

## Strategizing for Mental Models Control: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Nominalization in Trump's Inauguration Speech

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**المستخلص:** تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف العميق في التحليل النقدي للخطاب لفهم صيغة التسمية المستخدمة كاستراتيجية خطابية في خطاب التنصيب للرئيس الأمريكي دونالد ترامب الذي القاه في مبنى الكونغرس الكابيتول في يوم الاثنين العشرين من كانون الثاني 2025 بعد انتخابه الرئيس السابع والأربعون للولايات المتحدة الأمريكية. تناول الباحث تحليل الخطاب استنادا إلى نظرية التحليل النقدي للخطاب وخصوصا ما تبناه فان ديك في نظريته الذهنية للكشف عن طريقة التعامل مع الخطاب وفهمه وتفسيره وكيف يكشف التحليل النقدي الأيديولوجيات الكامنة ضمن الخطاب السياسي. بينت نتائج التحليل ان الرئيس ترامب وظف مجموعة متنوعة من مفردات صيغ التسمية التي تركزت على إبراز مفاهيم متعددة مثل اللامات والتحديات, القيادة, ديناميكية القوة, التأطير الأيديولوجي, مفهوم التجرد في تناول الأحداث السياسية بالإضافة إلى الرؤية المستقبلية. ان التركيز في الخطاب السياسي على هذه المفاهيم يهدف إلى خلق وإقامة ومن ثم العمل على إضفاء الصفة الشرعية للسلطة والهيمنة السياسية نحو التأثير والسيطرة على الصورة الذهنية للجمهور والرأي العام.

### Abstract

The aim of this study is to develop a critical analysis to deeply understand nominalization utilized as a discursive strategy in Donald Trump's inaugural speech delivered at the United States Capitol on Monday, January 20th, 2025, after being elected the 47<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. The data is approached via Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspectives, particularly Van Dijk's theory of mental models to understand the way individuals process and interpret discourse and how critical analysis is adopted to highlight the underlying ideologies. The findings show that Trump employs a variety of thematically categorized nominalization to foreground challenges, crises, leadership, strength, power dynamics, ideological framing, abstraction of concepts, representation of actions or states, processes and results, and future vision. This foregrounding targets establishing political discourse dominance and legitimacy to reflect on the mental models control of the audience and guide public perception.

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**Keywords:** nominalization, critical discourse analysis, discursive strategy, mental models, socio-cognitive approach

## 1. Introduction

Making an effective speech lies in the ability of the speaker to employ words of influential load. This tactic results in building a relation between the speaker and the intended audience(s). The employment of a potent language is a significant element in political discourse since language and politics are interrelated. Political discourse plays a crucial role in the construction of particular mental models that target shaping public perception. One of the remarkable discursive strategies to achieve this is nominalization—the transformation of verbs and adjectives into nouns.

This study aims at shedding the light on the critical analysis of the role of nominalization deployed as a discursive strategy in the inaugural speech of Donald Trump, the 47th President of the United States. It tries to show the ways in which nominalized words are invested by the speaker to control the mental models of audience and reflect on them ideologically.

Trump delivers the speech under analysis at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. on Monday, January 20th, 2025, as he takes office. It is a place used typically for the procedural formalities of presidential inaugurations. The attendees reflect a panoramic picture of polarized political context as they are both supporters and opponents of Trump.

In this speech, Trump focuses on his planned efforts to go back to America's foundational principles and the “Golden Age” vision of prosperity as he states. He talks over national sovereignty, repairing justice, and order. He discusses America's confrontation with immigration, inflation, and public safety. The speech is thought of as the most out of the common inauguration in American history at which he commences his speech by “the golden age of America begins right now” to address a reprimand to the administration of the former President Joe Biden and his Vice President Harris who are seated very close behind him looking on.

