articles and News Stories

In order to be effective and persuasive, news articles and stories must be presented in a way that appears impartial, accurate and plausible (Van Dijk, 1988, p.84). News is typically expected to adhere to principles of objectivity and “the norm of ‘reporting mere facts’” (Kitis and Milapides, 1997, p. 561), however, as Fowler (1987) argues, “there is no neutral representation of reality” (p. 67). In an era of “Fake News,” this statement seems particularly true. It is the argument of this project that news, particularly right-leaning, conservative outlets, such as Fox News, take a departure from neutrality and contribute to a national narrative of xenophobia through the use of emotionally charged, ‘victim’-perspective language, fear-driven ‘othering,’ and metaphorical constructions.

Fox News. The White House has repeatedly and publicly accused specific news outlets, and more broadly the media at large, of being ‘fake’ and dishonest, claiming bias against the current administration, favoring a more left-leaning

philosophy. One media outlet that has largely escaped this criticism is the Fox News Channel. Donald Trump has repeatedly quoted Fox News, referenced its coverage of his speeches, and hailed it as honest and impartial. Meanwhile, critics have accused Fox News of pandering to Trump, claiming it has taken a kid-glove approach that appeals to his ego and tendency toward self-aggrandizement.

Fox News Channel, owned by Fox Entertainment Group, is a U.S.-based cable news television channel. Until his dismissal in July 2016, amid claims of sexual harassment, former Republican Party media consultant, Roger Ailes, served as CEO of Fox News Channel (McShane, 2016). The network, along with its lineup including Fox and Friends, Hannity, The O'Reilly Factor (up until April, 2017), and Fox Files are widely perceived as staunchly conservative, though the network insists its coverage is impartial, as it asserts in its tag line: "Fair & Balanced." Trump has famously tweeted his approval of Fox and Friends and other Fox News Channel shows, also proclaiming that the network is unbiased and thoroughly reliable. The target audience for Fox News Channel is of a median age of 65+ and is composed primarily of conservative, Republican Middle America. (Carter, 2013; Pew, 2012)

Breitbart News. Breitbart is a far-right news commentary website that was founded in 2007 by Andrew Breitbart and managed by Steve Bannon, who took over as executive chairman in 2012 after Breitbart's death. Bannon would later become the chief executive of Donald Trump's U.S. presidential campaign.

SimilarWeb.com (2018), a market intelligence solutions website, reports traffic to Breitbart's news site at 81.7 million views in the month of December, 2017.

According to BBC.com (2018), Breitbart is the most widely read conservative news website in the U.S. and was created to challenge and undermine mainstream liberal media.

The O'Reilly Factor. The O'Reilly Factor, was a cable television news show which featured conservative pundit, Bill O'Reilly, discussing controversial political issues of the day with a variety of guests. The show's viewership peaked in 2009 at 3.1 million viewers between the ages of 25 and 54 and was the top-rated cable news show for 106 consecutive weeks (Boededeker, 2009). O'Reilly touted impartial coverage of current political events in his famous "No Spin Zone" and hosted the Fox News cable television show until he was fired in April, 2017 amid sexual harassment allegations, at which time The O'Reilly Factor was cancelled.

Ten news articles, featuring issues surrounding immigration, were selected from FoxNews.com, Breitbart.com, and Bill O'Reilly.com for examination through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis. The articles, dating between August, 2015 and July, 2017 (the period during which Trump was most heavily campaigning through 6 months after his election) were all accessible through the main pages of their respective sites. As a means of avoiding pieces that were clearly and openly intended to represent the opinions of the writer, no articles or stories were pulled from "Opinion" sections on any of the sites.

In Critical Discourse Analysis the language used by society's power elites, such as politicians, mass media, corporations, and entertainment is given special attention, since it has the power to influence the thoughts and actions of the masses. For this study, I examined the news articles through the lens of CDA and with the aid of CL methods to help understand the ways in which language used therein provides information about the context in which Trump's language is situated and supported. That is, I was interested in understanding what was going on in the landscape that might have contributed to the acceptance of blatant pejoratives and more subtle metaphorical constructions alike. The context in which language is situated is highly complex, so it is important to stress the elements mentioned in this project represent correlation and not necessarily causation. That is, while some of the items discussed may have been contributing factors, it is not my assertion that these elements are the reason Trump was not more heavily penalized for his language against immigrants. I do, however, assert that they contributed to the construction of a national narrative of xenophobia.

2.2 Methodology

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides a lens for analysis that reveals ideologies and power relations, and served as the guiding framework through which this project was conducted. Through careful examination of text and patterned linguistic features, a reader can develop a "critical consciousness of domination and its modalities," (Fairclough, 2001, p. 4) that allows them to see

the elements of power construction at play. That is, readers can conduct close analyses of texts that may be politically or culturally influential or manipulative and interpret the ways in which language is constructed, arranged and presented to manufacture consent.

Ideologies, which Fairclough describes as “‘common-sense’ assumptions which are implicit in the conventions according to which people interact linguistically, and of which people are generally not consciously aware,” are very closely associated with power, because they represent a means through which existing social and power relations are legitimized and propagated. Van Dijk (1995) asserts that ideologies are socially shared and used by groups and their members, and that they are extensively present in language. Ideologies should not be conceptualized in terms of ‘right’ and ‘wrong,’ according to Van Dijk. Instead they should be evaluated and understood as either ‘more’ or ‘less effective’ in promoting the interests of a particular group (1995). While there is not one definitive or inclusive description of the term ‘ideology,’ there are components of ideology that appear to be prevalent. For example, group ideologies are often polarizing, creating a strong sense of ‘self’ versus ‘other’ and of ‘us’ versus ‘them.’ This is particularly true when conflicting interests are at stake, as is the case when considering issues surrounding immigration. Additionally, ideologies are frequently described as subtle and often subconscious, making them particularly effective in terms of inconspicuous dissemination. It is not difficult then, to see the connection between ideology and

power relations, and even group domination. As Fairclough (2001) explains, power is gained either through coercion, which relies primarily on physical or other forms of force (economic threats or threats to an individual's sense of security), or through consent, and "ideology is the prime means of manufacturing consent" (Fairclough, 2001, p. 4).

Strauss and Feiz (2014) offer a clear and compelling description of how consent is manufactured through ideology:

Underlying the discourse of power and dominance are the institutional, political, academic, and even personal ideologies whereby inequity, injustice, and abuse are normalized and presented as common-sense assumptions—as given, as natural, as the taken-for-granted norms of society. In this way, dominance is jointly produced; it is condoned, ignored, rationalized; hence, taken for granted. Power and powerlessness are collaboratively perpetuated and institutionalized. It is the goal of research in the various disciplines practicing CDA to uncover those ideologies and the discursive means through which they are formed, and to the extent possible, effect 'change through critical understanding' (van Dijk 1993b: 252) (p. 321).

CDA relies on micro-level observations of language with a particular concern for patterned linguistic features and the ways in which they interact with macro-level concerns like power, inequality, racism and dominance. These features can include "individual lexical items [such] as adverbs, verbs of knowing

and understanding, logical connectors, pronouns of inclusion, pronouns of exclusion, metaphor and figurative language, euphemisms and dysphemisms, and other linguistically central stance-marking elements” (Strauss and Feiz, 2014, p. 316). It is the aim of CDA to “bridge the well-known ‘gap’ between micro and macro approaches” (Van Dijk, 2003, p. 354).

By critically analyzing Trump’s speeches and the collection of news articles through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis, this project draws attention to some of the inner workings of ideology and power as they present in politics and mainstream media. In the case of news articles, these often subtle (though sometimes not) rhetorical moves, work within a genre that is purportedly neutral and balanced, making their very presence more difficult to perceive and their effects even more powerful. Audiences often regard mainstream media as impartial and thoroughly vetted and consequently equate ‘news’ with ‘facts’ or ‘truth,’ making them particularly susceptible to manipulation.

2.2.1 Metaphor Theory

Fairclough’s (1981) seminal work on language and power explains the central role language plays in the production, manipulation and influence of social power relations. It is through language that ideologies, are constructed, expressed, and legitimized. The exercise and, in many cases, the abuse of power is achieved through ideology and the language in which that ideology is embedded. It follows then, that the critical examination of linguistic choices is exceedingly important in understanding the ways in which particular ideologies

are furthered. Once such linguistic construction worthy of careful examination and one of the central theories in this project is the metaphor.

Metaphors are powerful non-literal, semantic tools – a means of understanding abstract or unfamiliar concepts in a *target domain* in light of more concrete and familiar concepts known as the *source domain* (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Deignan (2005) describes metaphor in terms of two approaches: decorative and conceptual. In the decorative approach, metaphor is assigned a more peripheral role in language. It is viewed as mere ornamentation to give language an additional dimension of interest. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) describe metaphor in this approach as “a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish – a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language” (p. 3). In this decorative approach, metaphor is sometimes also conceptualized as a “mechanism for filling lexical gaps in the language” (Deignan, 2005, p. 2) and has no meaningful role whatsoever in the production and processes of thought.

In contrast to the decorative view, the conceptual view put forward by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argues that metaphor actually plays a central role in thought and its development, helping make sense of abstract concepts, such as time and space. In fact, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) suggests that *conceptual metaphors* actually structure thinking and knowledge, linking sets of ideas with one another. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explain, the realm of these conceptual metaphors is the mind – they are rarely used in speaking or writing. In

the example, LIFE IS A JOURNEY, the more abstract concept of 'life' (target domain) is understood in terms of a more concrete concept, 'journey' (source domain). A journey has a beginning and an end with a series of twists and turns and mile markers. The conceptual metaphor is easy to understand and allows for additional semantic connections to be made. Once that conceptual metaphor has taken root, it can easily expand into a network of related conceptual metaphors. When we think of life in terms of a journey, it might be easy to conceptualize difficult decisions in life as a 'crossroads' and challenges as 'obstacles' to overcome. Important life events might become 'mile markers' and unexpected changes might be conceptualized as 'detours.' In this way, the conceptual metaphor, LIFE IS A JOURNEY, gives life to any number of related connections.

Linguistic metaphors, on the other hand, are the "evidence of underlying conceptual metaphors" (Deignan, 2005, p. 14). They are a social practice and the manifestation of underlying thought patterns – one of the primary reasons they figure prominently in this project. The metaphors discussed here reflect more than an ornamentation or rhetorical flourish. They reveal the 'deeply embedded' beliefs and stereotypes surrounding immigrants of a vast, conservative segment of American society.

