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Term Paper

Emotional Appeal in Modern English Political Discourse

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a growing interest within the field of linguistics in understanding the complex relationship between language and emotions, particularly within the context of political discourse. This study seeks to contribute to this growing field of research by exploring the theoretical foundations and practical manifestations of emotional appeal in political communication. Emotions play an important role in shaping human behaviour and decision-making, and their expression through language holds profound implications for political persuasion and public opinion formation. By analysing the pragmatic appeal and strategic organisation of emotional rhetoric in modern English political discourse, and by undertaking a comparative analysis of the emotional appeal in the inaugural speeches of prominent leaders, this study aims to identify the complex interaction between language, emotion and politics. Through this exploration, we aspire to enrich our understanding of how linguistic choices evoke emotional responses, influence audience perceptions, and ultimately shape the dynamics of political discourse.

Aim: The aim of this term paper is to study the use of emotional appeal strategies in modern English political discourse, with a specific focus on inaugural speeches of J. Biden and D. Trump.

Object: The object of this research is the linguistic means of affective persuasion in modern English political discourse, specifically in the inaugural speeches of J. Biden and D. Trump.

Subject: The subject of this research is linguistic means of strategizing emotional appeal in the inaugural addresses of J. Biden and D. Trump.

Tasks: The aim of this research is achieved by solving the following tasks:

1. To provide theoretical foundations of emotional appeal in political discourse.
2. To study the significance of generating emotional appeal.

3. To define specific features and tendencies of modern English political discourse.

4. To analyse the use of emotive language in modern English political discourse.

5. To conduct a case study of inaugural speeches by J. Biden and D. Trump.

6. To analyse the strategic organisation of emotional appeal in the inaugural addresses of J. Biden and D. Trump.

7. Compare and contrast the use of language means in the emotional appeal of the inaugural speeches of J. Biden and D. Trump.

8. To assess the effectiveness of language means in achieving the designed emotional appeal in the inaugural addresses.

CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF EMOTIONAL APPEAL IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

1.1.   Pragmatic appeal: the ratio of ethos, pathos, and logos

In the world of political communication, where rhetoric takes centre stage, the power of emotional appeal is a strong force that shapes opinions, influences decisions and steers the course of public discourse. The very essence of modern political communication lies in the delicate balance between rational argumentation, emotional resonance, and the establishment of ethical credibility.

Pragmatic appeal is the use of rhetoric to persuade an audience by appealing to their practical interests and needs. Aristotle, a student of the Greek philosopher Plato, taught that a speaker's ability to persuade an audience is based on how well the speaker appeals to that audience (Lutske & Henggeler, 2009, p. 1). Rhetoric, according to Aristotle, relies on the interaction of ethos, pathos, and logos: ethos involves the speaker projecting credibility and trustworthiness to the audience. Pathos involves arousing the audience's emotions through the delivery of the speech. Logos, on the other hand, concerns the establishment of truth and logic within the speech itself (Rapp, 2022, p. 5-9).

Ethos is the appeal to ethics or credibility. It operates on two levels: audience values and authorial credibility/character. Ethical appeals are linked to the values of the audience, such as patriotism, justice or equality, in order to ground and legitimise the speaker's arguments (Gagich & Zickel, 2017, p. 150-151). The authorial ethos involves establishing credibility through knowledge and experience (authority) and building a character that is consistent with the audience's trust. Speakers achieve ethos by referencing audience values, adopting language common to those values, highlighting expertise, and shaping their character in a way that instils trust. Both Biden and Trump establish their credibility by acknowledging the importance of the American people and the nation's values. Biden emphasises the resilience of the Constitution and the strength of the nation's democratic institutions, while Trump

positions himself as a champion of the American people against the political establishment. Biden's reference to his predecessors and Trump's pledge to transfer power back to the people both aim to instil trust and confidence in their leadership.

Pathos serves as the emotional appeal in communication, forging a connection with the audience on a personal and affective level. This connection is established through the application of storytelling, vivid language and relatable experiences. By using emotional appeals, speakers evoke feelings that are in line with the audience's values, beliefs and personal experiences (Aristotle, 1991, p. 32). In their speeches, presidents appeal to emotions, underlining the challenges facing the American people and promising to solve their problems. Biden refers to the themes of unity, hope, and resilience, especially in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and racial injustice, seeking to evoke empathy and solidarity among his audience. Similarly, Trump paints a picture of economic hardship and social decline, evoking sympathy for struggling families and communities across the country and playing to feelings of frustration and despair among his supporters.

