

PERSUASION, IDEOLOGY AND POWER IN SELECTED CAMPAIGN SPEECHES OF 21ST CENTURY U.S PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Political speech is a powerful tool of proclaiming power, persuading the populace, propagating ideology and imposing moral codes. This paper explores the relationship between power, persuasion and ideology in electoral speeches of 21st century American presidents critically. The paper aims to present, rhetoric angles and utilitarian concepts in examining the role of persuasive discourse within the democracy, power building, and strengthening ideological regimes within the United States. The current research uses Critical Discourse Analysis approach (CDA) with a theoretical framework based on Fairclough three-dimensional model (1995) in exploring discursive practices, persuasive methods to establish authority, projecting political forces and influencing masses in political campaigns. It also tries to unravel the qualities of deeper ideological substructures and their adopted national values in presidential speeches. This research takes a qualitative interpretive/ explanatory design to concentrate on textual analysis, discursive practice and socio-cultural practice. A purposive sample of 3 electoral speeches of 3 American presidential electors in 21st century (1 each) of an official site, "The American Presidency Project has been taken and is used to analyse the main rhetorical tools, including pronouns, transitivity, metaphors, hyperbole, modality, repetition and evaluative language to uncover lexical patterns that may play a role in shaping the discourse of politics. This research will reveal the use of linguistic and rhetoric to build authority in line with national principles, shape discourse and ideologies that can convince people to form opinions based on what the speaker believes. By incorporating both rhetorical analysis and linguistic powerplay, the research adds to the body of knowledge and makes donations to the field of political discourse analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis, persuasive appeals and rhetorical studies.

Keywords: Persuasion, ideology, power, Critical Discourse Analysis, presidential candidates, speeches, 21st century

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a significant phenomenon not only helping to communicate but acting as a powerful instrument to shape and mould human communities and there is no other sphere where human activity people are influenced by the language so significantly and powerfully as in the political one. Fairclough (1992) states that discourse is dual, that it is constitutive as well as

reflective: texts do not merely mirror society but play their role to construct it. Electoral speeches in democratic societies are significant modes of political persuasion, identity creation and even ideology construction. Presidents do not just address the people to offer policy-reforms or to ask the people to support them, but to build up the self-image of the nation, legitimate power

and to influence people towards a common vision. (Fairclough, 1995/2010; 1995). John Fowles (1963) has said that the meaning of the word is dependent on the angle in which it is held. Rhetoric is an earlier mode of communication, which is linked to persuading, manipulating and convincing other people (Cockcroft and Cockcroft, 1992). Political leaders working at the visionary level employ strategic language in extending beyond the political announcements to the creation of narratives in an effort to create an impression to effect perception and ideological positioning in an attempt to gain trust and authority (Chilton, 2004; Fairclough, 1995). The history of persuasion carries the weight of extensive historic as well. The politics of American presidents in the 21st century has been one of the most important spheres of rhetoric discourse in the framework of the multidimensional and constantly evolving connection between language and politics.

The paper will use a three-dimensional critical Discourse Analyses model that was developed by Fairclough to examine the rhetoric and discursive practices used by political figures who hold positions of power to justify authority, influence opinions and form collective ideologies among its people. The three-dimensional model of Fairclough is applied by Ato (2024) to explain how one of the original speeches of the U.S. president was constructed in an ideological, power and identity manner. Moreover, Mustafa (2023) examines the pursuit of intertextuality, recurrence, and discursive creativeness in speech of two American presidents based on a paradigm established by Fairclough. In this way, the appropriateness of the model as applied in studies of the discursiveness of electoral speech is validated in these studies. According to Fairclough (1995/210), language has no neutrality: it is place of power politics, ideology, and struggle that privileges some ideas and voices and oppresses others in a demoted role. This work unravels the intersections of text analysis, discursive practice and social practice. The present research is qualitative in its character because it is being conducted with a purpose of analyzing a number of chosen election speeches by presidents of the 21st century in the USA. It is an overall textual and contextual discussion

work and it would only be achieved using the three-dimensional CDA model. On the first level (textual analysis), the text will be analysed with the aim of investigating the vocabulary, grammar, cohesion and rhetorical organisation in order to concentrate on the contribution of linguistic decisions, modality, transitivity, pronouns, metaphor and nominalisation in order to build power and construct ideologies and persuade people. As of the second level (discursive practice), the production, distribution and consumption of the speeches will be examined: how they utilize intertextuality- which can contain allusions to national history, myths of founding, etc. The third level of analysis (social practice) suggests putting discourse into context to broader socio-political and ideological constructs. To conduct the analysis, the data were taken on 3 speeches of chosen candidates of the President of the USA in the 21st century, Donald Trump, Barack Obama, Joe Biden.

In this modern world, individuals are directly interested in the politics that govern the state. According to Ismeti and Toci (2022), despite the fact that today we enjoy a great deal of freedom regarding what we can say about our representatives and people that will govern and govern the nation until their time of mandate, we are still left with a lot of influence having been imposed on us by the politics and politicians in particular. In the past, power was given to people due to their victory in wars or possession of resources; nowadays, one of the most effective weapons of the politicians is a speech delivered in the political platform to bridge the gap between the politicians and the decision makers. Presidential speeches in the US since 2001 have been made during a dangerous political stage: after 9/11, economic crunches, cultural displacement, and the most recent, the COVID-19 pandemic. In such a situation, the logic vs. emotion (or effort to assert authority or ideological appeal) employed by the candidates can carry a lasting impact on the electoral result in the immediate future, but to the extent of the long-term public trust also.

Jimenez -Preciado et al. (2025) note that during political debates, politicians tend to employ persuasive appeals especially when they are discussing controversial or morally sensitive topics. Jamal, N.H. (2021) discovered that

credibility or reliability is established by the use of personal pronouns, appeals to experience or character, usually against opponents. The major hypothesis in this current work will be that American electoral presidential speeches are not simply transactional or informative: they are performative: they are not only indicated at communicating but also at normalizing ideological programs, creating an identity and building an army of consent. Such speeches are power mechanisms in the use of language. Since Kadariyah and Sazida (2023) have illustrated how pronouns, repetition, and diction were strategically used in the speech by the 2016 United States presidential candidate to demonstrate power and authority.

1.1 Research Objectives

- To identify discursive strategies utilized by 21st century U.S Presidential candidates to influence the public and persuade voters during their campaign speeches.
- To examine how 21st U.S presidential candidates exhibit their political authority and portray power through election campaign speeches.
- To investigate how American presidential candidates, employ language to shape the narrative and legitimize their ideological stance in their election campaign speeches.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What discursive strategies have been utilized by 21st century U.S presidential candidates to influence the public and persuade voters during their campaign speeches?
2. How have election campaign speeches been used to claim power and assert political leadership by U.S Presidential candidates?
3. How do American presidential candidates employ language to shape the narrative and legitimize ideological positioning in their election campaign speeches?

