

Racial representation in the discourse processing from the psycholinguistic perspective of critical discourse analysis

Hui Zhou* and Hui Ying Jong

School of Humanities, Malay Linguistics Section, Universiti Sains Malaysia 11800, Penang, Malaysia.

* Correspondence: zhouhui@student.usm.my; Tel.: +60 133616018

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Abstract: This mini review explores the intersection of psycholinguistic research and critical discourse studies, focusing on racial representations intertwined with psycholinguistic variables in shaping discourse perceivers' perceptions. It addresses recent literature on the various psycholinguistic variables that influence discourse perceivers in discourse processing. This review has investigated recent developments regarding racial representations intertwined with these psycholinguistic variables that influence discourse perceivers from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The findings reveal that most existing studies have concentrated on social media, news, and political discourse while overlooking other types of discourse, such as narrative discourse in novels. These studies emphasize psycholinguistic variables to evoke cognitive and emotional responses in discourse perceivers, such as threatening noun-based expressions, violent verb-based expressions, categorized adjectives, animalizing/militarizing metaphors, binary-related pronouns, and exaggerated quantifier-based expressions. Meanwhile, among the existing studies, it has been discovered that a meager number of studies on the recontextualization of racial representation and its influences of relevant psycholinguistic variables on discourse perceivers. In terms of research focus, the limited recontextualization studies have only focused on the representation of migrants and refugees in Poland and Islamic representation in Italy, while little attention has been paid to other marginalized racial groups. Methodologically, this review also highlights a methodological gap, as much of the existing research relies on traditional CDA frameworks, such as the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), and a multi-step model of discursive shifts, while overlooking more eclectic and synergistic approaches. Furthermore, this review critiques the limitations of recontextualization as an analytical approach, followed by final remarks and suggestions for future directions.

Keywords: Racial representation; Recontextualization studies; Discourse processing; Critical Discourse Analysis; Psycholinguistic variables.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

To date, written discourses have provided invaluable resources for psycholinguistic researchers investigating the interplay between linguistic elements at various levels and the psychological process that discourse perceivers undergo ([Garcia et al., 2020](#); [Kapranov, 2023](#)). As a form of language production, discourse comprises diverse linguistic units, ranging from smaller elements, such as phonemes, syllables, and words, to larger structures, including phrases, clauses, and texts ([Sanders, 1997](#)). Recontextualization, defined as the (re)construction of social practices by text producers, involves linguistic transformations of discourses and texts ([Van Leeuwen, 2008](#)). It plays a pivotal role in embedding texts within specific socio-historical and cultural contexts, shaping the cognitive processes of readers or listeners as discourse perceivers ([Dickens, 2021](#); [Wodak & Fairclough, 2010](#); [Van Leeuwen, 2008](#)). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a problem-oriented, interdisciplinary approach that helps critically examine how discourse, as a form of language production, is expressed, (re)produced, and distributed, particularly in relation to social inequalities such as racism and xenophobia ([Esposito, 2023](#)). Since language shapes and is shaped by the sociopolitical structures of society, advancing power relations in nuanced ways, CDA helps uncover the relationships between subject positions and power dynamics within discourse ([Wodak & Fairclough, 2010](#)). This, in turn, facilitates readers' cognitive engagement beyond the discourse itself ([Nkala & Masuku, 2023](#)). From a psycholinguistic perspective, the linguistic elements of constructed representations in discourse guide readers' attention, establish logical connections between discourse content and individual memory and enhance interaction with the intended information conveyed by writers ([Katz, 2024](#); [Sanders & Gernsbacher, 2004](#)). For instance, research has found that readers show greater empathetic identification with central characters in narratives when processing linguistic features such as first-person pronouns, perception verbs (e.g., *see* and *think*), modal adverbs (e.g., *possibly* and *maybe*), and emotion adjectives (e.g., *angry* and *happy*) ([Eekhof et al., 2023](#)).

The recontextualized representation of various racial groups in specific texts and contexts often incorporates recounts of past people and events with an argumentative function, significantly influencing readers' comprehension of the narrative ([Elnakkouzi, 2024](#)). For example, Chinese immigrants and Chinese Americans have historically been misunderstood and

subjected to persistent stereotypes in socio-historical contexts, such as the "yellow peril" and the "model minority". The "yellow peril" stereotype refers to the negative portrayal of Asian people as a health threat due to their skin color and a biological danger rooted in presumed racial inferiority ([Cho, 2021](#)). The "model minority" stereotype refers to the construction of Asian people as exemplars of social success, emphasizing the structural standards by which minorities are expected to conform ([Walton & Truong, 2022](#)). These stereotypes, rooted in socio-historical realities, have fuelled recontextualized (re)productions aimed at countering racism and enriching Asian American literature ([Shomura, 2020](#); [Lee, 2019](#); [Le-Khac & Hao, 2021](#)). For instance, some scholars argue that recontextualized discourses, as an epistemological form, invoke an empirical sense of historical and social inequalities by constructing lifelike racialized bodies in allegorical ways ([Lee, 2019](#)). However, there is an ongoing debate that these recontextualized productions within historical realistic reality risk disciplining Asian American subjectivity or catering to the exoticized tastes of the marketplace ([Lee, 2019](#); [Pan, 2021](#)). Additionally, the use of racist tropes depicting Asians as either comic figures or victims in discourses has faced criticism for legitimizing marginalized and misrepresented histories, which, in turn, may lead readers to reinforce racial discrimination under the guise of white supremacy inadvertently ([Sheffer, 2019](#)).

Given the debated context outlined above, it is essential to review the psycholinguistic variables that influence discourse perceivers in discourse processing, particularly regarding how racial representation associated with these variables affects discourse perceivers from a critical discourse analysis perspective. Therefore, the following section of this review begins with an overview of psycholinguistic variables that influence discourse processing in perceivers. Following this, this review elaborates on recent developments regarding how diverse racial representations associated with these psycholinguistic variables trigger the cognitive and emotional responses of discourse perceivers, as examined through critical discourse analysis, highlighting the limited recontextualization studies with regard to their application. It has been discovered that of the limited recontextualization studies, researchers focused on a small scale of racial representation, such as the representation of migrants and refugees in Poland ([Krzyżanowski, 2020](#)) and Islamic representation in Italy ([Newth & Maccaferri, 2022](#)). Methodologically, these limited recontextualization studies predominantly drew upon the traditional

framework of critical discourse analysis and overlooked a more eclectic and synergic recontextualization-centered approach, such as a multi-step model of discursive shifts employed in the study by Krzyżanowski (2020), and the Discourse Historical Approach used in the study was by Newth and Maccaferri (2022). Thereafter, this review presents recontextualization as an analytic approach involving substitution, deletion, rearrangement and addition while identifying its limitations. Suggestions for future research focus on integrating recontextualization with other analytical tools in a more eclectic and synergistic manner under the CDA framework. This review concludes by identifying potential challenges and future directions for racial representation in recontextualization studies from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

2.0 THE PSYCHOLINGUISTIC VARIABLES IN THE DISCOURSE PROCESSING

A range of psycholinguistic variables has been shown to influence how discourse perceivers interact with and process discourse. One significant variable is the selection of lexical choices in linguistic constructions. For example, nouns and pronouns associated with specific characters in specific contexts play a crucial role in shaping incremental interpretations of social attitudes conveyed by the discourse (Watson et al., 2023). Moreover, grammatical structures, such as the present continuous tense or past simple tense, contribute to the mental simulation of events, aiding discourse perceivers in locating and comprehending targeted events within the discourse (Liao et al., 2023; Zwaan, 2024). Semantic structures further enhance coherence between texts and individuals' memory, making them particularly valuable for applying discourse production in educational settings (Keenan, 2024).