Metaphors in politics plays an important role in appealing to what may be perceived as "common ground" based on shared cultural understandings. Santana's 1991 data-driven analysis of metaphor, as it relates to the construction of immigrants in political discourse, points to a racist agenda that serves to

dehumanize immigrants by likening them to the subservient role of animals. Often grounded in physical experience as a means of describing and explaining abstract concepts, metaphors bridge two semantic domains and help us understand abstract concepts that can sometimes only be understood metaphorically. However, the relationship between a source domain and its corresponding target domain is not purely equative, making 'translation' of metaphor complicated at times and particularly susceptible to ideology. As Deignan (2005) explains, "the *interpretation* of situations and events presented by any metaphor is only partial, and therefore flawed" (emphasis added, p.23). It can suggest an equation between the target and source domains that does not actually exist. Life is not *exactly* like a journey in that life is infinitely more complex. Gaps between the domains exist – there are aspects of life that will not clearly and directly connect with aspects of a journey. Additionally, interpretations about the target domain are made based on individual, and therefore varied, experiences and beliefs about the source domain. It is through these gaps—the places where the interpretation is actually happening—Deignan (2005) argues, that ideology seeps into metaphor, making it a subtle but powerful means of conveying ideology.

This project examines the ideology hidden in these metaphorical gaps – ideology that may help to explain how it became possible for Donald Trump to use the pejorative language he has used both before and after his election surrounding immigration issues without facing serious, tangible consequences,

namely, failing to be elected or being ousted once in office. A careful analysis of his speeches reveals metaphorical structures being used to heighten fear of immigrants and highlights the specific ways in which metaphor furthers a destructive ideology that frames immigrants as dangerous 'others.' Reinforcing deeply-held and exclusionary stereotypes helps to delineate and/or construct in- and out-groups, defining various communities in terms of "us" vs. "them." The approach is particularly effective in carrying the idea that "they," in this case immigrants, are threatening "us" and "our" way of life.

Understanding that metaphors structure everyday knowledge, it is not difficult then to see how frequently-used metaphors can shape the beliefs of entire communities. Groups that share conceptual metaphors, as evidenced by corresponding linguistic metaphors (and therefore social practice) are also likely to share knowledge and beliefs. As Deignan (2005) notes, "If all metaphors present a partial picture, then the frequent metaphors of a community must contribute to a collective bias in understanding the world, because they both hide and highlight aspects of reality from members of that community" (p. 24). In other words, metaphorical gaps are filled with the biased, shared knowledge of a given community. Hawkes (1972) argues that "metaphors have a normative and reinforcing effect," (p. 89) making them remarkably powerful conduits for ideology.

2.2.2 Revealing Patterns through Close Linguistic Analysis

A careful investigation of the language used both in Trump's speeches and in conservative mainstream media articles about immigrants and immigration shone a light on patterned linguistic features that seek to influence thought in support of an agenda of exclusion and domination. Van Dijk (1993) identifies "social cognition as the necessary theoretical (and empirical) 'interface,' if not the 'missing link,' between discourse and dominance" (p. 251). Power and consent are manufactured not only through physical or economic force, but through cognition – which is structured and revealed through language. Strauss and Feiz (2014) explain that "controlling the minds of others for the purpose of perpetuating such ideologies of power is discursively achieved, through contextual features of discourse as well as through linguistic forms" (p. 321).

Synthesizing Fairclough (2003) and Van Dijk (1993, 2006), Strauss and Feiz (2014), present a framework of linguistic strategies that serves as a means of "justifying, rationalizing, legitimizing, and perpetuating inequality, racism, and injustice, and thereby also controlling social cognition ...

- Positive representations of US (dominant, elite) and negative representations of THEM (the powerless, the marginalized, the opposition)
- Hyperbole

- Metaphors and analogies (reflecting positive self-representation and negative other representation—self as “savior,” “benefactor,” “normal” other as “vermin,” “gluttons,” “different,” and “abnormal”)
- Creating oppositions and contrasts (“By blacks, I mean those principally of West Indian origin rather than the quieter gentler people from the Indian ...”)
- Granularity of detail (vague or precise, specific or general).
- Incorporating others’ voices (whose, which quotes, where, and how)
- Naming and wording (“person,” “human being,” “permanent resident,” “aliens,” “lawful resident”)
- Euphemisms (military terms such as “friendly fire” or “collateral damage” that serve to minimize or even legitimize unintended destruction of property or unintentionally caused injury or death)
- Dysphemisms (the opposite of euphemism, using derogatory forms in place of more neutral sounding ones; e.g., disparaging racial terms, disparaging gender terms, vulgar lexical items: “pissed (off)” in lieu of “angry,” “crap” in lieu of “stuff,” etc.)” (p. 321-322).

Each article and speech was analyzed with special attention paid to key linguistic features including the use of unmitigated pejoratives, metaphor, positive framing of “us,” and negative framing of “them.” The variety and combinations of words that may be used in association with each of these is extensive and nuanced, making them virtually impossible to be accurately and reliably identified and

quantified by software. Manual analysis and counting was required in order to reveal patterned linguistic features. While there was significant overlap in the content and wording of some of Trump's campaign speeches, counts were different for each and yielded interesting results. When analyzed in light of these linguistic strategies, the speeches and articles contained in this project reveal powerful patterns that surreptitiously affect popular perceptions of immigrants. Issues surrounding immigration can be shrouded in fear and, as a result, are often polarizing, making many of these strategies easy to exploit in service of furthering an elitist control-seeking agenda.

2.2.3 Corpus Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis

Each data set in this project was analyzed separately to see how it might reveal discursive patterns that contribute to a national narrative of xenophobia. Both sets of data were analyzed through the lens of Corpus Linguistics (CL) – which involves analyzing language by studying large collections of natural language with the aid of computer software – and manually, with a more holistic approach through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). As Baker et al (2008) explain, this dual approach sets as its goal a “methodological synergy” that attempts to utilize techniques from both CDA and CL together to conduct more robust analysis (p. 276) to uncover the discursive patterns that work to produce, reproduce and strengthen ideologies. Also, as noted by Mautner (2016),

Corpus linguistics allows critical discourse analysts to work with much larger data volumes than they can when using purely manual techniques. It also allows different perspectives on the data, thus contributing to methodological triangulation (McEnery and Hardie 2012, p. 233), that is, the use of several methods to study the same phenomenon (Creswell and Miller 2010, p. 156).

A corpus, as defined by Hunston (2002), is “a collection of naturally occurring examples of language consisting of anything from a few sentences to a set of written texts or tape recordings, which have been collected for linguistic study” (p. 2). Corpus-based analysis allows researchers to systematically identify and quantify specific linguistics patterns through the use of specialized concordancing software. The software retrieves sorted data from a given corpus and makes possible the analysis of large or small data sets with a greater degree of accuracy than could be achieved manually by a researcher. Researchers can identify and analyze patterns for which they may have been specifically looking, but may also discover patterns for which they were not looking and that might have otherwise gone unnoticed. Concordancing software allows for the non-linear analysis of a collection of texts, selected for a specific purpose. Both qualitative and quantitative analysis can be achieved, as the software allows for parsing and rearranging of the data in different ways so that a variety of observations can be made. As Hunston (2002) describes, “A corpus does not

contain new information about language, but the software offers us a new perspective on the familiar” (p. 3).

Some common uses for this type of software include the analysis of *word frequency*, which indicates which words and word types are used more frequently throughout the corpus; *concordance lines*, which are bundled lines of text using a specific word or set of words that may reveal patterns of use that might have gone unnoticed if the word or phrase was encountered in its normal context; and *collocation*, which measures the “statistical tendency of words to co-occur” (Hunston, 2002, p. 12). While each of these functions could presumably be completed by hand, the use of software makes completing these highly repetitive operations many times faster and more accurate, allowing researchers to focus their time and energy on the task of critical discourse analysis. For this project, the concordancing software *AntConc*, developed by Dr. Laurence Anthony, professor of Science and Engineering at Waseda University in Japan was used to look for patterns that might support the theory that both Trump’s and conservatives new media’s linguistic choices serve a xenophobic agenda of ‘othering’ to incite fear and garner support.

An initial analysis was conducted to identify instances of major metaphoric constructions associated with immigrants. Then, the transcript for each of the speeches and articles was converted to plain text, and uploaded to create a discrete 10-file corpus for each into the concordancing software, *AntConc*, for quantitative analysis. Several queries were run for analysis:

Word List. The most basic of queries available through this software, the *Word List* feature analyzed both of the 10-file corpora in their entirety and provided a list of all of the words used within the corpus, listed by frequency. The software provides a rank for each word based on its frequency relative to all of the other words in the corpus and provides a frequency count, indicating how many times that particular word appears in the corpus.

The 'word list' query brought to light the patterned and rhetorically relevant use of unexpected words in the Trump speeches data set and revealed a relatively more frequent use of pejoratives than of more rhetorically-neutral terms to describe immigrants in the news articles (discussed in greater detail in section 3.1.1).

N-Grams. N-grams are multi-word phrases or units, a sequenced bundle of words that can be analyzed for frequency within corpora. N-gram queries indicate frequently used phrases or word clusters that may reveal patterns and provide insight into a speaker's linguistic choices. For this study, a query for four-word n-grams (units of language made up of four words) was conducted. The 'N-Grams' selection was checked under *Search Term*, and *N-Gram Size* values were set at '4' for both the minimum and maximum, so that only four-word clusters would be identified and ranked. When it was run on the Trump speeches data set, the initial query returned 32,186 n-grams and 37,255 n-gram tokens that appeared at least once in any of the ten data files. This initial result provided a list of the four-word clusters Trump used most frequently in this collection of

speeches. While this was telling, the problem with this initial result is that there was no way of knowing how these n-grams were spread across the various speeches. That is, it may have been possible that an n-gram appeared with an unusually high relative frequency in one given speech, making the results less relevant across the entire corpus.

To narrow the results to a more significant data set, a second query was run, this time with *Minimum Frequency* and *Minimum Range* values selected. The *Minimum Frequency* value was set at '10,' meaning that an n-gram must appear a minimum of 10 times across the corpus to be included. This would narrow the list to only those n-grams which appeared with comparatively high frequency. The *Minimum Range* value was set at '6,' meaning that the n-grams must appear at least once each in a minimum of six of the files. This would ensure that it was a phrase that in addition to being used frequently, appeared across a majority of the files. The second query produced seven unique n-gram types with 189 tokens in total. Each of these n-gram types was then examined in concordance lines for context. When concordance lines for each of the n-gram types was called up (by selecting the *Concordance* tab), each token of a given n-gram type was displayed with corresponding words in the actual text both before and after the n-gram. A *Search Window* value of '50' provided sufficient text both before and after the n-gram to effectively complete analysis in context.

