

**Discourse of Hostility: Critical Discourse Analysis of The Representation of China by the American Politicians on COVID- 19**

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**Abstract**

China's international relations are one of the coronavirus pandemic consequences, particularly its relations with the Western world. The relationship between the USA and China reaches its culmination through the coronavirus crisis. The American administration has blamed China for everything wrong in the USA ahead of the last presidential election. This paper aims to examine the representation of the American politicians: the president of the USA 'Donald Trump', the secretary of the US State 'Michael R. Pompeo', to China in some of their coronavirus briefings. The critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework has been chosen as a powerful tool to show the ideology in Trump's and Pompeo's discourses. As a result, the paper describes some textual analytic techniques such as lexical choices and collocations and argumentation strategies. The paper seeks to examine whether the speeches have been friendly or hostile by the two American politicians using a qualitative and quantitative approach.

**Keywords:** Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Lexical choices, Discourse Historical Approach strategies (DHA)

خطاب العداء: تحليل الخطاب النقدي لتمثيل الصين من قِبَل رجال السياسة  
الأمريكيين في أعقاب جائحة كورونا

مستخلص البحث

إن علاقات الصين الدولية هي أحد عواقب جائحة كورونا ، وبخاصة علاقاتها مع العالم الغربي. حيث تصل العلاقة بين الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية والصين إلى ذروتها من خلال أزمة فيروس كورونا. فلقد أُلقت الإدارة الأمريكية باللوم على الصين في كل شيء خاطئ في الولايات المتحدة قبل الانتخابات الرئاسية الأخيرة. وبناء على ذلك ، تهدف هذه الورقة إلى دراسة تمثيل الساسة الأمريكيين: رئيس الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية "دونالد ترامب" ، ووزير خارجية الولايات المتحدة "مايكل بومبيو" للصين في بعض إحاطاتهم الإعلامية عن فيروس كورونا. لقد تم اختيار إطار تحليل الخطاب النقدي كأداة قوية لإظهار الإيديولوجية في خطابات ترامب وبومبيو. ونتيجة لذلك ، تصف الورقة بعض التقنيات التحليلية النصية مثل الخيارات اللفظية واستراتيجيات التراكيب والحجج. وتسعى الورقة إلى دراسة ما إذا كانت الخطابات ودية أو معادية من قبل السياسيين الأمريكيين باستخدام منهج نمونجي مختلط.

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**1. Introduction**

Political discourses have the impact of making up the social and political reality. Public political discourse discloses identity creation, power justification, political practice normalisation, and production and reproduction of social and political mental agreement (Jackson, 2005, p.148). As part of the public political discourse, the senior American politicians' briefings signal embedded ideologies and mental representations to reproduce general social cognition. Political practices steer language or discourse, forming an interdependent relationship. Therefore, political discourses stipulate an evident ideological identity serving as meaning interpretations to produce, reproduce, and remodel social relations of power.

Drawing on Van Dijk's (2000) ideological lens, this study identifies ideology as the foundations of evaluative beliefs and control group opinions or attitudes (p.49). Ideology influences the mental structures involved in the presentation and interpretation of discourse and is apparent in virtually all forms of text or talk. However, this is reflected more in some structures than others. Thus, semantic meaning and style are more affected by ideology than morphology and many syntax aspects because the latter is much more minor context-dependent (van Dijk, 2003, p.42). Ideologies organise people and society in polarised terms, and much of this information is about 'Us' versus 'Them', combining such underlying social beliefs with their expression in discourse (p.43).

**1.1 Significance and Scope**

This study aims to identify the mental representation employed in the senior American politicians' coronavirus briefings towards China and demonstrate China's representation. What is significant about the present research is that it employs a combination of methodologies: Reisigl and Wodak's Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) (2001) and Van Dijk's Ideology Square (1998) to explore the linguistic lexical features and the argumentation strategy's topoi used to manufacture ideology. This study aims to capture how more than one feature can work consecutively to represent the hostile discourse on China.

## 1.2 Research Questions

This study strives to answer the two following questions.

1. How do The American president and the secretary of the State represent China in some of their coronavirus briefings?
2. How do the lexical choices and argumentation strategies reveal the ideologies of the two political figures' discourses towards China?

## 2. Theoretical Framework

CDA is a multidisciplinary analytical approach (van Dijk, 2001, p.96) examining how discourse represents and reproduces social and political inequalities (Wooffitt, 2005, p.137). CDA considers both spoken and written language as forms of 'social practice' representing situations, knowledge, social identities, and relations between people and others (Weiss& Wodak, 2003, p.13).