2. Literature Review

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is one such method that has surfaced as an appropriate way to the analyse the interaction and relationship that exists between language, power and ideology within the political discourse. The authors (Orungbeja Babatunde et al., 2022) underline

that CDA considers the means of creating, replicating, and objecting to the social power abuse, dominance, and inequality with the help of text and talk in the social and political environment. The literature review involves a collection of literature on how the 21st century presidents of the United States utilize the linguistic dynamic to generate power, persuade, and at times disseminate ideological discourses when pursuing the aim of influencing the audience with their legitimacy. The major part of studies reviewed uses existing CDA frameworks. The multimodal analysis is done in Mantovan et al. (2020) through ten questions model of Fairclough. In Dr. K. Umaraj et al. (2020) and Mohammad Saadeen et al. (2022), the Van Dijk model of CDA is used. The three-dimensional approach advanced by Fairclough and Iman Raissouni et al. (2020) is adhered to by Shaima Mustafa et al. the authors introduce the rhetoric appeals (ethos, pathos, logos) into the frames of CDA. Such methodological diversity realizes this theoretical diversity and analytical rigor of the field.

The use of persuasive language devices is always present in President speeches. According to Yaser Khajavi et al. (2020), they are positive self-representation, negative other-representation, legitimization, delegitimization, persuasion, and many others. Similarly, L. Mantovan et al. (2020) have pointed out that there are lexical, grammatical, rhetorical, and nonverbal cues of the political speech which serve the ideological functions. The usage of the pronouns plays a huge role in developing the unity and power. Shaima Mustafa and others, (2023) find that Trump and Biden differ in their usage of the pronouns to form national cohesion and self-glorification. In addition, N. Awawdeh et al. (2023) also note that strategic pronouns are necessary to accentuate the unity. The article by Alemi Minoo et al. (2018) also addresses the use of inclusive/exclusive pronouns by Obama to legitimize the military reaction to ISIS in the same line. Obama is rhetorically grounded on the ethical justification, hopefulness and morality. Rameen Fatima et al. (2024) point out that righteousness and politeness were the central concerns of Obama. Moreover, as Yaser Khajavi et al. (2020) explain, Obama was relying on the American Dream mythology.

Likewise, Wudie et al. (2020) note the speeches Obama made in the Middle East as ideologies to legitimize the U.S. interest. Trump discourse is the opposite of the Obama discourse. As stated by Rameen Fatima et al. (2024), his style is utilitarian and forceful. Further, he appeals to the image of the darkness, and loyalty-based solidarity, as stated by Shaima Mustafa et al. (2023). Hazim Al Dilaimy et al. (2022) are sure that such linguistic overpowering and misuse of power are reflected in the violent language of Trump. Dr. K. Umaraj et al. (2020) include these persuasive methods in their article: hyperbole, number games, and promises.

Research has shown that rhetorical strategies like metaphorical framing and linguistic representation influence national identity and political persuasion at the electoral situation. As an example, Anwar et al. (2025) outline the role of war and construction metaphors on American campaign speech that serve as discursive resources to reinforce ideological cleavages and endorse political authority. Likewise, Zain-ul-Islam and Anwar (2025) indicate that the rhetoric of Trump makes strategic use of linguistic framing and binary oppositions as a means of justification of political stance and deflection of opposing actors. Moreover, Anwar et al. (2025) state that grammatical options, especially mood and modality, can be used as important linguistic tools, with which political leaders can establish authority and appeal to voters. The research by T. M. Siregar et al. (2021) talks about the celebratory address by Biden, where they lay emphasis on unity, equality, and freedom. Biden is positive in his speech and employs light metaphors with references to liberalism (Shaima Mustafa et al. 2023). Besides, Iman Raissouni et al. (2020) make a comparison of the rhetoric of Bush and Obama on the war on terror and find that both ideologically justify the use of military force.

Also, Abbas Hussein Tarish et al. (2019) elaborate how lexical and rhetorical choices made by Bush were dependent on the circumstances. Similarly, the studies of speeches delivered by Hillary Clinton in her running are analysed by Abbas et al. (2019), and it becomes known that the rhetorical and linguistic strategies are used to establish the ideological persuasion and influence. Presidential speech is one of power preservation and propaganda of

ideas. Raid et al. (2020) then depicts the manipulation through positive self-presentation and negative othering. As Sonia Tinshe et al. (2019) state, the debate about immigration can be linked to the construction of ideological identities, in which the identity of immigrants is obedient. They address the subject of rhetoric of immigration and demonstrate that the discourse of the presidential candidates dehumanizes the immigrants.

In addition, the research of Rameen Fatima et al. (2024) is on the subject of the policy in Afghanistan, and discovers that the reasons behind military intervention are rhetoric in other words. The N. Awawdeh et al. (2023) speech is devoted to the speeches of COVID-19, in which Trump dwells on the excellence of America. Abed et al. (2023) use more energetic appeal to fear and domination on the part of Trump in comparison to Arabic speech as examples of cross-cultural comparison. The refinement and extending of the CDA methodologies are available in some of the studies: Van Dijck 25 discursive devices are used by Mohammad Saadeen et. al., (2022) to analyse the micro-level. Also, Orungbeja Babatunde et al. (2022) highlight the value of CDA and its inabilities and thus consider it one of the primary instruments to expose the hidden ideologies. The assembly of these writing fragments is enough to warrant the strength of CDA in exposing the disguised dominations of power and ideological control in political language.

3. Methodology

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The present research relies on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and specifically, on the model created by Norman Fairclough (1995) as it represents discourse as a social practice that simultaneously determines and reflects power relations and ideological organizations in the society. The three-dimensional model of discourse by Fairclough offers a structural method of analyzing language as a meaning construct at various levels: the textual analysis (describing), the discursive (interpretation) and the social practice (explanation). In this framework, the discourse has been explored not as linguistic expression only but as a means of technology of power where political actors make

ideological standings, power, and influence audiences.

In political speech, presidential campaign speech occurs as a discourse that is powerfully established through language that is used intentionally to tweeze people and justify leadership. The CDA framework can enable the current study to safeguard the ways persuasion techniques, ideological discourse, and images of political authority are linguistically created in presidential rhetoric. The study allows concentrating on persuasion, ideology, and power to analyse how political candidates strategically render issues, make collective identities, and justify political standpoints using discourse. Therefore, the model created by Fairclough is the theoretical basis of exploring the correlation between language and political power in the modern American election process.

3.2 Research Design

The research follows a qualitative research approach; the main methodological instrument used in the investigation is the Critical Discourse Analysis, which is aimed at analyzing the linguistic construction of the persuasion, ideology, and power in the U.S. presidential campaign speeches of the 21st century. The study employed a qualitative design since it allows exploring the meaning of text and context on a deep level within the scope of political discourse. The analysis was aimed at elucidating the understanding of the language, instead of concentrating on quantitative tendencies in terms of communication (politics) and language as a strategic tool.

