University of Leeds

English Language Thesis: ENGL3022

Deconstructing the Narrative: Analysing Cable News' Lexical Choices and their Representation of Leadership During the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election.

Cameron Luke Norris

<u>Contents</u>

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Figures

1. Introduction

"If thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought" (Orwell, 2015). The language found in media deserves crucial consideration when discussing corruption of independent thought, as it is prominent and pervasive in society (Bell, 1995, p.34). It is important to understand how this language works, how it affects our perceptions of others and ourselves, how it is produced, and how it is shaped by social structures and forces. This form of communication is most strictly defined when discussing news media, rather than the general media (Cotter and Perrin, 2017, p.11). According to its characteristics and purposes, news journalists are expected and trained to use specific language in order to attract a large audience (Suksawat, 2017, p.41). This type of language is generally symbolic and persuasive, and to some extent, it withholds the potential to control the thoughts, beliefs and opinions of its readers or viewers (Van Dijk, 1995, p.10). Throughout the western world, people spend a considerable proportion of their leisure hours with one mass medium or another, together totalling more hours than children spend in school or families spend in conversation (Lunt and Livingstone, 2001, p.1). Thus, it is understandable that the exposure to such language could cause concern for potential "hypodermic" effects on the general public's attitudes (Lasswell, 1927, cited in Miller and Krosnick, 2000, p.301), especially when considering political opinions. Language can be used as a tool for serving political goals (Ghassemi and Hemmatgosha, 2019, p.28-30), and mass media organizations can make use of their trained vocabulary by exerting their ideological political views towards impressionable audiences. As Fairclough (1995, cited in Giles, 2009, p.212) argued, choice of words is not accidental; discourse is built from a series of optional terms and expressions within a given vocabulary or grammar. With this principle in mind, it is important to reiterate back to the significance of understanding news media's use of language, as their lexical choices appear to be critical for shaping political opinion.

Lewis-Beck and Nadeau (2015, p.170) suggest that a foregrounding attribute to the success of a political organisation is the perceptive opinions the public has towards political leaders, arguing that the image of leadership can contribute significant difference at an electoral ballot box. Within the discussion of political candidacy, news audiences may show more interest in politics when covering people of interest (Oyeleye and Osisanwo, 2013, p.2): showcasing their function, relevance, and influence in society,

alongside their comments made regarding particular issues. Consumers however are not devoid from the impact of a news reporter's viewpoint, capable of influencing public opinion, as a reporter's worldview goes a long way in influencing how people are represented. Since the rise of cable television especially, presidential news has focused less on policy and has become more focused on negativity (Eshbaugh-Soha and Peake, 2011, p.58), resulting in a substantial decline of public trusted news media. This brings forward the focus of this research; if Orwell suggests that human thought is capable of corrupting language, thus making language capable of corrupting the thoughts of others, then how is this made practical and where can its practicality be exemplified? It is believed that there is a need to examine the relationship between beliefs about the world and the political conclusions drawn by the public within an influential-media framework (Happer and Philo, 2013, p.333). Therefore, this research will direct its study towards exploring how news media may use language to corrupt and sway political opinions formed by the public and it will do so through linguistic analysis of the media's portrayal of leadership.

The media's language choice is an institutionalized means of framing reality (Popp 2006, p.6). Word choices however aggregate into patterns of new meaning for news audiences, and patterns of words accumulate in their minds to form identifiable tonalities that can become a politician's avatar during the course of a long period of reporting (Lowry, 2008, p.485). Within the aforementioned institution of rising cable television, news broadcasting stands arguably as the most important information source regarding the conduct of government and politicians (Shojaei, et al., 2013, p.858). Here, lexical diversity occurs because news editors, belonging to different news agencies, choose from the diverse lexical resources at their disposal to convey news in their own style, as per their own needs (Sheikh, 2022, p.47). Therefore, if we are to consider media biases, exposure to such levels of lexical patterning raises the initial research question:

1. what patterns of lexical choices do cable news networks incorporate into their broadcasting to support governmental leaders whose political values align with their own?

Linguistic resources used by news editors depend on contextual factors such as environment, background, and intent, etc (Sheikh, 2022, p.49). Within the production of news broadcasting, events are taken from the real world in which they occur and are presented in a way that follows specific logic or re-contextualised narratives (Kline, 1979,

p.36). As cable networks possess the power to recite stories according to their affiliations, lexical choice analysis on leadership should be investigated within the relevant contextual timeframe(s). Studies on the language of news should be dynamic, examining how discourse changes over time (Halmetoja, 2016, p.2). Of course, such a longitudinal study would be time-consuming given its nature, therefore this project will instead use a smaller, more independent research method to study lexical representations within a specific period(s). Hence, the second research question will ask:

2. do cable news broadcasts differ in their lexical representations of leadership due to their contextually impacted timeframes?

Finally, lexical choices also have an effect on the nuanced media coverage of political leadership, particularly in the reporting of distinctive leadership competencies (Wagner, et al., 2022, p.7). Brouer et al. (2013, p.195) found that leaders high in political skill were able to develop high-quality relationships with their followers. However, Kuo and Nakamura (2005, p.411) argue that this information can be framed and represented through cable news broadcasts congruent to the underlying ideological and political functions of media institutions. Thus, the final research question asks:

3. how is language used in cable news broadcasting to portray political leaders through representation of their leadership qualities.

2. Methodology

2.1. Topic Selection

Party leaders play an important role for all political parties; they are the most visible representative of the party in the media, and as such, they determine to a large extent their party's image amongst the public sphere (Bos et al., 2011, p.3). Furthermore, characteristics of television tend to prioritize personality over substantive programmatic goals (Garzia et al., 2020, p.238), with an emphasis on candidate and party leader assessments over partisan attachments and ideology. This was notably evident during the 2020 U.S. presidential election, as Graefe (2021, p.1) contends.

Mendelsohn (1996, pp.120-122) found that the media may teach people to justify their vote choices in terms of leadership, and that the news' tendency to focus on candidates may impact the outcomes of American electoral politics. Given the wide viewership of network broadcasting (Baum and Groeling, 2008, p.347), and the media's propensity to personalize politics through candidate coverage (Kruikemeier, 2018, p.215), this study will aim to investigate *how* cable news used lexical choices during the 2020 U.S. presidential election to represent political leadership.

2.2. Identification of Political Leniency

News media agencies of either left-wing or right-wing have their own political characteristics, and political stands (Ho et al., 2020, p.218). To conduct a successful analysis of cable news' portrayal of leadership, the following five criteria have been established by myself in order to distinguish between typical characteristics of biased networks:

1. Political ideology: news outlets tend to support policies that promote their ideological leanings (Eveland Jr and Shah, 2003, p.106), and might feature guests/experts who's political stance is more associated with their own.
2. Partisan bias: News outlets may have partisan leanings towards a particular political party, which is arguably evident in their coverage and commentary (Eveland Jr and Shah, 2003, p.106).
3. Agenda-Setting Theory: Referring to the ability of the mass media to signal to the public what is important (Moy et al., 2016, p.2); networks may prioritize covering issues that align with their political views and downplay or ignore issues that do not.
4. Tone/Frame-Setting Theory: News media can portray politicians in a favourable or unfavourable light depending on their use of tone (Hopmann et al., 2010, p.391), which can convey neutral, positive, or negative attitudes and emotions toward subject matters. The way in which these subjects are framed can subsequently affect how people evaluate political leaders in relation to them (Moy et al., 2016, p.10).
5. Audience: Cable networks may tailor their content to appeal to their audience's political leanings (Morris, 2007, p.712). This may vary depending on network demographics.

These criteria will be used as a reference point during data analysis.

2.3. Data Collection and Description

Two of the most notorious 24-hour cable news channels – CNN and the Fox News Channel – are frequently targets of media bias allegations (Martin and Yurukoglu, 2017, p.1), seeing CNN broadcast more liberal news whilst Fox News is more conservative. To coordinate analyses of both sides of the political spectrum, TV broadcast transcripts (n=201) were gathered via the *LexisNexis* (2023) online academic database, covering both CNN and Fox News (Boulahnane, 2018, p.258). Data was collected through an advanced search, requiring filtered criteria (see Table 1) to distinguish the type of texts required for analysis. The aim was to compile a CNN corpus (n=100) and a Fox News corpus (n=100) from the filtered transcripts, collected within the timeframe: 01.01.2020 → 03.11.2020 (election day). An additional transcript was also gathered, covering the final U.S. presidential debate of 2020 (see Section 2.4).

Table 1: LexisNexis Search Criteria

Search Filters	Filtered Option No.1	Filtered Option No.2
Publication Location	North America	United States
Publication Language	English Language	N/A
Publication Type	News Transcripts	N/A
Publication Name	▪ CNN Transcripts ▪ Fox News Transcripts	N/A

Each criterion was accompanied with specific keywords (see Table 2). These keywords covered five key 2020 events that may have impacted how the media represented leaders during their electoral campaigns. These keywords ensured that only relevant transcripts, pertaining to the primary leaders under focus and the given contextual events, would be filtered through. By using this approach, the study was able to create more concise and engaging branches of sub-corpora (McCarthy and O'Keeffe, 2010, p.123), whilst also supporting the investigation of Research Question 2.

Table 2: Keyword Advanced Search on Five Contextually Categorised 2020 Events

Contextual Event	Keyword No.1	Keyword No.2	Keyword No.3
Covid-19	"covid" OR "covid-19" OR "pandemic"	"Trump" OR "Donald Trump" OR "president"	"Biden, "Joe Biden" OR "Joseph Biden"
'Black Lives Matter'	"BLM" OR "black lives matter" OR "George Floyd"		
Climate Change	"climate change" OR "global warming" OR "wildfire" OR "bushfire"		
Final Presidential Debate	"presidential debate" OR "final debate" OR "debate"		
Second Impeachment of Donald Trump	"impeach" OR "impeachment"		N/A

Contextual keyword events indicated three major global issues: the Covid-19 pandemic, the 'Black Lives Matter' movement, and incidents related to climate change such as the California wildfires or the Australian bushfires. These events were selected based on their worldwide significance, to investigate how the American media specifically represented U.S. leaders in terms of their relation to these global issues, and their response to them. Additionally, transcripts were gathered for Donald Trump's second impeachment, to encourage analysis on how both cable news network represented the singular Republican leader within the same event. Furthermore, broadcasts were also collected following the second presidential debate, to help facilitate my own qualitative analysis. This allowed the study to compare CNN and Fox News' depictions of leadership and leadership qualities during this particular event, against my own (subjective and objective) interpretations (see Section 2.5). Transcripts taken from the final presidential debate were given their own specific timeframe, to ensure they did not amalgamate with the first

debate. Hence, its related texts were sorted between 23.10.2020 (date of final debate) →
03.11.2020 (election day).

Transcripts were sorted by 'Relevance,' and the top 20 results for each contextual
event were downloaded as individual MS Word docx. and assorted to their relevant
corpora/sub-corpora. 10 sub-corpuses were created, 5 per cable news network. Each
contextual event contains 20 transcripts, culminating into the two specialised corpora:

- *CNN Corpus*
- *Fox News Corpus*

Full quantification and summary each corpus/sub-corpus can be read in Table 3.

