UNIVERSITY
OF TURKU

"Where did POTUS incite violence? Give me one quote."

Examining the role of social cognition in power abuse and in incitement to violence through critical discourse analysis

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Master's Thesis

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March 2022

Degree Programme, Department: Language Specialist Degree Programme, Department of English
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Title of the thesis "Where did POTUS incite violence? Give me one quote." Examining the role of social cognition in power abuse and in incitement to violence through critical discourse analysis
Number of pages: 60 pages, two appendices

Abstract

Manipulation, power abuse and incitement to violence in political discourse are not new phenomena as such. The introduction of social media platforms as tools for mass communication have, however, brought on unprecedented new challenges in restricting the spread of such phenomena. The main aim of this study was to understand how the invisible elements, or the socio-cognitive elements of discourse which imply manipulation and power abuse or worse yet, incitement to violence, can be identified, examined, and made more visible through critical discourse analysis. This study first introduced Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)as a field of study, and some of the central methodologies and theories within CDA. The focus in the theoretical background was to introduce the basics of the socio-cognitive approach to CDA and to introduce the theoretical framework specifically focusing on power abuse and manipulation. The research methodology is based on the theoretical framework created by Teun Van Dijk, but also utilizes the research from other experts in the field, such as Norman Fairclough and Paul Chilton, where relevant. The data consisted of a written transcript on the President Trump speech in Washington D.C on January 6, 2021. This study was biased in the sense that it did not seek to answer whether power abuse, manipulation and incitement to violence occurred in the January 6th speech, but rather focused on how to identify such elements in discourse and how to make them more visible. The study concluded with a discussion on the findings and to ensure a triangulated element was included, it also examined the societal impacts of the role of such socio-cognitive elements in power abuse and incitement to violence. When analyzed using Teun Van Dijk's theoretical framework, most, if not all of the socio-cognitive elements clearly indicating manipulation and abuse of power to incite the audience into violent action are present in President Trump's speech on January 6th. The discussion therefore also elaborated on such related issues as accountability, regulation, and the role of social media in political discourse aimed at power abuse and incitement to violence. It appears clear that linguistics and more specifically, critical discourse analysts could potentially offer a valuable, if not critical contribution to the ongoing discussion on such things as harmful content online and the related regulation. Moreover, critical discourse analysis could serve as the basis to raise more awareness and understanding on what constitutes as hate speech and manipulation for the wider public at large. These issues could also benefit from further research in linguistics, as well as in political sciences and in legal studies.

Key words: social cognition, manipulation, critical discourse analysis, power abuse

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1   Introduction

The 45th President of the United States, Donald Trump, has had a controversial political career since his initial election campaign in 2015. He is known for his less than typical political rhetoric, polarizing views and for refusing to denounce the extreme rights movements among his supporters. In fact, he has appeared to defend them and support them in for example, following the controversy from the Charlottesville attack in 2017 by a right-wing supremacist, which caused a young woman to lose her life. Following his election campaign for a second term as the US President, Donald Trump refused to acknowledge the election results indicating that the Democrat candidate Joe Biden had won the elections. Trump began a relentless social media campaign in which he repeatedly insisted the election results were "rigged" and that the elections were "stolen" from him and from his supporters. As a culmination point of this campaign, he convened a "Save America" rally in Washington D.C. on the same day when the US Congress was scheduled to convene to reconfirm the 2020 Presidential Results at the Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. As a result of the speech given by Trump, his supporters illegally invaded the Capitol Hill building, forcing the US Congress to interrupt the democratic process of reconfirming the election results. More than 100 law enforcement officers were injured in the attack, and five people lost their lives. The Trump supporters only ceased their invasion once he had made a statement in the media asking the crowds to withdraw from the building.

Following the attack, Trump and his supporters vehemently insisted he did not incite the audience into violence, or to attack the US Congress. One of them commented in Twitter by asking for a specific quote in which Trump incited violence. This comment is where the title for this study is derived from, as to me it seems to summarise the issue well; how to prove Trump incited violence and thus abused his power to interrupt the democratic proceedings of the US Congress, when technically speaking, a verbal command or instruction to do so was not given? This study therefore focuses on two specific research questions:

1. What kind of discursive strategies can be identified in the January 6th speech indicating a potential hidden agenda by President Trump?

2. What is the role of socio-cognitive elements in such obvious abuse of power and incitement to violence?

Reisigl and Wodak (2017, 94) define discursive strategies are defined as:

> "More or less accurate and more or less intentional plan of practices (including discursive practices) adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic aim."

Examining discursive strategies in the context of this study is important because discursive strategies are used in the process of manipulation intended to promote elements which are consistent with the presenter's own interests, and at the same time, down-play or hinder those elements which appear inconsistent with the presenter's interests. Any discursive strategy which may support the creation or the reactivation of the desired mental models, may therefore be utilised in the process of manipulation (Van Dijk 2006b, 368). Furthermore, focusing on discourse strategies instead of an in-depth grammatical analysis as the starting point makes sense also because identifying those variable structures which may indicate control by cognitive and social structures (Van Dijk 2013, 23), which serve as a foundation and a starting point for the consequent in-depth socio-cognitive analysis. To ensure the main focus of this study can be analysed in more detail, the identification and analysis relating to the discursive strategies is limited to those strategies for which the findings best support the consequent socio-cognitive analysis. Discursive strategies therefore act as initial linguistic indicators or clues for further analysis in this study. The second part of this study examines the results in further detail through the socio-cognitive lens, that is, by trying to identify how the speech, the surrounding society and the discursive elements used by Trump and his supporters impacted the way his audience interpreted, understood and ultimately, acted based on the messaging they received that day.

I will start the study by providing additional context for background on the US Politics and on Donald Trump's political career, including the 2020 US Presidential elections. I will then continue with an introduction of Critical Discourse Analysis as a field of linguistical study and will also elaborate on the theoretical frameworks most relevant for my study, that is, the socio-cognitive approach. I will mainly rely on the linguistic research and theoretical frameworks by Teun Van Dijk, but where relevant, I will also include elements from other linguistics researchers, such as Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak. I will then proceed in providing information on the data, or the data used, which in this case is the written transcript from the January 6th, 2021, speech by Donald Trump. I will then discuss the methodology, that is, how I will apply the relevant theoretical frameworks to first conduct an initial textual analysis to identify and analyse potentially arising patterns in Trump's use of discursive strategies. I will also touch on the initial research question in more detail at this point. Following the textual

analysis, I will continue the analysis with a more in-depth examination on the role and the impact of socio-cognitive elements from the January 6th speech.

To ensure an adequate triangulation (that is, an examination of the textual analysis in context with the surrounding society as well as with the discursive practises in the society) is provided as a requirement for a critical discourse analysis study, I will discuss the analysis results but also elaborate more widely on the societal and the political impact of these results in the Discussion chapter. I will also revisit the research questions to discuss what the potential findings from the study reveal on the initial questions I had for this study. Finally, I will summarise the main points from this study in the Conclusion chapter, where I will also present some ideas for further study as a result from the analysis.

2 General background

Manipulation, power abuse and incitement to violence in political discourse are not new phenomena as such. The introduction of social media platforms as tools for mass communication have, however, brought on unprecedented new challenges in restricting the spread of such phenomena. Regulation is hailed by many governments as a solution to restrict and minimise these challenges. At the same time, some of the political leaders themselves are increasingly leaning on populist rhetoric which does not, on the surface, seem to fulfil the formal criteria for "hate speech" or for "incitement" or in general, using language which does not seem to contain visible elements of manipulation, but which seems to do just that by appealing mostly to the extreme right audiences, sometimes resulting in extreme actions by the audience. Democracy is therefore facing an unprecedented risk in many countries across the globe, which is why this study focuses on how President Trump tried to not only dispute the democratic election results in the oldest democracy of the world, but also on how he abused his power to manipulate the American citizens into violently interrupting the democratic proceedings in the US Congress on January 6th, 2021.

Donald Trump initially announced his availability as the Republican Candidate in the 2016 Presidential Elections on June 15, 2015. His campaign slogan was "Make America Great Again", and the main theme in his political program focused on "putting America first." Following a successful campaign, Donald Trump became the 45th President of the United States for the 2016-2020 term. He took office after two terms by a Democrat President Barack Obama, who was also the first African-American President in the United States. Starting from the initial announcement in 2015, the views presented by President Trump, which continued unchanged during his first term as the US President, were very much focused on the continuous negative emphasis on the "other" and on his positive self-emphasis, resulting in what many view as an unprecedented polarisation of American politics and of the American society.

President Trump also ran a campaign as the Republican candidate for his second term in office. Following the voting day in the US in November 2020, the results from the elections indicated that Trump would lose the elections to the Democrat Candidate Joe Biden. In addition to challenging these results legally in courts on both state and on federal level, Trump simultaneously began a relentless campaign in social media to continuously repeat the message that he actually won the elections and that the elections were "rigged". His claims in social media were considered so far from the truth, that Twitter began to add their own disclaimer on

President Trump's tweets on the election results indicating that "the facts are being disputed". On January 6th, 2020, the US Congress and the Vice President were scheduled to convene to reconfirm the election results. President Trump, who had no formal role in the official procedures, announced he will be holding a venue of his own in Washington D.C. on the same day. What was initially a generic announcement in social media, later transformed into what Trump referred to as "Save America" rally. Formally, however, a more detailed agenda for his speech was not provided ahead of the venue. Consequently, as a culmination of his 2020 re-election campaign, President Donald Trump made a speech on January 6th, 2021, in Washington D.C, which resulted a violent incident at the Capitol Hill, in which several people were hurt and five people were killed, when following Trump's speech, the audience members invaded the Capitol Hill building, forcing Congress to pause the election results reconfirmation. Following the attack, the wider public and the media were calling President Trump out on inciting the violent attack; an accusation he and his supporters vehemently deny mostly based on the fact that he did not give a direct order for the attack on January 6th. In the following days since the Capitol Hill attach, the same trend seemed to continue in the online debate on whether the President did or did not incite the attack, and it seemed that even the well-established legal experts were having difficulty in articulating what exactly was it that constituted the incitement to violence in the President's speech, as technically speaking, he did not issue a direct verbal command for the attack during his speech on January 6th.

I am therefore keen to examine the speech transcript in more using critical discourse analysis to understand the role of social cognition in what appears as an obvious effort to manipulate the audience and to incite violence in an illegal and an undemocratic attempt to hold on to public office.

2.1 Melodrama in US Politics

When examining the political events in the US, it may be useful to understand some of the typical characteristics of political discourse in the US. As with any bipartite constitutional democracy, it is probably safe to say that the politics in the country is fundamentally based on "us and them", where the two parties, Republicans and Democrats, periodically compete for seats in the Congress, the US Senate and ultimately, for the position of the President of the United States. Much of the political rhetoric in the US is therefore traditionally based on the underlying notions of moral superiority between the two political parties, as well as certain levels of melodrama. Melodrama in this context is defined (Anker 2005, 23) as:

> "A discursive practise that makes truth and justice legible by demarcating a clear boundary between right and wrong."

Moreover, the primary assumption of melodrama is the promise (by the presenter) of dramatic events to reveal moral as wells as emotional truths through pathos and action (Anker 2005, 24). The use of melodrama in American political rhetoric is not a new thing, but has traditionally been used by Presidents to justify, for example, international action to protect the "American people", whose values are based on the protection of democracy and freedom. Anyone threatening America and the national identity of its' citizens therefore automatically becomes the enemy. This legitimization approach has been used for example by the Republican President George W. Bush to justify what he referred to as "the war on terrorism", and also by the Democrat President Barack Obama in legitimizing the US military action in Afghanistan in 2009 (Reyes 2011, 2). I therefore argue in this study that President Trump's tendency for melodrama and his continued emphasis on polarizing the American society into "us and them" for the sake of protecting the American national identity is not a new or a novel approach as such, but perhaps has just been re-directed from the traditional perspective onto a new one, in which both those trying to protect the American national identity and those trying to destroy it are, according to President Trump, in fact American citizens.

3   Theoretical background

In this chapter, I will introduce Critical Discourse Analysis as a specific field of study in more detail. I will also briefly introduce some of the main characteristics of political discourse analysis, as it is relevant in the context when studying a speech made be someone in public office. I will then provide a more in-depth introduction on the theoretical framework of socio-cognitive discourse analysis, with a specific focus on power abuse and manipulation.

3.1   Critical discourse analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides a theoretical framework and a method for analysing discourse and language from a critical social perspective. CDA seeks to explain, in addition to examining and explaining them, how the existing realities impact discourse, and how discourse impacts them. (Fairclough in Jørgensen and Phillips 2011, 6). An alternative definition for CDA is that includes theories and methods to enable empirical research on how discourse relates to social and cultural progess in different social fields ((Jørgensen and Phillips 2011, 2). One of the reasons I chose to use CDA for this study is that CDA typically focuses specifically on the relation between language and power, as it examines such areas as institutional, political, gender and media discourses to identify markers on the way power is present and how it is used – or abused (Wodak 2011, 2). CDA may also be defined as a field of study which focuses on analysing both the invisible and the visible structures and relationships of power and control in the use of language. In other words, CDA studies how social inequality is created or made visible by the language we use to communicate (Wodak 2011, 3). Therefore, CDA as a field of research does not only focus on spoken or written word. A study using CDA as a method also includes in it a theory and a description of the surrounding society and the societal circumstances which provide additional context for the language we use (Fairclough and Kress in Wodak 2011, 3). Moreover, while textual analysis is by its nature a typical element of CDA, it far from being the only element (Fairclough 2003, 3).

Fairclough bases his approach to CDA on Halliday's (1985) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), a method which seeks to go beyond the traditional, grammar-based textual analysis to examine the functions of discourse instead of grammar alone. Fairclough maintains that language is an inseparable part of social structure, and therefore a study on society must also connect in it a study on the way language is used (Fairclough 2003, 2). Similarly, a process of "triangulation" is used in CDA to ensure an unbiased representation of the research; by

triangulating for example, the initial textual analysis and the further, more detailed study of the discourse together with the surrounding socio-political context to fully consider the analysis from all perspectives, is an approach supported by many theorists in the field of CDA (Wodak and Meyer 2011, 15-16). This aspect is also critical for the purposes of this study, as understanding and examining President Trump's overall tendency to polarise the views and opinions of his audience and of the society at large, is important to analyse the impact of social cognition in the events which followed his speech on January 6th, 2021.

In addition to the different approaches in defining CDA as a field of study, differences also exist in the methodologies with which CDA is conducted as well as in the approaches to its theoretical framework (Jørgensen and Phillips 2011, 5). Despite these differences, it is generally agreed there are five common assumptions which can be attributed to the CDA as a field of study as a whole (Jørgensen and Phillips 2011, 2-5). These assumptions are:

1. Social practises and social identities are partly formed by discourse. In other words, they way text and speech are presented and received contribute to how social practises and group identities are formed.

2. Discourse both impacts social practise, but it also shaped by it. It is therefore in a dialectical relationship with other social dimensions.

3. CDA focuses on a holistic analysis of language use in social interaction, rather than on specific linguistic elements within a language in an isolated setting from the social interaction.

4. Based on the assumption that discourse contributes to the distribution of power between social groups, the research focus of CDA is therefore on how discourse is constructed, but also on how discourse is used to further advance the interests of specific social groups.

5. CDA is therefore not a neutral science as such but is aimed at revealing the invisible and unequal power structures in discourse to benefit the social groups being oppressed.

One of the most fundamental aspects of critical discourse analysis is to examine how discourse impacts on the creation, maintenance and changing social relations related to such things as power and dominance. Textual analysis should therefore be focused on identifying and examining the impact of discourse and text in the existing power relations (Fairclough

2003, 9). As this study focuses on trying to discover and to connect the underlying meaning and messaging of Trump's January 6th speech and the impact it had on the audience on the day, choosing CDA as the theoretical framework to support the study seemed logical.

Additionally, identifying underlying ideologies, that is, representations which contribute to the social relations mentioned above, is therefore a critical element of CDA. While ideologies will be discussed further in this study from socio-cognitive perspective, it is worth noting that a critical element in the study on ideologies is their potential tendency to become what Fairclough (2012, 100) refers to as "naturalized" ideology. Naturalization is a process by which an ideology becomes being perceived as "natural" or as "common sense". At such instance, ideologies cease being perceived as ideologies which can be attributed to a specific social agent, but more as the natural order of things which makes sense within a wider society (Fairclough 2012, 102). Based on the context provided in this study on the speech as well as the overall societal background, I argue that President Trump's long-lasting effort to naturalise such things as hate, mistrust, and xenophobia as the new values of American patriotism were partly to blame on the events which followed his speech on January 6th, 2021. In other words, this ideology already existed and fed onto the audience's understanding and interpretation of his message on January 6th, 2021 (See Figure 1).

3.2   Defining relevant discursive strategies

Fairclough (2003, 5) draws from Halliday's (1985) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) in his approach to CDA in which he examines both how language is structured and how it is used. Fairclough appears to favour a pragmatic approach, in which he first focuses on the social issue at hand. Once the initial assessment or an examination on the issue is completed, he suggests moving on to a structural analysis on the discourse content. As the next step, the analysis should then include an interactional analysis focusing on identifying linguistic features through an examination of discursive strategies used in the discourse. Examining relevant and arising patterns in the discursive strategies in the January 6th speech is a part of the overall analysis of this study. For the purposes of the theoretical framework, I will provide initial definitions of the relevant discursive strategies examined in this chapter to briefly introduce them.

Nomination strategies imply categorization of membership through, for example, deictic expressions using personal pronouns, spatial expressions, or temporal ones, such as "now" or "then". Predicative strategies on the other hand, typically focus on attributing certain criteria on social actors, either positive or negative ones. Predicative strategies include such

linguistic expressions such as collocations, allusions and hyperboles. Another discursive strategy in which deictic expressions may be used, is the perspectivization strategy, by which a speaker positions themself either by expressing distance or closeness to the issue at hand. Finally, intensification or mitigation strategies may be used to enforce the speaker's own point of view or alternatively, de-emphasize the opposing view. Such strategies may also involve the use of hyperboles, for example (Wodak, 2015, 8).

3.3   Analysing political discourse

When Donald Trump gave his speech on January 6th, 2021, he was the incumbent President of the United States. Therefore, as the data of this study consists of a political speech which is given by someone in a public office, it seems prudent to introduce some of the theoretical background on political discourse as a genre, and also briefly elaborate on the studies to analyse political discourse.

Politics, by its nature, can be viewed to essentially be about power struggles between political parties, or alternatively, about driving consensus across the political field to ensure progress on mutual interest topics (Chilton 2004, 3). What appears interesting is that while such interactions, very much focus on communication between parties, individual members and political players and their audience, the recognition of the role of discourse in politics and in political theory seems too often be overlooked both by academics researching in political theory, and by people working in politics (Chilton 2004, 4). On the other hand, Reyes (2011, 783) notes that political discourse by its nature implies that it is about political actors who engage in a public dialogue. This dialogue most often takes place in public forums and is most often premeditated, as the goal of such political engagements is typically focused on maintaining one's political control or power (ibid.) Politicians base their power on their status and role to introduce and to justify their goals as legitimate, and more typically, as shared goals between the presenter and their audience (Reyes 2011, 784).

Political discourse contains certain characteristics which may be visible in other genres as well, but which constitute a specific function in political discourse. Implied pragmatic meanings, or implicatures, are an example of such language use. By using implicatures, politicians can imply specific meanings without explicitly stating those out loud, and at the same time, also enforce group membership by using wording which may hold specific significance to certain social group members only (Chilton 2004, 35). Whether the audience then picks up on such things as implicatures, and if they do, how these are interpreted by the

recipients, depends not only on the cognitive processes related to discourse comprehension and understanding, but also on the recipients' own background knowledge and on their social and political values (Chilton 2004, 42). Interestingly, similarly to Van Dijk (see p. 18 of this study), Habermas (in Chilton 2004, 42) points out that "knowledge" in this context should not be regarded as a neutral representation of an objective world, but rather something which is realised through what Chilton refers to as "language determined by interests" (ibid.). The concept of "knowledge" is therefore particularly ambiguous in political rhetoric, where the word is often used more in connection to the beliefs of an individual politician or a party, rather than in reference to actual facts (Van Dijk 2011, 60).

Another important factor in understanding political discourse is examining the roles and relationships of the presenter and the recipients, that is, how the different social actors are positioned towards one another. Chilton (2004, 56) makes the following observation in defining the term "positioned" in this context:

> "The term 'positioned' can be understood as a spatial metaphor conceptualising the speaker's and/or hearer's relationship to their interlocutor(s), to their physical location, to the point in time of the ongoing utterance, and to where they are in the ongoing discourse."

Figure 1: Dimensions of deixis (Chilton 2004, 58)
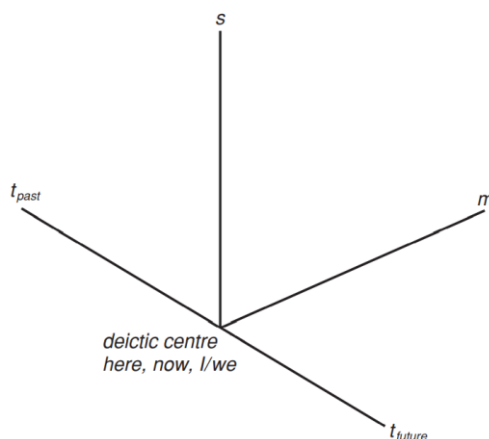
As illustrated in Figure 1, Chilton (2004, 58) suggests that all language users utilise a certain set of tools to "position" themselves and the discourse that is presented to them to further their understanding and interpretation of that discourse. In addition to the "Self" or the deictic centre, the additional dimensions include space (s), time (t) and modality (m). Space in this

scenario indicates how the presented or the recipient perceives themselves compared to the other social groups or agents included in the discourse. The "other" is usually in the extreme opposite end from the deictic centre. The distances here do not only include potential physical or geographic distances, but also the perceived social distances. (ibid.) Time, as the name suggests, refers to temporal settings, whereas the "now" is related to the deictic centre – the past and the future can imply distance but can also be presented as immediate in terms of what happens next or what happened before. Time as a positioned dimension is often strategically important in political discourse to enforce national ideologies and to justify present policy (based on future benefit or past threat) Chilton 2004, 59). Finally, the modality (m) scale, stands essentially to demonstrate the moral justification or the rightness of the presenter and the discourse, as by default, the "other" at the far end of the scale spatially, is by default also considered to be "wrong" in the modality axis. Positioning between the positive "Self" and the negative "Other" to signify group membership has a long tradition in political discourse (Van Dijk, 1993a, 51-52). Finally, while specific instances of "deontic meaning", that is, the meanings by which the presenter demonstrates their beliefs, values as well as power and authority to the recipients (Saeed in Chilton 2004, 59), can only be interpreted on the basis of the recipients' social knowledge, linguists have been able to draw from certain common elements present in deontic modality. Such elements are most commonly present in modal verbs, although they can be included in other expressions as well (Chilton 2004, 60).