Logos is the appeal to logic or reason. Logical appeals employ techniques such as comparison, cause/effect reasoning, deductive and inductive reasoning, exemplification, and coherent thought. These appeals aim to convince the audience through sound, factual, and well-organised reasoning (Gagich & Zickel, 2017, p. 147-149). In presenting their agendas for the nation, there are logical arguments used by Trump and Biden. Biden focuses on unity as the key to solving the country's problems, arguing that collective action is necessary to confront common threats and achieve common goals. In contrast, Trump prioritises domestic interests on trade, immigration, and foreign policy, advocating solutions that directly benefit American workers and families. Each president has appealed to the reason and practical interests of his audience in an attempt to shape the country's future in accordance with his vision.

The ratio of ethos, pathos, and logos in a pragmatic appeal depends on the purpose, context, and audience of the argument. A balanced and effective pragmatic appeal should use all three modes of persuasion in a harmonious and appropriate

way, so that the argument is credible, emotional, and logical. As Melanie Gagich and Emilie Zickel (2017) state, "using a combination of logical, pathetic, and ethical appeals leads to a sound, balanced, and persuasive argument " (p. 152).

In summary, the pragmatic appeal involves a thoughtful integration of ethos, pathos, and logos to create a persuasive and effective communication strategy. Joe Biden and Donald Trump exemplify this approach in their speeches, as they effectively employ elements of ethos, pathos, and logos to connect with their audiences and advance their respective agendas. By considering the interactions between these elements, speakers can tailor their approach to resonate with their listeners and achieve their communication goals, ultimately shaping public opinion and steering the course of discourse in the political arena.

1.2. Modern English political discourse

Political discourse plays a crucial role in today's society and politics, shaping how people view political happenings and decisions. In our information-driven world filled with mass media, social networks, and various platforms, political discourse holds significant power in shaping societal perspectives. (Mialkovska, 2024, p. 1).

Norman Fairclough, a notable researcher in this domain, regards political discourse as a strategic instrument used for the purpose of shaping, modifying, and channelling the political worldview. His scholarly investigation underscores the central role of language in exerting influence over the cognitive processes of citizens, consequently moulding and influencing their political convictions. Fairclough's work highlights the interplay between language use and the mobilisation of citizens towards diverse political actions (Fairclough, 2014, p. 118-119).

It is clear that the dynamics of Modern English political discourse extend beyond mere language manipulation. It navigates a complex spectrum of rhetoric, framing, and narrative construction to create compelling narratives that resonate with the public. In an era where attention spans are fleeting, political discourse uses

succinct and impactful messaging through soundbites and slogans, strategically disseminated across digital platforms to maximize reach and influence.

Furthermore, the symbiotic relationship between political actors and the media intensifies the impact of discourse. As if in support of our statements, Christina Schäffner and Susan Bassnett (2010) compared the media to a "fourth estate" (p. 3). They continue by pointing out that the media can reach a large audience, and the speed with which a message reaches the widest possible audience is one of the main values that guide journalistic practice. The 24/7 news cycle, fuelled by the constant demand for updates and breaking stories, transforms political discourse into a perpetual conversation that shapes public opinion. Politicians use media channels strategically, hiring spin doctors to ensure their messages dominate the narrative scene.

In this milieu, social media emerges as a formidable arena for political discourse, democratizing participation and providing a platform for diverse voices. A recent report by the Pew Research Centre conducted in eleven nations across four global regions found that social media users were more likely to interact regularly with a more diverse network, including people from different political parties, than those who were not active on social media (Barberá, 2020, p. 40). In addition, as social media's role in political conversations becomes more entrenched, it not only encourages cross-party communication, but also accelerates the spread of information, allowing citizens to stay informed and actively participate in unfolding political events. The continuing influence of social media in creating a more inclusive and dynamic public sphere is becoming increasingly apparent.

The 2020 United States presidential election, featuring the heated contest between Donald Trump and Joe Biden, demonstrated the profound influence of social media on modern political discourse. The research study "Social Media in Politic: Political Campaign on United States Election 2020 Between Donald Trump and Joe Biden" (2021), which analyses the candidates' Twitter accounts, sheds light on these dynamics. Conducted shortly after the election, it utilised content analysis to dissect the communication strategies used by Trump and Biden on the popular

platform. It revealed distinct patterns in their messaging: while Trump's tweets primarily focused on political issues like #MAGA and #VOTE, Biden's account covered a broader spectrum, including racial issues such as #NationalBlackVoterDay and #BlackHistoryMonth. Moreover, sentiment analysis unveiled differences in the emotional tones of their posts, with Trump's tweets often characterised by extreme positivity or negativity, contrasting with Biden's more moderate expressions.

Modern English political discourse transcends the traditional boundaries of rhetoric, intertwining with media dynamics and leveraging digital platforms. Its impact lies not only in the words spoken, but in the strategic organisation of narratives that form societal perspectives and influence political beliefs. This is illustrated by the pivotal role of social media, particularly Twitter, in shaping public opinion and political narratives during the Biden-Trump rivalry, highlighting the need for a nuanced understanding of media's impact on contemporary politics.

