

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.63332/joph.v5i10.3562>

Discursive Incivility in Geopolitical Conflict: A Cognitive-Linguistic Analysis of Trump's Discourse

Mostafa Abdelhafeez¹, Mahmoud Ali Gabeen²

Abstract

This study examines the discursive strategies and conceptual metaphors underpinning incivility in Donald Trump's geopolitical rhetoric, focusing on his discourse targeting China, GCC states, and Russia, among other nations. Through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), a corpus of speeches and tweets during the two Trumpian terms of U.S. presidency is analyzed to identify three recurrent patterns: (1) dehumanizing metaphors (e.g., framing China as a "virus"), (2) transactional framing of alliances (e.g., framing GCC states as "freeloaders"), and (3) adversarial hyperbole (e.g., framing relations with Russia as a "hoax"). The analysis reveals how these cognitive-linguistic patterns weaponized incivility to reconstruct diplomacy as zero-sum conflict, reinforcing moral dichotomies (us vs. them). By systematizing the interplay between metaphor, toxic discourse, and geopolitical othering, this study contributes to political linguistics literature while offering an analytical framework for understanding populist rhetoric's role in international relations.

Keywords: *Discursive incivility; political discourse analysis; conceptual metaphor theory; geopolitical rhetoric; populist discourse*

Introduction

Political discourse in the 21st century has undergone a significant transformation through digital mediation and populist rhetorical strategies (Wodak, 2021). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as conceptualized by Fairclough ([1992] 2013), has traditionally connected linguistic microstructures with macrosocial power relations. However, as Charteris-Black (2018) and Hart (2018) have demonstrated, early CDA frameworks often neglected the cognitive mechanisms that render discourse particularly potent during politically transformative periods like the Trump presidency (2017-2021). This paper addresses this critical gap by integrating Wallace Chafe's (1994) theory of real-time discourse consciousness with Charles Fillmore's (1982) Frame Semantics to analyze how Trump's spontaneous tweet adaptations systematically replaced diplomatic schemas ("mutual interest") with transactional ones ("zero-sum competition"). The cognitive turn in political discourse analysis (Musolff, 2016; Hart, 2010) becomes particularly relevant when examining contemporary populist rhetoric. Gilles Fauconnier's (1985) mental spaces theory provides crucial insights into constructions like "the Russia hoax" as strategic blends of factual and fictive inputs, while Dirk Geeraerts' (2010) prototype theory illuminates how the Trump administration revived and distorted archaic frames ("America First") to reshape political norms (Geeraerts, 2010, p. 173). These theoretical perspectives prompt our second key question: How do Fauconnierian mental spaces and epistemic blending function in constructing and sustaining "hoax" narratives, and what cognitive strategies reinforce their

¹ PhD. in linguistics, Email: mostafatranslator@gmail.com

² Licensed and Sworn Interpreter, Email: mahmoudaligabeen@gmail.com



persistence in public discourse?

Zoltán Kövecses' (2017) Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory (ECMT) serves as our central framework for analyzing how discursive incivility was weaponized throughout Trump's presidency. The study traces metaphor escalation from conventional mappings ("China as economic competitor") to dehumanizing constructs ("China is the virus"), demonstrating Kövecses' (2017, p. 12) concept of "main meaning focus" distortion. This progression leads to our third research question: How does Trump's discourse exploit Kövecses' context-induced metaphor variation to escalate conventional mappings into extreme conceptualizations, and what are the cognitive implications for the perception of geopolitical threats?

These cognitive-strategic operations reveal how Trump's discourse engineered a zero-sum civic epistemology. As Herman and Chomsky (1988) argue in *Manufacturing Consent*, such discursive tactics exemplify the "mobilization of bias" - where mediated communication systematically privileges adversarial frames while marginalizing nuanced perspectives (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, p. xvi). Our analysis demonstrates how this process operates at the cognitive level through three synchronized mechanisms: metaphor-driven threat construction (Kövecses, 2017), frame substitution (Fillmore, 1982), and reality distortion (Fauconnier, 1985).

Problem Statement:

Despite increasing research on political incivility, few studies systematically analyze how cognitive-linguistic strategies—especially conceptual metaphors and discursive framing—construct uncivil geopolitical rhetoric in populist leadership. Trump's presidency exemplified hostile, transactional, and dehumanizing discourse toward China, GCC states, and Russia, yet the cognitive mechanisms enabling its persuasive and polarizing effects remain underexamined. While Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) studies political incivility, integrating Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) to reveal how metaphors reinforce moral binaries ("us vs. them") and reframe diplomacy as zero-sum conflict, remains a gap. This paper examines Trump's strategic use of metaphor and hyperbole to normalize incivility, thereby reshaping diplomatic norms and intensifying geopolitical tensions, thereby bridging the fields of political linguistics and International Relations Theory.

The paper is centered on the following question: How does Donald Trump's geopolitical rhetoric strategically extend conceptual metaphors to normalize discursive incivility in international relations?

This study pioneers an integrated cognitive-linguistic framework analyzing how political discourse weaponizes incivility through three synergistic mechanisms: (1) Kövecses' (2017) metaphor escalation, transforming diplomatic concepts into adversarial constructs, (2) Fillmorean (1982) frame substitution eroding cooperative schemas, and (3) Fauconnierian (1985) epistemic blending destabilizing truth norms. Focusing on Trump's geopolitical rhetoric, we demonstrate how these cognitive operations collectively reconfigure political discourse into a tool of authoritarian persuasion - a phenomenon previously underexamined in cognitive linguistics. The framework advances methodological innovation for analyzing digital-era discursive aggression while offering empirical evidence of cognitive processes enabling post-truth political communication.

Literature Review

Discursive Incivility and its Development in Political Communication Studies

Discursive Incivility refers to the use of expressive techniques that violate the accepted norms of respect and politeness in public discourse, particularly in political contexts. This concept encompasses manifestations such as personal attacks, sarcasm, questioning of intentions, and

rejection of the other's legitimacy, as these techniques supplant rational discussion of ideas (Post, 2018). Academic interest in discursive incivility began in the late 1990s and was initially linked to the analysis of political discourse in traditional media, particularly in election debates and talk shows. The work of scholars such as Kathleen Jamieson and Diana Mutz has highlighted the impact of harsh rhetoric on audience perceptions and demonstrated how this type of expression can alter the nature of democratic interaction (Rossini, 2020).

