

## FINLAND'S ELECTION: IDEOLOGY, POWER, AND CRITIQUE BEHIND THE LOSS OF SANNA MARIN IN THE GUARDIAN

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### ABSTRACT

Finland's prime minister election result is out, impacting a huge shock in European politics. This study examines The Guardian's coverage of the Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin's loss in the recent election, utilizing Ruth Wodak's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis. The study aims to uncover underlying ideologies, power relations, and potential critiques in The Guardian's coverage. The article analyzes The Guardian's April 4th, 2023, publication titled "Why did Sanna Marin lose Finland's election?" and discusses the reasons behind Marin's defeat. The article frames Marin's loss as a "shock," suggesting potential flaws in the electoral system or an unfair outcome. The article discusses various factors that led to Marin's defeat, such as her approach to the economy, foreign policy, and immigration, highlighting their potential impact on voter behavior. Additionally, the article suggests that Marin's loss may indicate a shift towards more conservative values in Finnish society, highlighting a rise in anti-immigration sentiment and a focus on economic issues. The study also considers power relations in the coverage, highlighting the opposition's successful framing of Marin as an out-of-touch elite, which may have played a significant role in swaying voters. However, the study notes that this approach only examined a single source. Further research involving multiple media sources and a mixed investigative lens is necessary to understand discursive issues comprehensively.

**Keywords:** Finland's Election, Sanna Marin, Discourse Historical Approach, The Guardian

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Finland has gained attention for its unique political system and its successful implementation of social welfare policies. The Finnish political system is characterized by a parliamentary democracy, with a President as the head of state and a Prime Minister as the head of government (Wikipedia, 2023). This system has evolved, with significant changes occurring after World War II and the 1990s (Laine, 2019). In short, to begin the analysis, there will be a brief explanation or an overview of the Finnish political system, including its historical development, key institutions, and current political landscape. However, ideology will be schematically organized complexes of representations and attitudes with regard to certain aspects of the social world, which may feature a category "appear-appearance," are the "worldviews" that make up social cognition and constructions of practices from particular perspectives which iron out the contradictions, dilemmas, and antagonisms of practices in ways which accord with the interests and projects of domination (van Leeuwen, 2006) with power relation is drew on a common, egalitarian experience and

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acknowledged the balance of power between majority and minority groups (Paul-Binyamin & Haj-Yehia, 2019), and the criticism of the hegemonic discourses and genres that produce inequities, inequality, and oppression in modern society is what unites critical discourse analysis, not its methodology or theoretical dogma (van Leeuwen, 2006). Thus, the article draws on primary sources, including official government documents and academic research, to comprehensively understand the Finnish political system.

Tracking back to the past, the Finnish political system has 3 important dates, likely in 1809, 1906, and 1917 (Laine, 2019). Firstly, in 1809, after a long time of period, approximately 6 centuries, Finland quit being the easternmost part of the Kingdom of Sweden. It was "elevated as a nation among nations" by becoming an autonomous grand duchy under the Russian tsar. Secondly, in 1906, the Diet of Four Estates was replaced by a democratically elected parliament with universal and equal suffrage, universal eligibility, and unicameralism. Lastly, On December 6th, 1917, the (Eduskunta) Parliament declared Finland an independent republic. Most of the state's systems had been established within the last century.

In the bigger picture, although the Finnish political system is Democracy parliament, the Government is responsible for creating and executing proposals to be reviewed and either accepted or denied by Parliament. In addition, the proposals are presented to the President twice, and typically there are no disagreements between the President and the Government or Parliament. Consequently, a conflict between Parliament and the Government could lead to the Government being overthrown (Laine, 2019). In addition, as stated in Finnish Government (n.d.), "The Finnish Government is to be understood, on the one hand, as the body which convenes for the general governing of the country, consisting of the Prime Minister and other ministers, and, on the other hand, the decision-making body for governmental and administrative matters consisting of the Government plenary session and the ministries." In sum, the Prime Minister is responsible for managing and supervising the operations of the Government, as well as overseeing the planning and examination of issues that fall under the Government's authority. Additionally, the Prime Minister leads the full meetings of the Government and the official Ministerial Committees.

