

# Political Interviews with Donald Trump: Uncovering Power and Context through Critical Political Discourse Analysis



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## Article history:

Submitted: 15 January 2022

Revised: 22 March 2022

Accepted: 25 March 2022

## Keywords:

Critical political discourse analysis

Contextual knowledge

Political discourse

Political interview

Power

US-China trade war

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**ABSTRACT.** The study explored the Critical Political Discourse Analysis (CPDA) framework in analyzing political interviews, particularly with President Donald Trump on the US trade war with China. The study mainly explored how political power was revealed in political interviews with President Trump and what these political interviews revealed about the contexts of President Trump. The corpus constituted ten political interview episodes coded as PIE1, PIE2, and so forth with an average length of 11 minutes 26 seconds. The results revealed political power in the political interviews with President Trump as evidenced by his unusually loud volume, unusually low pitch, and falling intonation of expression structures and his positive evaluation of U S or Our action and negative evaluation of Them or Their action as underpinned by semantic polarization. Moreover, ideological polarization, rhetoric, and practical argumentation uncovered President Trump's context of "America First" thought, his hegemony, high extraversion, low agreeableness, domestic high opposition about the trade war against China, and populism. Finally, the procedures in undertaking CPDA could be utilized by researchers in their analysis of political speeches and interviews to uncover notions of power and contexts.

## 1.0. Introduction

Politics is a multifaceted phenomenon. It includes politicians' discourses, actions, practices and political processes, political systems, political ideologies, and political relations (Chilton, 2004; Dunmire, 2012; Van Dijk, 1997b). Political discourse is central in manifesting politicians' ideologies and beliefs, which may be articulated in their political speeches and interviews (Tang, 2013) through the instrumentality of media (Bayley, 2005). Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) contend that political discourse aims to support the decisions and actions of politicians. In Bayram's (2010) study, political discourse results from politics, which is determined by history and culture. Studies on political discourse include parliamentary sessions (Chilton, 2004), election campaigns, political interviews with the media, political speeches from the perspective of discourse-historical analysis (Yang, 2017), political debates focusing on language use (Bayram, 2010), and inaugural addresses of Presidents such as that of US President Obama with emphasis on persuasive strategies and covert ideology (Horvath, 2009).

Fetzer and Weizman (2006) argue that political discourse and the media coexist with each other to transmit political information, political beliefs, and political views. Political interviews are among the communication situations whereby the coexistence of political discourse and media is made manifest. In political interviews, journalists engage politicians, public officials, or subject-matter experts in challenging interactions. Politicians take political interviews to create a positive image (Trotta et al., 2020) for people, especially within their jurisdiction, to attack their opponents, and advance their ideas and thoughts (Feldman, 2016). In addition to verbal elements when advancing their ideas, politicians use non-verbal means (Rivers & Ross 2018; Trotta et al., 2020). Through verbal and non-verbal elements, political information, political beliefs, and political views, which constitute a political discourse, are transmitted.

Political discourses may be analyzed following Van Dijk's (1997) political discourse analysis or PDA. PDA can refer either to the analysis of political discourse, defined as the text and talk of



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politicians within overtly political contexts or to a political, namely, critical approach to discourse analysis. PDA is a field of discourse analysis that focuses on analyzing “political discourse” in political actions, such as parliamentary debates, government or ministerial regulations, political speeches, media interviews, political talk shows on TV, ballots, and so on. Fairclough (1995) contends that political discourse analysis deals especially with the reproduction of political power, power abuse, or domination through political discourse, including the various forms of resistance or counter-power against such forms of discursive dominance, while Chilton (2004) claims that PDA focuses on the structure of text or talk and a systematic account of the context and its relations to discursive structures. PDA covers a wide range of studies such as parliamentary debates (Chilton, 2004; Van Dijk, 2002; Chilton & Schäffner, 2002); State of the Union Address (Yongtao, 2010); public speeches (Hart et al., 2005; Usmonov, 2018); British PreBudget and Budget Reports (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012); Government Work Reports (GWRs) of China (Cao, 2014), political debates-World Economic Forum in Davos (Bayram, 2010), inaugural address of Presidents (Horváth, 2009; Martin, 2015) and political interviews (Chilton, 2004; Fetzer, 2002).

Most of the foregoing studies focused on the parliamentary discourse or public speech, but few of them were on political interviews. Chilton (2004) examined the political radio interview of a prominent woman politician being questioned vigorously in the run-up to the general elections of 2001 from BBC; whereas Fetzer (2002) used a pragmatic approach, especially Speech Act and Conversational Principles to conduct the study of political interview. The dearth of literature on political interviews makes the present study a valuable contribution to PDA as it advances critical political discourse analysis or CPDA in light of Van Dijk (1997; 2003), Chilton (2004), and Fairclough and Fairclough (2012). The present study employed CPDA to analyze purposively selected political interviews with Donald Trump.

The present study uncovered power and contexts in the political interviews with President Donald Trump through CPDA, which focused on the US trade war on China. Specifically, it answered the following questions: (1) How was power revealed in political interviews with President Donald Trump? (2) What did the political interviews reveal about the contexts of President Donald Trump?

**2.0. Framework of the Study**

Critical Political Discourse Analysis or CPDA served as the framework of the present study. It was derived from PDA (Chilton, 2004; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; Van Dijk, 1997b) and CDA (Fairclough, 1995; Van Dijk, 2003). Figure 1 presents a practicable and systematic presentation of CPDA when analyzing political discourses.

