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كيف يفسر الذكاء الاصطناعي الخطاب السياسي تحليل الخطاب النقدي

احمد عبدالرزاق عزيز

مديرية تربية محافظة نينوى

الملخص

تناولت هذه الدراسة الخطاب بين الرئيس الأمريكي السابق دونالد ترامب والرئيس الأوكراني فولوديمير زيلينسكي. تركزت الدراسة بشكل كبير على تحليل كيفية بناء خطابهم للاختلافات في السلطة، والاعتماد الدبلوماسي، والإطار الإيديولوجي باستخدام تحليل الخطاب النقدي (CDA). وبشكل أكثر تحديداً، تم استخدام نموذج Fairclough (1995) الثلاثي الأبعاد. حيث يحاول الباحث عبر هذا النموذج اظهار الميزات اللغوية، وإنتاج الخطاب وتداوله، والسياق الاجتماعي والثقافي للتفاعل. من خلال التركيز على الخيارات اللغوية لكل من الزعيمين، مثل استخدام ترامب للضمائر الحازمة والمساعدات المشروطة، وحذر زيلينسكي الدبلوماسي واستخدامه لتعابير الامتتان، تكشف الدراسة كيف تشكل هذه الاستراتيجيات ديناميكيات السلطة. كما تكشف النتائج أن خطاب ترامب يعزز هيمنة الولايات المتحدة بشكل استراتيجي من خلال تأطير المساعدات كمشروطة والتأكيد على سلطته باستخدام ضمائر "أنا" و"نحن".

الكلمات المفتاحية:

تحليل الخطاب النقدي (CDA)، الخيارات اللغوية، نموذج Fairclough الثلاثي الأبعاد، الخطاب السياسي.

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How Artificial Intelligence Interprets Political Rhetoric – A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

This study is a try to examine the discourse between the former U.S. President Donald Trump and the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. Heavily, it concentrates on analyzing their discourse and how it constructs ideological power asymmetry and diplomatic dependency using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), specifically, Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model. This model examines the linguistic features, discourse production and circulation, as well as the sociocultural context of the interaction. The study focuses on the linguistic choices chosen of both leaders. For Trump, he uses assertive pronouns and conditional aid. Unlike Trump, Zelensky uses heavily expressions of gratitude and diplomatic caution. Also, the study reveals how these strategies shape power dynamics. Concerning findings, the study reveals that Trump's discourse asserts strategically the U.S. dominance represented by aid as conditional. His emphasis assures his authority through the use of "I" and "we" pronouns. Contrastively, Zelensky balances carefully the expressions of gratitude. He reflects Ukraine's dependency on U.S. support. The incorporation of AI-assisted discourse analysis provides a complementary tool for the identification of rhetorical strategies and patterns in the speech. The AI offers new insights into political language. In brief, the research contributes to the broader understanding of political discourse and how power shapes dynamics of diplomacy globally the study recommends future research opportunities, especially in exploring the role of AI in political discourse analysis.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA, Linguistic Choices, Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model, Political Discourse.

1. Introduction

This study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine the White House conversation between former U.S. President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, focusing on how language constructs diplomatic authority, dependency, and geopolitical positioning.

Discourse analysis, particularly Fairclough's three-dimensional model (1995:3), allows for an in-depth examination of the linguistic choices (textual level), discourse production and circulation (discursive practice), and the broader sociopolitical influences (sociocultural context) that shape the interaction. Political language is never neutral; rather, it is embedded

with ideological underpinnings, power asymmetries, and strategic framing that serve to reinforce or challenge existing structures (Van Dijk, 1997:12).

