

First Submitted: 21 June 2018; Accepted 13 November 2018

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33182/ml.v16i3.632>

Discursive construction of an anti-immigration Europe by a *Sweden Democrat* in the European Parliament

Kamber Güler¹

Abstract

Discourses are mostly used by the elites as a means of controlling public discourse and hence, the public mind. In this way, they try to legitimate their ideology, values and norms in the society, which may result in social power abuse, dominance or inequality. The role of a critical discourse analyst is to understand and expose such abuses and inequalities. To this end, this paper is aimed at understanding and exposing the discursive construction of an anti-immigration Europe by the elites in the European Parliament (EP), through the example of Kristina Winberg, a member of the Sweden Democrats political party in Sweden and the political group of Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy in the EP. In the theoretical and methodological framework, the premises and strategies of van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach of critical discourse analysis make it possible to achieve the aim of the paper.

Keywords: European Parliament; anti-immigration; discursive construction; critical discourse analysis; Kristina Winberg.

Introduction

Is this 'the end of history', as claimed by Fukuyama (1989: 1), who pointed out 'the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government', or do we face the beginning of a new era of 'the clash of civilizations' as suggested by Huntington (1993: 22), who asserted that 'the great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural'? Or, are all these discourses just a part of an 'elite racism' (van Dijk, 1993; 1995)? In the light of the last question, in this paper, the aim is to find out how the elites in the European Parliament (EP) discursively construct an anti-immigration Europe through the example of Kristina Winberg, a member of the Sweden Democrats (SD) political party in Sweden and the political group of Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD) in the EP.² The reason of selecting Sweden as a case for the paper is the fact that it is one of the European Union (EU) Member States, which is commonly preferred as a destination country by people fleeing war, conflict and persecution in their countries, having offered an inclusive approach towards such people, in general. However, the emerging anti-immigration figures, such as Winberg and the recent increase in the popularity of her anti-immigration political party, SD, in

¹ Kamber Güler, Doctoral Candidate, Department of European Politics and International Relations, Marmara University, Turkey. E-mail: kamberguler@gmail.com.

Acknowledgement: This publication is part of my research work at Linköping University, thanks to a Swedish Institute scholarship and a Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey scholarship, respectively.

² Kristina Winberg ended her four-year EFDD membership on 2 July 2018 and has become a member of another right-wing political group in the EP, the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR). However, as the speeches included in this paper were delivered during Winberg's EFDD membership, this membership is particularly included in the paper.



Sweden, have started to threaten to roll back this inclusive approach.³ In this context, Winberg is selected as a case for the paper since she is not only a member of the SD but also a member of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) that deals with immigration issues, among others, in the EP. Membership of such a critical committee in the EP makes her discourses regarding immigration more vital, and these discourses that commonly have anti-immigration characteristics should be paid a particular attention to since they could lead to the formation of a Common European Asylum System (CEAS), with negative results for the people in need, such as refugees and asylum seekers. Moreover, as examined in the following section, such discourses delivered during the EP debates are means of controlling public discourse and public mind in the EU. Lastly, critical discourse analysis (CDA) is used, as the theoretical and methodological framework. From the broad field of CDA, van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach is drawn upon to analyse the discourses of Winberg during the parliamentary debates in the EP. The number of reviewed speeches of Winberg for CDA between the period of 2014 and 2017 is 51, six of which are considered to be the most relevant ones for the paper, translated literally as accurately as possible from Swedish to English and analysed in a critical way. This time frame covers the first three years of the 8th Parliamentary Term of 2014–2019, in which the anti-immigration discourses have considerably increased compared to the former parliamentary term. As the research for the paper has shown, the six reviewed speeches are not only the most relevant ones among others, but also just the tip of the iceberg in terms of a larger anti-immigration tendency in the EP. In this regard, if there is a 'refugee crisis', then, dialectically, the opposite is also possible: 'refugee awareness'. Accordingly, there is the aspiration through this work to contribute to the development of the literature on 'refugee awareness' by understanding and thus, exposing such anti-immigration discourses that ignore the international regulations on the issue, such as the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol as well as the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which was proclaimed in 2000 and has become legally binding on the Member States since the Treaty of Lisbon that entered into force in 2009.