Today, Finland is a parliamentary democracy where political parties compete for power and authority is shared among the top governing bodies. This system does not entirely conform to the classifications of parliamentary developed by political experts (Laine, 2019). Thus, according to Factsheet (2021), the Finnish Parliament (Eduskunta) is a unicameral body. Its 200 deputies are elected by direct, proportional, and secret universal suffrage for a mandate of four years. The Parliament enacts legislation, decides on the state budget, ratifies international treaties, and oversees the government. On June 2019, the next prime minister was elected, Mr. Antti Rinne from Social Democratic Party. However, his reign collapsed on November 27 after he lost the coalition's support of 5-parties (Hall & Brusnden, 2019). The vacant seat of the Finnish Prime minister caused a crack in the government crisis.

In the break of silence, Sanna Marin, Finland's transport minister and deputy president of Mr. Rinne's Social Democrats, skyrocketed into international fame with her coalition government headed solely by women (Howards, 2023). Sanna Marin is a Finnish politician who served as the Prime Minister of Finland from December 2019 to June 2021. According to an article in The Guardian by Henley (2019), Marin was elected as the leader of the Social Democratic Party of Finland at 34, making her the world's youngest prime minister. Another article in BBC News (2021) reports that during Marin's tenure as prime minister, she focused on progressive policies such as climate action, gender equality, and social welfare. Marin was also praised for her leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic, with Finland being one of the countries with the lowest infection rates in Europe (Pilkuhn, 2021).

The purpose of The Guardian's introduction of Sanna Marin is to provide context and background information about her rise to power as the youngest prime minister in the world and the unique circumstances that led to her election. The article begins by describing Marin as a "former supermarket cashier" who became the leader of the Social Democratic Party in Finland and was subsequently elected as the country's prime minister in December 2019 (The

Guardian, 2019). The article highlights Marin's youth and progressive politics, including her commitment to fighting climate change and promoting gender equality.

By framing Marin's election in this way, The Guardian aims to convey the significance of her victory and the broader political context in which it occurred. The article suggests that Marin's rise to power reflects a generational shift in Finnish politics, with younger and more diverse candidates emerging as key players in the country's political landscape (The Guardian, 2019). Moreover, the article highlights that Marin's government is the first in Finnish history to be led by a coalition of five female party leaders, which further underscores the significance of her election in terms of gender representation and political diversity. Overall, The Guardian's introduction of Sanna Marin provides readers with a comprehensive overview of her background, political beliefs, and the circumstances surrounding her election. By doing so, the article sets the stage for a deeper analysis of her government's challenges and opportunities and the broader implications of her victory for Finnish and European politics more generally.

According to several articles by The Guardian, the news outlet has consistently covered and promoted Sanna Marin throughout her political career. From her initial rise in Finnish politics to her eventual election as prime minister, The Guardian has followed and supported Marin's journey. In a 2019 article titled "Who is Sanna Marin? The Finnish PM who could become the Youngest EU Leader," author Jon Henley provides an overview of Marin's background and qualifications for the position. The article also highlights Marin's progressive policies and their positive impact on Finnish society. Similarly, in a 2020 opinion piece titled "The world needs more leaders like Finland's Sanna Marin," author Owen Jones praises Marin's leadership skills and her government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Guardian's consistency in promoting Sanna Marin can be seen as part of the publication's broader support for progressive political leaders and policies.

The Guardian is a British daily newspaper founded in 1821. Initially known as The Manchester Guardian, it was renamed to The Guardian in 1959. The newspaper is headquartered in London, with an international presence in the US and Australia. The Guardian has a rich history of reporting important global events, including the Watergate scandal and the Wikileaks controversy. The newspaper's liberal stance and commitment to social justice have significantly influenced British politics and culture. The Guardian has also been recognized for its investigative journalism, with many of its journalists receiving prestigious awards. According to Burrell (2015), the newspaper has faced various challenges throughout its history, including financial difficulties and changes in ownership. Despite these challenges, The Guardian has maintained its reputation as a leading voice in journalism, committed to editorial independence and journalistic integrity. The newspaper's ownership is held by The Scott Trust, which was established in 1936 to maintain the newspaper's independence. The Guardian's commitment to these values has made it a trusted source of news and information for millions of readers worldwide (Encyclopedia et al.; Media et al.).

