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Evaluating the Role of Social Media in Shaping Racist Discourse in American Society

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Dedication

This work is a piece of my heart, shaped by love, patience, and countless moments of hope
and struggle.

I dedicate it to my beloved parents and my dear family, whose endless love and silent
sacrifices have been the foundation of every step I take.

To my teachers, especially my supervisor, for their patience, guidance, and unwavering
support.

This achievement carries a piece of each of you.

With all my love and deepest gratitude.

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Abstract

This study aims to examine textual structures in American social media discourse. By employing Norman Fairclough's framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the research seeks to reveal the linguistic elements of racism and segregation in the representation of certain groups, such as Muslims, Mexicans, and Africans. Accordingly, the study addresses the following questions: How does social media shape public discourse on racism in American society? In what ways do Facebook strengthen, challenge, or change discourses about racism in the U.S.? The research combines theoretical discussion of racism in social media and Critical Discourse Analysis with a methodological approach that involves analyzing selected Facebook posts produced by American users. The findings indicate that many American Facebook posts reflect racist attitudes, particularly toward Africans, Muslims, and Mexicans. These posts frequently employ negative language to promote particular ideas and beliefs, often leaving little room for dialogue or resistance.

Keywords: Norman Fairclough, social media, racism, American society, Facebook posts.

List of Abbreviations

BLM: Black Lives Matter.

CDA: Critical Discourse Analysis.

DRA: Dialectical-Relational Approach.

ICERD: International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

MDA: Media Discourse Analysis.

SMPs: Social Media Platforms.

P1, P2, P3...: Participants (refers to the specific social media posts analyzed in the study).

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General Introduction

General introduction

1. Research Background

In the modern world, there are countless instances of injustice and discrimination based upon the factors of race, nationality, and religion. This discrimination does not remain within the heart or opinion but manifests itself through the form of injustice and atrocity, not just in third world countries, but also in the first world and Western civilization which prides itself on being more civilized and humane towards people than any other place (Wodak & Reisigel, 1999). Furthermore, it has been a long-standing problem which has occurred over time. The current term used against such prejudice and intolerance, which goes by the name of racism, is actually an ideology that forms and manifests itself through discourse (Wodak & Reisigel, 1999).

The importance of media as an information source, channel of communication, and company that comes along with our daily life has never been greater and more present. The high level of mediation in today's society has led to a new and serious threat in terms of the spread of racist speech on different online social media websites by malicious users (Schindler & Domahidi, 2021). Such attitudes and statements, which seek to ostracize a particular person or a group of persons, become some of the most common forms of racist speech in a social context. Thus, racism through the internet becomes an object of numerous disputes, which arise due to a conflict between different groups of different countries (Gianan, 2020).

However, as the international influence of internet continues to increase, the struggle for the hearts and minds of individuals has transcended into the virtual space, whereby many ideologies can easily reach out to their followers (Fukuyama, 2018). In this regard, social media is considered a key driver of the continuing rise of populist movements in the

contemporary world (Cervi & Marín-Lladó, 2021). It is important to note that social media serves as a platform for the propagation of such discourses, with significant impacts on public opinions (Cáceres-Zapatero et al., 2022) and social polarization (Makhortykh et al., 2021). Although many researchers have explored the role of social media platforms used by right-wing populist parties and leaders, most of these studies have mainly been conducted on some platforms, such as Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook (Finlayson, 2022; Peck, 2022).

2. Statement of the Problem

Over the past few years, the spread of racist discourse on social media platforms has become alarming and a serious concern. Many individuals share racially biased messages, images, and videos using coded languages, emojis, memes, and conspiracy theories. These messages spread widely across platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter. Despite numerous studies, there remain gaps in understanding the mechanisms through which this discourse is constructed on these platforms. Therefore, this research aims to decode and understand the strategies, algorithms, and ideologies underlying this racist discourse.

3. Objective of the study

This study aims to examine racist discourse on American social media platforms, especially Facebook, and analyze the strategies, algorithms, and ideologies shaping this discourse

4. Review of the Literature

The United States has witnessed various forms of racism and violence linked to racial discrimination throughout its history. Despite significant legal and social progress, racial disparities remain evident in education, housing, employment, and policing. Social media has become a tool that reveals and exposes racist practices, especially with algorithms that promote polarizing content. The debates about the definition of culture, ethnicity, and race as

social categories performed through discourses in everyday life have emerged since the 1980's, particularly because these constructs are seen as performing power in the distinction between in groups and outgroups (van Dijk, 1998). However, such debates emerge with the presence of certain critical discourse analysts such as van Dijk (1998) who treats the terms ethnic and racial interchangeably, an act that can be attributed to two interrelated reasons: first, the attribution of discourse to the construct race, which was initially defined in biological and physical terms (Bloor & Bloor, 2013), and second, the use of the latter in some instances as the ultimate social category underlying ethnic identity. Culture, on the other hand, is usually a broader category which covers several ethnic groups. In van Dijk's (1998) words, different ethnic groups with divergent ideologies are able to interact based on their shared cultural knowledge.

The usage of social media continues to increase, not only do people utilize social media to communicate with other people, but they also use it as a means to gather information. According to Shah, a national survey was carried out where 3,400 people were involved. He discovered that the internet has become an important tool for information gathering and social surveillance. Despite the fact that society continues to use traditional sources of information, social media has started to serve the same purpose as reading newspapers or magazines (Shah et al. 2002). Today, more than two-thirds of Americans state that they get some of their news through media sources (Shearar and Gottfried 2017). During the presidential primaries in 2016, 62% of adult Americans got their news from social media sites. The age group of those who use social media for news is continuously rising. In 2017, 78% of Americans under the age of 50 said that they receive their news from media sources. For the first time, more than half of the Americans aged 50 or above have stated that they obtain their news from these websites (Shearar and Gottfried 2017).

On the other hand, social media is not confined to any particular place. Media sources promote horizontal communication, hence creating the networked public sphere (Choi 2014). For instance, a recent study carried out by Hwang & Kim (2015) shows that Facebook can act as a medium through which individuals with weak ties get access to information that they would otherwise be unable to find in their regular activities. The benefits associated with Facebook include the ability to engage in networking and the creation and sharing of user-generated content. In Hwang & Kim's study, individuals with high bridging social capital (weak ties) who used social media had the intention of participating in social activism. Since Facebook offered a greater number of resources, individuals were exposed to more messages about social movements.

5. Research Questions:

The questions that the current research aims to answer are:

- How does social media shape public discourse on racism in American society?
- In what ways do Facebook strengthen, challenge, or change discourses about racism in the U.S.?

6. Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

- Americans' discourses contain elements of racism and promote their beliefs on Facebook.
- Facebook encourages racism in America by giving the users the freedom to comment and post whatever they need.

7. The Design, Methods and Procedures

This study uses a qualitative methodology to understand how and why racist discourse is constructed. It also applies Fairclough's critical discourse analysis to reveal ideologies embedded in social media content.

7.1 Participants and Data collection

The sample of this study consists of American Facebook users who express their beliefs and attitudes on the platform. The researcher collected eight Facebook posts from randomly selected individuals who discuss racism (e.g., toward Africans, Muslims, Arabs, and Mexicans). These posts convey specific ideas and promote negative attitudes toward non-Americans.

7.2 Data Analysis

Americans' Facebook publications have been analyzed according to Fairclough's model of CDA. The choice of Fairclough's model seems appropriate for this study since it reflects an analysis that brings into picture textual, discursive, and the sociocultural practice. This analysis will help us answer the research questions.

8. Limitations of the Study

Contradictory, this study is limited in size and scope. Notably, only eight texts related to racist discourse were analyzed, and the data therefore represent a relatively short time frame. Furthermore, American users increasingly rely on other social media platforms, such as Twitter and Threads; therefore, the findings cannot be generalized.

9. Significance of the Study

This research gains its significance from its focus on the role of social media in identifying and highlighting manifestations of racism within American society. It analyzes how platform

algorithms contribute to amplifying certain forms of discourse. The study emphasizes that digital discourse is not merely a reflection of social reality, but an active force that shapes and reproduces that reality.

10. The structure of the Thesis

The dissertation consists of two main chapters; the first chapter is devoted to the theoretical framework: Racism, social media, algorithms, Critical Discourse Analysis, power and discourse, social identity, major frameworks along with the description of the main model of this study. The second chapter presents the analysis of the study, based on Facebook posts collected from randomly selected American users. Using Norman Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the researcher analyzes the data.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Chapter One: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter represents the research's theoretical framework, starting with the first section that presents several definitions on racism and racist expression that are spread all over different platforms of social media. Next, since Facebook is the target platform to be analyzed, we tried to give a brief explanation on how Facebook has become the new arena to express racist ideas and how social media algorithms generally work. Additionally, we tried to give some popular examples on social media movements in USA such as #WhiteLivesMatter, #AllLivesMatter, and #BlueLivesMatter. In the second section, we present several definitions related to discourse and discourse analysis with a particular focus on media discourse analysis. Norman Fairclough's Dialectical-Relational Approach (DRA) is presented at the end of the chapter, as it serves as the theoretical foundation for the analysis.

1. Racism in Social Media and Facebook Discourse

1.1 Definition of Racism

Racism could be defined as different treatment of people in similar or equal situations. Racial discrimination is described by unequal and unfair treatment of people in groups and denial of their rights (Peyton & Huber, 2021). Terry (2009) defines racism as any act by an individual, an organization, an institution, or a custom that assigns unpleasant biological, psychological, social, or cultural qualities to a person based on their race or nationality.

Gee and Ford (2011) claim that Racism would lead to social inequality, racial brutality, segregation, and possibly genocide. Thus, "racism consists of distrusting and even looking down on those with different physical and cultural characteristics." (Gee & Ford, 2011, p.115.) Bizumic and Duckitt (2012) argue that racism has been conceptualized in various studies as "a preference for certain ethnic groups (cultural identity), xenophobia, or fear of

outsiders, ethnic marriage, or racial relations, and stereotypes, or generalizations about certain groups of people."(p. 887). However, it also relates to an individual's identity, biological traits, and physical characteristics.

However, racism is not limited to discrimination experienced by specific groups on the basis of race. It can also manifest through attitudes and behaviors, such as making stereotypical jokes, or in more extreme forms, including acts of violence or terrorism against individuals of different religions. Furthermore, racism may be directly experienced through jokes, images, violence, harassment, and discrimination perpetrated by individuals or groups (Schutte, 2011; Sheridan, 2006).

Furthermore, according to Bizumic and Duckitt (2012), there are six forms of racism. These forms are: (a) racist propaganda - signs, symbols, and pictures; (b) encouragement of racist behavior; (c) physical attack and abuse; (d) unwillingness to cooperate with people on the basis of their skin color, religion, and language; (e) threats of verbal abuse in the form of insulting words and ridiculing stereotypes; and (f) institutional racism that usually targets the less dominant ethnic and racial groups.

The purpose of having such an attitude is to oppress, discriminate against, or even curtail the rights of others. According to Cambridge Dictionary (2022), racism can be defined as: "harmful or unfair things that people say do, or think based on the belief that their own race makes them more intelligent, good, moral, etc. than people of other races."

Over time, the idea of racism and racism itself has become a complex phenomenon. According to Article 1 Part 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) in 1969, racial discrimination can be defined as "any restriction, distinction, preference, or exclusion, on the basis of colour, race, ethnic or national

origin, or descent which has or aims at the impairment or nullification of the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise of human rights and freedoms in all their aspects in life”.

