

The Concept of Identity in Immigrant Discourse

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na koncept identity v diskurzu jihoasijských imigrantů v USA. Práce zkoumá, jak se identita utváří v multikulturně rozmanitém světě, a jak je ovlivněna procesem imigrace. Pomocí kritické diskurzivní analýzy je analyzováno osm blogů indických imigrantů žijících v USA. Jazyk, kterým imigranti hovoří o svých zkušenostech, je zkoumán za účelem odhalení společenských nerovností a pochopení toho, jak imigranti vnímají svou vlastní identitu. Výsledky poukazují na to, jak je koncept identity konstruován a zpochybňován v imigrantském a multikulturním prostředí.

Klíčová slova: identita, multikulturalismus, rozmanitost, imigrace, diskurz, kritická diskurzivní analýza

ABSTRACT

This bachelor's thesis focuses on the concept of identity in South Asian immigrant discourse in the USA. The thesis explores how the identity is negotiated in a multiculturally diverse world and how it is influenced by the process of immigration. Eight blogs of Indian immigrants living in the USA are analysed from the critical discourse analysis perspective. The analysis focuses on the language used by immigrants to talk about their experiences in order to uncover social wrongs and mainly to understand how immigrants perceive their own identity. The results show how the concept of identity is constructed and challenged in immigrant and multicultural environment.

Keywords: identity, multiculturalism, diversity, immigration, discourse, critical discourse analysis

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INTRODUCTION

Multiculturalism is historically quite a new concept, and it is sometimes referred to as the phenomenon of the 21st century (Berkes 2010, 1). Even though multiculturalism has always existed as every nation has always had individuals or cultural groups that stood out from the crowd, the rise of mass immigration in the second half of the 20th century, which was supported by the emergence of civil rights movement, is often considered as the beginning of multiculturalism because countries consequently started to come across the problematics of mixing of cultures and diversity (Vertovec 2010, 168).

The rise of immigration in the USA in recent decades has led to the cultural diversity in many states and the subsequent emergence of multicultural communities (Berkes 2010, 1). Societies are reported to struggle with finding a balance between differences (cultural, political, ethnical, etc.) of the majority and minority groups, with minorities often being pressured and marginalized (Modood 2014, 205).

Uncovering social wrongs (e.g., discrimination, injustice, inequality, etc.), which minorities often encounter with, has been the aim of critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fairclough 2003; van Dijk 2015; Wodak 2014). As immigrant discourse is charged with hidden meanings, ideologies and accounts of being discriminated or isolated, CDA becomes a suitable framework to study the construction of discursive identities and social identifications. Via the study of language, power imbalance and social structures are revealed (Wodak 2014, 311).

To share experiences from their immigrant journey, immigrants often post blogs where they touch upon the topics of social wrongs, socialization and especially identity as the process of immigration has a significant influence on how one perceives his/herself. During immigration identity forms, reshapes and is being challenged due to the international contact which might lead to the changes in values, traditions, beliefs and attitudes (Ward et al. 2001, 100). Furthermore, socialization plays a crucial role during immigration as this process influences social identity which is closely tight to the sense of belonging (Ward et al. 2001, 115).

The aim of my bachelor thesis is thus to study how immigrant identities are construed in discourse and point out how the process of immigration and consequent socialization into a new society influences discourse.

The thesis is structured as follows: the theoretical part provides background to the topics of immigration and identity, giving focus on how these concepts are connected and influenced by today's multicultural and diverse society. Consequently, discourse and (critical) discourse analysis is discussed in order to lay the ground for the practical part which studies identity from discourse-analytical point of view and focuses on linguistic features of blogs by South Asian immigrants in the USA. Furthermore, the analytical part zeroes in on how immigrants view their host country in comparison to their country of origin and whether they find their new "home" in the USA.

I THEORETICAL PART

1 IDENTITY AND IMMIGRATION

Identity and immigration are two concepts that are strongly connected. Yet, due to globalization traditional identities such as nationality or ethnicity seem to be slowly disappearing. Immigration, multiculturalism, diversity and social and cultural mixing make identities more flexible to the point of the idea of multiple identities. It means that a person identifies as a member of more than one culture which often happens as a result of multiculturalism in which features of diverse cultures intermingle (Modood 2014, 206).

1.1 Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism does not have only one definition because this concept is understood slightly differently in various fields. Multiculturalism was first acknowledged by psychology (Pederson 1994; Sue and Sue 1977) and sociology (Hall 1990; Kymlicka 1995) which described it as an internal process of self-identification with multiple cultures. It means that a person considers themselves as a part of more than one culture (e.g., Chinese-American, Czech-German, etc.) and therefore labels themselves as multicultural. What matters is that their cultural plurality is reflected through devotion and commitment to those cultures. For example, as multicultural are considered people with mixed ethnical/racial background, people who have experienced life in different countries, children of immigrants or international couples (Crisp 2010, 89). The term is also commonly used to refer to people with different cultural and language backgrounds, ethnicities and religious convictions brought together due to the factors of globalization, immigration and technological progress (Judijanto et al. 2024, 268).

In philosophical studies, multiculturalism is sometimes described as a political and social philosophy that cherishes diversity and difference while supporting accommodation of immigrants (Berkes 2010, 1). In discourse studies, multiculturalism is understood as a concept of equality which is associated with integration. Integration thus means that people who are perceived as different (not necessarily in a bad light) are treated equally and are given the same opportunities regardless of race and ethnicity (Modood 2014, 202).

Multiculturalism is driven by 3 major factors: (1) coming of immigrants seeking for work and immigrants of former colonial countries; (2) arrival of their family members; and (3) refugee influx in various years (Crisp 2010, 90). Additionally, globalization is often mentioned as the main fuel of multiculturalism; however, globalization highlights

homogeneity unlike multiculturalism which emphasises difference and diversity (Berkes 2010, 3).

Pillars of multiculturalism are tolerance, respect, acceptance and celebration of diverse society in which various traditions, customs and values are acknowledged. In multicultural societies, different cultures do not just coexist next to each other, but they are connected and intertwined while the individualism of each of them is still encouraged to grow and evolve (Judijanto et al. 2024, 268).

Mutual understanding is essential for harmony in such society because heterogenous groups live simultaneously at one place so the conflicts of interests might appear. These groups are referred to as majorities and minorities (Mishra and Kumar 2014, 64). Majority represents the dominant community, which is specific for certain nation state. On the other hand, to minorities belong communities that are distinguished by different culture, language, religion or another feature. They proportionally form the non-dominant part of nation so usually immigrants (including refugees and national minorities) or ingenious people are considered as this group (Mishra and Kumar 2014, 64).