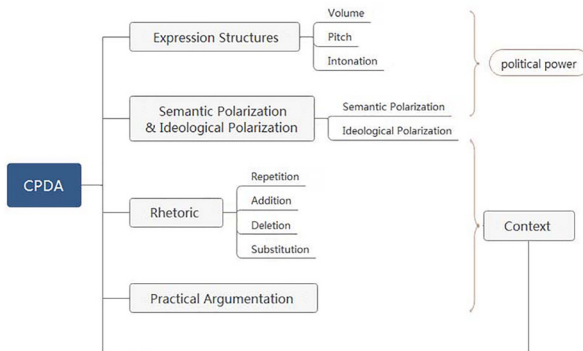


Figure 1. Diagrammatic presentation of CPDA

The diagram of CPDA as the contribution of the study presents a practicable method in analyzing spoken discourse in general and political speeches in particular. The construct of expression structures, which includes volume, pitch, and intonation, and the construct of semantic polarization could be utilized to explore how political power is revealed in political discourses. In addition, the constructs of ideological polarization, rhetoric which includes repetition, addition, deletion, and substitution,

and the construct of practical argumentation help uncover the contexts of the participants in political discourses. Finally, Figure 1 indicates that the context influences political power and helps analyze how political power is revealed in political discourses.

**3.0. Methodology**

*Research Design.* The present study employed a descriptive study that utilized the framework of CPDA in light of Van Dijk’s, Chilton’s, and Fairclough and Fairclough’s method. The constructs of Van Dijk helped in the analysis of the transcripts of the political interviews with US President Trump. The semantic and ideological polarization, rhetoric, and expression structures Van Dijk proposed in analyzing the political discourse fit well in analyzing the interviews. The construct of Chilton on context was a lens used in analyzing the political interview with Donald Trump because an interview is an interactive process where context plays an important role. Finally, practical argumentation was useful in analyzing the political power of Trump according to analyzing the political discourse in this study.

*Corpus of the Study.* The corpus of this study was the political interviews with President Trump, which specifically focused on the trade war between America and China. Table 1 presents the corpora of the present study.

**Table 1.** Detailed Presentation of Ten PIEs

Coded Political Interviews	Source/TV Network	Date of Interview	Number of Words	Length of Time
PIE-1	CNBC	June 10, 2019	3165	27min 08 seconds
PIE-2	Fox News	May 20, 2019	1815	14min 33 seconds
PIE-3	CNBC	July 20, 2018	1495	16min 04 seconds
PIE-4	C-SPAN	August 22, 2019	602	2min 53 seconds
PIE-5	CNBC	August 21, 2019	1143	7min 45 seconds
PIE-6	Fox News	May 14, 2019	1441	12min 04 seconds
PIE-7	CNBC	May 15, 2019	810	6min 56 seconds
PIE-8	C-SPAN	August 27, 2019	734	3min17 seconds
PIE-9	CNBC	July 27, 2019	964	5min 20 seconds
PIE-10	Fox News	December 13, 2018	1799	18min 20 seconds

Note: PIE means Political Interview Episode.

*Data Analysis.* Following the framework of CPDA, the semantic and ideological polarization, expression structure, context, rhetoric, and practical argumentation guided the researchers in analyzing the ten political interviews. The construct of expression structure of this study was analyzed mainly with the help of Praat, a voice analysis software. Three suprasegmentals of expression structure like volume, pitch, and intonation, particularly pitch and intonation, which appeared in each episode, were analyzed by using this software. It was most frequently used for pitch analysis to differentiate the high and low pitches. It was also used to validate the results of intonation patterns in this study. Every sentence in each interview episode was analyzed one at a time. Graphs were used to show the results of the Praat analysis.

After doing the lengthy Praat analysis of the ten PIEs, the researchers followed successive steps in analyzing the political interview transcripts: 1) identifying expression structures, particularly volume, pitch, and intonation in the interview transcriptions; 2) determining semantic polarization found in the interview transcriptions; 3) identifying the ideological polarization of President Trump; 4) identifying the rhetoric of President Trump; and 5) identifying practical argumentation. Descriptive statistics (frequency count, percentage) were utilized to account for occurrences of the foregoing elements.

4.0. Results

How was power revealed in the political interviews with President Trump?

Expression Structure

Volume (unusually loud, normal, unusually low), pitch (high pitch, normal, low pitch), and intonation (rising, falling, falling - rising) were the expression structures that revealed power across the ten political interviews. Table 2 shows volume as an expression structure across the ten PIEs.

Table 2. Volume as an Expression Structure across the Ten PIEs

Political Interview Episode	Volume							
	Unusually Loud		Normal		Unusually Low		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
PIE1	32	18.2	130	73.86	14	7.95	176	100.00
PIE2	18	12.9	113	81.29	8	5.76	139	100.00
PIE3	14	11.5	100	81.97	8	6.56	122	100.00
PIE4	10	16.4	48	78.69	3	4.92	61	100.00
PIE5	15	18.1	60	72.29	8	9.64	83	100.00
PIE6	22	18	92	75.41	8	6.56	122	100.00
PIE7	16	19.8	60	74.07	5	6.17	81	100.00
PIE8	11	16.4	52	77.61	4	5.97	67	100.00
PIE9	13	12.3	86	81.13	7	6.60	106	100.00
PIE10	18	12.6	116	81.12	9	6.29	143	100.00
TOTAL	169	15.4	857	77.91	74	6.73	1100	100.00

Results across the ten PIEs revealed that the normal volume of President Trump, which was at 77.91%, predominated over his unusually loud and unusually low volume at 15.4% and 6.73%, respectively. Evidently, the unusually loud was more than twice as unusually low, meaning the political power was revealed by using unusually loud volume than unusually low volume.