1.2 Racist Expression

According to Neubeck and Glasberg (2004), there are two forms of racist expressions. The first is the individual or small group expressions of personal racism. This is a display of bigotry and prejudices against the inferior race. This may take the form of stereotyping based on real or imagined racial differences, racial slurs, discriminatory behavior, harassment, and violence. The second form of racism is institutional racism. This is a social system designed to accomplish a given task or fulfill a social need that is necessary for a social system. According to Elias and Paradies (2021), institutional racism contributes to the formation of racism by the formulation of laws and social systems that distribute ideas and resources that shape our perceptions of ourselves and our people. Moreover, de Silva et al. (2007) explain that institutional racism is the display of racism in social systems and social institutions such as the social and economic, political, and educational systems. It may also be a set of policies, practices, or processes within bureaucratic organizations that lead to the maltreatment of certain types of individuals. This leads to racial stratification and inequalities in employment, housing, education, health care, government, etc.

To conclude, racism in which races and individuals believe that one race is superior to another is a fundamental problem that society is still grappling with in this age of globalization. This may seem to be a trivial issue, but it leads to negative attitudes beyond stereotypes, prejudice, gender, age, and even basic issues like culture and religion.

1.3 Facebook: The New Arena for the Enactment of Racial Discourses

1.3.1 Definition of Facebook.

Since Facebook is currently the most prominent social media platform in the world, with more than 1.8 billion users worldwide (Kemp, 2017), creating an account is extremely simple, easy, and completely free of charge. All that is required of the user is to be above the age of thirteen years, to provide some basic information about himself/herself (like name, date of birth, gender, and a valid email address), and to create his/her password (Caers et al., 2013). Yet, there are no technological barriers to stop the user from creating his/her account on Facebook with the alias rather than his/her real identity to remain anonymous in his/her communications (Halfeld, 2013).

1.3.2 Four Modes of Communication

In fact, the evolution of the internet from an only text-based medium to a more dynamic and interactive medium (or what is known as many-to-many communication), has facilitated the utilization of anonymity for masquerading attitudes that may not necessarily be those of the individual in an ordinary offline social setting. In this regard, an interesting study by Hughey and Daniels (2013) on the *online versions of various US newspapers* in the early 2000s had initiated a new feature to allow readers to add comments to some of their news and articles. The rationale for this strategy was an effort to engage readers with their available content and to attract new readers who would potentially become new paid subscribers. However, what the editors of these newspapers did not anticipate and were not prepared to handle was the emergence of slurs and racist comments even when there was no correlation to racial issues.

According to Larsson (2015), Facebook may be described in terms of what the researcher refers to as four modes of communication, i.e., 1) broadcasting, which refers to the capacity to

transmit messages; 2) redistribute, which refers to the attitude of sharing; 3) interaction, which refers to commenting on something and expressing opinions on the same; and finally, 4) acknowledge, which on Facebook is also known as 'like' and is indicated by the company's logo, i.e., the blue color of the thumbs up sign. The company introduced five different icons of Reaction in January 2016 to increase the number of interaction possibilities with its content, i.e., love, sadness, astonishment, anger, and laugh, as indicated by the Guardian (2016) and Vilicic and Beer (2016).

However, as they are merely an extension of the like function, the addition of the Reaction icons does not change the four modes of communication. With the four modes of communication established, it can be inferred that the manner by which racist content is disseminated on Facebook is as follows: a) the act of posting, or the intent to share the content; b) the sharing of the content by other users who share the same point of view; c) the commenting on the content; and d) the like button, which may be interpreted as an expression of approval for the content, and this can also be attributed to the fact that the like button is an easy form of measuring the engagement rate generated by the content. In conclusion, the manner by which this content is generated (posting), disseminated (sharing), commented on (commenting), and endorsed (like) is an indication that Facebook promotes the uncontrolled spread of this content and is also "a sphere that enables new forms of cultural expression and content consumption" (Boxman-Shabtai & Shifman, 2015, p. 523).

1.3.3 Online Anonymity

According to Misoch (2015, p. 536), anonymity is defined as "a condition where the sender or source of information is absent or not identifiable". Furthermore, Kling et al. (1999) describe that online anonymity can also have some advantages, which are: a) it can be useful in the development of investigative journalistic projects; b) it can be useful in the act of

whistleblowing without revealing the source; c) it can be useful in providing support for certain law enforcement operations; d) it can be useful in helping individuals in need of certain private counselling; e) it can be useful in providing privacy protection for individuals; and f) avoiding persecution in general. On the other hand, the negative aspects of online anonymity, which are considered as the cons, are: a) spamming; b) deception; c) hate mail; d) impersonation and misrepresentation; e) online financial fraud; and f) other forms of illegal. Thus, what the authors are actually stating here is that online anonymity can have a certain, well-defined, and justifiable purpose, as well as a certain avenue for a myriad of questionable purposes.

It can, therefore, be implied that online anonymity has the potential to be used as a convenient shield that protects (or prevents) the people to be identified right away and allows them to express their mind without any form of restriction (Younge, 2012; Pereira et al., 2016). Malmqvist (2015, p. 735) has explained that this form of behavior is subject to the social psychologist Philp G. Zimbardo's Theory of Deindividuation, whereby it has been explained that "under anonymous conditions, people lose, or give up, their sense of self and their adherence to norms and expectations of others, whereby their behavior becomes intensely emotional, impulsive, irrational that is, unrestrained".

1.4 Social Media Algorithms

Zhou et al. (2023) claim that by picking information that supports the opinions of the users, algorithms, which are designed to enhance the user experience, actually promote divisions along ideological lines and limit the consumption of divergent views. The social media platforms are also responsible for impeding the development of real racial understanding, as they have created a knowledge bubble that separates individuals from

divergent views, as opposed to promoting free-flowing discussions and debates. In this case, the dominant views are given greater visibility, while divergent views are silenced.

The social media algorithms also promote conflict-driven narratives over constructive dialogue, which not only promotes bias but also ensures that racially offensive content spreads faster. As social media platforms use the number of engagements as a way of measuring success, content that promotes anger and division is given greater visibility (Zhou et al., 2023)..

As antagonistic views become entrenched, and voices promoting racial understanding are not given a hearing, this phenomenon creates a distortion in the views of the people. The racial animosity also stems from the social media algorithms, which prioritize interactions over morality (Zhou et al., 2023).

According to Angwin and Parris (2016), Facebook has also come under scrutiny for allowing marketers to exclude people from their marketing campaigns based on their ethnic affinities. The nature of social media also encourages anonymity, detachment, and disinhibition, thus allowing users to express their extremist opinions without any fear of reprisal in the real world.

1.5 Social Media Racial Expressions

Social Media Platforms (SMPs) have become a space for people and communities to express their feelings and beliefs, both positive and negative about a subject that they think is relevant (Chung & Zeng, 2015; Stroińska & Cecchetto, 2019). SMPs provide a space for people to have an anonymous space where they can release their frustrations, reveal their affinities, and group themselves with those they identify with (De Saint Laurent et al., 2020). SMPs like Facebook provide a space for racist's discourses that become normalized and may shape and influence the social perceptions that users may have about race (Ekman, 2019).

Therefore, racist expression exists as a mechanism that keeps the structures of oppression and racial privilege in place.

Social movements began to utilize SMPs to mobilize and promote social change by uniting people with similar perspectives based on issues such as race, immigration, and political views (Wilkins et al., 2019). Some of the social movements that fall in this category include #MeToo, #BlackLivesMatter, or #bringbackourgirls, among others.

In the case of #BlackLivesMatter, there have been counter-movements to counter, contradict, attack, or recontextualize their message of racial justice (Wilkins et al., 2019). This is where recontextualization is defined “as a process in which factual words, images, or data are taken out of context, extracted, or reorganized in a way in which a new narrative can be constructed to reinforce racial stereotypes or subtract the importance and relevance of the event being denounced” (Ekman, 2019; Nortio et al., 2020, p.606). #WhiteLivesMatter, #AllLivesMatter, and #BlueLivesMatter are some of the counter-movements to #BlackLivesMatter which is a counter-narrative to the message intended by #BlackLivesMatter. There is usually a flux of messages during racial tension events in which there is a counter- movement of racially charged messages from #WhiteLivesMatter, #AllLivesMatter, and #BlueLivesMatter in which people in the dominant discourse usually feel threatened or exposed, resulting in the expression of racist messages (Siapera & Viejo-Otero, 2021).

1.6 Hate Speech on Social Media

One of the problems with the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution prohibits Congress from restricting fundamental rights: freedom of speech, press, religion, assembly, and petition. As far as hate speech is concerned, is that freedom of speech is not specifically defined, and as such, it is left to the court and lawmakers to interpret (Fisch, 2002; Matsuda,

1989). The particular interpretation given to the protection of hate speech has, over the years, created a solidity that has dramatically affected the outcome of all hate speech trials that are brought before the Supreme Court (Fisch, 2002). As such, the dissemination of information containing hate speech is able to utilize the particular interpretation and protection to cause physical, emotional, social, and economic harm without any consequence (Becker et al., 2000). As Matsuda (1989) has suggested, the failure of US law to provide resources to people and groups whose lives and livelihoods are threatened by hate speech is, in effect, another way to harm them.

Hate speech in social media, according to Siapera and Viejo-Otero (2021), creates a dilemma in balancing the freedom of speech and controlling hate speech. This leads to the following questions: When does hate speech become acceptable? What language do we have to use to give rise to hate speech or become racist? Are there bad forms of racism, therefore good forms of racism? How far does racism and racist discourses have to go to become offensive? While these questions may not be the ones we set out to find answers to in our research, they provide us with guidelines on how racist discourses or hate speech can be disguised with the intention of promoting racial discourses.

Different SMPs have come up with their own regulations or terms of service for their users, governing their posts, messages, and even the language used by them (Siapera, 2019); however, this only caters to what can be identified in general terms as explicit hate speech. Therefore, it can be said that SMPs function as gatekeepers of information. They set the filters and parameters for what can be said and how (West, 2017). This enables them to function as regulators of what constitutes a racist discourse and what does not.

In addition, the policy on the term of service of SMPs can be classified into two types: a free speech, oriented organization in which the main objective of their policy is to protect the

free expression of their users, and a community oriented organization in which the main objective of their policy is to prevent the discourses and content that could lead to the stereotyping and harassment of different communities (West, 2017).

1.7 Social Media as a Contemporary Public Sphere

SMPs such as Facebook have become a place for individuals to express political opinions and other viewpoints concerning current issues such as immigration, and social and race. These expressions create different virtual spaces for individuals to get together through a sense of belonging, or digital togetherness (Nortio et al., 2020). According to Marino (2015), digital togetherness refers to a sense of belonging and sharing an identity due to personal experiences, creating a space to communally propagate their values. This leads to the development of a sense of having an intimate relationship with other members through shared fears, stereotypes, or personal experiences that can be used to communicate their beliefs, or apparent knowledge towards those considered a threat to their identity (Ekman, 2019; Stamatelatos et al., 2020). Thus, individuals or groups that identify with what can be considered as counter-movements to BLM, such as Blue Lives Matter, All Lives Matter, or Whites Lives Matter, experience a sense of digital togetherness through a shared meaning affinity.

Furthermore, social movements such as #BlackLivesMatter (BLM) are expected to create social change and collective actions (Wilkins et al., 2019). Essentially, social movements like BLM exist to challenge the status quo and represent the interest of a collective social group that is being oppressed (Lippard et al., 2020). On the other hand, counter-movements exist to accomplish the opposite of what social movements achieve, and members of such movements advocate for the status quo, which entails ensuring that social change does not occur, particularly when such change affects their interests and privileged status in society (Lippard

et al., 2020). This means that such movements exist only if the social movement they are countering is politically significant (Meyer & Staggenborg, 1996). This makes such movements reactionary adversaries whose confrontations are set in the public sphere, including SMPs and courts (Lippard et al., 2020).

