

**A Critical Discourse Analysis of President  
Donald Trump's Speeches during the  
Coronavirus Pandemic Crisis**

تحليل الخطاب النقدي لخطابات الرئيس دونالد ترامب في ضوء أزمة كورونا

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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Master's Degree in English Language  
and Literature**

**Department of English Language and Literature**

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**Jan. 2021**

## Authorization

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## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my supervisor, **Dr. Linda Al-Abbas**, for having welcomed me, for agreeing to lead this work, for her scientific accuracy, availability, and other good qualities that have deeply touched me.

I must also express my profound gratitude and appreciation to **all the professors at Middle East University**.

I would like to thank **my father** and **my mother** who taught me the values of hard work and diligence.

To my **old brother Jehad**, your constant encouragement was a great source of inspiration toward this study and all aspects in my life.

To **my brothers and sisters**. I appreciate the contribution of my wife, **Um Jehad**, who was always by my side.

Finally, I would like to thank all people who helped me in achieving this work.

## Dedication

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**“In The Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful”**

**Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him, who brought us from the darkness to the lightness.**

I dedicate this work

To my parents, may Allah bless them, for their invaluable love,  
their consciousness, their support, their sacrifices  
and all the values they have been able to increase.

To my beloved old brother, **Jehad**, for the selfless support he has offered over the years and his financial and moral support, which is in valuable.

To my sisters and my brothers for their tenderness,  
their patronization and their presence. To **my beloved wife, Um Jehad**, for her Support and presence in my life. To **my son Jehad**. To **my daughters Aya, Layan and Sama**.

To my supervisor Dr. Linda Al-Abbas, and her wisdom that helped me accomplish this work & many friends that I can't mention.

## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قال تعالى: ﴿ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ يُذَبِّحُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴾ صدق الله العظيم [سورة القصص، ﴿٢٤﴾]

“ Verily, Fir‘aun (Pharaoh) exalted himself in the land and made its people sects, weakening (oppressing) a group (i.e. Children of Israel) among them: killing their sons, and letting their females live. Verily, he was of the Mufsidûn (i.e. those who commit great sins and crimes, oppressors, tyrants)”

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**Abstract**

This study aims at investigating the possible implications of Trump's choice of certain lexical items in his speeches during the coronavirus crisis. It also highlights the potential ideological stands reflected in Trump's usage of certain grammatical patterns including modal structures, comparative and superlative forms and pronouns. To achieve the objectives of the study, two speeches delivered by Trump in two different phases of the coronavirus crisis are selected and analyzed in light of Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis.

The study found that Trump used such linguistic tools to emphasize concepts such as American's superiority and supremacy, national unity, citizens' involvement, and self-glorification.

Egoism and exaggeration were also found in Trump's speeches by the use of the pronouns of "I" and "we". The researcher also concluded the bombastic language used by Trump in his speeches during the coronavirus pandemic were obstacles in the way of attracting Americans to his ideology. Such a thing was reflected in voting against him in the recent elections, in favor of his running mate Joe Biden.

**Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Political Speeches, Donald Tramp, Corona Virus.**

## تحليل الخطاب النقدي لخطابات الرئيس دونالد ترامب في ضوء أزمة كورونا

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الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقيق في الآثار المحتملة لاختيار الرئيس دونالد ترامب لبعض المفردات المعجمية في خطبه أثناء أزمة كورونا. كما تسلط الضوء على مفاهيمه والأيدولوجية المحتملة والتي تنعكس في استخدامه لبعض النماذج النحويّة الخاصة بما فيها الأفعال المساعدة وصيغ المقارنة والتفضيل والضمائر. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة، تم اختيار خطابين ألقاهما ترامب في مرحلتين مختلفتين من أزمة فيروس كورونا ثم قام بتحليلهما وفق نموذج فيركلوف Fairclough ثلاثي الأبعاد (1995) لتحليل الخطاب النقدي.

لقد وجدت الدراسة أن ترامب استخدم مثل هذه الأدوات اللغوية للتأكيد على مفاهيمه ومبادئه مثل تفوق الأمريكيين والوحدة الوطنية ومشاركة المواطنين والأناية وتمجيد الذات.

الغرور والمبالغة أيضا كانت من الملامح الواضحة في خطابات ترامب من خلال كثرة استخدام ضمائر "أنا" و "نحن". كما توصل الباحث إلى استنتاج أن اللغة المنمقة التي استخدمها ترامب في خطبه خلال جائحة كورونا كانت عقبات في طريق جذب الأمريكيين إلى أيديولوجيته. مثل هذا الأمر انعكس في التصويت ضده في الانتخابات الأخيرة لصالح منافسه جو بايدن.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تحليل الخطاب النقدي، الخطابات السياسية، دونالد ترامب، كورونا فايروس.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **Introduction**

### **1.0 Overview**

This chapter provides general background on Discourse Analysis. It states the problem of the study and the objectives, followed by the research questions. The significance of the study and its limitations are also outlined.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Language is a tool for communication between people. It is used to achieve many communicative functions. According to Bennett (1976), people communicate to express information or have actions done. Language has two functions: transactional and interactional functions. A transactional function means using language to transmit information, whether factual or propositional. This type is used to develop cultural ideas, literature, laws, etc. An interactional function, on the other hand, is characterized by using language to establish and preserve social relationships.

Discourse is the main social manifestation of communication. It refers to all forms of language used by communicators in a society (Fairclough, 1993; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Van Dijk, 1997). Discourse is the

process of exchanging linguistic sentences between the speaker or writer, on the one hand, and the listener or reader. Van Dijk (1997, p.2) defines discourse as “the form that people make of language to convey ideas, thoughts, or beliefs within a social context....”.

Discourse analysis (DA) is a linguistic field of inquiry that analyzes language at the context level from a grammatical standpoint (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2011). Yule (1997, p. 139) states that DA investigates how language users interpret and understand social and contextual messages communicated in linguistic texts.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) involves approaches that analyze vocal and written use of language related to evaluative procedures. Fairclough (1995) defines CDA as a kind of discourse analysis that investigates the relation between texts and the discursive practices and processes of social and cultural structures filled by the associations of struggles over power and ideology. Besides, Wodak (1995) assumes that CDA is a type of analysis that analyzes other ambiguous and unambiguous structural relationships of power, discrimination, control, and dominance, which can be found in language.

Among the domains that attract the attention of discourse analysts is presidential speeches. In late 2019, the coronavirus pandemic started in China and swept the whole world. During this period, the US President

delivered many speeches during press conferences, updating the public on the latest news on the coronavirus outbreak and stressing his administration's efforts to confront the novel virus. His speeches utilized different linguistic strategies that may carry over and covert meanings. This study investigates the patterns of utterances in Trump's speeches in press conferences during the coronavirus pandemic. It explores the hidden meanings of power and ideology in his speeches by analyzing the word choice and grammatical aspects, including modal structures, comparative and superlative forms, and pronouns.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Generally speaking, written or spoken language has messages that the speaker or writer intends to convey to his audience. These messages can be explicit or implicit. Analyzing and interpreting linguistic speeches from political or social perspectives calls for a systematic CDA approach.

In this study, the researcher applies Fairclough's CDA model which is based on Halliday's theory of a systematic functional linguistic approach (SFL). This choice may help analyze and interpret the political dimension of Trump's speeches during the pandemic.

The USA was one of the nations hardest hit by the global coronavirus pandemic in the year of presidential elections. It was a challenging

situation for Donald Trump as he needed to raise the possibility of his re-election by tackling the spread of the pandemic and reducing its devastating economic and social consequences before the presidential primary election. Therefore, Trump delivered daily speeches to improve his position because of the growing national view that he failed to secure the country amid the pandemic. Trump adopted a special kind of political discourse that is worth investigating from a linguistic discourse-based standpoint in this critical time of the American history.

This study may be among the very first few conducted to analyze structures that reveal some aspects of Trump's political speeches amid the coronavirus pandemic, including assertion of power, populism, racial attitude toward foreigners, and national supremacy. The linguistic tools under examination are word choice and grammatical aspects, including modal structures, comparative and superlative forms, and pronouns. In this study, the researcher analyzed Trump's uses of these structures to better understand the text in terms of ideology and power.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:



1. Investigating the possible implications of Trump's choice of certain lexical items in his speeches during the coronavirus crisis.
2. Examining the ideological stands reflected in Trump's usage of certain grammatical constructions, including modal structures, comparative and superlative forms, and pronouns.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What are the possible implications of Trump's choice of certain lexical items in his speeches during the coronavirus crisis?
2. What are the ideological stands reflected in Trump's usage of certain grammatical constructions, including modal structures, comparative and superlative forms, and pronouns?

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study employs a CDA approach in analyzing structures that reveal some aspects of Trump's political speeches, including assertion of power, populism, racial attitude toward foreigners, and supremacy. It aims at contributing to the body of existing knowledge in the domain of CDA. More specifically, the study examines the context-based hidden meaning of Trump's speeches by shedding light on the word choice and grammatical patterns involving modal structures, comparative and superlative forms, and pronouns.

This research may provide language learners with critical skills by analyzing structures and language features that reflect the speaker's ideology and intention by using CDA.

This study also highlights and marks the strategies and techniques that may be used by President Donald Trump in his speeches to persuade his audience with his thoughts and ideas and earn support to achieve his goals and plans in the near future.

## **1.6 Limit of the Study**

This study is conducted in Amman, Jordan, during the academic year 2020 - 2021.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The study is limited to a selected representative set of excerpts from the speeches delivered by President Donald Trump amid the coronavirus crisis. The researcher applied the CDA approach to analyze these speeches. A qualitative research design was used in this study. Fairclough's three dimensions model of description, interpretation, and explanation was applied to offer a deep understanding of the word choice and grammatical structures, on the one hand, and to explain their hidden meaning, on the other hand.

Finally, this study examines the linguistic issues such as word choice and grammatical patterns involving modal structures, comparative and superlative forms, and pronouns. It attempts to reveal some aspects of Trump's political speeches, including the assertion of power, populism, and racial attitude toward foreigners. The results can't be generalized on other speeches delivered by Trump or other presidents.

## **1.8 Definitions of Terms**

### **1- Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**

CDA is a unique approach in discourse analysis, which focuses on discursive components, conditions, and consequences of power abuse by dominant (elite) groups and institutions (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 65).

**Operationally:** it is the Analysis of Donald Trump's speeches that aims to explore their hidden meaning by examining word choice and grammatical patterns including modal structures, comparative and superlative forms, and pronouns to reveal some ideological implications.

**2- Speech** is the expression of thought using linguistic means.

**Operationally:** Discourses delivered by Donald Trump during the time of coronavirus pandemic.

**3-Modality** is concerned with the speaker's assessment or assumptions of possibilities and, in most cases, it indicates the speaker's confidence (or

lack thereof) in the truth of the proposition expressed. Coates (1983, p. 18).

**Operationally:** the use of modals in Donald Trump's speeches that indicate the assertion of power.

**4- Comparative adjectives** compare one person or thing with another and enable us to say whether a person or thing has more or less of a particular quality.

**5- Superlative Adjectives** describe one person or thing as having more of a quality than all other people or things in a group. **Operationally:** the use of comparative and superlative forms to indicate self-glorification and superiority.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

Critical Discourse Analysis has been thoroughly investigated by many linguists and social scientists. Fairclough and Wodak (1993) among others define discourse as any form of language that the society uses to convey information at contextual level. Technically, it refers to utterances or linguistic sentences between the writer – speaker on the one hand, and the reader- hearer, on the other. Therefore, analyzing sentences and words can help understand the speaker’s ideological background and how he uses language techniques to persuade and manipulate peoples’ minds. Since this study is concerned with analyzing Trump’s speeches during the coronavirus crisis, it is crucial to present related literature on Discourse Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis. Then, Fairclough’s model in Critical Discourse Analysis is also presented. The linguistic tools used in this study are highlighted. The chapter also sheds light on the ideological implications and Critical Discourse Analysis. Presidential speeches are also discussed as a genre for discourse analysis studies. The chapter concludes with empirical studies related to critical discourse analysis of political speeches.

## **2.1 Discourse**

Discourse has a several definitions explained in many theory books. These definitions are dissimilar depending on the theory used by each researcher. The term “discourse” is derived from the Latin root “discursus” which means speech or conversation in general. This means that discourse can be in the form of social conversation, written or spoken. Van Dijk (1997, p.2) defines discourse as “the form that people make of language to convey ideas, thoughts, or beliefs within a social context”.

Discourse is the main social manifestation of communication. It refers to all forms of language used by communicators in a society (Fairclough, 1993; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Van Dijk, 1997). It is the process of exchanging linguistic sentences between the speaker or writer, on the one hand, and the listener or reader, on the other. Brown (1983) mentioned that discourse may be performed by text. It could be only in the form of text, spoken or written.

### **2.1.1 Political Discourse**

Political discourse is an interdisciplinary subject in which different fields of study interact, such as politics, sociology, psychology, socio-linguistics, and others. It’s importance stems from the influence that this discourse has on the future of the nation. People know very well that politicians have a direct impact on economic, social, cultural, and political

aspects of life. However, it is politics which closely affects the decisions of war, peace, stability or conflict. For this reason, political speeches have attracted the attention of scholars, trying to interpret all message types, whether implicit or explicit, and uncover what they mean in reality (Sheveleva, 2012).

Political discourse is usually spoken. It is delivered by an affective speaker; president, king, deputy parliament, minister...etc. The affective speaker should have the advantage of voice quality which helps him influence listeners. He has to pay attention to what he said and plan the outcomes of the speech. Hence, politicians are looking for the effective speech in order to control and manipulate people minds. They use language to send their messages to achieve their goals.

Political language is usually simple because the speaker tries to communicate with people and who can't all understand the complex language. Moreover, political speeches have a number of functions. It is used to transform and deepen a particular phenomenon. It is used to convince listeners with the speaker's ideas by using some techniques such as analysis and explanation. Seidel (1985) argued that a political speech may constitute a, a domain, field or a genre. It is also an incredible achievement at a particular place and at a particular time, and contains three major elements;

- 1- The addressor or (the speaker).
- 2- The addressee or (the hearer).
- 3- The political speech itself.

Van Dijk (1998) mentioned that political discourse analysis deals with political authority abuse, supremacy or dominance. Thus, he views political discourse as a class of genres defined by the domain of politics, but not a genre by itself. Thus, political speeches, electoral debates, parliamentary deliberations, political programs and government discussions are therefore, some genres related to politics.

The current study is concerned with the political discourse of President Donald Trump during the coronavirus pandemic. It investigates the structures that reveal some aspects of Trump's political attitudes and ideologies.

## **2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a method of analysis in relation to ideology and power (Fairclough, 2013). It is an approach that examines all aspects of language use in political or social domains. Jorgesen and Philips (2011) state that CDA has supplied methods for the empirical study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in various social domains.



Van Dijk (1998) argued that CDA is a kind of discourse analytical research that studies the way dominance, inequality and social power abuse are resisted, reproduced and enacted by the talk and text in the political and social context. From the abovementioned, we can say that CDA focuses on revealing the hidden meaning of the text. It also shows how the speaker, or the writer applies the power in his discourse in order to control the minds and actions of the dominant groups and persuade them with his beliefs and thoughts. Fairclough (1989) focuses on the study of ideology in political discourses. He proposes three-dimensional framework of analysis; description, interpretation and explanation. His approach is based on Halliday's Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL) that is proposed to explain theories of discourse, language and society associated with the linguistic theory analytical method (Halliday, 1979).

Kress (1979) examines the shared aspects of language, lexical and syntactic structures used by society members when they intend to write or speak in all discourses. Fairclough (1989) argues that there is a strong relationship between society and discourse. This view claims that the structures are produced by the society and shape discourse which, in turn, shapes beliefs and values in society. In other words, linguistic features are used in discourse to form and represent reality.

The main purpose of CDA is then to find how the spoken or written texts are organized, and it investigates the hidden ideological features and power relations by analyzing the characteristics of language and structures in the text.

Likewise, Joworski and Coupland (2006) observe that power relations are formed in discourse. Fowler (1985) states that the speaker uses language to manipulate and consolidate social relationships and concepts to reveal power and control.

Fairclough and Wodak (1997, p. 271-80) argued that the general principles of CDA are:

1. It deals with social problems.
2. Power relations are considered as discursive.
3. Discourse constitute culture and society.
4. It performs an ideological work.
5. Discourses are historical.
6. It mediates connection between society and text.
7. It is explanatory and interpretative.
8. Social action shapes discourse.

Penny Cook (2001) presented a general classification of CDA. The first class deals with the way in which unequal power is represented in conversation. It concentrates on several issues such as turn-talking, control

over topic and interactions. By doing this, we can prove for example that topics are started and changed by the dominant participant in a conversation. This demonstrates how power determines the identity of the speaker, about which topic and for how long.

The second class doesn't deal with structures but rather with the content. It focuses on the ways in which ideologies are represented in discourse. The aim of analysis in this class is to reveal the underlying ideological representations and systems, and to show how they are connected with the larger social order. This class of analysis underpins the hidden ideological views of certain social groups, which they are able to enhance as naturalized.

Accordingly, CDA has moved beyond text analysis. It joined macro social analysis, power relations and micro linguistic analysis. Wang (2007) argued that Wodak's and Fairclough's works rely on linguistic analysis of texts, starting with the analysis of lexical resources, and moving through the analysis of syntactic functions and ending with the analysis of text metafunction and genre.

CDA is a sensitive approach of discourse analysis which gains its identity by distinguishing itself from other approaches and constitutes itself at several levels of selection, starting from choosing data, observation, explaining some theoretical concepts, and ending with the methods that

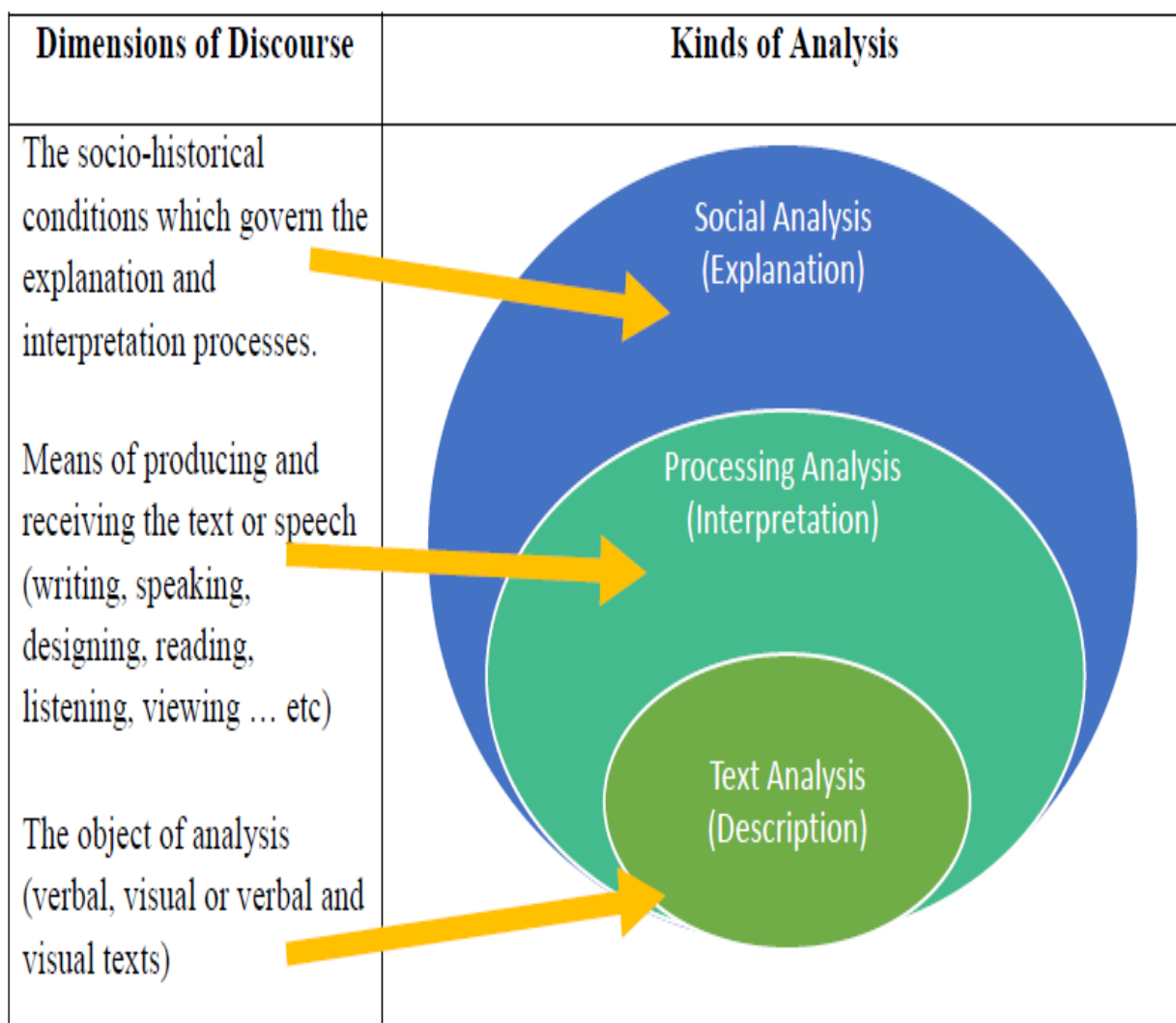
link observation and theory (Meyer, 2001). The main purpose of CDA is to find how the text is organized and it investigates the hidden ideological features by analyzing the characteristics of language and structures in the text.