Theoretical and methodological framework

One of the main concepts of the paper, 'discourse', is defined in various ways in the literature. According to Fairclough (2015: 51), it is language use as social practice, which implies 'a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s) which frame it' (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997: 258). In such a dialectical relationship, the discursive event is not only shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them. With a more linguistic perspective, Fairclough (1992: 64) claims that 'discourse is a practice not just of representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning'. Just like Fairclough and Wodak, van Dijk (1997d: 20) also accepts discourse as a form of social action and interaction, which according to him has three main dimensions: language use, the communication of beliefs (cognition), and interaction in social situations, with there being a relationship between the three (van Dijk, 1997c: 2). van Dijk's (2001: 352) definition of CDA not only underpins the theoretical framework of the paper but also answers the question of 'why is CDA critical?', as follows:

CDA is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by

³ The SD was represented in the Swedish parliament for the first time following the elections of 2010 by gaining 5.70% of the votes, and increased its tally in the following elections of 2014 and 2018, to 12.86% and 17.53%, respectively. For more information on the election results, see Valmyndigheten (2018).



text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take an explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality.

One of the premises of the socio-cognitive approach is that discourse ‘controls the minds of political actors, and hence their actions’ (van Dijk, 1997d: 44). Similarly, control of public discourse through social groups, institutions and their leaders (i.e. the elites such as political leaders or members of political parties or groups) as well as mind control through education, media and even job instructions are two instruments of power to produce, reproduce or sustain its hegemony in the social structure (van Dijk, 2001: 354–358). In the literature, there is a variety of studies that examine discriminatory and exclusionary effects of such discourses regarding migrants or refugees in this context (Jaworsky, 2011; Vollmer, 2012; Yazgan and Utku, 2017; Cervantes et al., 2018). Moreover, van Dijk (1997a: 17) calls the power in the discourses of governments, parliaments, dominant parties, politicians and political institutions as political power. In line with the argument of the paper, the relation between power and discourse can be summarised as follows:

Power is control of action, which requires control of personal and social cognitions, which presupposes control of public discourse, which is possible only through special forms of access, which may in turn be based on political, economic, social or academic power resources (position, ownership, income, knowledge, expertise, etc.). (van Dijk, 1997a: 22)

Regarding the power struggle over the determination of discursive practices, Foucault (1981: 52–53) emphasises that ‘discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized’. By taking all these premises into consideration, CDA aims to make more visible ‘the ideological loading of particular ways of using language and the relations of power’, which are often unclear to people (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997: 258).

Furthermore, as claimed by van Dijk (1997c: 30), ‘discourses are constructive in the sense that their constitutive units may be functionally used, understood or analysed as elements of larger ones, thus also creating hierarchical structures’, which applies to not only forms, but also, meaning and interaction. It should also be noted that cognition plays a fundamental role (i.e. mental processes and representations) in producing and understanding text and talk (van Dijk, 1997c: 31). In order to understand and explain the aspects of discourse properly, one needs to have recourse to the minds of language users. By referring to cognition as the interface between discourse and society, van Dijk (1997c: 31) argues that

besides personal memories and experiences of events (models), the shared sociocultural representations (knowledge, attitudes, ideologies, norms, values) of language users as group members also play a fundamental role in discourse, as well as its description and explanation.

There is a close relation between discourses and actions. In other words, political actions or practices are at the same time discursive actions or practices, which means that forms of political texts and talks have political functions and implications (van Dijk, 1997d: 14). The context of the political texts and talks is decisive for the categorisation of discourse as political or not, and politicians are assumed to talk politically, if they and their talk are contextualised in communicative events, such as cabinet meetings, parliamentary sessions, interviews with the media, bureaucratic



practices, etc. Considering the time, place and circumstances of the political texts and talks as well as their functions and goals, van Dijk (1997d: 14) suggests that ‘text and context mutually define each other, in the sense that a session of parliament is precisely such only when elected politicians are debating (talking, arguing, etc.) in parliament buildings in an official capacity (as MPs), and during the official (officially opened) session of parliament’. In this regard, in this paper, these requirements for a discourse to become a political discourse are taken into consideration, while analysing it in the proper context. The genre of the paper, that is, the political speeches of Winberg in the EP during the parliamentary debates, meets all these criteria given by van Dijk.

It should be noted that the political texts and talks of the politicians are not merely a discursive way of doing politics, but also, a way of contributing to the public agenda, and hence, to public opinion, as envisaged through the political functions and goals of the political discourses, while providing the necessary legitimation to political decision that may not completely be legal or moral in terms of international law and human rights principles (van Dijk, 1997d: 39–40). In other words, ‘who controls public discourse, at least partly controls the public mind, so that discourse analysis of such control is at the same time inherently a form of political analysis’ (van Dijk: 1997c: 44). Accordingly, a detailed and sophisticated political discourse analysis⁴ provides direct insight into discursive political actions, such as cabinet meetings, parliamentary debates, bureaucratic documents, bills and laws, which need description analysis so that one can comprehend the possible influences or effects they may have on the political cognitions of the public at large (van Dijk, 1997d: 41). This is what this paper is aimed at achieving by critically analysing the discourses of Winberg on immigration.

