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A Critical Discourse Analysis of Donald Trump's Twitter with regards to Sexism

Master's thesis in Language Studies with Teacher Education
Supervisor: Annjo Klungervik Greenall

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Abstract

In this critical discourse analysis, I have researched Donald Trump's private Twitter account with regards to sexism. This thesis goal was to uncover if Trump uses sexist language in his Twitter account, and if so what type of sexism. In addition I tried to find if there was any difference in the frequency from before and after the election when it came to the number of sexist tweets. With a qualitative approach I have searched Trump's private Twitter account for expressed sexist language. The tweets have been analyzed and categorized according to what sexist ideology they express, and what linguistic and discursive tools are used to express these sexist ideologies. The results will also be analyzed according to four different stages to Critical discourse analysis.

10 different tweets were used in the analysis where four different sexist ideologies were found and several linguistic and discursive tools were used to express these ideologies. Two different types of sexist language were also found. The results showed that Trump, president of the United States, does in fact use sexist language in his Twitter account.

Sammendrag

I denne kritiske diskursanalysen har jeg undersøkt om Twitterkontoen til Donald Trump inneholder sexistisk språk. Denne oppgavens mål var å undersøke om Trump bruker sexistisk språk på sin Twitterkonto , og hvis det er tilfelle hvilken type sexisme er det snakk om. I tillegg har jeg prøv å finne ut om det er noen forskjell i antall tweets med sexistisk språk før og etter presidentvalget. Ved hjelp av kvalitativ metode har jeg undersøkt Trumps privat Twitterkonto for sexistisk språk. Tweetsene har blitt analysert og kategorisert ut i fra hvilken sexistisk ideologi den uttrykker, og hvilke lingvistiske og diskursive verktøy som er brukt for å uttrykke disse sexistiske ideologiene. Resultatet vil også bli analysert i hend hold til den kritiske diskursanalysens fire steg.

10 forskjellige tweets ble brukt i analysen hvor fire forskjellige sexistiske ideologier ble funnet, og flere forskjellige lingvistisk og diskursive verktøy ble brukt til å uttrykke disse sexistiske ideologiene. To forskjellige typer sexisme ble også funnet. Resultatet viser at Donald Trump, USAs president, bruker sexistisk språk på sin Twitterkonto.

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Abbreviations

CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
NTNU	Norwegian University of Science and Technology

1. Introduction

Gender inequality in society tends to be a highly debated topic, and sexism contributes to maintain this gender inequality. When individual behavior and beliefs harm another individual based upon their gender it can be defined as sexism (Becker & Sibley, 2016, p. 315). Furthermore, Becker and Sibley (2016) write that sexism can be directed towards all genders, but because of their less powerful status in society sexism mostly affects women (p. 315). Donald Trump, the current President of the United States of America, has over the years become a well know persona in the public sphere. In addition to getting a lot of attention and media coverage for his business and tv-show *The Apprentice*, he has also become known for his view on and how he talks about women. In the media we have been able to read headlines such as "How Trump talks about women – and does it matter?" (Prasad, 2019), "The remarkably casual sexism of Donald Trump" (Cillizza, 2019) and "Our President Has Always Degraded Women – And We've Always Let Him" (Filipovic, 2017). As a politician and as president of one of the most powerful countries in the world there are certain expectations when it comes to behavior, manner and language. Trump has been elected by the American people to be the leader of the country's government, and the government is seen as a structured organization. Bloor and Bloor (2007) write that "when we look at the highly structured organizations that hold most power and that controls the way we live and influence the way we think, we can see that language is an integral part of that control" (p. 5).

As the leader of a highly structured organization with tremendous power, the US government, Donald Trump holds an extremely influential position where his language is of great significance. Trump is able to reach both the American people and the rest of the world through different channels, and one of these channels is Twitter. Trumps Twitter account, @realDonaldTrump, was created in march 2009 and as of May 2020 he is registered with approximately 52 thousand *tweets*[1] and 80 million followers (Trump's Twitter account, n.d.). Trump's language and how he refers to women on Twitter can be quite damaging due to his influential role, frequent activity on Twitter and amount of followers, especially when it comes to gender equality. Trump himself might also be aware of the influence he has as president, and this might show in his Twitter account with fewer, if any, tweets where sexism is expressed. In this thesis I will therefore research how Donald Trump refers to and describes women on his Twitter account, and the research questions this thesis aims to answer will be: Is Donald Trump sexist on his Twitter account? If so, what type of sexism is present, how is it expressed and are there any differences in frequency of sexist tweets before and after the election? I will attempt to answer these research questions by gathering material from Trumps Twitter account and analyze them based on theory on sexism. My first hypothesis, based on my own observations and the media's coverage of this topic, is that I will in fact find material that reflects sexism in Trump's Twitter account. My second hypothesis is that there will be fewer tweets with expressed sexism after the election, and this is based on the

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[1] The text you post on Twitter is called a tweet (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

assumption that as president he will have advisors for social media and communication who can moderate his tweets.

The method of choice for this thesis is Critical discourse analysis (CDA). Ehrlich and Romaniuk (2013) write that CDA is used to look at how discourse plays a part in social structures and social practices (p. 477). The role of discourse can, according to Bloor and Bloor (2007), be used to gain power or to maintain or create change (p. 2). Trump is an influential man of great power, and by using CDA it will be possible to look at his language in a social context.

In section 2, I will present the theoretical background for this thesis. In this section I will research what a sexist ideology is and what sexist language is, the different types of sexist language and how one can express sexism through language. In section 3, I will present the method, critical discourse analysis in depth. This section will also give an overview of what type of material was used and how the material was selected, and limitations to the study. In section 4 and 5, I will provide the analysis and results with a subsequent discussion of the findings.

2. Theoretical background

In this section I will present theory on sexist ideologies, sexist language and different types of sexism. This will be followed by challenges and limitations of this study.

2.1 Sexist ideology

In almost all cultures we see that the traditional gender distinction between women and men is extremely deep-rooted in perception, interaction and thought. This means that the distinction between men and women continues to influence the context for participants of interactions in nearly all societies and nearly all situations (van Dijk, 2008, p. 157). Context is used when we want to talk about the environment or the surroundings in relation to the event, phenomenon, action or discourse (van Dijk, 2008, p. 4). The traditional gender distinction between men and women can be seen as context when it comes to discourse. "There is no doubt that, despite the many situations or groups where gender is irrelevant or differently construed, in the majority of situations and for the majority language users, traditional gender identities, roles and differences still remain relevant in everyday life […]" (van Dijk, 2008, p. 157). This context, with the traditional gender distinctions, is part of sexist ideology. Bloor and Bloor (2007) describe an ideology as when members of a certain social group share a set of attitudes or beliefs. These attitudes or beliefs can be so deep-seated in our thought patterns and language that individuals can be unaware of them (p. 10). According to van Dijk (2006) these foundational social beliefs or attitudes are of a quite general and abstract nature. He also states that one acquires ideologies gradually and that "One does not become a pacifist, feminist, racist or socialist overnight, nor does one change one's basic ideological outlook in a few days" (van Dijk, 2006, p. 116). One could argue that the same applies for sexist ideologies, because one does not become a sexist overnight. The same goes for those who stop being sexist, because that does not happen overnight either. According to van Dijk (2006) one does not change ideologies without many experiences and discourses (p. 116). Van Dijk (2006) goes on to write that with ideological discourse there are some problems and one of them is intention. It is difficult to state what the intention of the speaker is. If someone is caught saying a sexist word, it is easy just to claim that is was not what they meant (p. 127).

2.2 Language aggression against women

Bou-Franchh(2016) writes that violence in the form of aggression against women will have consequences for both the victims who suffer from it and the society where the violence takes place. The structure and ideology of a society can be reflected by the patterns of aggression aimed towards women (p. 2). For this thesis the structure can be the current conception of the relationship between men and women in today's society and the ideologies of a society is the sexist ideologies. According to Bou-Franch (2016) "[…] violence affects (and permeates) every aspect of women's lives, not only as far as

their bodies and personal safety is concerned, but also as regards their experience of freedom and their sense of identity" (p. 3). Anderson and Cermele (2016) note that research on "verbal aggression in the context of intimate partner relationship" shows that language is a central element in gaining status and power over women (p. 110). The current conception of the relationship between men and women and the previously mentioned sexist ideologies can with the help of language give men a certain power and control over women.

According to Mills (2008), there has been a debate whether or not sexist language could be seen as a case of hate speech on the same level as racism and homophobia (p. 39). The term hate speech " […] refers to speech which is considered in itself as an incitement to violence and which is offensive enough to constitute violence in its own right" (Mills, 2008, p. 38). Even though language aggression against women can initiate violence against women in general, Mills (2008) suggests that it is fundamentally different from racism and homophobia. When it comes to homophobes and racists, these are people who want to avoid contact with the groups they hate trying to segregate them from the rest of society. This is not the case with sexism and women (p. 39). Sexism is not used to segregate women from society, but can be used to give men power over women.

2.3 Sexist language use

In the introduction to Mills' book *Language and Sexism* (2008) she writes that, within the feminist circles, the topic of sexist language has been a frequently debated topic since the 1960s (p. 1). This is also Weatherall's (2015) perception: "feminists have long recognised important relationships between language and gendered social order that disadvantages women" (p. 410). In the beginning it was a question of changing the way women were named in texts and communication, and how women were represented in magazines, newspapers and advertisements (Mills, 2008, p. 1). One example of naming that needed change would be calling a woman *whore* and one example of how women could have been represented was as sexual objects. Furthermore, Mills (2008) writes that statements based on stereotypical and outdated beliefs about women, statements where men's experiences are taken to equal to human experience or statements where activities done by men are seen to be superior to the same activity done by women, are considered to be sexist (p. 2). Examples of this can be statements such as: *Female soccer players should earn less money than male soccer players, because they are not as good as men* or *You throw like a girl.*

In addition to what Mills considers to be sexist language, there are many and different definitions of what sexist language is. Research within the field suggest that there could be two intertwined strands of research, where one focuses on the lexical and grammatical aspect of language, while the other focuses on language that is not inherently sexist. Sexism can be intrinsic to the language system or it can be extrinsic to the language system. Vetterling-Braggin (1998) is quoted in Mills (2008) and her definition of sexist language could apply for both strands of research: "Sexism was defined as language which discriminated against women by representing them negatively […]" (p. 38). As mentioned above the word *whore* is seen as a sexist word and falls under the definition mentioned by Vetterling-Braggin regarding how women can be represented negatively. The word *whore* is in itself sexist and using it to describe

someone will be seen as sexist, no matter what context it is used in. This example can be included into the strand of research which focuses on the lexical and grammatical aspects of language. Male generics and sematic derogation are also concepts that fit the box of lexical and grammatical aspects of language. Weatherall (2015) writes that male generics is the use of male terms to describe "[…] people in general (e.g., mankind) or the use of masculine pronouns when the gender of the referent is unknown" (p. 411). Kleinman (2002) writes that male generics reinforces the system where men are more privileged than women (p. 300). *Congressman, chairman* and *freshman* are words that are examples of male generics.