In addition, increasing attention has been given to the role of meaningful lexicalizations as initial activation points in updating the memory content of readers or listeners as discourse perceivers. These lexicalizations would foster a dynamic mechanism in discourse processing, enabling discourse perceivers to assess representations within the discourse (Dietrich et al., 2023; Kintsch, 1988). There is growing recognition that the accommodation mechanism in discourse processing is often modified or repaired when contextual elements, such as characters, time, or space, shift in a discourse containing inconsistencies (Beaver & Zevat, 2007; Clifton, 2013; Dietrich et al., 2023). In this sense, discourse perceivers, influenced by memory updates and accommodation mechanisms, may develop a

cognitive control process to monitor and integrate new linguistic elements and interpretations at various levels of discourse (re)production (Dietrich et al., 2023). Furthermore, recent studies have explored the cross-linguistic effects of cultural differences on individuals' abilities to perceive informative cues in discourse production (Kapranov, 2023; Zhu & Filik, 2023).

As linguistic properties adapt to mediate broader cultural and socio-historical realities, texts and discourses have consistently served as vital agents in representing human experiences and connecting readers' engagement to specific social events (Kelsey, 2020; Elnakkouzi, 2024; Macgilchrist, 2021). According to van Dijk (2006), mental representations tied to personal memories and prior episodes of social knowledge and attitudes are further activated when discursive contexts are considered during the process of subjective interpretation of readers as discourse perceivers. On this interactional and communicative basis, written language and the signified forms in discourses both shape and are shaped by society, fostering ideological cohesion within the complex power dynamics of cultural conventions of socio-political structures (Fairclough, 1989; Kelsey, 2020; Macgilchrist, 2021; Souto-Manning, 2014). As racial issues become increasingly diverse and complex globally, insights from discourses offer valuable access to representational forms across cognitive, affective, and perceptual dimensions. These insights hold epistemological and ontological significance in the co-construction of identities (Coplan, 2010; Forchtner, 2021).

However, psycholinguistic variables can negatively impact readers or listeners as discourse perceivers in racial contexts. For example, cognitive neuroscience studies on mirror neurons suggest that metanarrative interjections or metalepsis used in representations of fictional characters may immerse readers in self-aversive or distressed emotions when triggered by unpleasant portrayals of these characters (Decety & Lamm, 2009; Keen, 2013). Furthermore, representations characterized by rhetorical traits such as Orientalism and Chinoiserie are regarded as emphasizing racial differences, fostering xenophobia, perpetuating racial biases, and reinforcing individual anxiety about racial identity (Gilton, 2020; Shih, 2009). Recent studies further indicate that discourse (re)production assigning hierarchical relations to specific identities within discriminatory behaviors can incite psychological and physical violence against marginalized groups as readers or listeners internalize

this linguistic content ([Craft et al., 2020](#); [Tripp & Munson, 2023](#)).

In summary, psycholinguistic variables—including lexical choices, grammatical and semantic structures, working memory, accommodation mechanism of cognition, cultural differences, the portrayal of fictional characters through metanarrative interjections or metalepsis, rhetorical traits, and hierarchical representations—play a pivotal role in advancing wider understandings of how the human mind interacts with discourse (re)production. Given the positive and negative impacts these variables have on the physical and mental development of discourse perceivers, it is both necessary and urgent to critically examine, through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis, how racial representations produced in discourses in association with psycholinguistic variables influence discourse perceivers' cognition in the discourse processing. This investigation will be elaborated upon in the following section.

3.0 RACIAL REPRESENTATION IN THE DISCURSIVE (RE)PRODUCTION FROM CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

In the context of globalization, the discursive (re)production of racial representation has emerged as a prominent topic within the international academic community. Discourse (re)production refers to how socio-historical norms, ideologies, and power relations are maintained or reinforced through language use across various forms ([Harlap & Riese, 2021](#)). Racial representation refers to the portrayal of specific racial groups, encompassing public perceptions of racial individuals as social actors, their social actions, cultural characteristics, and the broader evaluation and interpretation of common-sense assumptions about them ([Uyan, 2021](#)). Racial representation is constructed or recontextualized within specific social contexts through linguistic choices that reflect various aspects of identity ([Oostendorp, 2022](#)). Scholarly interests, shaped by power relations, social identity theory, and cognitive accessibility, have increasingly adopted a critical discursive perspective to examine diverse racial representations and their associated identities ([Dixon et al., 2019](#); [Wodak, 1999](#)). According to Wodak (1999), racial representation can be perceived through discursive (re)production, which involves the specific construction of identity-focused discourse. The reproduction of these texts, influenced by evolving social contexts, continually (re)shapes public perceptions of specific racial groups ([Aspinall, 2020](#)). Recent literature on diverse racial representation,

analyzed through the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis, has primarily concentrated on social media discourse, news discourse, and political discourse ([Breazu & McGarry, 2023](#); [Lewicki, 2023](#); [Nann et al., 2024](#)).

3.1 Racial representation in social media discourses

3.1.1 Racial representation in the noun-based expressions in social media discourse

Regarding racial representations in social media discourse, prior research has highlighted the implicit connection between noun-based expressions and cognitive, emotional, and group-based biases among discourse perceivers. The prior research shows that radically exclusionary attitudes and intergroup differences would be activated through noun-based expressions.

For instance, cognitive biases toward Nigerian racial representation coincide with nouns like *enemy* or *aggressors* in association with terms such as *ihadists* or *terrorists* in the war, which, in turn, lead to condemnable Nigeria as the racial outgroup to the readers in online discussion forums ([Chiluwa, 2012](#)). Very relevant in this context is the increasingly negative perceptions and attitudes towards a certain racial group as an outgroup. For example, negative perceptions about members of racial outgroups are reinforced through derogatory noun-based invectives on platforms like Facebook, such as *bastards* and *fucking darkies* ([Ekman, 2019](#)). Members of racial outgroups are also labelled by noun phrases in rhetoric ways, such as *parasites* and *protozoans* ([Krzyżanowski, 2020](#)), *disgusting unnatural primates* and *monsters without the right to breathe oxygen* ([Wahlström et al., 2021](#)), as well as *yellow virus* and *yellow alert* ([Wang et al., 2021](#)). These noun-based expressions contribute to public biases in various online platforms, collectively constructing racial outgroups as more offensive, less moral, and less acceptable than ingroup members of the host population ([Kreis, 2017](#)). This biased thinking fosters division among different social groups on social media platforms ([Martikainen & Sakki, 2021](#)). Along the same lines, the sense of ingroup victimization (e.g., Whites) and the escalation of aggressive emotions among online readers ([Ekman, 2019](#)) have been linked to radicalization and violent revenge when it comes to the communicative interaction with racial representations in social media discourse ([Wahlström et al., 2021](#)).