With the development of digital media, the concept of discursive incivility has expanded to encompass expression patterns prevalent on social media platforms, online commentary, and political tweets, enabling researchers to analyze the phenomenon through the integration of quantitative and qualitative tools. Incivility is no longer viewed as a mere linguistic phenomenon; rather, it is understood as a multidimensional communicative structure encompassing intertwined linguistic, contextual, and political elements (Rossini & Maia, 2021). Rhetorical incivility manifests itself in democratic contexts through several entrenched patterns that reflect the shift of debate from an intellectual to a personal or adversarial level. Prominent among these patterns are personal attacks, which shift the debate from a critique of an idea to a direct insult to the speaker; sarcasm, which relies on ridicule and belittling of the opponent using exaggerated language; and exclusionary framing, which portrays the opponent as unpatriotic or hostile to public values or the people themselves (Kopytowska & Krakowiak, 2020). Research has shown that rhetorical incivility negatively impacts public engagement levels, as many individuals feel averse to engaging in political debates due to the increasing intensity of the discourse, leading to a kind of symbolic withdrawal from the public sphere (Bratslavsky et al., 2019). Conversely, this type of language may enhance momentary mobilization among some groups, particularly those drawn to emotional discourse or who feel marginalized by political elites (Song & Wu, 2018). At the institutional image level, the spread of vulgarity erodes trust in political and media entities, as these institutions become, in the public's eyes, arenas of conflict uncontrolled by the rules of democratic dialogue (Rossini, 2020b). Rzepnikowska (2018) notes that habituation to hostile rhetoric contributes to the decline of the symbolic prestige of institutions and fuels feelings of division within societies, posing a real challenge to the sustainability of democratic civil discourse.

Populist Discourse and Linguistic Cognitive Frameworks

Populist discourse is one of the most prominent linguistic and political phenomena that has gained significant traction in both democratic and non-democratic contexts, particularly in recent decades (Homolar & Scholz, 2019). Populist discourse is characterized by a set of linguistic and content characteristics that reshape the relationship between the leader and the public, fostering sharp perceptions of political reality (Busby et al., 2019). Prominent among these characteristics are the "us" versus "them" dichotomy, where the "pure people" are represented in opposition to the "corrupt elite" or "threatening others"; hostility toward ruling, media, and academic elites as detached from the popular will; and the simplification of complex conflicts and their depiction in decisive moral terms: good versus evil, patriotic versus traitorous, transparent versus conspiratorial (Strobl et al., 2023). In this context, metaphors and cognitive frames play a pivotal role in consolidating this type of discourse (Strapáčová & Hloušek, 2018). Metaphors are not only used as a rhetorical device; they also function as a cognitive mechanism that organizes people's understanding of reality. For example, when the metaphor of "the system as a diseased body" is employed, the notion is conveyed that there is an "internal virus" that must be eradicated, justifying policies of exclusion or eradication (Jensen & Greve, 2019). Metaphors of war and battle are also used to frame politics as an existential struggle, weakening the logic of dialogue

and strengthening the logic of mobilization (Rajandran, 2020). These cognitive frames produce a sharp moral divide, where the political opponent is portrayed not merely as an opponent, but as an enemy of national, religious, or cultural values (Prandi, 2017). Thus, politics becomes an arena of conflict between "heroes" and "traitors," deepening polarization and weakening the possibility of understanding or building common ground. Studies of political perception reveal that this pattern of framing influences popular perceptions of political reality, shapes electoral attitudes and behavior, and even affects the willingness to accept symbolic or actual violence against the "other" (Wen & Taylor, 2024).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in Geopolitical Conflict Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary research framework that links language, power, and ideology (Machin & Mayr, 2023). This approach emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s, led by several prominent researchers, most notably Norman Fairclough, Theo van Dijk, and Ruth Wodak, who sought to move beyond analyzing language as an independent discipline to understanding it as a tool used to produce dominance and reshape social relations in real-world contexts (Catalano & Waugh, 2020). This approach focuses on how language is used to build legitimacy, consolidate social hierarchies, and justify political or economic practices (Chiluwa, 2024). Fairclough believes that discourse contributes to shaping social reality, not merely reflecting it. Therefore, texts must be analyzed not only at the linguistic level, but also by linking linguistic structure to institutional and social contexts (Macedo, 2014). Van Dijk, on the other hand, focused on the construction of the "other" mental image and how rhetorical strategies (such as generalization, contrast, and dramatization) are used to produce negative representations of opposing or foreign groups, particularly in contexts of migration, conflict, and foreign policy (Nanay, 2023).

In the field of geopolitical conflict analysis, CDA has provided powerful tools for understanding how political discourses are used to formulate mental images of other states or peoples (Kareem & Najm, 2024). For example, studies demonstrate how some states are portrayed as existential threats using the vocabulary of war or disease, or how discursive colonialism is reproduced by depicting countries of the Global South as failing or in need of guidance. Tools such as representation analysis, agency, and appraisal are used to understand how "us" and "them" identities are constructed in political discourse (Machin & Mayr, 2023b).

Thus, CDA can be said to constitute a theoretical and applied approach to understanding how language is used to create a divided political reality, justify foreign policies, and shape public perceptions of the "other," whether ally or adversary. This makes this analytical framework highly relevant to analyzing leaders' speeches during periods of international tension or populist campaigns.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory in Political Language

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) is one of the most prominent contributions to the field of cognitive linguistics. It was established primarily through the work of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, particularly in their seminal book **Metaphors We Live By** (1980). This theory is based on the premise that metaphor is not merely a rhetorical device or linguistic embellishment, but rather a fundamental cognitive mechanism that shapes how we think and understand the world (Kövecses, 2020). Individuals do not directly perceive abstract concepts such as politics, conflict, or the economy; instead, they process them mentally through metaphorical projections drawn from their physical and daily experiences (Huang, 2020). In the political context, conceptual metaphors play a pivotal role in reshaping reality in the recipient's mind by framing conflicts and international relations in familiar language that conveys concepts such as strength, weakness, or

danger. One of the most prominent metaphors used in contemporary political discourse is the disease metaphor, which frames opposing states or ideologies as "epidemics" or "viruses" that threaten the security of the international community. This type of metaphor, such as describing China as a "virus," contributes to the delegitimization and dehumanization of the other, which paves the way for the acceptance of hostile policies toward it (Zheng et al., 2020).

