

THE ANTI-MIGRANT RHETORIC UNDER DONALD TRUMP'S ERA AND ITS IMPACT ON THE WELL-BEING OF AFRICAN EMIGRANTS AND OTHER IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES.

Louis Mathias FAYE

fayelouismathias@yahoo.fr

Université Cheikh Anta de Dakar, Sénégal

Abstract

This article provides deeper insights into the discourse of dominant culture, creating a strong sense of self versus other and of us versus them. Drawing inspiration from this cultural dominance permeating the US society, Donald Trump advocates a xenophobic rhetoric on migrants, which impinges on the black community and other minorities. His speech has fostered an “us versus them” attitude, which further divides US society by marginalizing minority groups on the basis of racial identities. Trump’s administration has unleashed all the worries because of the depiction of African immigrants. The effects of his xenophobia affect the well-being of the black community. The paper gives a portrayal of Trump who epitomizes sheer cruelty, racism and disregard, subverting the cement of American cultural, social, historical and political values associated with the American dream. This erratic behavior causes significant damages on the well-being of African emigrants. Finally, the article sheds light on the implications of the Trump’s administration’s policies and measures to counteract them. The crisis of cultural identities African Americans experience in the US society is laden with biases. African emigrants have expressed a growing concern and opposition to Trump’s xenophobic rhetoric because of its impact on minorities. They advocate a more constructive and inclusive political atmosphere, which prioritizes policy discussions above racial attitudes and xenophobic rhetoric, dehumanizing the black community and other minority groups within the US society.

Key words: *Xenophobia, Racial identities, Racism, Anti-immigration, Trump*

Résumé

Cet article offre une analyse approfondie du discours de la culture dominante, créant un fort sentiment d'opposition entre soi et l'autre, entre nous et eux. S'inspirant de cette domination culturelle qui imprègne la société américaine, Donald Trump adopte une rhétorique xénophobe à l'égard des migrants, affectant la communauté noire et les autres minorités. Son discours a encouragé une attitude du type « nous contre eux », ce qui divise davantage la société américaine en marginalisant les minorités sur la base de leur identité raciale. L'administration Trump a suscité de vives inquiétudes à cause de la manière dont les migrants africains sont représentés. Les effets de sa xénophobie affectent le bien-être de la communauté noire. Cette étude fait un portrait de Trump qui incarne la cruauté pure, le racisme et le mépris en subvertissant le ciment des valeurs culturelles, sociales, historiques et politiques américaines liées au rêve américain. Ce comportement erratique porte gravement atteinte au bien-être des émigrés africains. Enfin, l'article met en lumière les implications des politiques de l'administration Trump ainsi

que les mesures visant à les contrecarrer. La crise des identités culturelles que vivent les afro-américains dans la société américaine est empreinte de préjugés. Les émigrés africains ont exprimé une inquiétude croissante et une opposition à la rhétorique xénophobe de Trump, en raison de son impact sur les minorités. Ils préconisent une atmosphère politique plus constructive et inclusive, qui donne la priorité aux débats politiques plutôt qu'aux attitudes raciales et à la rhétorique xénophobe déshumanisant la communauté noire et d'autres groupes minoritaires au sein de la société américaine.

Mots clés : Xénophobie, Identités raciales, Racisme, anti-immigration, Trump

Introduction

Looking back through US history, the increasing migration of Africans dated back to the late 1970S and early 1980S. This phenomenon results in a growing discourse and literature on the contemporary experiences of black immigrant groups. These immigrants are in search of freedom and happiness because America is a gateway to opportunities, a chance to realize the American dream. They are part of the racial and ethnic transformation of the United States, creating changes in the demographics of black people and the interpretation of blackness in the twenty-first century. During Trump presidency, there are grounds for believing that the rhetoric in mainstream media, politics, marketing, and even popular culture attempt to border the nation, which shores up the demarcations between citizen and alien. Actually, American leaders and politicians draw on the anti-immigrant rhetoric to appeal to their bases and reinforce shared conceptions of the American identity. Yet, few of them use such brazen, inflammatory, and hyperbolic language as Donald Trump does in his presidency. His administration lays foundation for statements that construct directly or metaphorically the immigrants as a threat to the United States and its citizens. This rhetoric is perceived as a language, narrative or statement expressing opposition to or views about migrants. This phenomenon includes stereotypes, fear-based messages, or politics framed in a way that portrays immigrants as threats to national security, economic stability and cultural identity during Donald Trump's presidency. This era is marked by significant political, social, and policy changes, especially in relation to immigration, nationalism and political discourse, affecting the well-being of the black community and other minority groups within the US society.

