

Republic of Iraq
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of Babylon
College of Education for Human Sciences
Department of English



A Critical Discourse Analysis of Defamation on Social Media Platforms

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL OF THE COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION FOR HUMAN SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF
BABYLON, AS A PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER IN
EDUCATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS.

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November
2023 A.D.

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1445 A.H.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

{وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ
إِفْتَرَاهُ وَأَعَانَهُ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ آخَرُونَ}

صدق الله العلي العظيم
(سورة الفرقان: الآية ٤)

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

{Those who disbelieve say: “This (the Qur’an) is nothing but a lie that he (Muhammad) has invented, and others have helped him at it.”}

Almighty Allah, The Most High has told the truth

(Al-Furqan-4) (Al-hilali and Khan, 2021: 402)

THE SUPERVISOR' S DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis entitled (**A Critical Discourse Analysis of Defamation on Social Media Platforms**) written by (**Amina Ali Abdulhussein Abdulridha Alkhayat**) has been prepared under my supervision at the College of Education for Human Sciences, University of Babylon, as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Education in English Language and Linguistics.

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DEDICATION

*To my loving
Family with
gratitude*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks be to Almighty Allah the most merciful, the compassionate for giving me the strength to achieve my goals.

I would like to express my appreciation to my supervisor, Asst. Prof. Nesaem Mehdi (Ph.D.) for her valuable comments and insightful evaluation. Her empowering support has an impact on me. She is my role model.

I am pleased to thank Prof. Hussein Hameed Mayuuf (Ph.D.), the Head of the Department of English - College of Education for Human Sciences, for being patient and for showing willingness to cooperate and support his students.

I am honored to thank the seminar committee members who have given me their time to enrich my research. Many thanks extend to Prof. Riyadh Tariq (Ph.D.); Prof. Qassim Obyess (Ph.D.); Asst. Prof. Wafa Mukhlis (Ph.D.); and Asst. Prof. Nesaem Mehdi (Ph.D.). I would also like to thank my teachers and professors at the Department of English for their guidance throughout B.A. and M.A. Degrees, Prof. Ahmed Sahib (MA); Prof. Qassim Abbas (Ph.D.); Asst. Prof. Ahmed Abdul-Jalil (Ph.D.); Prof. Iman Mingher (Ph.D.); Asst. Prof. Aseel Khadim (Ph.D.); Asst. Prof. Muneer Ali; and Lecturer Sa'id Abdulwahab (Ph.D.).

I am pleased for having the opportunity to record my gratitude to Asst. Lecturer Taif Hatam who has helped me during the M.A. preparation stage. She was considerate and thoughtful whenever I had an examination. Because I cannot write, Mrs. Taif wrote my answers in the mid and final exams without hesitation. Thank you very much Mrs. Taif.

Warm thanks go to my father, Eng. Ali A. Alkhayyat, who has been my biggest support in my life. Without him, I would not have been able to be in this position. My father has been my eyes through which I

can see better than I would ever want. Warm thanks and love go to my family, my mother, sisters, and brothers who supported me and remembered me in their prayers to have the ultimate success. My parents, my sisters and brothers, no words can express how much I love you; I never stop thanking Almighty Allah for having you in my life.

Finally, I am thankful to my real friends who have always been there to encourage and empower me with their love and kindness.

ABSTRACT

The present thesis is a critical discourse analysis of defamation on social media platforms. Defamation which is the behaviour of harming someone by spreading false information about him has not been studied from a critical discourse analysis perspective as far as the researcher knows. Thereby, the present thesis is an attempt to fill this gap by answering the following questions: (1) what are the types of defamation found on social media platforms, (2) which reputational harm does a defamatory publication cause, (3) what are the a) syntactic strategies; b) semantic/lexical strategies; c) pragmatic strategies; and d) rhetorical strategies that are utilised to realise defamation on social media platforms, (4) what are the frequencies of occurrence of the discursive strategies utilised to realise defamation, and (5) what are the ideologies that motivate / influence an individual to publish a defamatory content on social media platforms?

The main aims of the present thesis are to (1) identify defamation types found on social media platforms, (2) determine the reputational harm caused by a defamatory publication, (3) identify the a) syntactic; b) semantic/lexical; c) pragmatic; and d) rhetorical strategies utilised to realise defamation on social media platforms, (4) figure out the frequencies of occurrence of the discursive strategies, and (5) capture the ideologies that motivate an individual to publish a defamatory content on social media platforms. An eclectic model is utilised to analyse ten defamatory texts that are originally published on the social media platforms of (1) YouTube, (2) Twitter, (3) Facebook, and (4) Instagram. Hill and Hill's (2009) defamation types as well as Post's (1986) reputational harm and Van Dijk's (1993, 2005, 2006a, and 2008) ideological discursive strategies are employed in the model to achieve the aims.

The present thesis comes up with various conclusions, the most important of which are: a defamatory publication tends to cause property, honor, and dignity harm to the plaintiff's reputation; a defamatory content includes a) syntactic strategies of transitivity and comparison, b) semantic strategies of negative lexicalisation and derogatory words, c) pragmatic strategies of speech acts, presupposition, and implicature, d) rhetorical

strategies of polarisation, hyperbole, and reference. It is further concluded that defamers are motivated by such ideologies as racism, prejudice, and discrimination when they publish a defamatory content on social media platforms.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviated Form	Full Form
AHS	Alberta Health Services
BPs	Behavioural Processes
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CDS	Critical Discourse Studies
CL	Critical Linguistics
CMOH	Chief Medical Officer of Health
DA	Discourse Analysis
EPs	Existential Processes
MPs	Material Processes
MnPs	Mental Processes
PHA	Public Health Act
RPs	Relational Processes
VPs	Verbal Processes

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 . Problem

Internet has been developed to represent the advancements in science that took place at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. This advancement affects a variety of aspects related to people's daily lives, including social communication and how to use the Internet for either positive or negative reasons.

A key aspect of this advancement is the proliferation of defamation on social media platforms. This surely did not occur before the invention of the Internet since there were fewer ways for a person to express his own opinions. Publishing speeches that harm and insult people may result in legal action being taken against the defamer and the imposition of the proper punishment. The researcher should be aware of such speeches in addition to investigating the factors that contribute and enhance the interaction of individuals on social media platforms. The ideologies of an individual interfere in the production of language that defames others. Fairclough (2013:358) contends that social groups conflict and advance their own ideologies through language. On the basis of this concept, discourse reveals the impact of an ideology. Put differently, discourse may create power inequality; social behaviour serves as a representation of this inequity.

Critical discourse analysis is the lens through which these ideologies are investigated. Employing the field of critical discourse analysis to tackle a defamatory content requires a deep knowledge of this field and its approaches; this knowledge allows the researcher to select the most appropriate approach which enables drawing comprehensive conclusions as much as possible.

Delgado and Stefancic (2014:322) list several causes for the rise of malicious language on social media platforms, one of which being the capacity to speak without identifying oneself. That is, people can express their thoughts without worrying about consequences because social media platforms enable Internet users to communicate publicly without mentioning their private personal information. Another reason includes trend-following; given how widespread defamation has become online, people who are abusive or make malicious contents are likely to capture approval of their opinions as well as cultivate others to do the same. Delgado and Stefancic (2014:330) add the issue of the permanence that comes with posting something on social media platforms; a defamatory content is likely to stay there particularly if it becomes viral unless it gets deleted at the request of the person who posted it. Even in such cases, there may be a recorded version of the deleted content found on one or more platform.

The present thesis is concerned with the concept of defamation, a language crime that has the potential to hurt an individual. Social media platforms have the consequence of creating a rich environment for defamation since billions of individuals from all over the world use them. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this topic has not been tackled, particularly from a critical discourse analysis perspective; that is why it is essential to study it to bridge this gap. Depending on what has been mentioned above, the researcher endeavours to answer the following questions:

1. What are the types of defamation found on social media platforms?
2. Which reputational harm does a defamatory publication cause?
3. What are the a) syntactic strategies; b) semantic/lexical strategies; c) pragmatic strategies; and d) rhetorical strategies that are utilised to realise defamation on social media platforms?
4. What are the frequencies of occurrence of the discursive strategies utilised to realise defamation on social media platforms?

5. What are the ideologies that motivate / influence an individual to publish a defamatory content on social media platforms?

1.2. Aims

The present thesis aims at:

1. Identifying the types of defamation found on social media platforms.
2. Determining the reputational harm that a defamatory publication causes
3. Identifying the a) syntactic; b) semantic/lexical; c) pragmatic; and d) rhetorical strategies utilised to realise defamation on social media platforms.
4. Figuring out the frequencies of occurrence of the discursive strategies utilised to realise defamation on social media platforms.
5. Capturing the ideologies that motivate/ influence an individual to publish a defamatory content on social media platforms.

1.3. Hypotheses

Based upon the questions and aims of the present thesis, it is hypothesised that:

1. Libel and slander are the types of defamation found on social media platforms since the defamatory content can be published in a written or a spoken form.
2. A defamatory publication causes harm to the plaintiff's social role and face. In other words, a defamer disrespects the plaintiff's need to be respected and esteemed.
3. The discursive strategies utilised to realise defamation on social media platforms are: a) the syntactic strategies of transitivity and comparison; b) the semantic/lexical strategy of derogatory words; c) the pragmatic strategies of speech acts and implicature; and d) the rhetorical strategies of polarisation and hyperbole.

4. The semantic and the pragmatic strategies are of more occurrences in the defamatory content published on social media platforms. Furthermore, the syntactic strategies are of lower frequency. Finally, the rhetorical strategies are the least frequently utilised strategies in a defamatory content published on social media platforms.
5. An individual is motivated/ influenced by such ideologies as racism and prejudice that can amount in publishing a defamatory content on social media platforms.

1.4. Procedures

In order to achieve the aims of the present thesis and evaluate its hypotheses, the following procedures are followed:

1. Presenting a theoretical overview of both defamation and critical discourse analysis so as to adopt the suitable approach to analyse defamation on social media platforms.
2. Adopting an eclectic model for the sake of analysing the data from a critical discourse analysis perspective.
3. Analysing the data qualitatively to acquire a comprehensive critical understanding of the nature and traits of defamation in particular texts from social media platforms.
4. Conducting a quantitative analysis to support the results of the qualitative analysis.
5. Drawing conclusions based upon the qualitative and quantitative analyses.

1.5. Limits

The present thesis is limited to tackle defamation from a critical discourse analysis perspective so as to understand the ideological dimensions of a defamatory content published on social media platforms. The data of the thesis is originally published on social media platforms, namely Twitter,

YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. The contextual factors that govern the data are described according to Lasswell's Communication Model (1971). The thesis analyses ten texts qualitatively by means of an eclectic model based on: (a) Hill and Hill's (2009) Types of Defamation; (b) Post's (1986) Reputational Harm; and (c) Van Dijk's (1993, 2005, 2006a, and 2008) Ideological Discursive Strategies.

1.6. Values

The researcher hopes that the present thesis is of value to students and linguistic researchers. The analyses and conclusions can be applied to language teaching as a means of raising students' awareness of the ideologies hidden beneath a discourse. Such awareness can be significant to the students as social members since they may be subjected to the negative use of social media platforms either in an active or passive way. Consequently, students can be conscious of how to use these platforms, and how to protect themselves from the negative impact of the Internet.

It is also hoped that linguistic researchers can use the theoretical part of the present thesis as a literature for both critical discourse analysis and defamation. The practical part, hopefully, widens the application of critical analysis to include not just the linguistic issues, but also the social practices that integrate in people's everyday life. Thus, researchers are intended to benefit from the present thesis so as to contribute to the positive social change which critical discourse analysts are expected to make.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2. Introductory Remarks

This chapter presents a theoretical background of the concept of defamation with a clarification of the most significant aspects that affect and influence how defamation is perceived. It also covers the field of critical discourse analysis, including an explanation of its aims along with some concepts related to it.

2.1. The Concept of Defamation

Simply speaking, defamation is “an attack on someone’s reputation” by maliciously saying or writing things about him (Garner, 1995:225), Collin (2004a:140), Crystal (2009: 328) and Garner (2016:157- 8). As Collin (2004a: 140) states, a defamatory statement is a false claim that has the ability to harm the reputation of the individual in the viewpoint of “right-thinking” members of the community. Thus, to defame someone means to use language in a way that damages his social image and reputation because defamation is an offence to someone by saying or writing dishonest things about him.

Defamation includes the deliberate intention of causing such damage (Collin, 2004b:65). So, for Merriam Webster Dictionary (2008: 433-4), to defame someone or something means to make false and unfair claims which make other people have bad opinion about them. Shuy (2010:10) says that an utterance is defamatory “if it tends to harm the reputation of another as to lower him in the estimation of the community or to deter third persons from dealing with him.” Therefore, as Lidsky (1996:6) illustrates, the analysis of a defamatory statement seems very straightforward at first sight. It is defamatory, for example, to falsely accuse an individual of being a liar, a thief, or a murderer.

If someone is using language that conveys defamatory meaning, then this action is only concerned with a man's reputation, or what people think about him. Consequently, it is for harm to his reputation and his estimation in the eyes of others (Hill and Hill, 2009:120).

According to Butterfield (2015:1396), libel and slander are types of defamation. Libel, on the one hand, is defined as a published false statement that harms a person's reputation depending on how far the word published can be extended to include email, Internet websites, and other kinds of electronic media of communication. Slander, on the other hand, is a spiteful, false, and hurtful oral utterance made about a person, i.e. simply saying damaging things about him. Butterfield (2015:1396) adds that the term libel is mostly used to refer to the permanent forms of defamation, such as writing, picture, statue, and so on; while slander is mostly used to refer to the transitory forms, like spoken words and gestures.

Garner (1995:225) and Crystal (2009; 328) state that libel and slander are synonymous in popular usage since they refer to a deliberate, untrue statement whether made in writing or orally. Garner (1995:127) adds that the legal distinction between them lies in the way language is used. A libel is made in a permanent form (writing, pictures, etc.) and a slander is made in a fugitive form (e.g. by speaking or gestures).

Libel, as Collin (2004a:287) and Merriam Webster Dictionary (2008:433-4) illustrate, is publishing and sharing a misleading information that causes people to perceive someone as being bad. Slander is the spoken type of defamation, i.e. the crime of damaging someone's character by saying hateful and untrue statements about him. Slander and libel cases, as Shuy (2010:3-4) puts it, are primarily concerned with how one manipulates language to discredit another. As mentioned by Garner (1995:127) and Crystal (2009: 328), an equivalent of defamation is the

term calumny which refers to the act of falsely and maliciously misrepresenting the words or actions of others. This leads to injure their reputation.

Hill and Hill (2009:251) note that a false statement about an individual that is published or broadcasted via the social media and harms the individual's reputation or social standing is a libel. Thus, it is a tort and the individual who is harmed can file a suit against the defendant. Slander is defined as a deceitful statement that is spoken but not published in writing or distributed through the media. Because the statement has the potential to reach a very large audience when it is made on social media platforms, it is regarded as libel rather than slander (Hill and Hill, 2009:395). It should be noted that this thesis adopts Hill and Hill's viewpoint concerning the types of the defamation.

Generally, Garner (2009:479) defines defamation as an intentional false statement, whether published or spoken publicly, that harms someone's reputation. Tiersma (cited in Shuy, 2010:11) explains that defamation is "a variety of language regulation that prohibits the uttering of certain types of speech, or more precisely, allows those types only in very specific circumstances." Shuy (2010:11) comments that this regulation involves a relationship between an individual to the community, since "a public accusation of wrongdoing is a linguistic act that lowers the status of an individual who has violated community norms". According to these definitions, community and the third party who receives, reads, and hears false claims about someone plays an important role in defamation cases. What makes a statement defamatory is that it damages an individual's reputation or character in the eyes of others. Here, as Garner (2016:157) argues, character refers to what one is; while reputation refers to what one is thought to be by others.

Finally, defamation is operationally defined as the behaviour of damaging someone's reputation in the eyes of the community by publishing false statements about him. It is a subjective phenomenon because it is influenced by the community norms and prejudices.

2.2. Defamation and Reputation

Reputation, as noted by Hill and Hill (2009:120), is central to defamation because when defamation occurs, it harms someone's reputation and leads reasonable people to avoid him and not deal with him. A person's reputation is the esteem in which he is usually regarded. A reputational injury constitutes defamation. For its deep connection to the subject of defamation, it is important to define the term *reputation*. Reputation is what people think of someone, how they view his actions and whether or not they see him accepted in a society. Collin (2004 a:140) defines it as “the opinion of someone or something held by other people.”

Amponsah (2004: 89) defines the concept of reputation as a quality and characteristic that an individual receives due to his status, character, position, and/or actions in his community.

Reputation has to do with the community norms and values; those two factors shape the way reputation is perceived. Reputation, Ralph (2008:5) illustrates, “is socially mediated, whereas character is innate.” The perceptions of others about a person, in turn, influence and confirm his own beliefs about himself to varied degrees. Character and reputation cannot, or perhaps should not, be so clearly separated. Post (1986:692) mentions that knowing the concept of reputation can help in understanding how reputation is hurt. He classifies reputation into three concepts: reputation as “property”; reputation as “honor”; and reputation as “dignity”.

2.2.1. Reputation as Property

For Post (1986:693), the term reputation as property refers to "reputation in the marketplace" and is thus comparable to "goodwill," or the positive reputation of a company and its relationships with its clients. According to him, the concept of reputation as property means that someone can build a reputation for himself via hard work, such as "the exertion of ability" or "mechanical competence and creativity". He adds, a professional reputation like that gained by labor constitutes property. Thus, defaming a professional person results in the destruction of valued right and interest, namely, the product of that person's talent, labor, and effort. In other words, reputational harm -or more particularly property harm- is "capable of financial evaluation" and protection just like all other types of property loss (Post, 1986: 694). Post covers cases of simply personal or private reputation in his analysis of property harm rather than constraining it to cases involving professional reputation.

Post (1986:695) argues that because they are earned, personal or private reputations can be regarded in the same way as property. Through efforts in social interactions, a positive reputation can be developed. He, then, strives to pinpoint the social image that underpins the notion of reputation as property after recognising that reputation is essentially social and that each concept of reputation is based on this notion. According to him, the idea that reputation is a form of property is based on the idea that people are connected to each other through workings in the marketplace. Thereby, the present thesis utilises the term *property harm* in analysing the concept of reputation as property.

2.2.2. Reputation as Honor

In his definition of honor, Post (1986:700) explains that it is a sort of reputation in which an individual personally identifies with the normative traits of a particular social role and in return individually

obtains the esteem and estimation that society pays to that role. Accordingly, reputation as honor is something that is acquired. It is a right that comes with a social role rather than something that may be obtained via effort. As Craik (2009:167) puts it, society members are connected within a hierarchical order. Accordingly, an individual associates with a certain social role and he wants his community to respect him depending on the characteristics assigned to his social role. The aspect of defamatory representation is important to this notion, which includes distinguishing between statements that are relevant to honor and those that are not. Dishonor is losing face in the community as well as status and identity.

As such, reputation as honor therefore implies reciprocity of responsibilities between a person and his society (Post, 1986:700). Post adds that the relationship between honor and social roles, as well as the importance associated with each, are predetermined. There is no “marketplace” for reputation as honor since it is “inalienable and unquantifiable”, unlike reputation as property, which cannot be turned into a medium of exchange. Henceforth, while losing honor is possible, gaining it is not. The defamed person's reputation is built on and consumes his whole life. Thus, a defamatory publication, according to this idea of reputation, deprives a plaintiff not just of an asset but, more importantly, of self-esteem (Post, 1986:701).

Reputation as honor is based on shared beliefs about social roles. In such a society, the state's interest in reputation protection becomes an interest in maintaining the social norms (Post 1986, 702). Damage to reputation as honor, i.e. honor harm, comprises harm that cannot be measured since it is associated with a social role and a social status. Post (1986, 703–5) maintains that the concept of reputation as honor highlights the significance of defamation in vindicating and protecting

plaintiff's honor. The term *honor harm* is employed within the present thesis to analyse the concept of reputation as honor.

2.2.3. Reputation as Dignity

As mentioned by Goffman (1967:56) cited in Rolph (2008: 27), social interactions continuously shape a person's identity. "Deference and demeanour" rules govern these interactions. The acts by which a person expresses gratitude "to a recipient, of a recipient, or to something of which this recipient is viewed as a symbol, extension, or agent" are known as the rules of deference. Whereas, the actions that the recipient uses to communicate to the individual whether he is acceptable or unacceptable are known as the rules of demeanour. The significance of these rules is to unite participants in a social interaction as well as society as a whole; each person exhibits both a demeanour image of himself and a deference image toward others. For Post (1986:710), a community protects the dignity of its individuals via defamation law which maintains rules of deference and demeanour. According to him, the protection of an individual's interest in his own dignity and the protection of society's interest in upholding its own rules of civility, and hence its own constitution, are the two purposes of defamation law that are conceived by the concept of dignity harm. In the present thesis the term *dignity harm* will be used to analyse reputation as dignity.

Thus, Lidsky (1996:71) proposes that reputational harm is a social concept that is more determined by how it affects the plaintiff's community than by how it affects the plaintiff personally. The community whose estimation of the plaintiff has been damaged must be chosen in order to determine if a statement is defamatory. Hence, a community is an important consideration for determining defamation accountability.

2.3. Defamation and Community

Ordinarily, community moral standards vary depending on who is being defamed. The idea that community norms can vary greatly depending on place, culture, and social position is a reason why the concept of defamatory language has proved to be so complex.

In defamation cases, the concept of community is fundamental. A plaintiff's community is used to make several decisions. First, the plaintiff's community determines whether a statement is considered defamatory depending on the norms and values of that community. Second, while assessing the plaintiff's status, the plaintiff's community is taken into account, thereby determining the amount of fault that must be demonstrated. For example, if a plaintiff is a public figure due to his status in the society, he must establish actual malice in order to prevail in a defamation case. Finally, the concept of community is required to assess if the plaintiff's reputation is harmed and if the plaintiff deserves vindication in the eyes of the target community (Hill and Hill, 2009:260) and (Sanders, 2010:234).

Accordingly, there need to be a clear definition of the term community. It is easier to define a community in terms of the geography, population, culture, and other aspects that constituted it. Viewing it this way, a community is a group of people who live in a specific area and who share similar values and beliefs. If someone's reputation is attacked and his community, as a result of that attack, stop dealing or interacting with him, this is an obvious form of defamation (Sanders, 2010:236). However, the situation is not that simple, especially in the time of the Internet which has opened the door for people from various parts of the world to compromise a community. A worldwide community, with a huge number of individuals who may or may not share the same background, has an influence on defamation cases. When a defamatory

statement is published on the Internet, people who have not had a face-to-face contact with the plaintiff have the opportunity to participate and influence the defamation case. In some cases, the plaintiff has no reputation, whether good or bad, on social media; yet he develops a reputation when being defamed (Sanders, 2010:232).

The decision of community effectively becomes a decision of policy. This idealised community frequently represents the opinions of the dominant groups in society rather than the views of a specific plaintiff's real community. As noted by Post (1986:716), an individual's identity is formed through identification with the community and internalisation of its rules and values. In turn, the community is formed by the shared values of its members, and it depends on "reciprocal observance" of the "rules of civility" that it has constructed in order to survive. Lidsky (1996:8-11) adds that because of the existence of shared beliefs and values that constitute community life, the defamation tort, which prohibits antisocial behaviours that damage reputation, contributes in the maintenance of the group's identity. Community biases, rather than community values, are arguably a more appropriate term. In England, for example, the false claim that X is Irish is now not considered defamatory, but what about the claims that he is black, communist, or homosexual? For Post (1988:300), "it is defamatory to say that a white person is black as a means by which defamation law enforced the values of the dominant white culture."

Every defamation case starts with the problem of determining if the statement in concern truly has a defamatory connotation, which includes two different steps. Firstly, it is crucial to determine whether or not the defendant's statements would bear the spin the plaintiff is attempting to place on them. This step involves linguistic analysis; however it goes without saying that the analyst's interpretation may be

biased by his own cultural prejudices. In the second step, the analyst evaluates if the words are "defamatory", that is, whether or not they are the kind of words that have the tendency to damage reputation. This stage needs both linguistic analysis to identify word "tendencies" and sociological investigation to identify community opinions and attitudes (Lidsky, 1996:12).

Moreover, defamation is a "recipient-centered notion," meaning that the focus is on other people's opinions or attitudes as well as how they act in response to the defendant's defamatory statement. Lidsky (1996:12) notes that this should be borne in mind when conducting an analysis. The "tendencies" of specific statements must be assessed in light of the attitudes, ideologies, and biases of the target community rather than just the language employed. This theoretical issue is a reaction to the fundamental character of reputation; as a result, harm to reputation is a socially constructed damage that is determined by how other individuals interact to the defendant's statements.

A plaintiff may endure reputational damage within one social group but not another due to communities with more pluralistic orientations, like America, wherein defamation is not a subject of majority opinion; not every wrongdoing is universally condemned. To resolve this issue, the relevant community whose perspectives of the plaintiff are hurt is determined through yet another theoretical issue. The norms and standards of society must be taken into consideration when analysing whether the false imputation tends to harm a person's social status or his opportunities for social contact. In other words, society is to be accepted as it is, with all of its acknowledged prejudices, without considering whether or not such prejudices are supported by logic or justice (Lidsky, 1996:19). Determining the borders of community becomes a procedure for recognising society's norms of morality. By

asserting that the values of a particular group inside the community are too antisocial to be considered, analysts determine the parameters of the community by declaring how much variation and diversity can be accepted within the group (Lidsky, 1996: 40).

To summarise, the notion of community should be clear whenever talking about defamation. A community is the public that surrounds a person and receives the defamatory language that addresses him. The defamed person may either be a private person or a public figure. The former's community involves his family, friends, neighbours and acquaintances. The latter's, on the other hand, includes the general audience that know his name since he is considered a famous individual. The size of a community has a huge impact on defamation. That is, a relatively large community makes the damage harder; similarly, a private person's reputation may not be hurt if his community consists of his family and relatives or anyone who knows him well. However, this has changed with the Internet. A private person, for example, has a larger community on the Internet which leads to a more damage of his reputation.

2.4. Defamation and Publishing

In the small community, unreliable information would be viewed in the context of a person's whole existence. People are now assessed solely on information gleaned from online sources. These fragments are being produced in substantially greater quantities, and the information they contain is growing more sensitive and possibly damaging. The new Internet accessibility has both positive and negative aspects. Without depending on publishers, broadcasters, or other typical intermediaries, anyone can now disseminate his opinions worldwide. This encourages interaction and freedom of speech. But these improvements also pose deep concerns to privacy and reputation (Solove, 2010:15-17).

By influencing the picture that is portrayed to others, the capacity to protect reputation is diminished when personal information is widely published. The preservation of one's reputation is crucial since it plays a significant role in society. When deciding whether to make new companions, go on a tour, hire a new employee, or proceed with a potential business deal, a person's reputation is considered (Solove, 2010:18). False rumours are everywhere now that the Internet has become so popular. Sunstein (2010:91) contends that practical issues with the Internet must be taken into account when assessing online defamation. False rumours are transmitted through the combined mechanisms of "social cascades" and "group polarization," which lead individuals who have ideologies to believe falsehoods.

The rapid distribution of information via social media platforms results in "social cascades." As Sunstein (2010:92) illustrates, this phenomenon begins when someone expresses his opinion on an issue. A subsequent group member evaluates his own knowledge of the subject in context of shared ideas depending on how much he trusts the first individual, and then decides what to believe. Following that, when each group member examines his own opinions on the matter, he also has more and more information about the perspectives of other group members, and how much he trusts other individuals becomes increasingly important, regardless of whether his own private information is superior. Sunstein (2010:93) adds that even if the original individual commits a mistake, his judgment still has a significant influence on others' views through this phenomenon. Two things happen as a result: 1) Individuals are likely to believe a falsehood, possibly a damaging one; and 2) there is a tendency for group views to appear factual. When people actually believe they know what is right or what is probably right, but nonetheless follow the crowd or the group in order to gain others' respect, this is, as

Sunstein (2010:95) puts it, comparable to how “a reputational cascade” works.

Another social phenomenon that helps propagate “false rumours” on the Internet quickly is “group polarization.” It has long been known that thinking together as group, like-minded individuals tend to gravitate toward the group's most conservative beliefs. For three reasons, Sunstein (2010:99-102) thinks that group mentality results in significant polarisation: 1) The initial distribution of opinions in a group effectively reinforces compelling justifications for the dominant views while disregarding and forcing minority opinions to be refuted by those dominant views, thereby strengthening their influence; 2) when other group members confirm someone’s interpretation, he becomes more confident in it and is more likely to accept evidence supporting it; and 3) people frequently change their opinions to support or at the very least not oppose a group in which they are worried about their social standing. It is obvious how these phenomena relate to the Internet. The following example is provided to illustrate what has been discussed in this section.

One well-known instance is what happened to corporate communications specialist Justine Sacco, who in December 2013 tweeted to her 170 followers, “Going to Africa. Hope I don’t get AIDS. Just kidding. I’m white!” The intended joke was mocking privileged American perspectives on the rest of the world, but during the 11-hour journey from London to Cape Town, her post was discovered, communities on Twitter decided it was racist, and they started to show their rage. Tens of thousands of individuals who commented on her, and on a subject as contentious as race, there was no need for anybody to speak up for her. By the time she arrived, her name was trending at number one on Twitter throughout the globe. Anyone may become a public figure because of the Internet, like Justine Sacco (Ronson, 2015).

Digital Internet technologies that enable users, corporations, and communication are referred to as 'social media.' Burgess et al. (2018:3) say, although it may be argued that the term "social media" is so wide as to be meaningless given how swiftly these technologies advance, this definition is intentionally broad and ambiguous. Similar to this, academics frequently define "social media" as "Facebook and Twitter." The online platforms, services, and applications that are centered on the combination of content sharing, open communication, and interpersonal interaction are referred to as social media platforms. For Burgess et al. (2018:1), the social media platform introduces relationships across commercial, public, and private contexts through the logic of convergence.

These platforms, their applications, and their rules are becoming more deeply ingrained in every aspect of people's daily lives, including their work and relationships and the increased use of mobile media, and they have an impact on every aspect of life (Crystal, 2018:457). As Karle (2020: 11) states, the majority of social media platforms allow users to post or share comments, photographs, videos, or audio online. Participants frequently get an individual online environment as well. This area, which is also referred to as a user profile, is where users may disclose information about themselves or customise what others see. Users can 'follow' one another on several social media platforms or connect in various ways to one another's accounts. Users may do this to build interactive communities and follow the content of the individuals and organisations they are interested in.

Karle (2020: 13) contends that some platforms, like Twitter, are designed to make it easy for posts to be found by anybody who searches for them. However, Twitter also offers the option for a private account, allowing users to limit their posting to a selected group of people. Thus,

the majority of platforms offer settings that let users restrict who may view their material. The person who owns the account may select the audience by choosing which postings on some platforms are public and which are private. To recapitulate, publication is an influential factor on how statement becomes defamatory; publication is the behaviour of making untrue, false and malicious statement known to others. The following is an explanation of the social media platforms related to the data that the present thesis deals with:

1. Twitter

Individuals can submit or react to posts referred to as ‘tweets’ on Twitter, an online social media platform owned and run by the American corporation Twitter, Inc. Unregistered users are limited to viewing public tweets, whereas registered users can tweet, like, retweet, and send messages to one another. Through its application, mobile frontends, browsers, or deliberately, users may communicate on Twitter. More than 330 million people use Twitter every month (Delgado and Stefancic, 2014:330) and (Karle, 2020: 46).

2. Facebook

It is possible to interact and exchange content with family and friends online using Facebook. Facebook was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg while he was a student at Harvard University and was first intended for college students. Anyone over 13 with a working email address could sign up for Facebook by 2006. With more than 1 billion users now, Facebook is the most popular social media platform in the world (Delgado and Stefancic, 2014:330) and (Karle, 2020: 46).

As with other platforms, Facebook's primary asset is its large user base, which defines its worth to each individual user. Facebook creates a platform for easy connection with people by creating a common ground. Facebook is extremely popular among individuals across the world; it

facilitates group and one-on-one contact and supports online and offline communication channels, among other aspects that are helpful for all kinds of communications. Facebook posts can include audio and video content and can be any length (Burgess et al., 2018:599-600).

3. YouTube

YouTube is a free video sharing platform. According to Karle (2020: 67), it is simple to watch Internet videos on YouTube. With over 6 billion hours of video watched each month by users, YouTube, which was first launched in 2005, is currently among the most visited websites online. YouTube's users have the option of setting up a private YouTube channel where they may submit videos, as well as search for and view content on other channels. Users may browse, view videos, subscribe to and follow channels, and like, comment on, and share other YouTube videos. There are other social media platforms that almost have the same features of YouTube. They are Vimto, DTube, Metacafe, TED, and Crackle.

By verifying in and creating an account, as Delgado and Stefancic (2014:331) state, YouTube may also recommend videos to users according to their prior search and viewing activity. Users who register for an account have the option of setting up a video channel on which others may view their updates. When a video channel becomes very well-liked, it may be "monetized," which means that it can start making money through advertisements that are placed on the channel and in the videos.

4. Instagram

On mobile devices, Instagram is a free image and video sharing application. Users of the platform can post videos or photos to share with their followers or a small group of friends. On Instagram, individuals can also see, comment on, and like posts that their friends share. By registering with an e-mail address and choosing a username, everyone

over the age of 13 may establish an account. Each post a user makes shows up on the Instagram profiles of his followers and, if hashtagged, may be seen by anyone. In order for just their followers to view their postings, users can also choose to make their profiles private (Karle, 2020: 107).

The four social media platforms previously mentioned can be used by both people and businesses. Companies and Television (TV) channels have the option to create a business account on the sharing application to advertise their name, content, and goods.

It is important to explain what a *hashtag* means since it is used in all the four platforms mentioned above. For Karle (2020: 50), a hashtag is a term or expression that begins with the hash/number [#] symbol and includes no spaces. Hashtags make it easier for users to locate publications from the same event or on related subjects. Typically, attendees are advised to use the appropriate hashtag for events. People may track the events during the event from the viewpoint of the attendees by searching for that specific hashtag.

