| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Donald Trump's Satirical Remarks toward Joe Biden and Kamala Harris during the 2024 Presidential Debates: A Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

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| ABSTRACT

This study investigates the satirical remarks uttered by President Donald Trump towards former President Joe Biden and former Vice President Kamala Harris during the 2024 Presidential election utilizing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), applying Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model. The study addresses two essential questions: (1) What are the hidden implications of President Trump's remarks toward former President Biden and former Vice President Harris? and (2) How do these remarks contribute to weakening the public image of Biden and Harris? A qualitative analysis of Trump's language reveals that satire played a crucial role in Trump's discourse, with repeated mockery as a strategic instrument to undermine the political image of the opponents. The analysis shows how Trump's satirical remarks shaped public views, effectively deteriorating the credibility of Biden and Harris as perceived by their advocates and potential voters. The study addresses the implications for future investigation, encouraging a more nuanced exploration of the linguistic strategies utilized by Biden and Harris as a counter to Trump's discourse. Future studies could benefit from incorporating alternative theoretical frameworks, such as Foucault's views on discourse and power, to expand the comprehension of political language in presidential campaigns.

1. Introduction

The United States of America Presidential races have witnessed over time discourse intensity, however, the intensified political discourse during the 2024 presidential election was notable. With deeper observation, satirical remarks within the political discourse have accelerated, therefore investigating the role of satire in presidential campaigns may draw attention to its impact on the public audience's perspectives. Analyzing such language is significant because it reflects the ideologies and power dynamics of American politics. Satire is used to mock, criticize, or shed light on social issues in an appealing strategy, all this can be embedded within political discourse, therefore portraying satire as a fundamental tool. Many studies examined political satire in various contexts (e.g., Baumgartner, 2008; McKenzie, 2009; Jones et al., 2016; Boukes and Hameleers,2020; Yaross, 2023; Fox, 2024).

Although satire significance marks its place in political campaigns, limited studies fathomed the linguistic nuances of political figures through official appearance, for instance in debates, like President Donald Trump who used satirical language to undermine his opponents like former President Joe Biden and former Vice President Kamala Harris. Trump's utilization of satire throughout the 2024 presidential election proposes a unique influence on the public audience's views, however, this particular matter remains relatively unexplored. Thus, a noticeable gap can be spotted in studies that center attention on the 2024 presidential election, particularly Trump's language strategies to diminish his opponent's image. Moreover, there appears to be a

lack of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) integrated with this context, which indeed could reveal ideologies and provide profound insights into the structure of power embedded in Trump's rhetoric.

This study aims to examine and explore Trump's satirical remarks toward Joe Biden and Kamala Harris during the 2024 presidential debates. Particularly, the study goal is to analyze the linguistic strategies utilized by Trump through his use of satire, alongside how such strategies aim at impacting the public audience's perception of Biden and Harris, and the political discourse. The process of analysis will also cover broader dynamics, such as power and ideology.

This study seeks to contribute to the comprehension and understanding of political satirical language as a means for persuasion, sway opinions and voters' advocacy, and reinforce ideology shaped in contemporary politics, in particular, during the 2024 presidential elections.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Sarcasm, irony, and satire are influential figurative tools for social commentary, in which they share characteristics yet differ from each other. All former terms are subgenres of comedy. (Engelsbel, 2019). On a societal level, sarcasm is used to undermine a certain individual in a pragmatic way, which often can also apply across various settings including politics. (Katz et al., 2004). Alternatively, irony often conflates the distinction between expectations and reality. According to Airaksinen (2020), Irony can reveal the absurdity of a certain setting without directly insulting a person, providing space for a more adroit critique. For illustration, in everyday speech, irony can expose the imperfection in societal standards or behaviors by juxtaposing them with unpredicted outcomes, encouraging people to contemplate the hidden truths.