## 2. Methodology

The study adopts a qualitative discourse analysis at which Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach is chosen to take up the task. Van Dijk's theory of mental models is an important element of his sociocognitive approach to account for the

way people understand, process, and interpret discourse. This approach aims to analyze the interaction between language, society, and cognition. The full transcription of the speech is analysed by highlighting forms of nominalization Donald Trump utilized. These forms of nominalization are identified and classified depending on their purposes in shaping public cognition and reinforcing dominant ideologies. Besides, the study interprets the ideological impact of these forms of nominalization on the mental models of the audience.

## 2.1 Research Questions

The analysis tries to answer the following questions:

1. What does nominalization reveal about the text's underlying ideologies and power dynamics?
2. What is the impact of nominalization on legitimizing the construction and reproduction of ideological dominance and cognitive framing in political texts?
3. How does nominalization interact with the involved context to shape the way public perceive Trump's political agenda?
4. How does the strategy of nominalization mediate on the interface between cognition and language to control the intended mental models in the public mind?

## 3. Nominalization

Nominalization is a grammatical process which refers to the transformation of verbs and adjectives into nouns. It is one of the lexicogrammatical features of language. It is a concise procedure to linguistically express the conceptualization of a particular process or state of affairs in a nominal form.

The Oxford Companion to the English Language (1992: 702) defines the concept of nominalization as follow:

The process or result of forming a noun from a word belonging to another word class: *writing/writings* and *shaving/shavings* derived from *write* and *shave* by adding *-ing*; *sanity* derive from *sane* by the addition of the noun-forming suffix *-ity*; *nominalization* derived from *nominalize* by adding *-ation*. The process or result of deriving a noun phrase by a transformation from a finite clause *their rejecting my complaint* or *their rejection of my complaint* from *'They rejected my complaint*.

From morphological and syntactic perspectives, Quirk, et al. (1985: 1288) shows that nominalization can be determined in the form of a noun phrase which corresponds with a clause structure. The noun head of such a phrase is normally related morphologically to a verb or to an adjective". For example:

- (1) His *refusal* to help ~ He *refuses* to help.

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(2) The *truth* of her statement ~ Her statement is *true*.

Quirks, et al. (1985), show the difference in meaning between a deverbal noun, such as (3) and (4), and their corresponding verbal noun (5) and (6):

(3) *Some paintings of Brown's*

~ (a) some paintings that Brown owns, or (b) some paintings painted by Brown

(4) *Brown's paintings of his daughter*

~ (a) Paintings depicting his daughter and painted by him, or (b) paintings depicting his daughter and painted by someone else but owned by him.

(5) *The painting of Brown* is as skilful as that of Gainsborough.

~ (a) Brown's mode of painting, or (b) Brown's action of painting.

(6) *Brown's deft painting of his daughter* is a delight to watch

~ It is a delight to watch while Brown deftly paints his daughter.

Quirk et al (1985) gives two kinds of nominalization, namely, verbal noun and deverbal noun. Verbal noun can be constructed from verbs by the addition of -ing and inserting 'of' before the noun phrase. This verbal noun is mostly an abstract noncount noun. Deverbal nouns are obtained from verbs to represent pure common nouns which have no verbal features. However, they are morphologically related to verbs.

Halliday (1985:729) presents two definitions of nominalization. The first is "Any structure in which a single constituent or a group of constituents functions as a noun phrase in a sentence is a Nominalization". The second definition is "Nominalization is considered to be the most effective method of creating grammatical metaphors, which is achieved by transforming verbs and adjectives in the unanimated tense into metaphorical nouns, which is, transforming the processes and properties of the original clause into core words in a noun phrase" (Halliday, 1985:729). The following two examples show the nominalization transformation:

1. He failed to complete the task because of his lack of effort.
2. His failure to complete the task was due to his lack of effort.

These two sentences generally convey the same meaning. However, each of them has a particular linguistic encoding as well as a different structure. In the first

sentence, the noun “He” denotes the participant and the verb “failed” refers to a process. The second sentence witnesses an example of noun phrase transformation “His failure to complete the task”.

