Political Myth in Trump's Speech on Immigration: A Discourse Historical Approach

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Abstract

Due to the ever-changing political scene and the increasing effect of political language on people's perception, linguistic analysis is inevitable to understand political matters. By using myths in speeches, politicians legitimise specific political actions and motivate the public to accept these actions This study inspects the concept of 'Political Myth' by Bottici (2007) within the framework of Discourse Historical Approach [DHA] and Van Leeuwen's model of Social Actor's Representation. The present study examines the utilisation of the political myth of Conspiracism in Trump's Immigration speech to legitimize the rejection of refugees. The USA, known as the land of opportunities, has a long history of rejecting refugees and immigrants based on the myth of Conspiracism. In the famous Immigration speech, former President, Donald Trump, relied on promoting anti-immigrant sentiments to justify rejecting refugees. The data under study comprises extracts that referred to immigrants/refugees and American citizens. This paper attempts to answer the questions: What is meant by Political Myth? What are the principles of the political myth of Conspiracism? What are the referential strategies used to depict the in-group and the out-group? To what extent did the depiction of the in-group and the out-group fulfil the principles of the myth of Conspiracism?. Overall, this study indicates the usefulness of examining political myth to understand the political status quo. Also, it sheds light on the importance of linguistic analysis to decipher and evaluate politicians' actions.

Keywords: Political myth, refugees, Discourse Historical Approach, Conspiracism, immigration, favouritism, discrimination, Donald Trump, political speech.

الأسطورة السياسية في حديث ترامب عن الهجرة: النهج التاريخي للخطاب

المستخلص

تعد مشكلة الهجرة واللاجئين من أخطر المشكلات السياسية في العصر الحديث. تميزت عقود القرن الماضي بحظ وافر من الدراسات اللغوية التي تهدف لبحث المشكلات السياسية حيث يؤمن باحثو اللغة بضرورة التفاعل مع الأحداث السياسية عن طريق دراسة الخطاب السياسي. أما عن المجريات السياسية في البلاد فهي تحدد اتجاهات الشعوب وأراءهم فيما يحدث حولهم. بعد نشوب الحرب في سوريا لجأ العديد من السوريين للهجرة للحصول علي معيشة آمنة. تُعد الولايات المتحدة من ضمن البلدان التي شهدت أعدادا كبيرة من المهاجرين. كثيرا ما توصف الولايات المتحدة بأنها أرض الاحلام والفرص، في حين أنها تمتلك تاريخا طويل في استخدام أسطورة المؤامرة كوسيلة لرفض المهاجرين. في هذا السياق، قام الرئيس السابق ترامب بإصدار قوانين من شأنها الحد من الهجرة. وهذا ما يؤكد أهمية المراجعة الناقدة للأحداث التاريخية وتحليلها للوصول لتفسير أفضل للمجريات السياسية دون الانسياق لخطابات السياسيين. تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلي مناقشة الخصائص العامة للأسطورة السياسية. هذا الي جانب البحث في استخدام أسطورة المؤامرة كوسيلة لرفض المهاجرين من خلال منهج التحليل التاريخي للخطاب.

الكلمات الدالة: الأسطورة السياسية –الهجرة –التحليل التاريخي للخطاب

1. Introduction

In 2011, due to war turmoil, millions of Syrians have been forced to flee their homes. Many Syrians sought an opportunity to resettle in USA. US immigration policy during Trump's administration rejected Syrian refugees and defined them as potential terrorists. The former American President adopted anti-immigrants measure to control immigrants' entry. He demonised immigrants and associated them with security threats. This image fulfilled the political aims of accentuating the fear of terrorism and appeared to fight it effectively. Trump's administration headed towards applying punitive measures to reduce the numbers crossing the borders. These anti-immigrants measures trace its history back to 1800s.

Even though the USA has originally been a country of immigrants, American history has a long record of demonising outsiders. Attitudes toward immigrants vacillated between welcoming and rejecting over the years. Foreigners have been objects of hostility. From the middle of the 19th century, immigrants were perceived as a threat to American economy, security and civilization. Several decrees have been established to control immigration, such as The Facilitating Act of 1864, The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Quota Law of 1921, The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996. During the 1950s and 1960s, the USA admitted refugees from war-torn regions. The major wave of immigration peaked in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000 (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2014). Although those refugees worked in dangerous jobs with low wages, they were faced with anti-immigrant sentiments from American citizens. After the attacks of 11 September 11, 2001, the narrative of security threats and immigrants has returned. Versanyi (2008) asserted that the marginalisation of Muslims after 9/11 set the stage for terms like "Alien" to rise on the surface again and the revival of Alien Enemies Act of 1798. He added that the federal government used this Act to detain thousands of law-abiding Arab and Muslim non-citizens in the United States on civil immigration charges. Reid (2017) echoed "The United States effectively alienated the Muslim American community, painting an entire religion with a wide brush, falsely claiming that all Muslims may not be terrorists, but all terrorists are Muslim"(p. 3). As a result, the narrative of security threat is used by politicians to pass restrictionist laws and to arouse public condemnation towards immigrants.

In the period that followed the Syrian conflict, the political atmosphere in the industrialised countries was in division; some countries adopted a policy of rejection toward immigration while others followed a

policy of acceptance. Ever since Trump's presidential campaign, he adopted stringent border control measures. After the first few months of Trump's presidency, he signed two executive orders to ban Syrian refugees' resettlement indefinitely. Trump named the first order as Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States. Reid (2017) described this order as a means to freeze Syrian refugee resettlement and a way to pass severe vetting measures for any traveller from five predominantly Muslim countries. The other executive order removed Iraq from restricted countries, yet it kept the ban on Syrian refugees. These decisions were problematic for people coming from those countries and for people with dual-citizenship living outside these Muslim-majority countries and living in other alliance countries. Trump's decisions were also problematic and caused confusion and division among Americans. Hence, the linguistic manifestation of political myth can deeply affect what people consider legitimate, making myth a pivotal intersection of discourse and political practice.