### **2.3 Fairclough's Model in Critical Discourse Analysis**

Norman Fairclough is a Critical Discourse Analysis who shed light on the link between language, power and social. Fairclough (1989) has presented his approach of studying language as a critical language study and reviewed a range of mainstream approaches, including Sociolinguistics, Discourse Analysis, Conversation Analysis, Linguistics, Pragmatics, Artificial Intelligence and Cognitive Psychology. Thus, in these areas, Fairclough presented limitations of critical perspective although it had offered something to language study. She also criticized individualism promoted in pragmatics and positive aspects of sociolinguistics and also the lack of concentration on context in conversation analysis. To overcome these limitations, Fairclough (1989, p.10) attempted to identify his approach as an alternative orientation which he called a "social theory of discourse". Fairclough (1992, p.92) attempted to combine social and linguistically-oriented and political thoughts with language and discourse. To do this, he argued that we can understand ideology and power relations by close language analysis.

Fairclough was trying to present and describe methods for analyzing discourse. In his book "*Language and Power*" published in 1989, Fairclough offered not only a guide for analyzing discourse, but he presented a methodological advice. Luck (2002, p.98) argued that Fairclough had attempted to "synthesize a corpus of text analytic techniques", and to focus on critical discourse analysis samples and methodology.

In 1989 Fairclough presented his model of CDA, which was considered the center of the Critical Discourse Analysis. The (1995) model for CDA consists of three inter-related tactics of analysis tied to three inter-related dimensions of discourse which are clarified in figure 1 below (reformulated from: Locke, 2004, p. 42)



**Figure 1. Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional Model of CDA**

These three dimensions include:

- (i) Object of evaluation (including verbal, visual or verbal and visible texts),
- (ii) Processes via means by which the object is produced and acquired (writing/ speaking/designing and reading/listening/viewing) through human subjects.

(iii) Socio-historical conditions which govern these processes  
(Fairclough, 1995, p.26).

According to Fairclough each of these dimensions requires:

1. a unique form of textual content analysis (description). This step concentrates on text analysis. Sound system, vocabulary semantic and cohesion organization above the sentence level and the analysis of grammar are part of linguistic analysis. Therefore, the text gives the necessary data for linguistic analysis. It is the main source of grammar description.
2. Processing evaluation (interpretation).

Fairclough (1989, p.26) says “interpretation is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction with seeing the text as the product of a process of production, and as recourse in the process of interpretation”. At this stage, interpretation should be focused on the relationship between the discourse, its production and its consumption. Besides, discourse is not only considered as text but also a discursive practice. Attention should be drawn to other factors such as intertextuality and speech acts, because these factors link the text to its context. Interpretation contains two processes. A) institutional process or (editorial procedure), and the other is b) discourse process (the alteration that the text goes through in

production and consumption). In other words, this step helps the researcher in finding the inter-textual relations among texts, discourse, and setting. Discourse is not only considered as the linguistic version, but also a kind of discursive practice. At this stage of interpretation, the interpreter should take into consideration those factors that relate to how people produce and interpret discourse.

### 3. Social Practice (Explanation)

Fairclough (1989, p.26), mentioned that Explanation concentrates on the link or the relationship between social context and interaction with the social limitation of the process of interpretation and production, and their social effects". On the other hand, the analysis in this part is related to the social, cultural and historical contexts. Discourse is considered as a kind of social practice, institution and sociality in fact. The hidden information of power relations, language and ideology can be explored and explained in this stage by two contexts, social context and institutional context (Fairclough, 1995).

By following these steps of analysis, understanding and studying language forms, one can discover the ideology and social processes that are embedded in the language, then find power relations which exist in the society.



What is useful about this method is that it enables us to center attention on the signifiers that make up the text, their layout, the precise linguistic selections, their sequencing, their juxtaposition and so on. Such a theory deals with the following: lexicalization, patterns of transitivity, active and passive voice, the use of nominalization, the choices of mood, the alternatives of modality or polarity, the thematic structure of the text, the information focus and cohesion devices (Fairclough, 1995).

The linguistic tools used in this study are highlighted in separate sections.

### **2.3.1 Modality in Discourse**

Modality system is considered an instrument for expressing power and control in critical discourse analysis. It reveals the speaker's past experience and future outlook. It is also used to form the speaker's opinions and judgments toward his audience and topic. Moreover, it uncovers the validity of what the speaker stated, offered, questioned, commanded or predicated (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014). Modality shapes and form of personal identity and it has an important part in this process (Simpson, 2004).

Coates (1983) argues that the speaker's confidence or lack of confidence and propositions of possibilities can be observed through the use of modality. We use the modal 'will' for instance to express the future

plans and purposes. It also expresses the prediction and willingness (Huddleston and Pullum 2002). Azar (2002) argues that the modal “can” is used to express informal polite request, permission, ability and possibility and with negation it expresses impossibility. The modal “could” is used to express polite request, degree of certainty, suggestions, past ability and impossibility in negative form. She stated that certainty and strong necessity can be expressed by using the modal “must” and in negative form “mustn’t” expresses a prohibition. The modal “must” also can be used to give advice, exhortations, making requests, and articulating power (Collins, 2009). The modal “have to” can be used to express impersonal obligation and act as external power (Westney, 1995). The certainty for future predications and advisability can be expressed by the modal “should” (Azar, 2002). Its weaker than “must” and expresses the speaker’s desire and advisability to perform an action.

This study analyzes and examines the structures of modals and their possible interpretations in the speeches of Donald Trump amid the coronavirus pandemic crisis.

### **2.3.2 The Use of the Pronouns I and We in Discourse**

The pronoun “I” is used in speeches in order to convey opinions. It can make the speech more subjective and can show the speaker’s authority

(Pennycook, 1993, p.3). Using the personal pronoun may make the speech seems quite personal.

The speaker might use the pronoun “I” to show his commitment to his audiences. Moreover, “I” may help in giving the speaker a personal voice that distances him from others. So, if the speaker uses the pronoun “I”, we cannot always expect that the other members of his party agree with his opinions (Bramley, 2001). It can be considered an attempt of placing the speaker outside or above the shared responsibility of his partners (Beard, 2000).

Showing personal involvement is the main benefit of using the pronoun “I” when the speaker wants to present positive news. However, when something goes wrong, the use of “I” may blame it all on the speaker.

The use of the pronoun “I” can be the motivating reason for a politician to convey his personal qualities; being someone with morals, principles, power and strength and is able to take action when necessary (Bramley, 2001).

In political speeches, the use of the pronoun is very important because it can express ‘institutional identity’, i.e. especially, when one person is speaking to represent an institution. “We” can also be used to separate *us* from *them*, for instance, between two political parties. If the speaker

establishes an *us* and *them*, it may separate him from the audience and create a positive image for his group and in some cases, a negative image of the other group. The purpose of using *us* and *them* is to separate one group apart from the other group and their actions. It can also include or exclude the audiences from the group membership (Bramley, 2001).

Sometimes, “we” is used to present the image of one political party as a team with shared responsibility. Politicians use the pronoun “we” to avoid self-representation or speaking about themselves as individuals (Beard, 2000).

### **2.3.3 Comparative and Superlative Forms**

Using the grammatical structures of comparative and superlative in discourse may represent self-glorification. The comparative structures, when used with positive adjectives, may indicate that someone or something has better qualifications than others. Superlative adjectives may reflect the dichotomy of positive self-representation and negative other representation; in other words, the distinction between Us and Them. Uplifting one entails lowering the other or giving somebody or something superiority over the other. This, in turn, renders the others inferior (Unvar & Rahimi, 2013)

## **2.4 Critical Discourse Analysis and Ideology**

Ideology is “a systematic body of ideas, organized from a particular point of view” (Hodge and Kress, 1993, p.6). It is sets and systems of beliefs shared by social groups and can be investigated from specific linguistic practices in texts because language reflects and constructs ideology. Simpson (1995, p.5-6) mentioned that ideologies are “particular ways of representing and constructing society which reproduce unequal relations of power, relations of domination and exploitation.” Thomson (1990) argued that ideologies are propositions which generally figure as implicit assumptions in texts, that contribute to reproducing or producing unequal relations of domination and the relations of power. Ideology to Fowler (1996) could be manifested from observing and describing the linguistic forms of the text such as vocabulary and the structure of the sentence in addition to the hidden meanings which do not have direct surface structure representation. If the ideologies presented are those of the powerful groups in society, the ideologies are dominant ideologies. Van Dijk (2008) argued that ideology is a system which consists of the ideas and beliefs of a specific group of people which can be defined from the multidisciplinary ways including cognitive, discursive and social aspects. He also mentioned that ideologies can be changed, expressed, reproduced

and acquired in the society, especially in several discourse practice forms such as speeches and texts.

Ideology is omnipresent in texts. Fairclough (2004) says that ideologies attach to key words which evoke but leave implicit sets of ideological assumptions. The idea/s which the writer presupposes from the very beginning shows his ideology/ies. In addition, the type of discourse/s used and the language associated are significant in showing ideology. “Both selections amongst available discourses and selection of particular ways of articulating them together are likely to be ideologically significant choices” (Fairclough: 2004, p.102). Text analysis is not enough in analyzing or understanding ideological practices; reception, interpretation and social effects of texts should also be considered (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). Ideologies in texts are analyzed not for the sake of analysis itself, but as a way of changing these practices in language as a manifestation of the beliefs of the dominant groups in societies since ideologies may sometimes be false or ungrounded construction of society” (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997).

Discourse is constructed with the ideas, personal thoughts, and beliefs which reflect attitude and personal behavior, identified as ideology. Ideology is the constructed ideas, thoughts which are socially conditioned. It can help in joining peoples’ perspectives from different places, as

presented, in political leaders' contexts. Fairclough (1995) mentioned that goals can be transformed with the perspectives of contextual and textual differences. Ideological implications can influence discursive practices and this may help in generating unequal power relations across the different community components and understanding how messages and thoughts and position of people are represented.

Fairclough and Wodak (1997) argued that the main goal of CDA is to investigate the ambiguous relationship of determination and causality between texts, discursive practices, wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes, and events in order to explore how such events, texts and practices, arise out and are ideologically shaped by the struggles over power.

Finally, ideology is connected to CDA in that ideology of the writer or the speaker is not apparent in the text. We understand ideology by using the methods of the CDA because they help to clarify and uncover the hidden meanings in the text.

## **2.5 Empirical Studies**

Analyzing political speeches under CDA framework attracted the attention of many linguists all over the year. Wang (2010) analyzed Barack Obama's speeches under CDA theory and Systematic Functional

Linguistics (SFL) from the perspective of transitivity and modality and how language was used to express power and ideology. The study found that Obama used colloquial and simple language to reach out and persuade his audience.

Similarly, Ekwati (2010) attempted to reveal the relationship between language and power by using modal verbs in the Indonesian presidential speeches. She used Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA. Her findings showed that the president used modal verbs to construct an image about being a successful president. His discourse also contained some assumptions about social relations between the audience and his leadership.

In the same vein, Unvar and Rahimi (2013) conducted a CDA study to investigate how certain ideologies are used and attitudes are produced through discourse. He analyzed the discursive structures in Obama's Victory Speech represented in the linguistic techniques of euphemization and derogation. The findings revealed that Obama chose certain words to express his desired ideology and point of view. Some terms emphasized the importance of being together and standing as a nation. Some others stressed the concept of 'US and Them', and showed how better WE are as compared with Them.

Likewise, Abed AL-Haq (2015) conducted a critical discourse analysis study of three speeches of King Abdullah II. The aim of the study was to



explore the linguistic strategies that King Abdullah II used in his speeches. He found that King Abdullah II uses creative expressions and intertextuality to persuade the American audience with his thoughts and ideas. He also used circumlocution to magnify and highlight a certain issue, namely, the American role in the peace process between Palestinians and Israelis.

Houda (2016) examined the discursive structures in Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential election campaign discourse. Fairclough's framework of critical discourse analysis was adopted. The study attempted to uncover the elements of gender references, rhetoric, frames and intertextuality. The findings revealed that Clinton's discourse contained elements that indicate gendered language, persuasive techniques, and framing that can all imply her ideology.

Hamood (2019) conducted a critical discourse analysis study of Trump's Discourse recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of occupation. The study aimed to find the influence of the American president official discourse on the identity of Jerusalem. In this study, Van Dijk thematic theory was applied to analyze the chosen speeches. The findings showed that Trump's decision was taken in isolation of others. Trump contradicted himself with regard to Palestinians and his local political considerations on a rational and realistic approach to external policy was uncovered.

Faiz, Chojimah, and Khasanah (2020) investigated the ideology of Trump on his speech about Jerusalem. They mainly analyzed the illocutionary acts and the ideology of Trump. They used Fairclough's three models of CDA which includes textual analysis, discursive practice and social practice. The study that found that there are five types of illocutionary acts expressed, with representatives being the mostly expressed by Trump. The ideology on the speech about Jerusalem showed that Trump wanted to use his power to create peace in Jerusalem.

As can be seen from the literature above, many studies investigated political speeches delivered by different presidents. Some investigated Trump's speeches but no studies have been conducted so far on his speeches in the press conferences during the coronavirus crisis. This lends importance to this study being conducted in a critical period of time all over the world, namely, the coronavirus pandemic crisis.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Methods and Procedures**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter describes the methods of data collection and analysis adopted in this study. It explores the investigated speeches delivered by President Donald Trump during the coronavirus crisis and the justifications for their selection. It further discusses the instruments used in analyzing the data and the procedures followed in the analysis.

#### **3.1 Sample of the Study**

The end of 2019 was a critical period since the whole world was facing the killing disease. All countries were trying hard to take the necessary measures to reduce its spread and prove their successful control of the virus. Therefore, speeches delivered by presidents at that time may involve different messages to their people. President Donald Trump appeared with his administration members in daily conferences during the coronavirus crisis to discuss the developments in the epidemiological situation in USA and in the world. In this study, the remarks given by Trump in two press conferences on the coronavirus updates were selected. The first conference press was held on the beginning of the pandemic on February 26, 2020. At that time, the number of infected cases was only fifteen. This speech was important for Trump who needed to stress his country's readiness to defeat

the novel virus. The press conference can be retrieved from:  
<http://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/donald-trump-coronavirus-press-conference-transcript-trump-and-cdc-give-coronavirus-updates>

The second conference remarks were delivered on April 27, 2020 when the infected cases surpassed a million. It must be noted that the USA was the first country to hit this record and this may have been critical to Trump who intended to keep the number of coronavirus cases down. This press conference can be retrieved from:  
<https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/donald-trump-coronavirus-press-conference-transcript-april-27>).

The videos of both conferences were downloaded from the internet in two forms: the video and the conference remarks transcript.

### **3.2 Instruments of the Study**

This study is an interpretive qualitative research. It provides a systematic investigation of the salient linguistic features of the political speeches of Donald Trump during the time of coronavirus pandemic.

The researcher analyzed the collected data in terms of Fairclough model (1995) this framework enables the researcher to explore the linguistic features that answer the study's questions. It consists of three inter-related tactics of analysis tied to three inter-related dimensions of discourse. These

three dimensions include (i) the object of evaluation (including verbal and visual texts), (ii) the processes by which the object is produced and acquired (writing/ speaking/designing and reading/listening/viewing) by human subjects.(iii) the socio-historical conditions which govern these processes.

According to Fairclough, each of these dimensions requires a unique form of textual content analysis (description), processing evaluation (interpretation), and social analysis (explanation). What is useful about this method is that it enables researchers to center attention on the signifiers that make up the text, their layout, the precise linguistic selections, their sequencing, their juxtaposing and so on. The theory deals with the following: lexicalization, patterns of transitivity, active and passive voice, the use of nominalization, the choices of mood, the alternatives of modality or polarity, the thematic structure of the text, the information focus and cohesion devices. These are Halliday's grammatical assets for ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings.

In this study, the researcher uses some of these tools to fulfill the study objectives. The data dealt with in the form of sentences and phrases. The selected data are considered as the form of political discourse, which is taken by the researcher in order to examine word choice, the use of

personal and plural pronouns “I” and “we” and the structures of necessity modals.

### **3.3 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments**

**Validity:** The selected speeches were downloaded in their oral and written forms were introduced to a panel of university professors specialized in discourse analysis to ensure their suitability and to decide whether or not they will be enough to fulfill the objectives of the study.

**Reliability:** The researcher used a pilot study on the selected speeches which were documented and presented in the appendices part.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

This study adopted the theoretical framework of Fairclough’s (1995) CDA model. The researcher provided linguistic tools for analyzing the structures which include word choice, pronouns, modal verbs and the comparative and superlative forms. The researcher was used such methods because they were suitable for the analysis and achieved the objectives of this study.

This qualitative research is based on Fairclough’s three dimensions model of description, interpretation and explanation. In description, the researcher focused on the text analysis using the linguistic tools mentioned above. This dimension was presented in chapter four. In interpretation and

explanation dimensions the researcher discussed and analyzed the results of the first dimension and answered the questions of the present study and drew the conclusion. These two dimensions were presented in chapter five.

### **3.5 Procedures of the Study**

To conduct this research, the researcher followed these steps:

1. Setting up the questions and objectives of the study.
2. Collecting theoretical and empirical studies relevant to the subject.
3. Downloading the videos of the speeches from the internet as well as their transcripts.
4. Checking validity of the suitability of the questions.
5. Checking the reliability.
6. Explaining and analyzing the selected samples of speeches.
7. Drawing out the conclusion.
8. Proposing recommendations for future studies.
9. Indexing references according to APA style.
10. Adding appendices.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Findings of the Study**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter answers the questions of the study which aimed to investigate the lexical choice in Trump's speeches during the coronavirus crisis in addition to the grammatical constructions that may reveal hidden ideologies and inclinations. The following are the study questions and their results:

- 1- What are the possible implications of Trump's choice of certain lexical items in his speeches during the coronavirus crisis?
- 2- What are the potential ideological stands reflected in Trump's usage of certain grammatical constructions including necessity modals, comparative and superlative forms and pronouns?

#### **4.1 Findings**

Since political speeches are highly constructed pieces of discourse, the present chapter critically assesses two discourses. The first speech was delivered on Feb 26, 2020 (Donald Trump Coronavirus Press Conference). The second was delivered on April 27, 2020 (Donald Trump Coronavirus Press Conference).