Schulz (1975) describes semantic derogation in the context of sexist language as a process where words related to girls or women start out with neutral or positive connotations and over time acquires negative connotations (p. 65). The male words *sir* and *master* have kept their meaning without any taint, but female words like *mistress* and *madam* have both been semantically derogated. *Mistress* is now associated with the woman someone cheats on their spouse with (Schulz, 1975, p. 66) and *madam* can, according to Manser (2007), mean a woman who runs a brothel (p. 190). Another example of words that were originally neutral male/female pairs is *spinster/bachelor* where the male term has kept its neutral meaning while the female term has been derogated (Cameron, 1992, p. 108). Mills (2008) points to the fact that semantic derogation is not the work of individual hostile men alone, but that:

> […] language change is a complex process whereby a wide range of variants is available within the language at any time; only some of these elements are adopted by large sections of population, and this adoption occurs when there is a pattern of usage already in the force, and that pattern is associated with institutional usage (p. 60-61).

Mills (2008) also states that semantic derogation is not a case of individual hostility, but when institutionalized it can be used by individual writers and speakers (p.60). McConnel-Ginet (1984) uses the word *sissy* as an example of semantic derogation. The word *sissy* was originally the diminutive of the word sister, but has been derogated, and is now associated with being "supra-feminine" or a "coward" (p. 125). Furthermore, McConnel-Ginet (1984) writes that the word *sissy* has now got negative connotations, and for this change to happen there needs to be some kind of agreement in the community that the word *sissy* is now associated with being for example a coward. Because of this it is easy to draw the conclusion that the whole community is misogynistic, but that does not necessarily need to be true. There only needs to be someone who thinks the community is misogynistic, and draws on the assumption that *sissy* is associated with being a coward or very feminine (p. 131). According to the Merriam-Webster (n.d.) dictionary misogynistic is an adjective defined as "feeling, showing, or characterized by hatred of women: of relating to, or being a misogynist". Based on McConnel-Ginet's statement and the definition of misogynistic one could see a connection between sexist language and hate speech.

The examples mentioned above are all examples of sexist language already embedded in the language itself and in words. On the other hand, Lei (2006) defines sexist language as "[…] language that expresses bias in favor of one sex and thus treats the other sex in a discriminatory manner. In most cases, the bias is in favor of men and against women" (p. 87). Bias can take place without using words that on their own are sexist or biased. One example of this can be *girls are not as good as boys at sports.* None of the words in

that sentence are sexist or bias but when put together and when creating that particular sentence it will come off as sexist. In their definition of sexist language Swim, Mallet and Stangor (2004) write that "Sexist language is an example of subtle sexism in that it consists of speech that reinforces and perpetuates gender stereotypes and status differences between men and women" (p. 117). *Men are better drivers than women* is an example of a stereotype that is not in favor of women. This is also an example where none of the words are sexist on their own, but when used in that particular sentence it is a sexist statement.

So far we have seen that on one hand we have sexism found in the language system, where words and language in itself is sexist, and on the other hand sexist language use, where the words in themselves are not intrinsically sexist. In addition to the mentioned strands of research, it is suggested that there are different types of sexism, where some are easier to recognize than others, and these types will be presented below.

2.4 Types of sexism

In this section types sexism will be introduced in a general matter, before the different types are presented more specifically. In her book Mills (2008) introduces two types of sexism, overt sexism and indirect sexism. Overt sexism is described as a very straightforward type of sexism "[…] which signals to hearers that women are seen as an inferior group in relation to men" (Mills, 2008, p. 11). On the other hand, indirect sexism is when sexism is expressed indirectly and makes it possible to deny using sexist language (Mills, 2008, p.12). Swim, Mallett and Stangor (2004) distinguish between three types of sexism, covert, blatant and subtle. Swim et. al. (2004) state that: "Blatant sexism is defined as obviously unequal and unfair treatment of women relative to men, whereas covert sexism is defined as unequal and unfair treatment of women that is recognized but purposefully hidden from view" (p. 117). Blatant sexism is equal to overt sexism, and subtle sexism is equal to indirect sexism. Mills (2008) does not write about covert sexism. Covert sexism will not be part of this study because it is very difficult to detect.

Calling a women a *whore* or uttering that *men should get payed more than women* are both examples of overt sexism. Swim et al. (2004) write that subtle sexism might not be easy to recognize, and that this is because it is perceived to be normative (p. 1117). Furthermore, Swim et al. (2004) suggest that one might not recognize subtle sexism if the behavior is not defined as sexist and it might not be seen as problematic if it is not noticed. They also suggest that people who use subtle sexism, because they do not see it as sexist or do not recognize it, are those who are most likely to use it. (p. 118). They do not see their language as sexist and therefore do not see the problem with it.

2.4.1 Overt/blatant sexism

Benokraitisk & Feagin (1986, p. 30) is referred to in Swim and Cohen (1997) and they define overt sexism as "unequal and harmful treatment of women that is readily apparent, visible and observable, and can easily be documented" (p. 104). According to Mills (2008) overt sexism puts women in an inferior position in relation to men. Overt

sexism is the easiest type of sexism to identify and is also the type of sexism that has become the most stigmatized by language users (p. 11). As mentioned in 2.3, there are two different strands of research when it comes to sexist language, and both of the strands can be related to overt sexism. Overt sexism can be expressed with language that is inherently sexist, where the words themselves are sexist, and as previously mentioned *whore* can be an example of this. In addition overt sexism can be produce with non-sexist language that become sexist when used in a sentence or is used in a specific context.

There are different types of overt sexism such as *male generic*, *insult, semantic derogation and stereotypes*. As mentioned earlier, masculine or male generic is when male terms are used to describe "[…] people in general (e.g., mankind) or the use of masculine pronouns when the gender of the referent is unknown" (Weatherall, 2015, p. 411). Kleinman (2002) mentions words such as *freshman, chairman* or *congressman* as examples of male generic (p. 299). Male terms are used to describe both men and women, in general and can therefore be characterized as sexist. A female starting college or university will be called a *freshman*, just like the boys. Another type of overt sexism is, according to Mills (2008), insults, and she suggests that insults directed towards women often are sexualized (p. 52). Examples of this can be *ho* or *bitch,* and these words are easy to categorize as sexist.

As previously mentioned, Semantic derogation is when terms associated with women have taken on negative connotations. Because of these negative connotations it is easy to recognize derogated words as sexist, and they are often seen as overt sexism. In Mills' book (2008) semantic derogation is categorized as overt sexism.

Stereotypes considering men and women's behavior have for a long time been challenged by feminists, "[…] so that the notion that women are weaker than men or that they should not compete with men in the workplace are notions which cannot be drawn on without also drawing upon discourse of feminism (Mills, 2008, p. 128). If someone says *you throw like a girl* it is not difficult to understand that the underlying meaning here is that you do not throw very well, and it is therefore easy to recognize as sexist. Therefore some types of stereotypical utterances can be seen as overt sexism.
As mentioned above overt sexism is the easiest type of sexism to recognize. This because of its direct nature. The words and statements mentioned as examples in this section are easy to recognize as sexist language, and have therefore become a stigmatized way of speaking.

2.4.2 Indirect/subtle sexism

According to Mills (2008) indirect sexism is a response to the feminist reforms regarding sexist language. Today overt sexism is not easy to articulate due to its perceived inappropriateness and because of this a more indirect and subtle forms of sexism has erupted. Because of this indirect and subtle form of sexism it is possible to express sexism without having to take responsibility for it (p. 12). Swim and Choen (1997) describe indirect sexism as "openly unequal and harmful treatment of women that goes unnoticed because it is perceived to be customary or normal behavior" (p. 104). One example of this could be stereotyping, which Swim et al. (2004) mentions explicitly in their definition of sexist language: "Sexist language is an example of subtle sexism in

that it consists of speech that reinforces and perpetuates gender stereotypes and status differences between men and women" (p. 117). One example of this can be if a man says that they are late because his wife took so long in the bathroom. This can be an implied stereotype that looks are important to women. Stereotypical utterances and implied stereotypes can therefore be both overt and indirect sexism. This means that there can be a fine line between if sexist language is seen as overt sexism or indirect sexism.

Humor can be used as a form of indirect sexism and Mills (2008) writes: "humour often exaggerates certain features associated with a group or draws on and plays with stereotypical knowledge for comic effect" (p. 140). Furthermore, Mills (2008) writes that some sort of solidarity can be formed amongst men by using this type of jokes (p. 140), and research on humor "has shown that women often are the butt of jokes by males" (p. 141). Crawford (1995) writes that humor is often used to reinforce unequal power relations, by silencing women and controlling the conversation (p. 145). She states that street remarks made from construction site workers to women have the effect of reminding "their targets that men control public spaces and that women's bodies are acceptable objects for public denigration" (Crawford, 1995, p. 146). Mills (2008) categorize street remarks as subtle sexism, and these street remarks are a perfect example of how difficult subtle sexism can be to recognize. These remarks are often 'positive' remarks on a woman's appearance, but they are also remarks that indicate that women can be commented on, in a sexual way, by strangers. Street remarks are remarks directed towards women in a way that does not apply to men (p. 141).