Satire advances further, combining humor, savvy, and exaggeration to mimic, mock, or criticize societal norms and issues, organizations or institutions, figures, or individuals. In contrast to sarcasm which can be a personal attack, satire often addresses overarching concepts, broader ideas, and fundamental figures; inviting individuals to participate in serious issues and amuse them simultaneously (Kreuz, 2020). While satire is often used to sway people's opinions, its main goal is often to provoke beliefs and thoughts on political spheres. Satire within the realm of politics is considered a powerful tool that can sway public perceptions. (Jones et al., 2009). With determinations of opponents to overwin each other, satire is amongst the most present figures of language displayed within political speeches. (Çanakpınar et al., 2024)

Nguyen and Sawalmeh, 2020 state that, "Fairclough defines CDA as a discourse analysis that aims to systematically explore often impenetrable relationships of causality and determination among discursive practices, events, and texts that are ideologically shaped by powers and struggles overpowers."

The specific way to portray and construct such language in media determines the audience's decisions, whether media mocks the situation or makes a serious stance, this will indeed influence people's perception. The prior explanation is referred to as The Framing Theory (Roslyng & Dindler, 2022). For elucidation, the Framing Theory is not limited to the circumstances surrounding a specific situation that affect public audience perception, it will massively address the decision-making members in governments or institutions. If political figures apprehend an issue wrapped within a certain situation, this might influence their decision or choice. Per the paper's focus, satire applied in serious settings and directed towards high-profile individuals will mostly undermine the overall image.

Within the scope of this study, Trump's satirical remarks can be perceived as an intentional attempt to frame Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, his opponents, negatively. Thereby, Trump guides the public audience to interpret Biden and Kamala's personas and behaviors during the 2024 presidential election.

2.3 Media and Political Staire

Media is the key influencer to deliver such satirical voices. Some studies have shown that before the immense incorporation of multimedia in everyday life, the impact of satirical language was rarely spotted, because to fully comprehend the meaning behind the satirical comment, some factors need to be considered. For example, tone of voice, accentual emphasis, facial expression, and timing. (Kulkarni, 2017)

People thirst to laugh, and when such laughter can be found between the folds of certain political ideologies, satire then serves the primary goal: to sway beliefs. As Gray et al. (2009) state, ''people cannot be blamed for finding themselves in need of a good laugh more than knowledge of the events that spawned it.'' Donald J. Trump greatly succeeded in underestimating former US President Joe Biden and former Vice President Kamala Harris through the eyes of the public audience, however; without multimedia spread of political content, such satirical attitude may perhaps see no light. Gray

et al. (2009) also remark on a great example of the media's contribution to widespread satirical content, as refers to the incident of former US President George W. Bush. Stephen Colbert, the host of the comedic show *The Colbert Report* was invited to a dinner in the white house during the tenure of former President Bush, Colbert took his chance and launched a satirical comment towards former President Bush. Without the media's mainstream presence, such humiliation would not be an immortal moment in the media archive.

Media and multimedia's role in displaying and greatly spread such remarks cannot be denied. "It speaks of the immense popularity of satire TV: being funny and smart sells and has proven a powerful draw for the audience's attention. The rapid spread of the clip highlights satire's viral quality and cult appeal, along with the technological apparatus that now allows such satire to travel far beyond the television set almost instantaneously." (Gray et al, 2009)

2.4 Political Rise of Donald J. Trump

Since the 1970s, Donald J. Trump ''rose to fame as a business magnate and TV presenter.'' (Biography, 2024). On April 30th, 2011, the 44th US President Barack Obama made a massive satirical comment as a means to insult Trump, given the skeptical allegation of the latter towards Obama's citizenship. A year after, Trump started flirting with politics, soon after he declared his intentions to run for the presidency. In 2015, Trump announced that he would run for the 2016 presidential election race for the Republican party, as an opponent to Hilary Clinton who ran for presidency on behalf of the Democrats.

Through the presidential debates between the two, and the viral interviews, Trump's satirical attitude came to the surface. Trump drew public audience attention to his satirical language and has unlocked new advocates during his widely circulated satirical response to Clinton during the second presidential debate between the two candidates, as derived from Bloomberg Television:

[Clinton directing speech to public audience]: ''It is just awfully good that someone with the temperament of Donald Trump is not in charge of the law in our country.''

