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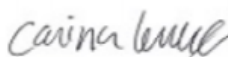
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An Emotional, Erratic Rant or a Display of Clever Linguistic Tactics?

A CDA Analysis of President Trump's 2020 Impeachment Victory Speech

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Master's Thesis, English

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Abstract

In today's modern and technologically advanced societies, the agenda of politicians is delivered largely through media coverage, which has created a relationship between journalists and politicians since they are dependent on each other to succeed in their respective fields. This is because a healthy relation between politicians and potential voters is vital to the success of the politicians, and they must therefore use media coverage to their advantage. President Donald Trump greatly utilizes the advancement in terms of mass media to communicate his personal and political agenda by only using his discourse and not through physical or legal force. This project aims to uncover and demonstrate the different linguistic tactics utilized by the President to both gain and maintain his position of power in the speech following his impeachment trial and subsequent acquittal. Furthermore, it will investigate and explain how the President uses his discourse to move the Overton window in his desired direction. A variety of theories on lexical style, negativization, normalization, the Overton window, masculine victimhood, and language and power will serve to exemplify and explain how the President's discourse functions in practice and the result thereof. The findings on the linguistics tactics employed by President Trump within the speech ultimately serve examples of how the President reacts to criticism and which specific tactics he employs to handle this criticism through the use of discourse. Meanwhile, in a larger context, the speech also serves as a perfect example of how power is exercised through language. Additionally, the findings within this project exemplifies how discourse can be used to as a powerful to manipulate less powerful individuals, and in the quest to maintain one's power, while also maintain public support.

Keywords: President Trump, CDA, discourse, language, power.

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Introduction

In a modern society, mass media comes in many forms and is available on several platforms, while serving a great purpose by providing entertainment and relying information to the general public. The media is therefore hugely influential in terms of political, social, and economic factors. The relationship between politicians and potential voters is hugely important in determining the success of any politician's career. Meanwhile, any journalist's career is dependent on being able to provide interesting content to viewers. This has therefore resulted in a symbiotic relationship between politicians and news media outlets. However, with the vast increase in access to a seemingly endless supply of news, any politician is consequently subject to public scrutiny through a sort of constant *public surveillance* contributed by various journalists. While it is the duty of journalists to relay information to the public, one must never forget or underestimate the importance of attracting viewers for news outlets to survive and thrive as a business:

The history of mass media in the last 150 years is an unusually interesting example of the interrelations of business, technology, and general culture. In the course of this history, business has become an ever more dominant influence in American culture, and technology has continuously vested greater control of the media in the hands of large private companies. (Cochran, 1975, p. 1)

Bringing viewers relevant information as well as exciting stories is thus important for any network to attract viewers, and since political scandals fulfill both criteria, those kinds of news stories are highly valuable content for networks. When a politician finds themselves amid a scandal, the media can both be their biggest enemy or best friend. While the media has the power to expose details of a scandal and thereby damage the reputation of a politician, on the hand, the

same politician can utilize media coverage to do damage control and attempt to rebuild their reputation. This scenario of a scandal exposed by the media and the subsequent use of media coverage to rebuild one's reputation serves as the core of this project. Meanwhile, the impeachment inquiry of President Donald Trump is certainly not the first time in American history where a scandal exposed by the news media has threatened to lead to the removal of a president from office.

Through U.S history, only three Presidents have been subject of an impeachment inquiry, with the first being President Andrew Johnson in 1868, when the United States House of Representatives charged him with "high crimes and misdemeanors" (Black, 2011). President Johnson was ultimately acquitted, and over 100 years would pass before another scandal almost lead to an impeachment of an American president. In June of 1972, the 37th president of the United States, Richard Nixon, was subject to public and political scrutiny in the exposing of his involvement in the so-called Watergate scandal, where the following event took place under Nixon's administration:

five men were caught breaking into the DNC headquarters at the Watergate hotel an office complex located in Washington D.C. They carried more than \$3,500, and had with them electronic equipment, including surveillance systems. (senate.gov) they were caught trying to wiretap the phones and steal classified documents. (Chouinard, 2017, p. 1)

Despite the media exposing this event to the public, Nixon was still re-elected in November of 1972. However, within the next two years of President Nixon's second term, the full implications of the scandal and Nixon's involvement in the matter became clearer, which ultimately lead to an upcoming impeachment of Nixon. However, before such an event could be arranged, Nixon

resigned from his post in August of 1974 to avoid the embarrassment of being voted guilty and removed from office (Chouinard, 2017, p. 2).

The incidents that lead to the impeachment inquiry of President Bill Clinton first became public knowledge in 1998 and has since come to be known as one of the biggest scandals of the 1990's. The media coverage of the entire ordeal was enormous, since it involved a sexual affair between President Bill Clinton, and White House intern, Monica Lewinsky. Furthermore, President Clinton was a husband and a father at the time and 24 years older than Lewinsky: "News of a possible extramarital affair between Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky during the 1995-96 period surfaced in January 1998, coming to light in the course of investigations related to Paula Jones' sexual harassment lawsuit against the President" (Miller, 1999, p. 721). Lewinsky signed and filed an affidavit, which denied any inappropriate relationship between her and President Clinton. Meanwhile, Lewinsky confided in a colleague, Linda Tripp, who secretly recorded their conversations. Tripp then turned over the tapes to attorney Kenneth Star, who instructed Tripp to wear a wire and record Lewinsky giving further details on her prior relationship with President Clinton (Miller, 1999, p. 721). Afterwards the following events took place:

What followed was a year-long expose as details of the affair gradually tumbled into the public domain. The year ended with the House voting for impeachment on December 19, 1998, and the new year began with the Senate voting not to remove Clinton on February 12, 1999. (Miller, 1999, p. 721)

Though President Clinton vehemently denied the affair for a period of time, he was later forced to admit the truth about his relations with Lewinsky. The scandal eventually led to President Clinton being accused of perjury and obstruction of justice, however, he was subsequently

acquitted of both charges (Waxman & Merrill, 2018). Though President Clinton was acquitted, it was still obvious that he had lied to, or at least misled, the public regarding his inappropriate relationship with Lewinsky. It would therefore be expected that irreparable damage had been done to his image and his popularity as president. Nevertheless, according to Miller, “at the beginning of 1998, Clinton's job approval rating hovered just above 50%. By the end of the year, it was approaching 70%, higher than at any previous time in his presidency” (1999, p. 722). Miller concludes that while the majority of voters viewed President Clinton’s actions as immoral, they also deemed the affair to be a private concern, rather than a public one (1999, p. 728). After the impeachment and acquittal, President Clinton therefore still had a large amount of support from voters, who judged him on his presidential abilities instead of his choices in terms of private relations.

The overall subject of this project is related to the newest scandal in American history, which has led to the impeachment inquiry of an American president, being President Donald Trump. Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, announced a formal impeachment investigation into President Trump on the 24th of September, 2019, and the background of the impeachment inquiry revealed itself as being both complicated and involving a large amount of people (Janowski, 2020). President Trump was suspected of having abused his power as president to pressure the Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelensky, to launch an investigation into the son of Democratic former Vice President, Joe Biden, and his alleged illegal activities. President Trump was formally charged with abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, and during the inquiry, a large amount of information surfaced, multiple witnesses were called to testify. Ultimately, President Trump was acquitted from both charges and thus officially became the third American president to face an impeachment and the second to be

acquitted (Janowski, 2020). Following the positive outcome for President Trump of the verdict on February 5th, 2020, he proceeded to give a televised victory speech from the White House the following day. This speech forms the basis of this project as the data chosen to be analyzed in detail.

Firstly, a methodology section will provide a brief presentation of the theoretical basis chosen to be applied to the speech to conduct an analysis, as well as a more detailed background in terms of the context surrounding the speech. Following this, a section on the specific theoretical approaches chosen for this project will be presented in detail.

The theories chosen for this project are chosen to create a deeper understanding of how President Trump uses his discourse in the speech in White House. For this project, the theories behind language and power by Norman Fairclough, are used, as it will bring focus to how language can be used to exert power over others, as well as to describe power relations within discourse. Along with this, the theories of lexical style and negativization are used. These theories are presented by Teun A. van Dijk and highlight the importance of word choice and how word choice can change the perception one gives, be that positive or negative. Negativization and the Overton window are also utilized, because Adam Bear, Joshua Knobe and William G. Bronston present normalization as a way to describe how normal or abnormal a given statement is. Furthermore, Josh Bolotsky presents the Overton window a tool to be used in order for a politician to change the opinion of the general public in his or her favor. Finally, the theory behind Masculine victimhood is included. The theory by Paul Elliott Johnson, refers to the strategy which a male can utilize to evoke sympathy of others, as well as the tactic of using words to show masculinity. The strategy can be used to provide the sense of a non-marginalized

group feeling marginalized and under attack from and Other. To frame this project, the overall theory of Critical Discourse analysis is presented.

A combined consideration of the context, the theoretical approach and the contents of the speech thus led to the following problem formulation:

What linguistic tactics are employed by President Trump in his speech in terms of his overall discourse to regain support from the public following the impeachment inquiry? Furthermore, how does the President use his discourse to move the Overton window and how does he portray and utilize the power structures within the American society? aim of identifying what linguistic tactics are utilized by Trump and the effects thereof.

The problem formulation will thus function as a guiding point to utilize the theoretical approaches to conduct a thorough analysis of President Trump's speech.

Following the analysis, important points and findings will be summarized in a concluding section, which aims to give a concise answer to the problem formulation based on the findings of the analysis.

Methodology Section

According to Teun A van Dijk, "Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (as qtd. in Tannen et al., 2015, p. 466). Since the aim of this project is to analyze the discourse of President Trump in a political speech, CDA has therefore been chosen as the appropriate analytical tool to achieve this purpose. Regarding which methods can be utilized to conduct a critical discourse analysis, van Dijk states the following:

One widespread misunderstanding of CDA is that it is a special method of doing discourse analysis. There is no such method: in CDA all methods of the cross-discipline of discourse studies, as well as other relevant methods in the humanities and social sciences, may be used. (as qtd. in Tannen et al., 2015, p. 466)

To conduct a thorough analysis of President Trump's speech and to present a satisfying answer to the problem formulation, a wide theoretical basis has thus been selected. The following section will therefore be split into three subsections, where the first subsection will provide further information regarding CDA as well as present the specific theories, which have been chosen as a basis for the analysis. The second subsection will introduce the data selected for this project as well as how this data has been treated prior to the analysis. The third subsection will present a timeline of the impeachment as well as background information relating to President Trump's speech to provide relevant knowledge regarding the context surrounding the speech itself.

Subsection One: Theoretical Basis

As mentioned above, the theoretical basis of this project will be within the area of discourse studies, and this subsection will aim to present the specific elements chosen as the theoretical basis for the analysis within this project, more specifically within the branch of Critical Discourse Analysis. This subsection will therefore provide knowledge regarding CDA as a general approach to the study of text and talk, and it will present the specific theoretical works chosen for this project. The aim of this section is thus to provide clarity and understanding of the reasoning behind choosing these specific theories. Finally, this subsection will include an explanation as to why CDA was chosen as the main base theory for this project, as well as an explanation as to why it is of relevance to the chosen data.

According to Paul Baker and Sibonile Ellecee (2011), CDA is “an approach to the analysis of discourse which views language as a social practice and is interested in the ways that ideologies and power relations are expressed through language” (p. 26). CDA is therefore an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse with a large focus on linguistic features as well as social relations and struggles. Regarding the importance of lexicality and context in terms of CDA, Baker and Ellecee (2011) state the following:

Unlike many other forms of linguistic analysis, CDA is not only concerned with words on a page but also involves examining social context - for example, asking how and why the words came to be written or spoken and what other texts are being referenced by them. (p. 26)

Therefore, the main focus of CDA is not merely to analyze and understand the meaning of the words, which a speaker chooses to express themselves, but rather, the focus is both on the deeper meanings of lexical choices as well as the social context within those words. Furthermore, CDA is also concerned with the larger context of how the analyzed discourse reproduces, maintains, or challenges societal power structures. According to Brian Paltridge (2012), CDA seeks to “reveal some of these ‘hidden out of sight’ values, positions and perspectives” (p. 186), which are imbedded into a speaker’s discourse. In his book, *Discourse Analysis: An Introduction* (2012), Paltridge states that the term ‘discourse analysis’ was introduced by Zellig Harris in 1952 “as a way of analyzing connected speech and writing” (p. 2). Paltridge (2012) also describes how Harris had two focus points of particular interest: “The examination of language beyond the level of the sentence and the relationship between linguistic and non-linguistic behavior” (p. 2). Furthermore, Paltridge (2012) quotes Harris as stating that language changes to adapt according to the situations in which they occur: “By ‘the relationship between linguistic and non-linguistic

behaviour' Harris means how people know, from the situation that they are in, how to interpret what someone says" (p. 2). The un-written rules of what kind of discourse is appropriate in certain situations and the general context surrounding the discourse is therefore of great importance to create an understanding of "the relationship between what is said and what is meant" (Paltridge, 2012, p. 2). In his book, *Discourse Analysis: A Resource Book for Students* (2012), Rodney H. Jones states that "in fact, nearly all communication contains some elements of meaning that are not expressed directly by the words that are spoken or written" (p. 2). Jones (2012) gives an example of that by using the question "do you have a pen?". When asking someone this, the question itself does in fact not explicitly express the intention behind the question, which is to borrow a pen. Essentially, the only thing being asked is if the person is in possession of a pen and is therefore not explicitly a request to borrow a pen (p. 2) Jones (2012) further explains that: In order to understand this question a request, the other person needs to undertake a process of 'figuring out' what you meant, a process which in this case may be largely unconscious and automatic, but which is, all the same, a process of interpretation" (p. 2). Communication between individuals is therefore subject to misunderstanding, simply because people might interpret statements differently, depending on their own context, which is affected by factors such as social background, age, gender, geographical location etc. Context is therefore highly relevant and must be taken into consideration when analyzing the hidden meanings within discourse.

CDA can be utilized to analyze a variety of different genres of discourse, however, it is important to determine genre to be able to conduct a proper analysis of any given type of discourse. Jones (2012) quotes Vijay Bhatia, who presents the definition of a genre as follows: "(A genre is) a recognizable communicative *event* characterized by a set of *communicative*

purposes identified and mutually understood by members of the community in which it occurs” (as qtd. in. Jones, 2012, p. 8). Bhatia further explains that by categorizing discourse into genre it results in constraints being enforced in terms of what is deemed appropriate conduct within each specific genre: “These constraints, however, are often *exploited by expert members* of the discourse community to achieve private intentions within the framework of the socially recognized purpose(s)” (as qtd. in. Jones, 2012, p. 8). Speakers can therefore utilize the unwritten rules of what constitutes appropriate discourse and personal conduct within specific genres of discourse to promote their personal agenda.

By analyzing a political speech using CDA, a great deal can be uncovered about the speaker’s ideology and agenda, as well as how the speaker’s discourse portrays, establishes, and reinforces societal power relations. To execute such an analysis, a theoretical base must be chosen from various suitable theories. The following section will therefore present the specific theories chosen to conduct the analysis of President Trump’s speech for this project, which include a variety of theoretical works. By presenting these theories, the general aim is to expand upon certain genres within critical discourse analysis to provide a theoretical structure, which can be applied as a basis for an in-depth analysis. Each individual theory has been chosen because of its potential to utilize as a tool in understanding every linguistic part of President Trump’s speech, and the context surrounding the President as an individual, the speech, and the intended audience to the speech itself.