Extract 1 was excerpted from PIE 1. The context of this extract was that the US Chamber of Commerce opposed tariffs against China because they thought imposing tariffs placed the cost squarely on the shoulders of consumers, manufacturers, farmers, and ranchers; at the same time, the tariffs made it more difficult to sell more "Made-in-America" products globally and expose many of their industries. In this discourse, the interviewer expressed his opinion about Meyer, a member of the US Chamber of Commerce. However, before he could finish what he was saying, Trump interrupted him and explained in unusually loud volume why Meyer opposed the tariff against China and his opinion aiming to protect his members of the US Chamber of Commerce but bad for the country. In an unusually loud volume, Trump said, "*he is protecting companies that are members of he's got most of them*" and "*he's doing a very bad big disservice*". His argumentation in loud volume emphasized Trump's national interest.

Extract 1

IR: I have a lot of times, I just you know what devil's advocate and I was with Meyer, and he just made it he was just so dogmatic about never used tariffs, so I was kind of kidding around with him and pushing back, but 80% is good, that's a good grade

Trump: joe *he is protecting companies that are members of he's got most of them* many of them

IR: Yeah, they're worth

Trump: protecting our country, *he's doing a very bad big disservice*, and frankly, I've never has support from the US Chamber of Commerce

Although President Trump's normal volume was predominant in the course of the ten PIEs, he used more unusually loud volume than unusually low volume to show his political power in the trade war with China and his standpoint and self-image building.

Table 3 shows pitch as an expression structure across the ten PEIs.

**Table 3.** Pitch as an Expression Structure across the Ten PEIs

Political Interview Episode	Pitch							
	Unusually High		Normal		Unusually Low		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
PIE1	37	18.97	128	65.64	30	15.38	195	100.00
PIE2	15	10.20	112	76.19	20	13.61	147	100.00
PIE3	18	13.74	94	71.75	19	14.51	131	100.00
PIE4	16	20.51	43	55.13	19	24.36	78	100.00
PIE5	15	15.79	64	67.37	16	16.84	95	100.00
PIE6	6	4.88	103	83.74	14	11.38	123	100.00
PIE7	16	18.18	53	60.23	19	21.59	88	100.00
PIE8	6	8.33	55	76.39	11	15.28	72	100.00
PIE9	7	6.25	79	70.54	26	23.21	112	100.00
PIE10	35	22.29	101	64.33	21	13.38	157	100.00
TOTAL	172	14.35	832	69.39	195	16.26	1199	100.00

Results from PIE1 to PIE 10 showed 14.35% for an unusually high pitch against 69.39% for normal pitch, but 16.26% for an unusually low pitch against 69.39% normal pitch. Political power was revealed according to the varying pitch of unusually high and unusually low compared with the normal pitch. Trump usually used low pitch than high pitch in an interview to show his power and calmness in the trade war with China as evidenced by the subsequent extracts.

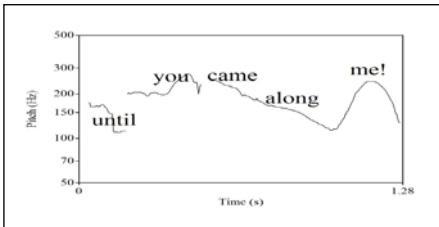
Extract 2 was excerpted from PIE 3. In this extract, President Trump used high pitch five times and low pitch once. The context was that the trade war between America and China had hit China's economy badly in some field; President Xi told Trump that the former did not like what the latter did.

**Extract 2**

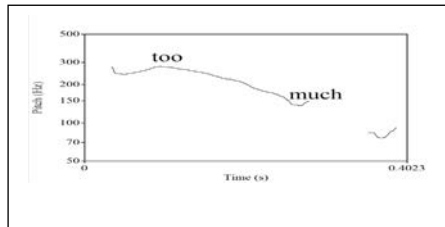
Trump: "nobody would ever complain until you<sup>t</sup> came along", me! <sup>↑</sup> and they said "now you're doing more than complaining, we don't like what you're doing", you know they think I'm doing maybe too<sup>t</sup> much, but of course, they're gonna think that, but for many years, and I'm not<sup>t</sup> just saying Obama, I'm saying bush and I'm saying along before<sup>t</sup>, if they had<sup>↓</sup> nobody. . .

Trump used the high pitch when he talked about what he did, such as "you" "me" "too" "not" "before" compared to other words. The result of the PRAAT analysis below shows a visual representation of Trump's pitch contour.

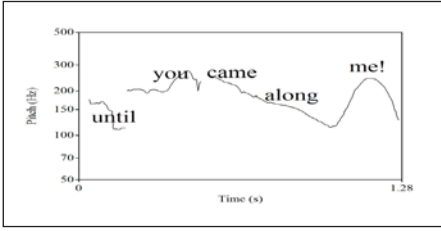
Based on the analysis of the different pitch variations, power was mainly revealed by the unusually high pitch employed by President Trump in his political interviews.