In a period of unrest turmoil fueled by Trump's administration in the mainstream of politics, researchers, politicians, leaders, scholars, journalists and writers express their concerns about the rhetorical

moves and negative framing of immigrants in the US society. In this study, we use a wide range of books, articles, mass media and newspapers, which examine the narrative xenophobia against the black immigrant community as a way of reinforcing the powerful stereotypes that reify the image of the immigrant as a threat to be mitigated. Dealing with the racial attitudes in the US society, Cisneros sees it as “*popular discourses of immigration-whether emanating from political leaders, mainstream media, or radical groups (...) rely on deeply embedded stereotypes and dominant values logics of immigration as a social problem and of immigration as threats to the nation*” (Cisneros, 2011:28/29). In the same vein, the conservative news media discloses the landscape in which these biases against blacks are situated, appearing to be a pervasive and negative framework for immigrants. The popular conservative news media-Fox News and the O’ Reilly Factor emphasize this metaphorical narrative negatively used to depict black immigrants. More importantly, Chavez (2013) unveils the problems of immigrants who bravely seek freedom from an antiquated system of oppression and persecution. According to him, this narrative is “*a grand tradition of alarmist discourse about the immigrants and their perceived negative impacts on society*” (Chavez, 2013:3). Actually, the stereotype image of black people remains mired in a tradition of diminishing foreigners as unworthy, criminal, poor, uneducated and parasitic. In his analysis of the cultural and racial biases, Carter (2014) underscores that by merging all immigrants into a one-dimensional group of criminals, the narrative effectively erases “*the collective and individual experiences*” (Carter, 2014:210) of immigrants, making them seem more like nameless, faceless, objects than the complex, multi-dimensional individuals they really are.

The central issue addressed in this study is associated with the damaging and racial rhetorical strategies and the grounds on which Trump focuses to claim such baseless statements, depicting african immigrants as a threatening race. In this study, we aim to explore the metaphorical constructions rooted in anti-immigrant sentiments. The metaphorical structures used to describe african immigrants resonate with and reinforce some deeply held biases, framing them as dangerous. By examining the specific discursive strategies used by US president, we remark that Donald Trump, in his speeches, highlights a national narrative of xenophobia. Through a close analysis of language, we can unveil the discursive patterns that contribute to dangerous ideologies of

a national xenophobic narrative, stripping humanity from countless immigrants. In Fairclough's words, these strategies increase consciousness of "*how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation*" (Fairclough, 2001:233). The problem of cultural dominance over a black immigrant community is critical because it results from an American racist society, dating back to the foundation of USA. Actually, this xenophobic rhetoric does not only shape public perception, but it also contributes to a climate of hostility, fear and exclusion for immigrant communities. In spite of the growing awareness of these problems, there is still a lack of focused research on how such political narratives affect mentally, socially and emotionally the well-being of African immigrants and marginalized groups. Exploring this gap is crucial to understand the broader human cost of political rhetoric and developing immigration frameworks.

The literary theory related to the critical discourse analysis is used to provide a lens for interpretation, unveiling ideologies and power relations. It serves as the guiding framework through which this study is conducted. While focusing on this literary criticism, the reader, through a careful examination of text and patterned linguistics features, can develop, as Fairclough puts it, "*a critical conscious of domination and its modalities*" (Fairclough, 2001:4). It allows to see the elements of power construction at play. From that perspective, readers can conduct close analysis of texts that may be politically or culturally influential or manipulative and interpret the ways in which language is constructed, arranged and presented to manufacture consent. Strauss and Feiz, in their book, *Discourse analysis: Putting our worlds into words* (2014) explores the discourse of power and dominance, which are the institutional, political, academic and even personal ideologies whereby inequity, injustice and abuse are normalized and presented as common-sense assumptions. In this way, dominance is produced and rationalized and the connection between power and powerlessness are collaboratively perpetuated and institutionalized. By using the critical discourse analysis as literary criticism in this study helps investigate issues related to power, inequality, racism and dominance in Trump's speeches.

This paper delves into the impact of Donald Trump's Administration on the well-being of African Emigrants or the Black Immigrant Communities. The article is divided into three parts: The first part

explores the linguistic strategies, such as positive ‘us’ framing negative ‘them’ and the metaphorical constructions, used to stoke fear and anti-immigrant sentiment. The second part sheds light on the xenophobic rhetoric of Donald Trump towards black immigrants and other minority groups in his Speeches and the final and last part deals with the US public opinion’s criticism of aggressive political discourse of xenophobia and disinformation embedded in US culture, holding biases against the black community.

1. The Metaphorical Representation of Us versus Them

In the US history, there are components of ideology, which prevail American society due to its diversity. Actually, we remark that group ideologies often dominate while creating a strong sense of self versus other and of us versus them. This phenomenon is obviously true when conflicts are at stake. That is the case while taking into account issues associated with immigration. In this light, we realize that there is a connection between ideology and power relations, and even group domination. By examining the discourse of dominant culture over others in his work, *Language and power* (2001), Fairclough highlights that power is gained either through coercion, which relies primarily on physical or other forms of force (economic threats or threats to an individual’s sense of security), a through consent, and “*ideology is the prime means of manipulating consent*” (Fairclough, 2001:4) According to him, the discourse of white dominant culture is basically grounded in an ideology held by the US society.