Highlighting Sanna Marin as the main focus actor and the result of her loss in the Finland election tended to have various opinions. Therefore, analyzing it through the most respected media in Europe, The Guardian, became the focus. This research tries to analyze the article "Why did Sanna Marin lose Finland's election?" from The Guardian using the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA). The study will employ discursive strategies based on Reisigl and Wodak's (2009) in Wodak (2015) conceptual framework. The key topics for DHA are critique, ideology, and power, which will guide the analysis of the text.

## **METHODS**

This study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the theoretical framework. CDA is an interdisciplinary approach that seeks to reveal the power relationships and ideologies within language use (Wodak, 1999). Additionally, Martínez (2007) explained that CDA is a theory and a methodological approach that includes several stages: identifying the social context, analyzing the text, and interpreting the meaning of the context. CDA

aims to uncover how language is used to construct social reality and maintain power relations (Weiss & Wodak, 2003). CDA has been used extensively in various fields, such as politics (Wodak, 2011), education (Hyland & Partridge, 2011), linguistics (Lu, 2011), and media studies (Kendall, 2007). This approach is particularly useful for analyzing news articles as they often reflect society's dominant discourses and ideologies (Wardani et al., 2020).

The analysis in this study will focus on the use of language in the news article "Why Did Sanna Marin Lose Finland Election?" published in *The Guardian*. The analysis will be guided by the principles of CDA, which include identifying the social context, analyzing the language use, and interpreting the meaning of the context. The analysis will also examine the power relationships and ideologies reflected in language use. The study will draw on various CDA techniques, such as transitivity analysis, modality analysis, and lexical analysis (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). The analysis will also consider the discursive strategies used in the article, such as presuppositions, implicatures, and rhetorical devices (Wodak, 2015).

In addition to the works, Lu (2011) provides a critical discourse analysis of modal verbs in the 2017 BRICS Talk, utilizing a functional systemic grammar perspective. Martinez (2007) discusses a methodological approach within critical discourse analysis, focusing on how to move from theory to method. Wardani et al. (2020) analyze the power of knowledge scholars present in creating research articles using critical discourse analysis. Weiss and Wodak (2003) offer a comprehensive overview of critical discourse analysis, covering its theoretical foundations and interdisciplinary nature. Wodak (1999) reflects on the evolution and current state of critical discourse analysis at the end of the 20th century. Wodak (2011) discusses the discourse of politics in action and how it shapes politics as usual. Finally, Wodak and Meyer (2001) provide a thorough guide to the methods of critical discourse analysis.

Using the Wodak approach was driven by five questions anchored in DHA (Reisigl & Wodak in Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Such questions are specifically presented as follows:

1. How are persons, objects, phenomena/events, processes, and actions named and referred to linguistically?
2. What characteristics, qualities, and features are attributed to social actors, objects, phenomena/events, and actions?
3. What arguments are employed in the discourse in question?
4. From what perspective are these nominations, attributions, and arguments expressed?
5. Are the respective utterances articulated overtly; are they intensified or mitigated?

By analyzing the article, the analyst may learn about the strategies used, the underlying viewpoints expressed, and how Sanna Marin's defeat in Finland's election is handled. This includes examining the linguistic naming and references of political actors and key elements. The analysts also identify attributed characteristics and qualities of Sanna Marin and other social actors. Additionally, the arguments presented regarding the reasons behind her loss was also analyzed in this article. Understanding the expressed perspective and assessing the linguistic features used in articulating the utterances are crucial.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### **1. Employing proper names, professional anthroponyms, and ideological anthroponyms to construct the Finns party as a problematic partner and a potential threat**

Nomination strategies are represented into how persons, objects, phenomena/events, processes, and actions named and referred to linguistically. Sanna Marin, the outgoing Prime Minister of Finland, who is presented as a popular leader, was praised for handling the Covid pandemic and efforts to join NATO. However, despite her and the Social Democratic Party's success, they were defeated in the election, and

Finland is moving towards the right. Marin is constructed as a popular and competent leader who handled the Covid pandemic well and led Finland to join NATO. However, despite her popularity, her party, the Social Democratic Party (SDP), was defeated, and Finland is moving to the right. "Sanna Marin was the most popular prime minister in Finland this century" (paragraph 1) was nominated as the proper name of a social actor, becoming the first sight in the first line of the first paragraph of the article. The prime minister was nominated as professional anthroponyms social actor becoming the most highlighted profession in the topic.