Table 3: The Number of Texts and Tokens in Each Corpus/Sub-Corpus

Corpora Titles	No. of CNN Transcripts	No. of FOX Transcripts	No. of CNN Tokens	No. of FOX Tokens
Covid-19 Sub-Corpus	20	20	111656	162207
'BLM' Sub-Corpus	20	20	106267	152939
Climate Change Sub-Corpus	20	20	119503	177889
Impeachment Sub-Corpus	20	20	99964	171103
Final Presidential Debate Sub-Corpus	20	20	110096	136862
CNN Corpus	100	N/A	547486	N/A
Fox News Corpus	N/A	100	N/A	801000

To compare observed frequencies within and between each noted (sub)corpora, overall
percentages and *AntConc's* likelihood log model (see Section 2.4) were utilized for fairer
comparison (Römer and Wulff, 2010, p.119).

2.4. Computational and Manual Methods

To successfully execute a thorough analysis and address the limitations of dealing with two sizeable corpora, a combination of computational and manual methods was employed (Angouri, 2010, p.30). This approach leverages both quantitative and qualitative analyses, using large-scale and close/small-scale examination, respectively. For quantitative analysis, *AntConc* (2022) was used to identify the frequencies and trends of lexical keywords, collocates, N-grams and their concordance lines, for each corpus/sub-corpus. To support this method of quantitative research, *AntConc* used the American English 2006 Corpus (Potts and Baker, 2012) as a reference corpus (token n=1,017,879). Additionally, to ensure that collocations were measured in the confidence that results are not due to chance (Rayson et al., 2004, cited in Potts et al., 2015, p.154), *AntConc's* log likelihood (LL) ratio was employed to compare data. This uses the 'likelihood log' as a shorthand for the natural logarithm of the likelihood ratio statistic: a statistical measure of the degree of association between a keyword and a specific context or target word.

For qualitative analysis, a combined approach of computational and manual methods was adopted. Using the copy of the final U.S. presidential debate of 2020, the transcript was examined in *CFL Lexical Feature Marker* (Woolls, 2021) to locate similar quantitative amounts as identified by *AntConc*. From there, each candidate's utterances were extracted into two separate documents, where they were both re-examined for additional collocation/concordance analysis in *AntConc*. This method however was further developed manually with my own interpretations and qualitative analysis.

2.5. Corpus and Critical Discourse Analysis

Corpora can be assembled to reveal how news media texts use linguistic choices to repeatedly frame issues related to leadership over a significant period of time (McCarthy and O'Keeffe, 2010, p.563). Kim (2014, p.2) states how a corpus-based approach is useful for identifying recurrent patterns and collocations associated with specific lexical items across an entire corpus, but contends that a critical discourse analysis-informed approach is better suited for scrutinising specific stretches of text. Baker (2006, p.13) notes that corpus

techniques can be utilized within Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to objectively demonstrate how language is employed to expose underlying objectives. The ideology of the news writers is not always apparent but is hidden in the subtle choice of linguistic forms (Kuo and Nakamura, 2005, p.395), and only by examining linguistic structures in a 'critical' way can the ideological underpinnings of news discourse be unpacked. Therefore, this research adopts a corpus based CDA approach to its data analysis, allowing for both large-scale examination of frequencies and trends, alongside closer inspection of specific sub-corpora/transcripts. This approach enabled my own evaluative perspective of candidate's leadership qualities during the second presidential debate, in comparison to CNN and Fox News' lexical representations. This was achieved through a combination of corpus linguistics and CDA, used to perform a critical analysis on frequently distributed lexical choices (Baker, 2012, p.249). Specifically, this searched to analyse linguistic cues of strong leadership qualities, e.g., use of pronouns, modality, prepositions and syntax.

3. Research Question 1: Analysis of Lexical Trends

3.1. Patterns of Lexical Choice

In order to decipher the ideology and possible prejudice of two news organizations with different political positions, Zhou (2022, p.272) examined the high-frequency words and collocations in both of their discourse structures. They argue that using this method of analysis will clarify both positive and negative representations related to the ideological models of news media. Danowski et al. (2021, p.77) however addresses the limitations of this "bag-of-word" approach, which seeks to calculate the frequency of single, tokenised words, omitting the words' co-occurrent contexts that are critical to sense-making. In contrast, Potts et al. (2015, p.154) opposes Danowski's view, supporting the inclusion of individual high-frequency words analysis by suggesting its use for the identification of statistically significant collocates. Srichai and Phoocharoensil (2016, p.26) argue that *AntConc* is especially beneficial for identifying high-frequency keywords/naming of political leaders, their collocations, and structured patterns of N-grams. Therefore, this research begins by identifying high-frequency naming conventions, their collocations, and structured patterns of N-grams, to establish a basis of positive/negative ideological representations of political leadership.

3.2. Keyword Analysis

Table 4 displays the top 3 most frequent naming/titles used to refer to each leading presidential candidate (Donald Trump and Joseph Biden) during the 2020 U.S. election, in both the CNN corpus and Fox News corpus.

Table 4: Most Frequent Nominal Keywords Relating to Political Leaders: CNN/FOX Corpus

Keyword	CNN FRQ (547486 Tokens)	FOX FRQ (801000 Tokens)	CNN Token %	FOX Token %
Trump	1630	2365	0.2977	0.2952
Donald Trump	1109	1162	0.2025	0.1451
President Trump	966	1255	0.1764	0.1566
Biden	1330	2182	0.2429	0.2724
Joe Biden	1736	2243	0.3170	0.2800
Vice President Biden	93	87	0.0169	0.0108

Both corpora had the same top three nominal keywords for each presidential candidate, but differences in frequency suggest some preliminary biases. CNN used higher frequency (%) of Biden's full name and official title, <Vice President Biden>, which could be interpreted as shown respect, also emphasising his experience for presidency. Fox News however used higher frequency (%) of <Biden> without his official title, possibly undermining his candidacy by downplaying his titled credentials. Although, Fox also refers <Trump> most frequently by his surname, rather than his surrounding titles/names. As Zhou argued however, the positive and negative ideological representations crafted by the media are typically exposed whilst examining the collocations of these high-frequency words.

3.3. Collocation Analysis

The most frequent collocate to each of the (Table 4) keywords are the inflectional '-s' suffix. To further analysis, Table 5.1 and Table 5.2 display the most frequent collocates to the most frequent noun + inflectional suffixes (Trump's…/Biden's…), in

both the CNN and Fox News corpora. The log-likelihood was also calculated for each recurring R3 collocate that appeared in both corpora's top results (e.g., *Trump + -'s America*). R3 collocate measurements were also taken to accompany the likelihood model, adjusting for spatial gaps such as *(running) mate* (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Most Frequent R3 Collocates to Noun + -'s Suffix: CNN Corpus

Noun + Inflectional Suffix	R3 Collocate	Likelihood Log Ratio (CNN)	Likelihood Log Ratio (FOX)
Trump + -'s	handling	69.032	N/A
Trump + -'s	America	54.542	118.077
Trump + -'s	claim	44.896	N/A
Trump + -'s	attacks	35.235	N/A
Trump + -'s	denial	31.981	N/A
Biden + -'s	son	110.069	N/A
Biden + -'s	plan	59.575	108.210
Biden + -'s	(running) mate	35.437	N/A
Biden + -'s	lead	34.916	N/A
Biden + -'s	America	34.883	N/A

Table 5.2: Most Frequent R3 Collocates to Noun + -'s Suffix: FOX Corpus

Noun + Inflectional Suffix	R3 Collocate	Likelihood Log Ratio (FOX)	Likelihood Log Ratio (CNN)
Trump + -'s	America	118.077	54.542
Trump + -'s	leadership	52.693	N/A
Trump + -'s	team	37.736	N/A
Trump + -'s	campaign	35.972	N/A
Trump + -'s	accomplishments	35.019	N/A
Biden + -'s	business	172.125	N/A
Biden + -'s	partner	88.805	N/A
Biden + -'s	plan	108.210	59.575
Biden + -'s	dealings	44.234	N/A
Biden + -'s	campaign	38.870	N/A

Table 5.1 and 5.2 show both CNN and Fox News describing *America* as a frequent possessive of Trump, whilst only CNN uses possessives to describe Biden's relation to the country. The remaining nominal collocates give us an indication as to what Trump and Biden's *America* means in relation to their leadership styles. For example, CNN use frequent collocates to *Trump + -'s* to focus more on his actions, and statements. The connotations of his *handling*, *claim* and *denial* does not convey the sense of certainty in his leadership that Biden's supposed *plan* or *lead* over America does. In contrast, Fox News also makes use of frequently pairing 'Biden's plan,' however when paired amongst collocates such as *business* and *dealings*, such words might convey Biden's view of America as more of a corporation, whilst Trump apparently sees himself, his *campaign*, his *team*, and *America* as more of a unity. In the CNN corpus, further distinctions between Biden and his relationship to others can also be distinguished, as Biden's campaigning Vice President, Kamala Harris, is most frequently referred to in collocation of *Biden + -'s* as his *running mate*. Fox News however describes Biden's most frequent relation to another as his *partner*, again implying a more business-orientated/transactional relation, as opposed to something more personal.

The reoccurrence of *plan* opens an interesting discussion considering it is a frequent collocate for *Biden + -'s* in both corpora. Fox News show this to be a much more likely collocate for Biden than CNN does, whilst also focusing more on Biden's *campaign* than with Trump's. This could imply that Biden still has to *plan* and strategize for his presidency, whilst Trump already has his accomplished *leadership*, *team*, and possession over *America*. In opposition, CNN represents Trump's actions to be more mismanaged, and where you would expect them to also represent Biden's possessives in relation to his actions, they instead focus more on crafting a personal persona. CNN's most frequent collocate actually refers to his son. In discussion of other family relations, CNN's top 30 3-grams containing *Biden + -'s* actually refers frequently to his *wife*, *family*, and *granddaughter*, whilst only referring to *Trump + 's* and his *son*. In this case, CNN and Fox News interpellated their audiences with different perspectives of Trump and Biden's *America*, shaping their understanding of the candidates and their leadership styles by establishing/framing (see Section 2.2, criteria 4) their identity through the discourse (Wetherell, 2001, cited in Parks, 2019, p.308).

3.4. Louis Althusser's *Concept of Interpellation*.

It is important to note that the discussed linguistic strategies are not arbitrary, but rather work to reflect the political ideologies of media outlets. Althusser (1971) argues through his concept of interpellation that the dominant ideology of a society can be reproduced and reinforced through media, which interpellates individuals as subjects. Subsequently, the linguistic strategies employed by CNN and Fox News can be understood as a reflection of their respective ideological positions, and their attempt to shape the audience's understanding of the presidential candidates in a way that aligns with their political interests. Fiske (1998, p.1271) describes how language and media constantly reproduce ideology in people, contributing to the construction of the subject. To compare this to the exposure of high frequency keywords and collocates etc, which in this dataset propels certain positive/negative connotations, suggests that CNN and Fox News are able to maintain a consistent ideology across their given media (O'Halloran, 2010, p.570). This could also be conceptualised as use of semantic preference or prosody (Khan and Zaki, 2022, p.6-7).