There are grounds for believing that the racial identity within the US society defines the insiders from the outsiders. In that sense, Wodak (2009) gives an insight into the power of these stories warning that often “*ethnic stereotypes articulated in discourse accompany or even determine political decision making*” (Wodak, 2009 :1). This depiction on the basis of race distinguishes only the insider from the outsider. It does not construct the difference between familiar and foreign, but it also identifies the voices worthy of participation in deliberation and governance.

In the same vein, George Simmel, in his work, ‘The Metropolis and Mental Life’, *The Sociology of George Simmel*, Kurt Wolff (1950), underscores the phenomenon of identities and characterization,

describing ‘us versus them.’ He lays foundation for the meaning of these two terms. He defines the former as an individual’s or a group’s self perception and the latter as what an individual or group perceives another individual or group to be. According to Simmel, instead of intermingling communities, we form cities with boundaries and social circles “*firmly closed against neighboring, stranger, or in some way antagonistic (other) circles*” (Simmel, 1950 :409). In this statement, Simmel highlights that the stranger, above all, is categorized as an outsider feared and to be avoided. This categorization spreads to those who do not share our values, ideals, or identity features – those who are different to us. From this framework, people create ‘us’ vs ‘them’ paradigms, where they view outsiders with either indifference or hostility.

Through US history, there was a persistent framing of ‘us’, which was discovered, holding Americans as white, hardworking, virtuous, trusting and often victimized. This ideology of American exceptionalism results from the puritan thought, including the idea of manifest destiny. In his work, *The white racial frame: Centuries of racial framing and counter-framing* (2010), Feagin explores a racial frame that exists within the American society. This frame on the basis of race includes, as he puts it, “*an overarching white worldview that encompasses a broad and persisting set of racial stereotypes, prejudices, ideologies, images, interpretations and narratives, emotions [...], as well as radicalized inclinations to discriminate*” (Feagin, 2010:3) Feagin highlights that the white racial frame is obviously and carefully curated, propagated and propagated by the white elites. For him, they control the dominant discourse through the institutions of cultural transmissions, including political discourse and mass media. Feagin underscores that the Americans’ virtues, particularly are set in contrast to the implied lack of virtue of non-Americans.

More importantly, the positive representation of the group defined as ‘us’ is offered as faultless when considered in contrast to the “criminal aliens” that would purportedly be given access to victimize the innocent ‘us.’ While focusing on the anti-migrant rhetoric and the biased opinions held by the dominant culture, we can assume that this contrasting language is relevant in that it reinforces the ways in which each group is identified and therefore known. From that perspective, Wodak unveils the racial identity prevailing the US society under Trump’s era. In an attempt to provide deeper insights into this

dominant discourse, Wodak asserts : “*identity is always defined via similarity and difference*” (Wodak, 2015 :7). Actually, Wodak reveals that by establishing ‘us’ as innocent victims, it becomes easier than to identify and accept immigrants (‘them’) as criminal aliens. This discursive strategy is particularly relevant in that it sets the stage for Americans to be understood as innocent victims, immigrants to conceptualized as criminal aggressors. And politicians and law-makers can position themselves as saviors in this narrative.

R. Horowitz and L. B. Murphy, in their book, *Projective methods in the psychological study of children*. *Journal of Experimental Education* (1938) examine racial issues built on the idea that people develop identities while focusing on how others see and treat them. They give an insight into low self-esteem and self-hatred as key components of black identity. Actually, they remark that African Americans still cope with exclusion and discrimination by whites, and they are generally stigmatized in American society. Blacks are thought to internalize this social rejection and devaluation leading to self-hatred and low self-esteem.

In addition, the negative representation of immigrants issues from the cultural discourse of white elites, dating back to the founding of America. This myth-making, describing immigrants as illegals and aliens, is the key reason why they are directly and indirectly targeted as the cause of problems prevailing in the US society. While relying on Wodak’s conceptualization of the politics of fear, we claim that immigrants are targeted and scapegoated as fear is constructed and instrumentalized for politicians to consider themselves as saviors. For illustrative purposes, we can say that when they are demonized, politicians can situate themselves as agents of change to save ‘us.’ For Donald Trump, this idea is forwarded through his promise to make America greater again. His repetition, with regard to this phrase both during his campaign and since then, reinforces a narrative that America was once great. Accordingly, past administrations failed to protect the borders, letting in too many immigrants who brought lawlessness and drained resources. Unlike former US presidents, Trump is determined to bring change and restore America to its former glory.