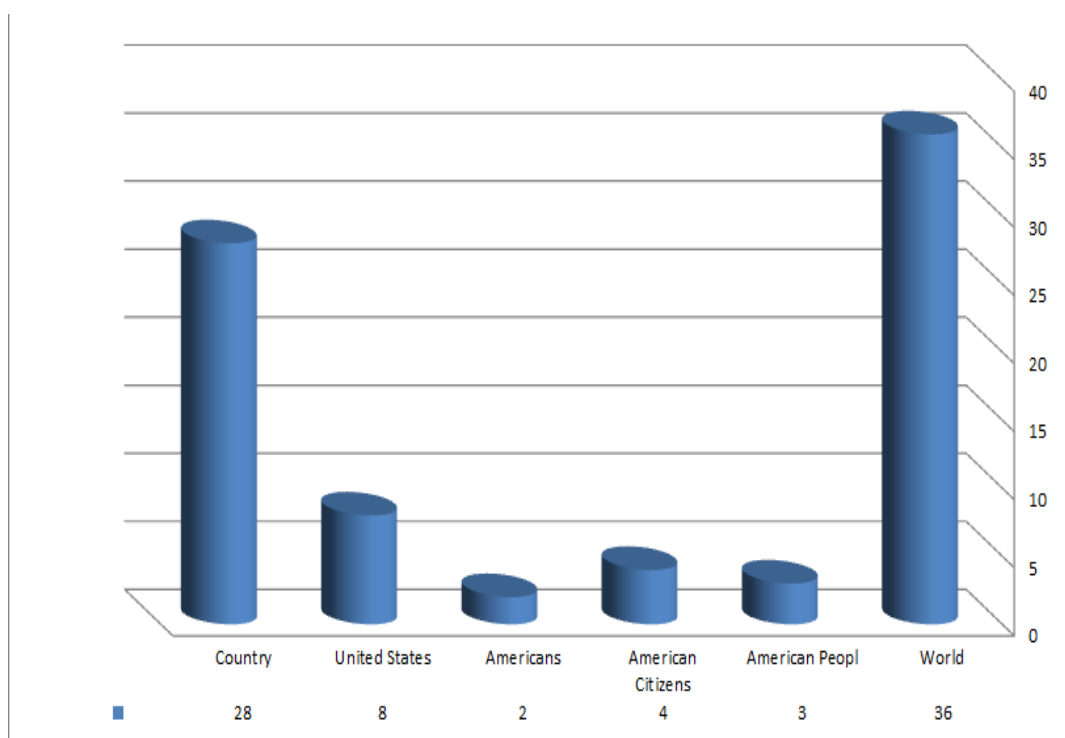


The research hypothesizes that Donald Trump's discourses may involve hidden views delivered by the choice of words and elements of necessity modals, comparative and superlative forms, in addition to pronouns. This part of the study is an attempt to reveal the underlying discursive structures adopting Fairclough's model of CDA. As mentioned in the second chapter; the analysis process contains three steps. First, text analysis which is concerned with investigating Donald Trump's language features in both speeches. It deals with vocabulary and grammar. Second, the discursive practice analysis which is concerned with both dimensions of explanation and interpretation. This means that Trump's ideological features are explored in both speeches. This framework, as hoped, helps make observations about the selected texts in particular. Although this may be applicable to different speeches delivered by Trump, the analysis results can't be generalized for all his other speeches.

#### **4.1.1 Findings Related to the First Question**

This part is concerned with the diction of Donald Trump in both speeches. Examples of his word choices are selected and explained. Only two sets of words are analyzed as examples of his vocabulary. The first set is related to identity and belonging, and the second set to beliefs and thoughts.

First, the researcher examined all the occurrences of the words that express identity and sense of belonging, namely, American people, American citizens, Americans, the United States, States, world and country in the two speeches under investigation. The main reason behind choosing this kind of words is to be the base for further discussions about nationalism, racial attitudes, and ideology. The figure below shows the frequency of the above-mentioned words.

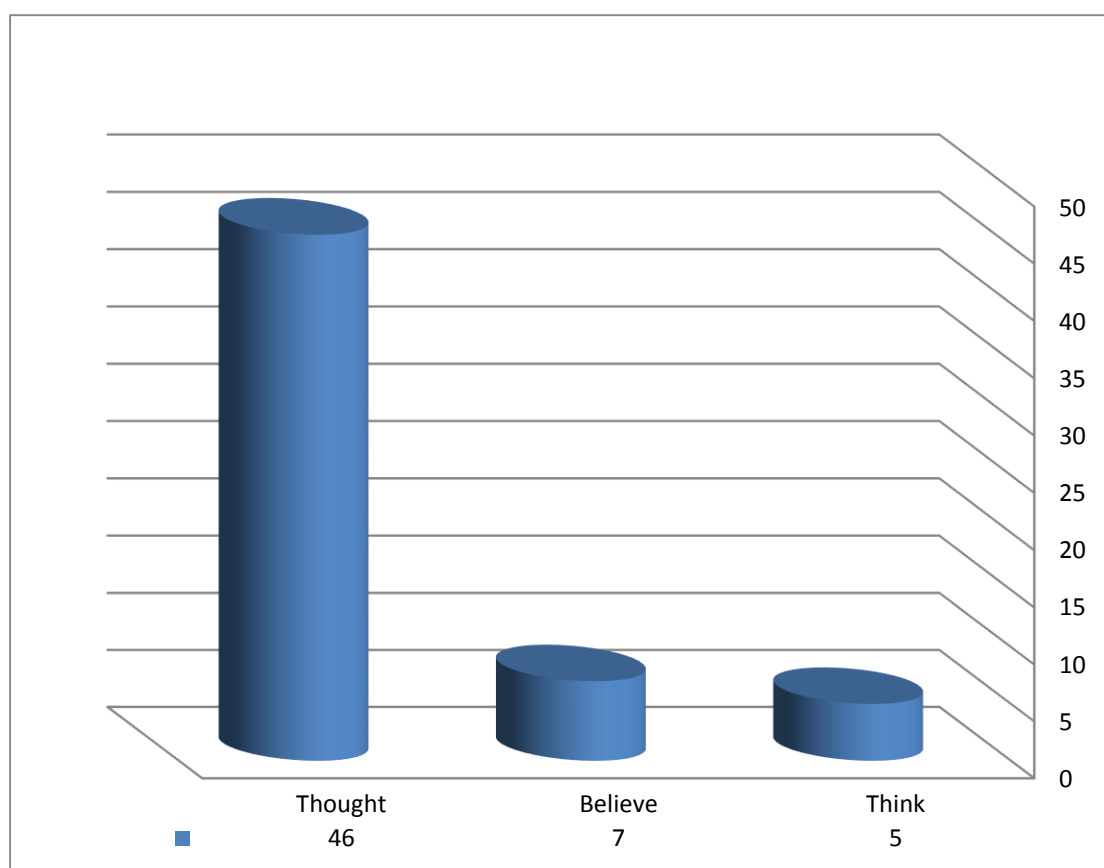


**Figure 2. Frequency of words that express identity and belonging**

After analyzing Trump's remarks in the two conferences, the researcher found that he used the word "world" thirty six times to refer to all people while he used the word "country" twenty eight times to refer to America and people. Trump also used "the United States" eight times to refer to all

states. It was also observed that he used “American citizens” four times, and “American people” three times, and “Americans” only two times to refer to all American people. The researcher used these details in order to justify the analysis of ideology and racial attitudes in the next section.

Second, the researcher examined all the occurrences of the words that express thoughts and beliefs, namely, think, believe, and thought. This set of words are selected as they express views and beliefs about certain issues which, in turn may imply his ideological stands. The figure below shows the frequency of the above-mentioned words.



**Figure 3. Frequency of words that express beliefs and thoughts**

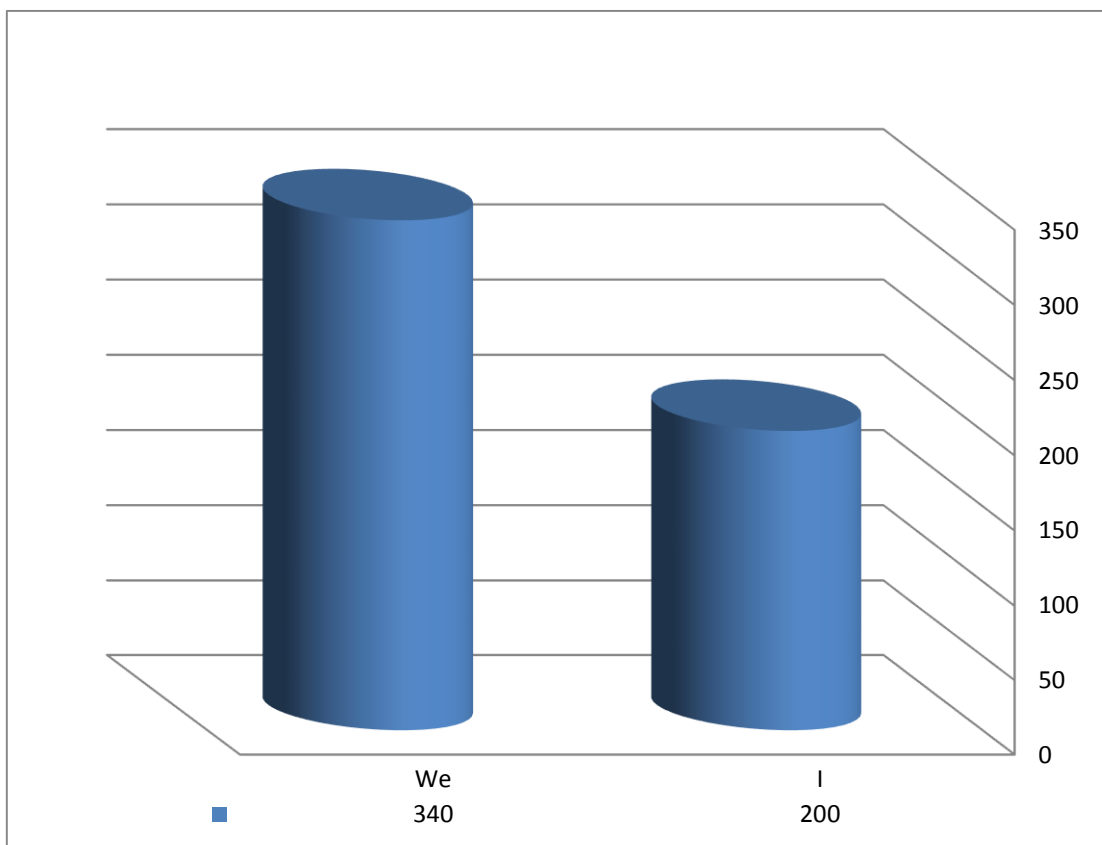
Noticeably, Trump used the verb “think” with the personal pronoun “I” sixty four times. He also used the verb “believe” seven times. Moreover, he used the verb “thought” five times. He used these words in order to express his degrees of certainty regarding certain events or opinions and beliefs based on his past experience.

#### **4.1.2 Findings Related to the Second Question**

This part is concerned with the pronouns and grammatical constructions of necessity modals and comparative and superlative forms used by Donald Trump in the two conferences under study.

##### **4.1.2.1 Pronouns**

The pronouns that are examined in this study are the subjective first-person singular and plural pronouns “I” and “we”, and their possessive forms “my” and “our”. The figure below shows the frequency of use of these words.

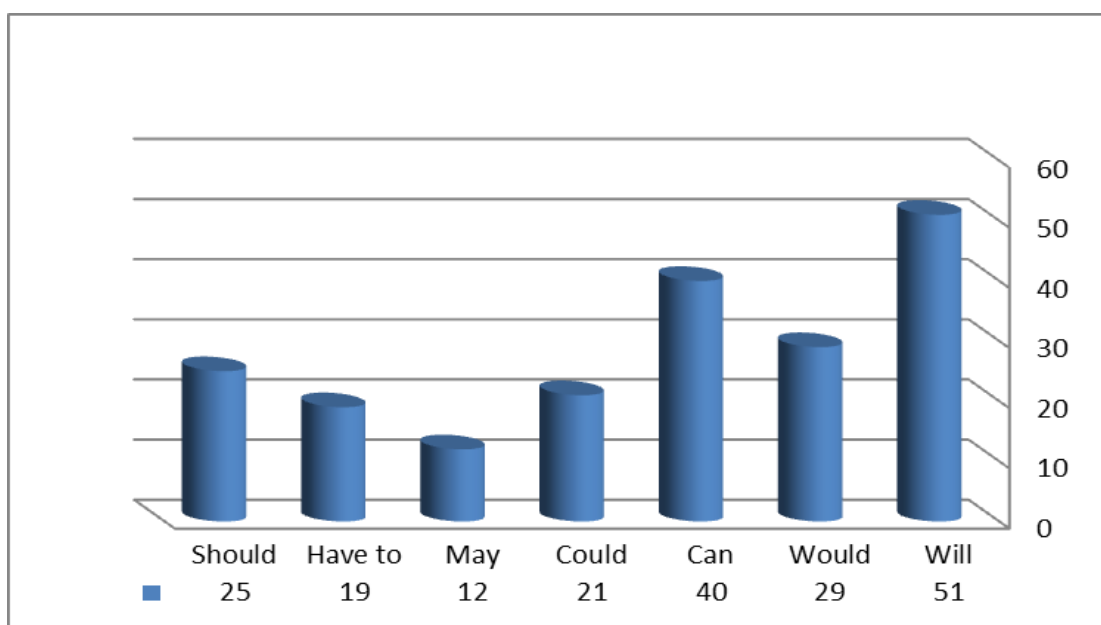


**Figure 4. Frequency of pronouns**

Noticeably, Donald Trump used the personal pronoun “I” two hundred times in both speeches which is believed to reflect egoism. Another noticeable result is the use of the pronoun “we”. It was used three hundred and forty times in both speeches. We can observe that the pronoun “we” is used more frequently than the pronoun “I” in his two conferences. “My” is the possessive state of the personal pronoun “I”. Donald Trump used “my” ten times in both speeches. He also used the possessive pronoun “our” fifty nine times in both conferences. Noticeably, that the use of the possessive pronoun “our” is more frequent than that of the possessive pronoun “my”.

### 4.1.2.2 Modal Verbs

In this section of analysis, the researcher analyzes the structures of modal verbs as this helps in exploring the speaker's intentions and degrees of certainty, and may also reflect the potential hopes, predictions, the abilities of the speaker and decisions. The modal verbs will, would, can, could, may, have to are investigated. The figure below shows the frequency of modal verbs in their affirmative and negative forms.



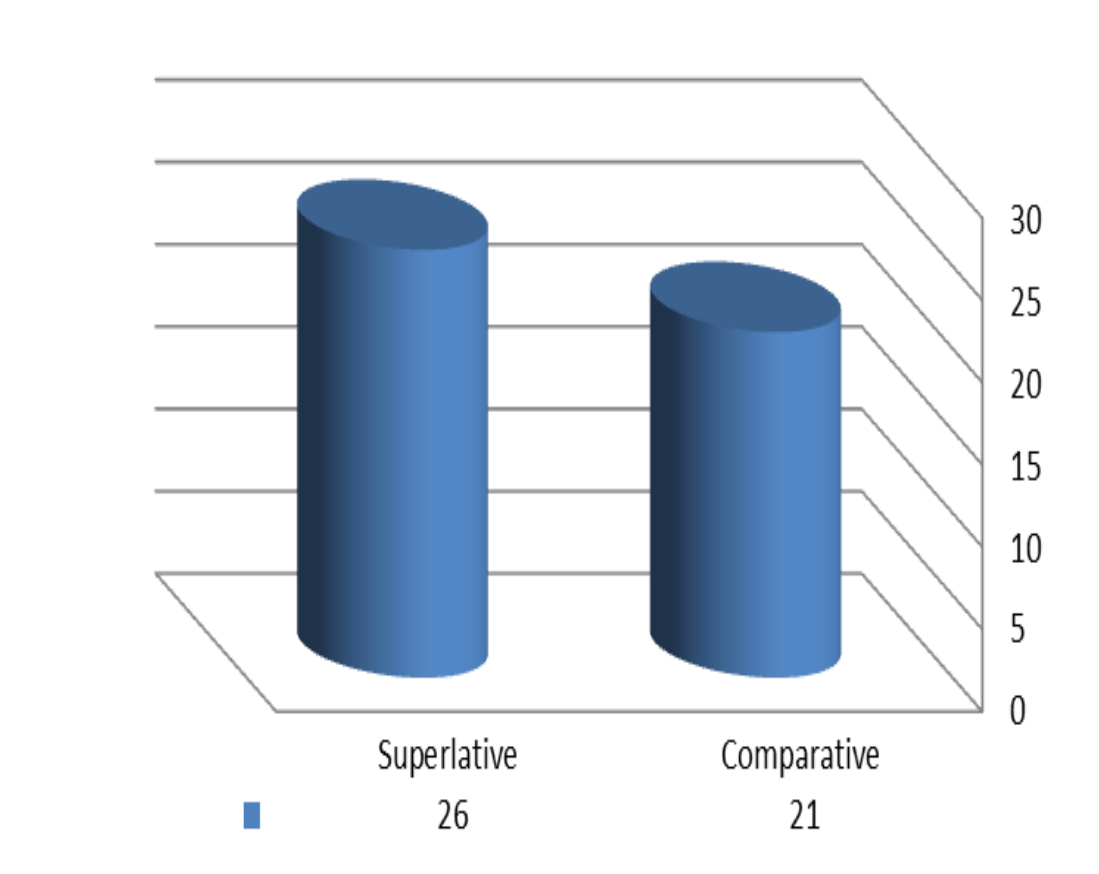
**Figure 5: Frequency of modal verbs**

From the above figure, we can observe that “will” is the most frequently used modal by Donald Trump. It was used forty eight times in both conferences. “Can” was used twenty times and “Could” was used twenty one times which may express his ability of achieving his goals. Moreover, he used “should” twenty times in both conferences. Another

noticeable aspect is the use of “have to” nineteen times in order to express necessity and obligation. Donald Trump also used “may” sixteen times.

#### 4.1.2.3 Comparative and Superlative Forms

In this part of analysis, the researcher analyzed the comparative and superlative forms since such structures help reflect the attitudes and views of the speaker. In the two speeches under investigation, Trump used these forms as can be seen in the graph below.



**Figure 6: Frequency of comparative and superlative**

Noticeably, superlative structures are more frequently used in both speeches. It was used twenty six times which may express Trump’s perfection in leading his country and the superiority of the United States in

all areas. Moreover, he used the comparative structures twenty times. This may establish a comparison between his achievements with the past US leaders, on the one hand, and between his country and other countries, on the other hand.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents a summary and discussion of the findings of the two research questions. It also attempts to explain and interpret the results in light of the reviewed literature. The chapter concludes with recommendations and suggestions for future research.

#### **5.1 Discussion**

##### **5.1.1 Discussion of the Findings of Question One**

What are the possible implications of Trump's choice of certain lexical items in his speeches during the coronavirus crisis?

The words that express identity and sense of belonging including American people, American citizens, Americans, the United States, States and country are discussed. In political speeches, national unity becomes one of the main concepts which underpin the speaker's ideas. This was emphasized by Trump's usage of such terms frequently in the speeches under investigation. The word "world" is the most frequently used in the speeches as shown in the examples below:

“Whatever happens, we’re totally prepared. We have the best people in the **world**. You see that from the study we have the best prepared people, the best people in the world.” (February 26. 2020)

“When you’re looking at a **country** this size with so many people pouring in with the number one in the world for people coming into a country by far, and we have a total of 15 cases, many of which almost much within a day, I will tell you most of whom were fully recovered.” (February 26. 2020)

In these two examples, Donald Trump wanted to confirm the concept of supremacy of Americans in all fields. Americans are the best people in the world. He also wanted to calm down Americans by comparing the situation in America with the other countries.

The word “country” is also repeated in Trump's speeches. He wanted to explain that he cares about his **country** as indicated in the following examples:

“It’s almost unfair if you think about it, but I think she’s incompetent, and I think she’s not thinking about the **country**, and instead of making a statement like that where I’ve been beating her routinely at everything, instead of making a statement like that.” (February 26. 2020)

“He shouldn’t be making statements like that, because it’s so bad for the **country**, and Nancy Pelosi, she should go back to her district, and clean it up because it’s the number one...”(February 26. 2020)

“All parts of the **country** are either in good shape, getting better, in all cases, getting better.” (April 27. 2020)

“There’s a hunger for getting our **country** back and it’s happening and it’s happening faster than people would think.” (April 27. 2020)

In the abovementioned examples Donald Trump concentrated on the concept of caring for his country against the enemies. He also tried to explain that Democrats represented by Joe Biden are working against the country and he is the hero who cares and helps the country by falling down.

He incorporates the concept of unity and caring for the nation as can be seen in the following examples:

"We put a ban on China other than our citizens coming in. We had our **citizens**; you can't keep out **American citizens**." (April 27. 2020)

"We took in some from Japan, you heard about that, because they're **American citizens** and they're in quarantine, and they're getting better, too. But we felt we had an obligation to do that." (February 26. 2020)

"We grieve by their side as one family, this great **American** family, and we do grieve. We also stand in solidarity with the **Americans** who are ill and waging a brave fight against the virus." (April 27. 2020)

Trump concentrated on using words that stress the American citizenship in order to reflect the idea of caring about Americans and national unity. He considers Americans to be one nation, one country, and one people with the same enemy, the coronavirus, and the same future. He also tried to express the feeling of "grief" that should be shared together with other citizens, being one family. Moreover, Trump also supported his idea of unity by mentioning that he was doing his best to protect all Americans wherever they were in the world.