Since CDA examines the role of discourse in the recreation of unequal social relations (van Dijk, 2008a, p. 217), it is paramount to meet some requirements to explain its aims. CDA must shed light on social and political issues that serve China's negative representation in the current study. CDA is a multidisciplinary approach that examines social problems that comply with the complex relations between the discourse and social structures in displaying the depiction created by the Western political figures in the briefings under investigation. CDA revolves around ratifying, authorising, legitimising, representing, or provoking the social relations of power and dominance (van Dijk, 2008 b, p. 86). Defining discourse studies as 'critical' necessitates some principles that signify domination as social power abuse by a social group. The investigated relations of such domination are from the dominant group's stance and the advantage of appraising dominant discourse compliant with the dominant groups' interests (van Dijk, 2008 b, p.6).

### 2.1 Socio-Cognitive Approach

While doing CDA, socio-cognitive discourse analysis is of paramount importance as it is a multidisciplinary type of CDS relating discourse structures with social ones through a cognitive interface (van Dijk, 2018, p.28). The socio-cognitive discourse analysis is overt in van Dijk's works on racism and ideology, both cognitive and social phenomena. CDA needs a solid linguistic basis that necessitates detailed structures, strategies, and functions of text and talk, including grammatical, pragmatic, interactional, stylistic, rhetorical, semiotic, or narrative (van Dijk, 2001, p. 97).

### 2.1.1 The Ideological Square

The ideological discourse is polarised by nature and based on the speakers' polarised mental models to form similar models among the recipients. Such polarisation influences all variable forms at all discourse levels and their communicative contexts (van Dijk, 2015, p. 5). van Dijk's ideological square of positive-self representation and negative-other presentation features a group conflict and interaction with other groups. It reflects the underlying polarised structure between (positive) Us and (negative or hostile) Them. The ideology square comprises four moves that mirror the essence of the topic of the present study and make the ideological square the perfect choice to explore the American politician's polarised mental models to form similar models among the recipients and reflect China's negative representation.

- 1- It expresses or emphasises information that is positive about Us.
- 2- It expresses or emphasises information that is negative about Them.
- 3- It suppresses or de-emphasises information that is positive about Them.
- 4- It suppresses or de-emphasises negative information about Us (van Dijk, 1998, p.267).

### 2.2 Discourse Historical Approach

The Discourse Historical Approach is distinct by its endeavour of working with different approaches. Researchers should follow the triangulation principle to diminish the chance of bias, as CDA is not concerned with evaluating the rightness or the wrongness (Wodak, 2001, p.65). The DHA stands for one of the most prominent critical approaches to the study of discourse. It is a central approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (Reisigl, 2010, pp.44-45).

**Table (1)** Discursive strategies. From Wodak (2001, p.73)

TABLE 4.1 *Discursive strategies*

Strategy	Objectives	Devices
Referential/nomination	Construction of in-groups and out-groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• membership categorization</li> <li>• biological, naturalizing and depersonalizing metaphors and metonymies</li> <li>• synecdoches (pars pro toto, totum pro pars)</li> </ul>
Predication	Labelling social actors more or less positively or negatively, deprecatorily or appreciatively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stereotypical, evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits</li> <li>• implicit and explicit predicates</li> </ul>
Argumentation	Justification of positive or negative attributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• topoi used to justify political inclusion or exclusion, discrimination or preferential treatment</li> </ul>
Perspectivation, framing or discourse representation	Expressing involvement Positioning speaker's point of view	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reporting, description, narration or quotation of (discriminatory) events and utterances</li> </ul>
Intensification, mitigation	Modifying the epistemic status of a proposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• intensifying or mitigating the illocutionary force of (discriminatory) utterances</li> </ul>

## 2.2 Previous Studies

Surveying the literature of CDA showed that many studies examined various discourses, utilising different CDA approaches. Researchers used CDA to investigate embedded ideologies, other representations, and hate content in political discourses.

Sarah (2019) analysed Donald Trump's speeches following van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach. The analysis demonstrated five CDA elements in Trump's speech: thematic, syntactic style, semantic style, force style, and rhetorical force utilising a qualitative method. The findings revealed several elements that build social cognition: emotional attachment, mind control, evidence mitigation, glorification, creating enemies, and rhetorical actions. Though Sarah's (2019) dealt with Trump's speeches using Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach, the present study used broader data and different methodology. The current study investigated four leading political figures on the micro and macro levels, using lexis and argumentation strategies.