The conservative National Coalition party (NCP) leader, Petteri Orpo, is introduced as the likely next prime minister. Orpo is constructed as a moderate, experienced figure trusted in the economy but lacks charisma. He has promised to cut spending on unemployment benefits and other welfare programs to allow for tax cuts. The text notes that the direction of his government will depend on whom he goes into coalition with, with the far-right Finns party being a possible partner.

Regarding the discursive construction of social actors, the article employed proper names, professional anthroponyms, and ideological anthroponyms. Sanna Marin is introduced as the current prime minister of Finland and a member of the Social Democratic Party (SDP). Petteri Orpo is introduced as the National Coalition Party's (NCP) leader. The article also references the far-right Finns party and notes its increased popularity in the recent election.

The article also used deictic and euphoric expressions to construct social actors. In the social practices of their culture, representations of social actors and their behaviors are inevitably built upon methods of reproduction, such as the media, but also the power of choice: the decision of how to fabricate words to portray a particular reality over another, the selection of images to convey that reality, and, in this case, the decision of how to position oneself within ideological frameworks that portray either traditional values or modern values from within society (Post, 2009). For example, the article noted that Marin was Finland's most popular prime minister "this century," highlighting her recent success. The article also referenced previous elections in Sweden and noted that the right "did well" in those elections, creating a euphoric reference to previous political trends. She mostly referred to Sanna Marin as the main focused social actor in this article; her showing the Possessive determiners indicate possession of or some other relationship to another word or phrase (linguistics girl, 2014). In the text, it can be seen clearly that the article maintained and highlighted most things related to Marin, just like the following text.

Her handling of the Covid pandemic

led her country to join Nato with overwhelming support.

Her center-left Social Democratic party

Her handling, indicating Marin's relationship in handling the COVID pandemic, is well noticed by the Finnish. Her country, indicating she is a nationalist and loyal to her country. Her center-left Social Democratic Party, indicating the relationship of icon, means Marin is likely the icon of her party.

Regarding collectives, the article noted that "the vote for smaller parties in the left-leaning coalition collapsed, and that there are now 10 parties in the Finnish parliament" (paragraph 6). This highlights the fragmentation of political parties in Europe and the weakening of the dominant center-left and center-right parties.

The discourse also constructs ideological matters, such as "the shift to the right, as a general trend in Europe." Post-pandemic worries and economic concerns are presented as trumping everything else, leading to a rise in right-wing parties in various countries. The construction of the far-right Finns Party is also significant in the discourse,

presenting them as having their best-ever election result due to concerns over inflation and claims of excessive non-EU immigration. However, their ideological differences with other parties are also highlighted, complicating their route to government.

Finally, the discourse constructs a fragmented political landscape in Europe, with a general tendency for European politics to fragment. This leads to more significant ideological differences between parties and the inability of traditional center-left and center-right parties to dominate politics. In sum, the article's discursive construction highlights the election's political implications, the rise of the right in Europe, and the fragmentation of European politics.

Furthermore, the article discusses the potential consequences of Finland's election results for the country and Europe. The shift towards the right and the potential formation of a coalition government with the far-right Finns party could have significant implications for issues such as Russia, Europe, climate change, and migration. It also highlighted a growing trend of right-wing parties performing well in various European countries, indicating that post-pandemic economic concerns are trumping other issues.

It used Wodak's CDA theory (Wodak, 2015), identifying various discursive strategies employed in the article to construct and reinforce certain ideas and opinions. For example, the article used selective emphasis to focus on aspects of the election and the candidates to construct a particular narrative. It highlighted the SDP's success in increasing its vote share and the popularity of Sanna Marin. It also emphasized the gains made by the right-wing parties, particularly the Finns party, and the potential difficulties in forming a coalition government. The article also employed various discursive strategies to construct the Finns party as a far-right party with extreme views on immigration and inflation. For example, it mentions the party's claims that excessive non-EU immigration was to blame for inflation. It describes their route into government as not straightforward due to ideological differences over Europe, climate change, and migration. These discursive strategies construct the Finns party as a problematic partner for a coalition government and position them as a potential threat to climate change and migration.

Overall, the article constructs social actors to reflect the political shifts in Finland and Europe more broadly. It highlighted the growing popularity of right-wing parties and the fragmentation of traditional political parties. It also constructed individual leaders, such as Sanna Marin and Petteri Orpo, as competent but facing different challenges in the current political climate. In addition, the article used discursive strategies to construct a particular narrative of the election results and the potential consequences for Finland and Europe. It highlighted the growing trend of right-wing parties performing well in various European countries and positions post-pandemic economic concerns as a significant factor in this trend. It also constructed the Finns party as a problematic partner for a coalition government and positioned them as a potential threat to important issues such as climate change and migration.

