

A Critical Pragmatic Study of Hate Speech in Trump's First Presidential Debate

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دراسة تداولية نقدية لخطابات الكراهية في المناظرة الرئاسية الأولى لترامب

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المخلص

الهدف الأساسي من استخدام اللغة هو التواصل ونقل أفكار الناس وآرائهم. مع ذلك، لا تُعدّ جميع الأفكار بناءة، فبعضها هدامة إلى حدّ كبير. تُعرف اللغة الموجهة إلى الآخرين بطريقة سلبية بخطاب الكراهية. وتُعدّ الاختلافات في بعض الخصائص البشرية، كالعرق والطبقة والجنسية والجنس والدين، من العوامل الدافعة لخطاب الكراهية. وقد استخدم ترامب، الرئيس الخامس والأربعون للولايات المتحدة، خطاب كراهية بكثرة في مناظرة الرئاسية. تتناول هذه الدراسة مفاهيم خطاب الكراهية والنظريات النقدية والتداولية. وتتركز على كيفية تسخير الكلمات للتأثير على الرأي العام ومهاجمة الخصوم وحججهم شخصيًا. تُفحص العبارات من منظورين: كحجج وكأفعال كلامية. وقد أثبتت البراغماتية النقدية في هذه الدراسة فعاليتها كمنهج لدراسة هذا النوع من الخطابات السياسية.

Abstract

The main purpose behind using language is to communicate and convey people's ideas and thoughts. However, not all ideas are meant to be constructive; as some are destructive to a great extent. The language that is directed at other people in a negative manner is known as hate speech. Differences in some human characteristics, such as race, class, nationality, gender, or religion, drive hate speech. Trump, the 45th U.S president, used a great deal of hate speech in his presidential Debate. The concepts of hate speech, critical theories and pragmatics are studied in this research. This study focuses on how words are weaponized to affect the general public and to personally attack opponents as well as their arguments. Utterances are examined from two perspectives that are as arguments and as speech acts. In this study, a critical pragmatics showed to be an effective method for studying such types of political speeches.

Keywords: Critical pragmatics, Hate Speech, Presupposition, and Speech Acts.

1. Introduction

To understand the different functions and interpretations of language, it is necessary to consider how it functions in society. Language use is a combination of social and cultural factors and linguistic variables. The social parts of pragmatics are concerned with how people use language and the way they give power to their speech. As a result, people may examine how language is used in society and take a critical look at issues such as prejudice, injustice, and rudeness, among others (Mey, 2001: 320). Hate speech is reprehensible throughout the ages and diverse people, civilizations and traditions. Being blameworthy gives a person the ability to blame and criticize. Critical Theory is a "school of thought" started in Germany since 1929 to the present time. When the term "critical theory" is capitalized, it usually refers to the Frankfurt School. Otherwise, it refers to any philosophical school with clear practical goals, such as feminism, postcolonialism, critical race theory, etc. (Bohman, 2016:

125-126). According to Yule (2016: 289), pragmatics is the study of the speaker's meaning. It is the study of the "invisible meaning" regardless to what is said or written. Mey (2001: 289) says that pragmatists "need to integrate their practical endeavors toward a better use of language with a theory of language use". According to Melefa and Chukwumezie (2014: 157), critical pragmatics emphasizes the idea that pragmatics is a tool for social conflict. It aims to explore and understand the social functioning of language and the use of its diverse expressions.

The term Hate Speech refers to verbal abuse and insults directed at certain individuals or groups based on their race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion (Brison, 1998: 313). In light of this, the problem of this research is to analyze hate speech in American Debit debates using a critical pragmatic approach, in addition to identifying the motivations behind its use. This research seeks to identify suitable responses to the following questions:

1. What choose practical goals Trump does want to achieve by consuming hate speech?
2. Is hate speech excused as the ends justifies the means?
3. What is the manner of hate speech?

By addressing these question, the study aims at identifying the concept of critical theory and pragmatic in linguistics, exploring the expressions of hatred in American Debates, and inspecting Trump's use of hate speech in his first presidential debate. This is done by hypothesizing the following:

1. The use of hate speech is to attract attention of American people.
2. Hate speech is intentionally produced.
3. Hate speech is a sharp verbal language that has negative effects in political debates.