In the context of U.S.-Ukraine relations, this study investigates how Trump and Zelensky navigate diplomatic discourse, power asymmetry, and rhetorical strategy in their conversation. Trump's language reflects a strategic assertion of control, particularly through conditionality in military aid and critiques of Europe's involvement, which align with his "America First" policy (Lakoff, 2016:28). Zelensky's discourse is shaped by diplomatic caution, i.e., expressions of gratitude, and a careful balance between seeking aid and asserting Ukraine's strategic importance (Wodak, 2001:6). Both of their discourse suggests a power imbalance where Ukraine is framed as a dependent ally rather than an equal partner. Furthermore, the argument of political discourse is often mediated and reshaped by external narratives, affecting public perception and policy debates (Baker et al., 2008:9). Thus, by applying Fairclough's CDA model, this study explores how political leaders use language to great extent constructing authority, managing diplomatic relations, and influencing global perceptions. At this point, it can be concluded that utilizing the AI-assisted discourse analysis represents an update and a new horizon about the role of machine learning in detecting rhetorical persuasion and ideological positioning (Bamman et al., 2014:5).

2 Research Question

1. How does the discourse between both Donald Trump and Volodymyr Zelensky at a meeting in the White houses during their White House asymmetry, diplomatic dependency, and ideological framing?
2. How can AI-assisted discourse analysis reveal the rhetorical strategies embedded in their conversation?

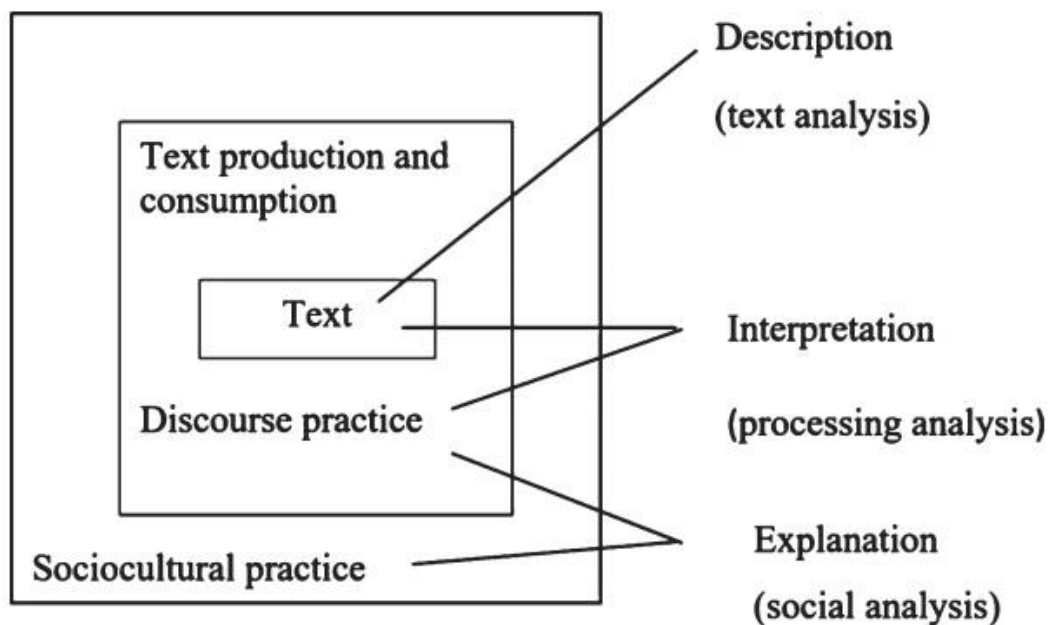
3. Research Objectives

The objective of this study are as follows:

1. Analyzing the linguistic features of both Trump and Zelensky's speech concentrating on pronouns, modality, hedging, and framing.
2. Investigating the discursive strategies that construct power relations and diplomatic dependency.
3. Assess AI's potential in political discourse analysis, particularly in detecting rhetorical strategies and media bias.