Shakoury (2018) examined linguistic features in eight Iranian Presidents, Hassan Rouhani and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who addresses the United Nations, General Assembly. He followed Van Dijk's framework and focused on positive self-representation and negative other representation. Comparing the two presidents' speeches at the macro-level showed that Rouhani relied more on positive self-representation and Ahmadinejad 'negative other representation. The study results showed that the two presidents conveyed different viewpoints on most topics covered in the eight UNGA addresses. However, they had similar ideological stances on a few topics. This study differed from the present study in methodology and data analysis, although it represented a good sample in analysing negative-other political discourse representation.

Though the studies mentioned above have concentrated on some other genres and discourses, the present study narrows the gap among previous studies. What is notable about the current research is that it is a synergy of methodologies: van Dijk's Ideology Square (1998) and Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) argumentation strategies to explore two American political figures' embedded ideologies and representations of China in their coronavirus briefings.

## 2. Methodology

This study conducted a mixed model linguistic analysis of some of Coronavirus briefings by two American politicians, namely, Donald Trump and Michael Pompeo, to point out the representation of China, using van Dijk's Ideology Square (1998) and Reisigl and Wodak's DHA

(2001) of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). In this study, the data to be analysed were drawn from online websites: the White House <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefings-statements/> and the US Department of State's official website <https://2017-2021.state.gov/remarks-secretary-pompeo/index.html>. The yielded data checked against the aired videos of these briefings to be verified. The collected data were as accurate as the leading political figures announced them. The data include (40) briefings out of (118), representing the ideological stances issued from late February 2020 to late April 2020. Under data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as in figure (1), the investigation period was defined according to the first reported death case, and it ended according to the coronavirus first wave's peak. The official coronavirus briefings by President 'Trump' and the Secretary of the State 'Michael R. Pompeo' represented the American ideological stance. During the investigated period, a total of (62) American briefings addressed the covid-19 issue. The briefings selection criteria were built upon the high frequency of the word China (510 times) in the investigation period to identify the portrayed image of China. The chosen American briefings were twenty to guarantee the detailed objective analysis. An archive search was made using the term 'China' as a search word in these websites, providing fifteen briefings by Trump and five by Pompeo.

#### New Cases by Day

The following chart shows the number of new COVID-19 cases reported each day in the U.S. since the beginning of the outbreak. Hover over the bars to see the number of new cases by day.

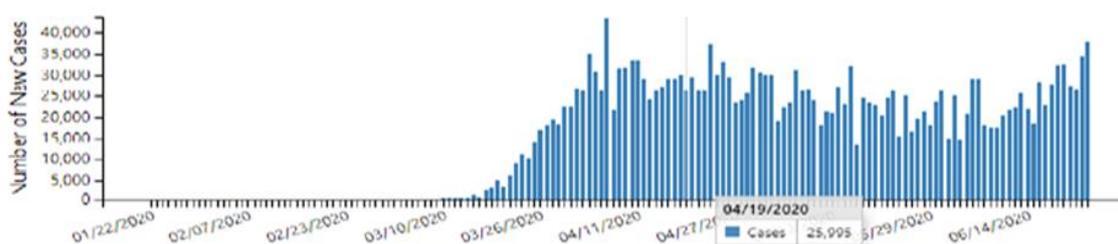


Figure (1) Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

## 4. Analysis

### 4.1 Lexical Choices and Collocations

In terms of lexical choices, the investigated data inspected the words nature collocating with China in the American briefings during the periods subject to the analysis. The data retrieved (92) most common nominal and adjectival collocations in the American briefings—the scrutiny of these collocating words based on the connotations and the

created mental image. The following sections expound on the findings of this investigated point.

#### 4.1.1 Negative-Other Presentation of China

The examples below illustrate the most common nominal and adjectival lexical items of negative connotations with China by Trump's administration.