The works of Teun A. van Dijk (1991) has been chosen as the theoretical basis for the terms ‘lexical style’ and ‘negativization’. Lexical style refers to the specific word choices a speaker makes and the consequences thereof in terms of the underlying meanings imbedded within certain words. Furthermore, personal context and the context surrounding specific

discourse affects the underlying meanings within a speaker's lexical choices. Negativization most often occurs through lexical choices and relates to both explicit and implicit expressions of negative opinions and attitudes. The act of negativization can thus occur on a subconscious level or deliberately to enforce one's own agenda. *Lexical style* has been chosen as a tool to analyze President Trump's speech, because it can assist in uncovering the meanings behind specific word choices. Analyzing specific lexical choices and the use of negativization can thus uncover a great deal about the speaker's ideology and agenda.

The act of *normalization* within discourse can be a powerful tool for any political figure to promote their personal and political agenda. On the other hand, identifying discursive acts of normalization can therefore uncover the intentions of a politician. An article by Adam Bear and Joshua Knobe (2016) concerning *normality* has therefore been chosen to present how normalization functions within discourse. Furthermore, William G. Bronston's contribution in *The Mentally Retarded Child and His Family: A Multidisciplinary Handbook* (Koch and Dobson, 1971) describes how the act of normalization can be used in an attempt to change public opinion in the desired direction of the speaker utilizing normalization tactics. Additionally, the act of normalization emerges as part of the theoretical phenomenon being *the Overton window*. To provide a description of how the Overton window functions in practice, the contribution by Josh Bolotsky in Andrew Boyd's 2012 book, *Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution*, has been quoted. The Overton window thus functions as a description of how public opinion can be swayed in terms of what is considered as appropriate political conduct. By using the theory of the Overton window to analyze President Trump's speech, it can reveal what linguistic tactics are utilized to promote his agenda as well as how it affects current societal power relations.

Paul Elliott Johnson's 2017 article, *Demagoguery*, was chosen as a theoretical basis of the reasoning behind the effects of President Trump's use of demagoguery as a manipulative, rhetorical tool. Johnson argues and exemplifies how President Trump utilized the act of demagoguery within his discourse during his campaign for the 2016 presidential election, which he was ultimately successful in. Through demagoguery, President Trump is able to appeal to the voters' emotions and prejudices, instead of relying on a discourse based on logic and rationality. Meanwhile, Johnson also argues that President Trump creates a sense of victimhood between him and potential voters as a direct result of the former administration's political actions. In general, Johnson demonstrates how President Trump's demagoguery proclaim the assumption that the American political system is broken, that the American people are victims of this broken system, and that he is the solution to this problem, because he is a strong, male leader. In this project, Johnson's description of what characteristics constitute *demagoguery* will be utilized in the analysis of President Trump's speech. The analysis will thus investigate how President Trump conveys demagoguery in his victory speech, while contemplating the reasoning behind these choices as well as their impact.

Norman Fairclough's 1989 book, *Language and Power*, has been chosen as a theoretical account of the power within discourse, as well as the power *behind* discourse. Fairclough's work reveals theories regarding how discourse aids in the production, maintenance, and potential altering of social relations of power, how discourse can assist in changing the existing social reality and relations, and the importance of incorporating the larger context surrounding a specific discourse to understand the underlying meanings behind the discourse. Furthermore, Fairclough explains how power can be exercised through coercion or consent, as well as how power can be exercised with consent through political discourse. Part of Fairclough's 1989

theoretical works on CDA has therefore been chosen as an explanation of the larger context and consequences that occur through the use of political discourse.

In the book, *Language and Power* (1989), Fairclough also includes a ten-question model, accompanied by a collection of sub-questions, which can be used as a basic guide when conducting a CDA analysis. This model has been chosen as part of the theoretical approach to present a theoretical basis of how to conduct a CDA analysis. Furthermore, other methods within the frame of discourse studies can be easily be added in addition to the contents of the model. The analysis will not seek to answer each question from the model, however, it will instead function in the manner that Fairclough suggested it be used, meaning as a general framework to conduct a CDA analysis.

Subsection Two: Data and Data Treatment

The media as an industry plays a large role in delivering news to the general public, and ever since the First Amendment established freedom of the press within the American democracy, news outlets hold a great deal of power regarding the political process in America. Because voters need information to decide which political candidates they should vote for during elections, the media is responsible for supplying that information through their coverage. While it is the duty of news media franchises to provide information to the public, political figures can thus utilize this duty to improve their personal image and promote their political agenda to gain support from voters. Maintaining a respectable personal image and a good relationship with voters is crucial to the success of a politician's career. On the other hand, having a poor relation to voters and an unfavorable image can be detrimental to a political career, which happened to be the case during the Watergate scandal. However, as seen with the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal, it is possible for a politician to earn back trust from the voters and repair the relations between them

as well as restore their personal and political image. Meanwhile, the media coverage of such scandals is of great importance, because without the existence of the free press, these scandals might never see the light of day as information available to the public. While media coverage can thus hurt the image and support of a politician, on the other hand, the same politician can then utilize media coverage as a means to exercise firstly damage control and then to slowly rebuild trust and a respectable image.

The data chosen for this project is an example of how a politician, in this case the current President of the United States of America, can utilize media coverage to their own advantage in the wake of a scandal. The data consists of President Trump's victory speech, which was delivered at the White House on February 6th, 2020. The speech took place after the end of the impeachment inquiry, which was launched by the Democratic Party on September 24th, 2019, by Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi. Since President Trump was acquitted, he seizes this press conference as an opportunity to give a speech, which promotes his personal agenda, criticizes his opponents, and presents a narrative of the entire ordeal favorable to his own advantage. Further context surrounding the speech and a timeline will be provided in the next subsection.

Video clips of the entire speech is available on several online platforms, and the video clip used for the analysis for this project was found on the YouTube channel of Fox Business. The video clip is an hour and five minutes long and was originally livestreamed on the 6th of February 2020 and is currently available to re-watch on their channel. The video clip is unedited and shown in its entirety without additional commentary. To analyze the speech using principles of CDA, a transcription of the speech itself was conducted in accordance with CDA requirements. Since the analysis is to be conducted using theoretical elements, which examine

what is being said and not on *how* it is being said, the transcription provides a written account of all spoken discourse within the speech. The transcription therefore excludes descriptions and observations regarding body language, tone of voice, facial expressions etc. To conduct a thorough critical discourse analysis, the context of the speech and President Trump is important to consider and will therefore be provided in the following subsection. The transcript will be utilized to conduct the analysis in this project by applying the theoretical approaches to the content of the transcription. The transcription will be included as an appendix to this project (Appendix A).

Subsection Three: Context and Timeline

Since context is important when conducting a critical discourse analysis, this section will aim to provide background knowledge as to why the speech was given in the first place. An account of the impeachment inquiry and its timeline will thus be presented in more detail. What led up to the impeachment began when former Vice President Joe Biden's son, Hunter Biden, joined the board of a Ukrainian oil and gas company called *Burisma Holdings* in 2014 (Janowski, 2020). In August of 2019, a letter was sent to Richard Burr, the senator from North Carolina, and Adam Schiff, the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee. While the author of the letter remained anonymous, it expressed an "urgent concern" ("Read the whistleblower complaint regarding President Trump's communications with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky", 2019) regarding the 45th President of the United States and his dealings concerning the presidential election in 2016 and the upcoming 2020 election. Among other things, the letter stated the following:

In the course of my official duties, I have received information from multiple U.S Government officials that the President of the United States is using the power of his

office to solicit interference from a foreign country in the 2020 U.S election. This interference includes, among other things, pressuring a foreign country to investigate one of the President's main domestic political rivals. ("Read the whistleblower ... ", 2019)

The opponent mentioned in the complaint is former Vice President and current Democratic presidential candidate, Joe Biden, and the foreign country, which is referred to as being pressured by the President, is Ukraine. The so-called pressuring is alleged to have occurred verbally during a phone call between the American President, Donald Trump, and the Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelensky. The call occurred on July 25th, 2019 and revolved around the relationship between the two countries. The whistleblower complaint states that "after an initial exchange of pleasantries, the President used the remainder of the call to advance his personal interests" ("Read the whistleblower ... ", 2019). The complaint then further explains how the President had overstepped his boundaries specifically by asking the Ukrainian President Zelensky to "initiate or continue an investigation into the activities of former Vice President, Joseph Biden and his son, Hunter Biden("Read the whistleblower ... ", 2019). Furthermore, the complaint stated that President Trump allegedly pressured President Zelensky to complete the following task:

Assist in purportedly uncovering that allegations of Russian interference in the 2016 U.S presidential election originated in Ukraine, with a specific request that the Ukrainian leader locate and turn over servers used by the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and examined by the U.S cyber security firm CrowdStrike, which initially reported that Russian hackers had penetrated the DNC's networks in 2016. ("Read the whistleblower ... ", 2019)

According to the whistleblower's information, President Trump abused his position as president to pressure Ukraine into launching an investigation into the Bidens as well as other tasks, which would be in exchange for aid promised to Ukraine following the crisis between Ukraine and Russia ("Read the whistleblower ... ", 2019). The complaint included the following point of view on the matter:

I am deeply concerned that the actions described below constitute 'a serious or flagrant problem, abuse, or violation of law or Executive Order' that 'does not include differences of opinions concerning public policy matters,' consistent with the definition of an 'urgent concern' in 50 U.S.C §3033(k)(5)(G). ("Read the whistleblower ... ", 2019)

The whistleblower's concerns were received with admission from the President's lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, who, during an interview on CNN, initially denied the allegation of asking Ukraine to initiate an investigation of the Bidens. However, just a few seconds later he contradicted himself on that statement by blatantly admitting that he did (LeBlanc, 2019). Following this incident, The White House released a transcript of the telephone conversation between President Trump and President Zelensky. Prior to the release of the transcript, entitled *MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION*, the document itself had been classified. The content of the transcript revealed that President Trump had asked the Ukrainian President the following:

The other thing, there's a lot of talk about Biden's son, that Biden stopped the prosecution and a lot of people want to find out about that so whatever you can do with the Attorney General would be great. Biden went around bragging that he stopped the prosecution so if you can look into it ... It sounds horrible to me.

("MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION", 2019)

The reason why President Trump asked the Ukrainian President to investigate the Bidens was because President Trump presumed that the Bidens were behind getting Ukrainian prosecutor, Viktor Shokin, fired “in order to thwart an investigation into a company tied to his son, Hunter Biden” (Subramanian, 2019). However, the reason for Shokin’s departure is said to be the opposite reason: “It wasn't because Shokin was investigating a natural gas company tied to Biden's son; it was because Shokin wasn't pursuing corruption among the country's politicians” (Subramanian, 2019). It was therefore assumed that President Trump asked the President of Ukraine to investigate Joe Biden to damage Biden’s chances in the 2020 presidential election. The allegation of such actions was thus the subject of the impeachment inquiry against President Trump.

Following the release of the whistleblower complaint and the transcript of the telephone conversation between President Trump and President Zelensky, President Trump was attending a private event in New York and was quoted by media outlets as stating the following regarding his opinion on the anonymous whistleblower and their actions:

Basically, that person never saw the report, never saw the call, he never saw the call — heard something and decided that he or she, or whoever the hell they saw — they’re almost a spy. I want to know who’s the person, who’s the person who gave the whistleblower the information? Because that’s close to a spy. You know what we used to do in the old days when we were smart? Right? The spies and treason, we used to handle it a little differently than we do now. (Ayesh, 2019)

Since this statement contains an implicit threat against the whistleblower, it could potentially be damning for President Trump. Meanwhile, the statement also proves that the whistleblower decision to come forward was justifiable, since President Trump blatantly admitted to the call

taking place. The impeachment inquiry was therefore launched since President Trump essentially had admitted to acquiring the help of a foreign country to defeat Joe Biden as his opponent in the 2020 presidential election.

The impeachment inquiry against President Trump had high stakes for the President and for the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party aimed to present enough damning evidence against the President to prove that he in fact did abuse his position of power to damage the reputation of his opponent, Joe Biden. After a vote in the House of Representatives, which is primarily held by Democrats, President Trump was officially charged with “abuse of power and obstruction of Congress” (Panetta, 2020). During the vote for each count, “the full House of Representatives voted to pass the abuse of power article by a vote of 230 to 197 to 1 and the obstruction of Congress article by a vote of 229 to 198 to 1” (Panetta, 2020). This moved the trial to a vote in the United States Senate, which consists of 101 members. For the impeachment to pass and subsequently have President Trump removed from office, two thirds of the members would need to vote to impeach. However, it is important to note that majority of the Senate seats are held by Republicans, while two seats are occupied by independents. The Democrats hoped to sway these two independent members in favor of an impeachment, but all Republican members ultimately voted against an impeachment along with three Democrats. This resulted in the acquittal of both charges made against President Trump (White & Kindred, 2020). The following night, February 6th, 2020, President Trump gave his victory speech live on air, which has become the focus point of the analysis in this project.

Theoretical Approach

As mentioned earlier, every politician depends greatly on support from the public, who can vote for them, and a solid relation to these voters is therefore of huge importance. Therefore,

the success a politician's entire career is hugely reliant on the support from voters, and a politician must therefore use their actions and discourse as an aid in appearing as trustworthy and efficient in terms of political actions and accomplishments. Through their discourse it is vital that politicians manage to deliver their opinions on topics and their proposed agenda as clear and precisely as possible to resonate with the audience, who are possible voters. However, their discourse can also be utilized to challenge or criticize their opponents, which can be done effectively both in an implicit or explicit manner. Furthermore, politicians can also use their discourse to divert attention away from topics or questions, which do not frame themselves or their political abilities in a positive manner. While a society ruled by dictatorship relies mostly on forceful or even violent actions, whereas in a society governed by democracy, a politician's strongest tool is indeed their discourse.

While modern advances in technology now afford any politician to use social media platforms as a means to communicate to and with the general public, the news media still plays a large role in the communication between politicians and the public. The news media as an industry consistently delivers a variety of news to the general public through print media, broadcast news and online, and they also play a large role as a mediator between politicians and the public. Journalists thus provide political information to voters, and politicians can strengthen their relations to the voters through news media outlets. For politicians, this task is accomplished through interviews with media outlets and through media broadcasting of speeches and other political events. Political speeches are therefore considered a specific type of genre within discourse analysis, and through analysis a great deal can be uncovered about the ideology and agenda of the politician, who gave the speech.

By analyzing a political speech using critical discourse analysis, a great deal can be uncovered about the speaker's ideology and agenda, as well as how the speaker's discourse portrays, establishes, and reinforces societal power relations. To execute such an analysis, a theoretical base must be chosen from various suitable theories. The following section will therefore present the specific theories chosen to conduct the analysis of President Trump's speech for this project, which include a variety of theoretical works by Adam Bear and Joshua Knobe, Andrew Boyd, Norman Fairclough, and Teun A. van Dijk. By presenting these theories, the general aim is to expand upon certain genres within critical discourse analysis to provide a theoretical structure, which can be applied as a basis for an in-depth analysis. Each individual theory has been chosen because of its potential to utilize as a tool in understanding every linguistic part of President Trump's speech, and the context surrounding the President as an individual, the speech, and the intended audience to the speech itself.