The metaphor of trade or transaction is also used to frame international relations as commercial transactions, as seen in descriptions of allies as "losers" or "free riders" (Kövecses, 2018). This in itself reframes diplomacy as a material relationship based on profit and loss, weakening the value-based or long-term strategic dimensions of alliances. The metaphor of war is one of the most common, presenting political conflict or diplomatic negotiation as a "battle," and depicting opponents as "enemies" to be defeated. This framing escalates political rhetoric and justifies the use of more severe tools, such as sanctions or military intervention (Ge et al., 2022). These metaphors are not used randomly; instead, they are subject to a cognitive and strategic logic that helps guide public opinion, justify political decisions, and foster division and polarization (Kövecses, 2020a). Metaphors are not neutral; instead, they express ideological representations that define who is the "agent," who is the "victim," and who deserves sympathy or hostility (Gibbs, 2017). Thus, conceptual metaphor theory emerges as a practical analytical framework for understanding the deep structure of political discourse, particularly in contexts of international conflict and populist discourse, where metaphors are used to frame reality in a way that simplifies complexity, activates emotions, and reshapes collective consciousness.

The Zero-Sum Framing in American Foreign Policy

Zero-Sum Framing is one of the most prominent cognitive frameworks used in political discourse to interpret international relations. It is based on the assumption that gains for one party necessarily mean losses for the other (Mishra, 2025). According to this conception, foreign policy is presented as an arena of conflict in which states compete for resources, status, and influence, making it impossible for mutual gain or mutual interests to be achieved (Vivoda et al., 2023). This vision does not necessarily belong to a single school of thought, but it is often associated with extreme nationalist rhetoric and hard-headed realism in international relations (Onursal & Kirkpatrick, 2019). This vision was clearly evident in the rhetoric of former US President Donald Trump, who adopted a zero-sum framework in interpreting most US foreign relations, whether in the commercial, security, or political spheres. Phrases such as "America is losing," "job theft," and "bad deals" were frequently used in his rhetoric when discussing China, the Gulf states, the European Union, NATO, and others (Galemba, 2021). In contrast, the rhetoric of former presidents such as Barack Obama, George W. Bush, and even Bill Clinton was often dominated by frameworks that highlighted the concepts of "common interest," "collective security," and "alliances based on shared values," expressing a more pluralistic vision of international relations (Jaradat, 2022). Trump's rhetoric was based not only on framing conflicts but also on portraying alliances themselves as burdens or losing deals unless they led to clear gains for America (Hall, 2020). Unlike previous administrations, which viewed American global leadership as an international obligation, Trump presented it as a paid service that should yield direct returns (Mishra, 2025). This zero-sum vision has profoundly shaped American public opinion, contributing to widespread perceptions that the United States is being "taken advantage of" by its allies and that free trade and international relations jeopardize the American economy and national security (Hopewell, 2020). Multiple polls during Trump's term have shown that a significant percentage of Americans now view withdrawing from international agreements, imposing tariffs, or reducing military commitments abroad as necessary steps to "restore justice"

At the level of political decision-making, this vision has been reflected in more closed-minded foreign policies and a tendency toward unilateralism. The Trump administration has opted to withdraw from several international agreements, such as the Paris Climate Agreement and the Iran nuclear deal and has adopted a trade policy based on unilateral tariffs and sanctions (Kazan, 2021). This framework has also contributed to the decline in the confidence of some traditional allies in America's commitment, weakening the cooperative structure of multilateral international institutions (Viola, 2024).

Thus, the zero-sum vision is not merely a rhetorical tool; it represents a cognitive and ideological framework that reshapes attitudes and policies, influencing public perceptions of the outside world. It reveals the extent to which political language influences engagement with international issues and shapes the nature of foreign relations, extending beyond strategic considerations to encompass profound cognitive and cultural dimensions. *The Impact of Discursive Incivility on International Relations*

Discursive incivility has become a growing phenomenon in international political discourse, with its effects extending beyond the domestic sphere to impact the nature of relations between states directly. Incivility is characterized by the use of harsh language, often marked by sarcasm, accusation, or deliberate contempt for the other party, which escalates tensions and strips diplomatic discourse of its rational negotiating nature (Rossini & Maia, 2021). A growing body of research in international relations has shown that the escalation of hostile rhetoric in official discourse, whether from leaders or political institutions, is closely linked to the escalation of crises or the disruption of resolution processes (Razak et al., 2024).

Graham & Svobik (2020) note that discourses that include direct insults or questioning of the other party's legitimacy contribute to the closure of communication channels and make concessions or a return to dialogue more politically costly for both parties (Frederiksen, 2021). The use of hostile metaphors, such as comparing countries to "viruses" or "cancers," transforms political disagreement into an existential struggle that is difficult to contain within traditional negotiating frameworks (Gulzar et al., 2021).

In the same vein, the media and social media platforms play a crucial role in expanding the reach of rhetorical vulgarity by rapidly and intensively reproducing hostile messages, often without filtering or critical analysis. Media outlets, especially those with a populist or polarizing orientation, often rebroadcast provocative statements in prominent headlines, heightening tensions and making them politically difficult to undo. Social media platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook, have enabled vulgar rhetoric to spread beyond formal diplomatic channels, making individual statements by state leaders visible and immediate, and sometimes leading to unplanned crises resulting from momentary tweets or comments (Gu et al., 2022). Studies in international discourse analysis suggest that coarseness can lead to a reevaluation of a state's image globally, as it associates the state with characteristics of threat, hostility, or disregard for international norms. This affects its strategic positioning and weakens its ability to build long-term alliances. Furthermore, the use of coarse rhetoric in dealing with allies may reduce their trust and contribute to the erosion of historical relations or security and economic alliances (Rossini, 2020c).

Accordingly, it can be argued that the effects of rhetorical vulgarity are not limited to communication but extend to reshaping the balance of international interaction and threatening the possibility of negotiation and peaceful resolution, especially in contexts of intense conflict or geopolitical competition.

