

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of Study

In U.S. 58<sup>th</sup> quadrennial presidential election, Donald Trump was elected in electoral college victory while losing the popular vote over Democratic nominee and former Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton. Trump achieved political victories despite sequences of controversies he made, such as extreme policies that have drawn criticism from many parties, a record of racist and sexist behaviour, and a lack of conventional political experience. McClay (2017) argues that throughout the 2015-2016 presidential election races, Trump's speeches have been a source of outrage, controversy and enthusiasm across America and throughout the world. With his blunt and controversial campaign, Trump had increased his popularity among other Republican's candidates prior to finally succeeding to be the President of the United States.

Earlier, On February 17, 2017, Donald Trump informally announced his candidacy rerunning for a second term and held the first of a series of occasional election campaign rallies in Melbourne, Florida. In the following two years, Trump arranged a "kick-off" rally in Orlando, Florida, under the slogan *Keep Making America great again*. Through his speech, Trump criticized and harshly attacked his political opponents, particularly the former Vice President Joe Biden regarding

his vision in economic policies, and on liberals. On many occasion of his campaign, Trump struck on Biden over China accusing the rival of being a “globalist sellout” who assisted engineer the extensive loss of American jobs. Furthermore, he also threw comment on Biden’s running mate, Kamala Harris. During an interview with Fox Business after the only vice-presidential debate of the election, Trump charged Harris for her stance on open borders, mentioning her a "monster" and a "communist". There were considerable moments in which Donald Trump lashed out his enemies delivered within his speeches.

Country’s leaders have to be a role model for the society both nationally, and even worldwide. In this case, leaders have the necessity to represent voice of society within their belief, notion, utterance, and behaviour. In larger context, one of the most prominent skills a leader possessed is public speaking skill. Slagell (2009) asserts that these days speakers not only transfer words and ideas to auditor but rather are engaged in a complex process of attempting to share meanings among diverse members of audiences.

This concept is also in line with Griffin (2012) who states that to be an ethical public speaker, one must consider the moral influence of the ideas and arguments captured by the listeners while entering a public dialogue. Conveying a speech is a natural way to incorporate a public dialogue as it gives the speaker a chance to clearly state their perspectives towards certain issues and to hear other people’s perspectives. Thus, speeches have been an important means of discourse,

particularly political discourse, since a politician is required to cast public statements, exclamation, information, affirmation, etc.

With this regard, the study would examine Donald Trump's strategies reflected in acceptance speech of the Republican National Convention 2020. Republican National Convention is a presidential nominating convention in which delegates of the United States Republican Party choose the party's nominees for president and vice president in the United States presidential election. The speech is particularly significant since it served as the summit of Donald Trump's acceptance of the Republican party nominee. The speech was used to gain public support as well as to influence the electorates by presenting the vision and mission of his leadership. The speech also contains certain ideology and strategies conducted by Trump against his opponent, Joe Biden.

Language as a means of communication reflects the linguistic choices which are motivated by certain value systems and beliefs both consciously and unconsciously, so that the resulting discourses are presented by some ideological perspectives (Verdonk, 2002). Fairclough (1989) also states that ideologies are tightly correlated with language since it is used in the generic form of social behaviors in which people rely most on the common sense assumption. Therefore, ideology serves as the ground and becomes the importance of the language usage. Aside from, the discourse also represents certain ideologies involved in the reproduction in society.

The study takes the analysis of discourse into account, which in particular includes the use of language in political domain and the certain ideologies underlying the language. Thus, the description of discourse is explained in advance elaborating the relation among discourse, language and ideologies. Foucault (1977) argues that discourse presupposes entire forms of knowledge and truth. The utilization of discourse in a particular context has the ability and power to persuade people to take some ideas as truth. Discourse is also able to represents the speaker's social class, gender, beliefs and ideologies. Discourse is not only concerning the language use, but it is also relating to the speaker who conveys the language. Additionally, Discourse enacts notable role in social construction of the world since it enables social communication in broader context.