The surface meaning of myth usually indicates falseness or imaginary tales. However, the function of myth in political contexts is far from the mere act of storytelling. Political myth has thrived in political discourse to justify specific political actions (Bottici, 2007).So, an understanding of political myth can shed light on the intersection of political discourse and political actions and unearth the legitimization of any political deed. Bottici (2007) and Edelman (1971) have dealt with the concept of political myth and noted its underestimated importance in societies. In her introduction to political myth, Bottici (2007) explained that politicians, even in the most developed countries, rely on political myth to add significance to political actions. Thus, all societies are mythical to a certain extent. Additionally, Bottici (2007) stated that political myth is interpreted by its significance not by its accuracy. Although, the core content of political myth is not necessarily a dubious narrative, still, it undergoes a form of re-contextualization and redefinition that assigns the narrative different functions from the original ones. In other words, a historically accurate story is taken out of its original context(and deprived of its original significance) to serve a different function in another different context. Following 9/11, the myth of Conspiracism has been reappropriated to fit in the context of terrorism. This myth helped define American national identity and composed a prominent element of immigration discourse throughout the country's history(Esch, 2010). Moreover, Esch explained that threat exaggeration and alarmism are common mechanisms of Conspiracism myth in the American history. Politicians used these two mechanisms as a

justification for passing anti-immigrants measures (Reid, 2017).Trump is known for inciting violence. For example, Trump sparked off a rebellion during the Capitol Hill riots On January 6, 2021. MAI (2021) reported that House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi accused Trump of provoking revolt against civil authority. Nancy declared that Trump should be removed or impeached immediately.

The rise of DHA has brought in tow a vast body of work on the role of myth and language in immigration discourse. One of the prominent studies conducted on immigration discourse was done by Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999). That study integrated Van Leeuwen's model of Social actors representation within the DHA framework. They combined the DHA with systemic functionally oriented methods of text analysis to study the official letters which notify immigrant workers of the refusal of their family reunion application. Another study by Reisigl and Wodak (2005) questioned the anti-foreigners sentiments in a petition launched by Jörg Haider. They concluded that the discursive strategies created a prejudiced atmosphere. Their analysis showed that Jörg Haider constructed an out-group of immigrants and an in-group of patriotic citizens whom immigrants prey on. In another study of myth in political discourse, Esch (2010) highlighted the vital role of American Exceptionalism as a political myth in legitimizing the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Wodak and Reisigl (2001) incorporated social actor representation in their approaches to DHA. Thus, Van Leeuwen's social actor representation model could function on a local intra-textual level within DHA (Khosravinik, 2010). As mentioned previously, the increasing effect of political language on people's perception requires close attention. This paper attempts to shed light on the crucial importance of analyzing political myth in immigration discourse. Arising from the believe that the analysis of political language will help to understand political actions, this paper argues that Trump used Conspiracism myth to legitimise rejecting refugees. This paper attempts to analyse the use of referential strategies to portray social groups in speech on immigration by Trump. Additionally, this paper examines how far the representation of the two groups fulfilled the principles of Conspiracism myth.

This paper is divided into five sections. Following this introduction, the section of 'Review of Literature' presents the concept of political myth and displays the kinds of political myth in general and Conspiracism myth in particular. The section entitled 'Discourse Historical Approach' deals with the main principles of DHA and its three dimensions of analysis. The section titled 'Van Leeuwen's model of social actors representation' provides a brief background for the linguistic analysis tool used in this paper. The third section, named 'Methodology'

depicts the socio-political context of the speech under investigation and outlines the data analysis structure. This is followed by 'Analysis and Discussion' that presents the linguistic analysis of Conspiracism myth in selected extracts from Trump's speech on immigration. The paper ends with 'Conclusion' section.

2. Review of literature

This study applies DHA along with the philosophical understanding of Political Myth. This section starts with a review of political myth then it briefly displays DHA's levels of analysis. Finally, this section provides a review of Social Actor network by Van Leeuwen.

2.1 Political Myth

Several authors have attempted to define political myth, but currently there is no single definition. Initially, it was thought that myth was limited to traditional societies where religion and politics were considered the same thing. However, scholars like Bottici (2007), Edelman (1971) and Tudor (1972) agreed that political myth is reproduced in every society, whether secular or traditional, but with variable percentages. Tudor (1972) clarified that the science of myth was mainly the concern of anthropologists and folklorists. Yet, historians helped in giving explanations of the myths, but no general theory was formed in explaining myth. He introduced from a philosophical point of view two meanings for the word myth. The first definition described myth as a kind of thinking or belief that lacks logical bases. The second definition explained political myth to be fictions about political matters. These definitions raise questions: is there any relation between using political myth in official discourse and reaching public consensus? Could the understanding of political myth lead us to a better understanding of political matters?

Bottici (2007) gave a more detailed framework for the origins of political myth. Bottici concluded that it would be better to frame a "genealogy" of myth which means "critique" of "certain view of myth". Her critique was built on tracing the historical transformation of ordinary myth to political myth. She divided the genealogy into three main periods. The first period is the Greek Homeric culture which used mythos and logos interchangeably and it lasted till the birth of Christianity. The following period was the "monotheistic religion of the book" known as "Biblos". It rejected the "plurality" of realities and replaced it with one true reality; this reality was caused by the new religion. The period of scientific rationality "scientific logos" was the period that followed the religious (Biblos) period. Scientific rationality period came out as a form of reaction towards "theological absolutism". However, Bottici clarified

that after the scientific revolution, the need for myth has not vanished. The rebirth of myth in the political field within contemporary societies led to Western Civilisation identity and European colonialism (Bottici, 2007).

The past decade has seen a renewed importance in political myth. Along with the many and fast political incidents of our world that redefined our vision about our own identity and other people's identities around us, it became essential for the public to know how everyday words affect their vision about themselves and the world. By coming to know the religious origins of myth, one may ask a related question, how does myth function in political matters?. In answering this question, Bottici (2007) concluded that all societies have been mythical with different ratios. In a sense, myth is continuously reproduced and dispersed within the society until it becomes part of the public subconscious and a way to view the world.   However, Bottici stressed the point that what distinguishes mythical societies is the possibility and availability of questioning these myths and forming critical discourse.

Tudor (1972) exposed the contributions done by both historians and political scientists in the field of political myth. As highlighted by Tudor "myth in its structure is drawn from primitive and ancient societies with no political significance experience" (1972, p. 30). To illustrate, myths could create motivation for carrying out revolutions and violent political actions. In his book, Tudor mentioned that historical political movements were initiated through myth such as the peasant rebellions[1] and proletarian revolution. These political movements strengthened Tudor's hypothesis that myth lacks any logical basis. Myth believers do not criticise it; however, it is the role of researchers to identify it and bring it under scrutiny to reveal the taken for granted attitude of those believers. Additionally, Sorel (1999) pointed out that the power of myth lied in the people who believed in it. In other words, believing and asserting certain myths would be the primary force or motivation for these believers to act. In other words, myth explains the experience that its believers live by along with describing their feelings towards this experience.