More importantly, Trump clearly uses the words ‘we’ and ‘our’ to emphasize a demarcation or a line between ‘us’ and ‘them’. This construction is a powerful rhetorical move that is particularly well

suiting for stocking fear of particular groups. In his analysis of this racial identity, VanDijk (1995) asserts that ideologies are “socially shared and used by groups and their members” (VanDijk, 1995 :22) and that group ideologies are often polarizing, creating a strong sense of ‘us’ and ‘them.’ We remark that the use of the words including ‘we’ and ‘our’ implies a ‘they’ and ‘their.’ This racial identity is considered as an inconspicuous means of furthering a dangerous and polarizing ideology. It frames immigrants as ‘them’ and white elites as ‘us’. The most important factors in the development of racial identity include racial discrimination and interracial contact, affecting African Americans and other minorities. Because of the segregation in the US society, many minorities are insulated from the negative extreme racism, and discriminatory behaviors of whites (Rosenberg, 1979 ; Simmons, 1978). African Americans continuously experience a cultural and racial identity crisis within the US society. In a nutshell, we contend that the reversal of socio-political and cultural identity of the black communities is at the forefront of Donald Trump’s administration, setting boundaries and social circles associated with identities and characterizations known as ‘us’ and ‘them.’

2. President Donald Trump’s xenophobic Rhetoric towards African migrants and other minority groups

African immigrants are faced with different challenges as they try to adjust to their new environment in the US society. In that light, Shaw-Taylor and Tuch explore the problems the black community contends with in a white dominant culture. According to them, “ *black immigrants confront the structure of racialized social system in America, which provides a structure for judging attitudes of blacks.*” (Shaw – Taylor &Tuch, 2007 :18) Actually, black immigrants are identified as blacks, which becomes problematic because of the dominant cultural constructs of blackness. They are often made targets as the root of American society’s ills. During time of social uncertainty, they are looked upon with suspicion in associated with problems such as high unemployment rates, economic downturns and a sense of weak national security. While in reality, immigrants have contributed much to this country both economically and culturally, but they are considered as a source of fear and concern. As Cisneros delves into this phenomenon, he argues that

“*a threat to national unity and cultural integrity of the nation*” (Cisneros, 2011 :29). In that same vein, under Donald Trump’s era, the administration advocates a proliferation of anti-immigrant sentiment and rhetoric. There is a growing public discomfort in the light of the changing face of America, coupled with the anxiety over economic and national security, which has prompted those with exclusionary attitudes towards ‘foreigners’. From that perspective, Trump seeks ways to reinforce America’s status by underpinning a national narrative of xenophobia, sometimes through the use of more veiled refugees and other ethnic minorities. However, we remark that those in control of the dominant discourse use linguistic choices to frame immigrants as strangers and dangerous others.

The linguistic choices made by Donald Trump and conservative media outlets contribute to a national narrative of xenophobia. His speeches strip black immigrants from human dignity because they are reduced to the level of objects and identity of criminality and threat, and effectively silenced. According to Chavez, this xenophobic narrative is inescapable and deeply embedded in the American psyche. By investigating the discourse of xenophobia prevailing in American society, he argues that “*it is the cultural dark matter filling space with taken for granted ‘truths’ in debates over immigration on radio and TV talks shows, in newspaper editorials, and on internet blogs*” (Chavez, 2013:3) Chavez sheds light on the widespread of the xenophobic narrative through social media and networking.

In his analysis of anti-migrant rhetoric advocated by Trump’s administration, Carter highlights that by emerging all immigrants into a one-dimensional group of criminals, the narrative effectively erases “*the collective and individual experiences*” (Carter, 2014, p.210) of immigrants. This characterization makes them seem more like nameless, faceless, objects than the complex, multi-dimensional individuals they actually are.

In addition, Laurence Anthony, professor of Science and Engineering at Waseda University in Japan, investigates patterns that might support the theory that the linguistic choices of both Trump and conservatives’ new media serve as a xenophobic agenda of othering to incite fear and garner support. Several queries like Word List are run for analysis. Whiling focusing on this investigation, we realize that the ‘Word List’ brings to light the patterned and rhetorically relevant use of unexpected word in the Trump speeches data set. It reveals a relatively more

frequent use of pejoratives than of more rhetorically neutral terms to describe immigrants in the new articles.

In his speeches, Donald Trump uses unmitigated pejoratives such as ‘Anchor Babies’, ‘Aliens’ and ‘Illegals’. It is the argument that Trump resorts to these pejoratives, which are unambiguously used as a display of perceived superiority. As a way of illustration, we contend that these terms, regardless of frequency or context, convey a sense of cultural dominance in the part of the speaker. The phrase ‘anchor baby’ is considered as a derogatory term, depicting a child born in the United States to undocumented parents. According to the 14th Amendment,

all persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state where in they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws (U.S. Constitution, Amendment XIV, 1868, Section 1).

Trump raises the issue that when children of undocumented immigrants are born on US soil, they are automatically the US citizens. Consequently, this fact has caused a great deal of tension among those with anti-immigrant sentiments. Then, this discourse is perceived as damaging to immigrant women. They are stripped of their humanity and furnished with a label that defines them more as criminals and animals than as mothers seeking a better future for themselves and their families. Along with the dehumanizing nature of this phrase, Trump has used ‘Anchor baby’ to refer to what he portrays as an endemic problem that is destined to ruin the country unless something is done to stop it.