## **2. Positive and Negative Characteristics for Capturing Predication**

This part is for representation of how characteristics, qualities, and features are attributed to social actors, objects, phenomena/events, and actions or namely as predication strategies. Using Wodak's theory on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Wodak, 2015), identifying several discursive characterizations of social actors, objects, phenomena, events, processes, and actions in the text. These characterizations are related to Finland's political situation and the recent elections' outcome.

### **2.1 Positive characterization of Sanna Marin**

The text presents Sanna Marin, the former Finnish prime minister, as a popular leader praised for handling the Covid pandemic and leading her country to join NATO with overwhelming support. The text highlights her popularity and that her party, the Social Democratic Party (SDP), increased its vote share and number of MPs in the recent election.

## **2.2 Negative characterization of the far-right Finns party**

The text describes the far-right Finns party as having gained its best-ever election result but portrays them as a potentially problematic coalition partner for the NCP. The Finns' anti-immigrant stance is highlighted as why other parties might be reluctant to form a coalition.

## **2.3 Negative characterization of concerns about Finland's growing national debt**

The text characterizes the right's concerns about Finland's growing national debt as a reason they want to cut social programs to balance the books. This characterization implies that the right is willing to sacrifice social welfare for economic stability, which is presented as a negative development.

## **2.4 Negative characterization of the fragmentation of European politics**

The text characterizes the fragmentation of European politics as a general trend contributing to the decline of classic center-left parties. This characterization implies that the traditional center-left and center-right parties are losing their dominant position in European politics, which is presented as a negative development.

The text presents a complex picture of the political situation in Finland, where the positive characterization of Sanna Marin is balanced against the negative characterizations of the far-right Finns party, concerns about Finland's growing national debt, and the fragmentation of European politics. The underlying premise of rational decision-making models, according to recent research on political thought and behavior, is that people vote for candidates who best share their beliefs on significant issues or who will provide them with the greatest economic benefit. This assumption has been challenged by evidence that suggests people primarily make political beliefs and behaviors out of self-interest. Political identity, or partisanship, has come to light in this recent research as a major influence on political behavior and thought. Research has shown that party affiliation influences voting behavior and policy preferences more than political ideology and self-interest measures (Chen & Urminsky, 2019).

## **3. Finland's Political Situation Critiques**

Arguments are employed in the discourse as an argumentation strategies. The text follows a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to analyze the political situation in Finland, focusing on the recent election results and the possible outcomes. The article uses a persuasive strategy to convince the reader of the validity of specific claims of truth and normative rightness, which can be analyzed using Wodak's theory of CDA (Wodak, 2015).

The first claim is that Sanna Marin was Finland's most popular prime minister this century, praised for handling the Covid pandemic and leading her country to join NATO with overwhelming support (paragraph 1). This claim is supported by evidence of her popularity and actions, and it establishes her credibility as a political figure. The second claim is that Marin and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) were defeated in the recent election, and Finland is moving to the right (paragraph 2). This claim is supported by evidence of the increase in vote share and number of MPs for the National Coalition Party (NCP) and the far-right Finns Party and the collapse of the vote for smaller left-leaning parties. The third claim is that concerns about Finland's growing national debt and the economy were central to the election outcome, leading voters to support the right's position of cutting social programs to balance the books (paragraph 7). This claim is supported by evidence of Marin's shift to the left and the right's successful lean into economic concerns.

The fourth claim is that Petteri Orpo, the leader of the NCP, is likely to be the next prime minister, as he is seen as a moderate and experienced figure trusted in the

economy (paragraph 9). This claim is supported by evidence of Orpo's political career and promises to cut spending on welfare programs to allow tax cuts.

The fifth claim is that Orpo may seek to form a government with the far-right Finns party. However, their massive ideological differences over Europe, climate change, and migration may make it difficult to form a coalition (paragraph 11). This claim is supported by evidence of the other parties reluctance to enter a coalition with the Finns party.

The sixth claim is that the election results reflect a general trend in Europe of the right doing well due to post-pandemic worry and the economy trumping everything else (paragraph 15). This claim is supported by evidence of the right's success in Sweden, Spain, and Poland.