Bottici illustrated a remarkable feature of political myth which Edelman (1971) explained and Geis (2012) named it later as "the Valiant Leader". The Valiant Leader myth refers to the concept when politicians portray themselves as the saviours and heroes of the public. As a result, all unimaginable promises and vows to fight evil and protect people are made. Thus, there should be an evil entity to fight, which changes by

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[1] The first rebellion to break out in English history. In 1381, during the reign of Richard II, it occurred as a revolt against the harsh taxation and forced labour.

changing time and place. Geis (2012) named this mythical concept as "The Conspiratorial Enemy" (p. 26). Bottici (2007) speculated this concept on the contemporary western hostility towards Islam and Muslims. The idea that whatever is 'orient' has potential hatred towards whatever is Western and modern has many supporters in America and Europe. Consequently, many Muslims around the world went under the stereotypical negative presentation of "other", jihadist, who is willing to kill and destroy whatever is western and modern. Islamophobia is one of the political myth products used by political speakers to justify their intentions to fight those "evil people" (Bottici, 2007, p. 233).

Driving upon the classical theories of political myth, Bottici (2007) reached a definition of political myth within several principles:

1- Political myth is a narrative that requires continuous work in order to fit: Bottici explained that "human beings are impelled to go back to their political narratives, revise them in light of their new needs and exigencies through their reception, or, when this is not possible, dismiss them" (p.179).

2- Political myth operates as the main force of creating significance for doing any action.

3-Political myth is not judged by its content but judged by the significance it holds within the society.

Thus, cognition attachment to a specific myth is a mirror of a certain mindset. People with this certain mindset resist further inspection and deny alternative interpretations for events.

(i) 2.1.1 Kinds of Political Myth

As mentioned earlier, Edelman (1971) proposed three kinds of political myth in contemporary societies. Geis (2012) suggested titles for the political myths proposed by Edelman:

A. The Conspiratorial Enemy: "the myth of a hostile out-group plotting to commit harmful acts which is perceived as different, homogeneous, highly potent or omnipotent, and conspiring to harm the in-group"(p. 26).

B. The Valiant Leader: "the view that the political leader is benevolent and is effective in saving people from danger and that he or she exhibits the qualities of courage, aggressiveness, and ability to cope."(p. 26)

C. United We Stand: "the belief that a group-a nation, a state, a party can achieve victory over its enemies if it will only work, sacrifice, and obey its leaders". (p. 26)

He added a new trait to myth characteristics that were proposed by Edelman. Geis (2012) proposed that the conspiratorial enemy myth was

exploited by Ronald Reagan when he considered the Soviet Union and Cuba as "evil empires". Besides, political myth could be used to "provide explanations of certain events, but also to justify certain courses of action"(p. 29). In this sense, it is empirical but not verifiable, which means that myth is not provable because appropriate experimentation for its notions is not applicable.

In the light of aforementioned definitions, political myth solidifies the imagined phenomena to produce an experience. Myth is used by politicians in the form of a narrative to create the intended political experience. Here comes the role of language in reflecting political myth as described by Cassirer. Following the framework established by Bottici, political myth is a narrative that connects past, present and future. Cassirer (1973) illustrated that any language displays two main purposes. The first purpose is the semantic effect and the second purpose is the magical effect. The semantic function is achieved when the speaker states particular affairs objectively, but the magical function is produced by the effect generated from using language. So, Cassirer interpreted the magical function to be the tool that helps politicians to move the public. He also stressed that the myth in the narrative is the most enormous staying power of any politician in modern-day life. The narrative quality of the myth could be achieved by making a prophecy. This prophecy could be a foreseeing for the future (Cassire, 1973). As illustrated by Cassirer "myth of the twentieth century is the myth of a superior race, the Aryan one[2], which, precisely on the basis of the narrative of its glorious origins is deemed to rule the world" (p. 177). In a similar vein, Sorel explained that "Christian martyrs are moved by the catastrophic representation of Apocalypse[3], so the passage from capitalism to socialism must take the form of catastrophe in order to be effective" (p. 164). Consequently, the particularistic nature is a fundamental characteristic of political myth. For example, the significance that a myth holds is related(tied) to the context that surrounds it. Thus, it is not necessarily that the same significance is always created from the same myth. Yet, myth is subjected to continuous work and redefinition in order to fit in and serve the current political situation.

(ii)   2.1.2 Political Myth of Conspiracism

As mentioned previously, conspiratorial enemy was suggested by Edelman(1971) as the most prevalent myth in contemporary society. He

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[2] A myth derived from the theory of Aryan race. This theory claims the superiority of the white race. Hilter and the Nazis exterminated Jews and other non-Aryans based on this notion. This theory is usually linked to negative sense such as Nazism and race crimes.
[3] An theological imaginary view for the end of the world. Its narrative is based on the unavoidable war between good and evil. One of its famous signs is the inevitable victory of the good over the evil.

defined as a hostile out-group plotting harmful acts against in-group. In a study of Bush's speeches by Esch(2010), conspiracy and Conspiracism were used interchangeably. Pipes (1997) described Conspiracism as a set of beliefs, knowledge, values, and practices that evolve around conspiracy theories. So, the conspiratorial enemy is considered part of the system of Conspiracism(Byford, 2011). Throughout this paper, Conspiracism will be used to refer to the political myth of a hostile out-group and a homogeneous in-group. In American history, many incidents followed this pattern of conspiracy mentioned above. The Chinese Exclusion as an anti-Chinese sentiment was based upon the idea that the Chinese are the reason for unemployment. In other words, they are taking American's chances of employment. Another incident is the anti-Catholic riots that rejected Irish and Germans' presence because they disturb the Protestant American culture. To discover the roots of this myth, Judis (2005) explained that the restoration of religious ideas was the main base that held and shaped the American foreign policy. One of these religious visions is the land of freedom created by the maker of heaven to fulfill its destiny and accomplish its call for duty. This call for duty changed by the changing of time. For instance, American officials referred to the Indian wars as the fight of civilisation against barbarism and the war between the US and Germany and Japan was described as a battle between good and evil. Furthermore, American nationalism and exceptionalism were described by Judis (2005)as a transfer from the Protestant millennialism into the Civil millennialism. To sum up, Conspiracism myth is a narrative that was brought by the early Protestant immigrants. Three features mark this narrative:

1- There are two significantly different groups(the good *us* the bad *them*) that are in a constant fight and constant conflict in objectives.

2- One group is destined to win the battle and spread peace in the world due to divine support.

3- The battle takes an apocalyptic form: a war should occur. The divine force supports the good side(*us* group), ultimate triumph is asserted, and final destiny is fulfilled.