Karle (2020: 50) adds that people can use hashtags to indicate significant subjects or trends. For example, on Twitter, hashtags are connected automatically. The search box or clicking on a linked hashtag in a tweet will display all tweets that contain that particular hashtag.

2.5. Defamation and Rumouring

Not all the published information is true or at least verified by the publisher. This leads to the important point of checking whether the material shared is factual or not because false information is considered as rumours that mislead the audience. A rumour, as Merriam Webster Dictionary (2008:1426) states, is “information or a story that is passed from person to person but has not been proven to be true.” For DiFonzo and Bordia (2007:13), rumours are unconfirmed and instrumentally

relevant information claims that circulate in circumstances of uncertainty, danger, or possible harm; i.e. rumours serve in helping individuals make sense and manage risk. Ambiguous circumstances occur when the meaning or significance of events is unknown, or when the consequences of those events are uncertain.

DiFonzo and Bordia (2007:13-14) elaborate that ambiguity is troublesome because humans have a primary social willingness to comprehend and act appropriately in any environment. Rumours are a collective effort that explains an ambiguity. When a group faces ambiguity, such explanations essentially make reality apparent and meaningful. To some extent, these explanations must satisfy some collective standards of plausibility.

Rumours have existed for nearly as long as human history, but with the development of the Internet, they have become common place. Nowadays, transformation of rumours on the Internet plays a role in shaping social reputation of individuals. Rumours, because of the Internet, become a permanent reputational stain that never dissipates. They are available all across the world, and they can be located in less than a second using Google (Solove, 2007:33). For Sunstein (2010:14), false rumours are especially bothersome because they do real harm to people as well as organisations. They have the ability to harm businesses and relationships by damaging the reputation and social image of an individual. On Facebook and Twitter, everyone is at some danger. Put differently, everyone is vulnerable to rumours, especially false and malicious ones. Sunstein (2010:15) adds that certain persons and organisations are motivated to believe a particular rumour because it is consistent with their self-interest or what they believe to be true.

Rumours propagate through two independent yet complementary mechanisms: “social cascades and group polarization.” Sunstein

(2010:17) argues that cascades arise because each individual is influenced by what others think and do. If most of the people a person knows believe a rumour, he tends to believe it too. Similarly, when "like-minded people" cooperate, they tend to start believing a more exaggerated interpretation of what they believe. This mechanism is known as group polarisation. Individuals learn from one another and are concerned with their reputations. Thus, publishers achieve their goals through affecting people's emotions since they know that an individual tends to embrace rumours which match what he already thinks. Sunstein (2010:60) notes that rumours are significantly more likely to spread if they arouse and influence people's emotions. An individual desires to be seen positively by other members of his community because his opinions are influenced by how he wants to display himself (Sunstein, 2010:43).

The way an audience perceives a rumour depends on the audience's background, status, and power, as well as the publisher's. Even if the publisher establishes that the defamatory rumour is not his own and that it already exists, he is legally held responsible as the original speaker. As such, the publisher of a defamatory rumour or any unverified information faces serious legal consequences (DiFonzo and Bordia, 2007:242).

In summary, rumours may or may not have a negative impact on someone. Thus, rumours that mitigate a certain social problem may help in minimising the consequences of that problem. Contrarily, they may damage an individual's reputation which, in turn, leads to commit the act of defamation. In other words, not all rumours are defamatory or harmful. Rumours that harm someone or something should be dealt with legally in order to compensate for that harm.

2.6. Critical Discourse Analysis

The essence of Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) is the idea that discourse may create or enforce an ideology by serving as a platform for communicating or representing reality. Discourse is a social practice that influences social life rather than being a social aspect. The relationship between discourse and social structure is emphasised by critical discourse analysts' tendencies. Fairclough (1992: 28), Fairclough, (2005: 68), Blommaert (2005:39), and Van Dijk (2006b:117) agree that those critical analysts identify the interaction between discourse and society as the important component of analysis, and make suggestions for how social structure elements could be included as context in discourse analysis (henceforth DA).

Van Dijk (2001:98) argues that CDA focuses on how social institutions affect the mental representation of a social group. In this sense, CDA may have an impact on how individuals highlight certain points of vital information in any communicative event. Instead of being a separate field, CDA is described as an interdisciplinary and multi-methodical approach. Van Dijk (2016:63) adds that CDA is not a critical analysis but rather a mix of critical theory and application, leading to the phrase "critical discourse studies" or (CDS). According to Van Dijk (2001:97), CDA is "a type of discourse analysis research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in social and political contexts."

According to Fairclough (2013:3), CDA has three fundamental characteristics: it is relational, dialectical, and transdisciplinary. It is a relational kind of study since its main emphasis is on social relations rather than on things or people. Discourse is not only a substance that can be described separately; analysts must first examine sets of relations in

order to comprehend discourse. Discourse in essence introduces meaning and the process of producing meaning into the many relationships make up social life. For Fairclough (2016:87), interactions between semiosis, a social process aspect, are dialectical in the sense that they are distinct but not discrete, i.e. not totally separate. Fairclough (2016:87) views CDA as being transdisciplinary research in that it makes use of interaction between disciplines as a source of theoretical and methodological progress. The following subsections involve the three components that constitute the field of CDA.

2.6.1. Critique

Analysis with a normative social component gains a normative aspect through critique. From a specific normative perspective, it focuses on what is wrong with a society as an institution or an organisation and how ‘wrongs’ could be ‘righted’ or reduced. As a foundation for evaluating current societies and potential reforms, critique is based on ideals, particularly conceptions of the ‘good society’ and of human advancement. For instance, most people agree that countries should uphold certain liberties, be equitable or ethical, and provide certain fundamental requirements for their citizens (Fairclough, 2013:7).

Fairclough (2016:8) continues to illustrate that ‘positive critique,’ which examines how people attempt to cure or reduce social ‘wrongs’ and identifies more opportunities to do so, can be distinguished from ‘negative critique’ which examines how societies create and maintain social ‘wrongs.’ With revolutionary consequences for CDA, DA is a necessary component of any use of the critical approach in social practices. Therefore, a critique of some aspect of social life must also criticise social life's discourses.

Sometimes, the term ‘critical’ might be deceiving; it is frequently employed in its common use to express disapproval. However, Bloor and

Bloor (2013:5) mention that in CDA, critical is used more with the sense of critique implying that the study leads to a fruitful conclusion, such as studies of effective resistance materials like those produced during the anti-racial discrimination activities in the USA in the 1960s. Wodak and Meyer (2016: 9) argue that being ‘critical’ entails analysing the problem in its social context, expressing the analyst’s perspective explicitly while conducting research. In other words, unlike other types of scientific inquiry, CDA allows the researcher to take a position on the subject under study.

For Pennycook (2004:795), critique refers to a method of increasing one's critical thinking in order to apply more comprehensive study to the dilemma or discursive interpretation. Due to a technical or empirical distinction from other techniques to language research, Billig (2003: 38) notes that CDA does not assert that it is critical but it is asserted that CDA is critical since it is based on a radical criticism of social interactions, just like critical psychology or critical social planning.

2.6.2. Discourse

Jurafsky and Martin (2023:544) define discourse as a coherently structured collection of phrases. They use the word coherence to describe the links between sentences that distinguish true discourses from merely meaningless collections of words. The word discourse, for Bloor and Bloor (2013:2), symbolises human interaction in its many forms whether directly through spoken or written language or via gesture, pictures, diagrams, films, or music. What exactly discourse means is not agreed upon by various scholars. The following are some definitions of discourse which may vary to some extent:

- (a) For Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 258) and Van Dijk (2001:96), discourse means using language, whether spoken or written, as a form of social practice.

- (b) Bloor and Bloor (2013:6) note that discourse refers to any instance of symbolic communication and interaction among individuals, most frequently done so through spoken, written, or visual representations; thus, there is human discourse, multimedia discourse, and so on.
- (c) For Holmes and Wilson (2022: 505), the term discourse is commonly used by sociolinguists to describe long passages of spoken or written language that extend far beyond a single statement.
- (d) Lupton (1992: 145) states that the term discourse is used to describe straightforward oral communication. It has a long history with this meaning, which is frequently described as “a group of ideas or patterned way of thinking which can be identified in textual and verbal communication, and can also be located in wider social structures.”
- (e) The terms ‘discourse’ and ‘text’ are occasionally employed in opposition to one another. While ‘text’ refers to actual written or spoken facts; ‘discourse’ refers to the full process of communication, including production and comprehension which is not always wholly verbal. Therefore, the study of discourse includes topics like context, background knowledge, or information that is conveyed between a speaker and listener (Widdowson, 2004: 6), (Reisigl and Wodak, 2009:89), (Bloor and Bloor, 2013: 6), and (Reisigl and Wodak 2016:26).

Equivalent uses are made of the word ‘text.’ Both terms (discourse and text) can be used to describe a linguistic unit that is “larger than a sentence.” Widdowson (2004:8) argues that aligning texts to their world knowledge or what he refers to as “extra - linguistic reality,” helps readers comprehend their

meaning. A text, he adds, is something that a writer or speaker creates; it only evolves into discourse when it is perceived as having a particular interpretation by the reader or listener. Whether it is purposely incorporated into the text or is interpreted as such, Widdowson (2004:13) states that the effect of the meaning is a discourse function rather than a component of the text. Discourse that produces written language is known as a text. This does not just include written text, but it also, as Bloor and Bloor (2013:7) state, includes an audio recording, visual elements or, in the case of an audio text, music.

- (f) The term discourse is widely used to describe casual communication that occurs in particular institutional settings, for instance, the discourse in the legal and scientific fields, among others. This is a helpful simplification, but it is obvious that it is an abstract idea that has nothing to do with specific communication events because each of these discourses is realised differently based on the context at hand. As a result, there are many different sorts of interaction in scientific discourse, including lectures, research reports, and theoretical conversations. Similarly, legal discourse includes traditional courtroom dialogues, cross-examination, written laws, legislation, contracts, and wills. The term discourse is commonly used to refer to a specific document, whether written or spoken (Van Dijk, 2001; 116) and (Bloor and Bloor, 2013: 7).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the present thesis adopts the definition of discourse which states that discourse is the full process of communication, including production and comprehension which is not always wholly verbal.

2.6.3. Analysis

The interactions between various discourses are a component of the relationships between various individuals. These interactions may be complementary to one another, antagonistic to one another, or one may even dominate the others. Discourses are one of the tools that individuals use to interact with one another, maintain their distance from one another, work together, compete, and establish dominance, as well as to endeavour and influence these interactions (Fairclough, 2003:123). Fairclough (2013:3) agrees with Wodak (2001:65) in that these relationships are dialectical, which actually illustrates why it is impossible to define discourse as a single, independent ‘object.’ Relations between objects are dialectical; no one object or aspect, such as discourse, can be analysed in isolation from its dialectical relationships with other objects. This is because of the fact that social practices constitute and are constituted by complicated relations of power, discourse, and other aspects. CDA examines both the internal relations of discourse and the dialectical external relations between discourse and other objects or elements.

CDA, as Fairclough (2013:4-5) illustrates, is a ‘transdisciplinary’ approach of investigation since it crosses traditional barriers across disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, sociology, and others. The transdisciplinary, or in Wodak’s (2001:16) term ‘interdisciplinary,’ nature of CDA implies that theoretical and empirical progress within the specific disciplines, ideologies, and frameworks in discourse occur during the relations between disciplines, concepts, and contexts that take place during analysis and research. A transdisciplinary approach is necessary for CDA since it should be a multidisciplinary analysis. Cogent, coherent, and researchable problems serve as the building blocks for creating an object of research for an inquiry. Research problems are theorised in terms of the categories and connections of not just a theory of discourse

but also other related theories, which form the basis for the construction of research objects in a transdisciplinary fashion. These may be political, sociological, educational, media, or other theories, based on the problem.

Fairclough (2013:6) elaborates that these transdisciplinary study objects enable diverse points of ‘entry for discourse’ analysts, sociologists, politics, and others who concentrate on distinct features or characteristics of the research object. For instance, as Holmes and Wilson (2022:543) state, the discourse analyst always studies discourse in relation to other aspects and in ways that are consistent with how the research question has been formulated, never doing so in isolation. A transdisciplinary approach investigates how a correspondence between two disciplines or frameworks may contribute in the growth of both through a procedure in which each reflexively appropriates the reasoning of the other as a tool for its own evolution (Chiapello & Fairclough, 2002 cited in Fairclough, 2005:53).

- **Context**

CDA focuses on a variety of behaviours, relationships, and social practices that are achieved through discourse or that result from ‘text and talk’ and are essential to context. In other words, discourse must be built on many components of many types of action at various levels of society in order to comprehend what is happening in discourse (Van Dijk, 2001:116). Context may take many different forms and functions at many different scales, ranging from the local to the global. The local context would be the fact that every sentence exists in a certain context of prior and succeeding phrases and, as a result, gets some of its meaning from these other sentences. The categories that govern human communication and societies- such as the fact that individuals, as mentioned by Blommaert (2005: 40), are classified into genders, races, and other categories- constitute the global context. He adds that discourses which

operate at all socio - economic levels and beyond society boundaries, from the level of the local all the way up to the level of the global economic system, reside between these two extremes. Thus, Rojo (2017: 87) states that context is essential to any type of study and it is the most fundamental rule that researchers must follow.

Context has frequently been discussed with regard to two distinct categories: the context of culture and the context of situation. The customs, institutions, discourse groups, historical basis, and individuals' knowledge all belong to the category of the context of culture which may be mono-cultural, cross-cultural or multi-cultural. Culture is always changing, much as situations, it may be quite challenging to separate cultural and situational contexts since they are sometimes so interconnected (Bloor and Bloor, 2013:26). The context of situation, on the other hand, emphasises the numerous components that contribute to the direct formation of meanings in a particular communication event.

In order to be able to establish accurate generalisations, Bloor and Bloor (2013:27) argue that analysts using the CDA model must take into consideration the context, identity of the participants, and other factors, because they often work with unique discourse. As a result, the manners in which someone expresses respect and the rules governing who should show respect to whom are examples of cultural context, whereas in the course of a particular conversation, the power structures between the participants and whether or not they adhere to society's standards are examples of situational context.

In order to undertake a CDA, Bloor and Bloor (2013:29) add, the analyst endeavours to identify the following criteria: setting, time and place of the event; individuals and their roles in the event; participants' closeness to the contents; participants' goals and those of the discourse event; participants' attitudes; the dynamics of the situation; and the genre.

It is likely that not every criterion is pertinent to the topic at hand, and there are undoubtedly situations where gathering all of this data is not feasible. Nevertheless, using these criteria to conduct the analytical process is helpful.

As mentioned by Bourdieu (2013: 25-6), in addition to referring to pertinent information that affects how a work is viewed or interpreted, context refers to the broader cultural environment that gives rise to a particular writer or thinker. The likelihood that the text would be interpreted differently increases with the degree of ignorance regarding the original context. The ultimate goal, Bourdieu (2013:58) adds, must be to establish a scientific understanding of national domains of production and the national categories of thinking that arise there, and to disseminate this understanding when necessary. Making individuals aware of how language frequently loses context in order to hide specific truths or deceive the audience is one of CDA's goals.

2.7. Critical Discourse Analysis vs. Discourse Analysis

In essence, DA was non-critical; that is, it did not offer an assessment of social behaviours. Its three main goals were to: identify and characterise the ways in which people use language to communicate; create analytical techniques that help to reveal the categories, or varieties, of discourse and the key characteristics of each; and develop theories about the nature of communication. Despite the significance of these concerns, there have always been discourse analysts who have wider objectives. They consider discourse to be both a product of society and a dynamic evolving force that is continually reshaping and influencing social practices (Wodak and Meyer, 2016:2). DA helps researchers who are interested in thoroughly analysing the linguistic behaviours related to specific social and cultural groups in social context. It is especially helpful in revealing differences as well as relations between groups and

social practices (Holmes and Wilson, 2022: 555). Researchers can use DA to characterise the linguistic resources that people employ to establish a variety of social practices and to discover the social norms that differ among societies in various communicative exchanges (Holmes and Wilson, 2022: 505).

DA always involves analysing language that is being used. Because of this, it cannot be limited to the presentation of language structures without considering the roles or goals that these structures are intended to fulfil in societies (Brown and Yule, 1983: 1). Unlike DA, CDA explicitly focuses on social problems because the consequences of these problems are directly communicated to the community in plain language (Wodak and Meyer, 2016:2).

Discourses that highlight and support the dominance of particular groups or persons are of significance to CDA (Fairclough, 2013:6-7). The misuse of power, hegemony, dominance, control, and the development and maintenance of ideologies that enrich powerful organisations or people are more particularly of concern to critical discourse analysts. Thus, they strive to analyse any language use that reflects dominance or the misuse of power, starting out with a certain ideological perspective and frequently a political objective. A large portion of CDA study concentrates on all forms of discrimination with special emphasis on stereotypes that are based on race, ethnicity, and gender (Van Dijk, 2015:466).

Van Dijk (2015:466) contends that CDA is not only interested in power relations in interaction, but it also focuses on how these relations are encoded in interaction via discourse. The goal of CDA sets it apart from other discourse analyses like sociolinguistics and conversation analysis. In order to reveal the hidden goals of certain powerful people or privileged parties, CDA aims to draw attention to characteristics of

dominance and power abuse. Most of the time, these people or groups operate against the interests of the controlled groups or people and frequently misrepresent or fabricate information in order to increase/maintain their power.

Another way to differentiate between DA and CDA is by knowing how the term discourse is understood and employed by these two fields. DA sees discourse as a neutral aspect of human communication; thus, as mentioned by Jurafsky and Martin (2023:543), discourse is a coherent collection of sentences used by participants in a communicative exchange. Other scholars like Lupton (1992: 146), Widdowson (2004: 6), and Bloor and Bloor (2013: 6-7) define discourse as the whole process of production, comprehension, and communication. That is to say, discourse in DA is merely the communication of ideas that help individuals be part of an interaction. By viewing discourse in CDA as a product that is neither neutral nor value-free, Fairclough (1993), Van Dijk (2001), and Wodak (2001) believe that discourse is a result of social activity that creates a purpose for language users to fulfil.

Fairclough (2015:3) says that it is impossible to define discourse as an independent object because relations between objects are dialectical. Therefore, discourse cannot be analysed in isolation from its dialectical relationships with other objects since social practices constitute and are constituted by complicated relations of power, discourse, and other objects. In summary, for Fairclough (2013:10-11), it is feasible to identify a few overarching traits that set CDA apart from other types of analysis and research. He contends that research and analysis qualify as CDA if they meet all of the criteria listed below:

- They consist of some kind of methodical, trans-disciplinary analysis of the relationships between discourse and other components of the social practice, not merely analysis of discourse.

- They incorporate some type of systematic analysis of texts.
- They are “normative as well as descriptive.” They discuss social problems in all of their argumentative facets as well as alternative solutions.

The following table summarises the major similarities and differences between DA and CDA

Table (2.1) The Major Similarities and Differences Between DA and CDA.

Similarities and Differences Between DA and CDA		
Item	DA	CDA
Aims	DA aims to identify the way people use language to communicate and interact, i.e. it is interested in language use for meaning making.	CDA is interested in analysing and criticising language to reveal power relations. It aims to expose such social relations as power, racism, inequality, and discrimination. More importantly, CDA tries to make a change in societies that suffer from those social practices.
Discourse	Discourse analysts view discourse as a coherent collection of sentences that people use in various social situations.	Critical discourse analysts view discourse as an evolving force that constitutes and is constituted by social processes. Thus, discourse for CDA is not neutral; rather, people use it to achieve certain purposes.
Context	Both discourse analysts and critical discourse analysts depend on context in their analyses. They cannot approach and study discourse out of context.	
Methodology	DA and CDA make use of various disciplines in both data collection and analysis; this makes them multi-methodical and interdisciplinary research.	
Focus	DA focuses on linguistic	CDA primarily focuses on the social

	features and relations within a discourse; that is why it is considered as discourse oriented approach.	problems that shape, reshape, and are shaped by discourse, this makes CDA social oriented.
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2.8. Concepts Related to Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA commonly concentrates on groups, organisations, and institutions because it is interested in power, dominance, and racial inequality. The knowledge, attitudes, ideologies, norms, and values that are shared by these social communities must thus also be taken into consideration by CDA.

2.8.1. Ideology

Ideology is a set of accepted ideas or beliefs that help to support the objectives of powerful groups. In all communities where there are pervasive and persistent injustices between individuals, as Giddens et al. (2018:21) argue, ideologies can be established. For Thompson (1990), cited in Reisigl and Wodak (2009:88), ideology refers to the social structures and mechanisms that enable the spread of dominant symbolic forms in society.

For Bloor and Bloor (2013:10), as long as CDA is concerned, it is crucial to be aware that the majority of discourse employed by group members frequently has an ideological foundation. However, people may not necessarily have the ideology-based attitudes or ideas consciously. Ideologies may become so embedded in people's speech and mental processes that they begin to take them for granted. Since one of the primary ways that CDA achieves its goals is through uncovering those components of ideology that support social interaction, the critical discourse analyst must always search for covered ideological perspectives. In other words, as mentioned by Bloor and Bloor (2013:19),

the goal of the critical discourse analyst is to identify and attempt to explore assumptions that are made in the name of cultural practice or that indicate the ideological underpinnings of the discourse.

Fairclough (2013:27) argues that ideologies are embedded in structures, discourse norms, and events; the norms used in real speech events are ideologically embedded in certain ways and are organised together within ‘orders of discourse’ connected to communities. Ideologies, on the other hand, are created and changed via actual speech events.

Ideology, according to Van Dijk (2008: 34), is a form of interactions between discourse and society; it resembles power in some ways cognitively. This indicates that ideology relates the sociological position of individuals to the ‘cognitive representation’ of action and discourse establishment. In order for their ideology and interests to be recognised by others as a system of values and norms, the dominant groups, as Van Dijk (2008: 34) notes, have a tendency to disguise them.

Accordingly, Van Dijk (2001: 115) contends that ideologies are the fundamental social representations of social groups. They serve as the foundation for the beliefs and behaviours of many organisations, including “socialists, neo-liberals, ecologists, feminists, and anti-feminists.” The membership devices, goals, objectives, activities, norms, and resources of each organisation are likely included in a conceptual framework that depicts the self-image of each group. The fundamental concepts that structure the attitudes that a group's members share are included in ideologies. A racist ideology, for instance, may organise perspectives on immigration, education, or the career path. For Wodak (2012: 528), ideology is seen as a crucial tool for creating and sustaining unfair distribution of power. The mechanisms in which language conveys ideology in various social structures are of special interest to CDA.

2.8.2. Power and Dominance

Power is the capability of a person or organisation to fulfil or advance their objectives. It is a fundamental component of all social structures and practices. The amount of power an individual or a group is able to acquire determines how far they can carry out their desires; so, several problems in social structure originate from power struggles (Giddens et al., 2018:21). A minority group, they add, is any group of individuals who, in a particular community, experiences inequality with respect to the dominant groups due to specific physical or ethnic features. Accordingly, Bloor and Bloor (2013:85) elaborate that people are classified according to their position in power hierarchies, and powerful groups can use language to reinforce injustice. The willingness of the dominated people to accept their situation as an ideological necessity is always in the interests of the dominant groups. Both social norms and laws, which urge individuals to behave in specific ways and associate with certain groups, tend to institute and solidify power systems.

Social norms and the law differ across domains and are continually changing in today's communities. In order to create social inequality whether political, cultural, socioeconomic, ethnic, racial, and gender inequality, powerful groups exert their social power. This is what is labelled as dominance by Van Dijk (1995:258). Understanding what power is and how instances of social and discursive dominance occur does not necessarily result from refusing inequality and discrimination as well as the social implications of stereotyping. Consequently, while that is the main objective of CDA, discourses lead to bias against specific individuals, social groups, events, or identities and how the elites spread such discourses in the media. It is also important to see how power creates inequalities in interactions and how it is exactly in these interactions that these representations and the knowledge they produce

get normalised (Rojo, 2017: 82). For Van Dijk (2015:475), the power of dominant groups can be seen in the way they control their own as well as other discourse. That is, social power may be implemented locally through the same qualities of dominant groups' language. Additionally, Van Dijk (1996:84) views dominance as a sort of social power abuse, or as the illegal or immoral use of authority to exert control over others for one's personal goals, frequently leading to social inequality.

2.8.3. Frames

Frames, according to Lakoff (2004), cited in Bloor and Bloor (2013:11), are "mental structures that shape the way we see the world" and are constituted by words. The unconscious mind has frames which work automatically to aid people in making sense of their surroundings. Like most cognitive models, frames are culturally dependent; for example, various countries and political parties have varied conceptions on what constitutes 'democracy' in terms of cognitive frames. The way the world is framed conveys cultural information that get normalised and accepted as regular common sense, which is why framing is crucial in CDA. However, Bloor and Bloor (2013:12) state that frames, like ethics, differ from culture to culture and have an impact on how people see power, communities, and identity.

2.8.4. Prejudice and Discrimination

Prejudice means the beliefs and behaviours of individuals from one party towards other individuals from another party. Even in the face of concrete facts or fresh knowledge, these predetermined views are frequently founded on illogical reasons that are rigidly unchangeable. Individuals may have favorable prejudices toward groups with which they also associate negative biases. Stereotyping, which refers to categorising thoughts in rigid and binary terms, is the primary mechanism through which prejudice manifests. The psychological mechanism of

displacement, in which sentiments of hate or rage are directed onto objects that are not the source of those feelings, is frequently strongly related to stereotyping (Giddens et al., 2018:331).

For Bloor and Bloor (2013:128), racists may not always have the same sets of beliefs or behaviours, and they do not always identify as such, but their individual beliefs and behaviours overlap on important topics to qualify them for membership. Many powerful politicians make use of prejudice as a useful tool for gaining and holding onto power frequently with catastrophic results. Bloor and Bloor (2013:91-2) add that discrimination is entrenched in the society because of the legal legitimatisation of such discrimination exercised by racists against others for decades. This legitimatised discrimination is apparent in such instances as "Apartheid in South Africa and the slave trade."

Although prejudice has a reasonable basis, it may also become rooted in ideology, working on both an unconscious and conscious level, and influencing what is considered to be "common sense." Holmes and Wilson (2022: 549) argue that the straightforward dichotomy of 'Us' and 'Them', the 'Self' and the 'Other' lies at the heart of prejudice. This type of prejudice exists in many different levels and uses a wide range of factors to separate the 'Other' from the 'Self,' including socioeconomic class, language, nationality, religion, gender, and social norms. Most people believe that their social group's habits are normal and that those from other cultures are abnormal.

To summarise, discrimination is a practice that marginalises individuals of a certain group from opportunities or resources that are available to others. Thus, persons who carry prejudices against others are not entitled to behave in a discriminatory manner toward others; on the other hand, people who hold no such prejudices about a group may yet

act in a discriminatory manner toward that group (Giddens et al., 2018:331).

2.9. Aims of Critical Discourse Analysis

The initial goal of critical discourse analysts is to make people conscious of how dominant groups mislead, control, or even victimise the oppressed groups. Analysts do so by uncovering the hidden goals and ideologies of controlling groups. Moreover, critical discourse analysts make an effort to question and oppose the actions of powerful organisations and people who put their ‘Own’ interests before those of ‘Others’ (Wodak and Forchtner, 2018:147).

In its dialectical relationships with other contexts, Fairclough (2016:87) argues that CDA seeks to clarify the discourse aspect of social context, practices, and change. By transdisciplinary interaction, it improves its theory, method, and agenda with the goals of (a) “cogently integrating discourse and discourse analysis” within ‘social theories’ and research methodologies, and (b) developing “its own theory of discourse and methods of discourse and text analysis” in strategies that are related to “a dialectical view of social reality.”

For Bloor and Bloor (2013:19), CDA aims to explain the origins and progression of a social problem, and to determine potential solutions to lessen its impacts. The analysis looks at the dialectical relationships between discourse and other factors as well as discourse itself. It can resolve these problems in a variety of ways depending on how these relations are constructed. Bloor and Bloor (2013: 20) and Van Dijk (2016: 70-1) mention that CDA aims to provide theories and analytical frameworks that help to understand why specific discourses and practices occur, why some of them tend to be dominant, how they lead the problem to escalate into a catastrophe, and how they could further contribute to social changes. Additionally, it aims to create and advance certain types

of knowledge, such as ideas and analyses that can persuasively understand and describe the problem.

The goals and aims of linguistics are distinct from those of CDA. Generally, linguists are interested in language as a whole, and focus on how language or discourse works. On the other side, as Bloor and Bloor (2013: 2) state, “critical discourse analysts are concerned with how language and discourse are used” to further social objectives and in the role that this use performs in social “maintenance and change.” Holmes and Wilson (2022: 547) view that CDA assists in increasing awareness and guiding individuals toward change, such an analysis is a legitimate and frequent practice for CDA.

Additionally, as CDA is a field that is continually evolving, new objectives may possibly be set, these objectives include: investigating how ideologies may get frozen in language and identifying strategies to break the ice; analysing discourse practices that reflect or build social problems; and raising understanding of how to apply these aims to particular instances of injustice, bias, and power abuse. And among the more theoretical objectives are: studying how meaning is constituted in context; showing the importance of language in power relations; and looking into how speaker or writer’s intentions and textual attitudes affect speech. Exactly how power and ideology are manifest in contact is the emphasis of CDA (Holmes and Wilson, 2022: 542).

2.10. Previous Studies

The previous studies in this section are related to the concept of defamation.

(1) Lee (2012)

In Lee’s “*A Pragmatic Analysis of Defamation and Slanderous Remarks*,” defamation is being investigated via the framework of

linguistic pragmatics. The focus is put on various forms of defamatory statements. From the perspectives of speech act theory and forensic pragmatics, it is examined how the recipient would interpret such statements and if the speaker will be held accountable due to the directness of the imputation. Two experiments are conducted to test the recipient's perception of defamatory statements in various degrees of directness: one is conducted offline, testing the recipient's perception of defamatory statements, and the other is conducted online, testing the recipient's perception of the speaker's illocutionary intent and the response time for each type of defamatory statement.

The study concludes that a more explicit statement tends to be perceived more defamatory borne out by the experiments, although their ordering was not identical. Even if the tests' ordering varied, the study's conclusion that a more explicit statement likely to be seen as being more defamatory is supported by the data. Because such metaphoric speech sounded more sarcastic than clear assertion and hedged or reported statement, it was viewed as being more strongly defamatory than intended. The recipient of a defamatory utterance should be considered more than just a passive interpreter of the statement; rather, they should be considered a particular set of facts, active agent who can recognise and differentiate all fine details of various expressions and find pertinent interpretations in social discourse.

(2) Magin (2019)

The study entitled “*The Risks of Defamation: Analysis into the Driving Factors Determining the Outcome of Commercial Defamation Cases*” looks at key elements that affect how defamation lawsuit outcomes turn out. Three primary criteria were determined based on the literature. The elements are examined and tested using 20 historical real-life defamation case studies. According to the study, all three of these

criteria are present in the sample and have a big impact on how a commercial defamation case turns up.

Companies are greatly at risk from commercial defamation. Reputational damage may have a detrimental impact on stock prices, client loyalty, and borrowing options. Hence, businesses must be aware of the possible risks of defamation and how to protect themselves against it. These findings help corporations develop effective defamation-defence tactics and legislators get a better grasp of commercial defamation.

(3) Zifana et al. (2022)

In order to discuss how victims in copies of court rulings on defamation cases are framed, this linguistic research entitled “*The construction of victims of defamation in court’s written verdicts*” uses language in the framework of law. It seeks to expose how victims were portrayed in the court's ruling. The data was collected from two copies of court judgments from 2014 and 2015. The documents outline the victims' position in respect to one of the judge's decision-making criteria.

The framework developed by Fairclough (1997) for critical discourse analysis, which incorporates dialectical-relational approach, is employed in this study to map the patterns of social interactions that explain how one party is constructed in discourse. The analysis of the data and its implications show how victims are marginalised, their place in defamation discourses is established, and institutional factors and powerlessness are not taken into account when making choices. As a result, victims are not emphasised in the written versions of Indonesian court judgements. The victim is also the most significant element in defamation lawsuits because they are considered criminal complaints.

Finally, what mostly distinguishes the present thesis from the previous studies is that it tackles defamation from a critical discourse analysis viewpoint. This thesis is interested in the ideologies that underlie

a defamatory text; more specifically, it is interested in the texts that are published on such social media platforms as Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. The critical analysis is going to employ Van Dijk's Discursive Strategies in order to detect the ideologies the text producer holds. This particular distinction between the present thesis and the aforementioned ones can provide a new insight to comprehend the concept of defamation linguistically.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3. Introductory Remarks

The present chapter is concerned with presenting an eclectic model of analysis. Before analysing the defamatory texts critically, the operational definition and types of defamation are mentioned here to make sure that every step of the model is clear. Additionally, the researcher must describe the contextual factors that surround the defamatory publication. These factors are adopted from Lasswell's Model of Communication; the next step includes the levels of analysis which constitute the eclectic model.

The first level consists of Defamation Type followed by the Reputational Harm. The third level shows how this harm is realised linguistically. Thus, the discursive strategies are illustrated based upon Van Dijk's approach. Finally, the eclectic model is shown in a form of a figure that involves these levels of analysis.

3.1. Defamation

Defamation is operationally defined as the behaviour of harming someone's reputation in the eyes of the community by publishing untrue statements about him. As illustrated in Chapter Two, there are certain features that help identifying defamation linguistically, these include false claims, false accusation, and/or malicious insults.

3.2. Lasswell's Communication Model (1971)

The analysis of mass communication was the main goal of Lasswell's Communication Model. It is used in both group and individual communication.

The model is created by Lasswell with the intention of studying mass media. Lasswell (1971:84) summarises the purpose of media analysis as follows:

“Who says what
through which channel
to whom
with what effect?”

In his most famous model, Lasswell develops the idea of effective mass communication; the connection between the message's presentation and the many consequences it causes. A message's impact can also be thought of as feedback.

Shoemaker and Reese (1996:12) add that although the model was created particularly for mass communication, it is now available for analysing a variety of media including the Internet. The model, which has five component parts, is used as a tool for analysing and assessing the complete communication process. These components are built upon the answers to the "W" questions that are shown in Figure (3.1).