Whereas collocation is a purely lexical (i.e., formal) relation, semantic preference can be seen as its semantic extension, as it is the relation "between a lemma or word form and a set of semantically related words" (Stubbs, 2001, cited in Gabrielatos and Baker, 2008, p.12). Additionally, the notion of semantic/discourse prosody further expands the possibilities of collocational analysis by allowing for the examination of expressed attitudes (Gabrielatos and Baker, 2008, p.12). Louw (1993, p.157) describes semantic prosody as "a consistent aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by its collocates," arguing that a speaker's real attitude can be marked by collocation even without intent. It could be fair to interpret this "consistent aura" within the CNN and Fox News corpora as strategic lexical choices to assimilate frequent naming + possessives with positive/negative semantic prosody (Kemppanen, 2004, p.93), loading the words with a certain a value of what Trump and Biden's view of *America* is to the American people.

Sinclair (1998, cited in Kemppanen, 2004, p.93) points out that semantic prosody is the reason why language users select certain lexical items. Albeit Sinclair (2004, cited in Bednarek, 2008, p.132) has further stated that there is "no reason to believe that the prosody cannot be neutralised or reduced substantially in impact by other choices in the vicinity." Bednarek (2008, p.132) took this to mean that prosody, much like preference, is context dependent. With regards to the data collected in Section 3, the patterns of lexical choice used to support governmental leaders may be vulnerable to alternative meaning, according to their given context(s). Therefore, to comprehend how cable news network's interpellate their audience as subjects to the dominant ideology, lexical choice must be studied not only by its connotational phrase, but through context.

4. Research Question 2: Analysis of Lexical Trends in Different Contexts

4.1. Lexical Patterns in Context

Analysis of lexical patterns in their concordance contexts utilises *AntConc's Keywords in Context* (KWIC) feature, positioning the most frequent patterns studied in Section 3 in their relevant concordance lines. Table 6.1 and 6.2 display relevant concordance examples to CNN and Fox News' use of the 3-gram: *Trump + -'s + America*.

Table 6.1: Selected Concordance (KWIC) Lines of 'Trump's America': CNN Corpus

(1)	ericans if they feel safe in Trump's	**America. (**	BEGIN VIDEOTAPE) PROKUPEC
(2)	d is being played in Donald Trump's	**America. (**	END VIDEO CLIP) KING: Repbuli
(3)	at are happening in Donald Trump's	**America.**	He is the president. He is -- it is on h
(4)	's America. This is Donald Trump's	**America.**	He is in charge. What he doesn't get
(5)	hat's happening in Donald Trump's	**America?**	I made it clear from the beginning th
(6)	t is unsafe to live in Donald Trump's	**America.**	President Trump wants you to see re
(7)	r they feel safe in President Trump's	**America.**	The president has repeatedly said th
(8)	at we're not safe in Donald Trump's	**America.**	This is Donald Trump's America. H
(9)	t is unsafe to live in Donald Trump's	**America**	as President Trump rails against De
(10)	afe in what he calls Donald Trump's	**America,**	not just in terms of what's happenin

Table 6.2: Selected Concordance (KWIC) Lines of 'Trump's America': FOX Corpus

(11)	o one is safe in Donald Trump's	**America.**	TRUMP: Yes. INGRAHAM: They're tr
(12)	is happening in Donald Trump's	**America.**	But the fact is that the -- the president's
(13)	ront row seat to Donald Trump's	**America**	First foreign policy. I wish every Ameri
(14)	now is we're in Donald Trump's	**America.**	He is rooting for more violence, not less
(15)	closed for good. This is Trump's	**America."**	How do you respond to that? PENCE: w
(16)	re happening in Donald Trump's	**America.**	WALLACE: All right. We're going to -
(17)	undly positive ways by Trump's	**America-**	first policies, including African-Americ
(18)	y is only the beginning. Trump's	**America**	is a land of opportunity, a place of prom
(19)	if it weren't for Donald Trump's	**America,**	... you would have riots like you've nev
(20)	LIP) INGRAHAM: In Trump's	**America,**	we believe the best is truly yet to come.

Concordance lines were equally selected and distributed in Table 6.1 and 6.2 based on my interpretation of the foregrounding/prevalent purpose behind the keywords and collocates' contexts in each corpus. The concordance contexts in Table 6.1 show relevance to CNN's discussion of safety in *Trump's America* (examples 1 and 6-9). Additionally, wider context for examples 2-5, and 10 further discuss safety and violence, alongside Trump's actions as president. These lines of concordance align with CNN's possessive collocations, indicating that CNN are trying to link Trump's mismanaged leadership with a resulting lack of safety for America, and they do so in a more offensive manner.

To elaborate, according to the concordance lines, CNN primarily addressed their viewers using declarative sentences (1-4 and 6-10) to describe the unsafety of Trump's *America*. Personal pronouns such as *they* (the American people) and *we* were incorporated prior to the phrase: *Trump's America*. The positioning of this creates a sense of inclusivity and a collective perspective (Sendén, 2014, p.103), suggesting that CNN is presenting its viewpoint as representative of the American people. However, the concordance texts that follow to the right side of *Trump's America* instead show less reference to the American viewers and use more direct address to Trump himself. <Donald Trump> is instead directly referred to as his presidential position, i.e., <President Trump> (3, 4, 6, 7, 9), indicating CNN's confrontational/critical stance towards his leadership status (Uscinski and Goren, 2011, p.887) (for more on naming conventions, see Section 4.3). This syntactic placement could also suggest that CNN is positioning itself as a watchdog or critical observer over the administration by informing the public about the president's unsafe actions.

In contrast to CNN's syntactic structure, the Fox News corpus shows a different sentence structure pattern. The majority of concordance text preceding the phrase, *Trump's America*, focuses on Democratic statements or declaratives. For instance, examples 11, 12, 14-16, and 19 showcase direct responses to the statements made by Democratic Party members (11, 15), Democratic guests, predominantly featuring Kate Bedingfield (12, 16), deputy campaign manager for the Biden 2020 presidential campaign, and Biden himself (14, 19). Notably, Fox appears to take a more defensive position in response to these statements, as the contextual concordances following *Trump's America* feature more Republican guests, such as Trump (11, 19), Fox broadcasters (12, 14, 16), and members of the Republican Party (15). These guests immediately respond by dismantling the Democratic claims made about Trump and *Trump's America*. For instance, example 14's full concordance context reveals the following quotation:

> *"JOE BIDEN (D), DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE: Protesting brutality is a right and absolutely necessary, but burning down communities is not protest. It's needless violence. Violence that endangers live. Violence that guts businesses and shutters businesses serve the community, that's wrong.*

*The problem we have right now is we're in Donald **Trump's America**. He is rooting for more violence, not less, and he is clear about that. And what's he doing? He's kind of pouring gasoline on the fire.*

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GUTFELD: So Joe finally condemned the violence coincidentally, as he also blames Trump using a terrible analogy. But he is only really condemning their violence in order to blame Trump."

- ['Fox News Corpus'].

Cable news outlets, such as CNN and Fox News, have a tendency to extract quotes from their original contexts (Smith, 2015, p.224), attributing them with a different meaning. In this context, Greg Gutfeld's quotation, taken from a transcript of *The Greg Gutfeld Show* (Fox), exemplifies his practice of several criteria of political leniency (2.2). In the above excerpt, it appears clear that Biden's statement on violence was built towards clarifying that it is a part of Trump's America, implying that he will build a better one. Gutfeld ignores this however, and instead prioritizes focus on Biden's comment on protesting. Through application of agenda-setting theory (see Section 2.2, criteria 3), Gutfeld tailors his content to appeal to that of his/Fox's predominantly Republican audience (see Section 2.2, criteria 5). Not only does this demonstrate his ability to signal to the viewers what he wants them to be made aware of (Vu et al., 2014, p.672), but it subsequently downplays the potential truth behind the current state of Trump's America. This same structure occurs within each of the remaining Table 6.2 concordances.

4.2. Partisanship and Trust

Section 2.2, criteria 2 states that news outlets are known to possess partisan leanings towards a particular political party, evident through their coverage/commentary. It is debatably unfair for Gutfeld to dismiss Biden's statement about the state of Trump's America (14), however much like the rest of Fox's denials and dismantling of responses (see Table 6.2), this indicates a partisan bias. To elucidate this concept, Tuchman (1972, cited in Coe et al., 2008, p.201) describes partisanship in cable news media as "a sharp departure from the norm of objectivity." In essence, objectivity is a fundamental principle of journalistic ethics

that requires news reporters/outlets to strive for fairness, accuracy, and impartiality in their reporting (Ryan, 2001, p.4), free from political bias or preference, so that no socio-political agenda is served. The significance of this in the CNN and Fox News corpora is closely related to their influenced biases, which stresses to portray their ideology over all others, demonstrated through Gutfeld's downplay of Biden's remarks. Additionally, the media's tendency to produce partisan news also exists to attract partisan audiences (Danowski et al., 2021, p.72), creating a vicious cycle where consumers of one-sided partisan media might believe that their source consistently represents the majority opinion (Baum and Groeling, 2008, cited in Dvir-Gvirsman et al., 2018, p.3). Furthermore, empirical evidence has suggested that exposure to opinionated news content promotes greater perceived distance between conservatives and liberals (Jamieson & Cappella, 2008, cited in Gunther et al., 2012, p.442), further disconnecting the trust between each network's narratives.

A popular belief is that the failure to discern between true and false news is rooted in political motivations. For example, it has been argued that people are motivated consumers of (mis)information – that they engage in "identity-protective cognition" when faced with politically valenced content (Kahan, 2017, cited in Pennycook and Rand, 2021, p.389). This leads people to be overly believing of content consistent with their partisan identity, whilst becoming sceptical of content that is inconsistent with it (Kahan, 2013, cited in Pennycook and Rand, 2021, p.389). In today's mediated world, news outlets can operate to reaffirm our trust or distrust of people and nations, shaping our developments and uncertainties about the world (Chamberlain and Hodgetts, 2008, p.1111). Both CNN and Fox News contribute to this reaffirmation of trust/distrust through their portrayals or presidential values over America. As Table 6.1 and 6.2 show, both networks pertained political biases or preference towards political candidates during 2020, serving to their socio-political agendas. As a result, not only are audiences exposed to such representations, but are interpellated into a certain ideological space of discourse.