Similarly, Van Dijk's (1998) ideological square represented the strategy of groups polarisation. Polarisation happens when positive and negative features of in-group (Us) and out-group (Them) are (de)emphasized by applying discourse structures. According to the scheme proposed by Bottici, the second component of political myth is its significance for the public. This feature is pivotal for the creation of political actions. Judis (2005) illustrated that throughout history, the American policy in dealing with foreign matters took the shape of

fighting for a high purpose. Additionally, Judis interpreted American involvement in the many wars that were declared by their officials due to "the millennialist framework is too deeply embedded in the Americans' understanding of their role in the world" (p.61). Indeed, the call of duty, as suggested by Judis saturated American heritage. Not only were they aware of this, but political leaders also exploited it in justifying declaring wars, excluding immigrants, giving aids, etc. Alongside wars, politicians used this persuading tool to legalise any foreign policies. For instance, the aftermath of the September 11 attacks a new hostile out-group was added to the Americans' list of evil people. In the period that followed the towers attack, new concepts like Islamophobia and groups like Al-Qaeda were introduced to the public. This form of reproduction reiterated the conspiracy narrative. It could be assumed that in the modern world, the use of myth will not prevail. Yet, the narrative of evil people plotting against great nation still carries significance in American society.

Part of the power that lies in the significance of certain myths is how people visualise the future. No political action is possible to be created without assuring the people of a better future. Just as the lens changes the view of a photo, so too the political myths change the future's perception. To accept any policy, people must believe that the policy is on their side. In other words, it should either bring them prosperity or fight potential harm. In this way, politicians exploited conspiracism schemes to justify and legalise political acts like deporting citizens suspected of having ties with the terror out-group. The wave of declining refugees and hardening the borders were tied with the accusations of plotting against the country. Policymakers convince the public that these measures will save them and the country from threats and potential terrorists. As a result, antiterrorist measures were taken towards people attempting to cross the borders and existing citizens of a different race. One of these measures is declining refugees. As Hammond (2011) concluded, politicians portray to the audience that the country will be a better place without the refugees. For instance, refugees are responsible for imposing security threats and economic threats in the country (terrorism, crime and unemployment). Thus, the homogeneous American culture will be at risk as long as "aliens" live among them(p. 746).

Hammond (2011) commented that towards the end of twentieth century, American citizens had two major problems with the growing influx of immigrants. Some citizens perceived immigrants as an economic threat; others regarded them as a cultural threat. The economic and cultural insecurities are common narrative used in anti-immigration discourse. For instance, immigrants were allocated the responsibility of taking jobs from "low-skilled American workers or depressed their

wages"(Hammond, 2011, p. 748). Additionally, other restrictionist policy advocates saw a cultural threat from immigrants. Hammond stated, "immigration of dark-skinned people from south of the border threatened the purity of our culture"(p. 748). Unexpectedly, the motives for anti-foreigners laws shifted from repairing the economy to fighting terrorism.

After the famous attacks of September 2011, panic over immigration was heightened significantly. Immigration and terrorism became conflated in the public mind(Hammond, 2011). As a result of the upheaval, Muslim immigrants became the new enemy. Americans started to look to their Muslim neighbours with fear and distrust. Media and politicians significantly stimulated an atmosphere of Islamophobia. Portes and Rambaut (2006) pointed out "the federal government has fed this confusion by targeting the Muslim population as a whole for special surveillance and by restricting entries from Arab countries as part of the effort to defend the nation against terrorist attacks."(p. 69). As a result, the myth of Conspiracism was used by politicians to pass restrictionist laws and to arouse public condemnation towards immigrants.

(b) 2.2 Discourse Historical Approach (DHA)

Wodak (2001) developed an approach that is mainly concerned with the political issues known as Discourse Historical Approach [DHA]. It is a multi-theoretical and multi-methodological approach used to investigate the social problem. It comes under the umbrella of CDA from the perspective and methodology. Like CDA and DHA, it depends on using linguistic analysis to reveal what is hidden in the discourse and justify why certain interpretation of discourse is more valid than others. However, the distinctive feature about DHA is that it adds the historical and socio-political dimension of the issue under investigation to the interpretation of hidden meanings. DHA is known to be a flexible toolkit for several reasons. Firstly, the interpretation of any discourse could vary according to the historical and socio-political context. Secondly, DHA encourages an eclectic framework that is used to analyse the text. As stated by Wodak, DHA integrates "a large quantity of available knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive 'events' are embedded" (Wodak, 2001, p. 65). Thus, this framework helps to integrate various social theories to reach the best possible interpretation for the text.

As Fairclough and Wodak (1997) illustrated, the discourse and linguistic component are the fuel for the creation of social movements and political actions. So, social changes are partly constituted linguistically. The relationship between discourse and society is described as "dialectical", in the sense that, "discourse constitutes society and

culture, as well as being constituted by them" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Therefore, the discourse can shape society and society's discourse. The two fundamental principles for DHA are known as:

Interdiscursivity: This means that topic-oriented discourses are linked to each other. For example, the discourse on ethnic diversity could refer to another topic like preferred immigration. Likewise, discourse on conspiracy theory could refer to other topics like unwanted immigration and sub-topics like un-employment and terrorism.

Intertextuality: Wodak (2001) termed it as texts are linked to each other via means of reference to the same topic, actors or events. Wodak clarified that the reference could be explicit, through allusions or evocations, or through arguments transformation. For instance, Trump's speeches about immigration and laws of restricting Muslim immigrants referred to the same topic (immigration), actors (Muslim immigrants) and events (banning immigrants).

Going by the aforesaid, DHA places great importance on the role of context in interpreting the meanings of discourse. The principles mentioned above are embedded in the four layers of context. Wodak (2009: 318) clarified that the context in DHA is "made up of four layers" that are taken into consideration while analysing any text:

1-"[The] immediate language or text internal co-text". This is the layer of linguistic analysis. According to Wodak and Reisigl (2001), this layer focuses on the feature of a single utterance that includes "lexical solidarities, collocational particularities and connotations, implications, and presuppositions as well as thematic and syntactic coherence" (p. 385). This layer is descriptive, while the other three layers reveal the role of social theories and discourse theories within a theoretical view of context.

2-"[The] intertextual, interdiscursive relationship between texts, genres, and discourses". The layer builds patterns and links between utterances, texts, genres, and discourses.

3- "[The] extralinguistic social/ sociological variable" which forms the immediate context of a situation. This layer reflects "the formalities of the situation, the place, the time, the occasion of the communicative event, the group/s of recipients" (Wodak & Reisigl, 2001, p. 385).

4- "[The] broader socio-political and historical context which discursive practices are embedded in and related to". This layer is vital to find a justifiable interpretation. In this research theories of political myth (Conspiracism and Multiculturalism) will combine the broader socio-political and historical context. So, theories of political myth will interpret the linguistic choices and fulfil the DHA principles of intertextuality and interdiscursivity.

When it comes to analysing language, DHA shares with CDA the interest in the perspective that language could have hidden power relations and manipulation. Thus, the language analysis, along with the contextual knowledge, created the analytical scheme. The "discourse-specific" analytical scheme in DHA is divided into three dimensions: the contents, the discursive strategies and the linguistic realisations.