[Trump's immediate-satirical response]: ''Because you would be in jail.'' (a very loud applause from the audience followed the above line). (Bloomberg Television, 2016)

President Trump is not only directing satire toward his opponents, but surprisingly, he was and -is- satires himself. With such a clever attitude, he drew attention to himself between many public audiences who were simply uninteresting in politics. Moore (2023) states, ''It was almost impossible to ridicule him, because how do you make a joke out of someone when that someone is making the joke about himself first? The audience—the voters—had never experienced such self-ridicule from a person they were also being asked to take seriously.'' He continues, ''That's the challenge of Trump. He didn't seem real, but he was very real.'' Counter-voices started to rise, mainly advocates of the Democratic party. The equation was simple: Trump uses satire as a soft power, which has proven immaculate impact; Moore (2017) directed speech to influencers and public audience: "He's affected by comedy! If you make fun of him, if you ridicule him, or if you just show that he's not popular … I'm telling you, my friends, this is how he'll implode. Let's form an army of comedy and we will bring him down." The emphasis on employing comedy as a means to contest Trump; is a blatant indication of using a similar attitude to his. (Romano, 2017). As Kadim (2022) notes, "Trump deliberately uses the discourse strategies in a more manipulative and persuasive way to achieve political gains against his opponents."

2.5 Political Satire Through Critical Lens

Fataya (2020) addresses that the greater the comedic-genre intersection with politics, the less serious politics becomes in the eyes of public audiences. She remarks, "Politics, despite its formality and serious-mindedness, is still inseparable from humor and comicality. In this context, people who follow the political events of a nation might turn politics into something comical for the masses." As satire can be a predefined criticism, Chovanec and Ermida (2012) emphasize that satirical texts must comply with a judgmental nature, in that they critique, diminish or condemn specific factors of society. Burton (2010) dates back to December 2009 and highlights the ban of satire on broadcasters in Brazil during the presidential election, hence the protest of comedians claiming their right to "ridicule." Buton (2010) points out that even the shortest and most-shallowed satirical-political comments refer to some significant matter between its folds and he supports his claim with Sturges (2010) emphasis, "Dismissing comedy as just a laughing matter misses the point." Another study experimented to measure the effectiveness of satirical politics and revealed that youth are more likely to be involved in politics through satire rather than regular politics. Thus, the perception of the satirized object was negative. On the contrary, the satirized subject gained endorsement via "perceived funniness." (Boukes et al., 2015). Jasim and Al Ghazzy (2022) observe that during the 2020 presidential debate between Trump and Biden; both candidates deliberately employed satire to "ignite the anger of the opponent," they continue "It reflects the image of the candidate's imbalance, and this is a political ploy to gain the support of the voters." Politics usually revolves around power; it is a power competition. Politicians therefore intentionally use language to criticize their opponents to advance their insights and

beliefs to exaggerate certain facts or ideas about their actions, or to simply threaten the opponent's face. (Sharndama, 2016). Derki (2022) delves into analyzing Trump-Biden's presidential race debate in 2020 and points out Trump's name-calling towards Biden: "sleepy Joe" and "crooked Hillary", with emphasis that "the regular use of this name creates a stereotype, and supporters will unconsciously link those names to these people." A recent study shows the public audiences' integration with political satire. For instance, people create AI-generated satirical memes to attack the opponent party, a meme spotted via Instagram where shows Joe Biden's head on a cyborg with a caption of him "being prepared for the presidential debate." (Chang et al., 2024). Such mockery weakens the trustworthiness of Biden's public supporters. Noteworthy, such satirical exchanges by public supporters and partisan verbal and non-verbal crossfire against each other, Trump also has his share of such mockery. Graham (2021) states that within politics, laughter can render special perspectives that enable one to " questions norms and clarifies thinking." All and all, Zekavat (2014) remarks that "political issues have always been a major stimulus for satire."