Mills (2008) often receives emails with humorous content about men and women. One of these examples is presented below:

Women's language translated

Yes = No
No = Yes
Maybe = No
I'm sorry = You'll be sorry
We need = I want
It's your decision = The correct decision should be obvious by now
Do what you want = You'll pay for this later
We need to talk = I need to complain
I'm not upset = Of course I'm upset you moron
You're so manly = You need to shave and you sweat a lot
You're certainly attentive tonight = Is sex all you ever think about
Be romantic, turn out the lights = I have flabby thighs
This kitchen is so inconvenient = I want a new house
I heard a noise = I noticed you were almost asleep
Do you love me? = I'm going to ask for something expensive
How much do you love me? = I've done something today you're not going to like
I'll be ready in a minute = Kick off your shoes and find a good game on TV
Is my butt fat? = Tell me I'm beautiful
Are you listening to me? = Too late, you're dead
You have to learn to communicate = Just agree with me

(Mills, 2008, p. 142)

Men's language translated

I'm hungry = I'm hungry
I'm sleepy = I'm sleepy
I'm tired = I'm tired
Do you want to go to a movie = I'd eventually like to have sex with you
Can I call you sometime = I'd eventually like to have sex with you
Nice dress = Nice cleavage
What's wrong ?= I don't see why you're making such a big deal out of this
What's wrong? = What meaningless self-inflicted psychological trauma are you going through now?
I'm bored = Do you want to have sex?
I love you = Let's have sex now
Yes, I like the way you cut your hair = I liked it better before
Let's talk = I'm dying to impress you by showing you that I am a deep person and maybe you'll have sex with me

(Mills, 2008, p. 142-143)

Mills (2008) writes that this kind of message is not usually seen as sexist because its humor is directed towards both men and women. She argues that this is a form for indirect sexism because women are portrayed as self-centered, manipulative, resistant to sex, and when women say something the usually mean the opposite (p. 143). Furthermore, Mills (2008) writes that men are portrayed as obsessed with sex, direct and plain-speaking. Despite being portrayed as obsessed with sex she say that men come out of this looking better than women, because they draw on "[…] unchallenged and largely negative stereotypes about women" (p. 143).

Another form of subtle sexism is *male firstness* which is "[…] the persistent placing of masculine terms before feminine terms" (Willis & Jozkowski, 2018, p. 138). In cases where men and women appear next to each other in sentences or with the conjunction *and* between them, men comes before women in almost all cases (Willis & Jozkowski, 2018, p. 138). Furthermore, Willis and Jozkowski (2018) write that the fact that *m* comes before *w* does not seem to be the reason for the placement. It is rather the inherent structures and the hierarchy of values in our society that is the reason for the placement of men and women in phrases (p. 139). Just like any other form of subtle sexism male firstness can also be difficult to detect. *Presupposition* is a form of subtle sexism that is used to give the speaker an opportunity to deny any form for sexism that was intended (Mills, 2008, p. 145). Mills (2008) uses the phrase 'So, have you women finished gossiping?' as an example of a presupposition, and states that this type of statement suggests that women gossip more than men or that female talk is trivial (p. 146).

The types of sexism mentioned above are all difficult to detect, which makes it difficult to challenge those who use this indirect type of sexism. Indirect sexism makes it possible for the speaker to avoid taking responsibility for their sexist utterances. Therefore, indirect sexism is a much more challenging type of sexism to deal with than overt sexism is.

2.5 Twitter and sexism

Twitter is one of the most popular microblogging platforms with millions of users worldwide (Castillo, Mendoza & Poblete, 2011, p. 675). The users come from a wide range of communities, and is used by various experts and amateurs, media and

politicians (Letierce, Passant, Decker & Breslin, 2010, p. 1). Over the years Twitter, like other social media, have had a growth and this has made it a perfect forum for hate speech. Zhang, Robinson and Tepper (2018) writes that the easy access and " […] mobility afforded of such a media has made the breeding and spread of hate speech – eventually leading to hate crime – effortless in a virtual landscape beyond the realms of traditional law enforcement." (p. 745). In countries such as Germany and Canada there are laws against hate speech, but in the United States hate speech is protected under the free speech provisions (Pitsilis, Ramampiaro & Langseth, 2018, p. 2). This means that there is no law, in the United States, against posting hateful utterances on a social media such as Twitter. This, together with easy access and mobility, makes Twitter the perfect forum for hate speech and sexism.

Tweets belong to a world of social media that belongs both in the public world and in the private world. You are a private person who is writing something that is expressed to the public. In her paper Hill (1995) writes about "Junk Spanish" and how language can balance on the line between public and private. Hill is not talking about tweets, but since tweets, as mentioned, has a foot in both the private and public sphere her paper has relevance for this thesis. When balancing between public and private, tweets can gain access to two dimensions of language that can help facilitate sexism. It will access what Hill (1995) calls "presumption of innocence" where "[…] the talk offered up as serious public discussion will be presumed to be addressed to the general good in an unbiased way […]" (p. 198). The second dimension has to do with style and the fact that we now speak more plainly including slang and colloquialism, and this dimension blurs the line between light private talk and serious public discussion. The "light talk" is protected by the conventions of privacy and should therefore not be taken too seriously (Hill, 1995, p. 198). Hill (1995) goes on to write: "These two ideological complexes protect racist (and sexist) discourse, and make possible its continued reproduction, even where convention proscribes it" (p. 198). Anderson and Cermele (2016) states that tweets are created by individuals, sometimes anonymously, and they can therefore be said to be a private form of discourse. At the same time tweets will be public in the form that they are posted on-line and the speaker is aware that they might contribute to a discussion (p. 109). "Tweets are publicly disseminated to all of the followers of a Twitter-user and available on-line to the general public" (Anderson & Cermele, 2016, p. 109). Tweets, which are public statements where the speaker could be held accountable for their uttering, are according to Anderson and Cermele (2016), "protected by norms against censoring private backstage talk that includes slang, sarcasm, and joking" (p. 110). The points made here about Twitter being both a private and a public scene is relevant because of the position Donald Trump holds. He is the president of one of the most powerful countries in the world, but at the same time he is a private person. On the one hand he is a public person who should be held accountable for his utterings, but at the same time he is a private person protected by the norms of privacy. Twitter gives you the opportunity to be private and public at the same time. With the help of 280 characters you are able to sit in your own house and post something to your personal profile, while at the same time have the opportunity to reach millions. As Hill (1995) stated, this balance between private and public can help facilitate sexism (p. 198). This balance between private and public, and that there are no laws against posting hateful utterances, such as sexism, on social media make Twitter a good platform for sexism.

2.6 Previous studies

Donald Trump and his language have also previously been subjects of research. Darweesh and Abdullah (2016) did a critical discourse analysis on Donald Trump and sexist ideologies. They used critical discourse analysis to look at how language could be used as a tool to express sexism, and how some of Trumps utterances could express sexist ideologies. They analyzed Trump's utterances according to different categories and what strategies were used to express them. Darweesh and Abdullah (2016) concluded that Trump's language reflects his ideology that men are superior to females, and that these beliefs can be difficult to change (p. 94-95). Ott (2016) wrote an article about Trump and Twitter, and how language and discourse works in the era of Twitter. He writes that Twitter is informal and a place where one does not need to account for the effect interactions might have on others (p. 62). An analysis of Trump's Twitter account shows that his lexicon is repetitious and simple, that his tweets are filled with negative connotations and that Trump frequently uses all caps and exclamation points (Ott, 2016, p. 64). Furthermore, Ott (2016) states that Trump uses Twitter to spread ideologies that base themselves on for example racism and sexism (p. 64). Winberg (2017) wrote an article after the 2016 presidential election on how Trump uses insult politics. He writes that within the right-wing politics tradition the political rhetoric has been filled with insult politics and that they use "[…] norm-braking language became a political strategy […]" (p. 3). In his conclusion Winberg (2017) writes that Trump most likely won the election despite of, and not because of, his mocking and insulting rhetoric, and that his derogatory rhetoric on women cost him voters (p. 10). There seem to be a research-gap to how Trump expresses sexist language, and this research-gap is something this thesis aims to fill.

3. Method

This thesis is a critical discourse analysis of Donald Trump's tweets with regards to sexism, which means Trump's Twitter account is the main source for gathering material. In this chapter the material used in the analysis and the research method will be presented. First, the material will be presented, in addition to how it was chosen and why it was chosen. Then, the research method and how the analysis is laid out will be presented, and finally, the limitations of the study.

3.1 Material

Twitter is used on a daily basis by millions of people. According to Statista (2020) Twitter has 330 million monthly users worldwide (numbers form first quarter in 2019). Twitter's popularity and global reach is one of the reasons for choosing this platform as a data source. If someone is willing to express sexism to millions of people worldwide it might suggest that they might not consider what they are writing to be sexist, and by not seeing and acknowledging sexism one will contribute to gender inequality. Donald Trump uses Twitter frequently and has a big number of followers. Trump controls two accounts, his private account (@realdonaldtrump) and the official account for the president of the United States of America (@POTUS). With 80 million followers on his private account, Trump is, according to Wikipedia, number 9 on the list of most followers on Twitter (Wikipedia, 2020). As mentioned before, as of May 2020 Trump's private account has about 52 thousand tweets and the presidential account has about 9 500 tweets (The US presidents official Twitter account, n.d.). The number of followers and tweets is therefore a reason for choosing Twitter as a source for data.