Violence cues, such as the noun *mob* linked to *murders*, suggesting the linkage of racial groups with violent

actions on social media platforms, are critical components in provoking prejudiced attitudes among readers (Jaszczuk-Grzyb et al., 2023). These cues further reinforce extremist assessments and hate speech directed at racial outgroups (Wilson & Starbird, 2021). Alongside the amplification of racial biases by such negative violence cues in social media platforms, positive perceptions of ingroup superiority, such as white supremacy, have also been found discursively proliferating online, fostering a binary hierarchical structure between ingroup and outgroup identities (Chen et al., 2023; Inwood & Zappavigna, 2023). According to word-emotion association studies by Yantseva (2020), binary representations in social media messages entail targeting the fears of target individuals, particularly when noun phrases such as "refugee crisis," "illegality," and "asylum process" represent migrants and refugees. As the online prevalence of incompatible binaries related to extremist sentiments increases, the categorization of stereotypes results from their automatic mental processes (Bosco et al., 2023). Stereotype categorization is closely related to the application of general characteristics assigned to the members of a social group, regardless of the actual differences among members. Interestingly, due to the resultant stereotype categorization perceived as a security threat or illegals, an emotional effect of historical credibility would be evoked by its identity connection in the noun phrases, such as *descendants of Oduduwa*, *children of Oduduwa*, or *light of the Black race* (Aminu, 2024). As extremist sentiments regarding specific racial groups continue to spread across social media platforms, misunderstanding and disinformation have been maintained through social media communication (Chen et al., 2023; Kreiss et al., 2018; Inwood & Zappavigna, 2023). Notably, language use that signals social differences between ingroup and outgroup status would further contribute to the cognitive bias known as the false consensus effect, which, in turn, intensifies the binary representations (Bouko et al., 2021; Karius & Cuskley, 2024).

3.1.2 Racial representation in the verb-based expressions in social media discourse

Several studies have investigated the use of verbs with negative connotations related to the existential threat of racial representation on social media (Kreis, 2017; Leidig, 2019; Yilmaz et al., 2023). For example, Yilmaz et al. (2023) focused on the racial representation of Syrian and Afghan immigrants in Twitter discourse, arguing that the illegal acts attributed to these groups—such as *invading*, *harassing*, and *raping*—serve as tools to evoke emotional arousal and exclusive hostility. In Twitter

discourses related to refugees and immigrants in Europe, Kreis (2017) found that their negative actions are frequently characterized by verbs such as *rioting violently*, *deport all migrants and refugees*, and *stop the invasion of Europe*. Kreis argued that these verb-based expressions exacerbate widespread concern and reinforce exclusionary sentiments among Twitter readers toward refugees and immigrants as perceived threats. In tweets addressing immigration, Leidig (2019) identified the verbs linking Muslims to terrorist activities and found that Muslims' actions are frequently blamed for *invading Western countries*, *raping local women*, and *destroying Western civilization*. Leidig argued that these verb-based expressions amplify a discourse of fear and anti-Muslim anxiety among online readers. As well as highlighting similar verbs' use of exaggerating the invasive nature of Muslims, Crosset et al. (2019) further highlighted the prevalence of verb phrases, such as *ban Islam*, associating Muslims with generalized delinquency. The findings suggest that such verb phrases create a conducive environment for hostility toward refugees and contribute to the normalization of exclusionary views as legitimate. Similarly, Erdogan-Ozturk and Isik-Gulerb (2020) found that Syrian refugees are often represented with verbs like *steal*, *harass*, and *escape*. Erdogan-Ozturk and Isik-Gulerb argued that these verbs serve as powerful strategies to arouse readers' emotions, perpetuate hate discourse, and undermine empathy toward refugees.

Additionally, recent studies have also expanded their focus on the use of verbs that represent racial groups as an economic threat, fuelling anti-immigration sentiments on social media. For example, Nann et al. (2024) studied the racial representation of refugees and immigrants across various social media platforms in Germany, including Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and Telegram. Nann et al. found that the racial representations of refugees and immigrants were closely associated with verb phrases such as *destroy cultures of Central Europe*, *take away our civilizational and technological progress*, and *seek and reap benefits*. The findings highlighted that these verb-based expressions contribute to stoking nationalist sentiment alongside more covert racist rhetoric of online extreme speech within the German context. Resonating with the study by Nann et al. (2024), Bozdağ (2020) investigated Syrian refugees on Twitter in a different context of Turkey. Bozdağ found that Syrian refugees were frequently represented using verb phrases such as *receiving social help from the state*, *not paying taxes*, and *receiving free housing*. Bozdağ argued that these verb phrases exaggerated the actual status of Syrians in

Turkey, serving as a covert form of racist discourse for online readers that excluded Syrians from full citizenship. Ozduzen et al. (2021) have also explored representations of Syrians in Turkey on Twitter in a related study. They noted that the leisure activities of Syrians in verb expressions, such as swimming, lounge, and having *fun* in public places like beaches, parks, and shisha bars, generated emotional discomfort and discontent among readers. They further found that uncomfortable feelings occur among the posts from those individuals who view these public spaces as primarily for white tourists and who hold the belief that Syrians should not have fun in leisure activities but instead *fight, get injured, or be killed for their homeland*. Ozduzen et al. argued that these verb expressions have attributed Twitter a central role in expanding racist comments and reviving racial superiority in the minds of readers.

3.1.3 Racial representation in the pronoun-based expressions in social media discourse

As an additional consideration, recent studies have examined the influence of pronoun-based expressions on the representation of diverse racial groups in social media platforms. The existing studies primarily focus on different types of pronouns, including first-person singular (I), first-person plural (we), second-person (you), third-person singular (he/she), and third-person plural (they) (DeVeaux et al., 2024). These studies suggest that pronoun-based expressions play a significant socio-cognitive role in reinforcing group boundaries between the host population and racial outgroups, thereby influencing discourse perceivers to interpret and process racial representation.

Regarding the use of the first-person plural pronouns, the inclusive *we*, *us*, and *our* are considered central markers in fostering a sense of victim status in the Muslim community, promoting involvement and belonging for members of the Muslim group on social media (Renaut, 2019). Further, Bouko et al. (2021) have highlighted the correlation between the first-person singular pronoun *my* and the second-person pronoun *you* in the discourse (e.g. *my brother, Muslims are dying. You must...*). Bouko et al. argued that such pronoun expressions construct an intimate social and interpersonal distance within the readers, which is built on social media platforms. While the combination of the second-person pronoun *you* and the first-person pronoun *my* can evoke a sense of identity and solidarity within a group (Li & Su, 2020), it has also been suggested that the second-person pronoun *you* can influence intergroup evaluation, as it can be perceived as the

equivalent of pointing the finger at the other (Chulvi et al., 2023). A very relevant relation in this context has been identified between the use of the second-person pronoun *you* and the accusation of immigrant irruption, positioning immigrants as the inferior group in the extremist messages on social media (Chulvi et al., 2023). Chulvi et al. argued that using the second-person pronoun, *you*, activates readers' negative attitudes, such as attacking, aversion, and antagonism against immigrants.

