



The Role of Semantic Fallacies in Distorting Political Argumentation

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Abstract in English

This current study examines the effect of Semantic errors on the distortion of political arguments via a qualitative case analysis of a specific political speech. The speech was segmented, transcribed, and examined using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in order to find semantic errors such as stuffed language, ambiguity, equivocation, and redefinition. Without offering sound logic, the research shows that these linguistic techniques are purposefully employed to change meaning, elicit strong feelings, and increase persuasive power. The result of this current study has been demonstrated how political actors can use semantic errors to simplify complicated topics, divert the focus of the audience, and influence public opinion, all of which lead to disinformation and political polarization. As stated by the final results semantic fallacies are intentional rhetorical devices that skew political speech rather than being unintentional linguistic mistakes. The study emphasizes the necessity of critical language awareness among audiences in order to lessen their vulnerability to linguistic manipulation and to encourage more knowledgeable participation in democracy.

Paper Info

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1. Introduction

Logical fallacies and biased reasoning have been consistently found in the study of probability judgments (e.g., Gilovich, Griffin, & Kahneman, 2002), although recent commentators have stressed that “the glass is half full” with respect to reasoning competence (McKenzie & Nelson, 2003).

We are mystified by words. Words have been used by humans for ages, even before written history. By using human communication, humans were able to exert more control over nature and advance our species' prosperity beyond what our physical

capabilities could support. Words have given humans a power and reach that far exceed those of our nearest relatives in the animal kingdom. Despite our advanced verbal abilities, humans have not been able to adequately explain the actions we take with words. Words still confound us. I intend to offer some fresh perspectives in this book that could pave the way for a sufficient explanation of how language functions and what we accomplish with words. Equipped with this understanding, we shall explore more facets of analytical philosophy.

As a consequence of writing and the breakdown of speech into grammatical units considered to be signs or symbols, reference was also put into the symbols. Many words are said to stand for, signify, denote or designate, refer to specific objects, concepts and so on. "Proper names" for instance, are said to refer to the people who bear the name. Robert J. Mott Jr. is my name. Both the script 'Robert J. Mott Jr.' and the sound "robert j mott jr" are said to be word symbols that refer directly to me, the person writing this text. Words and other units of speech such as the inscription 'the Queen of England' or the utterance "the queen of england" are said to refer to other people as well. Reference was put into the symbols along with meanings. Reference is the second of the semantic fallacies and will be critiqued in due course (Benom 2007, 2008).

Furthermore, because theorists associated the written word symbols with stable independent meanings after the advent of writing, they also began to associate spoken words with stable independent meanings. The analysis of written words and sentences has led philosophers and linguists to the absurd conclusion that the sounds that issue from human mouths are signs or symbols that have speaker neutral, independent meanings just as the written symbols supposedly do. They attached stable consistent semantic content to the word sounds issuing from human mouths that is indifferent to the speaker's speech history, the speaker's goals and the context of the utterance. The word symbols, both the written and the spoken varieties, were said to have timeless, placeless, stable literal or lexical meanings encoded in them. This is the genesis of the first semantic fallacy, i.e. words of either kind have consistent literal or lexical meanings that are identical for all speakers.

Three of the semantic posits meaning, reference and representation, are erroneous and lead to the innumerable puzzles and problems in contemporary philosophy of language and linguistic theory. As skeptical as you may be, I hope to persuade you that human speech is not a symbolic activity. That being the case, spoken words do not have meanings of any sort; they have no semantic content. Nor do words refer to anything. The words do not make reference. Nor do they represent or express mental content, e.g. ideas, concepts, propositions etc. These three posits are pervasive and pernicious within both philosophies of language and linguistic theory. They are the bedrock foundations upon which all of current semantic theorizing rests. They are wrong. These three errors can be summed up as the semantic fallacies.

A "fallacy" is a mistake, and a "logical" fallacy is a mistake in reasoning. There are, of course, other types of mistake than mistakes in reasoning. For instance, factual mistakes are sometimes referred to as "fallacies". However, The Fallacy Files is specifically concerned with logical errors, not factual ones.

A logical error is a mistake in an argument, that is, a mistake in an instance of reasoning formulated in language. As the term is used in logic, an "argument" is a group of statements one of which is called "the conclusion" and the rest are called "premisses"—by the way, I spell "premiss" with two eases instead of one, for reasons explained in the Glossary; in other words, this is not a misspelling.