For this thesis, I have collected material from one of Donald Trump's Twitter accounts, and the collected tweets are from both before and after the presidential election. Due to limitations when it comes to time, I have chosen to focus only on his private account. The number of tweets might indicate that it would be wise to focus on the account with fewer tweets, but I have chosen to collect data from his private account. This is because I assume that the official account for the president of the United States of America might be moderated by his advisors, which most likely does not apply to his private account. As mentioned, Trump's Twitter account has been used for several years and consist of about 52 thousand tweets, which will make the search for tweets of sexist nature more challenging, but at the same time it might provide more data to choose from. I searched for tweets with different word combinations on Google as shown:

1. Trump Twitter Women
2. Trump Twitter Feud
3. Trump Twitter Feud Women
4. Trump Twitter sexist
5. Trump Twitter sexism
6. Donald Trump Twitter Women
7. Donald Trump Twitter Feud
8. Donald Trump Twitter Feud Women
9. Donald Trump Twitter sexist
10. Donald Trump Twitter sexism

By using Google I found 5 tweets from the period before and after the election held November 8th, 2016. In addition to the google searches I used a web resource called *Trump Twitter Archive*. This website has categorized some of Trump's tweets and one of the categories was women. On this website I found 5 tweets from the period before the election. The tweets were included in this study if they showed signs of sexism based on the theory presented previously. In addition, it was possible to search for specific words, and all the tweets containing that word or words would show. I searched for *men and women* and found 80 tweets (as of March 2020), and *women and men* and found zero tweets (as of March 2020). One of the tweets discussed in the analysis is not written by Trump but he has retweeted[2] it. In total 10 tweets will be discussed in the analysis and they are from the period between 2012 and 2018. One might assume that I would find more tweets by Trump that express sexism. This search method yielded this number of tweets, and for my qualitative study the number of tweets is sufficient.

3.2 Analytical approach

When analyzing Trump's Twitter statements I will use critical discourse analysis (CDA). I have chosen this research method because it makes it possible to look at language in a social context, which is a key factor to this thesis. Ehrlich and Romaniuk (2013) describes three approaches to discourse analysis and one of them is precisely CDA. Critical discourse analysis consider that social practices and social structures have a discursive dimension and that "[…] discourse is implicated in social and political inequalities" (Ehrlich & Romaniuk, 2013, p. 477). Critical discourse analysts are concerned with the way discourse and language "are used to achieve social goals and in the part this plays in social maintenance and change" (Bloor & Bloor, 2007, p. 2). According to Bloor and Bloor (2007) discourse is an integral aspect of control and power and this is at the center of CDA. They also write that: "Power is held by both institutions and individuals in contemporary society and any challenge to status quo challenges those who hold the power" (p. 4). Discourse and language can be used to maintain and obtain power or control. Therefore, if Donald Trump, as the president of the United States, is using sexist language, does this mean that he is gaining some sort of power or control over the group that is the victim of this injustice, in this case women?

Critical discourse analysis starts with a social problem, and Fairclough (2001, p. 13) states that there are 4 stages to CDA:

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[2] A retweet is when someone re-posts a tweet (Twitter, n.d.)

Stage 1: Focus upon a social wrong, in its semiotic aspect.
According to Fairclough (2001) "'social wrongs' can be understood in broad terms as aspects of social systems, forms or orders that are detrimental to human well-being […]" (p. 13). Through extensive changes in the forms, orders or systems these 'social wrongs' could be ameliorated or perhaps even eliminated (Fairclough, 2001, p. 13). As examples of this Fairclough (2001) mentions racism, poverty, forms of inequality or lack of freedom (p. 13). In this thesis the social wrong is sexism. Stage 1 can be divided into two steps:

> Step 1: Select a research topic that relates to, or points up, a social wrong and that can productively be approached in trans-disciplinary way, with a particular focus on dialectical relations between semiotic and other 'moments'.
> Step 2: Construct objects of research for initially identified research topics theorizing them in a trans-disciplinary way.
> <div align="right">(Fairclough, 2001, p. 13-14)</div>

Stage 1 is divided into 2 steps and in step 1 Fairclough talks about selecting a research topic that is a social wrong, which in this thesis is represented by sexist language and discourse. Research on sexist language is research on both the discipline of sociology and the discipline of linguistics, hence it is a transdisciplinary research area. This is also reflected in the stages of analysis in this thesis. Sociology is represented by the sexist ideologies, which look at some of the shared attitudes in society. Linguistics is represented by the tools expressing sexism. The sexist ideologies represent the social context and the tools for expressing sexism represent the semantic aspect of the language. The object of research, which Fairclough mentions in step 2, is Donald Trump's Twitter account, and more precisely if there are any tweets expressing a sexist ideology. This research object belongs to the research topic sexist language, which is, according to Mills (2008), a topic frequently debated over the years. This thesis and its analysis bases itself on the ability to recognize sexist language, and recognition is a defining factor when it comes to sexist language. In this thesis two types of sexism are used to categorize the material, overt sexism and indirect sexism. As previously mentioned by Swim et. al (2004): overt sexism is easy to recognize, while indirect sexism can be difficult to recognize. This can be an obstacle when it comes to addressing sexism and sexist language, which leads to stage 2.

Stage 2: Identify obstacle to addressing the social wrong.
Stage 2 is about why the social wrong is difficult to address. What aspects of social life and its organization and structure makes it difficult to address a social wrong such as for example sexist language (Fairclough, 2001, p. 14). One way of doing this is textual analysis which can be summed up in 3 steps:

> 1. Analyse dialectical relations between semiosis and social elements: between orders of discourse and other elements of social practices, between texts and other elements of events.
> 2. Select texts, and point of focus and categories for their analysis, in the light of, and appropriately to, the constitution of the object of research.
> 3. Carry out the analysis of texts – both interdiscursive analysis and linguistic/semiotic analysis.
> <div align="right">(Fairclough, 2001, p. 14)</div>

Stage 3: Consider whether the social order 'needs' the social wrong.
In stage 3 Fairclough (2001) raises the question if the social order is in need of the social wrong (p. 15). If we take sexism as an example of a social wrong, the social order can be the current conception of the relationship between men and women. Fairclough (2001) continues by writing that the social order contributes to the social wrong, we need to start thinking that the social order needs to be changed (p. 15). If inequality between men and women in the world today contributes to sexism, we need to look at possibilities to change this.

Stage 4: Identify possible ways past the obstacles.
This stage is about how one can overcome the obstacle of addressing social wrongs such as sexist language. This is, according to Fairclough (2001), done by challenging, testing and resisting the social wrong, and it needs to be done in movements, political groups, in both social and domestic life (p. 15).

Due to the scope of my thesis, I will not include everything from all the 4 stages in my analysis. The stages that will be most relevant for my thesis and analysis are 1 and 2. In addition, the point about if the social order needs the social wrong in stage 3 will be addressed. Stage 4 will be briefly addressed in the conclusion.

In the analysis, I will try to isolate sexist remarks and linguistic units of a sexist nature, and analyze them qualitatively something that will require categorizing the findings. Tjora (2011) writes that the categorization will generate the starting point and base of the main themes in the analysis (p. 160). The categorization of the sexist units is a way of uncovering how Trump's sexism is uttered, and can be used to say something about Trump's view of women.

The analysis will consist of three steps, (1) sexist ideology, (2) overt sexism vs. indirect sexism and (3) linguistic and discursive tools used to express sexism. First the material will be categorized based on different sexist ideologies that may be present in discourse. The sexist ideologies in discourse are based on categories found in an article by Darweesh and Abdullah (2016):

1. Negative evaluation of women
2. Males as the norm, that is, females appear as dependent beings and as followers
3. Women are weak, lacking in strength and ability
4. Comparing women to inanimate objects
5. Semantic derogation/disparagement of women
6. Women are no more than possessions
7. Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality
8. Glorifying the maltreatment/mistreatment of women
9. Vulgarity when speaking about women
10. Negative presentation of women
                        (2016, p. 90)

I have chosen to make some changes in the list above because of some weaknesses in their framework. Some categories are very similar and some of the categories do not pertain as much a sexist ideology, as it does a linguistic or discursive tool. The fact that some of the categories are quite similar can make it difficult to analyze the material. I have therefor chosen to merge, remove and add some categories. Firstly, *Negative evaluation of women* and *Negative presentation of women* are both very vague

categories. The other categories have in some way to do with women being presented or evaluated negatively. Based on this vagueness and generality I have chosen to remove both *Negative evaluation of women* and *Negative presentation of women* from the list of sexist ideologies. Secondly, the analysis in this thesis bases itself on the categorizing of sexist ideologies and which linguistic and discursive tools are used to express these ideologies. The sexist ideologies say something about how the traditional gender distinction that Van Dijk (2008) writes about is expressed, while the linguistic and discursive tools are how the sexist ideologies are expressed. The linguistic and discursive tools are used to express sexist ideologies and sexist ideologies are used to express the traditional gender distinction. *Semantic derogation/disparagement of women* is a tool for expressing sexism rather than a sexist ideology. This category will therefore be removed from this thesis list of sexist ideologies. The same goes for the category *Vulgarity when speaking about women* which will also be seen as a tool for expressing sexism. Thirdly, I will remove the category *Comparing women to inanimate objects,* and replace it with *Women are objects.* This because objectifying is about more than comparing a woman to an inanimate object. It can also be sexual objectification. Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) refers to Bartky (1990) when stating that "sexual objectification occurs whenever a woman's body, body parts, or sexual function are separated out from her person, reduced to the status of mere instruments, or regarded as if they were capable of representing her" (p. 175). Some would argue that the body itself is inanimate, while others would define the body as something alive. Inanimate will therefore be omitted to avoid any confusion regarding objectification. Finally, the category *Women are no more than possession* will be merged with the category *Women are objects.* If someone possesses something, that something would be seen as an object. If a man possesses a woman, that woman can be seen as nothing but an object, and therefore the two categories will be merged. In this thesis the list of sexist ideologies in discourse will thus consist of 5 categories:

1. Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality
2. Women are weak, lacking in strength and ability
3. Males as the norm, that is, females appear as dependent beings and as followers
4. Women are objects
5. Glorifying the maltreatment/mistreatment of women

After categorizing the findings in terms of different sexist ideologies I will discuss if they belong in the category of overt or indirect sexism. In the theory chapter a number of different types of sexism were presented, such as overt, covert, blatant, subtle and indirect, where some of them were overlapping each other (Mills 2008; Swim, Mallet & Stangor, 2004; Swim & Cohen, 1997). For the sake of simplicity, I have chosen to use the terms overt sexism and indirect sexism in my thesis. Covert sexism will not be used in the analysis of this thesis. Covert sexism is, as mentioned in section 2.4, intentionally hidden sexism which makes it difficult to detect. It will not be possible to determine if sexism that is indirect could be covert, because I cannot determine if Trump tried to hide the sexism with intention. Therefore, I will only use overt sexism and indirect sexism in the analysis. The final step in the analysis will be categorizing the findings based on which linguistic or discursive tool or tools are used for expressing the particular sexist ideology. The list of such tools is gathered form different researchers presented in the theory chapter (Cameron, 1992; Crawford, 1995; Kleinman, 2002; McConnel-Ginet,

1984; Mills, 2008; Schulz, 2015; Weatherall, 2015; Willis & Jozkowski, 2018). The linguistic and discursive tools for expressing sexism will consist of 7 categories:

- Stereotypical utterance/implied stereotype
- Humor
- Male firstness
- Male generic
- Presupposition
- Semantic derogation
- Insult

These tools can, as previously noted, belong to two different strains of research and the tools can either be intrinsic to the language system or extrinsic to the language system , or both:

Intrinsic to the language system (linguistic tool):

- Stereotypical utterance/implied stereotype
- Male generic
- Semantic derogation
- Insult

Extrinsic to the language system (discursive tool):

- Stereotypical utterance/implied stereotype
- Humor
- Male firstness
- Presupposition
- Insult

The structure of the analysis will be based on the sexist ideologies. The material will be sorted according to which category of the sexist ideologies in discourse they belong to. Each of the tweets will also be categorized according to if it is overt sexism or indirect sexism, and what linguistic or discursive tool or tools are used for expressing sexism. The analysis will be divided into tweets from before and after the presidential election, because I am comparing the number of sexist tweets from before and after the election.