4.3. Maintaining a Consistent Ideology Across Contextual Narratives

CNN's use of inclusive/collective language can limit viewer's freedom of thought, as demonstrated in Table 6.1 where personal pronouns are used repeatedly to address the audience. By asking the viewers whether "*they* feel safe" (1, 7), stating that "*we're* not safe" (8), and suggesting that "Trump wants *you* to see" (6), CNN are able to create an

ideological position towards America, controlling what *we* must consider the country to be as viewers, or the political stance that *we* must take towards Trump because of it. Marinov (2020, p.1) argues that news media has become a neoliberal consumer–producer relationship, subjectivizing audiences as *rational* consumers whose news media consumption constitutes an aspect of human capital development. If consumers are in fact synonymous to that of a customer, then it should be questioned what information they are buying into, even outside the regular values of America. Fairclough (1995, cited in Tirronen, 2019, p.22) maintains that the choice and semantics of vocabulary in news reporting can be ideologically motivated and can even shape how *events* are represented in news. Furthermore, Sclafani (2015, cited in Coltman-Patel, 2018, p.19) maintains that by enforcing a consistent political identity across different political discourse genres, the level of trust an audience has for a politician and the country they represent can increase.

In Table 6.1, prior to the phrase *Trump's America*, CNN primarily refer to the presidential candidate as <Donald Trump>, in almost all cases of concordance. The contexts following this 3-gram however increasingly refer to him, whilst discussing his actions, as <the president> (3, 7), or <President Trump> (6, 9). Perhaps this was structured to diminish his position of power, referring to him as <Donald Trump> when discussing his possessiveness over America to connect his 'mismanaged' ownership with his personal identity. CNN can then shift the referred naming convention to his presidential ranking, if they then want to emphasize his political power whilst discussing his 'unsafe' actions. Partington (2004, p.153) notes that the quality and strength of the prosody of lexical items will differ from genre to genre or from each contextual domain, while Hess et al. (1995, p.62) suggests that context effects are primarily driven by the relation between the lexical item and its global or discourse context. Therefore, Figures 1.1 and 1.2 aimed to evaluate the ideological consistency of political identities throughout the corpora, by examining how cable news referred to Trump across different contexts.

Figure 1.1: How Naming Conventions Differ, Due to their Contextual Discourse: CNN

CNN's L1 Naming of 'Trump' in each 2020 Contextual Event

	Impeachment Corpus	Covid-19 Corpus	BLM Corpus	Climate Change Corpus	Final Debate Corpus
■ The President	0.67	0.36	0.27	0.27	0.34
■ President Trump	0.26	0.17	0.15	0.15	0.19
■ Donald Trump	0.12	0.24	0.19	0.23	0.22
■ Trump	0.19	0.36	0.23	0.26	0.44

Averaged Token % per Sub-Corpus
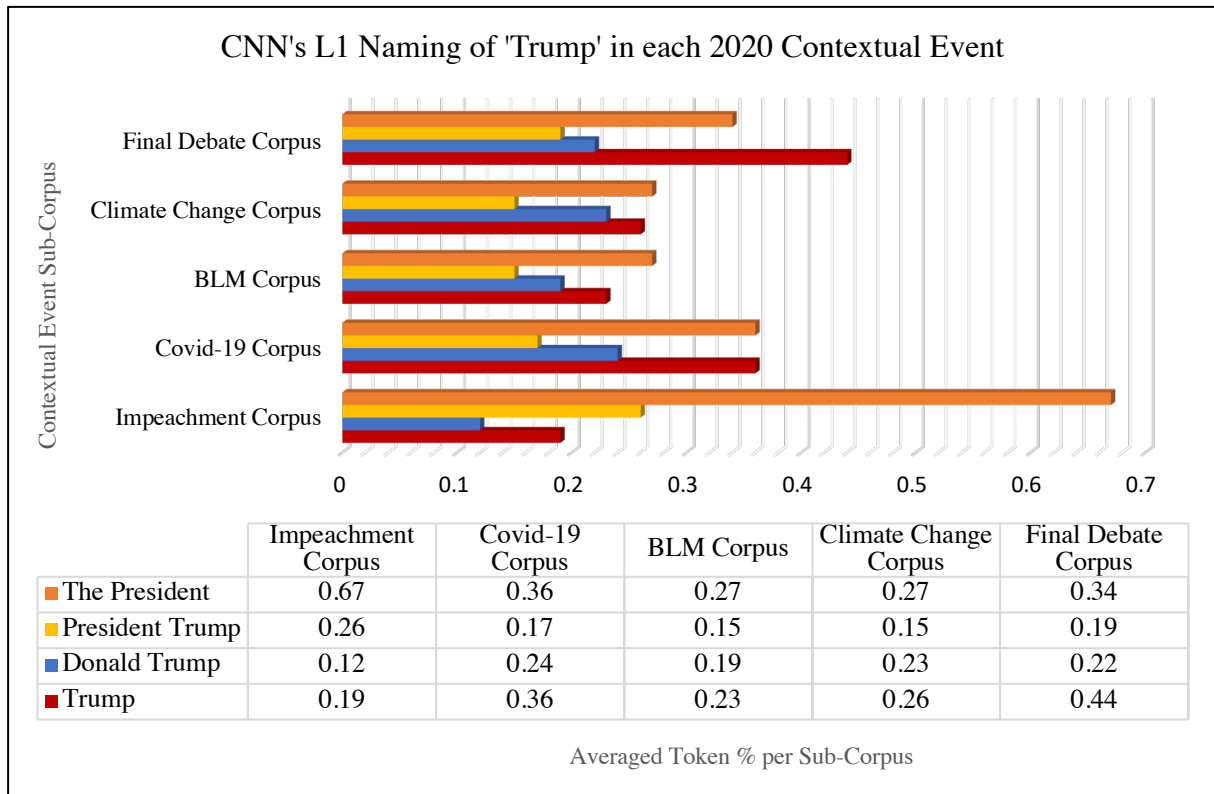
Figure 1.2: How Naming Conventions Differ, Due to their Contextual Discourse: FOX

Fox News' L1 Naming of 'Trump' in each Contextual 2020 Event

	Impeachment Corpus	Covid-19 Corpus	BLM Corpus	Climate Change Corpus	Final Debate Corpus
■ The President	0.34	0.32	0.21	0.22	0.26
■ President Trump	0.14	0.17	0.12	0.16	0.16
■ Donald Trump	0.12	0.11	0.14	0.2	0.16
■ Trump	0.24	0.25	0.58	0.22	0.51

Averaged Token % per Sub-Corpus
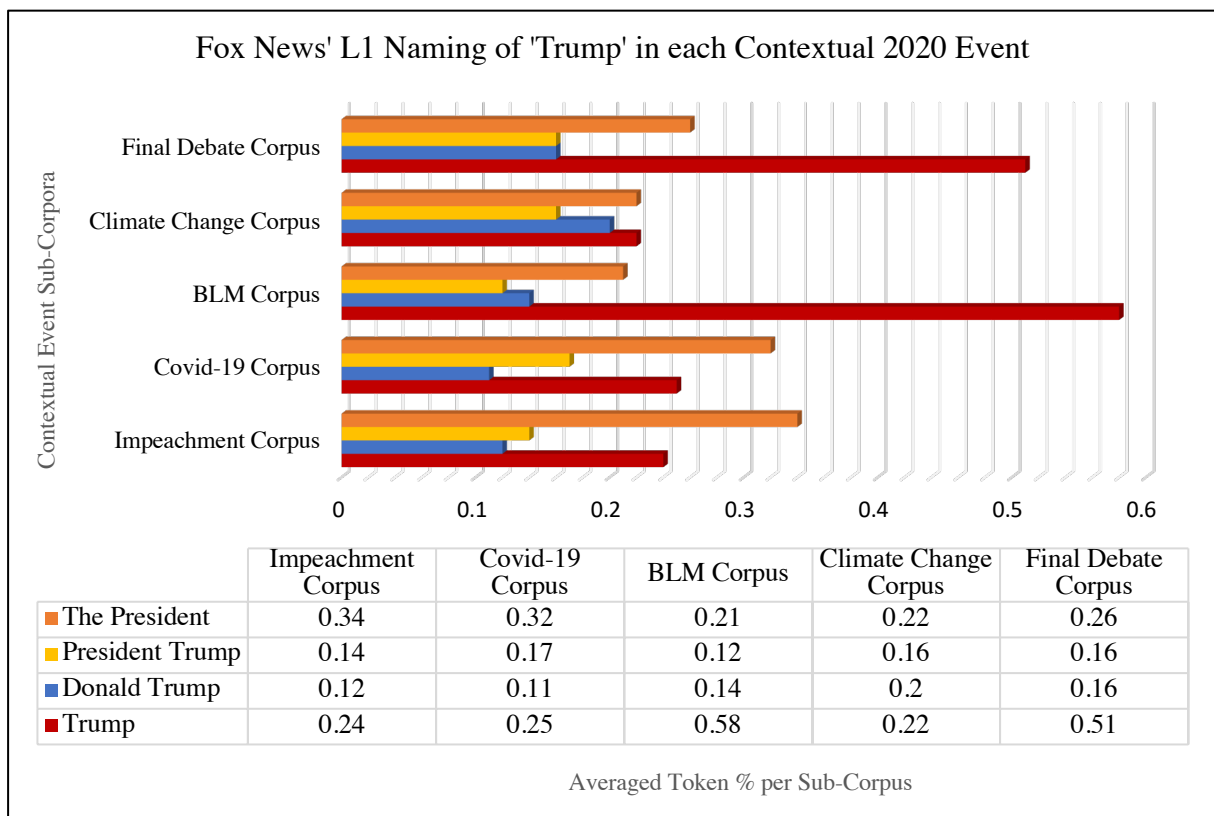
The datasets display the most frequent naming conventions for Trump, alongside their average percentages, calculated in comparison to each of the sub-corpus' total tokens (see Table 3). To avoid merging percentages, i.e., frequencies for <Trump> also configuring with frequencies of <President *Trump*> or <Donald *Trump*>, percentages for <President Trump> and <Donald Trump> were first calculated and then subtracted from the total instances where 'Trump' occurred. This ensured that <Trump> only reflected its percentage as a singular referred name.

The second impeachment of Donald Trump was a major political event which dominated news coverage during early 2020, marking the third time in U.S. history that a president had been impeached by the House of Representatives. Therefore, it is not surprising that both networks referred to Trump as <The President> most frequently in their Impeachment Sub-Corpuses. The significance of this naming convention lies in how it frames Trump's role and authority as the president during the impeachment proceedings. By referring to Trump as <The President>, his institutional role and governmental power is emphasized during the impeachment process, as opposed to his individual agency. This is especially evident in the CNN corpus; by referring to one's (professional) title, instead of one's birth name, a speaker can effectively "manipulate the hearer's identifications by directing attention … towards some generic role of conceptual category" (Wilson, 1990, cited in Gastil, 1992, p.485). This implies that with almost double Fox News' percent usage of <The President>, it is plausible that CNN focused more on Trump's institutional role to stress the importance of his presidential position and highlight the fact that the impeachment proceedings were directed at the office of *presidency*, rather than an individual agent. CNN also maintained relatively consistent use of the <The President> throughout the remaining sub-corpora, although <President Trump> was consistently the least frequent naming convention they used. It is possible that this was a tactical choice by CNN leading up to the election, effectively dissimilating *President* and *Trump* to disconnect their meaning as a compound noun.