Arguments can contain one of two kinds of errors:

A factual error in the premisses. As mentioned above, factual "fallacies" are not usually a question of logic; rather, whether a premiss is true or false is a matter for history or a science other than logic to determine.

The premisses fail to logically support the conclusion. A logical fallacy is usually a mistake of this type.

In logic, the term "fallacy" is used in two related, but distinct ways. For example:

"Argumentum ad Hominem is a fallacy".

"Your argument is a fallacy".

In 1, what is called a "fallacy" is a type of argument, so that a "fallacy" in this sense is a type of mistaken reasoning. In 2, it is a specific argument that is said to be a "fallacy", so that in this sense a "fallacy" is an argument which uses bad reasoning.

Clearly, these two senses are related: in 2, the argument may be called a "fallacy" because it is an instance of Argumentum Ad Hominem, or some other type of fallacy.

In order to keep these two senses distinct, I restrict the term "fallacy" to the first sense.

For me, a fallacy is always a kind of argument (Sperber & Wilson 1986\1995, 1998, Wilson 2004, Wilson & Sperber 2004).

Problem Statement:

Political discourse is often shaped by persuasive strategies that are not always grounded in sound reasoning. Semantic fallacies misleading arguments that use unclear language, emotive word choices. These fallacies have the power to skew meaning, stifle critical thought, and affect how the general public views political topics or politicians. Although, there is limited academic focus on how semantic fallacies operate in real political argumentation and how they impact political understanding and decision-making. This study purpose to evaluate the utilize of semantic fallacies in a particular political context and examine the degree to which they skew political reasoning and influence audience perception.

Research Questions

1. What types of semantic fallacies are present in the selected political case?
2. How do these semantic fallacies function to distort or shift the meaning of political arguments?
3. What is the effect of these semantic fallacies on the audience's perception of the political issue or actor involved?

Research Objectives

1. To classify the semantic fallacies used in the selected political case.

2. To examine how semantic fallacies alter the meaning and interpretation of political arguments.
3. To evaluate the impact of semantic fallacies on audience perception and public opinion.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Political Discourse Analysis

Van Dijk (2002) has argued that the concept of political discourse is liable to be fraught with a built-in ambiguity that emerges quite clearly in the face of issues such as determining the fundamental basis for identifying what discourse, in fact, legitimately falls under the rubric of political. This state of ambiguity provides the backdrop for the existence of what can be called the semantic fallacy where, in nonsensical defiance of reality, meanings are seemingly considered to operate along lines that are preordained but are actually socially and contextually constructed. From the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), political discourses are parsed for the purpose of unveiling their roles in the process of enacting, reproducing, and legitimating political domination or constructing the political resistance against such domination (Van Dijk, 2002).

It is Fairclough's (1992) emphasis that political discourse analysis should be concerned with power, domination, and their societal consequences of (re)creation of inequality. Such an exclusionary definition of political discourse as a micro entry point into the political domain of textual and spoken outputs of politicians or political institutions would be indirectly following a semantic fallacy by narrowing a political discourse by the extent of who is considered "political," i.e., different fractions of elite agents, while glossing over the very major fact that distributes power and ideology within broader social practices. This is the case where analysis of presidential candidates and politicians merely brings into view their language performances while leaving off the discursive mechanics of everyday political dominance. CDA tends to be reflexive in order to sidestep the very semantic fallacies in structuring meanings: how meanings in political discourse are constructed, naturalized, and how they are contested.

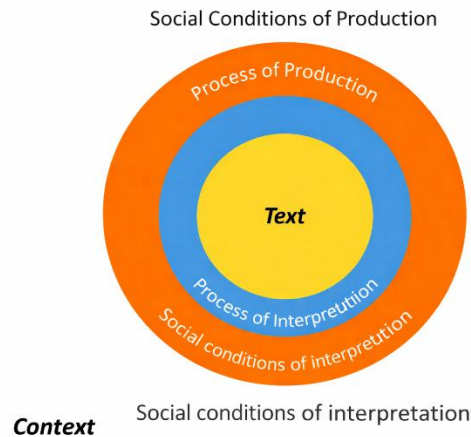


Figure 1: Conceptual framework Fairclough three levels of discourse (Fairclough, 2010, p.133)