Due to the relatively small data sample of news articles authored by a variety of writers, an 'N-gram' query did not yield noteworthy results that could be described as patterned in that data set.

Collocates. As was mentioned earlier, *collocation* is the “statistical tendency of words to co-occur” (Hunston, 2002, p. 12). That is, this is a measure of the likelihood that words will be located near one another within a specified range of words to the right or to the left of one another. Given the topic of this project, the word 'immigrant' was selected for analysis by collocates in the Trump speech data set. The range was set from six words to the left of 'immigrant' to six words the right of it. In order to concentrate on the most relevant collocates of the word 'immigrant,' the *Minimum Collocate Frequency* value was set to '4.' This would ensure only the most frequent collocates were analyzed. A total of 18 collocate types were identified with 145 total tokens meeting the selected criteria. The results were sorted by frequency for analysis. Not surprisingly, function words, such as 'the,' 'of,' and 'a' were the most frequent collocates of 'immigrant.' However, the next most frequent collocates of the word were significant and will be discussed in the analysis portion of this paper.

Both data sets were also carefully examined under the lens of CDA with particular attention paid to elements that fit the framework presented above. Instances of positive representation of “us,” negative representation of them, and metaphor were given the closest attention given their relative frequency and overall impact. Examining both quantitative and qualitative data, by utilizing

analysis methods associated with CL as well as methods traditionally associated with CDA, allowed for a more robust analysis of the data set. Corpus linguistics and the use of concordancing software brought to light the fact that collectively, the writers of the articles were more likely than not to use slurs when describing immigrants and that Trump tends to lean on a presupposition of established unity— something that might not have been picked up without the assistance of software. Likewise, the negative representation of ‘them’ and use of metaphor might not have been easily discovered through concordancing alone.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 Analysis

The following sections explore some of the specific ways in which Donald Trump and conservative media outlets, collectively, contribute to a national narrative of xenophobia that frames immigrants, particularly those of color, as parasitic and dangerous to the American way of life. There were four major categories that emerged during the data analysis: 1) unmitigated pejoratives, 2) positive framing of 'us,' 3) negative framing of 'them,' and 4) metaphors.

3.1.1 Unmitigated Pejorative: 'Anchor Babies,' 'Aliens' and 'Illegals'

An unmitigated pejorative is a term that is intentionally derogatory with no attempt at mitigation. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, speakers attempt mitigation or redress when endeavoring to avoid committing face-threatening-acts (p. 316). That is, speakers attempt to lessen the severity of a speech act through mitigation when they wish to display politeness or deference. However, "doing an act baldly, without redress," (p. 316) according to Brown and Levinson (1987), is the most direct and unambiguous way to perform a speech act. Speakers typically only perform this type of act: a) in the interest of urgency, b) when the risk of threatening the hearer's face is very small, or c) when the speaker "does not fear retribution," as is the case when s/he is (or perceives him/herself to be) "vastly superior" to the hearer or subject (p. 316). In the case of the unmitigated pejoratives found through this project

(such as 'anchor babies,' 'aliens,' and 'illegals'), there is no indication of a need for urgency, nor can the risk of threatening the hearer's face be categorized as small. Here, pejoratives are unambiguously used as a display of perceived superiority. The very presence of these terms, regardless of frequency or context, indexes a stance of superiority on the part of the speaker/writer and pejoration of the subject, in this case, immigrants.

The term "anchor baby" is a derogatory term meant to describe a child born in the United States to undocumented parents. According to the 14th Amendment, "all person's born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside" (U.S. Const. amend. XIV). When children of undocumented immigrants are born on U.S. soil, they are automatically U.S. citizens, a fact that has caused a great deal of tension and angst among those with anti-immigrant sentiments. The term "anchor baby" specifically implies a "purposeful procreation by foreign-born residents" (Lederer, 2013, p. 248) – an opportunistic move in which children are "conceived in order to improve their parent's chances of attaining American citizenship" (Ignatow and Williams, 2011, p. 60). As Ignatow and Williams (2011) explain, the phrase is a rhetorically-loaded expression, considered by many "to be racist and dehumanizing, as it implies that undocumented immigrants are having children in the United States as a means to attaining U.S. citizenship, rather than as an end in itself" (p. 60). That is, the term suggests that undocumented immigrants and other foreign-born residents

are having children, not out of love or for the purpose of growing their families, but that these babies are being brought into the world and used as tools for the purpose of circumventing immigration laws and gaining access to American citizenship.

This discourse is especially damaging to immigrant women who are stripped of their humanity and furnished with a label that defines them more as criminals and as animals than as mothers seeking a better future for themselves and for their families. According to Chen (2014), “Terms like ‘anchor baby’ and ‘drop and leave’ reduce Latina immigrants to the status of breeders and criminals negating not only their humanity but their right to motherhood as well ... Furthermore the underlying objective behind the dehumanization of Latina mothers (...) is to obliterate the concept of the immigrant family in the public consciousness” (quoted in Lugo-Lugo and Bloodsworth-Lugo, 2014, p. 11).

The decimation of the family unit as a rhetorical strategy to debase marginalized groups is not a new concept. It is one that has been employed for decades as a way of garnering support for public policy and agendas that might otherwise be recognized as unfair or harmful to “real” families. In the 18th and 19th centuries, black women were represented as either incapable of or unwilling to raise children in a family unit, making it more acceptable to separate mothers from their children. By imagining slaves as subhuman and incapable of love, otherwise-rational Americans, were able to justify tearing families apart and keeping mothers from their children as not particularly injurious. It is an approach

that parallels the tactics used by political leaders and school officials of off-reservation Native American boarding schools in the nineteenth century, which called into question the integrity of Native American families, specifically mothers, referring to them as “savages” and “heathens,” passing on their “primitive ways” to their children. By breaking down the family unit and constructing an image of crudeness and savagery, leaders of off-reservation boarding schools made the case for essentially obliterating Native American rites and traditions and supplanting them with the “civilized” ways of the white dominant society of the day (Enoch, 2008, p. 87).

Despite the dehumanizing nature of the phrase, Donald Trump has used “anchor baby” to refer to what he portrays as an endemic *problem* that is destined to ruin the country unless something is done to stop it. When confronted by a reporter about the term’s “hurtful” and “offensive” nature at an August, 2015 town hall event, Trump defiantly responded, “You mean it’s not politically correct and yet everybody uses it? Ya know what, give me a different term.” The reporter suggested, “American-born children of undocumented immigrants,” to which Trump responded “You want me to say that? No. I’ll use the word Anchor Baby. Excuse me! [when the reporter attempted to interject] I’ll use the word Anchor Baby” (Sherifinski, 2015). Trump’s implication that his use of the controversial term is merely shorthand—a convenient substitution for the more inclusive, but lengthier term “American-born children of undocumented immigrants”—minimizes the fact that the phrase represents more than the sum of its parts.

There is deep rhetorical meaning embedded within the term. Through the theory of Conceptual Blending, Lederer explains in a 2013 study how listeners “create intended meaning” (p. 250) when simple words activate “extraordinarily complex associations” (p. 250). Because meaning is never processed in a truly context-free manner, meaning is built from a variety of cognitive mechanisms, including stereotypes, conceptual metaphors, and other contextual associations. So the term “anchor baby” is more than just an *efficient* way to describe “American-born children of undocumented immigrants.” It reinforces existing negative stereotypes about immigrants, “further shaping and structuring a large category of people in American society” (Lederer, 2013, p. 265).

Equally dehumanizing are the terms “aliens” and “illegals,” frequently found in articles and news stories in Fox News, Breitbart. Here, too, the nominalization of the adjectives “alien” and “illegal” represent more than abbreviations for “relating, belonging, or owing allegiance to another country or government” (Merriam-Webster) and “not according to or authorized by law” (Merriam-Webster), respectively. Instead, these are terms that also activate “extraordinarily complex associations,” as Lederer (2013 p. 250) describes, and focus exclusively on immigrants’ legal status in the country. This type of reductive, single-axis rhetoric serves to objectify and dehumanize immigrants and reinforce their status as *Others*. At the same time, they help construct (at least in part) the “American” identity. That is, calling immigrants out as *outsiders*

helps to define and strengthen the imaginary borders around those who are the *insiders*. Cisneros (2011) explains,

“obsession over the literal and symbolic border between American and foreigner, between *us* and *them*, is motivated in part by fear of the dilution and dissolution of US citizenship. As a result, alienization of the non-citizen is fundamental to the rhetorical maintenance of US identity ... Just as the border is drawn to exclude migrants based on their legal, racial, ethnic, or other ‘difference,’ borders can be redrawn to reshape the contours of US citizenship.” (p. 26)

This concept is particularly significant, since it means that those in control of the dominant discourse, have significant influence over constructing the identity of those who “belong” and those who do not. In essence, those in a position of privilege appoint themselves to reformulate national belonging and to define what it means to be ‘American.’

A tendency total disregard for the effect of these terms and the insistence that ‘foreigners’ are ‘less-than’ is made evident through Trump’s repeated and brazen use of these terms coupled with disparaging comments he has made openly, and some that have been widely reported, but are unconfirmed with regard to specific groups of people: about Mexicans, “They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists...” and more recently about people from Haiti, El Salvador and African countries, “Why are we having all these people from shithole countries come here?” (Watkins, 2018). About Haitians he is

reported to have said, “they all have AIDS,” and of Nigerians he is alleged to have said that once they had seen the U.S., Nigerians would never want to “go back to their huts” (Scott, 2017). Trump’s demeaning remarks and use of terms such as “anchor baby” and “illegals” to describe immigrants are examples of the bald-on-record pejoratives that blatantly frame immigrants as different and less-than-human, reducing entire groups of people to their immigration status and rendering their complex identities as human beings inconsequential. While these terms may be perceived as shocking and abhorrent to many, Trump faced no serious consequences for his decision to use them, with many of his supporters dismissing it as Trump just “telling it like it is.”