It is argued by Fowler and Kress (1979, p.200) that different naming conventions "signify different assessments by the speaker/writer of his or her relationship with the person referred to or spoken to, and of the formality or intimacy of the situation." Thus, we might expect different naming conventions to reflect differences of leadership representation throughout other contextual sub-corpora. For example, Fox News fluctuate with their referred naming of Trump throughout the crisis-related sub-corpora, e.g., the Covid-19 pandemic, the

BLM movements/protests, climate change concerns. This could potentially align with Fox's defensive response, as the 'BLM' Sub-Corpus and Climate Change Sub-Corpus present a larger percentage of personal naming conventions, i.e., <Donald Trump>, <Trump>. It could be valuable for Fox News to represent Trump through a more humanised public image, especially after backlash he's received for his controversial comments and approaches related to the pandemic, the BLM movement and Climate Change.

(21) *"So last year 37,000 Americans died from the common Flu. It averages between 27,000 and 70,000 per year. **Nothing is shut down, life & economy go on**. At this moment there are 546 confirmed cases of CoronaVirus, with 22 deaths. **Think about that!**"* (Trump, 2020).

- [Donald Trump, Tweet: 09.03.2020].

(22) *"BERMAN: … And then he did this interview last night with the home team, with FOX TV, with Laura Ingraham, when he talks about police shootings of black men. And this is how he described it. Listen.*

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

*TRUMP: **They choke, just like in a golf tournament**. They miss a three- foot putt –*

LAURA INGRAHAM, FOX NEWS HOST: You're not comparing it to golf, because of course, that's what the media will say.

*TRUMP: **No, I'm saying people choke**.*

INGRAHAM: People panic.

*TRUMP: **People choke**.*

(END VIDEO CLIP)"

- [CNN: 'BLM Sub-Corpus'].

(23) *"In the beautiful Midwest, windchill temperatures are reaching minus 60 degrees, the coldest ever recorded. In coming days, expected to get even colder. People can't last outside even for minutes. **What the hell is going on with Global Wa[r]ming? Please come back fast, we need you!**"* (Trump, 2019).

- [Donald Trump, Tweet: 29.01.2019].

This study posits that even the few examples demonstrated with 21-23 exemplify negative incitement towards the three mentioned crises, which Trump was held accountable for through much of CNN's coverage. It is exactly this type of language that creates need for Fox News to maintain a responsive approach throughout the corpora, so their need to personalise his character over his statements made is understandable for their benefit.

If we equate consumers of cable news to that of a customer, then it is certainly applicable to suggest that voters are buying into consistent ideologies presented across different contexts. To measure the complete represented value of *America* in terms of leadership however, representation must be further examined through cable news' portrayals of leadership qualities. Liu et al. (2017, p.708) found that for leadership narratives to be taken up positively by the media, leaders must operate to convey a coherent identity and a consistent leadership approach. I offer to provide a different perspective of how the media represent leadership. In the Final Debate Sub-Corpora, both CNN and Fox News significantly increased their usage of <Trump> (see Figure 1.1 and 1.2). This was likely due to the fact that there was lesser need for complex naming, as broadcasts shifted focus towards how candidates portrayed *themselves* during the final debate. Following the concurrent notion of cable news' partisanship however, I predict that lexical choices will be used to construe each network's pre-existing narratives of candidates' leadership qualities, regardless of what they may actually be.

5. Research Question 3: Examining Biased Representations of Leadership Qualities

5.1. Identification of Linguistic Leadership Qualities

The presidential debates serve as a forum for candidates to exhibit their platforms without journalistic filtering (Doerfel and Marsh, 2003, p.212). Fein et al. (2007, p.168) however claims that presidential debates are not clear stimuli which represents the general consensus of a candidate's perception, but instead is dependent on the media's reaction; a major part of the unfolding political narratives which follows the debate. Hence, this research compiled the Final Debate Sub-Corpora from transcripts dated between the final 2020 debate and election day (see Section 2.3), so that only responsive broadcasts were

collected. Given that the final debate is publicly accessible without filtered journalistic input, this allowed for my own autonomous assessment of how presidential candidates presented their leadership qualities.

Régner and Rywick (2006, p.105) state that the definition of a "good leader" is difficult to establish due to the limited attention given to leadership characteristics. However, Steffens and Haslam (2013, p.1) contend that the oratory skills of great political leaders have been meticulously analysed by many scholars of psychology, linguistics, political science, and history. They propose that effective leaders act as "entrepreneurs of identity," utilising linguistic cues in their speech to cultivate a sense of identity with their audience. The following of which will be examined in this study:

- Proctor and Wen Su (2011, cited in Kaewrungruang and Yaoharee, 2018, p.88) discovered that the use of personal pronouns in presidential debates can create decisive turning points for politicians, while Brown and Gilman (1960, cited in Kaewrungruang and Yaoharee, 2018, p.88) further propose that pronouns are useful for revealing a leader's power dynamics. Therefore, it is probable that the pronoun variables employed during the debate will reveal how each candidate positions themselves in relation to the American people, either collectively or as an independent status.

- Cheng (2016, p.175) provides insight to the use of modality by politicians as a linguistic and ideological device to express their sense of obligation, commitment, and volition or possibility concerning certain affairs during debates. Thus, it would be appropriate to investigate candidate's modal intentions of responsibility.

- Lastly, Windsor and Bowman (2019, p.2) emphasise the significance of linguistic patterns in candidate rhetoric, specifically their syntactic structure and semantics, modelling *how* the candidates speak. Additionally, Beckner and Bybee (2009, p.27) found that preposition sequences may exhibit varying degrees of syntactic constituency in corpus data. Therefore, analysing the syntactic structure, specifically through prepositional use, will be valuable for evaluating the candidates' linguistic leadership qualities.

Using *LFM*, Figures 2-4 have calculated the total frequencies for both Trump and Biden's uses of pronouns, modal verbs, and prepositions, during their final presidential debate of 2020.

5.2. Pronouns

During examination of the final debate, it was found that personal pronouns absorbed the majority of pronominal utterances. Through calculation of the total pronouns spoken, and their individual percentages (of said total), Figure 2 provids a comparative analysis of Trump and Biden's pronominal usage.

Figure 2: Pronoun % Comparison
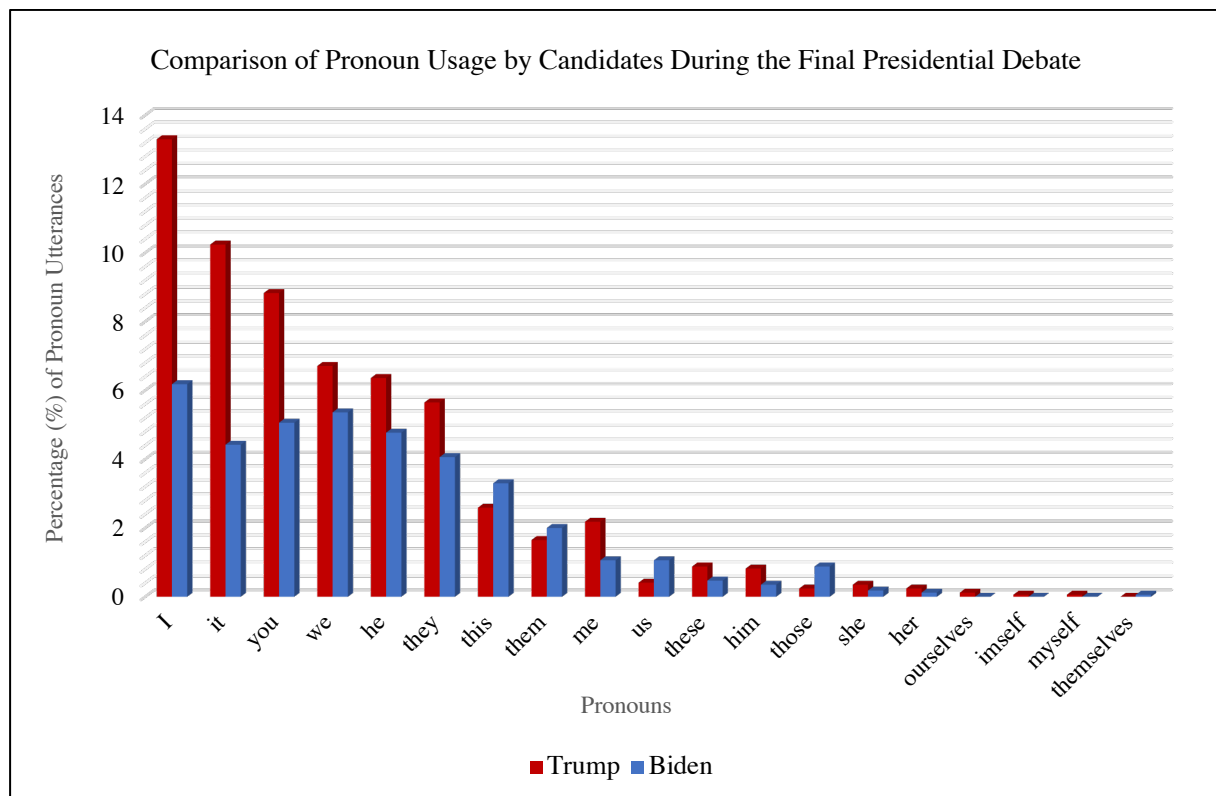
Trump's substantial difference in personal pronouns suggests confidence in his speech, as also suggested by Alavidze's (2016, p.68) study of personal pronouns in Trump's discourse. Alavidze found that Trump uses pronouns successfully to demonstrate "good qualities," such as confidence, shared experience, and opinion. They further explain that Trump's use of *you* is applied when targeting specifics groups that he wants to separate, similarly relating to the technique used by cable news to interpellate the public into an ideological space of discourse. This tactic is commonly used by politicians to position their audiences in a framed position of their choosing.

5.3. Modality

Additional signs of confidence and certainty was found through the candidates' use of modality. Figure 3 compares modal usage between Trump and Biden, revealing that Trump often expressed certitude that *X will X*, whereas Biden conveys a greater sense of possibility, indicating that *X can* or *should X*.