On the other hand, van Dijk makes a distinction between micro and macro levels of CDA. Specifically, language use, discourse, verbal interaction and communication take place at the micro level, whereas power, dominance and inequality belong to its macro level (van Dijk, 2001: 354). In this paper, the discourses of Winberg in the EP are analysed at the micro level so as to elicit how such discourses construct an anti-immigration Europe at the macro level. To illustrate, an anti-immigration speech by Winberg in the EP is a discourse at the micro level, but construction of an anti-immigration Europe through some legislation as a result of these speeches by her as well as the speeches of other MEPs (Member of the European Parliament) is at the macro level. van Dijk (2001: 354) argues that CDA has to bridge the gap between the micro and macro levels to form one unified whole, and he suggests several ways to bridge these levels as follows: members–groups, actions–process, context–social structure, personal and social cognition. To illustrate, Winberg represents her political group, EFDD, with her discourses, which are considered in this paper as an action, whereas the construction of an anti-immigration Europe through some legislation as a result of these and similar discourses is viewed as a process.

As for the overall strategies employed by the socio-cognitive approach, the ideological square is one of them coined by van Dijk. This relates to positive Self-presentation and negative Other-presentation and deals with ‘the way in-groups and out-groups are represented in text and talk, prototypically represented by the ideological pronouns *Us* and *Them*’ (van Dijk, 2011: 396–397). The main idea in van Dijk’s ideological square is that there is the tendency for group members’ texts and talks being positive about their own group, which include references to the hospitality, tolerance, equality, democracy and other values of the Self, while it is negative about the Other, or

⁴ van Dijk (1997d: 11) considers political discourse analysis within CDA, and states that it is not only about political discourse but also a critical enterprise, which deals particularly with the reproduction of political power, power abuse or domination via political discourse, including some forms of resistance or counter-power against such forms of discursive dominance.



out-group, being defined as opponent, competitor, enemy, illegal, economic and hence ‘fake’ refugee and/or foreigner (van Dijk, 2011: 397; 1997b: 36–37).

Table 1: Overall and specific strategies for CDA

Overall Strategies	Positive Self-presentation, Negative Other-presentation, Apparent Denial, Apparent Sympathy, Fairness, Top-down Transfer, Justification
Specific Strategies	Implications, Presuppositions, Denomination, Predication, Storytelling, Reversal, Numbers Game

Source: Adapted from (van Dijk, 2011: 396–398; 1997b: 36–55).

In addition to these two main overall strategies, as a result of analyses of some parliamentary debates, van Dijk (1997b: 37–38) also detected the following characteristic overall strategies: apparent denial (or denial of racism), apparent sympathy, fairness, top-down transfer and justification. Apparent denial implies the popular disclaimer of that ‘We have nothing against immigrants [or minorities], but...’, or mitigation of racism or discrimination in the country. Apparent sympathy relates to the discourse of ‘for their own good’. Fairness implies that the group members favour humanism, tolerance and equality, but political reality sometimes forces them to make unpleasant decisions; in other words, they are ‘firm but fair’. Top-down transfer relates to the fact that the group members tend to blame the extreme right or some poor or ‘ordinary’ citizens for prejudice, discrimination or racism against minorities, immigrants or asylum seekers. Lastly, justification implies the ‘force of facts’, such as international situation, agreements, financial difficulties and numbers of refugees. As well as these overall strategies given above, there are also some specific strategies employed for CDA, which van Dijk (2011: 398; 1997b: 36–55) explains as follows:

- **Implications** (propositions implied by propositions explicitly expressed in discourse) – propositions may be used that have (many) negative implications about *Them*;
- **Presuppositions** (propositions that must be true/known for any proposition to be meaningful) – presupposing propositions (negative about *Them*) that are not known to be true;
- **Denomination** (of propositions: participant description) – They tend to be named or identified as different from *Us* (precisely as *Them*) – strangers, immigrants, Others, opponents, enemies, etc.;
- **Predication** (of propositions: meanings of sentences) – any predicate of a proposition attributing negative characteristics to *Them*;
- **Storytelling** about ethnic events including personal experiences with Others: These express mental models of such events and the opinions storytellers have about them;



- **Reversal:** We are not discriminating, they are;
- **Numbers game,** the rhetorical manipulation of numbers of arrivals.