4 Theoretical Foundations of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a multi-disciplinary approach that blends linguistic analysis with social theory. It focuses on how language does constructs and perpetuates power relations, ideologies, and social inequalities. Beside a reflection of reality, CDA represents an active component that shapes the social realities as well as power dynamics. It emphasizes the role of language in establishing, maintaining, and challenging existing social structures. Fundamentally, Fairclough (1995:4) argues that CDA is concerned with discourse operation in society. It can reinforce or challenge hegemonic structures of power. Facilitating the analysis, Fairclough (1995) introduced a three-dimensional model for examining discourse, which includes:



Fairclough's three-dimensional model (Source: Fairclough, 1995: 98)

1. Textual Analysis: This component focuses on the linguistic features of discourse. It examines the ways in which language is structured within a text. It looks at the use of modality (expressions of necessity, possibility, or certainty), pronouns (to identify relationships between speakers and listeners), framing (the way issues are presented or contextualized), and other rhetorical strategies. Actually, it explores the elements that highly contribute in constructing meaning, influencing perception, and positioning both the speaker and the audience. Analyzing pronoun used in political discourse may reveal the power dynamics between a leader and the public,

where the frequent use of "we" might convey inclusivity, while "I" might emphasize individual authority.

2. Discursive Practice: This dimension considers the production, circulation, and interpretation of discourse. It examines the social and institutional contexts in which discourse is created, how it spreads across different mediums (such as media, speeches, and official statements), and how it is received and interpreted by various audiences. Discursive practice shows that the role of discourse is shaping public opinion, reinforcing social norms, and influencing political ideologies.

3. Sociocultural Practice: This dimension goes far and deeper broadly into sociopolitical and ideological context. In fact, it shows the power relations, social structures, and historical contexts. By analyzing sociocultural practices, CDA inspects the ideological forces in discourse, such as the reinforcement of gender, racial, and class hierarchies, the societal values of the time. Fairclough's three-dimensional model represent a comprehensive framework for the analysis of language functions. CDA emphasizes that language is never neutral; it is always imbued with power relations and ideological underpinnings. By analyzing discourse through these three dimensions, CDA offers valuable insights into how language shapes and is shaped by societal structures and power dynamics. Similarly, van Dijk (1997:11), argues that political discourse is a matter of inherently manipulation. Wodak (2001:6) extends that CDA reflects emphasizing historical context and the reproduction of power through language, particularly in institutional and diplomatic settings.

5 Trump and Zelensky Discourse

In their conversation, Trump strategically employs conditionality and hedging. They are exemplified by the phrase "we'll see what happens," asserting the U.S. dominance in the aid negotiations. This rhetorical choice signals that U.S. support is not guaranteed. It is contingent upon Ukraine's actions, reinforcing the perception that the U.S. holds control over the terms of assistance. Trump's use of this language emphasizes his power. The frames the U.S. used as the principal authority in the relationship, with Ukraine positioned as the beneficiary of U.S. generosity rather than an equal partner. On the other hand, Zelensky's discourse is marked by a careful balance of gratitude and diplomatic caution. Consistently, He expresses thanks for U.S. aid, signals Ukraine's dependence on American support, but he also navigates the conversation by strategically avoiding

overt demands. Zelensky's language reflects a recognition of the power asymmetry at play, acknowledging Ukraine's need for assistance while simultaneously underscoring the importance of his nation's strategic role in global politics.

6. Power and Ideology in Diplomatic Discourse

Asymmetrical power dynamics Diplomatic discourse between global superpowers and smaller nations appears clearly where language plays a crucial role in reinforcing these imbalances. Van Dijk (1997:13) emphasizes that world leaders strategically use language to:

1. Legitimizing Foreign Policy: Leaders, such as Trump, often employ language that positions their actions as reasonable and justified, such as framing U.S. aid as conditional.
2. Controlling Diplomatic Narratives: Political figures use discourse to shape the way their diplomatic situations are perceived. In our case, Trump and Zelensky.
3. Maintaining Ideological Dominance: Superpowers like the U.S. often position themselves as the primary benefactor in international relations. Trump's language, frames the U.S. as Ukraine's main supporter.
4. Aligning with Wodak's (2001:8) the dynamic perspective suggests that smaller nations must tread carefully when navigating diplomatic language. about communication but also about strategically reinforcing power structures and ideologies.