This study is conducted by following the procedures of (1) Providing a suitable theoretical background in pragmatics, critical theories, and hate speech theories. (2) Selecting three extracts of Trump's speech for the study. (3) Using critical pragmatic model in the analysis. (4) Analyzing the findings and discussing them. (5) Drawing conclusions based on the results of analysis. (6) The model adopted is an eclectic one. The current study is limited to the critical pragmatic study of hate speech in Trump's first presidential debate in 2016. Three extracts are chosen for the data under scrutiny. The modal adopted is an eclectic one. Such a study is regarded important because it provides insights into the nature and effects of hate speech in political discourse. It can help understand how hate speech is used by politicians to mobilize their base and appeal to certain voters, as well as, how it can contribute to the normalization of discriminatory attitudes and behaviors in society. By applying a critical pragmatic lens to the analysis of Trump's first presidential debate, the study also helps uncover the underlying motivations and strategies behind the use of hate speech in political communication. This contributes to a better understanding of the role of language in political power dynamics and provide a foundation for developing more effective strategies for countering hate speech and promoting more inclusive and respectful political discourse.

2. Critical Theory

Critical Theory is a type of social and philosophical inquiry that is originated in the Frankfurt School in Germany during the 1920s and 1930s. It seeks to understand and critique society and its structures, institutions, and ideologies. The central aim of Critical Theory is to empower individuals to resist oppression and domination, promote social justice, and realize their full potential as human beings (Habermas, 1971: 6). Critical Theory is not just a theoretical approach but also a practical one. It seeks to connect theory with practical action and aims to inform political and social change (Habermas, 1984: 19). The critical theorists of the Frankfurt School saw the need for a new type of social inquiry that would combine Marxist theory with psychoanalysis, sociology, and cultural analysis to understand and resist the totalizing effects of capitalism on all aspects of human life (Adorno, 1976: 8)A crucial concept in Critical Theory is that of the "public sphere." The latter is the arena in which individuals can come together to engage in rational discourse and debate on matters of public concern (Habermas, 1989: 35). The public sphere is a means of counterbalancing the power of the state and other dominant institutions. They argued that an open, democratic public sphere was essential for ensuring that

the interests of all individuals were represented and for fostering social justice (Habermas, 1984: 45). The critical theorists of the Frankfurt School, moreover, developed a critique of mass culture and the role it plays in perpetuating domination and oppression. They argued that mass culture serves the interests of the dominant class by providing a false sense of fulfillment and by distracting people from their real needs and desires (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1979: 9). The Frankfurt School distinguishes three critical theory theses:

1. It holds a particular place as a guide of human action.
2. They have cognitive value (they are types of knowledge).
3. they are reflective.

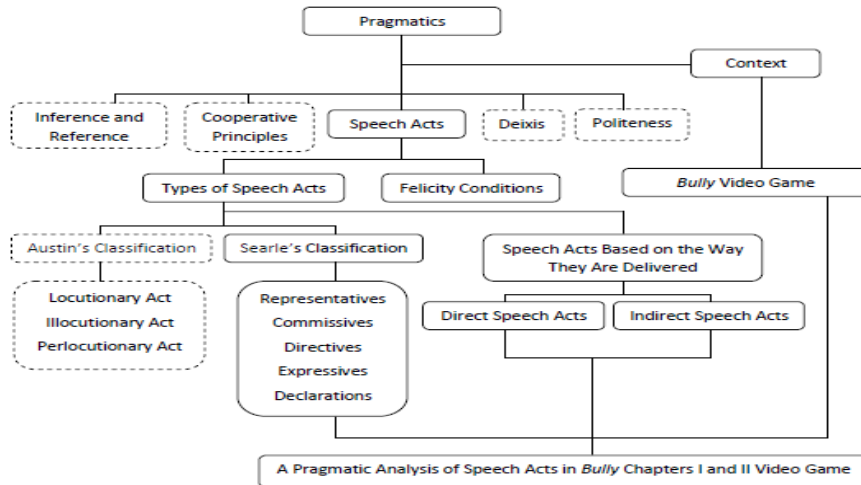
As a philosophical approach, its major purpose is a reflective evaluation and critique of society and culture supported by humanities and social scientific knowledge (Geuss, 1981: 2,3). Some fundamental notions must be introduced in a critical study. According to Wodak (2007: 209), attitude, critique, ideology, and even history are necessary components of critical works. Critical theory is a type of social and philosophical inquiry that is characterized by four main features: a commitment to social change, a critical stance towards existing power structures and ideologies, an interdisciplinary approach, and an emphasis on the practical application of theory.