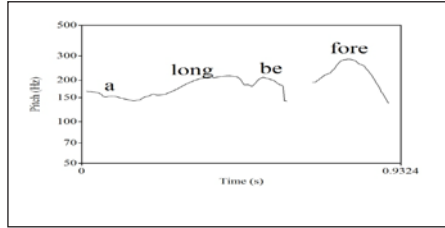
Note: Pitch contour of "until you came along me".  
Figure 1. Pitch analysis presentation by Praat



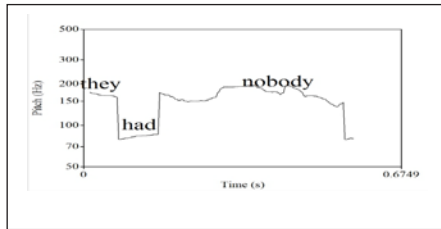
Note: Pitch contour of "too much".  
Figure 2. Pitch analysis presentation by Praat



Note: Pitch contour of “and I’m not just saying Obama”.  
 Figure 3. Pitch analysis presentation by Praat



Note: Pitch contour of “a long before”.  
 Figure 4. Pitch analysis presentation by Praat



Note: Pitch contour of “they had nobody”.  
 Figure 5. Pitch analysis presentation by Praat

Table 4 shows intonation as an expression structure across the ten PIEs.

**Table 4.** Intonation as an Expression Structure across the Ten PIEs

Political Interview Episode	Intonation							
	Rising		Falling		Falling-Rising		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
PIE1	64	39.02	89	54.27	11	6.71	164	100.00
PIE2	15	30.00	16	32.00	19	38.00	50	100.00
PIE3	18	34.62	28	53.85	6	11.54	52	100.00
PIE4	10	23.81	22	52.38	10	23.81	42	100.00
PIE5	28	43.08	33	50.77	4	6.15	65	100.00
PIE6	44	44.90	46	46.94	8	8.16	98	100.00
PIE7	24	40.00	32	53.33	4	6.67	60	100.00
PIE8	18	40.00	25	55.56	2	4.44	45	100.00
PIE9	19	33.93	28	50.00	9	16.07	56	100.00
PIE10	18	26.09	46	66.67	5	7.25	69	100.00
TOTAL	258	36.80	365	52.07	78	11.13	701	100.00

Intonation covers three forms: Rising, Falling, and Falling-Rising. The dominant intonation was falling at 52.07%, then the rising intonation at 36.80%, and the least was falling-rising intonation at 11.13%. Trump’s dominant use of falling intonation in his political interviews showed his power because falling intonation usually stressed his preferred meaning and emphasized the authority of power. As seen in the table, the falling form of intonation has the most frequency in each episode. Falling-Rising had the lowest frequency compared to the other two forms.

Extract 7 was excerpted from PIE 10. The context of this extract was the General Motor’s plan to wipe away 15% of the workforce right before Christmas under the stress of Trump’s trade war. Wiping away the workforce means unemployment would soar, which is a disadvantage to Trump’s government. This extract shows that Trump talked about this problem in different intonation patterns. When he said he did not like what the director of GM did, he used rising intonation to show his attitude as the context of this extract.

**Extract 7**

Trump: yeah tonight Coulter, I don't like what she did, I see I was nasty, it doesn't really matter, because Ohio is under my leadership ↑ from a nation national ↑ standpoint, Ohio is going to replace those jobs like in two minutes, but I don't like ↑ the General Motors does that, and they're going down to Mexico to ↓

make cars, now the New Deal, the U.S. MCA that I made really ↑ makes it very uncomfortable for people to go out of the country....↓

**Semantic Polarization**

Table 5 shows the words and phrases that constitute semantic polarization which ultimately revealed power across the ten PEIs.

**Table 5.** Words or Phrases that constitute Semantic Polarization

Words / Phrases	f
great/greatest	21
good	19
tremendous/tremendously	18
strong/strongest/strength	17
take/taking/taken in	15
well	14
big/bigger/biggest	8
fantastic	8
go/gone up/up	8
take/takes/taking/taken advantage of	8
TOTAL	136

The most frequent word / phrases that appeared in ten episodes are: "great/greatest" with the frequency of 21, "good" with the frequency of 19, "tremendously / tremendous" with the frequency of 18, "strong / strongest / strength" with the frequency of 17. The dominance of positive words showed Trump's preference to using the positive evaluation of the USA, which ultimately revealed power in his political interviews.

In extract 10, the dominant positive word "great" appeared twice to present semantic polarization. The first use of the word "great," which has a positive evaluation to describe Our action (trade war with China), showed the semantic polarization, and the second use of the word "great" indicated a positive evaluation of the US (America). Both uses of the word "great" indicated semantic polarization, which revealed Trump's power.

**Extract 10**

Trump: well, I have a very simple strategy, we were up almost 40%, and we've lost a little of that because of trade, I mean I'm doing great trading

IR: and you're willing to do that but that's different

Trump: yes rather do it when we're up 40%, and now let's take a little bit off the table, and fix it, because we cannot continue to lose 500 billion dollars a year to China, and I had a fantastic meeting with President Xi, this was four-hour meeting where everything was agreed on, now if we get it down at paper, that'll be another story, but I think we will, we have great strengths, nobody's ever done what I've done. . . .