The data included three purposively chosen campaign speeches of the prominent U.S. presidential candidates: Barack Obama (2009-2017), Donald J. Trump (2017-2021) and Joseph R. Biden (2021-2025). One campaign speech of each candidate was chosen based on particular criteria. To start with, the speech was required to be given in an official presidential election campaign. Second, the speech should have included evident persuasive arguments, ideological alignment and assertions of political positions. Third, the speeches were to be found in full text online where they could be found in trustworthy sources, such as presidential archives and trustworthy news media.

The political nature and the contextual relevance of the speeches chosen under the purposive sampling strategy guarantees the success of the research. The selected sources constitute exemplary illustrations of the modern political rhetoric of presidential campaigns in the U.S. and thus, properly serve the goals of the current research.

4. Data Analysis:

4.1 PERSUASION

A. Barack Obama: The Conviction of the Masses

"When people power is harnessed, when u guys are out there knocking on doors, making things happen, you can't be stopped."

Textual Analysis

On the textual level, the statement makes use of various linguistic and rhetoric elements, which serve as the means of persuasion and ideological contesting. "People power" is a strong lexical term that carries conscientious democratic connotations. It refers to the fact that the power of politics is always rooted in the masses and not elitist structures. The sentence constitutes a plurality of identity, with the foregrounding of "people" and grass-root engagement and democratic character. The recurring conditional sentence of "when" makes the sentence develop conditional. This repetition serves the rhetorical purpose of accumulating actions like, "harnessed," "knocking on doors," and "making things happen," that creates a piling effect, which consequently characterizes political action as a dynamic and active process.

The use of informal the second-person pronoun "u guys" introduces the conversational style and allows the political leader to appear closer to the readers. Additionally, the verbs of "knocking," "making," and "harnessed" had a new meaning of action and agency and suggested that change in politics is possible when civic participation is not passively endorsed, but pursued by a pragmatic stance.

The last sentence that is also a strong modal sentence is the last statement which is "you can't be stopped." The negative modal opposite "can't" cannot establish that sense of confidence and inevitability that collective mobilization can no longer be stopped once it has started. In general, the textual organization creates a narrative of

power to put citizens at the centre of political change.

Discursive Practice

In the discursive framework of campaign rhetoric, the utterance works as a mobilizing discourse that is aimed at stimulating a political response. The term knocking on doors makes a direct allusion to the practice of grassroots campaigns like door to door canvassing that lie at the heart of contemporary electoral strategies. The speaker puts the audience in a familiar political action, by appeal to this activity, and positions them as necessary observers to the campaign success. Such discourse is also aimed at creating a relational space between the audience and the leader. The statement focuses on collective agency, instead of political authority being top-down leadership. The speaker designates advocates as partners of a greater democratization movement. This is a persuasion strategy by making the audience more persuasive since the audience is not just a spectator, but the people are actually participating in change in the political system. The discussion is also based on the larger populist democratic tradition of American political communication.

This focus on people power makes the statement in line with the narratives of the Greatness of the grass-roots activism, the autonomy of the civic sphere, as the primary blocks of democracy. The role of institutional barriers or partisan opposition has been alluded to as a factor that cannot resist the collective citizen action. Within this sense, such a statement does not simply carry an encouragement piece of information, but rather creates a political speech that leaves ordinary citizens with a transformative spirit.

Social Practice

On the social practice level, ideological commitment to participatory democracy and civic mobilization have a large impact on discourse. The emphasis on the people power is used to condemn the hierarchical concept of political power by showing that the real political power is based on the general civic will. This ideological construction is aligned with the notion of democracy that puts a focus on civic action, grassroots campaigns, and the popular engagement in the government. The inference

can also be attributed to the existing political policies that are more reliant on the possibility to mobilize people rather than on the institution itself. Today, the significance of electoral campaigns has shifted to be based on volunteer networks, community organization and grass-root outreach. In addition, the assertion is implicit tending to cover greater power relations in democratic systems. The discourse makes ordinary citizens citizen actors that can transcend structural constraints in the form of political opposition, institutional inertia, or systemic interests. This ideological perspective is reinforced by this framing to assume that democratic societies are well served when citizens participate in political activities.

Critically speaking, the quote also shows how leaders in politics have used powerful stories of empowerment as a way of gaining political support. Although the focus of the discourse is on the agency of the grassroots, the discussion also endorses the legitimacy of the campaign by identifying the leader with the desires of the people. Therefore, persuasion works in tandem and combination with ideology to shape a vision in which politics revolve around leadership and mass organization towards the achievement of democratic transformations.

B. Donald Trump – Populist Representation: Convincing the Audience.

“I am running to be the voice of the forgotten men and women”

Textual Analysis

On the textual level, the statement illustrates the strategic application of simple but ideologically loaded language that makes communication easy. The sentence starts with the declarative clause one: “I am running;” this clearly establishes both agency and political intent of the speaker. The idea of the foregrounding the candidate as an agent and a forceful political figure is supported by the first-person singular pronoun, which is the pronoun “I”. Such linguistic decision is a support of a robust personal leadership image, which is a typical characteristic of populist rhetoric in which the leader is being positioned as the main embodiment of the common demands. The main persuasive aspect of the statement is presented by the phrase “to be the voice of the

forgotten men and women". The lexical selection "voice" is metaphorical, representing political representation and lobbying. The speaker puts himself in a role of a "voice" and creates a communicative gap between excluded citizens and political power structures. This metaphor implies that some sections of the society are not represented by the political institutions currently in place and thus need another representative to help them bring up their interest.

The adjective "forgotten" is especially important in the construction of the ideological context of the statement. It suggests neglect, exclusion and institutional disinterest by political elites or even the governing institutions. The use of the term "men and women" also expands the extent of the appeal and makes the work of the speaker more comprehensive and oriented towards the populace in general and not a particular demographic group. The simplified syntactic construction of the sentence makes it more rhetorically active and the message is easily memorized and emotionally connected. On the whole, the textual arrangement creates a story where the speaker becomes a spokesperson of the individuals who feel marginalized in the political system.

Discursive Practice

In the framework of political communication, this sentence is a typical case of populist persuasion. The speaker positions himself as an intermediary between the common people and the political system, thus developing a story of representation that contradicts the political order of things. The speaker positions the campaign in the form of a corrective action to the perceived failure of the traditional political leadership by stating that he aimed to become the "voice of the forgotten men and women".