Multicultural societies are not devoid of problems. Interestingly, the biggest ones do not stem from politics, ideology or economics but from a clash of different cultures (Berkes 2010, 1). At the same time there is the claim that multiculturalism policies have failed across Europe (e.g., Germany was not able to integrate a mass arrival of immigrants) mainly because minority groups were often marginalized and pressured to adapt and accept the cultural features of majority groups and therefore the question of equality and cultural identity often arises (Berkes 2010, 1).

Those in favour of multiculturalism (e.g., Hall 1990; Kymlicka 1995) claim that it is possible to preserve original roots and integrate to a new culture without losing individuality but only if certain criteria are fulfilled. In multicultural societies, minority groups are included into the concept of the “nation” and thus viewed as equal citizens with the same rights and access to justice as the majority. Their original cultural background is acknowledged, and they are given freedom to practice customs, traditions and attitudes representing their culture. Nevertheless, the integration can only be applied when it works both ways: thus, immigrants are treated as individuals and not as a mass (Modood 2014, 205).

Critics of multiculturalism (e.g., Huntington 1996; Caldwell 2009), though, claim that it might lead to the destruction of national identity and disruption of peace within a society

(Modood 2014, 202). This presumption is mainly based on stereotypes and prejudice towards foreigners, which have risen especially after some unfortunate events such as 9/11 and other terrorist attacks involving immigrants (Mishra and Kumar 2014, 65). Additionally, the rise of social media in the 21st century and its massive influence has led to hatred, tensions and discrimination of diverse cultural groups (Judijanto et al. 2024, 269).

1.2 Diversity

Diversity is considered as a pivotal key to multiculturalism and addresses an idea that every ethnical group should be entitled to express their own culture (Verkuyeten 2005, 227). Last few decades have seen a noticeable movement of people across the borders (especially towards Western countries) which led to the emergence of multiculturally diverse societies (Verkuyeten 2005, 223). Particularly in the 1990s, cultural diversity was brought to the broader attention of public because of the increase of diversity in politics, media and academic institutions (Crisp 2010, 88).

Diversity has various interpretations. Even though this term is usually associated with cultural difference, it reaches far beyond that because diversity might be also religious, ethnical or linguistic (Mishra and Kumar 2014, 63). For instance, discourse studies address diversity through the lens of inequality, social dilemma and power as formerly heterogeneous societies have experienced a challenge of balance (Verkuyeten 2005, 227).

Cultures vary across the world and sometimes might be sources of collisions because of their seemingly incompatible features that contrast with each other (Mishra and Kumar 2014, 65). In most cases, diversity (especially ethnic diversity as people's cultural convictions, beliefs and values are a major conflict of interests in a multicultural world) is viewed negatively because it might allegedly pose a threat to a national security and social stability (Holtug and Mason 2010, 407). However, Blommaert and Verschueren (2002, 11) argue that diversity can be managed through tolerance and open-mindedness. That can lead to the cultural enrichment, unique perspectives, broadening horizons or innovation that are the positive side effects of diversity if it is treated as something to be endured and cherished rather than something to fear (Mishra and Kumar 2014, 65).

1.3 Immigration and socialization

Immigration is characterized as a movement of people across the borders with a goal to permanently settle in a foreign country. This international relocation of humans has shaped

history, redefined the distribution of nations and influenced cultural evolution. Modern trends of immigration are influenced by the globalization which results in multiculturalism and establishment of diverse societies (Ward et al. 2001, 8).

Immigration is caused by a number of reasons – from immigrants' looking for new opportunities to seeking safety or freedom. The motives for immigration might be cultural, religious, economic or political such as fleeing away from a war or religious oppression (Ward et al. 2001, 8).

In social science, immigration is viewed as a process of desocialization and consequent resocialization. It means that the person cuts off their social ties in their mother country and after immigration is exposed to a completely new environment where they create new social connections (van Tilburg and Vingerhoets 2005, 75).

Earley and Ang (2003, 9) came with a term “cultural intelligence” (CQ) which refers to the individual's ability to adjust to a new cultural environment. The higher CQ a person has, the easier it is for them to socialize, create new cross-cultural contacts and understand and appreciate other cultures (Malik et al. 2014, 196).

The ability to socialize in a new country does not depend only on CQ but as well on a level of commitment and emotional attachment to the original culture. Some of the immigrants feel in the host country as if it was their own home. This statement mostly applies to adolescents who have experienced a lot of moving around because they do not have a feeling of “home” attached to a concrete place which makes them more flexible and gives them an advantage to socialize more easily (Ward et al. 2001, 158).

However, other immigrants struggle with socialization and extension of their social networks due to various obstacles including misunderstanding (e.g., language barrier), cultural difference or because of an attempt to decide whether to preserve their original cultural identity or accept the features of a dominant culture in order to be a part of a bigger social system (van Tilburg and Vingerhoets 2005, 95).

There are different approaches to handling of immigrant socialization, such as assimilation, separation, marginalization and integration (van Tilburg and Vingerhoets 2005, 95). Assimilation implies giving up on person's cultural background and blending into a mainstream culture. In other words, the less dominant culture is swallowed by the dominant one (Ward et al. 2011, 28–29). Separation (sometimes called segregation) does not encourage socialization between new arrivals and locals. Therefore, there can be often seen

establishments of small groups within nations that distance themselves and create communities based on sharing the same culture, language, religion or another similarity. Marginalization is an extreme case when a person “loses” themselves and fails to socialize at all with a consequence of being excluded from a society. Integration is considered as the most desired approach because during this process the person preserves their cultural roots but becomes a part of a society (van Tilburg and Vingerhoets 2005, 95).

Countries often try to facilitate the process of immigrant socialization by numerous strategies with a goal to keep the balance between original cultural identity of immigrants while helping them to socialize in a new environment (Vertovec 2010, 168). Most important is being recognized by law because it provides and secures protection and justice for new arrivals. Schools try to include immigrant children by addressing cultural diversity, teaching how to appreciate distinct cultures or providing possibility of education in person’s mother tongue. Media play a crucial role in the way immigrants are portrayed, and though with right intentions their influence might help to diminish or even avoid discrimination of minorities. Unfortunately, recognition of public cannot be ensured because the stronger the cultural difference is, the harder it is to be accepted in a world where prejudice and stereotypes still linger. However, even small actions can make a significant impact in immigrants’ inclusion, such as supporting social integration through entertainment facilities, providing multilingual public materials, accommodating religious practices, or establishing restaurants that serve cuisine from immigrants' home countries (Vertovec 2010, 168).