It must be noted that when non-Americans are present in the context, the feelings of caring disappear, stressing the notion of "us versus them" as indicated in the following example:

"We've stopped **non-US citizens** from coming into America from China" (February 26. 2020)

Furthermore, Trump expressed the concept of unity of the American people regardless of their ethnicity as shown in the following example.:

"We had the best employment numbers and the best unemployment numbers for **Hispanic American**, for **African American**, for **Asian American**, for everybody, best stock market numbers." (April 27. 2020)

This utterance enhances his perception of unity and caring about Americans irrespective of their ethnicity being Hispanic, African, or Asian. He then added the word "everybody" in order to include all American races to emphasize equality among all American ethnic groups. Equality involves opportunity, status and rights. It means that there are no differences between Americans related to different backgrounds, races, religions, and other social aspects. Trump disseminates this concept to strengthen his leadership, being a defender of that principle that all Americans favor.

Citizens are the determinant of any nation. Every decision made should be for their interest. He used the concept of "togetherness" to get Americans involved in national affairs, thus, sharing the responsibility. The concepts of citizen involvement were implicitly stated in his speeches. The following quotations are examples of that.

"We have to **all** work **together**." (February 26. 2020)

"I'm just saying we should **all** be working **together**." (February 26. 2020)

"Usually, it's we have to take less, and we should be working **together**."

(February 26. 2020)

"I hope that it's going to be a very little problem, but we have to work **together** instead." (February 26. 2020)

Trump expresses citizens involvement reflected in the use of the adverb "together". The word "together" shows that the actions are not done by Trump alone, but also by the Americans as well. This way responsibility will be shared by both parties.

In addition to the idea of unity, President Donald Trump also wanted to confirm the concept of National Priority and Superiority. In his speeches, he tries to emphasize that the country exists to serve its citizens. Therefore, citizens should be the first priority in all cases and in every national development. This is the concept that Donald Trump was trying to build in the minds of his audiences. The quotations below reflect such a concept.

"We took in some from Japan, you heard about that, because they're **American citizens** and they're in quarantine, and they're getting better, too. But we felt we had an **obligation** to do that." (February 26. 2020)

"And the **number one priority**, from our standpoint, is the health and safety of the American people" (February 26. 2020)

"We had our **citizens**; you can't keep out **American citizens**." (April 27. 2020)

We observe that Donald Trump has the concept of national priority. He mentioned that he had an obligation to serve all American citizens and their health is the number one priority. This may indicate the qualifications of a good president which strongly support him for reelection.

The second set of lexical choice is the words that express thoughts and beliefs, namely, think, believe and thought. The results showed that Trump used "think" more frequently than "believe" which may project hedging, uncertainty, or a lack of commitment to his past utterances. The examples below show this.

"But, I **think** you'll see a lot of schools open up, even if it's for a very short period of time. I **think** it would be a good thing. (April 27. 2020)

"I **think** the business that they lost will be picked up at a later date."  
(February 26. 2020)

The frequency of using "think" means that Trump is not certain about his expectations and does not want to be committed to what he said in case things go the opposite way. In addition, Trump used "think" with expressions that encourage people to reelect him such as anticipating a good future for economy in his upcoming era. The examples below indicate this.

"I **think** after I **win the election**, I **think** the stock market's **going to boom** like it's never boomed before. Just like it did by the way after I won the last election." (February 26. 2020)

"What we are doing is I **think** we're going to have, you're going to **see a big rise** in the third, but you're going to see an incredible fourth quarter and you're going to have an incredible next year. I **think** you're going to **have a recovery**." (April 27. 2020)

### **5.1.2 Discussion of the findings related to the second question.**

What are the ideological stands reflected in Trump's usage of certain grammatical constructions, including modal structures, comparative and superlative forms, and pronouns?

With regard to the use of pronouns, the results show that Trump uses the pronoun "we" more frequently in his speeches than "I" to express the institutional identity of America. He uses this technique to convey the meaning of one team in which every member shares responsibility and is involved in serving the country. The following examples help in illustrating this idea:

"**We** have, through some very good early decisions, decisions that were actually ridiculed at the beginning, **we** closed up our borders to flights coming in from certain areas. Areas that were hit by the coronavirus and hit pretty hard, and **we** did it very early."(February 26. 2020)



This utterance shows that Trump tries to get people engaged in the decisions he takes. He also tries to prove the advantages of his early decision in closing the borders of the United States to flights coming from the areas that were hit by the coronavirus. He tries to imply that his decisions are wise and taken on the right time in order to obtain their trust.

The notions of "togetherness" and unity are emphasized again through the use of "we" as can be seen in the following utterance:

**"We** also stand in solidarity with the of Americans who are ill and waging a brave fight against the virus. **We're** doing everything in our power to heal the sick and to gradually reopen our nation and to safely get our people back to work." (April 27. 2020)

Trump here uses impressive language to influence the emotions of his audiences to side with him, especially after the number of infected people have increased to more than a million. He tries to gain popularity in order to win the elections.

Trump also unites himself with the American people, being one of them. In addition to highlighting unity and caring about Americans, the president's speeches also stressed equality as can be seen in the example below:

**"We** have to all work together." (February 26. 2020)

"**We** continue to mourn with thousands of families across the country whose loved ones have been stolen from us by the invisible enemy"  
(April 27. 2020)

The pronoun "I" was frequently used in both speeches. This may imply superiority especially when used in some contexts such as:

"**I** have two people that are very talented and it's something I feel good about. **I** don't want to spare the horses. I have very talented people. **I** want to use them on this because **I** want it to stay low or as low as possible."  
(February 26. 2020)

"**I** directed our Medicare program to make it easier for seniors to get the testing that they need and the pharmacies...."(April 27. 2020)

"**I** helped the farmers by giving them, two years ago, \$12 billion all coming from China."(April 27. 2020)

These quotations show personal involvement which can be especially useful when positive news is delivered. Trump wants to persuade his audiences with his achievements. As stated in the billions he gave to farmers and by allowing the talented to work out a vaccine.

Regarding the use of modals, it can be said that they can express attitudes towards the propositional content of the speech made, and as a mode of functioning to regulate interpersonal relationships.

The linguistic modal *will*, that constitutes an epistemic assumptive modality, was also used in presidential speech. The modal verb *will*, in the negation form or in its passive form, is dispersed in the texts. *Will* in the texts has reference to conditional consequences, central epistemic and futurity. (Huddleston & Pullum 2002). It also implies the feeling of power.

The results revealed that Donald Trump used the modal "will" quite frequently in his speeches because he wanted to show that he is a powerful president who has a good experience which enable him to achieve the goals he set for himself and for the American people. The researcher cites the following quotations to illustrate his presupposition.

"This **will** end, this will end." (Feb 26, 2020)

"It **will** be a tremendous, tremendous comeback." (April 27, 2020)

"the stock market **will** recover." (Feb 26, 2020)

In the first quotation, the president promised his people that the pandemic would end, it won't spread further. On the contrary it became worse and more people got infected and more fatalities occurred. In the other examples, Trump shows a strong belief in himself as he decides determinately and believes that what he does is right.

The uses of *will* implies determination. However, the researcher noticed that none of the promises was fulfilled and this indicates Trump's failure to handle the pandemic.

Trump also used the modal *can* in his conferences. This modal expresses ability, informal polite request, possibility, informal permission, or impossibility in the negative form (Azar 2002). In Trump's speeches, the modal *can* mostly refer to ability. The results show that Trump used the modal "can" frequently. He tries to emphasize the United States' ability to develop the vaccine for the coronavirus in the near future as can be seen in the following example:

"The vaccine is coming along well, and then speaking to the doctors, we think this is something that we **can** develop fairly rapidly, a vaccine for the future, and coordinate with the support of our partners."(February 26. 2020)

" We **can** now do 60,000 tests a day" (April 27, 2020)

Trump believed in the capabilities of America and the American experts. He wants to prove that he could conduct his goal well.

The modal *could* was also present in Trump's conferences. Azar (2002) mentioned that the modal *could* expresses past ability, degree of certainty, polite request, suggestion, and impossibility in its negative form. Trump used this modal sometimes to expresses a tentative possibility as in:

"As they get better, we take them off the list so that we're going to be pretty soon at only five people, and we **could** be at just one or two people over the next short period of time." (February,26. 2020)

"there's a chance that it could get worse. There's a chance it **could** get fairly substantially worse."(February,26. 2020)

The president seemed not completely sure about the number of the cases in the future and whether or not the coronavirus disease would get worse.

*Should* was also used by Trump which is weaker than *must*, and stronger than *may*. Collins (2009, p.45) stated that the modal *should* is an expression of medium strength modality. Meanwhile, Azar (2002) argued that advisability and certainty for future expectations can be expressed by the modal should.

Trump used *should* which does not express strong obligation. For example, in the following utterance Trump gives an advice for the Democrat party to work with him and not just negatively criticize him and create panic, assuming that he has done very well in managing the pandemic.

"I'm just saying we **should** all be working together. She's trying to create a panic, and there's no reason to panic, because we have done so good." (February 26. 2020)

Another modal used by Trump is *have to*. The modal *have to* overlaps with *must* significantly although it is not the rival of the modal *must* in an epistemic sense but they both express necessity. "*have to* focuses on an external, existent obligation that can be perceived or described independently of the speaker, whereas *must* serves as a very general marker of obligation, with more specific senses such as urgency, irresistibility, and unconditionality being attributable to pragmatic interpretation." (Westney 1995, p.151). Furthermore, "The situation may change as *have to* becomes increasingly grammaticalized, with the likely consequence that its epistemic meaning will become more established via the process of subjectification" (Collins 2009, p. 59).

For example, Trump used this modal to imply the idea that working in team is necessary to defeat the pandemic.

"we **have to** be on the same team. This is too important. We have to be on the same team." (February 26. 2020)

"We **have to** all work together." (February 26. 2020)

Both examples of *have to* mentioned with subject *we*, which refers to the speaker and his audience and the Democratic Party, hence, establishing its epistemic meaning.

The last grammatical pattern to be discussed is the comparative and superlative forms which were used in Trump's speeches in both conferences in order to confirm the idea of American superiority. The following quotations reveal that.

"Whatever happens, we're totally prepared. We have the best people in the world. You see that from the study we have the **best** prepared people, the best people in the world." (February 26. 2020)

"We had the **greatest** experts, really, in the world right here." (February 26. 2020)

"It's the **greatest** tourism country in the world, so instead of leaving our country, leaving our shores, they'll stay here, and again" (February 26. 2020)

"We have, as I said, we have the **greatest** people in the world." (February 26. 2020)

"On Saturday alone, more than 200,000 test results were reported, which is a gigantic number, **bigger** than any country, anywhere in the world for a much longer period of time." (April 27. 2020)

In these examples, Trump states that the American people are the best in the world. He wanted to confirm the concept of American people's superiority over other races. The examples also indicate that American and the United States have better qualifications than others. This may point to the positive self-representation and negative other representation; in other words, the distinction between Us and Them. Showing Americans' superiority may indirectly indicate other's inferiority.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

From the previous discussion and analyses of the various citations derived from the speeches of President Trump, the researcher can conclude the following:

1. Nationalism and the supremacy of Americans are prevalent in Trump speeches indicated by the frequency of using words which reflects the concepts of unity and caring for nation, equality, citizen involvement, and national priority and superiority. The study also found that Trump uses some words to express self-glorification. This is consentient with Houada (2016) who found that Hillary Clinton used such words in order to persuade the audiences in the US elections.
2. Egoism and exaggeration were also found in Trump's speeches by the use of the pronouns of "I" and "we".



3. The researcher also came up to the conclusion the bombastic language used by Trump in his speeches during the coronavirus pandemic were obstacles in the way of attracting Americans to his ideology. Such a thing was reflected in voting against him in the recent elections, in favor of his running mate.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

The researcher would like to recommend the following:

1. Further studies are recommended to compare speeches of President Trump to other Presidents across the world during the coronavirus crisis.
2. Further studies are recommended to apply other CDA frameworks such as Halliday's SFL.
3. Further studies are recommended to investigate linguistic devices other than modality, comparative and superlative adjectives and pronouns to uncover more ideologies in Trump's speeches.

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## **Appendices**



## **Appendix I**

### **Transcripts of Trump's speech on February 26, 2020**

Donald Trump: [\(05:39\)](#)

Thank you very much everybody. Thank you very much. Before I begin, I'd like to extend my deepest condolences to the victims and families in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Earlier today, a wicked murderer opened fire at a Molson-Coors Brewing Company plant, taking the lives of five people. A number of people were wounded, some badly wounded. Our hearts break for them and their loved ones. We send our condolences, we'll be with them and it's a terrible thing. Terrible thing. So our hearts go out to the people of Wisconsin and to the families. Thank you very much. I've just received another briefing from a great group of talented people on the virus that is going around to various parts of the world. We have, through some very good early decisions, decisions that were actually ridiculed at the beginning, we closed up our borders to flights coming in from certain areas. Areas that were hit by the coronavirus and hit pretty hard, and we did it very early.

Donald Trump: [\(06:59\)](#)

A lot of people thought we shouldn't have done it that early and we did, and it turned out to be a very good thing. And the number one priority, from our standpoint, is the health and safety of the American people, and that's the way I viewed it when I made that decision. Because of all we've done, the risk to the American people remains very low. We had the greatest experts, really, in the world right here. The people that are called upon by other countries when things like this happen. We're ready to adapt and we're ready to do whatever we have to as the disease spreads, if it spreads. As most of you know, the level that we've had in our country is very low, and those people are getting better, or we think that in almost all cases the better they are getting.

Donald Trump: (07:51)

We have a total of 15. We took in some from Japan, you heard about that, because they're American citizens and they're in quarantine, and they're getting better, too. But we felt we had an obligation to do that. It could have been as many as 42, and we found that it was just an obligation we felt that we had. We could have left them and that would have been very bad. Very bad, I think. American people, and they're recovering. Of the 15 people, the original 15 as I call them, eight of them have returned to their homes to stay in their homes until fully recovered, one is in the hospital, and five have fully recovered, and one is, we think, in pretty good shape and is between hospital and going home. But we have a total of 15 people and they're in a process of recovering with some already having fully recovered. We started out by looking at certain things that we've been working with the Hill very, very carefully, very strongly, and I think we have very good bipartisan spirit for money. We were asking for 2.5 Billion, and we think that's a lot, but the Democrats and I guess Senator Schumer wants us to have much more than that. And normally in life, I'd say, "We'll take it, we'll take it." If they want to give more, we'll do more. We're going to spend whatever's appropriate. Hopefully, we're not going to have to spend so much, because we really think we've done a great job in keeping it down to a minimum. And again, we've had tremendous success, tremendous success beyond what people would have thought. Now at the same time, you do have some outbreaks in some countries, Italy and various countries are having some difficulty.

Donald Trump: (09:58)

China you know about. Where it started. I spoke with President Xi, we had a great talk. He's working very hard, I have to say. He's working very, very hard, and if you can count on the reports coming out of China, that spread

has gone down quite a bit. The infection seems to have gone down over the last two days, as opposed to getting larger, it's actually gotten smaller and one instance where we think we can be somewhat reliable. It seems to have gotten quite a bit smaller. With respect to the money that's being negotiated, they can do whatever they want. I mean, again, we'll do the two and a half. We're requesting two and a half. Some Republicans would like us to get four, and some Democrats would like us to get eight and a half and we'll be satisfied whatever it is.

Donald Trump: ([10:52](#))

We're bringing in a specialist, a very highly regarded specialist tomorrow, who works actually at the State Department. Very, very tremendously talented in doing this. I want you to understand something that shocked me when I saw it, that I spoke with Dr. Foushee on this, and I was really amazed, and I think most people are amazed to hear it. The flu, in our country, kills from 25,000 people to 69,000 people a year. That was shocking to me. And so far, if you look at what we have, with the 15 people and they're recovering, one is pretty sick, but hopefully will recover. But the others are in great shape. But think of that 25,000 to 69,000. Over the last 10 years, we've lost 360,000, these are people that have died from the flu, from what we call the flu. "Hey, did you get your flu shot?" And that's something. Now what we've done is, we've stopped non-US citizens from coming into America from China. That was done very early on.

Donald Trump: ([12:06](#))

We're screening people, and we have been, at a very high level, screening people coming into the country from infected areas. We have in quarantine, those infected and those at risk. We have a lot of great quarantine facilities. We're rapidly developing a vaccine and they can speak to you, the professionals can speak to you about that. The vaccine is coming along

well, and then speaking to the doctors, we think this is something that we can develop fairly rapidly, a vaccine for the future, and coordinate with the support of our partners. We have great relationships with all of the countries that we're talking about, some fairly large number of countries. Some it's one person. And many countries have no problem whatsoever, and we'll see what happens. But we're very, very ready for this, for anything. Whether it's going to be a breakout of larger proportions, or whether or not we're at that very low level, and we want to keep it that way.

Donald Trump: ([13:12](#))

So we're at the low level. As they get better, we take them off the list so that we're going to be pretty soon at only five people, and we could be at just one or two people over the next short period of time. So we've had very good luck. Johns Hopkins, I guess, it is a highly respected, great place. They did a study, comprehensive, "The Countries Best and Worst Prepared for an Epidemic" and the United States, we're rated number one. We're rated number one for being prepared. This is a list of different countries. I don't want to get in your way, especially since you do such a good job.

Donald Trump: ([13:55](#))

This is a list of the different countries. United States is rated number one. Most prepared. United Kingdom, Netherlands, Australia, Canada, Thailand, Sweden, Denmark, South Korea, Finland, this is a list of the best rated countries in the world by Johns Hopkins. We're doing something else that's important to me, because he's been terrific in many ways, but he's also very good on health care and we really followed him very closely. A lot of states do. When Mike was governor, Mike Pence, of Indiana, they've established great healthcare, they have a great system there. A system that a lot of the other states have really looked to and changed their systems, they

wanted to base it on the Indiana system, it's very good. He's really very expert at the field, and what I've done is, I'm going to be announcing, exactly right now, that I'm going to be putting our Vice President, Mike Pence, in charge and Mike will be working with the professionals and doctors and everybody else that's working. The team is brilliant. I spent a lot of time with the team over the last couple of weeks, but they're totally brilliant and we're doing really well, and Mike is going to be in charge, and Mike will report back to me. But he's got a certain talent for this and I'm going to ask Mike Pence to say a few words please. Thank you. Mike?

Vice President Pence: [\(15:27\)](#)

Thank you, Mr. President. President Trump has made clear from the first days of this administration, we have no higher priority than the safety, security, health and wellbeing of the American people. And from the first word of an outbreak of the coronavirus, the president took unprecedented steps to protect the American people from the spread of this disease. He recounted those briefly, but the establishment of travel restrictions, aggressive quarantine effort of Americans that are returning, the declaration of a public health emergency, and establishing the White House Corona Task Force are all reflective of the urgency that the President has brought to a whole of government approach. As a former governor, from the state where the first MERS case emerged in 2014, I know full well the importance of presidential leadership, the importance of administration leadership, and the vital role of partnerships of state and local governments and health authorities in responding to the potential threat of dangerous infectious diseases.

Vice President Pence: [\(16:43\)](#)

I look forward, Mr. President, to serving in this role. I'm bringing together all the members of the Corona Task Force that you've established. HHS,

CDC, DHS, the Departments of Transportation and State. This team has been, at your direction Mr. President, meeting every day since it was established. My role will be to continue to bring that team together, to bring to the President the best options for action to see to the safety and wellbeing and health of the American people. We'll also be continuing to reach out to governors, state and local officials. In fact, in recent days, the White House met with over 40 state, county, and city health officials from over 30 States and territories to discuss how to respond to the potential threat of the coronavirus. We'll be working with them in renewed ways to make sure they have the resources to be able to respond. And as the President said, we'll be adding additional personnel here at the White House, to support our efforts on the President's behalf.

Vice President Pence: ([17:53](#))

We'll also be working with members of Congress to ensure that the resources are available for this whole of government response, and we'll be working very closely with Secretary Azar and his team that had done an outstanding job communicating to the public, to ensure the American people have the best information on ways to protect themselves and their families, and also that the public has the most timely information on the potential threat to the American people. Mr. President, as we've been briefed, while the threat to the American public remains low of a spread of the coronavirus, you have directed this team to take all steps necessary to continue to ensure the health and wellbeing of the American people, and the people of this country can be confident that under your leadership, we will continue to bring the full resources of the federal government in coordination with our state and local partners, to see to the health and wellbeing and to the effective response to the coronavirus here in the United States of America. With that, the president has asked me to

recognize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Alex Azar, and also the Deputy Director of CDC, Dr. Anne Shocket for remarks. Secretary.