Lexical Style and Negativization

A key part of conducting a critical discourse analysis is understanding language and the hidden or implied meanings imbedded within a speaker's lexical choices. Therefore, a successful manner of communication can be difficult to achieve since certain statements and questions can have an underlying meaning. Such statements can be universally agreed upon as having a specific underlying meaning, as in the example mentioned above. If a person asks you if you have a pen, it is universally agreed upon that the question implies that the person is actually asking to borrow your pen, if you have one to loan them. The intended meaning of the question does therefore not align with the literal meaning of the question. To avoid confusion, one might alter the question and explicitly ask: "Do you have a pen I can borrow?". By making a slight change in terms of lexical choices, one can thus avoid any confusion by choosing to be more

direct with one's discourse. This simple example highlights the importance of understanding the underlying meanings within lexical choices. Therefore, to ensure a successful form of communication, it is thus vital that all participants are on the same page regarding their individual understanding of the underlying messages and meanings of other participants' lexical choices and overall discourse (Jones, 2012, p. 2-3).

Since different words carry different meanings in different contexts, the act of choosing one word over another to use in a sentence can result in changing the entire meaning of the statement. While lexical style is essentially a unique feature of any individual, several factors can influence an individual's perception of the underlying meanings imbedded within lexical choices. A person's individual style is determined by a variety of different elements, which can all affect how an individual speaks and which words they would favor in different situations. These factors are usually impacted by the environment where an individual has grown up or lived for a longer period, as well as the people they have been surrounded and influenced by. Furthermore, a person's lexical style can also change to accommodate implicit or explicit guidelines for what is considered proper speech in specific situations or when communicating with certain people. This phenomenon of changing one's speech according to specific circumstances can occur both knowingly and on a subconscious level.

According to Teun A. van Dijk, in journalism, lexical style is "the most obvious aspect of the study of 'formulation' in race reporting" (1991, p. 210), meaning the choice of words used by a journalist when reporting about an incident are crucial to how an audience will perceive the event based on the journalist's discourse. This occurs because a journalist's lexical style does not simply result in a stating of facts, but because it reflects personal opinions on the matters

discussed. On the topic of how personal opinion of an individual is reflected in their discourse, van Dijk states the following:

This selection may vary with the text genre as well as with the opinions, the social situation, group membership, or culture of the writer. The use of “thug” rather than “demonstrator” signals different underlying opinions about the people referred to. That is, a journalist may choose between these two variants (and many others) to refer to the same person or group member, and this choice is controlled by socially shared opinions, attitudes, and ideologies. (1991, p. 210)

A journalist can therefore deliberately use lexical choices, which have well known underlying meanings, to knowingly inflect a specific notion on a story. As an example, a journalist can choose to describe someone convicted of several murders by the word ‘serial killer’ instead of ‘convicted felon’ or simply by their birth name. Thereby, their personal opinion on the story is thus instantly inflected by using a negatively loaded word instead of a more neutral lexical option. However, these personal reflections regarding lexical choices are not always expressed deliberately, but the outcome in terms of the perception of a statement will remain the same either way.

According to van Dijk, the term ‘negativization’ describes the obvious or underlying negative opinions and attitudes expressed through certain choices in terms of lexical style. As an example of negativization in political journalism, van Dijk states that: “Whereas the liberal Press generally avoids making irrelevant references to the ethnic background of crime suspects, the rightwing Press often identifies them as “black” (1991, p. 212). This is an example of negativization, which relies on the negative associations of black Americans being more prone to criminality. Therefore, if the mention of race in this instance is truly irrelevant, the mentioning of

race results in a negativization of how black Americans are perceived. Regarding mentions of race in reporting, van Dijk further states that, “more generally, the irrelevant use of identifications of ethnic background in the right-wing Press is associated with negative opinions about the news actors” (1991, p. 212).

As has now been established, words are very powerful and can be used to express many different opinions whether intentionally or subconsciously. Negativization can thus easily occur accidentally or subconsciously, but it can also happen intentionally to project one’s personal opinion or as part of a larger scheme to promote a specific agenda. This is especially true within the world of politics, where politicians can use the act of negativization as a powerful tool to promote their own agenda.

Normalization and The Overton Window

In the 2016 article, *Normality: Part Descriptive, Part Prescriptive*, Adam Bear and Joshua Knobe state that “people often distinguish between the things they regard as normal and those they regard as abnormal” (p. 1). While this statement might seem to describe a simple human procedure of deciding between one or the other, the actual distinction between what is considered normal or abnormal is complex and subject to change. Bear and Knobe thus pose the question: “How is it that people come to regard certain things as normal and others as abnormal?” (2016, p. 1). One example of how a perception can be changed from abnormal to normal can occur through the process of *normalization*. In their book, *The Mentally Retarded Child and His Family: A Multidisciplinary Handbook* (1971), Richard Koch and James Dobson quote William G. Bronston, who describes normalization as a process whereby individuals “dislodge some of the prejudices and biases that both we and the general society at large hold” (p. 492). Furthermore, Bronston describes normalization as a “*powerful organizing tool*” (1991,

p. 492), meaning the act of normalization can be used to steer human beings in a specific direction. As an example, in terms of politics, the act of normalization can be applied to the idea of certain concepts, a specific pattern in lexical choices, changes in the law, changes in terms of leadership style, etc. Normalization can thus occur in many forms and can be a powerful tool for a politician to promote their personal agenda.

The act of normalization also occurs within the phenomenon of what is referred to as *the Overton window*. The model of the Overton window is described in further detail in the 2012 book *Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution* (Boyd). In a chapter, written by Josh Bolotsky, he describes the Overton window as “the limit of what is considered reasonable or acceptable within a range of public policy options” (as qtd. in Boyd, 2012, p. 200). The phenomenon was originally coined by and named after Joseph P. Overton and is intended to explain how policies and opinions are acceptable within a certain range, yet are all subject to change, which is achieved by moving the window (Astor, 2019). Bolotsky explains how “various policy options available on a given issue can be roughly plotted on a spectrum of public acceptability, from unthinkable, to fringe, to acceptable, to common sense, to policy” (as qtd. in Boyd, 2012, p. 200). Furthermore, Bolotsky describes how it is possible to shift the Overton Window from left to right, meaning it is possible to shift public opinion in either direction in terms of what is considered normal and what is considered abnormal (Boyd, 2012, p. 200). According to Bolotsky, there are two ways in which it is possible to shift The Overton Window, which is either the long and hard way or the short and easy way (Boyd, 2012, p. 200). As for the long and hard way’, Bolotsky explains that the window is thus shifted over time by a politician, who accurately and consistently explain his or her opinion on a certain topic to the public until it eventually becomes regarded as accepted. According to Bolotsky, this can occur either “due to

the strength of your rhetoric or a long-term shift in societal values” (as qtd. in Boyd, 2012, p. 200). Regarding the ‘short and easy way’ to shift The Overton Window, Bolotsky claims that it can be accomplished by stating what will be considered an extreme opinion as well as another opinion, which would still be considered abnormal, but in comparison will not seem as extreme as the first statement. While this tactic is drastic, it also gives more immediate results. Nevertheless, it should be noted that there are limits to what outrageous statements can be used to successfully move the window in the desired direction. According to Bolotsky, it is therefore important to still tread carefully when utilizing this tactic: “Not all radical positions are effective in shifting the Overton window ... Ideally, the position you promote should carry logical and moral force, and must include some common ground with your own position” (as qtd. in Boyd, 2012, p. 201). Furthermore, Bolotsky explains that if the stated opinions are not proportional, it could lead to backlash and in turn move the Overton Window in the opposite direction of what was originally intended (Boyd, 2012, p. 201).

Masculine Victimhood

In his article, *The Art of Masculine Victimhood: Donald Trump* (2017), Paul Elliott Johnson examines President Trump’s displays of demagoguery within his rhetoric during his campaign for the 2016 presidential election: “Instead of assuming a gap between rhetoric and politics, I return to demagoguery to shed light on Trump’s persuasive capacities and explain how they threaten liberal democracy” (2017, p. 230). Johnson argues that President Trump used demagoguery within his discourse, which appeals to the public’s emotions and prejudices rather than depending on logic and rationality.

Johnson quotes Jack Shafer on referring to President Trump as “the standard American demagogue” (2017, p. 230), meaning an individual that “relies on anger and resentment to attract

supporters” (2017, p. 230). According to Johnson and Shafer, President Trump’s discourse “reduces all politics and policy to single irrefutable talking points in order to attack the establishment” (2017, p. 229). Furthermore, Johnson also argues that President Trump’s discourse results in a sense of victimhood for him and his supporters, who have been ‘betrayed’ by the administration:

I argue that Trump’s rhetorical form functions through a toxic, paradoxically abject masculine style whose incoherence is opaque to his critics but meaningful to his adherents, for it helps them imagine themselves as victims of a political tragedy centered around the displacement of “real America” from the political center by a feminized political establishment. (2017, p. 230)

Through his discourse, President Trump thereby walks a fine line between projecting a masculine image of a strong and capable leader, while simultaneously gathering support from voters by creating and playing on a shared sense of victimization: “Demagogues encourage audiences to self-identify as victims on the basis of felt precarity, encouraging the well-off and privileged to adopt the mantle of victimhood at the expense of those who occupy more objectively fraught positions” (2017, p. 230). Through rhetorical displays of demagoguery, President Trump manages to create a distinct division between himself and his opponents. A so-called ‘us vs. them’ mentality is thus created, which strengthens the emotional bond between President Trump and his voters. Johnson refers to this consequence of demagoguery as “polarizing propaganda that motivates members of an in-group to hate and scapegoat some outgroup(s), largely by promising certainty, stability, and ... an ‘escape from freedom’” (2017, p. 231). President Trump therefore often displays hostility towards certain topics and various groupings of individuals, who share a common trait. Additionally, Johnson also argues that

President Trump displays demagoguery through often criticizing women, which results in strengthening the illusion of himself as the ultimate, strong, male leader: “He also critiques national public reason as feminized, lacking judgment and decisiveness. Men, on the other hand, know and act, even in the face of disagreement. The more America is uncertain—and feminine—the more it loses” (Johnson, 2017, p. 240).

The demagoguery imbedded into President Trump’s lexical choices and overall discourse illustrates the entire American administration and economy as broken, which invokes a fear of precarity for potential voters: “Trump’s demagoguery diverges stylistically from past efforts to the extent that he manufactures precarity by hyperbolically figuring the nation itself as weak and powerless” (Johnson, 2017, p. 238). By presenting his account of what constitutes America’s biggest problems, President Trump is then able to present himself as the only solution and only he can *Make America Great Again*: “Rather than defending a way of life, Trump claims a way of life has been destroyed and vanquished” (Johnson, 2017, p. 238).

Language and Power

Language is a powerful tool in the art of persuasion and in the quest to obtain and maintain power, and CDA is concerned with exploring how power is exercised through language. In his 1989 book, *Language and Power*, Norman Fairclough debates not only the power in discourse, but also the power *behind* discourse. In his 2014 reflection paper on the book, written 25 years from when the book was originally published, Fairclough explains how CDA “combines critique of discourse and explanation of how it figures within and contributes to the existing social reality, as a basis for action to change that existing reality in particular respects” (p. 4). Fairclough subscribes to the belief that language must be viewed “as a form of social practice (1989, p. 20), and he also explains the importance of understanding that there are

relations between discourse and “other social elements such as power relations, ideologies, economic and political strategies and policies” (p.4).

As one of two main purposes of the book, Fairclough explores and explains “the significance of language in the production, maintenance, and change of social relations of power” (1989, p. 1). As for the second purpose of the book, Fairclough seeks to “increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others” (1989, p. 1). Furthermore, Fairclough states that the book will focus on the concept of so-called 'common-sense' assumptions “which are implicit in the conventions according to which people interact linguistically, and of which people are generally not consciously aware” (1989, p. 2). Fairclough thus explains how these common-sense assumptions are ideologies which are subconsciously embedded in everyone’s use of and understanding of discourse. Additionally, Fairclough clarifies how the concept of ideology maintains a large part in the power achieved through discourse: “Ideologies are closely linked to power, because the nature of the ideological assumptions embedded in particular conventions, and so the nature of those conventions themselves, depends on the power relations which underlie the conventions” (1989, p. 2). Fairclough further explains that the understanding and acceptance of different ideologies often occurs on an unconscious level, meaning “they are a means of legitimizing existing social relations and differences of power, simply through the recurrence of ordinary, familiar ways of behaving which take these relations and power differences for granted” (1989, p. 2). Lastly, Fairclough asserts the important links between language, power, and ideology by explaining how “ideologies are closely linked to language, because using language is the commonest form of social behaviour, and the form of social behaviour where we rely most on 'common-sense' assumptions” (1989, p. 2).

Fairclough states that social structures determine a society's use of and understanding of discourse: "The way in which orders of discourse are structured, and the ideologies which they embody, are determined by relationships of power in particular social institutions, and in the society as a whole" (1989, p. 31). In regards to a modern, capitalist society, Fairclough believes in the existence of a class system, which divides citizens into groups dependent upon their social and economic status: "The relationship between social classes starts in economic production, but extends to all parts of a society" (1989, p. 32). However, according to Fairclough, "power relations are not reducible to class relations" (1989, p. 34), since power relations also occur in a variety of situations and between various groupings of individuals. While Fairclough does acknowledge this fact, he does establish that, according to his belief, class relations are the most significant in regards to power relations:

I shall regard class relations as having a more fundamental status than others, and as setting the broad parameters within which others are constrained to develop, parameters which are broad enough to allow many options which are narrowed down by determinants autonomous to the particular relation at issue. (1989, p. 34)

Regarding the power structure developed on the basis of class relations in a capitalist society, Fairclough explains how he assumes that "the state is the key element in maintaining the dominance of the capitalist class, and controlling the working class" (1989, pp. 32-33). However, he also emphasizes that it is not only the upper class and the state, who actively or subconsciously assist in maintaining this form of political power structure: "A whole range of social institutions such as education, the law, religions, the media, and indeed the family, collectively and cumulatively ensure the continuing dominance of the capitalist class" (1989, p. 33). To expand on this statement, Fairclough explains how the interest in economic gain plays a

large part in the upholding of a societal structure based on a capitalism, but also maintains that ideology is an even more important factor. Fairclough describes this form of ideology as “institutional practices which people draw upon without thinking often embody assumptions which directly or indirectly legitimize existing power relations” (1989, p. 33). The use of ideological power in practice and in discourse thus results in the sustaining of unequal power relations: “Ideological power, the power to project one's practices as universal and 'common sense', is a significant complement to economic and political power, and of particular significance here because it is exercised in discourse” (1989, p. 33).

The relation between a high-ranking politician and an average citizen is an example of an extremely unequal power relation, which the politician can greatly utilize within their discourse when promoting their personal political ideologies and proposals. In terms of the use of power within political discourse, Fairclough explains how a political leader can effectively attempt to gain the support of voters, by portraying adversary entities as *one single enemy*, rather than several enemies. The political leader will thereby prevent division in the public's attention, thus resulting in a more efficient divide between friend and foe: “The more uniformly the fighting will of a people is put into action, the greater will be the magnetic force of the movement and the more powerful the impetus of the blow” (1989, p. 86).

Fairclough states that there are two approaches for those in control of the power to exercise and maintain their power, being coercion or consent: “Through coercing others to go along with them, with the ultimate sanctions of physical violence or death; or through winning others' consent to, or at least acquiescence in, their possession and exercise of power” (1989, p. 33). Fairclough explains that while a state can choose to utilize repressive forms in terms of exercising their power, “any ruling class finds it less costly and less risky to rule if possible by

consent” (1989, pp. 33-34). Since “ideology is the key mechanism of rule by consent, and because it is the favoured vehicle of ideology” (1989, p. 34), discourse thus is of large significance in this context. Expanding upon the importance of discourse in terms of settling power struggles, Fairclough explains that social structures and discourse are not a one-sided construction. In fact, they are both impacted by each other and discourse is therefore of great importance in establishing, maintaining and changing power relations: “Control over orders of discourse by institutional and societal power-holders is one factor in the maintenance of their power” (1989, p. 37). Since the governments in modern, capitalist societies usually stray away from exercising their power through coercion, politicians must rely mostly upon utilizing their discourse to maintain their political power: “Power in discourse is to do with powerful participants *controlling and constraining the contributions of non-powerful participants*” (1989, p. 46).