No	Examples of Negative lexis Collocations	Source
1	The <b><i>main feeder</i></b> of this coronavirus outbreak was China.	Trump's Brief March 14
2	We closed it down to China and Europe, but in particular China, we closed it down to China, <b><i>the source</i></b> very, very early, very, very early, far earlier than even the great professionals wanted to <i>do</i> .	Trump's Brief March 17
3	I get a lot of credit for having closed our country very early to a very heavily <b><i>infected country</i></b> , China.	Trump's Brief March 21
4	The outbreak could have been contained at <b><i>its source</i></b> with very little death, very little death, and certainly very little death by comparison.	Trump's Brief April 14
5	This is something that could have been contained at <b><i>the original location</i></b>	Trump's Brief April 30
6	I talk about <b><i>the Chinese virus</i></b> , and I mean it. That's where it came from. If you look at Ebola, if you look at all ... Lyme, right? Lyme, Connecticut. You look at all these different horrible diseases, they seem to come with the name, with the location. And this was <b><i>the Chinese virus</i></b> .	Trump's Brief March 26
7	It'd be interesting to hear if you'd like to talk about the WHO, but the fact is that, I have heard for years that that is very much <b><i>biased toward</i></b>	Trump's Brief March 25
8	I said, the World Health Organization is very <b><i>China centric</i></b> , meaning whatever it is, China was <b><i>always right</i></b> .	Trump's Brief April 14
9	The WHO pushed <b><i>China's misinformation</i></b> about the virus, saying it was not communicable and there was no need for travel bands.	Trump's Brief April 14
10	The WHO's reliance on <b><i>China's disclosures</i></b> likely caused a 20 fold increase in cases worldwide, and it may be much more than that.	Trump's Brief April 14
11	We're not number one, China's <b><i>number one</i></b> , just so you understand. China is number one by a lot. They're <b><i>way ahead of us in terms of death</i></b> .	Trump's Brief April 18
12	We know that the first government to be aware of <b><i>the Wuhan virus</i></b> was the Chinese government.	Pompeo's Brief March 17

The above examples construct the negative other by demonstrating China's responsibility for the worldwide outbreak to create general public opinion believing in China's destructive and harmful role. The repetitive nominal and adjectival lexis consolidate the aggressive mental model of Trump's administration towards China.

For example (1), Trump tried to promote shame towards China as the "main feeder" of the outbreak. Using the term "feeder" indicates the continuity of China's danger function addressing fighting the coronavirus. China seems to be the world's enemy as being the "source" and the

"original location" of the pandemic, for example (2-5). Trump insisted on giving the coronavirus an unofficial term, ignoring the impartial respect of the Chinese people. The lexical terms in examples (7-11) diminish China morally. Trump manufactured an immoral mental image of China being "secretive" and spreading "misinformation campaigns" to mislead the world and cause the worst world scenarios. Trump denounced several times in his briefings the suppositional incredibility of the WHO and China. The mental models of China's unreliable information and "disclosures" intended to be held in the general public memory add to China's accountability for the increasing number of infected cases globally. The Trump administration aimed at diminishing China, evoking the sense of threat from it and creating like-minded beliefs towards it, using a recurring national term to the virus.

The utilised lexical choices, including collocations, are ideologically attributed to a negative connotation. China embodies the definite threat for the globe managing a sense of general public fear. The Trump administration signifies China as the out-group away from the in-group social one using mental representations of China's threat. This depiction deprives China of global social acceptance or sympathy for its severe coronavirus destruction.

#### 4.1.2 Positive-Other Presentation of China

Simultaneously, in Trump's administration briefings, some nominal and adjectival lexical items of positive connotations with China occurred. The sentences below illustrate some examples.

No	Examples of Positive lexis Collocations	Source
23	We had <b>a good relationship</b> because we made a <b>great deal</b> .	Trump's Brief April 19
24	Since they went into the World Trade Organization that they became <b>a rocket ship</b> with their economy.	Trump's Brief April 10
25	With China, we made the deal, and we became <b>friendly</b> .	Trump's Brief April 19
26	The Chinese people are <b>phenomenal people</b> .	Trump's Brief April 7
27	I think the people of China are <b>incredible</b> .	Trump's Brief March 21
28	China is a very <b>sophisticated country</b> , and they could have contained it.	Trump's Brief April 30
29	I assume the people of China. They are <b>good people</b> .	Pompeo's Brief April 29

The Trump administration manufactured a counter positive mental image attributed to the American-Chinese trade deal and the Chinese people. The trade deal is presented in many instances positively that grant significant interests to the Americans due to the potent power of Trump's administration in contrast to the former American administrations. Trump tried to create a personal heroic image constructing a problem-solving tender to the American economic issues. Trump praised the Chinese people and the American-Chinese relationship in favour of the trade deal.