Despite the intentionally disparaging nature of these terms, “anchor babies,” “aliens,” and “illegals” were frequently encountered in the data collected for this project, particularly in the news stories data set. Collectively, these terms appeared 57 times across the 10-file data set, at a normed rate of 0.75 occurrences per 100 words. In contrast, the terms “immigrants,” “migrants,” and “refugees” were only used 44 times across the 10-file data set, at a normed rate of just 0.58 occurrences per 100 words. (See Table 1 below.)

Table 1. Pejorative vs. Non-Pejorative Terms in News Articles

Total Word Tokens: 7,624

Pejorative Term	Freq.	Non-Pejorative Term	Freq.
Anchor Babies	14	Immigrants	28
Aliens	31	Migrants	9
Illegals	12	Refugees	7
TOTAL	57	TOTAL	44

The data excerpts below illustrate some of the ways these pejorative terms are used in the news articles. A sense of anxiety is communicated through the repeated use of these terms, as immigrants are referenced in terms of uncontrollable numbers and framed as *taking* benefits and opportunities of which they are undeserving – frequently from ‘deserving Americans.’

Excerpt 1 – Breitbart News Network – *Anchor Baby*

“This means that one ***anchor baby*** is delivered every 93 seconds, based on the 2008 census data analyzed by the Pew”

[...]

“Additionally, under universities’ system of racial preferences, ***anchor babies*** will get bonus SAT and GPA points when they apply to college”

(Hahn, 2015).

Excerpt 2 – O’Reilly – *Illegals*

“We have at least 11 million ***illegals*** in the country not only the jobs they are taking but everything else.” (O’Reilly, 2015)

Excerpt 3 – Breitbart News Network – *Aliens*

“Additionally, U.S.-born children of illegal ***aliens*** are entitled to American public schools, health care, and more, even though illegal-***alien*** households rarely pay taxes. (Hahn, 2015)

Excerpt 4 – Fox News – *Illegals*

“ ... my own children receive less money for college, potentially, than ***illegals*** who pay no taxes and who do nothing for this country but take every bit they can from it, and from us”

[...]

“Supportive administrators and scholarships at the drop of a hat are not the only perks for ***illegals*** in today's higher-education landscape.” (Reilly, 2016)

This repeated choice to use pejoratives in the place of more accurate and rhetorically-neutral terms is problematic, as each of these terms is highly inflammatory, carrying deeply embedded meaning that casts immigrants in a disparaging light.

3.1.2 Positive Representation of 'Us'

Throughout both data sets, a persistent framing of 'us' was discovered that held 'Americans,' as white, hard-working, virtuous, trusting and often victimized. Feagin (2010) describes an existing contemporary racial frame, “an overarching white worldview that encompasses a broad and persisting set of racial stereotypes, prejudices, ideologies, images, interpretations and narratives,

emotions [...], as well as racialized inclinations to discriminate (p. 3). The *White Racial Frame*, as Feagin describes it, is carefully curated, protected, and propagated by white elites – those in control of the dominant discourse – through “the institutions of cultural transmission” (p. 1), including political discourse and mass media. Examples of these Americans’ virtues, particularly set in contrast to the implied lack of virtue of non-Americans were found extensively throughout the data sets analyzed.

Table 2. Instances of Positive Representation of ‘Us’
News Articles & Trump Speeches Data Sets

Positive Framing of ‘Us’	Counts
Trump Speeches Data Set	173
News Articles Data Set	95
TOTAL	268

Paying taxes, despite being frequently represented as a burden in popular and political discourse, is widely equated with responsibility and a sense of duty. Taxes underwrite ‘the common good’ and are frequently associated with patriotism and good-citizenship. In the excerpt below, mention of taxes help frame Americans as responsible, “... Americans, who pay taxes ...” and generous, “... to help raise, feed, and educate ...”

Excerpt 5 – Breitbart News Network – *Tax-Paying Citizens*

The huge number of foreign children born on U.S. soil— roughly 340,000 per year— is also an economic imposition on ***Americans, who pay taxes to help raise, feed, and educate*** those children of illegal migrants. (Hahn, 2015)

In the excerpt below, parents of ‘legal students’ are described as good and hard-working.

Excerpt 6 – Fox News – *Hard-Working Parents*

In Chicago, Loyola University students conceived and then overwhelmingly approved the Magis Scholarship Fund to benefit illegals -- to be ***paid for by legal students*** and their ***hard-working parents***.

[...]

All of which puts our own ***legal American students*** last -- even as ***good and hardworking parents*** struggle every day ***to give their children a great education*** against a rising tide of difficulty. (Reilly, 2016)

This generalization—the author cannot presume to know for a fact that *all* of the parents of the so-called *legal students* are actually good and hard-working—exploits a deeply held and acutely valued notion of the American work ethic. Describing the parents of ‘legal students’ as hard-working, and reinforcing that

view by mentioning the parents' "struggle" frames them as responsible, tenacious and virtuous. Similarly, the word "legal" in front of "students" serves to frame Americans as law-abiding. These students are framed as good citizens who 'belong' and who follow rules, in sharp contrast with undocumented students who are simply referred to as "illegals."

In Excerpts 7 and 8 below, Americans are presented as "innocent" and as "victims."

Excerpt 7 – Trump Speech, September 17, 2016 – *Innocent American Victims*

Every day our border remains open, ***innocent Americans*** are needlessly ***victimized***. Every day Sanctuary Cities are left in place, ***innocent Americans*** are put in harm's way.

Excerpt 8 – Breitbart News Network – *Innocent American Victims*

The agent described such a proposal as "ridiculous" and dangerous—as her plan could enable criminal aliens to enter the country and ***victimize innocent Americans***.

[...]

In a statement announcing the endorsement, the council's president warned against Clinton's "radical plan" of "total amnesty plus open borders" that "would result in the loss of ***innocent American*** lives, mass ***victimization*** and death for many... (Hahn, 2016)

Here the group defined as 'us' is offered as faultless, particularly when considered in contrast to the "criminal aliens" that would purportedly be given access to "victimize" the innocent 'us.' This contrasting language is relevant in that it reinforces the ways in which each group is identified and therefore known. As Wodak (2015) explains, "identity is always defined via *similarity* and *difference*" (p. 7). By establishing ('us') as "innocent victims," it becomes easier then to identify and accept immigrants ('them') as "criminal aliens." This discursive strategy is particularly relevant in that it sets the stage for Americans to be understood as innocent victims, immigrants to be conceptualized as criminal aggressors, and for politicians and law-makers to position themselves as the saviors in this narrative.

3.1.3 Negative Representation of 'Them'

As was discussed above immigrants are the contrasting 'them' to the established 'us' – innocent, virtuous, hardworking Americans. Immigrants are named and referred to as "illegals" and "aliens," and are directly and indirectly targeted as the cause of America's problems. In Wodak's (2016) conceptualization of the *Politics of Fear*, immigrants are targeted and scapegoated as "fear is constructed and instrumentalized" for the purpose of laying the foundation for politicians to construct themselves as *saviors*. When 'they' are demonized, politicians can situate themselves as agents of change to save 'us.' In the case of Donald Trump, this idea was forwarded through his promise to "Make America Great Again." His repetition of that phrase both during

his campaign and since then, reinforces a narrative that America was once great, past administrations failed to protect our borders – letting in too many immigrants who brought lawlessness and drained resources, and now he is here to bring change and restore America to its former glory.

Table 3. Instances of Negative Representation of ‘Them’
News Articles & Trump Speeches Data Sets

Positive Framing of ‘Us’	Counts
Trump Speeches Data Set	356
News Articles Data Set	199
TOTAL	555

Throughout both data sets, immigrants are framed as posing a threat to ‘our’ American way of life. Three primary ways in which immigrants are presented in a negative light include 1) immigrants as criminals, 2) immigrants as freeloaders, and 3) immigrants as dishonest.

Excerpt 9 below refers to immigrants who were observed crossing the border into Texas. While there was no reference to the individuals having been seen doing anything but walking into the country, they were framed as dangerous criminals through context.

Excerpt 9 – Breitbart News Network – *Immigrants as Criminals*

The area where the citizens **encountered** the 21 **illegal** immigrants and the private property where Breitbart Texas **encountered** the 43 **illegal** immigrants is an area used by the Gulf **Cartel** to move **illegal** immigrants from Central America and countries other than Mexico across the Texas border with Mexico. The **criminal** organization uses an area in Starr County to **smuggle** Mexican nationals, **convicted criminals** and **previously deported aliens**. It is in that same area where the Gulf **Cartel** moves the bulk of their **drugs**—taking advantage of lack of physical border barriers and the decreased presence of law enforcement. (Ortiz and Darby, 2016)

By making mention of *cartels, smuggling, drugs, criminal organizations, convicted criminals, and previously deported aliens* all within the same few sentences, immigrants are being conflated with a level of criminality that is unwarranted based on the information that is actually being provided, which is that 21 people were observed walking into the country, *presumably* illegally.

The term “encountered” further reinforces this sense of danger. Its Latin origin *in (in) contra* (against) suggests facing an adversary. In modern use, it is still a term that is typically associated with the experience of unexpectedly facing something difficult or hostile: ‘*We have encountered a problem*’; or ‘*the explorers encountered a pack of hungry wolves*,’ So, while the immigrants were only being observed crossing the border, the phrase “the area where the

citizens encountered the 21 illegal immigrants” makes the implication that the situation these *citizens* (law-abiding) found themselves in was, or had the potential of being inordinately dangerous.

In excerpt 10 below, we see Trump conflating immigrants with criminals as he discussed the need for a wall along the southern U.S. border:

Excerpt 10 – Trump Speech, February 28, 2017 – *Immigrants as Criminals*

For that reason, we will soon begin the construction of a great, great wall along our southern border. As we speak tonight, we are removing **gang members, drug dealers**, and **criminals** that **threaten** our communities and **prey** on our very innocent citizens. **Bad ones** are going out as I speak, and as I've promised throughout the campaign.

In Excerpt 11, we see an attempt to make connections between immigrants and the most grievous of crimes:

Excerpt 11 – Fox News – *Immigrants as Criminals*

A recent investigation shows that 30 percent of illegal immigrants who committed crimes were charged with new offenses – such as **rape, child molestation and attempted murder**.

[...]