Figure 3: Modal % Comparison

Comparison of Modality Usage by Candidates During the Final Presidential Debate
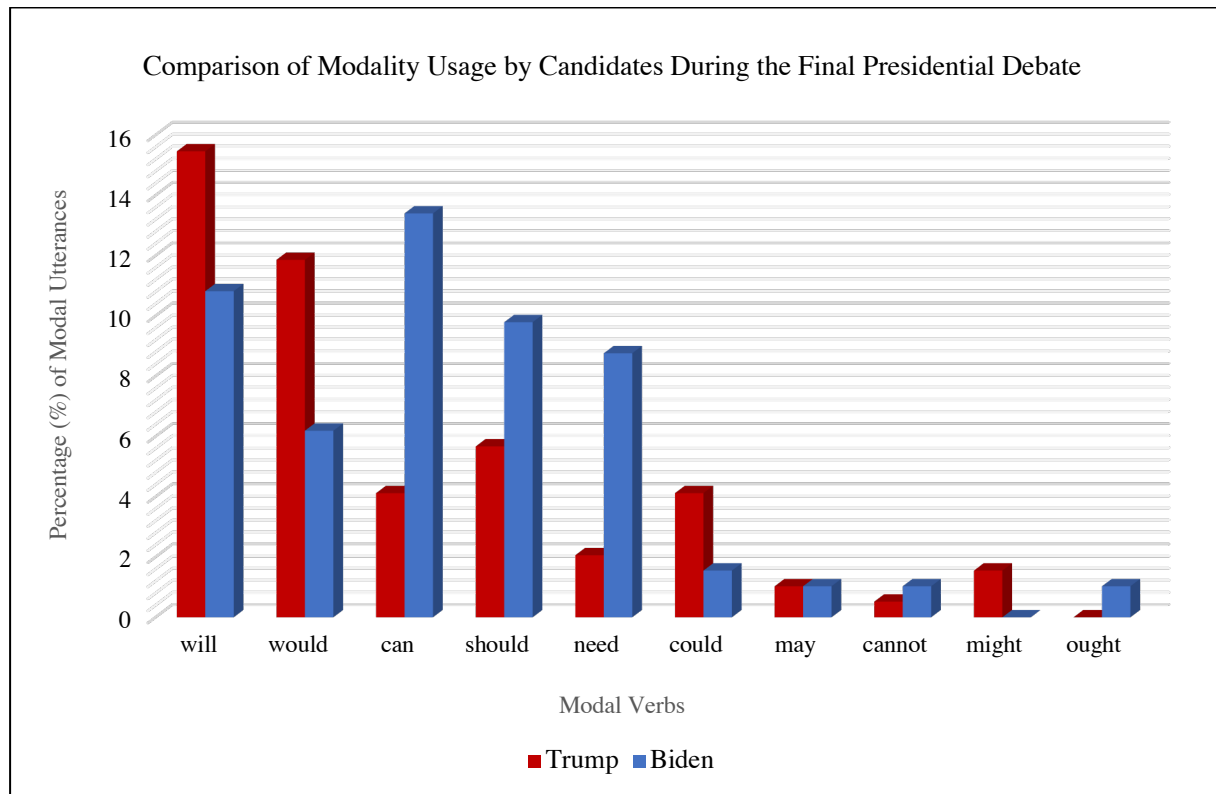
Though there is an overall greater total of Biden's modals, none possess the same level of assertiveness as Trump's does. Whilst *should* and *need* suggest an obligatory notion, *will* possesses a more progressive action, as if it is already in motion.

5.4. Prepositions

In Figure 4, the total amount of prepositions was first counted, then further calculated to each preposition's individual percentage (of said total). Due to an excess of utterances, only prepositions that had a frequency of 10% and over were filtered from collective (*Trump's + Biden's*) utterances, to maintain visual simplicity.

Figure 4: Preposition % Comparison

Comparison of Most Significant Prepositions (Collective Utterance Above 10%) used by Candidates During the Final Presidential Debate
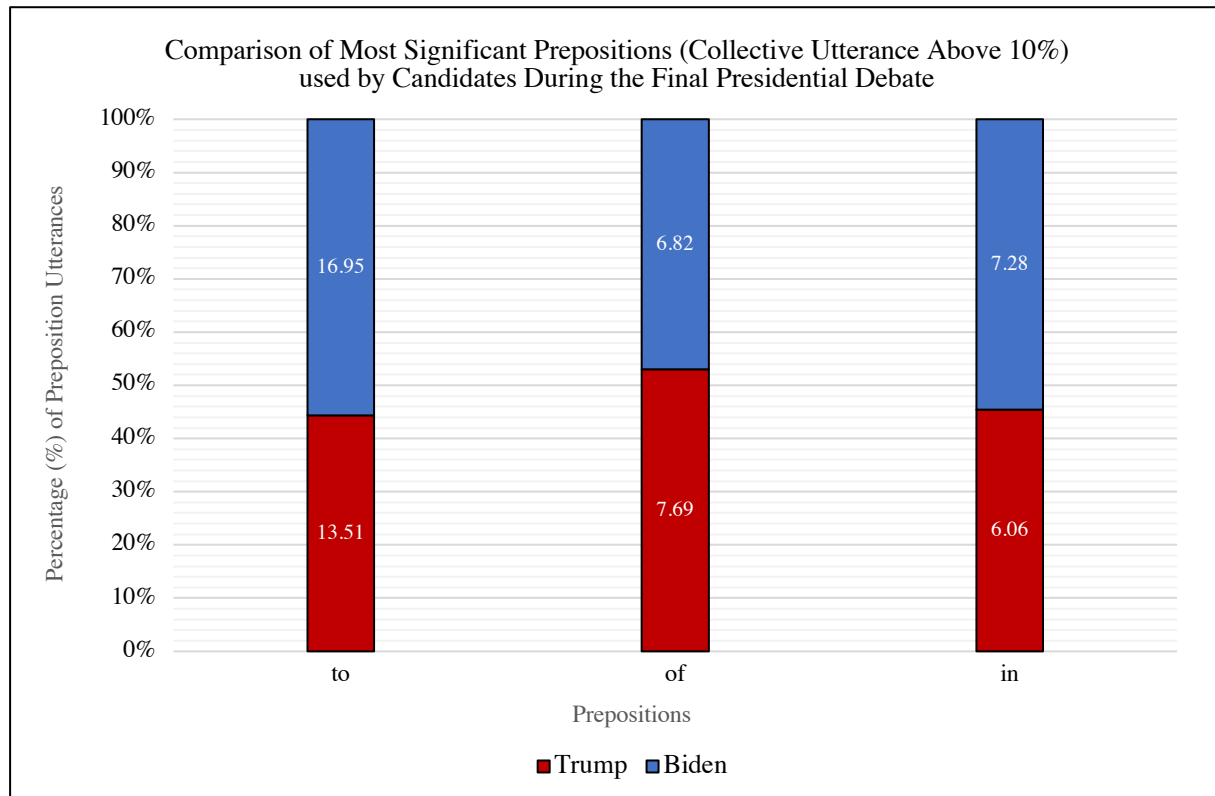
Biden indicates a clearer sense of direction or purpose here; a motivation to get *to* a particular place or objective, which could pertain to the current or future situations he/others are *in*. Additionally, Trump's control over the preposition, *of*, indicates his control over a certain relation, amount, quality or type of *X*. To gain a more conclusive and comprehensive understanding of this data, further analysis of collocative/concordance contexts is necessary.

5.5. CNN vs Fox: Constructing the Narrative

This section has focused on proving cable news' predisposition to maintain their ideological political leanings through their lexical choices, irrespective of candidates' actual leadership actions/qualities. Upon examining the media's response to the final presidential debate, it became evident that their reaction does not align with my interpretations of leadership characteristics shown. In both the CNN and Fox News Debate Sub-Corpora, the most frequent 2-gram, and most frequent sequence used to describe candidates, created the declarative phrase: *Trump is*. From here, data for the most frequent

R1 collocates to *Trump + is* were collected via *AntConc* and presented for each sub-corpus in Table 7.1 and 7.2.

Table 7.1: Most Frequent R1 Collocates to Proper Noun + Verb: CNN Debate Sub-Corpus

Noun + Verb	R1 Collocate	Likelihood Log Ratio
Trump + is	Trying	30.301
Trump + is	Irrelevant	15.917
Trump + is	Confused	11.420
Biden + is	Leading	59.996
Biden + is	Pushing	23.851
Biden + is	Overperforming	15.719

Table 7.2: Most Frequent R1 Collocates to Proper Noun + Verb: FOX Debate Sub-Corpus

Noun + Verb	R1 Collocate	Likelihood Log Ratio
Trump + is	Competing	12.287
Trump + is	Nonstop	12.287
Trump + is	Blitzing	12.287
Biden + is	Trying	29.443
Biden + is	Fading	15.383
Biden + is	(a) Corrupt	13.150

Following the debate, both CNN and Fox News broadcasts portrayed similar patterns of negativity towards each other's political affiliates. In each exampled phrase, the linking verb (*is*) is used to either connect the subject (*Trump*/*Biden*) to a present participle verb, describing their actions in the present moment, or to an adjective complement, suggesting their current state or status in relation to the current action or situation described. Although these could be construed as general descriptions, the connotations of each R1 collocate still remain consistent with Table 5.1-6.2's depictions of leadership.

From an objective standpoint, Trump appeared to indicate much contention and conviction in his speech, and Figures 2 and 3 imply this. Through frequent use of assertive modality, Trump demonstrates his confidence to not only address, but convey assurance

through his statements to the public. Table 8 exhibits this, displaying the most frequent L1 collocates to Trump's use of the preposition *to*.

Table 8: Most Frequent L1 Collocates to 'to' (PREP) Spoken by Trump: Final Debate Transcript

L1 Collocate	Preposition	Likelihood Log Ratio
going	*to*	364.974
have	*to*	138.014
want	*to*	83.979
wanted	*to*	36.049
wants	*to*	30.042

The L1 collocates here demonstrate Trump's confidence to act, so it is debatable for CNN to insinuate Trump as *confused*, given his confident linguistic cues. While it's true that Trump's standing in the election polls at any time may have been unfavourable, he still held a significant amount of supporters. For CNN to suggest that he is also *irrelevant* draws concern towards their biases, as they too would have been aware of his support from his previous campaigning and early polling numbers. This applies also to Fox News' implication that Biden is *fading*, despite his eventual gaining of the most presidential votes in U.S. history, and strong early polling numbers.

Fox News also exhibit unreliable connotations throughout their corpora. For example, Fox previously insinuated in Table 5.2 that Biden's view of America is treated more so as a *business*, which seems rather contradictory if we consider Trump's prepositional contexts during the debate. In Table 9.1, we can see the most frequent L1 collocates to Trump's use of the preposition *of*, and in Table 9.2, we can see each L1 collocate's contextual concordance lines.

Table 9.1: Most Frequent L1 Collocates to 'of' (PREP) Spoken by Trump: Final Debate Transcript

L1 Collocate	Preposition	Likelihood Log Ratio
lot	*of*	86.086
millions	*of*	59.615
kind	*of*	58.649
tens	*of*	41.816
heads	*of*	25.044

Table 9.2: Selected Concordance (KWIC) Lines for 'of' (PREP) L1 Collocations, Spoken by Trump: Final Debate Transcript

(24)	from Russia. They were paying you a	**lot**	of money, and they probably still are.
(25)	s and states. It was a way of getting a	**lot**	of money, billions and billions of doll
(26)	se guys. It was also a way of getting a	**lot**	of money from our people's pockets t
(27)	elease it, but I have paid millions and	**millions**	of dollars and it's worse than paying.
(28)	e just tell you, I prepaid millions and	**millions**	of dollars in taxes, number one. … D
(29)	king about doing a deal in China, like	**millions**	of other people, I was thinking about
(30)	e thing about me. We have a different	**kind**	of a relationship. We have a very goo
(31)	, the emails, the horrible emails of the	**kind**	of money that you were raking in, yo
(32)	they've ever made. If you look at the	**kind**	of numbers that we've produced for
(33)	I pay?" They said, "Sir, you prepaid	**tens**	of millions of dollars." I prepaid my t
(34)	my tax, over the last number of years,	**tens**	of millions of dollars, I prepaid, beca
(35)	ay our businesses. I will not sacrifice	**tens**	of millions of jobs, thousands and tho
(36)	most of those people, I could call the	**heads**	of Wall Street, the heads of every co
(37)	ould call the heads of Wall Street, the	**heads**	of every company in America. I woul
(38)	m, but I've been congratulated by the	**heads**	of many countries on what we've bee

Upon studying the L1 collocates in context, it becomes apparent that Trump frequently references money (24-28, 33, 34) and business relationships/ventures (29-32, 35-38). These concordance lines, which predominantly contain self-referential pronouns, create a strong connection between Trump and corporate America, more so than Fox tried to accomplish with Biden. This is not surprising, especially given Trump's background in

business. However, it is notable that Fox News implied this same perspective with Biden, indicating an effort to prevent voters from associating Trump with this ideology.