Methodologies for Combining CDA and CMT in Digital Corpora Analysis

The field of discourse analysis has witnessed a remarkable methodological development in recent years, represented by the integration of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). This aims to provide a multidimensional analysis of the deep structure of political and media discourses, particularly in light of the proliferation of digital content and the increasing complexity of its production channels. This integration offers a theoretical and analytical perspective that enables the uncovering of relationships between language and ideology, on the one hand, and the metaphorical cognitive structures that shape people's understanding of reality, on the other (Alkhamash, 2023). Critical discourse analysis focuses on the relationships between language and power, revealing how texts produce and reproduce relations of domination and exclusion. In contrast, conceptual metaphor theory examines how abstract concepts are cognitively organized through projections drawn from everyday experience. Combining these two approaches allows researchers to trace how power and control are encoded within familiar metaphorical patterns, such as the representation of rival states as "viruses" or international conflicts as "deals" (Jiang, 2023).

This dual approach is efficient when analyzing large digital corpora, including tweets, official statements, political speeches, or media content, as it reveals how specific linguistic patterns recur across time and context and how they are used to construct mental representations of the "other" or "enemy." One of the advantages of this combination is that it enables researchers to connect the surface layer of discourse (words, sentences, linguistic acts) with the deep layer (metaphorical concepts, mental patterns, cognitive framing).

Methodology

The political discourse of former US President Donald Trump has received extensive research attention, particularly from the perspective of his unconventional language and his use of Twitter as a central platform for expressing official positions. Several studies have focused on analyzing his tweets and official speeches to uncover the linguistic and symbolic features he used to express his positions toward major international powers, such as China and Russia, as well as toward traditional allies, including the Gulf states.

These studies have revealed recurring patterns of disparagement and amplification in Trump's rhetoric, characterized by the use of undiplomatic language and descriptions that delegitimize or reframe others in a threatening manner. For example, studies such as Xiaoyu (2020) and Lee & Nerghes (2021) have shown how China was portrayed during the COVID-19 crisis as the source of the "disease" or "contagion," contributing to the growth of negative stereotypes in Western media and political discourse. Other studies have noted how Trump described NATO and the Gulf states as "freeloaders," reflecting a framing of security and diplomatic policies in terms of markets and costs.

Regarding relations with Russia, some analyses have shown a discrepancy in Trump's rhetoric, between a personally conciliatory tone toward the Russian leadership and a hostile rhetoric characterized by exaggerated descriptions of the Russian "conspiracy" in the elections. Studies such as Krzyżanowski (2019) and Maley (2020) have focused on Trump's use of terms such as "hoax" and "witch hunt" to undermine investigative institutions and reframe the Russian threat as a media hoax or a "witch hunt."

Despite this research momentum, most previous studies have analyzed the discourse from a traditional linguistic perspective or through a critical discourse approach alone, without systematically integrating conceptual metaphor (CMT) and discursive incivility in the context of geopolitics. Much research has focused on Trump's tweets in isolation from his official speeches

or has treated the targeted countries as separate cases without linking them to a unified conceptual framework that explains the structure of hostile rhetoric across multiple contexts.

In this context, this study fills a knowledge gap by highlighting the structural interaction between political metaphor and rhetorical vulgarity in Trump's geopolitical discourse. This study systematically analyzes the linguistic patterns employed in constructing the image of the hostile "other," whether a direct adversary (such as China), an implicit adversary (such as Russia), or even an ally reframed through market logic (such as the Gulf states). The study also seeks to present an interpretive analytical model that demonstrates how metaphors such as "virus," "deal," and "trick" are used as tools to reshape popular perceptions of foreign policy and to imbue international relations with a moral or threatening character. Therefore, this study adopts a qualitative approach that combines Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) to analyze the rhetorical structure of former US President Donald Trump in the context of geopolitical relations with China, Russia, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states. This methodological combination is employed to uncover the linguistic and cognitive strategies that contribute to the production of rhetorical vulgarity and the formation of negative representations of the other.

The study corpus was compiled from a selection of official speeches, media statements, and tweets issued between 2016 and 2020, i.e., during the election campaign and the first presidential term. The sample was selected based on criteria related to the clarity of reference to the target countries, the frequency of metaphorical patterns, and the intensity of the rhetorical tone.

The analysis corpus consists of:

- 15 official speeches delivered in international contexts (e.g., UN speeches, security summits, press conferences).
- 30 tweets containing direct references to China, Russia, or the Gulf states.
- 5 prominent media interviews containing foreign policy statements.

The analysis was conducted on two levels:

1. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA): Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model was applied, which integrates textual analysis, discourse practices, and the broader socio-political context. The analysis focused on strategies of exclusion, delegitimization, threat, and discursive hegemony.

2. Conceptual Metaphor Analysis (CMT): The dominant metaphors in the discourse (e.g., "conflict as war," "China as a virus," "allies as free riders") were tracked and categorized according to Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) models to determine how they shape the cognitive structure of conflict and the other in the mind of the recipient. Data analysis software was used, such as:

- AntConc to extract metaphorical occurrences and recurring linguistic patterns.
- NVivo to code metaphorical meanings and link them to the discursive context.

This methodology aims to provide an in-depth interpretive reading that sheds light on the relationship between language and ideology, as well as on how metaphor and vulgarity are employed to construct a political discourse that transcends traditional diplomacy, reshaping geopolitics from a populist perspective.

Discussion

This study investigated how Donald Trump's geopolitical rhetoric systematically extended conceptual metaphors to normalize discursive incivility and reconfigure diplomacy as a zero-sum arena. Drawing on a mixed digital corpus of speeches, tweets, and interviews (2016–2020), our analysis identified three recurrent cognitive-linguistic patterns: (1) dehumanizing metaphors

(e.g., framing China in disease terms), (2) transactional reframing of alliances (e.g., describing Gulf partners as “freeloaders”), and (3) adversarial hyperbole coupled with epistemic dismissal (e.g., labeling inquiries and critiques as a “hoax”). When read together through the combined lenses of Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough) and Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Kövecses), these patterns reveal deliberate rhetorical moves that transform international others into existential or economic threats and thereby make uncivil, exclusionary policy options rhetorically and politically salient.

Interpreting the findings within the CDA + CMT framework

The present findings illustrate the value of integrating CDA with CMT: metaphors are not merely stylistic flourishes but cognitive devices that, when deployed repeatedly and publicly, shape the mental models through which audiences construe international relations. From a CDA perspective, the rhetorical choices identified in the corpus function to produce and reproduce relations of dominance and delegitimation. From a CMT perspective, these choices instantiate mappings that assign agency, moral status, and threat-valence to targets. Combining these approaches shows how surface linguistic patterns instantiate deeper ideological aims—namely, to erode cooperative frames and replace them with adversarial schemas that normalize incivility as a legitimate mode of statecraft.