3.3 Challenges

When analyzing the material some difficulties arose. It is difficult to categorize the tweet according to the correct sexist ideology and to recognize the different linguistic and discursive tools used to express those ideologies. Even more difficult is it to categorize the tweet as overt or indirect. This challenge of categorization arises due to two different types of challenges, the challenge of subjectivity and the general challenge of placing things in the "right" place. The challenge of subjectivity has to do with my position as a researcher. As a researcher I have a responsibility to be neutral and objective, but due to the interpretive and qualitative approach of the research this can be challenging. In this study the goal is to find out if Donald Trump has produced tweets of sexist nature on his account, which means that I have been looking for sexism. I have been reading about

sexism, and therefore will have an understanding of how sexism can be expressed. Things I find to be sexist, might to others not come off as sexist. Therefore, the question of how would others analyze this tweet always be present. The more general challenge has to do with the difficulty of placing things in the "right" place. Some tweets might for example "fit" several ideologies and it can be both overt and indirect. Therefore, the question is what categorization is the more correct one.

3.4 Position of researcher

When using an approach as critical discourse analysis one need to be aware of the fact that discourse is observed from our own ideological position, and this is something Bloor and Bloor (2007) agree on when writing that we as researchers of discourse need to be aware of our beliefs and attitudes which most likely will color our interpretation of the material we deal with (p. 33). They also write that critical discourse analysts are open and critical of their own position instead of attempting to claim the type of objectivity that other scientists of linguistics sometimes claim (2007, p. 4). For my thesis this means that my beliefs and attitudes might color the categorization of Trump's tweets, even when attempting to stay objective. According to Tjora (2011) will all researchers conducting a social research have some engagement or opinion connected to the topic. This can make it difficult for the researcher to be fully objective (p. 175-176). It is therefore important to be open about this limitation and be critical of my own objectivity throughout the thesis. To be able to obtain the reliability it will also be important to explain the study extensively and be open about how the study is conducted.

3.5 Ethics

Research ethics and privacy policies have been a debated topic in recent years. With social media there are no norms which have been agreed upon when it comes to research ethics (Fiesler & Proferes, 2018, p. 1). Fiesler and Proferes (2018) write that: "Traditional interventional human subject research involves informed consent direct interaction with participants who are aware they are being studied" (p. 1). In my study I use Twitter and more specifically Donald Trump's Twitter account as research material, which means that my study belongs to the branch of research where there are no agreed upon norms for research ethics. According to, Fiesler and Proferes (2018), during the fall of 2014 Twitter updated their Privacy Policy, and states that researchers may use tweets as part of their study material (p. 1-2). This means that for my study I can use Trump's Twitter material without making him aware of the research and without collecting his consent.

3.6 Scope and Generalizability

The limitations of this study have to do with the scope and generalizability. Due to the scope of the thesis and the limited amount of time to conduct the study it will be difficult to say something definite about the frequency of sexist tweets. Generalizability is by Tjora (2011) defined as if the results are valid for other cases than the ones who have been researched in the specific study (p. 194). The number of examples in this thesis

limits the generalizability. With the number of tweets used in the analysis of this study it is not possible to use this study to say something about the generalizability.

4. Analysis

The analysis will be divided into tweets from before and after the presidential election. The tweets from before the election will be presented first, followed by tweets from after the election. The structure of the analysis will be based on the sexist ideologies in discourse that were presented in section 3.2. The material will be sorted according to which of the sexist ideologies in discourse categories they belong to. Each of the tweets will also be categorized according to whether it is overt or indirect, and what linguistic and/or discursive tool or tools are used to express the sexist ideology. The tweets will be presented chronologically under the sexist ideology subsection they belong to.

4.1 Tweets posted before the election

Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality

Example 1

(Trump, 2012)

In this tweet, posted on 28th of October 2012, Trump calls Bette Midler an extremely unattractive woman. This was posted as a response to a tweet Bette Midler posted two days prior to Trump's tweet (Saad, 2019). In her tweet Midler wrote that Trump was the "[…] architect of the ruination of the West Side […]" (Bette Midler, October 26, 2012). Here Trump is commenting on a woman's appearance instead of her personality or intelligence. The tweet will therefore be categorized as *valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality.* He is very direct when stating that she is unattractive and it is therefore easy to recognize it as sexist language. Due to the easy recognition, the tweet will therefore be categorized as an example of overt sexism.

Here, he uses insult as a linguistic tool for expressing this particular sexist ideology. He insults her by calling her extremely unattractive, and comes across as sexist because he is commenting on her appearance. In this example he also writes that he will not say that Bette Midler is extremely unattractive by insisting that he is politically correct. By

saying that he is politically correct he in some way tries to rid himself of the responsibility of uttering that Bette Midler is an extremely unattractive woman. It can come off as provocative when he expresses a sexist ideology and at the same time disclaiming the responsibility for it. When doing this he is also using a discursive tool for expressing sexism: in being self-contradictory he can express humor and sarcasm, and by doing this he is heightening the effect of the comment about Bette Midler. We see that humor, which has been described by Mills (2008) as an indirect type of sexism, can here be found in a tweet categorized as overt sexism.
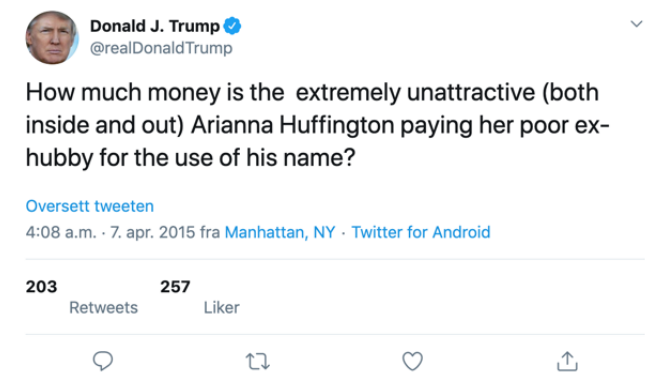
Example 2

(Trump, 2014)

Example 2 was posted the 21st of April 2014. This example is about Arianna Huffington, and it focuses on her appearance, and not her person, her intelligence or lack of intelligence. When calling Huffington ugly both inside and out Trump is using sexist language. One could argue that he is commenting on her personality when he is stating that she is ugly both inside and out. That both her appearance and her personality are ugly. In this example it is the comment on her 'outside ugliness' that makes the tweet sexist, because he is commenting on a woman's appearance. One could argue that this is not sexist because you could also call a man ugly, but I argue that when a man comments negatively about a woman's appearance it is in fact sexist. The fact that Trump choses to comment on her appearance gives the impression that looks are important, and maybe even more important than personality. His comment about her 'inner ugliness' could also just as easily have been made about a man, and with this comment he is actually referring to her personality. Nevertheless, Trump is commenting a woman's looks and since the sexist ideology of this tweet is expressed by him commenting on her appearance the tweet is categorized as *valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality.* In this example he is being very direct when commenting on Huffington's appearance and he makes it very easy for the reader to recognize this as sexist language. This example will therefore, due to the easy recognition, be categorized as overt sexism.

Here Trump is using insult as a linguistic tool for expressing the sexist ideology. He is insulting Huffington by calling her ugly both inside and out.

Example 3

Donald J. Trump ✔
@realDonaldTrump

How much money is the extremely unattractive (both inside and out) Arianna Huffington paying her poor ex-hubby for the use of his name?

Oversett tweeten

4:08 a.m. · 7. apr. 2015 fra Manhattan, NY · Twitter for Android

203
Retweets

257
Liker

(Trump, 2015)

This example was posted 7th of April 2015, and is also a tweet about Arianna Huffington. Example 3 has many of the same features as example 2. Donald Trump is commenting on her appearance instead of her personality and intelligence. As the previous example this will also be categorized as overt, due to the easily recognizable sexism.

When Trump calls her extremely unattractive he uses insult as a linguistic tool for expressing sexism. As in example 1, the same question arises here: is it sexist when you could call a man the same? Yes, because he is commenting on her looks. Since he is commenting on her appearance this tweet will also be categorized as the sexist ideology *valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality.* In addition to insult Trump also uses humor as a discursive tool. At the end of the tweet Trump asks how much she is paying her poor ex-husband for the use of his last name. For some, this can be seen as humorous and not sexist. According to Mills (2008) humor is defined as indirect sexism, but one could argue that it also can be overt. Some might see this tweet as humorous and not categorize it as sexist or see it as humorous and not recognize that this can be sexist. Others will see his attempt to use humor and at the same time categorize it as sexist. I would categorize his attempt to use humor in this example as overt sexism. By writing that Huffington's husband lets her use his name, assumingly talking about his last name, he implies that men have a higher status in the social hierarchy than women. In some sense he implies that men have the privilege of letting their wives use their last names. This, in my opinion, is clearly an expressed sexist ideology.