Instead of using the terms ‘Us’ and ‘Them’, in this paper, the terms the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’ are utilised in order to ensure coherence. In the next section, discursive construction of an anti-immigration Europe by Winberg is analysed through the theoretical framework detailed above and these overall and specific strategies for CDA, as given in Table 1.

Discursive construction of an anti-immigration Europe

As it is mentioned earlier, Winberg is a member of the SD in Sweden, and has been elected for the first time to the EP and has taken part as a member of the EFDD in the 8th Parliamentary Term of 2014–2019. Berggren and Neergaard (2015: 189) describe the SD, which won seats in the Swedish Parliament for the first time in 2010, as a party that ‘courts respectability on one hand and wants to be seen as anti-establishment on the other’. Moreover, for the SD, which ‘promotes a crude form of cultural racism against Muslim migrants’, it is not biology anymore, but ‘culture and ethnicity that constitute grounds for discrimination, even though the use of reproduction and generational rhetoric tend to bind biological racism together with cultural racism’ (Berggren and Neergaard, 2015: 189–190). To understand the context of Winberg’s discourses in the EP and the cognition, including the ideology, norms and values behind them, she is quoted as follows:

Madam President! I must say that here the EU takes water over its head and sails in the wrong direction. This will lead to even **more supranationality**, where they now want to deprive the Member States of being able to decide on their **sovereignty** and decide on their border protection on a voluntary basis and contribute to the external border protection. This is explained by the recent occurrence of an exceptional situation with **illegal migrants, weapons and terrorists** crossing the Mediterranean. This should have been understood a long time ago. We, Sweden Democrats, want to see **intergovernmental cooperation** with regard to our external border protection, where Frontex's main task is to monitor our external borders and the Member States should participate on a voluntary basis, and nothing else. If the Commission, supported by France and Germany, tries to do this, I think that Brexit will soon be followed by **Svexit**. (Winberg, 2015)

Winberg, by representing the SD in Sweden and the EFDD in the EP, favours an intergovernmental EU and does not support supranational border protection or a common asylum system, which has long been discussed in the EP since the late 1990s. Otherwise, she claims that Sweden will also leave the EU just like the UK, which is about to leave the EU as a result of the referendum held in the UK on 23 June 2016. By using the terms ‘illegal migrants’ along with ‘weapons and terrorists’, Winberg gives an example of negative Other-presentation and presupposes that all migrants arrive in Europe through illegal ways, they are prone to carry weapons and are responsible for the terrorist activities within the borders of the EU. In this manner, she tries to justify or legitimate the anti-immigration position of her political party in Sweden and her political group in the EP.

Mr President! Temperature is currently in Damascus 25 degrees, in Lagos 30 degrees and in Bangladesh 30 degrees. **No person should sleep in tents like the migrants in Sweden**, as in the winter of 2015. However, there is a simple solution: **We say no** from the beginning. **Europe, and especially Sweden**, have taken



responsibility – a responsibility **we** never had, because Sweden did not start a war for over 200 years and had no colonies in 300 years. When does responsibility cease? I ask. There is a simple solution to this: Add resources to travel home for the **economic migrants** that it is about. **Say no** before they cross, we do not need to be extorted by Turkey. I'm now putting the solutions up and we'll see what you're doing with them. Perhaps you need to consider a bit more and write reports. However, we all know that it will end with **Australia's migration system**. That's why I'll go there soon and learn more about this. Then you can ask me instead of those Liberals currently in the EU. Free right of asylum and open borders for **the whole world** do not work. It's time to realize it now. (Winberg, 2017c)

One of the common strategies used by an anti-immigrant, racist or discriminative political party or group members is apparent sympathy. In this excerpt above, Winberg tries to claim that it is not for Sweden or Europe's good, but it is for their own good not to come to Sweden or Europe as it does not have a proper climate for the immigrants, asylum seekers or refugees. Whilst Winberg refers to climate conditions in Sweden in this excerpt, she actually implies that neither the economic nor cultural climate of Sweden or Europe is convenient for these people, by also referring to them as 'economic migrants', which means that they are not real but 'fake' migrants. She also glorifies Sweden and Europe by claiming that 'we' have taken the highest responsibility ever, which is a clear example of positive Self-presentation and a well-known euphemism. By referring to Australia's migration system, which has mostly violated the principles of the international law on refugees in recent years, Winberg again tries to justify the idea of sending these people back to the conflict, persecution and political oppression in their homelands by just saying 'no'. She particularly refers to Australia, because that nation is generally known for its values of respect for human rights, rule of law and democracy as well as its prosperity. Winberg's claim of opening borders for the 'whole world' is a numbers game that is also often employed by such anti-immigration politicians so as to control the public discourse and hence, the public mind.