This discussion is based on a populist and dichotomous distinction between "the people" and "the elite". The statement does not identify those political opponents specifically, but the very use of the word "forgotten" is an implicit implication that some of the political institutions, political elites, or past administrations have forgotten some section of the population. By so doing, the speaker criticizes established political order indirectly, and at the same time, he asserts himself as an

alternative embodiment of the will. Moreover, the discourse serves to establish identification between the leader and the audience. The speaker creates a symbolic association with those who are economically, socially, or politically less important by telling them that he is representing them via the people who are "forgotten". Instead of detailed proposals of policies, the discourse gives more emphasis on representation and recognition. Such framing allows the speaker to mobilize the support based on the appeal to the emotional identification and the overall discontent surrounding the current power structures.

Social Practice

At the social practice level, this statement indicates a wider ideological process linked to the modern populist politics. The concept of lost men and women appeals to the social classes that feel side-lined by economic globalization, political leaders or changing cultural forces. The discourse exploits popular resources of political disenfranchisement and social ostracism by referencing this phrase. Ideologically, the statement supports an ideology of populism according to which society is broken down into regular people and a disengaged political elite. In this context, political legitimacy is obtained through the principle of the representation of the interests of the people as opposed to the conventional institution of power. The ability of the speaker to present himself as the official representative of these people, therefore as the voice of the people, is the tool that proves effective as he tries to plant one foot on the pedal to legitimize his authority at the expense of the existing power structure. The discussion also demonstrates the way in which political leaders create discourses that remodel power relationships in democratic societies. The speaker symbolically returns the political power to institutions that the people have to guarantee and by placing himself as a spokesperson of marginalized citizens, he redistributes it. Through this ideological framing, the campaign of elections is now an exercise of recognition and representation.

Further, the focus on the representation is indicative of broader socio-political conflicts in relation to inequality, financial insecurity, and feelings of governmental abandonment. This

statement implies that some groups are no longer a part of the political sphere of decision-making and need a leader that can regain their presence in the national political dialogue. Finally, the statement illustrates how persuasion, power, and ideology integrate into one communicational practice by populist rhetoric. The discourse creates a story where the leader becomes the true figure of the voice of the oppressed citizens and thus serves to strengthen political mobilization as well as ideological disorientation.

C. Joe Biden - Conviction by Moral Defence and Emotional Appeal

"Parents shouldn't have to worry about whether their kids will come home from school, and students shouldn't have to sacrifice themselves for their friends' days before graduation."

Textual Analysis

On a textual level, the sentence is highly dependent on the use of emotionally charged words and moral framing to build the persuasive effect. The recurring modal form "shouldn't have to" serves as a normative utterance which expresses a moral obligation. This phrase puts the illustrated scenario as not acceptable in a moral and social context. The repetition of a similar modal phrase in places, makes the sentence have a rhetorical emphasis, which adds more weight to the feeling of injustice that the circumstances under discussion are being described.

Words such as "parents," "kids" and "students" appeal to families and social life relations which are quite familiar to the audience. These terms make the issue become more human and place it in the context of common experience of most citizens. When the author uses the verb "worry," it brings in the emotional aspect to it, which demonstrates the psychological burden on the families. At the same time, "come home" after school is a term that means security and stability, and it goes without saying that learning institutions are supposed to be safe places.

The latter clause is an emotional appeal, made even stronger with the word "sacrifice" themselves to their friends. The word sacrifice has a very strong moral and heroic overture and can be traced to wartime heroes or deeds of monumental courage.

Addressing the students in this language, the statement points out at the severity of the situation in question. The emotional resonance is also enhanced with the help of the temporal phrase known as "days before graduation" as the graduation is a symbol of achievement, fresh start, and hopes. All these elements of language together form a powerful emotional narrative, making the problem both ethically urgent and socially unacceptable.

Discursive Practice

The statement has a wider discourse of political practice in terms of general safety and gender violence in school and education. The speaker identifies himself as an ethical advocate of families and schoolchildren, presenting the problem as a social problem and not just a policy battle. The discourse turns the focus away from the technical discussion of policies toward human impact of violence by foreshadowing the experiences of both teenagers and parents. This is a significant persuasive role. Abstract policy arguments are not always well received by the audience as much as emotional narratives. The statement creates a strong moral argument by highlighting the innocence of the child and the anxiety of parents to promote the implementation of tougher protective rules that should be supported by people. The discussion, therefore, turns the matter into an ethical need that must not be neglected.

Moreover, the quote creates a protective leadership self. The speaker maintains the role of political power as a provider of security by pitching himself as one who protects families and communities. The emphasis on the students and parents expands the audience also, as it is associated not only with the political supporters but also with the rest of the society. This pluralism framing enhances the persuasion value of the message. In general, the discourse can be described as a strong rhetorical tool that brings emotional appeal and moral authority.

Social Practice

On the social practice level, the statement reflects broader ideological debate concerning issues of collective safety, governmental duty and safeguarding of the group of people who are unable to protect themselves. The discourse implicitly spreads the idea that one of the key

responsibilities of the state is to ensure the safety of children. The schools that were traditionally viewed as safe areas to study and evolve turn into the metaphorical zones of greater social tension and policy failures. Attracting attention to these facts, the discourse highlights urgency of dealing with structural issues of violence and security. Also, the statement indicates the general power relations among government institutions, policymakers, and advocacy groups engaging in the discussions of gun regulation and safety of the population. The discourse tries to balance power towards the reform-oriented views by providing moral and not solely political terms that define the issue on the table. Ultimately, the quote demonstrates the impact of political speeches on forming the social consciousness of people. Invoking moral responsibility and emotional empathy, the speaker creates a story where safeguarding children will be an issue of societal concern. This political ideology supports the need that political leaders should impact power to protect communities and make educational facilities safe zones to protect the coming generations.

Comparative Insight

Presidential discourse is widely characterized by persuasion via strategic linguistic framing to mobilize popular opinion, justify political power and deliver ideological rhetoric. Various persuasive strategies that are depicted in the three dialogues by Barack Obama, Joe Biden, and Donald Trump can be aligned to several political narratives and leadership styles.

One of the most noticeable themes of comparison is the idea of collective empowerment that Barack Obama expresses most of all: "When people power is harnessed, when u guys are out there knocking on doors, making things happen, you cannot be stopped." Persuasion by Obama focuses on mobilizing of collective civic actions. People power highlights the idea of democratic agency and places the masses of people in the centre of political transformation. Drawing on grassroots actions like knocking on doors, Obama places the persuasion in the framework of democratic activism and civic participation. His speech develops persuasion as an action of collective mobilization, in which political success relies on civic mobilization. This is the ideological

commitment of participatory democracy where the legitimacy of political power is provided by the active involvement of the citizens.