ICE fought to deport Jean Jacques to Haiti in 2012, but released him when Haiti wouldn't accept him. Jacques **stabbed** a Connecticut man **to death** in 2015. (Fox News, 2016)

Fox News attempts to legitimize baseless claims by including language that alludes to scientific study: "a recent investigation shows that 30 percent of illegal immigrants ..." Which study? And by whom? This is a clear attempt to appeal to the analytical, by presenting information as 'hard facts.' However, without citation of sources, these 'facts' are unreliable at best.

Additionally, immigrants are framed as more likely to commit these crimes (and to do so repeatedly) and are, therefore, presented as particularly dangerous. We read that "a recent investigation shows that 30 percent of illegal immigrants who committed crimes were charged with new offenses." However, while the implication is made that a 30% re-offense rate is unusually high, it is actually lower than national statistics on recidivism. The U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that 76.6% of U.S. prisoners tracked in a 2005 study (the most recent available) were rearrested within five years (Durose, Cooper and Snyder, 2014). So, in reality illegal immigrants may potentially re-offend at significantly *lower* rates than the national average.

Another discursive strategy being used here is the association of immigrants with criminal acts that American society has traditionally deemed as among the absolute worst of crimes: rape, child molestation, and murder. The words "such as" in Excerpt 11 add no specificity to the statement and only serve

to make conceptual connections between immigrants and these serious crimes. That is, the phrase “such as ...” does not indicate how many instances, if any, of these types of crimes are included. They are merely samples of possible crimes that might (or might not) have been included in that figure. Why were those crimes selected as prototypes? Why not instead write “such as possession of marijuana and petty theft”? It is clear that the desired effect is to make mention of these most serious of crimes to help readers make cognitive associations between those categories of crimes and immigrants. Three isolated examples of immigrants committing serious crimes (all three involving murder) are provided as what is presumably meant as “evidence” of this alleged propensity to repeat and serious criminal activity. The last example in Excerpt 10 above, points out that this immigrant was so undesirable that his own home country of Haiti refused to “accept him.” The message? These appalling criminals who aren’t even wanted by their own countries are the types of people who are coming into ‘our’ country illegally.

When immigrants are not being framed as rapists, child molesters and murders, they are presented as greedy, free-loaders who take benefits from ‘us’ and ‘our children,’ as seen in the following excerpts.

Excerpt 12 – Breitbart News Network – *Immigrants as Freeloaders*

Additionally, ***U.S.-born children of illegal aliens are entitled*** to American public schools, health care, and more, even though ***illegal-alien households rarely pay taxes.***

[...]

Additionally, under universities' system of **racial preferences**, **anchor babies will get bonus SAT and GPA points** when they apply to college.

(Hahn, 2015)

Excerpt 13 – Fox News – *Immigrants as Freeloaders*

A new fall semester is about to begin. And while American college students struggle to pay for their higher education and long to be the fortunate recipients of college scholarships, **illegal immigrants find their path lined with institutionalized supports, loads of scholarship money -- and a healthy dose of "go get 'em kid," as they break U.S. law.** (Reilly, 2016)

Excerpt 14 – Fox News – *Immigrants as Freeloaders*

"So my own children receive less money for college, potentially, than **illegals who pay no taxes and who do nothing for this country but take every bit they can from it, and from us,**" said one father of four from New York. "It's outrageous, really. **They're also very likely taking the seat of an American college student,** who could have been where they are." (Reilly, 2016)

Excerpt 15 – Trump Speech, October 4, 2016 – *Immigrants as Freeloaders*

Thousands of refugees are being admitted, with no way to screen them, and are **instantly made eligible for welfare and free healthcare** – even as **our own Veterans die waiting** for the medical care they need.

In Excerpt 13 above, contrasting language situates “Americans” as hard working and struggling to achieve the dream of a higher education, while immigrants are framed as undeserving and over-served. The phrase “illegal immigrants find their path lined with institutionalized supports, loads of scholarship money and a healthy dose of “go get 'em kid,” as they break U.S. law.” (Reilly, 2016) above gives the impression that immigrants need only show up to receive “loads of scholarship money” – money that might have otherwise gone to American students. That is, according to this account, law-breaking immigrants (who need do nothing but *be*) will be treated to a ‘free ride’ to higher education, while hard-working, law-abiding American students (‘our’ children) are forced to struggle. In Excerpt 14, immigrants are once again framed as lazy and opportunistic: “...illegals who pay no taxes and who do nothing for this country but take every bit they can from it and from us [...] They’re also very likely taking the seat of an American college student, who could have been where they are.” In Excerpt 15 refugees are “instantly made eligible for welfare and free health care – even as our own Veterans die waiting for the medical care they need.” Here, like in excerpt 14, reality is further skewed here by framing the situation as a zero-sum proposition: *If ‘they’ get help, it comes at the expense of ‘our’ children and ‘our’ veterans.*

The following excerpts illustrate the framing of immigrants as dishonest, sneaking around and taking advantage of Americans. In excerpts 16 and 17

verbs associated with dishonesty (such as *caught*, *sneak*, and *posing*) frame immigrants as greedy and deceptive outlaws:

Excerpt 16 – Breitbart News – *Immigrants as Dishonest*

In fact, the proposal is so unpopular that even Jeb Bush, who favors large-scale immigration, has criticized pregnant foreigners who **grab** citizenship for their kids by flying into the country **posing** as tourists. Bush described the practice as “**fraud**,” (Hahn, 2015)

Excerpt 17 – Breitbart News – *Immigrants as Dishonest*

Whereas unlawful aliens traditionally sought to **evade** border agents in hopes of reaching U.S. cities where they could illegally fill American jobs, [...]

In the 12 months up to October 2016, 271,000 illegal immigrants were **caught** trying to **sneak** across the border. (Hahn, 2016)

In the line “pregnant foreigners who grab citizenship for their kids by flying into the country posing as tourists” (excerpt 16 above), the term ‘foreigners’ first reduces expectant mothers (a group that is typically cherished and protected in American society) to their status of ‘outsiders’ – not us. Then, the words “grab” and “posing” apply a treatment of greed and deceit, which is concretized by the use of the powerfully damaging word “fraud.” Likewise, in Excerpt 17 the word “evade” and the phrase “caught trying to sneak” paint a picture that represents

individuals not just as “unlawful aliens,” but as treacherous criminals violating our borders and stealing our jobs under the cover of darkness.

3.1.4 Metaphor

As was discussed in section 3.1.1, open pejoratives can have devastating effects by stripping away humanity, making it easier to deny rights or privileges to those considered ‘others’. However, at least equally damaging is the use of more subtle linguistic features, such as metaphors. Unlike bald-on-record pejoratives, metaphors inhabit the space just beneath the surface of openly delivered rhetoric. They are strategies that, despite being presented in plain sight, often go unnoticed and become normalized without conscious awareness of them, making metaphors particularly powerful vehicles for the dissemination of ideology – in this case, for the propagation of anti-immigrant rhetoric and negative presentation of *them*. They become engrained in cognitive processes and become part of listeners’ and readers’ understanding, taking statements from the realm of political ‘*opinion*’ to ‘*understanding*’ about immigrants and their roles in American society. As Cisneros (2008) explains,

“metaphors are cultural indices with which Americans build their commonplace understanding(s) and attitudes [...] as they become entrenched in theoretical discourse, they influence how we formulate our hypotheses about the impacts of immigration and ethnic group behavior – about how different immigrant groups fit into U.S. society.” (p. 570)

Metaphors then, serve as repositories of community and cultural understandings, knowledge and 'truth.' However, metaphors can lead to problematic connections in the minds of readers and listeners. Relationships that are incomplete or biased can lead to readers to make dangerous semantic connections by filling in gaps with ideologically charged entailments.

As will be discussed below, Trump and conservative news outlets utilize metaphor extensively, likening immigrants to animals, destructive flood waters, objects and danger/threat. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) assert that the thought and behavior of both the public and of politicians can be influenced by metaphor, leading to different actions than might have been taken in the absence of those metaphors. This point is particularly critical, when the politician in question is the President of the United States of America. As Lakoff and Johnson concluded in a 1991 study about events in the Persian Gulf, "metaphors can kill" (cited in Deignan, 2005, p. 23).

As was discussed in Chapter 2, metaphors play a critical role in thought and in the ways in which individuals process the world. Through metaphor, cognitive connections are made that help readers/listeners understand abstract or unfamiliar concepts in light of more tangible or familiar concepts. However, metaphors are not self-evident. That is, their meanings are *created*, not merely explained or "revealed" (Yanow, 2015, p. 16). The entailments, or logical deductions, that are made between source and target domains are influenced by a number of external and internal factors including immediate situational context,

social assumptions and understandings, stereotypes, biases and past experiences. Further, they “direct attention toward certain features of the target, thereby highlighting them, while at the same time they direct attention away from other features, thereby (metaphorically) blinding us to these” (Yanow, 2015, p.16). In this way, metaphor can be used to inconspicuously further an ideology that frames immigrants in a negative light.

In the extreme, metaphor manipulation can contribute to widespread social “understanding” and movements with devastating and enduring results. Musolff’s 2010 book, *Metaphor, Nation and Holocaust: The Concept of the Body Politic*, examines the Nazi movement’s use of metaphor as a “sinister tool of Nazi propaganda” (p. 1). The phrase *body politic* is associated with a variety of metaphors likening political issues to the human body. The terms “*head of state, head of government, long arm of the law, organ (of a party), sclerosis or tumour (sic) (of the body politic), heart of Britain or Europe,*” (Musolff, 2010, p.1) are all examples of political concepts in light of the very familiar source domain of the human body. On the surface, this metaphor has all the trappings of a clear and useful means of understanding abstract political terms and ideas. The metaphor becomes problematic, however, when it is used to manipulate the public’s thinking in favor of a particular political ideology. In the case of Nazi Germany, Musolff (2010) suggests that metaphor was used to portray the German state as a “poisoned human body” (p. 2). Adolf Hitler and his propaganda chief, Joseph

Goebbels, used metaphorical structures to frame Jewish people as *parasitic* to the German *body*:

- 1 [the Jew] has always been a *parasite in the body of other peoples*.

- 2 1914 witnessed the last flicker of the national *instinct for self-preservation* in opposition to the *progressive paralysis of our people's body*.