Example 4

(Trump, 2016)

This tweet was posted 27th of January 2016 and is about the reporter Megyn Kelly. According to TIME Kelly has called Trump out on his sexist language numerous times, and Trump has previously retweeted followers of him calling Kelly a bimbo (Berenson, 2016). Trump starts this tweet by writing that he refuses to call Kelly a bimbo, but when he adds that it would not be politically correct to do so he indirectly calls her a bimbo. One of the definitions of bimbo is a women that is attractive but stupid (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). By calling her a bimbo Trump comments on both her looks and her intelligence. One could argue that this tweet does not belong in the category of *valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality* because he is commenting on her intelligence*.* On the other hand, this is the most appropriate category and this tweet will because of the comment on appearance be categorized as *valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality.*

Calling someone a bimbo is recognized as quite offensive and the tweet will be categorized as overt sexism. According to Oxford Reference (n.a.) the word bimbo was originally an American slang word for a foolish chap or fellow. The word has therefore been derogated to an offensive term about women, and semantic derogation is therefore the linguistic tool that is used to express the sexist ideology. In addition, insult is used because the word bimbo is very insulting.

Women are weak, lacking strength and ability

Example 5

(Trump, 2013)

Example 5 was posted on 25th of January 2013. In this tweet Trump expresses a sexist ideology by stating that he does not like seeing women in combat, hence suggesting that men are the only ones that should be in combat. By writing this he is implying that women and men are not on the same level and that men might be physically stronger and mentally tougher than women. Both physical strength and strong mentality are abilities that are important when joining combat. This tweet will therefore be categorized as expressing the ideology *women are weak, lacking strength and ability.* When expressing a sexist ideology in an indirect way it is difficult to interpret if the tweet is sexist or not, or if it is overt or indirect. I will categorize this tweet as overt sexism. Despite Trump being indirect when expressing the sexist ideology, it is still easy to categorize this as expressing a sexist ideology. I see it as overt sexism because he mentions being old-fashioned. Some old-fashioned views involve the notion that women are weaker than men and rather need protection than being the ones who protect. The word "old-fashioned" triggers the idea that Trump also suggests that women are weaker and need protection.

Trump draws on the assumption and stereotype that men are stronger and tougher than women, and therefore more fit for combat. Women do not belong in parts of the military where they might find themselves in a combat situation, but rather in parts that would be more suited for women and their abilities. Another stereotype is that women should be feminine, something that does not match well with being in the military and in combat. There does not seem to be any linguistic or discursive tools needed to express the sexist ideology in this tweet. The closest we get to a discursive tool in this tweet is a stereotype. If a stereotype is categorized as the discursive tool in this tweet it will conflate the sexist ideology and the discursive tool. This tweet will therefore be categorized as lacking a linguistic or discursive tool.

Male as the norm, that is, females appear as dependent beings and as followers

Example 6

"@mplefty67: If Hillary Clinton can't satisfy her husband what makes her think she can satisfy America?" @realDonaldTrump #2016president"

4/16/15, 5:22 PM

100 RETWEETS 113 FAVORITES

(Thompson, 2015)

Example 6 was retweeted by Trump the 16th of April 2015. This tweet was retweeted during the 2016 presidential election campaign, where Hillary Clinton was Trump's opponent in the run for president. This tweet equals women's power with their ability to satisfy a man, and is therefore expressing the ideology *Male as the norm, that is, females appear as dependent beings and as followers.* According to *CNN*, Bill Clinton, Hillary Clintons husband, had an affair with another woman in the 1990s (Merica, 2020). Trump might imply that Clinton could not satisfy her husband which led to his affair. In some way he implies that if Clinton can not satisfy her husband she will not be fit to lead the country and is not suited to become president, and as her husband "turned on her" so might the American people. When talking about a woman's sexuality as a measure of her power, it will be seen as sexist. He clearly expresses that a woman should be able to satisfy a man and I will categorize this tweet as overt sexism.

The discursive tool for expressing sexism in this tweet is an implied stereotype. It is stereotypical to think that a woman's job is to satisfy a man, and if she cannot do that she will not be able to do a good job elsewhere. It is stereotypical to think that a woman's ability and power should be measured based on her ability to satisfy a man. One can also argue that he is using humor as a discursive tool for expressing sexism. Some might see this tweet as a joke and find it humorous that Trump compares a woman's ability to satisfy, with the ability to be in charge.

Women are objects

Example 7
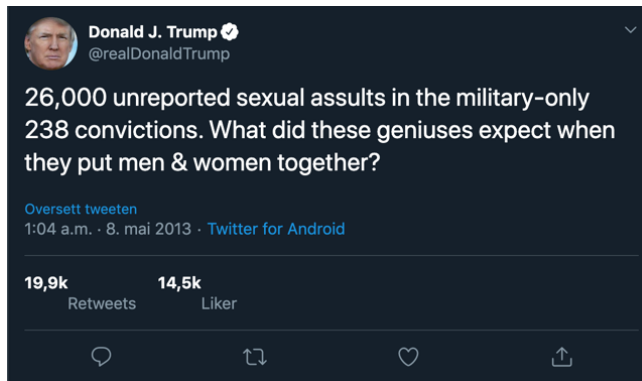
(Trump, 2013)

This tweet was posted the 8th of May 2013. On the 7th of may 2013 Pentagon released a report on sexual assault in the military in 2012 which stated that military sexual assaults were spiking (Department of Defense, 2013). In this tweet Trump insinuates that women have a certain effect on men when it comes to sexual urges. In a way he is expressing a stereotypical view about men who are not able to control themselves in the presence of women. By doing this he is objectifying women. He is insinuating that women have that effect on men, and by doing this he makes excuses for sexual assaults. Thus, that men cannot be blamed for sexual assault because they are just acting on their instinct and gives in to the temptation that a woman is. When writing this Trump sexually objectifies women and implies that this is something men do. By sexually objectifying women he expresses the ideology *women are objects.*

This tweet can be difficult to categorize as either overt or indirect. When he writes about men not being able to control themselves around women, one can easily draw the conclusion that we are talking about overt sexism, but there are no clear tools used to express the sexist ideology. The stereotype found in this tweet is more about men's lack of control around women, and with the lack of tools can lead to this tweet being categorized as indirect sexism. Nevertheless, I would classify this tweet as overt because Trump clearly insinuates that sexual assaults will happen just because men and women are together.

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Example 8

(Trump, 2013)

This tweet was posted the 17th of May 2013, approximately one week after example 7. This tweet is also about the report on sexual assault in the military in 2012. A report that stated that military sexual assaults were spiking (Department of Defense, 2013). As with the tweet in example 7 Trump writes about men's lacking ability to control themselves around women. Trump expresses a stereotype about women's effect on men and men's ability to control their sexual urges. In this tweet, I understand the phrase *when the poison kicks in* as a man's sexual urge or that he has been drinking. By writing that men cannot control themselves around women when they have been drinking their sexual urge takes over he objectifies women, and the tweet therefore expresses the sexist ideology *women are objects.* Again, as in example 7, he writes about how men have trouble controlling themselves, and it is therefore difficult to classify as either indirect sexism or overt sexism. There are also no clear linguistic or discursive tools used to express the sexist ideology in this tweet. One could argue that the tweet is indirect due to its lack of tools for expressing the sexist ideology. On the other hand one could also argue that it is overt because of the way he clearly insinuates that sexual assaults happen due to men's sexual urge, women's role as temptress or alcohol. Due to Trumps clear insinuation I will categorize this tweet as overt.

4.2 Tweets posted after the election

Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality

Example 9
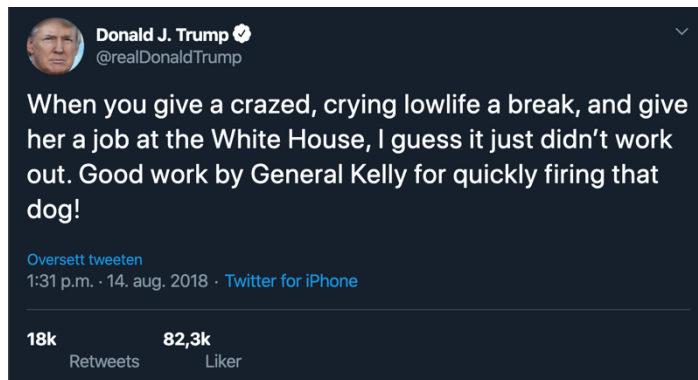
(Trump, 2018)

This tweet is from the 14th of August 2018 and is about a woman working at the White House. According to *TIME*, this tweet is about former White House official Omarosa Manigault-Newman. Manigault-Newman revealed to have recorded Trump's chief of staff, John Kelly. She also claimed to have recorded Trump using the N-word. After this she was fired by Kelly (Fitzpatrick, 2018). Trump ends the tweet by calling the woman *that dog* and because of this he expresses the ideology of *Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality*.