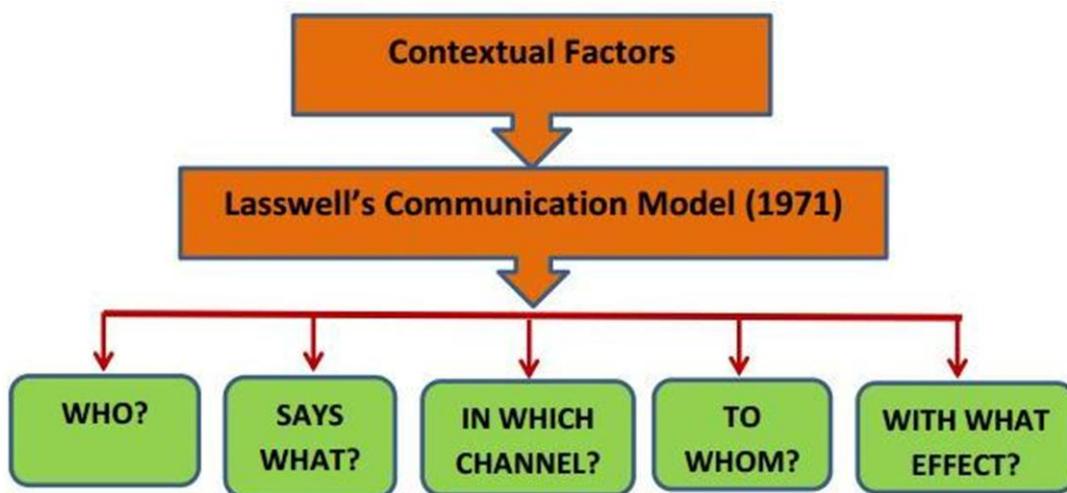


Figure (3.1) Lasswell's Communication Model (1971)

Answering these questions clarifies the context and its effects on the addressee, whether a person or a group of people. The components of this model are explained as follows:

A. Who

The person who produces and distributes a message is the communicator. This may be an individual, group of individuals, an organisation, or anyone who intends to share particular information (Lasswell, 1971:84). In the present thesis, answering WHO question involves providing the identity of the defamer and any information related to him.

B. Says What

This component includes the content of the communicated message (Lasswell, 1971:84). Thus, the answer to this question depends on any conditions that contribute to the creation of the text under analysis and render it a defamatory text. In the present thesis, the researcher pays attention to the case's substance while assessing the context since it has an influence on how the ideological component is detected and how it impacts the creation of the text.

Lasswell et al. (1952:34) assert that “content analysis is a technique which aims at describing, with optimum objectivity, precision, and generality, what is said on a given subject in a given place at a given time.”

C. In Which Channel

As Lasswell (1971:84) states, the medium or media utilised to distribute the message is referred to as the channel. The medium may include social media, mass media, and various communication technologies. Media analysis demonstrates the optimum medium to utilise in order to reach the intended audience as efficiently as feasible. The researcher describes the social media platforms through which the

defamatory discourse is published. In the present thesis, the data being analysed is taken from four social media platforms; namely YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

It is necessary to mention that the defamer may simultaneously publish on several platforms. This publication is either direct, through the immediate posting on the platform itself; or indirect, by sharing the URL or TAG of the site where the publication originally appears with other platforms on which he has an account. This is frequently done to increase the number of people included within the third party so that the defamatory effect is intensified.

D. To Whom

This component refers to the addressee or the audience to whom the message is communicated (Lasswell, 1971:84). Therefore, the viewers as well as the target of a defamatory speech represent this contextual factor in Lasswell's model. The present thesis, however, intends to assign this component to the target of defamation (the plaintiff); in other words, no reference is made here to the third party. Furthermore, the study introduces all significant information about the plaintiff that contributes to the critical analysis of the data under investigation.

E. With What Effect

This component involves the 'result' of the message in the communication process. Every communication has an intended result, thus the communicator considers it before writing the message in order to achieve the desired effect for the target audience (Lasswell, 1971:92). It is important mentioning that this component is not included within the description of the contextual factors relevant to the selected data because the effect of a defamatory speech is presented as a level in the eclectic model of analysis under the title 'The Reputational Harm.'

3.3. Defamation Types

Users of social media platforms can publish several forms of discourse. They can publish a written text, a video with or without written transcription, a picture, or a link that leads to a post published somewhere else. Thus, defamation type is not that easy to determine on social media platforms, this is because certain factors should be taken into consideration including the discourse form and the permanency of the publication. Figure (3.2) summarises defamation types that have been mentioned in Chapter Two.

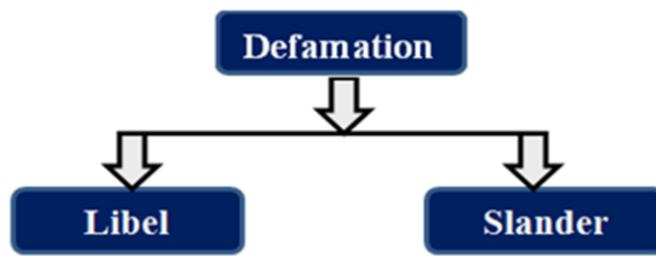


Figure (3.2) Defamation Types

3.4. The Reputational Harm

Defaming a person means harming his reputation and lowering his estimation in the eyes of the third party. Chapter Two includes an elaboration of the term reputation which consists of three concepts as Figure (3.3) summarises:

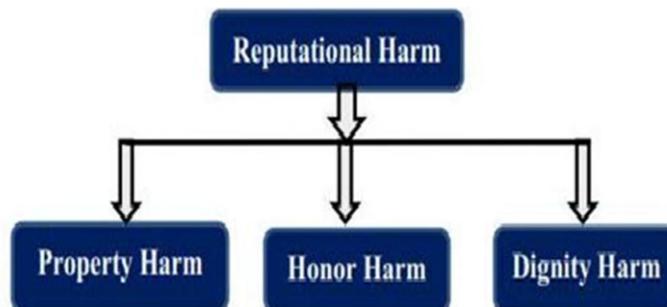


Figure (3.3) The Reputational Harm

3.5. Van Dijk's Approach to Critical Discourse Analysis

Given the basically verbal character of discourse, there is no doubt that explicit CDA requires a strong 'linguistic' foundation, where 'linguistic' is interpreted in a broad 'structural-functional' way. The detailed structures, strategies, and functions of text and talk, including grammatical, pragmatic, interactional, stylistic, rhetorical, semiotic, narrative, or similar forms of verbal and paraverbal institution of communicative events, must be taken into account by CDA as a specific form and practice of discourse analysis, regardless of the other dimensions of discourse it addresses. Thus, Van Dijk (2016:64) proposes that this domain is understood by the theoretical discourse- cognition- society triangle.

For Van Dijk (2001:97) and (2016:64), a sociocognitive approach contends that these links are cognitively structured, although all the methods of CDS examine the relationships between discourse and society. Just one way to connect discourse structures with social structures is through "the mental representations of language users as social members." The same cognitive link of mental models, information, beliefs, and ideologies is the only way discourse may affect social interaction and social structures.

It should be emphasised that *discourse* in this context refers to a 'communicative event' that includes spoken communication, written material, as well as accompanying expressions, textual structures, images, and any other 'semiotic' or multimedia aspect of symbolic representation. The term *cognition* used here refers to any 'mental' or 'memory' structure, image, or mechanism that is used in speech and communication. This includes both personal and social cognition, opinion and aim as well as evaluation and attitude. Finally, *society* refers to both

the local microstructure of located face-to-face interaction and the more global macrostructure socio-political frameworks that are variously defined in terms of groups, group-relations, actions, organisations, institutions, and social/political systems (Van Dijk, 2016: 67).

CDA highlights that a complete theoretical examination of a social problem, as Van Dijk (2016:66) views, must be conducted for each research in order for the analyst to select the discourse and social structures. CDA does not offer a pre-determined, how-to conduct a social study. Additionally, the context components of the study, such as the objectives, participants, setting, users, and their attitudes and interests influence the techniques of research. Van Dijk (2016:67) asserts that theory and the primary objectives of CDA, namely the critical examination of the discursive reproduction of domination in society, serve as guidelines for the selection of discourse categories in CDA. The topic of discourse, as one category, is crucial to interaction and communication for discursive, cognitive, and social reasons. Van Dijk (2016:63-85), in his socio-cognitive approach, introduces several dichotomies which are mentioned in the following sub-sections.

1. Macro vs. Micro

The micro level of the social order is where language use and verbal exchange take place. Generally, concepts like power, domination, and injustice between social groupings belong to the macro-level of investigation. The 'gap' between micro and macro structures must be enclosed by CDA. In order to construct global coherence, identify global discourse topics, plan and recall discourse throughout processing, and describe various genre characteristics of text and talk, macro-structures are essential (Van Dijk,2012:600).

Topics are described as 'semantic macrostructures' created from the local microstructures of meaning, which represent the most significant

information of a discourse and describe the overall consistency of text and talk. Topics indicate what a discourse is about; they are the overall meaning that language users create when producing and interpreting discourse, as well as the ‘gist’ that they can most easily recall. Topics specify the aims that institutions, groups, and individuals strive to achieve and which have the biggest influence on subsequent discourses and actions. Since they cannot be explicitly observed, topics with global meanings, for Van Dijk (2016:72), must instead be inferred from or assigned to discourse by language users. However, they are frequently used to express information in conversation, such as in headings, highlights, summaries, thesis statements, and conclusions.

Language users may employ topics as tools to infer or assign subjects, as the speaker or writer may have intended. This makes it possible to pursue people and manipulate them. Thus, speakers and writers may place more emphasis on meaning, manage understanding, and affect how ‘mental models’ of the event the discourse is about are formed (Van Dijk, 2012:588-9). Due to the significance of topics and the fact that topical macrostructural analysis may be used with bigger corpora, such an analysis includes many other characteristics of discourse and gives an initial, general impression of what a talk or collection of texts is about.

At all practical purposes, an analyst simply lists the topics in a text by summarising it because summaries by definition express macrostructures. This technique can be used repeatedly for a variety of levels. These different topics do, in fact, reflect very high-level as well as abstract concepts. The macro structures, or ‘macro propositions,’ reflect the broader ideas of the case that is being investigated. It may illustrate how “socially shared representations and personal mental models” differ from one another (Van Dijk, 2001:103).

For Van Dijk (2016:73), the study of ideologically biased discourses and how they polarise the representation of 'Us' (in-groups) and 'Them' (out-groups) is a common focus of CDA research, despite the fact that there are different approaches to examine meaning. The use of the "positive self-presentation and negative other presentation" strategy, in which 'in-group' good things and 'out-group' bad things are emphasised, and 'in-group's' bad things and 'out-group's' good things are de-emphasised, is apparent both at the level of global and local meaning analysis.

The study of the many implicit or indirect meanings, such as implications, presuppositions, allusions, ambiguity, and so on is particularly fascinating for CDA research. When information is discovered from the meaning of a text without being stated explicitly, this information is known as the contextual information. In theory, this indicates that hidden information is a component of an individual's mental model, but not of the text itself. In other words, Van Dijk (2001:104) illustrates that implicit meanings are connected to underlying beliefs but are not explicitly, directly, fully, or precisely stated for a variety of contextual reasons, including the well-known ideological goal of understating both "'in-group's' negative attributes as well as 'out-group's' positive attributes.

2. Global vs. Local Discourse

CDA is particularly interested in the detailed examination of the interface between the local and the global, between the structures of discourse and the structures of society (Van Dijk, 2001:117). The production of desirable "mental models and social representations," that is, to influence, manipulate, or control the mind, is also a goal of the global and local study of discourse meaning and form components of hegemonic discourse (Van Dijk, 2016:64).

Van Dijk (2001:117) points out that in order for social representations, such as attitudes and ideologies, to appear in discourse, there has to be a cognitive and an interactional interface. Discourse only has social impacts and functions when it helps to establish or confirm social attitudes and ideologies; for instance, white group supremacy can only be put into practice when members of the white group actively use such derogatory language as a form of discrimination. Thus, racism and sexism are not only abstract ideologies of social supremacy and inequality, but rather reach into the fabric of daily existence through the attitudes, actions, and discourses of the people who make up the respective groups.

CDA combines cognitive, social, and political analysis while putting more of an emphasis on the part that discourses play in society and its structures both locally and globally. Local actions and speech are generally constrained by social structures like organisations and institutions, general relationships like power, or global social activities like law and education. These constraints can range from rigorous standards and duties (such as those set down in legislation, the acts of judges or members of parliament), to more flexible or ‘soft’ norms, like politeness rules. Additionally, the constraints, as put by Van Dijk (2001:118), may have an impact on a variety of discourse characteristics, including how participants engage in turn-taking and session openings, speech acts, subject selection, local coherence, lexical style, and rhetorical devices. Alternatively, these discourse structures might be seen as instances of highly global social or political activities like reform of immigration or education.

3. Global vs. Local Context

It is vital to distinguish between local and global contexts because the critical goals of CDA can only be achieved if discourse structures are

connected to structures of local and global contexts. As illustrated by Van Dijk (2012:617), the social, political, cultural, and historical frameworks in which a communication event occurs form the global context. They frequently serve as CDA's final explanatory and critical foundation for discourse and its analysis. Contrarily, local context is typically described in terms of the characteristics of the current, interpersonal setting in which a communication event occurs. This situation's general domain, overall activity, individuals' intents, goals, knowledge, norms, and other beliefs, as well as their participation in various communicative and social roles, are some of its characteristics. The qualities of text and talk are said to be constrained by such contexts. In other words, how and to whom anything is stated depends on who is speaking, when, where, and for what reasons.

Thus, as Van Dijk (2012: 588) puts it, context model provides the restrictions that enable participants to choose knowledge that is situationally relevant, and interpret it as meanings to be conveyed in conversation. These restrictions on communication are more often reflected in different structures than in meanings. Substantially, models are an essential link between discourse and society, as well as between the individual and the community. Without such models, analysts are unable to define and explain how discourse systems influence social structures and vice versa. This is so because social representations, such as knowledge, attitudes, and ideologies, which in turn are connected to the structure of groups and organisations, are included in mental models in addition to personal beliefs.

3.6. Van Dijk's Ideological Discursive Strategies

Language is used by many different people, including those who have different ideologies, in a wide variety of contexts (Van Dijk, 2006a:375). In other words, individuals use the same discourse structures

as argumentation, knowledge, comprehension, and other forms of communication.

Van Dijk (1985:31) argues that discourse comprehension models totally or mostly explain the comprehension process in terms of analysing or building representations and rules. These representations and rules work with discourse and knowledge based on structural units. Van Dijk (1985:31) adds that although language users may be said to know representations of understanding ‘semantic interpretation’ to some extent, such rules can originate from a strictly theoretical point of view in a model that incorporates grammars or memory representations of discourse. However, the actual procedures involved have a *strategic* nature.

Reisigl and Wodak (2016: 32) mention that discursive strategies are found at various levels of discourse structure. They define a *strategy* as a more or less deliberate plan of practice (including discursive practices) chosen to fulfil a certain social, political, psychological, or linguistic aim. For Van Dijk (1985: 31), the concept of strategy in general, in addition to its apparent military uses, has been employed in the structure of game and play analysis; a game involves many players or participants. Their main objective is to win the game: that is, to outperform one's competitor.

This game theory metaphor has a limited purpose when discussing language comprehension processes. First of all, there is usually just one language user, a reader or listener, rather than a group of participants. Second, comprehending a text (ideally) or its producer is the only ‘continuous’ aim being sought after rather than a specific final objective. Van Dijk (1985: 32) points out that analysing a text is sometimes compared to problem-solving, especially in discourse

comprehension models. For the sake of analysing any text critically, the following strategies are employed:

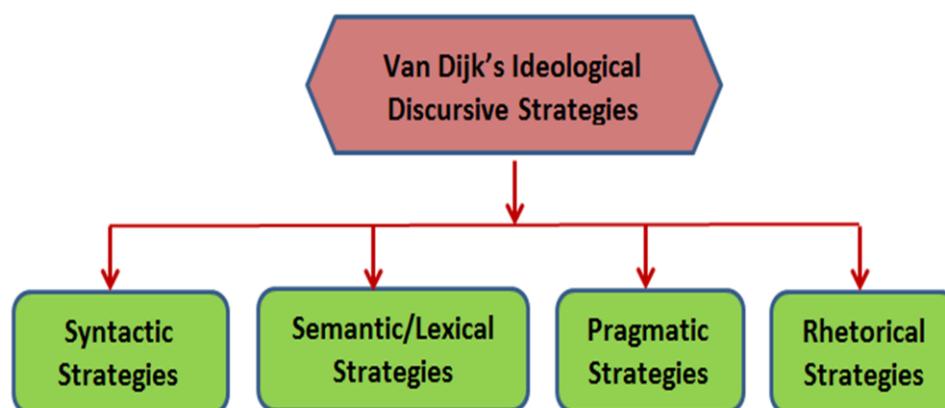


Figure (3.4) Discursive Strategies

These strategies are employed by discourse creators so as to achieve their final result or effect. The task of the researcher is to figure out the discursive strategies the defamer may employ to harm his plaintiff. The present thesis illustrates general strategies including syntactic, semantic/lexical, pragmatic, and rhetorical strategies to investigate the ideologies the defamer has in his defamatory publication in the selected data. The researcher strives to figure out the way through which negative other presentation is employed, whether directly or indirectly, in the defamatory speech. Negative other presentation is an overall strategy that entails the hidden ideologies held by an individual to achieve his goal, which is affecting the plaintiff's reputation in the case of defamation.

Van Dijk (2020, 19) contends that negative other presentation involves utilising various discursive strategies so as to frame the OTHER in a negative or 'bad' way. This indicates emphasising the negative properties of the out-group members and de-emphasising their positive

qualities. Ideological analysis, hence, can be drawn from studying the discourse levels available in a text or talk. Put differently, “discourse has many ways to emphasize or de-emphasize meanings, and as soon as these have an ideological basis,” the analyst can detect the speaker/writer’s ideologies depending on the different discourse levels (Van Dijk, 2006a: 376). Furthermore, the researcher endeavours to determine such ideologies as racism, prejudice, or hate that the defamer has against the plaintiff (out-group), which motivate him to defame the target and present him negatively.

3.6.1. Syntactic Strategies

The syntactic analysis provides an insight to how speakers construe their discourse in order to fulfil a communicative intention. A language producer, for example, may depend on certain sentence types, nominalisation, passivisation and other strategies for the major purpose of sharing a belief or convincing the audience to adopt that belief (Van Dijk, 2005: 24). The present thesis tackles transitivity and comparison as syntactic strategies employed by the defamer to achieve his aims of defaming the plaintiff and influencing the third party.

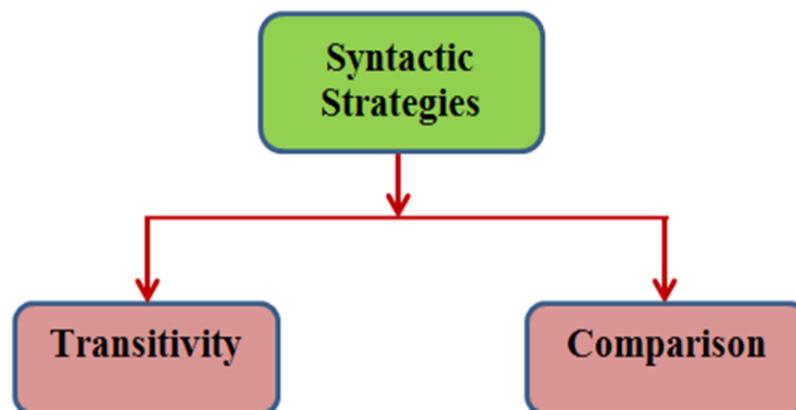


Figure (3.5) Syntactic Strategies

1. Transitivity

For Crystal (2008: 494), “transitivity is a category used in the grammatical analysis of clause/sentence constructions, with particular reference to the verb’s relationship to dependent elements of structure.” As Halliday and Matthiessen (2014: 30) state, the syntax of a sentence represents processes of speaking, perceiving, being, or having, with their numerous participants and circumstances. These verbs create functionally distinct nouns known as participants; depending on the verb or verbs they are associated with in a phrase, every participant can take on a number of functions. Additionally, many adverbial forms and prepositional phrases provide a variety of situations pertaining to place, time, and manner (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014:220) and (Chapelle, 2020: 1030). Since the defamatory action depends on the processes and participants, the transitivity analysis focuses on these elements regardless of circumstances.

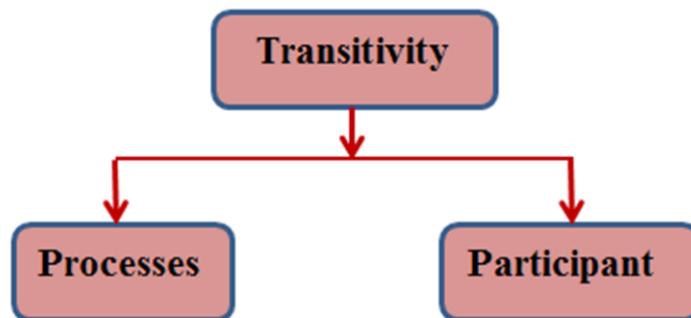


Figure (3.6) Transitivity

The verbal component of the sentence realises the *process*. Grammar creates a division between ‘inner experience,’ mental processes (MnPs); and ‘outer experience,’ material processes (MPs), or the processes of the outside world (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014:216-7).

Grammar acknowledges processes of a third type, those of recognising and categorising; these processes are known as relational processes [RPs].

Sub-processes that are present at each boundary are: behavioural processes [BPs] at the boundary between the material and mental processes; verbal processes [VPs] at the boundary between mental and relational; and existential processes [EPs] at the boundary between relational and material (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014: 218).

The entities directly participating in the process are referred to as *participants*; along with the passive individuals ‘who are done to, said to, etc.’, there are the ones ‘who do, behave, or say’ (Halliday, 1976:160). For Graber (2001: 15-6), “material processes are doing processes.” Usually, an action verb is used to convey them. Actors and goals are the two different categories of participants; the *actor* participant is the one who actually performs the action, whereas the *goal* is the person or thing to whom the process is aimed or targeted. Mental processes are 'feeling, thinking and seeing' processes. As Eggins (2004: 242) states, “mental processes contain two participants (senser and phenomenon).” The first refers to the conscious being engaged in a mental activity through seeing, feeling, and thinking. The second refers to the item or entity that the conscious senser can feel, think, or perceive.

Relational processes are used to describe both people and things through the attributive relation. This attributive relation, Graber (2001: 15) explains, contains carrier and attribute as its main participants. Verbal processes are employed in ‘exchanging information’; they involve such verbs as 'say, tell, talk, praise, boast, describe, etc.’ In these processes the main participants are sayer, the participant who is speaking; and the verbiage, the spoken entity. Verbs such as 'breathing, coughing, smiling, laughing, crying, staring, and dreaming, etc’ are involved in behavioural processes; these behaviours are mainly physiological and psychological.

Behaviour processes consist of one participant, 'behavior', which is generally a human. Finally, “existential processes represent that something exists or happens.” The ‘existent’ is the only one participant in this type of process (Graber, 2001: 16). Table (3.1) summarises the processes and participants that will be analysed in the selected data:

Table (3.1) The Processes and Participants

Process Type	Abbreviation	Participants
Material Process	MP	Actor - Goal
Verbal Process	VP	Sayer - Verbiage
Mental Process	MnP	Senser - Phenomenon
Behavioural Process	BP	Behaver
Relational Process	RP	Carrier - Attribute
Existential Process	EP	Existent

The researcher, in analysing this syntactic strategy, firstly endeavours to pinpoint the processes utilised by the defamer to attack the plaintiff; and secondly, to determine the social and ideological effects of these processes and their impact on the third party.

2. Comparison

As put by Van Dijk (2005: 205), this syntactic strategy is used to highlight the negative features of the other by drawing comparisons between out-group and in-group, the OTHER and SELF.

The emphasis is placed on the cultural and social divisions between US and THEM, which are then compared to our values. Thus, white is typically connected with positive values like cleanliness, beauty, goodness, purity, divinity, and honesty whereas black is usually associated with its opposites. Stereotypical beliefs ideologically based on race inevitably extend to the individual traits of the white and black groups (Van Dijk, 2005: 204). It should be made clear that the defamer uses this strategy to hurt his opponent and compare his group (in-group) to others (out-group) by placing undesirable traits to them.

3.6.2. Semantic/Lexical Strategies

Semantic or lexical strategies are among the most significant discursive strategies that are used to highlight and enhance an idea intended by the speaker/writer. The lexical meaning of a word can indicate the speaker's ideologies about the thing being discussed. Thus, a speaker may use a particular expression (such as murdering children) instead of another one (such as abortion) to affect how the addressee perceives the message (Van Dijk, 2008:107). For the sake of detecting negative other presentation covered in the defamatory discourse, the two semantic/lexical strategies of negative lexicalisation and derogatory words are analysed.

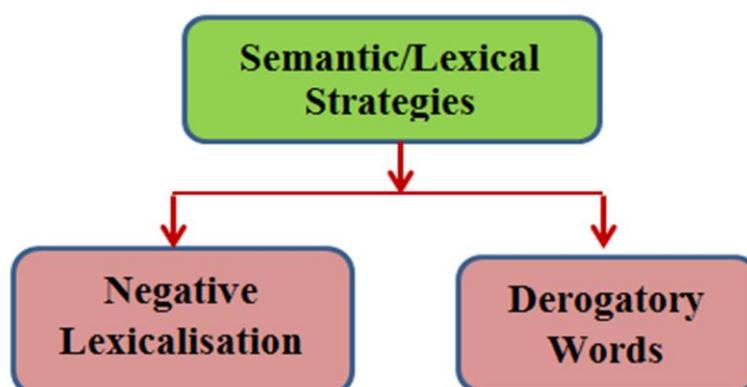


Figure (3.7) Semantic/Lexical Strategies

1. Negative Lexicalisation

Language producers employ the strategy of negative lexicalisation when trying to convey an idea. The word choice has a significant impact on the addressee as the example of “terrorist vs. freedom–fighter” shows. Van Dijk (2005: 25) views that there are several factors which influence the speaker/writer’s choice of the lexical item; these factors include “discourse genre, personal context (mood, opinion, perspective), social context (formality, familiarity, group membership, dominance relations) and sociocultural context (language variants, sociolect, norms and values).”

Van Dijk (2005, 25) continues to note that positive or negative lexicalisation is predetermined by the ideologies of the participants and their social relations with each other and with other social groups. Therefore, the present thesis investigates the negative lexicalisations utilised in the data. The focus on negative lexicalisations stems from the fact that a defamatory speech has the tendency to assault the plaintiff verbally.

2. Derogatory Words

Derogation is a lexical strategy that provides a speaker/writer with the lexical items suitable for his communication intention. Van Dijk (1993:84) points out that an individual from a certain social group may aim to derogate other group’s members by underestimating their actions or discrediting their identities. Racist practices, attitudes, and ideologies are the main source or motivation for derogating other ethnicities and races. In many cases, however, derogation is not as explicit as one would expect; that is, a person may choose an indirect form of derogation.

The primary motivation behind directly implementing this strategy is ideological extremism. However, certain social contexts and channels of communication limit the speaker's ability to use words with

an ideological tendency. Social media platforms, for instance, constrain the amount of racist and prejudiced content that may be published by individuals; as a result, users of these platforms may tend to use the strategy of derogation implicitly and indirectly.

It is important to distinguish between negative lexicalisation and derogatory words. According to what is mentioned earlier, negative lexicalisation means choosing the negative lexical item when describing something. Derogatory words, on the other hand, include choosing words that express contempt and pejoration in order to discredit someone and belittle him.

3.6.3. Pragmatic Strategies

The hearer must consider the context in addition to linguistic structure in order to comprehend the speaker's intention. According to Yule (1996:3), pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning, which entails determining what people mean in a given situation and how the context affects what they say. Leech (1983:10) claims that pragmatics is concerned with the aspects that formulate meaning, or the information stored in a language's lexicon and grammatical patterns that may be used to construct more complex meanings in communicative situations. The pragmatic strategies analysed within the selected data of the present thesis are speech acts, presupposition, and implicature.

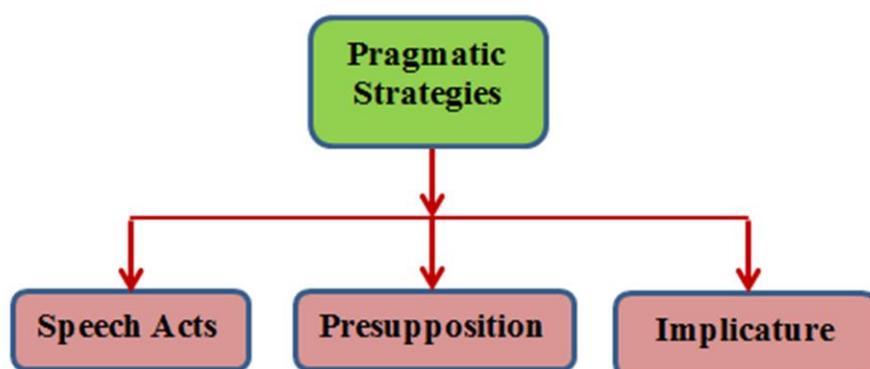


Figure (3.8) Pragmatic Strategies

1. Speech Acts

Yule (1996:47) refers to the actions that are carried out through utterances as “speech acts;” this term refers to Austin’s (1962) notion. According to Searle (1969:16), “all linguistic communication involves speech acts and these form the basic units of communication.” Thus, words have the power to make an individual perform an action or be affected by that action. For example, when a priest says *I announce you husband and wife*, the priest changes the addressees’ social status from single individuals to a married couple. The ways in which speech acts are executed vary from culture to culture, and these variations may lead to communication difficulties that can be funny or very serious (Gass and Neu, 1996:1).

Individuals employ various speech acts depending on various contextual factors such as the participants, their social relations, their social status, the setting in which they are involved as well as the power relations which influence the communication process. For instance, the employment of commands suggests that the speaker is in a superior position or status to the audience. Participants' relationships of dominance affect interactions, and as a result, the choice of speech acts (Van Dijk, 2008: 202). Van Dijk (2005: 31) adds that speech acts can reflect the ideologies held by text producers towards other social groups. If a speaker is racist or sexist, for instance, his choice of speech acts can imply such ideologies and stereotypical beliefs towards women or minority groups.

Kroeger (2018: 191- 2) mentions that speech acts are not just the act of producing language (speech/writing), but it involves the communication situation in general. This communication situation constitutes the context of situation - i.e. the utterance itself, the participants, the setting, etc–; and paralinguistic features that must be

obtained so that the meaningful communication is achieved. These features are known as felicity conditions; any speech act cannot be performed appropriately without its conditions. Searle (1979:12-6) classifies the illocutionary speech acts into five general categories as follows:

- (a) Representatives are those speech acts through which a speaker makes words fit the world. In this category, the speaker states how he believes the world to be; thus, he believes, asserts, concludes, accuses, and describes.
- (b) Directives are the speech acts that express what the speaker wants the hearer to do; therefore, a speaker uses a directive speech act -such as commanding, suggesting, or ordering—to make the world fit words through the addressee.
- (c) Commissives express what a speaker intends to do; i.e. a speaker uses commissive speech acts to commit himself to do an action in the future. In using this category of speech acts, the speaker attempts to make the world fit words. Acts such as promising, refusing, threatening, pledging and warning are included within this category.
- (d) Expressives enable the speaker to express his psychological state. They include verbs such as congratulating, condoling, apologising, welcoming, and thanking.
- (e). Declarations are the speech acts that allow the speaker/writer to change the world by his utterance. This category of illocutionary acts involve such verbs as resigning, announcing, appointing, christening, naming, and marrying.

2. Presupposition

A presupposition is an assumption made by a speaker/writer about a particular proposition. Language producers use this strategy to express

what they believe to be true or known by the addressee as facts and not mere opinions. A presupposition “is something the speaker assumes to be the case prior to making an utterance” (Yule, 1996: 25). Brown and Miller (2013:357) contend that a presupposition is a tenet that language producers ‘take for granted’ while making allegations. For example, Justine Sacco’s publication (mentioned in Chapter Two, p: 18) includes a presupposition. Her utterance “*Going to Africa. Hope I don’t get AIDS. Just kidding. I’m white!*” contains the following presupposition: the speaker believes that since she is a privileged white American, she will not get AIDS from black poor Africans; and that the poverty in Africa makes people have horrible diseases. She assumes that her followers on Twitter have background knowledge about her presupposition. Thus, for Van Dijk (2008: 207), “presuppositions assume previous knowledge of recipients.”

3. Implicature

Utterances carry an inferred meaning. The addressee, depending on the context and the utterance itself, tries to deduce the speaker’s intention. An implicature is a specific type of meaning. Consequently, a meaning that is implied but not clearly articulated is referred to as an implicature (Grundy, 2013:41). For Van Dijk (2020: 192), when a speaker attempts to avoid expressing an explicit meaning, he employs implicatures which the recipients draw from “contextual meanings or inferences.”

According to Van Dijk (2008: 207), contrary to inferred meanings, information that is explicitly stated tends to highlight positive characteristics of in-groups or negative ones of out-groups. There are several ways to approach ideological function of implicated actual social or political facts. Even though the addressee frequently assumes what individuals mean when they utter something (their models), this

illustrates the need of recognising the difference between mental models (beliefs) and discourse meanings. Van Dijk (2008: 269) adds that when analysing this pragmatic strategy, it is simple to determine what information regarding in-group and out-group will normally be expressed and which information will be left implicit. Therefore, the researcher analyses this strategy so as to detect ideologies held by the defamer and their influence on his publication.

3.6.4. Rhetorical Strategies

As Merriam (2008: 1398) mentions, rhetorical -as an adjective- is the art of elaborate, attractive writing or speaking, especially when used to convince or impact addressees. Brown and Miller (2013:170) point out that it includes transferring a particular meaning from its concrete, literal domain to another abstract domain. This domain may include the use of rhetorical terms like thaw (snow melting) and frosty (influenced by frost). Analysing the data by finding the rhetorical terms that the defamer employs to harm his opponents is one of the researcher's tasks.