The frequent praising kept company with mentioning the deal. Another positive mental image created was for China's economy as a rocket ship. By such praise, Trump claimed that the dependency of China on the World Trade Organisation was the main reason for its development. The extensive mentioning of this claim and China's history as a developing nation employs a sense of superiority against China. Although this discourse seems to be a credit towards China, China's out-group mental image employs an implicit negative connotation. The only recognition of China's sophistication was blame and augmentation of China's accountability for the global outbreak spread. Subsequently, the in-group mental image was self-glorification of the trade deal and the positive-other presentation of the Chinese people. The other explicit positive discourses regarding the country and its history carry negative connotations and out-group images.

#### **4.1.3 Discussion**

Investigating the data of the words associated with China in the American briefings on Covid 19, the data yielded nominal and adjectival collocations carrying much more hostile than friendly connotations. Out of the relevant (92) occurrences of nominal and adjectival lexical items keeping company with China (67 occurrences, 72.83%) belong to the hostile category, with only (25 occurrences, 27.17%) belonging to the positive category. The lexical items carrying unfavourable connotations far outnumber those with favourable meanings. The created out-group picture of China as 'the main feeder', 'the source', and the "infected place", in addition to the nationalistic given term of the coronavirus as the "Chinese virus" and "Wuhan virus" evokes hatred built upon intolerance towards China's nation. Besides, the ideological perception of inferiority diminishing China's current economic status by frequent mentioning China's history as a "developing nation" conveys the insistence of discrimination and hostility against China. The unethical mental image of China accusing both the World Health Organization of helping China in its cover-up and the World Trade Organization of facilitating rules and regulations for China damages the organisations' and China's credibility. The in-group mental picture is the self-glory of the trade deal and the positive-other presentation of the Chinese people. The explicit discourses regarding China as a country carry negative and hostile connotations and out-group images. The two previous subsections depict China using negative connotations (72.83%) than positive ones (27.17%) in the American briefings. The expansive manipulation of negative words and phrases in the American briefings draw the exact representation of China.

**Table (2)** Frequency of Lexeis' Positive/Negative Presentation of China

Politicians	Number of Positive Occurrences	Number of Negative Occurrences
The American	25	67
Total	27.17%	72.83%

#### 4.2 Argumentation Strategy Topoi

The American briefings analysis yielded a total of (99) occurrences of topoi involved with China (67), of which by Trump and (32) by Pompeo.

##### 4.2.1. Topoi and Negative-Other Presentation

The following examples illustrate a negative other presentation of China by the Trump administration.

No	Topoi	Example	Source
1		This was the Chinese virus.	Trump's Brief March 26
2		The main feeder of this coronavirus outbreak was China.	Trump's Brief March 14
3		We had the greatest economy in the history of the world. Better than China	Trump's Brief April 18
4		We had the greatest economy in the world by far. China is not even close.	Trump's Brief April 18
5		They are a developing nation.	Trump's Brief April 10
6		China was very secretive.	Trump's Brief March 21
7		China was putting out information, which was false, that our military gave this to them. That was false.	Trump's Brief March 17
8		They were not transparent. They were transparent at that time. But when we saw what happened, they could have been transparent much earlier than they were.	Trump's Brief March 21
9		China is number one, just so you understand. China is number one by a lot. It is not even close. They are way ahead of us in terms of death.	Trump's Brief April 18
10		The World Health Organization is very China-centric. Meaning whatever it is, China was always right.	Trump's Brief April 14
11		When China joined and was allowed to join, under those circumstances, the World Trade Organization, that was a very bad day for the United States because they had rules and regulations that were far different and far easier than our rules and regulations.	Trump's Brief April 10
12	<b>Definition</b>	The first government to be aware of the Wuhan virus was the Chinese government.	Pompeo's Brief March 17

The definition of coronavirus was the "Chinese virus" in example (1) instead of its real name, and this definition was confirmed in example (2) by describing China as the main feeder. China's economy was described disdainfully as not being near America's economy in examples (3) and (4). Besides, China was defined as a developing nation, for example (5). Examples (6), (7), (8) and (9) depicted China's international policy regarding the disinformation about the crisis. China hid information, misled the world and was not clear. Trump emphasised the unreliability of China's information in example (10) by defining it as being number one and surpassing America in terms of death. Examples (11) and (12)

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displayed the favouritism of the World Health Organization and the World Trade Organization to China. China was always right, although it hid information and caused the outbreak in the WHO approach. The WTO facilitated rules and regulations for the sake of China. For example (12), The American administration persisted in giving the coronavirus an unofficial term related to China, encouraging bias. Such terms foster racial hatred based on intolerance against China.