2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

According to Van Dijk (1995: 93), critical discourse analysis is a special approach in discourse analysis, components, and consequences. Fairclough (2010) defines Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as an approach that aims to systematically explore opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony (Van Dijk, 1995: 93). In 2012, Van Dijk (cited in Wodak & Meyer, 2001: xx) defined CDA as the primary focus of discourse analytical study known as critical discourse analysis is on how social power abuse and inequality are enacted, replicated, legitimized, and resisted in the social and political context using text and speech. Critical discourse analysts take an active approach to study, expose, and possibly challenge societal inequalities. This is likewise the reason CDA may be seen as a social movement of discourse analyzers who are engaged to politics. When describing CDA, Van Leeuwen (2006: 294) emphasizes the study agenda and the application of results: CDA is based on the realization that text and talk play an important role in preserving and legitimizing inequality, injustice, and oppression in society. It employs discourse analysis to demonstrate how this is done. Additionally, it tries to raise awareness of this element of societal language use and to argue directly for change based on its results.

2.2 Pragmatics

Communication is not about only the meaning of the words, but it is actually about what they have meant by their utterances. There are aspects of meaning that are determined according to context and communicative intentions of the speakers. This is because communication does not depend on knowing the conceptual meaning of words in an utterance only, but also on knowing what speakers mean by their utterances. Thus, pragmatics is the study of the intended speakers' meaning. The study of "invisible" meaning, or how humans perceive what is intended even when it is not expressed or written. To do this, speakers (or writers) must be able to rely on a large number of common assumptions and expectations while attempting to communicate. Searching such assumptions and expectations reveals insights into how humans comprehend more than simply the language meaning of statements. From a pragmatic point of view, more is meant than is spoken (Yule, 2016: 126). According to Allan (2012: 498), pragmatics is the study of the meaning of words and sentences in the way that speakers interact with each other. It is the understanding of the meaning meant with the statements or verbal communication.



(Moko, 2017: 26)

2.3 Critical Pragmatics

It is believed that pragmatics is a complex field that deals with elements of language use that are hidden. At a conference held in 1996 to mark the anniversary Professor Jacob Mei's 70th birthday and retirement from the University of Odense, the authors were invited to present papers on pragmatics. The conference's theme was to take a "critical approach to the subject of pragmatics" with an eye on its present state and potential for the future. One may argue that the meeting represented the early stages of critical pragmatism. It supports selectivity between criticality, pragmatics, and language use, where the focus is on the social power to accentuate the misuse of language (Verschueren, 1999: 896). Critical pragmatics offers a comprehensive overview of how several aspects of language studies fit into the larger picture of human behavior and thought. The main purpose is to give a picture of how pieces of language are employed to reflect human ideas and acts. It examines how humans use language to shape and alter the reality of the society to which they belong. Though, the belief that people may show their superiority over others through language seems realistic. As a result, critical pragmatism is described as an analytical approach that seeks to employ the pragmatic paradigm to express negative concerns in which ideological strengths or characteristics are shown through language abuse rather than language usage (Korta and Perry, 2011: 3).

2.4 Hate Speech: Definitions

Hate speech refers to actions involving the use of curse words or insults directed against persons or groups based on their race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion. Where the act is a type of humiliation, an atmosphere of animosity, intimidation, and pollution (Brison, 1998: 313). William B. Fisch (2002: 463) defines hate speech as encouragement to hatred against groups or individuals based on race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion. Fortuna and Nunes (2018: 5) define hate speech as language that condemns or belittles people or groups because of particular traits like race, class, gender, nationality, or religion. The term "hate speech" is frequently used and it has three major characteristics. First, it targets a specific or clearly recognizable person, a group of people, or both based on an arbitrary and moral irrelevant characteristic. Second, hate speech dehumanizes the target group by implying or directly linking it to traits that are generally thought to be very undesirable. The third is that the target group is regarded as an unwelcome presence and a justifiable target of hatred (Parekh, 2012: 40-1).