The study is significant for examining how President Donald Trump's satirical remarks impact public opinion of former President Joe Biden and former Vice President Kamala Harris, during the 2024 presidential election. It draws attention to the role of satire within political discourse and its effects on constructing political image. By utilizing Norman Fairclough's CDA framework, this study draws upon previous research and contributes to the existing literature.

The study aims to answer the following questions:

1- What are the implications hidden within President Trump's comments toward former President Biden and former Vice President Harris?
2- How do such comments minimize the Biden/Harris political image in the perception of the public audience?

3. Methodology
3.1 Research Design
The study employs a qualitative research design, as Creswell (2014) defines it: "an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem." Centered on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with a focus on Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional framework: (1) text (what is said), (2) discursive practice (how the text is produced and directed), and (3) social practice (the broader context). In brief, the text dimension focuses on linguistic features, for example, vocabulary, cohesion, and grammar. Discursive practice takes a step further and sheds light on the interpretation of a text and how it associates with other texts. The third dimension looks at the text from a macro lens, where social and cultural features, ideologies, and power shape the discourse. This framework allows for in-depth examination.

3.2 Materials and Corpus
The key material for the study at hand comprises transcripts of specific lines derived from two American presidential debates in 2024. The first debate occurred between President Trump and former President Biden, hosted by ABC and derived from the [CNN](#) YouTube channel, moderated by ABC's Jake Tapper and Dana Bash on the 28th of June 2024, in Georgia, Atlanta. The debate lasted for 98 minutes, where the two candidates were given specific time to answer the proposed questions by moderators. Surprisingly, on the 21st of July 2024, former President Biden dropped out of the presidential election race and announced former Vice President Harris as the presidential candidate for Democrats. Therefore, the second debate between President Trump and former Vice President Harris took place on the 10th of September 2024, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The debate was hosted by ABC and derived from the [CNN](#) YouTube channel, moderated by ABC's David Muir and Linsey Davis, and lasted for 90 minutes. During the debates, President Trump would go off the cliff and launch satirical comments to mock former President Biden and former Vice President Harris, which had a widespread impact on the public audience. In this paper, the main focus is on Trump's satirical comments and their implications, from a CDA lens.

3.3 Data Analysis
The analysis utilizes a combination of interpretive and descriptive analyses. Interpretive analysis delves into the underlying meaning and hidden implications within the application of Fairclough's framework. Moreover, descriptive analysis centers on the linguistic features of Trump's comments. Critical analysis evaluates the impressions on the Biden and Harris political image.

3.4 Procedure
The study at hand follows a five-step procedure: (1) watch full presidential debates and mark the satirical comments by President Trump towards both former President Biden and former Vice President Harris, the context in which those comments were uttered, and the anticipated goal lies between the folds of those satirical remarks. (2) transcribe the comments from CNN's YouTube channel and gather data, including the details surrounding the uttered comment (time and subject). (3) closely analyze those comments according to Fairclough's framework (Noteworthy, data is embedded within the first dimension of Fairclough's model analysis, the second- and third-dimension analysis depends on the data presented within the first one), (4) present data, discuss the results and conduct analysis. (5) conclude with future recommendations and limitations for the study.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

To confirm the validity and reliability of the data and its analysis, an interrater reliability process was carried out with two peers who are knowledgeable about Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Both peers reviewed and analyzed selected parts of the data independently, according to the specified criteria. Upon comparison, it was revealed that analyses were remarkably consistent, ensuring the reliability of the analysis process. Any variations in the analysis were addressed and resolved cooperatively, leading to a cohesive approach.

Further, the same peers were engaged in assessing the content validity. They evaluated whether the chosen texts and categories effectively exhibited the key ideas related to Donald Trump's satirical remarks towards Joe Biden and Kamala Harris during the 2024 Presidential election. Peer feedback guaranteed that the data precisely represented the anticipated research focus and was suitable for the study's objectives.