One of the structural arguments of counter-movements like #WhiteLivesMatter, #AllLivesMatter, and #BlueLivesMatter is that there is no need to establish racial hierarchy based on the fact that there is no differentiation in the value of other lives in comparison to Black lives (Agozino, 2018). This argument conceals and reduces the fact that there are races whose lives have been suppressed and made to be considered to be of lesser value than the lives of Whites and, therefore, can be taken without any consequences (Agozino, 2018). Kil (2020) argued that the three movements are positioned in the context of whiteness.

The term “all” in the #AllLivesMatter movement means “White” and is positioned in the context of color-blind language, which does not refer to race (Atkins, 2019; Kil, 2020; Lippard et al., 2020). The term “blue” in the #BlueLivesMatter movement means “White” and is represented in the context of the role played by the police in the United States in maintaining and preserving White privilege (Bock & Figueroa, 2018; Kil, 2020). The #WhiteLivesMatter movement, therefore, positions White lives in the context of existing discrimination against Whites based on their race (Kalunta, 2017).

Although some of these counter-movements have been “infiltrated” or “sabotaged” by racial and social justice supporters to change the narratives shared in these digital groups, the focus of these counter-movements remains the delegitimization of BLM as a movement (Banks, 2018). It is, therefore, crucial to be more explicit about the lives of the people who identify as part of these racial groups. Although the hashtags may not typically include explicit language that could be interpreted as racist, it includes colloquial and seemingly

innocuous language as part of a rhetoric that supports and perpetuates racist discourse. This subtle, vulnerable to interpretation, and difficult to identify form of discrimination is part of what is referred to as ADR (Rubio, 2020).

1.8. The Power of Controlling Images: Public News Sources

According to researches, one of the reasons why people are likely to turn to mediated sources for activism is the provision of data that is not filtered through larger organizations, as Warren (2014) explains. He suggests that individuals are drawn to mediated sources for activism because these platforms provide access to information that is not subject to the filtering processes of large institutions. As a result, such sources are perceived as offering more authentic, diverse, and immediate representations of social and political issues. The news sources have promoted certain perspectives of the events that have been harmful to a number of individuals, especially underrepresented individuals. These alternative news and communication sources, therefore, are reliable to individuals who consider the dominant news sources to be representing only a single perspective. Patricia Hill Collins describes the descriptions made by the dominant group as controlling images which are “designed to make racism, sexism, poverty, and other forms of social injustice appear as natural, normal, and inevitable parts of everyday life” (Collins, 2000, p.70). Many times, this is done by the news media, which presents a story that creates these controlling images and influences society’s perception of certain groups of people, which is why African Americans and Hispanics use social media to vocalize their opinions (Anderson et al. 2018).

In her book which is entitled, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, Collins discusses how the controlling images created by the dominant group towards black women maintained their subordination to whites. For instance, with the decline of slavery, the black woman was labeled a mammy. The descriptions that the

dominant group employed perpetuated the cycle of racial subjugation, “Moreover, by meshing smoothly with systems of race, class, and gender oppression, they provide effective ideological justifications for racial oppression, the politics of gender justification, and the economic exploitation inherent in capitalist economies” (Collins, 2000, p. 271). This image of a black woman was one of a faithful and obedient servant in a white household. It encouraged black women to be warm and loving, while also reminding them of their position as a domestic servant in a white household. This image of black women was an oppressive one, one that reminded them of their racial subordination to whites, their asexuality, and their exploitation in the workforce.

Today, the images that the controlling group presents to society through media influence the way racial minorities are viewed in society. Media over-representation of racial minorities as criminals subjects them to severe punishments. Dukes & Gaither (2017) explain that even when racial minorities are victims, their murder trials are biased due to media, as observed in the trial for the murder of a black individual. Media usually reports on a black person’s past or current behaviors as a criminal, their physical compositions, where the crime was committed, and negative, stereotypical aspects of their lifestyle, which contributes to negative controlling images. This, therefore, places blame on them for their own death and makes the shooter less culpable (Dukes & Gaither, 2017).

People believe they are able to have honest political discourse via social media because it is not regulated by any organization (Choi 1994; Grieco 2017). It, therefore, becomes a means of developing opinions and judgments about various groups and issues (Roskos-Ewoldsen & Monahan 2007). It is a means of interacting with others, unlike traditional media, which isolates people, and it makes society civically and politically engaged. It allows people to form relationships, though they might not be with their immediate community, because it

might help in creating a cycle of community engagement, social relationships, and trust (Shah et al. 2002; Hwang & Kim 2015).

In his research, Warren et. Al (2014) indicates how social media helps people connect, "many, many, many of us do not understand each other's perspective so I think social media has the ability to allow us to voice out and share our individual perspectives... In some way, it unites us," (p.287). Research indicates that people are connecting through social media. Moreover, people are utilizing social media as a tool for activism. However, people have low social trust and trust in information found on the internet. There are questions about whether social media opens the door to diversity or not. There are questions about building community, norms of reciprocity, trust, etc.

2. From Discourse to Media Discourse: Fairclough's Dialectical-Relational Approach (DRA)

2.1 Definition of Discourse

The term discourse was originally borrowed from Latin, where it was written as 'discursus' and meant 'speech and conversation'. Crystal, among other researchers, defined discourse, and his quote says, "a piece of naturally occurring spoken, written, or signed discourse identified for the purpose of analyses" (2003, p.72). Despite the fact that the term discourse is open to various interpretations, it is based on the act of turn-taking of utterances between a speaker and a hearer, or in the case of written discourse, between a writer and a reader, in relation to the context in which the discourse is taking place.

2.1.2 Definition of Discourse Analysis

Yule (1983, p.63) defines DA as "an effort to look at the language in use without forgetting to look at the context". The term 'discourse analysis' (DA) has been included in many fields, e.g., psychology, anthropology, and linguistics. Also, Van Dijk (1985) writes

that it is “the study of real language use, by real speakers in real situations” (p.2). In other words, DA is concerned with the study of real language use in the form of either spoken or written language. In this respect, DA deals with the study of what is being said in utterances and beyond them. Moreover, DA is commonly applied as a tool to describe and analyze the meaning in social interactions, considering the context and social rules. The meaning in DA has been explained by Cook (1989) as:

Not all sentences are interesting, relevant, or suitable; one cannot just put any sentence after another and hope that it will mean something. People do not always speak or write in complete sentences, yet they still succeed in communicating. (p.3).

In other words, meaning is not restricted to the linguistic form only. However, DA focuses on how people communicate in a conversation in search of meaning even when speaking in incomplete sentences. Even if a sentence is not grammatically complete in any way, there is meaning in that sentence and it is upon the hearer to make sense of that meaning as it is conveyed in any form of utterances, be it written or verbal. According to Cook (1989), language has two forms: one is “language as potential object for study” (p.5). This form is associated with grammar and teaching language such as that used in literature. The other form is “language in use for communication” that focuses on how people exchange utterances in a given context in pursuit of a given message. He argues that the second form is DA.

Discourse, as defined by John Fiske (as cited in Butler, 2012), is a language or representation which has socially developed to produce and represent a coherent set of meanings which represent the interests and purposes of sections of society. Discourse and language, as noted by Fiske, is not confined to grammar, speech, and vocabulary. It stretches out to include other meaning-producing media such as newspapers, televisions, cinemas, and photography. The discourses are ways of representing aspects of the world. The aspects of the

world include the social world, feelings, beliefs, processes, relationships, and mental processes or thoughts.

Furthermore, the author indicates that discourse has ideological effects. The ideologies are the parts of the world that aid in the establishment, maintenance, and changing of the social power relations. From these definitions, it is understood that discourse influences the ideologies, and the ideologies aid in the changing of the social power relations. Through the analysis of media discourse, it is possible to comprehend the impact of the use of language on the behavior and actions of people towards others in the society by critically analyzing the language used by the newspapers in relation to the potential of the language to incite violence.

Language and discourse cannot be separated from one another. In the course of analyzing the discourse, the functions of the language need to be analyzed. Johnstone (2008) states that the formulation of the world that people live in is done through the use of language. For example, the mode of paraphrasing the information is a reflection of the cultural mindsets and the worldview that are embedded in them. The discourse is influenced by various forms of structural conventions. This is further influenced by the motives of the speakers/writers who generate the discourse. The use of language can further show the relationship between the communities in the aspects of social distance, power, and relatedness (Bhatia, 2004).

2.1.3 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

CDA is a discipline came to existence in the late 1970s when Hodge, Trew, Fowler, and Kress wrote *Language and Control* in late 1970s. Then in 1989, Norman Fairclough followed suit by introducing CDA in the UK. In Austria, Ruth Wodak (1989) and in the Netherlands, van Dijk (1993) also began to work on CDA.

This discipline treats language as a social practice (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258.). This latter is defined by Fairclough as “an articulation of action and interaction, social

relations, persons (beliefs, attitudes, etc.), the material world and discourse” (1997, p. 25). He also adds that “The reason for centering the concept of ‘social practice’ is that it allows an oscillation between the perspective of social structure and the perspective of social action and agency” (as cited in Elbah, 2012, p.23). Coffin also describes CDA as “an approach to language analysis which concerns itself with issues of language, power and ideology.” In line with the above statement, Van Dijk (2001) describes CDA as follows:

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality. (p.352).

CDA, according to Van Dijk, is limited to carrying out power through either written or spoken word. Moreover, CDA is a tool which reflects a great part of the ideology, identity, gender, objectives, and above all, the political position of the speaker. Rogers (2004) states an inclusive definition of CDA, she says:

CDA is both a theory and a method. Researchers who are interested in the relationship between language and society use CDA to help them describe, interpret, and explain such relationships. CDA is different from other discourse analysis methods because it includes not only a description and interpretation of discourse in context, but also offers an explanation of why and how discourses work. (p.33).

The above quote clearly indicates that what makes CDA different from all other disciplines is that it gives explanations and interpretations in a specific social context in which the discourse occurs. Moreover, CDA’s reliability lies in the fact that CDA considers all aspects of discourse such as, the historical background of the speaker, social problems existing

currently in relation to political power, meaning, its relation to cultures, norms, conventions, etc. CDA's attempts to reveal ideologies.

2.2 Power and Discourse

The concept of power in the domain of discourse has been given different interpretations; it is defined as “means having preferential access to and control over scarce social resources.” (van Dijk, 2005, p. 2). For example, Wartenberg (1990) has enlightened us on the different forms power comes in and what enables the exercise of power. On the other hand, Foucault (1980) has analyzed the flow of power in different societies and how it maintains order and discipline.

Power, in the light of what Wartenberg and Foucault have to say, can be seen as a means of domination by some individuals to get what they want from other people. For example, politicians use speeches to exercise power in the form of discourse. This enables them to control the behavior of their subjects. According to Dahl, “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do” (Dahl, 1969, p. 80). It may be concluded that power is employed in social positions, in most cases political ones, in order to allow or prevent individuals from pursuing their interests. In addition, the employment of power may also result in shaping the minds of individuals, maintaining their beliefs, or even replacing them with new ones.