1.3. Emotional appeal in political discourse

Emotions play a crucial role in how people process information, form attitudes, and make decisions about politics. Therefore, politicians and parties often use emotional language and imagery in their speeches, campaigns, and media appearances to influence public opinion and behaviour.

There are different types of emotions that can be appealed to in political discourse, such as anger, fear, sadness, happiness, pride, or disgust. Each emotion has different effects on the audience, depending on the context, the source, and the target of the appeal. For example, fear can make them more susceptible to authoritarian or populist messages. Happiness can foster trust and cooperation, while sadness can generate empathy and solidarity. Pride can enhance national or group identity, while public anger can change the course of political events (Westen, 2007, p. 25).

Some scholars have argued that emotional appeals are more effective when they are congruent with the ideological orientation of the audience and the speaker. For instance, Sara Ahmed (2004) suggests that emotions are not only individual

feelings, but also social and cultural practices that shape collective identities and values (p. 29-33). Therefore, different emotions may resonate more or less with different political groups or movements. Similarly, Drew Westen (2007) claims that "emotions provide a compass for guiding our attention and behaviour" (p. 103). They are the primary drivers of political behaviour, and that rational arguments are often used to justify emotional preferences. It is also noted that liberals and conservatives have different emotional profiles, and that successful political communication should appeal to the core values and moral intuitions of each group.

Presenting the scientific school of KNLU, the researches by Iryna Pinich (2021, 2022) pave the way for a deeper understanding of emotional appeal in political discourse. Through an integral approach that examines the biological, cognitive and sociocultural aspects of emotions, it brings to light the complex nature of emotional experiences. This framework is essential in political communication, where politicians strategically evoke certain emotions in their audiences to influence opinions and gain support. Recognising the connection between the biological basis of emotions and their manifestation through language and non-verbal cues (facial expressions, body language) is of great significance (p. 143-144). Through analysing how emotions are verbalised and interpreted in a particular social context, it is possible to enhance understanding of the ways in which political actors use emotional language and images to resonate with their target audiences on a deeper level. Such an insight allows for a more nuanced analysis of political discourse, going beyond the superficial study of rhetoric to consider the underlying emotional stimuli and their potential impact on voters.

However, other scholars have challenged the idea that emotions are inherently aligned with specific ideologies or interests. George Marcus (2003) proposes a dual-process model of political psychology, in which emotions serve as a signal of how much attention and effort people should devote to political information (p. 175-178). He distinguishes between two types of emotions: enthusiasm and anxiety. Enthusiasm motivates people to seek more information and engage in politics, while anxiety makes them more vigilant and critical of the information they receive.

Analysing Joe Biden's and Donald Trump's inaugural speeches in the context of George Marcus's two-process model of political psychology, we can identify cases where they appeal to emotions such as enthusiasm and anxiety, regardless of ideological orientation. Biden's speech invokes a sense of hope and unity, appealing to the audience's enthusiasm for a better future. Donald Trump's speech also taps into enthusiasm by promising to prioritise the interests of the American people and make America *"strong again"* and *"great again"*. His repeated slogan of *"America First"* and promises to bring back jobs and wealth resonate with his supporters, motivating them to support his agenda and engage with his presidency.

Mentioning anxiety, Biden admits the challenges facing the nation, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, economic hardship, racial injustice, and political extremism. By addressing these issues directly and promising to confront them, Biden may arouse a sense of anxiety among the audience, making them more vigilant and critical of the information presented. Trump touches upon anxieties felt by his supporters, particularly regarding economic decline, immigration, and national security. He paints a picture of *"American carnage"* caused by job loss, crime, and terrorism, which may heighten anxiety and vigilance among his audience.

In conclusion, emotional appeal is a common and powerful tool in political discourse, yet its effects are neither uniform nor predictable. Emotions can have different impacts on different audiences, depending on various factors such as the type, intensity, and source of the emotion, the political context, and the prior beliefs and values of the audience. Therefore, emotional appeal should not be seen as a simple manipulation of the masses, but as a complex and dynamic interaction between the speaker and the audience.

Conclusions to Chapter I

In the field of political communication, the pragmatic approach is a versatile tactic that encompasses ethos, pathos and logos. This approach, rooted in the teachings of Aristotle, recognises the importance of ethical credibility, emotional resonance and logical argumentation in persuading audiences and shaping public

discourse. The examples of Joe Biden and Donald Trump demonstrate the careful application of these elements to establish trust, generate empathy, and present rational arguments relevant to their audiences.