No	Topoi	Example	Source
13		The WHO's reliance on China's disclosures likely caused a 20-fold increase in cases worldwide.	Trump's Brief April 14
14		Nobody has been ripped off like the United States by China	Trump's Brief April 19
15		If sleepy Joe won, they own our country. They will take our country.	Trump's Brief April 18
16		For years I have heard by 2019, China will catch us	Trump's Brief April 18
17		other countries since they are considered a developing nation.	Trump's Brief April 10
18		Farmers who were unfairly targeted by China.They were targeted unfairly by China.	Trump's Brief April 27
19		China has taken advantage of the United States, until I came here.	Trump's Brief March 26
20		It took an awful long time for the world to become aware of this risk that was sitting there residing inside of China.	Pompeo's Brief March 17
21		We have all suffered as a result of this virus that came out of Wuhan, China.	Pompeo's Brief April 29
22		Our first priority, unambiguously, is to address the crisis in which we find ourselves as a direct result of this virus that came out of Wuhan, China.	Pompeo's Brief April 29
23		We are working, fighting hard against the virus outbreak that originated in Wuhan, China.	Pompeo's Brief April 29
24		Even after the CCP did notify the WHO of the coronavirus outbreak, China did not share all of the information it had.	Pompeo's Brief April 22
25		Our mission set at the State Department is to protect the American people from threats around the world, so the information we provide about where this virus began in Wuhan is just data.	Pompeo's Brief April 29
26		It did not report sustained human-to-human transmission for a month until it was in every province inside of China.	Pompeo's Brief April 22
27		The CCP still has not shared the virus sample from inside of China with the outside world, making it impossible to track the disease's evolution.	Pompeo's Brief April 22
28		We still do not have a sample of the virus, nor has the world had access to the facilities or other locations where this virus may have originated inside of Wuhan.	Pompeo's Brief April 22
29		These labs are still open inside of China, these labs that contain complex pathogens that were being studied. It is not just the Wuhan Institute of Virology. There are multiple labs inside of China that are handling these things.	Pompeo's Brief April 22
30		There are multiple labs that are continuing to conduct work. We think to continue on contagious pathogens inside of China today. We do not know if they are operating at a level of security to prevent this from happening again.	Pompeo's Brief April 22
31		We know that that kind of freedom does not exist inside of China.	Pompeo's Brief March 17
32		I regret China's decision today to further foreclose the world's ability to conduct free press operations.	Pompeo's Brief March 17
33		There are also immense challenges with China, places where the President has identified where reciprocity does not exist. We have seen that in trade. We have seen that with respect to how journalists are treated, freedom of information, how it flows across borders and across the region.	Pompeo's Brief March 30
34	<b>Danger and Threat</b>	The narratives are different, but each of them has the same component, which is to avoid responsibility and try and place confusion in the world, confusion about where the virus began but also confusion about how countries are responding to it.	Pompeo's Brief March 30

China is the prime source of danger worldwide. For example (13), The world confronts death because of the unreliable information it shares. Examples (14: 19) present China as a grave threat to the economy of America and the ranchers in the past during the previous administrations and if Joe "Trump's opponent" would be elected in the coming presidential election. A threatening prop sense from China is explicit in Pompeo's words. The risk resides in China and results in the worldwide suffering from fighting against the originated virus in Wuhan. China causes a severe danger to the whole world due to the confidential information about the virus's human-to-human transmission and its evolution and drives the world to a potential menace from the multiple pathogen labs inside it. Press freedom is another controversial issue there where it does not exist. The Chinese media plays a role in converting truth to confuse the world. China symbolises the definite danger and threat for the globe, driving the world's sense of fear.