In this example semantic derogation and insult are the linguistic tools used for expressing sexism. In the English language the same word can have both a non-metaphorical meaning and a metaphorical meaning. In some contexts a word might be positive, but in other contexts it can be negative. The word *dog* can have a non-metaphorical meaning when referring to the animal, which might have both positive and negative connotations. The word *dog*, in its metaphorical meaning, is often used in a derogatory manner to mean unattractive, and specially an unattractive girl or woman (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). When used in this derogatory form *dog* will have negative connotations. Trump refers to her as *that dog* and when he does this he uses the version of the word dog in a derogatory manner. When Trump uses a derogatory word like *dog* to describe her he insults her by indirectly calling her unattractive. Both insults and semantic derogation are types of overt sexism and he expresses the sexism ideology clearly when calling her *that dog.* Because of this I will classify this tweet as overt sexism.
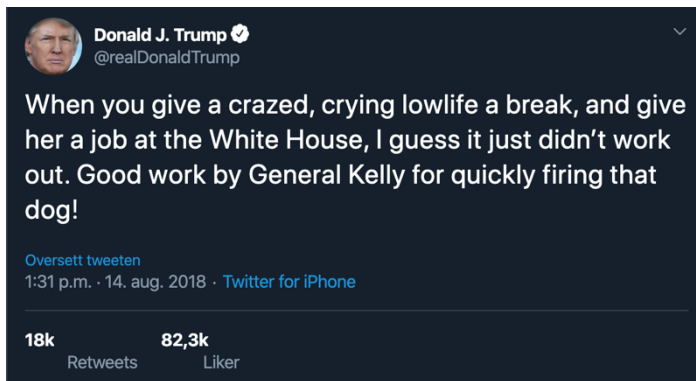
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Example 10

(Trump, 2018)

This tweet was posted the 16th of October 2018, and is about Stormy Daniels. According to *The Guardian* Stormy Daniels claims to have had an affair with Trump in 2006, something he denies. Daniels had filed a lawsuit against Trump, and this tweet was written after her lawsuit had been dismissed by a federal judge (Walters, 2018). In this tweet Trump refers to Daniels as *horseface,* and one could argue that he is not expressing a sexist ideology here because he could also insult a man with that comment. On the other hand when he as a man comments on her appearance and her looks, I would argue that it is in fact sexist. When calling her *horseface* he indirectly calls her unattractive. So instead of commenting on her personality or intelligence, he is commenting on her appearance. I would therefor categorized this as expressing the sexist ideology *valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality*.

Most people would probably agree that Trump is insulting Daniels by calling her *horseface*, but it might be difficult to see that this can also be sexist. The tweet will therefore be categorized as indirect sexism. To express the sexist ideology he uses insult as a linguistic tool.

Women are weak, lacking strength and ability

Example 11

When you give a crazed, crying lowlife a break, and give her a job at the White House, I guess it just didn't work out. Good work by General Kelly for quickly firing that dog!

(Trump, 2018)

The same tweet as example 9 which was posted the 14th of august 2018, but this time it is placed under the sexist ideology of *women are weak, lacking strength and ability.* The background for the tweet is the same as in example 9. It is about Manigault-Newman who recorded Trump's chief of staff John Kelly, accused Trump of using the N-word and who was later fired by Kelly (Fitzpatrick, 2018).

When he writes that she is a *crying lowlife* he insinuates that women are emotional and often turns to crying. It is therefore categorized as *women are weak, lacking strength and ability.* The discursive tool used for expressing this could be both a presupposition and a stereotypical implication. In this tweet he presupposes that she is a *crazed crying lowlife* and by doing this he also uses an implied stereotype as a discursive tool for expressing the sexist ideology. It is seen as stereotypical to indicate that women are emotional and often turn to crying. Both a presupposition and a stereotypical implication often operates as indirect sexism. Most people would probably see that Trump is being rude to Manigault-Newman when calling her *a crazed, crying lowlife,* but might not see it as sexist. It can be difficult to see that he is expressing a sexist ideology when calling her this. The tweet will therefore be categorized as indirect sexism.

4.3 Tweets posted before and after the election

Male as the norm, that is, females appear as dependent beings and as followers

Example 12

This example differs from the previous examples presented. Unlike the previous examples where I have been looking at one tweet at the time, this example will consider several tweets. When using the web site *Trump Twitter Archive* (n.a.) one can easily search for certain words or phrases in Trumps tweets. When searching for *men and women* this phrase is mentioned 80 times, but there are no results when searching for *women and men.* When putting *men* first every time, you imply that men are the norm, and Trump therefore expresses the sexist ideology *male as the norm, that is, females appear as dependent beings and as followers.* This is a form for sexism that can be very difficult to detect. Since it is not easy to see that Trump expresses a sexist ideology in these tweets, I will therefore categorize it as indirect sexism.

The discursive tool used to express sexism in this example is male firstness. As mentioned by Willis and Jozkowski (2018) male firstness is when male terms are placed before female terms. In this case the male term *men* comes before the female term *women* when placed together with the conjunction *and* between them. It should be mentioned that this is not something that is typical only for Trump, but majority of people actually use male firstness when referring to men and women. Willis and Jozkowski (2018) refer to Benor and Levy (2006) when writing that in both spoken and written databases men comes before women 94% of the time, when paired together (p. 138-139).

5. Discussion

The goal of this study was to answer the research questions: Is Donald Trump sexist on his Twitter account? If so, what type of sexism is present, how is it expressed and are there any differences in frequency of sexist tweets before and after the election?

Table 1 Summary of results

		Sexist ideology	Overt vs. Indirect	Linguistic or discursive tool
Before election	Example 1 28/10 - 2012	Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality	Overt	Insult Humor
	Example 2 21/4 - 2014	Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality	Overt	Insult
	Example 3 7/4 - 2015	Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality	Overt	Insult Humor
	Example 4 27/1 - 2016	Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality	Overt	Insult Semantic derogation
	Example 5 25/11- 13	Women are weak, lacking strength and ability	Overt	
	Example 6 16/4 - 2015	Male as the norm, that is, females appear as dependent beings and as followers	Overt	Implied stereotype Humor
	Example 7 8/5 - 2013	Women are objects	Overt	
	Example 8 17/5 - 2013	Women are objects	Overt	

	Example 9 14/8 - 2018	Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality	Overt	Semantic derogation Insult
After election	Example 10 16/10 - 2018	Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality	Indirect	Insult
	Example 11 14/8 - 2018	Women are weak, lacking strength and ability	Indirect	Implied stereotype Presupposition
Before and after election	Example 12 2011 - 2020	Male as the norm, that is, females appear as dependent beings and as followers	Indirect	Male firstness

The analysis showed that different types of sexism were present in Donald Trump's tweets, and that sexism was expressed by the use of different linguistic and discursive tools. In the analysis of Trump's tweets above I have presented his tweets based on when they were written and what type of sexist ideology they express.

In the method section five sexist ideologies based on Darweesh and Abdullah's (2016) article were presented. Of these five, four of them were found in the analysis of the selected tweets from Trump's Twitter account. These four were (1) Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality, (2) Women are weak, lacking strength and ability, (3) Male as the norm, that is, females appear as dependent beings and as followers and (4) Presenting women as objects. The fifth category (5) Glorifying the maltreatment/mistreatment of women was not used in the analysis, because I did not find any examples within this category.

All of the sexist ideologies (1) – (4) were found more than once in the analysis. The sexist ideology *valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality* was expressed in six of the tweets. In five out of the six examples with this sexist ideology the tweet was categorized as overt sexism. This gives the opportunity to suggest that the sexist ideology *valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality* often operates as overtly sexist. The sexist ideology *women are weak, lacking strength and ability* was solely overtly sexist. The remaining sexist ideologies had no clear patterns, and were categorized as both indirect and overt sexism. Mills distinguishes between two types of sexist language, overt and indirect sexism. Both overt and indirect sexism was found in the analysis of Trumps tweets. Mills (2008) writes that overt sexism is seen as a stigmatized form of sexism, and that indirect sexism has erupted as a response to the feminist reforms regarding sexist language. Using overt sexist language has become a stigmatized action, but indirect sexism can give the opportunity to use sexist language without it being detected or recognized as sexist. This indicates that indirect sexism is the more preferred and common type when expressing sexist language. With this as a theoretical background

one would expect to find more examples of indirect sexism than overt sexism in Trumps Twitter account. This was not the case. In the tweets analyzed in this study overt sexism is expressed more frequently, and I found 9 examples of overt sexism and 3 examples of indirect sexism. One of the reasons for this result might be because of the difficulties when it comes to recognizing indirect sexism. Indirect sexism is often difficult to recognize as sexist, and I might not have found them. I can have overseen some examples of indirect sexism because I was not able to recognize them as sexist. Another reason might be that there are fewer examples of indirect sexism than overt sexism, and that Donald Trump's language consist of a more overt type of sexist language. In three of the examples with overt sexism (examples 1, 3 and 6) humor is used as a discursive tool for expressing sexism. Using humor in these tweets can be an attempt to rid himself of the responsibility of using language or discourse that expresses sexism. If this is the case Trump must be aware that the ideologies he is expressing are not overall acceptable and can be seen as sexist. Humor is often seen as an indirect form of sexism, but humor was not found in any of the three examples of indirect sexism.

When it comes to the linguistic and discursive tools I found that insult was used to express *valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality* in all the six tweets. In all the six tweets Trump commented on the women's appearance by calling them unattractive either directly or indirectly. In examples 8 and 9 he uses animal references to call the women unattractive. In four of these six tweets he refers to women who have spoken against him or criticized him. Bette Midler referred to Trump as the "[…] architect of the ruination of the West Side […]" (Bette Midler, October 26, 2012), Megyn Kelly spoke about his sexist language, Omarosa Manigault-Newman accused Trump of using the N-word and Stormy Daniels had filed a lawsuit against him. One could therefore ask if Donald Trump respond to women's criticism of him by attacking their looks. By focusing on and attacking women's appearance he in some way diminishes their abilities and intelligence, because he insinuates that their looks are more important and that women should be valued based on their looks. Language can be used, as mentioned in 2.2 by Anderson and Cermele (2016), to gain power over women. Trump might therefore use sexist language to gain power and control over the women he has a feud with. When he expresses a sexist ideology by commenting on a woman's appearance it can be difficult to see it as sexist, but when he uses sexist discourse, he expresses the sexist ideology indirectly. This indirectness that the sexist ideology is expressed with can make it difficult to categorize the tweet as sexist. Many of the sexist ideologies are expressed indirectly and can be hard to classify as sexist. This may be because of the distinction between sexist language and sexist discourse. In section 2.4 two strands of research on sexism are presented. One where words and language in itself is sexist, and the second where the words in themselves are not sexist, but when put together in discourse becomes sexist (Vetterling-Braggin, 1998; Lei, 2006). This suggests that sexist discourse can be more difficult to detect and it might be more difficult to call someone out on being sexist when they are using sexist discourse.