As indicated earlier in this chapter, politics and political discourse are to a large extent, focusing on power – on the preservation of power, the gaining of more power, the power others may possess or at word, the power which others may abuse. For the purposes of this study, given the main focus is on the role of social cognition in the abuse of power and incitement to violence, I will heavily draw from the theoretical framework of a distinguished CDA researcher Teun Van Dijk focusing on these very aspects in their approach.

3.4   Discourse and the role of social cognition

The main principle of the socio-cognitive approach in critical discourse analysis is the assumption that the interlinkages between discourse structures and societal structures are mediated cognitively. In other words, how discourse is understood and interpreted depends on the underlying mental model structures which are further enhanced with the overall existing social attitudes and ideologies (Van Dijk 2013, 26). Drawing direct, causal connections between societal structures and discourse structures is therefore not possible, because they lack the

meditation of the mental representation of the presenters and the recipients alike (Van Dijk 2013, 1).

Understanding and interpreting discourse can take place on two levels, on a global level and on a local level (Van Dijk 2013, 25). Semantic macrostructures, or discursive topics, assumably, dictate the general coherence of discourse. However, semantic macrostructures of text, as well as the temporal and causal relations which define mental models, are not necessarily explicitly stated, or expressed. Instead, these implicit meanings can support the formulation of the mental situation models of the audience or the reader, and thus represent the actual meaning which are later best recalled by the recipients. (Van Dijk 2013, 24). The socio-cognitive approach therefore recognises that the same discourse can be received in various manners, depending on the mental models, the attitudes and the underlying ideologies of the recipients related to the issues being discussed (Van Dijk 2013, 17). The analytic focus is therefore not directed at grammatical structures of language as such, but rather on the interchanging structures of language which are maintained by cognitive and social structures (Van Dijk 2013, 23).

Despite the extensive research, no formal theory exists on how mental models are organised internally, that is, what their hierarchical structure looks like (Van Dijk in Stamenov 1997, 191). For the purposes of this study, Figure 2 is an attempt to visualise the cognitive processes in discourse understanding, as well as how the different elements in the process are interconnected and therefore, mutually dependent.
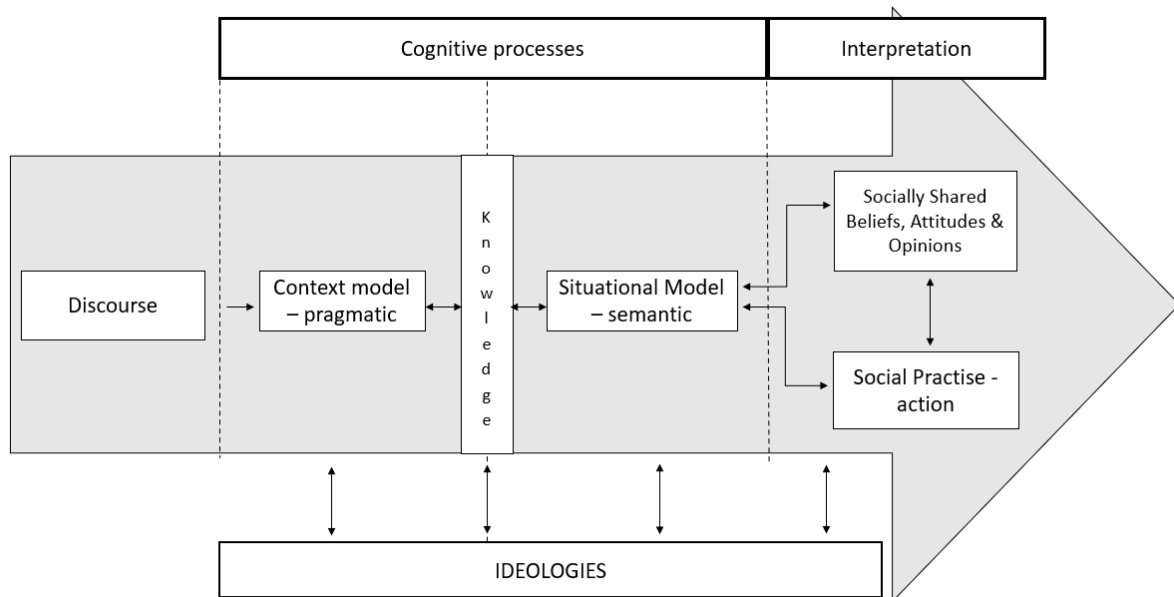
Figure 2: Cognitive processes in discourse processing

As illustrated in Figure 2 above, discourse processing and understanding requires – and is dependent on – a series of cognitive processes. The recipients utilise the pre-existing socially shared knowledge they have as a social group on the issues at hand. While mental models are personal and subjective, socially shared knowledge, which controls the construction of specific models and therefore also the production and understanding of discourse, is usually shared within a social group. Socially shared knowledge is typically considered presupposed information, because it is acquired and shared by all competent members of the group (Van Dijk 2013, 122). It is also worth noting, that in this context, that is, the social group context, knowledge does not necessarily equal to "knowledge" as universally understood for an individual. What this is means is that "knowledge" in a social group context does not equal, for example, knowledge gained from similar field of education of the group members, but as something equalling more as an abstract and an idealised shared belief within the group (ibid.).

Referring back to Figure 2 on the cognitive processes, mental models utilise socially shared knowledge, and can therefore also be impacted by the potentially present social group bias (ibid.) Context models form the pragmatic mental models to ensure participants understand the social parameters of the specific discourse, including roles, participants and their relationships, the spatiotemporal setting and so on, and are able to thereby adapt and control the discourse accordingly (Van Dijk 2009, 73). Context models therefore define such things as correct genres as well as the appropriate styles for the discourse in a given situation, and are,

by their nature, continuously ongoing processes in the working memory during a discursive event to adapt to the potentially changing circumstances (Van Dijk 2009, 74). Moreover, context models rely heavily on the knowledge the language users or the presenters have on the knowledge of the recipient group. Understanding this element enables the presenter to make assumptions or to presuppose what constitutes as the participants' common ground, and which thus further supports the formation of such forms of shared social cognition elements as attitudes, which create the basis of how a social group and its' members express opinions about themselves and others (Van Dijk 2009, 78).

In terms of coherence, discourse can only be perceived as coherent for the recipient if it resonates to the recipient's mental models of events and situations. These connections are subjective interpretations of situational models, and as such, they are semantic mental models rather than pragmatic. (Van Dijk 2009, 76). These semantic situational models also contribute to providing meaning to the implicit meanings of discourse; they do this even when the implicit reference is not present in the semantic representation of a specific discourse event. Such presuppositions can impact the recipient's interpretation even when not stated out loud during a specific discourse. The semantic situational models provide some explanation to why different social groups and recipients may have a very different understanding not only on a specific event, but also different interpretations on the discourse provided in that event (Van Dijk 2009, 78).

The socio-cognitive approach focuses, as the name suggests, in studying cognitive elements of discourse on societal level, instead of focusing on individual participant's minds. Nonetheless, understanding the mental models described above remain relevant in this field because they make up the interface between the individual members and their specific social groups. In other words, such social representations as beliefs, values and norms of a social group may impact the personal beliefs and values of an individual group member, and on the other hand, if the personal beliefs and values of a powerful group member are shared by other group members, these beliefs and values can become socially shared attitudes about specific issues (ibid.) Such attitudes will in turn define how the social group perceives itself compared to others outside the group, and will also form the basis of social practise of the group, that is, the way the group reacts to specific issues. In this context, it is important to distinguish attitudes from opinions; while the latter is typically an individual trait, attitudes are based on shared social cognition. (Van Dijk 2013, 11). Once formed, the socially shared beliefs, values and attitudes will then directly impact or generate the actions of the social group, that is, the social

practise of a group (ibid.). Equally importantly, such socially shared representations, when organised and controlled by their group members to construct a group identity, can in turn become formal ideologies for the group. Ideologies represent a more fundamental system by which the group not only identifies itself with, but which it also uses to organise and control the shared attitudes and beliefs of the group. Ideologies typically take a longer time to be established, but when created, they also serve as the group's cognitive functions to provide an ideologically coherent approach to the beliefs of a group and on how the group applies these beliefs in different situations (Van Dijk 2006, 116).

The main focus in the socio-cognitive approach in critical discourse analysis is its focus on the analysis of power and of power abuse. Power insinuates control, and such control may be obtained by action or by cognition (Van Dijk 1993, 254). Socio-cognitive CDA therefore focuses on examining discursive strategies which legitimate control or which, apart from direct and visible manipulation, aim at creating dominance by using standard, everyday forms of discourse to make it appear the discrimination presented is the natural order of things (ibid.). Unlike some other fields of CDA, the socio-cognitive approach assumes the question of power always involves the abuse of power (Jørgensen and Phillips 2011, 27). As the main focus of this study is to examine how power abuse and incitement to violence can occur in a discourse even when not explicitly stated, the examination of the invisible elements and social cognition in discourse production and understanding make Van Dijk's overall theoretical approach a critical element of this study.

3.4.1 Discourse and manipulation

Manipulation as a mental model implies social power abuse which is achieved by both cognitive mind control and by discursive action (Van Dijk 2006b, 359). As a cognitive function, manipulation requires the processing of information in the Short-Term Memory to provide meaning for such things as words, sentences and non-verbal signals (ibid). One way of manipulating the recipients' Short-Term Memory can involve alternating written text by for example using capitalisation and exclamation marks repeatedly to indicate urgency of the message content. However, such stylistic choices may be used for editorial or space reasons as well, so alone these do not necessarily signal manipulation. In fact, manipulating the recipients' Long-Term Memory instead the Short-Term Memory usually results in more permanent results. The Long-Term Memory part is where an individuals' knowledge, attitudes and ideologies are formed and stored, which also includes how a person remembers communicative events

afterwards once the communicative event is combined with the person's opinions and emotions involved with the subject matter. Mental models therefore determine how the recipients understand the communicative event, in addition to individual words and texts. From the manipulator's perspective, it is critical that the presenter is able to control how the mental models of the recipients are formed to ensure the recipients' reaction to the discourse presented meets the needs of the presenter, that is, the manipulator (Van Dijk 2006b, 365-367).

Personal cognition differs from social cognition. Manipulation efforts can therefore also focus on either one. Depending on the needs of the presenter, the socially shared attitudes and opinions can be more powerful than the mental models of an individual, which is why the general goal of manipulation is typically aimed at controlling the attitudes and opinions of a social group, rather than those an individual. Furthermore, social cognition tends be more permanent than the individual one. (Van Dijk, 2006b, 368-369).

Certain discursive strategies are typically involved in the creation of socially shared beliefs. One such strategy is 'generalisation', where specific, individual mental models of a specific event is presented in a way which results in this mental model to be become a more general, socially shared mental model aim at more abstract issues rather than at an isolated event. Such manipulation usually involves repeated references to a specific event, or making a series of references of related events, indicating these are interconnected for the same reasons. In such instances, the alleged benefits of a group, or "all of us" are usually emphasized, whereas the actual aims of the presenter may be de-emphasized, or even denied. A crucial indicator in the identification of manipulation of social cognition is that the recipients are made to believe that the overall goal or action is targeted to benefit the recipients as a whole, and not the presenter alone (Van Dijk 2006b, 370). The manner with which Trump utilizes discourse in a polarised way in his speech to represent the positive attitudes and ideologies of the "Self" or one's own social group, while systematically emphasizing the negative traits of the "other", that is, those outside the social group, is also another strategy which is often utilised in the effort to impact social cognition (Van Dijk, 2013, 16). Approaching the overall group membership views from the perspective that one's own group, or the "self" is the good and the positive one, while everyone outside the group, or the "other", is inherently and by default bad and negative, can impact an individual's cognition in a very powerful way, creating prejudice and affect the overall attitudes and opinions of an individual and consequently, of a group (Baider and Kopytowska, 2017, 135-136.)

Critical knowledge can perhaps be viewed as the enemy of manipulation, as it is construed as the most efficient tool in resisting being manipulated. Those trying to manipulate others will therefore typically try to restrict access to information which supports the overall building of critical knowledge, while at the same time trying to focus attention on information which maybe misguided or false, but which supports the dominant groups' own goals. In addition to such misleading efforts, other attempts to de-emphasize potentially relevant discourse may be involved, by, for example, the use of euphemisms or implicitness (Van Dijk 2006b, 371).

Manipulation also differs from the so-called "legitimate" methods for mind control, such as persuasion or information sharing. The main difference between these methods is that with the legitimate forms, recipients or the audience remain free to make up their own minds and form opinions without any consequences, whereas with manipulation, the recipients or the audience are required to "buy-in" or support the presenter based on the information provided solely by the presenter, or otherwise risk exclusion from the group or face other potentially negative consequences (Van Dijk 2006b, 361). Manipulation always signifies domination, and as such it also controls not only of the beliefs of the recipients, but indirectly also of their potential actions based on their manipulated – and therefore potentially – false beliefs (Van Dijk 2006b, 362). For someone aiming at dominating others, they must usually possess certain characteristics. These are, for example, that these persons must be in a certain authoritative position over the recipients and through their role, have access to public discourse (ibid.). As the President of The United States, Trump definitely fulfilled these criteria at the time he delivered his speech on January 6th, 2021.

Together with cognition, discourse also plays a role in the process of manipulation. The overall strategy of presenting oneself in a positive light, while presenting others in a negative light, is a typical example of potentially manipulative discourse. As such, this strategy can manifest itself on different levels of discourse; it can be present in the use of speech acts, lexicalisation, syntax or semantic macrostructures, for example (Van Dijk 2006b, 373). Dominant groups may also utilise referencing authoritative sources to emphasize reliability of relevant information, or knowingly engage or appeal to emotions by using dramatic wording or hyperboles (Van Dijk 2006b, 376).

In addition to identifying specific characteristics of manipulation strategies, certain criteria can also be assigned to those deemed most at risk of being particularly receptive to

manipulation. Such criteria can include, for example, the recipients possessing only partial or none of the relevant knowledge on the issues at hand, and equally, if the recipients are in a societal position which makes them particularly susceptible into accepting the messaging of those in a more authoritative role as factual truth (Van Dijk 2006b, 375).

Manipulation therefore requires a particular focus on such relevant cognitive and social characteristics to prepare the recipients for receiving and accepting the manipulative messaging. For manipulation to succeed, the dominant groups must therefore first ensure the recipients' mental models of the relevant issues are constructed in a way which makes the recipients accept the manipulative discourse without criticism and which therefore also makes them act accordingly (ibid.).

As discussed in the earlier in this study, given that the main focus of this study is on social cognition, I will be drawing mainly from Van Dijk's theoretical framework for the analysis, but will also utilise other theorists' studies as well in the analysis where relevant and appropriate. In the next chapter, I will elaborate on the data and the actual method for the analysis in more detail.

4 Data and methods

In this chapter I will introduce the data and the methods for my research in more detail. The data will be discussed first, after which the two methods used to first conduct the initial textual analysis and the more in-depth analysis on the socio-cognitive elements will be introduced in more detail.

4.1 Data

The data of this study consists of the written transcript of the speech given by President Donald Trump on January 6th, 2021, in Washington, D.C. The speech was televised across the world, and while recordings of the televised version exist, this research focuses on the written transcript of the speech, available in several locations on the internet. I am using a version published by the CNN (n.d.), a well-known and internationally established media organisation. As for the example tweets in the background section of the Analysis, I am using an online archive, (Trump Twitter Archive, n.d.) for the reason that following the events on January 6th, Twitter banned President Trump from the social media platform and prevented public access to his tweets.

The reason why I chose to study this speech is many-fold; as the consequent violent actions by the audience are well known across the globe; following the speech, the audience members unlawfully enforced their way in the Capitol building, and by doing so, they interrupted the democratic proceedings of the United States Congress to certify the Electoral vote recertification in the 2020 US Presidential Elections. As a result of the invasion, five individuals lost their lives, and more than a hundred law enforcement officers were injured in the attack (Reuters, n.d.). This speech therefore serves as an interesting study on how it is possible for someone seeking to abuse their power to manipulate their audience by inciting hate and violence using indirect and invisible forms of discourse.

The actual speech lasted 70 minutes and 52 seconds. The CNN transcript, when transferred onto Word format from the original PDF, contains 10, 936 words and is 28 pages long. I recognise that using a text transcript of a televised speech may result in losing some of potential semiotic elements from the analysis, however I have chosen to limit the study to the textual source to make the scope more appropriate for an MA Thesis.

As for any ethical issues, given the speeches of President Trump are public property in the sense that standard privacy regulation does not apply to anyone speaking in their formal capacity in public office. I therefore do not anticipate any immediate ethical issues in using this material. Furthermore, I will naturally apply the standard reference and transparency principles in all relevant materials for traceability according to good academic practise.

4.2 Methods

The research questions I have set out to clarify in this study are:

1. What kind of discursive strategies can be identified in the January 6th speech indicating a potential hidden agenda by President Trump?

2. What is the role of socio-cognitive elements in such obvious abuse of power and incitement to violence?

As indicated above, the data consists of a textual transcript of a spoken speech, which is why was at times difficult to try to apply very specific rules or principles typically present in written texts originally created for the purpose of written narrative. Also, President Trump does not appear to apply any of the typical elements for rational disputes or constructive arguing (van Eemeren and Grootendorst in Reisigl and Wodak, 2017, 102) in his speech. In fact, in various instances he does not even seem to use complete sentences, but instead he seems to resort to minimal utterances only.

I will first provide background information before the actual analysis to support the discourse analysis from a societal perspective, that is, to position the speech and the content in a wider societal and political context. The societal and political aspects are important to fully understand the impact of social cognition in discourse production and interpretation, and furthermore, they also add the required third layer in what is known as "triangulation" to close the full analysis. For this I have also examined tweets published by Donald Trump in the effort to understand how and at which point his campaign messaging changed from what appears more as a standard campaigning onto full on accusations of fraudulent elections and disputing the election results altogether. These initial stages are important to form a basis to understand the relevant mental models and the presupposed knowledge and ideologies of both the presenter and the recipients for the January 6th speech. In the consequent textual analysis, I will draw from both Van Dijk and Fairclough to examine the semantic macrostructures of the speech, as

well as trying to identify any discursive strategies which can potentially reveal hidden or underlying agendas which can impact the recipients' mental models.

As the next step, I have identified the relevant discursive strategies through examining their potential worth in terms of Trump appearing to manipulate his audiences, that is, if it appeared there is a pattern in his use of a discursive strategy which can potentially signify a hidden agenda or an attempt to manipulation, I have included these in the study. For example, I examine the use of collocations (predication), personal pronouns to signify either nomination or membership, but will also discuss deictic expressions in connection with perspectivization, that is, how Trump positions himself and his speech in the context and the action he requires from the audience. In addition to discursive strategies, I will also briefly examine Trump's use of perlocutionary and illocutionary speech acts to identify any existing patterns in his wording to either try to impact the reader to do something (by using perlocutionary speech acts) or to inform them (by using illocutionary speech acts) (Austin in Kissine, 2013). Where relevant, I will also examine genre as it relates to political discourse introduced earlier in this study.

4.2.1 Identifying socio-cognitive elements

Following the initial textual analysis on macrolevel and to identify patterns in the use of discursive strategies, I will focus on the social cognition aspect of this analysis. The main socio-cognitive elements I will focus on in this study are manipulation and mental models. Manipulation, as a cognitive process, interferes with an individual's understanding of the topic, and can therefore support the formation of biased mental models and impact an individual's levels of knowledge and the formation of ideological beliefs (Van Dijk 2006b, 359). Mental models, on the other hand, are our memories of communicative events which are stored in the episodic long-term memory of the brain. Mental models act as the basis of future learning, as well as the formation of attitudes and ideologies (Van Dijk 2006b, 367). For the purposes of this study, I will focus on examining context models and situational models related to social cognition (instead of personal or individual cognition). Based on this examination, I will re-evaluate and if required, re-produce the discursive topics of the Trump speech based on mental modelling to draw attention to the potentially invisible elements on the messaging. Such discursive strategies as persuasion and information sharing are close to manipulation and also typically present in political discourse. Therefore, for this part of the study I will also draw from Chilton's (2004) theories on political discourse where relevant in, for example, examining such things as the deictic positioning of the January 6th speech.

5   Analysis

In this chapter, I will present the analysis on the data based on the theoretical background presented earlier. I start by providing a very brief additional summary on the background for context to support the analysis and will then continue analyzing the data through textual analysis to identify and to examine the discursive strategies involved. I will then continue the analysis by drawing from Van Dijk's theoretical framework on the elements of social cognition and manipulation, and more importantly, how these relate to meaning making in discourse to examine the role of these elements in President Trump's speech on January 6th to understand how it is possible to manipulate an audience into action by inciting hate and violence without using visible, explicit wording for such things.

5.1   Textual analysis and discursive strategies

The speech by President Trump on January 6th, 2021, was a culmination of his 2020 Presidential Re-Election Campaign. The date for the speech was deliberately chosen as it coincides with the US Congress ratifying the 2020 Presidential Election results together with the Vice President.

To understand when and how the presidential campaign by President Trump took a turn towards him beginning to dispute the results of the presidential elections altogether, I reviewed his tweets backwards from January 6th, 2021, until I was able to discover the beginning of the more systematic election fraud claims from him. Typical of the US Election bi-party system, before the November 2020 voting day, Trump mainly focused on attacking his opponent and promoting himself in social media:

> (1) "Joe Biden is the candidate of rioters, looters, arsonists, gun-grabbers, flag-burners, Marxists, lobbyists, and special interests. I am the candidate of farmers, factory workers, police officers, and hard-working, law-abiding patriots of every race, religion and creed! #MAGA" (Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) November 1, 2020)

However, towards the end of the campaign, once the voting results started being announced from individual states, President Trump utilized social media in a frequent and repeated messaging; according to him, the election results were "rigged", and he did not lose the elections (Examples 2-4).