Mr President! In Sweden, we call them **paperless**. The persons, whose asylum applications have been rejected and would have left our country, preferably the day before yesterday. The word **paperless** can easily confuse, they have received paper after paper rejecting their asylum application. These people who should have left **our** countries get, lo and behold, access to **our welfare**, such as healthcare, dental care and, in some cases, supply support, many times more beneficial than **our poor retirees** who are having a hard time. A reform that we, Sweden Democrats, are alone in wanting to abolish. We know that these people are **underground** and many times are impossible to expel. They live in a **shadow community** where we know that many of them **work black, commit crimes and perform terror**. **Just look at who carried out a terrorist attack in Stockholm this spring where five people lost their lives. The person lived illegally in Sweden and became radicalized.** The authorities had no control at all of the person in question. Each Member State has to speed up expulsions, otherwise increases the risks that I mentioned earlier. We must also be better off to keep those who have been refused their asylum application **in custody**. Sweden can, and should not be a **cash machine** for **all the world's opportunists**. The Swedish government should act much harder immediately; otherwise, we will replace them the next year and they do the work themselves! (Winberg, 2017a)



The excerpt above is full of positive Self-presentation and negative Other-presentation. The terms ‘paperless’, ‘underground’, ‘shadow community’ are examples of denomination, and these people’s not leaving ‘our’ countries and still having access to ‘our’ welfare though they have been rejected for many times means that they are ‘illegal’ in ‘our’ countries and are here to exploit ‘our’ welfare, which is an example of predication. In this way, Winberg also claims that they ‘work black, commit crimes and perform terror’, which is another negative Other-presentation by using the specific strategy of predication again. By referring to ‘our poor retirees’, she endeavours to polarise the people into two camps, that is, the Swedish and the migrants. This is a kind of apparent denial and top-down transfer, which implies that ‘not me or my political group or party but “our poor retirees” are against the migrants’. It can also be accepted as a way of justification. Another strategy used by the politicians for their arguments to persuade the public is storytelling. The story about the terrorist attack in Stockholm and the presuppositions relating to this case do not have any evidence in her speech. Winberg’s suggestion to keep the people, whose asylum applications have been refused, in custody is an example of the strategy of fairness, that is, ‘firm but fair’. Calling Sweden a ‘cash machine’ is another positive Self-presentation and Winberg uses a strategy of numbers game when saying ‘all the world’s opportunists’, which can also be accepted as a hyperbole as well as a denomination.

Mr President! It is usually said that one should solve the causes of a problem, not just treating the symptoms. I would like to say that there are simpler solutions to **the migration crisis**, which is the crisis we should talk about throughout this House. The crisis created by an **overly generous immigration policy** in especially countries like Sweden, with a **well-thought-out thought**, but which in practice is catastrophically counterproductive for the well-being of a **democratic state**. In addition, the crisis is caused by the **huge population increase** outside Europe, as well as **the dysfunctional nature of these areas and countries**, resulting in **high unemployment and very gloomy prospects**. In Italy, **economic migrants** are currently **flowing** right now. Some days there are **thousands**. The solution is not to make a compulsory redistribution from Italy to the rest of Europe. It's like pouring water out of the boat but not clogging the hole in the boat, if I can use such a similarity in these contexts. The Commission and some Interior Ministers presented a solution to this day, which among other things will **help Libya's Coast Guard** to better patrol its coastline. We also want to **help Libya** secure their enormously long southern border. Who will do this is not said. It sounds like building a new state apparatus in Libya, which will be a big challenge. I have a simpler solution. Return the asylum legislation to each country. Give Italy the right to set the number of asylum seekers. Deciding on a break in asylum applications, or why not the right to say no to the boats from different organizations that currently, in principle, migrants transport almost all the way from Libya's coast to Italy. **I am aware of objections to asylum and other international law, but this must be done.** (Winberg, 2017b)