The boundaries between different social groups, built on the combination of inclusive first-person pronouns *we* and exclusive second-person pronouns *you*, are further accentuated by the use of third-person plurals (targeting refugees and migrants), which would strengthen the emotional projection of group exclusion (Chinn et al., 2023). For example, in the studies examining immigration related to the third-person plural pronouns (e.g. *they*, *them* or *their*) in online communities, it has found that readers are more likely to engage in a radicalized mindset of xenophobic resentment and threat assessment against the migrants (Bäck et al., 2018; Shrestha et al., 2020). Based on this context of increasingly salient social group conflicts, the use of third-person plural pronouns is emphasized in articulating a strong sense of ingroup identity, particularly in the presence of contrasting outgroups, thereby amplifying intergroup differentiation and social divisions (Yoong & Lee, 2023). Interestingly, focusing on Syrian and Afghan refugees represented in Turkish people's tweets, Yilmaz et al. (2023) have highlighted the unique usage of pronouns or pronoun phrases, such as *they*, *them*, *these*, and *those*, *in my country* or *for our country*. They argued that these pronoun-based expressions further reinforce readers' binary thinking, positioning refugees as the unwanted racial group and putting them on the opposite side of the host citizens.

3.1.4 Racial representation in the adjectives-based expressions in social media discourse

A growing body of critical studies has also been concerned with the use of adjectives representing racial outgroups, highlighting its influences on the identity and ideological stances of discourse perceivers in social media platforms.

Specifically, some studies have found that immigrants and refugees are represented as *barbarous*, *harmful*, *lazy*, *cowardly*, and *marauding* presences from external borders, arguing that the use of these adjectives plays a powerful role in shaping a territorial mindset for individuals (Chan et al., 2016; Erdogan-Ozturk & Isik-

[Guler, 2020](#)). In examining the representation of Syrians in Turkey on Twitter, Ozduzen et al. ([2021](#)) observed that racialized traits were used to negatively categorize Syrians through adjectives such as *dangerous*, *promiscuous*, *barbaric*, *dirty*, *uncivilized*, and *inhuman*. They argued that these adjective-based categorizations foster a sense of hierarchical belonging, positioning the host Turkish population in a superior position to define Syrians as inferior. Furthermore, Bosco et al. ([2023](#)) examined immigrant stereotypes within an Italian social media corpus. Their findings revealed that immigrants are represented with adjectives such as *numb*, *emotionless*, *overbearing*, *aggressive*, *sick*, *ugly*, *disgusting*, and *black*, directing readers' attention to a cognitively evaluative process of discrediting immigrants. This evaluative process toward racial representation and actions often involves ideological interests ([Ononiwu, 2023](#)). Aminu ([2024](#)) examined racial representations in tweet discourse by Oduduwa secessionists, specifically focusing on the marginalized Fulani group. The study found that adjectives such as *shameless*, *stupid*, *idiotic*, and *mad* aligned with binary thinking were used. Aminu argued that these adjectives, rooted in dualistic ideology, cognitively trigger a sense of otherness toward the Fulani group, reinforcing racial biases and unhealthy ideologies about them.

3.2 Racial representation in news discourses

3.2.1 Racial representation in the collocates of nouns with adjectives in news discourses

Among recent critical studies exploring the influences of racial representation in news discourse on discourse perceivers, researchers have not only focused on relevant noun-based expressions but also on the collocates that modify these noun-based expressions with adjectives. These highly reality-related, noun-based expressions in news discourse can distort readers' value judgments and socio-cognitive responses towards migrants rather than objectively reporting social reality in life. The negative impact on news audiences would be further amplified by the use of negative adjective collocates, which reinforce the ethnic binary.

For example, the study by Apirakvanalee and Zhai ([2022](#)) examined the discourses in the BBC's podcast, which represented China in an unfavorable light. According to their analysis, China is characterized by negative images such as *destroyer of national security*, *threats to trade imbalances*, *grabs of natural resources*, and *the chaos-maker of aggressive foreign policies*. In contrast, they found that discourses constructing favorable images of Western countries often included lexicalizations with positive traits, such as powerful and competent

intelligence agencies, security, superior democratic values, and legal systems. They argued that such discourse (re)production of racial representation in binary construction plays a sensemaking role, reinforcing negative emotions like Sinophobia among audiences. Another investigation by Nartey and Ladegaard ([2021](#)) examined how the racial representation of the Fulani is portrayed in the Ghanaian news media. It has been discovered that the collocational patterns of nouns and adjectives significantly influence the linguistic processing of textual cues and readers' social-cognitive abilities. For example, readers tend to cognitively interpret the Fulani as *strange enemies* associated with *social threat* when processing negative nouns (e.g., *menace*, *nuisance*, and *impudence*) and adjectives (e.g., *criminal*, *nefarious*, and *bellicose*). Their finding suggested that such criminalized representations of the Fulani group reinforce linkages with readers' preexisting knowledge, further legitimizing the psychological exclusion adopted by the public. In this context, they argued that news reporting serves as an outlet for the broader dissemination of stereotypical ideas targeted at specific racial outgroups.

A similar investigation examined the representation of Indians in the South African newspaper The Rand Daily Mail during socio-historical outbreaks of bubonic plague ([Steinke & Steinke, 2023](#)). The study found that the use of derogatory nouns or noun phrases (e.g. *Coolie location*, *rebel*, or *traitor*), combined with adjectives (e.g. *dangerous* or *unclean*), effectively achieved the communicative goal of language conveying an anti-non-white sentiment to the public. The findings suggested that this linguistic practice, which associates negative nouns with adjectives in news discourse, carries a risk of complicit manipulation in disseminating racism. At the same time, readers engage with a cognitive perspective about the derogatory representation of Indians. In a similar vein, Lindgren ([2009](#)) examined the language use of adjectives and nouns in Swedish news discourse related to immigrants involved in youth robberies. The study found that crime-related representations of immigrants in Sweden remained highly prevalent through the collocates of nouns and adjectives, such as *violent drama*, *the threatening immigrant-outsider perpetrators*, and *the alarming, urgent threat to democracy*. For Lindgren ([2009](#)), these collocates function as a constructed reality in discourse, constituting a particular interactive dimension among social relations. This means Swedish news, as the discourse sender, exerts power over readers by controlling the news information presented, which risks

biasing readers' cognition about immigrants in the continued discourse processing.

3.2.2 Racial representation in the collocates of nouns with verbs in news discourses

In addition to investigating the collocates of nouns and adjectives in news discourse, the representation of racial groups and their actions through noun-based expressions in conjunction with verbs in news discourse has also been examined. Exposure to verb-oriented expressions would lead readers to project themselves as the recipients of the negative behaviors by racial outgroups, thereby fostering their victim awareness in the given language.

For example, an investigation by Nartey and Ladegaard (2021) was conducted into the Fulani in the Ghanaian news, which was represented through nouns or noun phrases, such as *disruptors*, *theft*, *murderers* or *the Fulani's activities*, in conjunction with verbs, such as *threaten*, *rape* or *endanger*. Nartey and Ladegaard argued that readers' cognition develops in response to social attitudes towards the Fulani as a destructive force. Particularly, exposure to verb phrases, such as *terrorize local farmers*, further emotionally manipulated readers' cognition, positioning the Fulani as violent terrorists who destabilize the moral order of society. Similarly, research on Roma immigrants in UK newspapers, where the Roma group is often represented using nouns like *gangs* or *gangsters*, connects their social actions with verb phrases such as *build lavish mansions* and *swindle millions of pounds in benefits* (Breazu & McGarry, 2023). Breazu and McGarry argued such collocates function at the level of lexical signifiers, casting Roma immigrants as criminal exploiters of social welfare, thereby reinforcing public anxieties and insecurities in the discourse processing.