Mechanism 1 — Metaphor Escalation and Dehumanization

Trump’s recurring use of the phrase “*China virus*” in campaign rallies and on Twitter during 2020 exemplifies a classic case of metaphor escalation, where an initially descriptive geopolitical label (e.g., “*China trade competitor*”) transforms into a dehumanizing metaphor equating an entire nation with contagion. This rhetorical shift operationalizes what Kövecses (2020) describes as context-induced metaphorical intensification, in which sociopolitical stressors—here, the COVID-19 pandemic—trigger the extension of pre-existing conceptual mappings into more hostile or morally charged domains.

From a CMT perspective, the metaphor *CHINA IS A DISEASE SOURCE* activates embodied schemas of contamination, quarantine, and eradication (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Charteris-Black, 2011). Cognitively, such metaphors invite audiences to construe foreign actors not as negotiable partners but as existential threats requiring isolation or elimination (Musolff, 2016). From a CDA standpoint, this move delegitimizes dialogue by shifting the moral frame from diplomacy to self-defense (Wodak, 2015; Fairclough, 2013).

A representative corpus excerpt—Trump’s March 16, 2020 tweet: “*The United States will be stronger than ever. The world is paying a big price for what China did*”—illustrates how evaluative deixis (“*what China did*”) fuses attribution of blame with the pathogen metaphor. The iterative coupling of “*China*” with “*virus*” across speeches and tweets reinforces a moral contagion frame (Kövecses, 2020), producing a discursive environment in which incivility toward a nation becomes synonymous with protecting national health.

Mechanism 2 — Frame Substitution and Transactionalization of Alliances

In Trump’s repeated assertion that Gulf allies were “*not paying their fair share*”, we observe the operation of frame substitution—the replacement of the diplomatic frame of mutual security with a market transaction frame. Such statements, often directed at the GCC during press conferences and summits (e.g., “*We protect them, they have to pay*”), transform long-standing alliances from normative partnerships into cost–benefit exchanges (Entman, 2010).

According to Fillmore’s (1982) frame semantics, this linguistic choice cues an economic frame that foregrounds cost, obligation, and fairness while suppressing values like trust or shared security. The resulting cognitive re-framing aligns with Kövecses’s (2015) notion of *metaphor-*

based frame replacement, where an entrenched schema (ALLIANCE AS FRIENDSHIP) is supplanted by a competing one (ALLIANCE AS BUSINESS DEAL).

In CDA terms, this transactional reframing operates as an instrument of neoliberal rationalization (Fairclough, 2013): it legitimizes unilateral renegotiation and portrays multilateralism as inefficiency. The GCC case provides clear evidence of what van Dijk (2008) calls ideological square construction—emphasizing U.S. contributions and downplaying the commitments of allies—to produce a polarized “payer versus beneficiary” dichotomy.

Empirically, the phrase “*They are not paying their fair share*” appeared in multiple contexts: tweets, NATO summits, and bilateral meetings. The repetition performs ideological sedimentation, normalizing a discourse where international cooperation is valued only through monetary equivalence. Cognitively, this frame reduction discourages empathetic reasoning and collective identity formation (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), thereby constraining diplomatic imagination to market logic.

Mechanism 3 — Epistemic Blending, Hyperbole, and Institutional Delegitimation

The repeated deployment of “*Russia hoax*” across rallies, press briefings, and Twitter posts illustrates an epistemic blending mechanism that merges the narrative frames of *scandal*, *conspiracy*, and *victimhood* into a single conceptual space. Drawing on Fauconnier and Turner’s (2002) Conceptual Blending Theory, the expression fuses two input spaces: (1) the investigative reality of election interference, and (2) a politically motivated fabrication. The blended space yields a new emergent meaning—*any allegation is a hoax*—that neutralizes institutional critique. Cognitively, this blend produces what Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2013) describe as a metaphoric filter, selectively emphasizing threat to self (unfair persecution) while suppressing the veracity of evidence. From a CDA perspective, the phrase functions as a discursive weapon of delegitimation, attacking not only specific claims but the authority of knowledge-producing institutions (media, intelligence agencies, judiciary).

For example, the August 2020 tweet—“*The Russia Hoax is the biggest political scam in American history!*”—exemplifies adversarial hyperbole, which amplifies the evaluative polarity of discourse (Charteris-Black, 2018). The superlative form (“*biggest political scam*”) performs what Wodak (2015) terms politics of emotion, converting epistemic doubt into moral outrage. Repetition across media channels creates distributed coherence (Musolff, 2016), whereby digital amplification stabilizes the blend and diffuses it through partisan echo chambers.

The cumulative effect is the construction of an alternative epistemic authority centered on the speaker himself. This aligns with Hart’s (2018) findings that populist discourse often combines emotional metaphorization with self-referential truth claims, fostering public skepticism toward institutional mediation.

Taken together, these three mechanisms—metaphor escalation (“*China virus*”), frame substitution (“*they’re not paying their fair share*”), and epistemic blending (“*Russia hoax*”)—constitute a coherent rhetorical system that normalizes discursive incivility as both strategy and spectacle. Each mechanism leverages distinct cognitive operations—schema activation, frame replacement, and conceptual blending—but all converge on a shared ideological function: to simplify complex geopolitical realities into emotionally resonant moral binaries that privilege confrontation over deliberation (Lakoff, 2016; Wodak, 2021).

Crucially, these three mechanisms do not operate in isolation. When dehumanizing metaphors, transactional reframing, and epistemic destabilization co-occur, they produce a reinforcing zero-sum civic epistemology: audiences are encouraged to view international relations as an arena of existential or economic loss where trust is suspect, moral binaries dominate, and institutional

arbitration is delegitimized. This synergy explains how discursive incivility becomes both politically palatable and strategically effective: it mobilizes base constituencies (manufacturing consent) while constraining elite incentives for diplomatic rapprochement.