1)**The content/topic dimension**: Wodak and Reisigl (2001) stated this dimension is concerned with identifying the topic/s of a specific discourse. The topic dimension subsumes the topic's determination, the extralinguistic variable, and the broader socio-political, historical context.

2) **The discursive strategies**: This dimension is divided into the macro discursive strategy and the local discursive strategy. The macro strategies are used to achieve the general aims of the discourse. The local strategies operate to serve the specific aims of the discourse.

Wodak and Reisigl (2001) stated that there are four macro-strategies. These strategies are connected to the discourse topics; they may change according to the topic. They were defined by De Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak (1999) as follows:

- Constructive: "this strategy is used to build certain social quo".
- Perpetuating: used to preserve and reproduce "social quo".
- Transformational: used to change "national identity".
- Destructive: used to "demolish existing national identities or elements of them".

The macro-strategies mentioned above are achieved through the following local-strategies:

- Referential: This strategy is used to "represent social actors and construct them".
- Predicational: This strategy is used to assign positive/negative attributes to "social actors" whether implicitly/explicitly.
- Argumentation: This strategy is used to argue for or against specific ideology, concept or action. Besides the "Topoi" is used to justify positive/negative attributions.
- Perspectivation: used as a "framework" for the argument.
- Intensification/ mitigation: strategies used to make the argument either intensified or mitigated. It could be reflected in the use of modal verbs or intensifiers.

3)**Linguistic realisation:** This dimension is concerned with the linguistic manifestations of topics and strategies. Wodak (2001) clarified how each strategy is linguistically realised as follows:

- Referential: This strategy is linguistically realised through devices like membership categorisation, naturalising, depersonalising, metaphors and metonymies

- Predicational: This strategy is linguistically realised through stereotypical, evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits- implicit and explicit predicates

- Argumentation: This strategy is linguistically realised through the justification of political inclusion or exclusion, discrimination or preferential treatment.

- Perspectivation: This strategy is linguistically realised through reporting, description, narration or quotation.

- Intensification/mitigation: This strategy is linguistically realised through intensifying or mitigating the illocutionary force of discriminatory utterances. DHA has valuable application in examining the use of political myth in political actions. The incorporation of Political myth within DHA framework will help to decipher and evaluate politicians' actions. The increasing effect of political language on people's perception requires close attention to it. The contention of this paper is to detect the use of referential strategies in political myth to create an atmosphere of in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination. This demonstrates the importance of incorporating political myth within DHA to fight discrimination and to have a positive effect on society.

(c) 2.3 Van Leeuwen's model of Social Actors Representation

Van Leeuwen presented his socio-semantic inventory approach firstly in 1996 as "The representation of social actors". This approach primarily based on the assumption that "meaning belongs to culture rather than language" (1996, p. 32). Based on his work in 1996, Van Leeuwen developed his model in a book known as *'Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis'* (2008). Van Leeuwen's (1996) article discussed social actors' representation in political discourse and the difference between the socio-semantic project and the linguistic project. Meaning that the model examines the way of how social actors are represented "sociologically and critically before studying how they are aware linguistically" (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 23). For instance, "agents" are not necessarily realised only through linguistic categories, yet there is the "social and cultural understanding" (p. 35). Van Leeuwen (2008) illustrated that agency as a sociological concept is of major and classic importance in critical discourse analysis. Contexts play an essential role in defining social actors represented as agents or patients. However, the sociological agency is not always realised by the linguistic agency. For

example, the grammatical role of "agent" can be realised in multiple ways. In creating his model, Van Leeuwen was influenced by different scholars such as Michel Foucault, Basil Berntein and Michael Halliday. He based his model on Foucault's concept of "discourse", Berntsein's concept of "recontextualisation" and Halliday's concept of "register" (2008, p. 8). The approach formed by Van Leeuwen (1996, 2008) focused on how language can be used to represent social actors (participants in clauses). In other words, social actors could be represented as subjects or objects or excluded altogether via the use of grammatical systems. However, any form of representation is not spontaneous. Van Leeuwen (1996) questioned at the beginning of his article:

> How are social practices transformed into discourses about social practices-and this both in the sense of what means we have for doing so and in the sense of how we actually do it in specific institutional contexts which have specific relations with the social practices of which they produce representation (p. 35)

Van Leeuwen explained that social practices and actors could be represented in multiple ways, yet the "institutional" considerations required a specific representation form. In an attempt to provide possibilities for social actors' representations, Van Leeuwen (2008) made the distinction between presenting social actors in the text and not presenting them. Whenever actors are presented in the text, this is called "inclusion"; whenever they are not presented in the text, this is called "exclusion"(p. 32). The latter is divided into "suppression" or "background" of social actors. In suppression, social actors of a given activity are completely excluded while in "background" social actors are mentioned elsewhere in the text and could be inferred. Suppression is realised linguistically through passive voice, non-finite clause functioning as a grammatical participant and nominalization. Based on Van Leeuwen, the possible ways of representing social actors in texts are:

Role Allocation: In this section social actors are allocated roles of either activation or passivation. The former is when they are active, and the latter is when actors are represented as undergoing the activity. Activation and passivation are realised through participation, circumstantialisation and possessivation. Passivation could be divided to a subject or a beneficiary. Subjected social actors are represented as objects in the action while beneficialised actors benefit from the action(either negatively or positively).

(i) Genericisation and Specification

This refers to the assumption that social actors could be represented as classes or as specifically identifiable individuals. Genericisation is more explicit in press new as the same subject could be represented in more than one style according to the point of identification. On the other side, the specification could be realised through the absence of present tense (Van Leeuwen, 2008).

Assimilation:

When social actors are represented as groups, in paradox with representing them as individuals, Van Leeuwen referred to this representation as "Individualization". He furtherly divided assimilation into "Aggregation" which is representing social actors as "statistics" and "collectivisation" which is in contrast to aggregation. Definite or indefinite quantifiers could realise aggregation as in "a number of critics want to see our intake halved to 70,000" (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 38). Van Leeuwen contended that the importance of using aggregation is to "regulate practice" and to "manufacture consensus" (p. 37). Collectivisation could be realised linguistically through mass nouns or noun denoting a group of people. For instance, Bernard(2018, p. 91) concluded that "the Board remains resolute in its belief that safety is imperative" is a form of collectivisation. **Association and dissociation:**

Association and dissociation are other ways in which social actors can be mentioned as groups. Van Leeuwen used the term association to refer to groups of social actors or groups formed by social actors. Association could be realised through parataxis or circumstances of accompaniment.