Modern English political discourse goes beyond linguistic manipulation, using media dynamics and digital platforms to create narratives that have significant impact. As the Biden-Trump competition has shown, social media, particularly Twitter, has become a powerful platform for moulding public opinion, necessitating a nuanced view of the role of media in modern politics.

Emotional appeal, an inherent component of political discourse, is a powerful means of influencing public attitudes and behaviour. While researchers such as Sarah Ahmed and Drew Westen emphasise the connection between emotions and ideological orientations, George Marcus presents a dual process model, recognising emotions as signals that motivate participation or watchfulness. Analysing Biden's and Trump's speeches through this prism shows the nuances of appeals to enthusiasm and anxiety, highlighting the dynamic nature of emotional persuasion.

CHAPTER 2. EMOTIONAL APPEAL IN INAUGURAL SPEECHES OF J. BIDEN and D. TRUMP

2.1. Affective persuasion in inaugural speeches

The inaugural speeches mark the beginning of a new term in office for a community or government leader, such as the president. This reaction must persuade the people to believe in the government and the programs will be enacted (Nurkhamidah, 2021, p. 73). Central to these addresses is the art of persuasion, wherein presidents seek to connect with their audience emotionally while advocating for their vision and policies.

President Joe Biden's inaugural speech was delivered on January 20, 2021, at the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C. This inaugural address marked the beginning of Biden's presidency following the 2020 United States presidential election, in which he defeated incumbent President Donald Trump.

Dr. Pedrini (2021) considers that "in Joe Biden's inauguration speech, we can find standard emotional and rational stratagems that form its persuasive strategy to obtain the public's approval" (p. 13). Specifically, the intentional use of affective persuasion to convey a message of unity, hope and resilience distinguished his inaugural address. During his speech, Biden engaged with the audience in an emotional way. He stressed the importance of unity, urging Americans to come together as one nation to overcome shared challenges. Phrases like *"We come together as one nation"* and *"We will get through this, together"* resonated with themes of solidarity and collective strength, instilling a sense of optimism and determination. *"To overcome these challenges, ... Unity"*, this line was fundamental to what Biden has been saying throughout his campaign (Amir, 2021, p. 6).

Furthermore, Biden mentioned the existing anxieties and divisions within the nation, demonstrating empathy and understanding towards those who may harbour doubts or fears about the future. Biden tried to reassure the American people and inspire confidence in his leadership by directly addressing these concerns. His use

of phrases like *"I understand that many Americans view the future with some fear and trepidation"* underscored his commitment to addressing the nation's concerns and working towards a brighter future for all.

Additionally, he strategically selected words and imagery to trigger specific emotions, focusing on concepts such as unity, hope, healing, and truth. References to historical figures and events, such as Abraham Lincoln, the Civil War, the Great Depression, World War and 9/11, served to connect with the nation's past struggles and triumphs, further reinforcing the message of perseverance (Amir, 2021, p. 5).

Moving to the President Donald Trump's inaugural speech, it was delivered on January 20, 2017, also at the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C. Trump's inauguration followed his unexpected victory in the 2016 United States presidential election, defeating Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton.

President Donald Trump's inaugural address was markedly different in its approach to affective persuasion, with patriotic, nationalistic themes and an insistence on the urgency of action. Throughout the speech, Trump used emotionally charged rhetoric to rally support for his vision of *"America First"* and to assert his commitment to prioritising American interests. Trump's speech was characterised by a sense of urgency and determination, with phrases like *"The time for empty talk is over. Now arrives the hour of action"* and *"We will bring back our dreams"* evoking a sense of resolve and determination. *"I will fight for you with every breath in my body-and I will never, ever let you down"*. Trump makes serious promise that he devotes himself to America (Chen, 2018, p. 970). His focus on the need for decisive action and bold leadership appealed to voters who felt disillusioned with the political establishment and yearned for change.

In addition, Trump used fear tactics to underscore the perceived threats facing the nation, particularly in the area of national security. References to *"Radical Islamic Terrorism"* and the need to *"eradicate it completely from the face of the Earth"* served to arouse feelings of patriotism and solidarity, and build support for his administration's tough stance on security issues.

Both President Joe Biden and President Donald Trump made use of affective persuasion in their inaugural speeches, albeit in different ways. Biden's speech centred on unity and hope, while Trump's focused on patriotism and the urge to act. Their respective use of emotionally charged language, word choice and imagery reflected their individual visions for the nation and aimed to win sympathy from their particular audiences.

2.2. Strategic organisation of emotional appeal in inaugural speeches

When analysing the strategic organisation of emotional appeal in the inaugural speeches of Biden and Trump, it is crucial to delve into various facets of emotional communication with the help of Qualitative Emotion Analysis (2020). This includes examining the manifestation, expression, and thematicisation of emotions, as well as the speaker's pragmatic intentions and emotional intelligence.