2.3 CDA and Social Identity

The construction of identity has been an area of interest for various fields of study, such as sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, and even CDA. The latter, interestingly, has also started to offer methods for the construction and construction of identity linguistically, cognitively, and socially. In addition, the social identity, or the identity of the whole, as controlled by the practice of language among and over individuals, is an area of interest for

CDA. The individuals in the society are represented by their acts. However, an individual is affected by the shared language in the organizations and societies in the society.

Furthermore, Van Dijk (2002, p.17) adds that ideology is a composition of “social constructions”. The latter is shared among the individuals of one group or several groups that share the same culture, conventions, and values. Even when Van Dijk (2002) refers to language, he identifies the social group as speech community.

2.4 Speech Community

The group of human beings who agree on a set of linguistic variables related to the use of language is referred to as ‘speech community’ by Yule (2006). Labov (1972) states:

The speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behavior, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage. (pp.120-121)

Speech community, as a definition, is viewed and understood by linguists in different ways; however, it is obvious that it refers to social and cultural values that not only dictate to an individual how to talk as per the norms set for speaking, but also dictate to him/her how to behave and interact with the members of the same speech community.

2.5 CDA Major Frameworks

2.5.1 Fairclough’s Model in CDA

One of the frameworks of CDA is the threefold model of analysis of the ideologies and power practice introduced by Fairclough. The three levels of analysis given in this model are description, interpretation, and explanation (as mentioned by Fairclough 1989, p. 26).

Moreover, this model takes into consideration the process of meaning creation in discourse. Also, it tends to analyze the cognitive ways in which people implement meanings in their speeches. The components of Fairclough's (1989, 1995) model of CDA are three processes of analysis: three components of discourse. This model has been chosen to be used as a framework of the current study.

2.5.1.1 Description

The object of analysis in the first dimension is the text, which is addressed in the initial stage of the process. Text, according to Fairclough (1993, p. 138), means "the written or spoken language produced in a discursive event." For example, TV language makes the multi-semiotic potential of texts even stronger by incorporating visual images and sound. The analysis of the text forms the first step in the Fairclough model of CDA. This means the analysis of language structures that are either spoken or written for discursive states. According to Fairclough, the analysis of the text forms a vital component in social scientific research into a whole variety of social and cultural practices and processes.

2.5.1.2 Interpretation

The second part of Fairclough's model of CDA is the discursive practice. It is called interpretation. According to Rogers et al (2004, p.372), the production process is related to the interpretation and consumption processes. This implies that first the text is analyzed and then the interpretation/consumption happens. The focus of the discursive practice is the way in which people produce, interpret, and transform texts. This is an in-between process that paves the way for the proper analysis of the context.

2.5.1.3 Explanation

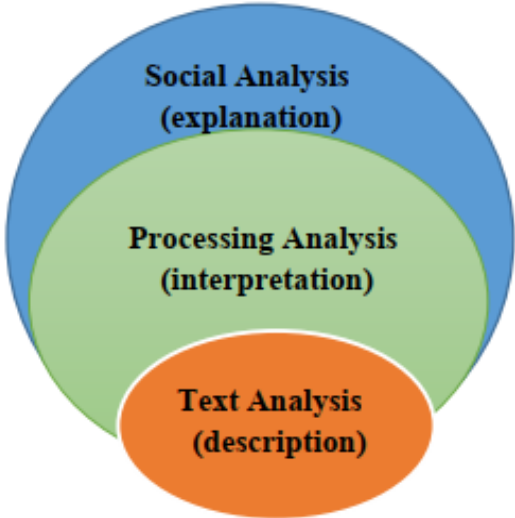
The third and final dimension is knitted to socio-cultural practice. What occurs is shaped by the social, historical, and cultural contexts that surround the discourse under investigation.

Issues like power and ideology are explored based on the role of discourses in society. Fairclough (1993) viewed language use as shaping and being shaped by society. He viewed texts and discourses as being socially constitutive when he said, “language use is always simultaneously constitutive of (I) social identities, (II) social relations and (III) systems of knowledge and beliefs.” (1993, p.134).

The figure below shows Fairclough's three-dimensional framework of analyzing discourse.

Figure 1

Fairclough's Model of CDA (adopted from Fairclough, 1995)

Dimensions of Discourse	Kinds of Analysis
<p>The socio-historical conditions that govern the explanation and interpretation processes.</p> <p>Means of producing and receiving the text or speech (writing, speaking, designing, reading, listening, viewing)</p> <p>The object of analysis (verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts)</p>	

2.6 Media Discourse Analysis (MDA)

The linguistic elements and the social life have been the focal point for many researchers, especially in Discourse Analysis. The linguistic elements of media discourse, as proposed by Norman Fairclough, are grounded in both language and social life. The linguistic elements comprise, for example, the analysis of the type of grammatical structure, verb form, or adjectives that are socially related to some event or culture. The social life, on the other hand,

is an effort to emphasize the idea that texts are multifunctional, which means that texts are capable of representing the world and establishing relationships with others. In simple words, the choice of words by media has social and ideological significance.

2.6.1 Media Discourse

Media discourse is defined as the interactions that take place through a broadcast platform. O'Keeffe (2006) elaborates on this definition further. According to O'Keeffe, this may either be written or spoken discourse that is oriented to a viewer, a listener, or a non-present reader. In the olden days, the discourse did not allow for instantaneous responses to the creators of the discourse. The written discourse is oriented to a readership audience, while the spoken discourse is oriented to a viewing or a listening audience. Media discourse is also not spontaneous or ad hoc in nature. Media discourse is again not off the record or private in nature; in other words, communication in media (like news, TV, or social platforms) is open, public, and meant for everyone to see or hear, rather than being secret or personal.

Thus, seeking to understand media discourse, it is crucial to consider the basic characteristics as discussed by O'Keeffe (2006). It is also essential to consider the manner in which media discourse is manufactured at an ideological level as well as a literal sense. Discourse analysis is an essential tool which can be employed for the understanding of media discourse and its role in the society (O'Keeffe et al. 2007). The fact that media discourse is always on record has made it interesting for the discourse analysts due to the availability of radio stations, television programs, and newspapers which can be accessed online.

Other researchers have also handled the subject of media discourse from various perspectives. To quote one of them, for instance, Talbot (2007) points out that media discourse can be seen as a means by which media shapes some issues and arrives at public discussions. In practical terms, media is used to promote some discourse as an integral part of

its very nature. To enable media to find a place for itself in its own world, media has to spread information with some binoculars or perspectives. Discourse can be defined in various ways. Discourse can be defined from one point of view as a means by which groups and individuals communicate with each other. Discourse can be seen on a deeper level as a symbol of beliefs and thoughts that dictate how an individual understands and interprets the world.

The linguistic elements and the social life have been the focal point for many researchers, especially in Discourse Analysis. The linguistic elements in media discourse, as proposed by Norman Fairclough, are based on the linguistic elements as well as the social life. The linguistic elements comprise, for example, the analysis of the type of grammatical structure, verb form, or adjectives that are socially related to some event or culture. The social life, on the other hand, is an effort to emphasize the idea that texts are multifunctional, which means that texts are capable of representing the world and establishing relationships with others. In simple words, the choice of words by media has social and ideological significance (1995, p.25).

The content of the news in media can be well understood with the help of discourse analysis. It is important to understand the definition and the functions of discourse analysis. Lam (2011) has addressed this issue from two different points of view. Discourse analysis can be defined from two different frames of evaluation. The first definition of discourse analysis focuses on the understanding of discourse as an interaction and social action of human agents. It can also be defined as a construction of reality, which creates a knowledge system and shapes the social practice and relations of people. Thus, according to the two definitions, discourse analysis focuses on the presence of a link between the content of media and a sociopolitical framework. This is a quantitative approach to content analysis. Media can be used for shaping the political and social discourse in a country. This definition can be used for understanding the ways in which media discourse and conflicts in a society can be related.

Another feature of this communicative context, as Fowler (2013) explained, is that the mass media is impersonal and has a fragmented audience. It is not possible to get a direct feedback from the audience, despite the presence of media surveys, call-ins, and letters to the editor. There is stereotyping in the news used in mass media. The impersonality of mass media communication gives rise to the stereotyping of the speaker and the reader. Lastly, as a feature of the communicative context of mass media, the news is embedded in talk. Within the text used in the news, there are other speech events.

Conclusion

For centuries, racism has been an issue in American society; however, the emergence of social media has altered the landscape of the vulgarity and encounter of racist content. Social media has become a crucial communication, advocacy, and information battleground. While these platforms have provided a voice through which underprivileged populations become equal in terms of advocating for equality and justice, the same platforms have nurtured the breeding ground for hate messages and discriminatory ideologies. This chapter explored the relationship between social media and racism, doing so to look at how these social media platforms amplify racist content alongside anti-racist movements and their broader influence on public perception. CDA is used as a method in this research in order to analyze different publication from Facebook. Therefore, it was defined according to Fairclough with a hint on MDA.

Chapter Two:
**Research Methodology and Analytical
Framework**

Chapter Two: Research Methodology and Analytical Framework

Introduction

In order to examine the role of social media in shaping racist discourse in American society, this chapter focuses on the analysis of selected Facebook posts using Fairclough's three-dimensional model. First, it presents the methodology employed, namely the analysis of randomly selected Facebook posts. Second, it describes the participants and the collected data. Finally, the Facebook posts are analyzed at three levels—textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice.

1. Research Methodology

The conducted method in this research is the qualitative method, it is employed as a design of research with Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis approach. The discourse analysis in this case also falls under the approach of the practice which represents not only the world but also signifies the world and constitutes the world in meaning terms (Locke, 2004). The posts used for this research are purposefully determined from the Facebook pages of Americans.

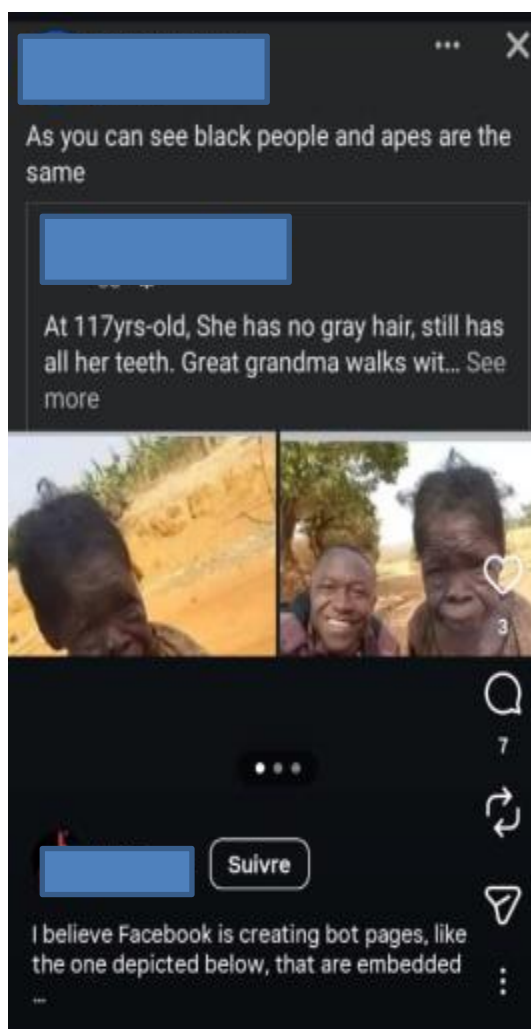
2. Participants and Collected Data

As it was mentioned previously, the source material for this study is Facebook; the material will be collected from public pages and groups. Additionally, the users of Facebook are anonymous. These posts will represent different viewpoints such as: immigration, Islamophobia, African-American people, vote, bullying...etc. These posts refer to racism in America. 08 publications will be collected randomly and analyzed according to Fairclough's CDA.