2.2 Past studies

Through a Critical Discourse Analysis(CDA) lens, various past studies have analyzed political discourse with a focus on the language through which power, ideology, and dominance are constructed. Such studies build the theoretical and methodological frameworks of the current study, especially considering the aspects of semantic ambiguity and fallacy in political discourse. Van Dijk (1998, 2002) was one of the most influential scholars on political discourse by analyzing parliamentary debates, political speeches, and media texts. The results show how political actors manipulate the meanings to justify their dominance and marginalize their opposition. The socio-cognitive approach proposed by Van Dijk clarifies that political discourse heavily relies on hidden meanings, presuppositions, and vague definitions that can result in semantic fallacies when such concepts like "democracy," "freedom," or "security" are cast to be universally agreed upon Fairclough (1992, 1995) regarding political discourse as a social practice analyses the way language is used to reproduce dominance and inequality. His studies show how political texts often render ideological meanings natural, giving the impression that they are common-sense rather than controversial. This contributes to a semantic fallacy whereby meanings are considered fixed and neutral but hide their ideological nature. Fairclough's work is especially relevant to the current study in that it shines a light on the fact that definitional ambiguities in political discourse are about power relations. Through the Discourse-Historical Approach, Wodak and Meyer (2009) analyzed political speeches and policy documents to demonstrate that meaning is significantly shaped by historical and social contexts. Their studies showed that political discourse often relies on selective interpretations of history and identity, producing semantic distortions that legitimize exclusion and dominance. All these underpin the focus of the present study in understanding how political meanings are constructed and misrepresented. Chilton(2004) was concerned with political discourse and metaphor, arguing that metaphors in political language distort political realities. His findings suggest that semantic fallacies occur when metaphors oversimplify complicated political processes and portray ideological positions as matter-of-factly truths. This coincides with the current study, looking deeper into the hidden meanings and ideological manipulation found within political texts. Reisigl and Wodak(2001) were also concerned with nationalist and exclusionary discourse, covering the ways in which political players manipulate the very basis of the terms

"nation" and "identity" for the sake of justifying power and discrimination. Such redefinitions often draw upon a particular degree of semantic reductionism to reinforce dominant ideologies and further silence alternative perspectives. Although many earlier studies have looked at power, ideology, and dominance in political discourse, very few explicitly deal with semantic fallacy as a focal area of analysis. This study draws on earlier CDA literature to explicitly investigate the ways in which semantic ambiguity, definitional manipulation, and meaning reduction serve as political instruments. By so doing, it finds a place in CDA literature while also providing a sharper image of how language constructs political reality.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research employs a qualitative case study design grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine how semantic fallacies are used in political speeches. The research focuses on the linguistic strategies politicians deploy to distort meaning, shape audience perception, and influence public opinion. Critical Discourse Analysis is appropriate for this study because it examines not only the structure of language but also the power relations and ideology embedded in political communication. Within CDA, this research applies components of Fairclough's three-dimensional model (Text → Discursive Practice → Social Practice) to understand the impact of semantic fallacies.

3.2 Data Source and Sampling

Type of Data: Spoken Political Speech

The study analyzes a political speech delivered by a selected political actor (e.g., national leader, presidential candidate, or government spokesperson).

Why Speech?

Political speeches are rich sources of persuasive language. They allow the researcher to examine:

- Language used in real-time political persuasion,
- The rhetorical strategies that influence audience emotions and reasoning,
- The possibility of identifying semantic fallacies as they occur naturally in argumentation.

Sampling Technique

- **Purposive sampling** will be used to choose the speech.
- Selection is based on relevance—especially speeches addressing public issues, policy debates, or political campaigns.

Inclusion Criteria

- The speech must be publicly available and officially recorded/transcribed.
- The speech should include argumentative or persuasive intent (e.g., rally speeches, policy justification, crisis speeches).
- The speech must address a contentious or debatable issue.

Exclusion Criteria

- Non-political speeches (e.g., ceremonial remarks with no persuasive intent).
- Speeches lacking argumentative structure

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

Speech Identification

A political speech is selected based on the criteria above.

Transcription

If the speech exists in video/audio only, it will be transcribed verbatim.

Pauses, emphasis, and significant non-verbal cues (laughter, applause, emphasis) will be noted where relevant.

Document Preparation

Transcripts are cleaned and segmented into units of analysis (paragraphs or meaningful speech chunks).