This difference in sentence structure activates different discourse functions at which process is changed into entity by having a verb process encoded into a nominal form.

Fowler et al (1979) have expressed the idea that choosing noun phrases (nominalization) rather than verbs reflects a non- neutral conceptualization and mostly recognized as ideologically charged. They demonstrate that nominalization is a tactic at which language users can invest to result in new created words or as what they call ‘relexicalization’. They write:

Many derived nominals can be spotted by their ending in -ion, -ition, -ation, -ience, -ness, -ment, etc...We have already seen that nominalization facilitates relexicalization, the coding of a new, specialised, set of concepts in a new set of lexical terms. (p. 40).

Weiss (2015: 33) states that speakers adopt nominalization to manipulate bad news. He also refers to the idea that nominalization “is a process that covertly a powerful, direct verb like “*decide*” into weak, pseudo-technical expression like “*reach a decision*”.

Van Dijk (2008: 821) mentions that “CDA scholars do not investigate nominalization in isolation, but within the text and context of the discourse studied critically”. He (1998: 270) shows that the strategy of nominalization can provide particular conceptualization of certain sentences as being more or less prominent as well as leaving them completely implicit. He adds that the agent can be made implicit to a great extent by using nominalization as in:

*The arrest of demonstrators*

Fairclough (1992: 27) presents nominalization as a grammatical transformation. He states that “Nominalization is the conversion of a clause into a nominal or noun”. By the utilization of nominalization, speakers or writers can transform activities and processes into states and similarly concretes and objects into abstracts. He further states that nominalization ‘may be associated with ideologically significant features of texts such as the systematic mystification of agency’. He (2003: 144) thinks that nominalization can obfuscate agency and manipulate responsibility for particular actions. By resorting to nominalization, actions, verbs, and processes are likely to have their dynamic nature disappeared

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and turned into more firm and static facts at which certain information are focalized.

Comparing nouns with verbs, it can be said that nouns have more potential for modification than verbs. Eggins (2004) explains that:

Nominalization enables us to move beyond the inherent chronological order of spoken language, where we connect a series of actions in which we play an active role. Through the process of nominalizing actions and logical connections, we can structure our written text not in relation to ourselves, but in relation to concepts, rationales, and causal factors. By converting words and other parts of speech into nouns, we expand the potential substance of our text, thereby enhancing its lexical density. (p.95)

According to Halliday (2004: 124), "the power of the nominal group is simultaneously both grammatical (its potential for structure) and semantic (the nature of entities)". In accordance with the grammatical and semantic points of views, it is argued that treating objects as nouns is advantageous.

## **4. Nominalization in Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an approach utilized widely to have a deep understanding of a particular discourse. It helps the analyst in the explanation and interpretation of the way language users in power shape their discourse. Fairclough (1995: 74) who is a pioneer of (CDA) refers to the idea that ideology invests language "in producing or interpreting a text, and the ways they are articulated together in orders of discourse". Ideology investment can have the role of "establishing a categorical and authoritative and decisive image than with giving information" (ibid: 75).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) shows interest in the ways —discourse structures reproduce, confirm, legitimate, or challenge relations of controlling as well as dominating society (van Dijk, 2001: 353). The critical sense in (CDA) lies in investigating how discourse can cause an impact on society. (CDA) focuses on the idea that language represents a form of social practice at which language works in connection with the social aspect of life as having the potentials of being the primary domain of ideology.

Nominalization is tackled in CDA in almost the same way ideology is discussed. This viewpoint is summarized in Fairclough's scrutiny that "the social

effectivity of nominalization depends upon what is nominalized...and on the specific social context in which it occurs...” (Fairclough 2010: 214)

## 5. Understanding Mental Models

Johnson-Laird (1983) suggests the idea of mental models to show that language users need to have some “analogical” representation of reality to be capable of arriving at suitable inferences from a text. Similarly, Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) put forward a theory of mental models, called “situation models,” to discuss the way language users process and understand discourse. The core argument of mental models theory is that language users set up mental models of the context of the texts events besides building a representation of the meaning of a text. This means constructing “situation models”.

