



Department of English Online Research Seminar

Analysing political rhetoric and appeals to common sense: A Discourse Argumentative Approach



ILP: 1 UNIT (CELD)



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Salomi Boukala is Assistant Professor of Critical Discourse Analysis at Panteion University of Social & Political Sciences and visiting scholar at Newcastle University. She is a specialist on Greek political discourse and has published widely in the fields of argumentation and Critical Discourse Studies. She is the author of *European Identity and The Representation of Islam in the Mainstream Press: Argumentation and Media Discourse* (Palgrave, 2019) and co-author of the forthcoming book *The Language of Politics and the Greek Paradigm* (Springer, 2025). In 2020, she co-edited a volume on Critical Discourse Analysis that is the first book on the field being published in Greece by Nissos Academic Publishing. Her research interests fall within the areas of the discursive construction of political and (supra)national identities, political rhetoric, discriminatory discourse, ethnographic approaches and media discourse.

Zoom link

<https://lingnan.zoom.us/j/97580073647?pwd=bAoQ1TAywj1HGWdYAAbwgwg0W3KvMw.1>

Meeting ID: 975 8007 3647

Passcode: 48498283

Abstract

Immigration emerges as a main issue during the 2024 U.S. election campaign and shapes a polarised climate that is usually based on misinformation about national security, economy and cultural identity. At the same time, political parties' migration agendas dominate their election campaigns in the majority of the European countries showing that border controls' issues have not monopolised the U.S. political scene or alt right political discourses.

Drawing upon the discursive strategies of the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and especially its argumentation strategies (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001; Reisigl, 2014), I intend to explore whether and how the European and U.S. political elites adopted a discriminatory discourse against migrants during their election campaigns. In particular, I focus on a Discourse Argumentative Approach (DAA) based on the Aristotelian topoi and fallacies, especially the topos of indication and the common sense fallacy (Boukala, 2016, forthcoming), to study whether the European and U.S. political figures normalised 'Trump era' policies on migration by utilising appeals to common sense. Lilie Chouliaraki and Norman Fairclough (2005) emphasised the importance of power relations as relations of domination based upon consent that involves the naturalisation of practices and their social relations as matters of common sense. Through this prism, I bring examples by Donald Trump, Kamala Harris, Kyriakos Mitsotakis & Nikos Androulakis (Greece), Emmanuel Macron & Marine Le Pen (France) political rhetoric to examine the theory of scapegoating and illustrate common sense fallacies as ideological strategies and power relations.

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