By exploring issues surrounding Donald Trump’s anti-migrant discourse, we remark that the dehumanizing terms associated with ‘aliens’ and ‘illegals’ are at the core in new stories in Fox News, Breitbart. The use of these words represents more than abbreviations

for relating, belonging, or owing allegiance to another country or government and not according to or authorized by law. Lederer, in his work, *'Anchor baby': A conceptual explanation for pejoration* (2013), relates that these terms describe and focus exclusively on immigrants' legal status in the country. For Lederer, this type of reductive, single-axis rhetoric is a way of objectifying and dehumanizing immigrants and reinforcing their status as others. By delving into the dehumanizing character of immigrants, Lederer adds that the phrases such as 'aliens' and 'illegals' used by Trump help conduct at least in part the American identity. They are meant for calling immigrants out as outsiders and help to define and strengthen the imaginary borders around those who are the insiders.

In his article, *Bordering the civic imaginary: Rhetoric, hybridity, and citizenship in La Gran Marcha* (2011), Cisneros explores the racial identity conveyed through Donald Trump's speeches. That is in this context that he claims :

obsession over the literal and symbolic border between American and foreigner, between us and them is motivated in part fear of the dilution and dissolution of US citizenship. As a result, alienation of the non-citizen is fundamental to the rhetorical maintenance of US identity... Just as the border is drawn to exclude migrants based on their legal, racial, ethnic, or other 'difference,' borders can be redrawn to reshape the contours of US citizenship (Cisneros, 2011 : 26).

Actually, the notion of racial identity in US society is particularly significant since it means that people in control of the dominant discourse have great influence over constructing the identity of immigrants. Being in a position of privilege, they appoint themselves to reformulate national belonging and define what it means to be American.

However, by examining Trump's anti-migrant rhetoric, we can obviously emphasize that there is a total tendency disregard while taking into account the effect of his terms, which aim at dehumanizing the foreigners. That is made evident through Trump's repeated and brazen use of these terms coupled with disparaging comments he has

openly made. His words are widely reported, but they are unconformed with regard to specific groups of people. Then, Trump holds a critical view towards foreign communities, adjusting to US society. While expressing xenophobic sentiments with reference to the racial groups, he points out that about mexicans, “*they’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime, they’re rapists...*” and more recently about people from Haiti, El Salvador and African countries, “*why are we having all these people from shjfhole countries come here?*” (Watkins, 2018) In the same way, Trump, showing a feeling of disdain to other communities, asserts that about Haitians, “*they all have AIDS,*” and of Nigerians, he is alleged to have said that once they had been to the US, Nigerians would never want to “*go back to their huts*” (Scott, 2017).

Besides, we could argue that Donald Trump’s demeaning remarks and use of terms related to ‘anchor baby’ and ‘illegals’ to give a depiction of immigrants frame blatantly them as different and less than human beings. He describes them as a way to reduce entire groups of people to their immigration status and renders their complex identities as human being inconsequential. Despite being perceived as shocking and abhorrent words for the whole immigrant community in the US, Trump faces no serious consequences for his decisions to use them. According to his supporters, they dismiss it as Trump just telling it like it is.

While describing immigrants as dangerous, Trump underlines that they are neither worthy of dignity nor enjoy the same rights and privileges to which ‘we’ are entitled. The argument Trump puts forward serves as the vehicle in the source domain that likens immigrants to criminals being released from prison. They also represent economic and physical threats, for they bring lawlessness and threaten the American civilized way of life. Donald Trump portrays immigrants as animals, and this metaphorical construction is often used in association with prisoners. The fact that they are being released into US society can incite fear compared to the release of wild animals into their neighborhoods, threatening their own safety. Focusing on Trump’s speeches, we contend that they disclose a xenophobic narrative, stereotyping the image of African American immigrants.

3. US Public Opinion's Criticism of Aggressive Political Discourse

The crisis of cultural identities African Americans or the black communities experience in the US society is laden with biases. Donald Trump's rhetoric has elicited significant reactions from various communities, particularly, the black communities. They see his policies and administration as exacerbating racial tensions and undermining civil rights. They have also expressed major concern and opposition to Trump's xenophobic rhetoric, affecting racial minorities and immigrants, including political statements, protests and scholarly analyses.