It can be concluded that the existing literature on CDA and AI in political discourse, and power asymmetry provides a strong foundation for discourse analysis.

7. The present Study

This study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the primary methodological approach. More specifically, Fairclough Multidimensional Model to examine the linguistic, ideological, and power dynamics within the White House conversation between Donald Trump and Volodymyr Zelensky. Fairclough (1995:2) asserts that "discourse is both socially shaped and socially constitutive," meaning that political speech does not only reflect existing power structures but also maintains and reinforcement actively.

8 Data Analysis

Political discourse plays a crucial role in shaping diplomatic relations, public perception, and international power dynamics (Fairclough, 1995:3). The conversation between Donald Trump and Volodymyr Zelensky at the White House has been analyzed depending on Fairclough three-dimensional model and methodologically on Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology to provides an insightful case study.

A. Textual Analysis: Linguistic Features in the Speech

The textual analysis focuses on word choices made by both Trump and Zelensky, revealing power structures and strategic framing.

Table (1) Trump and Zelensky Word Choices

Feature	Trump	Zelensky	Interpretation
Use of ' <i>we</i> '	7	5	Trump asserts leadership; Zelensky emphasizes partnership.
Use of ' <i>I</i> '	4	1	Trump personalizes U.S. aid decisions, reinforcing authority.
Hedging (e.g., ' <i>we'll see</i> ')	3	0	Trump avoids firm commitments, leaving aid conditional.
Gratitude expressions	1	6	Zelensky frequently expresses appreciation, reinforcing dependency.

1.Pronouns and Power Dynamics:

Trump frequently uses the pronouns “we” and “I,” reinforcing U.S. dominance in the discourse. For instance, when he says, “We’ve provided a lot of help,” he positions the U.S. as the benefactor, emphasizing its control and authority in the aid negotiations. Trump’s uses the pronoun (I) (4 times). He personalizes the discourse, further asserting his individual authority. He positions the U.S. as the dominant power in the exchange. In contrast, Zelensky uses the pronoun (we) (5 times). He adopts a more collective and inclusive tone indicating his country’s partnership with the U.S. Subtly, it reflects Ukraine's dependence on U.S. support. On the other hand, Zelensky uses the pronoun (I) (only once) highlighting his diplomatic

caution. This contrast in pronoun usage plays a crucial role in framing the power dynamics between the two leaders in this diplomatic exchange.

1. Lexical Choices and Framing (Gratitude Expressions and Dependency)

Zelensky, on the other hand, expresses gratitude repeatedly, saying, “We appreciate all the support.” This reinforces Ukraine’s subordinate position. Trump shifts responsibility via criticizing European countries, noting, “Some European countries, frankly, haven’t been so generous.” These words assist to emphasize the U.S. as the only provider of aid which undoubtedly solidifies the US dominant role. Zelensky uses the expressions of gratitude (6 times). This highlight, once again, Ukraine’s dependence on the U.S. for continued support. This reflects Zelensky’s careful navigation of this power imbalance. Unlike Zelensky, Trump uses gratitude only once which assures the U.S. position as the benefactor rather than an equal partner. This asymmetry in expressions of gratitude underscores the power dynamics in their discourse.

2. Modality and Commitment (Hedging and Conditionality):

Hedging language, modality, such as the phrase “We’ll see what happens,” reflects uncertainty. This usage positions U.S. aid as conditional. Repeating this phrase multiple times by Trump means that the future of aid is not guaranteed. This strategic uncertainty allows Trump to retain control over the terms of aid. In contrast, Zelensky avoids hedging and instead adopts a more assertive tone, underscoring the urgency and critical nature of continued U.S. support for Ukraine. His directness emphasizes the importance of securing aid without the ambiguity that Trump introduces, highlighting Ukraine's reliance on U.S. assistance.

3. Rhetorical Strategies:

Trump positions the U.S. as burdened: “It’s not fair for the United States to be the only country providing support.” Zelensky aligns with Trump’s critique of Europe to avoid confrontation: “I agree with you, Mr. President.”