Meanwhile, an appeal to moral protection and emotional persuasion is demonstrated in the statement of Joe Biden: "Parents shouldn't have to worry about whether their kids will come home from school, and students shouldn't have to sacrifice themselves for their friends' days before graduation." The rhetorical approach of Biden is vastly different compared to mobilization-based discourse of Obama. Biden concentrates on emotional and moral obligations of governance rather than his political engagement. The effectiveness of the statement is in its appeal to human concerns that are universal, especially the fears of parents and the safety of the children. Using the appeal to relatives and fragility of the students, Biden makes the problem a moral crisis that needs a political resolution. Such persuasion is largely based on empathy and the moral responsibility, which places political leadership in the role of protection of the citizens. Thus, the rhetoric of Biden is characterized by an ideological focus on the position of government and protection of social interests and in which persuasion is performed on the basis of a moral argument and not on mobilization.

The statement by Donald Trump also constitutes another framework of persuasion, which is populist in its style: "I am running to be the voice of the forgotten men and women." Persuasion is employed in this dialogue by building a symbolic association between the leader and the oppressed citizens. However, contrary to the stories of collective "people power" seen with Obama or the moral appeal to save families taken with Biden, Trump appeals to persuasive power by using a rhetoric of representation and recognition. Forgotten men and women are not a new term, and it suggests that some groups in the society have somehow been left behind by prevailing political institutions. The offerings of playing the role of their "voice" help Trump create a story where he is the immediate representative of these people against a purported political establishment. This type of rhetoric is connected to populist political communication in which an appeal is made to persuade people around the dichotomy between a common citizenry and perceived political

elites. The comparative analysis thus demonstrates that there are three models of persuasion in terms of theme. The language used by Obama underlines collective mobilization and democratic mobilization that call on citizens to take part in the politics. The rhetoric used by Biden focuses on moral responsibility and emotional appeal, and it attracts to the common value of ethics and lack of social security. The rhetoric of Trump revolves around populist presentation, where persuasion is made on the notion that political leadership must give voice to disfavoured citizens.

Though all these differences exist, one thing is shared among the three statements and that is the strategic building up of the relationship between the leader and the audience. Every president tries to achieve legitimacy by positioning himself with those of the people. Obama identifies himself with the citizens as political activists, Biden identifies with families in need of safety and security, and Trump identifies with those who feel politically disregarded. Therefore, the process of persuasion in the language of the presidential is not just a device of rhetoric but also an act of forming the political self and an ideological power. To sum up, the comparative thematic analysis shows that the idea of persuasion in presidential speech can assume various forms based on ideological orientation and communicative objectives of an orator. The rhetoric of Obama enhances democratic involvement, that of Biden is grounded in the moral duty and compassion, and that of Trump revolved around populist representation. Together, these claims show how political leaders employ all sorts of persuasive strategies to create support, achieve legitimacy, and provide a more substantial ideological narration in the political discourse of today.

4.2 IDEOLOGY

A. Barack Obama -Directional Choice Ideology

"It's not just a choice between two candidates or two political parties. More than any other election, this is a choice about two different visions for the country, for two different directions of where America should go."

Textual Analysis

At the textual level, the sentence involves contrasting words to introduce the election as a historic ideological cast ballot. "Not just a decision between two candidates or two political parties" makes the distinction between the superficial electoral competition (at the superficial level) and the depth level that concerns itself with ideological inequalities. The negation term used here, "not just," concentrates the fact that the election has wider implications than just other political personalities. The sounding of the word "choice" emphasizes the democracy of voter agency. Through pre-empting the action of selecting the process, foregrounding gives prominence to the issue of citizen engagement as one of the major aspects of democratic governance. In addition, the lexical expression "two different visions for the country" brings on board the concept that divergent political ideologies define different futures of the nation. "Vision" is used to express the dreams of politics in the long term with no policy proposals at the moment. The repetition of "two different directions" which follows after, further supports the metaphor of national movement. This is a comparison of the country as a group of persons going on a specific journey. The term of "where America should" go expounds on the prospective nature of the discussion, as it implies that political choices will dictate the course of the national progress. Using these language elements, the statement creates elections as the events of ideological reasoning where citizens decide on the future of the country.

Discursive Practice

Within a political rhetoric, this statement acts as an explanatory category to decipher the electoral competition. Instead of a contest between people, the speaker positions the election as an opposed ideology vision. This approach increases the density of the role of the electoral process by focusing on the long-term outcomes of the political decisions. The discourse also makes citizens as the active players in determining national destiny. The emphasis on the idea of "choice" is vital because, with the help of this feature, the statement supports democratic principles that put voters in charge and encourage political participation. The

oratory focus on visions and directions entices the electorate to judge the candidates based also on ideological background and not on his or her character traits. Also, the discourse establishes political leadership as a lighthouse towards national development. The speaker portrays political leaders as producers of the next direction of development of the country by presenting the election as a choice of “where America should go”. The collective responsibility to the development of the nation through this kind of framing adds to persuasive power. By this discursive position, the statement endorses a narration of democratic pluralism where conflicting ideas and views are central to political development.

Social Practice

On the social practice level, this statement indicates an ideological belief in the democratic pluralism and deliberative politics. The discussion recognizes that societies have different opinions, and conflicting policy-making methods. The statement supports the authenticity of ideological pluralism in democracies by placing elections as a vote on different visions. The national focus also indicates outer discussions regarding the future of the nation. Elections are often formed in the context of political rhetoric as turning points that decide on economic priorities, social policies, and engagement with the international community. In this respect, the statement emphasizes the importance of democratic institutions in leading the process of national transformation. Moreover, the rhetoric promulgates the ideological assumption that people have the authority to determine the political outcomes by voting in the elections. This position is consistent with democratic principles that consider popular participation as a foundation of a sound government. The statement also touches on the connection between collective choice and political accountability by making the focus on the former.

Altogether, the quote shows how the politics rhetoric can make the election a process of ideas choice. Focusing on pluralism and directional choice, the discourse promotes the formulation of democracy as an action whereby citizens

together decide the direction of the development of the nation.

B. Donald Trump - Ideology of National Sovereignty and Exclusionary Patriotism

“I am not running to be the president of the world. I am running to be the president of the United States. I am for America _ and America first.”

Textual Analysis

On the textual level, it builds on the repetitive and contrastive principles to create the concise ideological message based on the national sovereignty. Repeating the phrase “I am running” gives agency to the speaker and a political motive as well as creating a powerful leadership image. The constructions of the sentences are carefully plain and declarative, something that improves readability and rhetorical effects. This is typical of populist political speech since it allows to make messages easily understood by a large segment of his audience. The difference between “the president of the world and the president of the United States” is the main linguistic process with the help of which ideological meaning is conveyed. It is in refuting the idea of global leadership by struggling with national representation that the statement makes the international interaction seem a secondary factor to the domestic interests. The syntactic focus of the word “United States” and “America” previews the national identity as the primary political agenda. The last term “America first” is used as an effective ideological slogan. Repeating the word “America” makes the feelings of patriotism even stronger and places national interests on superiority to the global issues. The slogan summarizes a complicated ideological stance into a short and easy to remember statement. The first-person pronoun “I” is also employed to develop the speaker as the main defender of national sovereignty in the whole statement. With the help of such linguistic elements, the text forms the campaign of the candidate as the pledge to show national interests as priority and domestic identity as a safety net.