Alex Azar: ([19:18](#))

Well, thank you Mr. Vice President, and thank you, Mr. President for gathering your public health experts here today and for your strong leadership in keeping America safe, and I just want to say I could not be more delighted that you've asked the Vice President, my old friend and colleague, to lead this whole of government approach with us under the emergency support function number eight. As of today, we have 15 cases of COVID-19 that have been detected in the United States, with only one new case detected in the last two weeks. We also have three cases among Americans repatriated from Wuhan, and 42 cases among Americans repatriated who had been stuck on the Diamond Princess in Japan. The President's early and decisive actions, including travel restrictions, have succeeded in buying us incredibly valuable time. This has helped us contain the spread of the virus, handle the cases that we have, and prepare for the possibility that we will need to mitigate broader spread of infections within the United States.

Alex Azar: ([20:22](#))

The President's actions taken with the strong support of his scientific advisors have proven to be appropriate, wise, and well calibrated to the situation. We're grateful for the hard work that healthcare workers, first responders, communities, and state and local leaders have put into the response so far. Because of this hard work, and the President's leadership, the immediate risk to the American public has been and continues be low. Our containment strategy has been working. At the same time, what every one of our experts and leaders have been saying for more than a month now

remains true. The degree of risk has the potential to change quickly, and we can expect to see more-

Alex Azar: ([21:03](#))

It has the potential to change quickly, and we can expect to see more cases in the United States. That is why we've been reminding the American public, and our state, local, and private sector partners that they should be aware of what a broader response would look like. CDC has recommended that the American public, and especially state and local governments, businesses and other organizations should refresh themselves on how they would respond in the event that the situation worsens. We're encouraging Americans to learn what future steps might be necessary to keep themselves and their communities safe. Knowing these potential steps now can help keep the risk for you in your community low.

Alex Azar: ([21:40](#))

Americans can find useful information at [cdc.gov/covid](https://www.cdc.gov/covid) C-O-V-I-D19, and we're working closely with government, and private sector partners to educate them about preparedness. Finally, we've begun working with Congress to secure the funding that we need. There are five major priorities in the White House request to Congress that the White House made on Monday. These priorities are first, expanding our surveillance network, second, support for state and local governments work, third and fourth, development of therapeutics and vaccines, and fifth, manufacturing and purchase a personal protective equipment like gowns and masks.

Alex Azar: ([22:24](#))

As chairman of the president's coronavirus task force, I'm committed to providing regular updates from our coordinated inter agency process. We've had our top public health leaders like those joining me here today speaking to the media many times per day to inform the American public.



The Trump administration is going to continue to be aggressively transparent, keeping the American people, and the media apprised of the situation, and what everyone can do.

Alex Azar: ([22:50](#))

With that, I'm going to hand things over to Dr. Ann Schuchat. Dr. Schuchat is the senior career official at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the principal deputy director with an over 30 year career at the CDC in public health, and as a member of the United States Public Health Service Commission Corps. Dr. Schuchat I'll turn over to you.

Dr. Schuchat: ([23:12](#))

Thanks so much Mr. secretary. As you know, this has been a difficult, and challenging time, and our hearts go out to the individuals who have been directly affected by the virus, and to all those who've been working tirelessly in responding to it. Our aggressive containment strategy here in the United States has been working, and is responsible for the low levels of cases that we have so far. However, we do expect more cases and this is a good time to prepare. As you heard, it's the perfect time for businesses, healthcare systems, universities and schools to look at their pandemic preparedness plans, dust them off, and make sure that they're ready, and we have lots more information at the CDC's website and in partnership on how to do that.

Dr. Schuchat: ([24:07](#))

But, it's also a really good time for the American public to prepare, and for you to know what this means for you. The coronavirus that we're talking about is a respiratory virus. It's spread in a similar way to the common cold, or to influenza. It's spread through coughs and sneezes, and so, those everyday sensible measures that we tell people to do every year with the flu are important here; covering your cough, staying home when you're sick,

and washing your hands. Tried and true, not very exciting measures, but really important ways that you can prevent the spread of respiratory viruses.

Dr. Schuchat: ([24:52](#))

The trajectory of what we're looking at over the weeks and months ahead is very uncertain, but many of the steps that we have taken over the past 15 years to prepare for pandemic influenza, and our experience going through the 2009 H1N1 pandemic of influenza remind us of the kinds of steps that our healthcare system, our businesses, our communities and schools may need to take. We're in this together, all of government, the public, and the private sector, and the CDC wants to make sure you have the best information available every day. Thank you.

Donald Trump: ([25:35](#))

[inaudible 00:25:35] please.

Dr. Tony Fauci: ([25:38](#))

I just want to give you a very quick update on the...

Speaker 3: ([25:41](#))

[inaudible 00:04:41].

Dr. Tony Fauci: ([25:43](#))

My name is Dr. Tony Fauci. I'm the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at NIH. Just a very quick update on the counter measure development in the form of vaccines and therapeutics, I had told this audience at a recent press briefing that we have a number of vaccine candidates and one prototype, one to give you a feel for the timeframe of the vaccine, and what its impact might be now and in subsequent years is that I told you we would have a vaccine that we would be putting into trials to see if it's safe, and if it induces a response that you would predict would be protective in about three months.

Dr. Tony Fauci: ([26:21](#))

I think it's going to be a little bit less than that. It's probably going to be closer to two months. That would then take about three months to determine if it's safe, and immunogenic, which gives us six months. Then you graduate from a trial, which is phase one of 45 people to a trial that involves hundreds, if not low, thousands of people to determine efficacy. At the earliest an efficacy trial would take an additional six to eight months. Although this is the fastest we have ever gone from a sequence of a virus to a trial, it still would not be any applicable to the epidemic unless we really wait about a year to a year and a half.

Dr. Tony Fauci: ([27:05](#))

Now, that means two things. One, the answer to containing is public health measures. We can't rely on a vaccine over the next several months to a year. However, if this virus, which we have every reason to believe it is quite conceivable that it will happen will go beyond just a season and come back and recycle next year. If that's the case, we hope to have a vaccine, and then, finally and briefly, therapeutics. There are a number of antiviral drugs that are being tested. A few days ago we initiated a randomized controlled trial of a drug called Remdesivir, which has antiviral activity in vitro in an animal model.

Dr. Tony Fauci: ([27:47](#))

The good news about that is that it's a trial that's randomized to either placebo or standard of care, and drug and standard of care, which means that we will know reasonably soon whether it works and if it does, we will then have an effective therapy to distribute. Thank you.

Donald Trump: ([28:04](#))

Okay, thank you [inaudible 00:07:05].

Speaker 4: ([28:05](#))

Thank you very much Mr. President. First of all you have just come from a long and busy trip from India, and-

Donald Trump: ([28:14](#))

Great country, a long journey [crosstalk 00:28:17].

Speaker 4: ([28:20](#))

... concern you have a great [inaudible 00:28:20] and medical team behind you, and with you, and I'm sure [inaudible 00:28:25] India Mr. President, where do we go from here? U.S. India [inaudible 00:28:34] are concerend [inaudible 00:28:36]. Mr. President you are ready [inaudible 00:28:38] in India, and [inaudible 00:28:40] in America. What is the future? Indian American community is with you Mr. President.

Donald Trump: ([28:46](#))

We won't talk too much about that other than I just got back, a long flight. It's a long flight. He's a great gentleman, a great leader. It's an incredible country. We were treated very, very well, and we really enjoyed it. A lot of tremendous progress was made in terms of relationship. Our relationship with India is extraordinary right now, and we're going to be doing a lot of business with India. They're sending billions and billions of dollars now to the United States, but we'd rather talk about this right now.

Speaker 5: ([29:17](#))

Mr. President, CDC said yesterday that they believe it's inevitable that the virus will spread in the United States, and it's not a question of if, but when. Do you agree with that assessment?

Donald Trump: ([29:27](#))

Well, I don't think it's inevitable. It possibly will. It could be at a very small level or it could be at a larger level. Whatever happens, we're totally prepared. We have the best people in the world. You see that from the study we have the best prepared people, the best people in the world. Congress is willing to give us much more than we're even asking for.

That's nice for a change, but we are totally ready, willing and able. It's a term that we use, it's ready, willing, and able. It's going to be very well under control. Now. It may get bigger, it may get a little bigger. It may not get bigger at all. We'll see what happens, but regardless of what happens, we're totally prepared, please.

Crowd: [\(30:08\)](#)

[crosstalk 00:09:08].

Speaker 6: [\(30:08\)](#)

Mr. President, you talked a little earlier about the screening measures that you've put in place, and the travel restrictions you've put in place from China. At this point as the virus spreads in Italy, South Korea. Are you planning on adding those countries [crosstalk 00:30:19].

Donald Trump: [\(30:19\)](#)

Well, just to understand, I'm the president of the United States. I'm not the president of other countries. Other countries on the list that are very respected in what they do in terms of what we're talking about, but I really want to be responsible for this country. If it means placing a very strong situation on the border so people can't come into our country from a country that is infected, we're doing that and we've already done it with numerous countries, but we have to focus on this country. I don't think it's right to impose ourselves on others.

Donald Trump: [\(30:51\)](#)

But, if others aren't taking care, or we think they're doing it incorrectly, we're dealing with world health, and we have terrific people, and CDC does go around, and help other countries, give them recommendations as what to do, but they're working on their countries, and we're working on our countries, and so far from our simple end it's really worked out very well.

Speaker 7: (31:12)

... just visit Africa?

Speaker 17: (31:12)

[crosstalk 00:31:12] can you clarify, are you considering restricting travel to and from South Korea, Italy, and other countries that have been affected [crosstalk 00:31:21]?

Donald Trump: (31:22)

At a right time we may do that. Right now it's not the right time, but at the right time, and we are checking people as they come through specifically for the problem that we're dealing with. We're checking a lot of people, if they're coming from South Korea, it's been hit pretty hard. Italy's been hit pretty hard. China is obvious what's happened in China, but again, the numbers seem to be leveling often going down in China, which is very good news, so we'll see what happens.

Crowd: (31:44)

[crosstalk 00:31:44] Mr. President.

Speaker 8: (31:44)

White House is seen today denying that they are going to a point of the czar to run point on the coronavirus response today. The secretary Azar testified that he didn't think one was necessary, and they were going to run it out of HHS, and you yourself have been downplaying this, so why are you now selecting the vice president to [crosstalk 00:31:59].

Donald Trump: (31:59)

Well, Mike is not... Azar is vice president. He's in the administration, but I'm having everybody report to Mike. Mike's been very good, very adept. Anybody that knows anything about health care, they look at the Indiana model, and it's been a very great success. It's been a tremendous model in terms of healthcare, and this is really an offshoot of that, so this isn't Azar. I don't view Mike as a Azar. Mike is part of the administration, but I'm

having them report to Mike. Mike will report to me. They'll also be reporting in some cases to both.

Donald Trump: ([32:28](#))

I'll be going to meetings quite a bit depending on what they want to do, and what message we want to get out, but we've done really an extraordinary job. When you're looking at a country this size with so many people pouring in with the number one in the world for people coming into a country by far, and we have a total of 15 cases, many of which almost much within a day, I will tell you most of whom were fully recovered. I think that's really a pretty impressive mark. Now, we did take in 40 people that were Americans, and they're also recovering, but we brought them in, so I have a different group, but we felt we had an obligation to American citizens outside of the country that were trying to get back in. We thought it was very important.

Crowd: ([33:11](#))

[crosstalk 00:33:11] Mr. President.

Speaker 9: ([33:13](#))

The stock market has taken a big hit over the past few days. What can you do about that, and if the CDC is right in saying that the spread is inevitable, are you going to be dealing with stock market issues and economy issues for some time to come?

Donald Trump: ([33:24](#))

Well, I really think the stock market, if something I know a lot about, I think it took a hit maybe for two reasons. I think they look at the people that you watch debating last night, and they say if there's even a possibility that can happen. I think it really takes a hit because of that, and it certainly took a hit because of this, and I understand that also because of supply chains and various other things, and people coming in, but I think the stock

market will recover. The economy is very strong, the consumer is the strongest it's ever been.

Donald Trump: [\(33:52\)](#)

Our consumers are incredible, they're incredible, that's why we're doing well and even before the virus, we're doing great. Other countries have not been doing great. Our consumer's very, very strong, very powerful economically. Yeah. Please.

Crowd: [\(34:05\)](#)

[crosstalk 00:34:06].

Speaker 10: [\(34:05\)](#)

Mr. President, have you been presented any plans that would involve quarantine cities like we saw in China and what would have to happen for you to take a step on that?

Donald Trump: [\(34:13\)](#)

We do have plans of on much larger scale should we need that. We're working with states, we're working with virtually every state, and we do have plans on a larger scale if we need it. We don't think we're going to need it, but you always have to be prepared, and again, Congress is talking to us about funding and we're getting far more than what we asked for, and I guess the best thing to do is take it, we'll take it.

Crowd: [\(34:37\)](#)

[crosstalk 00:34:37].

Speaker 11: [\(34:37\)](#)

Mr. President how much money are you willing to give Congress if they're going six billion more than you can offer?

Donald Trump: [\(34:43\)](#)

Well, we're going see if we'll take care of states because states are working very hard. We have hospitals in the states that make rooms available, and



they are building quarantined areas. Areas where you can keep people safely. We're working really well with states. It's a very big part of it. My attitude if Congress wants to give us the money so easy, it wasn't very easy for the wall, but we got that one done. If they want to give us the money, we'll take the money. We'll just do a good job with it. Yeah, please. Go ahead.

Crowd: [\(35:10\)](#)

[crosstalk 00:14:09].

Speaker 12: [\(35:10\)](#)

Mr. President, should Americans be going out getting protective equipment such as masks, and so forth? And if so, what is the U.S. Doing to boost production of masks?

Donald Trump: [\(35:19\)](#)

Well, we can get a lot of it. In fact, we've ordered a lot of it just in case we need it. We may not need it. You understand that, but in case we're looking at worst case scenario, we're going to be set very quickly, but I don't think we're going to ever be anywhere near that. I really don't believe that we're going to be anywhere near that. Our borders are very controlled. Our flights in from certain areas that we're talking about are very controlled. I don't think we'll ever be anywhere near that. Please go ahead.

Crowd: [\(35:44\)](#)

[crosstalk 00:35:44].

Speaker 13: [\(35:45\)](#)

Back to the stock market for a second, that travel related stocks have especially been hammered here in the last couple of days. What would you say to Americans out there who right now are looking forward to the summer or the upcoming months and saying to themselves, "Should I make myself summer plans? Should I go travel abroad?"

Donald Trump: [\(36:00\)](#)

Well, hopefully they're going to be able to do that. We hope that it's going to be in good shape by that time, but they're going to have to remain a little bit flexible. Yeah, I would say travel related companies certainly right now they would be hurt. At the same time this ends, this is going to end. Hopefully, it'll be sooner rather than later, and I think the business that they lost will be picked up at a later date, but right now I think they're probably not going to be going to China. They're not going to be going to certain countries where the problem is far greater than it is in the United States.

Donald Trump: [\(36:37\)](#)

What it's going to do is keep people home, and they're going to travel to places that we have. It's the greatest tourism country in the world, so instead of leaving our country, leaving our shores, they'll stay here, and again, when you have 15 people, and the 15 within a couple of days is going to be down to close to zero, that's a pretty good job we've done.

Crowd: [\(37:03\)](#)

[ crosstalk 00:00:36:58].

Speaker 14: [\(37:04\)](#)

What is your response to speaker Pelosi who said earlier today you don't know what you're talking about, about the coronavirus? I'm also wondering if you'd want to address critics who say you can't be trusted with what your administration is saying.

Donald Trump: [\(37:12\)](#)

Sure, I think speaker Pelosi's incompetent. She lost the Congress once, I think she's going to lose it again. She lifted my poll numbers up 10 points. I never thought that I would see that so quickly, and so easily. I'm leading everybody. We're doing great. I don't want to do it that way. It's almost unfair if you think about it, but I think she's incompetent, and I think she's

not thinking about the country, and instead of making a statement like that where I've been beating her routinely at everything, instead of making a statement like that, she should be saying, "We have to work together because we have a big problem potentially."

Donald Trump: [\(37:47\)](#)

And, maybe it's going to be a very little problem. I hope that it's going to be a very little problem, but we have to work together instead, she wants to do that. Same thing with Chuck Schumer. He goes out and he says, "The president only asked for two and a half billion dollars. He should have eight and a half ..." This is the first time I've ever been told that we should take more. Usually, it's we have to take less, and we should be working together. He shouldn't be making statements like that, because it's so bad for the country, and Nancy Pelosi, she should go back to her district, and clean it up because it's the number one... If you look at percentage down, that was one of the finest in the world, and now you look at what's happening.

Donald Trump: [\(38:23\)](#)

I'm just saying we should all be working together. She's trying to create a panic, and there's no reason to panic, because we have done so good. These professionals behind me, and over here, and over there, and back here, and in some conference rooms. I just left a group of 45 people that are the most talented people in the world. Parts of the world are asking us in a very nice way, can they partake, and help them, so Nancy Pelosi shouldn't... And, she knows it's not true. All they're trying to do is get a political advantage. This isn't about political advantage. We're all trying to do the right thing. They shouldn't be saying, "This is terrible. President Trump isn't asking for enough money."

Donald Trump: [\(39:04\)](#)

How stupid a thing to say. If they want to give us more money, that's okay. We'll take more money. Some Republicans think we should have more money too. That's okay. We'll take more money, but they shouldn't demean the people that are on the stage who are the finest in the world. They're not demeaning me. They're demeaning the greatest healthcare professionals in the world and people that do exactly what we're talking about.

Crowd: [\(39:25\)](#)

[crosstalk 00:39:26].

Speaker 15: [\(39:28\)](#)

Your campaign today, Sue The New York Times for An Opinion piece. Is it your opinion, or is it your contention that if people have an opinion contrary to yours, that they should be sued?

Donald Trump: [\(39:38\)](#)

Well, when they get their opinion totally wrong as the New York Times did, and frankly, they've got a lot wrong over the last number of years, so let That work its way through the courts. If you read it you'll see it's beyond an opinion. That's not an opinion, but something much more than an opinion. They did a bad thing, and there'll be more coming.

Crowd: [\(40:02\)](#)

[ crosstalk 00:00:39:55].

Speaker 16: [\(40:07\)](#)

[inaudible 00:40:07] get this tonight. Do you expect [inaudible 00:40:06]?

Donald Trump: [\(40:07\)](#)

I hope so, because Shinzo, obvious, a very good friend of mine, I love the people of Japan, and I hope it's going to be in good shape. As you know, you have a number of people in Japan who have been infected. I hear they're doing a very professional job, which doesn't surprise me at all with

Shinzo and with all of the people you have. I know Japan very well. I think they're going to handle it very well. It's a little tight. They spent billions of dollars building one of the most beautiful venues I've ever seen, and your prime minister is very proud of it. I hope it's going to be fine. We hope it will.

Crowd: [\(40:41\)](#)

[crosstalk 00:40:42].

Speaker 18: [\(40:41\)](#)

Thank you very Mr. President. The doctor at CDC just talked about dusting off preparedness plans, but coming from you it has more weight, do you feel like U.S. schools should be preparing for a coronavirus spreading?

Donald Trump: [\(40:58\)](#)

I would think so, yes. I haven't spoken specifically about that with the various doctors, but I would think so, yes. I think every aspect of our society should be prepared. I don't think it's going to come to that, especially with the fact that we're going down, not up. We're going very substantially down not up, but yeah, I think school should be preparing, and get ready just in case. The words are just in case. We don't think we're going to be there, we don't think we're going to be anywhere close, and again, if you look at some countries, they are coming down, it's starting to go in the other direction.

Donald Trump: [\(41:29\)](#)

This will end, this will end. You look at flu season, I said 26,000 people. I'd never heard of a number like that. 26,000 people going up to 69,000 people doctor you told me before. 69,000 people die every year, from 26 to 69, every year from the flu. Now, think of that. It's incredible. So far the results of all of this that everybody's reading about, and part of the thing is

you, you want to keep it the way it is. You don't want to see panic because there's no reason to be panicked about, but...

Donald Trump: [\(42:03\)](#)

I don't want to see panic because there's no reason to be panicked about. But when I mentioned the flu, actually, I asked the various doctors. I said, "Is this just like flu?" Because people die from the flu, and this is very unusual. And it is a little bit different, but in some ways, it's easier. And in some ways, it's a little bit tougher. But we have it so well under control. We really have done a very good job. Go ahead.

Speaker 19: [\(42:24\)](#)

Thank you. Mr president. You mentioned the stock market earlier. To go back to that, to be clear, the Dow Jones dropped more than 2000 points this week. Are you suggesting that that was overblown? Are financial markets overreacting here?