(2) "We are up BIG, but **they are trying to STEAL the Election**. We will never let them do it. Votes cannot be cast after the Polls are closed!" (Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) November 4, 2020)

(3) "We won't let a **RIGGED ELECTION steal our Country**!" (Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) November 15, 2020)

(4) "**GREATEST ELECTION FRAUD** IN THE HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY!!!" (Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) December 20, 2020)

In addition to social media messaging, the Trump campaign team consequently went through a series of public legal appeals in the so-called "swing states" in the effort to legally dispute the elections results on state level, only to be followed with an escalation to the country's Supreme Court as the last resort. The Supreme Court refused to consider the possibility of election fraud due to lack of any evidence of fraud. Even though overturning the election results though the legal appeal process was unsuccessful on both state and federal level, Trump refused to concede and acknowledge the election results, declaring Joe Biden as the winner. Towards the end of December 2020, President Trump started promoting the January 6th venue in social media, while also continuing to repeat the messaging on fraudulent election results:

(5) "See you in Washington, DC, on January 6th. Don't miss it. Information to follow!" (Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) December 27, 2020)

(6) "JANUARY SIXTH, SEE YOU IN DC!" (Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) December 30, 2020)

(7) "The **BIG Protest Rally** in Washington, D.C., will take place at 11.00 A.M. on January 6th. Locational details to follow. **StopTheSteal!**" (Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) January 1, 2020)

(8) "**Washington is being inundated with people who don't want to see an election victory stolen by emboldened Radical Left Democrats. Our Country has had enough, they won't take it anymore! We hear you (and love you) from the Oval Office**. MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!" (Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) January 5th, 2020)

The speech on January 6th is therefore a culmination point in an aggressive social media campaign to question the election results, after the legal appeals have failed to overturn the results due to lack of evidence. The messages promoting the venue in social media were directed at the Trump supporters (see examples 5-8), which is why the assumption is the audience on

the 6th in D.C. consisted mainly of those Republican Trump supporters passionate enough to arrive in D.C. in person on the day, although the speech was also televised and live streamed online on global news media such as the CNN, as any such public speeches by the incumbent President of the United States assumedly would be. When examining the participant positions and roles, President Trump was therefore addressing the audience both in his capacity as the current President of the country, but also as the Republican Presidential candidate in the 2020 Presidential Elections.

The location of the January 6th venue, the National Mall in DC, is described (US National Park Service, n.d.) as:

> "For more than 200 years, the National Mall has symbolized our nation and its democratic values, which have inspired the world. The National Mall - the great swath of green in the middle of our capital city and stretching from the foot of the United States Capitol to the Potomac River - is the premiere civic and symbolic space in our nation."

The location is therefore significant for Trump's what can only assumed to be a predominantly American supporters on ground. Choosing this location for the speech most likely also allowed for more flexibility in terms of messaging than the official residence of the US President, the White House, thus enabling Trump to appear to approach his audience more from the perspective of being one of them, a concerned fellow citizen, and a patriot, rather than the incumbent President of the United States.

> (9) "**We're** gathered together **in the heart of our nation's capital** for one very, very basic and simple reason: **to save our democracy.**" (Lines 80-81).

> (10) "**We** have a deep and enduring love for America in **our** hearts. **We** love **our** country." (Lines 677-678).

> (11) **We're** going to try and give **our** Republicans, the weak ones, because the strong ones don't need any of **our** help, we're going to try and give them the kind of pride and boldness they need to take back **our** country." (Lines 692-695).

When examining group membership and nomination, Trump appears to be positioning of himself as just one of the participants (See Examples 9-11), which is interesting also because his role as the President provides him unique global access and authority over public audiences compared to ordinary citizens, that is, as the President he enjoys privileged access to political discourse and related communication, thus enforcing his direct connection to the social resources that form the very basis of dominance and power (Van Dijk 1993, 255). Furthermore,

he appears to utilize the first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives in positioning himself together with the audience and his supporters to present himself as a fellow citizen concerned of America's future (See Examples 9-11) – therefore also indirectly hiding his own agency and ulterior motive as the candidate standing to lose the presidential elections. I will analyze Trump's use of personal deixis as a discursive strategy in more detail in the next chapter.

As for genre, this speech represents political discourse as it is a speech given by a presidential candidate as well as the incumbent President to his audience. As a political speech it is non-mediated as there is only one person giving the speech to his audience at the time in front of a live audience and through live streaming. Furthermore, the speech is one-way in the sense that while the audience may signal its reactions through such things as applauds, there is no turn-taking in the form of verbal discourse, that is, this is not a dialogue in terms of multiple speakers taking turns.

In the below examples (12-13), Trump begins his speech by recognizing the number of participants at the event, while also insinuating the law enforcement is there to support him:

(12) "**The media will not show the magnitude of this crowd**. Even I, when I turned on today, I looked, and I saw thousands of people here, but you don't see hundreds of thousands of people behind you because they don't want to show that. **We have hundreds of thousands of people here,** and I just want them to be recognized by the fake news media." (Lines 1-4)

(13) "And I'd love to have, if those tens of thousands of people would be allowed, **the military, the Secret Service, and we want to thank you, and the police, law enforcement. Great. You're doing a great job. But I'd love it if they could be allowed to come up here with us**." (Lines 42-44).

Trump therefore implies his concerns for the future of the US democracy are shared by not only his numerous voters (Examples 12-13), but also by the authorities present in the audience (Example 13) – therefore appearing to make the speech and his message more legitimate especially to the audience who was watching the speech online by indicating that his claims are also supported by the law enforcement and the military. Additionally, he also seems to acknowledge the online viewers by implying that it will be futile to rely on media reports on the size of the audience, but that they should rather focus on what he is saying instead of the media reports on the venue (Example 12).

Enforcing the positive "self" while emphasizing the negative "other" is not a unique strategy limited to this speech but has been the standard approach for Trump from his initial

announcement on his availability to become the Republican candidate in the US Presidential Elections (The Guardian, 2015).

(14) "**You** will have an **illegitimate** president." (Lines 385-386)

(15) "**We** won't have a country if it happens." (Line 476)

(16) "**We fight like hell and if you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country anymore**." (Lines 685-686)

(17) "Democrats attempted **the most brazen and outrageous** election theft. **There's never been anything like this."** (Lines 116-117)

Trump appears to be utilizing these pre-existing negative attitudes during the January 6th speech to not only maintain the current attitudes but also to enforce new ones to promote action from the audience (Examples 14-16). Examples 14-16 also serve as examples on a strategy by which Trump tries to discredit the election results by extensively emphasizing the threat of such a win to his audience, that is, to the Republican supporters and to the country as whole. Van Dijk suggests that (1993, 264), statements such as these typically require further strategies to enforce credibility. Such additional strategies include, for example, the use of hyperbolic argumentative statements of the "their" negative actions, as also indicated in examples 14-17 above. In terms of deictic expressions and membership categorization, examples 14-16 also provide insights onto the way Trump seems to position himself when compared to the audience; he is a part of the group which will suffer the anticipated dire consequences should the audience not act (Example 15), but on the other hand, he appears to declare that it is the audience who will have "an illegitimate president" (Example 14), unless the audience "fights like hell" (Example 16). He is also utilizing rather strong intensification and hyperboles to argue the Democrats stole the elections (Example 17).

(18) "**I helped them get elected. I helped** Mitch [McConnell] get elected. I helped -- I could name 24 of them, let's say. I won't bore you with it, and then all of a sudden you have something like this." (lines 96-98)

(19) "You know, look, I'm not happy with the Supreme Court. They love to rule against me. I picked three people. **I fought like hell for them, one in particular I fought**. They all said, "Sir, cut him loose. He's killing us." The senators, you know, very loyal senators. They're very loyal people. "Sir, cut him loose. He's killing us, sir. Cut him loose, sir." I must've gotten half of the senators**. I said, "No, I can't do that. It's unfair to him. And it's unfair to the family. He didn't do anything wrong."** (lines 292-297).

Another potential persuasion strategy includes storytelling, that is, indicating such negative experiences have been experienced personally, and providing seemingly plausible evidence in support of the story (ibid.), see examples 18-19.

Moreover, lexical style can also serve as one of the strategies used to enforce credibility by choosing to use specific wording to focus on the negative "other" or the positive "self" (Van Dijk 1993, 264). When discussing himself or his supporters, Trump uses such positive (and potentially hyperbolic) predicative attributes as "great", "amazing", "fighter", "strong", "wonderful" but when discussing any other social actor such as the Democrats, the tech sector or the media, he tends to favor such attributes as "weak", "bad", "fake", "emboldened". Furthermore, Trump's lexical style in general appears to be a part of his brand, that is, that is he is not a career politician but someone who wants to be known as "street wise" and outspoken. His register therefore appears informal and conversational (See Examples 18-19). Such a style, that is, the apparent chattiness, can signal an effort to simulate a communicative interaction to enforce a more strategic purpose for the communication. (Fairclough 2003, 72). Trump also seems to follow a consistent pattern in his use of collocations:

> (20) "The media is the biggest problem we have, as far as I'm concerned, single biggest problem -- **the fake news and the big tech**." (Lines 9-10)

> (21) "The **radical left** knows exactly what they're doing. They're ruthless and it's time that somebody did something about it." (Lines 490-491)

> (22) "The **weak Republicans**, they're pathetic Republicans and that's what happens." (Lines 99-100)

During his time in public office, Trump appears to have coined a host of collocations which he has used repeatedly over the years, so much so that some of them seem to have become standard wording in the English language. Perhaps the most often used are the ones such as "fake news", "big tech", "Radical Left" and "weak Republicans" (See Examples 20-22). Such collocations are all used in connection and in relation to his opponents, or the "other" in the speech, and not in connection of his supporters, or the positive "self".

The way Trump uses speech acts to further underpin his agenda was particularly revealing in this study. I have presented some of the results in the table below:

Table 1: The use of perlocutionary and illocutionary speech acts

Illocutionary speech acts (Trump and his supporters)	Perlocutionary speech acts (Trump's [perceived] opponents)
I **won** them [elections] both.	**Suppresses** speech. **Suppresses** thought. (Media)
We **did not lose**.	Wants to **deceive** you**, demoralize** you and **control** you. (Media)
We **are not going to let it happen**.	Are going **to abuse their power** and **interfere** with our elections (Big tech).
We **are going to let you know** who they are.	**Stolen** our election victory (Democrats)
We **look at the facts**	**Chipped away** our jobs and **threw open** our borders (Policies enacted by the Democrats).
We **have come to demand** that Congress does the right thing.	They **defrauded** us out of a win in Georgia (Democrats)
We **have the truth and justice** on our side.	They **want to rip off** our country (Immigrants).

When examining these two categories of speech acts in the speech, Trump appears more or less consistent in referring to himself and to his supporters and their actions (the positive "self") using illocutionary speech acts, whereas when describing the acts of his opponents (the negative "other"), he seems to revert to perlocutionary speech acts. As a discursive strategy, Trump's consistency in using perlocutionary acts when discussing his opponents strongly suggests an agenda, and in the context of this specific speech, an agenda directed at his audience to evoke an emotional reaction [and to act accordingly]. At the same time, his use of illocutionary acts to enforce the positive "self" seems well aligned with the definition for the illocutionary speech act, that is, that they are *"pronouncements from the self to the world."*

The role and potential significance of identifying agency in the speech will be elaborated further in the next chapter, but the data on the use of the word "they" and how it is referred to in the speech is perhaps worth noting already at this point:

Table 2: Indicating agency to "they" in the speech

Overall instances of the reference of "they" in the data:	245
Agency for "they" identified	117
Agency for "they" unclear or not identified	128

In addition to the fact that in more than 50% of the instances in the use of the deictic "they" the agency or the reference to who it is Trump is actually referring to, remains hidden or unclear (See Examples 23-26) the perspectivization effort as a discursive strategy is clearly

visible in Trump's use of the word "they" to distance himself and his audience from the negative "other":

> (23) "**They** came from all over the world, actually, but **they** came from all over our country. I just really want to see what **they** do." **[Reference unclear – the audience, the media?]** (Lines 7-8)

> (24) "**Big tech** is now coming into **their** own. **[Reference clear]** We beat **them** four years ago. We surprised **them**. We took **them** by surprise and this year, **they** rigged an election. **They** rigged it like **they've** never rigged an election before." **[Reference unclear – big tech?]** (Lines 11-13)

> (25) "**They'll** knock out Lincoln too, by the way." **[Reference unclear]** (Line 74)

> (26) "But now **the caravans, they** think Biden's getting in, the caravans are forming again. **They** want to come in again and rip off our country." **[Reference unclear – the caravans? Immigrants?]** (Lines 675-676)

Although hidden or unclear in most cases, the social actors Trump refers to rather consistently with the use of "they" in the data, when identified, refer to the following social actors:

> (27) **The media** will not show the magnitude of this crowd. Even I, when I turned on today, I looked, and I saw thousands of people here, but you don't see hundreds of thousands of people behind you because **they** don't want to show that. (Lines 1-3)

> (28) If you want to get out of message, and if you want to go through **big tech**, social media, **they** are really, if you're a conservative, if you're a Republican, if you have a big voice, I guess **they** call it shadow ban, right? (Lines 410-412)

> (29) "…**the Democrats** are hopeless. **They're** never voting for anything, not even one vote. "(Lines 691-692)

> (30) "The **weak Republicans**, **they're** pathetic Republicans and that's what happens. "(Lines 99-100)

> (31) "**The radical left** knows exactly what **they're** doing. **They're** ruthless and it's time that somebody did something about it." (Lines 490-491)

Based on the categorization of Trump's use of "they/them", when the social actors can be identified (See Examples 27-31), it appears clear that Trump perceives as specific group of social actors as the negative "other" – a specific group consisting of a large number of different actors, that is. This group includes the Democrats, the big technology companies hosting social media platforms, the media and even his own party members, the Republicans who do not agree with Trump. This is perhaps the clearest indication, that in order to be considered a member of

the positive "self" and not the negative "other", one must agree on and support President Trump's actions and views. Moreover, the number of direct attributions to any one of these actors is somewhat revealing as well, in particular when compared to the number of unattributed uses of "they" in the speech (see Table 2):

Table 3: Opposing social actors and their occurrences in the Trump speech

Opposing social actor	Number of occurrences in the speech
The media	16
Big Tech	6
Democrats	14
Radical Left	3
Weak Republicans	3

It is interesting that while Trump repeatedly insists the above-mentioned social actors are in fact the culprits instead of him, his ability to directly refer to any of these social actors as the culprits in the speech instead of the mythical "they" (See Table 2) seems rather modest in terms of quantity. It is also worth noting that the large number of the unattributed or unclear references to "they" also stands out as a significant marker on the effort to emphasize the negative "other", while the large number can also signify an effort to enforce the importance of group membership, that is, the importance of being on the "right side". This type of legitimization strategy, that is, the creation of a more or less evil and ill-wishing entity "they" to emphasize and to legitimize the urgent need for action, has also been used by the previous US Presidents, but typically in the context when the administration is trying to justify the US military action abroad – and not within the US (Reyes, 2011). The discursive strategies Trump uses also tend to align with the previous practice, which focus mainly on nominative strategies of describing what "they" are like (see examples 30-31).

As indicated earlier in this chapter, Trump's use of personal deixis to express his own involvement when compared to what his is expecting from his audience, is also clearly identifiable, especially when it comes to describing the perceived required action:

(32) "**We're** gathered together in the heart of our nation's capital for one very, very basic and simple reason: to save **our** democracy." (Lines 80-81).

(33) "And we'll probably not going to be cheering so much for some of them, **you'll** never take back **our** country with weakness. **You** have to show strength, and **you** have to be strong." (Lines145-146)

(34) "**Somebody** says, "Well, **we** have to obey the Constitution." And **you** are, because **you're** protecting **our** country and **you're** protecting the Constitution, so **you** are." (Lines 373-376).

(35) "**We** fight like hell and if **you** don't fight like hell**, you're** not going to have a country anymore." (Lines 685-686))

(36) "**Our** brightest days are before **us**. **Our** greatest achievements still wait." (Line 681).

It appears obvious from the analysis, that, as indicated earlier, while Trump perceives himself as the member of the social group (Example 32), he expects the action to be initiated by the group without him (Example 33). He is indicating that in the consequent action, the group's actions will be acceptable, as they are protecting the country and the Constitution, as if pardoning the actions as the leader already in advance. (Example 34) He also makes the apparent threat very clear for his audience, but also at the same time paints an ideal future once victory is achieved. (See Examples 35-36). In fact, it almost appears as if he perceives himself as a general giving a motivational speech to his troops before a decisive battle, promising to be there to lead them again onto a glorious future once the fight is over. In this pursuit, Trump and his supporters are attributed ideal values which can typically be considered as desirable for any individual or group, as indicated in examples 37-39.

(37) "American **patriots** who are **committed to the honesty** of our elections and **the integrity** of our glorious republic." (Lines 16-17)

(38) "You have to show **strength**, and you have to **be strong."** (Lines 146-147)

(39) "We're going to see whether or not we have **great and courageous** leaders" (Lines 194-195)

To summarize, it is clear that there are specific patterns surfacing from Trump's use of discursive strategies, which suggest a specific agenda. Such an agenda initially appears to target impacting the audience's mental models to evoke action, while also rather consistently hiding Trump's own agency in such a goal, therefore indicating even more strongly, that an agenda exists and that the main benefactor of such an agenda is Trump himself. He is utilizing nomination as a strategy to highlight group membership, but where necessary, Trump also includes specific personal deixis (perceptivization) to indicate who is perceived as the performer expected to engage in the required social practice, that is, in the consequent action

(See Examples 33-35). Additionally, he re-enforces his own group membership through a specific genre which is typical for him but unusual in political rhetoric. Such an informal style suggests a potential simulation in certain type of communication to hide a potential motive or agenda See Examples 18-19). Furthermore, Trump appears consistent in his use of perlocutionary speech acts to evoke emotional reactions from this audience related to the "negative other", whereas he appears to highlight his own apparently rational and logical behaviour by resorting predominantly to illocutionary speech acts to describe the actions of himself or those of his social group (See Examples 37-39). Moreover, while his persistent use of hyperbolic statements in intensifying his message also appears as typical behaviour to Trump, he does appear to take the use of such a discursive strategy to the next level in this speech, again most likely in his attempt at continuing to evoke a strong emotional reaction from the audience (See Examples 16-17, 27).

Next, I will continue the analysis focusing on identifying and examining elements of social cognition from the data, while also building on the patterns identified in the discursive strategies in this chapter.

5.2   The role of social cognition

In this chapter I will mainly draw from numerous articles by Van Dijk (1992, 1993, 1997, 2006, 2006b, 2013), which consist of explaining, defining, and examining how cognitive processing related to discourse production and understanding works, as well as what role does social cognition play in discourse, when the aim of the discourse suggests abuse of power, manipulation and incitement to hate and violence.

When analysing the content of Trump's January 6th speech, especially given the well-known repercussions of this speech, it is critical to understand that in addition to the traditional textual analysis, the socio-cognitive elements should also be recognised, identified and analysed. In fact, Van Dijk (2006, 121) maintains that rather than simply textual evidence, contexts are "subjective participant interpretations" and as such, they represent the relevant mental aspects in discourse production and comprehension. As discussed in the Theoretical Background chapter of this thesis, how participants interpret discourse therefore depends on their understanding of the social situation, their opinions, attitudes and ideologies and on whether the message aligns with these. It is therefore necessary to examine the background of the January 6th speech once more to put the message of that speech into the right context to

ensure this study can include a full assessment on the socio-cognitive elements of the speech, including the pre-existing presuppositions of the audience.

During his presidential campaign in 2020, Donald Trump was famously asked during a televised presidential debate, whether he would, as the current President of the United States and as the candidate for the next presidency, publicly condemn white supremacists for inciting violence in the country. When pushed, his response was: "Proud Boys[1], stand back and stand by." (CNN, n.d.)

His response during the presidential debate was widely considered as a direct message to the white supremacist groups to "stand by". The Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.) defines the phrasal verb as "to be **waiting** and **ready** to do something or **to help**". When this incident is examined together with Trump's persistent social media campaigning that the elections were not fair, and that he actually won, and that the elections were stolen from him by fraud, the fact that he invited his supporters in Washington on the day when the election results were going to be formally confirmed to listen to him speak, suggests that the invitation alone could be considered as a signal for the Proud Boys and other similar extremist groups who supported Trump, to come forward and join him in D.C. on January 6th. During the speech, Trump enforces the positive self-presentation and the negative other as elaborated on in the previous chapter –where the negative other generally includes everyone who does not support Trump or who he perceives as enemies:

(40) "Our media is not free. It's not fair. **It suppresses thought. It suppresses speech, and it's become the enemy of the people**" (Lines 133-134)

(41) "**They [immigrants] want to come in again and rip off our country**."
(Lines 675-676)

(42) "But you don't hear it by **the people who want to deceive you and demoralize you and control you -- big tech, media**" (Lines 392-393)

(43) "See our election victory **stolen by emboldened radical left Democrats**."
(Lines 18-19)

This conduct is well aligned with his standard demeanor and as such, it does not present anything new in his approach, that is, the audience would have been familiar with his views already before the venue on January 6th. This approach supports the suggestion that for manipulation to succeed, the dominant groups must first ensure the recipients' mental models

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[1] Proud Boys is an American far-right group which was involved in the Capitol Hill attack on January 6, 2021.

of the relevant issues are constructed in a way which makes the recipients accept the manipulative discourse without criticism and which therefore also makes them act accordingly (Van Dijk 2006b, 375). By January 6th, Trump would therefore have been able to rely on the assumption that his audience would already have much of the information and/or knowledge he was going to present, that is, that it was already socially shared knowledge or a common ground (Van Dijk 2013, 8) among his supporters. The mental models Trump would have already contributed to already repeatedly during his political campaigning and during his first term would consist of enforcing the socially shared knowledge of his supporters (See examples 40-43).

Furthermore, Trump's persistent ─ and in some cases also systematic ─ use of collocations to describe "the other", examined in the previous chapter, would have further enforced the above claims to become adopted as factual information by his supporters already before the January 6th venue. Believing that the media is "fake", the Democrats "stole the elections" and so on, would therefore already form the attitudes of the audience already before January 6th. After all, as indicated earlier in this study, attitudes are typically social attitudes, in other words, they are not the same as personal opinions, but rather representations of social groups and their members (Van Dijk 1993, 258). Attitudes provide the framework in which members of a social group express opinions, and usually also form the basis of all social practises of a social group (ibid.). I argue that the attitudes of Trump's supporters against such social actors as the Democrats, technology companies, the media and the immigrants already existed before the January 6th speech, and therefore the purpose of the January 6th speech was not to create such attitudes, but rather find ways of enforcing the existing ones to incite the audience to act in a very specific manner in accordance with the implicit and invisible goal set by President Trump. Therefore, the audience's context model on the meaning of the venue as a whole would have depended on whether they supported Trump already prior to the event, which in turn would also have impacted the way their interpretation of the semantic situational model would have developed during the speech.