2.4.1 Hate Speech: Motivations

Like anything else in the world, there are a lot of reasons and motivations, whether known or hidden, behind every act of hatred and hate speech. As defined previously, hate speech is more like an attack or a strike that means to destruct others. Thus, there are motivations behind hate speech. The most important ones are class, race, nationality, gender and religion.

1. Class: A group of persons in a society who share the same social, educational, and economic status is referred to as a class (Romaine, 2001: 67).

2. Race: Race refers to the categorization of people based on specific physical characteristics, such as skin tone (Wren, 2001: 142).

3.Nationality: The legal notion of belonging to a particular political nation-state is known as nationality (Edwards & Wass, 2014: 12).

4.Gender: When we talk about gender, we are talking about the psychological, social, and cultural differences between men and women (Wardhaugh, 2010: 333).

5.Religion: A system of institutionalized or personal beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, or social relationships (Durkheim, 2014: 29).

2.4.2 Hate Speech: The Effects

Hate Speech (HS) is a damaging, immoral behavior with major consequences for those it affects. The main purpose of hate speech is to physically, emotionally, or socially damage others, with or without the intention of making the individuals targeted suffer. Hate speech may result in emotional responses such as rage, denial, disbelief, and a sense of being violated or vulnerable (Fischer et al., 2018: 311). It causes those it affects to remain silent, preventing them from expressing their emotions and thoughts. It separates them from others and keeps them out of society. It might be a factor in someone losing their sense of self, dignity, identity, and trust. It might result in homicide, suicide, genocide, discrimination, crime, and violence because it flouts social standards and threatens social order (Gelber & McNamara, 2015: 1-7). Consequences of hate speech can occur in four ways:

- 1) Convincing listeners to believe negative stereotypes that lead them to engage in other harmful behaviors;
- 2) Forming the listeners' preferences so that they are persuaded by negative stereotypes;
- 3) Adapting the environment so that the expression of negative stereotypes and the implementation of further discrimination (often unconsciously) become normal;
- 4) Pushing listeners to imitate the behavior (Maitra & McGowan, 2012: 6).

3. Methodology

According to Collinson (2016), the 2016 United States presidential election was one of the most polarizing and divisive in recent history. During the first presidential debate between Republican nominee Donald Trump and Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, hate speech was used by Trump towards various groups. This study analyzes three excerpts from the debate using the Critical Pragmatic approach to explore the impact of hate speech on the election and society as a whole. This study developed a three-stage eclectic model for the critical pragmatic analysis of HS in Trump's presidential debate making use of three mechanisms: stance, critique, and reproduction. Stance deals with the attitude towards HS as a negative phenomenon that has harmful effects on people and society. This model is a basic apparatus for the qualitative analysis of the data. HS can be best manifested via language. Due to its criticality, it is investigated in terms of CPs. It is motivated by the concept of being different in certain aspects. HS, thus, is invoked by a difference in race, class, religion, nationality, or gender. This is the first stage which represents the motivation behind HS. The data are three extracts taken from American Debates that have been under scrutiny to explore the manifestation of HS. These are the pragmatic representation of HS. This is the second stage which represents the pragmatic representation of HS. It is manifested in language via some pragmatic theories. These are Speech acts by Searle (1976), Presupposition, Implicature by Grice (1975) and Intertextuality by Fairclough (1992). HS has many effects on its targets, like leaving them silent, isolated, excluded or discriminated. These negative utterances should be reproduced by providing alternative utterances. This is achieved by employing the last mechanism in CPs, which is reproduction. It aims to minimize or avoid HS. Throughout the analysis, the above mechanisms operate simultaneously. In this respect, the numerous facets of communication in speech events are described by Hymes' (1974: 55–62) grid of SPEAKING. To describe the contextual factors of the genre types, the contextual factors of each example under scrutiny are listed in a table below the extract. But some of these factors—like venues, participants, and results—are essential to the data.