1.4 Identity

Identity is defined as an individuality of each person, or in other words, what distinguishes people from one another; thus, this concept emphasises uniqueness and diversity. It helps people to understand who they are, explore new things and find a sense of purpose. At the same time identity helps to make connection with outer world and find a meaningful place in it, as identity is closely tied to the theme of belonging and power (Weedon 2004, 1).

1.4.1 The concept of identity

In simple terms, identity is comprehended as an answer to a question “Who are you?” Yet, the whole concept is way more complex. An answer to this question would vary according to an individual, so it is hard to construct a universal definition because identity is understood slightly differently in various fields (Fearon 1999, 11).

In sociology, identity is characterized by social roles that are played throughout a lifetime – to some of them people are born (e.g., being born as an only child) and some of them are constructed during life (e.g., choosing a profession or hobbies and interests) (Appiah 2005, 86).

In political science, identity is understood as a concept of connectiveness. In this perspective, identity is supposed to connect and unite people with an aim to help them find a sense of belonging based on similar or same attributes that one shares with other group members (Brubaker and Cooper 2000, 10).

In philosophy, identity is seen from romantic and existentialist point of view. For example, Foucault (1998, 262) says: “we have to create ourselves as a work of art” which means that identity is not given but is created by being truly oneself.

Identity is shaped during human life and this process starts already in infancy. Identity is influenced by outer factors that are beyond individual’s choice and those are, for example, education, nation, religion or place where the person lives. Identity is created through contact with others which is conveyed by family, friends or brother society (Appiah 2005, 20).

In discourse, identity is often stereotyped and fixed by the way of narration and mostly distinguishes national, racial, class and gender identity (Bloor and Bloor 2013, 85). National identity is common for people of the same nation who share the same cultural values and beliefs. National identity is in discourse often associated with prejudice (Appiah 2005, 194). Anti-immigrant discourse highlights typical characteristics of a certain nation in a humorous, sarcastic or ironic way. This kind of mockery can be viewed as insulting because of its stereotypical jokes (e.g., Italians are loud and passionate, Germans are not funny, etc.). Whereas national identity is given by geographical construction of the world, racial (sometimes called ethnical) identity is inherited and originates in our roots. Racial identity is expressed by physical features such as the colour of the skin, body shape or facial features. Gender identity is in discourse expressed through different approaches: language is being gendered (personal pronouns he/she is used), women and men are stereotypically represented, interaction of men and women is different based on their way of communication and the choice of language of men and women is situational (Bloor and Bloor 2013, 85–97). Last one to mention is class identity which is based on social and economic status and holds to a certain degree a sense of power depending on the stratification of the society – the bigger the social/economical gap between different classes is the bigger space for inequality there is (Crisp 2010, 23).

When it comes to identity, it is important to mention a distinction between individual and collective (sometimes referred to as social) identity. Individual identity refers to the qualities, individuality and uniqueness of a person (Appiah 2005, 162–163). On the other hand, collective identity describes common features of people, in other words, how an individual defines within a bigger social group (Ward et al. 2001, 104). Every collective identity is specifically structured. First of all, collective identity is connected to labels because as people identify as a part of some group there have to be some kind of consensus of how they will define themselves (e.g., feminists, Christians, gays, etc.). Those labels lead to a process of internalization which means that those who carry the label accept them as a part of their individual identity and behave according to the moral and ethical norms of this identity. Last feature to mention is that people who share the same collective identity are most likely to be treated in a same way which could bring positive aspects as well as negative ones, such as discrimination or marginalization (Appiah 2005, 66–68).

1.4.2 Shaping of identity in immigration

Identity changes and reshapes during the process of immigration. Based on social psychological research (Benet-Martínez 2010) people who are bilingual or multilingual are able to easily switch between multiple identities (their original and acquired cultural identity) which influences their behaviour and perception of the world. Switching between identities caused by immigrant experience is called “cultural frame-switching” or inclining to one or another identity depending on personal preferences and situational circumstances (Foner et al. 2018, 5). For instance, a Chinese child raised in the USA by immigrant parents would most likely choose to identify as an American to fit in because the Chinese cultural identity would be suppressed.

Immigration influences both individual and collective identities. While some immigrants accept the new culture as a part of their individual identity, others refuse to do so because of their strong cultural inclination to their original culture. The extreme situation arises when a person rejects both original and acquired cultural identity therefore finding a balance and compromise between those is important in order to create a collective identity; otherwise, there is a small possibility to fit into new social groups (Ward et al. 2005, 1).

1.4.3 Immigration struggles

Immigration brings the inevitable cross-cultural contact that might be quite challenging – not only the process of socialization but also finding a new job or housing, language barrier,

confusion of cultural identity and especially internal accepting of this life-changing event (Malik et al. 2014, 199).

Cultural shock is considered as a negative feeling caused by a shock or surprise resulting from an immigrant experience and adaptation to a new culture where everything is unfamiliar (van Tilburg and Vingerhoets 2005, 18). According to Oberg (1960, 232), who was the first one to define the cultural shock in the 1960s, cultural shock has mostly psychological influence on self-identity which stems from confusion of roles.

Common signs of cultural shock are a feeling of loss because of abandoning family, friends, workplace and the original cultural environment or feelings of rejection, disgust and anxiety that immigrants might experience while adjusting to a new cultural environment. The immigrant is either rejecting new culture because of strong cultural differences that is hard to cope with or is being rejected by the new society. Nowadays cultural shock is perceived as a temporary emotional reaction to an unpredictable situation that cannot be controlled and therefore is rather stressful (van Tilburg and Vingerhoets 2005, 18–19).

Another struggle caused by cross-cultural transition is homesickness which is as well associated with the feeling of nostalgia (Ward et al. 2001, 233). Those terms are sometimes used interchangeably; yet there is a distinction between them – homesickness has rather negative connotation; however, nostalgia might be referred to with a positive meaning. Nostalgia means that the person reminisces the past rather than living in the present and clings to sentimentality. On the other hand, homesickness is described as a negative feeling of sadness (in an extreme case might even lead to depression) when a person misses their home and wishes to return back. Because of homesickness the homeland is often portrayed in a better light than it actually is and only the good features are emphasized (Ward et al. 2001, 233).

2 DISCOURSE

The term “discourse” first appeared in the 1980s and has been defined by many scholars in various fields thus there is not only one interpretation (Whisnant 2012, 3). This concept became a particular interest of the linguistic field even though it is also a subject of studies in cultural theory or in mainstream and critical linguistics (Mills 2001, 8).