- 3 ...the Jew represents *an infectious illness*... Germany has no intention of giving in to this Jewish threat but it intends to oppose it in time, if necessary by means of its most complete and radical extermin-, eh, elimination. (Musolff, 2010, p. 2)

In this most extreme of examples, the entailments associated with this line of metaphorical “logic,” serve to legitimize and justify genocide. Strong implication is made that Jewish people (*them*) are destroying the German state (*us*), so the natural “logical” conclusion that follows is that an entire group of citizens – in this case Jewish men, women and children – should be eliminated, just as one would cure a disease, remove a parasite, or kill a virus. It is important to note, however, that designs to annihilate an entire group of people are never explicitly presented. While the implicature is clear, the use of metaphor here allows room

for an interpretation that does not involve genocide. Goebbels' false start in example 3 above "reveals knowledge about the ongoing genocide, but also illustrates the effort to avoid unequivocal references to killing and mass murder." (Musolff, 2010, p. 3) These examples lean toward one extreme of the spectrum, but they serve as archetypes of the ways in which 'the elite' can and do use language to further toxic ideology that debases certain groups (them) and frames others as victims (us).

Metaphors in Conservative News Media Articles. Metaphors were found extensively throughout both data sets. There were 53 instances of metaphor counted throughout the 10-article data set.

Table 4. Conceptual Metaphors in News Articles

Count	Conceptual Metaphor	Frames Immigrants As:
7	IMMIGRANTS ARE OBJECTS	less-than-human; "they" are not worthy of dignity or of the same rights and privileges to which "we" are entitled.
9	IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGER	economic and physical threats; "they" bring lawlessness and threaten "our" civilized way of life.
17	IMMIGRANTS ARE ANIMALS	sub-human; "they" are not worthy of dignity or of the same rights and privileges to which "we" are entitled.
20	IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGEROUS FLOOD WATERS	uncontrollable; "they" infiltrate our communities and are impossible to stop.

The excerpts below demonstrate that the conceptual metaphor IMMIGRANTS ARE OBJECTS is constructed primarily through the use of words that represent movement.

Excerpt 18 – Breitbart News – IMMIGRANTS ARE OBJECTS

There are lots of aliens we should be **removing**, but we can't do it because we're handcuffed by policies.

Excerpt 19 – Breitbart News – IMMIGRANTS ARE OBJECTS

... an area used by the Gulf Cartel to **move** illegal immigrants from Central America and countries other than Mexico across the Texas border with Mexico.

[...]

The criminal organization uses an area in Starr County to **smuggle** Mexican nationals ...

Excerpt 19 – Fox News – IMMIGRANTS ARE OBJECTS

In just the past two days alone we're talking in the neighborhood of 200 **bodies** or more that we need to either find placement for ...

Immigrants framed as objects are much easier to dismiss. In excerpt 19 above, immigrants are referred to simply as 'bodies,' completely stripping them of minds, personalities, and desires. They are no longer people, they are merely bodies to be dealt with.

The conceptual metaphor IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGER equate immigrants with economic and physical threats. The excerpts below are examples of the ways in which immigrants are framed as criminals and other unspecified threats.

Excerpt 21 – Fox News – IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGER

In total, the citizens **encountered** 21 illegal immigrants in a matter of minutes.

Excerpt 22 – O’Reilly – IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGER

illegal immigrants in America who have **evaded** justice ... who are out there **at large**.

The following excerpts exemplify the use of the conceptual metaphor IMMIGRANTS ARE ANIMALS, which frames immigrants as sub-human and again, not worthy of rights and privileges. This is primarily accomplished through the use of terms such as ‘release,’ when referring to the chain of custody.

Excerpt 23 – Fox News – IMMIGRANTS ARE ANIMALS

While speaking before a subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee in 2011, ICE Executive Associate Director Gary Mead said only 7 percent of illegal aliens **released** since 2009 had been re-booked into ICE custody.

Excerpt 24 – Fox News – IMMIGRANTS ARE ANIMALS

The ICE agency has no room to house the arriving surge, so many illegals are being **released** into American communities.

The term 'release' is often used when describing captured animals. Animals are caught and then 'released into the wild.' The use of this term helps build connections that equate immigrants with animals, and therefore, less-than-human beings.

The following excerpts illustrate how the common conceptual metaphor, IMMIGRATION IS THE MOVEMENT OF WATER, is used by the media to incite fear.

Excerpt 25 – Fox News – IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGEROUS FLOOD WATERS

...former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani to not only look at Muslim immigration but also study the immigration **flow** across the Southern border. (Fox News, 2016)

Excerpt 26 – Breitbart News – IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGEROUS FLOOD WATERS

Exclusive – Immigration Officer: Border **Deluge** of Illegal Aliens 'Is the Worst We've Ever Seen.

[...]

The **flood** of illegal aliens **pouring** across the southern border has become a "crisis situation" and is even worse than the record 2014 border **surge**...

[...]

Many additional thousands of illegal aliens continue to ***pour*** across the border...

[...]

The ***surge*** is worse than it was in 2014. Our southern border is not secure. It's so ***porous***. (Hahn, 2016)

Excerpt 27 – Breitbart News Network – IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGEROUS FLOOD WATERS

Flood of Illegal Immigrants Continues at Texas Border

[...]

The discovery of ongoing ***waves*** of illegal immigrants ...
(Ortiz and Darby, 2016)

As Lederer (2013) explains, frequently “English speakers qualify and quantify immigration as influxes, waves, flow, flood, tides of immigrants” (p. 255).

Conceptual connections are then made between the threat of ‘floods,’ ‘waves,’ and ‘tides’ and immigrants reinforcing the negative representation of “them.”

The fact that multiple manifestations of each conceptual metaphor are present is significant. The presence of several semantically related metaphors provide critical insight on underlying thought patterns (Deignan, 2005). Baker et al. (2008) elucidate the danger of these metaphorical connections and repetitions as they tend to objectify and dehumanize immigrants “constructing them as an out-of-control, agentless, unwanted natural disaster” (p. 287).

Metaphors in Trump’s Discourse Examples of metaphorical structures that dehumanize and vilify immigrants were also found throughout Trump’s speeches. The conceptual metaphors that were most frequently used include IMMIGRANTS ARE FLOOD WATERS, IMMIGRANTS ARE OBJECTS, and IMMIGRANTS ARE ANIMALS. Each of these metaphors serves a slightly different purpose, but it contributes to a framing of immigrants as a threat to “us” and “our” way of life.

Table 5. Conceptual Metaphors in Trump’s Discourse

Counts	Conceptual Metaphor	Frames Immigrants As:
13	IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGER	economic and physical threats; “they” bring lawlessness and threaten “our” civilized way of life.
21	IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGEROUS FLOOD WATERS	less-than-human; “they” are not worthy of dignity or of the same rights and privileges to which “we” are entitled.
28	IMMIGRANTS ARE OBJECTS	economic and physical threats; “they” bring lawlessness and threaten “our” civilized way of life.
41	IMMIGRANTS ARE ANIMALS	sub-human; “they” are not worthy of dignity or of the same rights and privileges to which “we” are entitled.

Some metaphors can be rather easily detected by critical listeners. For example, during the speech announcing his candidacy in June 2015, Trump claimed that “The U.S. has become a *dumping ground* for everybody else's problems.” Here the conceptual metaphor he is constructing is IMMIGRANTS ARE GARBAGE. *Dumping ground* serves as the vehicle in the source domain that equates immigrants and all of the problems they purportedly bring (target domain) with garbage. However, other metaphorical constructions are a little more subtle. Trump goes on to say, “When Mexico is sending its people, they’re not sending their best ...” Here, he implies that Mexico (as one big, unified entity) is “sending” its people. The conceptual metaphor here is IMMIGRANTS ARE OBJECTS. The use of the verb “sending” serves to dehumanize immigrants as if they were unwanted, even in their own country, being transported to the U.S. by Mexico – a means of ridding itself of these “objects” and their “troubles.” Immigrants are stripped of their humanity, as if they were incapable of desiring and pursuing better lives for themselves and for their families. They are constructed as problem-laden “objects” being dumped into the U.S. by Mexico like garbage being tossed over the fence by an inconsiderate neighbor.

The following excerpts from the data sample also contain elements that contribute to the reinforcement of the conceptual metaphor IMMIGRANTS ARE OBJECTS and frame immigrants as parcels.

Excerpt 28 – Trump Speech, August 31, 2016 – IMMIGRANTS ARE OBJECTS

And they'll be brought great distances. We're not **dropping** them right across. They learned that. President Eisenhower. They'd **drop** them across, right across, and they'd come back.

Excerpt 29 – Trump Speech, September 17, 2016 – IMMIGRANTS ARE OBJECTS

What do you tell to the mother, who just buried her daughter, because someone was released at the border who should have been **sent** home?

Like the conservative media samples, Trumps speeches contained many (21) instances of the conceptual metaphor IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGEROUS FLOODWATERS. Similarly to the articles, Trump used the metaphor to construct immigration as out of control and unstoppable. The following are examples of excerpts that contain the conceptual metaphors IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGEROUS FLOODWATERS.

Excerpt 30 – Trump Speech, October 4, 2016 – IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGEROUS FLOOD WATERS.

I am going to end illegal immigration, stop the massive **inflow** of refugees, keep jobs from pouring out of our country, renegotiate our disastrous trade deals, and massively reduce taxes and regulations on our workers and our small businesses.

Excerpt 31 – Trump Speech, October 4, 2016 – IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGEROUS FLOOD WATERS.

We've had some big **waves**... Within just a few years immigration as a share of national population is set to break all historical records.

Trump also repeatedly (41 times) utilizes the conceptual metaphor IMMIGRANTS ARE ANIMALS to make immigrants appear sub-human. Once people are stripped of their dignity and their humanity, it becomes easier to deny them rights and privileges to which they are entitled. The following excerpts exemplify how Trump used words such as “release,” “prey,” and “catch” in an effort to subvert the worth of immigrants.

Excerpt 32 – Trump Speech, September 17, 2016 – IMMIGRANTS ARE ANIMALS

Her plan calls for total amnesty in the first 100 days, which means Obamacare, Social Security and Medicare for illegal immigrants. Her plan calls for **catch-and-release** on the border.

Excerpt 33 – Trump Speech, September 17, 2016 – IMMIGRANTS ARE ANIMALS

For that reason, we will soon begin the construction of a great, great wall along our southern border. As we speak tonight, we are removing gang members, drug dealers, and criminals that threaten our communities and **prey** on our very innocent citizens.

Excerpt 34 – Trump Speech, August 31, 2016 – IMMIGRANTS ARE ANIMALS

We will terminate the Obama administration's deadly, and it is deadly, non-enforcement policies that allow thousands of criminal aliens to freely **roam** our streets, walk around, do whatever they want to do ...