Referring to the theory of how the cognitive processing of discourse works in the mind of an individual recipient (see Figure 2), context models facilitate the cognitive information collection and interpretation between the semantic situation models and the actual discourse. By using Van Dijk's categorisation for context models (Van Dijk 1997, 215), table 3 below illustrates the context model categorisation for the January 6th speech:

Table 4: Context model categorisation

Type of speech event	The incumbent President of the US speaks to his supporters as a candidate of the 2020 US Presidential Elections.
Location and Time	**Location:** The National Mall in Washington, D.C. A place in the centre of the US National Monuments and the US Administration. **Time:** January 6th, 2020. The date coincides with the date when the US Congress, together with the US Vice President, convened to reconfirm the results of the 2020 US Presidential Elections.
Institutional environment	Trump is a Republican candidate, who was projected to lose the 2020 Elections to the Democrat candidate, Joe Biden.
Overall goals of the interaction	**For the presenter:** To provoke the audience into action on the presenter's behalf to intrude the reconfirmation of the results of the 2020 Presidential Elections. **For the audience (Trump supporters):** To receive further commentary and guidance from the incumbent President of the US and the candidate anticipated to lose the elections, should the Congress reconfirm the election results on the day.
Participants and their roles in the venue	**Presenter:** The President of the United States and the Republican candidate in the 2020 Presidential Elections. **Audience:** the media (both international and national), republican voters, Trump supporters, the public at home and abroad.
Current situational relations between participants	Given the event, the speech was unmediated, and no actual dialogue between the participants took place, with the exception of such semiotic elements from the audience as applauding or cheering. The President addressed the audience in a monologue.

Based on the context modelling, only the context, which is relevant semantically in the ongoing discourse, needs to be spoken out loud to further impact the creation of the situational mental model for the audience (Van Dijk 1997, 199). Therefore, it appears logical that Trump did not start the speech with what a typically would be a logical starting point for a speech taking place at the end of a presidential campaign, that is, by summarising the results of the 2020 Presidential Elections.

(44) "**The Media will not show the magnitude of this crowd**." (Line 1)

(45) "**We have hundreds of thousands of people here**, and I just want them to be recognized by the fake news media." (Lines 3-4)

(46) "Turn your cameras, please, and **show what's really happening out here, because these people are not going to take it any longer**. They're not going to take it any longer. Go ahead. Turn your cameras, please. Would you show?" (Lines 4-6)

Instead of what would appear as a more standard way of opening a political speech, Trump begins with re-enforcing the audience of the presupposition that the media should not be trusted to present the venue in a truthful and an accurate manner (Example 44) – most likely

directing the comment as his online viewers. He is also legitimizing his speech and his message by insisting on the large number of participants who have come to hear him in D.C (Example 45). He then also engages the participants in the pursuit of the "truth" by declaring the audience is frustrated and upset, and that they should co-participate in live streaming the speech in support of him (Example 46). He is, in essence, facilitating the building of the semantic event model, that the venue is held at a critical time in a critical battle for "these people", who are already emotional and upset, as this is what is *relevant* for his agenda for the venue. With such a claim, he is relying on the presupposed knowledge of the audience, which aligns with his own, that is, that the elections were "stolen" and that the venue was convened to determine the action required for the audience to ensure his continued Presidency. Since it is not relevant in this context or for the semantic situational model for the audience, Trump does not mention the fact that, for example, the multiple legal actions by his team to dispute the election results on both state and on federal level had all failed due to lack of any credible evidence.

With such a dramatic start for his "Save America" speech, Trump starts to build the semantic macrostructures for the audience from the very first sentence. It is assumed that semantic macrostructures define the discourse topic, but Van Dijk (2013, 24) suggests that they serve a more important purpose through which the speaker and the audience define the overall meaning of the discourse through their mental situation models. These meanings are therefore not necessarily visible in the text – or said out loud, in other words, but can only be interpreted through the underlying cognitive processes of the recipients. These macrostructures are typically the meanings that the recipients remember the best from the social situation (ibid.). In terms of context modelling of relevant information, when building the semantic macrostructures through cognitive processing, recipients typically use this initial context model building to determine what for them is going to be the important, or relevant message from the discourse, enabling them to therefore disregard the rest, such as the actual details, from the interpreting of the discourse (Van Dijk 1997, 195).

> (47) "**We're gathered together in the heart of our nation's capital** for one very, very basic and simple reason: **to save our democracy**" (Lines 80-81)

> (48) "**We're supposed to protect our country, support our country, support our Constitution and protect our Constitution**." (Lines 54-55)

> (49) "Today, **for the sake of our democracy, for the sake of our Constitution, and for the sake of our children,** we lay out the case for the entire world to hear." (Lines 315-317)

(50) "But **our fight against the big donors, big media, big tech and others** is just getting started." (Lines 633-634)

(51) "And **we fight. We fight like hell and if you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country anymore**". (Lines 685-686)

(52) "And I'm going to go over a few more states. But you don't hear it by (sic) **the people who want to deceive you and demoralize you and control you -- big tech, media**." (Lines 392-393)

(53) "**These are the facts that you won't hear from the fake news media. It's all part of the suppression effort**." (Lines 386-387)

Overall, based on the transcript of the January 6th speech, it appears that the semantic macrostructure or the topic level structure which Trump is focused on and which his supporters will best remember from the speech, focuses on the following messaging:

1. American democracy and our Constitution are under a threat. (Examples 47-49).

2. They can only be saved by you and me. (Examples 50-51).

3. You can only trust me, everyone else is lying to you. (Examples 52-53).

4. We must fight like hell or we have no country left. And we must do it now. (Examples 48, 50-51).

However, as discourse structures are not identical with social structures (Van Dijk 2006, 18), more analysis is required to understand and to demonstrate how power and dominance can be exercised through social cognition. In terms of power abuse, one of the ways to identify social power relations between a group is by examining control – who is trying to control who and how (Van Dijk 2013, 14). Discourse can be controlled by setting structures on the context, such as time, place, participants, their knowledge and intentions. Another way to exercise power through discourse control is to set specific structures on the way the discourse is delivered, that is, on genre, topics, lexicon and so on (ibid.) Given his role as the incumbent President of the US at the time of the speech, it is clear that Trump is in a position of power towards his audience not only symbolically, but also materially.

(54) "Just, again, I want to thank you. **It's just a great honor to have this kind of crowd and to be before you and hundreds of thousands of American patriots** who are committed to the honesty of our elections and the integrity of our glorious republic." (Lines 15-17)

(55) "**I've been in two elections. I won them both and the second one, I won much bigger than the first**." (Lines 26-27)

(56) "And I actually, **I just spoke to Mike. I said, "Mike, that doesn't take courage**. What takes courage is to do nothing. That takes courage," and then we're stuck with a president who lost the election by a lot, and we have to live with that for four more years." (Lines 59-61)

(57) "**But I want to thank all of those congressmen and women. I also want to thank our 13 most courageous members of the US Senate, Sen. Ted Cruz, Sen. Ron Johnson, Sen. Josh Hawley, Kelly Loeffler…"** (Lines 215-217)

While consistently hiding his own agency in his target setting for the speech (See, for example, Examples 81-84 on page 50), Trump is, on the other hand, at the same time re-enforcing his authority role and position of power indirectly and implicitly, by indicating he is the reason the "hundreds of thousands of American patriots" have gathered to the January 6th venue (Example 54), and that he has in fact won two presidential elections (Example 55). Furthermore, he also stresses his authority in expressing he not only has direct access to the US Vice President, but that he is in a position to address the Vice President informally, and to guide him, therefore suggesting at least a parallel if not a superior position to the Vice President (Example 56). Similarly, he implies a superior position to the congressmen and members of the US Senate, therefore indicating an executive leadership role over the legislative arm of the US Government (Example 57).

(58) "We fight like hell, and **if we don't fight like hell, you are not going to have a country anymore".** (Lines 685-686)

(59) "**It's called suppression. And that's what happens in a communist country**. That's what they do. They suppress." (Lines 252-253)

(60) "Together **we will drain the Washington swamp and we will clean up the corruption in our nation's capital**." (Lines 658-659)

(61) "But **our fight against the big donors, big media, big tech and others is just getting started**." (Lines 633-634)

(62) "But now the caravans, they think Biden's getting in, **the caravans are forming again. They want to come in again and rip off our country**. Can't let it happen. **As this enormous crowd shows, we have truth and justice on our side. We have a deep and enduring love for America in our hearts. We love our country. We have overwhelming pride in this great country, and we have it deep in our souls. Together we are determined to defend and preserve government of the people, by the people and for the people**." (Lines 675-680)

(63) "All Vice President Pence has to do is send it back to the states to recertify, and **we become president, and you are the happiest people**." (Lines 57-58)

As indicated earlier in this chapter, during the January 6th speech Trump is building on the already created socially shared attitudes during his years in the office and his election campaign, according to which the country is at a risk (Example 58), the media cannot be trusted (Example 59), everyone else in Washington and in the US administration is "crooked" except for him (Example 60), he fights for the common people against the power elites (Example 61) and finally, the foreigners only want bad things for America and for Americans, who like him, love their country passionately (Example 62) and whose future happiness will be ensured if Trump continues to be the President (Example 63) . Furthermore, by utilizing time as a deictic position to underline the critical need for urgent action, Trump appears now to be constructing alternative semantic, hyperbolic models for the future which will look very different for his audience depending on who wins the presidential elections:
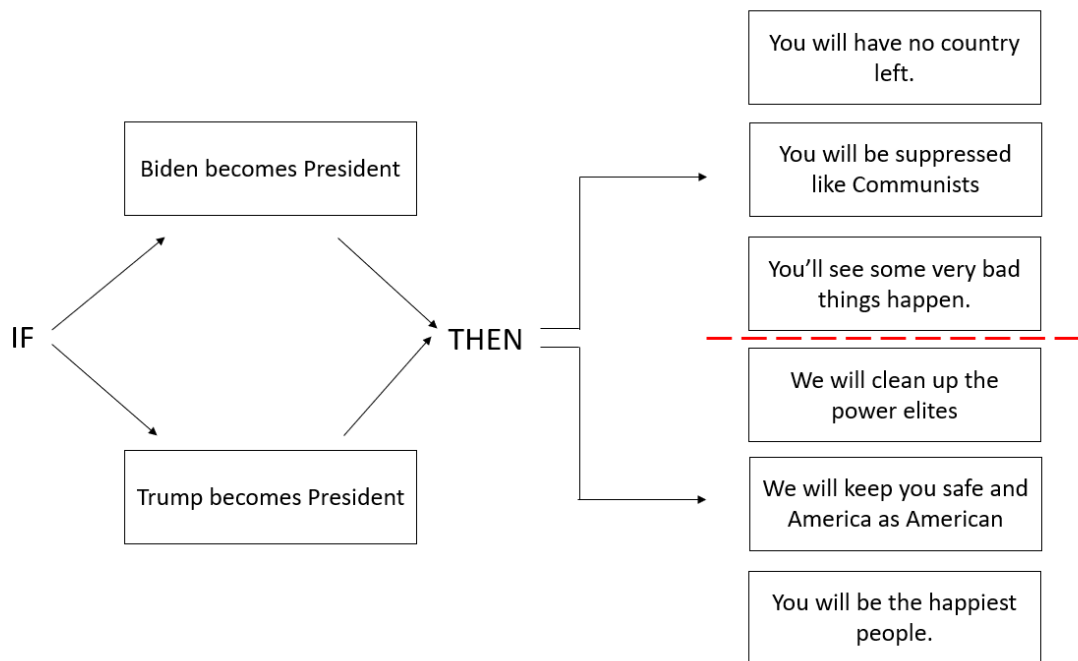
Figure 3: Semantic, hyperbolic model enforced by Trump on the future depending the audience action on January 6th

To re-enforce his overall goal for the January 6th speech, Trump is clearly demonstrating elements of manipulation towards his audience. Manipulation, which always indicates the abuse of power, is usually perceived as negative as it most often also signifies a non-legitimate control through discourse, as recipients are made to believe or to act in the sole interests of the manipulator (Van Dijk 2006b, 360). Manipulating an audience discursively is, in essence, about manipulating the structure of the mental model to influence how the event or action is perceived

(Van Dijk 2006b, 368). A way to ensure those being manipulated form the mental models the manipulators want them to form, is to ensure the recipients freedom to interpret the message is limited to ensure their interpretation aligns with those of the manipulator (Van Dijk 2006b, 367). Trump portrays several apparent attempts to ensure this in his speech: in addition to his repeated commentary on the media, social media platforms and on the freedom of the press, he also insists that:

> (64) "**All over the world, they talk about our elections**. You know what the world says about us now? **They say we don't have free and fair elections**" (Lines 130-132)

> (65) "Today, **for the sake of our democracy, for the sake of our Constitution, and for the sake of our children,** we lay out the case for the entire world to hear." (Lines 315-317).

> (66)" This is the most corrupt election in the history, maybe of the world. You know, you could go (to) Third World countries, but I don't think they had hundreds of thousands of votes and they don't have voters for them. I mean, **no matter where you go, nobody would think this.** In fact, **it's so egregious, it's so bad, that a lot of people don't even believe it. It's so crazy that people don't even believe it. It can't be true. So they don't believe it.**" (Lines 621-625).

As Trump has repeatedly already made it clear throughout his first term in the office, as well as during his 2020 campaign that the media or the social platforms cannot be trusted to tell the truth or to ensure free speech, the audience is already manipulated into believing that nothing they see on the news or online is accurate information. Trump also appears to re-enforce the legitimacy of his claim by implying the "whole world" has already condemned the 2020 elections as unfree and not fair (Example 64), only to then proceed to portraying himself as the saviour of the American democracy, the US Constitution and the future of the audience, therefore appealing to their values and emotions (Example 65). Finally, he makes what to me seems the most problematic claim yet (Example 66), as by raising such suspicions on what to believe in he seems to enforce the view that whatever the audience hears elsewhere, is not true because it's "so crazy" – as if already preparing the audience's socially shared knowledge and attitudes beyond the venue, and beyond what happens next as a result of his speech. In other words, when the media and the world later condemned the Capitol attacks and President Trump's role in it as a blatant abuse of power and as an assault on democracy, the audience was already manipulated into reverting back to their socially shared attitude of the situation to regard any such claims as "crazy". Therefore, in essence, Trump is manipulating the audience into believing that:

1. Anyone suggesting he did NOT win the elections, is crazy.
2. Anyone suggesting that he is in the wrong in claiming he won, is crazy.

Another interesting aspect of examples 58-66 is the theory that any action, from a theoretical perspective, is always a sum of two components: cognition (intention) and activity. In other words, by claiming good intentions, a negative action may be denied (Van Dijk 1992, 91). This seems to be the leading theme in these examples and the semantic macrostructure of the hypothetical future, that is, Trump is presenting the audience the good and the perceived critical intention to justify the required – and the potentially negative – action from the audience. Furthermore, in terms of such denial strategies, reversal, or counter-attacking the "other" is typically also perceived as a standard strategy of the far-right movements (Van Dijk 1992, 94). This tendency is clearly visible in the January 6th speech as well, as illustrated in, for example, examples 59, 62 and 66 above.

> (67) "But this year, using the pretext of **the China virus** and the scam of mail-in ballots, Democrats attempted the most brazen and outrageous election theft."
> (Lines 116-117)
>
> (68) "And I had a campaign against Michelle Obama and Barack **Hussein** Obama against Stacey." (Lines 287)
>
> (69) "But now the caravans, they think Biden's getting in, **the caravans are forming again. They want to come in again and rip off our country."** (Lines 675-676)
>
> (70) . "As this enormous crowd shows, **we have truth and justice on our side**".
> (Lines 676-677)

Trump is also utilising another typical aspect of the far-right rhetoric; the creation of the hypothetical "truth". Not only is he blatantly xenophobic (See Examples 67-70) and thus appealing to the far-right representatives in his audience, but he also presents himself as someone defending the "truth" and therefore "justice" as well. By implying that the COVID-19 is the fault of China (Example 67), by emphasizing President Obama's middle (and probably foreign sounding) name (Example 68) and by insinuating that the potential influx of immigrants from Central and Latin America (Example 69). In claiming Trump and his supporters have "truth" on their side (Example 70), he is enforcing a connection with the "truth" as "common sense" for his audience, thus contributing to the underlying ideology that anything foreign automatically presents a threat to the American citizens, and that such a belief is only "common sense". In the effort to succeed in such an attempt, all of these claims also require further

implicit propositions in the mental models for his audience to enforce a socially shared belief that they need to protect themselves from anything "foreign". Such implicit presuppositions would, logically include, for example, that the first reported COVID-19 cases were diagnosed in China (Example 67), that President Obama's father was born in Kenya and that Trump has insisted for years, that President Obama is therefore not an American citizen (Example 68), and finally, that immigrants from Central and Latin America have gathered caravans on their journeys by foot to reach the US Border (Example 69).

> (71) **"We don't have a free and fair press"**. (Lines 131-132)

> (72) **"Our media is not free. It's not fair. It suppresses thought. It suppresses speech, and it's become the enemy of the people"** (Lines 133-134)

> (73) **"We don't have a fair media anymore.** It's suppression, and you have to be very careful with that." (Lines 270-271)

The Trump claim on the "truth" is also further enhanced by his repeated attacks on the media (See Examples 71-73) and what he claims as the lack of free speech in the US – again another discursive strategy in the denial of racism, in which the presenter claims moral blackmail from presenting the "truth", while at the same time recognising the "truth" typically equals elaborate negative claims on the "other" (Van Dijk 1992, 105). Indirectly, he appears to also try to limit the recipients' access to information, or to "credible" information, according to Trump. As mentioned earlier in this study, such limited or restricted access to information is one of the possible criteria by which to make audiences more susceptible to manipulation. Moreover, Trump also utilises a third typical far-right strategy (Van Dijk 1992, 109) in the nationalist glorification of his supporters and the US:

> (74) "There's never been a movement like this ever, ever, for the **extraordinary love for this amazing country and this amazing movement."** (Lines 63-64)

> (75) "Looking out at all the **amazing patriots** here today, I have never been more confident in **our nation's future."** (Lines 664-665)

> (76) "It's just a great honor to have this kind of crowd and to be before you and **hundreds of thousands of American patriots who are committed to the honesty of our elections and the integrity of our glorious republic**." (Lines 15-17)

In addition to the preservation of the positive "Self", such national glorification can almost seem to present two opposite extremes from ideological perspective, that is, while this kind of rhetoric emphasizes the ideal values and beliefs of a nation, it also cognitively implies that such ideal values are only shared by those who share the socially shared beliefs and

underlying ideologies of the specific social group (Van Dijk 1992, 111), thus indirectly enforcing strict group membership. In examples 74-76, it is therefore implied that only those who support Trump and agree with his claims on fraudulent elections, are the proper patriotic Americans, who are loving, honest, committed and who have the integrity to safeguard their country. By enforcing such claims, Trump is implicitly also enforcing the attitude that it is only right to take action to preserve Trump as the US President, as it is only *natural* for any such a loving and passionate patriot to protect their country by doing whatever it takes.

When examining the relevant strategies from the perspective of social cognition, one of the most central strategies is *naturalisation*. In generalising an issue which has impacted the audience's mental models, the manipulator can continue to turn the socially shared belief into socially shared attitudes on a number of related issues, eventually potentially forming a more systematic underlying ideology (Van Dijk 2006b, 370) within a social group, by which the specific, socially shared view about the issue becomes to be perceived as the normal, or "natural" view about the issue. Utilising the issue's emotional impact, together with ensuring the manipulating message is repeated and where possible, carried over to other seemingly relevant areas can impact the receiving social group's mental models about the issue. In such cases, the actual benefactor of the recipient actions remains hidden or obscured (ibid.). Trump has, throughout his political career, already utilised the generalising procedure in creating mistrust on the media, the big technology companies, and on his political opponents – whether these are Democrats or Republicans. During the January 6th speech, it appears clear that he is also appealing to the audience's emotions;

> (77) "So, I mean, I could go on and on about this fraud that took place in every state and all of these legislatures want this back. **I don't want to do it to you because I love you and it's freezing out here**, but I could just go on forever." (Lines 591-593)

> (78) "**We have a deep and enduring love for America** in our hearts. **We love our country**. **We have overwhelming pride in this great country**, and **we have it deep in our souls**. **Together we are determined to defend and preserve government of the people, by the people and for the people**." (Lines 677-680)

> (79) "Looking out at all **the amazing patriots here** today, I have never been more confident in our nation's future." (Lines 664-665)

> (80) "You have a **lot of bad people out there**." (Line 660)

In the above examples 77-80, Trump appears to emphasize that he is only acting for the benefit and for the well-being of his audience, who consist of loving, committed American

patriots, thus appealing to his audience emotionally to draw their attention also to the fact, that the rest of the world is not to be trusted, as "you have a lot of bad people out there". This approach remains consistent with this usual negative demonstration of the "other" and with his positive presentation of "self" to further polarize the views and beliefs of his supporters. Moreover, in his emotional appeal, he is utilising the only allusion in the speech, in which he makes a reference to President Abraham Lincoln, and to what is generally perceived by some as one of the most famous political speeches in history (Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d.), the Gettysburg Address, using a direct quote from the speech: *"government of the people, by the people and for the people".* As the only allusion in his speech, this quote is clearly an attempt to enforce the situational model for his audience on the importance of <u>what happens</u> on the day, as he also states that *"I'm going to be watching, because history is going to be made."* (line 186).

> (81) "**All of us** here today do not want to see **our** election victory stolen by emboldened radical left Democrats, which is what they're doing, and stolen by the fake news media." (Lines 17-19)

> (82) "**We** will never give up. **We** will never concede. It doesn't happen. **You** don't concede when there's theft involved." (Lines 20-21)

> (83) "**We** will not let them silence **your** voices. **We**'re not going to let it happen." (Lines 40-11)

> (84) "All Vice President Pence has to do is send it back to the states to recertify, and **we** become president, and **you** are the happiest people. (Lines 57-58)

Moreover, examples 81-84 demonstrate how Trump is hiding his own agency to obscure the audience away from the fact that it is him, who is seeking to benefit from the potential actions of the audience, in alignment with Van Dijk's suggestion on the manipulator typically seeking to obscure whose interests are being protected, most typically by portraying the potential opponents as threats to safety and security (2006b, 370). Trump also makes interesting use of altering the personal deixis in the above examples, by presenting "We" has the ultimate protector, and "you" as the recipient of the protection. He also appears to spread this promise of protection to the audience's possible actions, by stating that "**You** don't concede, when there is theft involved" (Example 82) but by adding: "**We** will not let them silence your voices.", again also utilising the unidentified **"them"** as the threat to the audience, or to "**your** voices" (Example 83). However, rather interestingly, the above examples also appear consistent with the typical melodramatic approach in the US political rhetoric, in which victory is achieved through heroic sacrifice (Anker 2005, 25-26).