No	Topoi	Example	Source
35		American taxpayers provide between 400 million and \$500 million per year to the WHO. In contrast, China contributes roughly \$40 million a year. And even less as the organisation's leading sponsor	Trump's Brief April 14
36		We are spending \$500 million, and China's spending \$38 million, \$34 million, \$40 million, \$42 million in a case, it is again, not money, but it is not right.	Trump's Brief April 14
37		If they do that and they are also paying us 25% or \$250 billion in tariffs. So, we are taking in, wait a minute, we are taking in billions of dollars from China. They never paid us 25 cents.	Trump's Brief April 14
38		Over the years, many years, we have been paying them from 300 to 500 and even more million dollars a year. China has been paying them less than 40 over the years. So, we are paying them more than ten times more than China. And they are very, very China-centric.	Trump's Brief April 10
39		China has taken advantage of the United States for 30 years.	Trump's Brief April 10
40		China has lost thousands and thousands of people. China has gone through hell over this. They have gone through hell.	Trump's Brief March 21
41		Our contribution exceeded \$400 million last year, ten times that of China.	Pompeo's Brief March 31
42		The US contributed nearly \$1.7 billion to the UN Refugee Agency, which is helping those least able to mitigate their exposure to the virus. This compares to \$1.9 million from China.	Pompeo's Brief March 31
43		In 2019, the US-supported UNICEF with more than \$700 million. China gave just a mere fraction of that.	Pompeo's Brief March 31
44		China, conversely, has been the largest annual emitter since 2006, and it expects that its emissions will continue to grow until around 2030, thus offsetting the progress of countries all around the world in reducing global emissions.	Pompeo's Brief April 22
45	<b>Numbers</b>	Americans have devoted nearly \$6.5 billion in government and non-government contributions to help countries fight COVID-19. \$6.5 billion. This is by far the largest country total in the world and more than 12 times that of China's combined contributions.	Pompeo's Brief April 29

Trump accused the WHO and WTO of unfairly bias China as a strong reason for halting the American funding to WHO. Example (39) asserts that China's fortune was hunt by the advantages took from the USA 30 years ago. In sentence (40), Trump displayed the heavy loss of China in lives compared with the US's. The analysis demonstrates the clear negative depiction of China to profiteer from the WHO, the WTO and the USA. Pompeo used numbers to diminish China's contributions to official organisations. The USA administration glorified their contributions to the WHO and UNICEF compared to China's fractions. Meanwhile, China threw out commitments to reduce emissions to achieve a greener and cleaner world in the future. A further hostile image of China by Pompeo using numbers was its inadequate contributions to countries in fighting COVID-19.

No	Topoi	Example	Source	
46	<b>History</b>	They were a developing nation; China was a developing nation.	Trump's Brief April 19	
47		They were flatlined for years and years, frankly for many, many decades.	Trump's Brief April 10	
48		When China joined and was allowed to join, under those circumstances, the World Trade Organization, that was a very bad day for the United States because they had rules and regulations that were far different and far easier than our rules and regulations.	Trump's Brief April 10	
49		If you look at the history of China, it was only since they went into the World Trade Organization that they became a rocket ship with their economy.	Trump's Brief April 19	
50		They came into the World Trade Organization that they became a rocket ship because they took advantage of all those.	Trump's Brief April 19	
51		You study China, and you know what I mean. They took advantage of them like very few people would even think to take advantage of them.	Trump's Brief April 10	
52		Remember, this is not the first time that we have had a virus come out of China.	Pompeo's Brief April 29	
53		<b>Abuse</b>	China kicked the Washington Post out of China, and they kicked the New York Times out of China, and I guess the Wall Street Journal.	Trump's Brief March 21
54			China made the decision to force the Western press out of China.	Pompeo's Brief March 30
55			This information campaign that they are waging is designed to shift responsibility.	Pompeo's Brief March 17
56	That imposes a special responsibility to raise the flag to say, "We have a problem. This is different and unique and presents a risk."		Pompeo's Brief March 17	
57	<b>Responsibility</b>		The Chinese communist party had a responsibility to do this, not only for Americans and Italians and South Koreans and Iranians who are now suffering but for their own people as well.	Pompeo's Brief March 17

Trump despised China's history as being a developing nation for decades. Therefore, to boost the economy, China should have money and good relations. Accordingly, Trump claimed that China boosted its economy by taking advantage of the WTO, as shown in examples (46: 50). Pompeo created a unified thought of China about its previous deeds through using the verb "remember". Especially for the public health issues, China spread viruses worldwide several times.

Concerning China's abuse, the Trump administration depicted its practice towards the Western press as being unbelievers of such freedom. China abused the press as it "kicked" and refused the presence of the "Washington Post", the "New York Times", and the "Wall Street Journal". China forced journalists to leave, which was an unacceptable move. Nevertheless, again, this asserts the argument of hiding facts and information from the world.

For example (55:57), Pompeo ascertained China's responsibility to initiate the risk and suffer globally via its misinformation. China's "designed" information add to China's accountability for the increasing number of infected cases worldwide.