2. Data Analysis

Figure 2

Black People as Apes



1. Textual Analysis

✓ Lexicalization

The post contains explicitly racist and dehumanizing language, most notably in the statement: *“black people and apes are the same.”* This lexical choice reflects a historically

entrenched racist trope that equates Black individuals with animals, thereby denying their humanity. The use of the generalizing phrase “*black people*” constructs a homogenized racial group.

✓ **Patterns of Transitivity**

The example relies on relational processes, “black people and apes are the same”; the writer of this statement establishes an equivalence between two different entities. The absence of material process depicts the racist claim as inherent truth.

✓ **The Use of Active and Passive Voice**

In this post, the active voice is used as a declarative sentence, which emphasizes directly the comparison between black people and apes, the absence of passive voice shows that the writer of this comment is sure of his statement.

✓ **The Use of Nominalisation**

“Black people” is used as a form of nominalization (Noun phrase), to reduce a group of people into a single category (black people); this expression facilitate stereotyping.

✓ **The Choices of Mood**

The mood is declarative throughout the discourse; it presents factual observation rather than an opinion, “black people and apes are the same” give a provocative and offend tone. Also the statement “as you can see” strengthen the position of the participant 1 and presents his statement as an “obvious” “undiscussable” truth.

✓ **The Choices of Modality or Polarity**

The text uses strong and racial discourse, with no modal verbs. It is used to express definite truth and to enforce racism.

✓ **The Thematic Structure of the Text (Theme vs. Rheme)**

The main Theme in this post is “black people and apes”; it foregrounds a dehumanizing comparison, positioning it as the central topic of the clause. The Rheme “are the same” introduces the ideological claim as new information, yet it is presented as a logical conclusion rather than a subjective opinion. This thematic organization contributes to the naturalization of racist ideology by presenting it as given knowledge.

✓ **The Information Focus**

The post contains a visual image of an old black woman, which is presented as a proof and evidence of the publication. It guides the reader into a racial reading and understanding. The text “Black people and apes are the same” makes this comparison as the central focus and normalize the association of black people and apes.

✓ **Cohesive Devices**

Cohesion is achieved through using the pronoun “you” in “as you can see” as a demonstrative reference to make the users more engaged. Cohesion is achieved a by using also visual-textual connection between the caption and the images in order to emphasize the intended meaning.

2. Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

✓ Speech Acts

The post performs mainly two different speech acts, the first one is the Assertive acts that make statements presented as truth (“black people and apes are the same”). The second act is directive in “as you can see” this sentence intends to subtly directs the audience to interpret the images in a specific way (racial discrimination).

✓ Coherence

The post constructs a simplified and misleading coherence by linking the caption with the images. It suggests a cause-effect or evidential relationship (images as “proof”), relying on racist assumptions shared within certain audiences. This coherence is ideologically driven rather than logically valid

✓ Intertextuality

The text demonstrates interdiscursivity by drawing on different discourses; starting with the racist discourse in which P1 uses a historical animalization of Black people. He also refers to the biological hierarchy by using a scientific discourse. Finally, P1 succeed in creating a social media discourse by posting a shocking content to attract engagement on Facebook.

3. Sociocultural Practice (Explanation)

✓ **Dominance** as it is defines in The social dominance theory proposed by Sidanius and Pratto (1999) conceives of group based social hierarchies as “ubiquitous”. There are some studies state that even groups of young children are hierarchically organised (Hawley, 1999)

The post reinforces racial dominance by reproducing white supremacist ideology; P1 presents Black individuals as inferior and dehumanized people. Also he creates unequal power relations by legitimizing discrimination and exclusion.

✓ **Resistance**

Resistance is a part of power resistance to change his ethnocentric ideological stance. (Williams, 2011, p. 89). Also Gillespie state that resistance shows when alternatives to a unitary conception start to be supported by more persons and groups (Gillespie 2008, p. 382).

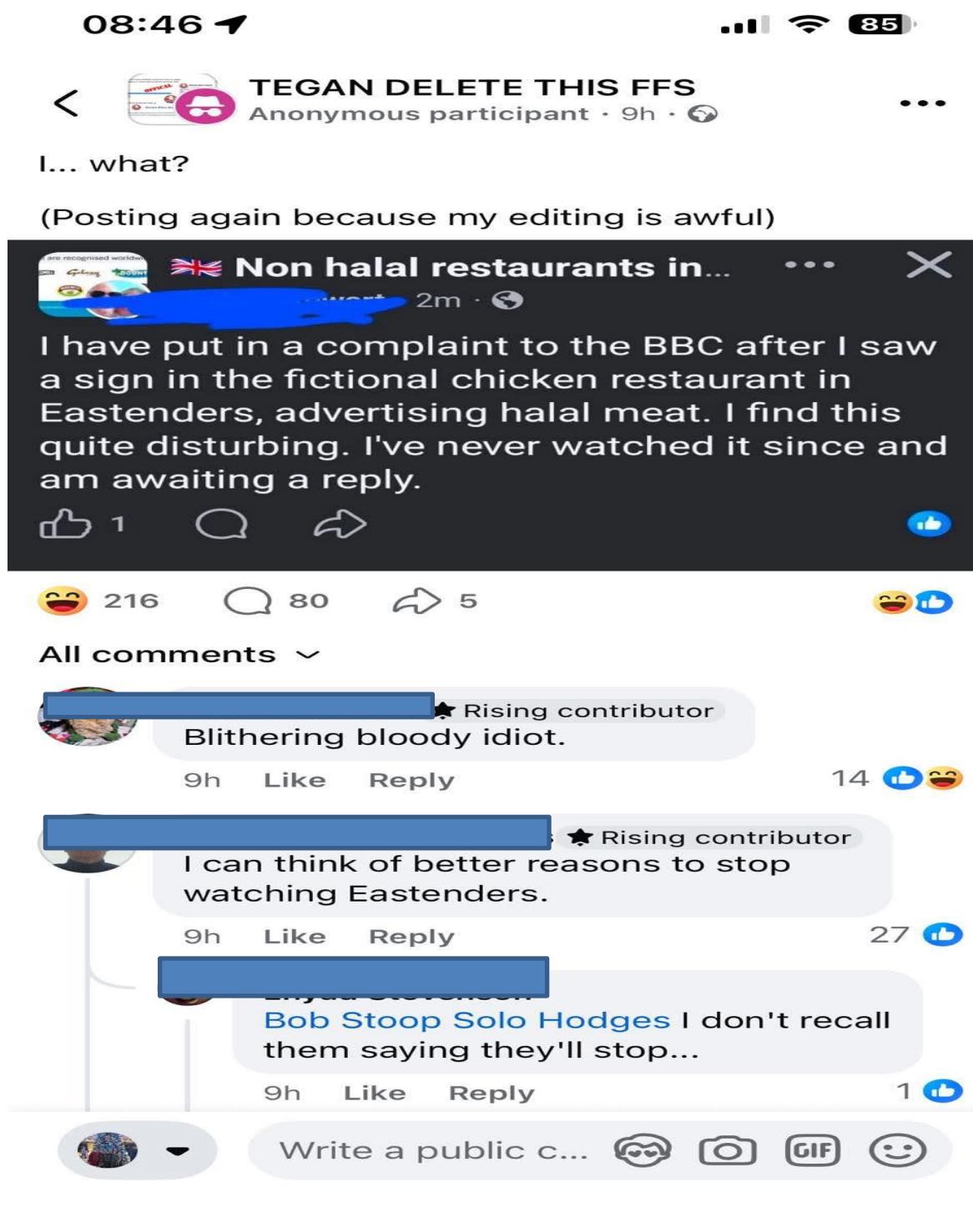
Despite the fact that this post reflects racism, the surrounding context, with the user commenting “Facebook is creating bot pages,” indicates a form of resistance (African people). This means that some users do not support racism and knew the challenge that people face in nowadays because of social media platforms.

✓ **Hegemony:** Fairclough (1989) claim that hegemony is dominance through consent, and it can be reinforced by discourse (p.17). Therefore Hegemony can be define as dominated power exercised through ideology and discourse (Wodal and Meyer, 2016, p.10)

This is how hegemony works here: the post attempts to normalize dehumanizing ideas about race by presenting them in an informal Facebook context (White people) , where users often scroll quickly and engage casually. In such spaces, extreme views can be made to look like just another opinion among many, which reduces immediate critical questioning.

Figure 3

Halal Food



1. Textual Analysis

✓ Lexicalization

In this publication, ideological words have been used such as: “halal meat” and negative words such as “disturbing” and “complaint”, these terms reflect a negative attitude towards Islam, and portray some Islamic practices such as hala food as unwanted and disturbing act.

✓ Patterns of Transitivity

The post consists of both mental and material processes, mental processes: “I find this quite disturbing, “I’ve never watched it since” express personal feelings and attitudes. Also Material process: “I have put in a complaint” expresses an action taken against the representation of halal meat.

✓ The Use of Active and Passive Voice

The active voice is used in this post, “I have put in a complaint” and “I’ve never watched it since,” which emphasizes the speaker’s personal reaction and opinion. It is used to reinforce the legitimacy of the person complaining and strengthens his position against halal representation.

✓ The Use of Nominalisation

Nominalisation appears in terms such as “complaint” and “halal meat.” These nouns reflect cultural and religious practices.

✓ **The Choices of Mood**

The mood is primarily declarative, presenting personal opinions as justified reactions. Statements such as “I find this quite disturbing” and “I’ve never watched it since” function as assertions rather than opening the door for discussion, it gives definite point of view.

✓ **The Choices of Modality or Polarity**

This blog expresses weak modality, yet high polarity because it does not contain any hedging expressions and shows firmness and justification in its opinions. There is no use of modal verbs such as “may” and “can” which reflects the negative attitude towards halal practices.

✓ **The Thematic Structure of the Text (Theme vs. Rheme)**

P2 established a theme that centers on the pronoun (“I”), foregrounding personal experience and reaction. While the rheme introduces halal meat and its perceived negative implications, as it is an action of discomfort.

✓ **The Information Focus**

The post presents personal reaction as evidence, particularly the act of filing a complaint and discontinuing viewership. This subjective experience is presented as sufficient justification for criticism

✓ **Cohesive Devices**

Cohesion is achieved through the use of different elements such as using the pronoun I as a personal reference that was repeated many times. Also the use of linking words such as “after

I saw...,” “since then”; they are considered as temporal elements. Finally, in order to reinforce the central topic he used a lexical repetition such as “halal”, “complaint”.

2. Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

✓ Speech Acts

The post performs several speech acts such as, assertive: “I find this quite disturbing”; Commissive/Expressive: “I’ve never watched it since” and Declarative: “I have put in a complaint” suggests engagement with institutional authority.

✓ Coherence

The post maintains coherence through a linear narrative, P2 talk about halal action in order to create an emotional reaction that made people complain and this action leads to another reaction which is boycotting. This structure relies on shared beliefs that halal practices are controversial or problematic.

✓ Intertextuality

The text demonstrates interdiscursivity by drawing on multiple discourses, it refers to media discourse by presenting the TV show, and also, it introduces some religious discourse by presenting halal practices in Islam. P2 presents islamophobia discourse by showing some Islam symbols that are framed as incompatible or threatening. Finally, opinions of users are presented through comments and reactions, this is social media discourse.