Collaboratively, these steps emphasized the validity and reliability of the study, confirming that the analysis was both reflective and consistent.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

This study was conducted with a considerate and mindful awareness of respecting the individuals involved, specifically the political figures. With utmost care, objective and natural stances were ensured, to free the analysis from any personal bias. More importantly, all data used was publicly available and accessible to everyone, no restricted, confidential, or private data were used. All data were derived from two public presidential debates. Lastly, concerning maintaining academic integrity, all data was appropriately cited and attributed to its sources.

4. Results and Discussion

As both debates progressed, all candidates showed serious stances toward the subjects that were discussed, and each party representative (Trump for Republicans, Biden and Harris for Democrats) defended deeply their point of view, promises, and the party's orientation alongside utmost attempt to sway public audience opinions to gain voters' advocacy. Employing humor within the language they used was obvious, however, Trump's bitterish satirical remarks were somehow monitoring the debates, which drew the public audience's attention. Adopting Fairclough's three-dimensional model allows for an in-depth exploration of the between-the-folds tenor of these comments.

1. Text Analysis

The debate between President Trump and former President Biden began with a general introduction by the moderators and quickly delved into serious subjects that both candidates needed to take stances for. The subject under investigation was the USA healthcare system, Biden clarified, "… making sure that we continue to st.. strengthen our healthcare system, making sure that we are able to make every single solitary person eligible for what I have been able to do with.. uh.. with.. with the Covid, excuse me with umm…" surprisingly, Biden with a slip of the tongue continued, "dealing with everything we have to do with uh.. look.. if.. we finally beat Medicare." Trump satirically asserted, "well he is right, he did beat Medicare. He beat it to death; he is destroying our Medicare, …" (11:43). Trump responded with an immediate sarcastic comeback at Biden, by immensely using Biden's slip of the tongue and kept assuring that this is a real fact of Biden's contribution to the healthcare system. This could be interpreted as a strategic move by Trump, to draw the public audience's attention to Biden's huge mistake. Moreover, Trump suggested that Biden's strategies were not only ineffective but also harmful—to death. Trump's tone sounded scornful, portraying Biden's actions in such an adverse light, that he sought to assemble support among those worried about healthcare issues. In addition, during minutes (21:35) Biden stuttered in his speech, which displayed difficulty in comprehending what he said. Of course, Trump used Biden's stutter and adduced, "I do not know what he said at the end of the sentence, and I do not think he knows either. …" Trump's confusion lessened Biden's communicative skills and implied that the message Biden was attempting to convey was unreliable. Apart from this, Trump denoted Biden's lack of awareness of his own words, which signified Biden's incredibility for leadership. Trump's tone sounded mockery, in an attempt to ridicule Biden's communicative skills. As the debate continued, the moderates shed light on Social Security, both candidates went back and forth on that. at a certain moment, Trump said to Biden, "he is the worst president, he just said it about me—" meaning that Biden said the exact thing about Trump, "—he just said it about me because I said it, ha-ha. …" (1:11:34). Trump strongly condemned Biden's presidency by asserting that *he is the worst president.* In a satirical remark, Trump referred to Biden as an imitative individual and followed that with quick and gentle laughter which accentuated Trump's dismissive and mocking tone. Lastly, during the debate's closing statement of each candidate, Trump began his closing statement by saying, "Like so many politicians, this man is just a complainer," he continued with derisive facial expressions, "he said we want to do this; we want to do that, we want to get rid of this tax, that tax, but he does not do anything." (1:36:11). Trump generalized Biden's attitude by placing him in a broader category of politicians who are perceived adversely. Furthermore, Trump mentioned Biden's trait of being a complainer; asserting to the public audience that Biden is a griever rather than a solution-seeker. With mockery facial expressions, Trump displayed Biden's contrast between his promises and actions. In the above statement, Trump successfully utilized language to critique