Table (1): Hymes' (1974: 55-62) Model of Contextual Factors

| | Dimension | Subcomponents |
|---|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| S | Settings | a. Indicates the time and place of the event b. Psychological setting: participants' understanding of event or environment of setting |

| | | |
|----------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| P | Participants | Speaker, sender, addressor, hearer, receiver, audience, addressee (present or absent) |
| E | Ends | Purpose- goals Purpose- outcome |
| A | Act sequence | Sequential organization of speech acts Message form Message content (or the form and order of the event) |
| K | Keys | Tone or spirit of the communicative act. |
| I | Instrumentalities | Medium of transmission of speech Forms of speech and speech style. |
| N | Norms | Rules of interaction: rules governing speaking Norms of interpretation: rules governing cultural belief systems |
| G | Genre | The discourse type that achieves the speech event |

3. 1 Data Analysis

3.1.1 Excerpt One

During a campaign rally in Phoenix, Arizona, on August 31, 2016, Donald Trump made the statement, "Mexico is going to pay for the wall. And they're going to be happy about it. Believe me." In this speech, Trump promises that Mexico will pay for the border wall he proposed to build, and he suggests that Mexico will be pleased to do so (Trump, 2016). *Table (1)*

| Contextual Factors | Description |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Settings | Arizona, on August 31, 2016 |
| Participants | Speaker: Trump Addressee: audience in a debate |
| End | Electional campaign |
| Instrumentalities | Spoken form of an utterance |
| Genre | Debate |
| Kind | Class |

In this statement, Trump is making an act of promise (commissive speech act) to the American people that Mexico will pay for the wall. He is asserting that Mexico will be happy in doing so. The speech act of promise and assertion are being used here to persuade the American people that the wall will be built and Mexico will pay for it.

Trump's use of the phrase "believe me" implies that he is trustworthy and that the American people should have faith in his promise. Additionally, Trump's assertion that Mexico will be "happy" to pay for the wall suggests that he believes that Mexico is guilty of taking advantage of the United States, and that they will be happy to make amends.

A) Critique: From a critical perspective, this utterance reflects underlying ideologies and power relations: Trump shows a division between the United States ("us") and Mexico ("them"), reinforcing the class boundaries between the two nations. The utterance resonates with audiences by presenting a strong, decisive solution without engaging with practical feasibility.

B) Stance (Speaker's Positioning)

Stance refers to how the speaker expresses attitudes, certainty, and evaluation:

- High certainty: The use of "is going to" expresses strong confidence and inevitability.
- Authority and control: The speaker positions himself as capable of enforcing international outcomes.

C) Reproduction: Reproduction examines how the utterance spreads and influences discourse: Trump's statement was widely circulated through news outlets and social media, increasing its impact. As for Repetition as normalization, the appropriate utterance is "Mexico is going to be helped".

3.1.2 Excerpt Two

During a debate in Cleveland, Ohio, on August 6, 2015, Trump stated, "I think the big problem this country has is being **politically correct**. I've been challenged by so many people, and I don't frankly have time for total political correctness. And to be honest with you, this country doesn't have time either."

Table (2)

| Contextual Factors | Description |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Settings | Cleveland, Ohio, on August 6, 2015 |
| Participants | Speaker: Trump Addressee: audience in a debate |
| End | Electional campaign |
| Instrumentalities | Spoken form of an utterance |
| Genre | Debate |
| Kind | Nationality |

In this speech, Trump criticizes the culture of political correctness in the United States, arguing that it is preventing the country from addressing important issues.

Trump is making an assertion that political correctness is a problem in the United States. He is suggesting that he is aware of what the "big problem" in the country is and the proper solution for this problem.

The use of the word "big" implies that political correctness is a major issue in the United States. Additionally, Trump's assertion suggests that he believes that political correctness is hindering the country's progress.

A) Critique: This statement presupposes that political correctness is a problem, which is an assumption that is not shared by all Americans. It presupposes that Trump is aware of what the country's problems are, which is a controversial assumption. Trump's criticism of political correctness is a reference to his campaign platform, which was focused on being politically incorrect and unapologetic. He is referring to one of the most famous mottos of himself, "Make America Great Again". It reflects an ideology of inclusivity, diversity and sensitivity.