3. Sociocultural Practice (Explanation)

✓ Dominance

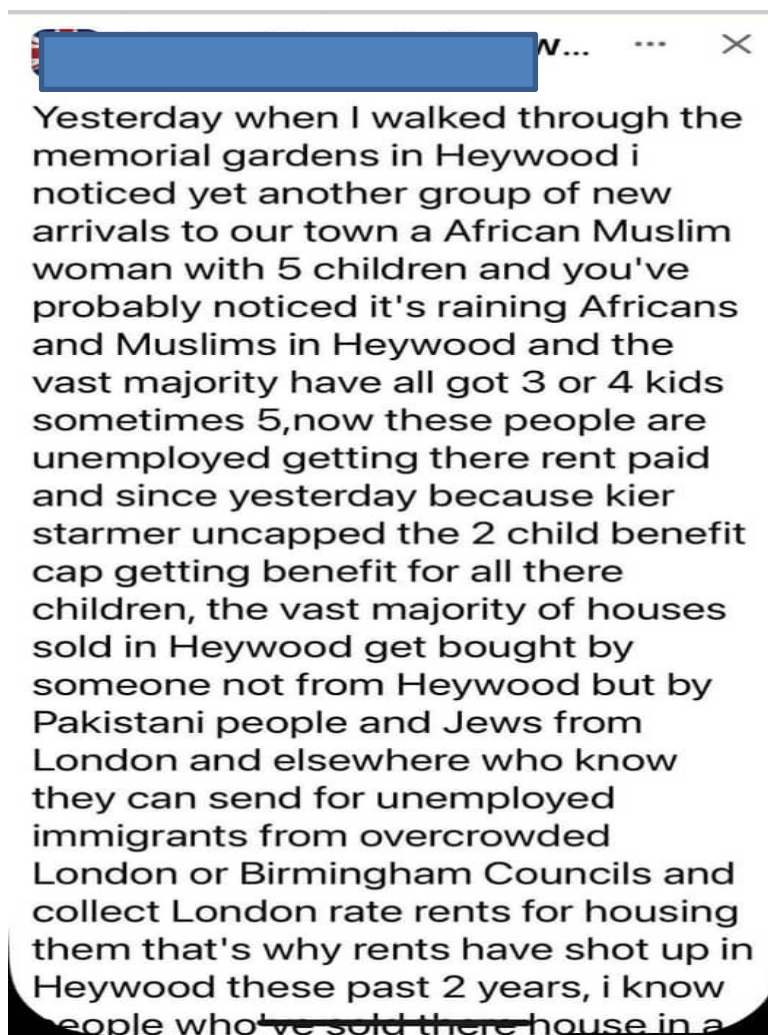
The post reflects Islamophobia, where Islamic practices such as halal consumption are constructed as deviant or unwanted. This contributes to the marginalization of Muslim communities by portraying their cultural and religious practices as incompatible with other societies. We can say that the dominant group is the Western world.

✓ Resistance

Resistance is clear in the part of comments, where some users challenge or mock the original poster's stance. This indicates that social media functions as a contested space in which dominant and opposing ideologies interact and compete.

✓ Hegemony

P2 is trying to make an institutional appeal to make a compliment about advertising halal food, this is a sort of hegemony by trying to control representation of halal food

Figure 4*Immigration of Africans and Muslims***1. Textual Analysis****✓ Lexicalization**

The post employs highly evaluative and ideologically lexical choices such as “another group of new arrivals,” “problem,” “unemployed,” “overcrowded,” and “getting benefit.” These terms construct African Muslim women and immigrants as a social burden and a threat to economic stability. The repeated reference to “African Muslim women” highlights both racial and religious identity, reinforcing an “us vs. them” dichotomy. Additionally, the use of

phrases like “vast majority” and “these people” generalizes and homogenizes a diverse group, contributing to stereotyping and negative categorization.

✓ **Patterns of Transitivity**

The text shows a clear use of transitivity through material processes, which help construct a negative image of immigrants. Expressions such as “have all got 3 or 4 kids,” “are unemployed,” “are getting benefit,” and “get bought by someone not from Heywood” describe immigrants in terms of actions and conditions linked to economic and social problems. These material processes present immigrants as responsible for issues such as unemployment and dependence on welfare. In this case, they contribute to portraying immigrants as a burden on society, which reinforces negative stereotypes and unequal power relations.

✓ **The Use of Active and Passive Voice**

The post uses the active voice, directly blaming the immigrants (e.g., “these people are unemployed,” “they can send for unemployed immigrants”).

✓ **The Use of Nominalisation**

Nominalisation appears in terms such as “arrivals,” “benefit,” and “rents.” These nouns compress refer to socio-economic issues (migration, welfare systems, and housing policies) into simplified entities, obscuring structural causes and focusing blame on immigrants.

✓ **The Choices of Mood**

The mood here is also declarative, presenting factual observations. Statements such as “I noticed yet another group” and “the vast majority have all got...” create an impression of objectivity and proofs

✓ **The Choices of Modality or Polarity**

The post demonstrates strong modality and polarity, particularly through expressions like “probably noticed” and “vast majority,” which suggest certainty while maintaining minimal hedging. This reinforces the speaker’s authority and discourage any doubt.

✓ **The Thematic Structure of the Text (Theme vs. Rheme)**

The thematic structure of the text shows a clear pattern in how immigrants are represented. The Theme consistently foregrounds immigrants through expressions such as “African Muslim women” and “these people,” making them the main focus of the message. The Rheme then adds negative information about them, including unemployment, reliance on benefits, and population overcrowding. This structure links immigrants directly to social and economic problems. these expressions reinforces negative stereotypes and presents immigrants as a burden on society.

✓ **The Information Focus**

The text emphasizes quantification and generalization (“3 or 4 kids,” “vast majority”) to create an impression of valid statistics. They function as pseudo-evidence to legitimize negative stereotypes.

✓ Cohesive Devices

The text uses several cohesive devices to reinforce its message. Repetition of phrases such as “these people” and “vast majority” helps maintain focus on immigrants and generalizes them as a single group. In addition, lexical items related to social problems, such as “benefit,” “rents,” and “overcrowded,” create a semantic field associated with welfare and housing issues. The use of additive structures like “and... and...” further accumulates negative attributes, making the description appear more extensive and convincing.

2. Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

✓ Speech Acts

The post performs several types of speech acts that contribute to its overall message. First, it uses assertive acts by making claims about immigrants’ behavior and their impact on society, presenting these statements as facts. Second, it includes expressive acts that show concern and dissatisfaction with social changes, especially in relation to immigration. Finally, the post contains an implicit directive, as it encourages readers to adopt a critical or negative attitude toward immigrants without directly telling them to do so.

✓ Coherence

The post creates coherence through a clear causal narrative that links immigration to a series of social problems. It presents a linear progression: immigration leads to unemployment, which leads to welfare dependency, and finally to a housing crisis. This structure makes the argument appear logical and easy to follow. However, it simplifies complex socio-economic issues and ignores other possible explanations.

✓ **Intertextuality**

The text exhibits significant interdiscursivity by weaving together several distinct yet reinforcing discourses. Primarily, it utilizes an anti-immigration discourse that frames immigrants as a collective economic burden, a tactic often used to justify exclusionary social policies. This is tightly intertwined with an Islamophobic discourse, where "Muslim" identity is specifically highlighted and presented as inherently problematic or incompatible with the host culture. Furthermore, the integration of social media discourse, specifically through the mechanics of platforms like Facebook, plays a crucial role in the lifecycle of these narratives.

3. Sociocultural Practice (Explanation)

✓ **Dominance**

The post reinforces dominant ideologies by constructing immigrants particularly African Muslim women as responsible for economic and social issues. This reflects broader discourses of racialization and othering, where minority groups are portrayed as threats to national identity and resources. Such discourse contributes to maintaining power relations by legitimizing discrimination and reinforcing negative public perceptions of immigrants and Muslims.

✓ **Resistance**

Although not explicitly visible in the post itself, such discourse often generates counter-discourses on social media, where users challenge stereotypes and defend multiculturalism. This highlights the contested nature of online spaces, where dominant and resistant ideologies coexist.

✓ Hegemony

P3 constructs a narrative about immigration, welfare, and housing in which certain groups are repeatedly associated with problems such as unemployment, high birth rates, and rising rents. Through this repetition and framing, the post attempts to make a specific political interpretation of social issues appear natural and self-evident, rather than one possible viewpoint among others. This is a key feature of hegemonic discourse: it disguises ideology as fact.

Figure 5

Terrorism

19:17 3.89 K/s 4G 19

- The two failings America has that are at the core of our destruction are racism and misogyny. If we have a movement that exposes how wrong that is and how oneness can save US as a society our world would be a much better place. Start by rejecting those bigotries by VOTING out anyone who espouses those beliefs. 2020

If the shooter turns out to be...

Hispanic
"Build the wall!"

Arab
"Ban Muslims!"

Black
"BLM are terrorists!"

White
"We need to ask ourselves how are we as a society failing these poor troubled young men? What kinds of movies, video games, and music are we making?"

- Grow ♥ [antiracism: Fixed to Growth Mindset Fixed-Comfort: "I don't know where to start or what to say." Growth-Courage: "First I will listen/read/watch. I will speak against injustice." Fixed-Comfort: "I don't want to get it wrong or get called out." Growth-Courage: "I will make mistakes, no doubt about it. I will be grateful for the lesson." Fixed-Comfort: "It won't make a difference what I do. Nothing is going to change." Growth-Courage: "Things happen when I take risks and become part of something bigger." Fixed-Comfort: "I don't get involved in politics. I don't have time."

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1. Textual Analysis

✓ Lexicalization

In this post, the user uses ideological choices such as “terrorist,” “blame the war,” “ELM & terrorist,” and “racism and misogyny”. These terms shows how different racial and ethnic groups are represented in media. He repeats the use of “terrorist” in association with the words “Arab” and “Black”. While the word “White” is completely absent.

✓ **Patterns of Transitivity**

The text employs a combination of relational and material processes, the relational materials when P4 used the expression “America has... racism and misogyny” that shows responsibility to a national entity, and the Material: “we need to ask ourselves,” “what are we doing,” which call for action, a self-reflection, and take a step. The structure also assigns implicit agency to media and society in naming certain groups as “terrorists,” while avoiding such labels for others.

✓ **The Use of Active and Passive Voice**

The post predominantly uses the active voice, particularly in statements like “America has at the core...” and “we need to ask ourselves.” It emphasizes the readers to engage and change. At the same time, the labeling of groups such as (“Arab = terrorist”) functions as a passive construction, where the agents responsible for these labels (media) are omitted.

✓ **The Use of Nominalisation**

Nominalization is clear in “racism,” “misogyny,” and “representation.” These nouns compress refer to racial issues and enable the normalization of racism.

✓ **The Choices of Mood**

The mood shifts between a declarative mood—seen in assertions such as "America has at the core"—to establish factual certainty and present specific ideological claims as settled truths. While the interrogative mood, posing questions such as "what movies, video games, and music are we making?" This shift functions as a powerful rhetorical device that invites the audience into a space of reflection. By combining these two moods, the text does more than just state facts; it creates an interactive dynamic where claims are presented as foundational.

✓ **The Choices of Modality or Polarity**

The text uses modality, through expressions like "we need to," which imply obligation and necessity. This creates a persuasive tone that encourages collective responsibility without presenting claims as entirely absolute.