To synthesize the findings of the corpus analysis, Table 1 provides an overview of the three cognitive–discursive mechanisms identified across Trump’s geopolitical rhetoric between 2016 and 2020. Each mechanism combines a distinct cognitive operation, linguistic realization, and discursive function that collectively normalize incivility and reframe diplomacy as a zero-sum endeavor. The table summarizes the representative expressions found in the data, the underlying conceptual processes identified through Conceptual Metaphor and Blending Theory, their corresponding Critical Discourse Analysis interpretations, and illustrative examples drawn from the corpus. This integrated summary highlights how metaphor escalation, frame substitution, and epistemic blending operate in tandem to transform rhetorical aggression into a strategic communicative resource.

Table 1
Summary of Cognitive–Discursive Mechanisms in Trump’s Geopolitical Rhetoric (2016–2020)

Mechanism	Representative Phrase(s)	Cognitive Operation	Discursive Function (CDA Perspective)	Illustrative Example / Effect
1. Metaphor Escalation and Dehumanization	“China virus”	Context-induced metaphor intensification (Kövecses, 2020); activation of DISEASE schema (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980)	Delegitimizes dialogue; constructs foreign nation as existential threat (Wodak, 2015)	Tweet, 16 Mar 2020: “The world is paying a big price for what China did.” → Equates China with contagion; normalizes incivility as self-defense.
2. Frame Substitution and Transactionalization of Alliances	“They’re not paying their fair share”	Frame replacement: ALLIANCE AS BUSINESS DEAL (Fillmore, 1982; Kövecses, 2015)	Reconfigures cooperation into market logic; legitimizes unilateralism (Fairclough, 2013)	Statements to GCC and NATO: “We protect them, they have to pay.” → Reduces multilateralism to monetary fairness; erodes trust-based diplomacy.
3. Epistemic Blending, Hyperbole, and	“Russia hoax”	Conceptual blending of scandal and	Undermines institutional authority;	Tweet, Aug 2020: “The Russia Hoax is

Institutional Delegation		conspiracy frames (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002)	replaces evidence with moral outrage (Hart, 2018; Wodak, 2015)	the biggest political scam in American history!" → Generates moral polarity and skepticism toward media and intelligence agencies.
--------------------------	--	---	--	--

Findings

The corpus analyzed in this study consisted textual items drawn from Donald Trump’s official speeches, press conferences, televised interviews, and Twitter posts between 2016 and 2020. Through keyword extraction using AntConc and thematic coding in NVivo, three overarching cognitive–discursive patterns were identified: metaphor escalation and dehumanization, frame substitution and transactionalization of alliances, and epistemic blending with institutional delegitimation. These patterns were derived from recurrent lexical clusters, collocational structures, and evaluative expressions that together revealed systematic expansions of metaphorical and framing strategies across communication platforms.

The first pattern, metaphor escalation and dehumanization, was characterized by the consistent use of biological and pathological imagery to describe geopolitical entities, particularly China. The expression “China virus,” which appeared in numerous tweets and public remarks throughout 2020, exemplified how a political and economic rival was re-conceptualized through the metaphor of disease. Related terms such as *plague*, *infection*, and *invisible enemy* frequently co-occurred within a narrow lexical span, forming stable metaphorical collocations that intensified over time. For instance, a tweet posted on March 16, 2020, stated, “The United States will be stronger than ever. The world is paying a big price for what China did.” Such expressions linked national identity with notions of contamination and threat, thereby escalating the metaphor from economic competition to biological invasion. Frequency analysis confirmed a sharp rise in the use of disease-related language during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, suggesting that metaphorical intensification operated as a strategic discursive device to redirect blame and mobilize in-group cohesion.

A second prominent finding concerned frame substitution and the transactionalization of alliances, whereby cooperative or diplomatic relationships were reframed in commercial terms. Trump’s frequent use of phrases such as “They’re not paying their fair share,” “We protect them, they have to pay,” and “America is not a bank” transformed the semantics of international cooperation into the language of trade and debt. Collocational mapping revealed strong associations between the lexemes pay, protect, cost, and deal with, particularly in references to NATO, Saudi Arabia, and Gulf Cooperation Council partners. Across 2017–2019, the phrase “fair share” appeared more than sixty times, often in contexts implying economic imbalance or exploitation. Linguistically, this frame shift was reinforced by cost metaphors—“we spend billions,” “they owe us”—and moral comparatives such as “it’s not fair.” The persistence of this pattern across tweets, rallies, and official briefings indicates a deliberate cross-platform strategy

to redefine alliances through the metaphor of business negotiation, aligning with the broader conceptual frame of ALLIANCE AS TRANSACTION.

The third recurring discourse pattern involved epistemic blending and institutional delegitimation, prominently illustrated by the recurrent phrase “Russia hoax.” Appearing 112 times across various media between 2017 and 2020, the term combined connotations of conspiracy, deceit, and personal victimization. Its strongest lexical companions were *fake news*, *witch hunt*, and *deep state*, forming a semantic network that positioned investigative institutions and mainstream media as antagonists. A representative example, tweeted in August 2020, declared, “The Russia Hoax is the biggest political scam in American history!” Such utterances employed hyperbolic adjectives—*biggest*, *worst*, *total disgrace*—and self-referential truth markers like “I was right” and “everyone knows it.” Quantitative analysis revealed that the intensity of this language peaked during the Mueller investigation (2018–2019) and remained frequent thereafter. This pattern demonstrates how epistemic language—centered on notions of truth and deception—was blended with emotional amplification and evaluative polarization, resulting in a sustained erosion of institutional legitimacy and the construction of a personalized epistemic authority.

These patterns form an interrelated discursive system in which metaphorical, transactional, and epistemic mechanisms overlap to simplify complex geopolitical realities into moral and affective binaries. Co-occurrence analysis showed that nearly one-third of Trump’s tweets combined at least two of these mechanisms within the same message, particularly during periods of heightened controversy or crisis. This convergence suggests that metaphor escalation, frame substitution, and epistemic blending were not isolated rhetorical strategies but mutually reinforcing processes that structured his political communication.

Relation to Existing Literature

The present findings build on and expand several strands of existing scholarship. They reaffirm Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) foundational claim that metaphors do more than decorate language—they actively structure political reasoning and perception. Likewise, they support Kövecses’s (2020) argument that metaphor meanings are highly sensitive to context and capable of intensifying under conditions of political or social strain. Beyond that, the analysis adds a distinctly cognitive layer to critical discourse studies (Fairclough, 2013; Wodak, 2015) by identifying the mental operations—metaphor escalation, frame substitution, and conceptual blending—that connect linguistic form to broader ideological effects. These findings also align with research on populist rhetoric’s dependence on moral binaries and oversimplification (Homolar & Scholz, 2019; Busby et al., 2021). However, this study goes a step further by tracing the specific cognitive-linguistic pathways through which such simplifications become naturalized in foreign policy discourse.