“Catch-and-release” (excerpt 32) is a term commonly used in association with fishing. As a conservation method, a fisherman catches a fish, but then unhooks and releases it back into the water. Likewise, the word “prey” deals with animals hunting and killing food, and “roam” is often associated with animals out in the open. By using this type of language, Trump calls up concepts associated with animals in conjunction with discussions about immigrants.

Perhaps the most striking and also among the most frequently repeated in the collection of speeches is the conceptual metaphor IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGER. Trump uses a variety of metaphorical constructions to stoke fear by equating immigrants with criminals, terrorists, animals, and other unknown/undefined threats. Regarding the number of immigrants entering the United States, Trump stated in a 2016 speech at the Ohio Republican National Convention, “They are being released by the tens of thousands into our communities with no regard for the impact on public safety or resources.” In this example, Trump uses a powerful cocktail of metaphorical constructions to carry the conceptual metaphor IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGER.

The word *released*, at the surface level, serves as the vehicle in the source domain that likens immigrants to criminals being *released* from prison. At a deeper level, Trump is equating immigrants with animals – a metaphorical construction often used in association with prisoners. Dangerous animals are captured then *released* back in into the wild away from people, towns, etc. where they cannot harm “us.” So, by indicating that they are being released into our communities, he is inciting fear that can be likened to what might be experienced if wild animals had been released into our neighborhoods.

Further analysis of the sentence reveals additional metaphorical associations. By stating that “they are being released *by the tens of thousands...*” Trump implies that the number of immigrants being discussed is unmanageable. *They are coming in mass numbers and they will overwhelm us.* The concept of these individuals as dangerous threats is then reinforced in the final part of that sentence: “with no regard for the impact on public safety or resources.” This presupposes that there will necessarily be an impact on public safety and on the resources on which Trump’s audience rely. The combination of these linguistic choices powerfully constructs immigrants as hordes of criminal-animals that will deplete resources and threaten the safety of law-abiding citizens, being framed here as “us.” It is this final layer of metaphorical framing that truly brings the threat home for the audience. “*They* are being released by the tens of thousands into *our* communities ...” This rhetorical move serves to help audiences truly internalize the proposed threat. – ‘*They*’ are a danger to ‘*us*.’

3.1.5 The Subtle Construction of Immigrants as ‘Danger’ in Trump’s Speech

Computer-assisted, corpus-based analysis provides a means of analyzing large data sets with speed and accuracy. As Biber and Conrad (2009) explain, computer-assisted evaluations “make it possible to identify and analyze complex patterns of language use, based on consideration of a much larger collection of texts than could be dealt with by hand” (p. 74). Additionally, the ability to quickly and accurately process larger quantities of text make it possible to identify patterns that might have otherwise gone unnoticed. In this project, the use of the concordancing software AntConc revealed subtle patterns that ultimately support the theory that Trump uses ‘othering’ to incite fear and to construct a narrative of xenophobia.

In terms of word frequency, the most frequent words found across all of the speech texts were function words. *The*, *and*, *to* and *of* ranked 1st through 4th on the word list. Interestingly, the pronoun *we* was ranked 5th and the determiner *our* ranked 8th among all of the examined texts. The possible motive behind this pervasive use of *we*, with 673 instances (1.8 per 100 words) and *our*, with 612 instances (1.64 per 100 words) is revealed when the words are examined in context. As explained by Hunston (2002), concordance lines provide analysts the opportunity to examine many instances of a word or phrase in context, allowing them to observe patterns that might have otherwise been missed when the same words or phrases are observed in their everyday context.

While the words *we* and *our* might routinely go unnoticed due to their unremarkable and frequent use, when analyzed in these speeches in terms of comparative frequency and context, the power of these unassuming words can be easily observed. Concordance lines reveal what may be an attempt on the part of Trump to persuade audiences that he identifies as one of them – that their goals are his goals. By utilizing the words *we* and *our*, he presupposes an established, shared stance and vision:

- “It is a strike at the heart and soul of who *we* are as a nation.”
- “*We* need to respond to this attack on America as one united people - with force, purpose and determination.”
- “*We* will be a country of generosity and warmth. But *we* will also be a country of law and order.”
- “The attack on the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida, was the worst terrorist strike on *our* soil since September 11th, and the worst mass shooting in *our* country's history.”
- “*We* have a dysfunctional immigration system which does not permit us to know who *we* let into *our* country, and it does not permit us to protect *our* citizens.”

The last example is particularly telling. Trump clearly uses the words *we* and *our* to construct a demarcation – a line between *us* and *them*. This construction is a powerful rhetorical move that is particularly well suited for stoking fear of particular groups. Van Dijk (1995), asserts that ideologies are “socially shared

and used by groups and their members” (p. 22), and that group ideologies are often polarizing, creating a strong sense of ‘us’ versus ‘them.’ Trump’s use of the words *we* and *our* naturally implies a *they* and *their* – an inconspicuous means of furthering a dangerous and polarizing ideology that frames immigrants as “them” and his base as “us.”

An analysis of four-word N-Grams revealed a similar pattern, yielding the following as the top results:

Table 6. Rank, Frequency and Range of N-Grams in Trump’s Speech

Total Word Tokens: 37,285

Rank	Freq	Range	N-gram
1	81	7	we are going to
2	26	6	we re going to
3	22	9	of the united states
4	20	6	i am going to
5	17	7	and we are going
6	13	6	by an illegal immigrant
7	10	9	make america great again

Here again, we see a pattern in the use of the word *we*, this time collocated with the phrase *are going to*. The top two results (which could arguably be combined into one) are *we are going to* and *we’re going to*. A look at the corresponding

concordance lines reveal an apparent desire to indicate a plan for positive and unified action – one that we will take together:

- “...*we are going to fix* the system ...”
- “*We are going to defeat* the barbarians of ISIS ...”
- “*We are going to build* a great border wall ...”
- “*We are going to work* with all of our students who are drowning in debt ...”
- “*We are going to conserve* your land for the future ...”
- “...*we are going to deliver* justice for every American family and every American victim.”

A clear pattern can be observed that couples the lexical bundle *we are going to* with a positively-framed verb (*fix, defeat (the enemy), build, work, conserve, deliver*) that constructs the “us” group as proactive and heroic, defending “our” land against the “others” who would see it decimated. A closer look at the entailment of each phrase reveals that these statements simultaneously positively-frame “us,” while reacting to something that is undesirable and problematic:

- “...*we are going to fix* the system ...” [because it is broken]
- “*We are going to defeat* the barbarians of ISIS ...” [because they are threatening]

- “*We are going to* build a great border wall ...” [because immigrants are flooding into our country illegally]
- “*We are going to* work with all of our students who are drowning in debt ...” [because they are not getting the ‘perks’ illegal immigrants get]
- “*We are going to* conserve your land for the future ...” [because ‘they’ want to take ‘our’ land away]
- “... *we are going to* deliver justice for every American family and every American victim.” [because we are being victimized]

Another revelatory phrase – this time regarding “them” – is the 6th most frequent N-Gram: *by an illegal immigrant*. Perhaps not surprisingly, this lexical bundle was accompanied most frequently by verbs that carry a negative and fear-inducing connotation (*murdered, shot, killed, gunned down*):

- “He was murdered *by an illegal immigrant* gang member previously convicted of burglary...
- ... he was viciously shot and killed *by an illegal immigrant* with three gun charges ...
- “These brave men were viciously gunned down *by an illegal immigrant* with a criminal record and two prior deportations.”
- “gunned down in the Sanctuary City of San Francisco *by an illegal immigrant* deported five previous times. And they knew he was no good.”

- “Jamiel's 17-year-old son was viciously murdered *by an illegal immigrant* gang member who had just been released from prison.”

As demonstrated above, the bundle is frequently preceded by a ‘vicious’ act and followed by a postnominal modifier (relative clause or prepositional phrase) indicating prior criminal offense: *who had just been released from prison, previously convicted of burglary, with a criminal record and two prior deportations*. Here Trump is very clearly framing immigrants as repeat offenders – vicious and irredeemable lawbreakers. This strategy simultaneously constructs immigrants as criminals, disparages the previous administration, and makes an indirect call to action: *These criminals had done this before, and those in charge did nothing about it. Now we need to act.*

The notion of Trump constructing immigrants as criminals was further reinforced when a collocation query was performed. Collocation is the “statistical tendency of words to co-occur” (Hunston, 2002, p. 12). Excluding function words (*an, by, the, was, of, etc.*) the top collocates of *immigrant* are *illegal, killed, previously, murdered, deported, member* and *gang*– all terms with highly negative and patterned criminal connotations.

- “He was murdered by an *illegal immigrant* gang member previously convicted of burglary...”

- "... he was viciously shot and *killed* by an illegal *immigrant* with three gun charges..."
- "... by an illegal *immigrant*, *deported* five previous times.

Each of the examples above represents a foundational element that repeats and reinforces the broad conceptual metaphor IMMIGRANTS ARE DANGER.

Racism. While overt racism was not found to be patterned in the data sets, one article stood out as undeniably racist. While it only represents one example, the fact that BillO'Reilly.com would publish the article at all is indicative of the news outlet's stance. In the following example, language is used that slightly, but significantly, modifies the "us" that reveals racist sentiments on the part of the "Bill O'Reilly staff" listed in the byline. In this story, which takes place in Sweden, the "us" is no longer representative of American citizens, but are instead white, northern Europeans:

Excerpt 18 – Bill O'Reilly News

Festival officials, as they announced the end of Bravalla, complained that "certain men" don't know how to behave. You might wonder if those "certain men" are strapping blonde Swedes with names like Erik, Viktor, and Gustav. But in fact, the assailants are allegedly immigrants from the Middle East, North Africa, and other predominantly Muslim areas of the world. (Bill O'Reilly Staff, 2017)

Here the 'blondes' are described as "strapping" and are given typical Scandinavian names: Erik, Viktor, and Gustav. A rhetorical picture is painted of brawny blonde men with names and stories. In sharp contrast, the alleged assailants are "immigrants from the Middle East, North Africa and other predominantly Muslim areas of the world," who are most likely not blond or named Erik. The alleged (no evidence is ever offered) assailants are reduced to their immigration status and to their presumed religious affiliations.