Discursive Practice

This sentence serves as a political statement, which is part of the ideology of nationalism. The

orator creates a discursive enclosure amongst nationalist interests and international duties. The denial of the position of “the president of the world” gains the statement the implication of reproaching the past methods of political practice that focused on international interaction or world leadership. “The America first” phrase is used as a rhetorical tool mobilizing followings who value protectionism in the economy, national security along with self-determination. The use of such rhetoric framing enables the speaker to target audiences that see globalization as a source of domestic misery and their cultural value. As a result, persuasion takes place based on ideological conformity that voters support greater national borders and less international commitments.

Moreover, the discussion develops a connection between the leadership and representation. The speaker deconstructs himself as the protector of national interests, which makes his authority authoritative by a sense of patriotism. The focus on a sense of nationality makes intricate debates on geopolitics even more simplified to a dualistic idea of domestic interests and participation in the worldwide arena. Such framing has a greater effect on persuasion by making the candidate appear as an advocate of ordinary citizens against some alleged external pressures.

Social Practice

The statement shows that there are larger trends in ideologies, connected to nationalist populism, in the social practice level. The text dwells upon the sovereignty, identity of nations, and that interests back home have a priority in political decision-making process. Such kind of rhetoric is more widespread in the economic or cultural uncertainties when some strains of individuals within a society may find themselves at risk at the hands of globalization, immigration or foreign institutions. The ideological tone in the statement is a measure against the liberal internationalism perspective that traditionally espouses international cooperation and dictating the international rule. Instead it encourages a political system a situation in which national governments prioritize their citizens over the international obligations. This school of thought redefines the power relations notion, according to which a state prevails over internationalization. In addition to this, the

statement shows how the discourse of politics shapes the formation of national identity perception. Mentioning “America” several times, the speaker constructs a narrative based on which patriotic defence is the political leadership.

In the end, the statement depicts the power of political rhetoric to express a wider ideological vision of the world. The discourse makes the idea of national identity the overriding framework of political power by its focus on sovereignty and patriotism.

C. Joe Biden- Ideology of Structural Equality and Economic Inclusion.

“Investing in all children from birth, so that regardless of their zip code, parent's income, race or disability, they are prepared to succeed in tomorrow's economy”

Textual Analysis

On the textual level, the statement underlines inclusivism and equality with specific use of words. The term “investing in all children since birth” makes the childhood development seem like a social responsibility. The economic implications of the verb “investing” tend to imply that the decision to support children can be viewed as an ethical one but it is also a tactical point in policy making where future advantages of the society are also expected. The use of the term “all children” is an inclusive term that brings out universality and equality. This inclusiveness is supported by the provision “irrespective of their zip code, parent income, race or disability”. The listing of the aforementioned factors attracts the attention to structural inequalities, which may affect chances of success. The statement recognizes certain systemic barriers in the society by referring to the socioeconomic and demographic variables directly.

Also, the sentence, which states, that it is “prepared to succeed in tomorrow's economy” adds the futuristic point of view. The focus on preparing indicates that people need education and social support to succeed in the changing economic environment. The lexical meaning of “succeed” and the “economy” is an indication of a discourse of relating social equality to the economic productivity. By using these language features, the statement creates an ideological text

that highlights the view of equal opportunity and investing long term in human capital.

Discursive Practice

This statement becomes an excuse of policy making in the arena of political communication based on the decreasing structural inequality. The discussion portrays the investment in children as a proactive strategy of eradicating inequality in education, income and social mobility. The speaker does rectify the situation by pointing that the opportunities are more likely to be affected by the socioeconomic situations as described in the form of zip code and income. This informing presents the involvement of the government as a significant instrument that leans towards justice and inclusion. The priority to teach children about the future economy can be perceived to mean that social programs and education investments are the key to the national prosperity.

As a result, the discussion combines social justice and the economic policy. Moreover, the statement builds up leadership as the one that develops equal opportunities. The speaker is on track of political authority by recommending investing in early childhood and in the development of inclusive efforts. Such a rhetorical measure will attract those voters who believe in the policies of lessening inequality and increasing access to resources and education.

Social Practice

At the social practicum, the articulation collects ideological values currently linked with social democracy and inclusive economic policy. The argument propagated by the discourse is that the governments ought to work to reduce structural inequalities to provide fair chances to every citizen. The statement recognizes the contribution of the systemic barriers to the development of social outcomes by focusing on race, income, and disability. The ideological focus on investing in early childhood is also indicative of larger discussions on the issues of social mobility and economic competitiveness. Communities whose education and social well-being are committed tend to be viewed as better placed to result in development and economic stability in the long run. The discourse therefore associates the issue of social equality to national development. Additionally, the statement

provides evidence of the capacity of the government institutions to facilitate redistribution and institute opportunities of the disadvantaged societies. The discourse justifies policies to curb inequality by positioning such interventions as investments and not expenditures. Conclusively, the quote is an example of how the ideology of structural equality and economic inclusion can be encouraged through political rhetoric. The discourse introduces equal investment in children as a key factor in achieving social justice as well as national prosperity through its focus on universal opportunity and long-term growth.

Comparative Insight

The three dialogues depict different ideological paradigms that indicate various political priorities and ideas about the way governance should be conducted. The statements of Donald Trump, Barack Obama, and Joe Biden advance national sovereignty, exclusionary patriotism, democratic pluralism, and ideological choice, structural equality and inclusive economic development, respectively. The rhetoric of Trump forms ideology based on the idea of national identity as the priority. His speech focuses on the domestic demands and sovereignty of America, which is more important than international affairs by giving emphasis on America first. This ideological view portrays political leadership as a protective element that is charged with the role of protecting national interests and cohesion of culture.

Instead of highlighting national security or economic reparation, Obama puts the election in terms of two competing visions of the future of the country. His conversation places a large emphasis on the democratic deliberation and the involvement of citizens as some of the key mechanisms by which societies formulate their political path. The statement of Biden presents a new viewpoint, ideologically based on social inclusion and economic equality. His discussion of the role of government in the reduction of systemic inequalities and recognition of equal opportunities by investing in children without consideration of socioeconomic status emphasizes this point. This view is also an ideological dedication towards social wellbeing and economic inclusiveness. Collectively, the three statements illustrate the ways the

presidential discourse explains various ideological stories in the democratic politics. Trump stresses national sovereignty and national security, Obama stresses on the democratic choice and pluralism, and Biden stresses on structural equality and inclusive development. These differences in ideologies explain how political leaders conceptualize the nature of governance and power as well as the future of the society.

4.3 POWER

A. Barack Obama - Institutional Legitimacy and Democratic Mandate

"That's the choice in this election. And that's why I'm running for second term as president of the united states of America".