As Fairclough states, more powerful participants can utilize their power position to put certain constraints on the lesser powerful participants in order to control them. Fairclough suggests three aspects of discourse, which such constraints can be applied to: “*Contents*: on what is said or done; *Relations*: the ‘social relations’ people enter into in discourse; *Subjects*: or the ‘subject positions’ people can occupy” (1989, p. 46). However, the constraints being put on the less powerful participant are usually not directly implied, “rather, the constraints derive from the conventions of the discourse type which is being drawn upon” (1989, p. 47). When the most powerful participant in an unequal power relation utilizes their power to put constraints on the discourse implicitly the encounter becomes an example of hidden power.

According to Fairclough, another example of hidden power occurs when participants are separated in place and time. This occurs in terms of written discourse, but also within the broad

spectrum of mass media: “Mass-media discourse is interesting because the nature or the power relations enacted in it is often not clear, and there are reasons for seeing it as involving *hidden* relations of power” (1989, p. 49). When discourse occurs through media, the face-to-face aspect of an encounter is lost. According to Fairclough, “in face-to-face interaction, participants alternate between being the producers and the interpreters of text, but in media discourse, as well as generally in writing, there is a sharp divide between producers and interpreters” (1989, p. 49). The person communicating their agenda through mass media thus solely has the role of the producer and is therefore in a powerful position. However, because the discourse is one-sided, the producer cannot react to feedback from other participants and must therefore beforehand choose what target audience their discourse addresses: “Since all discourse producers must produce with some interpreters in mind, what media producers do is address an *ideal subject*, be it viewer, or listener, or reader” (1989, p. 49). Discourse through mass media is thus another example of an unequal power relation since the producer of the discourse has the full power to decide how to express themselves, what information to include or exclude, and how to present facts.

Another element of the hidden power within discourse is the act of *standardization*, meaning the process “whereby a particular social dialect comes to be elevated into what is often called a standard or even 'national' language” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 56). According to James Milroy, “the process of standardization works by promoting invariance or uniformity in language structure” (2001, p. 531). Language standardization thus refers to the process whereby the universal form of a language is established and maintained through economic, political, and cultural influences. According to Milroy, an imperative consequence of standardization is the development of a common sense in terms of what is considered the correct form of a language:

“In what I have above called standard-language cultures, virtually everyone subscribes to the ideology of the standard language, and one aspect of this is a firm belief in correctness (2001, p. 535). In terms of common sense, Milroy maintains that one should not underestimate the power of appealing to common sense. Finally, Milroy states that the goal of standardization was previously assumed to be making literature widely available to the public. However, in modern times, Milroy argues that “the immediate goals of the process are not literary, but economic, commercial and political (2001, p. 535). Fairclough shares the same belief, since he states that “we ought to see standardization as a part of a much wider process of economic, political and cultural unification” (1989, p. 56). According to Fairclough, the standardization of a language is greatly tied to the pursuit of economic success, since such an accomplishment calls for clear communication between parties. Regarding the influence of the English language, Fairclough notes that with time and through colonization and globalization, the English language has steadily claimed its place as a widely known and accepted, and thus, powerful language:

By coming to be associated with the most salient and powerful institutions - literature, Government and administration, law, religion, education, etc. - standard English began to emerge as the language of political and cultural power, and as the language of the politically and culturally powerful. (1989, p. 56)

Fairclough’s Ten Question Model

As has been described above, CDA has been heavily influenced by the works of Norman Fairclough, who discussed CDA as containing three levels: “description of text, interpretation of the relationship between text and interaction, and explanation of the relationship between interaction and social context” (1989, p. 109). As part of the initial level, being description, Fairclough included a ten-question model in the book *Language and Power* (1989), which can be

utilized as a tool in analyzing any text. The ten questions are accompanied by extra sub-questions and according to Fairclough, the aim is to “make it relatively easy for readers to assimilate and use the framework” (1989, p. 110). The questions are thus meant to be used as a framework of basic elements for in critical discourse analysis: “The set of textual features included is highly selective, containing only those which tend to be most significant for critical analysis” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 110). However, Fairclough notes that these questions are meant to be “a guide and not a blueprint” (1989, p. 110), meaning the questions are meant to be utilized in a suitable manner according to the context being analyzed. As mentioned above, the list is comprised of the ten main questions and some sub-questions, and it has been divided into three main sections, being: *Vocabulary, Grammar and Textual structures*:

A: Vocabulary

1. What *experiential* values do words have?
What classification schemes are drawn upon?
Are there words which are ideologically contested?
Is there *rewording* or *overwording*?
What ideologically significant meaning relations (*synonymy, hyponymy, antonymy*) are there between words?
2. What *relational* values do words have?
Are there euphemistic expressions?
Are there markedly formal or informal words?
3. What *expressive* values do words have?
4. What metaphors are used?

B: Grammar

5. What experiential values do grammatical features have?

What types of *process* and *participant* predominate?

Is agency unclear?

Are processes what they seem?

Are *nominalizations* used?

Are sentences active or passive?

Are sentences positive or negative?

6. What relational values do grammatical features have?

What *modes* (*declarative, grammatical question, imperative*) are used?

Are there important features of *relational modality*?

Are the pronouns *we* and *you* used, and if so, how?

7. What expressive values do grammatical features have?

Are there important features of *expressive modality*?

8. How are (simple) sentences linked together?

What logical connectors are used?

Are complex sentences characterized by *coordination* or/ *subordination*?

What means are used for referring inside and outside the text?

C: Textual structures

9. What interactional conventions are used?

Are there ways in which one participant controls the turns of others?

10. What larger-scale structures does the text have? (Fairclough, 1989, pp. 110-111)

Question One: What *Experiential Values* Do Words Have?

Question one focuses on how underlying meanings are embedded within specific words, which means that the act of making certain lexical choices affect the overall meaning of a statement: “A formal feature with *experiential* value is a trace of and a cue to the way in which the text producer’s experience of the natural or social world is represented. Experiential value is to do with *contents* and knowledge and beliefs”. (Fairclough, 1989, p. 112).

In terms of political discourse, language is the most powerful tool most politicians possess, and by utilizing critical discourse analysis, one can uncover underlying meanings affected by the personal ideology of the speaker. Additionally, question one also focuses on *meaning relations* between words, being *synonymy*, *hyponymy*, and *antonymy* (Fairclough, 1989, p. 116). The use of synonyms often occurs when a speaker is guilty of 'overwording', which Fairclough describes as “an unusually high degree of wording, often involving many words which are near synonyms” (1989, p. 115). Regarding synonyms, Fairclough notes that it is rare to find two words, which carry the exact same meaning. Therefore, two words can be regarded as synonyms, therefore “one is looking for relations of near synonymy between words. A rough test for synonymy is, whether words are mutually substitutable with little effect on meaning” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 116). According to Fairclough, “*hyponymy* is the case where the meaning of one word is, so to speak, included within the meaning of another word” (1989, p. 116), meaning one word describes a more specific meaning than another word, which provides a more general descriptive meaning. As an example, *bus* is a hyponym of *vehicle* and *rose* is a hyponym of *flower*. Lastly, *antonyms* represent words that are of opposite meaning in relations to one another, meaning *good* and *bad* are antonyms, because they have opposite meanings (1989, p. 116).

Question Two: What *Relational* Values Do Words Have?

Question two describes how words carry relational value, which depend on the relationship between a speaker and their audience or the relations between communicating parties. Oppositely, analyzing lexical choices within a text or speech act can reveal relational values. Fairclough describes relation values as follows: “A formal feature with relational value is a trace of and a cue to the relationships which are enacted via the text in the discourse. Relational value is (transparently!) to do with relations and social relationships” (1989, p. 112). Question two therefore addresses the notion that “a text’s choice of wordings depends on, and helps create, social relationships between participants” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 116). Lexical choices are of immense importance both in connecting and identifying with other individuals or groups: As an example, Fairclough explains how making lexical choices with racist under- or overtones can have relational value, possibly because racist beliefs are shared between the speaker and the audience, or between people communicating with each other (1989, p. 116). Alternatively, the opposite strategy could be to *avoid* certain lexical choices with unwanted expressive values because of relational values. While choosing to avoid certain wordings altogether is one option, another option would be choosing to use a *euphemism* to avoid uttering a word with unwanted negative values. For example, one might choose to describe a death by using a *euphemism* such as the more subtle and respectful term ‘*passed away*’ or the more insensitive phrase ‘*to kick the bucket*’. Another consequence of the awareness of relation values is the level of formality created through a speaker’s lexical choices.

Question Three: What *Expressive Values* Do Words Have?

In terms of what expressive values words have, Fairclough states that “expressive value is a trace of and a cue to the producer’s evaluation (in the widest sense) of the bit of the reality it relates to” (1989, p. 112). Expressive values within lexical choices are therefore highly personal

and hint to a speaker's individual perception of the world. The expressive values of words can thus also reveal a great deal about any speaker's personal ideology:

Differences between discourse types in the expressive values of words are again ideologically significant. A speaker expresses evaluations through drawing on classification schemes which are in part systems of evaluation, and there are ideologically contrastive schemes embodying different values in different discourse types. (Fairclough, 1989, p. 119)

The use of these expressive values can be a powerful tool in terms of persuasive language since a speaker can purposely add negative or positive associations into their language through the expressive values within their lexical choices. This can either be achieved explicitly or implicitly, depending on whether the speaker wishes to clearly state their opinions or do so in a subtle and implied manner. On the other hand, a speaker can also aim to stay neutral in terms of expressive values, which is often the case for journalists, who aspire to stay neutral in terms of their personal beliefs.

Question Four: What Metaphors Are Used?

A metaphor is a figure of speech, which creates an implied comparison between two concepts that are essentially unrelated to each other, but which share some form of common characteristics: "Metaphor is a means of representing one aspect of experience in terms of another, and is by no means restricted to the sort of discourse it tends to be stereotypically associated with - poetry and literary discourse" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 119). Metaphors are a form of figurative language and metaphors result in a more colorful language, which could prove effective when a speaker attempts to catch the attention of an audience. Using metaphors can

therefore be a clever strategy in enhancing one's language to persuade an audience, and the metaphors used by a speaker can thus reveal a great deal about their ideology and agenda:

... any aspect of experience can be represented in terms of any number of metaphors, and it is the relationship between alternative metaphors that is of particular interest here, for different metaphors have different ideological attachments. (Fairclough, 1989, p. 119)

Question Five: What Experiential Value Do Grammatical Features Have?

The fifth question explores the experiential values associated with grammatical features, meaning analysis of a speaker's grammatical choices can uncover details about their personal ideology and agenda. Fairclough describes the experiential aspects of grammar as follows:

The experiential aspects of grammar have to do with the ways in which the grammatical forms of a language code happenings or relationships in the world, the people or animals or things involved in those happenings or relationships, and their spatial and temporal circumstances, manner of occurrence, and so on (1989, p. 120).

According to Robert Lawrence Trask (1999), a sentence can be broken down into words, and these words can be organized into categories, with the main categories being: Verbs, which denote actions, nouns, which denote entities, adjectives, which denote states, adverbs, which denote manner, and prepositions, which denote location. Nouns can then be further divided into number, meaning singular or plural, and verbs can be subdivided by tense, aspect, or voice (p. 94) When analyzing a speaker's grammatical choices, Fairclough outlines how one can utilize these grammatical categories and features, and he suggests in part doing so by asking the following questions: What types of process and participant predominate? Is agency unclear? Are

processes what they seem? Are nominalizations used? Are sentences active or passive? Are sentences positive or negative? (1989, p. 111). According to Fairclough, “when one wishes to represent textually some real or imaginary action, event, state of affairs or relationship, there is often a choice between different grammatical process and participant types, and the selection that is made can be ideologically significant” (1989, p. 120). Therefore, by taking these proposed questions into consideration when analyzing grammatical choices, a great deal can be revealed about the speaker’s ideology and intentions.

Question Six: What Relational Values Do Grammatical Features Have?

Question six focuses on another aspect of grammatical features, which have relational values, being *modes* of sentence, *modality*, and *pronouns*. Fairclough states that there are “three major modes: *declarative*, *grammatical question*, and *imperative*” (1989, p. 125). A declarative sentence is characterized by a subject followed by a verb, whereas imperatives do not contain a subject. Grammatical questions can consist of *wh*-questions, meaning questions that start with words such as who, where, when, what, etc. However, grammatical questions can also consist of sentences that start with a verb, or they can be yes/no questions, meaning questions, which can simply be answered adequately by replying yes or no (Fairclough, 1989, p.125). According to Fairclough, these three modes can reveal relational values between parties:

Systematic asymmetries in the distribution of modes between participants are important per se in terms of participant relations: asking, be it for action or information, is generally a position of power, as too is giving information - except where it has been asked for (1989, p. 126).

In regard to relational values, Fairclough describes the term *modality* as follows:

“Modality is to do with speaker or writer authority, and there are two dimensions to modality, depending on what direction authority is oriented in” (1989, p. 126). Fairclough then states that the first dimension of modality concerns “the authority of one participant in relation to others” (1989, p. 127), and the second dimension regarding a “speaker or writer's authority with respect to the truth or probability of a representation of reality” (1989, pp. 126-127). The distinction between these two types of modality is important when analyzing a text since it can reveal the status of certain power relations and how these power relations are maintained or sought to be changed. Fairclough explains how modality is visible through the use of “modal auxiliary verbs like *may, might, must, should, can, can't, ought*, but also by various other formal features including adverbs and tense” (1989, p. 127). Fairclough explains how these modal auxiliary verbs are utilized to perform explicit speech acts in terms of power struggle: “It is precisely implicit authority claims and implicit power relations of the sort illustrated here that make relational modality a matter of ideological interest” (1989, p. 127).

The use of the pronouns ‘we’ and ‘you’ also carries relational value, and to illustrate this Fairclough gives an example from a Daily Mail editorial: “We cannot let our troops lose their edge below decks while Argentine diplomats play blind man's buff round the corridors of the United Nations” (1989, p. 127). This particular example showcases how the use of the pronoun ‘we’ in this case results in a statement, which becomes inclusive of both the writer, the paper, and the readers. Depending on the context, ‘we’ can also refer to the writer and one or two others, and in such an instance, the ‘we’ is exclusive, as it does not include the reader. By doing so, “it is making an implicit authority claim rather like the examples of relational modality above - that it has the authority to speak for others” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 128). Regarding the use of the

pronoun ‘you’, Fairclough explains that it can convey a variety of implicit meanings: “Another case where it pays to try to work out relationships which are being implicitly claimed is when the pronoun *you* is used, also in mass communication, where there are many actual and potential addressees whose identity is unknown to the producer”. (1989, p. 128)

Fairclough suggests advertising as an example of utilizing the pronoun ‘you’ to create a sense of personal relation between the consumer and the product, which a company is advertising to sell. Another example is stating ‘you’ as an indefinite pronoun, where the word does not necessarily refer to a specific individual or group. According to Fairclough, this tactic can create a sense of solidarity between the speaker and the audience, whoever it might be (1989, p. 128).

Question Seven: What Expressive Values Do Grammatical Features Have?