Van Dijk’s (2014:49) theory of mental models presents a perception of the way the worlds of discourse interact with society. He states that language users produce discourses or texts according to their understanding of the world. This perception is cognitively represented in the form of mental models which are constructed and stored in memory. Discourses whether written or spoken are shared with other social actors’ mental models arriving at dynamic and internal understanding, interpretation, and interaction with language and the world around language uses. These mental models sum up the language users’ beliefs and ideologies and help them trail the relationships in a particular discourse in view of the language context.

Van Dijk’s theory of mental models is an important element of his sociocognitive approach to account for the way people understand, process, and interpret discourse. This theory gives prominence to the following features:

1. The analysis of mental models in discourse means analyzing the cognitive representations people construct to understand the world around them.
2. Mental models are thought of as facilitators for individuals to understand and interpret the world around them.
3. As far as discourse conception, mental models help in searching behind explicit information and learning more about what is implicit.
4. Mental models are governed and shaped by personal experiences and situational contexts at which discourse is variably interpreted by individuals.

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5. Mental models are associated with social interactions and the shared understandings within communities. Such distributed mental models facilitate communication. However, they may result in misunderstandings with out-group members of a community, a way of dichotomizing in-group and out-group membership.

6. Mental models of individuals grow and develop gradually over time.

7. Mental models have the capacity to bridge discourse and cognition. They reflect on the way people process information.

## 6. Data Analysis

This section presents the critical analysis of the discursive strategy of nominalization as employed by Trump. The following are expository examples accentuating the nominalized expressions in the speech under study. In these expressions verbs, adjectives, and other parts of speech are turned into nouns to signal the recognition of significance, policy, national vision, and framing the ideas and notions being tackled in the context of the speech in a more formal, abstract, and authoritative manner.

***Extract (1):** From this day forward, our country will flourish and be respected again all over the world. We will be the **envy** of every **nation**, and we will not allow ourselves to be taken **advantage** of any longer. During every single day of the Trump **administration**, I will, very simply, put America first.*

*Our **sovereignty** will be reclaimed. Our safety will be restored. The scales of **justice** will be rebalanced. The vicious, violent, and unfair **weaponization** of the Justice Department and our government will end.*

In extract (1), the word “**envy**” is converted from the verb form into its nominalized expression with a zero suffix. Other nominalizations witnessed a transformation by using various suffixes as in “advantage”, “administration-admire”, “sovereignty-sovereign”, “weaponization-weaponize”, and “justice-justify”. The transformation from verbs into nominalized forms expresses turning actions into abstract concepts. The speaker employs these expressions to identify his feelings and intentions to create emotional negotiations with the listeners to control their mental models and to present positive assessment of his administration arriving at establishing ideological basis for political power and

dominance. In this way, activities and processes are changed into states and objects into abstracts.

**Extract (2):** *My recent **election** is a **mandate** to completely and totally reverse a horrible **betrayal** and all of these many betrayals that have taken place and to give the people back their **faith**, their **wealth**, their **democracy**, and, indeed, their **freedom**. From this **moment** on, America's **decline** is over. Our **liberties** and our nation's glorious **destiny** will no longer be denied. And we will immediately restore the **integrity**, **competency**, and **loyalty** of America's **government**.*

In extract (2) above, various suffixes are used for nominalizing the expressions highlighted in bold. The nominalized forms can be phrased or reworded into their original non-nominalized words to reflect the difference in the communicative meaning of the message conveyed in the nominalized forms in comparison with non-nominalized ones as follows:

- (*My recent election....*) into (*I was elected...*)
- (*to completely and totally reverse a horrible betrayal...*) into (*to completely and totally attack those who betrayed...*)
- (*to give the people back their faith, their wealth, their democracy...*) into (*to have faithful people, wealthy people, democratic people...*)

The use of the nominalized concepts in these examples aims to influence the listeners' mental models, direct their behaviour, and control the course of the political events. Nominalization is utilized strategically to enlarge and deepen the difference with the former administration led by Biden. Furthermore, nominalizing these expressions has a significant role in getting the attention of the audience and let these nominalized elements thematized.