Indetermination and differentiation:

Van Leeuwen (2008) stated that "Indetermination" occurs when social actors are represented as unspecified "anonymous individuals" (p. 39). Indetermination is realised linguistically through indefinite pronouns (i.e. Somebody). Indetermination could be aggregated as in "some believe".

(ii) Nomination and Categorization

The nomination is about representing the identity of social actors as unique. Nomination occurs when a proper noun is used. However, categorisation is about representing social actors in terms of "identities and functions they share with others" (p. 40). Van Leeuwen divided categorisation into functionalisation and identification.

Functionalisation:

Functionalisation is about representing social actors in terms of what they do, whether it is an occupation or role. This representation strategy is realised linguistically via a noun derived from a verb through

suffix such as "-er, -ant, -ent, -ian, -ee, e.g., "interviewer," "celebrant," "correspondent," "guardian," "payee" (p. 42). Another way is through a noun derived from a noun that denotes a place or a tool associated with an activity such as "-ist, -eer, e.g., pianist, mountaineer" (p. 42). Van Leeuwen pointed out that forms like "man, woman" are a highly generalised form of categorisation.

(iii) Identification

Identification is representing social actors in terms of their identities. Social actors could be identified in the form of classification, relational identification, and physical identification.

Classification: In this form, social actors are referred to through categories. These categories are designed by society or institution to differentiate between classes of people. As a result, these categories could vary, historically and culturally. For instance, in the west classification could be according to "age, gender, provenance, class, wealth, race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation" (p. 42). Relational identification happens when social actors are referred to in terms of their relation to other social actors. Physical identification happens when social actors are represented in terms of physical characteristics.

(iv) Personalization and Impersonalization

All the categories mentioned above represent social actors as human beings(Van Leeuwen, 2008). However, social actors could be impersonalised by representing them through abstract nouns or concrete nouns whose meanings are non-human. Additionally, impersonalization, in general, affects the representation of social actors. Van Leeuwen explained that it could background the identity or the role of social actors. Also, it could lend impersonal authority or add positive/negative connotations to the action. Impersonalisation could be in two types; it could be abstraction or objectivation.

Abstraction: In this type, social actors are represented by utilizing a quality assigned to them. For example, immigrants are referred to as problems in "Australia is in danger of saddling itself up with a lot of unwanted problems". Van Leeuwen (2008) illustrated that immigrants, in this example, are assigned the quality of being "problematic" (p. 46). As a result, abstractions add connotative meanings for social actors as it interprets and evaluates them.

(v) Objectivation

Objectivation occurs if social actors are represented through a place or a thing closely related to them or their actions. Types of

objectivation   are   spatialisation,   utterance   autonomization, instrumentalisation, and somatisation.

(vi) Overdetermination

This representation is one of the strategies used to legitimise political practices. It happens when social actors are engaged as participants in more than one activity at the same time. Van Leeuwen (2008) distinguished them into Inversion, symbolisation, connotation, and distillation.

An example of applying DHA in political discourse is a study by Lamb (2013) that analysed the immigrants' role in official data about immigration. The study applied the discourse-historical approach, and Van Leeuwen's representation of social actors. He concluded that officials divided migrants into two groups. The 'good' groups are included, and the 'bad' groups are excluded. Another application of DHA and Van Leeuwen's model is the analysis of immigrants representation in online newspapers during Brexit Referendum debate by Pointon. Pointon (2018) concluded that *The Telegraph* and *The Daily Mail* exhibited a pattern of negative representation of immigrants. Also, they created security and financial arguments by associating migrants with security and economic problems. Lawton (2013) examined the reproduction of discrimination and anti-immigrant sentiment within the 'English Only' movement in the United States. Lawton endorsed that this movement exploited a mythical version of the US to construct in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination.

3. Data and Methodology

After the Syrian conflict in 2011, and before the inauguration, Trump attacked the open door policy adopted by the Obama administration and expressed his intentions to limit immigration. As explained by Reid (2017), Trump's campaigns were "based on this fear mongering to rally Americans behind him as someone who will protect the country from terrorism" (p. 30). As a result, the increasing islamophobic atmosphere affected even the Muslims living and residing in the states. Reid asserted that "many Muslim immigrants and Muslim Americans are fearful that if they leave the country, they will have a hard time reentering simply for being Muslim" (2017, p. 30). It was clear that Trump's decisions annoyed the international community and the local American community. Additionally, Reid underlined the role played by the historical context in reviving such anti-foreigner measures. For instance, democratic legislators described Trump's orders as a pattern of "scapegoat measures". These measures were a result of anti-immigration sentiments that existed during the nineteenth century. For instance,

Chinese and Mexican immigrants were rejected several times because of the economic threat that they imposed. Similarly, Syrian refugees were the new scapegoat for terrorism threats(Reid, 2017). As mentioned previously, Conspiracism myth is used by politicians to generate political actions. Some of these actions could be the political exclusion of minorities such as immigrants and refugees. Pipes (1997) described Conspiracism as a set of beliefs, knowledge, values, and practices that evolve around conspiracy theories. So, the conspiratorial enemy is considered part of the system of Conspiracism (Byford, 2011). Throughout this paper, Conspiracism will be used to refer to the political myth of a hostile out-group and a homogeneous in-group.

The data for the present study come from the 2016 Phoenix Immigration Speech delivered by Trump. The controversial speech is one of Trump's campaign's speeches before the inauguration. In this speech, he presented himself as the Republican party nominee against the Democratic nominee, Hillary Clinton. The 10-point plan speech fully dedicated to emphasising the hardline stance towards immigrants. This speech is odten referred to as being a representative of anti-immigration political speeches. Trump conflated the term "immigrant" with the term "refugee"; he grouped them as outsiders and aliens. Reid (2017) described this speech as a proposal of violent solutions to the problem of refugees. Along the same line, Pointon (2018) stated that Trump attacked everybody crossing the American borders in general and dehumanised refugees in specific. Finally, this speech was delivered after the Syrian conflict, making it a suitable speech for analysis.

The selected extracts were qualitatively analysed using Political Myth theory within the framework of Discourse Historical Approach. This involved examining the referential strategies through Van Leeuwen's model of social actors representation. The focus on social actors is inspired by the concern that language can represent humans in different forms. These forms could either be a positive one or a negative one. Thus, examining the pattern of social actors representation will lead to understanding the motives behind the discourse. In particular, this study is concerned with the representations of the in-group and the out-group. So, Van Leeuwen's model will reveal the representation pattern of the in-group and out-group; the pattern, in its turn, will disclose political myth creation.

4. Analysis and Discussion

The data used for the analysis are selected from the speech on immigration delivered by Trump in 2016. In this speech, Trump presented his 10-point plan to end immigration and reject refugees. The

selected extracts are chosen based upon mentioning the in-group (Americans) and the out-group (immigrants/refugees). The two groups are represented as two conflicting worlds. The analysis reveals how Trump depicted the in-group as a force of good and the out-group as a force of evil. Trump uses a classification referential strategy for Americans and immigrants. However, this strategy depicts the in-group as a sophisticated group and the out-group as unsophisticated.