It has been shown how semantic polarization through President Trump’s use of positive and negative words revealed power across the ten interviews. Power was revealed according to the positive evaluation of the US (America) and Our action in the ten PIEs through semantic polarization. The dominant word was “great” to show a good evaluation of Our action/ U S. Additionally, the negative evaluation of Them (China) or Their action like “lose/ losing/lost” revealed power in President Trump’s political interviews.

**Contexts of President Trump as Revealed in the Political Interviews**

According to Chilton (2004), context means that participants are aware of social structures beyond the local context of the current interaction. Contexts refer to the specific contextual knowledge of the participants. This section showcases what the political interviews with President Trump revealed about his contexts through ideological polarization, rhetoric, and practical argumentation found across the ten interview episodes. Rhetoric pivoted around repetition, addition, deletion, and substitution.

**Ideological Polarization**

According to Van Dijk (1997), ideological polarization generally restricts political text and talk and its evaluation: Emphasis/De-Emphasis of Our/Their Good/Bad Actions (p. 28). Table 6 exhibits the cases of ideological polarization found across the ten PIEs.

**Table 6.** Ideological Polarization Cases across the Ten PIEs

Political Interview Episode	f	%
PIE1	25	14
PIE2	15	8
PIE3	14	8
PIE4	17	9
PIE5	22	12
PIE6	27	15
PIE7	15	8
PIE8	10	6
PIE9	16	9
PIE10	19	11
TOTAL	180	100

Based on the table, the frequency of ideological polarization that appeared across the ten PIEs ranged from 10 to 27, depending on the length of the transcription. The highest frequency of ideological polarization was in PIE 6 with a frequency of 27, and the least frequency of ideological polarization was in PIE 8 with 10 frequency. Extract 14 excerpted from PIE 1 is evidence of the ideological polarization between the U.S and China. The backdrop of this extract shows the interviewer asking President Trump about being behind 5G and Huawei’s action affecting America’s technology development. Trump government had taken some action against Huawei, aiming to restrain China’s high technology. Against this backdrop, Trump expressed, “I made a priority 5G”, meaning they are ahead of China in 5G, not behind China. In addition, he used the expression “we’re leading in . . .” twice. All these sentences on ideological polarization that emphasized the United States’ good action revealed the context of President Trump, which was “America First”.

**Extract 14**

Trump: I made a priority 5G, and before I got here, we were way behind it, I think that we’re actually going to be leading very shortly, you know we’re leading in everything....

Extract 15 excerpted from PIE 5 demonstrated ideological polarization. The context of this extract was that President Trump took China on and raised tariffs on Chinese goods, and the result turned out to be good for America, but it hurt China badly. Therefore, the positive evaluation of our Good action was delivered by the expression “it does put us in a good negotiating position, doesn’t it?” This is an implicit expression that indicates America being at an advantageous position in the trade war with China. Moreover, the emphasis of negative evaluation of Their (China) bad action with direct expression “they were stealing all of our intellectual property ideas” expressed China’s attitude



towards the United States. All instances of ideological polarization in this extract showed the context of President Trump, that is, he was very wary of China's development.

**Extract 15**

Trump: it does put us in a good negotiating position, doesn't it? and China wants to make a deal and that's good, but they have to make a deal that's fair to us, it can't be a deal that's not fair to us, and you should be happy that I'm fighting this and I'm fighting this battle, because somebody had to do it we couldn't let this code, I don't even think it's sustainable to let go on what was happening, they were stealing all of our intellectual property ideas. . . .

In a nutshell, ideological polarization across the ten interviews revealed the contexts of President Trump. Ideological polarization, which underscores Our Good Action and Theirs Bad Action, was shown across the ten PIEs in the context of President Trump's slogan of "America First".

**Rhetoric**

Rhetoric usually presents its persuasive functions and political significance in a political context of communication. Rhetoric covers repetition, addition, deletion, and substitution; all these aspects of rhetoric found across the ten PIEs revealed the contexts of President Trump.

**Repetition**

Table 7 presents the frequency of repetitions found across the ten PIEs.

**Table 7.** Instances of Repetition across the Ten PIEs

Political Interview Episode	f (Sentences)	%
PIE1	7	15
PIE2	5	10
PIE3	7	15
PIE4	4	8
PIE5	7	15
PIE6	5	10
PIE7	2	4
PIE8	3	7
PIE9	4	8
PIE10	4	8
TOTAL	48	100

Based on the table, PIE1, PIE 3, and PIE 5 have the highest frequency with 7 each, and PIE 7 has the lowest frequency with 2. The frequency of repetition varied depending on the length of Trump's political interviews. The analysis on repetition showed excerpts from PIE 1- PIE 10.

Extract 17 is excerpted from PIE 3. In this extract, President Trump used the repetition of meaning to emphasize that he could have a better president life instead of doing this. The context of this discourse was that the interviewer doubted if there was a headwind on the American economy caused by a trade war with China. President Trump explained that he could have avoided doing so, but he was compelled to do it. He spared no effort in saving America, which was definitely good. Trump's act could show his context of populism.

**Extract 17**

Trump: so Joe I could have a much easier life, if I wanted to do it incorrectly, it would be much easier for me, sitting here I could just let all of these countries continue onward with, these massive deficits. . . .

The frequency and percentage of repetition that appeared in episodes was in the range of 2 - 7 as shown in the table. Repetition in the interviews revealed the context of President Trump on populism and hegemonism showing his power as president in his discourse.

**Addition**

Table 8 presents the frequency of addition found across the ten PIEs.