Another example can be found in the representation of Indians as coolies in the South African newspaper, where noun phrases like *the source of the plague* are associated with verbs like *spread disease* or *combat* (Steinke & Steinke, 2023). It is argued that this combination is likely to evoke negative social cognition regarding the Indian group, particularly in terms of the perceived dangers through disease (Steinke & Steinke, 2023). Similar patterns are evident in the study by Nkala and Masuku (2023), which focused on the immigrants in South Africa's mainstream newspapers. Their study found that immigrants, represented in the use of nouns like *asset* associated with the verb such as *transported*, induce readers' impression of the presence of immigrants as an inanimate matter in a subordinate

social hierarchy. Further association with verbs or verb phrases, such as "roaming free," "arrest," "deport," "leading the charge," or "operation to rid," is uncovered to facilitate understanding of the troublesome nature of immigration as a racial issue.

3.2.3 Racial representation in the metaphors in news discourses

Moreover, the role of metaphors related to racial groups has been analyzed, suggesting that metaphors serve as exaggerated resources for facilitating extensive semantic processing and enhancing racially charged interactions within the minds of readers. For instance, an investigation into the representation of Fulani minorities revealed their depiction through metaphorical terms such as "aliens" or "human pests" (Nartey & Ladegaard, 2021). The finding underscores the exclusionary and discriminatory messages conveyed through metaphors that echo the preexisting harmful associations with this minority group as a social threat, further evoking readers' negative social attitude of isolating the Fulani minorities. Similarly, a recent work has examined the metaphors tied to natural disasters, such as *massive influx*, *abnormal influx*, and *flooding to South Africa* (Nkala & Masuku, 2023). Echoing Nartey and Ladegaard's (2021) observations, Nkala and Masuku argued that the metaphorical usage of natural disasters creates ideological connections that promote readers' perceptions towards the dehumanized African immigrants in the discourse processing. Another metaphor-related examination has shown that readers' social attitudes would be potentially linked to the metaphorical usage in the invisible form of racism. For example, by highlighting the metaphorical association of Roma immigrants with *rubbish*, Breazu and McGarry (2023) argued that the stereotypical view about Roma communities as useless and disposable is activated and perpetuates racial biases.

3.2.4 Racial representation in the quantified expression in news discourse

Interestingly, quantified expressions related to racial representation in news discourse have been highlighted as critical factors influencing how readers cognitively perceive and process the impact of immigrant populations. For instance, examining the representation of African immigrants in South African news, Nkala and Masuku (2023) found that African immigrants are closely correlated with quantified expressions such as *huge numbers*, *millions of foreign nationals*, and *over 300 illegal foreigners*. They argued that these quantifiers open the readers up to consideration of the overwhelming population of African immigrants that

comes easily to mind. On this basis, it is suggested that these imprecise quantifications used in relation to African immigrants would impinge on readers' cognitive ability to quantify the actual number of African immigrants, leading to a perception of the African group as a threat to social stability.

3.3 Racial representation in political discourses

3.3.1 Racial representation in the rhetoric of political discourse

The language use of rhetoric related to racial representation is prominent in political discourse, which can be strategically manipulated to influence readers' perceptions about racial groups and individuals. For example, Utych (2018) reviewed how dehumanizing rhetoric influences emotions and attitudes, noting its early impact on cognition about immigrants (Andrighetto et al., 2014; Stevenson et al., 2015). Utych (2018) specifically examined the use of *coyotes* in political speeches—an example of animalistic dehumanization represented through disease metaphors. Utych observed that exposure to such rhetoric elicits negative emotions in readers toward immigrants, including fear, anger, and disgust. Utych argued that these emotional responses, in turn, decrease the likelihood of pro-immigrant attitudes and increase public support for restrictive policy preferences.

Similar to the study by Utych (2018), Lewicki (2023) explored the discourse of political office holders in Britain and Germany, highlighting the need to consider relevant tropes that ascribe essentializing characteristics to people from Eastern Europe. For example, the trope of Eastern Europeans as virus-carrying species is combined with depictions of labor shortages, such as *the Polish Pearl* or *the Polish plumber*. This trope-related usage semantically primes readers' perceptions to associate Eastern Europeans with menial inferiority. Further, Lewicki argued that the tropes, representing Eastern Europeans as the demographic invasion of *welfare tourists*, *benefit scroungers* or *the strained public services*, fostering discriminatory thinking and exclusionary attitudes among the public. This, in turn, supports the institutionalization of differential conditional policy treatment for people from Eastern Europe. The other trope is the attribution of criminality to Eastern Europeans, such as the repetition of Poles as *tricksters*, *Eastern European mafia*, or *traffickers*. Lewicki argued that rhetorical usage exerts framing effects on readers' cognition to perceive Eastern Europeans as a group outside the normative

boundaries of European identity, thereby affecting their cognitive perception of belonging and value.

However, the study by Hart (2021) has offered a different interpretation of the dehumanizing metaphors in political discourse. According to Hart, prior works have shown that dehumanizing metaphors can be a radical process of recontextualizing old discriminatory language (Krzyżanowski, 2020; Utych, 2018). These insights paved the way for Hart's hypothesis that animalizing metaphors establish conceptual correspondences and prompt readers to reason about immigrants within the same frame of reference applied to animals, thereby eliciting readers' feelings of fear or prompting them to consider containment measures. On this basis, Hart went on to expose readers to the conceptual effects of two extreme metaphors used for immigration: one is dehumanizing metaphors involving animal and disease frames, and the other is militarising metaphors involving war and conflict frames. Interestingly, differing from the results demonstrated in the prior works (Krzyżanowski, 2020; Utych, 2018), readers in Hart's study showed an unexpected response: the power of the two extreme metaphors upon readers' conceptual processing triggers their sympathetic attitudes toward migrants and decreases their reception of anti-immigration policies. Hart argued that this result shows evidence of readers' critical language awareness, suggesting they may engage with language more critically than previously assumed.

3.3.2 Racial representation in the quantified expressions in political discourse

Additionally, the strong connection between readers' perceptions and the processing of quantified expressions related to racial representation in political discourse has also sparked the interest of researchers (Zhao & Cummins, 2024). As Van Dijk (2019) pointed out, quantified expressions related to immigration are essentially part of the numbers game played by politicians. These expressions are typically divided into two categories: numerical quantified expressions, which provide precise numbers, and non-numerical quantified expressions, which lack exact figures (Jarvis, 2023). For example, McNeil (2023) investigated the marginalized, such as immigrants, refugees, and ethnocultural and racialized groups, in the political discourse of Canadian federal recovery documents. It has been discovered that a precise percentage in the quantified expressions influence readers' categorical knowledge about collective identities of deficiency (e.g. *too many people from the immigrant, refugee, ethnocultural and racialized (IRER) communities, 13.6%*

[...] are considered high-risk drinkers, and 981 people died in alcohol-related vehicle crashes).