Individuals utilise rhetorical strategies to highlight/ mitigate certain meanings and ideologies; Van Dijk (2008:192) points out that the primary function of these strategies is to (de)emphasise ‘interactional and communicative intentions.’ Rhetorical strategies are “used differently by and for different social categories or groups.” Thus, negative other presentation contains rhetorical emphases on the negative properties of the out-group members. Rhetorical strategies indicate ‘social or ideological identity,’ as well as social relations between participants and their shared beliefs (Van Dijk, 2008: 193).

The analysis focuses on the rhetorical strategies of polarisation, hyperbole, and reference.

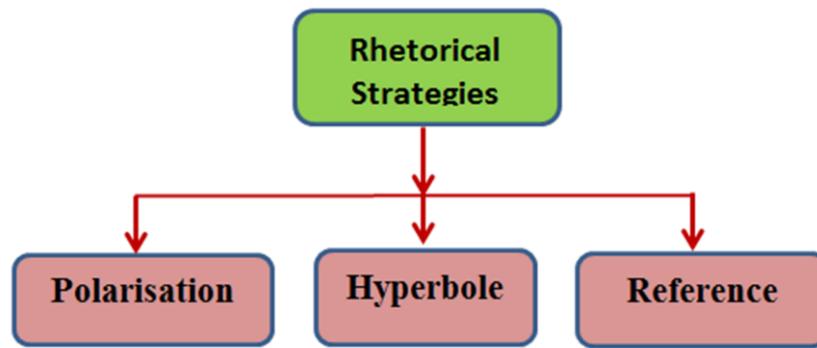


Figure (3.9) Rhetorical Strategies

1. Polarisation

For Van Dijk (1993:69), polarisation is defined as the contrast between US and THEM; it implies that groups generate an ideological representation of themselves and of others with the result that “(generally) We are depicted positively and They come out negatively.” He (1993:69) adds that a major characteristic of ideologies appears to be a positive presentation of oneself and a negative presentation of others. Views of social structure, or the types of things we find preferable or those we perceive others stand for are associated with such polarised views of US and THEM. These social structures are descriptions of more universal ideals at this extremely abstract level.

The emergence of ideologies is based on disputes over limited social assets. Van Dijk (1998:161) argues that the polarisation between in-groups and out-groups is the most striking example of how group identity and relationships are “the most direct social counterpart of ideological structures”.

Through analysing this strategy, the researcher can determine the underlying ideologies in the defamatory speech that serve as the primary motivation for the defamer. One may say that there is a polarisation between members of in-group and out-group that is based on beliefs of racism and prejudice.

2. Hyperbole

It is common that language producers tend to employ the rhetorical strategy of hyperbole to achieve their goals of persuading and convincing their addressees to believe or adopt certain opinions. Crystal (2009: 608) defines hyperbole as the use of exaggerated terms and expressions which frame things in a better or worse way than they actually are. For instance, someone may say “infinite” instead of “great,” or “a thousand apologies” instead of “an apology.” Thus, the ideology or belief is not expressed neutrally, but it is emphasised and exaggerated for the purpose of convincing the hearer/reader.

3. Reference

Speakers refer to objects or focus their listeners' attention to them when they are engaging in the process of reference. Based on the contexts, various reference terms are employed. When speakers utilise definite referring noun phrases, they believe their listeners would understand the reference because the referent has previously been addressed or is prominent (Brown and Miller, 2013: 375). According to Crystal (2008:407-8), reference is the link between two linguistic expressions where one supplies the details required to understand the other. Therefore, it is a signifying connection between a verbal word and the actual thing or concept it denotes.

Malmkjær (2002:543) and Crystal (2008: 407-8) mention that endophoric reference is the use of cataphora or anaphora to refer to textual objects. Cataphora, or ‘forward-reference,’ means a reference to a subsequent part of the discourse; whereas anaphora, or ‘backward-reference,’ means a reference to a previous part of the discourse. Exophora reference, which is described as the immediate reference to an extra-linguistic referent, is the type of reference presented by Halliday and Hasan (1976:13).

Halliday and Hasan (1976: 71) classify Exophora reference into two subtypes: *deixis* and *homophora*. Deixis, as illustrated by Levinson (1983:54), is a reference made by an expression whose meaning depends on the extra-linguistic context including the participants and the setting. As put by Halliday and Hasan (1976: 71), “homophora is reference that depends on cultural knowledge or other general knowledge, rather than on specific features of a particular context.”

It should be made clear that homophora is the only reference type with which the present thesis is concerned. Throughout the analysis of data, the researcher attempts to investigate how certain notions and concepts are employed within the defamatory speech so as to attract the attention of the third party. Put simply, defamers may try to make use of the social knowledge, which the addressee and the audience have, that has the capacity to enhance the ideological as well as the defamatory effect intended by the publisher.

What remains is a schematisation of the model explained above. Thus, Figure (3.10) is a diagram of the eclectic model employed for purpose of analysing the data in the present thesis:

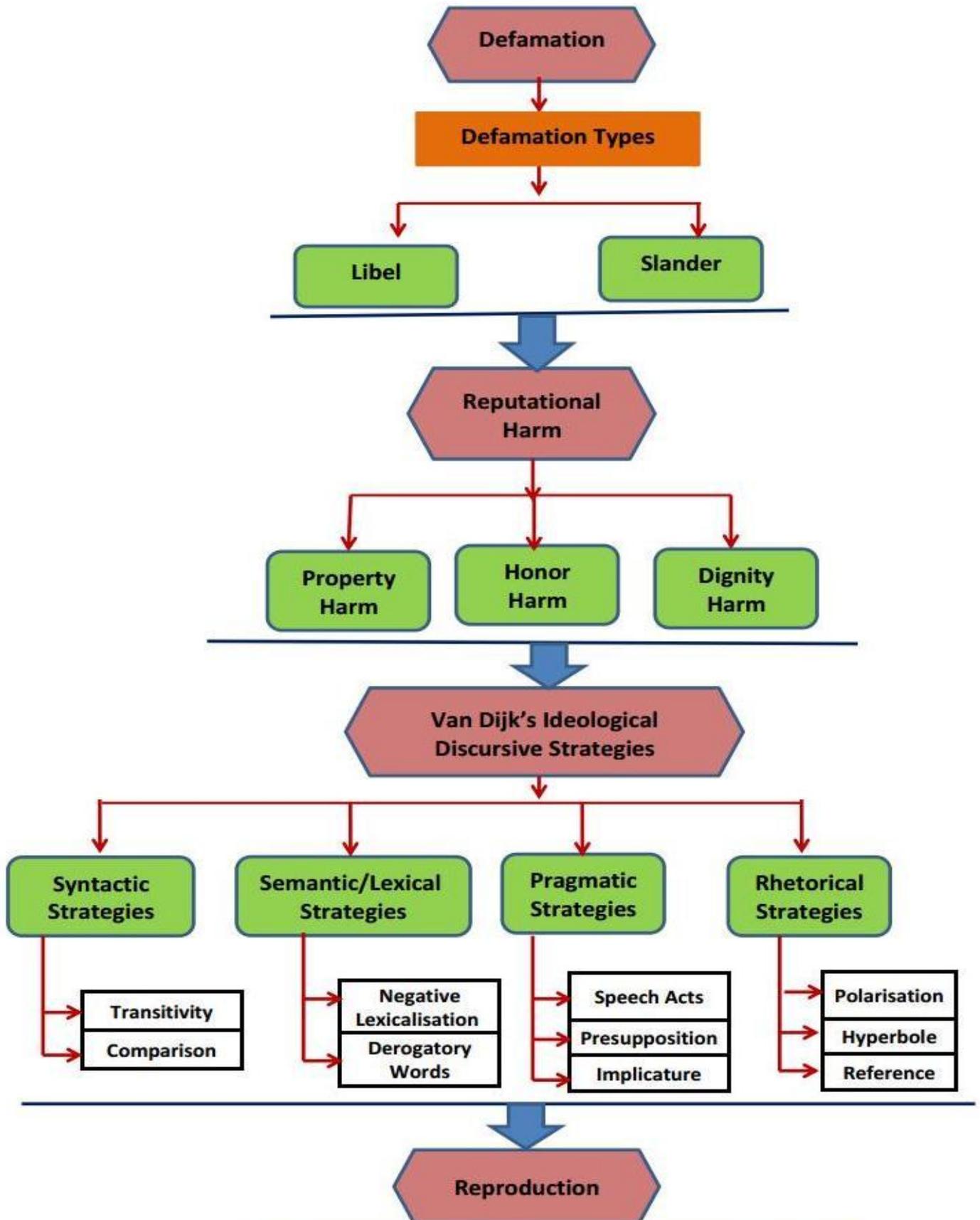


Figure (3.10) The Eclectic Model of Analysis

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA COLLECTION, DESCRIPTION, AND ANALYSIS

4. Introductory Remarks

The present chapter is dedicated to the practical part of this thesis. Hence, the model is applied to the selected data so as to verify or refute the hypotheses of the thesis. Everything relevant to the data is explained here; thus, this chapter shows how the data is collected in addition to its major characteristics. After that, the procedures that are followed in the practical part are exhibited in a separate section. Finally, the researcher analyses the selected data qualitatively and quantitatively as well

4.1. Data Collection

The researcher collects the data from the Internet. Although the data is supposed to be taken from social media platforms, the selected texts are found in legal files in the form of (pdf). In other words, most of the publications are removed from the platforms because the judges have ordered the defamers to do so. Few publications, however, are not deleted from their original platform even though the researcher collects them from the lawsuit cases.

One text, *Moore v. Cohen*, is taken from its original platform of YouTube since the case source does not include the sufficient information about the video to be analysed discursively. Furthermore, the case of *Khalid v. Johnston* is taken from the site (Web Source 1) because Ms. Khalid has not sued Mr. Johnston which means that they do not have a lawsuit source.

It needs to be noticed that the lawsuit cases include most of the contextual factors concerning the defamatory event. The analyses are conducted based upon these contextual factors so as to draw the most comprehensive critical analysis of the collected texts.

4.2. Data Description

Users of social media platforms can publish various forms of language including spoken and written. Accordingly, some of the selected data - which are originally spoken in videos - are transcribed so the researcher can provide it in this chapter. It is necessary to mention that these transcriptions are found in the sources from which the data is taken. However, the case of Moore v. Cohen is transcribed by the researcher.

Some publications are too long so the researcher has to select extracts in order to avoid lengthy and redundant analysis. Furthermore, some cases involve more than one publication within the same analysis which is attributed to the importance of providing enough and sufficient material that helps in conducting a comprehensive analysis to the data. Table (4.1) summarises the descriptions of the data according to the criteria of place of event, channel of publication, date of publication, text source, and the form of the original text (whether spoken or written).

Table (4.1) Data Description

The Case	Place of Event	Channel of Publication	Date of Publication	Text Source	Form of Text
Khalid v. Johnston	Canada	Freedom report.ca and YouTube	July, 2017	Ontario Superior Court of Justice	Spoken
Fakih v. Johnston	Canada	YouTube	July, 2017	Internet	Spoken
Moore v. Cohen	USA	ShowTime YouTube	February, 2018	Internet	Spoken

Ganske v. Mensch	USA	Twitter	July, 2018	United States Discrete Southern Of New York	Written
Burston v. Hanson	Australia	Facebook	February, 2019	Federal Court of Australia	Written
Riley v. Murray	England	Twitter	March, 2019	Royal Courts of Justice Strand, London	Written
Banks v. Cadwalladr	England and Canada	TED YouTube and Twitter	April, 2019	Royal Courts of Justice Strand, London	Spoken and Written
Alberta Health Services v. Johnston	Canada	YouTube and The Kevin J. Johnston Show	2020	Court of King's Bench of Alberta	Spoken
Post v. Hillier	Canada	Twitter	November, 2021	Ontario Superior Court of Justice	Written

Martin v. Najem	Australia	Instagram	April, 2022	District Court New South Wales	Spoken
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4.3. Procedures of the Analysis

Each case is analysed on the basis of certain procedures which are explained in the form of listed steps as follows:

1. A brief introduction of the case is presented to give the reader an idea about the case itself.
2. The selected text is introduced.
3. The contextual factors governing the text are described to have an insight of the defamatory action from all dimensions. This step consists of describing the defamer, plaintiff, the channel through which defamation occurs, and the content of the case and how it starts.
4. The analysis based on the eclectic model begins at this step. The first level contains determining the type of defamation.
5. The second level illustrates the reputational harm as a consequence or effect of defamation.
6. The third level includes analysing the discursive strategies available in the data which explains how the reputational harm happens. This level gives a glimpse of the ideologies and negative other presentation covered within the defamatory text.
7. Finally, the last level is a reproduction of defamation; it is the analyst's suggestion of how the text should be produced with no harm whatsoever.

4.4. Data Analysis

After describing the contextual factors governing the data, the qualitative analysis is conducted based upon the model of the present thesis. The next step contains the quantitative / statistical analysis which supports the qualitative analysis. Analysing the data quantitatively further demonstrates the outcomes of the qualitative analysis; additionally, it will be the tool through which the fourth hypothesis is verified or refuted.

4.4.1. Qualitative Analysis

Case 1: Khalid v. Johnston

No matter how civilised a society is, there are always those who hold extreme views towards others who are different from them in terms of race, religion, or even culture. These extremist beliefs are manifested in their day-to-day behaviour and range from negative expressions to hostile behaviour, and threats, harms or even murders. This case represents an example of such behaviour, since Mr. Johnston utilises social media platforms to negatively impact the reputations of others, disparage them, and even subtly threaten their lives because of their race and religion. Because of the extremist's adoption of racist ideologies and hate speech, which he publishes via his own YouTube channel and other social media platforms, Mr. Johnston will serve as an ongoing model in the present thesis.

The defamer of this case uses his social media platforms to express his beliefs about different social issues. The present thesis analyses three publications of the same person in order to investigate how a social media platform can be used for harmful purposes. It needs to be highlighted that this first case includes some expressions that might be inappropriate. However, these expressions cannot be excluded because of their contribution in the analysis.

The Text:

It sickens me that she holds a seat in Parliament Hill as a terrorist scumbag ... I believe that you are a terrorist. I believe that you are here to kill me, and kill my children, and kill the entire future of this entire nation... The only thing that your actions can do is cause a civil war within these borders... Because I can tell you this, there are a lot of gun nuts in this country, and you're pissing them off. You don't want to do that. There is a select kind of Canadian that even I'm afraid of. And those are not the guys you want to try and bring Sharia law to. But hey, if you think that is the right way to go, go ahead. I'm a journalist, and I'll be there to see you on the ground crying and complaining about the fact that someone shot you because they disagreed with Sharia law and the rape of children. And I'll be there with a big fat smile on my face, saying, "Heh, heh, Iqra Khalid gets shot by a Canadian patriot who didn't want to wrap his daughter up in a bandage, and who did not want to take on or adopt Sharia, where he has to pin his daughter down on the ground and cut her labia and clitoris off with a razor blade (Web Source 1).

A. Contextual Factors

1. Who: The Defamer

Kevin J. Johnston is an active public figure on YouTube. He was a mayoral candidate in Mississauga, 2014; yet he was not elected as the mayor since he did not get enough votes. Four years later, Mr. Johnston ran for the same election and got the second position with 13.5 per cent of the votes (Web Source 1).

In 2017, the defamer was charged by “the Peel Police with willfully promoting hatred toward the Peel Muslim community.” It seems that Mr. Johnston dedicated his platform to spread hate speech and Islamophobia (Web Source 2) and (Web Source 3).

2. Says What: The Content

Kevin J. Johnston used his social media platforms to express his beliefs about, among other things, Islam and Muslims. In a specific publication on YouTube, he attacked the Liberal Member of Parliament (MP) Iqra Khalid. He described her as a ‘*little girl*’ with ‘*very little intelligence*.’ Mr. Johnston published a video that included the following speech: “*It sickens me that she holds a seat in Parliament Hill as a terrorist scumbag. I believe that you are a terrorist. I believe that you are here to kill me, and kill my children, and kill the entire future of this entire nation,*” he said in the video, “*I believe that you want the maple leaf removed from the flag, to be replaced by the crescent moon*” (Web Source 1).

3. In Which Channel

On July 24, 2017, one of the postings of the above-quoted video about Iqra Khalid was removed from YouTube for violating their policy on hate speech. Kevin J. Johnston posted anti-Muslim videos on his YouTube channel and website freedomreport.ca. In one particular video, Mr. Johnston attacked Liberal MP Iqra Khalid (Web Source 1).

4. To Whom: The Plaintiff

Ms. Iqra Khalid was born in Pakistan in 1985; her family immigrated to Canada in 1998 and began a new life in Mississauga. Ms. Khalid attended York University where she graduated in 2007 with a degree in criminology and professional writing. She then attended Western Michigan University Cooley Law School to get Doctorate Degree. Her final thesis included a comparative analysis of the effects of

cultures on the governance and regulation of a nation. She graduated with honor in 2012, after that Ms. Khalid returned to Canada. In 2015, she was elected to represent the riding of Mississauga-Erin Mills in the House of Commons of Canadian the federal election.

Since 2015, Ms. Khalid has represented Mississauga-Erin Mills in the legislature. She spoke out on topics including human trafficking, online hatred, and the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya. She is a fervent supporter of women's rights and a faithful partner in the fight for human rights. Ms. Khalid has represented Mississauga-Erin Mills's residents in her capacities as a chair of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, a member of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Human Rights, and chair of the Women's Caucus.

In 2017, Ms. Khalid tabled a successful motion to undertake a study on human trafficking. After hearing from numerous witnesses and travelling across Canada to examine the issue further, the committee presented its report "Moving Forward in the Fight Against Human Trafficking in Canada", which included recommendations that would help provide victims of trafficking the support they need and bring traffickers to justice (Web Source 1) and (Web Source 2) .

B. Defamation Types

Mr. Johnston libels Ms. Khalid since he has published his defamatory speech on YouTube; i.e. unless removed, it could be permanent and accessible.

C. Reputational Harm

The defamer spreads untrue information about Ms. Khalid; he attempts to instigate people against the plaintiff by damaging her reputation. Ms. Khalid's reputation as honor is firstly attacked and harmed since Mr. Johnston talks about her role as an MP who wants to "*bring Sharia law*" to Canada. Mr. Johnston describes the plaintiff's

actions that “*cause a civil war*,” and the Sharia law that forces a father to “*wrap his daughter up in a bandage*”, and “*pin his daughter down on the ground and cut her labia and clitoris off with a razor blade.*”

This malicious and hateful publication has the potential to harm Ms. Khalid as a social member; it can also get her removed from her role as an MP in the House of Commons. Reputation as honor involves respecting Ms. Khalid’s characteristics which she has been given by her community; therefore, when the defamer publishes false claims about the plaintiff, Ms. Khalid may not be able to recover and overcome the reputational harm.

D. Discursive Strategies

1. Syntactic Strategies

- **Transitivity**

Table (4.2) Transitivity in Johnston’s YouTube Speech

NO.	Phrase	Participants	V. Process
1	It sickens me that she holds a seat ... Hill	that she holds a seat (actor) me (goal)	Sickens (MP)
2	I believe that you are a terrorist	I (sensor) that you are a terrorist (phenomenon)	Believe (MnP)
3	you are a terrorist	You (carrier) a terrorist(attribute)	Are (RP)
4	You... kill me/ my children/ the entire future	You (actor) Me/ my children/ the entire future (goal)	Kill (MP)
5	Your action ...cause a civil	Your action(actor)	Cause

	war	a civil war (goal)	(MP)
6	I ... tell you this	I (sayer) This (verbiage)	Tell (VP)
7	there are a lot of gun nuts	gun nuts (existent)	Are (EP)
8	you're pissing them off	You (actor) Them (goal)	Are pissing off (MP)
9	There is a select kind of Canadian	a select kind of Canadian(existent)	Is (EP)
10	I'm afraid of [a select kind of Canadian]	I (sensor) a select kind of Canadian(phenomenon)	Am afraid of (MnP)
11	you think that is the right way to go	You (sensor) that is...(phenomenon)	Think (MnP)
12	I'm a journalist.	I (carrier) a journalist (attribute)	Am (RP)
13	I'll be there	I (existent)	Will be (EP)
14	I'll... see you on the ground.	I (sensor) You (phenomenon)	See (MnP)
15	someone shot you	Someone (actor) You (goal)	Shot (MP)
16	They disagreed with Sharia law and the rape of children	They (sensor) Sharia law and the rape of children (phenomenon)	Disagreed (MnP)
17	a Canadian ... wrap his	a Canadian(actor)	Wrap up

	daughter	his daughter(goal)	(MP)
18	a Canadian... take on or adopt Sharia	a Canadian(actor) Sharia (goal)	Take on / adopt (MP)
19	he has to pin his daughter down	He (actor) his daughter (goal)	Pin down (MP)
20	He... cut her labia...of	He (actor) her labia (goal)	Cut of (MP)

The processes and participants demonstrated in table (4.2) reflect how Mr. Johnston tries to attack Ms. Khalid. For instance, the verb ‘*sickens*’ in the first clause indicates the defamer’s hatred towards the plaintiff and her action, “*that she holds a seat...*” Mr. Johnston wants to instigate his followers against the plaintiff through the clause “*I believe that you are a terrorist.*” The mental process in this clause helps in presenting the plaintiff negatively and framing her as an out–group member whose actions are dangerous to the in–group. In order to present the plaintiff negatively, Mr. Johnston continues framing Ms. Khalid as an actor who wants to ‘*kill*’ the defamer and his in–group (goal). The relational process through which the defamer describes Ms. Khalid reveals his Islamophobic ideologies against the plaintiff “*You are a terrorist.*”

Additionally, Mr. Johnston uses various processes such as EP, MP, and VP while attempting to persuade the third party that Ms. Khalid is not accepted by him and by other in–group members who are pissed off by the plaintiff and her actions. In summary, Mr. Johnston’s main aim is to harm the plaintiff’s reputation via portraying her as an actor who intentionally hurts the defamer and other Canadians since they form a

goal for her actions. Moreover, racism and Islamophobia are observed in the RP which Mr. Johnston employs in “*You are a terrorist.*”

2. Semantic/Lexical Strategies

- **Negative Lexicalisation**

Mr. Johnston utilises the strategy of negative lexicalisation for the main purpose of attracting his viewers’ attention to his publication. For example, he says words such as ‘*sickens*’ and ‘*kill*’. These words intensify the negative other presentation of Ms. Khalid because the defamer’s attacks are directed to fulfil this ideology. Mr. Johnston states that “*it sickens me*” that Iqra Khalid “*holds a seat in parliament hill.*” Thus, he explicitly expresses his disagreement with her because he believes that she is here ‘*to kill*’ him and ‘*kill*’ his children, and “*kill the entire future of this entire nation.*”

Mr. Johnston goes on in describing the plaintiff as a negative influence on the Canadians as he believes that the plaintiff attempts to “*bring Sharia law.*” For the defamer, this law leads to the aggressive actions such as “*the rape of children.*” The defamer’s choice of the lexical items reflects his intentions of portraying the plaintiff as an out-group member who does not belong in the in-group of Canadian patriots who do not “*want to wrap [their daughters] up in a bandage,*” and do not want “*to pin [their daughters] down on the ground*” to circumcise those girls or “*cut...off*” their labia and clitoris ‘*with a razor blade.*”

Each one of these words has its own function of attacking the plaintiff and presenting her negatively as an out-group member.

- **Derogatory Words**

Mr. Johnston employs various derogatory words in his speech so as to discredit Ms. Khalid and her actions. Thus, he describes her as “*a terrorist scumbag.*” This word has the tendency to harm the plaintiff’s reputation especially when the defamer uses it with other attacks such as

“I believe that you are here to kill me, and kill my children...” These attacks involve an explicit derogation of Ms. Khalid; however, the speaker’s publication includes an implicit derogation that is found in the following sentence: *“The only thing that your actions can do is cause a civil war within these borders.”* This statement presents Ms. Khalid (out-group member) as a danger to the Canadians (in-group members). The defamer’s final attacks also hold an implicit derogation shown in *“Iqra Khalid gets shot by a Canadian patriot”* because her actions influence a Canadian *“to pin his daughter down on the ground...”* Whether explicit or implicit, the strategy of derogatory words is used by the defamer to attract the viewers’ attentions to the reputational harm of Ms. Khalid.

The two lexical strategies of negative lexicalisation and derogatory words assist the defamer in presenting the plaintiff negatively. Apparently, the defamer is motivated by Islamophobic ideologies since he discriminates Ms. Khalid, a Muslim out-group member.

3. Pragmatic Strategies

- **Speech Acts**

What the defamer endeavours to do is to make people perceive Ms. Khalid as a negative influence on his group. Mr. Johnston does so by employing the speech act of accusing. He accuses her of being ‘*a terrorist*,’ Mr. Johnston says that the only thing Ms. Khalid’s actions can do ‘*is cause a civil war.*’ The defamer continues to employ the representative speech acts of accusing and asserting. Mr. Johnston explicitly states *“I believe that you are a terrorist. I believe that you are here to kill me, and kill my children, and kill the entire future of this entire nation.”* Put differently, the defamer shares beliefs and not mere opinions about the plaintiff.

Furthermore, Mr. Johnston utilises the commissive speech act of threatening; he threatens the plaintiff that his in-group members will hurt her because they do not want ‘*Sharia law*’ in their country. This is found in “*there are a lot of gun nuts in this country, and you’re pissing them off ... And those are not the guys you want to try and bring Sharia law to ... I’m a journalist, and I’ll be there to see you on the ground crying and complaining about the fact that someone shot you ...*”

- **Presupposition**

Mr. Johnston, by addressing Ms. Khalid, expresses his ideas and beliefs about Muslims. He tells the plaintiff that Canadians (in-group) do not want the Sharia law; the defamer states “*Iqra Khalid gets shot by a Canadian patriot.*” Mr. Johnston shares how he perceives Islam in “*Canadian patriot who didn’t want to wrap his daughter up in a bandage ... and who did not want ... to pin his daughter down on the ground and cut her labia and clitoris off with a razor blade.*” In other words, the defamer presupposes that Muslims, ‘*take on or adopt Sharia,*’ commit savage and illegal crimes; Mr. Johnston believes that all Muslims circumcise little girls.

Both of these strategies reveal the defamer’s ideologies, particularly concerning Islam. Mr. Johnston is driven by Islamophobic beliefs; i.e. he is prejudiced against Muslims that is why he attacks them by framing them as out-group members. The defamer, thus, mentions that other Canadians (in-group members) discriminate the plaintiff. They and he as well, want to get rid of Ms. Khalid because they do not want her ‘*to try and bring Sharia law.*’

4. Rhetorical Strategies

- **Hyperbole**

Mr. Johnston’s publication includes hyperbole. To start with, the defamer states that ‘*It sickens me that she holds a seat in Parliament*

Hill;’ the word ‘*sicken*’ indicates the hate Mr. Johnston has against Ms. Khalid. Second, the defamer describes the plaintiff as ‘*a terrorist scumbag;*’ Mr. Johnston attempts to make the third party view the plaintiff as extremely negatively as possible. Mr. Johnston, then, continues his exaggeration in attacking Ms. Khalid by telling her that she wants to ‘*kill*’ him and his children as well as ‘*the entire future of this entire nation.*’

It seems that the defamer views the plaintiff and the Muslims (out-group) from a racist perspective. After that, the defamer utilises the word ‘*only*’ to emphasise the impact of his speech “*the only thing that your actions can do is cause a civil war within these borders.*” As a racist Islamophobic, Mr. Johnston believes that ‘*Sharia*’ forces people to do criminal actions such as ‘*rape of children.*’ The defamer attempts to further attract the third party’s attention to what ‘*Sharia*’ does from his viewpoint. He states that “*a Canadian patriot [in-group] ... didn’t want to wrap his daughter up in a bandage.*” Moreover, the defamer claims that Sharia forces a non-Muslim Canadian “*to pin his daughter down on the ground and cut her labia and clitoris off with a razor blade.*”

These hyperbolic sentences indicate and reflect the defamer’s prejudice and racism against Islam. His hate motivates him to attack Ms. Khalid and call her ‘*a terrorist scumbag;*’ Mr. Johnston discriminates her and speaks to her in an extremely disrespectful manner. Mr. Johnston will even be happy if the plaintiff gets ‘*shot.*’ He will have ‘*a big fat smile*’ and say ‘*Heh, heh, Iqra Khalid gets shot.*’ Obviously, not only does the defamer want to harm the plaintiff’s reputation; but he also instigates other people to attack and hurt her.

E. Reproduction

In order to avoid defamation, Mr. Johnston should have tried to talk to Ms. Khalid without racism and discrimination. The analyst views

that this publication is full of hateful and malicious speech; thus, the harm is undoubtedly intended and deliberate. However, Mr. Johnston could have avoided libelling the plaintiff even though he is prejudiced against her and her group. This would be done through communicating with Ms. Khalid in a respectful way; put differently, the defamer could accept the differences between his beliefs and Ms. Khalid's. Only in this way the defamer avoids attacking his target and harming her reputation.

Case 2: Fakh v. Johnston

Defamation offenses are widespread in communities with a wide range of residents. This is most evident in nations like Australia and Canada, where immigrants from all over the world and indigenous people coexist in society. It is obvious that multiculturalism causes ethnic groups to form within a single community. In this instance, it is obvious how religious and national diversity have an influence on social issues that end in the crime of defamation against some individuals because of their ethnicity or religious affiliation. Social media platforms have made it simple to post videos and texts that involve defamation. The inappropriate use of social media by a person with an ideology dedicated to hatred of Muslims and immigrants is evident in this instance, as well as in other events from the same person.

The Text

I can't for the life of me understand why a restaurant would be here unless the restaurant was up to something nefarious. You have to be Jihadist or have raped someone else's wife as a condition of entry to the Restaurant. Mr. Fakh is a racist restaurant owner and an economic terrorist. Mohammad Mr. Fakh wants to be part of giving money to convicted terrorists. Why do Muslim business men in Mississauga hate white

Christian men so much? Paramount is little more than a front and this man was under investigation by CSIS and by the Canada Revenue Agency...they were trying to figure out where this man's money came from. The Pakistani spy agency ISI is giving him the money that he needs to utilize his stores as a front to bring more refugees/illegal aliens into the country, all whom, of course, are Muslim. Boycott Paramount Fine Foods until they come clean on terror involvement (Web Source 4)

A. Contextual Factors

1. Who: The Defamer

Mr. Johnston is a social media performer; he frames himself as a journalist. He operates the ‘*Kevin J. Johnston Show*,’ Canada's best podcast, which runs from Monday to Friday at 7PM to 9PM Mountain Time. This is done through his personal website; the defamer acknowledges that the show he presents and his social media platforms “*are very popular in Canada and worldwide*” (Web Source 2) and (Web Source 4).

In 2010, Mr. Johnston's website advertised him as ‘*a court process server*.’ After that, he seemed to have been a quasi-public figure in the city of Mississauga, Canada. In 2014, the defamer sent a photograph of himself, naked and in blackface, performing a Nazi salute (Web Source 4).

2. Says What: The Content

On July 20, 2017, a Mississauga Paramount location hosted Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, at a Liberal Party fundraiser. Mr. Johnston was stationed outside with a camera and megaphone, along with Mr. Banerjee who appears in the defamatory videos (Web Source 4) and

(Web Source 5). However, Mr. Johnston is the major concern of analysis in the present thesis; Mr. Banerjee's talk is not dealt with but he is mentioned here for the sake of providing a sufficient content.

On July 20, 2017, Mr. Banerjee and Mr. Johnston were at the Paramount Fine Foods restaurant in Mississauga. Mr. Johnston, with his camera, took eight video clips which he has published on Freedom report.ca and YouTube a few days later. Generally speaking, the videos under analysis show Mr. Johnston with a microphone in hand making comments to the camera, talking to other people, and videoing what was taking place that day outside the Paramount restaurant, mainly from across the street. A summary of the selected videos is presented below:

In the first video, which is published on July 23, 2017, Mr. Johnston is speaking directly to the camera. He is also directing the camera operator. He is at the Paramount Fine Foods location in Mississauga. He is standing at the intersection close to the restaurant. Mr. Johnston points to the restaurant and identifies the Paramount restaurant as being owned by Muslims. An image of the Paramount restaurant with a moon and star superimposed on it appears, along with text reading "*Islamic Restaurant Paramount Fine Foods*" and the restaurant's address and phone number. Mr. Johnston states he has deep concerns about the restaurant and finds it suspicious that it is in the middle of an industrial area. He advises his audience to look up Paramount Foods and says they will understand it is little more than a front. Mr. Johnston says they will be following up on the story (Web Source 6).

The second video is published on the same day immediately after the first one. Mr. Banerjee and Mr. Johnston are present in close proximity to each other. There is almost no one else outside the restaurant, which is nearby. Mr. Banerjee has a megaphone slung over his shoulder. Together Mr. Banerjee and Mr. Johnston walk towards the

restaurant with the camera operator following them. They speak to someone who appears to work at the restaurant. There is text on the video clip, reading “*Justin Trudeau Speaking at Muslim Only Meeting in Mississauga, Ontario, on July 20, 2017 - Part 2*”. They approach a person passing by and strike up a conversation with the man and to each other. The conversation between them is provided in the Appendix.

The third video is published on July 23, 2017; Mr. Johnston is speaking to the camera. He describes the activities of people standing at the restaurant’s entrance. He speaks to someone who drives up to the restaurant, then attempts to speak to a woman who is entering the restaurant. Mr. Banerjee is not visible. At the end of the video, the sound of an Arabic incantation re-appears over video of the restaurant’s facade.

The fourth video, published on the same day, shows that Mr. Johnston is speaking to the camera. Mr. Banerjee is walking down the street in the distance and is speaking to someone. Mr. Johnston comments that “Jihadi Justin Trudeau” will be showing up soon. He says that “*we’ll talk about the amount of money Muslims always seem to have in Canada*”, pointing to the restaurant as an example. He points to a car parked outside the restaurant that Paramount appears to be raffling. He says: “*You can win this car...so everyone knows you’ve had Saudi Arabian money buy a car for you*” (Web Source 4) and (Web Source 6).