Biden's method of governance. Through labeling, generalization, emphasizing the contrast between words and actions, repetition, and a contemptuous tone, Trump created a narrative that portrayed himself as a more capable presidential candidate. Commencing with the second debate, which occurred between President Trump and former Vice President Harris, Trump emphasized on strong assertion and declared, "She does not have a plan; she copied Biden's plan, and it is like four sentences, like run spot run; four sentences that are just oh, we will try and lower taxes she does not have a plan. ..." (14:40). Trump's negation and repetition of the statement that *she does not have a plan* alongside *she copied Biden's plan* indicated the undervalue of his opponent's credibility, denoting to public audience that Harris lacks dishonesty and showed her unpreparedness. The satire hides beneath the metaphor that Trump mentioned, *like run* spot *run*, this phrase was a reference to the simplicity of children's books, in the current situation, Trump mocked Harris that her plan was overly simple and did not measure up to a presidential candidate's plan. *Run Spot Run* was a strong satirical comparison that referred to the simplicity between her plan to an introductory text for young people. The derisive tone appealed to the public audience's emotions, perhaps evoking agreement or laughter. The debate continued and Trump kept on track his 'lighthearted jabs' toward Harris, as he said, "Everything that she believed three years ago and four years ago is out the window; she is going to My Philosophy now. In fact, I was going to send her a MAGA hat; she has gone to My Philosophy, but if ever she got elected, she would change it. ..." (18:15). Trump drew attention to the instability -as he believed- in Harris's viewpoints, throwing at her the claim that she was inconsistent with her plans before and would not be with her promised ones. In a satirical remark, Trump denoted to the public audience that Harris was also benefiting from his plans and views; that he almost sent her a "MAGA hat" (Make America Great Again: Trump's campaign slogan) framing his point of view and plans as superior that she is even in alignment with him. Similar to the previous example, the derisive tone was at its clearest. The subject quickly turned to the American internal issue: abortion. Each candidate attempted to present valid solutions for females in such regard, as the debate went on; Trump began questioning former President Biden's credibility, "her I, I think probably her boss—if you call him a boss—he spends all his time on the beach, ..." (25:50). The hesitation in the beginning of this sentence suggested absence of confidence in the claim he proposed, or perhaps just to create casualness in the language he used. The doubt that Trump directed toward Harris questioning former President Biden's authority and leadership efficiency, by portraying the leader –boss– carefree of presidential responsibilities and the sense of leisure he was living, as supposed by Trump. Further, the contentious discussion persisted; and the satirical language used by Trump kept on reaching its (climax). In minutes (33:45) Trump stated, "She is destroying the country and if she becomes president, this country does not have a chance of success," he implied to the public audience that Harris represents a threat to the nation, in a strong accusation that *she will destroy our country!* The selection of the word "destroying" signifies urgency and inquietude. Trump's vital warning to the public audience was direct, that her presidency could lead to catastrophic consequences. He added, "Not only success, it will end up being Venezuela on steroids." The satire between the folds of *Venezuela on steroids* was transparent, where he drew the public audience's attention to his claimed belief: if Harris wins this election, America will be as weak as Venezuela, even worse as if it was on "steroids." That will accelerate the collapsing process covering all sectors. Indeed, Trump fostered a sense that Harris (them) is the danger that threatens the nation, portraying himself (us) as the savior of the country. With close observation, Trump's tone sounded hostile and alarmist. Nonetheless, to comprehend the next satirical remark, returning back in time is essential. In October 2020, during the Vice-Presidential debate between Kamala Harris and Mike Pence, Pence interrupted Harris, and she immediately replied, "Mr. Vice President I am speaking. I am speaking." This line went viral online and evoked the public audience the strong personality of Harris. Going forward to the current debate under investigation, at some point in the debate, Harris interrupted Trump; surprisingly, he instantly responded "Wait a minute, I am talking now. If you do not mind, please, does that sound familiar?" (46:05). *Wait a minute* signaled the dominance of Trump in this debate, indicating that he expected to be listened to without interruptions, such imperative language conveyed authority and control. Most importantly, referring to something that she said before, with the same attitude as hers, denoted satire towards the opponent in an attempt to regain control in the present debate and create a connection between past and present actions. In addition, as *if you do not mind, please* imply politeness, it was suggesting a sarcastic attitude. Trump's tone was contemptuous and dismissive as if he was attempting to re-establish control. The moderators of the debate kept the discussion going and proposed another subject that addresses international policies, Trump asserted, "Biden and you do not have the courage to ask Europe like I did with NATO. They paid billions and billions, hundreds of billions of dollars when I said either you pay up or we are not going to protect you anymore. So that is maybe one of the reasons they do not like me as much as they like weak people." (1:12:50) He repeated another act of direct accusation, by accusing Harris and Biden that they do not have courage, therefore suggesting a lack of bravery and leadership which benefited his image as a strong leader and decisive individual. Indeed, the repetition of billions indicates the magnitude of financial payments granted from foreign countries under his term of presidency, showing that his efforts and seriousness were impactful, alongside an ultimatum towards those countries either they pay up or he will break the promise of protecting them, this strongly suggests assertion and toughness in Trump's approach in contrast to his opponents' lack of bravery as he perceived them. The crux of the above excerpt was the satire hidden within the last twelve words, Trump's indication that he is tough, and his opponents are weak, thus Europeans did not like him as much as they liked *weak people* in a strong reference to Harris and Biden. Noteworthy, Trump's tone tended to be aggressive and defiant, as a means to display dominance and toughness. In a