**Table 8.** Instances of Addition across the Ten PIEs

Political Interview Episode	f	%
PIE1	9	16
PIE2	7	14
PIE3	3	5
PIE4	6	11
PIE5	5	9
PIE6	5	9
PIE7	4	7
PIE8	5	9
PIE9	5	9
PIE10	6	11
TOTAL	55	100

As could be gleaned from the table, PIE 1 has the highest frequency of 9, while PIE 3 has the lowest frequency of 3. Four of the ten PIEs had 5 instances of addition.

Extract 19 was excerpted from PIE 8. The context of this extract was that the interviewer asked President Trump if China wanted to make a deal. What he thought was China did not have a choice but to make a deal. He used an additional method of rhetoric to elaborate it in detail and stressed that what America did to China before his election had totally failed and implied the excellence of what he did in contrast with his predecessors. This kind of expression revealed the context of President Trump’s dominance over China.

**Extract 19**

Trump: I don't say that as a threat, I don't think they have a choice, in the meantime of the United States which has never collected 10 cents from China will in a fairly short period of time be over 100 billion dollars in tariffs, so I think they want to make a deal very badly . . .

The frequency of addition, which appeared in the episodes, varies from 3 to 9. The addition used by President Trump indicated the context of the hegemony and “America First” of President Trump in the interviews.

**Deletion**

Table 9 presents the frequency of deletion found across the ten PIEs. Based on the table, PIE 1 had the highest frequency of 8 while PIEs 3, 4, 7, and 9 have the lowest frequency of 2 each. Three of the ten PIEs had three instances of deletion. The different frequencies of deletion across ten PIEs depended on the varying length of political interviews.

**Table 9.** Instances of Deletion across the Ten PIEs

Political Interview Episode	f	%
PIE1	8	24
PIE2	3	9
PIE3	2	6
PIE4	2	6
PIE5	5	14
PIE6	4	11
PIE7	2	6
PIE8	3	9
PIE9	2	6
PIE10	3	9
TOTAL	34	100

Extract 21 was excerpted from PIE 5. The context here was that many economies (countries) had persuaded the president to give up taking action on China, but Trump insisted on doing otherwise. In this extract, he used deletion of rhetoric to show his power. In the sentence, “long term it’s imperative that somebody does this”, he deleted “he should take action and put a tariff on China” because of partisan reason, but expressed it in an implicit manner. It revealed the context of President Trump, that is, domestic high opposition about the trade war with China.

**Extract 21**

Trump: I read, and I see so much, and I read so much, I’ll see these economies say, oh, give up! Give up on China! Give up! China’s been ripping this country off for 25 years for longer than that, and it’s about time; whether it’s good for our country or bad for our country short term, long term it’s imperative that somebody does this . . .

Based on the foregoing, instances of deletion that President Trump used in his interviews revealed his context of domestic high opposition about the trade war with China, his tough situation, and his power as an American president.

**Substitution**

Table 10 shows the instances of substitution used by President Trump, which appeared in the ten PIEs.

**Table 10.** Instances of Substitution across the Ten PIEs

Political Interview Episode	f	%
PIE1	11	18
PIE2	9	15
PIE3	4	7
PIE4	4	7
PIE5	7	11
PIE6	7	11
PIE7	5	8
PIE8	3	5
PIE9	5	8
PIE10	6	10
TOTAL	61	100

As shown in the table, PIE 1 had the highest frequency of 11, while PIE 8 had the lowest frequency of 3. Others had the frequency of substitution of 9, 7, 4, 5, and 6. The different frequencies of substitution in each episode were based on the varying length of Trumps’ political interviews.

Extract 23 was excerpted from PIE 2. The context of this extract was that President Trump asked all the production plants of American companies to move out of China, back to America, or other countries in Asia where there were no tariffs. Some of the companies followed his request, but some did not. What he substituted in the sentence “we have very smart people in this country”, he used “very smart people” to describe the companies that moved out of China and implied irony to sarcasm that the companies which did not follow his request were “not smart”. These expressions showed the context of his hegemony and “America First” slogan.

**Extract 23**

Trump: a lot of these companies that are in China are now moving to all Asian countries, where they don’t have the tariffs, so really you know, we have very smart people in this country, they’ll be buying from different locations

By and large, rhetoric through repetition, addition, deletion, and substitution across the ten interview episodes has revealed the contexts of President Trump. The instances of repetition revealed in his political interviews the context of President Trump, that is, populism and hegemony of his power as president. The addition of rhetoric used by President Trump indicated the context of President Trump’s hegemony and “America First”. For deletion, it revealed the context of President

Trump's domestic high opposition about the trade war with China and his hegemony as an American president. Besides, substitution as an aspect in his interviews showed the context of his hegemony and "America First" in the trade war with China. In sum, rhetoric revealed the context of President Trump's populism, hegemony, domestic high opposition about the trade war with China, and his "America First" slogan.

**Practical Argumentation**

According to Fairclough and Fairclough (2012), practical argumentation can be seen as "means-ends" argumentation, but it not only includes means and ends but also goals and the context of action (circumstances). Practical argumentation is also characterized by goals and circumstances, where the goals of one action, once turned into reality, become the context of action (the circumstances) of further action. This part of the paper focuses on the instances of practical argumentation found across the ten PIEs. These instances of practical argumentation revealed the contexts of President Trump. Table 10 presents the instances of practical argumentation across the ten PIEs.

