Impacts of President Trump's Zero Tolerance Policy and Speech on Illegal Immigrants

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Abstract: Under Trump's administration, there were many "brave" policies and speeches that are controversial enough for American founding thoughts which call for equality in the society and the development of the United States. This paper will uncover the influence of immigration policies from President Trump by listing and analyzing the ways that will marginalize illegal immigrants. This paper provides a close scope of the difficulties faced by illegal immigrants because of the harsh immigration policies, and how they will be marginalized in the future due to the unrestricted and offensive words from the speeches of President Trump. The results of the research are that new immigration policies are negative toward the illegal immigrants of the The United States obviously results in the mental health problem of the illegal immigrants and brings fatal damage to the illegal immigrant families. Also, these people who make speeches, due to their own benefit, never pay attention to the possible worse situation for the illegal immigrants, marginalizing the weak group.

Keywords: Illegal immigrants, harsh immigration policy, speeches, damage, marginalizing

1.   Introduction

The problem of Illegal immigrants could not be solved in recent years, and there are numerous concerns about illegal immigrants. There is some research about attitudes towards illegal immigrants from the directions of economics, and what factors influence the attitudes towards illegal immigrants. However, there is little research analyzing the potential reasons which will influence the attitudes towards the illegal immigrants from the policy itself and linguistics, lowering the status of illegal immigrants, in the future, and marginalizing them in society. under the Trump administration, the policies become extremely harsh, and his speeches do not respect illegal immigrants enough. Because of the "Zero Tolerance" immigration enforcement, the children of the illegal immigrants have to be separated from their parents, resulting in mental problems, which will have negative effects on their life for the rest of their life. Due to the indelible trauma and the bias from the majority, there is a high possibility that the policy in the future will gradually ignore the situation of the illegal immigrants, violating human rights to a larger degree. Besides, Language holds infinite power, and it could be both positive and negative. This article will analyze the speeches of president Trump through locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts to identify the negative linguistic power of president Trump: what are the meanings of these words, what are the intentions of Trump, and how it marginalizes immigrant people. Thus, this paper is of great significance for researchers who study

the topic of marginalization of illegal immigrants brought by the harsh laws, and official speeches in recent years.

2.   The Existing Results of the "Zero Tolerance" Policy

President Trump has enacted a "Zero Tolerance" immigration enforcement policy, which will detain illegal immigrants in a facility without the permission of their children. If their parents are not released by the facility, they will be in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). As a result, there were roughly 3000 children who became victims of the policies. It is dubious why the government will pass the crucial policy without respect for human rights. The reason might be that It is possible that an extreme harsh policy will prevent illegal immigrants from crossing the border, but according to the data from the document of U.S department of Human & Health Services, the Number of Newly Separated Children keep increasing from July to November; concurrently, the Proportion of Separated Children increases from 0.47% to 0.91%. Besides, the document indicates that the overall rate of separated children, 0.69%, was twice than the overall rate in 2016, but it is still lower than the peak of the zero-tolerance policy[1]. Based on the data above, the zero-tolerance policy didn't meet the expectation completely, on the contrary, it increased the number of political victims under the Trump administration. There are more and more illegal immigrants who fall into difficult situations, and it is hard for them to improve their situation in the future because of many limitations, such as limited educational resources and mental health problems. Thus, this policy definitely harms young children a lot.

Table 1: Separated Children Referred from DHS to ORR, July 1-November 7, 2018[1].

Month	All Children Entering ORR Care	Number of Newly* Separated Children	Proportion of Separated Children
July	3,864	18	0.47%
August	3,773	25	0.66%
September	4,059	29	0.71%
October	4,339	36	0.83%
November	1,104	10	0.91%
Total	17,139	118	0.69%

The problems of mental health and human rights of illegal immigrant children, in particular, mental health problem, which is caused by the separation from their parents, definitely has a high possibility of marginalizing the young illegal immigrants. According to the research from the Center for Mental Health Services, the trauma of children brought by the separation of parents will cause mental health disorders, and this kind of situation definitely brings extreme harm to the children. According to the letter from the American Medical Association, it emphasizes that the trauma and adverse experience from childhood will impact people's entire life negatively[2]. Also, the president Jessica Henderson Danie of the American Psychological Association states that there is much psychological research that shows that separation from the parents in childhood will suffer severe psychological distress, having the problems of anxiety, sleep disturbance, appetite, withdrawal, aggressive behavior, and decline in educational achievement[3]. However, even though there are many harms from the policy toward innocent young children, it is still prompted successfully. These problems might marginalize the illegal immigrants gradually because the enactment of the policy means that the importance of the human rights of the illegal immigrants is not the same as the importance of the illegal immigrants.