Excerpt 19 – Bill O'Reilly News

This year the situation was even more sickening, with four reported rapes and 23 instances of sexual assault. And the Times? The "paper of record" chose to run a brief Associated Press dispatch noting that the festival has been shut down. Nowhere was there any mention that Muslim immigrants were the likely perps.

[...]

Again, the perps weren't Wolfgang, Hans, und Dieter. They were described by the women as men of "Arab or North African appearance."

(Bill O'Reilly Staff, 2017)

Why is the failure on the part of the New York Times to mention that “Muslim immigrants were likely the perps” objectionable to the writers? And why the need to mention that the alleged perpetrators were described by women as “men of Arab or North African appearance.” It’s difficult to come to a conclusion about the motivation behind these moves that doesn’t involve racism and instigating racism. Interestingly, the anonymous “Bill O’Reilly Staff” appear to dismiss the fact that Swedish authorities and tourism officials – groups that are typically afforded a greater degree of credibility, due to their official posts – state that “immigrants are fitting in quite nicely” (Bill O’Reilly Staff, 2017). Instead, they made a rhetorical choice to write their own narrative, loosely quoting anonymous sources who support a xenophobic ideology. As Gabrielatos and Baker (2008) assert, through their “prosodic choices, newspapers make and communicate sociopolitical choices” (p. 14). This is, perhaps, not entirely surprising nor is it a phenomenon unique to the United States, but the implications for societal impact are significant. In a 1991 study of covert racism in British media, Van Dijk made significant connections between social inequality and the perpetuation of racism by the media. He showed empirically how “minority races are surreptitiously framed through disproportionately negative language in media discourse”, a phenomenon Van Dijk calls “elite racism,” wherein elites are in a position that “allows them to perpetuate racist views of the society at large” (Van Dijk, 1991, p. 253).

One critical element missing from this and all of the articles in this study is the immigrant perspective. Nowhere is an immigrant quoted, never are their intentions, fears or desires even alluded to. They are spoken *about*, but never spoken to. This is powerfully telling of an agenda that would see immigrants reduced to, at best, “an issue,” but more frequently “a problem.” It reveals yet another very subtle move – a decision that communicates that immigrants are not worthy of a voice. Their aspirations and dreams for a better life are non-existent or simply don’t matter. They are not seen as courageous trailblazers leaving their home countries in search of a safer more economically stable future for themselves and for their families. They are objects. Things to be dealt with and not heard from.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusion

It has been the objective of this project to use Critical Discourse Analysis aided by Corpus Linguistics to shed light on the ways in which Donald Trump and mainstream conservative media use language to sustain and invigorate a national narrative of xenophobia. This study makes the empirical assertion that the use of demagogic and dehumanizing language, along with more subtle discursive strategies, are being used to stoke fear and anti-immigrant sentiment and to strip individuals of their humanity for the purpose of rendering them unworthy of dignity and of the same rights and benefits as those to which groups considered *insiders* and 'real Americans' are entitled. Through positive framing of us, negative framing of them, metaphorical constructions that equate immigrants with animals, danger, floodwaters, and objects, and through a complete omission of the immigrant perspective, Trump and conservative media are perpetuating a discourse of racism in America.

We cannot unambiguously know the motivation behind Trump's specific appeal to fear. However, fear is a powerful motivator for action, and if history is any indicator, it is likely that Trump used fear as a means of mobilizing the townspeople with torches and pitchforks (quite literally in some cases) against a common enemy of his making for the purpose of garnering their support. Evolutionary anthropologist, Michael Tomasello (2008) explains that "recent

evolutionary models have demonstrated what politicians have long known: the best way to get people to collaborate and to think like a group is to identify an enemy and charge that ‘they’ threaten ‘us’” (New York Times Magazine, nytimes.com, para. 8).

For centuries fear has been ‘instrumentalized’ as immigrants and other *outsiders* are scapegoated and targeted as the cause for any number of societal and economic woes. At the same time, this instrumentalized fear puts those in power in a position to construct themselves as “saviors” (Wodak, 2016). Trump appears to have done exactly that. He has constructed himself as an emblem of change and hope in an attempt to garner political support. – *Put me in charge, and together, we will make America great again.*

As was tragically evidenced in Nazi-era Germany, xenophobic discursive practices can have shattering and enduring effects. Left unchecked, media power elites could potentially achieve “hegemony – total control over what the public sees, reads, hears and ultimately thinks” (Ignatow and Williams, 2011, p.63) to devastating consequences. The task, then, is to listen and read critically. While some racism is blatant, much of it remains thinly shrouded in metaphor and plausible deniability.

Not all of Trump’s speech about issues surrounding immigration is metaphorical. Describing Mexican immigrants, Trump famously uttered the words “They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people” (Trump, 2015). Based on this excerpt (albeit

hyperbolic), there is no mistaking the fact that Trump equates immigrants with criminality. He makes a blatant generalization about all Mexican immigrants: “They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists.” – *They are rapists.* – There is no question about the meaning behind his inflammatory, reductive and inaccurate insinuation that immigrants are necessarily criminals. There is no subtlety, no implicature, and his apparent attempt at mitigation -- “And some, I assume, are good people” – comes across as an empty afterthought that only serves to further emphasize his stance that if not *all*, an overwhelming majority of immigrants, fit this description. This type of bald-on-record language is reckless at best and profoundly toxic to the very fabric of society.

It is worth noting, however, that this type of flagrant language necessitates some form of reaction. It may be shocking to many and may cause some listeners to recoil, immediately rejecting his statements. Some may chalk it up to hyperbole. Others still may whole-heartedly agree with his statements. At the very least, however, audiences consciously reflect upon the meaning of these words and make their own assessments. This type of transparent language is certainly dangerous. However, less obvious, more subtly metaphorical language can be every bit as damaging. Because listeners may not consciously notice them, inconspicuous metaphorical constructions, such as those reinforced by the patterns discussed above, may be even more insidious, particularly since their banality allows for frequent repetition, which leads to the cementing of concepts

as natural and accepted. As Lederer (2013) explains, “Language changes the structure of our minds and once connections are made they can be hard to break” (p. 265). It is unlikely audiences will find an ulterior motive behind words such as *we* or *our*, and yet, these serve as building blocks for a metaphor that constructs immigrants as dangerous *others* threatening *our* way of life. Cisneros (2008) makes a call to action,

“the task, then, is to examine the ways in which conventional understandings of immigration are made concrete through metaphor. Examining these discursive representations can “unmask or demystify” dominant assumptions about immigrants, assumptions that can have potentially deleterious effects on social relations” (p. 571).

This study is an attempt to answer that call. Through Critical Discourse Analysis we are able to shine a light on discursive practices that attempt to further dangerous, destructive, and exclusionary ideologies – the types of ideologies that Strauss and Feiz (2014) describe as involving “hidden dimensions of power, control, injustice, and inequity, all which go unseen and unnoticed because they are couched in what appears to be common-sense assumptions of social reality and “truth” (p. 313).

There is tremendous value to understanding language as more than a series of symbols strung together to make meaning. Language is a social practice and the discursive choices made by its participants can have a profound and lasting effect on social norms.

4.1.2 Limitations of Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus-Based Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis provides a powerful and systematic lens through which discursive strategies can be carefully examined. As Lederer (2013) explains, “the reinforcement of negative cultural and conceptual stereotypes is of primary concern in Critical Discourse Analysis” (p. 265) It is unquestionably an essential framework that has yielded important scholarship regarding discursive practices and power construction. However, it is important to note that it is not without its limitations. As Gabrielatos and Baker (2008) explain, the number and selection of texts used in CDA projects have been scrutinized and their value questioned. “CDA studies have been criticized for arbitrary selection of texts, which is seen to cast doubts on their representativeness, and the analysis of a small number of texts or text fragments, which cannot be expected to reveal helpful insights into their frequency” (Gabrielatos and Baker, 2008, p. 6). While the selection of texts for this study was targeted and purposeful, additional research with a wider or different set of texts might challenge the findings of this study. Still, CDA remains relevant as it can guide “the critical analyst to more and more explanatory investigations of how racism and inequality is embedded in language structure and use” (Lederer, 2013, p. 265).

Like CDA and any other research perspective, corpus-based study also has its limitations. In this project only ten Trump speeches were examined, but there are countless other remarks, press releases, and tweets that when

examined, could potentially yield different results. Another important limitation is that “corpus presents language out of its context” (Hunston, 2002), leaving out relevant aspects of speech including audience composition and interaction, intonation, body language and other paralinguistic features. Concordance lines certainly give us some sense of the context in which a word or lexical bundle is used, but other equally critical contextual information is simply not available. As Hunston (2002) explains “corpus can show nothing more than its own contents ... [and can] offer evidence but cannot give information.” While the frequent use of certain terms can be verified by corpora, their intended meaning cannot be similarly verified. Further, generalizations made based on corpus data are extrapolations often based on intuition, unless data points are examined rigorously through careful discourse analysis, as I attempted to do in this project. Even then, however, other information regarding context may simply not be present in speech transcriptions.

Despite its limitations, corpus-based linguistic analyses are a valuable tool. Gabrielatos and Baker (2008) explain that corpus linguistics can draw attention to areas for closer analysis that may be of significance but that might have otherwise gone overlooked, as was the case with Trump’s use of ‘we’ and ‘our’ in this study. Additionally, “corpus linguistics methodology allows for a greater degree of objectivity – that is, it enables the researcher to approach the tests (relatively) free from any preconceived notions regarding their linguistic or semantic/pragmatic content” (p. 6). As Hunston (2002) argues, corpus-based

analysis can provide concrete insight to what is happening in naturally occurring language and functions as a tool that can in many ways be more reliable than native speaker intuition is. As was established through the word lists and N-Grams queries in this project, words that might appear unremarkable on the surface may actually be powerfully loaded with meaning. That is not to say that intuition is not valuable and quite frequently correct. Corpora simply provide an additional tool that can help confirm intuition or bring to light patterns that might have otherwise been missed.

4.1.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Further research, involving larger text samples over longer periods of time may reinforce or challenge the findings in this study. Additionally, examining samples from other historical periods may shed some light on differences and similarities and on whether and how the language of “othering” has changed over time. Language is always imbued with ideology, and it is central in the production, manipulation and influence of social power relations (Fairclough, 2001). In an era during which speech that celebrates sexual assault, demonizes immigrants and ridicules people with disabilities seems to be not only socially permissible, but is openly embraced by many, it is critical that the techniques by which this language is made ‘normal’ continue to be carefully and critically examined.

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