If the number of tourists coming to Sweden or Europe suddenly increased threefold or fourfold in a year, would any conservative, right-wing or far-right political party or group member call it a ‘tourism crisis’? No, instead, they would probably choose some positive terms for it so as to increase the tourism revenue of their country or that of Europe. The term ‘migration crisis’ is one of the basic terms of negative Other-presentation that involves political, economic, social and cultural



implications and presuppositions. I would suggest using the term ‘migration awareness’ as a counter-discourse in this case. Winberg again glorifies Sweden as well as Europe by making reference to ‘overly generous immigration policy’ with a ‘well-thought-out thought’ in a ‘democratic state’ like Sweden, which relates to positive Self-presentation. Winberg’s speech including references to the ‘huge population increase’, ‘dysfunctional nature of these areas and countries’, ‘high unemployment and very gloomy prospects’, which are followed by the terms ‘economic migrants’ and ‘flowing’ implying the natural disaster of a flood, constitutes another example of apparent sympathy combined with negative Other-presentation. Winberg claims that these ‘economic migrants’ ‘flow’ in ‘thousands’ some days, but she does not mention the number of migrants who are rejected or sent back to their countries every day. This is one of the outstanding characteristics of the strategy of numbers game. Winberg’s making reference to Libya may be accepted as a sort of top-down transfer, which also implies that it is not only for our good, but also for that of another country. The last sentence of the excerpt ending with, ‘but this must be done’, is another example of the strategy of fairness, i.e. ‘firm but fair’.

Mr President! There are many foul languages that are used around in this chamber too often. **‘Racist’, ‘xenophobe’** and now **‘populist’** are terms that could have had a clear and distinct meaning in another social climate. But given the fact that you have called **ordinary people** – who simply have different views about immigration – the terms have lost their significance. When did it become racist to want a **controlled immigration**? When did it become racist to care about the **safety of women and children**? When did it become racist to **love its country and culture**? **Our citizens** have seen enough to be very concerned about the situation. This cannot be dismissed as **populism** or **divergent** views. You in the EU pretend to fight intolerance while inviting **millions of migrants** who come from **intolerant cultures**. How can you expect **our citizens** to be **tolerant of intolerance**? I would like to have **applause**, too. (Winberg, 2016a)

The excerpt above gives a clear example of apparent denial. Winberg uses the strategy of top-down transfer by referring to ‘ordinary people’, ‘safety of women and children’ and ‘our citizens’, which is also a way of justification. She also tries to justify ‘controlled immigration’ by claiming that this is because ‘we’ love ‘our’ country and culture. The polarisation between the Self and the Other is clearly emphasised in this excerpt. The Self is presented as ‘tolerant’ as much as possible, whereas the Other is depicted as intolerant ‘millions of migrants’ coming from ‘intolerant cultures’. This includes positive Self-presentation and negative Other-presentation as well as the strategy of numbers game. By expecting applause from the ‘public’, Winberg tries to test the success of her attempt to control the public discourse and public mind.

Thanks for asking! I can only see in my country Sweden how in some cases we distance ourselves from **our own culture** to **correct the immigrants** coming. For example, we stop celebrating school closures in the Church because we may encounter some groups, and so on. I see more and more how **we deprive our own culture to adapt to others**. (Winberg, 2016b)

In the excerpt above, another example of the overall strategies of positive Self-presentation and negative Other-presentation can be seen, with the specific strategy of reversal being clearly exemplified here. It implies that since the immigrants are not correct enough, ‘we’ waive ‘our own culture’ not only so as to ‘correct the immigrants’, but also in order to ‘adapt to others’. Therefore,



it is 'us' who suffers from such a 'flood' of immigration, not 'them'. However, Winberg does not provide any evidence on the phenomenon of depriving 'our' own culture to adapt to that of 'others' in Sweden.

Conclusion

Discourses are mostly used by the elites as a means of controlling public discourse and hence, the public mind. In this way, they try to legitimate their ideology, values and norms in the society, which can sometimes result in social power abuse, dominance and inequality. The role of a critical discourse analyst is to understand and expose such abuses and inequalities. To this end, in this paper, the aim has been to understand and thus, expose the construction of an anti-immigration Europe by Winberg through her discourses in the EP as a representative of her political party, SD, in Sweden and her political group, EFDD, in the EP. The strategies of the socio-cognitive approach of CDA make it possible to achieve this objective. As seen throughout the paper, Winberg tends to glorify the Self, i.e. Sweden and Europe, by conveying various positive attributions upon them, whereas she mostly refers to the Other, i.e. immigrants, asylum seekers or refugees, through negative implications, presuppositions, denomination or predication, which is a common behaviour of anti-immigration politicians and paves the way for an anti-immigration Europe. The research for the paper has also shown that Winberg is not an exception in terms of delivering anti-immigration speeches during the EP debates. In the EP, whilst such anti-immigration tendencies are seen among the left-wing political groups as well, it is more common and overt among the members of the right-wing ones that commonly have anti-immigration political affiliations in their own countries. What makes the anti-immigration discourses of Winberg so critical is that they are delivered by an MEP coming from Sweden, which is widely known for its respect for human rights and inclusiveness towards vulnerable people, such as asylum seekers and refugees. Moreover, it is not a coincidence that her political party in Sweden, SD, tripled its vote in the third election it has participated in, in 2018, when compared to the first, in 2010. Hence, the anti-immigration discourses of other MEPs from different EU Member States should be examined closely through further research on the issue in the context of discursive construction of an anti-immigration Europe.