**Extract (3):** *I return to the **presidency** confident and optimistic that we are at the start of a thrilling new era of national success. A tide of **change** is sweeping the country, **sunlight** is pouring over the entire world, and America has the **chance** to seize this **opportunity** like never before.*

Extract (3) shows that the speaker modifies the structure to be nominalized as “**return to presidency**” instead of saying for example, “I’m the president now”, to reinforce his authority and legitimacy and express power control. This is a strategic way of manipulating the mental and contextual models of the audience as well as constructing an image of an urgent political leadership who is able to

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resolve the encountered crises. The utilization of “change” as a noun in “a tide of change is sweeping the country” is to give the nominalized element more significance and make it the theme of the clause. Although the word “change” semantically expresses a process of dynamicity, it is used here to add extra sense of transforming that process into a nation state. The same idea is true with reference to the employment of the expressions “*chance*” and “*opportunity*”.

In Extract (4) and Extract (5), Trump resort to the nominalized words to reflect on the listeners through mentioning instances of bad appraisal of Biden's government to reproduce a negative image in the brains of the audience:

**Extract (4):** *We now have a **government** that cannot manage even a simple **crisis** at home while, at the same time, **stumbling** into a continuing **catalogue** of catastrophic events abroad.*

**Extract (5):** *It fails to protect our magnificent, law-abiding American citizens but provides **sanctuary and protection** for dangerous **criminals**, many from **prisons** and mental **institutions**, that have illegally entered our **country** from all over the world.*

Negatively evaluating Biden's government is publically tackled to establish a sense of urgency that the country is under an obligation to a remedial administration of American patriots to put up with every crisis in the country. In light of the contextual factors of the political environment and party affiliation struggle between Trump's administration and that of Biden's, nominalization lends itself for the speaker to frame him as the solution for America's crisis and decline. This strategy of framing is directed towards sketching out the listeners' mental models and drawing up a problem-solution action at which shift of power and dominance is established by mapping out a country plan whose leader is Trump as it is expressed in extracts (6), (7) and (8) below:

**Extract (6):** *That is why each day under our **administration** of American patriots, we will be working to meet every **crisis** with **dignity and power and strength**. We will move with **purpose and speed** to bring back **hope, prosperity, safety, and peace** for citizens of every **race, religion, color, and creed**.*

**Extract (7):** *As our **victory** showed, the entire **nation** is rapidly unifying behind our **agenda** with dramatic **increases** in **support** from virtually every element of our **society**: young and old, men and women, African Americans, Hispanic Americans,*

*Asian Americans, urban, suburban, rural. And very importantly, we had a powerful **win** in all seven swing states — (applause) — and the popular **vote**, we won by **millions of people**.*

**Extract (8):** *National **unity** is now returning to America, and **confidence and pride** is soaring like never before. In everything we do, my **administration** will be inspired by a strong **pursuit of excellence and unrelenting success**. We will not forget our **country**, we will not forget our **Constitution**, and we will not forget our **God**. Can't do that.*

In Extracts (9) and (10) below, the employment of the nominalized words (try to kill me into assassin's **bullet ripped**), (*I was saved* into **my life**), and (*because* into **reason**) with mentioning "**by God**" brings forth a sense of divinity to control the audience thought by visualizing this incident as a God supportive involvement for change and pursuing success being abided by the Constitution.