Biden's address includes a range of emotional experiences conveyed through verbal and non-verbal channels. Physiologically, his facial expressions, including smiles, furrowed brows, and occasional teary eyes, reflected sincerity, determination, and empathy, seamlessly matching with the emotions conveyed in his words, such as hope, unity, and resilience. This correlation between physiological reactions and emotional behaviour enhanced the authenticity and impact of his message. Additionally, Biden's paraverbal behaviour, including tone of voice, pace of speech, and emphasis on certain words, further echoed his emotional state, with occasional quivers and modulation mirroring the emotional journey of his message. Deliberate pauses and changes in cadence added depth and sincerity, reinforcing the connection between his paraverbal cues and his genuine emotional expression.

President Biden's proclamation that *"This is America's day. This is democracy's day. A day of history and hope,"* employs emphatic language to evoke a sense of pride and empowerment in the audience. Equally, he utilises ideologically marked vocabulary to emphasise democratic values and unity, as seen in phrases like *"democracy's day"* and *"one nation, under God, indivisible"*. In addition,

attitudinally marked vocabulary appeals to the audience's sense of justice and moral duty, as Biden states, *"Democracy is precious. Democracy is fragile"*. Pedrini (2021) notes that Biden repeats the term *"democracy"* five times in the opening moments of his speech, and a total of eleven times throughout his entire discourse (p. 15).

There is a multi-dimensional pragmatic intention: to inform, inspire, and unite the audience. He shares his vision for addressing national challenges and elicits emotional responses of hope and determination. Biden seeks to attract attention to his agenda while recognizing opposing viewpoints with respect and empathy. Thus, he admits the challenges facing the nation by stating, *"Few periods in our nation's history have been more challenging or more difficult than the one we're in now"*. This acknowledgement demonstrates Biden's pragmatism and willingness to confront the reality of the situation while offering hope for the future.

Biden's speech exhibits a high level of empathetic emotion deixis, with the speaker demonstrating understanding and resonance with the audience's emotions and concerns. Biden's empathetic approach allows him to connect with audiences, helping to establish a sense of shared purpose and collective identity. For example, he states, *"To all those who supported our campaign, I am humbled by the faith you have placed in us. To all those who did not support us, let me say this: Hear me out as we move forward. Take a measure of me and my heart. And if you still disagree, so be it."* This inclusive language demonstrates Biden's empathy and his commitment to unity, regardless of political differences.

The speaker demonstrates a sophisticated comprehension of emotional dynamics and the rational use of emotional appeal in political discourse. His speech shows a high level of emotional intelligence, characterised by empathy, social skills, self-awareness, and motivation. Using civility and respectfully engaging opposing viewpoints, Biden masterfully handles a complex emotional discourse, uniting diverse audiences behind a common vision. As he claims, *"I will be a President for all Americans. I will fight as hard for those who did not support me as for those who did"*. This statement showcases Biden's emotional intelligence and his dedication to

representing the interests of all Americans. Generally, the whole speech shows Biden has high self-confidence (Nurkhamidah, 2021, p. 79).

In Donald Trump's inaugural speech, various verbal and non-verbal manifestations of emotional experiences were apparent as well. On the physical level, Trump displayed confident body language, including assertive gestures and facial expressions that conveyed determination and strength. His stern facial expressions and firm stance suggested resolve and conviction, reflecting his verbal emphasis on themes such as patriotism and America-first policies. However, while Trump's non-verbal cues projected confidence and determination, there was less congruence between these manifestations and his actual emotional behaviour. Despite outward displays of strength, his delivery lacked the depth and sincerity typically associated with genuine emotional expression. Paraverbally, Trump's tone of voice was forceful, often marked by sharp intonations and emphatic pauses to underscore key points and allow the public to react.

In addition, the speech is characterised by its abundant use of emotive language, which taps into the audience's hopes, dreams, and patriotism. Intensifiers like *"never, ever"* and *"totally unstoppable"* are employed to heighten the speaker's commitment and determination, amplifying the urgency of his message. Moreover, the speech contains ideologically charged vocabulary, including terms like *"American carnage," "Radical Islamic Terrorism,"* and *"America First,"* which reflect the speaker's political stance. Attitudinally marked vocabulary permeates the speech, emphasising notions of rightness, patriotism, strength, and pride, thereby reinforcing the speaker's vision for the nation. In the lines, *"We will bring back our jobs. We will bring back our borders. We will bring back our wealth",* with the help of anaphora, Trump puts focus on his commitment to specific goals and actions (Comesaña Pérez, 2021, p. 39).