The general goal of manipulation is to ensure that the mental minds of a social group enforce a specific socially shared knowledge, directly contributing to the attitudes and shared ideologies of a group. Once this goal is achieved, these mutual beliefs will control the social group's actions and reactions on issues and in certain situations. Moreover, when the social group's shared ideologies are already influenced, less and less manipulation may be required to get the social group to act accordingly (Chomsky 2004, in Van Dijk 2006b, 369). This is where the earlier, rigorous social media campaigning by Trump on how the elections were "rigged" seems to have benefitted him, as it seems no actual evidence on the potential election fraud was really required on January 6th by his audience. He also appears to be very conscious of this fact:

(85) "**We've amassed overwhelming evidence** about a fake election." (Lines 272-273)

(86) "Well, I'm going to read you pages. **I hope you don't get bored listening to it.** Promise?" (Line 242)

(87) "**So when you hear, when you hear, "While there is no evidence to prove any wrongdoing," this is the most fraudulent thing anybody's -- This is a criminal enterprise.**" (Lines 595-596).

He makes a clear assertation (Example 85) but then also pre-empts the presentation of any concrete facts (Example 86) by implying that such information will be boring, and that anyone requesting such information may therefore be boring also. In addition to a lengthy presentation of large figures in different states indicating fraudulent election results by hundreds of thousands, Trump is intensifying his message through another discursive strategy to impact the recipient mental model through appealing to emotions by using hyperboles (Van Dijk 2006b 376). When combined with the pre-emptive statements on how this information will be boring, together with the notion that the context model of the venue is, for his supporters, already dictating what information is "relevant" for them, it seems logical that receiving actual factual evidence on the election fraud is not relevant content for the Trump supporters in the audience. Trump then provides direct guidance to his audience on how to react on any claims that the election results may in fact be valid as they are (Example 87), again in alignment with manipulative strategies in emphasizing his own power as the authority voice while also discrediting anyone whose claims deviate from his (Van Dijk 2006b, 378).

As indicated earlier in this chapter, continuous and systematic repetitions on a certain message or messages may impact the recipients' mental models in a way, which requires less effort to manipulate the recipient(s) into further action in alignment with the manipulator's own

desires and goals. While Trump repeats the usual claims on January 6th on the untrustworthiness of the media and the technology companies, and the dishonesty of the Democrats, the elections and of those Republicans who do not agree with his claims, it is apparent that with the January 6th speech, Trump had ulterior motives; to utilise the mental models of the audience and manipulate the social cognition of the Trump supporters into any possible action to interrupt the proceeding of the reconfirmation of the 2020 election results by the US Congress. At the same time, the apparent attempt to hide his own agency as a benefactor from the potential action by the audience, as well as the clear attack to deny and to question the authority of the legislative and the judicial powers of the US government as stated in the US Constitution, clearly indicate an abuse of his power as the incumbent President of the US, as well as the fact that it was him who as trying to overthrow democracy and the US Constitutions, and not the social actors he is so keen to portray as the villainous conspirators. I will discuss the findings as well as the societal context in more detail in the next chapter.

6 Discussion

This study focused on examining the socio-cognitive elements of manipulation and the abuse of power using Van Dijk's approach to critical discourse analysis. The assumption of this study and main aim of the research questions was not whether the data included socio-cognitive elements focused on manipulation and on the abuse of power, but rather to examine how these assumed elements presented themselves, and how they could be made more visible through critical discourse analysis.

The data consisted of a written transcript of the speech given by President Trump in Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2020, after which the audience members invaded the Capitol Building, thereby forcing the US Congress to pause the formal procedure of officially confirming the results of the 2020 Presidential Elections. This study focused on the following research questions:

1. What kind of discursive strategies can be identified in the January 6th speech indicating a potential hidden agenda by President Trump?

2. What is the role of socio-cognitive elements in such obvious abuse of power and incitement to violence?

This study also utilised, to some respect, the practical guidance from Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis approach to identify relevant discourse practises on which to further build on using Van Dijk's theories on identifying and examining the socio-cognitive elements in the data. In addition to the discourse, this study also included examinations of the cognitive processes involved in discourse processing, as well as an analysis of the surrounding social elements to set the background and to further support the discourse analysis. This study therefore includes in it a triangulation of the discourse-cognition-and society aspects.

Examining discursive strategies can potentially be indicative of implicit agendas by the presenter. Trump has been known for his efforts to polarize the dialogue and the American society throughout his political career and appears to be very consistent with this effort also in this speech. Compared to the traditional melodramatic approach (See Anker, 2005) used by the US Presidents earlier to identify Americans as the positive "self" and the rest of the world as the negative "other", Trump's approach deviates from this standard to quite an extent, as he appears to categorise as the negative "other" anyone who does not agree with his policies, even members of his own political party. He therefore bundles together several domestic social

groups in addition to the rest of the world as the "negative" other, including those Republicans who do not agree with his policies, the media who scrutinizes him, the technology companies who host social media platforms which dispute or remove the false claims he publishes, the Democrats as the political opponents, and in the January 6th speech, also the Congress and the US Supreme Court. What is worth noting here also is that with these social groups, he does not only present them as groups which do not share his views, but as "weak", "bad", "fake", "radical" "abusing" and "deceitful", therefore manipulating the audience by implicitly and indirectly limiting their access to what they perceive as credible information and also by indicating that anyone opposing him is indeed less than a trustworthy American patriot.

As for patriotism in general, the Trump approach to deny and discredit the legitimate role of the US Congress and the Supreme Court seems particularly revealing, as the US Constitution dictates the basic separation of powers to ensure a democratic society – by which the power is divided into legislative (The Congress), judicial (The Supreme Court) and executive (The President) branches (Cornell Law School, n.d.). By disputing and undermining the constitutional role of the legislative and the judicial branches in the US Government in confirming the election results of the 2020 Elections, from societal and from political science perspective, it does raise a question whether a similar attempt in a less democratic country would perhaps be rather more directly perceived as an attempt for a coup.

In enforcing his negative emphasis on the "other" and to build on the previously created mental models of his audience, Trump is very much utilising additional discursive strategies on January 6th; for example, by his use of rhetorical figures and hyperbolic statements and also references to what he considers as experts to further enforce the credibility of his claim. Moreover, while he is known for his less than typical political rhetoric, the conversational style or the apparent chattiness with the January 6th speech is also consistent with Fairclough's suggestion that such a style can simulate a certain kind of interaction to enforce the presenter's strategic agenda for the speech.

While some of the typical attributes Trump tends to attach to his perceived opponents were already touched on above, he appears to have coined a number of collocations already during his first term as the US President, which are again enforced in the January 6th speech. These include, for example, "fake news", "weak Republicans", "big tech" and "radical Left". Collocations can indicate an attempt to enforce alternative semantic meanings for the words used together, which is also apparent in the way Trump uses collocations, as they are typically

directed at his perceived opponents, and not at his supporters, thereby further enforcing the hyperbolic connotations on the negative "other"

Furthermore, speech acts as a discursive strategy can be revealing in terms of enforcing implicit, semantic meanings and driving the potentially existing strategic aims, such as persuasion by appealing to emotional reactions. Trump's use of speech acts seems to align well with such categorisation, as he seems very consistent in reserving the use of illocutionary speech acts to his supporters, while reverting to using perlocutionary speech acts in discussing his opponents. After all, it is the perlocutionary speech acts which are typically used for the purposes of warning, threatening, persuading, or convincing the recipients. His attempts at enforcing the perception on the negative "other" remain consistent also in his use of personal deixis and indication of agency; he is rather lose in his use of the pronoun "they/them" when describing his opponents, thereby potentially further enforcing the use of perlocutionary speech acts to persuade and convince the audience into action because of the threat of the "other", even when it is unknown of the "other" is. In terms of agency, his use of the personal deixis "I/We" appears particularly revealing, as he seems to present the threats as common threats to all, and the action required to remove the threat as something the audience needs to perform, while at the same time hiding his own agency, that is, presenting the ideal future as something that is beneficial to his audience and not only to himself. Moreover, from his use of the personal deixis "I/We/you" it is clear that he portrays himself as a leader or a commander or even as a defender of the public, but not as an active participant in the action he suggests is required.

In terms of the hypothetic future Trump lays in front of the audience, he is clearly utilising "time" as a deixis (see Figure 1) to further position himself and to justify the need for action. He does this by creating two very different mental models on the hypothetical future, depending on who becomes the next president of the US. Additionally, given the election results were about to be reconfirmed the very same day, he does emphasize the urgent and immediate need for action throughout the speech, albeit indirectly in most cases.

When examining the role of social cognition in connection with the January 6th speech, as discussed already earlier in this study, Trump already engaged in a vigorous campaigning in social media prior to the January 6 venue the repeat his message that the elections were "rigged" and that he in fact won the elections. While most of the global audience probably doubted his mental capabilities as a result, Trump was in fact already building the mental models, or the presuppositions of his supporters to further enhance a shared knowledge of the group that what

was in fact being threatened was America itself, thus also eventually promoting the January 6 venue as a "Save America" rally. The macrosemantic structures for the January 6th rally venue therefore most likely appeared very different for the audience depending on whether they were Trump's supporters or not. Given that it is the macrosemantic structures the participants tend to remember the best, the macrosemantic structures from the January 6 speech for his own supporters most likely consisted of the following:

1. American democracy is under a threat.

2. It can only be saved by you and me.

3. You can only trust me, everyone else is lying to you.

4. We must fight like hell or we have no country left.

The mental models he is therefore enforcing during the speech are building on the audience's socially shared knowledge, to be complemented by the context model to indicate that the audience and President Trump are in Washington to save the country because otherwise the America as they know it will no longer be left, which constitutes as the underlying semantic situational model for the venue. By hiding his own agency, Trump was appealing to his supporters in indicating immediate action was required to save the American democracy and the US Constitution, which according to him where the very things under threat. This persistent message, which was at the same time drawing from and contributing to the underlying ideology of the group, result in the required social practise, that is, in the attack on Capitol Hill.

Based on this study, one should not ignore the very real sense of urgency created by Trump with this speech among his supporters, who have long ago already adopted the ideology that "America" as they see it is disappearing with the demographic becoming increasingly diverse, and the socially shared knowledge that they perceive Trump as the only credible and sufficiently likeminded candidate to help the audience to preserve what they perceive as the ideal future for themselves and for America.
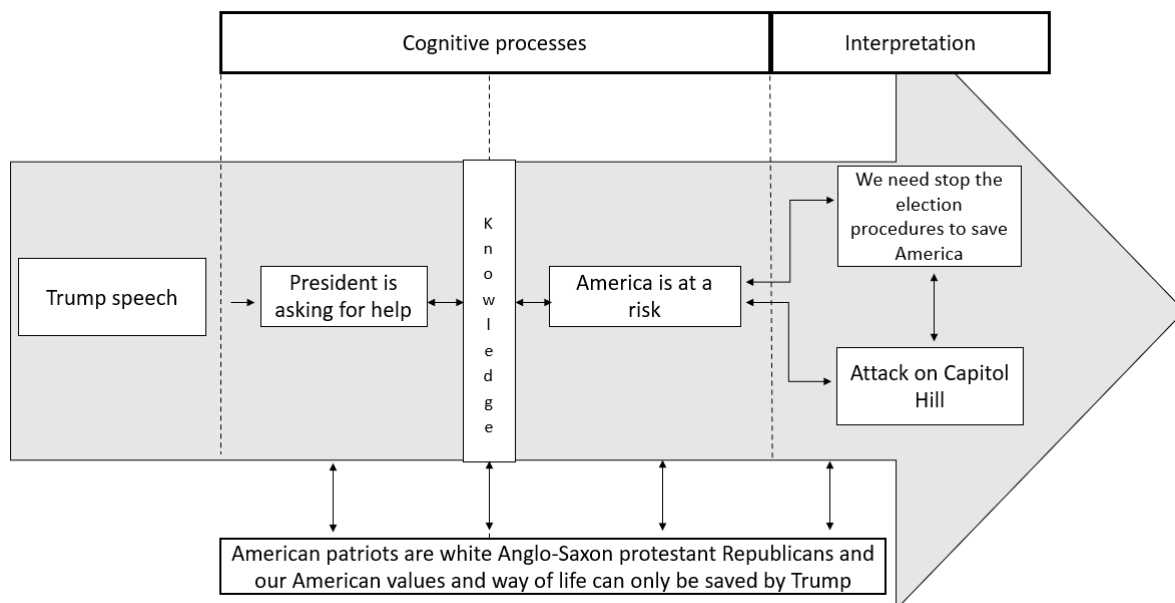
Figure 4: Example of the possible cognitive processing by the Trump supporters on January 6th

In reference to the earlier description on the cognitive processes involved in discourse interpretation (see Figure 2) Figure 4 above tries to illustrate a possible interpretation of the January 6th based on the recipients' social cognition. Again, the absolute sense of urgency must have been also enforced by the way Trump used "time" as a deixis to support his positioning and the need for immediate action; as illustrated in Figure 4, his speech contributed to the creation of two very different semantic models for the future, depending on the outcome of the 2020 US Elections to further enforce the message.

Given such a dramatic interpretation, it is not surprising that while Trump made some indications on how he will provide concrete evidence on the election fraud during his speech, the audience, with their already existing mental models, did not require any actual evidence to be provided, as it was not relevant information for them. They were already manipulated and conditioned to not only belief Trump and only Trump, but also as the "amazing patriots" (line 643) to act on his command as their leader and as the President of the United States. To ensure no demands for evidence would be required and to further strengthen group mentality, he also repeatedly indicated that anyone requesting evidence would be "boring" and also, that the potential claims to dispute his election victory would in fact be "crazy". Given his very clear and consistent policy on the negative "other" constituting as anyone who opposes with him, such messaging could also semantically imply an actual challenge for anyone to try to dispute him – and to be at risk for being excluded from the group membership.

Following the audience's attack on the Capitol Hill, the Congress was in fact forced to interrupt the formal procedure of confirming the election results. The Trump supporters continued their invasion of the premises for several hours, during which several Republican representatives, the media and the Trump family members appealed to the President to issue a statement requesting the insurrectionists to cease their attack and leave the Capitol. For several hours, instead of complying with such appeals to issue a statement, the President watched the events unfold on TV. Consequently, when he did step in front of the media to provide a statement, he concluded it with a message to the invaders by "Go home. We love you, you are special." Semantically, this cannot be interpreted as anything other than a thank you from Trump for the audience doing as he requested; interrupting the formal procedures of the confirmation of the election results, but again by hiding his own agency under "We". Moreover, as a clear indication on the audience acting on their President's requests, they ceased their invasion following the statement from President Trump to leave the Capitol Hill.

Given the undisputable consequences on January 6th, this speech serves as an excellent example on the impact of social cognition in manipulation, power abuse and in incitement to violence. While it is clear that technically speaking, when examining the transcript from word to word, Trump did not give a verbal order for the audience to attack the Capitol, this analysis has shown that, semantically speaking, the command was provided. Furthermore, this command was clearly built on prior socially shared knowledge and the related mental models of the audience. This finding appears well aligned with Van Dijk's theory that it is not possible to draw a direct line from discourse to meaning without cognition.

Therefore, this study has been very educational for me personally as well, as someone who has followed the Trump presidency throughout the years with horror, disgust and disbelief. It has been impossible to understand how a person which appears to make no sense when speaking, or even be capable of speaking using full sentences, can gain such loyal support from his audiences. This also applies to his behaviour and his use of social media, in which he would, for example, just post one single word repeatedly: "RIGGED!" Upon completing this study, it now appears clear that in some cases, it is not the actual, word-for-word message or narrative that one should pay specific attention to, but rather more on the implied, semantic messages to impact the recipients' mental models. Given the ongoing global dialogue on the effects of social media, mis/disinformation, hate speech and other harmful content, generating more coherent understanding and awareness of the role of social cognition in discourse production and understanding therefore appears critical. Several countries are, together with intergovernmental

institutions such as the EU, currently engaging with the civil society and the technology sector to define what the above terminology means legally, as well as trying to set standards on how to regulate the spread of such information online (See Fino, 2020). When examining some examples of existing regulation, whether national or international, it appears clear that the most standard definitions on, for example, hate speech, focus on the so-called protected characteristics. That is, that hate speech towards groups or individuals based on predefined characteristics such as ethnicity or gender is deemed illegal (See Baider et al., 2020). This categorisation is naturally required, but given the Trump example, one cannot help to wonder whether it is sufficient for the society's purposes, especially in such extreme cases where the hate speech is directed so generally across different groups, ethnicities, political affiliations and so on. Furthermore, the Trump example also raises the question of accountability with regards to hate speech, abuse of power and incitement to violence. Such acts, when committed by the incumbent President of a democratic country, are most likely already enshrined in the Constitution of the country as legal criteria in case of impeachment, but as the Trump example also shows, given he was not indicted, there may be room for re-examining the legal definitions of such acts in the current legislation (See Alkiviadou in Assimakopoulos et al. 2017, 6-7). Such an examination, as well as the ongoing debate on how such difficult terminology should be defined could definitely benefit from a stronger contribution from the linguistics and critical discourse analysts to enhance the overall understanding of the socio-cognitive mechanisms by which hate speech, manipulation, power abuse and incitement to violence are created, generated and enhanced by using language, as well as social cognition, as a tool.

While it is critical there is additional awareness on the cognitive processes related to discourse processing and understanding, the society today must equally also understand how these processes are further impacted by social media. The technology companies hosting social media platforms are very much involved in the discussion on liability, as well as on the formal conceptualisation of the terminology to discussed above. This study is not a legal study, nor does it try to weigh in on questions related to intermedial liability in connection with social media platforms and the spread of harmful content. However, when examining the Trump method of creating and of purposefully enhancing the desired mental models of his supporters using social media as his main communication channel, perhaps the social media companies could also benefit from a better understanding of such things as what manipulation, persuasion and convincing look like from linguistic perspective. To be very clear, given the social media platforms' business models tend to be based on such things as targeted advertising and the sale

of customer data based on user profiling, I wonder whether the more appropriate suggestion is that social media platforms should better utilise their already existing understanding on cognitive and behavioural sciences and the related discourse processing to better contribute to the minimization of hateful content online. This proposal no doubt contains potential ethical challenges as well, as encouraging the social media platforms to increase their understanding and their use of their users' cognition to monitor online content comes with a host of concerns for user privacy, and at its' worse could present a model for a very dystopian future for societies. Nonetheless, as could be seen with the Trump example, social media platforms only banned him following the January 6th events, even though it was clear already prior to the event, that he was disputing the results of a democratic process while also manipulating the audience into thinking the "other" had deliberately cheated not only Trump himself, but the American voters at large. If not given the chance to enforce this a message and the consequent socially shared knowledge among his supporters, one can only wonder whether he would have been able to evoke such action from his audience on January 6th, had he only presented his claims for the first time in full during his speech. Such questions remain very problematic also from the opposite perspective of preserving the freedom of speech and freedom of expression, but at the very minimum, it feels that again given the Trump example, social media platforms should enforce the same community standards to all their users, as such standards should be viewed as applicable to all users, that is, that all users of the social media enjoy the same rights but also must comply with the same community standards – and the consequent action when repeatedly violating those rights and those standards. After all, Trump was using his own personal social media account for this messaging throughout his political career instead of the official account created for the President of the United States.

When considering intermediary liability and the increasing regulatory pressure towards social media platforms to identify and minimise harmful content on their platforms, is it realistic to assume they are able to adequately monitor such content if the regulatory definitions on what constitutes as harmful content only focuses on the visible aspects of discourse? On the other hand, would it be realistic to assume that regulating cognitive processes related to discourse would be possible from a moral and ethical perspective in a democratic and rights respecting society? Perhaps the best solution to this dilemma would indeed to ensure the close involvement of linguistics and critical discourse analysts in the relevant debate(s) on the definitions of such content as hate speech, manipulation, abuse of power and incitement to violence. Furthermore, it should not be assumed by politicians or regulatory bodies that such regulation alone would

be sufficient to minimise the spread of such harmful content. Therefore, it would be useful to also consider how critical discourse analysis could best be put to use in addressing the root causes for such societal challenges has hate speech, manipulation, abuse of power and incitement to violence. Could, for example, the socio-cognitive linguistics research contributes to the awareness raising, training and the overall media literacy of citizens to enable them to better identify how discourse, and political discourse in particular, can contain elements directed at manipulation and incitement to harmful action even when it is not explicitly stated?

As indicated in this study, Trump is not the first US President to harness the strategy on polarisation and the positive self-emphasis over the negative "other" focus. While the previous US Presidents have predominantly focused on utilising such discursive strategies to legitimate their actions on Foreign Policy and by the US Military abroad instead of domestic opponents, one cannot help wondering whether the very nature of the bi-partisan political system is part of the breeding ground for such polarizing strategies. In a bi-partisan party system, the nature of the debate tends to rather naturally generate towards "us" and "them", or towards the positive "Self" and the negative "Other". This is not to say that a bi-partisan system automatically equals a platform for such extreme positions as those created by Trump, but also at the same time, it appears that in a coalition government system in which the government is made of several parties, it may be more difficult to raise credible critique on the "other" without further specifying who or which party it is that the critique is focused on. In other words, while the coalition government system still enables the various political parties to emphasize their positive "self", it may naturally require more clarity in discussing the "other" – particularly when compared to the Trump used of personal deixis, for example, in which "they" can present anyone opposing his policies. Moreover, a coalition government system may also provide additional balance on the discourse from the perspective that typically, the political parties represent different shades and views in the political spectrum, rather than two extreme opposites.

In a balanced, democratic debate, there should be room for different views and opinions, as well as leadership which is able ensure protection and respect to democratic institutions such as free media and an independent judicial system. In essence, with the January 6th speech, Trump incited an attack not only on the Democratic Party or the incumbent Vice President, but also on the fundamental democratic institutions in the country. Based on the socio-cognitive elements examined in this study, he abused his power as the President of United States in the effort to promote action from the audience on his behalf. He also continued his systemic

enforcement of the audiences' mental models to create a sense of emergency, as well as a sense of a potential dystopian future if the audience does not take action. His speech also included material markers or indications of underlying racist ideologies, which were most likely used in a further effort to spike action from the audience. Furthermore, Trump did not, at any point, fully acknowledge his own personal agency as the benefactor from the potential action but presented the benefits as something the audience would enjoy, should they agree to take the action required.

7   Conclusion

This study initially set out to understand the role of social cognition in a discourse focusing on the abuse of power and in incitement to violence. The research questions for the analysis were:

1. What kind of discursive strategies can be identified in the January 6th speech indicating a potential hidden agenda by President Trump?