Donald Trump: [\(42:38\)](#)

I think the financial markets are very upset when they look at the Democrat candidates standing on that stage making fools out of themselves and they say, "If we ever have a president like this," and there's always a possibility, it's an election, who knows what happens, right? I think we're going to win. I think we are going to win by a lot. But when they look at the statements made by the people standing behind those podiums, I think that has a huge effect, yeah.

Speaker 19: [\(43:03\)](#)

You don't think the selloff had to do with the Coronavirus?

Donald Trump: [\(43:03\)](#)

I think it did. I think it did, but I think you can add quite a bit of selloff to what they're seeing because they're seeing the potential. Again, I think we're going to win. I feel very confident of it. We've done everything and

much more than I said we were going to do. You look at what we've done, what we've done is incredible with the tax cuts and regulation cuts and rebuilding our military, taking care of our vets and getting them choice and accountability.

Donald Trump: [\(43:27\)](#)

All of the things we've done, protecting our second amendment. I mean they view that second amendment, they're going to destroy the second amendment. When people look at that, they say, "This is not good." So you add that in. I really believe that's a factor. But no, this is what we're talking about is the virus. That's what we're talking about. I do believe in terms of CNBC and in terms of Fox Business, I do believe that that's a factor. Yeah. And I think after I win the election, I think the stock market's going to boom like it's never boomed before. Just like it did by the way after I won the last election. The stock market the day after went up like a rocket ship.

Speaker 19: [\(44:17\)](#)

At what point would you be considering loosening the travel restrictions regarding China.

Donald Trump: [\(44:17\)](#)

When we're at a point where we don't have a problem. We're not going to loosen the travel restrictions, that's what saved us. Mike alluded to it, had I not made a decision very early on not to take people from a certain area, we wouldn't be talking this way. We'd be talking about many more people would have been infected. I took a lot of heat. Some people call me racist because I made a decision so early. And we had never done that as a country before, let alone early. So it was a bold decision. It turned out to be a good decision. But I was criticized by the Democrats. They called me a racist because I made that decision, if you can believe that one. We have to all work together. We can't say bad things. And especially when we have

the best team anywhere in the world and we really gave it an early start. We gave it a very early start.

Speaker 19: [\(45:04\)](#)

[inaudible 00:45:04] consistently called for enormous cuts, the CDC, the NIH and the WHO. You talked a lot today about how these professionals are excellent, hypercritical if necessary. Does this experience at all give you pause about those consistent cuts?

Donald Trump: [\(45:15\)](#)

No, because we can get money and we can increase staff. We know all the people, we know all the good people. There's a question I asked the doctors before. Some of the people we cut, they haven't been used for many, many years. If we ever need them, we can get them very quickly. And rather than spending the money, and I'm a business person, I don't like having thousands of people around when you don't need them. When we need them, we can get them back very quickly. For instance, we're bringing some people in tomorrow that are already in this great government that we have, and very specifically for this. We can build up very, very quickly and we've already done that. I mean we really have built up, we have a great staff and using Mike, I'm doing that because he's in the administration and he's very good at doing what he does and doing as it relates to this. Yeah, go ahead.

Speaker 19: [\(46:06\)](#)

Thank you Mr. President. So far your administration-

Donald Trump: [\(46:09\)](#)

I picked him, but your fine. Go ahead.



Speaker 19: [\(46:11\)](#)

Is only testing less than 500 people. And health officials are questioning whether that's enough comparing to other countries who have tested more than tens of thousands of people. Are you planning to test more people?

Donald Trump: [\(46:23\)](#)

Well, we're testing everybody that we need to test and we're finding very little problem, very little problem. Now you treat this like a flu. In fact, I might ask one of the doctors to come up and explain it. You want to wash your hands a lot. If you're not feeling well, if you feel you have a flu, stay inside, quarantine yourself, don't go outside. But there are certain steps that you can take that we won't even be necessary. In many cases when you catch this, it's very light, you don't even know there's a problem. Sometimes they just get the sniffle. Sometimes they just get something where they're not feeling quite right. And sometimes they feel really bad, but that's a little bit like the flu. It's a little like the regular flu that we have flu shots for and we'll essentially have a flu shot for this in a fairly quick manner. Yeah, go ahead.

Speaker 19: [\(47:14\)](#)

Two weeks ago Mr. President, your acting OMD director was in this room and was talking about what he expects to be GDP growth for this coming year. He said it was 3%, and we've talked about the effects of the Coronavirus on the supply chain, the declines in the financial markets. Are you still confident that you'll see that kind of economic growth this year?

Donald Trump: [\(47:36\)](#)

No. We're going to have tremendously low unemployment. We're setting records in that. In fact the administration is as you know, the lowest average unemployment of any administration in history. And our numbers are very low, very good, 3.5 3.6. But you can't really see what this does in

terms of GDP. It could affect it, but that's irrelevant compared to what we're talking about. We want to make sure it's safe. Safety number one, but this would have an impact on GDP. But we're still a very, very... We're doing great, but this will... I'll tell you what has a big impact. Boeing has a big impact. How did that happen? A year ago all of a sudden that happened. I think that took away a half a point to a point even. It's a massive company, I think Boeing, we had the general motors strike. That was a big impact on GDP.

Donald Trump: [\(48:25\)](#)

And of course we're paying interest rates. I disagree with the head of the fed. I'm not happy with what that is because he's kept interest rates. President Obama didn't have near the numbers and yet if you look at what happened, he was paying zero. We're paying interest. Now, it's more conservative and frankly people that put their money away and now getting a return on their money as opposed to not getting anything. But I think we're the greatest of them all. We should be paying the lowest interest rates. And when Germany and other countries are paying negative rates, meaning they're literally getting paid when they put out money. They borrow money and they get paid when it gets paid back. Whoever heard of this before? It's said first. But we don't do that. So I totally disagree with our fed.

Donald Trump: [\(49:07\)](#)

I think our fed has made a terrible mistake. And it would've made a big difference as good as we've done, even without the 2000 points, and we started off at 16,000 and we'll be at 28,000 without. We were going to crack 30,000. We have had increases like nobody's seen before, but we're doing well, but we have to watch... We're doing well anyway in other words, even despite the 2000 points, it sounds like a lot and it's a lot, but

it's very little compared to what we've gone up. But we'll be watching it very closely. But we have been hurt by general motors. We've been hurt by Boeing and we've been hurt, in my opinion, very badly by our own federal reserve, who has also created a very strong dollar. That's something nice about a strong dollar, but it makes it much harder to do business outside of this country.

Speaker 19: ([49:57](#))

Thank you, sir. A number of your supporters online have embraced these theories or forwarded these theories that the CDC may be exaggerating the threat of coronavirus to hurt you politically. Rush Limbaugh the other day said this has been advanced to weaponize the virus against you.

Donald Trump: ([50:12](#))

You don't mean my supporters, you mean my people that are not supporters.

Speaker 19: ([50:15](#))

Right, your opponents.

Donald Trump: ([50:16](#))

I agree with it.

Speaker 19: ([50:17](#))

Have you seen evidence of that?

Donald Trump: ([50:19](#))

And I'd like it to stop. I think people know that when Chuck Schumer gets upset... He did the same thing with a couple of trade deals that are phenomenal deals now. Everybody's acknowledged they're phenomenal deals before he ever saw the deal. He didn't even know we were going to make a deal. They said, "What do you think of the deal with China?" "I don't like it. I don't like it." He talked about tariffs. I left the tariffs on 25% on \$250 billion. He said, "He took the tariffs off." He didn't even know the

deal and he was out there knocking it because that's a natural thing to say. But when you're talking about especially something like this, we have to be on the same team. This is too important. We have to be on the same team.

Speaker 19: ([50:58](#))

Have you seen evidence that the CDC is trying to hurt you?

Donald Trump: ([51:01](#))

No, I don't think the CDC is. No, they've been working really well together.

Donald Trump: ([51:08](#))

They really are. They're professional, I think they're beyond that. They want this to go away. They want to do it with as little disruption and they don't want to lose life. I see the way they're working. These people behind me and others that are in the other room, they're incredible people. No, I don't see that at all.

Speaker 19: ([51:27](#))

Thank you Mr. President.

Donald Trump: ([51:28](#))

Thank you very much, I appreciate it. I don't know who said that, but I appreciate it.

Speaker 19: ([51:34](#))

Thank you Mr. President. Tonight you're minimizing the risk of danger or the virus. Are you telling the Americans, except for the ones who are sick, not to change any of their behaviors?

Donald Trump: ([51:44](#))

No, I think you have to always... I do it a lot anyway, as you probably heard, wash your hands, stay clean. You don't have to necessarily grab every handrail unless you have to. You do certain things that you do when you have the flu. View this the same as the flu. When somebody sneezes, I try and bail out as much as possible when they're sneezing. I had a man

come up to me a week ago. I hadn't seen him in a long time and I said, "How are you doing?" He said, "Fine, fine." He hugs me. I said, are you well? He says, "No." He said, "I have the worst fever and the worst flu," and he's hugging and kissing me. So I said, "Excuse me." I went and I started washing my hands. So you have to do that. I really think, doctor, you want to treat this like you treat the flu, right? And it's going to be fine. It was so nice of you to say thank you very much.

Speaker 19: ([52:39](#))

Thank you Mr. president.

Donald Trump: ([52:39](#))

Go ahead. Give me a nice question then. Don't ruin it. Don't ruin it with a bad question. Go ahead.

Speaker 19: ([52:44](#))

It's really nice to talk to you without the helicopter. But also I want to talk to you about 2014. During the Ebola crisis, you said you wanted a "Full travel ban." You said Obama was a quote unquote stubborn dope not for doing it. You said just stop the flights dummies. You also said it was a quote unquote total joke to appoint someone to lead the Ebola response with "Zero experience in the medical field."

Donald Trump: ([53:08](#))

They listened to a lot of what I had to say.

Speaker 19: ([53:10](#))

I did. So how does that square with what you're doing now.

Donald Trump: ([53:13](#))

Well, because this is a much different problem than Ebola. Ebola, you disintegrated, especially at the beginning. They've made a lot of progress now on Ebola. But with Ebola we were talking about it before, you disintegrated. You got Ebola, that was it. This one is different, much

different. This is a flu. This is like a flu and this is a much different situation than Ebola. And we're working on a right now by the way, we're working on certain areas of the Congo. The Congo has Ebola and caused largely by the fact that they have war and people can't get there. We can now treat Ebola. At that time it was infectious and you couldn't treat it. Nobody knew anything about it. Nobody had ever heard of anything like this, so a much different situation.

Speaker 19: ([53:54](#))

Mr. President, let me ask you this.

Donald Trump: ([54:01](#))

Yeah, go ahead.

Speaker 19: ([54:02](#))

And just the course of the last couple of minutes, you have disputed some of what the officials that are working in your administration behind you have said about the risk of Coronavirus and its spread. Do you trust your health officials to give you good information or do you trust your instincts more?

Donald Trump: ([54:15](#))

They've said it could be worse, and I've said it could be worse too. [crosstalk 00:54:19] No, I don't think it's inevitable. I don't think it's inevitable. I think that we're doing a really good job in terms of maintaining borders in terms of letting people in, in terms of checking people, and also, that's one of the reasons I'm here today, getting the word out so people can... They'll know. They're going to know. No, I don't think it's inevitable. I think that there's a chance that it could get worse. There's a chance it could get fairly substantially worse, but nothing's inevitable.

Speaker 19: (54:49)

Mr. President, Brazil has its first case.

Donald Trump: (54:52)

That's right, Brazil.

Speaker 19: (54:54)

Right, Brazil. And you have many Americans now in Brazil for Carnival. What are your concerns and what are the procedures and practices that you plan to implement as those Americans are trying to come back home?

Donald Trump: (55:06)

Yes, we're very strong on people coming in from Brazil. Now it only has one case, it's a big country, but it only has one case, but still it's a case. We deal with Brazil very well. The president's a very good friend of mine. In fact, he ran on exactly, it's called "Make Brazil Great Again," that's what he ran on. We get along very well. I know you're so thrilled to hear that. We get along very, very well. And we're working with Brazil, but we have much worse instances than Brazil. You have Italy and you have other countries where they have much more than one person.

Donald Trump: (55:33)

They have one person right now, as of now, as of just a little while ago, one person in Brazil. But Italy is a deeper problem, and we're checking people coming in very, very strongly from those. And at some point we may cut that off. At some point depending on what happens, we may cut certain additional countries off like we've had to do with China. And we hope we can open it up to China as soon as possible, and we hope the numbers that we've been getting are true on China where it really has leveled off and started to go down because eventually sometime that's going to happen. Go ahead.

Speaker 19: [\(56:07\)](#)

Thank you very much. You've said repeatedly that you think the federal government is very prepared, that you're ready for this, but if you think that Secretary Azar is doing such a great job, why did you feel the need to make a change and put Vice President Mike Pence in charge of the federal response to this virus?

Donald Trump: [\(56:25\)](#)

I think Secretary Azar is doing a fantastic job, but he also has many other things. We're working on many, many things together. If you look at his schedule of what he's doing, including drug prices, I think it's perhaps the most complicated job that we have in government, and I want him to be able to focus on that. And Mike is really good at it. They're going to work together, they're going to work very closely together, and they're both in the administration. I see them all the time, so it really works. This isn't Azar, this isn't going out and getting somebody that's never been in the administration. I have two people that are very talented and it's something I feel good about. I don't want to spare the horses. I have very talented people. I want to use them on this because I want it to stay low or as low as possible.

Speaker 19: [\(57:11\)](#)

Thank you, Mr. President. I want to get to China. At the beginning of this outbreak, the Chinese communist party covered it up. That has been the general consensus of everyone. How can you now legitimately trust President Xi and the Chinese communist regime-

Donald Trump: [\(57:31\)](#)

President Xi.

Speaker 19: [\(57:31\)](#)

to be forth coming and forthright with this [inaudible 00:57:41]?



Donald Trump: (57:41)

Well, I can tell you this. I speak to him. I had a talk with him very recently and he is working so hard on this problem. He is working so hard, and they're very tough and very smart. And it's a significant group of very talented people that are working. And they're calling up Dr Fowchee, they're calling up our people. We're dealing with them, we're giving them certain advice. We actually have through World health, we have them over there also and we have a lot of our people making up that group that went over there. No, he's working very hard. It'd be very easy for me to say... It doesn't matter what I say, really. I can tell you he is working... I had a long talk with him the other night. He is working really, really hard. He wants it to go away from China and go away fast, and he wants to get back to business as usual.

Speaker 19: (58:36)

[inaudible 00:58:36] flu has a fatality ratio of about 0.1%.

Donald Trump: (58:38)

Correct.

Speaker 19: (58:40)

This has a fatality ratio of somewhere between 2 and 3%.

Donald Trump: (58:45)

We think. We don't know exactly. And the flu is higher than that.

Speaker 19: (58:50)

There's more people who get the flu, but this is spreading or it's going to spread maybe within communities.

Donald Trump: (58:55)

It may.

Speaker 19: (58:55)

That's expectation. Does that worry you? Because that seems to be what worries the American people.

Donald Trump: [\(59:00\)](#)

No because we're ready for it. It is what it is. We're ready for it. We're really prepared. We have, as I said, we have the greatest people in the world. We're very ready for it. We hope it doesn't spread. There's a chance that it won't spread too, and there's a chance that it will. Then it's a question of at what level? So far, we've done a great job. When you have 15 people with this whole world coming into the United States, and the 15 people are either better or close to being better, that's pretty good. All right, we'll do one more. Go ahead.

Speaker 19: [\(59:31\)](#)

Mr. President, there've been many cases of price gouging on the sales of medical equipment mast and so-on. Should the government be investigating that, looking into it? Do you have a message on that.

Donald Trump: [\(59:42\)](#)

If you tell me that's happening, we would definitely investigate. We don't want that. All right, one more. Go ahead. Go ahead. Yes.

Speaker 19: [\(59:51\)](#)

Are you working with China right now? Specifically in what areas?

Donald Trump: [\(59:55\)](#)

We're working with China. We just did the biggest trade deal in history. We did two of them between a USMCA and the China deal. It's the biggest in history. The relationship with China is a very good one, and I can tell you that again, President Xi is working really hard. He wants this problem solved, as hard as you can work. Thank you all. I may leave you behind and you can answer a few more questions. [crosstalk 01:00:19]

Alex Azar: [\(01:00:44\)](#)

If I could just clarify, think you're not getting the point here of this. I'm still chairman of the task force. Mick Mulvaney has been serving actually an invaluable role for me as acting chief of staff, helping to coordinate

across the government with my colleagues and the whole government approach. Having the vice president gives me the biggest stick one could have in the government on this whole of government approach.

Speaker 19: ([01:01:04](#))

So, you don't feel like you're being replaced?

Alex Azar: ([01:01:06](#))

Not in the least. When this was mentioned to me, I said I was delighted that I get to have the vice president helping in this way. Delighted. Absolutely.

Speaker 19: ([01:01:16](#))

Will you answer a few more questions?

Alex Azar: ([01:01:19](#))

Not tonight.

## Appendix II

### Transcripts of Trump's speech on April 27, 2020.

Speaker 1: (07:07)

Ladies and gentlemen, the president of the United States accompanied by the vice president of the United States.

Donald Trump: (07:25)

Thank you very much. Thank you. Today I'd like to provide you with an update in our war against the coronavirus. Thanks to our comprehensive strategy and extraordinary devotion to our citizens. We've had such tremendous support all over. We continue to see encouraging signs of progress. Cases in New York area, New Orleans, Detroit, Boston, and Houston are declining. Denver, Seattle, Philadelphia, Washington DC, Atlanta, Nashville, Indianapolis, and St Louis are all stable and declining.

Donald Trump: (08:09)

All parts of the country are either in good shape, getting better, in all cases, getting better, and we're seeing very little that we're going to look at as a superseding hotspot. Things are moving along really a horrible situation that we've been confronted with, but they're moving along. As we express our gratitude for these hard-fought gains however, we continue to mourn with thousands of families across the country whose loved ones have been stolen from us by the invisible enemy.

Donald Trump: (08:46)

We grieve by their side as one family, this great American family, and we do grieve. We also stand in solidarity with the thousands of Americans who are ill and waging a brave fight against the virus. We're doing everything in our power to heal the sick and to gradually reopen our nation and to safely get our people back to work. They want to get back to work and they want to get back to work soon.

Donald Trump: [\(09:15\)](#)

There's a hunger for getting our country back and it's happening and it's happening faster than people would think. Ensuring the health of our economy is vital to ensuring the health of our nation. These goals work in tandem. They work side by side. It's clear that our aggressive strategy to slow the spread has been working and is saving countless lives. For those who are infected. We've taken unprecedented action to ensure they have the highest level of care anywhere in the world.

Donald Trump: [\(09:47\)](#)

The federal government has built more than 11,000 extra beds, shipped or delivered hundreds of millions of pieces of personal protective equipment. As you know, in fact, some of the people here are going to be talking about it. Some of our greatest executives, some of the greatest anywhere in the world, and distributed over 10,000 ventilators and we now have in a very short period of time, many have been delivered and hundreds of thousands are being built and frankly, every governor has more ventilators right now than they know what to do with.

Donald Trump: [\(10:21\)](#)

They're actually shipping them to different locations and we're shipping some to our allies and others throughout the world because we have ventilators like the job that they've done and getting this very complex piece of equipment built is actually incredible. You don't hear about ventilators anymore except in a positive way. We've launched the most ambitious testing effort, likewise on earth.

Donald Trump: [\(10:48\)](#)

The United States has now conducted more than 5.4 million tests, nearly double the number tested in any other country more than twice as much as any other country. Think of that. Moments ago, I came from a meeting with

some of our nation's largest retailers, including Walmart, Walgreens, CVS, Rite Aid, and Kroger. We're joined by the leaders of those great companies and we also have with us the leaders from the world's top medical diagnostics companies and suppliers, Thermo Fisher, LabCorp Quest, [US Carlton 00:00:11:26] and the American Clinical Laboratory Association.

Donald Trump: ([11:29](#))

These are great companies. These private sector leaders along with others such as Roche, Abbott, Becton Dickinson, Hologic and Cepheid have been exceptional partners in an unprecedented drive to expand the state's capabilities and our country's capabilities. The job they've done has been incredible. The testing that's been developed and being developed right now has been truly an amazing thing.

Donald Trump: ([12:03](#))

I want to thank Abbott Laboratories for the job they've done. I want to thank Roche and in particular those two have really stepped forward Abbott with a five minute test that people can take and in five minutes they know what the answer is. I'd like to ask if I could, the executives of these great companies and they have really helped us a lot over the last 45-day period.

Donald Trump: ([12:28](#))

We're talking about a 45-day period when many of us met and since then what Walmart and the others have done has been nothing short of amazing. I just want to ask them to come forward and say a few words about their company plus they're going to make a big contribution to our country. Please come forward please. Thank you. Come on up. Thanks. Thanks very much.