The pragmatic intention behind Trump's speech is to gain support for his administration's agenda, with a particular focus on economic revitalisation and national security. His focus on themes such as job creation, infrastructure development, and America-first policies is designed to resonate with the aspirations

and priorities of his audience, solidifying his political mandate. Repeatedly during the address, Trump stressed the importance of prioritising the interests of American citizens over those of foreign nations. His declaration that *"From this day forward, a new vision will govern our land"* reflects his commitment to putting *"America First"* in all aspects of governance. This pragmatic approach resonates with many Americans who feel that their voices have been ignored or neglected by previous administrations, generating widespread support for Trump's populist agenda.

Trump's speech demonstrates a calculated use of empathetic emotion deixis, with the speaker addressing the struggles and aspirations of ordinary Americans while positioning himself as their advocate. Presenting himself as a "champion of the poor" significantly enhanced his standing among the working class (Lakoff, 2017, p. 595-606). By making use of rhetoric, that highlights the concerns of the *"forgotten men and women"* of the country, Trump creates a sense of connection and shared solidarity with his audience. His promises to prioritise the interests of American workers and families resonate with those who feel marginalised by the political establishment, thereby fostering a sense of empathy and shared purpose among his supporters. Trump's assertion that *"Everyone is listening to you now,"* speaks to the frustrations of those who feel overlooked by the political elite.

Although Trump works efficiently with emotional appeals to bond with his audience, his speech also reveals limitations in terms of emotional intelligence. His rhetoric, which involves polarising language and divisive issues, may exclude parts of the population and deepen existing social divisions. Indeed, Trump's focus on nationalist and protectionist policies may be perceived by some observers as exclusionary or isolationist, highlighting the challenges of governing in a diverse and pluralistic society. Despite these limitations, Trump's inaugural speech demonstrates a keen comprehension of the emotional dynamics of political discourse and the successful use of emotions to mobilise support for his agenda.

2.3. Contrastive analysis of emotional appeal strategies in the inaugural speeches

In the analysis of emotional appeal strategies employed in inaugural speeches, a contrastive examination was conducted between the addresses delivered by President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump.

As noted in the previous point, both politics used a combination of verbal and non-verbal signs to transmit emotional experiences in an engaging manner. Physiological reactions such as facial expressions and gestures, as well as paraverbal behaviors including tone of voice and rhythm, were observed in both speeches. Biden's speech had a somber but determined tone, with occasional smiles that conveyed hope, while Trump's appeared to be more confident and assertive, often accompanied by gestures and facial expressions that indicated assurance.

Both leaders used expressive language to create emotional responses in their listeners. Biden included emotive language to introduce concepts such as *"democracy"*, *"unity"* and *"hope"*, while Trump focused on themes of patriotism, strength and power through phrases like *"America First"* and *"greatness"*. In their lexical choice of words, we can clearly identify their ideological leanings and underlying intentions. *"Democracy"* is mentioned ten times in Biden's speech, marking the highest frequency of its mention in any inaugural address in history. In contrast, Trump's speech features words like *"carnage"*, *"blood"*, *"stolen"*, and *"ripped"*, and is notable for its coarse and pessimistic tone (Comesaña Pérez, 2021, p. 44).

In both addresses, verbal labelling of emotions and their intensity, along with figurative descriptions of emotions and experiences, were noted. Trump's speech have used metaphors that present politics as a battlefield, focusing on conflict, defence and force. "Politics is war" is the key thesis (Ursic, 2021, p. 42). He utilised militaristic language, describing America as a country under siege and in need of protection from external threats. His rhetoric surrounds the notion of fighting for the nation's interests and securing its safety from perceived adversaries:

"*When America is united, America is totally unstoppable.*

There should be no fear – we are protected, and we will always be protected.

We will be protected by the great men and women of our military and law enforcement and, most importantly, we are protected by God. "

In comparison to Trump's combative approach, Biden tends to rely on metaphors that portray politics as a journey (Ursic, 2021, p. 42). He favours progress and solidarity, and frames challenges as part of a broader narrative of growth and development. Biden's framing rhetoric often appeals to the idea of moving forward together, drawing on the collective efforts of the American people to overcome obstacles and achieve common goals:

"Over the centuries through storm and strife, in peace and in war, we have come so far. But we still have far to go.

We will press forward with speed and urgency, for we have much to do in this winter of peril and possibility. "

When it comes to the intent of the speech, we can see diametrically opposed intentions between both US Presidents tone (Comesaña Pérez, 2021, p. 42). The first speaker seemed to aim to provoke and create strong negative emotions of estrangement and division, particularly by highlighting the perceived harms that foreigners and outsiders have inflicted on the United States. By drawing divisions between Americans and others, between the establishment and the people, and between immigrants and native-born citizens, the former President has promoted an us-versus-them mentality, while favouring protectionism over globalisation.