Fairclough argues that in terms of expressive modality, “there is overlap between the modal auxiliaries which mark relational modality and those which mark expressive modality” (1989, p. 128). Fairclough explains that the word *may* is both associated with *possibility* and *permission*, while the word *must* is both associated with *certainty* and *obligation*. Expressive modality can therefore be used as a tool to express one’s version of a truth or knowledge: “This is one terminal point of expressive modality, a categorical commitment of the producer to the truth of the proposition” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 129). Furthermore, Fairclough argues that a speaker’s use of modal auxiliaries can be traced back to the speaker’s personal ideology: “The ideological interest is in the authenticity claims, or claims to knowledge, which are evidenced by modality forms” (1989, p. 129). As an example, Fairclough suggests the way news outlets present events as their version of the truth:

The prevalence of categorical modalities supports a view of the world as transparent - as if it signalled its own meaning to any observer, without the need for interpretation and representation. 'News' generally disguises the complex and messy processes of information gathering and interpretation which go into its production, and the role therein of ideologies embedded in the established practices and assumptions which interpreters bring to the process of interpretation. (1989, p. 129)

Question Eight: How Are (Simple) Sentences Linked Together?

Question eight focuses on the connective values of formal features within a text, meaning how elements are structured to connect to one cohesive text. However, Fairclough also notes the importance that the relationship between texts and contexts, meaning how the a text relates to other texts with the same context as well as the background of the text: “Some formal features point outside the text to its situational context, or to its 'intertextual' context, i.e. to previous texts which are related to it” (1989, p.130). Fairclough states that these links between sentences “are collectively referred to as *cohesion*” (1989, p. 130), and can refer to the words used to connect sentences, repeating words, using related words, as well as using so-called *connectors* and *references* (Fairclough, 1989, p. 130). According to Fairclough, logical connectors “can cue ideological assumptions” (1989, p. 131), and refers to the words, which a speaker utilizes to create a logical, but implied assumption within a sentence.

Fairclough explains that a complex sentence is created when two simple sentences are connected in one of two ways, either through *coordination* or *subordination*:

A distinction is commonly made between *coordination*, where the component simple sentences have equal weight, and *subordination*, where there is a main clause and one or

more subordinate clauses - clause is used for a simple sentence operating as part of a complex one. (1989, pp. 131-132)

Therefore, a complex sentence with coordination results in a statement, where both sentences carry equal significance, whereas a complex sentence with subordination creates a statement, where one sentence contains more information and is of greater importance. According to Fairclough, analyzing a speaker's use of coordination and subordination can uncover truths about the speaker's priorities and general ideology: "Something to be on the lookout for is ways in which texts commonsensically divide information into relatively prominent and relatively backgrounded (tending to mean relatively important and relatively unimportant) parts" (1989, p. 132).

Lastly, Fairclough explains the importance of analyzing how a speaker uses references such as:

(it, he, she, this, that, etc.) and the definite article *(the)*" (1989, p. 132). By using a reference, a speaker can avoid having to repeatedly introduce or explain earlier mentions of certain people, events, or objects. However, a reference can also be used in a situation, where it has not previously been introduced or explained, thus making the reference presupposed. (Fairclough, 1989, p. 132)

In a later chapter, Fairclough explains that when a speaker uses presupposed references, it reveals a great deal about the audience, which the speaker wishes to influence:

Discourses and the texts which occur within them have histories, they belong to historical series, and the interpretation of intertextual context is a matter of deciding which series a

text belongs to, and therefore what can be taken as common ground for participants, or presupposed. (1989, p. 152)

Question Nine: What Interactional Conventions Are Used?

Question nine debates the topic of power relations within the organizational features of dialogue and monologue. The turn-taking system can be split into two main categories, being informal conversation and dialogue between unequal participants. According to Fairclough, the informal conversation “has great significance and mobilizing power as an ideal form of social interaction, but its actual occurrence in our class-divided and power-riven society is extremely limited” (1989, p. 134). Fairclough also notes that though this form of conversation is often perceived to be the most utilized kind in everyday life, it is in fact the one to occur the least frequently (1989, p.134). In terms of the unequal form of dialogue, Fairclough explains that the turn-taking rights are too unequal. As an example of an unequal encounter in terms of the power relation between participants, Fairclough suggests the example of a classroom and the implied rules for the conversational practice between a teacher and a student. Lastly, Fairclough notes that: “Underlying, and reproduced by, the prevalence of such discourse in classrooms are ideologies of social hierarchy and education” (1989, 135), however, this statement is true for all kinds of dialogue between participants with unequal power relations.

Furthermore, Fairclough explains that in dialogue between unequal participants, the participant who holds the power can put “constraints on the contributions of less powerful participants” (1989, p. 135). This can be accomplished through several approaches, and Fairclough describes four of those, being “*interruption, enforcing explicitness, controlling topic and formulation*” (1989, p. 135). To combat these approaches, Fairclough describes how the less powerful participant can utilize ambiguity and vagueness as tools against a more powerful

participant. The less powerful participant can thus avoid stating a clear opinion or through silence. However, to counteract such tactics, the more powerful participant can “respond by enforcing explicitness - for instance, forcing participants to make their meaning unambiguous by asking things like: is that a threat? are you accusing me of lying?” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 136).

Question Ten: What Larger-Scale Structures Does the Text Have?

With the overall structure of a text being the focus of question ten, Fairclough explains how a text is often structured in a predictable manner. A news article or segment usually consists of: “ ... what happened, what caused it, what was done to deal with it, what more immediate effects it had, what longer-term outcomes or consequences it had” (1989, p. 137). Furthermore, Fairclough states that:

Participants' expectations about the structure of the social interactions they take part in or the texts they read are an important factor in interpretation and particular elements can be interpreted in accordance with what is expected at the point where they occur, rather than in terms of what they are. (1989, p. 138)

Therefore, the context of a text and the background of the readers of a particular text are both important factors in the production and analyzing of a text. Lastly, Fairclough explains the potential consequences of structuring on a global scale: “But the significance of global structuring is also longer term: such structures can impose higher levels of routine on social practice in a way which ideologically sets and closes agendas” (1989, p. 138). Structuring in general can thus be utilized as a tool to subtly promote one’s agenda to an audience.

Analysis

The Nixon investigation and the Clinton/ Lewinsky scandal are examples of the importance of the public's opinion in terms of both the personal and political judgement of any politician. While President Clinton was able to regain a large amount of trust from the public, President Nixon could not recover after the Watergate scandal and chose to resign from office to avoid facing an impeachment trial. Since the person who serves as the American president is considered the highest-ranking politician in the country, their every move is consequently under intense scrutiny from their opponents and the media. Meanwhile, every statement they choose to make is thus subject to being dissected and analyzed endlessly. Since the President is put under a microscope due to intense media coverage, the ramifications of a scandal can be devastating to the President's popularity and even threaten their position. To avoid the possibility of impeachment and attempt to secure enough votes for a second term, any president must respect and obey the law and continuously seek to maintain support from voters. Any politician, including the President, must therefore strive to be in control of how he or she is perceived by the public, their political peers, as well as their political opponents.

In the case of the Watergate scandal, President Nixon initially attempted to emphatically deny any wrongdoing, even though his illegal actions were uncovered and made public by the media. This led to the President stating the now famous words "I'm not a crook" on live television. Nevertheless, President Nixon could not talk his way out of trouble when further evidence was released, which resulted in a loss of public support for the President, who had made himself appear as untrustworthy. The refusal to cooperate with investigators and hand over evidence, the decision of having evidence destroyed, and the fact that President Nixon had been involved with the organization of the burglary made him appear as unfit to be in the important

position as President of the United States of America by the American people (Chouinard K, 2017). Though the Clinton/Lewinsky incident was an equally large scandal compared to the Watergate scandal, the outcome for President Clinton concluded differently. In this case, the President was charged with lying under oath and obstruction of justice regarding his official statements denying an extramarital affair with Lewinsky. President Clinton went through an impeachment trial, and his affair with Lewinsky was proven to have occurred, meaning the President had lied to the American public. However, the President was ultimately acquitted of all charges in the impeachment inquiry and was able to use his discourse to regain public support. While there appeared to be a common public consensus that the President was morally wrong for having an affair, that fact would not affect his ability to lead the country as their president. Both examples prove how important the relationship between politicians and voters are in terms of controlling the outcome of a scandal (Miller, 1999).

While several years have passed since the Nixon and the Clinton scandals occurred, the consequences in terms of how it affected public opinion of the President are by now clear. However, since the impeachment trial and subsequent acquittal of President Trump, at the time of writing, occurred very recently, the full effects on the public's support for the President are yet to be fully understood. Meanwhile, the relationship between President Trump and his supporters can be strained at times, due to the disagreement in terms of the President's harsh linguistic choices. Though President Trump was acquitted of all charges, it is still up to the public to form their own beliefs and opinions regarding the President's innocence and ability to be the leader of the country. These decisions will subsequently affect the President's future support from voters. The speech given by the President after he was acquitted is therefore the first example of how President Trump will attempt to regain public support through the use of his discourse.

Examples of Normalization and the Overton window

The act of normalization and making efforts towards moving the Overton window are closely connected, since attempting to normalize a concept can be used as a tool to eventually succeed in moving the Overton window in the desired direction. These two approaches are thus both strong tools to use by politicians who seek to communicate and enforce their political agendas. However, when choosing which tactic to use as a politician one must be aware of how their discourse and actions ultimately affect their public image. Therefore, if a politician wishes to publicly appear as calm and in control, yet determined, choosing to use what Bolotsky's refers to as "the long hard way" to move the Overton window would be preferable (Boyd, 2012, p. 200). On the other hand, a politician can choose a more aggressive approach to enforce their agendas, which can then move the Overton window in a shorter timeframe. However, it should be noted that while this approach can be successful, it can also backfire and result in moving the Overton window in the opposite direction of what was originally desired (Boyd, 2012, p. 201).

The discourse of President Trump in his speech displays examples of what, in the larger context of the President's rhetorical style, could be considered as acts of normalization and attempts to move the Overton window. Normalization facilitates over time, when a politician repeatedly and continuously states an opinion or suggestion, which to the public is initially received critically. Through time, repetition, and persistence on the part of the speaker, the public will eventually get used to the proposed opinion or suggestion and become more susceptible to the idea in practice. The process of normalization is therefore used to move the Overton window to make listeners understand and accept more extreme opinions than would be the norm. This approach will thus eventually lead to moving the Overton window, but will take time if the politician wishes to avoid backlash in the form of losing support from voters (Boyd, 2012).

President Trump has long been known for his bold choices regarding his approach to business, his private life, his presidential campaign, and subsequent presidency. While the President's opinionated and expressive style of discourse may have been considered appropriate for a wealthy and extravagant celebrity entrepreneur, the same style of discourse is not the norm for politicians in America and certainly not for a president. President Trump has therefore chosen the risky, yet quicker in terms of results, approach to moving the Overton window, by maintaining his blunt style of discourse. While this approach has at times sparked outrage in the media and the public, President Trump's style of discourse has persisted and has thus become normalized. Throughout the entire speech there are many displays of President Trump's approach to moving the Overton window through normalization in terms of his use of extreme lexical choices and blunt approach to his overall discourse. President Trump has been known to reject or discredit criticism by taking on the role of an innocent victim in an attempt to gain the public's sympathy and support. This tactic has therefore become the norm for the President and also occurs in the speech, when President Trump claims the following regarding the impeachment: "We've all been through a lot together, and we probably deserve that hand for all of us because it's been a very unfair situation" (l. 10-12). The President continues his attempt of convincing the audience of his innocence and the unjust treatment received from his opponents:

And every time I'd say, "This is unfair, let's go to court," they say, "Sir, you can't go to court, this is politics." And we were treated unbelievably unfairly. And you have to understand, we first went through "Russia, Russia, Russia." It was all bullshit". (l. 69-71)

In this instance, Trump uses the tactic of repetition as well as adding the adjective, "unbelievably" to the word "unfairly" (l. 70) to reinforce the meaning of the statement and make his point very clear. The same tactic is employed in the following quote: "We've been treated

very unfairly. Fortunately, we have great men and women that came to our defense. If we didn't, this would have been a horrific incident for our country” (l. 612-614). The only difference in this instance is that the word added in front of “unfairly” (l. 613) is an adverb and not an adjective, yet the effect of this lexical choice remains the same. Additionally, President Trump attempts to gain sympathy from the audience by mentioning the strain the impeachment has put on his family to further illustrate and convince the public as to how unfair the situation has been. Furthermore, the President even includes his belief that the impeachment, in a larger context, has been unfair to America: “Because, from my family's standpoint, it's been very unfair for my family. It's been very unfair to the country” (l. 276-277). The concept of the impeachment inquiry being unfair is referenced by President Trump on several occasions during the speech, with some version of the word ‘unfair’ being mentioned a total of ten times. Additionally, the word has been reinforced through different lexical variations and coupled with the context of the President’s family and the effect it has had on the American people. This is therefore clearly a calculated tactic employed by the President to use repetition to normalize the idea of the impeachment inquiry being unjust. If the President is successful in convincing the American public that he did nothing wrong regarding the incidents that led to the impeachment inquiry, he will have then moved the Overton window in terms of the bigger concept of what is considered appropriate and accepted conduct of a president.

Another well-known tactic employed by President Trump through his discourse is the strategy of attacking and heavily criticizing his opponents and complimenting and praising his supporters. This strategy is also evident in the speech, where President Trump acknowledges his supporters during the impeachment inquiry as if they have been to war: “So, I appreciate that. But some of the people here have been incredible warriors. They're warriors. And there's

nothing, from a legal standpoint; this is a political thing” (l. 67-69). The President once again uses repetition to convince the audience of his and his administration’s superior political abilities: “No, my Cabinet's great and they're all here but today is the date to celebrate these great warriors, right? These are great warriors, they really fought hard for us” (l. 347-349). By referring to his supporters during the impeachment inquiry using the word “warriors” (l. 68, 348, 609), as well as using the word “war” (l.29) to describe the impeachment results in a dramatization of the entire situation. By using these words to create a war analogy, it results in giving the impression to the audience that the President and his administration have been under a violent attack by his opponents. Furthermore, in the larger context, this tactic creates associations to the military within the United States and creates images of brave men and women, who work tirelessly for the benefit of the country against an evil enemy. Throughout the speech, President Trump makes several references to his supporters being “warriors” (l. 68, 348, 601) and proclaims that he and his administration have endured battle and war:

I want to start by thanking some of – and I call them friends because, you know, you develop friendships and relationships when you're in battle and war, much more so than, "Gee, let's have a normal situation." With all that we've gone through, we've done – I think – more than any president and administration and, really, I say, for the most part, Republican congressmen, congresswomen and Republican senators. (l. 28-32)

By making these references to warfare, President Trump attempts to convince the audience and the public that the Democrats had not only attacked the President and the Republicans but that they had done so unfairly and unlawfully. As a continued attempt in this quest, President Trump takes his accusations against his opponents to an even higher level of seriousness by claiming the basis of the impeachment inquiry was based on corruption:

But it didn't stop; it just started. And tremendous corruption – tremendous corruption. So, we had a campaign – little did we know we were running against some very, very bad and evil people, with fake dossiers, with all of these horrible, dirty cops that took these dossiers and did bad things. (l. 80-84)

By now it has been made clear that words carry meaning and can result in severe consequences, and such claims by the President should not be taken lightly, since he is essentially accusing several people of illegal activities. However, since it has become the norm for the President to use his discourse in extreme manners, such remarks will instead merely function as a tool to strengthen his point. This tactic is therefore an example of normalization as well as an example of how lexical choices can highly affect how powerful a statement can become.