Fox News also suggested that 'Biden is Corrupt,' although if we analyse Biden's syntactic placement of the personal pronoun, *we*, and its inflections during the debate, the vast majority of such coexist in direct L1 collocation to the preposition, *in*, demonstrating a collective position. Table 10 exemplifies the concordance lines for each L1 pronoun constituent + preposition.

Table 10: Selected Concordance (KWIC) Lines for 'in' (PREP) L1 Collocations, Spoken by Biden: Final Debate Transcript

(39)	president of the United States. We're	**in**	a situation where there are a thousand
(40)	can save a 100,000 lives. And we're	**in**	a circumstance where the president th
(41)	(30:40) But the point is folks. We are	**in**	a situation where we have foreign co
(42)	Barack Obama. And secondly, we're	**in**	a situation here where the federal pris
(43)	has said, even today, he thinks we are	**in**	control. We're about to lose 200,000
(44)	astly, we're going to make sure we're	**in**	a situation that we actually protect pr
(45)	ning against. And the idea that we're	**in**	a situation where China would have t

During the final debate, I perceived Biden to come across more collective and sincere with his relation to the American people, despite Trump's larger personal pronoun usage. Table 10 supports this, as Biden's frequent structure of *pronoun + in* (PREP) + *location/state* (NOUN) recurringly positions himself and the public as a collective identity. By positioning his pronouns prior to the preposition, Biden is suggesting that he is also on the same level as the American citizens by acknowledging the state of *Trump's America* that himself and the public is in. Thus, it is more credible to connote Trump to corporate greed, since Fox News' portrayal of Biden as a *corrupt* and *fading* candidate, who's more focused on building a *business* than public relationships, contradicts the qualities Biden exhibited during the debate.

6. Conclusion

The CNN and Fox News corpora illustrate how cable news networks construct narratives to align with their political biases. Asghar et al (2019, p.676) states that the lexical choices

made by both networks have had previous impacts on presidential perceptions, and this research suggests no difference with their representations of leadership during the presidential campaign period, 2020. Analysis of trends and patterns such as lexical items of high frequency, collocations, naming conventions, and contextual concordances have demonstrated a biased portrayal of candidates, despite their contextual distributions. Furthermore, subjective and objective perspectives of leadership qualities misaligned with cable news' typical representations of candidates, indicating a prevalence of partisan journalism.

The significance of this study is detailed through its discussed theory, such as the concept of interpellation, or semantic prosody in connection to partisanship. If individuals are "hailed" or addressed by social institutions and ideologies to be positioned in a certain way (Hall, 1985, p.102); if words have a certain connotation or emotional valence that goes beyond their literal meaning (Šorli, 2013, p.97); if news outlets seek to promote their own ideological agendas by disregarding all others (Hyun and Seo, 2021, p.667); then what form of democracy can thrive if citizens are exposed only to biased and partisan news, established to reinforce our pre-existing beliefs? Van Dijk (1998, p.4) maintained that many group ideologies involve the representation of Self and Others, Us and Them; his observation has only become more relevant when we consider the dangers of a polarised media landscape. When we view the world in terms of "Us vs Them," we are more likely to seek out media sources that confirm our preconceptions, and to reject information that challenges those beliefs. This kind of echo chamber can be detrimental for democracy, as it can lead to a distorted understanding of reality; a corruption of thought; hindering people's ability to engage with different perspectives and ideas. To protect the principles of democracy, we must demand a media that is accountable, transparent, and committed to public interest. Only then can we hope to preserve and strengthen the democratic values that are essential to our *shared* future.

7. References

Alavidze, M. 2016. The use of pronouns in political discourse. *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*. **9**(4), pp.68-76.

Althusser, L. 1971. Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation). In: Althusser, L. ed. *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. New York: Monthly Review Press, pp.127-186.

Angouri, J. 2010. Quantitative, qualitative or both? Combining methods in linguistic research. *Research methods in linguistics*. **1**, pp.29-45.

Anon n.d. 2023. *LexisNexis*. [Online]. [Accessed 27 January 2023]. Available from: https://advance.lexis.com/firsttime?crid=8be0d0d4-6762-47ed-afef-a51aeb64c0ee&pdmfid=1519360

AntLab Solutions. 2022. *AntConc* (2022). [Software]. [Accessed 10 February 2023].

Asghar, R., Khan, M.H., Khuhro, R.A., Adnan, H.M. and Alqurainy, S.H. 2019. US presidential elections 2016: A comparative study of media coverage of CNN and FOX news. *Media Watch*. **10**(3), pp.675-686.

Baker, P. 2006. *Using corpora in discourse analysis*. London: Continuum.

Baker, P. 2012. Acceptable bias? Using corpus linguistics methods with critical discourse analysis. *Critical discourse studies*. **9**(3), pp.247-256.

Baum, M.A. and Groeling, T. 2008. New media and the polarization of American political discourse. *Political Communication*. **25**(4), pp.345-365.

Beckner, C. and Bybee, J. 2009. A Usage-Based Account of Constituency and Reanalysis. *Language Learning*. **59**, pp.27-46.

Bednarek, M. 2008. Semantic preference and semantic prosody re-examined. *Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory*. **4**(2), pp.119-139.

Bell, A. 1995. Language and the media. *Annual review of applied linguistics*. **15**, pp.23-41.

Bos, L., Van der Brug, W. and De Vreese, C. 2011. How the media shape perceptions of right-wing populist leaders. *Political Communication*. **28**(2), pp.182-206.

Boulahnane, S. 2018. Ground Zero mosque in the context of America's post-9/11 religious

pluralism: CDA of mainstream news media's coverage of the discursive event. *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*. **8**(2), pp.253-280.

Brouer, R.L., Douglas, C., Treadway, D.C. and Ferris, G.R. 2013. Leader political skill, relationship quality, and leadership effectiveness: A two-study model test and constructive replication. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*. 20(2), pp.185-198.

Chamberlain, K. and Hodgetts, D. 2008. Social psychology and media: Critical considerations. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*. **2**(3), pp.1109-1125.

Cheng, M. 2016. The power of persuasion: Modality and issue framing in the 2012 Taiwan Presidential Debates. *Discourse & Society*. **27**(2), pp.172-194.

Coe, K., Tewksbury, D., Bond, B.J., Drogos, K.L., Porter, R.W., Yahn, A. and Zhang, Y. 2008. Hostile news: Partisan use and perceptions of cable news programming. *Journal of communication*. **58**(2), pp.201-219.

Coltman-Patel, T. 2018. Creating and Maintaining Identities in Political Discourse. *Trent Notes on Linguistics*. **1**, pp.1-27.

Cotter, C. and Perrin, D. 2017. *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Media*. [Online]. London: Routledge. [Accessed 29 December 2022]. Available from: https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9781315673134/

Danowski, J.A., Yan, B. and Riopelle, K. 2021. Cable news channels' partisan ideology and market share growth as predictors of social distancing sentiment during the COVID-19 pandemic. In: Segev, E. ed. *Semantic Network Analysis in Social Sciences*. London: Routledge, pp.72-93.

Doerfel, M.L. and Marsh, P.S. 2003. Candidate-Issue Positioning in the Context of Presidential Debates. *Journal of applied communication research JACR*. **31**(3), pp.212–237.

Dvir-Gvirsman, S., Garrett, R.K. and Tsfati, Y. 2018. Why do partisan audiences participate? Perceived public opinion as the mediating mechanism. *Communication Research*. **45**(1), pp.112-136.

Eshbaugh-Soha, M. and Peake, J.S. 2011. *Breaking through the noise: presidential leadership, public opinion, and the news media*. Studies in the modern presidency. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

Eveland Jr, W.P. and Shah, D.V. 2003. The impact of individual and interpersonal factors on perceived news media bias. *Political psychology*. **24**(1), pp.101-117.

Fein, S., Goethals, G.R. and Kugler, M.B. 2007. Social influence on political judgments: The case of presidential debates. *Political Psychology*. **28**(2), pp.165-192.

Fiske, J. 1998. Culture, Ideology, Interpellation. In: Rivkin, J. and Ryan M. ed. *Literary Theory: An Anthology*. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, pp.1268-1273.

Fowler, R., Hodge, B., Kress, G. and Trew, T**.** 1979**.** *Language and Control*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Gabrielatos, C. and Baker, P. 2008. Fleeing, sneaking, flooding: A corpus analysis of discursive constructions of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK press, 1996-2005. *Journal of English linguistics*. **36**(1), pp.5-38.

Garzia, D., Ferreira da Silva, F. and De Angelis, A. 2020. Image that matters: News media consumption and party leader effects on voting behavior. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*. **25**(2), pp.238-259.

Gastil, J. 1992. Undemocratic discourse: a review of theory and research on political discourse. *Discourse & Society*. **3**(4), pp.469-500.

Ghassemi, R. and Hemmatgosha, Z. 2019. Language in Media: A Tool for Expressing Political Views. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*. **10**(5), pp.28.35.

Giles, D. 2009. *Media psychology*. [Online]. New York: Routledge. [Accessed 12 January 2023]. Available from: https://www.vlebooks.com/Product/Index/77485?page=0

Graefe, A. 2021. Of Issues and Leaders: Forecasting the 2020 US Presidential Election. *PS: Political Science & Politics*. **54**(1), pp.70-72.

Gunther, A.C., Edgerly, S., Akin, H. and Broesch, J.A. 2012. Partisan evaluation of partisan information. *Communication Research*. **39**(4), pp.439-457.

Happer, C. and Philo, G. 2013. The role of the media in the construction of public belief and social change. *Journal of social and political psychology*. **1**(1), pp.321-336.

Hall, S. 1985. Signification, representation, ideology: Althusser and the post-structuralist debates. *Critical studies in media communication*. **2**(2), pp.91-114.

Halmetoja, T. 2016. *Both Sides of the Coin A Discourse-Analytical Study of Ideologies in Fox*

News and CNN Coverage of Terrorism and Conflicts. MA thesis, Götesborgs Universitet.

Hess, D. J., Foss, D. J. and Carroll, P. 1995. Effects of Global and Local Context on Lexical Processing During Language Comprehension. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*. **124**(1), pp.62-82.