Barack Obama's era was considered as the post-racial America myth. Despite his unimaginable elevation to the highest office, Obama as the 44th President of USA, never deluded himself about the alleged retreat of racism. In his farewell speech in Chicago on January 10, 2017, he declared that

There's a second threat to our democracy – one as old as our nation itself. After my election, there was talk of a post-racial America. Such a vision, however, well-intended, was never realistic. For race remains a potent and often divisive force in our society. I've lived long enough to know that race relations are better than they were ten, or twenty, or thirty years ago- you can see it not just in statistics, but in the attitudes of young Americans across the political spectrum. But we're not where we need to be. [...] Going forward, we must uphold laws against discrimination – in hiring, in housing, in education and the criminal justice. That's what our constitution and highest ideals require. But Laws alone won't be enough. Hearts must change. [...]¹

In his declaration, Obama unveils the racial issues, which continuously pervade the US society. The identity and characterization on the basis

¹ Barack Obama, "Farewell Speech," The Los Angeles Times, January 10, 2017. <<http://www.latime> (...)

of race have undermined the cultural and social values of African Americans for years. Given that Obama has repeatedly reputed the myth of a post-racial society to avoid being accused of partiality. That was the most daunting of his challenge. Reconsidering the laws which discriminate the black communities and other minority groups, healing hearts from prejudices and reversing the dominant white culture are a way to come to grips with these racial problems.

The white dominant discourse, under Donald Trump's era, subverts long-held American values which polarize and racialize the national debate. The floodgates of hatred and bigotry portend a looming race war. Because of Trump's tenure, the United States faces confrontational issues and a kind of underdeclared civil war in which race and rage feature prominently. According to Matt Lewis, "*this uncivil war has already begun with the public shaming and shunning of Trump officials.*"² In the same vein, Khatya Chhor sees it as a "*resistance to Trump movement is under way, a motley coalition of anti-trumpists who diverge on tactics but seem to agree that the ballot is the least resort.*"³ Given the current tensions in American society, there is little hope that political and racial antagonisms will be appeared anytime soon.

It is the argument that when politicians or other public figures use strong or offensive vocabulary, the public frequently criticizes it. The xenophobic discourse used by Donald Trump may encourage animosity and anger and contribute to an environment of violence and division. Actually, this kind of language is perceived as destructive. The aggressive political speech is criticized on the grounds that it might have harmful or even fatal repercussions. As illustrative purposes, we can assert that, for many individuals, the harsh language of some politicians and media characters bring about violence after the attack on the US capitol on January 6, 2021. Similarly, violent political speech, according to critics, may damage democracy by weakening public

²Matt Lewis, "The Uncivil War Has Officially Begun," *Daily Beast*, June 26, 2018 <<https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-uncivil-war-has-officially-begun>>, accessed on August 24, 2018; Sam Wolfson, "Make Them Pariahs: How Shaming Trump Aids Became a Resistance Tactic," *The Guardian*, July 11, 2018. <<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/jul/11/trump-protest-harassment-public-sarah-sanders>>, accessed on August 24, 2018.

³Khatya Chhor, "Wonder Who's Fighting Trump? Meet the #Resistance," *France 24*, May 31, <<https://www.france24.com/en/20180530-who-fighting-trump-opposition-meet-resistance-resist-twitter-hashtag-grassroots-usa> 2018>, accessed on August 24, 2018; David Brooks, "The Devolution of Anti-Trumpists," *The Seattle Times*, January 9, 2018. <<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/the-devolution-of-anti-trumpists/>>, accessed on August 24, 2018.

confidence in political institutions and motivating more individuals to use violence than engage in civil society conversation and compromise. In his analysis of Donald Trump's xenophobic rhetoric targeting African Americans and other minority groups, R. Jones, in "The Trump Administration's Ban on Muslims." *Journal of Politics and International Affairs* (2019), points out that as people grow more entrenched in their opinions and less receptive to competing viewpoints, this can lead to a feeling of division and polarization. Soroka and Wlezien hold a similar view as they give an insight into racial attitudes, existing in US society. In that light, they argue that

some activists have requested politicians and public personalities to tone down their language and concentrate on courteous, constructive conversation in order to address this problem. They contend that political leaders must set a good example and foster decency and respect in public dialogue and discourse. (Soroka and Wlezien, 2019 :230).

Actually, the condemnation of such a violent political rhetoric reflects a greater understanding of the influence that words can have on attitudes and actions. The use of the negative language contributes to lessening polarization and division and fosters a more peaceful and democratic society by encouraging a more polite and courteous political culture.

Donald Trump's era is known as a period marked by a combative and divisive style, which frequently draws criticism from both political opponents and members of mass media. His electoral campaign speeches and tweets are characterized by a focus on issues such as immigration, trade, and national security, with a particular emphasis on putting America first. Then, Trump using a racially charged rhetoric is, particularly, a controversial aspect of his presidential communication. Trump's rhetoric on immigration is driven by racial hostility and a desire to appeal to his base, rather than a genuine concern for national security or immigration policy. His rhetoric on immigration creates intense public argument, leading to divisive stand during his presidency.

It also reflects deep divisions in American society over issues of race, identity and national security.

The speeches of Trump are described as showing disrespect for others. In January 2018, during a meeting with lawmakers about immigration policy, President Trump reportedly referred to Haiti, El Salvador and African countries as shifthole countries, which drew widespread condemnation. Trump's comments are widely criticized as racist and offensive, with many arguing that they reflect a broader pattern of prejudice and xenophobia in his administration. Critics also point out that Trump's comments are inconsistent with American values of diversity, inclusion and respect for other cultures.