Critical Discourse Analysis is used as the framework to disclose certain ideologies behind the text and how the certain ideologies are constructed through the linguistic choices. CDA is a multidisciplinary study of language which comprises with various analyses and methods as Fairclough (1995) argues that CDA is the analysis of the relationship between language and other social practice elements. Text properties, such as vocabularies, grammar, style, generic structure and so on could be explored for their potential to be ideological (Fairclough, 1995). Therefore, in this study, the analysis of the linguistic features is also used to support the ideologies behind the speech.

Van Dijk's Political Discourse analysis is employed as major tool in this study. Van Dijk introduces the general strategies of the Ideological square (2005)

to examine an ideological discourse based on principles: Self and Others Representation. This ideological dichotomy is deployed to reveal the manipulation of language to benefit in-group members and disadvantage out-group members at the macro-level of analysis, Van Dijk's (2005) work for analyzing political discourse seems to be a dynamic and thorough framework of analysis in Critical Discourse Analysis studies (Matic, 2012).

In the context of Critical Discourse Analysis, former studies related to the topic of this study contribute to show the development of language studies. The related studies also support the theories and analysis of this study from which references can be acquired. Several related studies are read and examined in order to provide as an additional source of information which is relevant to the theories and issues in the topic of this study.

Khalil & Abbas (2017) in their study entitled *"Iraq in the American Presidential Debate Discourse: A Critical Discourse Analysis"* examines both U.S. Republican and Democratic presidential nominees' (Hillary Clinton's and Donald Trump's) ideologies towards Iraq in three American presidential debates held before the 2016 presidential elections . The study utilizes Critical Discourse Analysis framework and the linguistic tools selected as means to manifest the ideologies are global topics, local semantics and speech acts to support Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach. It is shown from the analysis that the three American presidential debates represent a substantial ideology discourse and that both Clinton and Trump share specific ideologies towards Iraq but contrast in the majority of



these ideologies. Both presidential nominees have taken advantage of the issue of Iraq in the debates to achieve certain electoral benefits and try to gain more votes.

Khan et al. (2019) in the paper titled *“Muslims’ Representation in Donald Trump’s Anti-Muslim-Islam Statement: A Critical Discourse Analysis”* describes that the Muslim community in America has been facing disturbance, particularly after the events of 9/11. Muslims are confronted by a number of anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim discriminatory action, biases, and negative sentiments from many Americans. These religious prejudices are observable at the public and political leadership levels, as well as other facets of the country.

The study aims to examine and point out the self-other representations that are evident in the Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiments in Trump’s statements during the American Presidential Elections of 2016 with engaging Critical Discourse Studies as its framework, and a specified focus upon Van Dijk’s Ideological Square Model. The results indicated that the self-other dichotomy is actively presented in Trump’s statements and he employed various discursive techniques to represent Islam and Muslims in a negative appearance, while representing himself as extremely patriotic to the country. The research also reveals that Donald Trump has represented Islam and Muslims as a negative phenomenon and presented himself as an Islamophobia by negatively targeting Islamic components, such as Shariah and Jihad.

Mohammadi (2016) in his study *“A Critical Discourse Analysis of Donald Trump’s Language Use in U.S. Presidential Campaign”* suggests that in most of

the campaign speeches, there are some critical issues which are represented in the speeches, such as Americanism, immigration, terrorism, rigid system, economy and trade. The findings of these ideologies behind the discourse are derived from relational and expressive values of vocabularies and sentences by using ten-question model of Norman Fairclough (1996). The language used in simple, direct way tends to be very easy to understand, yet very provocative. The language is used to establish a close relation with the listeners and assert power. Thus, the language use serves an effective persuasive message, particularly for the Native low-middle working-class white as the main target group.

McClay (2017) in his study "*A Descriptive Analysis of Donald Trump's Campaign Speeches*" employs the principles of van Leeuwen's (2008) Network of Social Actors in decontextualizing the representations of social actors and exploring the underlying ideologies in the juxtaposition between 'they' and 'we' by which the discourse is structured. This research suggests that the dichotomy between 'we' and 'they' is intended to legitimize his political stance while delegitimizing the opponents'.