3. In Which Channel

On July 23, 2017, Mr. Johnston published his videos on YouTube. Mr. Johnston also shared these videos on his Twitter and Facebook accounts so as to raise the number of viewers (Web Source 6).

4. To Whom: The Plaintiff

A businessman and philanthropist from Lebanon, Mohammad Fakih is also of Canadian descent. Through the Fakih Foundation, the founder of the Middle Eastern chain of halal restaurants known as

Paramount Fine Foods, Mr. Fakhri also engages in charitable work and community service (Web Source 6) and (Web Source 7).

B. Defamation Types

Even though this defamatory content is in the form of spoken language, it is libellous since it is published on social media platforms like YouTube. In other words, it is libellous because it could be permanent unless being removed.

C. Reputational Harm

Mr. Johnston's speech has an impact on the plaintiff's reputation. The defamer attacks all three components of Mr. Fakhri's reputation. The plaintiff's reputation as property is harmed from the first sentence when Mr. Johnston wonders why Mr. Fakhri opens his restaurant in an industrial area unless there is "*something nefarious.*" Throughout the videos, the defamer assumes that Mr. Fakhri uses his restaurant for negative purposes such as bringing "*illegal alien*" and "*giving money to convicted terrorists.*" These attacks on the plaintiff's work cause or are likely to cause property harm to Mr. Fakhri.

The defamer also attacks Mr. Fakhri's reputation as dignity since Mr. Johnston has violated the rules of deference and demeanour. Mr. Johnston has disrespected the plaintiff and his desire to be accepted as an in-group member. This harm is achieved through assuming that the plaintiff is a '*racist restaurant owner,*' and an '*economic terrorist.*' Representing Mr. Fakhri as an out-group member damages his social image and harms his reputation as dignity.

In addition to that, Mr. Fakhri's reputation as honor is harmed in one way or another. The defamer lowers the plaintiff's estimation since he belittles Mr. Fakhri. Mr. Johnston eradicates the characteristics that the society has given to Mr. Fakhri as a philanthropist and Muslim restaurant owner. Mr. Fakhri may never be able to recover this honor harm.

D. Discursive Strategies

1. Syntactic Strategies:

- Transitivity

Table (4.3) Transitivity in Johnston's YouTube Speech

NO.	Phrase	Participants	V. Process
1	I can't ... understand why a restaurant would be here	I (sensor) why a restaurant would be here(phenomenon)	Understand(MnP)
2	The restaurant was up to something nefarious.	the restaurant(carrier) nefarious(attribute)	Was (RP)
3	You have to be Jihadist	You(carrier) Jihadist(attribute)	Be(RP)
4	[You]have raped someone else's wife	You(actor) someone else's wife(goal)	Raped(MP)
5	Mr. Fakh is a racist restaurant owner and an economic terrorist	Mr. Fakh(carrier) Racist/ terrorist (attribute)	Is(RP)
6	Mr. Fakh wants to be part of giving money to convicted terrorists.	Mr. Fakh(sensor) part of giving(phenomenon)	Want(MnP)
7	Muslim ...hate white Christian men	Muslim(sensor) Christian(phenomenon)	Hate(MnP)

8	ISI is giving him the money	ISI(actor) Him(recipient) the money(goal)	Is giving(MP)
9	refugees/illegal aliens ... are Muslim	refugees/illegal aliens(carrier) Muslim(attribute)	Are(RP)
10	[you]Boycott Paramount Fine Foods	You(actor) Paramount Fine Foods(goal)	Boycott(MP)
11	they come clean on terror involvement	They(actor) terror involvement(goal)	come clean on(MP)

Various process types are utilised by Mr. Johnston to attack Mr. Fakh. For instance, Mr. Johnston uses the MnP to present Mr. Fakh negatively since the defamer cannot ‘*understand*’ why the plaintiff’s restaurant is in an industrial area. As a guess behind such a place of the restaurant, the defamer describes it as ‘*nefarious*’ through the RP. Once again, Mr. Johnston uses the RP to describe Mr. Fakh himself in the sentence “*Mr. Fakh is a racist restaurant owner and an economic terrorist.*” Furthermore, the defamer frames Mr. Fakh as an out–group member who does not allow anyone to enter the restaurant unless that person (actor) ‘*has raped*’ (MP) “*someone else’s wife*” (goal). MnP is also employed to frame the plaintiff and his group as racists who ‘*hate*’ (MnP) “*white Christian men*” (phenomenon).

Accordingly, the defamer holds Islamophobic beliefs that view Muslims as terrorists and they deserve to be avoided and ‘*Boycott*’ because they do not belong to the in–group. Put simply, prejudice and

racism influence Mr. Johnston to discriminate Mr. Fakhri and other Muslims.

2. Semantic/Lexical Strategies

- **Negative Lexicalisation**

Mr. Johnston uses negative words in his reputational harm of Mr. Fakhri. For example, the defamer states that in order to be able to enter Mr. Fakhri's restaurant, an individual has to be '*a jihadist*' or has "*raped someone else's wife*." The word '*hate*' is used to describe how Mr. Fakhri, a Muslim, feels towards "*white Christian men*." The defamer attacks the plaintiff with the help of this strategy so that Mr. Fakhri's reputation is harmed while being presented negatively. Analysing the strategy of negative lexicalisation unveils the racism and prejudice the defamer has against the plaintiff.

- **Derogatory Words**

Explicit and implicit derogatory words are employed within Mr. Johnston's speech. To start with, the defamer attacks the plaintiff by saying that Mr. Fakhri is "*a racist restaurant owner*" and that he is "*an economic terrorist*." Attacking the plaintiff personally is not enough for the defamer; Mr. Johnston mentions the plaintiff's work, his restaurant. The word '*nefarious*' is used by the defamer as an attempt to discredit Mr. Fakhri's work because Mr. Johnston is suspicious about the restaurant place which is clear in the following sentence "*why a restaurant would be [in an industrial area] unless the restaurant was up to something nefarious*." Those quotes are examples of direct or explicit derogatory words. Implicit derogatory words can also be seen in Mr. Johnston's defamatory speech.

The defamer derogates the plaintiff by saying that "*Mr. Fakhri wants to be part of giving money to convicted terrorists*." This implicit derogation has the ability of instigating YouTube users against the

plaintiff. Mr. Johnston continues attacking Mr. Fakhri and his actions by mentioning that Mr. Fakhri takes money from the ‘*Pakistani spy agency ISI ... to bring more refugees/illegal aliens into the country.*’ Therefore, Mr. Johnston’s intentions to insult and contempt the plaintiff are obvious, especially that Mr. Fakhri is a Muslim person.

Knowing that Mr. Fakhri is a Muslim clarifies the defamer’s attacks because Mr. Johnston is prejudiced against Islam so he discriminates Muslims among whom is the plaintiff. This kind of discrimination and prejudice is motivated by Islamophobic beliefs such as the stereotypical ideologies that Muslims are terrorists.

3. Pragmatic Strategies

- **Speech Acts**

Mr. Johnston utilises a variety of speech acts in order to achieve his goal, harming the plaintiff’s reputation and deterring other people from dealing with him. The defamer, for the most part, accuses the plaintiff of being ‘*racist*’ and ‘*terrorist,*’ who wants to bring ‘*illegal aliens*’ to Canada. Additionally, Mr. Johnston states that Mr. Fakhri’s “*restaurant was up to something nefarious.*” These accusations imply an insult; thus, the defamer employs the speech acts of insulting and accusing to harm the plaintiff’s reputation.

The defamer utilises the representative speech act of asserting; he asserts the information that he mentions about Mr. Fakhri as being facts rather than mere personal opinion. Therefore, the assertion reflects the defamer’s intention; i.e. Mr. Johnston deliberately attacks Mr. Fakhri to damage his social image. Finally, Mr. Johnston finishes his speech by using an order, the defamer directs his audience to “*Boycott Paramount Fine Foods until they come clean on terror involvement.*” This is a directive speech act of ordering to deter the third party from having any contact or communication with the plaintiff.

- **Presupposition**

Mr. Johnston uses this strategy to assert that Muslims in general and Mr. Fakhri in particular are out-group members who do not belong to a Western country like Canada. The main and obvious presupposition is found in the utterance “*Why do Muslim business men in Mississauga hate white Christian men so much?*” This question presupposes that all Muslims actually do hate “*white Christian men.*” It also presupposes that Muslims are racists who discriminate Christians and whites. For the defamer, Muslims are ‘*aliens*’ and they bring destruction and terror to in-group communities.

Depending on the pragmatic analysis, it is clear that the defamer deliberately wants to harm the plaintiff’s reputation by damaging his social face. Mr. Johnston appears to be racist and prejudiced against Muslims. He attacks the plaintiff just because Mr. Fakhri is a Muslim; the defamer discriminates Muslims and believes that they are terrorists and out-group ‘*aliens*’ who have to be abandoned.

4. Rhetorical Strategies

- **Hyperbole**

This strategy unveils the ideologies held by Mr. Johnston. Racism, prejudice, and discrimination are shown through the hyperbolic expressions. For instance, Mr. Johnston states that Mr. Fakhri only allows ‘*jihadist[s]*’ to enter his restaurant. The defamer asserts that people “*have to ... have raped someone else’s wife*” in order to be allowed to enter. These exaggerations reveal how the defamer views the plaintiff just because of assumed beliefs about his religion. Moreover, the word ‘*aliens*’ is used to describe Muslim immigrants; Mr. Johnston employs this word to highlight his viewpoint about Mr. Fakhri and the out-group members.

E. Reproduction

It is apparent that the defamer has intentions to harm the plaintiff's reputation. Mr. Johnston holds racism and prejudice against Muslims; so, his publications are full of hate and reputational harm.

It would be possible to avoid defamation if there was no racism against any religion, ethnicity, or any group of individuals. Therefore, the analyst believes that the extract cannot be reproduced to become neutral because every sentence underlies ideological beliefs which have the potentials to damage Mr. Fakih's social image, reputation, and life.

Case 3: Moore v. Cohen

Because they make the average viewer entertained, comedy shows have flourished in the age of Internet. In contrast with the other cases, this one involves the plaintiff being indirectly accused and defamed by the host. Mr. Cohen interviews a person, in this case a politician, in *Who Is America*. He asks him, in an interesting comedy framework, questions that contain amusing segments which touch many aspects of politics and society.

The Text:

[Cohen]: *They have now used this technology to identify other abnormalities. It turns out those sex offenders and particularly pedophiles secrete an enzyme, 4-DHT, which is actually detectable. It is three times the level of nonpedophiles, so the phrase 'sweating like a rapist' is actually based on science. So in Israel, they have developed a machine that is used in schools and playgrounds to detect anyone coming in, and if they detect a pedophile, the wand alerts the law enforcement and the schools within a hundred mile radius. Uh, it is very, very simple to*

use. You just switch it on, and because neither of us is sex offenders, then it make absolutely nothing.

[Cohen brings the wand close to his body first, so it does not make a sound, but when this device is near the guest's body, it makes a sound]

[Cohen]: *You just put it on. You put it nearby.*

[Wand beeping. Cohen repeats the same thing]

[Cohen]: *Wait. This, there's obviously a problem.*

Hold on. Hold on. [Cohen repeats the same thing, wand beeping]

[Cohen]: *It must be faulty. It's malfunctioning. I'm sure it will do the same with the other guy here. -Uh, Raziel?*

[Raziel] :*Yeah?* [Cohen calls someone and closes the wand to Raziel, it doesn't make sound]

[Cohen]: *Let me just...* [bring the stick closer to Moore ,wand beeping] *Uh, sorry. -Is this your jacket?*

[Moore]: *Yes.*

[Cohen]: *Uh, did you lend the jacket to somebody else maybe?*

[Moore]: *No. No. -I've been married for 33. Never had an accusation of such things.* [Moore leaving the studio]

[Cohen]: *I am not accusing you at all. This is not ...*

[Moore interrupts]: *Well, then if this is an instrument, I-- Certainly, I'm not a pedophile, okay?*

[Cohen]: *No, but the machine works.*

[Moore]: *Well, I don't know. Then maybe Israeli technology hasn't developed properly.*

[Cohen]: *How's that? This is 99.8 percent accurate. It is not saying that you are a pedophile. Of course no.*

(Web Source 8)

A. Contextual Factors

1. Who: The Defamer

Sacha Noam Baron Cohen is a British actor, comedian, screenwriter, and producer, born 13 October 1971. He is best known for his creation and portrayal of the fictional satirical characters ‘Ali G, Borat Sagdiyev, Brüno Gehard, and Admiral General Aladeen.’ His characters converse with interviewees-usually politicians or other prominent figures-while he is still in character, setting them up for major laughs at their expense. He takes on a range of accents and personas for his characters. Born into a religious Jewish household, Mr. Cohen attended the University of Cambridge to study history (Web Source 9) and (Web Source 10). .

2. Says What: The Content

In February, 2018, Mr. Moore was approached to come to Washington for an interview by an Israeli television station and to receive an award for his “*strong support of Israel.*” Mr. Moore flew from Alabama to Washington, D.C. on February 13, 2018, and was transported by a car service to his hotel. Pls. Counter-Rule. The interview took place the next day at a different hotel. The plaintiff, Mr. Moore, was tricked into participating in an interview with the defamer on February 14, 2018. The interview aired on television as part of a comedy series that was broadcasted by defamer’s Showtime Networks, Inc. (Web Source 8).

The interview was conducted by Mr. Cohen, who was dressed up and acted in the role of an Israeli “*Anti-Terrorism Expert*” named “*Gen. Erran Morad.*” At the time, the plaintiff did not know that the defamer was involved in the interview, including that Mr. Cohen was actually the

interviewer. Mr. Cohen first asked Mr. Moore about Alabama's "*strong connection with Israel*," before proceeding to describe technology used by the Israeli military to combat terrorism. Mr. Cohen discussed one specific device which he claimed the Israeli army employed to uncover tunnels used by terrorists to launch attacks. Mr. Cohen explained that the device could also detect certain enzymes that are secreted only by "*sex offenders and particularly pedophiles*." Retrieving this device, a black wand-like object, Mr. Cohen commented that "*because neither of us are sex offenders, then it make absolutely nothing*." But when Mr. Cohen moved the wand closer to Mr. Moore, the gadget seemed to emit a beeping noise. Mr. Cohen then hit the device against his hand, stating that the device "*must be faulty*," before asking Mr. Moore if he might have lent his jacket to someone else. After declaring that he has been "*married for 33 [years] – and never had an accusation of such things*," the plaintiff left the hotel room, ending the interview. As Mr. Moore exited the room, Mr. Cohen maintained, "*I am not saying you are a sex offender at all*." When the device signalled that Mr. Moore could be a pedophile, he became angry and ended the interview. Before '*Who Is America?*' aired on Showtime, some conservative public figures made statements saying that Baron Cohen had deceived them while in character (Web Source 8).

3. In Which Channel

'*Who Is America?*' is a comedy show presented by Mr. Cohen in CBS: ShowTime TV channel, and on YouTube page related to the TV channel. Mr. Cohen portrays various characters in *Who Is America?* The most prominent and controversial being 'Erran Morad, an Israeli anti-terrorism expert.' The character is referred to as a colonel (and later captain, general, major, sergeant, brigadier, sergeant corporal and lieutenant) in the Israeli military and a former agent of Mossad. On July 30, 2018, this video had been viewed about 7,353,781 times (Web Source 8).

4. To Whom: The Plaintiff

Roy Stewart Moore, born on February 11, 1947, is an American politician, lawyer, and jurist who served as chief justice of the Supreme Court of Alabama from 2001 to 2003 and again from 2013 to 2017, each time being removed from office for judicial misconduct by the Alabama Court of the Judiciary. He was the Republican nominee in the 2017 U.S. Senate special election in Alabama, but was accused by several women of sexual misconduct and, consequently, lost the seat. The plaintiff, Mr. Moore, was tricked into participating in an interview with the defamer Mr. Cohen on February 14, 2018 (Web Source 9) and (Web Source 10).

B. Defamation Types

Even though the defamatory interview is conducted orally, it is libellous because social media platforms like YouTube make the content permanent and, unless removed, can be viewed at any time.

C. Reputational Harm

Mr. Moore has a reputation as honor that he has gained from his social roles which he expects to be taken into consideration by others. Yet, the defamer affects Mr. Moore's characteristics that the society provides to a politician and a judge. In such case, Mr. Moore may not regain his reputation as honor. In addition to that, the plaintiff's reputation as dignity is also harmed since the defamer has not respected Mr. Moore by violating the rules of deference and demeanour. Mr. Cohen, by his conduct, has subjected the plaintiff's occupation to a serious damage which results in harming Mr. Moore's reputation as property. These three concepts of reputation are equally harmed; this can be attributed to the fact that by accusing someone of being pedophile, the accused individual has little to no chance of being vindicated.

D. Discursive Strategies

1. Syntactic Strategies

- **Transitivity**

Table (4.4) Transitivity in Cohen's Interview

NO.	Phrase	Participants	V. Process
1	They... used this technology	They (actor) This technology(goal)	Used (MP)
2	to identify other abnormalities	[they] (actor) other abnormalities(goal)	Identify (MP)
3	It turns out those sex offenders...	It (actor) sex offender(goal)	turns out (MP)
4	Which[an enzyme] is actually detectable	an enzyme (carrier) detectable (attribute)	Is (RP)
5	they have developed a machine	They (actor) Machine (goal)	Developed (MP)
6	[a machine] is used in schools...	a machine (goal)	Is used (MP)
7	The wand alerts the law enforcement...	the wand (actor) the law enforcement (goal)	Alert (MP)
8	it is very, very simple to use	It (Carrier) Simple (attribute)	Is (RP)
9	You just switch it on	You (actor) It (goal)	Switch on (MP)
10	neither of us is sex offenders	neither of us (carrier) sex offenders	Is (RP)

		(attribute)	
11	You just put it on	You (actor) It (goal)	Put on (MP)
12	there's obviously a problem	a problem (existent)	There is (EP)
13	It's malfunctioning	It (carrier) Malfunctioning (attribute)	Is (RP)
14	I've been married for 33	I (actor)	I've been married (MP)
15	I am not accusing you	I (actor) You(goal)	Accuse (MP)
16	I don't know [if the machine works]	I (sensor) if the machine works](phenomenon)	Know (MnP)
17	This is 99.8 percent accurate	This [machine] (carrier) 99.8 percent accurate (attribute)	Is (RP)
18	It is not saying that you are a pedophile	It (sayer) you are a pedophile (verbiage)	Is...saying (VP)
19	you are a pedophile	You (carrier) a pedophile (attribute)	Are (RP)

Since this case involves an indirect defamation, Mr. Cohen uses processes to implicitly attack Mr. Moore. Throughout the show, the

defamer talks about ‘*sex offenders*’ and ‘*pedophiles*’ who can be detected by the device being tested. First of all, Mr. Cohen introduces a new device that looks like a wand; it (actor) can ‘*identify*’ (MP) ‘*abnormalities*’ (goal) such as “*sex offenders*” who “*secrete an enzyme.*” The enzyme (carrier) is ‘*detectable*’ (attribute). Mr. Cohen uses various process types such as MP, RP, and EP to illustrate, to the audience as well as to Mr. Moore himself, how the machine works. However, it needs to be made clear that the defamer performs implicit processes in order to achieve the negative presentation of Mr. Moore.

As such, Mr. Cohen frames the plaintiff (carrier) as a sex offender and pedophile (attribute) since the wand (actor) beeps when it is near the plaintiff’s body (goal). Most importantly, it is obvious that Mr. Cohen himself is being an actor and Mr. Moore is a goal since the former defames (MP) the latter. Ideologically, prejudice and discrimination can be detected from transitivity analysis as Mr. Cohen tries to frame the plaintiff to be an out–group member who “*secrete[s] an enzyme*” because he is a pedophile

- **Comparison**

Mr. Cohen attempts to present the plaintiff as an out-group member by employing this strategy. The defamer indirectly compares himself as well as a member of his staff, Raziell, on the one hand and the plaintiff on the other. This implicit comparison is achieved through the context; thus, whenever the device becomes close to the in-group members, it makes no noise. However, it immediately beeps when it is moved towards the plaintiff’s body, out-group member. Mr. Cohen states that “*the machine works... This is 99.8 percent accurate.*” This is an attempt to lower the plaintiff’s estimation by proving that the machine is accurate since it has not made a noise when being close to the

nonpedophiles in-group; but it beeps whenever being close to the out-group, Mr. Moore.

2. Semantic / Lexical Strategies

• Negative Lexicalisation

Throughout the show, the defamer uses various negative lexical items so as to convey his intentions of harming the plaintiff's reputation. The context that governs the event highlights the negativity of the words chosen by Mr. Cohen. For instance, the word '*abnormalities*' is employed to describe the actions detected by the wand which the defamer is testing. The defamer illustrates what he means by '*abnormalities*' when he mentions other negative expressions such as '*sex offenders*' and '*pedophiles*.' These two expressions are repeated by Mr. Cohen throughout his conversation with Mr. Moore so that the defamer emphasises the effect of these words on his viewers.

The choice of negative lexicalisations does not only attract the attention of Mr. Cohen's audience, but it also harms Mr. Moore's social image because the expressions seem to characterise the plaintiff when the wand beeps near his body. Thereby, the defamer succeeds in presenting Mr. Moore as a negative person who belongs to the out-group of "*sex offenders and particularly pedophiles*."

• Derogatory Words

This strategy is employed implicitly within Mr. Cohen's speech since he pretends to be someone else and claims not to accuse the plaintiff of anything. The whole idea of having a machine that beeps near "*sex offenders and particularly pedophiles*" derogates the plaintiff and presents him negatively. A particular statement appears to derogate Mr. Moore; the defamer claims that "*sex offenders and particularly pedophiles secrete an enzyme*." This sentence disdains the plaintiff because the machine is set to beep near him only. Thus, the defamer

disrespects Mr. Moore by this derogation which reveals Mr. Cohen's intentions of discrediting Mr. Moore and his actions.

It is clear that Mr. Cohen uses the semantic/lexical strategies of negative lexicalisation and derogatory words because he attempts to present Mr. Moore as an out-group member. Even though the defamer does not attack the plaintiff directly, Mr. Cohen's ideologies of prejudice and discrimination are reflected via these strategies.

3. Pragmatic Strategies

- **Speech Acts**

The speech acts of accusing and insulting are utilised; however, both of these speech acts are performed implicitly. When the device beeps, the defamer insults the plaintiff by accusing him of being sex offender and pedophile because the beeping noise indicates that the machine identifies and detects "*those sex offenders and particularly pedophiles [who] secrete an enzyme ... which is actually detectable.*" Although Mr. Cohen repeats the utterance '*I'm not accusing you,*' this is part of the show through which the defamer tricks the plaintiff. These speech acts are affirmed through the repetition of the beeping sound that occurs whenever the wand becomes close to the plaintiff. Moreover, Mr. Cohen asserts that "*the machine works...This is 99.8 percent accurate.*" which indicates that the accusations are factual information about Mr. Moore.

- **Implicature**

Contextually, the whole interview implicates the intended meaning which the defamer attempts to convey, i.e. Mr. Cohen tries to present Mr. Moore as a sex offender and pedophile. The use of the wand, which identifies '*abnormalities*' such as '*pedophiles*' who "*secrete an enzyme...which is actually detectable,*" implicates that the plaintiff is pedophile because it beeps when it moves near Mr. Moore's body. The

utterance “*the phrase ‘sweating like a rapist’ is actually based on science*” further implicates that what Mr. Cohen accuses the plaintiff of are considered facts.

4. Rhetorical Strategies

- **Hyperbole**

The defamer insults Mr. Moore and harms his reputation with the help of this strategy. Mr. Cohen, from the very beginning of the show, exaggerates in presenting the plaintiff as a sex offender who has been accused by several women. The character Mr. Cohen plays has a further exaggerative function; the defamer pretends to be an Israeli and an expert in detecting ‘*abnormalities*’ such as “*sex offenders and particularly pedophiles.*” Thus, Mr. Cohen frames the plaintiff as a corrupt politician and untrustworthy judge. The context of this case, more than anything else, indicates the ideologies the defamer has. He is prejudiced against Mr. Moore and attempts to make people view him in the same way.

E. Reproduction

“*Who is America?*” is a comedy show which primarily should entertain people but not at the expense of someone. Mr. Cohen is supposed to inform the guest that the show is based on comedy and give Mr. Moore the opportunity to decide whether or not he joins it. Another serious issue is that the device beeps only when it comes near Mr. Moore; the defamer and his staff could pretend that it beeps when some other people use it so as to indicate that the machine might not work. However, the accusation itself is hard to get rid of because the topic of sex abuse and paedophilia is extremely sensitive in various communities all over the world. Therefore, YouTube escalates the impact of defamation because its users, regardless of their social knowledge, would not accept such kinds of behaviour. The prank, hence, could be changed to regard a

different topic which is not defamatory and does not lower the estimation of the plaintiff.

Case 4: Ganske v. Mensch

If someone is accused of dealing with a foreign nation that is the West's enemy, like Russia, in the Western media, that accusation amounts to high treason. People who consider journalism to be a lucrative career should be aware of the long-standing hostility between Eastern and Western European societies. A journalist, who has been covering Russian politics and who writes articles on Russia as a part of his employment, is at the center of this case. This journalist may be accused of endorsing Russian government ideologies, and the defamer is attempting to get people who employed him to have him fired from his job, which is ultimately what happened.

The Text

To this xenophobic tweet of yours, sir, I fear we must tell @AP Central 'citation needed.' You clearly personally spread Russian bots on your own site; and @ ConspiratorO work on it has sent you into a frenzy of tweeting and trying to discredit him (Web Source 11).

A. Contextual Factors

1. Who: The Defamer

Former member of the British Parliament and operator of the news website Heat Street is Ms. Louise Daphne Mensch. She ran many Twitter accounts and worked as a full-time blogger, including @LouiseMensch, and @patriotics (Web Source 11).

2. Says What: The Content

On July 27, 2018 at 12:32 AM, Ms. Mensch came across the conversation between Mr. Ganske and @Conspirator0, and interjected herself and tweeted that:

To this xenophobic tweet of yours, sir, I fear we must tell @AP Central 'citation needed.' You clearly personally spread Russian bots on your own site; and @ ConspiratorO work on it has sent you into a frenzy of tweeting and trying to discredit him (Web Source 11).

Within this tweet, Ms. Mensch attached an image, exhibited below, of previous tweet published by the plaintiff (twitter.com/cganskeap/stat...). Ms. Mensch intentionally tagged plaintiff's employer, '@APCentral,' and published (Web Source 11):

3. In Which Channel

The defamer published her tweet on July 27, 2018 at 12:32 AM. She attached an image related to a previous tweet from plaintiff's account @eCGanskeAP (Web Source 11). It is necessary to mention that Twitter, like other media platforms, provides a feature called TAG symbolised by @. If someone tags other people in a tweet, those people get notified which results in the inevitability of viewing that particular tweet.

4. To Whom: The Plaintiff

Mr. Charles Ganske is a 37-year old journalist. From 2005 to 2007, as part of his job, he edited a website, www.russiablog.org. In addition to helping to prepare grant applications and fundraising letters, he also authored news releases. The plaintiff resumed his career in journalism in March, 2011 to work as the Central Region Broadcast News Editor for the Associated Press (AP) in Chicago, Illinois. From 2016 to 2018, the plaintiff worked as the National Sports Broadcast Editor and the

Social Media/UGC expert in Chicago while he was still employed by the AP. He had a clean name as a journalist and was well regarded by his peers in Chicago and London for his work and commitment to gathering user-generated information with subtlety and competence (Web Source 11).

B. Defamation Types

The type of defamation in this case is libel since it is published in a written form, and it is permanent on Twitter.

C. Reputational Harm

This tweet contains false and defamatory statements about the plaintiff because neither he nor his tweets are ‘*xenophobic*’; he never spreads Russian bots on any website. He is defamed because the defamer uses Twitter to make and publish false statements about Mr. Ganske and these false statements have harmed his reputation.

The plaintiff’s reputation as property is obviously harmed since Ms. Mensch’s attack to Mr. Ganske threatens his work. The defamer tags ‘@AP Central,’ the association in which Mr. Ganske works, so that they get notification of the tweet. Furthermore, Mr. Ganske’s reputation as honor is harmed by the claims and accusations of Ms. Mensch. The libel eradicates or is likely to eradicate the plaintiff’s characteristics that the community has given him. Mr. Ganske may face difficulties to recover from the harm of his reputation as honor, or worse, he may never recover it.

D. Discursive Strategies

1. Syntactic Strategies

- **Transitivity**

Table (4.5) Transitivity in Mensch’s Tweet

No.	Phrase	Participants	V. Process
1	I fear we must tell @AP Central	I(sensor) must tell @AP Central (phenomenon)	Fear (MnP)
2	We must tell @AP Central “citation needed”	We (sayer) “citation needed” (verbiage)	Tell (VP)
3	You ... spread Russian bots	You (sayer) Russian bots(verbiage)	Spread (VP)
4	[He] has sent you into a frenzy of tweeting	@ ConspiratorO (actor) You (goal)	Sent (MP)
5	[He]... discredit him	@ ConspiratorO (actor) Him(goal)	Discredit (MP)

Putting the context that governs this case in mind, it can be inferred that Ms. Mensch is prejudiced against the plaintiff. Thus, she attempts to present him as a racist person and an out–group member since he (actor) ‘*spread[s] Russian bots...*’ Ms. Mensch takes the role of sayer when she steps to inform or ‘*tell*’ Mr. Ganske’s employers, ‘@AP Central’ about his ‘*xenophobic tweet.*’ As such, the defamer seeks to present the plaintiff negatively as a racist out–group person in order to harm his reputation in the eyes of Twitter users and, most importantly, in the eyes of his employers so that he gets fired.

2. Semantic/ Lexical Strategies

- **Negative Lexicalisation**

Ms. Mensch expresses her beliefs about the plaintiff with the use of negative words to attract the attention of Twitter users. She opens her tweet with the word ‘*xenophobic*’ to describe Mr. Ganske and his tweet. Then, the defamer says that “*I fear we must tell @AP Central*” as an attempt to enhance the negative presentation of Mr. Ganske. Thus, the defamer claims that it is necessary to inform Mr. Ganske’s employers about his dangerous ‘*xenophobic tweet*’ in order to get him fired. The defamer tags the plaintiff’s employers, ‘*@AP Central,*’ because she wants them to be notified of her defamatory attacks.

- **Derogatory Words**

Implicit derogatory words can be found in Ms. Mensch’s tweet. The statement “*to this xenophobic tweet of yours*” demonstrates how the defamer intends to present the plaintiff as a racist person who hates foreigners and foreign countries. Therefore, Mr. Ganske is insulted by the defamer since she disrespects him when trying to discredit his tweet.

Ideologically, the plaintiff is presented as an out-group member who deserves to be fired and harmed. Ms. Mensch is influenced by such ideologies as racism and prejudice that result in the reputational harm of Mr. Ganske.

3. Pragmatic Strategies

- **Speech Acts**

This tweet has multiple speech acts such as asserting, accusing, and insulting. The defamer, first, asserts her ideas about the plaintiff by saying “[t]o *this xenophobic tweet of yours*”; accordingly, Ms. Mensch attempts to inform people on Twitter that the plaintiff’s tweet is in fact ‘*xenophobic.*’ Then, she states that the plaintiff “*clearly personally*

spread[s] Russian bots” on his site; Ms. Mensch’s assertion continues and is proven by her utterance.

Most importantly, the defamer accuses the plaintiff of things he has not done, i.e. she accuses him of untrue actions that result in damaging his reputation. Ms. Mensch accuses Mr. Ganske of being ‘*xenophobic*,’ and that he “*spread[s] Russian bots.*” Not only does the defamer attack the plaintiff with these false accusations, but she also attempts to harm his work life by tagging the association that Mr. Ganske works for. The tag means that the ‘*@AP Central*’ is going to be notified of this tweet which indicates the defamer’s intention of libelling Mr. Ganske and harming his reputation.

- **Implicature**

Implicitly, the accusation directed to Mr. Ganske implicates an insult for him. That is to say, the speech act of insulting is implicated and can be drawn from the contextual elements of the case. Therefore, accusing the plaintiff of being ‘*xenophobic*’ implicates an insult that Mr. Ganske is racist. Ms. Mensch’s prejudice against Mr. Ganske motivates her to accuse the plaintiff and insult him whether directly, by making assertions; or indirectly, by making an implicature. This prejudice serves in presenting the plaintiff as a member of the out-group (OTHER) who has negative features.

4. Rhetorical Strategies

- **Hyperbole**

This strategy intensifies the defamatory impact on the plaintiff. The defamer mentions that “*I fear we must tell @AP Central.*” This statement has two expressions that help the defamer in her exaggeration, namely, ‘*fear*’ and ‘*must*’. The word ‘*fear*’ emphasises the sensitive situation in the tweet. The obligation realised by the auxiliary verb ‘*must*’ indicates the seriousness of what Ms. Mensch is trying to do. Moreover,

the word ‘*xenophobic*’ itself has an exaggerative connotation; that is, it enhances the concept of racism against foreigners.

Ms. Mensch’s attempt to present the plaintiff as a ‘*xenophobic*’ and racist person helps in influencing how people perceive the plaintiff. She employs this rhetorical strategy so as to insult the plaintiff and make him an out-group member.

E. Reproduction

The tweet could be free from defamation if the defamer has expressed mere opinions rather than asserting her ideas as being factual claims. Additionally, if Ms. Mensch did not use negative words like ‘*xenophobic*,’ she could express her opinions without harming Mr. Ganske’s reputation. Thus, the tweet could have been written as follows: *I think we should tell @AP Central about your tweet, sir. You may spread Russian bots on your site; and @ ConspiratorO work on it has sent you into a frenzy of tweeting and trying to doubt him.*

Case 5: Burston v. Hanson

The political struggle to become a senator representing a certain state or obtain a seat in parliament may take on social factors that influence the outcome of the competition. Defamation is one of the social factors that can harm a politician's reputation, particularly if the person being defamed is the subject of words which have a material or moral impact on him. This could result in the loss of his parliamentary seat or even harm to his personal and family relationships; therefore, the defamed person's honor or morals are at risk. This case is a defamation proceeding between a former Senator for New South Wales, Mr. Brian Burston, and Ms. Pauline Hanson, who is an on-going and longstanding Senator for Queensland and leader of the Pauline Hanson One Nation Party (One Nation or PHON).