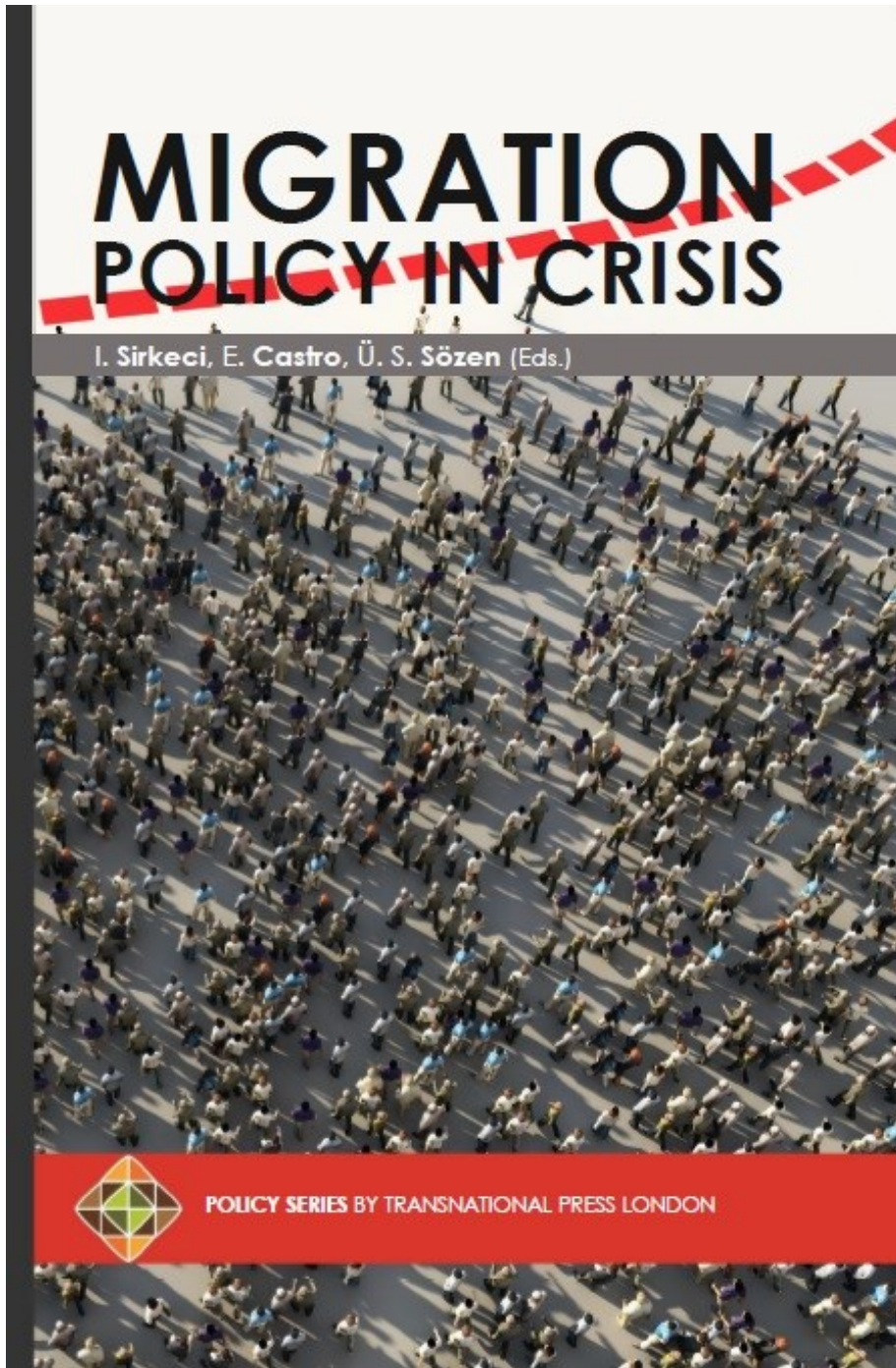
References

- Berggren, E., & Neergaard, A. (2015). 'Populism: Protest, democratic challenge and rightwing extremism'. In: M. Dahlstedt and A. Neergaard (eds.) *International Migration and Ethnic Relations: Critical Perspectives* (pp. 169-199). London: Routledge.
- Cervantes, A. G., Alvord, D., & Menjivar, C. (2018). "'Bad Hombres": The effects of criminalizing Latino immigrants through law and media in the rural Midwest'. *Migration Letters*, 15(2): 182-196. <https://doi.org/10.33182/ml.v15i2.368>
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fairclough, N. (2015). *Language and Power*, 3rd ed. London and New York: Routledge.
- Fairclough, N., & Wodak, R. (1997). 'Critical discourse analysis'. In: T. A. van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse as Social Interaction: Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, 1 (pp. 258-284). London: SAGE.
- Foucault, M. (1981). 'The order of discourse'. In: R. Young (ed.) *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader* (pp. 51-78). London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Fukuyama, F. (1989). 'The end of history'. *The National Interest*, 16: 1-18.
- Huntington, S. P. (1993). 'The clash of civilizations?'. *Foreign Affairs*, 72(3): 22-49. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20045621>



- Jaworsky, B. N. (2011). 'Terrorists at the gates? Unauthorized migrants and discourses of danger'. *Migration Letters*, 8(1): 43-54. <https://doi.org/10.33182/ml.v8i1.153>
- Valmyndigheten. (2018). 'Valresultat'. Valresultat. <https://www.val.se/valresultat/riksdag-landsting-och-kommun/2018/valresultat.html>, October 8.
- van Dijk, T. A. (1993). 'Denying racism: Elite discourse and racism'. In: J. Solomos and J. Wrench (eds.) *Racism and Migration in Western Europe* (pp. 179-193). Oxford: Berg. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781483326184>
- van Dijk, T. A. (1995). 'Elite discourse and the reproduction of racism'. In: R. K. Slayden and D. Slayden (eds.) *Hate Speech* (pp. 1-27). Newbury Park: SAGE.
- van Dijk, T. A. (1997a). 'Discourse as interaction in society'. In: T. A. van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse as Social Interaction: Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, 1 (pp. 1-37). London: SAGE.
- van Dijk, T. A. (1997b). 'Political discourse and racism: Describing others in western parliaments'. In: S. H. Riggins (ed.) *The Language and Politics of Exclusion: Others in Discourse* (pp. 31-64). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- van Dijk, T. A. (1997c). 'The study of discourse'. In: T. A. van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse as Structure and Process: Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, 1 (pp. 1-34). London: SAGE. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446221884.n1>