In both examples (7 and 8) categorized as *women are objects* and in example 5 categorized as *women are weak, lacking strength and ability,* there were no clear linguistic or discursive tools used to express the sexist ideologies. In examples 7 and 8 there are stereotypes connected to men but not to women. Despite the lack of linguistic and discursive tools and presence of the stereotype about men, Trump expresses the sexist ideology *women are objects* in these two tweets. Could this imply that there

already is some kind linguistic or discursive tool embedded into the sexist ideologies? Or it could indicate that the sexist ideologies are expressed with some linguistic or discursive tool that I have not listed. Example 5 indicates that the discursive tool, stereotype, would conflate with the sexist ideology. If we look at the list of sexist ideologies in section 3.2 they can all be categorized as implied stereotypes. If we look at the sexist ideologies many of them come off as stereotypes with a quite old-fashioned manner. It is an implied stereotype to think that women should not be appreciated for their personality and intelligences, and that the most important thing is how they look. To think that women are weak and lack the strength and abilities a man might hold is also a stereotype. Presenting women as objects is also a very old-fashioned way of thinking of a woman, and it is also a stereotype to think that women are only objects that men can claim. To claim that male is the norm, and that men are first and better than women is also in itself a stereotype. One could therefore argue that all sexist ideologies are in themselves an implied stereotype and that you do not need a specific tool to be able to express a sexist ideology. The implied stereotype is already present.

Several linguistic and discursive tools for expressing sexism were found in the analysis. All the tools from the list of linguistic and discursive tools were found except male generic. In the analysis 8 examples of linguistic tools were found, and 7 examples of discursive tools were found. In some of the tweets there were more than one tool used to express sexism. In six of the tweets (Example: 1, 3, 4, 6, 9 and 11) I found more than one tool for expressing sexism. In examples 1, 3 and 6 humor was the second tool found, and humor was never the only tool found in any of the examples. This can indicate that humor is produced with the help of other linguistic or discursive tools. As Mills stated, humor is an indirect type of sexism and is often used to hide sexism. How humor is categorized depends, however, a lot on the person who reads or hears it. It is for example possible to recognize something as humor without finding it humorous, and it is possible to recognize something as humor and finding it sexist. Another tool that does not operate on its own is semantic derogation. In examples 4 and 9 semantic derogation is found together with insult. It can be difficult to express sexism with the use of semantic derogation without insulting someone. On the other hand it is possible to insult someone without the use of some other tools, as we can see in example 2 and 10.

The examples are divided according to if they are written before or after the election. The tweets from before the election are from the time period between 2012 and 2015, while the tweets from after the election are from the time period between 2018 and 2020. As we can see from the analysis there are more examples from before the election than after the election. One interesting finding is that before the election the only type of sexism found is overt, if we do not consider example 12, while after the election there is both overt sexism and indirect sexism. It is difficult to say something about the difference in frequency of sexist tweet from before and after the election, and why the tweets before the election are all examples of overt sexism. One possible reason might be that Trump has understood or been told that he as the president of one of most powerful and influential countries in the world needs to be careful with what he writes. Being labeled as sexist might cost him some voters, and cost him support. Another reason might be that he has staff moderating his tweets. Dan Scavino works as the Assistant to the President and as Senior Advisor for Digital Strategy. He was previously the Director of Social Media at The White House (whitehouse.gov, 2019). Scavino could be advising and moderating Donald Trump's tweets, and advising him to express himself

differently. Another question is if I have found all the relevant tweets. The scope and time limitations of this study and the search methods might have made it difficult to find all the relevant tweets. I would assume that there are more tweets that I did not find, but the search method I used found a sufficient number of tweets for my qualitative study.

In the method chapter, Fairclough's (2001) 4 stages to critical discourse analysis is presented. As previously mentioned stages 1 and 2 are the most relevant for my thesis, while only some of the points in stage 3 and 4 will be taken into account here, due to space and time limitations. Stage 1 has in this thesis been carried out by analyzing Trump's Twitter account with regards to sexist language and discourse. Stage 2 of Fairclough's CDA stages is about identifying these obstacles. If it is difficult to recognize sexism and sexist language it will be difficult to address it. Another obstacle of addressing sexism is that some of the linguistic and discursive tools for expressing sexism can be used in a way so that you do not need to take responsibility for what you are saying. Both humor and presupposition are tools which can make it hard to accuse someone of being sexist. In some of his tweets Trump uses both humor and presupposition, and by doing this he can rid himself from the responsibility of being sexist. He can for example state that he did not mean it and that it was just for laughs. In example 1 and 4 he claims that he is politically correct, and this is also a way to rid himself of the responsibility of expressing a sexist ideology. To be able to address something, Fairclough suggests 3 steps, where the first step is about relations between semiosis and social elements. In this thesis this would mean the relations between Trumps tweets and the linguistic and discursive tools expressing sexism, and the sexist ideologies they are categorized according to. It could also be the relations between Trumps tweets and the feuds he has with the women. The tools used to express sexism in his tweets leads the tweets to belonging to certain categories of sexist ideologies. Steps 2 and 3 of stage 2 have been carried out in the analysis above, with tweets being the texts that are categorized and analyzed.

Stage 3 and 4 of Fairclough's 4 stages of CDA are not the main focus of this thesis, but a few of the points warrant some attention. In Stage 3 Fairclough (2001) states that: "[…] if a social order can be shown inherently to give rise to major social wrongs, that is a reason for thinking that perhaps it should be changed" (p. 15). The current conception of the relationship between women and men is part of society's social order, and can be said to be the foundation of sexism. Weatherall (2015) suggest something similar when writing that the relationship between gendered social orders and language might lead to women getting disadvantages (p. 410). There seem to be a broad consensus that sexism is a social wrong, and that this is something that needs a social change. When the President of the United States, who sits on top the social structures of a social order, expresses sexist ideologies one ought to demand change. He holds a position with huge responsibility, and one of those responsibilities I would say is to start the process to rid social wrongs. When Trump, who holds a position of power, himself contributes to a social wrong he needs to be held responsible for that wrong and be demanded to change.

6. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to answer the research questions: Is Donald Trump sexist on his Twitter account? If so, what type of sexism is present, how is it expressed and are there any differences in frequency of sexist tweets before and after the election? In the introduction of this paper I presented my hypothesis that suggested that I expected to find tweets by Donald Trump that expressed sexism. Based on the findings in this study it is possible to conclude that Donald Trump expresses sexist ideologies on his Twitter account, and to identify the linguistic and discursive tools that were used to express them. In this critical discourse analysis of Trump's Twitter account I found 10 tweets where sexist ideologies were expressed. Out of the five sexist ideologies that was presented in section 3.2 four of them were expressed in Trump's tweets. The results showed that both overt sexism and indirect sexism was present in his tweets. Trump used several linguistic and discursive tools to express the different sexist ideologies, but in three of his tweets there were no clear tools. In these three tweets he was able to express the sexist ideology of *women are objects* and *women are weak, lacking strength and ability* without using any tools. This opened up the possibility that you do not need a specific linguistic or discursive tool to express a sexist ideology, because one could argue that the sexist ideologies themselves already hold implied stereotypes against women. The fact that Donald Trump, as one of the world's most powerful men, uses a language that expresses sexist ideologies is a problem. He holds a position where he should be held accountable for his language, and instead of contributing to the social wrong he should be contributing to the process to rid the social wrong.

Fairclough's (2001) fourth step was about identifying ways past the obstacle that is the social wrong. He also suggested that one way past it is research that tested and challenged the social wrong (p. 15), which in this case is sexism. This paper did not, in the sense of Fairclough's definition, challenge or test the social wrong that sexism is, but it did address it. When it comes to a social wrong such as sexism one of the first steps towards change and to move past the obstacle is to address it and call out those who use language that contributes to gender inequalities in society. Addressing sexism and putting it on the agenda is only a small step towards actual change in society, but it is a necessary step to take.

To be able to answer all the research questions fully, I would have had to include a more quantitative approach to my study. The last research question asks if there are any differences before and after the presidential election when it comes to tweets expressing sexism. With the scope of my study it is not possible to say in definite that there is a difference between before and after the election. There are not enough examples included in this study to determine the frequency of tweets expressing sexism. The search methods I used might not have been sufficient to find all the sexist tweets in both periods. It would have been interesting to see if a more quantitative approach to the research questions would have been able to uncover a difference in frequency of sexism before and after the presidential election.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: The master thesis' relevance for the teacher profession

Appendix 1: The master thesis' relevance for the teacher profession

This thesis was written as a part of my five year lector education at NTNU, and during this process of writing my master thesis I have bumped into several aspects that can be relevant for my teacher profession. In this section I will therefore reflect upon some of the aspects of this process. First, as a teacher it is important to be aware of the process one need to go through when a text is produced. I have gotten valuable first-hand experience to how the process of creating a text from scratch works, and this experience is something I can use both in my teaching and in my guidance. During the months I have spent on writing this thesis I have been so fortunate to have a supervisor who has, by giving me advice and good feedback, showed me how one can guide students before and during the process of creating a text. I have gained knowledge on how the process of planning works, and how the process of writing and re-writing your text works. To be able to evaluate and process your own texts is one of the competence aims for both the 10th grade curriculum and the upper secondary curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a, 2020b).

Second, in the English curriculum both for 10th grade and upper secondary one of the competence aims is to be able to read, redistribute and discuss different types of texts (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a, 2020b). In this thesis Twitter was the source for data, and tweets are a type of text. Twitter can be used in the classroom both to read and discuss texts, and to create texts. Another aim found in the curriculum for both 10th grade and upper secondary is that students should learn to be critical to what sources they use (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020a, 2020b). One could discuss if Twitter is a good source, and why one should read tweets with a critical eye.

Third, in this thesis it was not Twitter in general that was the main focus, but Donald Trump's Twitter. The subject Donald Trump can be used in several ways in the classroom. He is the president of the United states of America and he can be used to create a discussion on for example the election, democracy, language or the right to free speech. I, myself, have during the process of writing this thesis gained some insight into Trump's language and rhetoric can be used to give him more Power, and this is important in the light of democracy. In the new curriculum there is a part about interdisciplinary subjects where one of them is about democracy and citizenship. The goal is to give students an understanding of how democracy can be seen in relation to for example the right to free speech and the right to vote (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020c). Discussions in the classroom can be about how the American election system works, and if it is a good system or not, or one could discuss if the right to free speech gives you the right to say just anything.