**Extract (9):** *Just a few months ago, in a beautiful Pennsylvania field, an **assassin's bullet ripped** through my ear. But I felt then and believe even more so now that **my life** was saved for a **reason**. I was saved by God to make America great again.*

**Extract (10):** *National **unity** is now returning to America, and **confidence and pride** is soaring like never before. In everything we do, my **administration** will be inspired by a strong **pursuit of excellence and unrelenting success**. We will not forget our **country**, we will not forget our **Constitution**, and we will not forget **our God**. Can't do that.*

In extract (11) below, various suffixes are used for nominalizing the expressions highlighted in bold in the extract. The nominalized forms can be reworded into non-nominalized words as follows:

- (*My recent election....*) into (*I was elected...*)
- (*to completely and totally reverse a horrible betrayal...*) into (*to completely and totally attack those who betrayed...*)
- (*to give the people back their faith, their wealth, their democracy...*) into (*to have faithful people, wealthy people, democratic people...*)

A variety of suffixal morphemes are used in nominalization transformation. The use of nominalized lexical items in extract (11) aims to influence the listeners'

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mental models, direct their behaviour, and control the course of the political events. Nominalization is utilized strategically to enlarge and deepen the difference with the former administration led by Biden. Furthermore, such nominalization has a significant role in getting the attention of the audience and foregrounding these nominalized elements to be the themes of the clause:

**Extract (11):** *My recent **election** is a **mandate** to completely and totally reverse a horrible **betrayal** and all of these many betrayals that have taken place and to give the people back their **faith**, their **wealth**, their **democracy**, and, indeed, their **freedom**. From this **moment** on, America's **decline** is over. Our **liberties** and our nation's glorious **destiny** will no longer be denied. And we will immediately restore the **integrity**, **competency**, and **loyalty** of America's **government**.*

In Extract (12) below, the use of nominalization is invested to convey strong commitments and promise to do the necessary repair of the trade system. Such repair is modelled mentally and shaped discursively in the view of protecting workers and families. The verbal nominalization of "taxing" reflects transforming action into fact which is enhanced by the utilization of "instead" to incite differences through positively presenting Trump's administration and negatively Biden's one. This is discursively addressed to establish dominance and power control to be normalized and legitimized.

**Extract (12):** *I will immediately begin the **overhaul** of our **trade system** to protect American **workers and families**. Instead of **taxing** our **citizens** to enrich other countries, we will **tariff** and **tax** foreign countries to enrich our citizens.*

## 7. Results and Discussion

The results of analyzing the full transcript of Donald Trump's speech show that a wide scope of nominalization is discursively employed to strategize mental models control. Table (1) below presents the nominalized expressions identified in the speech.

**Table (1): Nominalizations and their Thematic Classification**

	Nominalizations	Thematic	CDA Perception and
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		<b>Classifications</b>	<b>Mental Models Control</b>
1	decline, challenges, crisis, despair, criminals, prisons, emergency, betrayal, invasion, responsibility, threats, inflation	Challenges and Crises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aspects of urgency to settle crises and challenges</li> <li>- Government involvement to resolve country problems</li> <li>- Establishment for legitimacy, validity and justification</li> </ul>
2	restoration, victory, power, determination, resurgence, unity, government, safety, advantage, presidency, election, competency, strength, revolution, troops, invoking, enforcement, confidence, leadership, policy, vigor, vitality, promise	Leadership, Strength, and Power Dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dominance and control</li> <li>- Authority of government institutions to shape and reflect on societal norms</li> <li>- Actions appear unavoidable which emphasizes perceived power dynamics</li> </ul>
3	freedom, security, justice, patriotism, prosperity, democracy, opportunity, expression, trust, catalogue, mandate, unity, mission, religion	Framing Ideologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potentials for positive change</li> <li>- Political aspiration for democracy through government control</li> </ul>
4	Liberation, Prosperity, Freedom, hope, peace, Justice, Liberty, Safety, Happiness, sovereignty, safety, justice, wealth, faith, confidence, destiny, loyalty, spirit, courage, compassion	Expressing Abstract Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potentials for positive change, values, freedom</li> <li>- Perception of such values is important to democracy and life of people</li> <li>- Emphasis of ideas rather than actions.</li> </ul>