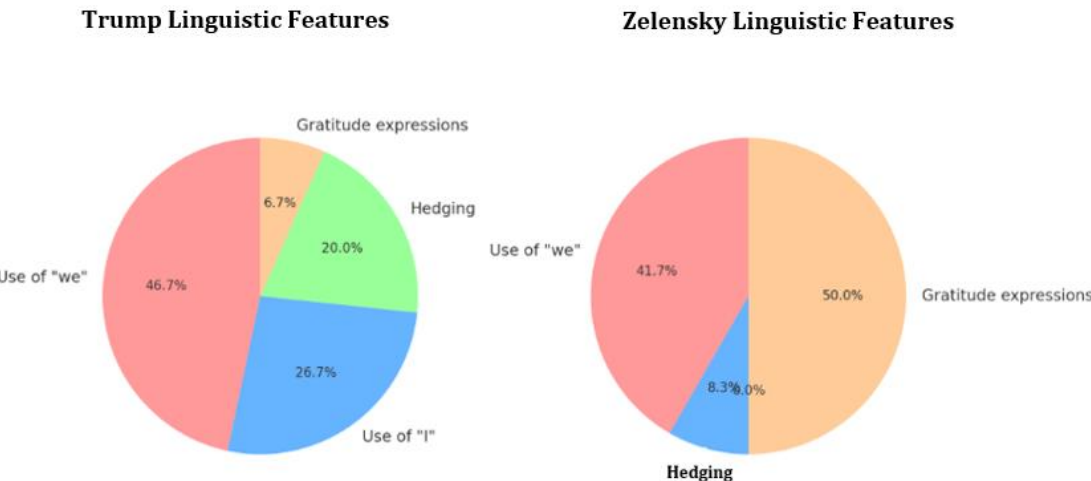


Figure (1) Trump-Zelensky linguistic features

Trump's Contribution: 55.6%

Trump dominates the conversation linguistically, contributing more than half of the discourse. His strategic use of assertive language and hedging reflects his control over the diplomatic narrative. Trump's rhetorical moves, such as conditional statements and the use of "I" to personalize U.S. authority, reinforce his dominant role in the power structure. The dominance of Trump's linguistic features underscores his leadership position in the dialogue, positioning the U.S. as the primary negotiator in the conversation.

Zelensky's Contribution: 44.4%

Zelensky, while contributing slightly less to the conversation, carefully balances his language to align with U.S. expectations while also managing his diplomatic strategy. His frequent expressions of gratitude and limited hedging suggest his careful navigation of the diplomatic terrain, where Ukraine seeks aid from the U.S. while maintaining a respectful and cautious tone. Despite the apparent power asymmetry, Zelensky's contributions are framed with diplomatic awareness, reflecting his need to maintain Ukraine's image as a sovereign state seeking strategic alliances.

B. Discourse Practice: Production, Circulation, and Interpretation

While the previous section considers the textual analysis of the Trump-Zelensky conversation. It focuses on the linguistic features with their power implications. This section delves into the discourse practice and sociocultural practice components of the conversation offering a deeper understanding of how power, dependency, and ideological framing are constructed in diplomatic discourse. Actually, discourse practice refers to how any piece of discourse is produced, circulated, and interpreted within the broader social context. It involves examining the processes of how the conversation between Trump and Zelensky is constructed and disseminated, considering the roles of both speakers and their audience.

1. Trump's Rhetorical Positioning: Framing U.S. Aid as Conditional

As it was observed in the textual analysis, Trump's discourse uses conditional statements, such as "we'll see what happens," to frame U.S. support for Ukraine as contingent on the actions of the Ukrainian government. Doing so, Trump asserts the dominance of US in the conversation positioning the US nation as the primary power broker in

international relations. This suggests that the U.S. has the ability to dictate the terms of foreign aid emphasizing the transactional nature of international support. From this discourse practice perspective, the rhetorical positioning reflects the production of the conversation as a negotiation where Trump establishes terms, reinforces U.S. control, and demands gratitude from the Ukrainian leadership. So, the use of hedging and conditional language adds ambiguity and power implies that aid is not a given but something that Ukraine must earn. Trump's choice to use this discourse signals using a strategic method that determines the U.S.'s relationship with Ukraine, leveraging power over aid in exchange for political alignment and cooperation on U.S. terms.