Steve Rusckowski: ([12:56](#))

Thank you Mr. President and thank you all of you for being here today and what we'd like to talk about is the progress we've made. The last time we were here was March 13th and we've made tremendous progress and none of that progress could be made without the 47,000 people at Quest Diagnostics that are working around the clock and working up the test and running the test and delivering the results that we need.

Steve Rusckowski: ([13:22](#))

As far as results, we've made tremendous progress. We are currently at Quest Diagnostics testing and about 50, 000 tests per day. We've been pushed by the task force to bring up that number. By the end of May, we'll have 100,000 tests per day about 3 million tests, and these are the molecular tests that we do today. We've also brought up serological testing. We started that this past week and by the end of May we'll be close to 250,000 a day, about 7,000 a month.

Steve Rusckowski: ([13:53](#))

You put those two numbers together it's about 10 million tests by the end of the May that we'll be doing at Quest Diagnostics. We're doing that also in a quicker way. Turnaround times were somewhat of an issue at the early days. We've reduced that to one to two days. Our turnaround time for people in beds, hospital beds is less than 24 hours, and we're doing that in the same way we've done it with the FDA and with CLIA delivering the quality that you all expect and convenience will improve as well with convenient solutions that will be able to swab individuals more easily and also deliver to consumer the ability to have consumers choose a test online with the telehealth provider.

Steve Rusckowski: ([14:34](#))

With that, I'd like to offer my colleague the podium as well.

Adam Schechter: ([14:39](#))

Thank you. Mr. President. Thank you very much for your leadership and for having us all here today. Our scientists and our lab technicians are working day and night in order to do as many tests as we possibly can for the American public and to turn those tests around as quickly as possible. Just 45 days ago we said we could do several thousand tests a day. We can now do 60,000 tests a day and we're continuing to expand that capacity every single day.

Adam Schechter: ([15:11](#))

In addition, our scientists are working to make testing more convenient and easier. We have the swabs now that are much smaller than the original ones that we originally launched with, but we also have the Pixel by LabCorp at-home test. That test right now is for healthcare workers on the frontline and first responders, but we will be rolling that out much more broadly over the coming weeks and we're going to roll it out with absolutely no upfront cost for the individual consumers.

Adam Schechter: ([15:39](#))

At the same time, we are building our capacity for serology testing and we can currently do about 50,000 today and we'll be able to do several hundred thousand per day by the middle of May. We're going to where you're working with the retailers. Our colleagues are here today to help them as they expand their testing capabilities across the entire country. Lastly, Mr. President, we have a rather large drug development...

Adam Schechter: ([16:03](#))

And lastly, Mr president, we have a rather large drug development business and we will continue to work with our colleagues and the pharmaceutical and the biotechnology industry to ensure we do everything we possibly can



to enroll clinical trials fast so that we can get new treatments and potential vaccines. Thank you.

Donald Trump: [\(16:20\)](#)

Thank you very much. Thank you gentlemen. Please go ahead.

Marc Casper: [\(16:28\)](#)

Mr president. Thank you and thank the administration for all of the collaboration to enable Thermo Fisher Scientific to be able to produce the test kits that companies like LabCorp and Quest and the public health labs around the world run. We met our original commitments of producing 5,000,000 kits a week and we're up to scaling that to double that in the coming weeks in terms of supporting testing around the world. I'd like to thank my 75,000 colleagues around the world for their tireless effort to make that a reality and supporting all of our customers to have the testing necessary to get America back to work.

Donald Trump: [\(17:05\)](#)

Thank you very much. Great job. Thank you.

John Nims: [\(17:14\)](#)

Thank you Mr president. I'm John Nims with US Cotton and we are the company that is going to produce the swabs to be used in these testing kits. We have about 1200 people in our company and in our Cleveland operation they have pivoted from... As you've said, the Q-tip style swab to a swab that's going to have a plastic stick with a polyester tip so that they can be assembled into these kits. Our Cleveland team has done a wonderful job with this and they're very excited to be able to help in this effort. So thank you mr president.

Donald Trump: [\(17:46\)](#)

Thank you very much. Great job.

Larry Merlo: ([17:54](#))

Mr president, thank you. I'm Larry Merlo with CVS health and it was just over a month ago that we opened up our first drive through test site and since that time we have opened wide-scale testing facilities across five States in partnership with the administration and working with the governors of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Georgia in Michigan. And these sites are enabling us to test approximately 1,000 individuals a day with realtime results. We now have a capacity to test about 35,000 individuals each week. And this afternoon we announced plans to expand that capacity even further beginning in May, we will install testing capabilities in up to a thousand CVS pharmacies. We'll be using our drive-throughs and our parking lots with swab testing. So again, you'll see that coming online in may. And we also recognize the fact that the virus is disproportionately affecting our minority communities.

Larry Merlo: ([18:57](#))

So we're working in partnership organizations like the National Medical Association to bring testing and care into the traditionally underserved communities. We're also beginning to implement mobile capabilities with which to do that. And as businesses are restarting their workforce, we'll also be looking to assist them as they begin to come back to a normal operation. And finally, as my other colleagues, I just want to thank my CVS colleagues, they have done a phenomenal job in terms of helping people in many different ways all across communities in the country. And they're part of this army of healthcare professionals and front store and first line supervisors and workers that are doing terrific things to bring our country together. And for that we owe them a huge amount of gratitude. Thank you.

Donald Trump: ([19:51](#))

Thank you very much. Great job. Thank you.

Richard Ashworth: ([19:59](#))

Thank you mr president. Appreciate the invitation to be here today and it was just 45 days ago when we were here. I'm Richard Ashworth, I oversee Walgreens in the US and I just want to start off Larry, like you thinking the over 200,000 Walgreen team members who are in stores every day all across America, taking care of our patients and our customers giving them essential daily needs, the prescriptions obviously that they need and even COVID testing while we're here. We also announced today we'll be expanding our testing capabilities across all States including Puerto Rico. We'll be able to triple the volume that we do now in partnership with our lab partners and we're excited to be able to do that. We're really excited with the public private partnership that we have here because that's what enabling us to do this and we look forward to working with the additional States to get these sites up and running as fast as possible.

Richard Ashworth: ([20:53](#))

As a pharmacist, I just want to say one quick thing. I'm really proud to be part of this profession and not just Walgreens pharmacists and pharmacy employees, but all of them across grocery, mass independence. You're really doing what you should be doing and what you went to school for it to help patients, counseling them on their medicines and helping them understand the problems that we're facing. Pharmacy is right here in it with everyone together in the community and we look forward to being part of the testing like we are now serology, whatever that might look like in the future and eventually treatment when the vaccine does come. So thank you Mr president for the opportunity. Thank you.

Donald Trump: ([21:37](#))

Great job. Thank you very much.

Rodney McMillan: ([21:37](#))

Thank you Mr president. Thank you Mr vice president. We appreciate all you're doing to get America back to work and doing it safely. I represent Kroger and my name is Rodney McMillan and I am so proud of our nearly half a million associates that are doing everything every day to keep customers safe and our associates safe. And one of the things that we were able to do is provide basic practices we're doing, we call it blueprint and it's the things that all of us can learn from on how to get America back working. We also announced earlier today continuing to accelerate our practice on testing. We are actively engaged in six States. In the next couple of weeks we'll take that to 12 States and the number of tests that we do continues to grow faster than that. Together we will win together. We will solve this problem and move on. America is always great. Thank you again.

Donald Trump: ([22:28](#))

Thank you very much. Thank you.

Doug McMillan: ([22:35](#))

Thank you Mr president. My name is Doug McMillan. I'm a Walmart associate and I too would like to start by thanking our associates for everything that they're doing in our store, Sam's clubs, distribution centers, and in our eCommerce fulfillment centers. They've been inspiring and continue to have a can do attitude and step up. It's much appreciated. We started 45 days ago as that everyone else and we've been operating sites for a while now. We're now up to 20 sites across 11 States. By the end of next week we'll be to 45 and by the end of may, we'll be at 100 and we also, a few weeks ago, vice president Pence and I were in a distribution center in

Virginia food distribution center. He was kind enough to come and thank our associates for us there, which is much appreciated.

Doug McMillan: ([23:15](#))

And the president and vice president were speaking on the phone about surgical gowns and the president asked if we could put in an order for millions of surgical gowns and we don't normally buy those. So I wasn't sure if we were going to be able to do that. But I'd like to thank our apparel team and McKesson in particular for partnering with us. We've been able to in the month of April, secure an additional two and a half million surgical gowns and by the end of May we'll have an additional 6,000,000 available to help. So thank you for the opportunity to serve and for being here.

Donald Trump: ([23:44](#))

Thank you. Great job. Thank you.

Heyward Donigan: ([23:52](#))

Thank you Mr president and thanks to the team for getting this great operation up and running for the benefit of the country. I'm Heyward Donagen with Rite Aid and we are currently operating 40% of the current test sites in 25 locations across eight States. I had the opportunity as I was driving up to stop at our Richmond location and see the testing in action and thank the associates, whether it be security or pharmacy, front end, everybody who's helping with this great effort and all of the customers that appreciate this so much. It was really amazing to see and I want to thank my 50,000 associates also for keeping these retail locations up and running during these really, really tough times. It's been quite amazing and we too are going to expand our testing and we're doing about 1500 a day. Thanks

Donald Trump: [\(24:54\)](#)

Thank you very much. So thank you all very much. It's incredible what we've done together over a short period of time. I want to thank our vice president for the task force and the work. Every day it gets better, and we had a fantastic call with the governors today and I would say that they are as thrilled as they can be, considering that the fact is that there has been so much unnecessary death in this country. It could have been stopped and it could have been stopped short, but somebody a long time ago, it seems decided not to do it that way and the whole world is suffering because of it. 184 countries at least, but I want to thank all of these great businessmen and women for the job they've done. They've been fantastic with us working with us and as you know, for several weeks my administration has encouraged the governors to leverage unused testing capacity in States.

Donald Trump: [\(25:51\)](#)

Very few understood that we have tremendous capacity. Then one week ago we provided each governor with a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of the labs where they could find additional testing capacity in their state. Within 48 hours, the number of tests performed across the country began to absolutely skyrocket. On Saturday alone, more than 200,000 test results were reported, which is a gigantic number, bigger than any country, anywhere in the world for a much longer period of time. A number that is an increase earlier in the month when we tested roughly less than 100,000 a day so we much more than doubled it and that will be doubling again very shortly. We are continuing to rapidly expand our capacity and confident that we have enough testing to begin reopening and the reopening process we want to get our country open and the testing is not going to be a problem at all.

Donald Trump: [\(26:48\)](#)

In fact, it's going to be one of the great assets that we have. Today were releasing additional guidance on testing to inform the States as they develop their plans for a phased and very safe reopening. Our blueprint describes how States should unlock their full capacity, expand the number of testing platforms, establish monitoring systems to detect local outbreaks and conduct contact tracing. We have it all other countries that calling to find out what are we doing and how do you do it and we're helping them with dealing with a lot of countries, helping them on testing just like we did on the ventilators. I directed our Medicare program to make it easier for seniors to get the testing that they need and the pharmacies... as you know, we are allowing pharmacies now to do testing and we have other testing locations that we're going to be allowing also.

Donald Trump: [\(27:43\)](#)

But having pharmacies get involved in testing is a very big deal. We're also asking governors to do the same in their Medicaid program, so they are going to be able and authorized to do the same in Medicaid. So it's a big, that's a big deal. So we're deploying the full power and strength of the federal government to help States, cities to help local government get this horrible plague over with and over with fast. There is tremendous energy in our country right now. There's energy like people haven't seen in a long time, a spirit that they have not seen.

Donald Trump: [\(28:19\)](#)

And we're doing very well, very well considering what happened to us and considering if you look at what happened to others, this is something that the world has not seen for a long, long time. You can probably go back to 1917 where it was a terrible period of time. You all know what happened in 1917 that's over 100 years ago. With that, I'd like to introduce if I might,

Dr Birx, if you could come up and then Edmond you'll come up and between the two of you, you'll explain the entire process and how much progress we've made and where we're going. Thank you very much.

Dr. Birx: [\(28:59\)](#)

Thank you mr president. So the blueprint lays out the roles and responsibilities to enhance our partnership between the private sector and the public sector, bringing together State and local governments with the federal government to ensure that we can accomplish and achieve our core principles and objectives. We can have the first slide. The core elements of the testing plan include both three elements, robust diagnostic testing plans developed in partnerships with State. And I just really want to thank the governors and the health officials both at the State and local levels who've been working with us day and night to work through these issues and also all the laboratory directors in many of the States as well as the American society for microbiology who've been working with us to ensure that the plans were efficient and effective. Within the robust diagnostic testing plans, it was really unlocking the full capacity of the State, increasing the number of testing platforms.

Dr. Birx: [\(29:57\)](#)

We now have multiple tests for different platforms, increasing the ability to collect samples, increasing testing and laboratory supplies, and ensuring that we work together to make sure that every client receives the test that they need. This is added with timely monitoring systems, and what do I mean by that? Systems where we bring together the ability to not only diagnose the symptomatic, but proactively and interactively work with individuals that we know are at higher risk. We've worked with States to look at where the outbreaks have occurred when they're not in the large



metros. And we see that it occurs very often in places of close settings among our native Americans and among our longterm care facilities.

Dr. Birx: [\(30:40\)](#)

So an active monitoring program that's active, integrated and innovative. And then combining us with a third element, which is the rapid response program relying on CDC to be working with State and local governments to ensure that every symptomatic case and critically the asymptomatic cases are quickly tracked and traced to ensure that we can not only control this epidemic but predict outbreaks before they expand. And then finally, the plan includes approach of using science and technology to develop even newer platforms, more efficient testing, really ensuring that the antibody tests that are utilized and recommended by both FDA and CDC have high quality in predicting both exposure to the virus and antibody development. And then finally working on innovative tests that could be high throughput and point of care, and antigen based test or a point of care expanded nucleic acid test. Thank you.

Donald Trump: [\(31:37\)](#)

Very good. Thank you. Admiral please.

Admiral Giroir: [\(31:46\)](#)

Thank you Mr president. And thank you ambassador Birx. If I could have the next slide please. I want to spend just a couple of minutes about going over where we've been, but more importantly, where we're going. I think we all can understand how we can group this into three distinct...

Admiral Giroir: [\(32:03\)](#)

I think we all can understand how we can group this into three distinct phases. First is our launch phase. When we were really engaging the emerging epidemic and the types of things we need to do. For example, mobilize the private sector to develop tests and have EUAs. And I think

you know, over the past two months the FDA has issued 67 Emergency Use Authorizations, which is far outpacing anything that has been done or could ever be imagined. Galvanizing the research community and the commercial labs. The reason why we're here with ACLA Labs having done about three million tests is because of that day when it was galvanized by the President and the Vice President.

Admiral Giroir: [\(32:40\)](#)

We also set models in the community. Those first community-based testing sites that were federally supported, and really under the direction of the US Public Health Service, people who had been in Japan testing people on the Diamond Princess to assure that it would be done right and it would be done safely for everyone involved.

Admiral Giroir: [\(32:58\)](#)

Then we moved to really scaling. That phase was very, very important because we knew we needed to be at an immense scale to enter the third phase about supporting opening again. This again, for example, a lot of my life is about swabs. It was enhancing the production capability of a small company in Maine called Puritan, that you'll hear a whole lot more about, that is sort of the swab provider for the country. But also because of the FDA actions and the actions of scientific community being able to broaden the types to spun polyester. So US Cotton can now come in and start delivering within the next couple of weeks 3 million swabs per week of a different type. It also did things like expanding the community based testing sites. Whereas we started small with the commercial partners, you see today, right now, we have 73 of this 2.0 sites going to 110.

Admiral Giroir: [\(33:52\)](#)

And very importantly, this demonstrated the model and 68% of those sites are in communities of moderate or high social vulnerability. And 22% are

in the highest social vulnerability communities so that we can make sure the testing gets where it needs to be. You've just heard that that could be expanded to thousands of sites.

Admiral Giroir: [\(34:12\)](#)

And finally, Stage Three, which is very exciting. Coordinating with governors to support testing plans and rapid response programs. Over the past week, a multidisciplinary team from the White House, HHS, FDA, FEMA has met virtually with multidisciplinary teams from every State, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia to understand what their testing aspirations are, and to make sure that we can meet those demands. We're going to have another round of those calls this week. But as we talked about earlier today, we will be able to supply every state with the supplies and the tests that they need, that will dramatically increase the number of tests we've done to this point.

Admiral Giroir: [\(34:57\)](#)

Just to give you an idea, the supplies that we will be providing to States, the minimum that we're supplying to States, is approximately double in that month then the Republic of Korea has performed in the four months to now accumulated. To give you an idea of the amount of testing that we're going to be doing.

Admiral Giroir: [\(35:16\)](#)

So, I'm very exciting right now as we complete this ecosystem with the large reference labs, the LabCorp and Quest, providing the very high throughput, large scale testing. The galvanizing of the hospitals and academic labs that Dr. Birx has done by a machine to machine understanding and promoting that with the governors. And, of course, using point-of-care testing when and where that's very important to stop

outbreaks, or in remote areas like in the Indian Health Service or in Alaska.  
Thank you, Mr. President.

Donald Trump: [\(35:49\)](#)

Great job. Okay, so with that we're here to answer some questions and Mike is up here also, so we'll answer. Steve, please go ahead.

Steve Holland: [\(35:59\)](#)

As governors grapple with when and how to open their states, what's the best advice from you on what they should do? How quickly, how slow should they-

Donald Trump: [\(36:06\)](#)

We want them to do it. We recommend that they do it as quickly as possible, but safely. We want everyone to be safe. And I think you're seeing that, you're seeing a lot of governors get out and they want to open it up. Many are thinking about their school system, not a long way to go in the school system right now for this season, for this year. But, I think you'll see a lot of schools open up, even if it's for a very short period of time. I think it would be a good thing. Because as you see, in terms of what this vicious virus goes after, young people seem to do very well. Young people seem to do very well. So I know that there are some governors that aren't necessarily ready to open up their states, but they may be ready to open up their school systems. We'll see. But that's their choice. But the word is safety. Okay? Rapid. But safety. Yeah. Please. Go ahead, please.

Jon Decker: [\(36:57\)](#)

Thank you, Mr. President. I had a question for you regarding one of the members of your Coronavirus Taskforce. And that's Secretary of HHS, Alex Azar. On January the 28th he was in the briefing room, and in the briefing room he told reporters that for the individual American the virus should not be an impact on their day to day life. Three months later, more

than 55,000 of our fellow Americans have now lost their lives. Mr. President, why is he still your top health advisor? Why is he still serving as the HHS Secretary?

Donald Trump: [\(37:32\)](#)

Well, I think it's a very unfair question. Because you have many great professionals, some of them you have great respect for. And you have many people on the other party, you mentioned Alex Azar, but you have many people in the other party that have said the same thing and with even more confidence. So a lot of people didn't get that right. I was very fortunate, whether it was through luck or whatever, that we closed the border. We put a ban on China other than our citizens coming in. We had our citizens, you can't keep out American citizens. You know, "Gee, you can't come back into your country," that's a little tough to do. But we put a ban on China, that was very fortunate. But I could tell you that Nancy Pelosi was dancing in the streets in Chinatown. She wanted to go, "Let's go out and party." That was late into February, so you don't mention that, but you could mention that. Go ahead. Any other? Please, go ahead.

Jon Decker: [\(38:22\)](#)

...since April third Mr. President.

Donald Trump: [\(38:25\)](#)

Go ahead. Yeah please, stand up.

Jon Decker: [\(38:26\)](#)

He has not been in a briefing, Mr. President, since April the third. Does that show confidence in him?

Donald Trump: [\(38:28\)](#)

You should have no complaints. Please.

Jon Decker: [\(38:29\)](#)

But, but-

Mario Parker: [\(38:30\)](#)

Thank you, Mr. President. Yesterday you retweeted someone who alleged that Democrats have, quote, “inflated,” the mortality rate of the coronavirus by under-reporting the infection rate. Do you believe that’s true? That there’s some sort of conspiracy theory regarding the number of infections States are reporting?

Donald Trump: [\(38:50\)](#)

Well, I can only say what we’re doing. We’re reporting very accurately. If you look at other countries, other countries are not. I mean, you can look at China, you can look at numerous countries where I don’t think those are right numbers. I can only say what we’re doing. It’s very important to us to do very accurate reporting and that’s what we’re doing. John, go ahead please.