2. What is the role of socio-cognitive elements in such obvious abuse of power and incitement to violence?

In this effort, I first introduced Critical Discourse Analysis as a field of linguistic study. I then also provided additional context more specifically on the socio-cognitive approach in the CDA field, as examining the impact of social cognition through CDA is the main focus in the study. I also sought to introduce the societal and the political background for additional context, as these elements were critical to fully address and assess such socio-cognitive elements as socially shared knowledge, presuppositions, attitudes, and ideologies. Following the background introduction, I then proceeded to present the data and the methodology for this study. The data consisted of the written transcript from the January 6th speech, and the methodology for the analysis was based on the theoretical frameworks introduced earlier. I also introduced the main discursive strategies I was going to focus on in the initial textual analysis stage in more detail at this point. In the analysis chapter, I set out first on providing a more macrolevel textual analysis, while also examining the discursive strategies from the data for any potentially arising patterns suggesting an agenda from the presenter. Using these results together with the rest of the data, I then proceeded to analyse the elements from cognitive processing of discourse production and understanding to further identify and assess the impact and the role of social cognition in the consequent action which followed the January 6th speech. This study was therefore not a neutral study, but a biased one in the sense that it was not seeking to confirm whether an abuse of power and incitement to violence occurred that day by Donald Trump, but rather focused on examining the invisible, implicit elements in his speech which resulted in the well-known unfortunate action by his supporters.

Following the analysis, I described and elaborated on the initial research questions and the analysis results in the Discussion chapter, together with discussing the potential societal and political implications of the January 6th speech, but also how such things as power abuse, manipulation and incitement to hate or violence could be better identified and prevented

through increased awareness and further contribution from Critical Discourse Analysis in relevant dialogues surrounding these issues, especially as the pertain to the online environment today. As for the research questions listed above, certain discursive strategies in the data seemed to reveal underlying motives, such as, for example, Trump's use of nomination strategies to indicate membership, as well as his use of personal deixis. He also strongly utilised time as a deixis to position his speech and the required action as an emergency requiring immediate action. In terms of personal deixis, he indicated clearly that although he perceives himself as the leader of the group, he expected his supporters to act for him, thereby excluding himself from the perceived action. Furthermore, his consistent use of perlocutionary speech acts to describe the "negative other" were indicative of his attempt at enforcing a specific mental model of the perceived "other" as something bad, as conspirators and most of all, as a fundamental threat to American democracy and to the US Constitution. As for the role of social cognition in the abuse of power and incitement to violence, I believe the study revealed a strong connection between these elements, and also equally importantly, raised the question on the role of social media in building mental models, shared attitudes and ultimately, shared practises. This argument is based on the question whether Trump would have been able to enforce such a reaction from the audience on the day with his speech alone, had not the relentless social media campaigning to dispute the election results and claim that the elections were stolen impacted the audiences mental models as well as emotions already before the venue, thus creating certain conditioning on both the context models as well as the situational models in the minds and the expectations of the individual participants.

Based on this study, I argue that there is a wealth of opportunities in further study on the role of social cognition in discourse, manipulation and in the incitement to hate and violence. These ideas include, for example, in Linguistics, conducting a study using CDA to compare the different legitimization strategies used by several previous US Presidents (regardless of their political affiliation) to understand to what extent Donald Trump is re-using existing strategies, but only re-defining the positive "Self" and the negative "Other" in his approach. In Political Science, a study on how polarization impacts political discourse in bi-partisan systems compared to parliamentary democracies might also provide new insights on the potential pitfalls and potential sensitivities the political parties as well as the audience at large could perhaps be more aware of. As for Legal studies, the topic of what counts as "harmful content" and "hate speech" online are at the moment extremely relevant themes, but as most of the existing hate speech regulation appears to focus on the protection of the so-called protected

characteristics instead of regulating the act itself, even though international human rights standards and norms (See ICCPR Article 20) also includes an obligation for states to prevent hate speech, it might be useful to examine how the act of hate speech, especially when consisting of invisible, implicit elements in the discourse, could be better included in the relevant regulation on national level, in addition to the continued protection on the protected characteristics. Furthermore, as this study indicates, incitement to hate and violence is possible without using an explicit wording for it, further research on the obligations towards the social media platforms on content moderation, as currently designed for example in the EU Digital Services Act, would perhaps be useful to understand whether the current regulatory planning will be sufficient at all for the purpose it is designed for, or whether focusing on regulating specific wording will potentially just result in those willing to incite hate and violence becoming more skilled in their choice of alternative words, metaphors and euphemisms to drive their cause. Such studies could also benefit from an increased understanding on how the technology companies hosting social media platforms already utilise such things as cognitive processing in their user profiling and targeted advertising, and also whether the increased use of AI-based tools for content moderation would present additional challenges or risks in an improved understanding on the role of social cognition in the abuse of power, manipulation and in the incitement to hate and violence. Finally, another field for further interdisciplinary study for linguistics, legal experts and political scientists together could perhaps focus on the question of accountability; when it is the leader of the country who abuses their power and incites hate and violence, especially in a democratic society based on the rule of law and the respect for human rights, how can CDA best contribute in helping to design such regulation and a legal procedure to ensure that leaders who commit such acts can be adequately held accountable for their actions to help safeguard the country's continued commitment to democracy and the rule of law.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: CNN Transcript of the Trump speech with line numbers

1 The media will not show the magnitude of this crowd. Even I, when I turned on today, I looked,

2 and I saw thousands of people here, but you don't see hundreds of thousands of people behind

3 you because they don't want to show that. We have hundreds of thousands of people here, and

4 I just want them to be recognized by the fake news media. Turn your cameras, please, and show

5 what's really happening out here, because these people are not going to take it any longer.

6 They're not going to take it any longer. Go ahead. Turn your cameras, please. Would you show?

7 They came from all over the world, actually, but they came from all over our country. I just

8 really want to see what they do. I just want to see how they covered. I've never seen anything

9 like it. But it would be really great if we could be covered fairly by the media. The media is the

10 biggest problem we have, as far as I'm concerned, single biggest problem -- the fake news and

11 the big tech. Big tech is now coming into their own. We beat them four years ago. We surprised

12 them. We took them by surprise and this year, they rigged an election. They rigged it like

13 they've never rigged an election before. And by the way, last night they didn't do a bad job

14 either, if you notice. I'm honest.

15 Just, again, I want to thank you. It's just a great honor to have this kind of crowd and to be

16 before you and hundreds of thousands of American patriots who are committed to the honesty

17 of our elections and the integrity of our glorious republic. All of us here today do not want to

18 see our election victory stolen by emboldened radical left Democrats, which is what they're

19 doing, and stolen by the fake news media.

20 That's what they've done and what they're doing. We will never give up. We will never

21 concede. It doesn't happen. You don't concede when there's theft involved.

22 Our country has had enough. We will not take it anymore and that's what this is all about. And

23 to use a favorite term that all of you people really came up with, we will "stop the steal." Today,

24 I will lay out just some of the evidence proving that we won this election, and we won it by a

25 landslide. This was not a close election.

26 You know, I say sometimes jokingly, but there's no joke about it, I've been in two elections. I

27 won them both and the second one, I won much bigger than the first. OK? Almost 75 million

28 people voted for our campaign, the most of any incumbent president by far in the history of our

29 country, 12 million more people than four years ago. And I was told by the real pollsters, we

30 do have real pollsters. They know that we were going to do well, and we were going to win.

31 What I was told, if I went from 63 million, which we had four years ago, to 66 million, there

32 was no chance of losing. Well, we didn't go to 66. We went to 75 million, and they say we lost.

33 We didn't lose.

34 And by the way, does anybody believe that Joe had 80 million votes? Does anybody believe

35 that? He had 80 million computer votes. It's a disgrace. There's never been anything like that.

36 You could take Third World countries. Just take a look, take Third World countries. Their

37 elections are more honest than what we've been going through in this country. It's a disgrace.

38 It's a disgrace. Even when you look at last night, they're all running around like chickens with

39 their heads cut off, with boxes. Nobody knows what the hell is going on. There's never been

40 anything like this. We will not let them silence your voices.

41 We're not going to let it happen. Not going to let it happen.

42 Thank you. And I'd love to have, if those tens of thousands of people would be allowed, the

43 military, the Secret Service, and we want to thank you, and the police, law enforcement. Great.

44 You're doing a great job. But I'd love it if they could be allowed to come up here with us. Is

45 that possible? Can you just let them come up, please? And Rudy [Giuliani], you did a great job.

46 He's got guts. You know what? He's got guts, unlike a lot of people in the Republican Party.

47 He's got guts. He fights. He fights, and I'll tell you.

48 Thank you very much, John [Eastman]. Fantastic job. I watched.

49 That's a tough act to follow, those two. John is one of the most brilliant lawyers in the country,

50 and he looked at this and he said, "What an absolute disgrace, that this could be happening to

51 our Constitution." And he looked at Mike Pence, and I hope Mike is going to do the right thing.

52 I hope so. I hope so, because if Mike Pence does the right thing, we win the election. All he has

53 to do. All -- this is from the number one or certainly one of the top constitutional lawyers in our

54 country. He has the absolute right to do it. We're supposed to protect our country, support our

55 country, support our Constitution and protect our Constitution. States want to revote. The states

56 got defrauded. They were given false information. They voted on it. Now they want to recertify.

57 They want it back. All Vice President Pence has to do is send it back to the states to recertify,

58 and we become president, and you are the happiest people.

59 And I actually, I just spoke to Mike. I said, "Mike, that doesn't take courage. What takes

60 courage is to do nothing. That takes courage," and then we're stuck with a president who lost

61 the election by a lot, and we have to live with that for four more years. We're just not going to

62 let that happen. Many of you have traveled from all across the nation to be here, and I want to

63 thank you for the extraordinary love. That's what it is. There's never been a movement like this

64 ever, ever, for the extraordinary love for this amazing country and this amazing movement.

65 Thank you.

66 By the way, this goes all the way back past the Washington Monument. Do you believe this?

67 Look at this. Unfortunately, they gave the press the prime seats. I can't stand that. No, but you

68 look at that, behind. I wish they'd flip those cameras and look behind you. That is the most

69 amazing sight. When they make a mistake, you get to see it on television. Amazing, amazing,

70 all the way back. And don't worry, we will not take the name off the Washington Monument.

71 We will not. Cancel culture. Tech I don't think that's going to happen. It damn well better not.

72 Although with this administration, if this happens, it could happen. You'll see some really bad

73 things happen.

74 They'll knock out Lincoln too, by the way. They've been taking his statue down. But then we

75 signed a little law. You hurt our monuments, you hurt our heroes, you go to jail for 10 years,

76 and everything stopped. You notice that? It stopped. It all stopped. And they could use Rudy

77 back in New York City.

78 Rudy, they could use you. Your city is going to hell. They want Rudy Giuliani back in New

79 York. We'll get a little younger version of Rudy. Is that OK, Rudy?

80 We're gathered together in the heart of our nation's capital for one very, very basic and simple

81 reason: to save our democracy. Most candidates on election evening -- of course this thing goes

82 on so long, they still don't have any idea what the votes are. We still have congressional seats

83 under review. They have no idea. They've totally lost control. They've used the pandemic as a

84 way of defrauding the people in a proper election. But you know, you know, when you see this

85 and when you see what's happening, number one, they all say, "Sir, we'll never let it happen

86 again." I said, "That's good, but what about eight weeks ago?" You know, they try and get you

87 to go. They say, "Sir, in four years, you're guaranteed." I said, "I'm not interested right now.

88 Do me a favor, go back eight weeks. I want to go back eight weeks. Let's go back eight weeks."

89 We want to go back, and we want to get this right because we're going to have somebody in

90 there that should not be in there and our country will be destroyed, and we're not going to stand

91 for that.

92 For years, Democrats have gotten away with election fraud and weak Republicans, and that's

93 what they are. There's so many weak Republicans. We have great ones, Jim Jordan, and some

94 of these guys.

95 They're out there fighting. The House guys are fighting, but it's incredible. Many of the

96 Republicans, I helped them get in. I helped them get elected. I helped Mitch [McConnell] get

97 elected. I helped -- I could name 24 of them, let's say. I won't bore you with it, and then all of

98   a sudden you have something like this. It's like, "Oh, gee, maybe I'll talk to the President

99   sometime later." No, it's amazing. The weak Republicans, they're pathetic Republicans and

100 that's what happens. If this happened to the Democrats, there'd be hell all over the country

101 going on. There'd be hell all over the country. But just remember this. You're stronger. You're

102 smarter. You've got more going than anybody, and they try and demean everybody having to

103 do with us, and you're the real people. You're the people that built this nation.

104 You're not the people that tore down our nation.

105 The weak Republicans, and that's it. I really believe it. I think I'm going to use the term, the

106 weak Republicans. You got a lot of them, and you got a lot of great ones, but you got a lot of

107 weak ones.

108 They've turned a blind eye even as Democrats enacted policies that chipped away our jobs,

109 weakened our military, threw open our borders and put America last. Did you see the other day

110 where Joe Biden said, "I want to get rid of the America First policy"? What's that all about, get

111 rid of -- how do you say, "I want to get rid of America First"? Even if you're going to do it,

112 don't talk about it, right? Unbelievable, what we have to go through, what we have to go

113 through, and you have to get your people to fight. And if they don't fight, we have to primary

114 the hell out of the ones that don't fight. You primary them. We're going to let you know who

115 they are. I can already tell you, frankly.

116 But this year, using the pretext of the China virus and the scam of mail-in ballots, Democrats

117 attempted the most brazen and outrageous election theft. There's never been anything like this.

118 It's a pure theft in American history. Everybody knows it. That election, our election was over

119 at 10 o'clock in the evening.

120 We're leading Pennsylvania, Michigan, Georgia by hundreds of thousands of votes, and then

121 late in the evening or early in the morning, boom, these explosions of bullshit, and all of a

122 sudden. All of a sudden it started to happen.

123 Don't forget when [Mitt] Romney got beat. Romney. Did you see his -- I wonder if he enjoyed

124 his flight in last night? But when Romney got beaten, you know, he stands up like you're more

125 typical – "Well, I'd like to congratulate the victor." The victor? Who was the victor, Mitt? "I'd

126 like to congratulate." They don't go and look at the facts. Now, I don't know. He got slaughtered

127 probably, maybe it was OK. Maybe it was -- that's what happened. But we look at the facts,

128 and our election was so corrupt that in the history of this country we've never seen anything

129 like it. You can go all the way back. You know, America is blessed with elections. All over the

130 world, they talk about our elections. You know what the world says about us now? They say

131 we don't have free and fair elections. And you know what else? We don't have a free and fair

132 press.

133 Our media is not free. It's not fair. It suppresses thought. It suppresses speech, and it's become

134 the enemy of the people. It's become the enemy of the people. It's the biggest problem we have

135 in this country. No Third World countries would even attempt to do what we caught them doing,

136 and you'll hear about that in just a few minutes. Republicans are constantly fighting like a boxer

137 with his hands tied behind his back. It's like a boxer, and we want to be so nice. We want to be

138 so respectful of everybody, including bad people. And we're going to have to fight much harder,

139 and Mike Pence is going to have to come through for us. And if he doesn't, that will be a sad

140 day for our country because you're sworn to uphold our Constitution. Now it is up to Congress

141 to confront this egregious assault on our democracy.

142 And after this, we're going to walk down -- and I'll be there with you -- we're going to walk

143 down. We're going to walk down any one you want, but I think right here. We're going walk

144 down to the Capitol, and we're going to cheer on our brave senators, and congressmen and

145 women. And we're probably not going to be cheering so much for some of them because you'll

146 never take back our country with weakness. You have to show strength, and you have to be

147 strong.

148 We have come to demand that Congress do the right thing and only count the electors who have

149 been lawfully slated, lawfully slated. I know that everyone here will soon be marching over to

150 the Capitol building to peacefully and patriotically make your voices heard. Today we will see

151 whether Republicans stand strong for integrity of our elections, but whether or not they stand

152 strong for our country, our country. Our country has been under siege for a long time, far longer

153 than this four-year period. We've set it on a much straighter course, a much ... I thought four

154 more years. I thought it would be easy.

155 We created the greatest economy in history. We rebuilt our military. We get you the biggest tax

156 cuts in history. Right? We got you the biggest regulation cuts. There's no president, whether

157 it's four years, eight years, or in one case more, got anywhere near the regulation cuts. It used

158 to take 20 years to get a highway approved. Now we're down to two. I want to get it down to

159 one, but we're down to two. And it may get rejected for environmental or safety reasons, but

160 we got it down the safety. We created Space Force. Look at what we did. Our military has been

161 totally rebuilt. So we create Space Force, which by and of itself is a major achievement for an

162 administration. And with us, it's one of so many different things.

163 Right to try. Everybody knows about right to try. We did things that nobody ever thought

164 possible. We took care of our vets. Our vets, the VA now has the highest rating, 91%, the

165 highest rating that it's had from the beginning, 91% approval rating. Always you watch the VA,

166 when it was on television. Every night people living in a horrible, horrible manner. We got that

167 done. We got accountability done. We got it so that now in the VA, you don't have to wait for

168 four weeks, six weeks, eight weeks, four months to see a doctor. If you can't get a doctor, you

169 go outside, you get the doctor, you have them taken care of.

170 And we pay the doctor. And we've not only made life wonderful for so many people, we've

171 saved tremendous amounts of money, far secondarily, but we've saved a lot of money.

172 And now we have the right to fire bad people in the VA. We had 9,000 people that treated our

173 veterans horribly. In prime time, they would not have treated our veterans badly. But they

174 treated our veterans horribly. And we have what's called the VA Accountability Act. And the

175 Accountability says if we see somebody in there that doesn't treat our vets well, or they steal,

176 they rob, they do things badly, we say, "Joe, you're fired. Get out of here." Before, you couldn't

177 do that. You couldn't do that before.

178 So we've taken care of things. We've done things like nobody's ever thought possible. And

179 that's part of the reason that many people don't like us, because we've done too much, but

180 we've done it quickly.

181 And we were going to sit home and watch a big victory. And everybody had us down for a

182 victory. It was going to be great. And now we're out here fighting. I said to somebody, I was

183 going to take a few days and relax after our big electoral victory. Ten o'clock, it was over. But

184 I was going to take a few days.

185 And I can say this, since our election, I believe, which was a catastrophe when I watch and even

186 these guys knew what happened, they know what happened. They're saying, "Wow,

187 Pennsylvania's insurmountable. Wow, Wisconsin, look at the big leads we had." Even though

188 the press said we were going to lose Wisconsin by 17 points. Even though the press said Ohio

189 is going to be close, we set a record. Florida's going to be close -- we set a record. Texas is

190 going to be close. Texas is going to be close -- we set a record. And we set a record with

191 Hispanic, with the Black community. We set a record with everybody.

192 Today, we see a very important event though, because right over there, right there, we see the

193 event going to take place. And I'm going to be watching, because history is going to be made.

194 We're going to see whether or not we have great and courageous leaders or whether or not we

195 have leaders that should be ashamed of themselves throughout history, throughout eternity,

196 they'll be ashamed. And you know what? If they do the wrong thing, we should never ever

197 forget that they did. Never forget. We should never ever forget. With only three of the seven

198 states in question, we win the presidency of the United States.

199   And by the way, it's much more important today than it was 24 hours ago. Because I spoke to

200   David Perdue, what a great person, and Kelly Loeffler, two great people, but it was a setup.

201   And, you know, I said, "We have no back line anymore." The only back line, the only line of

202   demarcation, the only line that we have is the veto of the President of the United States. So this

203   is now what we're doing, a far more important election than it was two days ago.

204   I want to thank the more than 140 members of the House. Those are warriors. They're over

205   there working like you've never seen before, studying, talking, actually going all the way back,

206   studying the roots of the Constitution, because they know we have the right to send a bad vote

207   that was illegally got.

208   They gave these people bad things to vote for and they voted, because what did they know?

209   And then when they found out a few weeks later -- again, it took them four years to devise

210   history. And the only unhappy person in the United States, single most unhappy, is Hillary

211   Clinton because she said, "Why didn't you do this for me four years ago? Why didn't you do

212   this for me four years ago? Change the votes! 10,000 in Michigan. You could have changed the

213   whole thing!" But she's not too happy. You notice you don't see her anymore. What happened?

214   Where is Hillary? Where is she?

215   But I want to thank all of those congressmen and women. I also want to thank our 13 most

216   courageous members of the US Senate, Sen. Ted Cruz, Sen. Ron Johnson, Sen. Josh Hawley,

217   Kelly Loeffler. And Kelly Loeffler, I'll tell you, she's been so great. She works so hard. So let's

218   give her and David a little special -- because it was rigged against them. Let's give her and

219   David. Kelly Loeffler, David Perdue. They fought a good race. They never had a shot. That

220   equipment should never have been allowed to be used, and I was telling these people don't let

221   them use this stuff. Marsha Blackburn, terrific person. Mike Braun, Indiana. Steve Daines, great

222   guy. Bill Hagerty, John Kennedy, James Lankford, Cynthia Lummis. Tommy Tuberville, the

223   coach. And Roger Marshall. We want to thank them, senators that stepped up, we want to thank

224   them.

225   I actually think, though, it takes, again, more courage not to step up. And I think a lot of those

226   people are going to find that out, and you better start looking at your leadership because the

227   leadership has led you down the tubes. You know? "We don't want to give $2,000 to people.

228   We want to give them $600." Oh, great. How does that play politically? Pretty good? And this

229   has nothing to do with politics. But how does it play politically? China destroyed these people.

230   We didn't destroy -- China destroyed them, totally destroyed them. We want to give them $600,

231   and they just wouldn't change. I said, "Give them $2,000. We'll pay it back. We'll pay it back

232   fast. You already owe 26 trillion. Give them a couple of bucks. Let them live. Give them a

233   couple of bucks!"

234   And some of the people here disagree with me on that. But I just say, look, you got to let people

235   live.

236   And how does that play though? OK, number one, it's the right thing to do. But how does that

237   play politically? I think it's the primary reason, one of the primary reasons, the other was just

238   pure cheating.

239   That was the super primary reason. But you can't do that. You got to use your head.

240   As you know the media has constantly asserted the outrageous lie that there was no evidence

241   of widespread fraud. You ever see these people? "While there is no evidence of fraud" -- oh,

242   really? Well, I'm going to read you pages. I hope you don't get bored listening to it. Promise?

243   Don't get bored listening to it, all those hundreds of thousands of people back there. Move them

244   up, please. Yeah. All these people, don't get bored. Don't get angry at me because you're going

245   to get bored because it's so much. The American people do not believe the corrupt fake news

246   anymore. They have ruined their reputation.