sarcastic reference, Trump kept questioning Biden's abilities as US president, Trump added, "We are playing with World War III, and we have a president that we do not even know if, if he is... where is our president? We do not even know if he is a president; they threw him out of the campaign like a dog. We do not even know, is he our president? But we have a president that does not know he is alive." (1:14:20). The use of alarmist language was clear in this statement, Trump tried to warn the public audience that the current president is useless and absent, and we—as a nation face the immense threat of World War III. Nonetheless, the repetitive query *of where is our president* demonstrated doubts about Biden's authority and legitimacy; thus, Trump undermined Biden's mental stability. Not only did he undermine Biden's mental stability, he was also mocking it by satirically referring to Biden's absent-mindedness.

After careful observation, the remaining minutes of the Trump/Harris debate had no satirical remarks nor further mockery. The debate kept going smoothly and Trump maintained more seriousness and used formal language.

2. Discursive Practice Analysis.

Trump's utilization of satire was an intentional rhetorical selection aimed at involving his audience while deteriorating his opponents. Satire served to ridicule and uncover weaknesses, often employing humor to emphasize perceived incompetence. In both debates, Trump used this technique to construct a plain contrast between himself and his opponents. To clarify, Trump's mockery of Harris's interruption and Biden's stutter displayed Trump's approach to raising the public audience's doubt about their competence. Phrases like "threw him out the campaign like a dog" and "he does not know he is alive" created satirical exaggeration to indicate that Biden was not only inefficient but profoundly unfit for the presidency. This approach employed by Trump, engaged the public audience to laugh, thereby he established a bond over shared comedy, which guaranteed for him a targeted communicative style between himself and his audience. Further, Trump magnified the absurdity of Biden and Harris's public images, through the use of rhetorical queries, e.g., "Where is our president?" and utilization of hyperbole, for instance, "destroying Medicare." Such strategies not only entertained the public audience but encouraged them to think critically concerning Biden and Harris's capabilities, displaying himself as the sole rational choice. Delving deeper into Fairclough's Discursive Practice dimension, Trump's satirical remarks as perceived by the public audience reinforced collective identity and created a means of camaraderie among his advocators, this cultivated "in-group" dynamic which increased loyalty, advocacy, support, and incentivized political actions. With close observation, Trump's consistency in framing Biden and Harris as incompetent policymakers and politicians who lack credibility cannot be unseen, alongside his consideration and comprehension of the public audience's preference for decisiveness in leadership. This drew a clear boundary that Trump attempted to frame both debates pertaining to clear binaries: weakness vs. strength, effective vs. ineffective, reliable vs. untrustworthy. Trump's trick was obvious, the goal was not only to criticize, defend his stance, or sway opinions, but to entertain and stimulate laughter, making his humorous language stick to the public audience's minds. This emotional bond may be particularly persuasive, impacting the public audience's convection of competence and trustworthiness. Unquestionably, the language used in both debates was not isolated; it interacted with and was intensified by media coverage. Soundbites from Trump's satirical remarks were possible to flow in news reports and social media, therefore embedding Trump's narrative in public audiences' consciousness.