In linguistics, discourse is understood as anything beyond the sentence even though there are other interpretations, such as that discourse equals the language in use or that discourse has even broader meaning because the concept of discourse includes non-linguistic elements of the language (e.g., body language, tone of voice, haptics etc.) (Tannen et al. 2015, 1).

In cultural theory, discourse refers to a social practise that is influenced by the individuality, cultural background and social network of every person because the way one uses language and communicates is reflected in discourse (Whisnant 2012, 4).

Mainstream linguistics came with a shift from studying language solely at a level of sentence to studying language in a more complex way as an interconnected structural system (Mills 2001, 9). This trend broadened the horizons of linguistics because not only grammar, but also social, cultural and semantic factors were considered while studying language (Ilyinova and Kochetova 2016, 20). Discourse in mainstream linguistics is studied as a language in use and is differentiated based on repeated language patterns (therefore, discourse of newspapers, social media, etc.) (Mills 2001, 9).

In the field of critical linguistics, the concept of discourse is connected to the power structures. Discourse analysts explore language patterns and structures based on which it is possible to uncover social and class differences which possess certain amount of power; thus, one can to for instance distinguish between the discourse of lawyers and electricians or doctors and pimps (Whisnant 2012, 7).

2.1 Discourse analysis (DA)

Discourse analysis (DA) is considered as an interdisciplinary approach to the study of language in use because it is impossible to study discourse separately without relations to the fields of psychology, anthropology, social and political science etc. (Tannen et al. 2015, 194–195).

DA focuses on how the language is actually used in communication and interaction between people. It explores how the meaning is conveyed from the writer to the reader or from the speaker to the listener (Trappes-Lomax 2004, 134).

The subject of DA is unit larger than a sentence; therefore, texts are mostly used as a material for the analysis. However, the texts are not studied separately but in context with an attempt to find any possible relations (inside but also outside the text) and interpretations that explain the purpose, meaning and message of the text (Johnstone 2008, 30). The main goal of DA is to identify language structures, aspects and patterns that enable to uncover the meaning beyond the words as DA does not analyse only grammar and the use of vocabulary but rather how the language is influenced by speaker's/writer's perception of the world, cultural/social background and situational circumstances which makes it a complex study of language in use (Johnstone 2008, 44).

2.2 Critical discourse analysis (CDA)

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was introduced in the late 1980s and became an interdisciplinary methodological approach in social sciences which focuses mainly on social relations (Wodak 2014, 302).

CDA considers language as a complex. It examines social phenomena that influence the discourse and explores, for example, the connections between the discourse and ideology, discourse and power, discourse and identity etc. (Johnstone 2008, 52–53). However, the term “critical” does not have to be necessarily understood as something negative as is often misinterpreted. One form of criticality in the analysis is self-criticism, where the author uses self-reflexion to criticise him/herself. Another one is the attempt to “make the implicit explicit” (Wodak 2014, 304). It means that the literal meaning is being questioned and challenged in order to uncover what is not directly implied (Wodak 2014, 304–305).

The principle of CDA stems from the idea that discourse is intertwined with social and economic structures that might be the sources of social wrongs (e.g., inequality, injustice, discrimination, etc.) (Mills 2001, 36). Thus, CDA aims to uncover hidden ideologies and power relations through discursive aspects of language (Fairclough 2010, 8).

There are several approaches to CDA but to most prominent belong Norman Fairclough's Socio-Cultural Approach, Teun van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Approach and Ruth Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach.

Socio-cultural approach to CDA was founded by linguist Norman Fairclough who came up with a three dimensional model of discourse. According to Fairclough (2003, 36–38), discourse composes of 3 interconnected levels (dimensions): spoken/written text, discourse practice and socio-cultural practice. These dimensions are used in CDA to identify hidden ideologies as Fairclough argues that discourse is always ideologically driven. Furthermore, ideology is a tool through which the power is maintained. Thus, CDA might uncover instability of power dynamics such as inequality between social groups and classes, cultural minorities and majorities or different genders depending on how the individual/groups are positioned and represented in discourse (Fairclough 2003, 36–38).

Socio-cognitive approach views discourse as a social tool. Thus, van Dijk (2015, 466–467) claims that CDA should not study only the relationship between discourse and social systems but should also consider social cognition (ideology, norms, values, attitudes etc.) that create one's perception and assumptions of the world.

Last approach to be mentioned is discourse-historical approach which derives from the studies of Ruth Wodak. According to Wodak (2014, 304–306), discourse needs to be studied in relation to its historical context because context involves psychological, social, political and ideological factors that play an important role while using CDA.

2.3 Identity in discourse

In discourse, identity often becomes a subject of analysis as this concept is closely connected to language. CDA analyses identity by considering linguistic factors along with the social and cultural ones (Zotzmann and O'Regan 2016, 1).

It is believed that identity is socially constructed which means that the identity is shaped through social interaction and communication and influenced by the perception of others. Individuals perform social roles as parts of the groups which manifest collective identity (Zotzmann and O'Regan 2016, 25).

CDA studies collective identity mostly from socio-cognitive point of view. This approach considers social factors such as norms, beliefs and values that form an opinion on the identity of the group. However, the members of the group are not examined individually but through their stereotypical or prejudicial thinking and behaviour inside the groups or towards them. When a member of a group differs from the rest it is considered more of an exception (Koller

2012, 20). This approach helps to uncover power imbalances such as discrimination, exclusion or marginalization (Zotzmann and O'Regan 2016, 25).

As people identify themselves into groups through language, linguistic features are used as the parameters for the analysis because the patterns of the language might help to uncover the hidden meaning in the text. To analyse identity in discourse, CDA focuses on their roles as social actors (how groups and individuals are perceived and treated; whether groups are excluded or included based on others' knowledge of them, etc.), positioning (us vs. them; othering; what emotions are linked to identity, etc.) or figurative language such as metaphoric expressions (Koller 2012, 23–25).

II ANALYSIS

3 MATERIAL AND METHODS

The analysis focuses on the representation and construction of identity in immigrant discourse. For this purpose, 8 blogs of Indian immigrants living in the USA posted in the years 2016 – 2024 were selected based on demographical and geographical criteria. The blogs were posted on relevant platforms and appeared in Google search using keywords like “Indian immigrants in the USA”, “Life and experience of Indian immigrants in the USA” and related topics. 8 posts were chosen from the blogs as they contained explicitly expressed points of view on person’s comprehension of identity, cultural difference and their position in relation to the host country.

100% of the bloggers are females. The age of bloggers ranges from approximately 20 to 35 years of age. Only 2 posts mention the exact part of India where their families come from and those are the state of Kerala and Mumbai City which are both located in the southern part of India. Other bloggers referring to the places of their family’s origin indirectly – one mentions growing up near the dessert which might imply the north part of India, and one mentions going to the mountains which might imply the Himalayan range in the north. The material selected is 9,139 words in length, with individual posts ranging from 530 words (the shortest post) and 2,239 words (the longest post).