**Table 11.** Instances of Practical Argumentation across the Ten PIEs

Political Interview Episode	f	%
PIE1	3	15
PIE2	2	10
PIE3	2	10
PIE4	1	5
PIE5	2	10
PIE6	3	15
PIE7	1	5
PIE8	2	10
PIE9	1	5
PIE10	3	15
TOTAL	20	100

As could be gleaned from the table, practical argumentation occurred, albeit minimal, in all the ten PIEs, with PIE 1, PIE 6, and PIE 10 having the highest frequency of three each. Practical argumentation was evident in Extract 25. Here, the context of the problem was about Trump's meeting with President Xi at G20. The circumstantial premise here was the Chinese ministry's non-confirmation of President Trump's meeting with President Xi at the G20. The goal premise was that President Xi would meet Trump at G20. Whereas, the value premise was Trump's tough attitude towards the trade war with China. The means-end premise was that Trump would raise tariff to China if they did not make a deal. Based on these four premises, the conclusion arrived at was that Trump would take some action if President Xi did not meet him at G20. Trump's action showed the context of his putting American interest first and his hegemony.

**Extract 25**

Trump: if we don't that so I look from our standpoint the best deal we can have is 25 percent on 600 million dollars, okay and then those companies are going to move into other locations and they're going to send the and it won't be a tariff if a product import goes up in price if we don't have a deal if we don't make a deal then we will be raising the tariffs, meaning putting the tariffs on more than you know we've we've only tax 35 to 40 percent of what they said then they have another 60% and that'll be taxed absolutely. . . .

As the table shows, practical argumentation appeared in every episode with the frequency varying from 1 to 3. Based on the analysis, President Trump used practical argumentation in his interview, demonstrating the context of the hegemony of his political power.

The instances of practical argumentation across the ten interviews revealed the contexts of President Trump's "America First" and the hegemonism of his political power when dealing with trade war against China. Textual evidence revealed the relationship between political power and context or contextual knowledge. Extract 28 excerpted from PIE 4 illustrates the relationship between power and context. The context of this extract is that the interviewer doubted the American economy and asked about the next move of President Trump in facing the economic recession, but President Trump

countered the interviewer. Based on the extract, Trump's context in responding to the interviewer's question was the recession in the US as fake news, the U.S. doing well in its economy, and China ripping off the economy of the United States. These are the pieces of evidence of Trump's context of hegemony that very well relates to Trump's political power. It bolstered his positive evaluation of the US (America) and his negative evaluation of Them (China) and Their action. This dialogue happened on August 22, 2019, when the yield curve in the bond market of America was inverted, which means that America's economy declined, influenced by the trade war with China. The statement *but one thing I have to do is economically take on China; President Clinton, President Bush, and President Obama and others, should have done this long before me; we are winning against China. . .* showed the political power of Trump as president. Only under the context (contextual knowledge) could the listeners better understand Trump's power.

#### Extract 28

IR: Mr. President, taken American a usual recession, do more of that and do American factories need to shut up?

Trump: so the fake news, of which many of you are members, is trying to convince the public to have a recession, let's have a recession, the United States is doing phenomenally well, but one thing I have to do is economically take on China because China has been ripping us off for many years, President Clinton, President Bush, and President Obama and others, should have done this long before me, my life would be much easier, although I enjoy doing it, but my life would be much easier if I just said: let China continue to rip off the United States all right? it'd be much easier, but I can't do that, we are winning against China. . . .

The foregoing results reveal the inherent relationship between political power and contextual knowledge.

### 5.0. Discussion

The present study focused on the political interview with President Trump based on the constructs of Van Dijk (1997), Chilton (2004), and Fairclough and Fairclough (2012). The study acknowledges some limitations. First, the current study mainly focused on the interviewee, that is, President Trump's discourse; the interviewer's discourse was not included in this study. Second, the gender of the interviewer was not considered in the present study. Third, the political interviews with President Trump were conducted by different television networks, but an equal representation of the network was not part of the study.

Given the foregoing limitations of the study, the present study espouses a relatively new framework in analyzing political discourse, which is Critical Political Discourse Analysis (CPDA). As a theoretical contribution, CPDA, which is basically Van Dijk's, incorporated some of Chilton's PDA constructs and Fairclough and Fairclough's CDA constructs in the analysis of political interviews.

Based on the analysis of ten PIEs under the framework of CPDA, power was revealed in the political interviews with President Trump through the three forms of expression structures such as the unusually loud volume, unusually low pitch, and falling intonation in his political interviews. For volume, President Trump was more likely to use unusually loud volume than unusually low volume in interviews to show his power and confidence and build a good image in the trade war with China, as evidenced in the extracts. For pitch, all the words spoken in high pitch could strengthen the meaning of his achievement in a strong feeling that could show his self-approval and moodiness, and the words in low pitch to increase the reliability of his words. However, using the high pitch constantly would bring untruthfulness to listeners and indicate his uncertainty. The usage of low pitch suggested the generally binding force of his power. For intonation, President Trump was inclined to use the Falling intonation to emphasize his power. For instance, in Extract 7, the Falling-Rising intonation behind it reinforced the tone and his attitude towards GM companies' actions. The falling-rising pattern also indicates that he had something more to add. When he said he would make GM uncomfortable going out of the country, he used Falling intonation to stress his determination and authority of power when facing the problem. All these intonation patterns in the discourse represented his inclination for power and showed "America first" and the superiority of his power. In addition, power was also revealed according to the positive evaluation of US (America) or Our action, and the negative evaluation of Them (China) or Their action in the ten PIEs through semantic

polarization. For example, by using them, Trump could easily show the achievements he gained since his election, his protection on domestic trade, especially in the trade war and his power as president, and contrasted descriptions between America's and China's economies to show his confidence, his desire for power and the superiority of his power in the trade war.