Some researchers argue that quantifiers, such as *hundreds*, *thousands* or *millions*, when used in the context of immigrant or refugee flows, draw readers' attention to the existential meaning of vast and unmanageable numbers, thus evoking fear and anxiety among readers (Goodman & Kirkwood, 2019; Pérez-Paredes et al., 2017). However, Billig (2021) offers a different interpretation. According to Billig, these quantifiers are not actual numbers but function as unspecific non-number plurals with an exaggerating effect. These quantifiers influence individual interpretation and inference regarding the quantity, making it difficult to ascertain an exact figure. In other words, the unspecified quantifiers would hinder readers' perception exact values since one is unable to add *thousands* to an exact number and arrive at a definitive total of the two.

In addition to the exaggerating function of quantified expressions, using quantifiers without precise numbers plays a crucial role in performing both evaluative and numerical functions for readers, often with significant rhetorical effects. For example, quantifiers, such as *vast* and *overwhelming*, interact with readers rhetorically, evoking a sense of the scale of uncontrolled flows from certain racial groups (Espeland, 2022). Building on this perspective, Jarvis (2023) further suggested that these quantifiers carry persuasive authority, aligning with political purposes by reinforcing readers' responses to threat constructions in discourse. By emphasizing the scale of immigration or refugee flows, these quantifiers help attribute significance to preexisting social tensions associated with these racial groups, such as radicalization or gang violence.

3.4 Limited Recontextualization Studies of Racial Representation from Critical Discourse Analysis

Among recently existing studies, limited critical discourse studies have investigated the recontextualization of racial representations associated with psycholinguistic variables, with merely a few exceptions, such as representations of migrants and refugees in Poland (Krzyżanowski, 2020), and Islamic representation in Italy (Newth & Maccaferri, 2022).

For example, Krzyżanowski (2020) used a multi-step model of discursive shifts to analyze the racial representation of Muslim immigrants in the political discourse of the Polish party PiS and its role in sustaining and normalizing anti-immigration views. Specifically, in

the first step, Krzyżanowski found that PiS initially represented Muslim immigrants as cultural and religious threats by associating them with the rhetoric of the Refugee Crisis. These alleged refugees were also represented with the verb of *suffering* while simultaneously linking them with dangerous nouns of *terrorists* and *invaders* in news discourse. Such linguistic choices conveyed a hierarchical subordination of these immigrants, positioning them as a threat to the public. In the second step, Krzyżanowski observed a more radical recontextualization of these refugees in social media discourse, particularly on platforms like YouTube, where exaggerated claims were made, such as the statement that getting 100,000 Muslims into Poland was true (the actual quota of Polish refugees was set at a little over 7,000).

Furthermore, the discourse employed Islamophobic and racist language through the discriminatory use of nominal phrases, such as *parasites*, *protozoans* or *carriers of dangerous diseases*, which were originally used in the anti-Semitic racism discourses. Krzyżanowski argued that this recontextualization served to intensify the previously hierarchical view and visibly distorted the facts about Muslims to readers and audiences. In the third step, *Muslim* refugees are recontextualized in magazine discourse by linking the expression of the *Islamic rape of Europe* with a historical myth of the *Rape of Europa*. This implies to readers that ethnic diversity is equivalent to violence in association with a sexual nature. Further, Krzyżanowski argued that the recontextualization of *Muslim* immigrants not only supported earlier danger-related discourse but also pre-legitimized the discriminatory discourse against *Muslim* refugees in favour of Christian values for readers. This was achieved through the use of verb-based expressions, such as *murder*, *rape*, *burn*, *injure*, *cut heads* and *lay bombs* as well as *destroy churches and households of Christians*. Interestingly, Krzyżanowski also noted the use of sarcasm in these discourses, which labelled Muslim immigrants as victims while simultaneously portraying them as violent aggressors. This paradoxical representation served to undermine their victimhood and, in turn, normalized the moral panic surrounding Muslim immigration.

Inspired by the discursive shift identified by Krzyżanowski (2020), Newth and Maccaferri (2023) proposed that anti-fascism and post-fascism discourse can be seen as efforts to reshape the norms of public expression regarding racism, politics, and ideology over time. Using the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA), they analyzed the recontextualization of political

discourse from the early anti-fascism rhetoric of the Italian party Lega under Umberto Bossi to the post-fascism discourse of the current Lega under Matteo Salvini. Their analysis unfolded in two steps. On the one hand, based on the early anti-fascism discourse by Bossi, it has been found that anti-Islamic sentiment in the public domain was triggered by associating the noun-based trope of *Islamic invasion* with the claim that *immigration from the Third World means fascism*. The rhetoric of *North First*, linked with the independence movement Lega Nord, played a key role in supporting Bossi's political advocacy for Northern Italian independence, which aimed at *fighting for freedom* from the perceived racism and fascism aligned with ethnic culture from Southern Italians.

On the other hand, based on the post-fascism discourse by Salvini, it has been found that the noun-based trope of *dead ideologies* with *pathology* was used to defend against his political opponents' focus on fascism as an outdated concern irrelevant to contemporary politics. Simultaneously, migration, particularly from North Africa, was found in the conflation with the noun-based trope of *terrorists on boats heading to Italy*. This further paved the way for rationalizing his political stance to the public, reinforced by the claim that *the real problem for Italy today is Islamic extremism* and that *immigration should be regulated*. Meanwhile, the noun phrase of *common sense* used by Salvini was found as an indicative evocation of normalizing migrant-blocking attitude as cognitively rational and broadly appealing.

It is worth noting that only two studies, Kaya and Yağlı (2024) and Eriş (2020), have employed a recontextualization approach, but neither explored the recontextualization of racial representation associated with the psycholinguistic elements from critical discourse analysis. Specifically, Kaya and Yağlı (2024) employed analytical tools that combined recontextualization, as proposed by Van Leeuwen, with argumentative topoi developed by Van Leeuwen and Wodak. Their study investigated how arguments of innocence in a speech by Fenerbahçe president Aziz Yıldırım were represented and recontextualized through transformations in Turkish newspapers. The results showed that through substitution, deletion, rearrangement, and addition processes, Turkish newspapers negatively recontextualized the arguments of innocence in Yıldırım's speech. Kaya and Yağlı (2024) argued that this recontextualized discourse shifted the discourse from one of innocence to allegations of corruption, thereby leading to divisions in public opinion and escalating ideological conflicts about a

constructed binary image of Turkish sports, a discourse of corruption versus innocence.

Another study by Eriş (2020) combined recontextualization and corpus-based linguistics to investigate the recontextualization processes that occur in the translation of political news texts from English to Turkish, selecting the BBC and Euronews as the corpus. The findings revealed that numerous transformations occur in the forms of omission, information selection, substitution, paraphrasing, and situational information. These transformations, however, led to differences between the source and target texts. Eriş argued that the target readers are often not provided full access to the content of the source texts due to transformations in the recontextualization processes.

In summary, compared with the wide range of psycholinguistic variables influencing the human mind in discourse processing discussed in the previous section, the studies presented in this section have demonstrated significant influences of racial representation on the cognitive and emotional responses of discourse perceivers. Their cognitive and emotional reactions are shaped by diverse psycholinguistic variables related to those racial representations, such as threatening noun-based expressions, violent verb-based expressions, categorized adjectives, animalizing/militarizing metaphors, binary-related pronouns, and exaggerated quantifier-based expressions.