The Text

Pauline Hanson Please Explain” You’ll be disgusted to know that taxpayers are footing the bill for multiple unfair dismissal cases in one Senators office that doesn’t have the guts to dismiss people face-to-face. Instead, he sacks them by text, email or letter with no warning. This same Senator is now under investigation for serious sexual harassment. Just because we wear a little red pin that signifies we’re Senators, should not excuse shocking behaviour by elected members. If you don’t have respect for your staff, how can employees respect you? #Auspol # OneNation #PaulineHanson #NoToSexualHarassment (Web Source 12).

A. Contextual Factor

1. Who: The Defamer

Ms. Hanson is a popular political personality in Australia and has served as the senator for Queensland in the Senate since the 2016 Federal Election after winning re-election on May 21, 2022. She helped create One Nation, a right-wing populist political party afterwards known as PHON, in February, 1997. As a consequence of Mr. Burston's participation in the party that Ms. Hanson created, Ms. Hanson became friends with him and his wife, Rosaline, in 1998. Over time, Mr. Burston and Ms. Hanson's friendship deepened. Ms. Hanson's employment with her husband, most likely, led to Mr. Burston's friendship with her. This friendship lasted until the two fell out in the middle of 2018. Finally, Mr. Burston announced on June 14, 2018, that he was leaving One Nation to serve in the Senate as an independent. He then switched to the United Australian Party (UAP); however the defamatory publication caused him to lose his position in the 2019 Federal Election (Web Source 12).

2. Says What: The Content

A post published on Ms. Hanson's verified Facebook page, titled "*Pauline Hanson Please Explain*" on February 12, 2019, restated key aspects of a speech made by her to Parliament that night under parliamentary privilege. In her Facebook Post, Ms. Hanson accused the plaintiff for sexually harassing staff in his office, as an Australian Senator who behaved disgracefully by improperly dismissing numerous staff from their employment, and he brought the Senate into disrepute by his shocking behaviour towards his staff. It is noted that Ms. Hanson did not explicitly mention the plaintiff's name in her post. After two days, on February 14, 2019, Ms. Hanson sent the following text message to Mrs. Burston via Messenger:

Ross [sic] I have a lot of time for you especially because you were there for me when I broke up with Chris. You are being taken for a fool by Brian. He is the last man I would ever hit on. I am definitely not attracted to him now or ever. He is vindictive as you well know, Oldfield, Hinch, Dury, James and me. He is being investigated for sexual harassment by more than one of his former female staffers. They can't all be wrong. Everyone at Parliament knows that he is infatuated with Terry-lee and in his own words love her.

You won't get to see the evidence all on text from him to her because it will be a closed decision and she will get her pay out and gagged. He considers you to be nothing but a winging [sic] old bag turning out to be just like your mother who he wants to drop dead. He tells his staff he owns your home. Wake up to him. I

have nothing to gain. I just believe you deserve to be treated with a bit more respect. This is the man who said he would never hurt me or try to destroy One Nation. He turned on me because I couldn't endorse him for another 6 years. I am sorry that was a political decision because he never worked enough to keep it. You may think differently but please be objective.

[Mrs Burston reply]: *Please stop contacting me* (Web Source 12).

In this text message, Ms. Hanson again accused the plaintiff, Mr. Burston, of sexually harassing numerous female staff and behaving disgracefully by cheating on his wife, Mrs. Rosalyn Burston, with one of his female staffers. Various media sources had reported the sexual harassment mentioned in Ms. Hanson's text message (Web Source 12). According to the information provided above, it is apparent that the plaintiff, who is attacked in Ms. Hanson's post, is Mr. Burston. That is why the text message is mentioned within the contextual factors.

3. In Which Channel

Ms. Hanson published a post titled "*Pauline Hanson Please Explain*" on her verified Facebook page. The publication took place on February 12, 2019 (Web Source 12).

4. To Whom: The Plaintiff

Mr. Burston is more than 75 years old. Since 1987, Mr. Burston developed an interest in politics, serving on the Cessnock City Council for 12 years and subsequently as Deputy Mayor for Cessnock in 1997. Mr. Burston became involved with the One Nation party in around 1998. The party later endorsed him as the lead Senate candidate for New South Wales in the 2016 Federal Election. It was that election when Mr.

Burston was elected as Senator to represent One Nation for the State of New South Wales.

After meeting in 1998 at the One Nation senate pre-selection in Sydney, Mr. Burston and Ms. Hanson's friendship grew over time. Mrs. Burston also became close to Ms. Hanson, presumably through her working relationship with her husband. The friendship of Mr. Burston and Ms. Hanson started to deteriorate after Mr. Burston announced his resignation from One Nation on June 14, 2018, to sit in the Senate as an independent and later joining the United Australian Party (UAP) (Web Source 12).

B. Defamation Types

The type of defamation in this case is libel for two reasons: it is published in a written form and, most importantly, the publication is in a permanent form.

C. Reputational Harm

The defamer, Ms. Hanson, publishes insults and false accusations about Mr. Burston whose reputation is damaged in various ways. Mr. Burston is a reputable Senator who has worked in the political domain for more than two decades; thus, he has built his reputation as property which he expects others to respect. The defamer, though, attacks Mr. Burston's reputation as property more than once in her post: "*one Senator ... who doesn't have the guts to dismiss people face-to-face*", "*This same Senator is now under investigation for serious sexual harassment*", and "*Just because ... we're Senators, should not excuse shocking behaviour ...*" All these sentences are intended to damage the plaintiff's reputation as property. The consequences of this post are apparent in that Mr. Burston has not been elected because his reputation as Senator, i.e. his reputation as property, is destroyed and he may not be able to regain it.

The plaintiff’s reputation as honor is harmed to the same extent as his reputation as property. This is because his social role as Senator gives him the attributes that the society attaches to the Senator. By defaming Mr. Burston, Ms. Hanson eradicates the social privileges that the plaintiff has as a Senator. Thus, reputations as property and honor are complementary and interconnected for Mr. Burston because his social role simultaneously has certain characteristics attributed by the society, and also it is his property that has been improved throughout his years of work.

Indisputably and undoubtedly, the plaintiff’s reputation as dignity is also harmed by Ms. Hanson. Insulting the plaintiff and humiliating him, by such accusations as being ‘*unfair*’ senator who does ‘*shocking behaviour*’ like sexual harassment, carries dignity harm because the defamer expresses her disrespect towards the plaintiff in front of thousands of individuals on Facebook and probably other social media platforms.

D. Discursive Strategies

1. Syntactic Strategies:

- **Transitivity**

Table (4.6) Transitivity in Hanson’s Facebook Post

No.	Phrase	Participants	V. Process
1	You’ll be disgusted to know that...	You(sensor) To know that(phenomenon)	Disgusted (MnP)
2	[You]...know That taxpayers...	You(sensor) That taxpayer.. (phenomenon)	Know(MnP)
3	Taxpayers are footing the	Taxpayers (actor)	are footing

	bill..	The bill(goal)	(MP)
4	Senator [...] doesn't have the guts to...	Senator (behave)	doesn't have the guts (BP)
5	[Senator] dismiss people face-to-face.	Senator(actor) People(goal)	Dismiss(MP)
6	he sacks them	He(actor) Them (goal)	Sakes(MP)
7	This... Senator is now under investigation	Senator (carrier) under investigation (attribute)	Is (RP)
8	we wear a little red pin	We(behave)	Wear(BP)
9	we're Senators	We(carrier) Senators(attribute)	Are (RP)
10	[this] excuse shocking behaviour	shocking behaviour(goal)	Excuse(MP)
11	you don't have respect for your staff	You(sensor) Respect(phenomenon)	Have(MnP)
12	employees respect you	Employee(sensor) You (phenomenon)	Respect (MnP)

How Ms. Hanson frames Mr. Burston is reflected through transitivity analysis. From the very first clause, Ms. Hanson attaches the sensor role to her in-group members who are treated unfairly by Mr. Burston. Thus, her viewers and followers will be '*disgusted*' when they '*know*' the plaintiff's '*shocking behaviour*.' In addition to that, the defamer displays Mr. Burston in the actor role since he '*dismiss[es]*' people and '*sacks*' them without firstly warning them. Such framing indicates that the plaintiff is an out-group member who targets the

defamer's in-group members. The in-group, in turn, is displayed as the goal of Mr. Burston's actions. The negative presentation of the plaintiff is apparent in Ms. Hanson's publication since she portrays him as a bad person who takes advantage of his social position to do unethical and 'shocking' actions such as '*serious sexual harassment.*' Having different political beliefs from the plaintiff seems the most significant motivation that leads Ms. Hanson to discriminate the plaintiff and be prejudiced against him.

2. Semantic/Lexical Strategies

• Negative Lexicalisation

As an attempt to attract her viewers' attention, Ms. Hanson uses various negative terms from the very first sentence of her post. She addresses those who will view her publication by saying that they will be '*disgusted.*' The defamer starts to explain why people will be '*disgusted*' when she describes the plaintiff's actions. She assumes that the plaintiff '*sacks*' his employees '*unfair[ly]*' because he does not have the '*guts*' to do so '*face-to-face.*' Additionally, Ms. Hanson mentions that the plaintiff is being investigated for '*serious sexual harassment.*' Such negative terms and expressions are intended to destroy the target's social image and his reputation because he is presented negatively as an out-group member who conducts unethical and '*disgust[ing]*' actions.

• Derogatory words

Derogatory words are not necessarily direct or explicit; however, it should be emphasised that their effect is expressed as negatively as they should be. Through her post, Ms. Hanson employs indirect derogatory words with the intention of insulting the plaintiff. To start with, Ms. Hanson presents Mr. Burston as a coward "*who doesn't have the guts to dismiss people face-to-face. Instead, he sacks them by text, email, or letter with no warning.*" Furthermore, Ms. Hanson- when assuming that

the plaintiff is investigated for ‘*serious sexual harassment*’ tries to discredit Mr. Burston’s actions and his identity. The defamer highlights the same derogation by adding the hash tag ‘*#NoToSexualHarassment*.’ This hash tag allows Facebook users to view the defamer’s post simply through clicking on the hash tag.

Ideologically, the Facebook post underlies the prejudice that Ms. Hanson has against the plaintiff. This prejudice is indicated by the negative other presentation of the Senator who belongs to the out-group. Negative lexicalisations and derogatory words such as ‘*unfair*’, ‘*sacks*’, and ‘*shocking behaviour*’ reflect that the defamer attempts to assault the plaintiff because no one can ‘*respect*’ him. This bias is clearly supported by the power that the defamer has since she is a public political figure. Not only does the defamer attack the plaintiff publicly because of her bias, but she also highlights his ‘*shocking behaviour*,’ which will make people ‘*disgusted*’. Put differently, Ms. Hanson tries to dominate people and direct them to hold her beliefs.

3. Pragmatic Strategies

- **Speech Acts**

Ms. Hanson’s post involves the representative speech act of asserting. She conveys some information as being facts for which she has evidence to prove. For example, she writes that Mr. Burston “*doesn’t have the guts to...*”, “*he sacks...*”, and he is “*under investigation for serious sexual harassment.*” These speech acts imply that the defamer knows facts which she asserts in her post. Another speech act utilised in Ms. Hanson’s publication is that of accusing. She accuses Mr. Burston and insults him as well. Various accusations are found in the Facebook post, such as the accusation of being an unfair Senator who is coward and who ‘*sacks*’ people out of their jobs. She also accuses him of ‘*serious*

sexual harassment’, Ms. Hanson emphasises this accusation by giving the hash tag “*#NoToSexualHarassment* .”

Mr. Burston is insulted by the defamer when Ms. Hanson notices that people on Facebook will ‘*be disgusted to know*’ that Mr. Burston “*unfair[ly] ... sacks them by text, email, or letter with no warning.*” Ms. Hanson insults Mr. Burston by saying: “*If you don’t have respect for your staff, how can employees respect you?*”

- **Implicature**

Pragmatically, when a speaker conveys a particular meaning that can only be interpreted with a context, this is known as implicature. In Ms. Hanson’s Facebook post, the plaintiff’s name has never been mentioned. With the help of context, it is possible to determine which Senator is intended. Thus, Ms. Hanson implicates that the plaintiff is Mr. Burston since Mr. Burston has been “*under investigation for serious sexual harassment.*” Another implicature that pinpoints the identity of the plaintiff is Ms. Hanson’s utterance: “*Just because we wear a little red pin that signifies we’re Senators...*” The pronoun ‘*we*’ here may refer to the fact that both Ms. Hanson and the plaintiff, Mr. Burston, have worked together as one group; both of them have been allies for a long time which allows the defamer to use ‘*we*’ in reference for Mr. Burston. The text message sent by Ms. Hanson to Mr. Burston’s wife, clearly, explains who the plaintiff is. Leaving the plaintiff’s identity implicit reflects Ms. Hanson’s ideology which speculatively leads to reveal this person through his characteristics mentioned in the post. Therefore, the reputational harm could be intensified and enhanced by the use of implicature.

Ms. Hanson utilises these pragmatic strategies to reach her goal successfully; that is, defaming the plaintiff and damaging his reputation. As a Senator, she has the power and dominance to insult another Senator;

she also accuses him of ‘*serious sexual harassment.*’ Not anyone can prove such an accusation against a Senator; but a powerful Senator like her may be able to attack and harm the plaintiff’s reputation and nobody would ask for a proof. This kind of power allows the defamer to be prejudiced publicly and in front of a huge number of people. The defamer tries to make use of this power and make people prejudiced against the plaintiff.

4. Rhetorical Strategies

- **Hyperbole**

‘[U]nfair’, ‘*disgust*’, ‘*sacks*’, ‘*sexual harassment*’, and ‘*shocking behaviour*’ are the expressions used by the defamer to attack the plaintiff. Apparently, she attempts to attract readers’ attention by such words; she elaborates her ideologies with hyperbole so as to assault the plaintiff and destroy his image in the community. Hyperbole reveals the speaker’s ideological bias and her intentions of lowering Mr. Burston’s estimation in the eyes of Facebook users who are related to the political domain in particular and other domains in general. The hyperbolic expressions in Ms. Hanson’s speech are reinforced through her assertions of the information; that is, the defamer asserts her description of Mr. Burston and emphasises her libel by employing hyperbole.

E. Reproduction

There could be less or no harm of reputation if the speaker expresses an opinion rather than asserting facts. Ms. Hanson could express her ideas and beliefs without making a reference to any particular individual through the use of the passive form. Thus, she could have said: *Some taxpayers are dismissed unfairly, they deserve some respect. Some employees face sexual harassment, and this has to be rejected by making protection policies against abusers. No excuse should be given to anyone*

who behaves in such an unacceptable way. We have to respect our employees so they could respect us.

This brief and simple example of what could be said has some criteria that do not imply defamation. First and for most, no reference has been made to any particular individual; this is achieved through the use of passive form and general reference. The words and expressions are also free from libel since they do not indicate an insult or accusation that threatens someone's reputation. Therefore, the speaker conveys ideas and beliefs without prejudice and bias.

Case 6: Riley v. Murray

The issue of Britain's Exit from the European Union, or the so-called *Brexit*, has cast a shadow over the political and economic life of the United Kingdom. This is clearly evident on the direct impact of verbal bids in the prime ministerial elections, as well as on the talks of politicians and economists who were divided into supporters and opponents of Britain's Exit from the European Union.

This case is about Ms. Murray, who is from the party opposing Britain's Exit from the European Union, She posts a tweet on her Twitter account dated March, 2019 in which she attacks the journalist, Ms. Riley, and called her defamatory words and falsely accused her of saying things she did not say.

The Text

Today Jeremy Corbyn went to his local mosque for Visit My Mosque Day, and was attacked by a Brexiteer. Rachel Riley tweets that Corbyn deserves to be violently attacked because he is a Nazi. This woman is as dangerous as she is stupid. Nobody should engage with her. Ever (Web Source 13).

A. Contextual Factors

1. Who: The Defamer

The Defamer, Laura Murray, served as the Stakeholder Manager for Jeremy Corbyn MP, who was the leader of the Labour Party at the time. In March, 2019, she had some 7,252 followers (Web Source 13).

2. Says What: The Content

To understand the context, it is necessary first to set out two earlier tweets; one by Owen Jones, the Guardian journalist, and the other by Rachel Riley. On January 10, 2019, Mr. Jones posted the following message on Twitter referring to an incident in which an egg had been thrown at Nick Griffin, the former leader of the British National Party:



At around 15.30 on March 3, 2019, the leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, was assaulted with an egg whilst he was visiting the Finsbury Park Mosque. A member of Mr. Corbyn's team apparently detained the assailant, and he was subsequently arrested. Media reports of the incident started to appear from around 16.30 on March 3, 2019. At 17.25, the Guardian reported that a man had been arrested for hitting Mr. Corbyn with an egg. At 18.16, Rachel Riley re-tweeted Mr. Jones' tweet and said '*Good Advice.*' Ms. Riley was referring to the incident involving the assault on Mr. Corbyn earlier that afternoon. At 20:10, Ms. Murray posted the following tweet in reply to Riley (Web Source 13):



At 21.03, Ms. Murray posted the following tweet (Web Source 13):



The natural and ordinary meaning of Ms. Murray's tweet includes false accusation to Ms. Riley of being supporter of public violence.

3. In Which Channel

The defamer, Ms. Murray, published her defamatory statement on Twitter on March 3, 2019. At that time, she had around 7,252 followers (Web Source 13).

4. To Whom: The Plaintiff

The Plaintiff, Rachel Riley, is a television presenter, probably best known for her appearance on the Channel 4 programme, Countdown. She

was a regular user of Twitter. In March, 2019, she had some 625,000 followers (Web Source 13).

B. Defamation Types

This defamatory action is considered libellous for two reasons: the first one is that it is written; while the second one, and probably the most important one, is that it is published on Twitter. This publication indicates that the libel is permanent.

C. Reputational Harm

This tweet affects the plaintiff's reputation, namely, reputation as honor and dignity. Since Ms. Riley is a journalist whose esteem is predetermined in the society; the defamer, Ms. Murray, published untrue information about the plaintiff. The society attaches the role of a journalist to such characteristics as being honest. An individual who has a certain social role, such as journalist, desires other individuals in his society to respect him for the qualities that his social role requires. Therefore, the defamatory statement has reduced Ms. Riley's esteem on Twitter, since she has lost her face in the community as well as her status and identity. Deference and demeanour rules govern social interactions; the plaintiff expects others to adhere to those rules.

However, Ms. Murray has disrespected the plaintiff by calling her '*dangerous*' and '*stupid*' in front of the community. Additionally, the defamer has attempted to prevent other people from interacting or dealing with the plaintiff "*Nobody should engage with her. Ever.*" This reputational harm can be perceived further through analysing the discursive strategies.

D. Discursive Strategies

1. Syntactic Strategies:

- **Transitivity**

Table (4.7) Transitivity in Murray’s Tweet

NO.	Phrase	Participants	V. Process
1	Rachel Riley tweets that Corbyn deserves to be violently attacked because he is a Nazi	Riley (sayer) That... a Nazi (verbiage)	Tweet (VP)
2	Corbyn ... be violently attacked	Corbyn (goal)	Be...attacked (MP)
3	he is a Nazi	He (carrier) Nazi (attribute)	Is (RP)
4	This woman is as dangerous	This woman (carrier) Dangerous (attribute)	Is (RP)
5	She is stupid	She (carrier) Stupid (attribute)	Is (RP)
6	Nobody should engage with her	Nobody (actor) Her (goal)	Engage (MP)

All the sentences in Ms. Murray’s publication are centred around one particular aim, that is of showing Ms. Riley in the role of sayer “*Rachel Riley tweets ...*” who instigates people to attack Mr. Corbyn, and the role of carrier since she has such attributes as ‘*dangerous*’ and ‘*stupid.*’ Additionally, Ms. Murray portrays Mr. Corbyn, her in–group member whom she supports, in the role of the goal attacked by the out–group members who are instigated and supported by the plaintiff.

The aforementioned analysis unveils Ms. Murray’s prejudice and discrimination against Ms. Riley. These ideologies stem from the difference of opinion and political affiliation the two participants have. Therefore, the defamer is motivated to present the plaintiff negatively so as to make people avoid Ms. Riley and not ‘*engage with her.*’

2. Semantic/Lexical Strategies

- **Negative Lexicalisation**

Expressing one's opinion is a right that everyone in the society has. Ms. Murray, though, misuses her right of freedom of opinion expression through spreading false information concerning Ms. Riley. What the defamer tries to do is to present the plaintiff negatively so as to harm her reputation and deter others from '*engaging*' with her. Thus, Ms. Murray claims that Ms. Riley encourages violence against the MP Mr. Jeremy Corbyn. The defamer states that Ms. Riley "*tweets that Corbyn deserves to be violently attacked.*" '*Violently*' and '*attacked*' are capable of directing Twitter users to perceive the plaintiff as an out-group member; Ms. Murray elaborates her claim about Ms. Riley's alleged tweet in '*because he [Corbyn] is a Nazi.*' The word '*Nazi*' is intentionally used to highlight the defamer's viewpoint about the plaintiff. Ms. Murray strives to make people avoid interacting with Ms. Riley by saying that "*nobody should engage with her*" because Ms. Riley "*is as dangerous as she is stupid.*" All these negative terms and lexical items are employed to portray the plaintiff as a bad social member who belongs to the out-group. Ms. Murray's strong beliefs in the ideologies of the Labor Party and its leader, Mr. Corbyn, can be considered as a significant factor behind defaming Ms. Riley and attacking her publicly.

- **Derogatory Words**

Ms. Murray assaults the plaintiff with the derogatory words '*dangerous*' and '*stupid.*' These two words describe how the defamer views the plaintiff; i.e. the defamer insults the plaintiff explicitly in front of thousands of individuals on Twitter. Derogating the plaintiff means discrediting her identity and image which can harm the plaintiff's reputation and lower her estimation in the society.

Analysing the semantic strategies of negative lexicalisation and derogatory words reveals to what extent the defamer deliberately intends to harm the plaintiff. This intention is influenced by prejudice against Ms. Riley that stems from difference of political beliefs and affiliations.

3. Pragmatic Strategies

- **Speech Acts**

The speaker is committed to the truth of proposition. The utterance “*Rachel Riley tweets ... is a Nazi*” is a representative speech act of asserting since Ms. Murray publishes information that she believes to be true. This is clear through Ms. Murray’s use of the present simple tense instead of modal verbs which express uncertainty. In other words, the defamer asserts that the plaintiff does something which, in reality, is not correct.

The representative speech act of accusing is found in Ms. Murray’s publication, it includes spreading incorrect information about the plaintiff which holds accusation that damages Ms. Riley’s reputation. It is necessary to mention that defamation, in most or in all cases, includes the speech act of accusing which fulfils the defamer’s intention of lowering the esteem of the plaintiff.

The defamer insults the plaintiff by using the words ‘*dangerous*’ and ‘*stupid*,’ i.e. Ms. Murray intentionally humiliates Ms. Riley by publically disrespecting her. Finally, the utterance “[n]obody should engage with her. Ever” includes an advice because the speaker uses ‘*should*’ to construct the directive speech act of advising. The word ‘*engage*’ can hold the meaning of interacting with Twitter users whether by reading, retweeting, and liking their tweets; it can also mean dealing and interacting with someone in general. This latter meaning is more likely to be seen as intended by the defamer especially when she ends her tweet with the word ‘*Ever.*’

Ideologically, the three speech acts found in Ms. Murray's tweet assist in making negative other presentation of the plaintiff. This can be noticed through the defamer's use of insult with the words '*dangerous*' and '*stupid*.' In addition to that, discrimination can be perceived through analysing the directive speech act of advising; that is to say, the defamer discriminates the plaintiff by directing and advising others to avoid interacting with her.

4. Rhetorical Strategies

- **Hyperbole**

Ms. Murray has publically accused the plaintiff, Ms. Riley, of encouraging a violent attack against Mr. Corbyn "*because he is a Nazi,*" the use of hyperbole reveals the defamer's attempt to present the plaintiff as a racist and '*dangerous*' individual. The words '*Nazi*' and '*dangerous*' bear exaggeration in their cultural meanings since the former, *Nazi*, threatens European social security, and the latter, *dangerous*, has the connotation that a dangerous person may represent a threat for all people regardless of their race, religion, ethnicity, and so on.

- **Reference**

Since homophora is a type of reference that relies more on general knowledge or shared culture than it does on specific information of a given context, employing the word *Nazi* instigates Twitter users against Ms. Riley. When Ms. Murray publishes her untrue information about Ms. Riley, the defamer has made an effort to show that the plaintiff is an out-group member who bears racist ideologies against in-group members such as Mr. Corbyn.

Rhetorical analysis is used to detect the ideologies behind the tweet. It can be noticed that Ms. Murray utilises rhetorical strategies to harm the reputation of the plaintiff; describing the plaintiff as a dangerous

person highlights that Ms. Riley is an out-group member, and that the defamer is prejudiced against plaintiff.

E. Reproduction

The analyst views that in order to avoid defamation, the speaker could have done the following:

- Ms. Murray could publish correct information for which she has accurate evidence.
- She could avoid using negative and derogatory words such as '*dangerous*' and '*stupid*' that imply an insult and humiliation.
- She could advise the plaintiff to support antiracism since Ms. Riley is a journalist and has a huge audience.
- Finally, Ms. Murray could use modal verbs to express her opinion rather than asserting her information as being a matter of fact.

Case 7: Banks v. Cadwalladr

This is another case about Brexit. The journalist, Ms. Cadwalladr, talks on the TED platform about the impact of social media on people's ideas and opinions and how the Internet may distort the facts of Britain's Exit from the European Union in a video and through her account on Twitter. She attacks and defames a politician and the businessman, Mr. Banks, by calling him a liar and claiming that the Russian government funds him financially to carry out his campaign for Brexit. The issue of financing this campaign by a country like Russia, with the hostility of the West towards it, has dimensions including denigrate him and may amount to treason. Therefore, this issue contains ideological - political aspects and social - cultural aspects that lead to harm his reputation and prevent people from dealing with him, so that the damage is political and economic.

The Texts

The words spoken by Ms. Cadwalladr on the TED Talk are:

And I am not even going to get into the lies that Arron Banks has told about his covert relationship with the Russian Government.

In the tweet, Ms. Cadwalladr provided a hyperlink to the TED Talk and wrote:

Oh Arron. This is too tragic. Nigel Farage's secret funder Arron Banks has sent me a pre-action letter this morning: he's suing me over this TED talk. If you haven't watched it please do. I say he lied about his contact with the Russian govt. Because he did (Web Source 14).

A. Contextual Factors

1. Who: The Defamer

The defamer, Ms. Carole Cadwalladr, is a freelance journalist and writer who has written predominantly for The Observer and The Guardian newspapers. She, as a social activist, expresses her opinion on a platform called TED.com and on Twitter. It is necessary to mention that Ms. Cadwalladr is among the opponents of Britain's leaving the European Union; that is to say, she is against the Brexit campaign (Web Source14) and (Web Source 15).

2. Says What: The Content

On April 15, 2019, Ms. Cadwalladr gave a speech on Ted Talk conference which was entitled “*Facebook’s role in Brexit – and the threat to democracy.*” A video recording of the conference was published on the Ted.com website shortly after it was given in the Ted conference in Canada. In this Ted Talk, Ms. Cadwalladr mentioned Mr. Arron Banks by saying that: “*And I am not even going to get into the lies that Arron*

Banks has told about his covert relationship with the Russian Government” (Web Source14) and (Web Source 16).

Mr. Banks sent Ms. Cadwalladr a letter to inform her that he was going to sue her over the Ted Talk. Ms. Cadwalladr, then, published on Twitter a hyperlink of the Ted Talk and wrote:

Oh Arron. This is too tragic. Nigel Farage’s secret funder Arron Banks has sent me a pre-action letter this morning: he’s suing me over this TED talk. If you haven’t watched it please do. I say he lied about his contact with the Russian govt. Because he did (Web Source14).

3. In Which Channel

Ms. Cadwalladr mentioned the plaintiff, Mr. Banks, in a conference which was recorded and published on Ted.com. On Twitter, also, she shared a hyperlink of the Ted Talk with a tweet to explain what the hyperlink included. Ms. Cadwalladr asked Twitter users to go ahead and watch the video in case they had not seen it yet (Web Source14) and (Web Source 15).

4. To Whom: The Plaintiff

Mr. Arron Banks is an important public figure in the political domain. He is one of the leaders of, and by far the largest donor to, the successful campaign for the United Kingdom to vote in favour of leaving the European Union in the referendum held on June 23, 2016. He is also a businessman with a diverse range of business and investment interests including the insurance industry (Web Source14).

B. Defamation Types

Both publications of the defamer are libellous because they are permanent and can be accessed at any time.

C. Reputational Harm

Mr. Banks is a businessman and an active politician who has played an important role in the campaign for Britain to leave the European Union. He is, consequently, a public figure who has a reputation related to his social roles. Additionally, Mr. Banks expects people to respect his social face, and to treat him accordingly. However, Ms. Cadwalladr has breached the rules of deference and demeanour by publicly calling Mr. Banks a liar. Therefore, his reputation as dignity is damaged. His reputation as honor is also damaged since the defamer has humiliated the plaintiff, especially by attacking his social role as a famous politician and a reputable businessman.

Furthermore, Mr. Banks may have gained his reputation through his hard work, i.e. he has a reputation as property which has been damaged by the defamer. Social media platforms play a role in defamation particularly when the defamer publishes a hyperlink on Twitter which allows endless number of people to watch the Ted Talk video (more than one million). In this case, Mr. Banks has a little chance in regaining his reputation as property and dignity; he, however, may have no chance in regaining his reputation as honor.

D. Discursive Strategies

1. Syntactic Strategies

- Transitivity

Table (4.8) Transitivity in Cadwalladr's TED Talk

NO.	Phrase	Participants	V. Process
1	I ...get into the lies	I(actor) The lies(goal)	Get (MP)
2	Arron Banks has told	Arron (sayer) His...	Has told (VP)

	...Government.”	Government(verbiage)	
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Table (4.9) Transitivity in Cadwalladr’s Tweet

NO.	Phrase	Participants	V. Process
1	This is too tragic	This (carrier) Tragic(attribute)	Is (RP)
2	Arron Banks has sent me a pre-action letter	Arron Banks (actor) a pre-action letter(goal)	Has sent (MP)
3	he’s suing me	He (actor) Me(goal)	Is suing (MP)
4	You haven’t watched it	You (sensor) It(phenomenon)	Haven’t watch (MnP)
5	please [you] do	[you] (actor/sensor)	Do/watch (MP/MnP)
6	I say he lied ... govt.	I(sayer) He....govt.(verbiage)	Say (VP)
7	he lied about ... govt.	He (sayer) about ... govt.(verbiage)	Lied (VP)
8	He did	He(actor) It (goal)	Did (MP)

Ms. Cadwalladr’s publications on Ted Talk and Twitter have the same intention of exposing the ‘lies’ that are ‘told’ by Mr. Banks. Thereby, the defamer puts herself in the role of actor as she attempts to not ‘get’ involved ‘into the lies’ of the plaintiff. Mr. Banks, on the other hand, is repeatedly presented as a liar (sayer). Allegedly, the plaintiff

(out-group member) tells lies about a ‘*covert relationship*’ he has with another out-group member, i.e. ‘*Russian Government.*’ Moreover, the tweet includes Ms. Cadwalladr’s attempt to instigate her viewers to watch the plaintiff’s lies that she has already mentioned in the Ted Talk. Consequently, the defamer appears to present Mr. Banks negatively because he has ‘*covert relationships*’ with a European country that has a political conflict with England. What motivates Ms. Cadwalladr to frame Mr. Banks in the above mentioned ways is her prejudice against the plaintiff personally in addition to the Russian Government.

2. Semantic/Lexical Strategies

•Negative Lexicalisation

Ms. Cadwalladr’s publications include a lot of negative words that not only can attract people’s attention, but they can also ruin Mr. Banks’ social image as a public figure and reputable businessman. Ms. Cadwalladr, the defamer, states that Mr. Banks has told ‘*lies*’ about his ‘*covert relationship*’ with the Russian Government. Obviously the word ‘*lies*’ means that the plaintiff does not tell the truth and is being dishonest about his political relations with other European country like Russia. ‘*Covert,*’ on the other hand, indicates that the plaintiff is doing something wrong which gets him to be secretive about it. This is found in the subsequent sentence stated by Ms. Cadwalladr “*secret funder Arron Banks.*” Therefore, the defamer claims that the plaintiff has an illegal and unethical conduct because he ‘*lied*’ about it. The occurrence of the word *lie* more than once entails that the defamer believes rather than opines her viewpoint about Mr. Banks. She insists on the idea that the plaintiff tells lies about ‘*secret*’ and ‘*covert*’ relationship the plaintiff has with the ‘*Russian Government.*’ Since the United Kingdom and Russia are not allies, such publications display Mr. Banks as an out-group member and present him in a negative way. Ideologically, the defamer seems to be

influenced by prejudice against Mr. Banks and, as a consequence, Ms. Cadwalladr discriminates the plaintiff via harming his reputation.

- **Derogatory Words**

Ms. Cadwalladr utilises the strategy of derogatory words motivated by her prejudice and discrimination against Mr. Banks. Thus, the defamer states that Mr. Banks tells ‘*lies*’ about “*his covert relationship with the Russian Government.*” This allegation is repeated in the tweet “*I say he lied about his contact with the Russian govt. Because he did.*” Such claims and allegations are capable of ruining the plaintiff’s reputation in front of Ted talk viewers as well as Twitter users. Since Ms. Cadwalladr opposes Britain’s leaving the European Union and since Mr. Banks is the leader and largest donor of the Brexit campaign, the defamer disdains and disparages the plaintiff via her publications. It needs to be mentioned that Ms. Cadwalladr employs explicit derogation which can be attributed to the fact that she, as a journalist, has the power that enables her to disrespect the plaintiff and discredit his actions overtly and publicly.