It is worth claiming that Michael Cohen, in his work, *Low Opinions of All Black Folks* (2020), expresses disapproval of Trump's xenophobic discourse. According to Cohen, Donald Trump is depicted as making racist comments on numerous occasions. He evokes low opinions of all black folks, from music to culture and politics. Trump makes it clear while highlighting that any country run by a black person is subject to a shithole.

During his presidency, Trump is always blamed for inflaming racial, ethnic and religious tensions across the United States. From that perspective, the Southern Poverty Law Center reported that there were 867 hate incidents in the 10 days after the 2016 presidential election. That is a phenomenon, which is partly blamed on Trump's rhetoric. SPLC president Richard Cohen delves into this xenophobia while blaming the recent surge on the divisive language used by Trump throughout his campaign. That is in this context that he declares: "*Mr Trump claims he's surprised his election has unleashed a barrage of hate across the country. But he shouldn't be. It's the predictable result of the campaign he waged.*"⁴ According to Cohen, the dehumanizing rhetoric used by Trump fuels racial, social and political tensions during the US presidential election.

More importantly, the Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Tolerance conducted a survey of teachers after the 2016 presidential

⁴ Mazin Sidahmed, (November 29, 2016). "Trump's election led to 'barrage of hate', report finds". *The Guardian*. Retrieved January 27, 2018.

election. Focusing on that survey, we remark that the results of the elections have a profoundly negative impact on schools and students. Most respondents believe the impact will be long-lasting. For respondents, there is an increase in verbal harassment, the use of slurs and derogatory language, and disturbing incidents involving swastikas, Nazi salutes and confederate flags. Accordingly, many of the incidents are motivated by anti-immigrant sentiment and, anti-black incidents are the second most common, with frequent references to lynching, antisemitic and anti-muslim attacks are common as well. From that sense, the **Southern Poverty Law Center** believes that “*the dynamics and incidents these educators reported are nothing short of a crisis and should be treated as such.*”⁵ As SPLC President Richard Cohen gives an insight into Trump’s racist rhetoric, he declares that “*we’ve seen Donald Trump behave like a 12 year old, and now we’re seeing 12 year olds behave like Donald Trump.*”⁶ Cohen depicts Trump as being immature, reducing him to the level of a mere infantile who aimlessly talks about nonsense. In short, we remark that the US public opinion’s criticism of aggressive political discourse has a strong sense of blacks’ self-awareness, restoring the racial, cultural and political identity of African Americans within the US society. Instead of undermining the foundation of America on the basis of myth-making, they contribute to shaping and rebuilding the American way of life and the cultural, social, political and historical values standing as the bedrock of America.

Conclusion

The Metaphorical structures in Donald Trump’s speeches convey a sense of stereotypes meant for dehumanizing and vilifying immigrants. The conceptual metaphors that were most frequently used include immigrants are flood waters, objects and animals. Each of these metaphors serves a slightly different purpose, but it contributes to a framing of immigrants as a threat to ‘us’ and American way of life. The depiction of immigrants as a threatening community has an impact on public safety and on the resources on which Trump’s audience rely.

⁵ Kuang Keng Kuek Ser, (April 20, 2016). “What’s the ‘Trump Effect’ in schools? Here’s how 2,000 teachers explain it”. *The World*. Retrieved January 22, 2018.

⁶ Kuek Ser, Kuang Keng (April 20, 2016). “What’s the ‘Trump Effect’ in schools? Here’s how 2,000 teachers explain it”. *The World*. Retrieved January 22, 2018.

The combination of these linguistic choices powerfully constructs immigrants as hordes of criminal-animals. In Trump's words, they deplete resources and threaten the safety of law-abiding citizens, being framed as 'us.' He uses the term 'othering' to incite fear and construct a narrative of xenophobia. His rhetoric has fostered an "us versus them" attitude, and it further divides society by singling out people and groups based on their race, religion, or political membership. Donald Trump's critics argue that his rhetoric and policies on issues such as immigration and criminal justice give way to a climate of fear and mistrust among minority groups and exacerbate existing racial tensions in the United States. The xenophobic rhetoric of Trump is a deeply divisive problem, playing a crucial role in shaping public opinion of his presidency. Donald Trump using harsh language in his political discourse has a great impact on US society. In his speeches, he is depicted as a character, encouraging racism and prejudice, and this can have detrimental effects on politics, individuals and society as a whole. The use of polarizing language has already worsened existing differences and damaged public confidence in democratic institutions like the media and the electoral process. Through the political discourse analysis, we can shine a light on discursive practices that attempt to further dangerous destructive and exclusionary ideologies. The political discourse associated with xenophobia involves hidden dimensions of power, control, injustice and inequity. These issues are crucial and unnoticed because they are couched in what appears to be common-sense assumptions of social reality and truth.