President Trump continues to deliver claims of corruption during the speech: “And it never really stopped. We've been going through this now for over three years. It was evil, it was corrupt, it was dirty cops, it was leakers and liars” (l. 19-20). While this is a repetition of the claim of corruption, the President reinforces the meaning by using adjectives. In fact, the words “corrupt” (l. 20, 111, 288, 481) or “corruption” (l. 285, 287, 288, 293) are mentioned 12 times throughout the speech, which proves that the President is once again using the strategy of normalization to push a specific narrative onto the audience and into their subconsciousness.

Another example of normalization occurs whenever the President uses extreme adjectives to describe his opponents, such as “evil” (l. 20, 82, 684), and “bad” (l. 26, 82, 84, 132, 477, 489, 641): “So, we had a campaign – little did we know we were running against some very, very bad and evil people, with fake dossiers, with all of these horrible, dirty cops that took these dossiers and did bad things” (l. 81-84). To emphasize his point, the President also utilizes the adverb ‘very’, and even states it twice to illustrate further accentuating. The word ‘evil’ carries serious

implications and is used three times as a reference to the President's opponents during the speech. Furthermore, the President also refers to his opponents using the words "lousy" (l. 251, 258) and "vicious" (l. 259, 264, 269) several times: "See, I say Democrats are lousy politicians because they have lousy policy" (l. 250-251). The President continues his rant by stating the following: "So, I've always said they're lousy politicians, but they do two things. They're vicious and mean – vicious, these people are vicious" (l. 258-259), "And these are vicious people" (l. 264). He then concludes by stating: "And they stuck together, and they're vicious as hell" (l. 268-269). Put together, these statements can easily be classified as a rant, since the President is essentially stating the same claims and opinions several times in a short span of time and in an aggressive manner in terms of lexical choices. While it is a commonly known and accepted fact that Democrats and Republicans disagree and therefore often criticize each other, it is not common for politicians to refer to each other in a slanderous and highly insulting manner. Therefore, when President Trump uses this specific tactic against his opponents and gets away with it, it is yet another example of how the President has normalized this unusual practice regarding his use of discourse.

The speech is filled with examples of how the President has persisted in his use of an extreme style of discourse, which has resulted in his style of discourse eventually being seen and accepted as the norm. President Trump is thereby able to continually attempt to persuade the public into supporting him and his administration by damaging the public image of the Democratic Party. Viewing President Trump's presidential campaign win and his achievement in terms of getting acquitted during the impeachment trial in a larger context, both events are confirmations of the fact that President Trump has moved the Overton window.

Displays of Masculine Victimhood

Much like the act of normalization and attempts to move the Overton window, the tactic of displaying a form of masculine victimhood is a discourse-based tool, which can be utilized to great effect. President Trump utilizes the strategy of displaying a masculine victimhood in his discourse to convince the public into viewing him as a victim of unfair treatment to gain sympathy and discredit actions taken by his opponents. Meanwhile, the President is also able to portray himself as a strong, white, male leader of the United States through the indication of him overcoming these hurdles. This strategy is exploited by President Trump through several examples in the speech, especially by claiming that the Democrats were trying to remove him from office by any means necessary, legally, or not. Referring to Nancy Pelosi, the President claims that:

She wanted to impeach from day one, by the way, don't let it fool you. You know, she said, "no, the impeachment is a very serious thing." I said, "she wants to impeach, watch". (l. 661-663)

Since this accusation against Pelosi is not backed by any actual data, the statement is thus a result of President Trump's personal feelings towards her. Nevertheless, by stating this personal opinion as a fact, the President attempts to discredit Pelosi's arguments for the impeachment. This notion is echoed when President Trump once again proclaims his innocence:

Two days, they knew that we were totally innocent. But they kept it going – Mark. They kept it going forever. Because they wanted to inflict political pain on somebody that had just won an election that, to a lot of people, were surprised". (l. 90-93)

If the President's claim that the Democrats illegally framed him to move forward with an impeachment inquiry are true, it subsequently means that the President is innocent and has been victimized by the Democrats. Meanwhile, the speech does not exhibit any kind of actual evidence to support this claim, but that is not important to the President, as long as he is successful in using his discourse to convince the public of his version of the impeachment. As mentioned earlier, through the entire speech, President Trump continually perpetuates his belief that he and his administration were treated unfairly: "We went through hell, unfairly, did nothing wrong – did nothing wrong" (l. 56-57). By making such claims, the President evokes feelings of injustice toward the Republicans by misconduct of the Democrats. However, President Trump also seizes this opportunity to portray himself and his administration as enduring and resilient: "We've been treated very unfairly. Fortunately, we have great men and women that came to our defense. If we didn't, this would have been a horrific incident for our country" (l. 612-614). The President thus uses the sense of masculine victimhood within his discourse to evoke feelings of sympathy for himself and his administration, while also using it as an example of how strong he and his administration are. Furthermore, President Trump also seizes the opportunity to discredit future attempts by the Democrats to remove him from office:

But I'm sure they'll try and cook up other things, they'll go through the state of New York, they'll go through other places. They'll do whatever they can. Because instead of wanting to heal our country and fix our country, all they want to do – in my opinion, it's almost like they want to destroy our country. We can't let it happen. (l. 651-655)

The statement also serves the function of, once again, reiterating how capable and resilient President Trump and his administration are, which subsequently illustrates how incompetent the Democrats would be in this position of power. Lastly, the statement also seeks to provide a sense

of fear among the public, by claiming that the Democrats wish to destroy America. Luckily, the President assures the American people that he will not let that happen, once again portraying himself in a positive light. Taking the analysis of this statement one step further, it could also be argued that it relates back to the President's slogan from the presidential election, "Make America Great Again", since the President presents himself as being the only candidate capable of making this statement come true. Meanwhile, President Trump does credit the Democrats, which he refers to as "the other side" (l. 309, 477, 502, 535), for being clever in their persistence in attempting to impeach him:

I will say, it's genius on the other side – maybe even more so, because they took nothing and brought me to a final vote of impeachment. That's a very ugly word to me. It's a very dark word, very ugly. They took nothing. They took a phone call that was a totally appropriate call – I call it a perfect call, because it was – and they brought me to the final stages of impeachment. But now we have that gorgeous word. I never thought a word would sound so good. It's called, "total acquittal". (l. 309-314)

On the surface the statement seems to contain a compliment towards the Democrats, but when considering the overall meaning of the entire statement, it is yet another tactic used by the President to portray himself as the victim and the Democrats as sneaky and corrupt. This is accomplished by the President through the mentioning of how the Democrats changed details in the transcription of the phone call between President Trump and President Zelensky. Ultimately, President Trump spins the narrative within the statement in his own favor by clearly stating that he ultimately was acquitted on all charges. The Democrats are then portrayed as the villains and President Trump must therefore be the victim, who ultimately defeated those villains.

Another tactic within displaying masculine victimhood is portraying one's masculinity through bragging about accomplishments, which President Trump does on several occasions during the speech:

we have some states that are going to be not easy, but Arizona's been great and we're stopping illegal aliens from coming in, we're putting up walls. New Mexico, too, a state that's never been in play for Republicans is totally in play, right? Nevada's really looking good. We're – we're doing well – we're doing well. We're going to have a great – there's more spirit – I will say this, there's more spirit now for the Republican Party by far than the Democrats. (l. 360-365)

The mention of “illegal aliens” (l. 361) is a crude reference to Mexicans, who illegally try to enter the United States. By referring to these illegal immigrants in such a manner, the President dramatizes the consequences thereof significantly to make his claim of stopping these actions seem even more impressive. This tactic is also employed when the President suggests that Arizona is a state, which usually votes in favor of the Democratic Party. By making the claim of gaining support from there thus seems like a major accomplishment, which could only have been achieved due to President Trump's efforts. Generally, the statement suggests that President Trump is solely responsible for the rise in the spirit of the Republican Party, while also insinuating that the Republicans have gained public support solely because of him and his actions. President Trump once again manages to use his discourse to portray himself as a strong, capable, and extremely successful leader, despite enduring many hardships from his opponents.

Another tactic, which the President utilizes to portray himself in a positive light, is the act of referencing flattering opinions about himself from other individuals. Furthermore, the President also uses the strategy of claiming that the success of another individual transpired with

help from the President himself. This is seen in the following example, where he recounts how Congressman Matt Gaetz complimented him and encouraged him to go into politics:

And he said I made the best speech. With all of these professional – I hate to say this – with all of these professional politicians, they voted by far the best speech was Trump. He calls me, he says "you should run for politics." I say, "what do I know about politics?" But you know what, we learned quickly, and our country has never done better than it's doing right now, so it's pretty good. (l. 606-610)

While this tactic essentially is a way for the President to compliment himself in front of the audience, he does so by referencing these compliments through another person. By doing so, it results in the President presenting himself in a positive light, while making himself seem humble as well as appearing as if he is being validated by other politicians.

Towards the end of his speech, President Trump goes on a confusing and unstructured rant, which once again functions to portray himself as the victim, while also appearing as protective over America:

And I love the FBI and the FBI loves me, 99 percent. It was the top scum. And the FBI people don't like the top scum. So, think of that 100 million to one. And he's investigating me. And then, God, Trump is a loathsome human being, isn't he? These are the people looking at me. I'm really not a bad person. And Page said, "yes, he's awful." How would you like to have that? This is just – this is the good stuff. There's stuff a hundred times worse than that. These are all dirty people. And now, I just heard that they're suing the United States of America because they were interfered with. Ah, not going to let it

happen, just not going to let it happen. We cannot let this happen to our country. (l. 638-646)

Earlier in the speech, President Trump made comments about “dirty cops” (l.83), which he elaborates on in this statement by implying that the majority of the FBI are decent people, who “love” (l. 638) him. However, the “top scum” (l. 639) he refers to are the individuals, who are corrupt. Taking on the role of an innocent victim, the President thereby attempts to discredit actions of the police officials, who co-operated with the Democrats to impeach him. Meanwhile, he also credits himself by claiming that the majority of the FBI are on his side, which must logically be due to all of his accomplishments during his time as President. In this quote, it is also implied that Democrats are working against President Trump simply because they lost the presidential election to him and the Republican Party. The final comment in the statement is another clear example of how the President is confident in his ability to lead and protect the country even under constant and vicious attacks by his opponents. The statement therefore also implies the importance of the Republicans sticking together to defeat the enemy, the Democrats.

President Trump utilizes the strategy of displaying masculine victimhood to win sympathy and support from the audience. This is accomplished in a parallel manner, where the President presents himself as a victim, who firmly believes that the sole purpose for the Democrats, led by Nancy Pelosi and Adam Schiff, is to remove him from office and that they will attempt this vigorously until they reach their goal. He even alleges that they wish to “overthrow the government of the United States” (l. 624). He thereby implies that the Democrats are not qualified to lead the nation, while implying that the President himself certainly is. Meanwhile, the President also portrays himself as a competent and successful leader by constantly making claims of his successes as president, and by repeating compliments of himself

and his accomplishments by others. The President manages to communicate his belief that the country would be in a much worse position in the hands of the Democrats, and that the notion that he will continue to fight for the good of the country despite any tries to damage his reputation or attempts to remove him from office.

President Trump's Lexical Style and use of Negativization

During the speech, President Trump exhibits examples of negativization multiple times, which are mostly achieved through personal attacks on his opponents. On the other hand, he uses positive lexical choices to portray himself in a complimentary manner. In comparison, this results in his use of negativization in the form of personal attacks appearing as even more aggressive. His choices in terms of lexical style thus changes from negative to positive depending on what individual he discusses, and he also constantly changes from one subject to a new and then back to a formerly mentioned subject again. This is an example of over-wording and results in the overall structure of the speech being confusing to follow, which is a tactic often employed by President Trump. Since this tactic will most likely confuse the audience, it will discourage the audience from focusing on the lack of facts to back President Trump's many opinionated claims. Instead the audience will remember the negativization projected onto certain subjects and the positive claims made about other subjects.

Following the President's entrance, initial applause, a couple of expressions of appreciation, and hand gestures to the audience, President Trump initiates the speech with a negativization of the impeachment process: "We've all been through a lot together, and we probably deserve that hand for all of us because it's been a very unfair situation" (l. 10-12). This statement is also the first example of how President Trump, throughout the entire speech, uses the word "we" (l. 10) to reference the people gathered for his speech as well as his supporters.

This word invokes the feeling a special bond between the President and his supporters as well as portraying them as a strong unit. Furthermore, by labelling the impeachment inquiry as unfair, it is implied that the President strongly believes that he was wrongly accused of the charges of abuse of power and obstruction of justice. The President claims this belief once again using a different wording: “We went through hell, unfairly, did nothing wrong – did nothing wrong” (l. 56-57). Though the statement consists of other lexical choices than the previous one, the overall meaning of the statement remains the same. However, by repeating the same claim and using a different type of discourse to do so, the President is able to further emphasize his point to the audience and attempt to make it resonate with them. He even states that “if this happened to President Obama, a lot of people would have been in jail for a long time already, many, many years” (l. 26-27), indicating that he believes this would not happen to a Democrat. The only logical explanation for the impeachment inquiry must therefore be due to some form of personal vendetta against President Trump. This point is further strengthened by the President referring to the impeachment inquiry as a “witch hunt” (l. 15), since that term indicates how an individual is persecuted by a crowd based on a lack of evidence. President Trump also seizes the opportunity to state several facts throughout the speech, which clarify how much he has accomplished in his time as president. While none of these claims are proven to be true, they succeed in portraying the President himself as being extremely capable of achieving his goals and that his administration is both effective and talented. This is evident when the President claims that “we've done more than any administration in the first few years, you look at all of the things we've done” (l. 32-33), as well as:

Let me tell you, if we didn't win, the stock market would have crashed. And the market was going up a lot before the election because it was looking like we had a good chance

to win. And then it went up tremendously from the time we won the election until the time we took office which was November 8th to January 20th. (l. 36-40)

The President also flatters himself and his political accomplishments in the following statement regarding poll numbers:

But maybe not because the Republican Party's poll numbers, Mitch, have now gone up more than any time, I think, since 2004, 2005. And you know what happened then. But in normal times, decades, you would call it. That was a little unusual time. It was for a very short period. The Republican Party's poll numbers and Donald Trump's poll numbers are the highest I've ever had that. So maybe they were. (l. 269-274)

By uttering the phrase “I think” (l. 271), the President is essentially admitting to not being sure about the validity of the facts he is stating to the audience about the poll numbers. He even refers to himself in the third person, which could either be construed as arrogant or a sign of confidence. However, by speaking so highly of himself and his administration’s accomplishments works to enforce a stark contrast to the way the President presents the Democratic Party through extremely negative lexical choices. The President also points out how the media has not always shown interest in reporting when he has been successful:

I'm going to try and get out to those Trump – those Trump areas that we won by a lot. And you know, in '18, we didn't win – we just won two seats in North Carolina – two wonderful seats in North Carolina that were not supposed to be won but I went and I made speeches and we had rallies and we did a great job and we won. We took two seats, nobody writes about that. If we lost, it would've been the biggest story of the year. But

we're going to go, we're going to do a job and we're going to win a lot of seats – we're going to win a lot of seats. (l. 327-333)

Once again, President Trump makes the effort to point out how well he and his administration has done over time. He makes sure to mention that they won two seats, had popular rallies and were successful in their political quest. However, by mentioning that “nobody writes about that” (l. 331), he implies that the media is guilty of not reporting his successes, but are more than happy to report negative storylines about him and his administration. This statement relates to one of the President’s most discussed topics, which is what he refers to as ‘fake news’, meaning news stories fabricated based on lies and untrue facts. In a larger scheme, the statement represents the President’s belief that the media is using the tactic of negativization to portray him and his administration. The President further strengthens his belief in this narrative by stating:

And everybody from the media was saying "who are those crowds over there?" You know, they expect it to be one of these competitive where everybody's running ‘cause they want to win – they want to win, and it was Trump. Right, Mark Meadows? It was Trump. This was a Trump crowd. (l. 371-374)

The statement serves two functions, firstly being another example of how the President believes that the media is portraying him negatively on purpose, and secondly, by illustrating how he is able to gather a big crowd in a successful rally. The President continues to flatter himself and his accomplishments by claiming that “the spirit for the Republican Party right now is stronger, I think, than it's ever been in the history of our country. I think it's stronger than it's ever been” (l. 376-378). Through constant repetition of such claims, the President is able to put this narrative in the subconsciousness of the public, thus swaying them towards supporting him and the Republican party.