Implications for International Relations and Media Ecosystems

From a practical standpoint, the normalization of incivility in elite rhetoric carries significant implications for international relations. When leaders consistently frame allies as exploiters or

adversaries, they foster public support for unilateral action and make diplomatic compromise appear weak or illegitimate. Over time, such framing can erode alliance cohesion, distort crisis communication, and contribute to the securitization of issues far beyond the military domain—such as trade or public health. In the digital sphere, these effects are amplified. Social media platforms compress complex messages into emotionally charged soundbites, accelerating the circulation of metaphors and blended narratives. What might begin as a rhetorical strategy can thus evolve into a structural feature of international political discourse. For scholars and policymakers alike, incivility should not be dismissed as theatrical performance; it is a communicative force capable of shaping negotiation dynamics, public sentiment, and even policy outcomes.

Methodological Contribution

This study also demonstrates the value of a hybrid methodological approach that bridges quantitative and qualitative analysis. Using corpus-linguistic tools such as AntConc to detect recurring metaphorical patterns, combined with thematic coding in NVivo and cognitive-linguistic interpretation, allows for a more layered understanding of how rhetorical patterns operate across contexts. The approach not only reveals the frequency of certain linguistic constructions but also illuminates how they function conceptually and politically. This mixed-methods design can be replicated across other leaders, cultural settings, and languages to explore how cognitive-linguistic strategies travel across geopolitical boundaries and adapt to new ideological environments.

Limitations and Future Directions

While the study's findings are robust, several limitations should be acknowledged. The corpus—restricted to Trump's English-language tweets, speeches, and interviews between 2016 and 2020—captures only a specific temporal and linguistic frame. As such, it cannot fully reflect how diverse audiences received these messages or how their effects unfolded beyond the study period. The selection of high-profile, rhetorically dense materials may also privilege particularly provocative language, overlooking more mundane communicative patterns. Future research could address these gaps through experimental studies testing how exposure to metaphors like “China virus” or “Russia hoax” influences public attitudes, as well as reception analyses that examine how different demographic groups interpret such language. Cross-linguistic and cross-cultural comparisons of populist discourse would further clarify whether the mechanisms identified here—metaphor escalation, frame substitution, and epistemic blending—are universally applicable or context-dependent.

Conclusion

In sum, this paper offers a cognitive-linguistic account of how discursive incivility functions as a strategic resource in contemporary geopolitical communication. By tracing how metaphors escalate, frames shift, and epistemic boundaries blur, the study reveals how populist rhetoric can recast diplomacy as a zero-sum contest and justify exclusionary policies. The integration of Critical Discourse Analysis and Conceptual Metaphor Theory within a digital corpus framework provides both theoretical insight and practical tools for analyzing political language in the networked age. Ultimately, the findings highlight that rhetorical form is not a mere stylistic

choice but a site of ideological struggle—one that demands close attention from linguists, political scientists, and practitioners concerned with the health of democratic discourse.

References

- Chafe, W. (1994). **Discourse, Consciousness, and Time**. Chicago UP.
- Fauconnier & Turner (2002). **The Way We Think**. Basic Books.
- Fauconnier, G. (1985). **Mental Spaces**. MIT Press.
- Fillmore, C. (1982). **Frame Semantics**. In *Linguistics in the Morning Calm*.
- Kövecses, Z. (2017). **Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory**. Cambridge UP.
- Alkhamash, R. (2023). Bibliometric, network, and thematic mapping analyses of metaphor and discourse in COVID-19 publications from 2020 to 2022. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1062943>
- Bratslavsky, L., Carpenter, N., & Zompetti, J. (2019). Twitter, incivility, and presidential communication: A theoretical incursion into spectacle and power. *Cultural Studies*, 34(4), 593–624. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09502386.2019.1656760>
- Busby, E. C., Gubler, J. R., & Hawkins, K. A. (2019). Framing and blame attribution in populist rhetoric. *The Journal of Politics*, 81(2), 616–630. <https://doi.org/10.1086/701832>
- Cap, P. (2020). Representation, conceptualization and positioning in Critical Discourse Analysis. *International Review of Pragmatics*, 12(2), 272–294. <https://doi.org/10.1163/18773109-01202004>
- Catalano, T., & Waugh, L. R. (2020). *Critical discourse analysis, critical discourse studies and beyond*. Springer.
- Chiluwa, I. (2024). Investigating the language of conflict and peace in critical discourse studies. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2024.2331160>
- Degani, M., Frassi, P., & Lorenzetti, M. I. (2016). *The Languages of Politics/La politique et ses langages* Volume 1. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Frederiksen, K. V. S. (2021). When democratic experience distorts democracy: Citizen reactions to undemocratic incumbent behaviour. *European Journal of Political Research*, 61(1), 281–292. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12465>
- Galemba, R. B. (2021). “They steal our work”: Wage theft and the criminalization of immigrant day laborers in Colorado, USA. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, 27(1), 91–112. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10610-020-09474-z>
- Ge, M., Mao, R., & Cambria, E. (2022). Explainable metaphor identification inspired by conceptual metaphor theory. *Proceedings of the AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence*, 36(10), 10681–10689. <https://doi.org/10.1609/aaai.v36i10.21313>
- Gibbs, R. W. (2017). *Metaphor Wars*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gu, M., Guo, H., Zhuang, J., Du, Y., & Qian, L. (2022). Social Media User Behavior and Emotions during Crisis Events. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(9), 5197. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19095197>
- Gulzar, K., Khan, S. A., Khan, I. U., Khan, S., & Amina, S. (2021). AN ANALYSIS OF WAR LANGUAGE IN COVID 19 SPEECHES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, 9(3), 1399–1412. <https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2021.93139>
- Hall, J. (2020). In search of enemies: Donald Trump’s populist foreign policy rhetoric. *Politics*, 41(1), 48–63. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395720935377>
- Hayır, N. (2024). Aggressor state, aggressor individual, and what international law Does/Should protect. *Michigan Journal of International Law*, 45.3, 487. <https://doi.org/10.36642/mjil.45.3.aggressor>
- Homolar, A., & Scholz, R. (2019). The power of Trump-speak: populist crisis narratives and ontological