247   But it used to be that they'd argue with me, I'd fight. So I'd fight, they'd fight. I'd fight, they'd

248   fight.

249   Boop-boop. You'd believe me, you'd believe them. Somebody comes out. You know. They

250   had their point of view, I had my point of view. But you'd have an argument. Now what they

251   do is they go silent.

252   It's called suppression. And that's what happens in a communist country. That's what they do.

253   They suppress. You don't fight with them anymore, unless it's a bad story. If they have a little

254   bad story about me, they'll make it 10 times worse and it's a major headline. But Hunter Biden,

255   they don't talk about him. What happened to Hunter? Where's Hunter? Where is Hunter? They

256   don't talk about him.

257   Now watch, all the sets will go off. Well, they can't do that because they get good ratings. The

258   ratings are too good. Now where is Hunter? And how come Joe was allowed to give a billion

259   dollars of money to get rid of the prosecutor in Ukraine? How does that happen? I'd ask you

260   that question. How does that happen? Can you imagine if I said that? If I said that it would be

261   a whole different ball game. And how come Hunter gets three and a half million dollars from

262   the mayor of Moscow's wife, and gets hundreds of thousands of dollars to sit on an energy

263   board even though he admits he has no knowledge of energy, and millions of dollars up front,

264   and how come they go into China and they leave with billions of dollars to manage? "Have you

265   managed money before?" "No, I haven't." "Oh, that's good. Here's about $3 billion."

266   No, they don't talk about that. No, we have a corrupt media. They've gone silent. They've gone

267   dead. I now realize how good it was if you go back 10 years. I realize how good, even though

268   I didn't necessarily love him, I realized how good, it was like a cleansing motion. Right? But

269   we don't have that anymore.

270   We don't have a fair media anymore. It's suppression, and you have to be very careful with

271   that. And they've lost all credibility in this country. We will not be intimidated into accepting

272   the hoaxes and the lies that we've been forced to believe over the past several weeks. We've

273   amassed overwhelming evidence about a fake election. This is the presidential election. Last

274   night was a little bit better because of the fact that we had a lot of eyes watching one specific

275   state, but they cheated like hell anyway.

276   You have one of the dumbest governors in the United States. And, you know, when I endorsed

277   him, I didn't know this guy. At the request of David Perdue. He said, "A friend of mine is

278   running for governor."

279   "What's his name?" And you know the rest. He was in fourth place, fifth place. I don't know.

280   He was way -- He was doing poorly. I endorsed him. He went like a rocket ship and he won.

281   And then I had to beat

282   Stacey Abrams with this guy, Brian Kemp. I had to beat Stacey Abrams and I had to beat Oprah,

283   used to be a friend of mine. I was on her last show. Her last week she picked the five outstanding

284   people. I don't think she thinks that anymore. Once I ran for president, I didn't notice there

285   were too many calls coming in from Oprah. Believe it or not, she used to like me, but I was one

286   of the five outstanding people.

287   And I had a campaign against Michelle Obama and Barack Hussein Obama against Stacey. And

288   I had Brian Kemp, he weighs 130 pounds. He said he played offensive line in football. I'm

289   trying to figure that. I'm still trying to figure that out. He said that the other night, "I was an

290   offensive lineman." I'm saying, "Really? That must've been a very small team." But I look at

291   that and I look at what's happened, and he turned out to be a disaster. This stuff happens.

292   You know, look, I'm not happy with the Supreme Court. They love to rule against me. I picked

293   three people. I fought like hell for them, one in particular I fought. They all said, "Sir, cut him

294   loose. He's killing us." The senators, you know, very loyal senators. They're very loyal people.

295   "Sir, cut him loose. He's killing us, sir. Cut him loose, sir." I must've gotten half of the senators.

296   I said, "No, I can't do that. It's unfair to him. And it's unfair to the family. He didn't do anything

297   wrong. They're made-up stories. They were all made-up stories. He didn't do anything wrong."

298   "Cut him loose, sir." I said, "No, I won't do that." We got him through. And you know what?

299   They couldn't give a damn. They couldn't give a damn.

300 Let them rule the right way, but it almost seems that they're all going out of their way to hurt

301 all of us, and to hurt our country. To hurt our country.

302 You know, I read a story in one of the newspapers recently, how I control the three Supreme

303 Court justices. I control them. They're puppets. I read it about Bill Barr, that he's my personal

304 attorney. That he'll do anything for me. And I said, "You know, it really is genius," because

305 what they do is that, and it makes it really impossible for them to ever give you a victory,

306 because all of a sudden Bill Barr changed,

307 if you hadn't noticed. I like Bill Barr, but he changed, because he didn't want to be considered

308 my personal attorney. And the Supreme Court, they rule against me so much. You know why?

309 Because the story is I haven't spoken to any of them, any of them, since virtually they got in.

310 But the story is that they're my puppet. That they're puppets. And now that the only way they

311 can get out of that, because they hate that, it's not good in the social circuit. And the only way

312 they get out is to rule against Trump.

313 So let's rule against Trump, and they do that. So I want to congratulate them.

314 But it shows you the media's genius. In fact, probably, if I was the media, I'd do it the same

315 way. I hate to say it. But we got to get them straightened out. Today, for the sake of our

316 democracy, for the sake of our Constitution, and for the sake of our children, we lay out the

317 case for the entire world to hear. You want to hear it?

318 In every single swing state, local officials, state officials, almost all Democrats made illegal and

319 unconstitutional changes to election procedures without the mandated approvals by the state

320 legislatures, that these changes paved the way for fraud on a scale never seen before. And I

321 think we'd go a long way outside of our country when I say that.

322 So just in a nutshell, you can't make a change on voting for a federal election unless the state

323 legislature approves it. No judge can do it. Nobody can do it, only a legislature. So as an

324 example in Pennsylvania or whatever, you have a Republican legislature, you have a Democrat

325 mayor, and you have a lot of Democrats all over the place. They go to the legislature, the

326 legislature laughs at them. Says, "We're not going to do that." They say, "Thank you very

327 much." And they go and make the changes themselves.

328 They do it anyway. And that's totally illegal. That's totally illegal. You can't do that.

329 In Pennsylvania, the Democrat secretary of state and the Democrat state Supreme Court justices

330 illegally abolished the signature verification requirements just 11 days prior to the election. So

331 think of what they did. No longer is there signature verification. Oh, that's OK. We want voter

332 ID, by the way. But no longer is there signature verification, 11 days before the election! They

333 say, "We don't want it." You know why they don't want it? Because they want to cheat. That's

334   the only reason. Who would even think of that? We don't want to verify a signature? There

335   were over 205,000 more ballots counted in Pennsylvania. Now think of this. You had 205,000

336   more ballots than you had voters. That means you had 200 -- where did they come from? You

337   know where they came from? Somebody's imagination.

338   Whatever they needed. So in Pennsylvania you had 205,000 more votes than you had voters!

339   And it's --the number is actually much greater than that now. That was as of a week ago. And

340   this is a mathematical impossibility, unless you want to say it's a total fraud. So Pennsylvania

341   was defrauded.

342   Over 8,000 ballots in Pennsylvania were cast by people whose names and dates of birth match

343   individuals who died in 2020 and prior to the election. Think of that. Dead people! Lots of dead

344   people, thousands. And some dead people actually requested an application. That bothers me

345   even more. Not only are they voting, they want an application to vote. One of them was 29

346   years ago died. It's incredible.

347   Over 14,000 ballots were cast by out-of-state voters. So these are voters that don't live in the

348   state. And by the way, these numbers are what they call outcome determinative. Meaning these

349   numbers far surpass -- I lost by a very little bit. These numbers are massive. Massive. More

350   than 10,000 votes in Pennsylvania were illegally counted, even though they were received after

351   Election Day. In other words, "They were received after Election Day, let's count them

352   anyway!" And what they did in many cases is they did fraud. They took the date and they moved

353   it back, so that it no longer is after Election Day. And more than 60,000 ballots in Pennsylvania

354   were reported received back. They got back before they were ever supposedly mailed out. In

355   other words, you got the ballot back before you mailed it! Which is also logically and

356   logistically impossible, right? Think of that one. You got the ballot back. Let's send the ballots.

357   Oh, they've already been sent. But we got the ballot back before they were sent. I don't think

358   that's too good.

359   Twenty-five thousand ballots in Pennsylvania were requested by nursing home residents, all in

360   a single giant batch -- not legal -- indicating an enormous illegal ballot-harvesting operation.

361   You're not allowed to do it. It's against the law. The day before the election, the state of

362   Pennsylvania reported the number of absentee ballots that had been sent out. Yet this number

363   was suddenly and drastically increased by 400,000 people. It was increased. Nobody knows

364   where it came from -- by 400,000 ballots. One day after the election, it remains totally

365   unexplained. They said, "Well, we can't figure that." Now that's many, many times what it

366   would take to overthrow the state. Just that one element. 400,000 ballots appeared from

367   nowhere, right after the election.

368 By the way, Pennsylvania has now seen all of this. They didn't know because it was so quick.

369 They had a vote, they voted, but now they see all this stuff. It's all come to light. Doesn't happen

370 that fast. And they want to recertify their votes. They want to recertify. But the only way that

371 can happen is if Mike Pence agrees to send it back.

372 Mike Pence has to agree to send it back. And many people in Congress want it sent back, and

373 think of what you're doing. Let's say you don't do it. Somebody says, "Well, we have to obey

374 the Constitution."

375 And you are, because you're protecting our country and you're protecting the Constitution, so

376 you are.

377 But think of what happens. Let's say they're stiffs and they're stupid people. And they say,

378 "Well, we really have no choice." Even though Pennsylvania and other states want to redo their

379 votes, they want to see the numbers. They already have the numbers. Go very quickly and they

380 want to redo their legislature because many of these votes were taken, as I said, because it

381 wasn't approved by their legislature. That in itself is illegal and then you have the scam and

382 that's all of the things that we're talking about. But think of this: If you don't do that, that means

383 you will have a president of the United States for four years, with his wonderful son.

384 You will have a president who lost all of these states, or you will have a president, to put it

385 another way, who was voted on by a bunch of stupid people who lost all of these things. You

386 will have an illegitimate president, that's what you'll have. And we can't let that happen. These

387 are the facts that you won't hear from the fake news media. It's all part of the suppression effort.

388 They don't want to talk about it. They don't want to talk about it. In fact, when I started talking

389 about that, I guarantee you a lot of the television sets and a lot of those cameras went off and

390 that's how a lot of cameras back there. But a lot of them went off, but these are the things you

391 don't hear about. You don't hear what you just heard.

392 And I'm going to go over a few more states. But you don't hear it by the people who want to

393 deceive you and demoralize you and control you -- big tech, media.

394 Just like the suppression polls that said we're going to lose Wisconsin by 17 points. Well, we

395 won Wisconsin. They don't have it that way because they lose just by a little sliver. But they

396 had me down the day before. Washington Post/ABC poll: down 17 points. I called up a real

397 pollster. I said, "What is that?" "Sir, that's called a suppression poll. I think you're going to win

398 Wisconsin, sir." I said, "But why do they make it 4 or 5 points?" "Because then people vote.

399 But when you're down 17, they say, 'Hey, I'm not going to waste my time. I love the President,

400 but there's no way.'" Despite that, despite that, we won Wisconsin. We're going to see. We're

401 going to see. But that's called suppression because a lot of people, when they see that, it's very

402   interesting. This pollster said, "Sir, if you're down 3, 4 or 5, people vote. When you go down

403   17, they say, 'Let's save, let's go and have dinner, and let's watch the presidential defeat tonight

404   on television darling.' "

405   And just like the radical left tries to blacklist you on social media, every time I put out a tweet,

406   even if it's totally correct, totally correct, I get a flag. I get a flag. And they also don't let you

407   get out. On Twitter, it's very hard to come onto my account. It's very hard to get out a message.

408   They don't let the message get out nearly like they should, but I've had many people say, "I

409   can't get on your Twitter." I don't care about Twitter. Twitter is bad news. They're all bad

410   news. But you know what? If you want to get out of message, and if you want to go through

411   big tech, social media, they are really, if you're a conservative, if you're a Republican, if you

412   have a big voice, I guess they call it shadow ban, right? Shadow ban. They shadow ban you,

413   and it should be illegal. I've been telling these Republicans get rid of Section 230.

414   And for some reason, Mitch and the group, they don't want to put it in there. And they don't

415   realize that that's going to be the end of the Republican Party as we know it, but it's never going

416   to be the end of us, never. Let them get out. Let the weak ones get out. This is a time for strength.

417   They also want to indoctrinate your children in school by teaching them things that aren't so.

418   They want to indoctrinate your children. It's all part of the comprehensive assault on our

419   democracy and the American people to finally standing up and saying no. This crowd is, again,

420   a testament to it. I did no advertising. I did nothing. You do have some groups that are big

421   supporters. I want to thank that -- Amy [Kremer] and everybody. We have some incredible

422   supporters, incredible, but we didn't do anything. This just happened.

423   Two months ago, we had a massive crowd come down to Washington. I said, "What are they

424   there for?" "Sir, they're there for you." We have nothing to do with it. These groups, they're

425   forming all over the United States. And we got to remember, in a year from now, you're going

426   to start working on Congress. And we got to get rid of the weak congresspeople, the ones that

427   aren't any good, the Liz Cheneys of the world, we got to get rid of them. We got to get rid --

428   you know, she never wants a soldier brought home.

429   I've brought a lot of our soldiers home. I don't know, some like it. They're in countries that

430   nobody even knows the name. Nobody knows where they are. They're dying. They're great,

431   but they're dying. They're losing their arms, their legs, their face. I brought them back home,

432   largely back home, Afghanistan, Iraq.

433   Remember I used to say in the old days, "Don't go into Iraq. But if you go in, keep the oil." We

434   didn't keep the oil. So stupid. So stupid, these people. And Iraq has billions and billions of

435   dollars now in the bank. And what did we do? We get nothing. We never get. But we do actually,

436 we kept the oil here. We did good. We got rid of the ISIS caliphate. We got rid of plenty of

437 different things that everybody knows and the rebuilding of our military in three years, people

438 said it couldn't be done. And it was all made in the USA, all made in the USA. Best equipment

439 in the world. In Wisconsin, corrupt Democrat run cities deployed more than 500 illegal

440 unmanned, unsecured drop boxes, which collected a minimum of 91,000 unlawful votes. It was

441 razor thin, the loss. This one thing alone is much more than we would need, but there are many

442 things.

443 They have these lockboxes and they pick them up and they disappear for two days. People

444 would say, "Where's that box?" They disappeared. Nobody even knew where the hell it was.

445 In addition, over 170,000 absentee votes were counted in Wisconsin without a valid absentee

446 ballot application. So they had a vote, but they had no application. And that's illegal in

447 Wisconsin. Meaning those votes were blatantly done in opposition to state law. And they came

448 100% from Democrat areas, such as Milwaukee and Madison, 100%. In Madison, 17,000 votes

449 were deposited in so-called human drop boxes. You know what that is, right? Where operatives

450 stuff thousands of unsecured ballots into duffel bags on park benches across the city in complete

451 defiance of cease and desist letters from state legislatures. Your state legislature said, "Don't

452 do it." They're the only ones that could approve it. They gave tens of thousands of votes.

453 They came in, in duffel bags. Where the hell did they come from? According to eyewitness

454 testimony, postal service workers in Wisconsin were also instructed to illegally backdate

455 approximately 100,000 ballots. The margin of difference in Wisconsin was less than 20,000

456 votes. Each one of these things alone wins us the state. Great state, we love the state, we won

457 the state. In Georgia, your secretary of state, who -- I can't believe this guy's a Republican. He

458 loves recording telephone conversations. I thought it

459 was a great conversation personally, so did a lot of other -- people love that conversation,

460 because it says what's going on. These people are crooked. They're 100%, in my opinion, one

461 of the most corrupt between your governor and your secretary of state. And now you have it

462 again last night, just take a look at what happened, what a mess. And the Democrat party

463 operatives entered into an illegal and unconstitutional settlement agreement that drastically

464 weakened signature verification and other election security procedures.

465 Stacey Abrams, she took them to lunch. And I beat her two years ago with a bad candidate,

466 Brian Kemp.

467 But they took -- the Democrats took the Republicans to lunch because the secretary of state had

468 no clue what the hell was happening, unless he did have a clue. That's interesting. Maybe he

469 was with the other side, but we've been trying to get verifications of signatures in Fulton

470 County. They won't let us do it.

471 The only reason they won't is because we'll find things in the hundreds of thousands. Why

472 wouldn't they let us verify signatures in Fulton County, which is known for being very corrupt?

473 They won't do it. They go to some other county where you would live. I said, "That's not the

474 problem. The problem is Fulton County." Home of Stacey Abrams. She did a good job. I

475 congratulate her, but it was done in such a way that we can't let this stuff happen.

476 We won't have a country if it happens. As a result, Georgia's absentee ballot rejection rate was

477 more than 10 times lower than previous levels, because the criteria was so off. Forty-eight

478 counties in Georgia with thousands and thousands of votes rejected zero ballots. There wasn't

479 one ballot. In other words, in a year in which more mail-in ballots were sent than ever before,

480 and more people were voting by mail for the first time, the rejection rate was drastically lower

481 than it had ever been before. The only way this can be explained is if tens of thousands of

482 illegitimate votes were added to the tally. That's the only way you could explain it. By the way,

483 you're talking about tens of thousands. If Georgia had merely rejected the same number of

484 unlawful ballots, as in other years, there should have been approximately 45,000 ballots rejected

485 -- far more than what we needed to win, just over 11,000.

486 They should find those votes. They should absolutely find that. Just over 11,000 votes, that's

487 all we need. They defrauded us out of a win in Georgia, and we're not going to forget it. There's

488 only one reason the Democrats could possibly want to eliminate signature matching, oppose

489 voter ID and stop citizenship confirmation. Are you a citizenship? (sic) You're not allowed to

490 ask that question. Because they want to steal the election. The radical left knows exactly what

491 they're doing. They're ruthless and it's time that somebody did something about it. And Mike

492 Pence, I hope you're going to stand up for the good of our Constitution and for the good of our

493 country. And if you're not, I'm going to be very disappointed in you. I will tell you right now.

494 I'm not hearing good stories. In Fulton County, Republican poll watchers were ejected, in some

495 cases physically, from the room under the false pretense of a pipe burst.

496 Water main burst, everybody leave. Which we now know was a total lie. Then election officials

497 pulled boxes -- Democrats -- and suitcases of ballots out from under a table. You all saw it on

498 television. Totally fraudulent. And illegally scanned them for nearly two hours totally

499 unsupervised. Tens of thousands of votes, as that coincided with a mysterious vote dump of up

500 to 100,000 votes for Joe Biden, almost none for Trump. Oh, that sounds fair. That was at 1:34

501 a.m. The Georgia secretary of state and pathetic governor of Georgia -- although he says, I'm a

502 great president. You know, I sort of maybe have to – He said the other day, "Yes, I disagree

503 with (the) president but he's been a great president." OK. Thank you very much. Because of

504 him and others -- Brian Kemp, vote him the hell out of office, please.

505 Well, his rates are so low, his approval rating now, I think it just reached a record low. They've

506 rejected five separate appeals for an independent and comprehensive audit of signatures in

507 Fulton County. Even without an audit, the number of fraudulent ballots that we've identified

508 across the state is staggering.

509 Over 10,300 ballots in Georgia were cast by individuals whose names and dates of birth match

510 Georgia residents who died in 2020 and prior to the election. More than 2,500 ballots were cast

511 by individuals whose names and dates of birth match incarcerated felons in Georgia prison.

512 People who are not allowed to vote. More than 4,500 illegal ballots were cast by individuals

513 who do not appear on the state's own voter rolls. Over 18,000 illegal ballots were cast by

514 individuals who registered to vote using an address listed as vacant, according to the Postal

515 Service. At least 88,000 ballots in Georgia were cast by people whose registrations were

516 illegally backdated.

517 Sixty-six thousand votes -- each one of these is far more than we need. Sixty-six thousand votes

518 in Georgia were cast by individuals under the legal voting age. And at least 15,000 ballots were

519 cast by individuals who moved out of the state prior to (the) November 3 election. They say

520 they moved right back. They move right back. Oh, they moved out. They moved right back.

521 OK. They miss Georgia that much. I do. I love Georgia, but it's a corrupt system. Despite all

522 of this, the margin in Georgia is only 11,779 votes. Each and every one of these issues is enough

523 to give us a victory in Georgia, a big, beautiful victory. Make no mistake, this election stolen

524 from you, from me and from the country. And not a single swing state has conducted a

525 comprehensive audit to remove the illegal ballots. This should absolutely occur in every single

526 contested state before the election is certified.

527 In the state of Arizona, over 36,000 ballots were illegally cast by non-citizens. Two-thousand

528 ballots were returned with no address. More than 22,000 ballots were returned before they were

529 ever supposedly mailed out. They returned, but we haven't mailed them yet. Eleven thousand

530 six hundred more ballots and votes were counted more than there were actual voters. You see

531 that? So you have more votes, again, than you have voters.

532 One hundred fifty thousand people registered in (Maricopa) County after the registration

533 deadline. One hundred three thousand ballots in the county were sent for electronic adjudication

534 with no Republican observers. In Clark County, Nevada, the accuracy settings on signature

535 verification machines were purposely lowered before they were used to count over 130,000

536 ballots. If you signed your name as Santa Claus, it would go through. There were also more

than 42,000 double votes in Nevada. Over 150,000 people were hurt so badly by what took place. And 1,500 ballots were cast by individuals whose names and dates of birth match Nevada residents who died in 2020, prior to (the) November 3 election.

More than 8,000 votes were cast by individuals who had no address and probably didn't live there. The margin in Nevada is down at a very low number. Any of these things would have taken care of the situation.

We would have won Nevada, also. Every one of these we're going over, we win. In Michigan quickly, the secretary of state, a real great one, flooded the state with unsolicited mail-in ballot applications, sent to every person on the rolls, in direct violation of state law. More than 17,000 Michigan ballots were cast by individuals whose names and dates of birth matched people who were deceased. In Wayne County -- that's a great one, that's Detroit -- 174,000 ballots were counted without being tied to an actual registered voter. Nobody knows where they came from. Also in Wayne County, poll watchers observed canvassers re-scanning batches of ballots over and over again, up to three or four or five times. In Detroit, turnout was 139% of registered voters. Think of that. So you had 139% of the people in Detroit voting. This is in Michigan -- Detroit, Michigan.