2. Zelensky's Diplomatic Strategy: Balancing Gratitude and Dependency

Zelensky's discourse represented by full expressions of gratitude and strategic alignment with Trump's position reflects clearly the Ukraine's dependency on U.S. support. Zelensky admits this in his words "We continue to push for more support,". His language shows a discursive practice where he maintains a diplomatic stance through aligning himself with Trump's critiques of Europe. This demonstrates that Zelensky is carefully keen to reflect his role as an ally seeking assistance. So, in terms of discourse practice, Zelensky's rhetorical choices highlight how language is produced with an awareness of the power imbalance. On the other hand, Zelensky diplomatic caution indicates his full will of keeping his country's relationship with the U.S. as a permanent which in turn guarantee Ukraine's security.

3. Discourse Circulation and Media Interpretation

This discourse does not end with the end of the conversation between Trump and Zelensky. Actually, another step should be considered, its circulation through various media outlets and its interpretation by different audiences. This plays a significant role in shaping public perception. Conservative media show Trump as a strong negotiator emphasizing the role of U.S. as a strategic power player in international diplomacy. Unlike Conservative media, liberal outlets critiqued Trump's approach in the sense of personal political gain. The different interpretations of the discourse depend on how media circulates the conversation framing it through ideological lenses.

Sociocultural Practice: Power Relations and Ideological Context

The third dimension of analysis of Fairclough, sociocultural practice, examines the broader social, political, and historical context where discourse takes place. It concentrates on how Trump and Zelensky words mirrors and reinforces power dynamics, ideological positions, and the larger sociopolitical context.

1. U.S.-Ukraine Power Imbalance: Framing Aid as a Privilege

The conversation between Trump and Zelensky reveals the sociocultural practice of power asymmetry in international relations. The U.S. positioning itself as the global benefactor, reflects a power dynamic. In other words, the capability of deciding the fate of other nations whether they are small or big nations. This aspect frames the U.S. as a hegemonic force internationally, reinforcing its power over countries like Ukraine. Socioculturally, this discourse reflects a broader geopolitical context where the U.S. has played historically a dominant role in global affairs.

2. Zelensky's Strategic Dependent Position

Zelensky, socioculturally, is forced to navigate the practice of dependency on U.S. support. His insistence on using the gratitude expressions reflects Ukraine's strategic reliance on the U.S. militarily and politically. The sociocultural practice echoes the broader ideological context of Ukraine's geopolitical situation to counterbalance the influence of Russia.

3. Geopolitical and Ideological Implications

The sociocultural context of the Trump-Zelensky conversation highlights the ideological framing of US -Ukraine relations. Trump's stance toward Europe frames it as a passive one in comparison to the proactive role of the US. Trump criticizes Europe inaction and reasserts U.S. leadership in international diplomacy. This goes hand in hand with the broader ideological context of U.S. dominance of the world geopolitics. It is the U.S. power that manages the international conflicts. At this point, positioning Ukraine as a key U.S. ally, Zelensky navigates the delicate balance of securing U.S. support while asserting Ukraine's sovereignty. Applying Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA model to the Trump-Zelensky conversation means that the discourse is shaped by power relations, strategic positioning, and the sociopolitical context. Discourse practice reveals how Trump asserts dominance through conditional aid and hedging, while Zelensky strategically navigates his dependent position through gratitude expression as it has been mentioned earlier. Together,

these dimensions offer a comprehensive understanding of the way language constructs power, dependency, and ideology in international diplomacy.