Furthermore, the contexts of President Trump were revealed in the political interviews through different aspects. Ideological polarization revealed the contexts of President Trump, such as his slogan of "America First", his hegemony around the world by having a trade war with China, and his high extraversion and low agreeableness. On the other hand, rhetoric revealed the context of President Trump, such as populism, hegemony, the domestic high opposition about trade war against China, and his "America First". Finally, practical argumentation revealed the context of President Trump of "America First" and the hegemony of his political power when dealing with trade war against China.

According to Van Dijk (1997), "semantics will be similarly biased, for example, through typical positive evaluations of us and Our actions in positive terms and negative evaluations of THEM who is our political and ideological competitors or enemies and THEIR actions in negative terms" (p. 28). One of the findings of semantic polarization also revealed the political power of President Trump according to the positive evaluation of the US (America) or Our action, and the negative evaluation of Them (China) or Their action. In the current study, the expression structures including volume, pitch, and intonation revealed such political power, just as Van Dijk (1997) stated that "volume, pitch, and intonation of speakers may influence modes of attention and understanding of what they say following the principles of the ideological square" (p. 36). As Van Dijk (1997) contended, the presence of rhetoric usually has persuasive functions and, therefore, political significance in a political context of communication. According to the analysis of the four aspects of rhetoric, the current study found that rhetoric did play an important political role in exploring the context of President Trump. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) stated that "descriptions, narratives or explanations of the context of action (e.g., the crisis) provide premises in practical arguments". Based on the analysis of the practical argumentation across ten PIEs, it also revealed the context of President Trump in the political interviews.

The participants of political activities organized some political events related to various language forms like political speeches, political interviews, and political debates, which constitute political discourse. Individual speakers produce some forms of political discourse, and how they "personalize" the group beliefs underlay the more particular properties of political discourse. For the current study, President Trump's discourse was on behalf of all the American people. Chilton (2004) stated that the assignments of political discourse analysis (PDA) are to answer the authentic and relevant political questions and deal with some issues that appeared and were discussed in political science. The developments in media communication have influenced the researchers greatly to study the communicative behavior in the political field in which politics has been investigated as text and talk. Therefore, in the current study, the analysis of expression structures and semantic polarization in the political interviews clearly showed Trump's political power in his responses to the interview questions.

According to Bayram's (2010) study, political discourse is a result of politics, and it is determined by history and culture. It exerts various functions according to different political activities. Based on the findings of the present study, three constructs of ideological polarization, rhetoric, and practical argumentation revealed the contexts of President Trump. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) claimed that "the purpose of political discourse is ultimately not to describe the world but to underpin decision and action" (p. 13). The context of President Trump could underpin his next decision and action on the US-China trade war. So, the findings are consistent with the previous study.

According to Van Dijk (1997), "the study of political discourse should not be limited to the structural properties of text or talk itself, but also include a systematic account of the context and its relations to discursive structures" (p. 5). In addition, Chilton (2004) contended that the nature of the talk that is made can only be explained in terms of the contextual knowledge of the participants (p. 74). Based on the analysis of the power and context, the context influences political power and helps analyze the political power in certain political discourse. Trump's context evidently reinforced his political power as revealed in the ten PIEs.

The present study employing CPDA revealed President Trump's power and contexts. CPDA has indeed been a practicable framework for analysis of political discourse, particularly political interviews, because the political discourse has a very close relationship with media that could transmit

and shape the political information, political beliefs, and political opinions (Tang, 2013, Chilton & Schaffner, 2002; Fetzer & Weizman, 2006).

## 6.0. Conclusion

Power in political interviews is revealed through expression structures, including volume, pitch and intonation, and semantic polarization. Furthermore, contexts are revealed in political interviews through ideological polarization, rhetoric, and practical argumentation. In light of the foregoing, CPDA is indeed a practicable framework for analyzing the political discourse, particularly political interviews. It can be both a theory and a method that unfolds political power and contexts or the contextual knowledge of the participants in political discourses.

Finally, the software of Praat contributed greatly to measuring the expression structures of pitch and intonation in the political interviews, and it is a practicable method in analyzing the political discourse. The use of this software provides favorable data support for the results of this current research and future studies and ensures the validity and authenticity of the results.

## 7.0. Recommendations

The constructs and procedures of CPDA may be employed to reveal power and context in the political interviews with other prominent political figures across the globe or the Philippine President, whose popularity among the masses has been consistently high. In addition, CPDA as a practicable framework may be utilized in analyzing other political discourses such as political debates between and among presidential candidates, especially now that the Philippines is preparing for its national election.

Moreover, the software Praat which is mainly used for analyzing pitch and intonation, could be utilized to analyze other spoken political discourses like public speeches, which may not be limited to the political interviews.

Future research could focus on the interviewer's discourse during political interviews and further explore the practicability of CPDA in the analysis since the current study mainly focused on the interviewee's discourse. Finally, variables such as the gender of the interviewer or the interviewee could be considered.

## 8.0. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## 9.0. Funding

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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