> *(1)*
>
> *It should mean improvements to our laws and policies to make life better for <u>American citizens</u>.Thank you. But if we're going to make our immigration system work, then we have to be prepared to talk honestly and without fear about these important and very sensitive issues. For instance, we have to listen to the concerns that working people, our forgotten working people, have over the record pace of immigration and it's impact on their jobs, wages, housing, schools, tax bills and general living conditions. These are valid concerns expressed by <u>decent and patriotic citizens</u> from all backgrounds*[00:04:40]
>
> *(2)*
>
> *While there are many <u>illegal immigrants</u> in our country who are good people, many, many, this doesn't change the fact that most illegal immigrants are lower skilled workers with less education, who <u>compete directly against vulnerable American workers,</u> and that these illegal workers draw much more out from the system than they can ever possibly pay back[00:11:11]*

In these extracts, Trump classifies Americans as decent, patriotic citizens. On the contrary, Trump classifies immigrants as illegal workers with lower skills and less education. The classification strategy acknowledges the civil and political rights of Americans by referring to their citizenship. The reference to immigrants as "lower-skilled workers" and Americans as "vulnerable American workers" create nationalistic boundaries between the two groups. Pointon (2018) explained that nationalism-dependent images are built upon accepting what is national and rejecting "anti-national". Similarly, Bonikowski and DiMaggio (2016) explained that patriotism is a popular theme that is related to nationalism. They also implied that the country's unquestionable positive evaluation is a characteristic of "blind patriotism". Thus, this image has created nationality-based in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination.

In extract (3) and (4), Trump uses functionalization strategy to refer to Americans and immigrants.

(3)

I have met with many of the great <u>parents</u> who lost their children to sanctuary cities and open borders So many people, so many, many people. [00:06:35]

(4)

Marilyn Pharis, was sexually assaulted and beaten to death with a hammer. Her <u>killer</u> had been arrested on multiple occasions… I am going to create a new special deportation task force focused on identifying and quickly removing the most dangerous <u>criminal illegal immigrants</u> in America… That is those relying on public welfare or straining the safety net along with millions of recent <u>illegal arrivals</u> and <u>overstays</u> who've come here under this current corrupt administration.[00:09:51]

Functionalization strategy underlines the beneficial role played by Americans in society by representing them as "parents". While Americans are positively depicted, immigrants are negatively depicted as in "killer", "criminal", and "overstays". This representation led to cultivating resentment of immigrants and reinforcing racial stereotypes. Trump emphasises the danger imposed by immigrants and denies any form of contribution done by them. So, Trump represents the Americans as the civilised group who are victims of immigrants' crimes. Accordingly, this picture creates a dichotomous world view; a peaceful community composed of the ingroup attacked by the chaotic, violent out-group. In terms of aggregation, Trump uses this device to reinforce in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination. The excessive representation of immigrants via numbers could negatively indicate the large scale of their population(Van Leeuwen, 2008).

(5)

Then there is the issue of security. <u>Countless innocent American</u> lives have been stolen because our politicians have failed in their duty to secure our borders[00:06:15]

(6)

Since 2013 alone, the Obama administration has allowed 300,000 criminal aliens… Hillary Clinton has pledged amnesty in her first 100 days.. this includes her plan to bring in <u>620,000 new refugees</u> from Syria and that region over a short period of time[00:17:58]

So, Trump exacerbates the large numbers of the out-group whom he previously announced in the speech as not wanted. This image runs contrary to the aggregation used to represent Americans. As shown in extract (5), the quantifier "countless" indicates the massive scale of American victims. Additionally, this image magnifies the representation

of Americans as weak and vulnerable. The aggregation has sharply intensified the demonisation of the out-group. Also, it has indicated the profound harm inflicted on the in-group. As mentioned earlier, Trump wanted to limit immigration. So, the aggregation strategy is used to indicate that eliminating crime and terror from the country is tied with declining immigrants and refugees.

Extract (7), (8), (9) and (10) show the striking difference in naming the in-group and the out-group via collectivization and abstraction strategies.

(7)

I will get this done for you and for your <u>family</u>. <u>We'll</u> do it right. You'll be proud of our country again. <u>We'll do it right.</u> [00:55:38]

(8)

obligation to them and to their children to control future immigration as we are following, if you think, previous <u>immigration waves</u>. We've had some <u>big waves.</u>[00:50:44]

(9)

I'm going to deliver a detailed policy address on one of the greatest <u>challenges</u> facing our country today, illegal immigration. [01:01:20]

(10)

We have no idea who these people are, where they come from. I always say <u>Trojan horse.</u> [00:17:51]

In extract(7), Trump uses collectivization strategy in "family" and "we" to represent Americans as a unified group. This strategy depicts Americans as a unified group. The image of collectivization creates a spirit of unanimity that is absent in the out-group. In a longitudinal study of the American Identity, Ricento (2003) has noticed the use of the plural pronoun "we" by officials to establish and perpetuate American identity. Thus, the pronoun "we" has led to American identity production that excludes some groups, includes other groups, and assigns agency to the American people for deciding immigration policy and regulations. In terms of impersonalization, Trump uses abstraction strategy to represent immigrants, but he has not used it to portray Americans. Van Leeuwen (2008) suggests that impersonalization strategy foregrounds the quality assigned to the social actor. In extract (8), Trump uses "waves" to depict immigrants with extremely negative qualities. In extracts (9) and (10), Trump uses "challenges" and "Trojan horse" to represent them as being non-human. The previous examples clearly reflect the negative impersonalisation used to refer to Syrian refugees. The analogy of "Trojan Horse" recalls the historical event of Troy's great nation downfall due to a conspiracy made by Greeks. Trump treats refugees as a symbolic entity

and regards them as conspiring agents plotting for the United states' downfall. Thus, by accepting the refugees, national security will be at risk.

(11)

peace and law and justice and prosperity will prevail.[00:55:51]

(12)

our enforcement priorities will include removing criminals, gang members, security threats, visa overstays, public charges. [00:35:53]

(13)

You won't like what you're hearing. The result will be millions more illegal immigrants; thousands of more violent, horrible crimes; and total chaos and lawlessness. [01:01:39]

Extracts (10), (11) and (12) highlight the blatant contradiction in representing the in-group and out-group. In extract 11, the association strategy links Americans with "peace" and "law"; this resulted in associating the in-group with moral values. However, in extracts 12 and 13, Trump associates immigrants with crime and acts of "lawlessness". Thus, the in-group is represented with favourable connotation terms while the out-group is not. This construction of two different worlds has insinuated a boundary between an American world of law and order and a non-American world of crime and disorder.