#### **4.2.2. Topoi and Positive-Other Presentation**

The positive categorisation of China by Trump's administration is in the topoi examples below

No	Topoi	Example	Source
58		The Chinese people are phenomenal people.	Trump's Brief April 7
59		They are big, strong, smart people.	Trump's Brief April 19
60		I think the people of China are incredible.	Trump's Brief March 21
61		We had a very bad relationship with China. Then we had a good relationship because we made a great deal	Trump's Brief April 19
62		We just signed a very big deal with China.	Trump's Brief March 26
63		we will continue to find every opportunity to work alongside China. We have important economic relationships.	Pompeo's Brief March 30
64	<b>Definition</b>	I assume the people of China. They are good people.	Pompeo's Brief April 29

The above examples (58-60) are a positive presentation of the Chinese people. They are "big", "strong", "smart", "phenomenal" and "incredible" ones. In examples (61-62), the lively presentation introduced the deal as being 'big, good, "big", "great", and unbelievable trade one. Trump described only the Chinese people and the trade deal positively in his coronavirus briefings. Pompeo described their economic relationships and the Chinese people positively in his press conferences. Therefore, the

USA administration pursued their integral relationship with China and created a splendid reflection of the Chinese people as being good.

No	Topoi	Example	Source
65	<b>Numbers</b>	China is going to have to buy \$250 billion a year in our product, 50 billion from the farmers, 40 to 50.	Trump's Brief April 18
66		China has paid, because of me, China has paid us tens of billions of dollars over the course of a very short period of time, billions of it.	Trump's Brief April 14
67		They paid us tens of billions of dollars because of what we have done. And the trade deal we have, they have to give us \$250 billion in purchases – they do that, and they are also paying us 25% or \$250 billion in tariffs. So, we are taking in, wait a minute, we are taking in billions of dollars from China. They never paid us 25 cents.	Trump's Brief April 14
68		China is supposed to be spending \$250 billion in our country. We are going to be watching a very much to see.	Trump's Brief April 14
69		They are supposed to buy substantially in excess of \$200 billion from us.	Trump's Brief April 10
70		<b>Responsibility</b>	The Vice President and his team have talked about the air bridge that has delivered products to the American people from China, and we appreciate that.
71			

Sentences from (65) to (70) are of topoi of numbers. They evince the pride of the trade deal and how it benefits the USA. For example (71), Trump's administration treasures the Chinese fulfilment of obligations to the Americans, depicting a positive self-representation of (us) America and a positive other-representation of (them) China for their considerable concern and commitment.

### 4.2.3 Discussion

The occurrences of topoi associated with China in the American briefings were (99) incidences. Table (3) below displays the occurrences of topoi with China by Trump's administration.

**Table (3)** Occurrences of Topoi with China in the American Briefings

Type	The American Administration		Total
	Positive	Negative	
<b>Topos of Definition</b>	16	25	41
<b>Topos of Danger and Threat</b>	0	25	25
<b>Topos of Numbers</b>	9	11	20
<b>Topos of History</b>	0	7	7
<b>Topos of Abuse</b>	0	2	2
<b>Topos of Responsibility</b>	1	3	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>26 (26.26%)</b>	<b>73 (73.74%)</b>	<b>99</b>
	99 (100%)		

The hostile occurrences of topoi (73 times, 73.74%) are more significant than the friendly ones (26 times, 26.26%). China has been represented negatively in the American briefings through applying topoi of definition, danger and threat, history, abuse and responsibility. The utilised negative expressions foster and spread hatred based on nationalism. The American

politicians gave the coronavirus a nationalistic characterisation related to China in most briefings. The high percentage of hate topoi in the investigated political statements promote a perception of shame and hostility against China. However, China has been represented positively through topoi of numbers and a small proportion of definitions when mentioning the trade deal between the United States and China and the Chinese people.

### **5. Conclusion**

This study shows China's representation by the senior American politicians: the USA President 'Trump' and the Secretary of the State 'Michael R. Pompeo' in some of their coronavirus briefings through a CDA analysis. The qualitative and quantitative analysis reflects that the lexical choices and nominal/adjectival collocations with China are negative. The same tendency persisted in using topoi of definition, danger and threat, numbers, history, abuse and responsibility. The level of occurrences proves this for each tool. On the other hand, the analysis reveals that the lexical choices and nominal/ adjectival collocations and topoi of definition and numbers used with the 'Chinese people' and the 'trade deal' are positive. In sum, Trump and Pompeo have exhibited hostility and contempt for China linguistically. Finally, according to the applied analysis, this study has limitations, such as removing some CDA tools. The study can be performed after working on these limitations to provide more corroborating evidence.

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