1. Archiving

- The transcript, along with metadata (speaker, date, context, source), will be stored in a speech corpus folder for analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedure

The speech will be analyzed using three frameworks combined:

Stage	Analytical Focus	Output
Stage 1: Semantic Analysis	Identify wording that may constitute semantic fallacies: ambiguity, equivocation, loaded language, emotional connotation.	Coding of sentences/phrases
Stage 2: Argumentative Analysis	Determine how semantic fallacies distort argument structure or lead to invalid reasoning.	Classification by type of fallacy
Stage 3: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)	Evaluate how the fallacies influence meaning, perception, political bias, or ideological framing.	Interpretation of political effect

4. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

4.1 Data Analysis

Fallacy One

“High-density development [doesn't] reduce congestion. The superficially appealing idea is that if we all live closer to where we work and shop, shorter car trips and mass transit will replace all those long car rides. But the real world doesn't work that way. Try this thought experiment. What happens at a cocktail party when a new wave of people shows up and the population density of the living room doubles? Is it harder or easier to get to the bar and the cheese tray? Is it harder or easier to carry on conversation and move around the room? As urban population density rises, auto-traffic congestion gets worse, not better, and commute times get longer, not shorter”

Analysis: The overall outcome of this argument is given in the following first and last sentences: High-density development does not reduce congestion; rather, higher density

produces more congestion and longer commutes. The analysis can be achieved through a series of "thought experiment," which is a comparison between high-density development and a cocktail party. At this point, we can see how the argument started to deviate.

Given the situation, if someone decided to perform the proposed "thought experiment," one could envision their time at a cocktail party with a large number of newbies. Will this situation make it less complicated, or perhaps would it make it more difficult for them to move around the room? For sure, it will become more difficult! Does this have to say that the analysis is valid? Certainly not.

The experiment could be done in a new context with a different situation: Assume an individual is not initially at the event and are then one of the new guests coming inside the party. Is it simpler for him to walk himself to the table and get the drink now that he has just arrived? Yes, it would not be hard for him to move around!

Simply to put in words, with an increasing number of people coming into the party, it will get even more difficult for people who have already been there earlier to walk to the refreshment table to get their drinks, but in the opposite situation, it is not difficult at all for those people who just arrived after to get their drinks. Likewise, if someone is currently staying in the city, additional people moving in would undoubtedly render it increasingly challenging for the "old settlers" to go around like they used to, and hence making it hard for them to go to their work. However, if someone resides in the suburban area and relocates somewhere to downtown so that it would be nearer to their workplace, the time for them to travel to get to their work would undoubtedly be reduced.

There is one step that could be taken if we want to tell whether greater density reduces, prolongs, or maintains travel times is by taking a look at the average journeys of all of the people that are being impacted. In other words, although travel durations for individuals who have already reside downtown could rise, travel times for people who will then relocate to the downtown would reduce. We would not be sure if the average falls, grows, or balances. However, this is not something that can be addressed by just implementing the thought experiment; only a legitimate statistical analysis would be able to offer a thorough explanation.

This does not mean that high-density urbanization alleviates traffic congestion. Maybe the conclusion given is correct, which generally means that what we required is a stronger argument for giving better support for the situation. Nevertheless, the cocktail party comparison is flawed, and hence this could be considered a fallacious argument.

Fallacy Two

"Sharp-tongued Benjamin Disraeli, so the story goes, was ordered in the last century to withdraw his declaration that half the Cabinet were asses. "Mr. Speaker, I withdraw," was Disraeli's response. "Half the Cabinet are not asses."

Analysis: Remark made by Disraeli's "half the Cabinet are not asses" was actually meant to be ambiguous and may indicate that: "It does not that half of the Cabinet are asses." Through this sense, Disraeli is retracting his prior comment that half of the Cabinet were indeed asses by denying his statement.

In this case, the word "not" in Disraeli's sentence has a broad reach; it rejects the whole argument that half of the Cabinet are asses. The well-known proverb "all that glitters is not gold" demonstrates that not everything that glitters is gold; or to make it more easier to digest, not all glittery objects can be deducted as golds.

"Half the Cabinet are non-asses". According to this perspective, the denial has a limited reach, denying just the statement's "ass". This interpretation, nevertheless, does not refute Disraeli's initial allegation that half of the Cabinet were asses; instead, it is a result of it, because if approximately half of the Cabinet are asses, then it could be concluded that the other half has to be non-asses!