In contrast, Biden appeals to the emotions of the audience to encourage unity, dignity and respect, especially in times of crisis. Rather than exacerbating divisions, this approach seeks to foster solidarity and mutual respect among all Americans, regardless of background or ideology.

Overall, the analysis of the emotional appeal strategies in the inaugural speeches of two political leaders reveals a stark contrast in their approaches and intentions. Biden's speech, characterised by a gloomy yet hopeful tone aimed to create a feeling of solidarity, honour and reverence. In contrast, Trump's speech expressed confidence and assertiveness. It featured themes of patriotism and power,

while promoting division through an "us versus them" mentality. Ultimately, these inaugural addresses serve as powerful reflections of the leaders' contrasting visions for the nation's future.

2.4. Designed perlocutionary effect of emotional appeal

The perlocutionary act is the effect or influence on the feelings, thoughts or actions of the listener/hearer. Perlocutionary acts could be inspiring, persuading, consoling, etc. it brings about an effect upon the beliefs, attitudes or behaviours of the addressee (Mohammed Hashim, 2015. p. 701).

Drawing on the concept of the perlocutionary act, the designed perlocutionary effect of emotional appeal in the speeches of political figures is a tactical rhetorical device aimed at eliciting specific emotional responses from the listener. This effect is not merely a by-product of the speech, but rather a targeted outcome created through the careful selection of language, tone and content.

In the context of the inaugural addresses of Presidents Biden and Donald Trump, the designed perlocutionary effect of emotional appeal can be observed in their different approaches to engaging with the public's emotions. The heads of state wanted to establish a bond with the nation and to set the tone for their respective administrations.

President Biden's speech, for example, was infused with calls for the nation to come together and overcome adversity. The repeated use of personal pronouns *"we"* and *"our"* strengthened a sense of inclusiveness and aimed to inspire a collective response to a common goal. The emotional appeal here was intended to resonate with the ideals of democracy and shared responsibility, thereby motivating the audience towards civic engagement and cooperation. According to him, humanity can achieve peace if they come to accept each other and do away with hatred, grudge, envy, pride, arrogance, cruelty, and the like. These aforementioned topics are loaded with emotions and personal attitudes to the audience, who are expected to share the same attitudes evoked by Biden (Hoshan, 2022, p. 664).

In the reactions of the public to Biden's speech, there may be a sense of relief or optimism among those who resonate with his message of unity and cooperation. Biden's supporters may feel emboldened by his call for collective action and view it as a promising beginning to his presidency.

Donald Trump, on the other hand, may have aimed to reinforce his image as a political outsider and to galvanize his supporters. His speech might have been designed to provoke pride and a sense of urgency about *"taking back"* the country and *"bringing back our dreams / borders / jobs /"* (Ursic, 2021, p. 35). The repetition of the slogans *"Make America Great Again"* and *"America First"* only intensified these ideas. He wanted his audience to feel strong and validated in their beliefs and inspired to continue to support his agenda. This inaugural address also aimed to energise his supporters and gain support for his key policy initiatives. He sought to instil a sense of urgency and decisiveness, particularly with regard to revitalising the economy and restructuring immigration policy. The language used was designed to inspire a proactive stance among his audience, encouraging them to actively participate in and advocate for the changes he proposed.

The response of the public to Trump's speech may include a feeling of reassurance or power among his supporters who agree with his message of putting America first and challenging the status quo. They may perceive Trump as a resolute leader who fearlessly confronts entrenched interests and fights for the interests of the American people. For the same reason, there may be criticism or condemnation from those who disagree with Trump's policies or rhetoric. Critics may view his speech as divisive or inflammatory, potentially worsening existing divisions within the country.

Biden and Trump would have wanted their speeches to inspire action, whether it be to support their policies, engage in civic activities, or simply to foster a greater sense of national identity and purpose. The speeches contain emotional appeals that are designed to leave a lasting impression and motivate the audience to support the speaker's political goals and leadership. These appeals are subjective evaluations and should be clearly marked as such.

Conclusions to Chapter II

Inaugural speeches are powerful devices to influence public opinion and shape national identity. In these speeches, leaders use various strategies of emotional persuasion to achieve a certain effect on the audience. The main aspects of such strategies include emotional persuasion, strategic organisation of speech, linguistic means and vocabulary, and the impact of the speech on the audience.

Both presidents, Joe Biden and Donald Trump, used emotional persuasion in their inaugural addresses, but in different ways. Biden stressed the importance of unity and hope, urging Americans to come together to overcome common challenges. He used phrases that brought out a message of solidarity and collective strength. Trump, on the other hand, focused on patriotism and the need for action. His speech was marked by the use of emotionally charged rhetoric to gain support for his vision of "America First" and to emphasise his resolve.