3. Pragmatic Strategies

- **Speech Acts**

The utterances “*the lies that Arron Banks has told*” and “*I say he lied Because he did*” constitute the representative speech acts of asserting and accusing. The defamer asserts her viewpoint of Mr. Banks as a truth that is taken for granted. Ms. Cadwalladr uses tenses that convey this type of speech act such as present perfect ‘*has told*’, present simple ‘*I say*’, and past simple ‘*he lied.*’

When she asserts that Mr. Banks is a liar, the defamer employs the speech act of accusing. By publishing untrue and bad information about the plaintiff, Ms. Cadwalladr distorts the reality so as to harm the plaintiff’s reputation. A further reputational harm is conveyed by the act

of insulting; the defamer uses libellous insult expressed by the following utterances: “*the lies that Arron Banks has told*” and “*he lied.*” Publishing a libelous speech on TED Talk results in serious reputational harm, and sharing the link of that speech on Twitter exacerbates the harm.

Ms. Cadwalladr explains the content of hyperlink with a tweet that attracts Twitter users’ attention; she urges and directs them to watch and react to the hyperlink “*If you haven’t watched it please do.*” This directive speech act of ordering reflects the defamer’s intention of attacking Mr. Banks and therefore harming his reputation. A freelance journalist has a powerful status with a decent amount of followers; these two factors give her the opportunity to express and publish the ideology and attitude towards out - group members. Not only does she express her beliefs, but she also tarnishes the reputation of others by publishing libelous and untrue statements.

4. Rhetorical Strategies

- **Reference**

Due to the cultural and ideological commonalities between Western Europe in general and Britain in particular, as well as Britain's political relationship with Russia, the claim that a political businessman like Mr. Banks receives financial support from the Russian government is an accusation of betrayal which can risk his political and even economic work in Britain. Thus, the homophora in Ms. Cadwalladr’s sentence, “*his covert relationship with the Russian Government,*” indicates a libel which has an ideological essence.

E. Reproduction

It is possible for Ms. Cadwalladr not to defame Mr. Banks; the defamer could express and convey her ideas as being mere opinions. The freedom of speech includes expressing one’s opinions but it does not include harming someone’s reputation. Furthermore, the speaker could

avoid attacking the plaintiff's social image; put differently, Ms. Cadwalladr could replace the assertion that the plaintiff '*lied*' or '*has lied*' by less humiliating expressions. For example, the researcher views that the Ted Talk could involve the following: *And I am not even going to get into what Arron Banks has told about his relationships with other governments.*

Additionally, the tweet could be expressed as follows: *Arron Banks has sent me a pre-action letter this morning: he's suing me over this TED talk. If you haven't watched it please do. I say he has mentioned something about contacts that he may have with other countries' govt.*

Case 8: Alberta Health Services v. Johnston

Social catastrophes like wars and disease outbreaks drive some people to come up with ideologies that are related to whether they should embrace the catastrophe or not. The COVID-19 pandemic forced many individuals to take the preventative measures used by the nation's health officials and supported by the legislation. In this case, Mr. Johnston utilises social media platforms to attack healthcare organisations and those who work there in order to insult and harm them.

The Text

AHS has gone out of their way to commit the following crimes... criminal trespass, criminal harassment, extortion, intimidation, and terrorism.... Obviously, we're going to put their names out in public... we're going to talk about them.... We are going to be utilizing the law to bring these criminals who work for AHS to justice, and believe me, they are going to go to prison, these are people who have committed heinous crimes against the people of Calgary and I'm not going to quit until they are in jail.

Hey, AHS, repeating what I said this morning, we're going to arrest you for culpable homicide and then we're taking your houses and bank accounts, you're not getting them back. Those are going to be liquidated and spent on restoring Calgary business and fixing the lives you've ruined. You're just following orders? Didn't work for the Nazis either, isn't going to work for you. I have zero sympathy. We're going to have Nuremburg trials in Calgary folks that are what's happening. I've truly had enough and you know I'll be smiling the whole time I do it (Web Source 17).

A. Contextual Factors

1. Who: The Defamer

At the time of this publication, Mr. Johnston was a resident of Calgary. He wanted to mitigate the pandemic of COVID-19, so Mr. Johnston was a self-appointed spokesperson to oppose public health measures in Alberta. Mr. Johnston was a creator of social media, candidate to be a mayor, and the host of an online show (Web Source 17).

2. Says What: The Content

Mr. Johnston used his mayoralty campaign and his social media platforms to spread hate and misinformation about the Alberta Health Services, henceforth AHS. On various occasions, the defamer expressed his beliefs about AHS and its inspectors. Among these occasions, for example, he published the following speech on his online show (Web Source 18):

Get this. Alright. Get this into your heads. If your wives your husbands and your kids are over 18, they're adults, they are all the beneficiaries of your illegal activity. I'm coming after each and every one of you.

This is something you need to consider. All of you are criminals, every single one of you. I have no respect for anyone at Alberta Health Services. I'm going to come at you with everything that I have got. I'm going to come at you with full vitriol and full malice. You have never once come across a guy like me who cannot wait to see each and everyone of you suffering the way you made all of us in Alberta suffer. You wanted a war? You're going to get one. In fact, AHS, the WAR IS ON.

The defamer also published a CTV interview by the reporter Tyson Fedor; Mr. Johnston told the interviewer the following:

AHS has gone out of their way to commit the following crimes... criminal trespass, criminal harassment, extortion, intimidation, and terrorism.... Obviously, we're going to put their names out in public... we're going to talk about them.... We are going to be utilizing the law to bring these criminals who work for AHS to justice, and believe me, they are going to go to prison, these are people who have committed heinous crimes against the people of Calgary and I'm not going to quit until they are in jail (Web Source 18).

In his speeches, Mr. Johnston expressed his intentions to harm AHS by saying that “*My goal is to bankrupt AHS members.*” He continued to attack the plaintiff at the Whistle Stop Café; Mr. Johnston stated:

Hey, AHS, repeating what I said this morning, we're going to arrest you for culpable homicide and then we're taking your houses and bank accounts, you're not getting them back. Those are going to be liquidated

and spent on restoring Calgary business and fixing the lives you've ruined. You're just following orders? Didn't work for the Nazis either, isn't going to work for you. I have zero sympathy. We're going to have Nuremburg trials in Calgary folks, that are what's happening. I've truly had enough and you know I'll be smiling the whole time I do it (Web Source 17).

3. In Which Channel

Mr. Johnston publishes his videos on his Website 'www.Freedom report.ca.' The following is an advertisement used by the defamer to propagate his show: "Kevin J. Johnston is CANADA'S MOST CENSORED MAN! Watch the Kevin J. Johnston Show LIVE Tuesdays 7PM MS.T / 9PM Eastern Time" (Web Source 18).

4. To Whom: The Plaintiff

AHS is a regional health authority; it is the only provider of public health services in Alberta. Their employees are responsible for educating Albertans about and 'enforcing the mandate of the Public Health Act (henceforth PHA) and the orders of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, or CMOH.' This responsibility included enforcing CMOH orders concerning the COVID-19 pandemic (Web Source 17).

B. Defamation Types

Publications on social media platforms like YouTube are considered libellous because they are, or can be, permanent and accessible at various places and times.

C. Reputational Harm

The defamer attacks AHS to destroy its reputation in Calgary and the whole world. Since Mr. Johnston targets AHS, and since it is a public organisation that has several members working for it, AHS reputation as property is harmed as a consequence of the publication. Mr. Johnston

makes his intentions about hurting AHS clear to the public. He mentions that he would do his best to harm AHS and its inspectors. Therefore, his intentions are explicit to the plaintiff and the third party to whom the publications are made.

D. Discursive Strategies

1. Syntactic Strategies:

- **Transitivity**

Table (4.10) Transitivity in Johnston’s YouTube Speech

NO.	Phrase	Participants	V. Process
1	AHS... commit ... crimes	AHS (actor) Crimes (goal)	Commit (MP)
2	We... put... names	We (actor) Names (goal)	Put (MP)
3	We... talk...them	We (sayer) Them (verbiage)	Talk (VP)
4	We...utilize the law	We (actor) The law (goal)	Utilize(MP)
5	They... go	They (actor)	Go (MP)
6	People... committed ... crimes	People (actor) Crimes (goal)	Committed (MP)
7	I... quit	I (actor)	Quit (MP)
8	They are in jail.	They (existent)	Are (EP)
9	We... arrest you	We (actor) You (goal)	Arrest (MP)
10	we’re taking your houses and bank accounts	We (actor) Houses/accounts (goal)	Taking (MP)

11	the lives you've ruined	You (actor) Lives (goal)	Ruined (MP)
12	I'll be smiling the whole time I do it."	I (behave)	Smiling (BP)

Mr. Johnston is an active figure who opposes the health measurements being taken against COVID-19. For this specific reason, he is prejudiced against AHS and its employees because they try to follow the orders relevant to the vaccine. The defamer, in order to discriminate the plaintiff, presents AHS negatively via the role of an actor whose goals are the Albertans. This is shown in the clauses '*AHS ... commit ... crimes*' and '*ruin*' the '*lives.*' of Albertans. Mr. Johnston endeavours to take an action against AHS's employees through '*utiliz[ing] the law*' to put them '*in jail.*' Being a sayer, the defamer attempts to expose AHS's employees because they are dangerous out-group members and they deserve to be arrested. In summary, Mr. Johnston deliberately intends to harm AHS since his speech is full of discrimination and prejudice which drive the defamer to present the plaintiff negatively.

2. Semantic/Lexical Strategies

- **Derogatory Words**

Mr. Johnston utilises both direct and indirect derogation throughout his publication. First of all, he attacks AHS with such derogatory words as "*AHS ... commit the following crimes... criminal trespass, criminal harassment, extortion, intimidation, and terrorism.*" The assumption that AHS commits these crimes has the potential of damaging its reputation. The defamer continues his derogation by saying that he and his in-group members are going to expose "*these criminals who work for AHS.*" Mr. Johnston believes that AHS is an out-group organisation and he intends to utilise the law to bring it '*to justice.*'

Once again, the defamer derogates the plaintiff when he mentions that AHS ‘*committed heinous crimes*’ such as ‘*culpable homicide*.’ The aforementioned derogatory words allow the defamer to disdain the plaintiff and disrespect its social estimation as a public health organisation. Since Mr. Johnston is against the vaccine and since he attempts to mitigate the COVID–19 pandemic, he is prejudiced against AHS and its employees who are ‘*following orders*’ through forcing Calgarians to take the vaccine.

3. Pragmatic Strategies

- **Speech Acts**

The main speech act used by Mr. Johnston to accomplish defamation is that of accusing. Throughout his publication, the defamer accuses the plaintiff of ‘*criminal trespass*,’ ‘*terrorism*,’ ‘*harassment*,’ ‘*extortion*,’ and ‘*intimidation*.’ Mr. Johnston emphasises his belief that AHS workers are ‘*criminals*’ who commit ‘*heinous crimes against the people of Calgary*.’ He further accuses AHS of ‘*culpable homicide*’ and ruining Calgarians’ lives and businesses.

Another speech act found in Mr. Johnston’s publication is threatening. This commissive speech act assists the defamer to express his intentions of harming the plaintiff’s reputation and work. More than once, Mr. Johnston threatens AHS workers to ‘*arrest*’ them ‘*for culpable crimes*,’ and he threatens to take their ‘*houses and bank accounts*.’ He threatens that he is going ‘*to put [AHS workers] names out in public*,’ he also threatens that he is going to utilise “*the law to bring these criminals who work for AHS to justice*.” The defamer assures his viewers of his threats by saying that “*and believe me, [AHS workers] are going to go to prison, these are people who have committed heinous crimes against the people of Calgary and I’m not going to quit until they are in jail*.”

It is apparent that Mr. Johnston intends to harm the plaintiffs; he explicitly shows his intentions without employing presuppositions or implicatures. His prejudice drives him to discriminate AHS because he tries to mitigate the COVID–19 pandemic.

4. Rhetorical Strategies

- **Polarisation**

This speech includes a separation between the defamer and the plaintiff; a separation between the in-group and the out-group. Mr. Johnston employs the pronoun ‘*we*’ whenever he talks about the in-group members including himself. On the other hand, he uses ‘*you/they*’ to talk about the out-group which is associated with AHS, its workers, and whoever supports them.

Polarisation here reveals the prejudice in Mr. Johnston’s speech in addition to the discrimination between the in-group and the out-group since the latter ‘*commit heinous crimes*’ and ruin Calgarians’ lives. Finally, the speaker has a powerful platform and powerful social role that allow him to discriminate and defame the plaintiff even though he may have opponents who disagree with his ideologies.

- **Hyperbole**

Mr. Johnston’s speech includes hyperbole to highlight the defamation effect. Thus, the defamer repeats the words ‘*crime*’ and ‘*criminal*’ over and over again so as to affirm his accusations. Mr. Johnston exaggerates in the way he threatens his target because he wants to make sure that people see AHS true colours. This can be noticed in Mr. Johnston’s statement “*I’m not going to quit until [AHS workers] are in jail.*” Moreover, the defamer exaggerates in his negative description of AHS actions when he states “*Didn’t work for the Nazis either, isn’t going to work for you.*” Consequently, AHS are being attached to ‘*Nazis*’ because they have committed ‘*culpable homicide.*’

E. Reproduction

The analyst maintains that when opposing a specific action, such as the preventative measures taken by institutions and their employees to deal with a health emergency, like the COVID-19 pandemic, one must be more neutral in order to avoid harm resulting from defamation and damage to the reputation of others. Mr. Johnston should have formulated his criticism in the following way:

- 1- People should have margin of desire to take the vaccine because some people have immunity against diseases and this immunity may be damaged when taking the vaccine.
- 2- The health restrictions put in place to prevent a COVID-19 pandemic can be favorably formulated as follows:

The individual in charge of carrying out health measurements must be flexible when dealing with those who object to receiving the vaccine.

Case 9: Post v. Hillier

YouTube and Twitter are the main social media platforms used by those who are more involved with and interested in the news. These platforms represent relevant source of voices and opinions. They also provide a virtual space where a lot of the debates and discourses on current social, cultural and political issues take place.

In this case, the harm done to Ms. Post is increased by the spread of false information on social media. Without regard to the veracity or importance of a tweet's contents, Twitter is meant to get the most traffic or attention possible rather than for the exchange of thoughtful arguments or debatable topics. This does not absolve users of responsibility for harmful and false tweets. On the contrary, because of the effect of defamation on social media, users may be subject to more severe damages.

The Text

On November 11, 2021, Ms. Hillier tweeted:

When she secretly dated her student at Carleton University we said nothing. But since she's on a spree i may as well go all in".

"I love @post_esther. An incredible Uni. Prof. She slept with her students and fed them Ativan in parking lots. It was a good time @ Carleton_ U."

"Your entire account is dedicated to my dad and i. You are a predator, an abuser, and a gaslighter. I will hold you to account every time (Web Source 19).

A. Contextual Factors

1. Who: The Defamer

Ms. Chelsea Hillier is the daughter of Randy Hillier, who for years held a seat in the provincial legislature. Ms. Hillier was a student at Carleton University. She ran unsuccessfully for public office, first in the 2021 federal election and then in the 2022 Ontario election (Web Source 19).

2. Says What: The Content

In 2009, Ms. Post and Ms. Hillier were good friends since they met at the University. Ms. Hillier took two undergraduate English courses by Ms. Post; at the time, the latter was a graduate student. Ms. Hillier and Ms. Post were very close that Ms. Hillier attended Ms. Post's wedding in 2014. Their friendship was good until 2020 when it deteriorated because of political differences. The two women used their Twitter accounts to express their political perspectives. Ms. Post re-tweeted a thread of tweets that criticised antivaccine protests at hospitals and other tactics endorsed by Ms. Hillier and Mr. Randy Hillier that took place in early November 2021 (Web Source 19).

On November 11, 2021, Ms. Hillier reacted to Ms. Post's tweets by tweeting that "*When she secretly dated her student at Carleton University we said nothing. But since she's on a spree i may as well go all in.*" Ms. Hillier, then, published photos taken from Ms. Post's wedding and they included the bridal attendants among whom was Ms. Hillier herself. She described Ms. Post by saying "*violent white nationalist.*"

Everyone who followed Ms. Hillier's Twitter account (@chelshillier) viewed her tweets, but this account was suspended after Ms. Post had reported Ms. Hillier's tweets which violated Twitter rules against targeted abuse. The suspended account had over 9,300 followers on November 11, 2021. Ms. Hillier created a new account (@chealseahillier6) a week later which initially had over 1,500 followers. She used this account to continue posting tweets about the target. Ms. Hillier, between November 18 and 21, 2021, published other tweets in which she described Ms. Post as a '*predator*', a '*gaslighter*', and an '*abuser.*' Ms. Hillier also tweeted "*She slept with her students and fed them Ativan in parking lots.*"

This new account had a photo from Ms. Post's wedding as a profile picture, Ms. Hillier also used Ms. Post's Twitter handle in the profile description. It is worth mentioning that this new account was public; i.e. anyone who entered Ms. Hillier's account could view her tweets (Web Source 19).

3. In Which Channel

Ms. Hillier published her defamatory content on her Twitter accounts. On November 11, 2021, she used her account @chelshillier which had over 9,300 followers. However, she created another account because the first was suspended. Ms. Hillier's accounts are public and her tweets are easily accessible to anyone on Twitter.

Ms. Hillier also used the ‘*#MeToo hashtag*’ in some of the tweets, which made it more likely that they would show up in search results. Her tagging of some tweets with her father’s account and Carleton University’s Twitter handle also expanded their reach (Web Source 19).

4. To Whom: The Plaintiff

Ms. Esther Post is a University Prof., she taught courses in the English department at Carleton University for 18 years. She has a Ph.D. in Literature and Cultural Studies, Ms. Post also works as a freelance copyeditor and writer. She is married and has two children (Web Source 20).

B. Defamation Types

The tweets are in written form and some of them include photos with description attached to them. This means that defamation is libel. Not only are the tweets written, but they are also permanent unless Ms. Hillier removes them.

C. Reputational Harm

The libellous tweets have a severe harm to Ms. Post’s reputation. First and for most, the plaintiff’s reputation as honor is destroyed by the defamer; this is because Ms. Hillier has published untrue information concerning Ms. Post’s occupation as a ‘*Uni. Prof.*’ The defamer describes the plaintiff as ‘*a predator*’ and ‘*an abuser*’ who sleeps with her students and feeds them Ativan. This kind of misinformation has the potential to eradicate Ms. Post’s characteristics that she gets from her social role as a teacher who has a Ph.D.

Additionally, this misinformation published by the defamer is capable of ruining Ms. Post’s career by getting her fired from her job, which means that the plaintiff’s reputation as property is seriously harmed. The possibility of such a harm increases by tagging Ms. Post’s employer, @ *Carleton_ U.*, by Ms. Hillier.

Furthermore, the concept of reputation as dignity requires adherence to the rules of deference and demeanour; the defamer, though, has violated these two significant rules when she calls Ms. Post “*a predator, an abuser, and a gaslighter.*” These descriptions lower, or can lower, Ms. Post’s estimation in the eyes of right-minded Twitter users from various parts of the world.

D. Discursive Strategies

1. Syntactic Strategies:

- Transitivity

Table (4.11) Transitivity in Hillier’s Tweets

NO.	Phrase	Participants	V. Process
1	She... dated her student	She (actor) Student(goal)	Dated (MP)
2	we said nothing	We(sayer) Nothing(verbiage)	Said (VP)
3	I love @post_esther.	I (sensor) @post_esther(phenomenon)	Love (MnP)
4	post [is]An incredible Uni. Prof	Post (carrier) An incredible Uni. Prof(attribute)	Is (RP)
5	She slept with her students	She (actor) Student (goal)	Slept with (MP)
6	[She]fed them Ativan	She (actor) Them(recipient) Ativan (goal)	Fed (MP)
7	It was a good time	It (carrier) A good time (attribute)	Was (RP)

8	Your entire account is dedicated.	Your ... account (goal)	Dedicated (MP)
9	You are a predator/an abuser, .../ a gaslighter	You (carrier) a predator/an abuser/a gaslighter (attribute)	Are (RP)
10	I will hold you	I (actor) You (goal)	Hold (MP)

As a Professor in the University, Ms. Post has predetermined ethics to follow. These involve being committed to the social role itself through showing respect to other teachers in addition to her students. Thus, for a teacher to have a relationship with a student (if not illegal) is frowned upon by the society at large and the University community in particular. Ms. Hillier makes use of this inappropriate behaviour in attacking Ms. Post. The defamer attaches the role of actor to Ms. Post and claims that the plaintiff ‘*slept*’ with her students. Furthermore, Ms. Hillier explicitly describes Ms. Post (carrier) as “*a predator, an abuser, and a gaslighter.*” Such attributes have the potential to ruin Ms. Post’s career and distort her social image. Ms. Hillier, based on the context in addition to the analysis above, is motivated by prejudice because she and Ms. Post have different political and social beliefs.

2. Semantic/Lexical Strategies

- **Negative Lexicalisation**

The lexical choice can unveil what the speaker tries to do to the audience or the addressee. In the case under analysis, what Ms. Hillier wants to do is to attract her followers’ attention so that they observe how the plaintiff is portrayed. Ms. Post is claimed to have an affair with her student; that is, the defamer claims that Ms. Post has an illegal and unethical relationship with her student. The terms ‘*secretly*’ and ‘*dated*’

mean that since the plaintiff does not abide by the general rules concerning being a teacher and a University Prof., Ms. Post is a bad out-group member. The defamer continues to present the plaintiff in a negative way through repeating the same attack of having an unethical relationships with her students “*@post_esther ... slept with her students.*” Furthermore, Ms. Hillier claims that Ms. Post gives her students ‘*Ativan*’, such an assault has the potential of damaging the plaintiff’s social image and lowering her estimation in her community.

- **Derogatory Words**

Implicit derogatory words are employed by Ms. Hillier so as to achieve the overall strategy of negative other presentation. “*When she secretly dated her student ... and fed them Ativan in parking lots*” is an attack stated by Ms. Hillier for the main purpose of disdaining Ms. Post so that the plaintiff is shown as an out-group member. Derogating Ms. Post explicitly and directly is expressed in “*You are a predator, an abuser, and a gaslighter.*” These words describe Ms. Post from Ms. Hillier’s perspective; consequently, the defamer disrespects the plaintiff and discredits her identity.

The ideologies drawn from the semantic analysis are prejudice and discrimination. Because Ms. Post and Ms. Hillier hold different political beliefs, the defamer disrespects the plaintiff, insults her, and presents her negatively in order to achieve the reputational harm as deeply as possible.

3. Pragmatic Strategies

- **Speech Acts**

The tweets under analysis are full of the speech acts of accusing and asserting. The defamer asserts the misinformation she shares about the plaintiff; all of these assertions hold accusations of misconducts. The utterance “*When she secretly dated her student at Carleton University*” is

an explicit accusation because it is formulated to appear as a matter of fact. This accusation is repeated in the utterance ‘*She slept with her students,*’ which is coordinated with another accusation, found in the utterance “*and fed them Ativan in parking lots.*” These utterances are in the past simple which indicates that the actions have undoubtedly happened.

In addition to that, the defamer utilises the speech act of insulting to secure her harm. Thus, such false and malicious accusations hold an insult to the plaintiff’s social image and her reputation. Moreover, Ms. Hillier highlights her defamation with the use of the following direct insults “*You are a predator, an abuser, and a gaslighter.*”

Consequently, the defamer overtly and explicitly attacks the plaintiff motivated by her ideologies of prejudice and discrimination. In fact, it seems that Ms. Hillier depends on her father’s power, Mr. Randy Hillier. She tags his Twitter account and tells Ms. Post that “*Your entire account is dedicated to my dad and i.*” The defamer has refused to remove her tweets at the beginning of the incident, which proves that she holds onto her power, or rather her father’s power, to discriminate the plaintiff and harm her reputation.

E. Reproduction

Ms. Hillier has published a series of tweets to defame Ms. Post; and when Ms. Hillier’s account was suspended, she created another one to continue her malicious and defamatory publications. It is obvious that the defamer has the intention to harm Ms. Post’s reputation in the community; this intention is based upon prejudice and discrimination influenced by different viewpoints whether political or otherwise. The most convenient way to avoid defamation and reputational harm would require the defamer to respect the opposite opinion Ms. Post holds. If Ms. Hillier had respected Ms. Post and her social role, the defamer would not

have published untrue, heinous, and malicious information about Ms. Post. The defamer could have also avoided using derogatory words as ‘*abuser,*’ ‘*predator,*’ and ‘*gaslighter.*’

Case 10: Martin v. Najem

Due to business competition, a single individual may spread malicious and false information about another in an effort to exclude the plaintiff from the labor market. If racial elements are present along with the defamation and negatively impact the target's achievement in his work, the defamation becomes worse. This particular case serves as a heart-breaking picture of the terrible harm that may result from the malicious use of Instagram as a publication platform for defamatory materials.

The researcher wants to apologise for the readers in advance because this case contains some words that might be culturally unacceptable.

The Text

In multi post Instagram

“Isaac Eats-a-lot paedophile looking mother fucker”

“For my Muslim brothers and sisters, get ready, this is why”

“Isaac Eats-a-lot a fucking pedo dog”.

“He is taking the piss out of Muslims” and “He attacks the Lebanese people”

a “Isaac Eats-a-lot is a racist dog whose habit is attacking Islam, attacking Muslims.” “He hates multiculturalism”

“Isaac Eats-a-lot probably the most hated person in the social media marketing industry”.

“this fucking paedophile looking mother fucker, which he is...So for everyone watching this right now”
“low life scum of a person” and a “fucken cunt concern is “it’s only going to get worse.” (Web Source 21)

A. Contextual Factors

1. Who: The Defamer

Mr. Fouad Najem is a social media influencer who publishes blogs on his Instagram accounts. His blogs are related to the food industry. Mr. Najem had two Instagram accounts; one of them had over 24,000 followers at the time of this publication. The other account had over 1,442 followers. In order to obey the rules of Instagram, the defamer used his larger account as a means of publicising the content which he published only on his smaller account (Web Source 22).

2. Says What: The Content

Mr. Najem used one of his accounts on Instagram to defame the plaintiff. The publications on this account included the handle of the defamer’s other Instagram account; this meant that superimposing the handle of an account functioned as a link to that account. Mr. Najem’s followers and other Instagram users could easily access the two accounts and view whatever content published on them.

On April 22, 2022, Mr. Najem seriously attacked the plaintiff and described him as a ‘*paedophile*,’ ‘*pedo dog*,’ and ‘*racist*.’ The defamer also told his followers to ‘*let him know what u think about him*.’ One of the defamer’s posts involved a photoshopped picture of the plaintiff on Bond Beach with the word ‘*RACIST*’ written on the plaintiff.

On April 24, 2022, the defamer published screenshots of direct messages that he had sent to the plaintiff earlier on the same day. These messages contained a malicious language directed to the plaintiff; Mr.

Najem told the plaintiff, among other things, the following: ‘*I’m going to end you ... [and] destroy you,*’ furthermore, the plaintiff was described as a ‘*racist dog*’ (Web Source 21).

3. In Which Channel

The defamer used Instagram as a channel of publication. Mr. Najem had two accounts on Instagram. He published his defamatory content on his small account because he was restricted by Instagram rules. However, Mr. Najem used the other account (which had over 200,000 followers) to promote the first one’s content (Web Source 21).

4. To Whom: The Plaintiff

Mr. Issac Martin is a blogger who works in the food industry. He was a pastry chef, and then began competing in eating food. He was, and still is, very good at this career, so he got asked to advertise and promote venues and restaurants. Throughout time, Mr. Martin gained a huge number of followers. On the time of the defamatory publication, he had around 200,000 followers on his Instagram account ‘*issac_eatsalot.*’ The plaintiff used this account to promote another account ‘*the_chew_crew,*’ which is the professional business account (Web Source 22).

B. Defamation Types

The defamer published a series of posts and videos on Instagram to attack the plaintiff. The publications included photos, videos, and written content; therefore, Mr. Najem libelled Mr. Martin for the above reasons in addition to the permanency of the published content.

C. Reputational Harm

The defamer uses a variety of expressions to describe Mr. Martin. All of Mr. Najem’s descriptions lead to the property harm. Mr. Martin is a reputable blogger who has a large number of followers; thus, the way he is described could cause him serious harm concerning his work. As has been noted in the contextual factors, the defamer and the plaintiff work in

the food industry on social media platforms. This is a sufficient reason for Mr. Najem to damage the plaintiff because the defamer does not want a competitor who can be more successful than him.

Moreover, the plaintiff's reputation as dignity is harmed in the worst way possible; Mr. Najem, in all his publications relevant to the plaintiff, has violated the main rules that construe the reputation as dignity. Rules of deference and demeanour require a person to respect the social standing and face of others. Mr. Najem, however, has insulted and disrespected Mr. Martin; by publicly humiliating Mr. Martin, Mr. Najem has assaulted and abused the plaintiff which results in lowering the plaintiff's estimation in the viewpoint of the third party.

D. Discursive Strategies

1. Syntactic Strategies

- **Transitivity**

Table (4.12) Transitivity in Najem's Instagram Posts

NO.	Phrase	Participants	V. Process
1	Isaac Eats-a-lot [is]paedophile	Isaac Eats-a-lot (carrier) Paedophile (attribute)	Is (RP)
2	Isaac Eats-a-lot [is] a fucking pedo dog.	Isaac Eats-a-lot(carrier) a fucking pedo dog (attribute)	Is (RP)
3	He is taking the piss out of Muslims	He (actor) Muslims (goal)	taking the piss out of (MP)
4	He attacks the Lebanese people	He (actor) the Lebanese people (goal)	Attacts (MP)
5	Isaac Eats-a-lot is a	Isaac Eats-a-lot (carrier)	Is (RP)

	racist dog	a racist dog (attribute)	
6	He hates multiculturalism	He (sensor) Multiculturalism (phenomenon)	Hates(MnP)
7	it's only going to get worse	It (Carrier) Worse (attribute)	Get (RP)

The defamer is an extremist Muslim and is biased to Islam and Muslims. He believes that Mr. Martin is an out-group member; Mr. Najem gives Mr. Martin the role of an actor who “*is taking the piss out of Muslims*” and “*attacks the Lebanese people.*” In addition, Mr. Martin is given the roles of a sensor and a carrier to be presented negatively. As such, Mr. Najem states that Mr. Martin (sensor) “*hates multiculturalism.*” It needs to be noticed that Mr. Najem gives the plaintiff the carrier role extensively to emphasise certain characteristics attributed to Mr. Martin. For instance, the defamer describes Mr. Martin (carrier) as a “*mother fucker,*” “*pedophile,*” “*fucking pedo dog,*” “*racist dog*” and so on.

For Mr. Najem, Mr. Martin does not belong to the in-group where the defamer and his “*Muslim brothers and sisters*” belong. As a consequence, the defamer frames Mr. Martin as a racist person; put differently, Mr. Najem portrays the plaintiff to be a dangerous out-group member since he “*hates*” and “*attacks*” Muslims. The roles attached to the plaintiff have the capability to deter Instagram users from interacting with the plaintiff. Mr. Najem holds such ideologies as racism, prejudice, and discrimination which amount in defaming the plaintiff.

2. Semantic/Lexical Strategies

- **Derogatory Words**

This publication involves a lot of derogatory words and expressions which describe the plaintiff and his actions. The defamer

employs swear words that are taboo or inappropriate to be used in front of Instagram users. To start with, Mr. Najem repeats the word ‘*fucking*’ throughout his speech. Such a word holds a lot of disrespect and contempt towards the plaintiff. The defamer describes the plaintiff as a ‘*mother fucker*’ and a ‘*fucking cunt*.’ Mr. Najem insults Mr. Martin when the defamer describes the plaintiff as being a ‘*paedophile*,’ ‘*fucking pedo dog*,’ and ‘*racist dog*.’ All these derogatory words present the plaintiff as an out-group member, especially that Mr. Najem states that Mr. Martín (out-group) hates “*my Muslim brothers and sisters*” (in-group).

The defamer believes that Mr. Martin is an Islamophobic who wants to attack Islam and Muslims. Such a belief makes Mr. Najem prejudiced against Mr. Martin and, therefore, discriminates the plaintiff. These ideologies drive the defamer to deliberately harm the plaintiff through presenting him negatively as a dangerous Islamophobic pedophile.

3. Pragmatic Strategies

- **Speech Acts**

The defamer employs this strategy to defame Mr. Martin. Mr. Najem accuses the plaintiff of untrue conducts; i.e. Mr. Najem depends heavily on the representative speech act of accusing in order to discredit the plaintiff and damage his social and business image. Thus, the defamer accuses the plaintiff of being ‘*a paedophile*,’ and “*a racist dog whose habit is attacking Islam, attacking Muslims.*” These accusations stem from the defamer’s prejudice against the plaintiff. Put differently, Mr. Najem attempts to destroy the plaintiff’s career and life by spreading this false information on Instagram.

In addition to that, Mr. Najem’s accusations hold disrespect and insult towards Mr. Martin. The defamer depends on the speech act of

insulting which implies that he disrespects the plaintiff. This act is realised with the use of swear words that are culturally unacceptable; for example, “*Isaac Eats-a-lot paedophile looking mother fucker, ‘fucking paedophile,’ and ‘fucken cunt.’*” All these insults are made public to humiliate and discredit the plaintiff.

Moreover, the defamer’s intentions to harm Mr. Martin are prominent especially through the commissive speech act of threatening. Mr. Najem intends to make the plaintiff miserable by destroying his business and reputation. The defamer threatens “*it’s only going to get worse.*” Hence, Mr. Najem commits himself to the future action of harming the plaintiff by making these attacks get worse. Such an act reflects nothing except the defamer’s discrimination and prejudice against Mr. Martin.

- **Implicature**

Based on the context and the publications made by the defamer, the analyst infers that Mr. Najem claims to be antiracist by attacking the plaintiff who ‘*is a racist dog*’ because Mr. Martin ‘*attacks the Lebanese people.*’ However, these utterances show that it is not Mr. Martin who is racist; but Mr. Najem himself, who claims to be antiracist. He attacks the plaintiff, accuses him, insults and humiliates him. These acts reveal the reality that Mr. Najem tries to get the plaintiff down because Mr. Martin is a successful businessman and a successful influencer; therefore, the defamer fears that the plaintiff could be better than Mr. Najem.