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5	Governance, Employment, Investment, Protection, finding, Education, Enforcement, priority, change, establishment, purpose, speed, explorers, innovators, overhaul, taxing	Representation of Actions and States	- Actions for protecting democratic nation and shaping peoples' expectations accordingly
6	Development, Achievement, Commitment, administration, pursuit, actions, lifeblood	Processes and Results	- Commitment to positive changes perceived as important for progress
7	transfer, challenge, economy, destiny, resilience, Transition, Establishment, Division, weaponization, defense, support, reality, message, adventure	Information Compression	- Focusing on the idea that the new elected administration is the proper choice - Dichotomizing what is positive or negative
8	Success, restoration, chance, wealth, education, love, freedom, liberties, integrity, dignity, agenda, dream, pride, choice, place, awe, admiration, victory, expectations, ambition	Future Vision	- Moving back to positive situation - This returning is the solution for most crises - - Presupposition that healthy political environment leads to people benefit.
9	trust, freedom, momentum, pride, love, faith, integrity, loyalty, race, religion, creed	Social Aspects of Communication (values and beliefs)	- manipulating the audience to accept the speaker's political stance - Reproduction of positive presentation

It is clear from Table (1) above that many forms of nominalization are used by Trump. These forms are identified and categorized in view of a critically

suggested thematic classification which expresses their subject matters in parallel with (CDA) perception, and mental models control. The analysis shows that nominalization are mainly connected with themes of challenges and crises, leadership, strength, and power dynamics, ideological framing, expressing abstract concepts, representation of actions or states, processes and results, compression of information, future vision, and social aspects of communication(values and beliefs).

The analysis demonstrates that Trump uses nominalization as a discursive strategy to express dominance, and power dynamics of his new administrative policy. This helps the audience uncover the underlying ideologies loaded in his speech which mirror his agendas in the fields of politics, economy, immigration, inflation, and public safety. In this way, the first question raised earlier in the study is answered.

Answering the second question, the researcher pinpoints that Trump manages to share responsibility by involving the audience in the political situation. This strategy which is enhanced by transforming certain structures to their nominalized forms results in reproduction and normalization of political dominance, empowering the speaker's authority, and legitimizing his past, present, and future actions.

With reference to the third question, forms of nominalization in discourse prove their important role in reflecting on the perception of audience particularly the elites present in the place which is typically used for the procedures of presidential inaugurations. The attendees reflect a panoramic picture of polarized political context as they are both supporters and opponents of Trump.

Through nominalization processes are transformed into things, concepts, and states. As such, public cognition finds such concepts and things difficult to be rebutted or denied.

To explain the interrelation between cognition and discourse which is scrutinized in the fourth question of the study, politicians can mediate between them by nominalizing certain concepts to politically establish and control the intended mental models in the public mind and the nation's political scenery.

## **8. Conclusion**

In accordance with the aims of the present study and in line with the results, the researcher wraps up the analysis with the following concluding remarks:

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1. Trump uses nominalization as a discursive strategy to reveal the underlying ideologies, dominance, and power dynamics of his new administrative policy.
2. The use of nominalized forms helps Trump to simplify complex processes into concepts by which mental models are cognitively shaped.
3. The technique of nominalization enhances abstractness and formality of the speech as it pinpoints ideas rather than actions.
4. Trump's utilization of nominalization emphasizes a sense of shared responsibility to have the audience engaged in the political situation. This works for the reproduction and normalization of political dominance, empowering the speaker's authority, and legitimizing his actions.
5. Nominalization is a significant political strategy invested by leaders to reflect the interface between cognition and language which is politically driven for establishing the intended mental models in the public mind.
6. The utilized nominalization forms are mainly concerned with themes of challenges and crises, leadership, strength, and power dynamics, ideological framing, expressing abstract concepts, representation of actions or states, processes and results, compression of information, and future vision.

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### **Speech Web links**

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/remarks/2025/01/the-inaugural-address/>

<https://youtu.be/IFvLorAL5-8?si=2XCyYhPwI07lt9Yw>