(14)

Grant Ronnebeck... he was murdered by an illegal immigrant[00:08:21]

(15)

Another victim is Kate Steinle. Gunned down in the sanctuary city of San Francisco, by an illegal immigrant[00:08:52]

(16)

Since 2013 alone, the Obama administration has allowed 300,000 criminal aliens[00:26:35]

Another highlighted strategy is the use of nomination with the in-group. As extracts 14 and 15 display, Trump uses proper nouns to name Americans killed by immigrants. Trump employs this strategy to arouse sympathy towards the American victims and to stir up racial hatred. So, this image sustains the sense of victimhood and grievance that was emphasised to legalise rejecting refugees. In extracts (14) and (15), the former American president extends the discourse of victimhood by affirming American innocence. Trump has depicted a less-than-human enemy whose savage ideology threatens the American civilisation. Besides, Trump uses nomination in extract (16) to attack his opponent Obama for accepting more refugees. Trump assigns Obama's

administration the responsibility of participating in the crimes committed against Americans by not deporting immigrants. In this example, Trump wants to curtail admissions of refugees and other immigrants dramatically. So, he criticised the welcoming stance adopted by Obama. An act that presents Obama's administration as acting against American interests. Simultaneously, Trump's heroic act of rejecting refugees is stressed because he saves American citizens from the evil administration.

To conclude, the analysis revealed that for the in-group were Classification, Functionalisation, and Aggregation referential strategies were used for the in-group and the out-group. However, Collectivisation and Nomination strategies were used with the in-group only, while Aggregation and Abstraction were used with the out-group only. Although some strategies were used for both groups, the representation of each group was utterly different from the other. Thus, Trump created the two-social groups based on exaggerating the differences between the in-group and out-group members.

5. Conclusion

As political discourse becomes increasingly central to people's everyday lives, it is crucial to understand how political speeches affect their perception of legitimacy. This paper has illustrated how Conspiracism political myth plays an essential role in Trump's immigration speech to legitimise rejecting refugees. One of the main contributions of the present study is to decipher and evaluate politicians' actions. The present study applies qualitative analysis to Trump's speech on immigration using Political Myth theory within the framework of Discourse Historical Approach.

This paper has argued that the political myth of Conspiracism revolves around a conflict between a hostile out-group and a homogenous in-group. Interestingly, the analysis reveals a relationship between constructing different social groups and developing a rigorous political approach towards immigrants. In Immigration Speech, Trump created two groups; the Americans formed the civilised in-group, and immigrants formed the barbaric out-group. The two groups are highly opposite to each other in terms of their presentation.

The analysis revealed that the referential strategies for the in-group were Classification, Functionalisation, Aggregation, Collectivisation and Nomination. The Classification strategy has developed a moral distance between American citizens and immigrants; it has created a lawful group of American citizens and an unlawful group of immigrants. For example, the classification strategy created a group of "patriotic citizens" who were upset from the increasing numbers of immigrants. Thus, Trump endorsed that restrictive immigration legislation was carried out due to the public

desire. Functionalisation strategy portrayed Americans as victims of crimes done by immigrants. Also, the use of "great parents" reinforced the inhumane side of immigrants. This representation has created a battle of right against wrong, virtue against vice. As a result, this image aroused hostility towards the out-group of immigrants and provided a reason for excluding them. Aggregation and collectivization strategies have augmented the victimisation of American citizens. This image of victimhood included portraying the citizens as weak and vulnerable. For example, Trump employed collectivization strategy to indicate that the American national identity is in danger and should be defended.

The analysis revealed that the referential strategies for the out-group were Classification, Functionalization, Aggregation and Abstraction. One of the key findings of this paper is the use of Classification strategy to represent immigrants. This strategy depicted the American side as legitimate, yet it portrayed the immigrants' side as corrupted. Classification strategy cast immigrants as a primary reason for the lack of job opportunities and low wages. For instance, the former American President has classified immigrants in terms of their legality, education and skills. Thus, this strategy constituted grounds for Americans to reject immigrants because they took jobs away from skilled American workers. The reference to immigrants as "lower-skilled workers" and Americans as "American workers" created nationalistic boundaries between the two groups. So, Trump reinforced the in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination based on exaggerating the differences between the in-group and out-group members. As Byford (2011) explained, this kind of representation spurred anti-immigration policies, policies that accepted the native and rejected the non-native. Additionally, Trump used Functionalisation to depict immigrants as criminals committing crimes against innocent American citizens. He explained immigrants' action of breaking the visa as deliberate lawless action. Thus, the image of civilisation against barbarism emphasised the essential goodness of American actions and the corruption of immigrants' objectives.

Another key finding is the use of Aggregation strategy to highlight the large scale of legal immigrants coming from Iraq and Afghanistan to trigger fears from their Islamic background. This strategy created a negative correlation between immigrants and crime. The use of abstraction strategy to refer to immigrants fueled the hostile rhetoric about them and predicted a potential threat from legal immigrants and refugees coming to the United States. Immigrants and refugees are systematically constructed as a similar group, sharing similar qualities,

backgrounds, motivations, and economic status. Thus, Trump chose to overlook the social and legal differences between immigrants and refugees; he treated all of them as unwanted out-groups.

Similar to Esch (2010) study, the present study showed that politicians could use political myth to gain public consensus. Esch explained that the creation of two social groups fueled the prejudiced criminalisation against immigrants. In line with Reisigl and Wodak (2005) ideas, the present study concluded that functionalization strategy is recurrent in Trump's speeches. The use of "criminal immigrants" and "citizens" enhanced the uncivilised out-group image (p. 156). Similar to results reported by Pointon (2018), the present study confirmed that the reference to immigrants as "lower-skilled workers" and Americans as "American workers" created nationalistic boundaries between the two groups.

So, the analysis has confirmed the use of referential strategies to create a civilised in-group and uncivilised out-group. On the one side, the above mentioned referential strategies constructed America as a well-ordered and homogenous society. Ultimately, the first part of the Conspiracism scheme, creating a civilised in-group, was fulfilled. On the other side, the referential strategies used for immigrants/refugees established the image of a disordered and uncivilised out-group. Eventually, the second part of the Conspiracism scheme, the evil out-group, was fulfilled. This form of reproduction reiterated the conspiracy narrative. It could be wrongly assumed that in the modern world, the use of myth will not prevail. Yet, the narrative of evil people plotting against great nation still carries significance in American society. Thus, to fully understand the political status quo, it is crucial to gain a complete picture of in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination. For this reason, political myth is relevant to the process of legitimisation in political discourse.

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