Rachman and Sofi (2017) on their journal inspect four goals of the research: the utterances that illustrated political discourse in Donald Trump Speech, the way Trump delivered his political discourse, the objectives of the utterances, as well as the effect of the utterance to people. Descriptive qualitative is employed as the method of the research and the data of research are the utterances that figured Donald Trump's political discourse. The data are analyzed employing van Dijk

thematic theory of CDA. The result indicates the way Donald Trump deliver his ideology in gaining power that there is an ability to control people which in line with his purpose to win American's heart. Trump's political strategies succeeded to gain supports making him elected as the presidential candidate from the Republican. The contribution of this research is to complete the way of analyzing thematic analysis which is include as the part of macrostructure strategy.

Another study conducted by Chen (2018) titled "*A Critical Discourse Analysis of Donald Trump's Inaugural Speech from the Perspective of Systemic Functional Grammar*" utilizes Halliday's systemic functional grammar that is a practical method to analyze discourse. The study looks over on Donald Trump's inaugural speech specifically from the perspectives of language features such as transitivity, modality, personal pronoun and coherence in order to disclose the speaker's political intention, and assist readers in understanding the meaning of discourse itself. It is found that Trump uses different language forms to transmit, change and maintain audiences' ideology subtly.

This study employs van Dijk's political discourse analysis model with the focus of analyzing political discourse as one of the domains in which language and society intersects. The framework is effective for political discourse analysis (Rashidi & Souzandehfar, 2010), seeing that it deals with discourse at two levels: first, the analysis of discursive devices at the micro-level which subsequently discloses ideological positive self-representation and negative other-representation at the macro-level. The micro-level of analysis is the basic elements of the macro-



level. At the micro-level, adopting the 25 devices, the framework supports to inspect the discourse to decode the meanings of words and phrases. Decoding the meaning at the micro-level enables the revelation of ideology at the macro-semantic level. In addition, what makes Van Dijk's approach distinctive in comparison to other analytical frameworks of CDA is the combination of five components of argumentation, political strategies, rhetorical devices, semantic strategies, and stylistic information (Rashidi & Souzandehfar, 2010). Furthermore, Van Dijk's framework mostly emphasizes semantic features of the discourse instead of the grammatical features of the discourse. This signifies that the model is generally semantic-oriented in comparison to its correlative frameworks arranged by Fairclough and Wodak. Also, the novelty on the subject of this study is prominent since the speech is delivered recently and there is no other research related to the corpus by the time this study is presented.

## **1.2. Research Question**

The study is conducted in order to investigate these following questions:

1. What discursive devices (micro-level) are prevalent in the Donald Trump's Republican National Convention speech?
2. What dichotomy of Us versus Them polarization (macro-level) are reflected in the Donald Trump's Republican National Convention speech?
3. What ideologies are represented based on the micro-level and macro-level analysis which is reflected in the acceptance speech of the National Republican

Convention 2020?

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

This study firstly aims at explaining what discursive devices at the micro- level are prevalent and what dichotomy of Us versus Them polarization at the macro-level are reflected in the speech in order to get the leadership of the United States. The study also explores how certain ideologies are represented through the analysis of micro-level and macro-level that could finally lead to the speaker's intention.

### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

In its academic benefit, the study aims to explain how the linguistic aspect is selected, structured and manipulated in a certain way that conveys meanings that are used to achieve the communicative objectives. It involves the investigation of speakers' way of employing language features that contribute to meaning making processes to achieve certain goals.

In its practical benefits, the study aims to provide critical insights behind the discourse by presenting a correlation between discourse and social phenomena, such as power imbalance, abuse, inequality, domination and other forms of social injustices/wrongs in an ideological social construction. The study serves an important benefit to the power resistance emergence that leads to the evaluation and improvement of the social issues in practice.