Disraeli was seen to be able to get the chance to experience two positive sides at once, by making this ambiguous assertion: he might appear to fulfil the instruction to turn back from his first assertion by rejecting it though at the same time he was intentionally trying to deliver the second connotation.

Fallacy Three

"On the campaign trail, [John Kerry]'s in favor of raising taxes on everybody who makes over \$200,000 a year. Unless, of course, he's the one being asked to pay more, in which case, forget about it.

We know this because of a little whoopee cushion recently inserted into the income tax forms of his home state of Massachusetts. ... [A]n anti-tax group managed to place a line on the tax form giving Bay Staters the option of paying at the old, since-repealed 5.85 percent rate, rather than at the current 5.3 percent rate. For two years now, John Kerry has had the opportunity to pay his "fair share." But...the Democratic Party candidate for president has taken the money and ran.

"Why do you even call asking about this?" his spokesman, Michael Meehan, said Saturday morning. He has made the same decision as 99.9 percent of his fellow Massachusetts residents."

Analysis: Originally, I used this to illustrate the bandwagon fallacy, but a reader using a pseudonym wrote in:

“Upon reading this, I was sure that this was a classic example of the Tu Quoque fallacy. The article's author is attacking John Kerry's position that the tax rate on the wealthy should be increased, by pointing out that Kerry did not take the option to voluntarily pay at a higher rate. Whether Kerry, personally, is consistent with his position doesn't have any weight on the strength of his arguments for that position (and I don't think not voluntarily paying taxes at a higher rate is even inconsistent, but that's not relevant). I agree that his spokesperson's reply is a bandwagon justification. However, in today's political climate, where image and character are held above, or at least equal to, position and merit, it is not tenable for a politician to respond to a fallacious argument in such a way. In my opinion, the more glaring example of fallacious logic was the author's attack on Kerry's position. The spokesperson's response, while logically fallacious, was probably deliberately pragmatic.”

Analysis: In a Tu Quoque, one could justify himself against an allegation by reversing the claim. However, this does seemingly not exist in this context of analysis because, as what as we are aware of, the writer has not been charged with doing something that he accuses what things that Kerry have done before.

Instead of criticising Kerry's tax policy, he appears to be criticising Kerry individually as a hypocrite individual. If he were to argue against Kerry's argument by calling out his own dishonesty, he would then be committing a circumstantial ad hominem fallacy instead of a Tu Quoque.

It is to be noted that not all personal accusation can be straightforward be claimed as fallacious argument. That is an excerpt from an article published while Kerry was "on the presidential election campaign". While candidates for political office frequently run their campaigns on platforms, generally, it is only one individual who will then eventually chosen to be elected as the president, and thus all the unfulfilled campaign pledges are not to be taken as a surprise by many. As a result, a candidate's personality is not objectively unimportant. Some forms of personality assaults could be meaningless; for example, a candidate's personal and private transgressions would not be a problem and would not influence the way he would lead the country.

Nevertheless, Kerry's liability for reporting a higher tax rate while previously he had the opportunity and would definitely convince it calls his genuineness in seeking increased rates into doubt. No doubt that the amount of credence to give to this information is arguable, but it did provide a fair insight into the type of individual Kerry was and how he would rule under his power. As for the conclusion, although this article could be seen as a personal assault, one could not categorise it as an ad hominem fallacy. Contrary to popular belief, the text does not, in my judgment, constitute ad hominem against Kerry. Instead, the representative supporting Kerry against the allegation of the act of hypocrisy committed the bandwagon fallacy in the final section. A presidential candidate must not be judged as of the same expectations as a regular people, particular when that mentioned candidate is wedded to the successor to the Heinz vast fortune.

Fallacy Four

“There are very few general laws of social science, but we can offer one that has a deserved claim: the restriction of the concept of humanity in any sphere never enhances a respect for human life. It did not enhance the rights of slaves, prisoners of wars, criminals, traitors, women, children, Jews, blacks, heretics, workers, capitalists, Slavs or Gypsies. The restriction of the concept of personhood in regard to the fetus will not do so either”

Analysis: The writer disputes that constraining the idea of an individual by colour, nationality, financial standing, or age has increased widespread respect for humanity. In fact, he believes that these constraints have decreased respect for life. Indeed, this is hardly unexpected considering that all of the entities used as analogies are actual human beings.