Thus, the most distinct crime of the zero policy is the violation of human rights. Zero tolerance policy violates three pieces of international legislation: The Refugee Convention and its Protocol

which indicates that unlawful immigrants could not be treated as criminals; the refugees and human rights laws set forth by the United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugee which indicates that people could not be detained for any arbitrary reason; and Torture Convention which indicates that separating from the family amounts to torture for the Children[4]. Probably the young age makes them too weak and the number of the young is too few to fight against the policy made by the Trump government. However, it is still emergent and necessary to respect their human rights of them and protect their health and well-being of them instead of ignoring them and bringing harm to them. Indirect social impacts from the words of policies

3.   The Analysis of Language in the Public Speeches from President Trump

Language in the public speeches of president Trump holds dramatic potential harms to illegal immigrants. It will influence the actions and thoughts towards the illegal immigrants, strengthening the bias of the illegal immigrants and bringing an unexpected demagogues future to the weak group.

Based on their theory of Austin, it explains the meanings of the locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts: the actual utterance and its apparent meaning; the speaker＇s intent; the speech act which has an effect on the feelings, thoughts, or actions of either the speaker or the hearer [5]. All of these theories could be used to analyze their roles of them in political speeches to realize how languages could harm people.

Take parts of President Trump's speeches as an example: When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people [6].

According to the theory of locutionary act, the meaning of this speech is that people who migrate to the United States, people from Mexico, are sending problems and bringing drugs and crimes, and they are rapists.

From the illocutionary act, the speakers could have three important intentions behind this speech. The first intention of the speaker is to damage the reputation of immigrants, especially illegal immigrants, by superficially exaggerating the negative influence made by illegal immigrants. However, the so-called negative influence could be explained by some research, which didn＇t support the idea that immigrants commit most of the crimes in the United States and threaten the security of the United States. Mostly, there would not be terrible attacks from the illegal immigrants, because they are not the group with high technology and dangerous weapons, as the situation in 911. Thus, the concerns about illegal immigrants are about drugs, which might bring threats to American society. Nevertheless, according to the research, the illegal immigrants who are involved in drug crimes are much fewer than the native people [7]. Even though it is true that illegal immigrants are involved in property crimes, which will bring economic loss to American society, they are not crimes and threats. Besides, one more factor that needs to be considered is age and sex, and young males are at a much higher rate in prison, in the absence of the citizenship [7]. Besides, according to research, the criminality of undocumented immigrants has substantially lower crime rates than native-born citizens and legal immigrants between 2012 and 2018, in Texas [8]. Both of these researches show that the speeches of President Trump are invalid to some degree. Thus, it is not appropriate to attribute all the problems to illegal immigrants.

The second is to permit that politicians could easily define the character of the illegal immigrants and have offensive words towards them publicly in the future, breaking the political norms, because in the past politicians hardly had such apparent, strong, and direct bias toward immigrants. Based on the book of Tirrell, the violence of linguistics could not be ignored. The book, "Speech and Harm: Controversies Over Free Speech", provides examples that how linguistic harms become physical harm step by step in Rwanda, resulting in the genocide of the Tutsi [5]. If politicians, who could occupy the media easily and have big domestic and international influence, in the future could have

such negative attitudes towards one group of people, the supporters of the politicians, or even worse the normal people, would be influenced, resulting in the uncontroversial tragedies.

The perlocutionary act has effects on the thoughts and actions of listeners. Some listeners are persuaded to believe the speeches of President Trump, which indicate that immigrants will bring many crimes to the United States. For the influence on actions, the officials in the government are persuaded to implement the Zero Tolerance policy, which brings deep harm to the illegal immigrants and violates the human rights of the illegal immigrants, and the details of the Zero Tolerance policy have been illustrated above. According to the analysis above, the locutionary and illocutionary acts both show that the speeches from president Trump apparently bring harm to the people. The harm would be damaging the reputation of illegal immigrants, and making innocent children become political victims – bringing mental health problems to them and violating the human rights of them.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Zero Tolerance policy brings dramatic harm to illegal immigrants, especially the innocent young children which would be further marginalized in the future if the government could not respect the status of the weak group enough and take priority over the majority. Also, the harm from the speech seems to be ignored due to the celebrities, such as politicians, who offend and discriminate against the weak and poor group without fear and hesitation. Both of these would worsen the situation of illegal immigrants. Thus, the study in the future could focus on the situations of the weak group to analyze how their lives were under the harsh policy and offensive speeches. And it is also necessary to find more poenitentia ways that would bring harm to the weak group.

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