3. Social Practice Analysis

Fairclough's third dimension broadens the scope and analyzes texts from a macro lens, revealing the societal influence accompanying the text. Trump's presidential campaign slogan MAGA (Make America Great Again) resonates profoundly with Americans who believe that their nation needs restoration, as Mollan and Geesin (2020) assert "Trump's campaign slogan–'Make America Great Again'–was an invocation of a nostalgic, imagined, and inherently conservative past, and offered a glimpse of the ambitious agenda to re-organize American institutions that lay at its heart." Noteworthy, Trump's satirical language impacts the polarization of the public audience's viewpoints. By portraying Biden and Harris in such humorous and absurd expressions, he boosts existing division, making it more challenging for advocates to be involved with opposing perspectives. This polarization is aggravated by the media spread of these statements, turning them into discussion points that label each candidate's public image. Indeed, such language can construct authority for Trump, as satire can be seen as a tool to establish and assert authority alongside dominance within the political field. Some individuals appreciate satire as a form of criticism, therefore depending on such behavior may unlock new groups of voters for Trump's sake. Furthermore, this language also supports existing stereotypes about politicians. Depicting Biden as a "complainer" or a weak boss, Trump strikes into broader societal beliefs that perceive politicians with skepticism, specifically those who are viewed as overly wary or uncertain, thus unfit to lead the country. Whereas satirical language may hugely benefit its' users, it can create rapid hostility in society, particularly in political discourse. To illustrate, as satire can be employed to belittle opponents (Trump's approach in both debates) it can stimulate more aggressive alteration of beliefs and ideas among voters and advocates of both parties. Thus, a toxic political sphere may arise, where constructive and productive debates are marred by defamatory attacks.

It is observable that Trump's satirical remarks attack on Harris was almost triple the number compared to the satirical attack on Biden. This might reveal two possible hidden beliefs: (1) Trump does not resonate with female leadership, particularly for the presidency. Walsh (2019) as cited in Prasad (2019) asserts that "... he talks about women, any prominent, powerful woman, in the

most demeaning of ways, trivialising them." This perhaps contrasts the fact that Trump's daughter, Ivanka Trump, is considered a successful businesswoman. However, "Ivanka Trump, for example, still fits within the typical image of a woman—on the arm of powerful men." (Parsad, 2019). Or (2) after the sudden withdrawal of Biden, Trump spotted a weak point within the Democrats, therefore, his intense verbal-satirical attack in the second debate.

5. Conclusion

This study has examined President Donald Trump's satirical remarks toward former President Joe Biden and former Vice President Kamala Harris during the 2024 presidential election. This examination was through a CDA lens, by shedding light on how satire is used as a rhetorical strategy and Trump's seeking to influence public audience perception, reshape ideologies, and diminish his opponents. The analysis showed that Trump's language strategy is a powerful tool for constructing a public narrative, with frequent attempts to blur the line between critique and aggression.

Further, the implications of this study are centered on the following points: (1) it sheds light on the growing significance of satirical rhetoric in forming political discourse. (2) also, contributes to the broader field of Critical Discourse Analysis, by employing it to current political events.

Yet, similar to any study, this study has its limitations. First, it focused on Trump's satirical remarks and humorous language, without examining Biden and Harris's responses, or satirical remarks as well. Second, this study centered attention on a sole political figure within a specific political context. Third, it only adopted a sole model within the realm of CDA. Recommendations for future research are to consider the rhetoric of Biden and Harris during the 2024 presidential election, conduct a comparative study is political satire utilized by other political figures, and explore satire within political language from other perspectives in CDA, for example, Michel Foucault and Van Dijk.

In conclusion, the study at hand emphasizes the power of satire in political discourse, affirming that satire can be both a strategy for critique and a tool for persuasion.

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