Textual Analysis

On the textual level, the statement uses clear and assertive words in order to highlight political legitimacy. "That's the choice in this election" serves as a conclusion about the importance of the electoral decision. The demonstrative pronoun "that" is used has linked it back to earlier pivotal instances of ideological disparities and assimilated it together into one defining decision on the part of the voters. The following statement "And that is why I am running second term" gives a direct relationship between the electoral decision, and the political candidacy of the speaker. The term puts into focus continuity and accountability because the campaign is rendered as a reaction to the democratic processes and not personal ambition. Singer use of the first-person pronoun I'm emphasizes personal responsibility and at the same time, the spoken word has a formal tone similar to the president.

The mentioning of the "president of the united states of America" supports the authority of the institutions as well as the leadership of the nation. The mentioning of the office itself gives relevance to the statement because of the position of legitimacy and responsibility involved with the presidency. The tone of stability and continuity of the institution is achieved by the formal structure and the lack of emotionally toned words. By using such words of language, the statement presents political power as the result of democratic elections and constitutional power.

Discursive Practice

In the context of discussion of elections in general, the statement serves to substantiate the candidacy of the speaker by the aspects of democracy. By pointing out that the election is an attempt with a significant decision, the speech solidifies the participation of voters in the process of coming up with political leadership. In this context, democratic process itself emerges as the way of political power. The sentence also indicates that the candidate is a responsible individual in the democratic rule. Using the context of the speaker saying he would run to a second term as a general election announcement, he makes his campaign look as an extension of democratic participation and not a personal exercise of authority. This rhetoric method supports the concept that leadership has to be legitimized by its popularization. Moreover, the discourse places political power within the institutional frames. With great focus on the presidency and the election process, the algorithms of the constitution and its ability to legitimize power gain prominence. By doing this framing the speaker attributes a sense of responsibility among political leadership to the democratic institutions and voter action as being the accountable institution.

Social Practice

At the social practice level, ideological allegiances to democratic governance and institutional legitimacy are implied in the statement. The discussion supports the policy that the political power must be born out of the elections and the popular vote. The statement can be seen as reinforced through the concept of voter choice, as it helps position the campaign in its proper context. The safety of democratic systems is also brought out through the focus on institutional leadership. The discourse describes the concept of political power as the organization of actions according to the constitutional provisions and democratic involvement, rather than putting the political power in the context of the personal or confrontational conflict. This view is in line with the greater democratic ideals which place more emphasis on accountability, transparency and electoral legitimacy. The discourse enforces the notion that leadership should be functional in

institutional settings through focus on the office of the presidency, and the fact that the election is important. Finally, the statement demonstrates that political rhetoric can strengthen the belief in democratic institutions as well as justifying leadership with the help of the electoral mandate.

B. Donald Trump – Populist Antagonist Power

“We are going to take on big donors, and big businesses, and big media- we are going to take on the rigged system that has shipped America's wealth to other countries.”

Textual Analysis

At the textual level, there is repetition and antagonistic language used to create a narrative of political antagonism. The repetitive line “we are going to take on” serves as a rhetoric, which highlights to be determined and act collectively. The monotony also creates rhythmic intenseness, which supports the image of an upcoming clash with strong parties. The fact that the plural pronoun is used (“we”), is notable especially, as it forms a group identity between the speaker and the audience. By this use of language, the speaker places himself in the company of average citizens and not above them. The list of perceived enemies is formed by the list of names of “big donors, big businesses, and big media”. The same notion of “big” adjective being used again strengthens the notion that such institutions hold undue power and influence in the political system. This grammatical arrangement forms a chain of command where strong levels of elites take control of political and economic systems.

The use of the term, “the rigged system” brings with it a weighted judgement. The adjective “rigged” is associated with corruption, manipulation, and injustice of such order in political and economic life, so that the political and economic order is in contrast to the interests of common people. There is also the framing of nationalism in economics as the clause, “that has shipped America wealth to other countries”, is introduced. The metaphorical use of the verb, “shipped,” portrays wealth as something stolen out of the country which co-creates the notion of economic exploitation. The statement in these

language elements creates a populist discourse of revolt against influential institutions.

Discursive Practice

In the field of political communication, the statement serves as a populist type of discourse that puts into question the centres of power. The speaker negatively labels their opponents as “big donors,” “big businesses” and “big media,” which creates a political narrative of dominance by the elite over a common man on the ground. This rhetoric technique enables the speaker to make himself look like a challenger to institutional power. The third person pronoun “we” is repeatedly used and it broadens the political agency of the leader, the individual one. It puts the fight against elite institutions in the form of collective action where both the political leader and the populace are involved. Such discursive approach reinforces the convincing capacity since it invites the audience to perceive themselves as the members of an extended political agenda. In addition, the call to action to “take on the rigged system” reduces the complicated political and economic system to a simple dilemma of right and wrong between the corrupt elites and commoners. This rhetoric enables the speaker to gather support by using the public anger with the alleged economic imbalance and political malpractice.

Social Practice

At the social practice level, the statement is indicative of the ideological paradigm of populism that tends to depict the society as being fragmented between common and influential citizens. The discourse also doubts or questions conventional institutional authority whereby economic, political and media institutions are said to work in manners that disfavour the general population. The rhetoric is also representative of larger tensions in the society about globalization and economic disparity. The statement refers to domestic economic concerns by stating that the system has “shipped the American wealth to other countries,” thus relating international economic processes with domestic economic concerns. This ideological orientation aids the types of policies that value the interests of the national economy and tend to question the global economic integration. However, in conclusion,

the statement explains how political language may create power as a struggle among opposing groups in the society. Considering elite institutions as the antagonist to the leader and citizens, the rhetoric aims at reconfiguring political power and justifying a populist vision of the state.

C. Joe Biden – Bureaucratic and Policy-Driven Power

“Biden will work to close this gap by tripling Title I funding, which goes to schools serving a high number of children from low income families.”

Textual Analysis

On the textual level, the statement has employed policy-oriented language that focuses on the administrative action and institutional mechanisms. The statement that the gap would be bridged through effort implies a conscious and continuous process as opposed to instant change. The informative word “will work” is a modal form that is committed but has a pragmatic tone of a policy discourse. The very mention of the idea of “tripling Title I funding” ushers in a certain governmental initiative and a factual policy change. The verb “tripling” is also used which helps emphasize the scale of the suggested change and gives the impression of a massive increase of financial resources. The mentioning of “Title I funding” places the discussion in the context of federal education policy, as instituted.

The beneficiaries of the policy are clarified by the clause “which goes to schools with a large number of children with low income families”. The socioeconomic inequality is the key point under the lexical focus on “low income families”. The statement is based on technicality and policy specificity, unlike emotional appeal or rhetorical slogans. The discourse codes political power as the capability to bring targeted political solutions to the situation using the bureaucratic mechanisms through these linguistic features.