He then proceeds to claim that limiting the idea of a person in relation to human foetuses would carry the exact impact of lowering overall regard for human life. Nevertheless, in order for this argument to operate by comparison with the examples of the other groupings, foetuses should be a sort of an individual. Employing the same process of thought to entities that are manifestly not human would be able to demonstrate the situation.

For example, would limiting the idea of an individual to exclude pigs reduce respect for human life? Many vegans may believe so, but would a non-vegan consider this reasoning convincing? For sure, it diminishes regard for the existence of the porcine, but a pig is not a human being. Likewise, would limiting the idea of a human being for excluding human spermatozoa lessen overall respect for human life? Some Catholics may hold this way of thinking, but should non-Catholics reconsider their stance on contraceptive methods?

To be compelling to those who question the immoral act of abortion, this argument requires to presuppose that human foetuses are actually full-fledged human beings demanding mutual treatment, same as an adult person. If this is the scenario, the implication is self-evident: excluding any living person from the idea of humankind decreases regard for human life by meaning.

Nevertheless, if the foetuses are not yet a fully formed being, the argument loses its tenacity, just as the argument with "pig" or "sperm cell" substituting "foetus" loses its tenacity. By other means, if we already believe that foetuses are a completely human being, this argument is clear, though if you do not believe in this thought, the argument is meaningless.

Fallacy Five

“Hate based on skin color and/or ethnic and cultural differences still festers among us. It's an aggressive monster that actively seeks putrefaction like itself so it may commune and spawn. It spreads like a fungus, seeking to multiply”.

Analysis: When the metaphorical wording in this sentence is removed, what remains is as follows:

There are still racial, ethnic, and cultural prejudices. People who have such sentiments want to share their thoughts and beliefs with other people around them. While the internet has risen in popularity as a means of networking, the same goes for the trend of its usage to disseminate prejudice.

Truth be told, racism and ethnic hate coexist in society, and it is not a complete surprise that as an increasing number of people implement the internet to interact, the same goes for a lot more negative individuals.

The article from which the line was taken was trying to imply that Google, the profoundly known internet site giant, ought to regulate its rankings in order to reduce the propagation of these hate search results. Nonetheless, the passage's power stems from its complex text: racism is referred to as a "monster," a "putrefaction," and a fungus.

Through this method, the writer wants to influence the audience's sentiments instead of pleading to logic. Probably Google and the rest of the search engines must filter their search results, but this argument would not provide evidence to support that assumption.

Fallacy Six:

“...Scientology textbooks sometimes refer to psychiatry as a "Nazi science".

“Well, look at the history. Jung was an editor for the Nazi papers during World War II. ... Look at the experimentation the Nazis did with electric shock and drugging. Look at the drug methadone. That was originally called Adolophine. It was named after Adolf Hitler.”

Analysis: This excerpt is from an interview with Tom Cruise, a well-known Scientologist and actor. The interviewer brings up the subject of Scientology books mentioning psychiatry because Scientology is antagonistic to the field. as a "Nazi science". Cruise argues that the psychiatric medication methadone was initially named for Adolf Hitler and that psychiatrist Carl Jung changed Nazi documents in order to refute the allegations.

The argument is illogical regardless of the veracity of these assertions. Jung's theories are rarely, if ever, applied in modern psychiatry; instead, the medication technique is utilized to reduce discomfort and stifle withdrawal symptoms. The drug's usefulness would remain unaffected even if it had been developed by German scientists who named it after Hitler. Cruise and other Scientologists are attempting to discredit

psychiatry by linking it to Nazism, which is akin to claiming that Hitler's promotion of the Volkswagen makes it a terrible vehicle.