When referencing the phone call between President Trump and President Zelensky, which formed the basis of the entire impeachment inquiry, President Trump utilizes the strategy of stating how someone else have expressed their belief that the President is innocent of any claims of wrongdoing: “When you read those transcripts – Tim Scott – I don't know if Tim's here, but he said "Sir" – he's the first one to call me – "Sir, I read the transcript. You did nothing wrong." And Mitch, he stayed there right from the beginning, he never changed “ (l. 123-125). In this instance, President Trump is referring to the transcripts released by the White House regarding the phone call between the Ukrainian President and himself. To support his own claims of doing everything by the book during the call, the White House released a transcript of the call, which President Trump has then used to refer to as evidence of his innocence. However, it must be noted that this document was produced by President Trump’s administration. Since it could be used to possibly impeach the President, which of course is not in the interest of his staff, the transcript could easily have been altered to favor the President by his own staff. Nevertheless, the President obviously never states this context surrounding the production of the transcript in his speech, and instead he uses it as concrete evidence of his innocence. The fact that the document could have been altered will therefore most likely never occur to the public, who are then heavily inclined to believe the transcript to be proof of President Trump’s innocence. The President’s use of the discourse depicted in the transcript is thus an example of how much word choices and use of one’s discourse matters on a large scale.

The President also heavily relies on the use of negativization to express his opinions regarding his opponents. The following statement is an example of how the President portrays his opponents during the impeachment trial negatively by suggesting corruption in the form of fabricating false evidence:

Right at the beginning, they said "Sir, you have nothing to worry about. All of the facts are on your side." I said, "You don't understand, that doesn't matter – that doesn't matter" and that was really true. They made up facts. A corrupt politician named Adam Schiff made up my statement to the Ukrainian President. He brought it out of thin air, just made it up. They say, "He's a screenwriter – a failed screenwriter. He tried to go in" – unfortunately, he went into politics after that. (l. 109-114)

Once again, the President attempts to prove his innocence by labeling Adam Schiff as a corrupt politician. However, choosing the word 'corrupt' to describe another politician directly implies illegal action being conducted by said politician. This extreme lexical choice is therefore another example of President Trump's tactic regarding his use of discourse to damage the reputation of his opponents at any cost. He also further strengthens his attempt to frame Schiff negatively by mentioning how he failed as a screenwriter. Though this might seem to be an irrelevant fact in this particular context, by mentioning it, the President attempts to make the audience subconsciously make an association between Schiff's failure as a screenwriter and his abilities as a politician. This also serves to not only mock Schiff for past endeavors, but also to make a connection between the former statement of Schiff making up the President's statement and the fact that Schiff allegedly fabricated the entire thing. Meanwhile, the larger context in terms of meaning within this statement relates to the President's beliefs that no matter if he does everything by the book, the Democrats will always attempt to take him down as president due to them being jealous and spiteful over losing the presidency to him and the Republican Party.

Within the speech, President Trump also notes the difference in the values of the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, which is a clever strategic ploy to damage the reputation of the Democrats and polish the reputation of the Republicans. This is done by the

President listing the many positive values of the Republican Party and claiming how much they have accomplished to better the state of the country, while simultaneously suggesting that the Democratic Party has no morals or positive values. Both types of statements are then reinforced using either positive or negative lexical choices. Although this tactic dominates most of the contents of the speech, the President does briefly diverge from this strategy. This occurs when President Trump speculates as to how much could be accomplished for the country if the Democrats and Republicans worked together. Meanwhile, the President also seizes the opportunity to once again portray the Democrats in a negative manner, by implying that they are not interested in working together and instead only wishes to impose damage on the President and his administration: “Think of what we could have done. And I'm now talking both sides. Think of what we could have done if we had the same genius – because it's genius” (l. 307-309). The President is thereby implying that the Republicans are willing to work with the Democrats, thus illustrating how they are willing to be the bigger person to achieve the best possible outcome for the American people. Subsequently it also results in framing the Democrats as wanting the opposite and thus not caring about the state of the country. While the Democrats would most likely disagree and maintain that their decision to move forward with the impeachment inquiry was a consequence of wanting what they believe is best for the country. However, since President Trump has the power to control this narrative during the speech, his opponents are not afforded the opportunity to defend their intentions. The President thus continues by stating:

I will say, it's genius on the other side – maybe even more so, because they took nothing and brought me to a final vote of impeachment. That's a very ugly word to me. It's a very dark word, very ugly. They took nothing. They took a phone call that was a totally

appropriate call – I call it a perfect call, because it was – and they brought me to the final stages of impeachment. But now we have that gorgeous word. I never thought a word would sound so good. It's called, "total acquittal". (l. 309-314)

This statement once again suggests that President Trump might have been willing to work with the Democrats, because he admits that they do have politically savvy members. However, he maintains that they ruined that possibility by attempting to have him removed from office based on a lie. Furthermore, the President refers to the call as “appropriate” (l. 312) and “perfect” (l. 312) to further convey his innocence to the audience. This tactic is effective, since it shows himself in a positive light where he presents himself as willing to be the bigger person and bridge the gap between the two Parties, despite how unfairly he claims that the Democrats have treated him. The President thereby portrays himself as forgiving and gracious in the quest to better America, while portraying the Democrats as being petty and selfish. By doing this, he promotes himself and the Republican Party to appear in a much more positive light against the Democrats, who are portrayed as corrupt, vicious, and as scrutinizing and twisting his actions to accomplish their quest to remove him from office. A colorful illustration of how the President portrays himself versus the Democrats would be President Trump as the hero and savior of America, while the Democrats are the evil villains. President Trump thus utilizes these portrayals to appear as if he occupies the moral high ground, which would be considered a noble and useful position of a president. This notion is further emphasized in the following statement: “They're saying the most horrendous things about me. It's OK. It's politics. And then they're supposed to vote on me! They're trying to replace me, and then they're supposed to be voting” (l. 152-154).

President Trump also mentions his claims about Joe Biden partaking in illegal activities and how he believes that the Democrats either covered that up, simply ignored it or never even

knew about it. Regardless of the reason, The President uses this example to prove that the Democrats cannot be trusted:

But they don't think it's corrupt when a son that made no money, that got thrown out of the military, that had no money at all, is working for \$3 million up front, \$83,000 a month. And that's only Ukraine; then goes to China, picks up \$1.5 billion; then goes to Romania, I hear, and many other countries. They think that's OK. Because, if it is – is Ivanka in the audience? Is Ivanka here? Boy, my kids could make a fortune. They could make a fortune. It's corrupt. But it's not even that; it's just general corruption. (l. 288-293)

In this statement, the President uses the tactic of deflecting claims of incompetence and immoral conduct towards the Democrats. Subsequently, he manages to take the focus away from such claims that often have been made against himself. He also manages to portray himself as an observant leader, who spotted this negligence and corruption and then brought the entire scandal to the attention of the public for the sake of the country. Meanwhile, the overall intention of such a statement is to convince the public that they should be thankful for the just and morally correct actions taken by their President, which resulted in stopping the Bidens and the Democrats of conducting other acts of corruption.

As mentioned previously, President Trump often utilizes the tactic of switching between several topics and changing his focus back and forth between those topics. By employing this tactic, he is then able to switch between heavily criticizing his opponents through extreme lexical choices and flattering himself using positive wordings. This is especially evident in the following statement, where the President constantly shifts between criticizing the Democrats and their political agenda and flattering himself and his own visions:

See, I say Democrats are lousy politicians because they have lousy policy. Open borders, sanctuary cities, they have horrible policy. Who the hell can win? Oh, their new policy is raise taxes. They want to raise taxes. You know, all my life, I wasn't in politics, but I'd say, if you're a politician, you want to say, "We're going to lower taxes." They want to raise taxes. So, they have open borders, sanctuary cities, raise everybody's taxes, get rid of everybody's health care – 180 million people in the United States – and they're really happy. And we're going to give you health care that's going to cost more money than the country could make in 30 years if it really does well. (l. 250-258)

He seems to be speaking directly to potential voters, making it sound as though he has important inside information to make the economy thrive and that he of course has his voters' best interests at heart. Meanwhile, he also implies that even though he has not been dealing with politics for very long, he is still a more capable politician than most others. He attempts to convey the notion clearly that *he* is working for the betterment of the country, while the Democrats are certainly not striving for the same. Additionally, the President's use in terms of lexical choices to describe his feelings towards the Democrats are quite personal, since he refers to his opponents as "lousy politicians" (l. 251) with a "horrible policy" (l. 252). Meanwhile, the President continues with personal attacks by claiming that Democrats are 'vicious and mean':

So, I've always said they're lousy politicians, but they do two things. They're vicious and mean – vicious, these people are vicious. Adam Schiff is a vicious, horrible person.

Nancy Pelosi is a horrible person. And she wanted to impeach a long time ago. When she said, "I pray for the President, I pray for the" – she doesn't pray. She may pray, but she prays for the opposite. (l. 258-262)

Instead of simply attacking his opponents on their professional and political abilities, he takes his attacks to the next level by making it personal. He even suggests that Nancy Pelosi is lying about praying for him and instead insinuates that she does not pray at all, because he believes that she is a horrible person:

But I doubt she prays at all. And these are vicious people. But they do two things: They stick together – historically, I'm not talking now – they stick together like glue. That's how they impeached, because they had whatever the number is, 220 people. So, they don't lose anybody, they'll be able to impeach anybody. You could be George Washington, you could have just won the war and they'd say, "Let's get him out of office." And they stuck together, and they're vicious as hell. And they'll probably come back for more. (l. 264-269)

In this statement, President Trump manages, in a subtle manner, to compare himself to George Washington, resulting in portraying himself as a beloved, strong, and successful leader by making an association between those two. Meanwhile the statement is yet another ploy for President Trump to appear as the victim of foul play by the Democrats.

Another example of how President Trump attempts to use his discourse to enforce negative associations towards the people, who tried to impeach him, occurs in the following statement:

And I love the FBI and the FBI loves me, 99 percent. It was the top scum. And the FBI people don't like the top scum. So, think of that 100 million to one. And he's investigating me. And then, God, Trump is a loathsome human being, isn't he? These are the people looking at me. I'm really not a bad person. (l. 638-642)

In this instance, President Trump seems to imply that a small percentage of police officials might be working with the Democrats to remove the President from office at any cost. Furthermore, he states: “These are all dirty people. And now, I just heard that they're suing the United States of America because they were interfered with. Ah, not going to let it happen, just not going to let it happen. We cannot let this happen to our country (l. 643-646). Once again, he uses his discourse to implement a divide between the two political parties, which is made clear through his use of the “we” (l. 645), “they” (l. 644), and “our” (l. 646). These word choices all serve to strengthen this illusion of a strong divide and give the impression that President Trump’s supporters are under attack from the Democrats, who do not have the country’s best interest in mind. Meanwhile, he uses the word “dirty” (l. 20, 26, 83, 478, 643), which is a vivid approach to describe how these people are morally corrupt. However, since the word can also refer to someone being unclean, which is an uncivilized physical state to appear in, the President also uses this specific word to form the association that Democrats are uncivilized and therefore cannot be trusted by the American public.

In one of the very last statements in his speech, the President once again shifts the focus to his critical opinions of Nancy Pelosi and her actions, which lead to the impeachment trial:

She wanted to impeach from day one, by the way, don't let it fool you. You know, she said, “no, the impeachment is a very serious thing.” I said, “she wants to impeach, watch.” Impeachment is so divisive to the country that unless there's something so compelling and so overwhelming and bipartisan – bipartisan, it was 197 to nothing – and – other than one failed presidential candidate. (l. 661-665)

With this statement, the President manages to slander the reputation of Pelosi one final time, while he also mentions how Pelosi and the Democrats, in his opinion, failed miserably in their

attempt to have him removed from office. Thereby, the President is able to display his belief that it was utterly ridiculous of Pelosi and the Democrats to even make such an attempt. Furthermore, he also seizes the opportunity to publicly discredit the one person, who voted against him in the conclusion of the trial:

And the only one that voted against was a guy that can't stand the fact that he ran one of the worst campaigns in the history of the presidency. But she said, "there's something so – It has to be so compelling and so overwhelming and bipartisan. I don't think we should go down that path because it divides the country..." – she's right about that – "... and it's just not worth it." That was Nancy Pelosi a year ago, right? And I think it's a shame. I think it's a shame. (l. 668-673)

President Trump once again makes it clear that he believes that Pelosi is a hypocrite for stating how she only wants what is best for the country, while trying to impeach President Trump, since he strongly believes his presidency *is* what is best for the country. The statement focuses on Senator Charles 'Chuck' Ellis Schumer, whom President Trump also attacks by referencing his failed presidential campaign. By doing this, he asserts once again that the people moving against him are unprofessional and clearly acting out of spite and jealousy. The President concludes by suggesting that Pelosi and the Democrats will probably continue in their wrongful and corrupt quest to have him removed from office:

But I'm sure they'll try and cook up other things, they'll go through the state of New York, they'll go through other places. They'll do whatever they can. Because instead of wanting to heal our country and fix our country, all they want to do – in my opinion, it's almost like they want to destroy our country. We can't let it happen. (l. 651-655)

This statement reflects President Trump's attempt to use his discourse to create an intense divide between Democrats and Republicans to convince the American people to support him and the Republicans in the next election. Through the speech, the President uses different tactics, which all function together to convey his opinions and feelings about how wrong and unlawful the impeachment inquiry and the events leading up to it was. In short, President Trump seems to genuinely believe that he has done nothing wrong, and that the impeachment trial should therefore never have transpired. Furthermore, he uses his discourse to attack the individuals who were responsible for the impeachment inquiry on a personal and professional level to portray himself in a positive light towards the public, who ultimately holds the votes that can afford him another presidential term. To strengthen this claim, the President continuously spins the narrative that the Democratic Party has no actual reason for the impeachment attempt, which must then mean that they did it out of pure spite. He also firmly believes and communicates the fact that even though he won this round, the Democrats will keep scrutinizing his every move to find even the smallest excuse to attempt to impeach him again. By perpetuating this notion, the President thus sets the stage for future claims of being victimized by the Democrats, despite being innocent and only wanting to do his best to serve the country.

Language as Power by President Trump

President Trump is one of the most powerful political figures in the world because of his position as the head of state and head of the government in the United States of America, as well as commander-in-chief of the United States Armed Forces. Meanwhile, America is also considered a superpower and thus maintains a dominant position globally as a result of economic factors, the power of their military, technological advances, and a strong cultural influence. The actions and discourse of any American president is therefore influential to not only America, but

to the rest of the world. Additionally, with the consequences of increased globalization and the rise of access to global mass and social media, everyone in a modern society can keep up with current world affairs including constant accounts of the American President's actions and statements.