A career employee of the Detroit, City of Detroit, testified under penalty of perjury that she witnessed city workers coaching voters to vote straight Democrat, while accompanying them to watch who they voted for. When a Republican came in, they wouldn't talk to him. The same worker was instructed not to ask for any voter ID and not to attempt to validate any signatures if they were Democrats. She (was) also told to illegally and was told, backdate ballots received after the deadline and reports that thousands and thousands of ballots were improperly backdated. That's Michigan. Four witnesses have testified under penalty of perjury that after officials in Detroit announced the last votes had been counted, tens of thousands of additional ballots arrived without required envelopes. Every single one was for a Democrat. I got no votes. At 6:31 a.m., in the early morning hours after voting had ended, Michigan suddenly reported 147,000 votes. An astounding 94% went to Joe Biden, who campaigned brilliantly from his basement. Only a couple of percentage points went to Trump. Such gigantic and one-sided vote dumps were only observed in a few swing states and they were observed in the states where it was necessary. You know what's interesting, President Obama beat Biden in every state other than the swing states where Biden killed him. But the swing States were the ones that mattered. There were always just enough to push Joe Biden barely into the lead. We were ahead by a lot and within the number of hours we were losing by a little.

570   In addition, there is the highly troubling matter of Dominion Voting Systems. In one Michigan

571   county alone, 6,000 votes were switched from Trump to Biden and the same systems are used

572   in the majority of states in our country. Sen. William Ligon, a great gentleman, chairman of

573   Georgia Senate Judiciary Subcommittee, Senator Ligon, highly respected on elections has

574   written a letter describing his concerns with Dominion in Georgia.

575   He wrote, and I quote, "The Dominion voting machines employed in Fulton County had an

576   astronomical and astounding 93.67% error rate." It's only wrong 93% of the time. "In the

577   scanning of ballots requiring a review panel to adjudicate or determine the voter's interest, in

578   over 106,000 ballots out of a total of 113,000." Think of it, you go in and you vote and then

579   they tell people who you're supposed to be voting for. They make up whatever they want.

580   Nobody's ever even heard. They adjudicate your vote. They say, "Well, we don't think Trump

581   wants to vote for Trump. We think he wants to vote for Biden. Put it down for Biden." The

582   national average for such an error rate is far less than 1% and yet you're at 93%. "The source

583   of this astronomical error rate must be identified to determine if these machines were set up or

584   destroyed to allow for a third party to disregard the actual ballot cast by the registered voter."

585   The letter continues, "There is clear evidence that tens of thousands of votes were switched

586   from President Trump to former Vice President Biden in several counties in Georgia. For

587   example, in Bibb County, President Trump was reported to have 29, 391 votes at 9:11 PM

588   eastern time. While simultaneously Vice President Joe Biden was reported to have 17,213.

589   Minutes later, just minutes, at the next update, these vote numbers switched with President

590   Trump going way down to 17,000 and Biden going way up to 29,391." And that was very quick,

591   a 12,000 vote switch, all in Mr. Biden's favor. So, I mean, I could go on and on about this fraud

592   that took place in every state and all of these legislatures want this back. I don't want to do it to

593   you because I love you and it's freezing out here, but I could just go on forever. I can tell you

594   this.

595   So when you hear, when you hear, "While there is no evidence to prove any wrongdoing," this

596   is the most fraudulent thing anybody's -- This is a criminal enterprise. This is a criminal

597   enterprise and the press will say, and I'm sure they won't put any of that on there because that's

598   no good, do you ever see, "While there is no evidence to back President Trump's assertion," I

599   could go on for another hour reading this stuff to you and telling you about it. There's never

600   been anything like it. Think about it, Detroit had more votes than it had voters. Pennsylvania

601   had 205,000 more votes than it had more -- but you don't have to go any -- Between that, I

602   think that's almost better than dead people, if you think, right? More votes than they had voters,

603   and many other States are also.

604   It's a disgrace that the United States of America, tens of millions of people are allowed to go

605   vote without so much as even showing identification. In no state is there any question or effort

606   made to verify the identity, citizenship, residency, or eligibility of the votes cast. The

607   Republicans have to get tougher. You're not going to have a Republican Party if you don't get

608   tougher. They want to play so straight, they want to play so, "Sir, yes, the United States, the

609   Constitution doesn't allow me to send them back to the States." Well, I say, "Yes, it does

610   because the Constitution says you have to protect our country and you have to protect our

611   Constitution and you can't vote on fraud, and fraud breaks up everything, doesn't it?" When

612   you catch somebody in a fraud, you're allowed to go by very different rules. So I hope Mike

613   has the courage to do what he has to do. And I hope he doesn't listen to the RINOs and the

614   stupid people that he's listening to. It is also widely understood that the voter rolls are crammed

615   full of non-citizens, felons and people who have moved out of state and individuals who are

616   otherwise ineligible to vote. Yet Democrats oppose every effort to clean up their voter rolls.

617   They don't want to clean them up. They are loaded. And how many people here know other

618   people that when the hundreds of thousands and then millions of ballots got sent out, got three,

619   four, five, six, and I heard one who got seven ballots. And then they say, "You didn't quite

620   make it, sir." We won. We won in a landslide. This was a landslide.

621   They said, "It's not American to challenge the election." This is the most corrupt election in the

622   history, maybe of the world. You know, you could go (to) Third World countries, but I don't

623   think they had hundreds of thousands of votes and they don't have voters for them. I mean, no

624   matter where you go, nobody would think this. In fact, it's so egregious, it's so bad, that a lot

625   of people don't even believe it.

626   It's so crazy that people don't even believe it. It can't be true. So they don't believe it. This is

627   not just a matter of domestic politics, this is a matter of national security. So today, in addition

628   to challenging the certification of the election, I'm calling on Congress and the state legislatures

629   to quickly pass sweeping election reforms, and you better do it before we have no country left.

630   Today is not the end. It's just the beginning.

631   With your help over the last four years, we built the greatest political movement in the history

632   of our country and nobody even challenges that. I say that over and over, and I never get

633   challenged by the fake news, and they challenge almost everything we say. But our fight against

634   the big donors, big media, big tech and others is just getting started. This is the greatest in

635   history. There's never been a movement like that. You look back there all the way to the

636   Washington Monument. It's hard to believe. We must stop the steal and then we must ensure

637   that such outrageous election fraud never happens again, can never be allowed to happen again,

638 but we're going forward. We'll take care of going forward. We got to take care of going back.

639 Don't let them talk, "OK, well we promise," I've had a lot of people, "Sir, you're at 96% for

640 four years." I said, "I'm not interested right now. I'm interested in right there."

641 With your help we will finally pass powerful requirements for voter ID. You need an ID to cash

642 your check. You need an ID to go to a bank, to buy alcohol, to drive a car. Every person should

643 need to show an ID in order to cast your most important thing, a vote. We will also require

644 proof of American citizenship in order to vote in American elections. We just had a good victory

645 in court on that one, actually. We will ban ballot harvesting and prohibit the use of unsecured

646 drop boxes to commit rampant fraud. These drop boxes are fraudulent. There for, they get --

647 they disappear and then all of a sudden they show up. It's fraudulent. We will stop the practice

648 of universal, unsolicited mail-in balloting. We will clean up the voter rolls that ensure that every

649 single person who cast a vote is a citizen of our country, a resident of the state in which they

650 vote and their vote is cast in a lawful and honest manner. We will restore the vital civic tradition

651 of in-person voting on Election Day so that voters can be fully informed when they make their

652 choice. We will finally hold big tech accountable and if these people had courage and guts, they

653 would get rid of Section 230, something that no other company, no other person in America, in

654 the world, has.

655 All of these tech monopolies are going to abuse their power and interfere in our elections and

656 it has to be stopped and the Republicans have to get a lot tougher and so should the Democrats.

657 They should be regulated, investigated and brought to justice under the fullest extent of the law.

658 They're totally breaking the law. Together we will drain the Washington swamp and we will

659 clean up the corruption in our nation's capital. We have done a big job on it, but you think it's

660 easy, it's a dirty business. It's a dirty business. You have a lot of bad people out there. Despite

661 everything we've been through, looking out all over this country and seeing fantastic crowds,

662 although this I think is our all-time record. I think you have 250,000 people. Two hundred fifty

663 thousand!

664 Looking out at all the amazing patriots here today, I have never been more confident in our

665 nation's future. Well, I have to say we have to be a little bit careful. That's a nice statement, but

666 we have to be a little careful with that statement. If we allow this group of people to illegally

667 take over our country, because it's illegal when the votes are illegal, when the way they got

668 there is illegal, when the States that vote are given false and fraudulent information. We are the

669 greatest country on Earth and we are headed, and were headed, in the right direction. You know,

670 the wall is built. We're doing record numbers at the wall. Now they want to take down the wall.

671 Let's let everyone flow in. Let's let everybody flow in.

672   We did a great job in the wall. Remember the wall? They said it could never be done. One of

673   the largest infrastructure projects we've ever had in this country and it's had a tremendous

674   impact and we got rid of catch and release, we got rid of all of the stuff that we had to live with.

675   But now the caravans, they think Biden's getting in, the caravans are forming again. They want

676   to come in again and rip off our country. Can't let it happen. As this enormous crowd shows,

677   we have truth and justice on our side. We have a deep and enduring love for America in our

678   hearts. We love our country. We have overwhelming pride in this great country, and we have it

679   deep in our souls. Together we are determined to defend and preserve government of the people,

680   by the people and for the people.

681   Our brightest days are before us. Our greatest achievements still wait. I think one of our great

682   achievements will be election security because nobody until I came along, had any idea how

683   corrupt our elections were. And again, most people would stand there at 9:00 in the evening

684   and say, "I want to thank you very much," and they go off to some other life, but I said,

685   "Something's wrong here. Something's really wrong. Can't have happened." And we fight. We

686   fight like hell and if you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country anymore.

687   Our exciting adventures and boldest endeavors have not yet begun. My fellow Americans, for

688   our movement, for our children and for our beloved country, and I say this, despite all that's

689   happened, the best is yet to come.

690   So we're going to, we're going to walk down Pennsylvania Avenue, I love Pennsylvania

691   Avenue, and we're going to the Capitol and we're going to try and give -- the Democrats are

692   hopeless. They're never voting for anything, not even one vote. But we're going to try and give

693   our Republicans, the weak ones, because the strong ones don't need any of our help, we're

694   going to try and give them the kind of pride and boldness that they need to take back our

695   country.

696   So let's walk down Pennsylvania Avenue. I want to thank you all. God bless you and God bless

697   America.

698   Thank you all for being here. This is incredible. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Appendix 2: Suomenkielinen tiivistelmä

USA:n 45. Presidentti Donald Trump piti puheen kannattajilleen tammikuun 6.päivänä 2021 Washington D.C:ssä. Puhe merkitsi Trump presidentinvaalikampanjan loppua vuoden 2020 presidentinvaaleissa, jotka hän hävisi demokraattiehdokkaalle Joe Bidenille. Trump ei kuitenkaan missään vaiheessa tyytynyt siihen, että Joe Biden olisi saanut enemmän kannattajamiehiä ja täten voittanut vaalit; sen sijaan Trump käynnisti ennen näkemättömän kampanjan sosiaalisessa mediassa alustavien vaalitulosten selvittyä marraskuussa 2020. Tässä kampanjassa Trump väitti toistuvasti, että vaalit olivat vilpilliset, ja että itseasiassa hän voitti presidentin vaalit. Tammikuun 6. päivän puheen seurauksena Trumpin kannattajat valtasivat USA:n kongressirakennuksen Capitol Hillin, pakottaen näin kongressin edustajat keskeyttämään perustuslain mukaisen presidentinvaalien tuloksen vahvistamisen. Rynnäkön yhteydessä loukkaantui yli 100 poliisia, ja viisi ihmistä kuoli. Trump, eivätkä hänen kannattajansa, tunnusta vielä yli vuosi rynnäkön jälkeenkään, että Trump olisi millään tavalla kehottanut tai käskenyt puheessaan kannattajiaan hyökkäykseen. Tarkkaan ottaen, sellaista suullista käskyä ei annettu tammikuun 6. päivän puheen yhteydessä, mutta yleisesti ottaen pidetään selvänä, että Trumpin puhe kiihotti yleisön toimintaan.

Tämä pro gradu-työ keskittyy selvittämään tuossa puheessa käytettyjä mahdollisia sosiaalisen kognition keinoja, jotka ovat semanttisia ja näin ollen näkymättömiä keinoja vaikuttaa yleisöön. Näitä keinoja käytetään yleisesti politiisissa puheissa, mutta erityisen vaarallisia näistä keinoista tulee silloin, kun niitä käytetään vallan väärinkäytön ja manipuloinnin välineenä tarkoituksena nostattaa vihaa ja väkivaltaa. Varsinaisia tutkimuskysymksiä oli kaksi:

1. Mitä sellaisia diskursiivisia strategioita Trumpin puheesta voi tunnistaa, jotka saattavat viitata puhujan piiloagendaan yleisöön nähden?

2. Mikä on sosiaalisen kognitition merkitys puheessa, joka näin selkeästi tähtää vallan väärinkäytössä ja väkivaltaan yllyttämisessä?

Aloitan tutkimuksen esittelemällä kriittisen diskurssianalyysin suuntausta lingvistisessä tutkimuksessa. Esittelen teoreettisen viitekehyksen lisäksi myös joitakin tälle tutkimukselle erityisen kiinnostavia alaviitekehyksiä sekä näiden kehittäjiä. Kriittiselle diskurssianalyyttiselle tutkimukselle on ominaista mm. se, että se keskittyy tutkimaan varsinaisen kieliopin tai muun yleisen ja neutraalin kielen tutkimisen sijaan sitä, miten kieltä käytetään diskurssin kautta

vallan käytössä. Kriittinen diskurssianalyysi lähtee siis liikkeelle aina siitä oletuksesta, että diskurssia käytetään vallan välineenä. Jotkut alan tutkijat ovat sitä mieltä, että vallan väärinkäyttö on olennaisesti ja oletusarvoisesti aina osa diskurssianalyysitutkimusta, kun taas toiset tunnistavat ja tunnustavat vallan läsnäolon diskurssissa, mutta eivät välttämättä näe sitä negatiivisena asiana, tai siis, eivät oleta että kyseessä on aina vallan väärinkäyttö. Teoriaosuuden lisäksi työn alussa esitetään myös yleinen yhteiskunnallinen tausta, jonka puitteissa tammikuun 6. päivän puhe esitettiin.

Taustaesittelyn ja teoriaosuuden jälkeen työ jatkuu lähdemateriaalin sekä tutkimusmetodologian esittelyllä. Lähdemateriaalina tässä tutkimuksessa toimii uutis-ja mediatalo CNN:n tallentama tekstiversio tammikuun 6. päivän puheesta. Työhön valittiin tekstiversio videoidun puheen sijaan sen vuoksi, että tekstin analyysi auttaa kirjoittajaa keskittymään nimenomaan tekstuaaliseen analysointiin muiden mahdollisesti mukana olevien semioottisten elementtien sijaan. Tämä voi toki myös mahdollisesti rajoittaa tutkimuksen tuloksia jonkun verran, mikäli semioottiset elementit ovat olennainen osa analyysin loppupäätelmiä. Tämän työn kohdalla analyysin loppupäätelmät eivät olisi olennaisesti eronneet vaikka semioottiset elementit olisi sisällytetty tutkimukseen mukaan. Itseasiassa, oletus on, että puheen semioottiset elementit tässä tapauksessa olisivat lähinnä vahvistaneet ennestään analyysin loppupäätelmiä.

Tutkimusmetodi oli moniosainen. Tämä lähestymistapa on tyypillistä kriittiselle diskurssianalyysille, jossa pyritään yleisesti ensin analysoimaan tekstiä tai diskurssia makro-tai ylätasolla, jonka jälkeen tekstiä tutkitaan tarkemmin esimerkiksi diskursiivisten strategioiden tunnistamiseksi ja analysoimiseksi. Lopuksi analyysi viimeistellään tarkastelemalla analyysin tuloksia yhteiskunnallisen merkityksen näkökulmasta. Aloitin tutkimuksen tämän vuoksi lyhyellä taustakatsauksella, jossa käytiin läpi tammikuun 6. päivän taustaa sekä puhetta edellisinä kuukausina että myös tapahtumapäivänä. Analyysi jatkui ylätason tarkastelulla, jonka jälkeen pyrin tunnistamaan mahdolliset puheenkäytön tai diskurssin strategiat, joita pidetään yleisesti ottaen mahdollisina indikaatioina piiloagendoista, eli sellaisina jotka sisältävät mahdollisia semanttisia merkityksiä. Tämän alustavan tutkimuksen perusteella näytti selvältä, että Trump pyrkii vaikuttamaan yleisön mielipiteisiin käyttämällä toistuvasti latautuneita ja tunteisiin vetoavia sanamuotoja, sekä myös yleisesti ottaen esiintymään presidentille epätyypilliseen, epäviralliseen tapaan, joka voi myös omalta osaltaan viitata puheen pitäjän mahdollisiin omiin, ääneenlausumattomiin tarkoitusperiin.

Tutkimuksen ensimmäisen osan jälkeen jatkoin lähdemateriaalin tarkastelua Teun Van Dijkin teoreettisen viitekehysten pohjalta. Van Dijk käyttää kriittisen diskurssianalyysin työkaluna psykologiasta tuttuja kognitiivisen psykologian prosesseja tutkiessaan niiden merkitystä sekä puheen tuottamisessa että sen ymmärtämisessä. Vaikka on yleisesti tunnettua, että virallista visuaalista kuvaa kognitiivisten prosessien toiminnasta ja niiden keskeistä hierarkiasta ei ole vielä luotu, pyrin hahmottelemaan tämän tutkimuksen sekä Trumpin puheen merkityksen hahmottamiseksi oman luonnokseni näistä prosesseista lukemani kirjallisuuden perusteella.

Tammikuun 6. päivän yleisön sosiaalisen kognition kannalta näyttää siltä, että Trump pyrki luomaan tiettyjä mielipiteitä ja uskomuksia kannattajiensa joukossa jo ennen varsinaista puheetta. Hän teki näin käyttäen hyväkseen sosiaalista mediaa. Näin ollen on selvää, että yleisöllä, ja erityisesti Trumpin kannattajilla yleisön joukossa, oli selkeät ennakkokäsitykset vaalien vilpillisyydestä sekä tammikuun 6. päivän puheen varsinaisesta tarkoituksesta jo ennenkuin he saapuivat kuuntelemaan puhetta. Trumpin uskollisimpia kannattajia yhdistävä ideologia ja ryhmäidentiteetti vaikuttivat myös merkittävästi siihen, miten he suhtautuvat Trumpin väitteisiin "totuudesta" – sosio-kognitiivisen teorian mukaan "totuus" voi olla hyvin subjektiivinen versio, jonka ei olekaan tarkoitus olla koko yhteiskunnan jakama käsitys totuudesta ja tosiasioista, vaan jota nimenomaan rajaa ryhmäidentiteetti, eli se, mitä Trumpin kannattajat yhdessä uskovat totuudeksi. Van Dijk muistuttaa omassa teoreettisessa viitekehyksessään myös, että mitä voimakkaammin vastaanottajien ajatuksia on manipuloitu esittäjän tarkoitusperiin sopivaksi jo etukäteen, sitä vähemmän esittäjän tarvitsee jatkaa manipulointia saadakseen vastaanottajat reagoimaan haluamalla tavalla.

Tämän tutkimuksen tulos vahvisti sen käsityksen, että vaikka suullista käskyä hyökkäykseen ei annettu tammikuun 6. päivä, Trump väärinkäytti asemaansa USA:n virassaolevana presidenttinä, ja manipuloi sekä yllytti kannattajansa väkivaltaiseen rynnäkköön viivyttääkseen tai keskeyttääkseen virallisen vaalituloksen vahvistamista USA:n perustuslailla asetettujen menetelmien mukaisesti. Trump teki tämän käyttäen hyväkseen valtaansa presidenttinä, joka takasi hänelle pääsyn suurten yleisöjen ja mediahuomion kohteeksi. Hän myös manipuloi yleisöään käyttämällä hyväkseen kuviteltuja uhkakuvia USA:n tulevaisuudesta, mikäli Joe Bidenistä tulisi USA:n seuraava presidentti. Trump käytti myös tehokkaasti hyväkseen vihapuhetta ja perättömiä syytöksiä vahvistaakseen kannattajiensa mielikuvaa siitä, että muut toimijat kuten media ja teknologiayritykset, jotka omistavat sosiaalisen median alustavat, ovat demokraattien puolella ja auttavat näitä niin sanotusti varastamaan vaalit. Näin tehdessään Trump myös epäsuorasti rajoitti kannattajiensa keinoja

hankkia tietoa lisälähteistä, koska hänen mukaansa kehenkään muuhun ei voi luottaa kuin häneen USA:n silloisena presidenttinä. Tiedon saamisen rajaamista pidetään yleisesti yhtenä voimakkaana propagandan levitys- ja manipulointikeinona. Tiedon rajaamista perustuen väitteisiin että muihin kuin presidenttiin itseensä ei voi luottaa, voi myös pitää erityisen ongelmallisena demokraattisessa yhteiskunnassa.

Analyysin päätteeksi sen tuloksia tarkasteltiin ja tulkittiin lähemmin keskustelukappaleessa, missä myös otettiin esiin sosiaalisen median merkitys Trumpin pyrkimysten välikätenä. Kriittinen diskurssianalyysi ja erityisesti sosiaalisen kognitioon keskittyvä suuntaus voisivat tämän tutkimuksen pohjalta merkittävästi tukea monessa maassa ja maanosassa tällä hetkellä meneillään olevaa keskustelua sosiaalisen median sisällön hallinnasta. Tällainen mahdollinen tuki voisi auttaa niin lainsäätäjiä, poliitikkoja kuin teknologiayrityksiäkin ymmärtämään paremmin sosisaalisen kognition roolin vihapuheen, väkivaltaan yllyttämisen ja muun vallan väärinkäytön syntymisessä. Lisäksi, yleisö eli sosiaalisen median käyttäjät, voisivat myös hyötyä yleisestä tiedottamisesta ja koulutuksesta liittyen manipulaation ja haitallisen sisällön tunnistamiseen. Lopuksi, koska useissa maissa on meneillään oleva keskustelu siitä, mikä pitäisi lain mukaan olla sosiaalista mediaa tuottavien teknologiayritysten vastuu haitallisen sisällön tunnistamiseksi ja poistamiseksi, lingivistiikan asiantuntijoiden, ja erityisesti tutkijoiden jotka keskittyvät sosiaalisen kognition rooliin diskurssin tuottamisessa ja ymmärtämisessä, olisi hyvä osallistua myös siihen lainsäädännölliseen keskusteluun, miten "haitallinen" sisältö määritellään.