The blogs were analysed using interdisciplinary approach. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was chosen as the main approach and was complemented with features of narrative and linguistic analysis. Linguistic analysis was used to analyse immigrant language such as the use of foreign words or to identify figurative language such as the use of metaphors, metonymy, hyperboles, etc. Narrative analysis was applied in order to examine the way of narration and attitudes of the immigrants towards their immigrant journey. Lastly, CDA focuses on how identity, social wrongs and related problematics is reflected in the text.

Selected bloggers are Indian immigrants living in the USA; thus, the blogs are written in American English. Examples from the posts are kept in their original form; therefore, they might include typos.

4 REPRESENTATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

Despite the fully established terms “Indian American” or “South Asian American”, which were introduced into the American discourse in the 1980s, the question of identity for Indian people living in the USA remains challenging (Venkatraman 2021). Indian ancestry, background and, for some, Indian upbringing often clashes with the American culture, to which they are exposed to after immigration; therefore, there is a question whether they should identify themselves more as South Asian or American.

On the one hand, they feel that the Americans do not consider them American enough, but on the other, Indians themselves do not feel Indian enough. For example, the author of post [6] writes:

[6] *Despite this multicultural upbringing, I never felt I fully belonged in either world. I was not American enough in America and not Indian enough in India.*

Post [6] points out the theme of belonging. Several posts [3, 4, 6] mention that whiteness was what made one American; thus, they felt that they do not belong because of their different skin colour, so they tried to suppress their Indian identity and prioritize the American one. Moreover, some Indian immigrants reported that they felt ashamed and embarrassed of their Indian identity as 4 posts discuss the issue of identity crisis when Indian immigrants struggled with accepting their Indian cultural background. For example, the shift away from the roots is described in post [3].

[3] *Slowly after that day, my Indian identity began to fade over the years to come, as I pursued my better 'American' identity instead. It began with my refusal to eat Indian cuisines outside of our home, and slowly but surely, I began to speak in English instead of Malayalam to my family, replace the old Malayalam music CDs from the Casio with the voices of American pop singers, and watch the channels of Nickelodeon and PBS kids every night alone, so that I could create new conversations the next day at school with my American friends, while my family took pleasure in enjoying their Malayalam sitcoms in the room beside me.*

It seems that the shift back to the family traditions is associated with the older age in the analysed blogs. 5 out of 8 blogs post report learning to appreciate their Indian culture heritage after reaching certain age (usually after starting college or work life). This marks also the change in how immigrants start speaking about themselves. They acknowledge being nationally American, but they highlight their Indian heritage which appears in 2 posts.

However, most of them refer to themselves as Indian-American – 6 blogs point this out. As they spend a considerable part of their life in the USA they acquired American traditions, customs and life-style but they are as well proud of their Indianness. For example:

[1] *While I take pride in my Indian heritage, my personality has been shaped by my experiences in the US! I am now as much an American as I would consider myself Indian.*

Post [1] points out that even though the author 's cultural heritage originates in India, her Indian identity was reshaped by the influence of American culture in which she grew up; therefore, she identifies herself both as Indian and American.

Situational circumstances and upbringing form the way on how immigrants perceive their identity which is demonstrated in the blog post [4. a]:

[4. a] *As a teenager, I navigated my world as a hyphenated person: two halves of a single identity that were always separate. Embracing my undesirable racial identity as Asian meant inherently giving up my desirable "Americanness." I had spent too long defending my Americanness, too long trying to fit in with the white majority, to give it up by embracing my "fobby" Indianness.*

In the post [4. a] the author is torn between her original (Indian) and acquired (American) cultural identity because as a teenager she thought that they negate one another; thus, she cannot embrace one identity without giving up the other one. However, later in the same blog post she mentions that as she matured she realized that she could consider herself as equally Indian as American:

[4. b] *Embracing my Indianness does not deny me any part of my Americanness.*

Case [4. b] is an example of dual cultural identity which means that the immigrant defines themselves as a member of their original but as well new resident country. Dual cultural identity is mostly caused by immigration but might be as well a result of multicultural upbringing or mixed heritage which leads into combining features of two cultures (Crisp 2010, 127).

4.1 The use of language

Multiculturalism introduced cultural diversity along with the linguistic one, as for instance, in the USA the use of other languages besides English is common among immigrant communities. In the USA there is about 20% rate of people who use features of foreign language in discourse (Crisp 2010, 89). I will look at the use of pronouns for self-positioning, metaphoric language, and the bilingualism in the posts.

4.1.1 Pronouns and self-positioning

Even though 100% of the analysed blog posts are written in first person singular, which is typical for the genre of blogs, the authors of immigrant blogs often use the first person plural to refer to the immigrant community as, for instance, in the blog post [5]:

[5] *We end up looking for people “like us” to hang out or communicate with.*

This phenomenon is described as a collective identity which is used to create a sense of belonging and unity (Appiah 2005, 66). Using pronoun “we” instead of “I” or “somebody and I” as well creates a sense of power because the statement is stronger and more powerful since it does not reflect an opinion of a single person but of a mass. In case of [5], “we” includes the speaker along with other immigrants of South Asian origin.

Pronoun “we” to emphasize collectiveness is also used in the blog post [7] in order to express how the upbringing in Indian-origin families is different from that of Americans. This is as well an example of othering. It means that “we” is put in a contrast to “they”; however, while in power discourse “they” are usually shown in a bad light (Said 1979, 12), in immigrant discourse we notice that “they” are portrayed depending on the perspective of immigrant narration.

[7] *We are also taught that if you work hard, you will automatically be noticed, and so self-advocacy and -promotion are discouraged, and even deemed as “being cocky/self-centered” or a “bad omen.”*

In this case, the author distances herself from her Americanness and emphasises her Indianness through the pronoun “we”. In [7], “we” includes the speaker along with the other children brought up in “Asian immigrant community”. She positions herself as exclusively Indian even though she grew up in the USA so it would be expected that she identifies herself as South Asian-American.

First person pronoun “I” appears in blogs when the immigrants position themselves as outsiders and victims who do not fit in American society because they are often misunderstood and outcasted due to their Indian background. They often associate their life in the USA with embarrassment, shame, discrimination, loneliness and mockery. Good example can be seen in blog post [3] where the Indian immigrant who grew up in the USA positions herself as a victim of bullying.