- security. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 32(3), 344–364. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09557571.2019.1575796>
- Hopewell, K. (2020). Strategic Narratives in Global Trade Politics: American hegemony, free trade, and the Hidden Hand of the State. *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 14(1), 51–86. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjip/poaa020>
- Huang, J. (2020). Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 35(4), 302–305. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926488.2020.1813035>
- Jaradat, M. (2022). Persuasion strategies employed by Bell Clinton and Barack Obama in their presidential nomination speeches in 1992 and 2008: A comparative study. *Jordanian Educational Journal*, 33. <https://doi.org/10.46515/2060-007-970-014>
- Jensen, T. W., & Greve, L. (2019). Ecological cognition and metaphor. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 34(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926488.2019.1591720>
- Jiang, H. (2023). Critical Discourse Analysis: a practical introduction to power in language. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 21(6), 742–744. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2023.2210698>
- Kareem, A. H., & Najm, Y. M. (2024). A Critical discourse analysis of the biased role of Western media in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. *JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE STUDIES*, 8(6), 200–215. <https://doi.org/10.25130/lang.8.6.12>
- Kazan, N. (2021). The Evolution of US Policy towards Iran and the Iranian Nuclear Program. (c2021). <https://doi.org/10.26756/th.2022.222>
- Kopytowska, M., & Krakowiak, R. (2020). Online incivility in times of Covid-19: Social disunity and misperceptions of tourism industry in Poland. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*, 24(4), 743–773. <https://doi.org/10.22363/2687-0088-2020-24-4-743-773>
- Kövecses, Z. (2018). Metaphor in media language and cognition: A perspective from conceptual metaphor theory. *Lege Artis Language Yesterday Today Tomorrow*, 3(1), 124–141. <https://doi.org/10.2478/lart-2018-0004>
- Kövecses, Z. (2020a). An extended view of conceptual metaphor theory. *Review of Cognitive Linguistics*, 18(1), 112–130. <https://doi.org/10.1075/rcl.00053.kov>
- Kövecses, Z. (2020b). *Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory*. Cambridge University Press.
- Macedo, D. S. (2014). *FAIRCLOUGH, Norman. Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language*. 2. ed. UK: Pearson Education, 2010. *Cadernos De Linguagem E Sociedade*, 15(1), 161–165. <https://doi.org/10.26512/les.v15i1.9184>
- Machin, D., & Mayr, A. (2023a). *How to do critical discourse analysis: A Multimodal Introduction*. Sage Publications Limited.
- Machin, D., & Mayr, A. (2023b). *How to do critical discourse analysis: A Multimodal Introduction*. Sage Publications Limited.
- Mishra, S. (2025). What is mine cannot be yours: How zero-sum perceptions of power and status shape men’s perceptions of ingroup harm from women’s hierarchical advancement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000496>
- Nanay, B. (2023). *Mental imagery: Philosophy, Psychology, Neuroscience*. Oxford University Press.
- Onursal, R., & Kirkpatrick, D. (2019). Is Extremism the ‘New’ Terrorism? the Convergence of ‘Extremism’ and ‘Terrorism’ in British Parliamentary Discourse. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 33(5), 1094–1116. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2019.1598391>
- Post, S. (2018). Polarizing communication as media effects on antagonists. *Understanding Communication in Conflicts in Digital Media Societies*. *Communication Theory*, 29(2), 213–235. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ct/qty022>
- Prandi, M. (2017). Conceptual conflicts in metaphors and figurative language.

- <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315208763>
- Rajandran, K. (2020). 'A Long Battle Ahead': Malaysian and Singaporean prime ministers employ war metaphors for COVID-19. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 20(3), 261–267. <https://doi.org/10.17576/gema-2020-2003-15>
- Razak, N. K., Sultan, M. I., & Farid, M. (2024). Debasing political rhetoric: Dissing opponents, journalists, and minorities in populist leadership communication. *Communication and Democracy*, 1–3. <https://doi.org/10.1080/27671127.2024.2405651>
- Rossini, P. (2020a). Beyond Incivility: Understanding patterns of uncivil and intolerant discourse in online political talk. *Communication Research*, 49(3), 399–425. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650220921314>
- Rossini, P. (2020b). Beyond Incivility: Understanding patterns of uncivil and intolerant discourse in online political talk. *Communication Research*, 49(3), 399–425. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650220921314>
- Rossini, P. (2020c). Beyond Incivility: Understanding patterns of uncivil and intolerant discourse in online political talk. *Communication Research*, 49(3), 399–425. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650220921314>
- Rossini, P., & Maia, R. (2021). Characterizing disagreement in online political talk: Examining incivility and opinion expression on news websites and Facebook in Brazil. *Journal of Deliberative Democracy*, 17(1). <https://doi.org/10.16997/10.16997/jdd.967>
- Rzepnikowska, A. (2018). Racism and xenophobia experienced by Polish migrants in the UK before and after Brexit vote. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45(1), 61–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183x.2018.1451308>
- Song, Y., & Wu, Y. (2018). Tracking the viral spread of incivility on social networking sites: The case of cursing in online discussions of Hong Kong–Mainland China conflict. *Communication and the Public*, 3(1), 46–61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2057047318756408>
- Strapáčová, M., & Hloušek, V. (2018). Anti-Islamism without Moslems: Cognitive Frames of Czech Antimigrant Politics. *Journal of Nationalism Memory & Language Politics*, 12(1), 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.2478/jnmlp-2018-0001>
- Strobl, M., De Viteri, A. S., Rode, M., & Bjørnskov, C. (2023). Populism and inequality: Does reality match the populist rhetoric? *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 207, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2023.01.010>
- Viola, L. A. (2024). The quest for leadership in multilateral institutions: Great power rivalries and middle powers in the WTO. *Contemporary Security Policy*, 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2024.2419175>
- Vivoda, V., Matthews, R., & McGregor, N. (2023). A critical minerals perspective on the emergence of geopolitical trade blocs. *Resources Policy*, 89, 104587. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2023.104587>
- Wen, X., & Taylor, J. R. (2024). *The Routledge Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*. Routledge.
- Zheng, Y., Goh, E., & Wen, J. (2020). The effects of misleading media reports about COVID-19 on Chinese tourists' mental health: a perspective article. *Anatolia*, 31(2), 337–340. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2020.1747208>