However, little research has been conducted on the recontextualization of racial representation and its influence on relevant psycholinguistic variables on discourse perceivers. The few existing recontextualization studies have focused on specific racial representations, such as migrants and refugees in Poland (Krzyżanowski, 2020) and Islamic representation in Italy (Newth & Maccaferri, 2023). Methodologically, these limited recontextualization studies predominantly drew upon the traditional framework of CDA, such as a multi-step model of discursive shifts employed in the study by Krzyżanowski (2020) and the Discourse Historical Approach used in the study by Newth and Maccaferri (2023), and thus overlooked a more eclectic and synergic recontextualization-centered approach. However, the combined methods of associating the recontextualization approach with other analytical tools under the framework of CDA, as employed in the two studies by Kaya and Yağlı (2024) and Eriş (2020), provide meaningful insights into the feasibility of the recontextualization approach to critical discourse

analysis. Therefore, the next section focuses on reviewing recontextualization as a useful tool for enriching the interpretative stages of CDA.

4.0 THE RECONTEXTUALIZATION APPROACH

Originating from educational sociology, recontextualization serves as a tool of pedagogic communication operating within particular contexts and times, in which the selected knowledge is reconstructed and re-represented in terms of certain rules, norms and values ([Bernstein, 1990](#), [Dickens, 2021](#)). Recontextualization thus exhibits a dynamic nature characterized by transferability, wherein texts and discourses undergo transformation ([Linell, 1998](#)). In this sense, recontextualization is a mixing process in which 'new' elements, such as particular words, phrases, arguments, and rhetorical expression, are incorporated with 'old' elements ([Wodak & Fairclough, 2010](#)).

Drawing on Bernstein's concept of recontextualization in pedagogic discourse, Van Leeuwen ([2008](#)) developed and extended the concept of recontextualization as an analytical approach to critical discourse analysis. Based on transformation and mixed linguistic elements, recontextualization is regarded as a dialectic practice of colonization and appropriation ([Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999](#)). For example, on the textual level, linguistic transformations of intertextually recontextualized texts can reflect the structure of social practice, such as implementing anti-immigration policies ([Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999](#)). In this regard, recontextualization is further interpreted as a social practice that significantly highlights the social relations of power within governance ([Fairclough, 2003](#)). The complex social relations in the process of recontextualization are concretely manifested in the binary tensions or contradictions, such as between homogenization and heterogenization, globalization and fragmentation ([Weiss & Wodak, 2007](#)). In this sense, the context-dependent complexity of recontextualization processes is prominent, which can be investigated in detail by focusing on linguistic transformations ([Wodak & Fairclough, 2010](#)).

According to Van Leeuwen ([2008](#)), recontextualization as a social practice includes representing social actors in certain roles/identities, actions, performances, times, and locations. The process of recontextualization inherently involves multiple transformations, wherein the knowledge representing these linguistic elements is relocated and reconstructed with different social meanings ([Dickens, 2021](#); [Fairclough, 2003](#); [Kaya & Yağlı, 2024](#); [Van Leeuwen, 2008](#); [Wu et al., 2016](#)). In a sense,

the transformed and recontextualized practices in the given contexts is a productive process, one that not only suggests more significance than what is represented of the social practice itself but also makes the ideas, interests, intentions, and values of the text producer more visible to discourse perceivers ([Kaya & Yağlı, 2024](#); [Van Leeuwen, 2008](#)). Transformation involves "tangible linguistic changes when one discourse is converting from one social practice to another" ([Wu et al., 2016](#), p. 442). In Van Leeuwen's view ([2008](#), pp. 17-21), recontextualization, involving four main ways of transformation, could be an analytical approach in critical discourse analysis, contributing to the cognitive process of discourse perceivers with newly reflexive linguistic and epistemic meanings.

Firstly, the most basic transformation involves the substitution of linguistic elements ([Van Leeuwen, 2008](#), p. 17). This can be achieved through generalized terms that represent social actors in particular roles or identities, objectified behaviors that social actors perform in specific events, or other actions that are spatialized in places. In this way, discourse perceivers will be directed toward concrete, specific people, events and places in a logical manner. For example, Kaya and Yağlı ([2024](#)) studied how arguments of innocence in Fenerbahçe president Aziz Yıldırım's speech are represented and recontextualized through transformations in Turkish newspapers. They argued that substitution is a recontextualization process of corruption construction, as shown by the following extracts:

- (a) We will ensure that Fenerbahçe will not be in the TV coverage system until it is cleaned. (the actual speech by Yıldırım)
- (b) Upon being acquitted, I will make F. Bahçe leave the TV coverage system. (Yıldırım's speech substituted by newspapers)

In the actual speech by Yıldırım, Kaya and Yağlı found that the inclusive first-person plural (we) indicates collective decision-making in the club. However, the newspaper substituted the inclusive *we* with the first-person singular *I*, misrepresenting Yıldırım as the sole individual responsible for match-fixing rather than a collective governance. Meanwhile, *being cleaned* in the actual speech by Yıldırım delivers clearing Fenerbahçe from defamatory accusations. However, the newspaper substituted the verb "*cleaned*" with "*acquitted*", reproducing a discourse that connects Fenerbahçe with corruption. Kaya and Yağlı argued that the substitution by the newspaper altered the reader's understanding of

Fenerbahçe's stance and reinforced a negative association with corruption.

Secondly, recontextualization involves deleting elements ([Van Leeuwen, 2008](#), p. 18). When the representation of social actors or actions in certain roles or identities is not fully nominated, it may lead to a vague understanding among readers or listeners, affecting their assessment of the discourse's credibility. For example, in the study by Kaya and Yağlı ([2024](#)), they argued that deletion is a recontextualization process that generates new meanings, as seen in the following extract: The prosecutor was a Galatasaray fan. I call them immoral. (Yıldırım's speech substituted by newspapers).

In the actual speech, Yıldırım stated that *he would call them immoral*. He also addressed that the prosecutor knows the innocence of Fenerbahçe but has an insinuating bias by indicating the prosecutor's allegiance as a fan of Galatasaray (the rival of Fenerbahçe). Yıldırım further accused those who pretended to be friends but acted as spies and betrayed Fenerbahçe. While he intended to counter defamatory accusations by calling these individuals immoral, newspapers deleted key parts of his speech, such as *would* and the reference to Fenerbahçe's innocence, and recontextualized his language as a more overtly hostility. Kaya and Yağlı argued that the deletion as a recontextualization process attracts readers' attention to the new offensive meaning in Yıldırım's discourse rather than the original claims of innocence.

Thirdly, recontextualization involves rearranging linguistic elements in diverse ways to align with the purposes of the recontextualized discourse ([Van Leeuwen, 2008](#), p. 18). This process can reverse the sequence of real-world events to serve persuasive intentions and hortatory concerns or to direct the attention of readers or listeners in the discourse processing. For example, in the study by Kaya and Yağlı ([2024](#)), rearrangement is identified as a recontextualization process used by the newspaper to align with its persuasive intentions and shape readers' interpretation of events in the context that the newspaper rearranged. The following extract about Yıldırım's speech substituted by newspapers is illustrative: Yıldırım blamed their rival G. Saray for match-fixing and incentive pay, said, "G. Saray and Trabzon wanted to hit us below the belt. We are not immoral; we did not engage in match-fixing." The extract shows that the newspaper adapts Yıldırım's original speech to emphasize the accusations against

Galatasaray. However, the quoted speech by Yıldırım is not presented in its original context but is instead rearranged and embedded into the selective context by the newspaper. Kaya and Yağlı argued that this rearranged discourse in a different context by the newspaper transforms Yıldırım's speech into a tool for the newspaper's intention, allowing it to resonate with readers while simultaneously interpreting and reshaping the original meaning.