[3] *As a child, I had felt like a misfit. I was timid, and felt alone in those very instances, disappointed after being greeted by the same faces that proceeded to taunt me every day.*

In post [3], the blogger refers to herself as a “misfit” due to struggles finding a sense of belonging and she uses words like “timid” or “alone” to refer to the emotional alienation from her peers, social exclusion and loneliness which is conveyed through the pronoun “I”.

Similar case of alienation appears in post [4] where the blogger positions herself as an outsider through the pronoun “I”:

[4] *Growing up, I always felt like an outsider, like I wasn't a real American despite being born and raised here.*

Post [4] emphasises emotional and social distance between the blogger and her American peers which is based on the colour of the skin because that is apparently what makes one “real American”, not citizenship and birthplace.

4.1.2 Figurative language in self-representation

Immigrants are often referring to their immigration and relating problematics not directly, but with a use of figurative language.

Metaphors were used in 20 instances in 7 blog posts. Most of them are tied to the themes of identity, belonging and emotional struggle during immigration journey as, for instance, in the blog post [3]. Identity is described here as something that can fade away and disappear over the years which symbolises detachment from original cultural roots.

[3] *Slowly after that day, my Indian identity began to fade over the years to come, as I pursued my better 'American' identity instead.*

Another example of metaphor is from the blog post [2]. Verb “bleeds” is used here to express the emotional pain and suffering of immigrant community who has to deal with issues such as racism or discrimination.

[2] *Our community bleeds when verbal and physical attacks occur.*

Metonymy in blog post [4. a], does not stand here only for the colour of skin but also represents the mainstream American culture.

[4. a] *“Too often, ‘Americanness’ is equated with ‘whiteness.’*

Immigrants are often using figurative language in order to describe unpleasant experiences such as discrimination, bullying or misunderstanding such as in the blog post [5. a].

[5. a] *My experiences make me who I am, but they also equally and easily distinguish me from American life.*

In post [5], the author does not directly explain what she means by “experiences”, but she claims that they made her stronger; therefore, one might assume that she refers to obstacles relating to her immigrant journey. She as well mentions “American life” which is an example of metonymy as it stands for cultural norms, values, beliefs and life-style.

Hyperbole is the second most frequently used figure throughout the blogs (used 10 times) because the exaggeration of negative experiences makes the reader emotional thus the discourse is more powerful. Immigrants use hyperbole to describe emotional distress, struggles and challenges relating to their immigrant journey. The hyperbole from the blog post [4. b] helps the blogger to describe herself as “practically white” which is an exaggeration to express how she assimilated to an American culture.

[4. b] *By the time I was a teenager, I had become “practically white” to my friends—a label I wore proudly.*

The author of the blog post [5] is making a reference to Brené Brown which is an example of allusion. To understand the context, Brené Brown is an American writer and an author of her own podcast. In her broadcasts she emphasizes that everyone is worth of love and belonging (Brown 2019). In the blog is not explained what an exact relation to Brown is but one might assume that the blogger was struggling with belonging during her integration journey therefore she mentions Brown.

[5. b] *Yet, throughout my journey, I have had a constant feeling of something missing from my life and only recently, while listening to Brené Brown, I realized I was struggling with the idea of belonging and fitting in.*

This case is as well an example of journey metaphor. Immigration is compared here to a “journey” which is described as a long-run search for fulfilment and inner peace (“I have had a constant feeling of something missing from my life”) and contains obstacles and struggles especially when it comes to acceptance (“I was struggling with the idea of belonging and fitting in.”)

4.1.3 Bilingualism

In 6 of the blogs, we can encounter with several words or from the immigrants’ native languages of the Indian subcontinent, such as Hindi, Malayalam, etc. incorporated into their

texts. While some of these are used as cultural allusions, they are also linked to immigrants' bilingualism or even multilingualism. Another reason for using foreign words is the attempt to keep the "Indianness" in the text as a part of author's Indian identity, further assuming that the aimed audience of these blogs are other Indian immigrants who can relate to those stories.

There are 5 groups of foreign words (food, religion, clothes, everyday life and entertainment) used in the blogs. Below is a list of all these words that were used throughout the blogs:

Table 1: List of foreign words

	COUSINE	
1	Masala	Mixture of spices [1]
2	Dal	Lentils [2]
3	Tandoori chicken	Skewed chicken roasted in a tandoori oven [2]
4	Sambar	South Indian traditional vegetable stew [3]
5	Dosas	Rice crepes originating from South India [3]
6	Chicken biriyani	Variation of chicken with rice [7, 8]
7	Gulab jamuns	Dessert [8]
	CLOTHING	
8	Churidar	Tightly fitting trousers worn by both men and women [3]
9	Saree/sari	Long piece of cloth worn by Indian women [3,8]
10	Kameez	Long tunic worn by both men and women [8]
	CULTURAL PRACTICES	
11	Namaste	Respectful greeting [1]
12	Pujari	Hindu priest [8]
13	Karma	Good or bad luck resulting from one's actions [8]
	EVERYDAY LIFE	

14	Batamese	Brat [8]
15	Rickshaw	Vehicle used for transportation [8]
	ENTERTAINMENT	
16	Bollywood	Combination of words Bombay and Hollywood used in film industry [5]

One group of such words are foreign words, which cannot be translated from Indian to English, since they denote unique experiences or cultural practices. For example, “Pujari” used in blog [8] translates as a Hindu priest responsible for religious rituals in temples. Here the expression refers to something unique to Hinduism, the majority religion on the subcontinent; thus, no similar concept exists in English.

Second group are names of the dishes that are typical for Indian cuisine. Some of them are borrowed to English due to their popularity among western cultures. For instance, “Tandoori chicken” used in the blog post [2] immediately indicates the type of dish – often commonly found in Indian restaurants across the world. On the other hand, “Gulab jamuns” in blog post [8] referring to a traditional Indian dessert might be slightly less known.

Another category of foreign words refers to national clothing. These pieces of attire are part of Indian national costumes that are worn in India on a daily basis as well as during special occasions including religious ceremonies, weddings, festivals etc. These terms appear in the blog post [3] and [8].

Next group of those words reflect some ways of Indian life. For example, “Rickshaw” is a word already known in the western world through media, but it originates in Asian culture as this vehicle is mostly used for transportation in India and other Asian countries.

Last group of foreign words is related to entertainment. I identified only one word from this category and that is “Bollywood” which was created by combining words Bombay and Hollywood and stands for Hindi-language film industry.