As the effects of Trump's rhetoric continue to be felt in all spectrum of US society, it is critical to consider its impacts and work forward a more inclusive and positive political language, and respectful community that are equally essential issues. The American public opinion holds a critical view and expresses a growing concern about Trump's xenophobic rhetoric. The reactions against the racial attitudes, under his presidency, aim to address rhetorical violence and xenophobia in political discourse in the United States. By analyzing the lingering impacts of this discourse, we suggest that Trump should advocate a more constructive and inclusive political atmosphere, which can be created by encouraging respectful dialogue and prioritizing policy discussions above personal attacks. In an attempt to examine the psychological, social and economic effects of this rhetoric, this study delves into how

human language and policy intersect to shape societal attitudes and treatment of marginalized groups. It also lays foundation for the importance of inclusive governance and the need to protect rights and dignity of all individuals regardless of origin.

Bibliography

Chavez L. (2013), *The Latino threat: Constructing immigrants, citizens, and the nation*, Stanford University Press.

Chhor Khatya (2018), “Wonder Who’s Fighting Trump? Meet the #Resistance,” *France 24*, May 31,

<<https://www.france24.com/en/20180530-who-fighting-trump-opposition-meet-resistance-resist-twitter-hashtag-grassroots-usa-2018>>, accessed on August 24, 2018; David Brooks, “The Devolution of Anti-Trumpists,”

The Seattle Times, <<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/the-devolution-of-anti-trumpists/>>, accessed on August 24, 2018.

Cisneros J. D. (2011), (Re) Bordering the civic imaginary: Rhetoric, hybridity, and citizenship in *La Gran Marcha*.

Quarterly Journal of Speech, 97:26-49.

Fairclough N. (2001), *Language and power* (2nd ed.). London, Longman/Pearson.

Feagin J. R. (2010), *The white racial frame: Centuries of racial framing and counter-framing*, New York, Routledge.

Horowitz R. & Murphy L.B. (1938), Projective methods in the psychological study of children. *Journal of Experimental Education* 7 (1), 133–140.

Jones R. (2019), “The Trump Administration's Ban on Muslims.” *Journal of Politics and International Affairs*, 10(2), 56-73. Accessed 18 Mar. 2023.

Kuek Ser Kuang Keng (2016), “What's the 'Trump Effect' in schools? Here's how 2,000 teachers explain it”. *The World*.

Retrieved January 22, 2018.

Lederer J. (2013), ‘Anchor baby’ : A conceptual explanation for pejoration. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 57, 248-266.

Obama Barack (2017), “Farewell Speech,” *The Los Angeles Times*, <<http://www.latime> (...)

- Lewis Matt** (2018), "The Uncivil War Has Officially Begun," *Daily Beast*,
 <<https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-uncivil-war-has-officially-begun>>, accessed on August 24, 2018;
- Sam Wolfson (2018), "'Make Them Pariahs': How Shaming Trump Aids Became a Resistance Tactic," *The Guardian*,
 <<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/jul/11/trump-protest-harassment-public-sarah-sanders>>, accessed on August 24, 2018.
- Scott E.** (2017), Despite White House denial, some find Trump's comments about black immigrants believable.
Washington Post. Retrieved from:
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2017/12/23/despite-white-house-denial-some-find-trumps-comments-about-black-immigrants-believable/?utm_term=.bd7cedbebca1
- Sidahmed Mazin** (2016), "Trump's election led to 'barrage of hate', report finds". *The Guardian*. Retrieved January 27, 2018.
- Simmel George**, 'The Metropolis and Mental Life', *The Sociology of George Simmel*, Kurt Wolff (Trans.) (1950), (New York, Free Press,) p. 409-424.
- Soroka Stuart N. and Wlezien Christopher** (2019), *Degrees of Democracy: Politics, Public Opinion, and Policy*. Cambridge University Press, Accessed 3 Nov. 2022.
- Strauss S. & Feiz P.** (2014), *Discourse analysis: Putting our worlds into words*, New York, Routledge.
- Tomasello M.** (2008), How are humans unique? *New York Times Magazine*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/25/magazine/25wwln-essay-t.html>
- U.S. Constitution Amendment XIV.
- Tuch S. A. & Shaw-Taylor Y.** (2007), *The other African Americans: contemporary African and Caribbean immigrants in the United States*, Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Van Dijk T. A.** (1995), Opinions and ideologies in the press. *Paper Round Table on Media Discourse*. Published in Allan Bell and Peter Garrett (Eds.), *Approaches to Media Discourse*, Oxford, Blackwell, (pp. 21-63).
- Wodak R. P.** (2015), The Discursive construction of strangers: Analyzing discourses about migrants and migration

From a discourse-historical perspective. *Migration and Citizenship: Newsletter of American Political Science Association Organized Section on Migration Citizenship*, 3(1), 7-11.

Watkins E. & Phillip A. (2018), Trump decries immigrants from ‘shithole countries’ coming to the US. *CNN*. Retrieved from: <https://www.cnn.com/2018/01/11/politics/immigrants-shithole-countries-trump/index.html>.