Discursive Practice

In the framework of political communication, this statement can be seen as a justification of a policy in which the government programs play a significant part in dealing with social inequality.

Making a reference to a particular funding mechanism, the discussion indicates the level of experience and administrative skills. This is an effective approach that builds credibility in the ability of political leadership to control intricate policy structures. Institutional capacity to form power is also constructed by the statement, but not a personal ability.

In the discourse, the practical ability of the government to allocate the resources and programs is highlighted over highlighting confrontation or the legitimacy of the electoral process. This framing would agree on leadership and technocratic form of government and evidence-based policy making. In addition to this, government takes on the role of social mobility because it prioritizes the provision of education. The policy aims at reducing the unethical disparities in the accessibility of educational opportunities through the allocation of funds to increasing populations in institutions with low levels of income within the localities.

Social Practice

On the social practice level, the statement represents an ideological allegiance on social welfare and government involvement in fighting inequality. The discussion defines political power as the institutional political power of being able to redistribute resources in a manner that promotes opportunity and fulfilment of equity. The emphasis on the federal education financing, shows how the bureaucratic systems can help in influencing the social outcomes. Governments can address the problem of income, education and opportunity disparities by making certain policy initiatives. This strategy is in line with the policy models that reckon state intervention to be the primary to successful long run economic growth. Furthermore, the statement casts some light on correlation of political power and administrative capability. Good governance must also be coupled with electoral legitimacy, as well as the capacity to create and execute policies that can deal with social issues. Finally, the discussion shows the way power may be exerted using policy choices and institutional processes. The statement positions the governmental power as a driver of creating social equity and enhancing the

prospects of underprivileged groups due to investing in education.

Comparative Insight

The three discussions demonstrate different ideas of the political power which is the representation of various styles of leadership and different ideological leanings. The statement expressed by Donald Trump reflects the power of populist antagonism, the statements Barack Obama makes are based on the principles of institutional legitimacy and democratic mandate, and the statements expressed by Joe Biden reflect the power of bureaucracy and policy. Trump fashions power by challenging elite institutions. His rhetoric makes political leadership a battle against so-called systems of influence by identifying enemies like big donors, big businesses and big media as adversaries. In this discourse, power arises as a result of a mobilization of the citizens who feel offended because of the perceived elite control. On the contrary, Obama defines power as a product of democratic procedures and institutional authority. His statement is on electoral choice and constitutional power of the presidency. Instead of challenging institutions, the discourse strengthens their value as the pillars of democratic rule. Biden is technocratic and policy oriented in terms of power. His saying dwells upon the governmental ability to introduce programs and distribute resources. Administrative structures are used to exercise power, which can make specific interventions to tackle social inequality. The three conversations together show three approaches to power creation in presidential speech: President Trump focuses on a populist crusade against it, Obama is concerned about the creation of democratic legitimacy, and Biden centres his focus on how the policy is carried out within bureaucracies. These two opposing views illustrate how political leaders theorize power and policies of governance in the current democratic discourse.

5. Discussion

This paper has analysed the use of language as a strategic means of construction of persuasion, ideology and power in campaign speeches by the 21st-century presidential candidates in the United States of America. Based on a Critical

Discourse Analysis approach, developed by Fairclough, it was found that political discourse is a focal aspect in which candidates raise support and legitimise political authority, as well as ideological positioning. It is observed that the mechanism of persuasion is done with specific rhetorical techniques among the chosen candidates. The discourse of Barack Obama focuses on the mobilization and democratic involvement in which citizens are the agents of political change. The rhetorical formation of people power is a manifestation of a participatory democratic discourse in which persuasion is pursued through promoting civic activity and responsibility. On the contrary, the persuasive speech of Joe Biden is based on moral framing and emotional appeal to a greater extent, especially references to family safety and social protection. Through foregrounding sensitive issues of parents and student vulnerability, Biden builds his political leadership as an ethical and caring system in society.

The persuasive discourse of Donald Trump, however, reveals a populist communicative style whereby persuasion is attained through the use of antagonistic framing as well as the portraying of marginalized citizens versus the perceived elite institutions. Trump creates a narrative about political leadership, by naming the enemies of his campaign territory, including but not confined to: big donors, big businesses, and big media. This approach fits into the larger populist discourse concerning highlighting the separation between the masses and political or economic elites (Mudde, and Kaltwasser, 2017). The act of shaping political discourse by ideological narratives is also provided in the analysis. Obama views elections as a democratic decision among competing types of national direction which is a pluralistic democratic ideal. Biden focuses on structural equality and economic inclusion, saying that there must be government investment in order to deal with social inequalities. In contrast to that, Trump advocates the ideology of national sovereignty and exclusionary patriotism, emphasizing domestic interests in the slogans of America First.

These results corroborate earlier studies that, in democratic societies, political rhetoric is vital in the legitimacy construction and the process of

establishing perception at the individual contemporary level (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1997). Finally, presidential campaign speeches do not only act as instruments of persuasion, but they are also discursive spaces, where ideological stands and power politics are negotiated and solidified.

6. Conclusion

The paper examined the phenomenon of conviction, politeness, and influence by analyzing selected 21st century presidential nomination speeches by the U.S. presidential candidates using Critical Discourse Analysis. Through the analysis of linguistic decisions and rhetorical texts in the speeches of Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and Joe Biden, the study proves that political speech serves as a potent tool to change the perception of people, justify political authority, and express ideological discourses. The findings indicate that the presidential candidates employ different types of persuasion strategies depending on their political interests and tendencies of their ideologies. The Obama discourse is rich in the role played by the democratic participation and mobilization, and the political engagement is a common civic responsibility. Rhetoric of Biden rests on the moral responsibility and the social protection, and the political leadership is brought as the instrument of the equality and the safety of vulnerable groups. The Trump talk, nevertheless, generates persuasion in the shape of populist representation and antagonistic framing, in which the Trump actually positions himself to be a defender of average citizens against those institutions of the elite, as he sees them. There is also the discussion on ideological stand and its relationship in political language. Campaign speeches are not just preferences of policy, but they also draw more sweeping descriptions of national identity, government, and priorities. Through discursive strategies, the candidates determine how the audiences perceive the political issues and how the future of the country may be.

Overall, the paper highlights the role that language has the potential of playing in the contemporary democratic politics. The campaign speeches given by the president are regarded as a strategic communication tool that the leaders employ to mobilize, exercise

authority as well as legitimizing ideological points of view. The study will contribute to a deeper understanding of how the political discourse works within the electoral context with the help of the Critical Discourse Analysis approach created by Fairclough. Future research can expand this analysis by examining a larger representative sample of the campaign speeches or perform a multimodal discourse analysis in examining how visual and digital forms of communication influence political persuasion.

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