In total 16 foreign words were used throughout the blogs (some of them more than once) and more than half of them appeared in blog post [8]. Some of those words are commonly used among English speakers (e.g., “Karma”, “Rickshaw”), however, some of them are still more typical for Indian or other South-Asian culture (e.g., “Churidar”, “Batamese”). Almost half of those words were names of dishes from Indian cuisine, which on the one hand reflect

the effect of India's soft power in the world politics, and on the other hand point to the phenomenon known as "food-evoked nostalgia" (Reid et al. 2022, 34). The foreign words were incorporated into the English language in an attempt to keep a hint of the Indian identity in the text as all blog posts (in total 5), which mentioned this kind of words, express respect to the Indian background.

4.2 Representation of host vs. home country

This section captures how Indian immigrants view their host country in comparison to the country of their or their parental origin.

4.2.1 Host country

The attitudes towards the host country can be divided into 2 groups: (1) beliefs and attitudes about the USA while living in India; (2) beliefs and attitudes of the USA while living in the USA.

When describing their perceptions of the USA before coming there, Indians are referring to the USA as to the "dream land" [1, 8] with countless possibilities and opportunities. Their expectations about the USA are high, and they assume that their life will drastically improve after moving to the USA mainly because of the way the USA is portrayed in commercial shows, movies, books, media etc. as can be seen in the following example:

[1. a] *Growing up in India the idea of America was created based on American authored books, hep TV shows like Beverly Hills 90210 and movies like Pretty Woman and other Hollywood hits! We were in awe of American life, its high-rises, fast cars and outspoken, 'speak your mind' youth!*

Words of positive connotation such as tolerance, acceptance, embracement, etc. are used to describe the image of American life.

However, after Indians immigrate to the USA, their idealist view of the country shatters and they come in touch with the reality of high taxes, lower salary than expected or unfamiliar environment as demonstrated in the blog post [1. b]:

[1. b] *However, coming to Bowling Green, KY felt different. It was not in line with the stereotypical American image that I had clung to for so long! I had arrived in a small, quiet, mid-western town, with people speaking in an English accent that was unfamiliar to me. There were no high-rises here or the fast pace that popular western movies had portrayed.*

The disappointment usually stems from the lack of acceptance because all 8 blog posts describe hostile or unfriendly attitude of Americans towards Indians. These include cases of discrimination based on skin colour [2, 4], intolerance to cultural practices [4], implications of legislature and visa requirements [5, 7] or mockery of an Indian culture [7, 8]. For example:

[3] *I would be called various nicknames and words or be treated differently, simply because I didn't fit the standard profile of the 'American child', and I vividly remember instances of this happening.*

Blog post [3] points out verbal assaults and highlights the word “different” which is used here with negative connotation. It denotes judgmental behaviour from others, alienation and no respect from Americans to the Indians.

Nevertheless, as soon as the immigrants adjust to the new environment and overcome initial obstacles and problems such as cultural shock or language barrier, there is a positive twist in their attitudes towards their host country as demonstrated below:

[1. c] *Despite initial hiccups in adjusting, the free-spiritedness, conveniences/opportunities offered in America had me hooked!*

In blog post [1. c] is shown a change of attitude towards the USA from negative (“initial hiccups” is a metaphor which denotes small problems, obstacles or disruptions) to positive as the country is associated with “free-spiritedness” and positive prospects for life.

Only 3 posts express appreciation to Americanness. For instance, blog post [1. d] praises the USA because of its diversity, heterogeneity and cultural mixing:

[1. d] *Living in New Jersey/New York City area has accelerated my understanding of the term, melting pot! A global gateway city, NYC is a sensory revelation! It is energizing to walk on streets that resonate with various ethnicities, languages, cuisines, and mosaic of skin colors that have made America, home.*

Post [1. d] values the USA (concretely New York City) for its diversity as it is referred to with a term “melting pot”. It means that the city is heterogenous when it comes to ethnicities, nationalities, cultures, etc. The author states that diversity is one of the reasons why she found in NYC “home” because everyone is accepted there; thus, she did not stand out because of her Indianness.

4.2.2 Country of origin

India as a country of origin is viewed in a positive way – 6 posts describe it as such. Most of the Indian immigrants reminisce about Indian culture, traditions, food, music or their relatives living in India. India is mostly mentioned as a place where the authors go to visit their relatives [8] or where kids of Indian immigrants are taken to holidays to learn about the culture of their origin [1]. In the portrayal of India, it is described as almost flawless and in a better light than it actually is. Such portrayal is either the result of nostalgic feelings or idealization/sentimentalization of the country. For example:

[2] *When I went to college, I realize I missed the colored food my mom cooked, missed the Bollywood movies and music, and, most importantly, missed the Indian political discussions with my dad.*

The author of the blog post [2] expresses feelings of missing all things connected to India (e.g., food, movies, music, etc.) despite hating them while growing up as an Indian kid in the USA. As a grown women she retrospectively remembers on her Indian childhood with positivity which might be a result of nostalgia.

On the other hand, author of the blog post [3] says that she has always loved and cherished South Asian culture that according to her is rich, vibrant and diverse:

[3] *My South Asian culture is something that I have always cherished. The traditional folk music and dances, flavorful cuisines, and colorful festivities native to Kerala have always managed to mesmerize me ever since I was young.*

In the blog post [8], a daughter of Indian immigrants living in the USA is describing her excitement about India that is based on the experience of her parents who grew up there:

[8] *My parents regaled me with magical stories of their childhood, scampering around with their cousins, playing pranks, going to Juhu Beach, near-death rickshaw rides, beautiful temples, palm trees, chauffeur-driven cars, and going to the latest Bollywood flick.*

Blog post [8] shows an example of idealization of India when the parents of the author described their country of origin with nostalgic feelings as they are referring to India as to a “magical place”.

In the accounts of India, problems like poverty, poor hygiene or low life standard are never mentioned in relation to India. In fact, not a single post presents it in “bad” light. The only hint of the difference of economic standard of living between the USA and India is noticeable

when the author of the blog post [8] describes her trip to India where all the kids admired her because she had expensive stuff (e.g., clothes, toys, etc.) that were not accessible in India which shows the difference between these two countries as demonstrated in the example below:

[8] *As an American in India, I was the center of attention amongst all the neighborhood kids. All the other kids were fascinated by my hot pink striped leggings, my Barbie collection, my patent leather shoes, and my charming American accent.*

Overall, the country of origin is described in a better light than the USA: words with positive connotations such as *rich, vibrant, colourful*, etc. are used to describe the beauty of Indian culture.

4.3 Inclusion/exclusion in discourse

This subchapter examines the narratives of inclusion and exclusion in the posts of the Indian immigrants to the USA, with the focus on the sense of belonging.