Ho, S.M., Kao, D., Li, W., Lai, CJ. and Chiu-Huang, MJ. 2020. "On the left side, there's nothing right. On the right side, there's nothing left:" Polarization of Political Opinion by News Media. In: Sundqvist, A., Berget, G., Nolin, J. and Skjerdingstad, K.I. *Sustainable Digital Communities: 15th International Conference, iConference 2020, March 23–26, 2020, Boras, Sweden*. [Online]. [no place]: Springer International Publishing, pp.209-219. [Accessed 23 January 2023]. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-43687-2_16

Hopmann, D.N., Vliegenthart, R., De Vreese, C. and Albæk, E. 2010. Effects of election news coverage: How visibility and tone influence party choice. *Political communication*. **27**(4), pp.389-405.

Hyun, K.D. and Seo, M. 2021. The Effects of HMP and TPP on Political Participation in the Partisan Media Context. *Communication research*. **48**(5), pp.665-686.

Kaewrungruang, K. and Yaoharee, O. 2018. The use of personal pronoun in political discourse: A case study of the final 2016 united states presidential election debate. *Reflections*. **25**(1), pp.85-96.

Kemppanen, H. 2004. Keywords and Ideology in Translated History Texts: A Corpus-based Analysis. *Across languages and cultures*. **5**(1), pp.89-106.

Khan, M.A. and Zaki, S. 2022. Corpus Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis of Pakistan's Language Education Policy Documents: What are the Existing Language Ideologies?. *SAGE Open*. **12**(3), pp1-19.

Kim, K.H. 2014. Examining US news media discourses about North Korea: A corpus-based critical discourse analysis. *Discourse & Society*. **25**(2), pp.1-24.

Kline, S. 1979. Creating reality: How television news distorts events. *Canadian Journal of Communication*. **5**(3), pp.36-39.

Kruikemeier, S., Gattermann, K. and Vliegenthart, R. 2018. Understanding the dynamics of

politicians' visibility in traditional and social media. *The Information Society*. **34**(4), pp.215-228.

Kuo, S.H. and Nakamura, M. 2005. Translation or transformation? A case study of language and ideology in the Taiwanese press. *Discourse & Society*. **16**(3), pp.393-417.

Lewis-Beck, M. and Nadeau, R. 2015. Between leadership and charisma, the importance of leaders. In: Lobo, M.C. and Curtice, J. eds. *Personality Politics?: The Role of Leader Evaluations in Democratic Elections*. [Online]. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.169-190. [Accessed 20 January 2023]. Available from: https://academic.oup.com/book/26715

Liu, H., Cutcher, L. and Grant, D. 2017. Authentic leadership in context: An analysis of banking CEO narratives during the global financial crisis. *Human Relations*. **70**(6), pp.694-724.

Louw, Bill. 1993. Irony in the Text or Insincerity in the Writer? The Diagnostic Potential of Semantic Prosodies. In: Baker, M., Francis, G. and Tognini-Bonelli, E. eds. *Text and Technology*. *In Honour of John Sinclair*. [Online]. Philadelphia: Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, pp.157-176. [Accessed 26 February 2023]. Available from: https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/leeds/detail.action?docID=680963

Lowry, D.T. 2008. Network TV news framing of good vs. bad economic news under democrat and republican presidents: A lexical analysis of political bias. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*. **85**(3), pp.483-498.

Lunt, P. and Livingstone, S. 2001. *Language and the media: An emerging field for social psychology*. In: H. Giles and P. Robinson. ed. *The New Handbook of Language and Social Psychology*. 2nd edition. London: John Wiley, pp.585-600. [Accessed 10 January 2023]. Available from: https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/1006/1/Language_and_the_media(LSERO).pdf

Marinov, R. 2020. Neoliberal rationality and the consumption of biased news: theorizing the neoliberal subjectivation of news media audiences. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*. **37**(1), pp.1-14.

Martin, G.J. and Yurukoglu, A. 2017. Bias in cable news: Persuasion and polarization. *American Economic Review*. **107**(9), pp.1-94.

McCarthy, M. and O'Keeffe, A. 2010. *The Routledge handbook of corpus linguistics*. [Online]. London: Routledge. [Accessed 05 February 2023]. Available from: https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9780203856949/

Mendelsohn, M. 1996. The Media and Interpersonal Communications: The Priming of Issues, Leaders, and Party Identification. *The journal of* politics. **58**(1), pp.112–125.

Miller, J.M. and Krosnick, J.A. 2000. News media impact on the ingredients of presidential evaluations: Politically knowledgeable citizens are guided by a trusted source. *American Journal of Political Science*. **44**(2), pp.301-315.

Morris, J.S. 2007. Slanted objectivity? Perceived media bias, cable news exposure, and political attitudes. *Social science quarterly*. **88**(3), pp.707-728.

Moy, P., Tewksbury, D. and Rinke, E.M. 2016. Agenda-setting, priming, and framing. *The international encyclopedia of communication theory and philosophy*. pp.1-13.

O'Halloran, K. 2010. How to use corpus linguistics in the study of media discourse. In: McCarthy, M. and O'Keeffe, A. eds. *The Routledge handbook of corpus linguistics*. [Online]. London: Routledge, pp.563-577. [Accessed 25 February 2023]. Available from: https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9780203856949/

Oyeleye, L. and Osisanwo, A. 2013. Lexicalisation in media representation of the 2003 and 2007 general elections in Nigeria. *World Journal of English Language*. **3**(2), pp.1-9.

Parks, P. 2019. Crisis continued: Cable news, American exceptionalism, and discourses of danger. *Journalism Studies*. **20**(3), pp.305-326.

Partington, A. 2004. 'Utterly content in each other's company'. *International journal of corpus linguistics*. **9**(1), pp.131-156.

Pennycook, G. and Rand, D.G. 2021. The psychology of fake news. *Trends in cognitive sciences*. **25**(5), pp.388-402.

Popp, R.K. 2006. Mass media and the linguistic marketplace: Media, language, and distinction. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*. **30**(1), pp.5-20.

Potts, A. and Baker, P. 2012. Does semantic tagging identify cultural change in British and

American English? *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*. **17**(3), pp.295-324.

Potts, A., Bednarek, M. and Caple, H. 2015. How can computer-based methods help researchers to investigate news values in large datasets? A corpus linguistic study of the construction of newsworthiness in the reporting on Hurricane Katrina. *Discourse & Communication*. **9**(2), pp.149-172.

Régner, I. and Rywick, T. 2006. Left-and right-wing perceptions of presidential candidates: Similarities and differences between French and American voters. *Revue internationale de psychologie sociale*. **19**(2), pp.103-125.

Römer, U. and Wulff, S. 2010. Applying corpus methods to written academic texts: Explorations of MICUSP. *Journal of Writing research*. **2**(2), pp.99-127.

Ryan, M. 2001. Journalistic ethics, objectivity, existential journalism, standpoint epistemology, and public journalism. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*. **16**(1), pp.3-22.

Sendén, M.G., Lindholm, T. and Sikström, S. 2014. Biases in news media as reflected by personal pronouns in evaluative contexts. *Social Psychology*. **45**(2), pp.103-111.

Shojaei, A., Youssefi, K. and Hosseini, H.S. 2013. A CDA approach to the biased interpretation and representation of ideologically conflicting ideas in western printed media. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*. **4**(4), pp.858-868.

Smith, N.L. 2015. Consumer protection in the marketplace of ideas: a proposal to extend the news distortion doctrine to cable television news programs. *Thurgood Marshall Law Review*. **40**(2), pp.223-272.

Šorli, M. 2013. Forms of encoded pragmatic meaning: semantic prosody. A lexicographic perspective. *Lingue e linguaggi*. **10**, pp.95-112.

Srichai, P. and Phoocharoensil, S. 2016. *A Corpus-Based Study of Specialized Vocabulary from American Political News Articles: An Analysis of Lexical Items*. MA. thesis, Thammasart University.

Steffens, N.K. and Haslam, S.A. 2013. Power through 'us': Leaders' use of we-referencing language predicts election victory. *PloS one*. **8**(10), pp.1-6.

Suksawat, P. 2017. A Lexical Analysis of American and Non-American Political News. *Vacana*. **4**(2), pp.40-55.

The Orwell Foundation. 2015. *Politics and the English Language*. [Online]. [Accessed 28 December 2022]. Available from: https://www.orwellfoundation.com/the-orwell-foundation/orwell/essays-and-other-works/politics-and-the-english-language/

Tirronen, J. 2019. *Wording, Semantic Fields and Othering Discourses in News Media: A Study of the Accusation Process of Christine Ford against Judge Brett Kavanaugh in CNN and Fox News*. Master's thesis, Arcada University of Applied Sciences.

Trump, D.J. 2019. *In the beautiful Midwest, windchill temperatures are reaching minus 60 degrees, the coldest ever recorded. In coming days, expected to* […]. [Twitter]. 29 January. [Accessed: 15 March 2023]. Available from: https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1090074254010404864?s=20

Trump, D.J. 2020. *So last year 37,000 Americans died from the common Flu. It averages between 27,000 and 70,000 per year. Nothing is* […]. [Twitter]. 9 March. [Accessed: 15 March 2023]. Available from: https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1237027356314869761?s=20

Uscinski, J.E. and Goren, L.J. 2011. What's in a name? Coverage of senator Hillary Clinton during the 2008 democratic primary. *Political Research Quarterly*. **64**(4), pp.884-896.

Van Dijk, T.A. 1995. Power and the news media. *Political Communication and action*. **6**(1), pp.9-36.

Van Dijk, T.A. 1998. Opinions and ideologies in the press. *Approaches to media discourse*. **21**(63), pp.1-33.

Vu, H.T., Guo, L. and McCombs, M.E. 2014. Exploring "the world outside and the pictures in our heads" A network agenda-setting study. *Journalism & mass communication quarterly*. **91**(4), pp.669-686.

Wagner, A., Trimble, L., Curtin, J., Auer, M. and Woodman, V.K.G. 2022. Representations of political leadership qualities in news coverage of Australian and Canadian Government leaders. *Politics & Gender*. **18**(3), pp.798-829.

Windsor, L. and Bowman, D. 2019. *Language in the 2016 US Presidential Election*. [Online]. The University of Memphis: [no publisher]. [Accessed 5 April 2023]. Available from:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335026044_Language_in_the_2016_US_Presidential_Election

Woolls, D. 2021. *CFL Lexical Feature Marker* (2021). [Accessed 10 February 2023].

Zhou, Z. 2022. February. Discourse Analysis: Media Bias and Linguistic Patterns on News Reports. In: *2021 International Conference on Education, Language and Art (ICELA 2021)*. [Online]. [no place]. Atlantis Press, pp.271-277. [Accessed 21 February 2023]. Available from: https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220131.049

8. Appendix

8.1. Abbreviations

R3:   A word that appears within three words to the right of the target word.

R1:   A word that appears within one word to the right of the target word.

L1:   A word that appears within one word to the left of the target word.

N-gram: A sequence of N (e.g., 2) words appearing together in a text.

<X>:   Used to indicate a naming convention.

X: A placeholder or filler word used to represent a variable or unknown element.

PREP: Preposition.

NOUN: Noun.