Lastly, recontextualization involves adding new linguistic elements that shift the original meaning of discourse ([Van Leeuwen, 2008](#), pp. 18-21). For example, in the study by Kaya and Yağlı ([2024](#)), they illustrated addition as a recontextualization process in the following extract about Yıldırım's speech substituted by newspapers: "We will ensure that Fenerbahçe will not be in the TV coverage system until it is understood that we are innocent of the match-fixing." According to Kaya and Yağlı, the newspaper adds the clause beginning with "until," which connects the concept of innocence to match-fixing in the readers' minds. This addition presents a logical connection to readers: if Yıldırım is involved in match-fixing, then Fenerbahçe is implicated as well. Kaya and Yağlı argued that addition as a recontextualization process further distorts Yıldırım's original intention of asserting Fenerbahçe's innocence and instead embeds the newspaper's evaluative stance of alleged corruption into Yıldırım's discourse.

Taking the discussions mentioned above, recontextualization, involving substitution, deletion, rearrangement and addition, is a significant tool in connecting the socio-cognitive reactions of discourse perceivers to the recontextualized discourse as social practices that serve specific ideological or power interests. However, there are some limitations where recontextualization might not fully capture the complexity of discourse dynamics with the broader socio-political and historical forces, especially when compared to other approaches, such as the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), Corpus Linguistics Approach (CLA), and so on ([Wodak & Meyer, 2015](#)).

As Van Leeuwen acknowledged ([2008](#), p. 22), recontextualization primarily centers on the linguistic realizations of categories within discourse, such as pronouns, verbal modes, etc. In other words, recontextualization focuses on the micro-level process of discourse transformations into a new context rather than placing greater emphasis on the macro-level of the socio-historical dimension that shapes and sustains power relations. For Wodak and Meyer ([2015](#)), although

analyzing these specific linguistic categories is salient and widely adopted in many CDA studies, it would result in an impression that limited concentrations on specific linguistic features are central to CDA studies. CDA, explicitly or implicitly, focuses on the linguistic surface and deep structure of discourse ([Wodak & Meyer, 2015](#)). This involves the challenge, theoretically and methodologically, to address complex interconnections between social actors/actions, social practices and social structures on the micro-level and macro-level ([Wodak & Fairclough, 2010](#)).

Using the Discourse-Historical Approach proposed by Reisigl and Wodak ([2001](#)) and Reisigl ([2017](#)) as an example, DHA links discourse with specific socio-historical dimensions, revealing how discourse is shaped by and serves power structures within particular socio-historical contexts. It emphasizes how discourse evolves alongside changes in the socio-historical structures, offering insights into how power and ideology are embedded in and perpetuated through discourse. While recontextualization is valuable for its focus on how the meaning of discourse shifts from one context to another to modify or reinforce specific ideologies and power relations, DHA focuses more explicitly on the broader socio-historical contexts shaping the form and content of discourse, qualitatively offering a more comprehensive context-driven approach to understanding the interplay between power relations and ideology.

Quantitatively, the Corpus Linguistics Approach (CLA), as discussed by Wodak and Meyer ([2015](#), p. 26), complements qualitative analyses by extending CDA with quantitative tools. CLA methods, such as keyword analysis, collocation analysis, and frequency counts, can enhance the analytical depth of CDA by providing empirical linguistic evidence to support interpretative findings. Additionally, recontextualization may sometimes obscure the role of individual or collective agency in the discourse processing since different readers might have different interpretations of how far-reaching those transformations are. As per the recent call by Gruber et al. ([2023](#)), there is also a necessity for future research addressing the variability in how diverse members of audiences interpret and respond to recontextualized content.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the growing interest in the impact of linguistic elements across different levels of discourse on readers and audiences highlights a significant area of inquiry at the intersection of psycholinguistic research

and critical discourse studies. This review has investigated recent literature on the various psycholinguistic variables influencing discourse perceivers in discourse processing. Due to the controversial complexity of racial representation prevailing in the global context, this review has further investigated recent developments regarding racial representations intertwined with these psycholinguistic variables that influence discourse perceivers from critical discourse analysis.

In terms of types of analyzed discourse, this review found that most existing studies have focused on social media discourse, news discourse, and political discourse ([Breazu & McGarry, 2023](#); [Lewicki, 2023](#); [Nann et al., 2024](#)), with insufficient attention to narrative discourse in novels/stories from CDA ([Forchtner, 2020](#)). Unlike the wide range of psycholinguistic variables influencing the human mind in discourse processing, most existing critical discourse studies have concentrated on specific aspects of racial representation intertwined with different psycholinguistic variables. Specifically, these studies often emphasize the strategic use of psycholinguistic variables to evoke cognitive and emotional responses in discourse perceivers, such as threatening noun-based expressions, violent verb-based expressions, categorized adjectives, animalizing/militarizing metaphors, binary-related pronouns, and exaggerated quantifier-based expressions.

Meanwhile, among the existing studies, it has been discovered that a meager amounts of studies on the recontextualization of racial representation and its influences on relevant psycholinguistic variables on discourse perceivers. In terms of research focus, the limited recontextualization studies have only focused on the representation of migrants and refugees in Poland ([Krzyżanowski, 2020](#)) and Islamic representation in Italy, while little attention has been paid to other marginalized racial groups. As Newth and Maccaferri ([2022](#)) suggested, future work can expand beyond the Italian context. On this basis, the marginalized Chinese immigrants/Chinese Americans in the recontextualized discourses are worthy being examined in the future, particularly given the relevant controversies about Chinese immigrants/Chinese Americans highlighted in the introductory section.

In terms of research methodology, a methodological gap exists in the limited recontextualization studies. On the one hand, the limited existing research on recontextualized discourse of racial representation

predominantly relies on traditional frameworks of CDA. For instance, Krzyżanowski (2020) employed a multi-step model of discursive shifts, while Newth and Maccaferri (2022) utilized the Discourse-Historical Approach. However, both studies overlooked the potential of a more eclectic and synergic recontextualization-centered approach that integrates multiple analytical tools for a deeper exploration. On the other hand, more recent studies by Kaya and Yağlı (2024) and Eris (2020) demonstrated the value of combining recontextualization approaches with different analytical approaches under the broader framework of CDA, offering meaningful insights. Nonetheless, the two studies did not address racial representation in the recontextualized discourse,

leaving this critical aspect underexplored.

Further investigation into recent literature on recontextualization reveals a key limitation of this approach: it primarily focuses on the micro-level process of discourse transformations within new contexts without emphasizing the macro-level socio-historical dimensions that shape and sustain power relations. This narrow focus may overlook the broader social, historical, and political forces influencing discourse production and interpretation. According to Wodak and Meyer (2015), other approaches, such as DHA or CLA, could complement the future direction quantitatively and qualitatively.

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