4.3.1 Exclusion

6 posts reported that they were excluded from communities especially during their childhood when they were bullied by their peers at schools. Other kids made fun of them because of their original cultural heritage such as different skin colour, religion or unusual names that were hard to pronounce for Americans. Stereotypes based on Indian culture played a huge role as well. In most cases immigrants position themselves as outsiders who were discriminated or ridiculed by others as can be seen in following examples:

[2. a] *Growing up in the United States with a different skin color was an emotional experience. I was called “brownie” and never understood why my skin and hair color were different. Most challenging for me, was my name “Usha.” I was called “Busha,” “Pusha,” etc.*

Post [2. a] points out verbal attacks that were a result of having a darker skin colour and unique name in the USA. This is a case of racial discrimination, cultural insensitivity and microaggression which is based on the stereotypes of the minority culture.

[4] *Growing up, I always felt like an outsider, like I wasn’t a real American despite being born and raised here. My black hair, dark skin, thick eyebrows, and twig legs on a short stature—stood out painfully amongst the sea of blonde and brunette white peers. Fob. “Go*

back to India.” When kids would come over to my house, they would laugh at the “strange” Indian gods and goddesses and tease me for my parents’ accents.

In post [4], the blogger refers to herself as to an outsider, which explicitly indicates that she felt excluded among her peers while growing up. Besides being discriminated for appearance as already mentioned in the previous case, post [4] reports verbal attacks regarding Hindu religion, which is a minority religion in the USA, or mockery of an accent as English is not the first language of the immigrants.

In the following blog post [2. b] Indian immigrant reported that despite growing up in the USA and considering it her homeland, she experienced verbal attacks regarding her race:

[2. b] To further confuse my identity and culture, my parents and I became targets during both Persian Gulf Wars. We were mistaken as Arabs. I will never forget when a man banged on the hood of my mom’s car at the red light and spit, saying, “Go home to your country,” What country, I would ask in my mind. Because I am in my country.

Post [2. b] highlights how ignorance, insensitivity and xenophobia can influence one’s identity and sense of belonging.

4.3.2 Inclusion

Indian immigrants who moved from India to the USA in their adulthood usually in order to pursue their career reported that they felt included and welcomed in the host country because they made new friends, broadened social contacts or even found life-time partners with ease. 3 posts talk about inclusion in American society in positive terms. For example:

[5] I came to Chicago back in 2012, starry-eyed and ready to take over the corporate landscape, bringing my experiences of working in India managing global client teams along with a whole lot of love and a head full of memories from my homeland. I have since met many wonderful people throughout the course of my career, and I’ve had the luxury and opportunity to travel to almost all the major cities across this country. There have been some life-changing experiences along the way, from living alone in Chicago, building new friendships, and finding love to moving to Boston and now having a tiny little human that has transformed my life for the better!

Post [5] captures that the blogger felt blessed to get an opportunity to move to the USA. Words such as *starry-eyed*, *luxury* or *life-changing* are used to express optimism, excitement and gratitude for the new beginning.

One blog post of the first generation South Asian Americans [7] also refers to her childhood in the USA in a positive way and reminisces on her happy and cheerful memories because they allegedly outweigh the bad ones. Later in the post, the reader finds out that she did not feel included by other American kids but by the community of other immigrant kids. At the same time, the feeling of inclusion comes from the inclusion into immigrant community, rather than a broader American one. Forming of such communities is the result of sharing similar experiences and better understanding of each other due to similarity of customs and values.

[7] *But, it was not all doom and gloom. In fact, most of my memories are not unhappy. I still remember the joy of playing soccer outside every day with a bunch of kids who were also from immigrant families.*

The same situation is reported in the blog post [4], where the blogger refers to her Asian friends who help her understand herself better and fit into a social group.

[4] *Having other Asian friends showed me how my perceptions of race, of what it means to be “American,” were misguided.*

Post [4] points out that the blogger found her sense of belonging between immigrant community rather than between Americans. She highlights that she felt included by other peers with Asian origin as they presumably went through the similar immigrant experience and encounter as well with struggles alongside the immigrant journey; therefore, they can relate to what she is going through and, moreover, understand her cultural background.

CONCLUSION

This bachelor's thesis examined identity in immigrant discourse with a use of critical discourse analysis. 8 blogs where Indian immigrants share their experiences about their life in the USA were analysed in order to uncover how immigrants perceive their identity and how this concept is shaped by multicultural world.

6 blogs highlighted that the immigrants identify themselves as members of their original, but as well their host country, so in this case, they refer to themselves as Indian-American. This stems from a fact that the immigrants cherish their original roots, but they have already adapted to their new life in the USA as they spend here considerable part of their life; thus, they are integrated into both cultures.

However, the immigrants mostly used the pronoun "we" to refer to the immigrants of South-Asian origin and pronoun "they" to refer to Americans which might signalize that they incline more to their Indian identity. In the language the Indian identity was reflected through the vocabulary used by the immigrants as the words of South-Asian origin were used quite frequently (18 times throughout the blogs). The bloggers used figurative language in order to describe unpleasant experiences relating to their immigrant journey and their life in the USA. Concretely, metaphors (in total 20) had the biggest representation as through them is easier to express emotional struggles.

Comparison of the representations of the host country (the USA) to the country of origin (India) uncovered the features of nostalgia, idealization/sentimentalization and homesickness. India was portrayed in a better light than the USA as immigrants associated the country of origin with words of positive connotation.

On the other hand, the USA was criticised for its hostile environment as all 8 blogs mentioned judgmental attitude and xenophobic behaviour of Americans towards Indians and reported on racial insults, bullying, stereotyping and mockery in regard of Indian culture, traditions, religion, etc. Based on this discovery, Indian immigrants feel included and understood by other immigrant communities rather than by Americans. This finding leads to a conclusion that cultural, national and ethnical background still plays a huge role despite the idea of multiculturalism which supports equality and justice.

In a nutshell, Indian immigrants tend to incline to their Indian identity as they value their original cultural heritage, which is visible through the use of language; however, they still appreciate possibilities that the USA provides them.

Further research could analyse larger corpus including not only immigrants from India, but also immigrants from other countries, which could provide insight into whether all immigrants in the USA are treated equally or whether only some are subjected to prejudice, stereotyping, and injustice.

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LIST OF TABLES

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CQ Cultural Intelligence

DA Discourse Analysis

CDA Critical Discourse Analysis

APPENDICES

Appendix I: List of Blogs

APPENDIX I: LIST OF BLOGS

- [1] Author Unknown. 2021. "Identity Evolution: Being Indian in America." *Yoga Weave*, December 12. <https://www.yogaweave.com/makingrelationshipswork/identity-evolution-being-indian-in-america>.
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