4.2 Comparative Table of the Six Fallacies (Scientific / Logical Analysis)

#	Fallacy Name	Logical Structure	Core Error (Scientific/Technical)	Why the Reasoning Fails	Key Distinction
1	Faulty Analogy	A behaves like X → B behaves like X	Model Invalidity / External Validity Failure	Compared systems (e.g., cocktail parties vs. urban traffic) differ in critical variables. Results cannot be generalized across structurally different systems.	Uses inductive reasoning; error is a structural mismatch , not a language or emotional error.
2	Ambiguity (Scope Fallacy)	Statement allows multiple logical interpretations	Semantic Indeterminacy / Linguistic Ambiguity	The negation (e.g., "not") has an unclear scope, creating distinct propositions with different truth conditions.	Purely linguistic ; no inference is actually tested, only the meaning of the words.
3	Misidentified Ad Hominem	Personal traits used to assess credibility	Relevance Misclassification	Not all personal criticism is fallacious; hypocrisy or character may be relevant to sincerity or policy credibility.	Focuses on argument diagnosis ; identifies when personal data is actually relevant evidence.
4	Begging the Question	Premise assumes the conclusion is true	Hidden Premise / Logical Circularity	The argument presupposes the very point it is trying to prove (e.g., assuming personhood in a debate about personhood).	Error lies in assumption contamination , not analogy or rhetoric.
5	Appeal to Emotion	Emotional imagery → policy conclusion	Psychological Persuasion vs. Evidence	Metaphors and charged language trigger biological/emotional reactions but provide no empirical support for the claim.	Relies on rhetoric and affect , unlike the linguistic errors of Fallacy 2.
6	Genetic Fallacy / Guilt by Association	X linked to Y → X is bad	Causal Irrelevance / Source Invalidation	The historical origin or association of an idea does not determine its current truth, utility, or scientific validity.	Targets origin rather than content; uses social stigma rather than emotional imagery.

Conclusion

The main aims of this study is to show the role that semantic errors play in political communication and how they skew political arguments. As, loaded language, equivocation, ambiguity, and misleading redefinitions involving in Semantic fallacies, are strategically used to shape audience perceptions and influence political judgments, as demonstrated by a qualitative discourse study of a chosen political speech.

As stated to this final results, semantic fallacies are intentional rhetorical devices intended to change meaning and affect how political statements are understood rather than being unintentional linguistic errors. By utilizing these fallacies, the speaker might divert attention from important topics, elicit strong feelings, or present a story that supports a particular political goal. The analysis showed that when language is purposefully twisted, arguments seem more convincing even though they may not be logically sound.

The study also shows that semantic fallacies are a contributing factor to the larger issues of political polarization and disinformation. Political actors can discreetly sway public opinion, simplify complicated subjects, or foster unfavorable preconceptions about opponents by taking use of ambiguous or emotionally charged language. These trends demonstrate the effectiveness of language manipulation in political influence.

At the end, this study emphasizes the significance of critical language awareness for both audiences ingesting political messaging and academics examining public discourse. Understanding semantic fallacies makes people more capable of critically assessing political arguments, which lessens their vulnerability to manipulation and promotes a more knowledgeable and logical democratic society. By comparing several speeches or investigating the connection between semantic mistakes, media framing, and public reaction, future research could build on this topic.

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Abstract in Arabic

دور المغالطات الدلالية في تشويه الخطاب السياسي

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المستخلص

تدرس هذه الدراسة الحالية تأثير الأخطاء الدلالية على تحريف الحجج السياسية من خلال تحليل حالة نوعي لخطاب سياسي محدد. تم تجزئة الخطاب ونسخه وفحصه باستخدام تحليل الخطاب النقدي (CDA) من أجل العثور على الأخطاء الدلالية مثل اللغة المحملة والغموض والمراوغة وإعادة التعريف. دون تقديم منطق سليم، يُظهر البحث أن هذه التقنيات اللغوية تُستخدم بشكل مقصود لتغيير المعنى وإثارة المشاعر القوية وزيادة القوة الإقناعية. أظهرت نتيجة هذه الدراسة الحالية كيف يمكن للجهات الفاعلة السياسية استخدام الأخطاء الدلالية لتبسيط الموضوعات المعقدة وتحويل تركيز الجمهور والتأثير على الرأي العام، وكل ذلك يؤدي إلى التضليل والاستقطاب السياسي. وكما ذكرت النتائج النهائية، فإن المغالطات الدلالية هي أدوات خطابية متعمدة تحرف الخطاب السياسي بدلاً من كونها أخطاء لغوية غير مقصودة. وتؤكد الدراسة على ضرورة الوعي اللغوي النقدي بين الجماهير من أجل تقليل تعرضهم للتلاعب اللغوي وتشجيع المشاركة الأكثر دراية في الديمقراطية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المغالطات الدلالية؛ التشويه؛ الجدل السياسي