The seventh claim is that European politics are fragmenting, with smaller parties gaining more influence and the big parties of center-left and center-right no longer dominating politics (paragraph 18). This claim is supported by evidence of the number of parties in the Finnish and Dutch parliaments.

The eighth claim is that the big parties' ability to reverse the fragmentation trend is limited (paragraph 18). This claim is not explicitly supported by evidence but is implied by the previous claim and the trend of smaller parties gaining more influence.

On the whole body, the article uses a persuasive strategy to convince the reader of the validity of these claims by providing evidence and expert opinions. Inter-party conflict and political polarization are largely influenced by social group identity. Here, it measures bias in the processing of political ingroup and outgroup faces using ambiguously valenced faces, taking into account inter-party differences in baseline emotional judgments (Basyouni et al., 2022). The article seeks to critically analyze Finland's political situation and its implications for Europe as a whole.

#### **4. Defeating Incumbent Prime Minister in the Recent Elections**

Perspectives expressed nomination, attributions, and arguments. The text presents a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the current political situation in Finland. The article focuses on the defeat of the incumbent prime minister, Sanna Marin, and her center-left Social Democratic Party (SDP) in the recent elections. The article examines the reasons for the defeat, the rise of the right-wing parties in Finland, and the possible impact of these developments on European politics. Employing Wodak's theory of CDA (Wodak, 2015) to analyze the perspectivization in the text. The following are some examples of how the author's perspectivization of the article uses the DHA approach:

##### **4.1 Positioning the speaker or writer's point of view and expressing involvement or distance**

The author of the text employs this strategy to present an objective analysis of the recent political developments in Finland. While the author presents facts and figures to support the arguments, the author's tone remains neutral throughout the text. The author does not express personal opinions or biases towards political parties or candidates.

##### **4.2 Ideological perspectives**

The author discussed the economic policies of the conservative National Coalition Party (NCP), which advocates tax cuts and spending cuts on social welfare programs. The author also analyses the far-right Finns Party, which blames excessive non-EU immigration for inflation and other economic problems. The author emphasizes the ideological differences between the parties on issues such as Europe, climate change, and migration.

##### **4.3 Lexical choices and metaphors**

The author uses lexical choices and metaphors to convey the political developments in Finland. For example, the author describes the rise of the right-

wing parties in Finland as a "move to the right," which implies a shift in the political landscape. The author also uses metaphors such as "post-pandemic worry" to describe the public's concerns about the economy and inflation.

#### **4.4 Implicatures and presuppositions**

The author uses implicatures and presuppositions to convey the possible impact of the recent political developments in Finland on European politics. The author implies that the rise of the right-wing parties in Finland reflects a general trend in Europe, as seen in Sweden, Spain, and Poland. The author presupposes that the fragmentation of the political landscape in Europe is a long-term trend unlikely to change anytime soon.

The social aspect of political identity is significant in influencing how people interpret unclear social cues and ostensibly influencing attitudes and interactions between political parties. Party labels alone were, in fact, sufficient to elicit a shift in valence bias, driven by outgroup negativity rather than ingroup positivity, in the absence of any other cues to elicit political or ideological disagreements (Basyouni et al., 2022). In sum, utilizing the analysis through Wodak's theory of CDA (Wodak, 2015), the article provides an objective analysis of the recent political developments in Finland. The article uses various strategies, such as positioning, ideology, lexical choices, metaphors, implicatures, and presuppositions, to present a nuanced analysis of the complex political landscape in Finland and its possible impact on Europe.

#### **5. Respective utterances articulated overtly; (intensified or mitigated) (Intensification and mitigation strategies)**

Modifying the illocutionary force of utterances concerning their epistemic or deontic status is an important aspect of discourse analysis. It refers to how language expresses knowledge or prescriptions about the world. In environmental discourse, Smith (2022) notes that epistemic modification can be achieved through techniques such as mitigation or intensification. Mitigation involves downplaying or undermining the strength of a claim, such as the fallacy of scientific uncertainty, where a speaker might use the phrase "so-called climate change" to undermine the scientific consensus on the topic. Intensification involves emphasizing or strengthening the strength of a claim, such as the fallacy of equating communism and environmentalism. Deontic modification, conversely, involves language expressing prescriptions or obligations about a particular topic. Examples in environmental discourse might include the topos or fallacy of backgrounding cap-and-trade policies as a form of mitigation or the topos or fallacy of moral duty not to introduce large emissions reduction schemes as a form of intensification. In both cases, modifying the illocutionary force of utterances can be a powerful tool for shaping discourse and influencing opinions. Therefore, it is important to be aware of these techniques and critically analyze language to understand the underlying assumptions and beliefs (Smith, 2022).