Mario Parker: [\(39:07\)](#)

...by retweeting that, Mr. President?

Donald Trump: [\(39:07\)](#)

Thank you, please John?

Jonathan Karl: [\(39:08\)](#)

Mr. President, I wanted to ask you about the Payment Protection Plan, the PPP plan to help small businesses. There’ve been a lot of concerns today with the website just not working. In fact, we heard from the American Bankers Association saying that they are deeply frustrated and until it’s fixed American banks will not be able to help struggling small businesses. Do you know-

Donald Trump: [\(39:30\)](#)

Well, I just came out and I hadn’t heard. I heard there was a glitch. We’ll find out whether or not that’s so. Certainly it did work out very well for the original amount of money. This is the second amount and I’ll find out

about that. We're relying on the banks to go out and do an accurate job. Yeah, please. In the back.

Charlie Spiering: ([39:47](#))

Thank you.

Jonathan Karl: ([39:48](#))

... of all the companies that get aid, Mr. President-

Donald Trump: ([39:49](#))

Well, I wouldn't mind doing that. I don't know what the legal status of something like that. I would like to do that, as far as I'm concerned. I'm not involved in that process, but I would certainly like to have it listed. I'd have to find out if there's a legal problem, but if there isn't I would do it gladly. Please.

Charlie Spiering: ([40:04](#))

Thank you, Mr. President. Charlie Spiering, Breitbart News. A majority of polls show that Americans blame China for the spread of the coronavirus and yet they're taking advantage of the crisis to make the world more dependent on their supply chains. How do you hold China accountable and how do you keep our country-

Donald Trump: ([40:23](#))

Well, Charlie, there are a lot of ways you can hold them accountable. We're doing very serious investigations, as you probably know. We are not happy with China, we are not happy with that whole situation. Because we believe it could have been stopped at the source, it could have been stopped quickly and it wouldn't have spread all over the world. We think that should have happened. So, we'll let you know at the appropriate time. But we are doing serious investigations.

Charlie Spiering: ([40:46](#))

... American businesses from relying on China for their supply chains. How do you fix that?

Donald Trump: [\(40:52\)](#)

Well, we've already discussed that and especially having to do with supplies, and others. If you look prior to this virus, the deficit was coming way down under my administration because I put massive tariffs on China. We took in tens of billions of dollars, gave some of it to the farmers who were unfairly targeted by China. Nobody's ever done that before. We never took in ten cents from China. Now all of a sudden, I think you know very well, we've taken in tens of billions of dollars. I helped the farmers by giving them, two years ago, \$12 billion all coming from China. And we had plenty of leftover, too. And then the following year, 16 billion and this year we're also going to help our farmers. But nobody's ever done a thing like that because they were targeted unfairly by China. So we're doing a very strong investigation and we'll let you know what the result of that is. We should be able to get the answers, too.

Donald Trump: [\(41:45\)](#)

Go ahead, please.

Speaker 5: [\(41:46\)](#)

As you talk about potentially reopening up America again, as we see in the slides behind you, what data are you going to look at in the future to see if restrictions need to be reimposed?

Donald Trump: [\(41:55\)](#)

Yeah, we're looking very much, and reliant very much on the local areas, the governors. And that's been the way it has been for me, maybe not for everybody, but for me that's the way it's been at the beginning and from the beginning. The governors, some of them are doing an extraordinary job, not all of them, but some of them. And I think all of them, maybe, hasn't



had a chance to do that. Some will be a little bit different. The areas are much different. Manhattan is much different than Montana. You have a lot of different circumstances. And obviously, if you look at the virus, it hits some areas, hasn't hit very much other areas not even at all. Almost not at all. But the entire country has been infected. West Virginia, as an example, I spoke to Jim Justice, the governor of West Virginia. And they were a long before anything hit, and they had numerous deaths even in West Virginia, and they were really the last one to be hit.

Donald Trump: [\(42:49\)](#)

So we're dealing with the governors. We had a really great call today, as I told you, very, very solid. These were not complaining people. These were people that... They had everything they needed, they had their ventilators, they have their testing. They see their testing is growing, they're growing their testing, we're helping them. We're getting them what they need. I'm sure some of you are on the line, even though you weren't supposed to be, and I think you know what the result of that call was. Please, go ahead.

Speaker 6: [\(43:20\)](#)

Following up on Charlie's question on making China, holding them responsible. Germany sent a bill to China for 130 billion Euros for the damages caused by the coronavirus. Would your administration look at doing the same?

Donald Trump: [\(43:36\)](#)

Well, we can do something much easier than that. We have ways of doing things a lot easier than that. But Germany's looking at things and we're looking at things. And we're talking about a lot more money than Germany's talking about. Yeah.

Donald Trump: [\(43:47\)](#)

Please, go ahead. We haven't determined the final amount yet. It's very substantial. If you look at the world, I mean, this is worldwide damage. This is damage to the US, but this is damaged to the world. Yeah, please.

Yamiche Alcindor: [\(43:59\)](#)

Thank you, Mr. President. Attorney General, William Barr directed federal prosecutors to watch out for state and local officials that might be violating the constitution by some of their stay at home or orders. What's the strategy there? Would the Federal Government sue local authorities?

Donald Trump: [\(44:13\)](#)

Well, you'd have to ask Attorney General Barr. But I think he wants to see, like everybody, he wants to see people get back and wants to see people get back to work. He doesn't want people to be held up when there's no reason for doing it. In some cases, perhaps, it's too strict. He wants to make sure that people have their rights and they maintain their rights. Very importantly. So, a lot of people would agree with him. But you'd actually have to ask that question specifically, from a legal standpoint, to Attorney General Barr.

Yamiche Alcindor: [\(44:38\)](#)

... the Federal Government suing state officials?

Donald Trump: [\(44:39\)](#)

It would depend on the state. It would depend on the circumstances of the state. But some states are perhaps a little early and some states are a little bit late. And the Attorney General... I read that and I saw that, and frankly, the Attorney General doesn't want to have rights taken away. Because, there are some people that aren't allowed to open up a store, they're going to lose their livelihood. And by the way, that causes death, also. Between all of the things that happen, and this has been a big study. The fact that

people aren't allowed to have their freedom causes a tremendous amount of problems, including death. So that's what he's talking about.

Donald Trump: [\(45:17\)](#)

Please, in the back.

Speaker 7: [\(45:20\)](#)

... now and in other states. Governor Larry Hogan specifically said they've seen a spike in people using disinfectant after your comments last week. I know you said they were sarcastic, but do you take-

Donald Trump: [\(45:31\)](#)

I can't imagine why, I can't imagine why. Yeah.

Speaker 7: [\(45:34\)](#)

...take any responsibility if someone where to die?

Donald Trump: [\(45:35\)](#)

No, I can't imagine, I can't imagine that. Yeah, go ahead please.

Speaker 8: [\(45:38\)](#)

...President. Dr. Anthony Fauci says that we need to increase testing by double it, at least. And so does the Rockefeller Foundation. When are we going to be doubling testing?

Donald Trump: [\(45:48\)](#)

It doesn't really matter what they say there, and we just left him. We just had a meeting. Because we're going to have much more than double it, very soon. Now there are big believers in testing and then there are some governors that don't feel as strongly about it at all. You understand that, they feel much differently about it. But we're going with maximum testing because it's something we're very capable of doing. But we'll be much more than doubled. You know, Mike, I'd like you to answer that. We're going to be much higher than doubled on testing very shortly. Mike, please.

Mike Pence: [\(46:24\)](#)

Thank you, Mr. President. I hope the American people looking on today are as proud as the President and I are of the incredible public and private partnership that you heard from today. It was two months ago that we had done less than 10,000 tests for the coronavirus in the United States. But because the President brought together these incredible commercial labs, brought together the best known retailers in America, now Mr. President, we have 5.4 million tests. And as you said earlier today we've done more than 200,000 tests in a single day.

Mike Pence: [\(47:06\)](#)

As we met with governors today, I sensed the enthusiasm among governors for the way that testing is scaling all across the country. And, we assured them on the call today that we're going to continue to directly partner with them to make sure that all of the resources you've heard about today continue to be expanded.

Mike Pence: [\(47:26\)](#)

I want to ask Admiral Giroir, who is literally working day in and day out with the governors, to describe some of the numbers for exactly where we will be. We're North of 5 million tests done now. It is remarkable to think of the pace of acceleration. But Admiral, maybe you could speak about exactly when we will reach the point that some of the experts say that they think we need to be at. Whether that be the 300,000 tests a day or 500,000 tests a day. But what's remarkable to me as a lay person, Mr. President, is because of this partnership you've forged. We're almost there.

Mike Pence: [\(48:03\)](#)

Because of this partnership you've forged, we're almost there. And we'll be there very, very soon for the American people. But everyone who is anxious to see America reopen, as this president and our entire administration are, should know that the three-phased approach that the

president outlined 10 days ago, we believe, and I believe increasingly governors understand around America, that we have a sufficient amount of testing today for every state that qualifies to enter phase one to begin to reopen their economies. And Mr. President, with your permission, I'll just ask Admiral Gerard to give some specific numbers about for all that we've done, how much more quickly you'll see an expansion of testing because of the partnership that you witnessed again here today.

Admiral Giroir: [\(48:49\)](#)

Thank you Mr. President and Mr. Vice President. The number of tests that need to be done depends on the state level. You understand that places where there's high virus circulating will need many, many more tests. Places that do not have high virus circulating may need less tests. But let's just assume Dr. Fauci was talking about about a four million per month number, which was sort of a week ago where we are. So we will, according to the governor's plans for next month, we will easily double that four million number. We will have over 20 million swabs that we're going to send out. We will have over 15 million tubes of media. We have all the tests matched machine to machine in a focused area. We've gone state by state and understand that.

Admiral Giroir: [\(49:39\)](#)

And this is not even including what you just heard, the five million per month test by LabCorp and Quest, or the point of care test by Abbott, or all the other tests that are out there. So in May, we are going to be doing more testing in this country. And people talk about South Korea a lot. The states with the least amount of testing will double the overall cumulative number per capita that South Korea has done in four months, to give you that understanding.

Donald Trump: ([50:11](#))

Go ahead, John.

John: ([50:12](#))

Good morning. This sounds incredibly promising. Walgreens, CVS for the drive through test, the diagnostic agencies. But we sat here in the Rose Garden back on March 13 and these companies were here, some other companies were here. By my count, only 69 drive through test sites have been set up by the companies that were here. I'm wondering if... And of course Mr. Vice President back in early March, you said we'd be at four million tests by the following week. We're just now got there in the last few days. So what have you learned about what went wrong a month and a half or over the last month and a half or two months? And what's going to go right now? What lessons have you learned from the mistakes over the last month and a half or so?

Mike Pence: ([50:53](#))

John, I appreciate the question, but it represents a misunderstanding on your part and frankly a lot of people in the public's part about the difference between having a test versus the ability to actually process the test. The truth was when the president tapped me to lead the White House Coronavirus Task Force two months ago, we saw the production of lots of test kits going into the marketplace. But as the president has said many times, what he understood early on was the old system would never be able to process the tests at the massive volume that we would need in the midst of an epidemic. And that's why the president brought together these extraordinary commercial labs that you've heard from today. Literally sat them down in the Roosevelt Room and said, "We need you to turn all of your energies loose on doing the kind of high speed testing that would be necessary for us to reach the numbers we're at today."

Mike Pence: ([51:52](#))

And so there was no disconnect at all. There were lots of test kits out there, and well frankly there still are today. There are literally millions of tests that could be run in the old style slow laboratory that are still conducting tests today, whether it be at the CDC or at state laboratories. But what the president brought about with this public private partnership has brought us to the point where we've done 5.4 million tests to date. And literally, you just heard that by next month, we could be doing as many as two million tests a week all across the country to give the American people confidence that we can reopen and get our economy moving again.

John: ([52:34](#))

So when you said four million tests seven weeks ago, you were just talking about tests being sent out, not actually being completed? I'm a little confused.

Mike Pence: ([52:43](#))

John, I think, precisely correct, that in my first week on this job, we were informed that HHS, I believe IDT was the vendor, Admiral Gerard, that had distributed a million, was distributing another four million. And we believe they did. But again, those were tests that frankly, but for the president's leadership, we'd still be waiting on those tests to be done in many cases, because they were tests that were designed to be run in the old laboratory model. But early on at the president's direction, we brought in these incredible commercial labs. We partnered with these extraordinary retailers and now we stand here today. Literally one day last week, more than 200,000 tests in a single day. About the time that we were making those comments, we'd done less than 25,000 tests in the entire country. But we've met this moment with American ingenuity, with the incredible companies that are represented here, and we couldn't be more proud.

John: [\(53:40\)](#)

Follow up, Mr. Vice President. A follow up.

Donald Trump: [\(53:42\)](#)

I think it's very important to know, and this you can get from any other country I think if they're being honest, not only do we have the most testing in the world by far, but we have by far the best testing. OAN please. Go ahead.

Speaker 9: [\(53:56\)](#)

Mr. President, thank you. As I'd like to switch gears and talk about general Flynn. There are reports circulating now that he may well be fully exonerated this week. If that were the case, is there any reason why you would not bring him back into the administration?

Donald Trump: [\(54:15\)](#)

I will only say this. I think that general Flynn is a wonderful man, he had a wonderful career, and it was a disgrace what happened to general Flynn. Let's see what happens now. But what happened to general Flynn should never happen again in our country. What happened to other people should never happen again in our country. What happened to your president of the United States should never again be allowed to happen. Go ahead please.

Speaker 10: [\(54:49\)](#)

Mr. President, thank you. Today, one of your top economic advisors, Kevin Hassett, he said that the US is likely to experience a 20 to 30% decline in the GDP in the second quarter, the worst since the great depression. Do you agree with that assessment?

Donald Trump: [\(55:05\)](#)

I don't know, but I can tell you the third and the fourth quarter in particular are going to be, I think, spectacular. We were talking about it with the executives. I think we're going to have a phenomenal third quarter. Nobody



except one country can be held accountable for what happened. Nobody's blaming anybody here. We're looking at a group of people that should have stopped it at the source. But so what happens in second happens in second. What we are doing is I think we're going to have, you're going to see a big rise in the third, but you're going to see an incredible fourth quarter and you're going to have an incredible next year. I think you're going to have a recovery. Look. I built, they were just telling me inside and it's fact, I built the greatest economy. With the help of 325 million people, I built the greatest economy in the history of the world. And one day because of something that should have never been allowed to happen, we had to close our country, we had to close our economy. I built it. We had the best employment numbers and the best unemployment numbers for Hispanic American, for African American, for Asian American, for everybody, best stock market numbers. And by the way, the stock market was up very substantially today and people are seeing a lot of good things. A lot of very smart people investing in the stock market right now. It's at 24,000, approximately 24,000. And if you would have said with the tragedy that this country had to endure and go through, with all of the death and the people that died and were so badly hurt by what happened. And you can only say God bless them. But if you would have said that our country would be in the position we're now. We're ready to move forward.

Donald Trump: [\(56:56\)](#)

We'll never forget loved ones. We'll never forget these great people that sacrifice for a reason of incompetence or something else other than incompetence, what happened at a point where they could have protected the whole world. Not just us, the whole world. But we had the greatest economy ever in the history of our world. And I had to turn it off in order to get to a point where we are today. And now we're making a comeback.

And I think we're going to have economically, from an economic standpoint, next year an unbelievable year. And I think that you're going to see a fantastic fourth quarter and the third quarter, we'll start to build. But the second quarter, obviously you're going to have GDP lack of growth. I'm looking at the head of Walmart. What a job Walmart's done in going through something. They were doing yeoman's work, including getting us millions of really very, very protective outfits. And the job that Doug and Walmart did was incredible.

Donald Trump: [\(58:02\)](#)

Millions of outfits. And those are high quality. I've seen them. Those are high quality. That's what we need. So people have stepped up to the plate. I think we're going to have a really good. I think it's going to start building. I think it's going to build fast. I think it will be a tremendous, tremendous comeback. And so I say, I built the greatest economy. With all of the people that helped me and all of the people in this country, we built the greatest economy the world has ever seen. And we're going to do it again. And it's not going to be that long. Okay. Yes, please go ahead.

Speaker 11: [\(58:32\)](#)

Mr. President, opening up the country, how long will you keep up the travel restrictions for Europe?

Donald Trump: [\(58:38\)](#)

Well, we're looking at that and it depends on how long it's taking Europe to heal. Italy is starting to make a comeback. I'm very happy to see that with my friend, the prime minister. It's tragic what went on in Italy, and Spain, and France, and Germany frankly, and every country over there. It's tragic. But we'll be looking at what's happening in Europe and certainly we want to do that and they want to do it too. They want to do it very badly. Yeah.

Speaker 12: [\(59:03\)](#)

Do you have any update on Kim Jong-un's health?

Donald Trump: [\(59:07\)](#)

Say it.

Speaker 12: [\(59:07\)](#)

Have you gotten any update on Kim Jong-un's health? Has he responded to your letter from March?

Donald Trump: [\(59:12\)](#)

On Kim Jong-un? I can't tell you exactly. Yes. I do have a very good idea but I can't talk about it now. I just wish him well. I've had a very good relationship with Kim Jong-un. If I weren't president, you'd be in war. You would have been in war with Korea. You would have been in war with North Korea if I wasn't president. That I can tell you. He expected that. That I can tell you. I hope he's fine. I do know how he's doing relatively speaking. We will see. You'll probably be hearing in the not too distant future. All right, one or two more. Go ahead. Please.

Speaker 12: [\(59:49\)](#)

Are you confirming he's alive?

Speaker 13: [\(59:50\)](#)

Yeah, I had a question about the 2020 election. Your likely Democratic opponent, Joe Biden, recently suggested that you were considering changing the date of the election, that you might try something like that. That's my first question. The second question is-

Donald Trump: [\(01:00:05\)](#)

I never even thought of changing the date of the election. Why would I do that? November 3rd, it's a good number. No, I look forward to that election and that was just made up propaganda, not by him but by some of the many people that are working, writing little statements. I see all the time

statement made, you say so statement made per Joe Biden, Sleepy Joe. He didn't make those statements but somebody did. But they said he made it. No, let him know I'm not thinking about it at all. Not at all. Go ahead, in the back please. Please.

Speaker 14: [\(01:00:37\)](#)

The bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee came out with the fourth installment of this report. It concluded that Russia interfered in the 2016 elections and there was not political bias. Do you accept its conclusions?

Donald Trump: [\(01:00:47\)](#)

Oh, I don't know. I haven't seen the report. I haven't seen the report. Yeah, please go ahead.

Speaker 15: [\(01:00:51\)](#)

President, nice to see you. I think you have a good relationship with North Korea and with Kim Jong-un, but last Saturday, Senator Graham, he mentioned in the Fox News, he interviewed. He said that-

Donald Trump: [\(01:01:10\)](#)

He didn't say anything last Saturday.

Speaker 15: [\(01:01:12\)](#)

... that Kim Jong-un-

Donald Trump: [\(01:01:14\)](#)

Nobody knows where he is, so he obviously couldn't have said it. If you have a... This is breaking news that Kim Jung-un made a statement on Saturday. I don't think so.

Speaker 15: [\(01:01:22\)](#)

But anyways-

Donald Trump: [\(01:01:22\)](#)

Okay, go ahead.

Reporters: [\(01:01:23\)](#)

[crosstalk 00:13:23].

Donald Trump: [\(01:01:24\)](#)

Let's do one more. Please, in the back.

Speaker 16: [\(01:01:26\)](#)

If an American president loses more Americans over the course of six weeks than died in the entirety of the Vietnam War, does he deserve to be reelected?

Donald Trump: [\(01:01:36\)](#)

So yeah, we've lost a lot of people, but if you look at what original projections were, 2.2 million, we're probably heading to 60 thousand, 70 thousand. It's far too many. One person is too many for this. And I think we've made a lot of really good decisions. The big decision was closing the border or doing the ban, people coming in from China. Obviously other than American citizens which had to come in. Can't say you can't come back to your country. I think we've made a lot of good decisions. I think that Mike Pence and the task force have done a fantastic job. I think that everybody working on the ventilators, you see what we've done there, have done unbelievable.

Donald Trump: [\(01:02:17\)](#)

The press doesn't talk about ventilators anymore. They just don't want to talk about them and that's okay. But the reason they don't want to talk... That was a subject that nobody would get off of. They don't want to talk about them. We're in the same position on testing. We are lapping the world on testing and the world is coming to us. As I said, they're coming to us saying, "What are you doing? How do you do it?" We're helping them. So, no, I think we've done a great job and one person, I will say this, one person is too many. Thank you all very much. Thank you. Thank you.