Biden's and Trump's inaugural speeches had different approaches to organising an emotional appeal. Biden demonstrated a high level of empathy and used language to develop an impression of community and mutual understanding. Trump, conversely, made a point of being patriotic and confident, through his use of the rhetoric of conflict and defence. Biden's speech prominently featured lexical choices associated with unity and optimism, while Trump's speech had a more combative tone with the words like *"carnage"* and *"stolen".*

The inaugural addresses of President Biden and President Trump varied not only in their use of emotional persuasion, but also in their overall tone and content. Their speeches had different impacts on the audience, resulting in different emotional reactions.

Each President had specific goals in mind when creating their inaugural pieces. Biden hoped to inspire joint action and support for his programme, at the same time as Trump tried to mobilise his supporters and attract support for his initiatives. The emotional appeals in both addresses were aimed at achieving a certain effect on the listeners, causing them to have certain emotional reactions and stimulating certain actions or feelings.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The study of the emotional appeal of political discourse presented in two chapters outlines its key role in forming public opinion and influencing political conduct. The synthesis of theoretical foundations and empirical analysis leads to several key conclusions:

Firstly, the theoretical framework of emotional appeal in political discourse reveals the connection between ethos, pathos, and logos in pragmatic persuasion. Drawing on Aristotle's triad of persuasion, it becomes evident that effective communication strategies in politics necessitate a balanced integration of ethical credibility, emotional resonance, and logical argumentation. Political actors, as Joe Biden and Donald Trump, deploy these elements to connect with their audiences and advance their agendas.

Secondly, the study of modern English political discourse demonstrates its dynamic nature, which is driven by the convergence of rhetoric, media dynamics and digital platforms. In the current information context, political discourse functions as a strategic device for the modelling of societal perspectives, with language manipulation, framing and narrative construction playing a central role. Social media has become a powerful platform for political engagement, which democratises participation and increases the influence of political narratives.

Emotions can be powerful drivers of political behaviour, affecting how individuals process information and make decisions. Emotional appeals may be congruent with ideological orientations, but they are also subject to individual and contextual factors. Therefore, emotional appeal should be understood as a dynamic interaction between speakers and audiences, rather than a simplistic manipulation of the masses.

In order to express emotions in an engaging way, both leaders used a combination of verbal and non-verbal cues. The speeches were supported by physiological responses such as facial expressions and gestures, as well as paraverbal behaviours such as tone of voice and rhythm.

Biden used the concepts of *"democracy"*, *"strength"* and *"unity"*, at the same time Trump focused on themes of patriotism and power through phrases like *"America First"* and "*Make America Great Again"*. Their lexical choices revealed their ideological leanings and intentions. In Biden's speech, the word *"democracy"* was mentioned ten times, the highest frequency of any inaugural address in history, as opposed to words like *"carnage," "blood," "stolen,"* and *"ripped"* in Trump's speech, which was distinctive for its blunt and straightforward tone. Moreover, former President employed metaphors portraying politics as a battlefield, focusing on conflict, defence, and force, while Biden favoured metaphors portraying politics as a journey, emphasising progress and solidarity.

In conclusion, the addresses had significantly different intents. Trump aimed to provoke negative emotions of estrangement and division, particularly by highlighting perceived harms inflicted on the United States by foreigners and outsiders. This approach promoted an "us versus them" mentality and favoured protectionism over globalisation. In contrast, Biden appealed to emotions to encourage unity, dignity, and respect, thereby strengthening solidarity and mutual respect among all Americans.

РЕЗЮМЕ

Дослідження на тему "Емоційний вплив у політичному дискурсі" присвячене аналізу емоційних аспектів в політичному мовленні, зокрема в інавгураційних виступах Дж. Байдена та Д. Трампа. Курсова робота складається зі вступу, двох розділів, загальних висновків, списку літератури та списку ілюстративних джерел.

Перший розділ **"Theoretical framework of emotional appeal in political discourse"** ("Теоретичні засади емоційного впливу у політичному дискурсі") – теоретичний. У ньому розглядається прагматичний аспект з урахуванням поєднання етосу, пафосу та логосу, а також особливостей сучасного англомовного політичного дискурсу.

Другий розділ **"Emotional appeal in inaugural speeches of J. Biden and D. Trump"** ("Емоційний вплив в інавгураційних промовах Дж. Байдена та Д. Трампа") являє собою практичне дослідження. У ньому представлено аналіз інавгураційних виступів Дж. Байдена та Д. Трампа, зокрема, їхньої афективної переконливості та стратегічної організації емоційного впливу. Контрастний аналіз промов відображає різноманітні стратегії емоційного впливу, а також запланований перлокутивний ефект.

Ключові слова: політичний дискурс, емоційний вплив, інавгураційні виступи, стратегії емоційного впливу.

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