The article under discussion analyzes the recent election results in Finland and explores their implications. The defeat of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and its leader Sanna Marin is attributed to concerns about the national debt rather than other issues, such as her handling of the Covid pandemic or the leaked video of her dancing. The article suggests a trend across Europe of right-wing parties gaining support while traditional center-left parties lose it. The text employs strategies of critical discourse analysis, including modifying the illocutionary force of utterances concerning their epistemic or deontic status. One of the key epistemic claims made in the article is that concerns about the national debt played a greater role in shaping the election results than other issues. The text implies this by using phrases such as "it was not a point of disagreement in the election" and "the economy trumped everything else." These phrases suggest that the importance of economic issues, specifically the national debt,

was so great that it overshadowed all other concerns. Furthermore, the text presents this as a fact rather than an opinion, indicating that it is an epistemic claim. The article suggests this trend is not unique to Finland but is part of a broader trend across Europe.

Another key aspect of the text's critical discourse analysis is its examination of deontic status. The article notes that Petteri Orpo, the leader of the conservative National Coalition Party (NCP), is expected to become the next prime minister of Finland. Orpo has promised to cut spending on welfare programs to allow for tax cuts, which the article presents as a deontic prescription for addressing concerns about the national debt. This indicates that the text sees Orpo's proposed solution as a moral obligation or duty rather than simply a suggestion. The article also implies a deontic norm of not associating with far-right parties. It notes that some parties have ruled out entering a coalition with the far-right Finns party, suggesting that this is a norm that should be followed. This deontic norm is presented as a way of maintaining a moral standard in politics rather than simply as a practical consideration. Overall, the text's analysis of deontic status provides a moral framework for understanding the election results in Finland.

## CONCLUSION

The Guardian has maintained its reputation as a leading voice in journalism, committed to editorial independence and journalistic integrity to maintain the newspaper's independence. The Guardian's commitment to these values has made it a trusted news source and information for millions of readers worldwide. The article "Why did Sanna Marin lose Finland's election?" published in The Guardian on April 4th, 2023, discusses the reasons behind the loss of the Finnish Prime Minister, Sanna Marin, in the recent election. They use Ruth Wodak's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis to examine the language used in the article to uncover underlying ideologies, power relations, and potential critiques.

In the article, the writer describes the defeat of Sanna Marin as a "shock" to the Finnish political landscape, signaling a significant shift in the balance of power. The word "shock" implies a sudden and unexpected event, suggesting that Marin's loss was unforeseen and significant. This framing of the event could indicate an attempt to critique the election outcome, highlighting potential flaws in the system or suggesting that the result was unfair. Furthermore, the article discusses the reasons behind Marin's loss, pointing to several factors, such as her handling of the economy, her approach to foreign policy, and her party's stance on immigration. These issues are framed in a way that highlights their potential impact on voter behavior, suggesting that Marin's policies and positions may have been out of touch with the electorate's values and interests. Ideologically, the article suggests that Marin's loss may be due to a shift towards more conservative values in Finnish society. The article mentions a rise in anti-immigration sentiment and a focus on economic issues often associated with right-wing politics. This framing could indicate a potential critique of the direction of Finnish politics, suggesting that the country is moving away from more progressive values towards more conservative ones. Regarding power relations, the article discusses the role of different political actors in Marin's loss. For example, it highlights the opposition's successful framing of Marin as an out-of-touch elite, suggesting that this narrative may have played a significant role in swaying voters. This framing could indicate an attempt to critique the opposition's use of language and discourse, suggesting that their tactics were manipulative or deceitful.

However, the study discussed above was limited in its approach as it only analyzed a single newspaper article. Thus, biased perspectives, stereotypes, and imbalanced perspectivization are possible. Therefore, there is a need for further research that involves a wider range of media sources and adopts a mixed investigative lens of critical discourse studies. This will help gain a more comprehensive understanding of discursive issues by examining intertextual and interdiscursive viewpoints.

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