9 AI-Driven Discourse Analysis in Political Discourse

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) technologies represent a significant promise in studying discourse analysis these days. AI offers advanced computational tools to process vast amounts of data as well as to analyze the linguistic patterns across multiple sources. The AI can reveal the underlying rhetorical strategies, sentiment shifts, and patterns of ideological framing that may not be immediately apparent through manual analysis alone. AI can complement CDA by automating certain elements of discourse practice and textual analysis, such as:

1. Sentiment and Emotion Analysis: AI tools can provide insight into how leaders manipulate emotions shaping public perception.
2. Ideological Framing: AI can detect recurring themes and ideological patterns within discourse.
3. Framing of Authority and Power: AI has the ability to analyze the linguistic markers such as modality, hedging, pronoun usage, and conditionality.

In the case of the Trump-Zelensky conversation, AI assists in quantifying the frequency of specific linguistic features (e.g., conditionality, modality), while CDA provides the sociopolitical context needed for the interpretation of the ideological framing and power relations within the conversation

10 Findings

The analysis of the Trump-Zelensky conversation at the White House shows significant power imbalances, rhetorical strategies, and ideological framing in diplomatic discourse. The textual analysis concentrates on features of discourse, focusing on the language used, such as vocabulary, grammar, and rhetorical structures. In this research, the use of pronouns, modality and expressions of gratitude. Discourse practice analysis highlights how media outlets frame the conversation based on ideological bias: both conservative and liberal media where each one has its own say. The last dimension, the sociopolitical analysis, demonstrates the broader geopolitical reality where Ukraine remains dependent on U.S. assistance, and. Furthermore, the integration of AI-assisted discourse analysis validates these findings, detecting rhetorical patterns, sentiment shifts, and media bias in coverage.

11 Recommendations

This study recommends the following suggestions for further research:

1. Comparative Analysis with Other U.S. Presidents.
2. AI-driven Discourse Analysis: investigating the positive effect of AI-driven discourse analysis.

12 Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the diplomatic discourse between Donald Trump and Volodymyr Zelensky. It has focused on the power dynamics, rhetorical strategies, and ideological framing within their conversation. By applying Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), particularly Fairclough's three-dimensional model, the research highlights the language reflection in terms of power asymmetries and geopolitical realities. Also, the study assures the usage of assertive language and conditional statements by Trump. Unlike Trump Zelensky uses a lot the expressions of gratitude which underscore Ukraine's dependence on U.S. support. Finally, the integration of AI-assisted discourse analysis enriches the study of discourse analysis specifically enhancing the understanding of political rhetoric. The findings confirm that political discourse is never neutral but it serves as a powerful tool in shaping public perceptions, reinforcing global hierarchies, and negotiating international relations. The study recommends doing researches in AI detecting the strategies used in CDA.

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Appendix: Full Transcript of the Trump-Zelensky White House Meeting

****Donald Trump:** ** It's a great honor to be with President Zelensky.

We've had some very good discussions.

Ukraine is a country that I think, frankly, has made a lot of progress in the last few years.

I wouldn't say it's in the best shape since I've been watching it, but certainly it's come a long way. I really hope that Russia and Ukraine can get together and solve their problems.

that would be a tremendous achievement, and I think it's something that could happen.

The United States has been very, very good to Ukraine. We've provided a lot of help, military help, and other things.

****Volodymyr Zelensky:** ** Thank you, Mr. President. We are very grateful to the United States.

You are a great partner and strategic ally.

We appreciate all the support, especially in terms of security assistance.

As you know, we are in a war situation, and it's very important for Ukraine to continue receiving aid.

I believe our relations will continue to grow.

****Donald Trump:** ** Well, we're looking at that very closely, and we'll see what happens.

But the United States has been very generous.

Some European countries, frankly, haven't been so generous.

We think they should be contributing more.

It's not fair for the United States to be the only country providing support.

****Volodymyr Zelensky:** I agree with you, Mr. President. I have spoken with European leaders, and we continue to push for more support.

I know that the United States is our biggest supporter, and we are grateful.

But we also hope that the support continues in the future.