4. Rhetorical Strategies

- **Polarisation**

One rhetorical strategy that provides an insight to the defamer’s ideologies is polarisation. Mr. Najem endeavours to frame Mr. Martin as an out–group member; that is to say, Mr. Najem believes that the plaintiff belongs to THEM whereas the defamer is one of US or the in–group. The

defamer addresses his followers by saying the phrase ‘*my Muslim brothers and sisters.*’ Consequently the defamer polarises his in-group ‘*Muslim brothers and sisters,*’ from the plaintiff’s out-group who attacks ‘*Islam... and Muslims.*’ Mr. Najem claims that the plaintiff ‘*hates multiculturalism,*’ that is the reason behind humiliating and hurting the plaintiff. However, the defamer discriminates the plaintiff since these claims are incorrect and malicious. The defamer’s motivations for such intentions are explained further by analysing the following strategy.

- **Hyperbole**

The exaggeration in attacking Mr. Martin and in the way he is described further discloses the defamer’s bias against Mr. Martin. The utilised swear words play a significant role in attracting the Instagram users’ attention. Even though Instagram restrains its users from saying these words on verified large accounts, the defamer spreads these descriptions on his small account in order not to be removed by Instagram. It is important to notice that Mr. Najem promotes his small account by inviting the followers on his larger account to visit the smaller one; he does so by superimposing the handle of the small account on the posts published on the large account.

Inappropriate taboo words are employed to describe Mr. Martin; e.g. ‘*fucking pedo dog,*’ ‘*mother fucker,*’ and ‘*fucken cunt.*’ Furthermore, there are other swear words that are deliberately not mentioned here because they are extremely unacceptable; what this indicates is the defamer’s intentions to harm the plaintiff by the use of hyperbolic phrases and expressions.

E. Reproduction

Mr. Najem’s libellous content is published on several days, which indicates that he is deliberately harming the plaintiff. In one of his posts, the defamer states that these attacks are ‘*only going to get worse;*’

furthermore, Mr. Najem expresses beliefs rather than opinions. Therefore, the following points should be taken into consideration so as to avoid defaming Mr. Martin:

1. No derogatory or swear words should be utilised.
2. No false accusations such as '*paedophile*' and '*racist*' should be attached to the plaintiff.
3. Most importantly, no negative other presentation should be implied because it is the basis of all of the previously analysed strategies.

Put simply, if the defamer had not had prejudice and discrimination against the plaintiff, Mr. Najem would not have accused and disrespected Mr. Martin.

4.4.2. Quantitative Analysis

The discursive strategies are analysed quantitatively in this subsection. Thus, the frequencies and percentages of occurrence of the general strategies are exhibited in the form of tables and figures. The main purpose behind conducting this analysis is to firstly support the qualitative analysis of the defamatory texts, and secondly to be able to verify/refute the fourth hypothesis of this thesis. It is necessary to mention that:

- (a) The present thesis conducts the descriptive statistics which includes calculating frequencies and percentages based upon the following equation:

$$\textit{Percentage} = \frac{\sum x}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where:

Σ Represents 'sum of.'

x Represents the frequency of occurrence of a specific sub-strategy in the selected data.

N Represents the total frequencies of occurrences of sub-strategies in the selected data.

(b) Microsoft Excel Charts is used in creating the figures exhibited in the statistical analysis.

Table (4.13) Frequency and Percentage of Syntactic Strategies

Sub Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Transitivity	10	91%
Comparison	1	9%
Total	11	100%

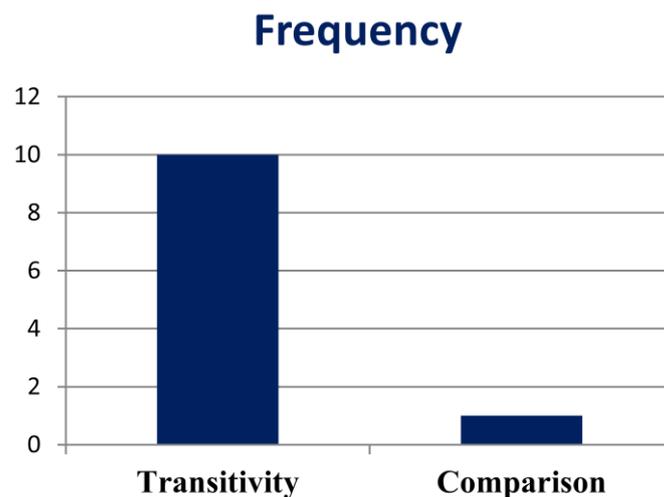


Figure (4.1) Frequency of Occurrence of Syntactic Strategies

Table (4.13) consists of the frequencies and percentages of the syntactic strategies, Transitivity and Comparison, found in the selected data. Transitivity is found in the ten analysed texts; while comparison, on the other hand, occurs in one text. Figure (4.1) displays frequency of occurrence of the syntactic strategies shown in the table. It can be inferred that the defamers utilise transitivity in order to frame themselves

and their in-groups as well as the plaintiffs with the out-groups in such a way that enhances the effect of defamation. Moreover, the transitivity analysis illustrates how defamers endeavour to present the plaintiffs negatively which leads the third party to perceive the plaintiffs as out-group members who deserve to be avoided.

It should be mentioned that the low frequency of occurrence of the comparison strategy indicates that defamers usually avoid using it because they can defame other individuals without comparing themselves with the plaintiffs.

Table (4.14) Frequency and Percentage of Semantic/ Lexical Strategies

Sub Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Negative Lexicalisation	8	44%
Derogatory Words	10	46%
Total	18	100%

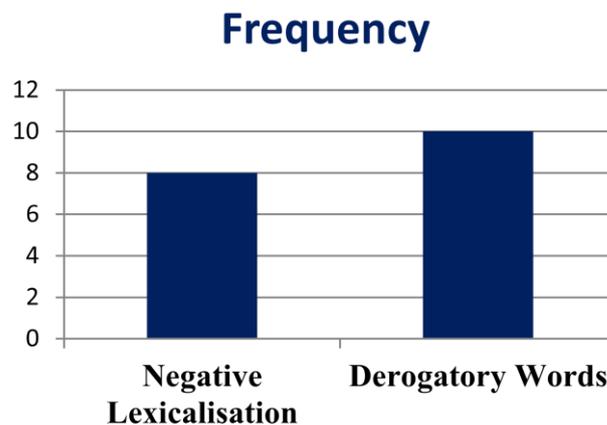


Figure (4.2) Frequency of Occurrence of Semantic/ Lexical Strategies

Table (4.14) and Figure (4.2) show the frequency and percentage of occurrence of the semantic strategies found in the data. As such, the strategy of negative lexicalisation is found in 8 texts with the percentage of 44%, and the strategy of derogatory words is found in 10 texts with the

percentage of 46%. Defamers seem to employ negative lexicalisations in order to attract their viewers' attentions to the defamatory publications and the negative presentation of the plaintiffs. Similarly, the strategy of derogatory words has at least three functions in the process of defamation. First, it enhances the negative other presentation of the plaintiffs. Second, it helps discrediting the plaintiffs' identities and actions when the defamers describe plaintiffs with pejorative and disrespectful words whether explicitly or implicitly. Third, derogation is capable of distorting the plaintiffs' social image since it disparages and disdains target group leading to the ultimate defamatory effect; i.e. the reputational harm.

Table (4.15) Frequency and Percentage of Pragmatic Strategies

Sub Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Speech Acts	10	63%
Presupposition	2	12%
Implicature	4	25%
Total	16	100%

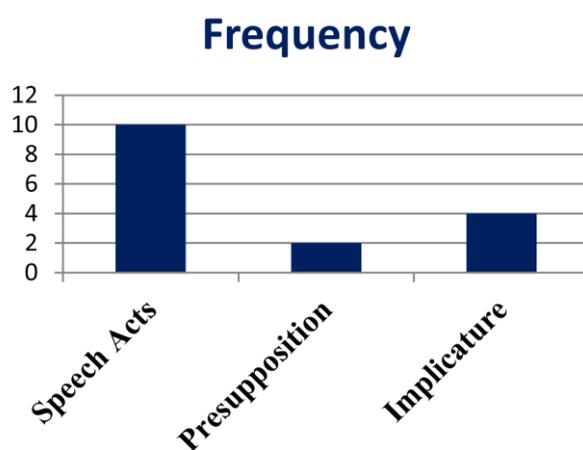


Figure (4.3) Frequency of Occurrence of Pragmatic Strategies

The frequencies and percentages of occurrences of the pragmatic strategies are illustrated in Table (4.15) and Figure (4.3). Presupposition occurs in 2 texts while implicature occurs in 4 texts with the percentages 12% and 25% respectively

These percentages demonstrate that defamers often attempt to defame their targets explicitly and directly; in other words, defamers utilise presupposition and implicature as long as these strategies help in harming the plaintiffs' reputations and presenting them negatively.

The strategy of speech acts, on the contrary, is found ten times with the percentage of 63%. Based on this percentage in addition to the qualitative analysis of the speech acts, the following points can be inferred:

1. Defamers employ the speech act of accusing since defamation in itself consists of accusing someone of a false information or misconduct.
2. The speech act of insulting is used so as to disrespect the plaintiffs and present them negatively.
3. Sometimes, defamers employ such directive speech acts as ordering and advising when they attempt to deter the third party from interacting with the plaintiffs.

Table (4.16) Frequency and Percentage of Rhetorical Strategies

Sub Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Polarisation	2	16%
Hyperbole	8	68%
Reference	2	16%
Total	12	100%

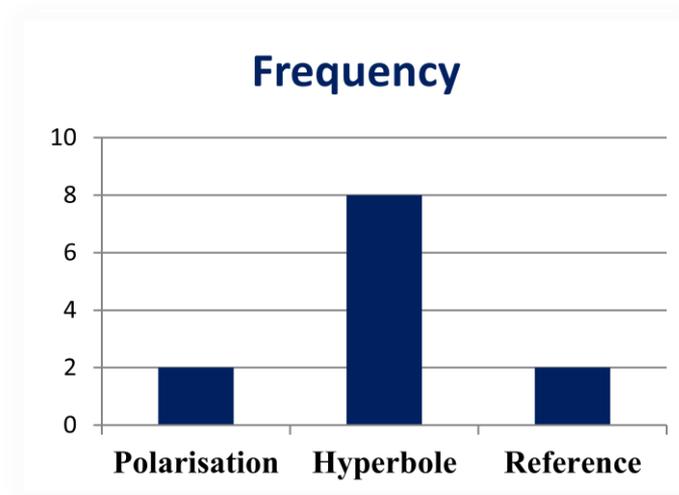


Figure (4.4) Frequency of Occurrence of Rhetorical Strategies

Table (4.16) along with Figure (4.4) involve the frequencies and percentages of the rhetorical strategies available in the selected texts. The strategies of polarisation and reference are each found in two texts with the percentage of 16%. Polarisation assists defamers in separating themselves and their in-group from the plaintiffs and the out-group. In this way, defamers can attract the attention of social media users to the negative qualities attributed to the plaintiffs. The strategy of reference functions as an apparatus that enables defamers to refer to social and cultural aspects that can attract the viewers' attention to the defamatory publications.

Hyperbole, on the other hand, is found in 8 texts with 68% percentage. This can be attributed to the fact that defamers, in most instances, try to make exaggerations for two reasons. One reason is that hyperbolic terms and expressions can highlight the overall strategy of negative other presentation. Secondly, defamers' intention is to harm the plaintiffs' reputations; this can be fulfilled properly via describing the plaintiffs with such exaggerative terms as '*Nazi*,' '*pedophile*,' '*culpable homicide*,' '*xenophobic*,' as well as other obscene and vulgar words.

Table (4.17) Frequency and Percentage of Overall Strategies

Strategies Case No.	Syntactic		Lexical		Pragmatic		Rhetorical			Total	
	Transitivity	Comparison	Negative Lexicalisation	Derogatory Words	Speech Acts	Presupposition	Implicature	Polarisation	hyperbole		Reference
Frequency	10	1	8	10	10	2	4	2	8	2	57
Percentage	18%	2%	14%	18%	18%	4%	7%	4%	14%	4%	100%

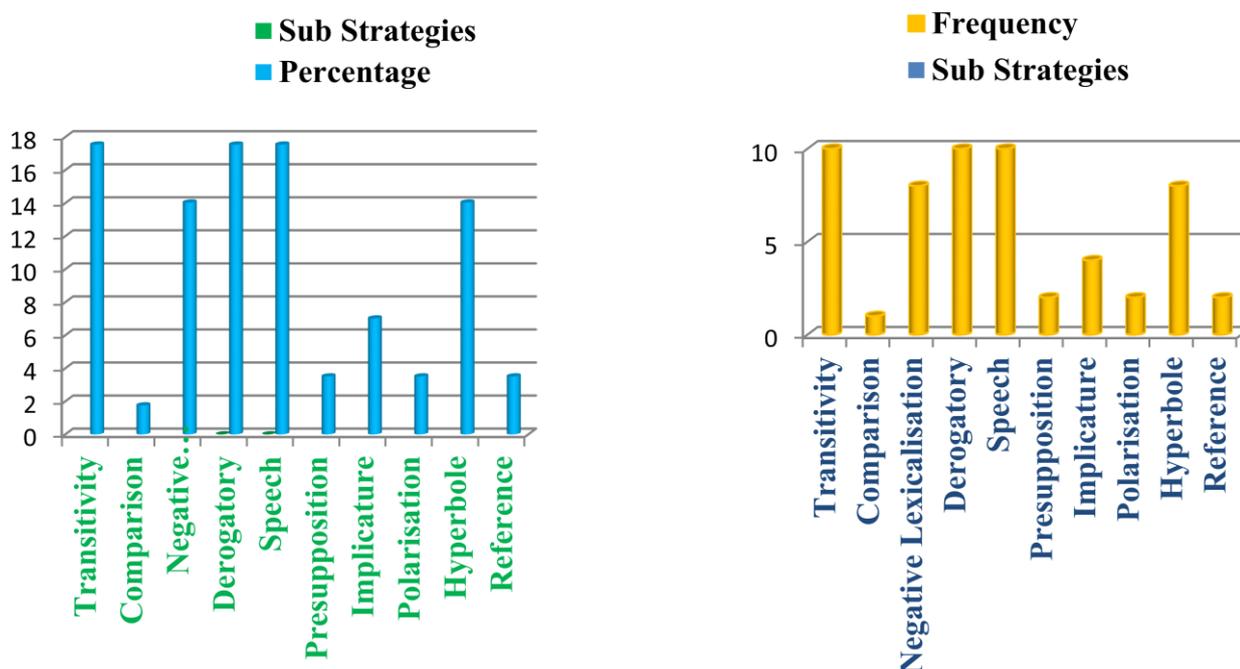


Figure (4.5) Frequency and Percentage of Overall Strategies

Table (4.17) and Figure (4.5) demonstrate the most frequently utilised strategy/s in the data. Apparently, the syntactic strategy of transitivity; the semantic strategy of derogatory words; and the pragmatic strategy of speech acts are of highest frequencies and percentages since the three of them are found in the ten defamatory texts with the percentage of 18%. This percentage unveils the fact that each one of the three strategies has an indispensable role in defamation.

According to the qualitative analysis, defamers always employ the pragmatic strategy of speech acts. This is because defamation involves

accusing someone of untrue information that can harm his reputation and social esteem. In addition to that, the syntactic strategy of transitivity plays a role in framing the plaintiff as an out-group member so that defamers instigate the third party against the target person. Furthermore, defamation must contain the malicious use of language which is represented in the semantic strategy of derogatory words. In order for a defamer to disrespect and humiliate his plaintiff in front of users of social media, such pejorative and derogatory words as ‘*abuser*,’ ‘*terrorist*,’ and ‘*stupid*’ are used to discredit the plaintiff’s identity and actions.

The other strategies, in addition to the above mentioned ones, help detecting the hidden ideologies that defamers hold. It should be pointed out that the ideologies of racism, prejudice, and discrimination are consistently detected in the analysis regardless of the defamers’ social backgrounds. For the most part, different political opinions and affiliations drive defamers to hold these ideologies. In other cases, defamers are influenced by extremist religious beliefs which, consequently, get an individual to discriminate the opposite religion. Finally, social media platforms have made it easier for people to defame another person, group, or even an organisation because these platforms have a huge number of users from varying groups and backgrounds.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

5. Introductory Remarks

This chapter consists of three parts. The first one tackles the conclusions that are drawn from the analyses to answer the questions introduced in Chapter One. The second part is concerned with the recommendations made by the researcher to those who will benefit from the present thesis. Finally, the third part involves suggestions for further research to those who are interested in the field of critical discourse analysis and the concept of defamation.

5.1. Conclusions

After analysing the data of the present thesis, the following conclusions are arrived at:

1. Libel is the only type of defamation that can be found on social media platforms as far as the present thesis is concerned. This refutes the first hypothesis which reads as “Libel and slander are the types of defamation found on social media platforms since the defamatory content can be published in a written or a spoken form.” This refutation is attributed to the fact that even though defamatory material might be deleted from these platforms, it is still accessible on platforms or websites other than the original source of publication.
2. A defamatory content published on social media platforms has the potential to harm the plaintiff’s reputation. As long as the analysed texts are concerned, defamers cause property harm which means harm to the plaintiffs’ life in the marketplace. Defamers also cause honor harm that includes assaulting the

plaintiffs' social roles as teachers, senators, journalists, influencers on social media, and so on. A defamatory content causes dignity harm; i.e. a defamer disrespects his plaintiff by violating the rules that govern social interaction. Such a conclusion partially verifies the second hypothesis which states that "A defamatory publication causes harm to the plaintiff's social role and face. In other words, a defamer disrespects the plaintiff's need to be respected and esteemed."

3. A defamatory content published on social media platforms includes:
 - a) The syntactic strategies of transitivity and comparison.
 - b) The semantic/lexical strategies of negative lexicalisation and derogatory words.
 - c) The pragmatic strategies of speech acts, presupposition, and implicature.
 - d) The rhetorical strategies of polarisation, hyperbole, and reference.

This conclusion partially verifies the third hypothesis which states that "The discursive strategies utilised to realise defamation on social media platforms are: a) the syntactic strategies of transitivity and comparison; b) the semantic/lexical strategy of derogatory words; c) the pragmatic strategies of speech acts and implicature; and d) the rhetorical strategies of polarisation and hyperbole."

4. The syntactic strategy of transitivity, the semantic strategy of derogatory words, and the pragmatic strategy of speech acts are the most frequently utilised strategies in the analysed data. The reason behind this conclusion can be the main elements that

constitute defamation which are the malicious language, accusation of false information, and the impact of the third party. Thus, transitivity assists defamers in constructing their sentences as a means of persuading the third party to adopt certain perspectives related to the plaintiff. Furthermore, the speech act of accusing is the apparatus to spread untrue statements about the defamed individual. The strategy of derogatory words paves the way for a defamer to insult his plaintiff with the use of malicious expressions. Moreover, the semantic strategy of negative lexicalisation and the rhetorical strategy of hyperbole occur in eight texts since defamers attempt to attract their viewers' attention with the help of these strategies. It is also found that the syntactic strategy of comparison is of least occurrence in the analysed texts. Concerning the pragmatic strategy of presupposition in addition to the rhetorical strategies of polarisation and hyperbole, these strategies are utilised in two texts. Finally, the pragmatic strategy of implicature is employed in four defamatory texts. This variation can be attributed to defamers' intentions and the way through which they want to express their beliefs and ideologies. Thus, the fourth hypothesis which reads as "The semantic and the pragmatic strategies are of more occurrence in the defamatory content published on social media platforms. Furthermore, the syntactic strategies are of lower frequency. Finally, the rhetorical strategies are the least frequently utilised strategies in a defamatory content published on social media platforms" is refuted as a result of this conclusion.

5. The critical analysis of the research data illustrates the ideologies that motivate/influence an individual to defame someone on social media platforms. Prejudice, racism, and discrimination are the

most prominent ideologies covered in the defamatory publications. Difference of opinion, such as political affiliation, can amount in influencing defamers to harm the plaintiffs' reputations. For instance, 'Post v. Hillier' and 'Burston v. Hanson' cases show how friends can become opponents just because they have different political ideologies. Moreover, Mr. Johnston's three publications represent the impact of extremism on the person's social behaviour. The analyses of these and other cases validate the final hypothesis which is put as follows "An individual is motivated/influenced by such ideologies as racism and prejudice that can amount in publishing a defamatory content on social media platforms."

5.2. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Students' language awareness can be increased through teaching them how to think critically while receiving a particular text. Since social media platforms form an important part in his life, a student should be taught to use these platforms appropriately in a safe way by being conscious of what to publish, share, re-share, comment, and even think of on social media platforms.
2. Researchers in the field of linguistics should study and tackle social issues relevant to people's lives. Such studies can support, or be the starting point of positive social change which involves preventing the social harm that stems from ideological differences.
3. Specialists in various linguistic disciplines should conduct studies that sharpen the foggy line between opinion expression and malicious use of language.
4. Syllabus designers need to pay attention to the topic of defamation so that students can learn more about language use. Through such

syllabi, students would know what dimensions defamation has and how to avoid committing it.

5. Critical discourse analysts can search for further motivations that influence defamers. CDA helps reveal whether power/dominance affects the occurrence of defamatory content. Social practices other than the ones tackled in the present thesis need to be investigated in order to know why defamation occurs in the first place, why it cannot be controlled, who benefits from committing defamation, who is harmed more seriously, and how to make positive social change concerning these and other questions.

5.3. Suggestions for Further Research

Further research is hopefully conducted on the basis of the following suggestions presented by the researcher:

1. A Sociopragmatic Study of Defamation on Social Media Platforms.
2. A Sociolinguistic Study of Defamation in Selected English Short Stories.
3. A Contrastive Analysis of Defamation in Selected Arabic and English Newspapers.
4. A Critical Pragmatic Study of Defamation on Social Media Platforms.
5. A Stylistic Analysis of Defamatory Newspaper Articles.
6. A Pragma-stylistic Study of Defamation in British and American Talk Shows.

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APPENDICES

Appendix (1): Khalid v. Johnston

1- It sickens me that she holds a seat in Parliament Hill as a terrorist
2- scumbag ... I believe that you are a terrorist. I believe that you are
3- here to kill me, and kill my children, and kill the entire future of
4- this entire nation... The only thing that your actions can do is cause
5- a civil war within these borders... Because I can tell you this, there
6- are a lot of gun nuts in this country, and you're pissing them off.
7- You don't want to do that. There is a select kind of Canadian that
8- even I'm afraid of. And those are not the guys you want to try and
9- bring Sharia law to. But hey, if you think that is the right way to
10- go, go ahead. I'm a journalist, and I'll be there to see you on
11- the ground crying and complaining about the fact that
12- someone shot you because they disagreed with Sharia law
13- and the rape of children. And I'll be there with a big fat
14- smile on my face, saying, "Heh, heh, Iqra Khalid gets shot
15- by a Canadian patriot who didn't want to wrap his daughter
16- up in a bandage, and who did not want to take on or adopt
17- Sharia, where he has to pin his daughter down on the ground
18- and cut her labia and clitoris off with a razor blade.

Appendix (2): Fakih v. Johnston

1- I can't for the life of me understand why a restaurant would be here
2- unless the restaurant was up to something nefarious. You have to be
3- Jihadist or have raped someone else's wife as a condition of entry to
4- the Restaurant. Mr. Fakih is a racist restaurant owner and an
5- economic terrorist. Mohammad Mr.. Fakih wants to be part of giving
6- money to convicted terrorists. Why do Muslim business men in

7- Mississauga hate white Christian men so much? Paramount is little
8- more than a front and this man was under investigation by CSIS and
9- by the Canada Revenue Agency...they were trying to figure out
10- where this man's money came from. The Pakistani spy agency ISI
11- is giving him the money that he needs to utilize his stores as a front
12- to bring more refugees/illegal aliens into the country, all whom, of
13- course, are Muslim. Boycott Paramount Fine Foods until they
14- come clean on terror involvement.

Appendix (3): Moore v. Cohen

Below is the text of the speech made by Cohen in interview with Moore on *Who Is America?* On CBS: ShowTime TV channel on February 14, 2018.

1- Cohen: They have now used this technology to identify other
2- abnormalities. It turns out those sex offenders and particularly
3- pedophiles secrete an enzyme, 4-DHT, which is actually detectable. It
4- is three times the level of nonpedophiles, so the phrase 'sweating like a
5- rapist' is actually based on science.
6- So in Israel, they have developed a machine that is used in schools and
7- playgrounds to detect anyone coming in, and if they detect a pedophile,
8- the wand alerts the law enforcement and the schools within a hundred
9- mile radius. Uh, it is very, very simple to use. You just switch it on,
10- and because neither of us is sex offenders, then it make absolutely
11- nothing.

Appendix (4): Ganske v. Mensch

On 27, July, 2018 at 12:32 AM, Mensch came across the conversation between Ganske and @Conspirator0, and interjected herself and tweeted that:

@patribotics (Patribotics) 2018-07-27 12:32 AM Tweet



Patribotics
@patribotics

Replying to @patribotics @AP and 4 others

To this xenophobic tweet of yours, sir, I fear we must tell @APCentral "citation needed". You clearly personally spread Russian bots on your own site; and @Conspirator0 work on it has sent you into a frenzy of tweeting and trying to discredit him.

twitter.com/cganskeap/stat...

The tweet:

- 1- To this xenophobic tweet of yours, sir, I fear we must tell @AP Central
- 2- 'citation needed.' You clearly personally spread Russian bots on your
- 3- own site; and @ ConspiratorO work on it has sent you into a frenzy of
- 4- tweeting and trying to discredit him.

Appendix (5): Burston v. Hanson

The following post published on Ms. Hanson's verified Facebook page, titled "*Pauline Hanson Please Explain*" on 12 February 2019:

- 1- Pauline Hanson Please Explain" You'll be disgusted to know that
- 2- taxpayers are footing the bill for multiple unfair dismissal cases in one
- 3- Senators office that doesn't have the guts to dismiss people face-to-
- 4- face. Instead, he sacks them by text, email or letter with no warning.
- 5- This same Senator is now under investigation for serious sexual
- 6- harassment. Just because we wear a little red pin that signifies we're
- 7- Senators, should not excuse shocking behaviour by elected members. If
- 8- you don't have respect for your staff, how can employees respect you?
- 9- #Auspol #OneNation #PaulineHanson #NoToSexualHarassment.

Appendix (6): Riley v. Murray

On 10 January 2019, Owen Jones posted the following message on Twitter:



On 10 January 2019, at 20:10, Murray posted the following tweet in reply to Riley:



At 21.03, Murray posted the following tweet:



Laura Murray 🇬🇧 🇨🇪
@LauraCatriona

Today Jeremy Corbyn went to his local mosque for Visit My Mosque Day, and was attacked by a Brexiteer.

Rachel Riley tweets that Corbyn deserves to be violently attacked because he is a Nazi.

This woman is as dangerous as she is stupid. Nobody should engage with her. Ever.

- 1- Today Jeremy Corbyn went to his local mosque for Visit My Mosque
- 2- Day, and was attacked by a Brexiteer. Rachel Riley tweets that Corbyn
- 3- deserves to be violently attacked because he is a Nazi. This woman is
- 4- as dangerous as she is stupid. Nobody should engage with her. Ever.

Appendix (7): Banks v. Cadwalladr

On 15 April 2019, Ms. Cadwalladr gave a speech in Ted Talk conference which was entitled “*Facebook’s role in Brexit – and the threat to democracy.*” The words spoken by Ms. Cadwalladr in the TED Talk are:

- 1- And I am not even going to get into the lies that Arron Banks has told
- 2- about his covert relationship with the Russian Government.

Ms. Cadwalladr, then, published on Twitter a hyperlink of the Ted Talk and wrote. In the Tweet, Ms. Cadwalladr provided a hyperlink to the TED Talk and wrote:

- 1- Oh Arron. This is too tragic. Nigel Farage’s secret funder Arron
- 2- Banks has sent me a pre-action letter this morning: he’s suing me over
- 3- this TED talk. If you haven’t watched it please do. I say he lied about
- 4- his contact with the Russian govt. Because he did.

Appendix (8): Alberta Health Services v. Johnston

Mr. Johnston speech on online video show:

- 1- AHS has gone out of their way to commit the following crimes...
- 2- criminal trespass, criminal harassment, extortion, intimidation, and
- 3- terrorism.... Obviously, we're going to put their names out in public...
- 4- we're going to talk about them.... We are going to be utilizing the law
- 5- to bring these criminals who work for AHS to justice, and believe me,
- 6- they are going to go to prison, these are people who have committed
- 7- heinous crimes against the people of Calgary and I'm not going to quit
- 8- until they are in jail.
- 9- Hey, AHS, repeating what I said this morning, we're going to arrest
- 10- you for culpable homicide and then we're taking your houses and
- 11- bank accounts, you're not getting them back. Those are going to be
- 12- liquidated and spent on restoring Calgary business and fixing the
- 13- lives you've ruined. You're just following orders? Didn't work for
- 14- the Nazis either, isn't going to work for you. I have zero sympathy.
- 15- We're going to have Nuremburg trials in Calgary folks that are
- 16- what's happening. I've truly had enough and you know I'll be
- 17- smiling the whole time I do it.

Appendix (9): Post v. Hillier

On November 11, 2021, Ms. Hillier posts the following multi tweeted:

- 1- When she secretly dated her student at Carleton University we said
- 2- nothing. But since she's on a spree i may as well go all in".
- 3- I love @post_esther. An incredible Uni. Prof. She slept with her
- 4- students and fed them Ativan in parking lots. It was a good time @
- 5- Carleton_ U."
- 6- Your entire account is dedicated to my dad and i. You are a predator,
- 7- an abuser, and a gaslighter. I will hold you to account every time.

Appendix (10): Martin v. Najem

In multi post Instagram, the following texts are posted by Mr. Najem:

- 1- Isaac Eats-a-lot paedophile looking mother fucker
- 2- For my Muslim brothers and sisters, get ready, this is why
- 3- Isaac Eats-a-lot a fucking pedo dog.
- 4- He is taking the piss out of Muslims” and “He attacks the Lebanese
- 5- people.
- 6- Isaac Eats-a-lot is a racist dog whose habit is attacking Islam,
- 7- attacking Muslims.” “He hates multiculturalism”
- 8- Isaac Eats-a-lot probably the most hated person in the social media
- 9- marketing industry.
- 10- this fucking paedophile looking mother fucker, which he is...So
- 11- for everyone watching this right now
- 12- low life scum of a person and a fucken cunt concern is “it’s only
- 13- going to get worse.

المستخلص

تُجرى الدراسة تحليلاً نقدياً لخطابِ التشهير على منصاتِ التواصلِ الاجتماعي. تُعرضُ الدراسةُ مشكلةَ البحثِ على شكلِ اسئلةٍ منها : ما هي أنواعُ التشهيرِ الموجودةِ على منصاتِ التواصلِ الاجتماعي؟ ما هو نوع الأذى الذي يُسببه المحتوى التشهيري على سُمعةِ المُشهرِ فيه؟ ما هي الإستراتيجيات (أ) النحوية ، (ب) الدلالية ، (ج) التداولية ، (د) البلاغية المستخدمة في النصِ التشهيري على منصاتِ التواصلِ الاجتماعي؟ ما هي وتيرة حدوثِ الإستراتيجياتِ الخطابيةِ المُستخدمة لتحقيقِ التشهيرِ على منصاتِ التواصلِ الاجتماعي؟ ما هي الأيديولوجياتُ التي تُحفزُ المُشهرَ لنشرِ المحتوى التشهيري على منصاتِ التواصلِ الاجتماعي؟

تهدفُ هذه الدراسةُ لتحديدِ أنواعِ التشهيرِ، معرفة نوع الأذى الذي يسببه المحتوى التشهيري على المُشهرِ فيه، إيجادِ الإستراتيجياتِ (أ) النحوية ، (ب) الدلالية ، (ج) التداولية ، (د) البلاغية المستخدمة في النصِ التشهيري على منصاتِ التواصلِ الاجتماعي، وتحديدِ وتيرة حدوثها، إيجادِ الأيديولوجياتِ التي تُحفزُ المُشهرَ لنشرِ المحتوى التشهيري على منصاتِ التواصلِ الاجتماعي.

تتبنى هذه الدراسةُ نموذجاً إنتقائياً لتحليلِ عشرةِ نصوصٍ تشهيريةٍ منشورةٍ على منصاتِ اليوتيوب، التويتز، الفيسبوك، و الإنستغرام.

تُوظفُ الدراسةُ أنواعَ التشهيرِ الخاصةِ بهيل و هيل (٢٠٠٩) بالإضافةِ لأذى السمعةِ الخاصِ بيبوست (١٩٨٦) و إستراتيجياتِ فان دايك الخطابية (١٩٩٣، ٢٠٠٥، ٢٠٠٦، ٢٠٠٨، و ٢٠٠٨) لإتحقيقِ الأهدافِ المذكورةِ آنفاً .

توصلتِ الدراسةُ إلى إستنتاجاتٍ مختلفةٍ و من أهمّها: الأفتراءُ هو النوعُ الوحيدُ من التشهيرِ الذي يُمْكِنُ إيجادُه على منصاتِ التواصلِ الاجتماعي ، ميل المحتوى التشهيري لتشويه سمعة الضحية و تحديداً السمعة المتعلقة بشرفه و كرامته و ممتلكاته. علاوةً على ذلك، يتأثرُ المُشهرُ بأيديولوجياتِ التحيزِ والتمييزِ و العنصريةِ عند نشرِ خطابِ التشهيري.



جمهورية العراق
وزارة التعليم العالي و البحث العلمي
جامعة بابل
كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية
قسم اللغة الإنكليزية

تحليل نقدي لخطاب التشهير على منصات التواصل الاجتماعي

تقدّمت رسالة إلى مجلس كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية في جامعة بابل
جزءاً من متطلبات نيل درجة الماجستير في التربية / اللغة الإنكليزية/ اللغة

الطالبة

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