B) Stance: Trump's negative evaluation of the big problem signals a negative stance against toward political correctness.

C) Reproduction: political correctness is normalized in terms of the phrase "the trivial problem" of the country, reframing the phrase to be appropriate.

3.1.3 Excerpt Three

During the first presidential debate between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton on September 26, 2016, Trump said, "I will release my tax returns against my lawyer's wishes when she releases her 33,000 emails that have been deleted."

Table (3)

| Contextual Factors | Description |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| Settings | September 26, 2016 |
| Participants | Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton |
| End | Electional campaign |
| Instrumentalities | Spoken form of an utterance |
| Genre | Debate |
| Kind | gender |

In this speech, Trump makes a Commissive speech act to release his tax returns, but only if Clinton releases her deleted emails. He suggests that there is a connection between the two issues, implying that Clinton is hiding something.

Trump's use of the phrase "against my lawyer's wishes" implies that he is doing something that is against his own best interests. His assertion that there is a connection between the release of his tax returns and Clinton's deleted emails suggests that he believes that Clinton is hiding something.

This statement presupposes that Clinton's deleted emails are something significant and that the release of Trump's tax returns is relevant to the issue. It again presupposes that Trump has access to his own tax returns and that his lawyer is against their release.

A) Critique: Trump issues a Commissive speech act claiming of a future action in the respect of presidency. This refers to a major issue during the election campaign, which was the controversy over Clinton's use of a private

email server while she was Secretary of State. Trump's suggestion that Clinton releases her deleted emails is a reference to this controversy.

B) Stance: Trump has the willingness to signal a negative evaluation of the opponent.

C) Reproduction: normalizing criticism of political correctness in that it softens the strong expression toward Clinton.

4. Findings

For Trump here, as in all three examples above, hate speech is an appeal to his base and an effort to sway undecided voters. The epithets subtle to his partisans and the insinuations that the opponent a liar. Trump's synecdoches are inflammatory and divisive. They evoke his intertextual descriptions of his campaign platform, to "make America great again," camouflaging policies into aspirations that attempt to include a large base of voters who wish to reclaim their position from the political elite. For instance, Trump's attack on political correctness may appeal to people who feel that they need to self-censor. Or take, for example, his pledge to construct that wall. His claim that Mexico will foot the bill; which would no doubt resonate with those who believe their jobs and safety are being jeopardized by illegal immigration. Despite this, he is effective in the eyes of hate speech as it both strengthens the rift between groups and adds to the hostility and division prevalent in society. Similarly, that Clinton is partly dishonest and untrustworthy due to these missing emails like in the context guess. Trump implied that Clinton "has something really bad to hide with her deleted emails". Such character attacks on his opponent help enable a generally sour tone in the campaign. These types of attacks can undermine trust in the political process and dissuade people from being involved in the democratic process. Hate speech during the debate made a huge impact during the election and on society overall, with impact on the lack of trust, respect, and civility in political discourse. Leaders and people should understand the harm of hate speech, work for respect, tolerance and mutual understanding.

5. Conclusions

In politics and elections, hate speech can have a detrimental effect on society. Analysis of hate speech in Trump's first presidential debate indicates that he, for sure, used the language effectively to arouse his supporters desires and convince the voters. Notably, one can examine Trump's promises, assertions, implications, and presuppositions using various controversial assumptions and references to his campaign platform through the Critical Pragmatic approach at multiple levels of analysis. During the debate, Trump used hate speech in particular to try to delegitimize his opponents and to attract voters sick of the system. Hate speech plays a huge role in election and society, providing division and supporting discrimination. Hence, annotating political discourse is vital in order to comprehend what hate speech means, and to subsequently encourage a more inclusive and democratic society. The study performs three analyses of text from the 2016 United States presidential election debates that contained hate speech by President Trump using the Critical Pragmatics. Hate speech can make use of implicatures, presuppositions, and intertextuality that relates to target groups such as Mexicans. This is harmful to society as it causes increased polarity and distance. That's why it is important to realize harm caused with hate speech and to strive for more inclusive, respectful political discourse.

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