✓ **The Thematic Structure of the Text (Theme vs. Rheme)**

The Theme consistently centers on "America" and specific racial and ethnic categories, such as "Hispanic," "Arab," "Black," and "White." By placing these groups in the thematic position at the beginning of clauses, the text establishes them as the primary subjects of concern, grounding the discourse in a framework of racial and national identity. The Rheme, which contains the new information or the "point" being made about the Theme, provides the associated representations and actions. Here, we see a stark contrast in how these groups are discursively constructed: while some groups may be linked in the Rheme to concepts of "reflection" or national identity, others are systematically tied to "blame" or "terrorism." This

structural alignment does more than organize the sentence; it creates a repetitive, predictable pattern of associations that reinforces social hierarchies and stereotypes

✓ **The Information Focus**

The post emphasizes contrast and comparison as its main informational strategy. By juxtaposing different racial groups and their stereotypical portrayals, it highlights perceived double standards in media representation.

✓ **Cohesive Devices**

The use of cohesive devices within the text further solidifies its internal logic and ensures that its ideological message is consistently reinforced. One of the primary methods of achieving this is through the repetition of specific racial categories, such as "Hispanic," "Arab," "Black," and "White." By repeatedly returning to these labels, the text keeps the audience's attention fixed on racial distinctions, effectively making these categories the primary lens through which the entire narrative is viewed. Also, the use of logical connectors and bullet points, which serve to organize the ideas into a clear, easily digestible hierarchy

2. Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

✓ **Speech Acts**

P4 employs different speech acts which are: Assertive by making things as facts (claiming racism is at the core of society), also it directs the reader to do something (telling us "we need to ask ourselves" questions), and it expresses a deep worry about injustice. By mixing these together, P4 isn't just giving information—it's trying to stir up emotion and push the reader to take action or change their mind.

✓ **Coherence**

The post maintains coherence through a contrastive structure: it first presents a critique of systemic racism, then illustrates it through examples of differential labeling, and finally calls for reflection. This logical progression supports its argumentative purpose.

✓ **Intertextuality**

The text demonstrates interdiscursivity by drawing on multiple discourses. First, Media discourse by using movies, news, and popular culture, second, a racial discourse through stereotyping and labeling of groups; third by integrating social justice discourse (racism, misogyny, activism). Finally, using Digital/social media discourse via Facebook, where such critiques appears widely.

3. Sociocultural Practice (Explanation)

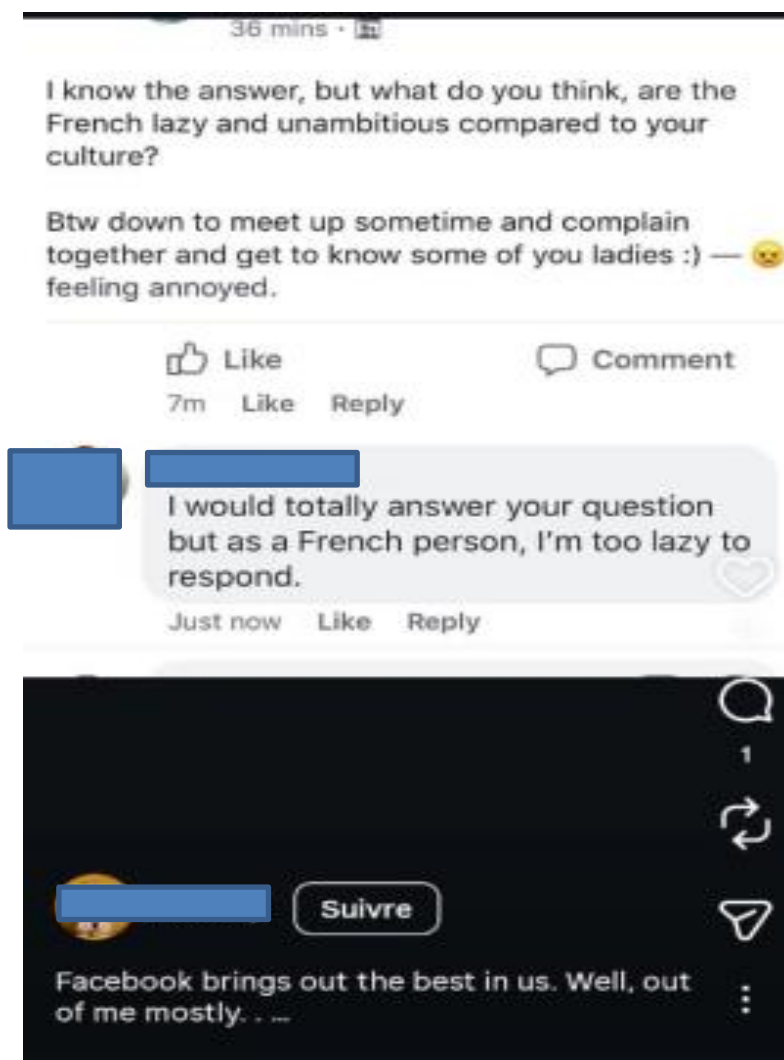
✓ **Dominance**

This publication takes criticizes a dominant ideology by pointing out how race hierarchies continue to be perpetuated by representation through media. P4 notes that minorities, especially Arabs and Blacks, are unfairly linked to acts of terror while Whites remain untouched by this label.

✓ **Resistance**

In contrast to earlier posts, the current text constitutes a form of counter-discourse. This counters the established racist discourse by making apparent the injustices that exist and fostering awareness about them. This aligns with Fairclough's model of discourse, which shows how discourse may be used to both uphold and challenge power dynamics.

Figure 6

French People and Laziness**1. Textual Analysis****✓ Lexicalization**

The post employs evaluative and stereotypical terms such as “lazy” and “unambitious” to describe French people. These adjectives carry negative attitude towards a whole nation, and construct a generalized national identity based on unfavorable traits. The phrase “compared to your culture” introduces an implicit contrast, suggesting a hierarchy between cultures.

Additionally, the informal tone (“btw,” emojis) softens the delivery but does not diminish the underlying stereotyping

✓ **Patterns of Transitivity**

P5 uses two main types of "processes" to describe people and share ideas; the first one is the relational processes (Assigning Labels) in which “relational” language to link a group of people to specific traits, like saying "the French [are] lazy." He pins a fixed label onto an entire national group. By using this style, the author makes a subjective stereotype sound like a permanent, objective fact. The use of mental processes (sharing thoughts): in “what do you think” or "I know the answer." These phrases shift the focus from "facts" to personal opinions. They make the writing feel more interactive by inviting the reader to participate in the conversation, while still centering the author's own perspective.

✓ **The Use of Active and Passive Voice**

The post uses the active voice, directly attributing characteristics to “the French.” This direct attribution reinforces the generalization and leaves no space for discussion.

✓ **The Use of Nominalisation**

Nominalisation appears in the use of collective nouns such as “the French” and “your culture.” These terms abstract entire nation into singular entities, erasing diversity and enabling stereotyping.

✓ **The Choices of Mood**

P5 uses the interrogative mood (questions like "what do you think?") to create a sense of openness and inclusion, making the reader feel like an active participant in the discussion. However, this is balanced by the declarative mood ("I know the answer"), which functions to state facts or firm opinions.

✓ **The Choices of Modality or Polarity**

The post demonstrates strong polarity, particularly in the use of definitive adjectives without modal qualifiers (e.g., no "some," "might," or "sometimes"). This absence of modality reinforces the certainty of the stereotype.

✓ **The Thematic Structure of the Text (Theme vs. Rheme)**

P5 chooses "the French" as the Theme. By placing this at the very beginning of the sentence, P5 makes "nationality" the main anchor or the "topic" that the reader should focus on first. The Rheme then adds the attributes "lazy and unambitious." Since the Rheme is where the "news" or the description of the sentence lives, it effectively glues these negative characteristics to the group mentioned in the Theme.

✓ **The Information Focus**

The post emphasizes generalization as evidence, presenting a subjective opinion as if it reflects a broader reality. There is no evidence, yet the claim is widely accepted

✓ **Cohesive Devices**

The text uses several cohesive devices to link ideas together and establish a specific tone, By using terms like "the French" and "your culture," the text creates clear boundaries between

"them" and "you." This helps the reader track who is being discussed while reinforcing a sense of social or cultural division. Second, The use of casual transitions like "btw" (by the way) makes the text feel less like a formal lecture and more like a spontaneous conversation. This informal style can make the author's claims feel more relatable and less like a targeted attack. Finally, the inclusion of emojis and conversational phrasing further signals that this is an interactive, social exchange. These markers soften the delivery of the message, using a friendly or "chatty" appearance to help the underlying stereotypes go down more easily.

2. Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

✓ Speech Acts

The text functions through a series of speech acts that define how the author communicates with their audience and what they hope to achieve, the Assertive acts in the statement "the French are lazy and unambitious" acts as an assertive speech act. By asking "what do you think?" P5 uses a directive speech act. This isn't just a question; it is an invitation for the reader to engage and interact. Finally, The use of an informal tone and emojis represents an expressive speech act. This signals the author's emotional state or attitude

✓ Coherence

The post constructs coherence through a contrastive structure: one culture is implicitly positioned as inferior ("lazy and unambitious"), while another ("your culture") is implied to be more productive or ambitious. This relies on shared assumptions about national stereotypes.

✓ Intertextuality

It draws on multiple discourses simultaneously, combining elements of national stereotype discourse with those of social media communication. On one hand, it incorporates commonly circulated views and generalizations about French people, reproducing familiar national stereotypes. On the other hand, it adopts features typical of Facebook discourse, such as informal language, racially charged expressions, and provocative phrasing designed to capture attention and encourage user interaction

3. Sociocultural Practice (Explanation)

✓ Dominance

The post reflects a stereotyping and cultural generalization. An entire national group is described with only one trait (laziness). This adjective reinforces cultural hierarchies and P5 is considered as dominant person.

✓ Resistance.

Resistance appears in the comment section, where the user (French person) replies “I’m too lazy to respond”; this sentence can be interpreted in two ways: either a reinforcement to the racial comment, or an ironic resistance

Figure 7*Muslims and Immigration***1. Textual Analysis****✓ Lexicalization**

The post employs ideological terms such as “freedom,” “Christian country,” “Muslim countries,” “refuge,” and “wouldn’t try building a church.” These terms build a strong opposition between “Christian” and “Muslim” societies. The phrase “there are 54 Muslim

countries they could be free in” implies exclusion and delegitimizes Muslims’ presence in non-Muslim societies.

✓ **Patterns of Transitivity**

The text’s patterns reveal a strong reliance on material processes to construct social actions and assign agency. Expressions such as “Muslims want a right to freedom,” “they would be free,” “Britain has stopped calling...,” and “they are trying to stop...” foreground actions and events, attributing roles to both Muslims and governmental or societal actors. In this way. Alongside these material processes, the text also incorporates mental processes, as seen in phrases like “I believe,” which introduce subjective viewpoints. These mental constructions allow the speaker to frame personal opinions as reasoned positions, blending individual belief with claims that appear to be supported by evidence or strong conviction.

✓ **The Use of Active and Passive Voice**

The post uses the active voice in sentences like “Muslims want...” “Britain has stopped...” “they are trying to stop...”; assigning clear agency This direct attribution reinforces a narrative of taking action and responsibility, particularly portraying Muslims as agents of cultural change.

✓ **The Use of Nominalisation**

Nominalisation is used in terms such as “freedom,” “refuge,” and “right.” These abstract nouns compress complex political and legal concepts, simplifying debates about immigration, religious rights, and integration.

✓ **The Choices of Mood**

The mood combines two modes, Interrogative (“Why do Muslims want a right to freedom...?”) and declarative statements. The interrogative form is rhetorical, as it is immediately followed by assertions that imply a predetermined answer, limiting genuine dialogue.