- van Dijk, T. A. (1997d). 'What is political discourse analysis?'. In: J. Blommaert and C. Bulcaen (eds.) *Political Linguistics* (pp. 11-52). Amsterdam: Benjamins. <https://doi.org/10.1075/bjl.11.03dij>
- van Dijk, T. A. (2001). 'Critical discourse analysis'. In: D. Schiffrin et al. (eds.) *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (pp. 352-371). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- van Dijk, T. A. (2011). 'Discourse and ideology'. In: T. A. van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, 2nd ed. (pp. 379-407). London: SAGE. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446289068.n18>
- Vollmer, B. A. (2012). 'Making light of borders: The case of the external EU border'. *Migration Letters*, 9(2): 131-140. <https://doi.org/10.33182/ml.v9i2.102>
- Winberg, K. (2015). 'Decision adopted on the European border and coast guard package (Debate)'. EP Debates. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20151215+ITEM-008+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=2-902-000>, December 15.
- Winberg, K. (2016a). 'Combatting racism, xenophobia, homophobia and other forms of intolerance (Debate)'. EP Debates. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20161201+ITEM-002+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=2-017-000>, December 1.
- Winberg, K. (2016b). 'Combatting racism, xenophobia, homophobia and other forms of intolerance (Debate) (2)'. EP Debates. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20161201+ITEM-002+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=2-019-000>, December 1.
- Winberg, K. (2017a). 'The fight against illegal immigration and people smuggling in the Mediterranean (Topical debate)'. EP Debates. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20171025+ITEM-012+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=3-345-000>, October 25.
- Winberg, K. (2017b). 'Preparation of the Commission Work Programme for 2018 (Debate)'. EP Debates. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20170704+ITEM-011+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=2-577-000>, July 4.
- Winberg, K. (2017c). 'Winter plan for asylum seekers (Debate)'. EP Debates. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20171115+ITEM-008+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=3-085-000>, November 15.
- Yazgan, P., & Utku, D. E. (2017). 'News discourse and ideology: Critical analysis of Copenhagen gang wars' online news'. *Migration Letters*, 14(1): 145-160. <https://doi.org/10.33182/ml.v14i1.322>





Visit Transnational Press London

www.tplondon.com



www.migrationletters.com