President Trump's choices in terms of his discourse are therefore of great importance, because of the national and global consequences it can result in, and is therefore a perfect example of Norman Fairclough's claim that language must be viewed as a form of social practice and that power is exercised through language. Fairclough also claims that there are two approaches for powerful individuals to exercise and maintain their power, which are through the act of either coercion or consent. However, since governments in modern, capitalist societies usually do not enforce their power through acts of force, politicians must therefore rely on the power within their discourse. The speech given by President Trump is thus an example of a high-ranking politician relying on tactics employed through his discourse to manipulate the audience into believing his portrayal of the impeachment process. These linguistic tactics should then result in President Trump maintaining his position of power by gaining public support, which is ironically attempted through the use of the circumstances afforded to him *because* of his position of power as president.

When President Trump won the presidential election in 2016, he came to occupy a position as the top of the political chain and thereby holds a great amount of power, since he directs the executive branch of the federal government. Nevertheless, any American president is still held accountable by the Congress and the Senate, and President Trump must therefore often rely on the power of persuasion in terms of his discourse to gather support for his suggestions. The President must also utilize his discourse to obtain and maintain public support to secure a

second presidential term. President Trump's choices in terms of his discourse should thus be viewed as an attempt to uphold the existing social relations of power and power structures resulting in maintaining his own powerful status or broadening it. However, the attempted impeachment of President Trump is an example of limitations to the many powers afforded to any president, while President Trump's victory speech is an example of how media coverage, an unequal power structure, and most importantly, language can be used as a powerful tool to manipulate the audience into believing the narrative that the President presents them in the speech.

Fairclough explains that so-called 'common-sense' assumptions within language are representations of ideologies embedded in people's use and understanding of discourse (1989, p. 2). Over the last three years of his presidency, President Trump has cemented his own personal style of discourse, which undeniably differs from what would be considered standard and appropriate political discourse in America. However, with time and repetition, President Trump's unique style of discourse has come to be regarded as 'normal' linguistic behaviour for the President. His discourse style has even become a trademark for him and a well-known characteristic in terms of his personality and projection of his personal ideology through discourse. Examples of the President criticizing concepts, situations, his opponents etc. using an aggressive, and at times even a malicious and mean-spirited style of discourse has occurred so often that it by now has come to be regarded as a personality trait of the President. These often-occurring instances of the President using foul and aggressive language have therefore come to be regarded as common-sense and an expression of President Trump's personal ideology.

Since it is a commonly known and accepted fact that Democrats and Republicans highly disagree in terms of political ideologies, it is also publicly accepted that politicians display and

debate these differences of opinions through their discourse. Fairclough refers to this type of convention in terms of the type of expected discourse between political parties as an ideological assumption: “Ideologies are closely linked, to power, because the nature of the ideological assumptions embedded in particular conventions, and so the nature of those conventions themselves, depends on the power relations which underlie the conventions” (1989, p. 2). However, since the power structure between President Trump and the Republican Party is unequal, the President is able to utilize that imbalance in terms of power to publicly bash, criticize, discredit, and attack anyone who disagrees with him or shows him any kind of resistance on not only a political level, but also on a personal level.

When the President mentions or reference the impeachment process in his speech, he could have chosen to express his dissatisfaction with the impeachment by describing it as a ‘tough situation’ or as ‘challenging, stressful’ etc. By choosing this route in terms of a clear, yet subtle display of personal emotions and opinions, the President could have communicated his negative feelings towards the impeachment, while remaining respectful in his word choices. However, as mentioned earlier, the act of describing basically any concept, which is not in the President’s favor, using extremely negative adjectives to portray the events to the public is by now regarded as a common lexical feature of the President’s discourse. Meanwhile, this approach to discussing people or concepts, which the President does not agree with, has over time become a verbal display of the President’s personal ideology. It is therefore not surprising that President Trump uses several exceptionally negative words to describe the impeachment such as, “unfair” (l. 11, 69, 277, 341), “unbelievably unfairly” (l. 70), “a disgrace” (l. 24), “tremendous corruption” (l. 81), and “crooked politics” (l. 144). Furthermore, on several occasions the President refers to the entire event as an “impeachment hoax” (l. 214, 325, 433),

because as he expressed, the events leading to the impeachment and the trial itself was based on lies: “It was evil, it was corrupt, it was dirty cops, it was leakers and liars” (l. 20). The President is thereby using his discourse to present the basis impeachment to the audience as being downright wrong. Furthermore, the President uses his words to personally attack several people involved in the impeachment by describing lawyer, James Comey as a “disaster” (l. 25), Nancy Pelosi as “a horrible person” (l. 260), Adam Schiff as a “corrupt politician” (l. 111) and “a vicious, horrible person” (l. 260). Additionally, he also states the insulting proclamation that “Democrats are lousy politicians because they have lousy policy” (l. 251). Though it is by now considered common for the President to react to adversity through negative lexical choices and displays of anger and disdain, using such a high number of various negative adjectives will subconsciously resonate with audiences. If the President is successful with the tactics of his linguistic choices, it will result in making the audience believe that the President was treated unfairly, that the impeachment was built on lies, and that the Democratic Party and several of his opponents simply wished to impeach out of spite and jealousy instead of the impeachment being based on legitimate legal factors. This proclamation is further supported by the President stating that “a corrupt politician named Adam Schiff made up my statement to the Ukrainian president. He brought it out of thin air, just made it up” (l. 111-113), thus claiming that Schiff lied about a crucial detail of the impeachment. Such a statement is not merely another example of a sentence uttered by the President, which has been inflicted by personal opinion, but rather an example of a serious claim of legal misconduct. As a continued attempt within the speech to persuade the public into believing that the impeachment was a so-called hoax, the President once again claims that the impeachment occurred based on lies in terms of false testimonies and fabricated evidence in the following statement: “So, we had a campaign – little did we know we were

running against some very, very bad and evil people, with fake dossiers, with all of these horrible, dirty cops that took these dossiers and did bad things” (l. 81-84).

While President Trump’s type of discourse is often aggressive and condemning, it is also self-flattering and consequently attempts to spin any narrative in his and his political Party’s own favor. This results in the President using his discourse to present himself as a strong leader, which functions as a stark contrast to the way he presents his opponents. President Trump begins the speech by thanking everybody, who have been on his side during the impeachment, and continues by claiming that such a situation should never happen to another president and flatters himself by adding: “I don't know that other presidents would have been able to take it; some people said no, they wouldn't have” (l. 21-22). Seconds later he once again states the same opinion by saying:

With all that we've gone through, we've done – I think – more than any president and administration and, really, I say, for the most part, Republican congressmen, congresswomen and Republican senators. We've done more than any administration in the first few years, you look at all of the things we've done. (l. 30-33)

Though the President presents no facts to back up his claims that his administration has accomplished more than any prior administration, the audience will most likely believe this statement, because of the common assumption that the top leader of a country should be reliable and honest and therefore would not lie about facts. The assumption that the President must be telling the truth is further strengthened by the opposite narrative continuously repeated by President Trump that the impeachment was a result of lies fabricated to remove him from office at any cost. Additionally, when stating a claim as a fact with confidence in terms of discourse, it is possible to persuade an audience into believing in your statements. Furthermore, by remarking

how well the President considers himself to have handled the impeachment, he is not only embedding the idea of being a strongminded leader into the consciousness of the audience, but he is even suggesting that he is the best in comparison with any other prior President. President Trump further builds his claims of being unfairly treated in the following statement:

We had a rough campaign. It was nasty. It was one of the nastiest, they say. They say Andrew Jackson was always the nastiest campaign. They actually said we topped it. It was a nasty – It was a nasty – both in the primaries and in the – in the election. (l. 77-80)

Once again, the President claims that he experienced the most hardship during his presidential campaign out of any other presidential candidate while having no facts to back up such a claim. The statement serves two different functions by being an example of how the President presents himself as a victim of unfair treatment, while simultaneously making himself appear resilient for enduring this ‘harsh’ and ‘unfair’ treatment. The statement is also another example of how President Trump is able to utilize the power afforded to him because of his position as president to spin a narrative in his own favor. According to Fairclough, this would be an example of ‘hidden power’, which transpires when a speaker and the audience is separated in place and/or time. This results in the speaker being able to express their agenda using media coverage without concerns of interruptions or criticism from the audience (1989, p. 49).

Since the speech is held at the White House, the President has full control over the selection of the audience, who is physically present for the speech. Fairclough explains that more powerful participants are able to place certain constraints on less powerful participants to control them, which the circumstances regarding the choices in terms of audience allowed to witness the speech in person are thus an example of. According to Fairclough, the more powerful participant, in this case President Trump, can enforce constraints on the less powerful participant through the

subjects of contents, relations, and subjects (1989, p. 46). By giving a speech instead of a press conference and by controlling the invitations in terms of audience members present, President Trump is able to control all three subjects of possible constraints. This results in the President being able to present an extremely controlled, and therefore biased, narrative of the speech and the facts stated by the President. Furthermore, the speech is subject to a live broadcast and thus becomes an example of what Fairclough describes as a display of unequal power structures where the speaker has full ability to decide how to frame any narrative and decide what information and facts they wish to either include or exclude. The President even makes the fact that he has control of the guest list clear by stating that he has “invited some of our very good friends” (l. 12) and that “we have limited room, but everybody wanted to come. We kept it down to a minimum. And believe it or not, this is a minimum” (l. 12-13). In addition, the statement also sheds a positive light on the speech by implying that attendance is sought after. By solely inviting Trump-supporters, the President is thereby ensured moral support during the speech, which is beneficial in his quest to appear as a beloved and highly capable President, while simultaneously being able to freely criticize any of his opponents without any interference from the audience. Other examples of the President being able to flatter himself through claims of success during his presidency without any facts to support these claims occur several times during the speech. During his campaign and his presidency, the President has often highlighted his background in business as an example of his ability to boost the American economy, a promise which was also featured in terms of his campaign promises. The speech after the acquittal was no exception with the President stating the following:

And the market was going up a lot before the election because it was looking like we had a good chance to win. And then it went up tremendously from the time we won the

election until the time we took office, which was November 8th to January 20th. And that's our credit, that's all our credit. And leading up to that point was our credit because there was hope. And one of the reasons the stock market has gone up so much in the last few days is people think we're doing so well. (l. 37-42)

Meanwhile the President also mentions that the Republican Party's poll numbers are at an all-time high and stated that “the spirit for the Republican Party right now is stronger, I think, than it's ever been in the history of our country. I think it's stronger than it's ever been” (l. 376-378). He also refers to him winning the presidential election as “one of the greatest wins of all time” (l. 95-96), once again a statement without any data to confirm its validity. In his conclusion of the speech, President Trump thanks his family for their support and makes one final claim as to how well the country is doing:

... we are making progress and doing things for our great people that everybody said couldn't be done. Our country is thriving. Our country is just respected again, and it's an honor to be with the people in this room. Thank you very much, everybody. (l. 694-697)

These statements are yet another set of examples as to how President Trump is free to present these various claims of success with no data to factually back the claims, because he had the power to select the audience in attendance of the speech.

Fairclough maintains that an effective tactic by a political leader to attract voters can occur by linguistically creating a sharp divide between ‘us’ and ‘them’, meaning themselves and their supporters and their opponents. This will prevent a division occurring in terms of the public’s attention being on several different groups of opponents and instead create the illusion of a single *enemy* (1989, p. 86). This tactic is also employed by President Trump and is evident

in the speech, where the President even uses terms associated with wartime as analogies of the impeachment process by referring to his supporters as ‘warriors’ and by stating the following’: “I want to start by thanking some of – and I call them friends because, you know, you develop friendships and relationships when you're in battle and war” (l. 28-29). President Trump also refers to the Democratic Party using the term, “the other side” (l. 309, 477, 502, 535), which is a deliberate lexical choice that results in an explicit divide between Democrats and Republicans. Another example of this tactic is evident in the President’s use of the pronoun ‘we’, to refer to himself and his supporters, and the pronoun ‘they’ or ‘them’, when referring to Republicans and individuals, who are Anti-Trump. These lexical choices in terms of pronouns in the speech are not simply an implicit attempt to create a subconscious sense of divide between Republicans and Democrats. Instead, it is an example of deliberate lexical choices that clearly expresses an explicit division between Republicans and Democrats. To further strengthen the claim that the President has been treated unfairly, he verbalizes his belief that Nancy Pelosi most likely will continue her quest to impeach him. He does so by claiming that Pelosi is behaving as if she wishes to destroy the country:

But I'm sure they'll try and cook up other things, they'll go through the state of New York, they'll go through other places. They'll do whatever they can. Because instead of wanting to heal our country and fix our country, all they want to do – in my opinion, it's almost like they want to destroy our country. (l. 651-655)

This statement is another example of how the President is able to make outrageous claims based on personal opinions instead of facts. Meanwhile, because of the President’s powerful position, the people he is insulting or accusing of various forms of political, legal, or ethical misconduct are not able to defend themselves of these serious accusations.

Conclusion

The aim of this project was to analyze and uncover what linguistics tactics are used by President Trump in his speech to regain public support after the impeachment inquiry. The findings showed that the President uses a wide array of different highly descriptive and meaningful words and phrases to emphasize his own his political abilities and innocence and to discredit every opponent of his to make himself appear as trustworthy. This tactic is evident in terms of his lexical style within the speech, which revolves around three main strategies: Convincing public of his innocence, emphasize and communicate his belief that the Democrats are attempting to ruin his political reputation and remove him from office, and to highlight his capabilities in terms of his abilities as president and remind the public of his many accomplishments during his presidency.

The President thus utilize his position of power and the unequal power structure between him and his opponents as well as the public to make himself appear as an innocent victim and portray the Democrats as evil and corrupt. The President attempts to push this narrative from the very beginning of the speech when he describes the impeachment inquiry as ‘unfair’. He continuously depicts this belief several times during the speech, though he uses different wordings every time. The President is thus able to convince the public into believing his claims through repetition in his discourse and manipulation. Meanwhile, the President also use his power to control who are allowed to attend the physical performance of his speech, and he is thereby in full control of avoiding criticism from the audience, who are present to witness the speech. He also uses the act of negativization to further strengthen his portrayal of the Democrats as the enemy of him and even the American people, since they wish to remove the President

from office. However, this is regarded by President Trump as attempts to harm the country, since he firmly believes that America is in great hands with him serving as president.

While the speech represents how the President attempts to maintain his position of power, it is also an example of how he is able to use his power in that quest. The speech is thus a perfect example of the fact that power is exercised through language. Furthermore, the President is well-known for using aggressive language to convey his opinions and promotes his agendas, which have thus over time come to be regarded as the norm in terms of how President Trump expresses his personal and political ideology. By using these tactics in terms of his discourse, the President has thus been successful in moving the Overton window in his desired direction. The impeachment trial and subsequent acquittal also serves as examples of how President Trump once again has moved the Overton window and thus have changed what kind of actions and discourse is publicly and lawfully approved for a president in America. Viewed in a larger context, the discourse of the President within the speech results in the speech itself becoming a proof of the fact that discourse is not merely the result of a string of words, which carry no deeper meaning. Rather, it is an example of how unequal power structures coupled with the power within spoken discourse can result in change in the bigger picture. The question for the future now remains, how far will President Trump be able to move the Overton window using clever linguistic tactics disguised as emotional, erratic rants?

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