✓ **The Choices of Modality or Polarity**

The post demonstrates strong modality and polarity, particularly through expressions like “would be free” and “wouldn’t try,” which present hypothetical scenarios as certain and predictable. The absence of hedging reinforces ideological certainty.

✓ **The Thematic Structure of the Text (Theme vs. Rheme)**

The theme revolves around “Muslims” and “Britain,” while the rheme introduces claims about freedom, cultural change, and perceived threats. This structure emphasizes a conflict between two entities.

✓ **The Information Focus**

The post emphasizes contrast and hypothetical reasoning (e.g., comparing Muslim countries with Britain). These comparisons function as evidence to justify their attitudes.

✓ **Cohesive Devices**

Cohesion is achieved with different elements, such as repetition of “Muslims,” “Muslim countries,” “Britain”. Additionally, logical connectors such as “instead,” “also,” “if I became...” , and finally, parallel structures contrasting “they” vs. “I”

2. Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

✓ Speech Acts

The post performs multiple speech acts, the assertive acts making claims about Muslims and societal change and the Directive acts (implicit) in order to encourage readers to adopt a critical stance toward Muslim presence in their countries; while the expressive acts that aim conveying concern and dissatisfaction with perceived cultural shifts

✓ Coherence

The text establishes coherence through a simplified cause-and-effect narrative structure, a feature that Fairclough highlights in CDA as central to how discourse shapes understanding. It presents a linear progression in which Muslims are portrayed as demanding rights, which then leads to societal changes and ultimately results in the loss of cultural traditions. This linear structure simplifies complex socio-political realities and relies on shared belief about cultural conflict.

✓ Intertextuality

The text illustrates intertextuality through a clear case of interdiscursivity, as it draws upon and blends several distinct but overlapping discourses. It incorporates religious discourse by framing identities in terms of a Christian–Muslim divide, while also invoking political discourse through references to concepts such as freedom, rights, and immigration.. Additionally, P6 reflects Islamophobic discourse, presenting Muslims as incompatible with so-called Western values, thereby constructing an oppositional “us versus them” dynamic. These elements are further embedded within social media discourse, particularly the style

associated with Facebook, where such narratives are frequently circulated, amplified, and debated through informal, provocative, and engagement-driven communication.

3. Sociocultural Practice (Explanation)

✓ Dominance

The post reinforces dominant exclusionary ideologies by constructing Muslims as outsiders who threaten national identity and cultural traditions. It reflects broader patterns of Islamophobia, where Muslim communities are portrayed as incompatible with Western societies and undeserving of equal rights.

Figure 8*Racism and Hijab***1. Textual Analysis****✓ Lexicalization**

The use of emotive and polarizing terms is clear in this post: "*racist encounter*," "*joke of a president*," and "*traumatized*." These words categorize the event not just as an argument, but as a systemic social issue.

✓ **Patterns of Transitivity**

P7 is the actor and the aggressor in this post; in the quoted speech ("a woman came up to me and pulled..."). The actions are violent and physical (*pulled, said, hang*), while the author who is presented as the Sufferer (the one receiving the action) and the sener ("I am traumatized").

✓ **The Use of Active and Passive Voice**

The user uses active voice to describe the assault ("a woman... pulled my Hijab"), which assigns clear blame and agency to the aggressor.

✓ **The Use of Nominalisation**

The phrase "our new joke of a president" nominalizes an entire political administration into a single derogatory noun, linking the political level directly to the personal encounter.

✓ **The Choices of Mood**

The post shifts from declarative (stating facts: "as I am at Walmart") to exclamatory/affective ("I am traumatized"). The quoted aggressor in the comments section uses Imperative mood ("go hang yourself"), which is the language of command and dehumanization.

✓ **The Choices of Modality or Polarity**

The publication presents a high modality (certainty) regarding her feelings ("I am traumatized"). While the aggressor (the comments) uses an expression ("this is not allowed anymore") to present a personal opinion as a universal law and logical evidence.

✓ **The Thematic Structure of the Text (Theme vs. Rheme)**

The theme, introduced by the phrase “My first racist encounter...,” establishes the overall frame and perspective of the narrative, signaling to the reader that what follows will be a personal account centered on an experience of racism. The rheme then develops this initial framing by providing the specific details of the Walmart incident, along with its emotional impact on the speaker.

✓ **The Information Focus**

The focus is on the causal link between the "new president" and the "racist encounter."

✓ **Cohesive Devices**

The Facebook interface itself acts as a cohesive device. The "like," "angry," and "sad" reactions, along with the comments below, create a cohesive "thread" of communal support and shared beliefs.

2. Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

✓ **Speech Acts**

The post functions as a complaint and a call for sympathy/witnessing. The comments (e.g., "May Allah grant you peace") are expressive, specifically acts of blessing and solidarity.

✓ **Coherence**

The text relies on the reader's understanding of the 2016 US election climate. The "coherence" of the story depends on the shared cultural knowledge that political rhetoric can influence public behavior.

✓ **Intertextuality**

First, it directly incorporates the hateful discourse of the aggressor by quoting their words, thereby embedding another voice within the text. It reproduces the original hostility and allows the reader to engage critically with the nature of that discourse. Second, the post situates itself within the broader genre of social media testimonials, where individuals publicly share personal experiences of trauma or discrimination. In doing so, it draws on a recognizable communicative practice aimed at fostering solidarity, raising awareness, and inviting audience response, thus linking the personal narrative to wider social and discursive contexts.

3. Sociocultural Practice (Explanation)

✓ Dominance

The image illustrates a clash of ideologies. The aggressor represents a "dominant" or emboldened exclusionary nationalism (claiming what is "allowed" in public space). The author highlights how this dominance is enacted through the policing of religious clothing (the Hijab).

✓ Resistance

P7 reflects forms of resistance by illustrating both individual and collective responses to discriminatory discourse. At the individual level, the very act of sharing the story functions as resistance, as it breaks silence and explicitly labels the aggressor's behavior as "racist," thereby challenging and exposing it. At the collective level, resistance is further reinforced through the comments of individuals such as "Abubakar" and others, who employ religious and moral language to construct a counter-narrative centered on peace, solidarity, and support. Together, these responses demonstrate how discourse can be used not only to reproduce

power relations but also to contest and reshape them by offering alternative meanings and communal forms of empowerment.

Figure 9

Racism and Politics



1. Textual Analysis

✓ Lexicalization

The vocabulary here is the demographic makeup of the groups. The top image uses a "lexis" of diversity (different ethnicities, religious headwear). The bottom image uses a "lexis" of homogeneity (predominantly white, similar business attire).

✓ **Patterns of Transitivity**

In the top image, P8 use is verbal/relational processes (Obama is speaking/engaging). The interns are the goal/sufferer (the ones being engaged). While in the bottom image, there is no clear central "Actor" engaging the group; the group itself is the point of analysis, posed statically for a formal portrait.

✓ **The Use of Active and Passive Voice**

The of active voice is clear in this image, to show a clear belief about racism

✓ **The Use of Nominalisation**

The text "White House Interns" nominalizes a complex political hiring process into a simple, single category, making the demographic shift feel like a fixed "fact" rather than a result of specific policy choices.

✓ **The Choices of Modality or Polarity**

The image uses high modality (real photographs) to claim "truth." However, the "Spot the Difference" text lowers the modality by turning a serious political observation into a "game" or a riddle.

✓ **The Thematic Structure of the Text (Theme vs. Rheme)**

The theme, presented as "White House Interns" in the top text, establishes the given information and sets the focus of the discourse, indicating what the message is about. The rheme then introduces new information by highlighting the visual contrast in race and gender between the two panels. This progression from theme to rheme guides the reader's

interpretation, directing attention from a general label to a more specific and meaningful comparison.

✓ **The Information Focus**

The focus is placed squarely on the visual contrast. The use of a split-screen forces the viewer to compare the "Before" and "After."

2. Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

✓ **Speech Acts**

The text "Spot the Difference?" is a Directive. It isn't just a question; it's a command for the user to perform a critical comparison and reach a specific conclusion.

✓ **Coherence**

The user must use their outside knowledge of US politics to make sense of the images. Without knowing who the figures are or the timeline of US presidencies, the "coherence" of the meme would fail

✓ **Intertextuality**

This image borrows from the "Before and After" advertising genre and children's "spot the difference" puzzles. By using a "child's game" format to discuss systemic racism or political exclusion, it creates a biting, satirical tone.

3. Sociocultural Practice (Explanation)

✓ Dominance

The analysis here would argue that the bottom image represents the dominant power structure returning to a traditional, homogeneous norm. It suggests that power in this administration is concentrated within a specific racial and class demographic.

✓ Resistance.

The creation and sharing of this image is an act of resistance. By juxtaposing the two photos, the creator is talking back to power, highlighting a perceived lack of representation and using visual evidence to critique the administration's inclusivity.

Conclusion

The discourse analysis of Facebook publications has revealed a lot about their racial beliefs. The analysis has shown that American use negative adjectives and declarative sentences to show their certain beliefs towards some racial groups such as (Africans, Muslims, Mexicans...etc.). Also, they use negative adjectives to deliver a bad image on non-Americans and to make people construct a negative picture of the others. Therefore, it is concluded that the media discourse of Facebook, reflects racism in American posts. They use certain arguments and beliefs to promote racism in social networks and create a debate.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The present study has investigated the theme of racism in Americans' publications in Facebook depending on critical discourse analysis as a methodological approach. The dissertation aims to examine racist discourse on American social media platforms, especially Facebook, and analyze the strategies, algorithms, and ideologies shaping this discourse. The main objective of this thesis is to investigate how social media and mainly Facebook shape the American's beliefs and attitudes towards certain groups such as (Arabs, Muslims, Africans, and Mexicans...etc.). This study is also based on Fairclough's model of media discourse that emphasizes the relation between language, society and power.

This research defines racism, social media, and discourse analysis in order to give a hint on the proposed theme. The first chapter is mainly theoretical; it is composed of two sections. In the first section, we present different concepts such as how racism is promoted through social media and especially Facebook. Moreover, it introduces how algorithms of Facebook work in order to promote certain beliefs and ideas. The second section presents the framework of Fairclough, since it is the used analysis in this research.

The analysis of Facebook publications has demonstrated that Americans' use of the discourse is not random, but holds meaning and ideology. For instance the repeated use of words "immigration and terrorism" is frequent and collocates whenever Muslims are mentioned. The discourse and sentence forms are almost all declarative sentences; to be clear and direct and avoid misinterpretation, also they leave no space for discussion and besides, their use of declarative and interrogative forms reflects a picture of power and domination.

The second chapter demonstrates that American discourse contains racist elements that are used to target individuals perceived as the main contributors to the rising crime rate in the United States, especially immigrants. In order to prevent illegal immigrants from entering the

US borders, they even suggest building a wall in the borders to separate between Mexico and America. In addition, Americans' view on Islam and Muslims have not changed through the last decades and still hold a negative image, as the mass media still portray Muslims as "terrorists". Certain publications promote not only racism but also violence towards non-Americans.

For further studies in highlighting the theme of racism in individuals' discourse, other approaches could also undertake that procedure. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is one example, in which the researcher focuses on the textual and linguistic elements (such as sentence forms, verbs, adjectives, and semantics). In short, the present work has examined the discourse of Americans in Facebook from a textual standpoint by analyzing some of their random publications, which would uncover the racist and nationalist views and ideology that lies under their discourse.

Finally, we can say that racism in America is promoted through social media, in this case, Facebook. Americans tend to express their ideas and beliefs on social media without paying attention to the ethics of using social media. Therefore, they use negative discourse and certain arguments to make people believe them without any obstacle or doubt.

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