

Persuasive Strategies in Hillary Clinton's Presidential Campaign Speeches

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Received: May 6, 2019 Accepted: September 19, 2019 Published: September 21, 2019

doi:10.5296/elr.v5i2.15489 URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/elr.v5i2.15489>

Abstract

This paper aims to explore how a political leader can propagate ideology through the tactful use of language. It has been investigated how different linguistic tools have been used to project or achieve political objectives. Therefore, the paper is devoted to the exploration of persuasive and manipulative strategies utilized by the democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton in her campaign speeches. This paper is framed under the scope of discourse analysis wherein three speeches of Hillary Clinton are highlighted to fathom the ways in which she mesmerizes her audience through the use of certain linguistic and rhetorical devices and crafts to inject her ultimate goal of persuading people and indoctrinate her ideology so as to gain as many voters as possible. The selected speeches have been analyzed qualitatively using analytical framework of Barbra Johnstone's work (2008) about persuasive strategies.

Keywords: language and politics, discourse analysis, political discourse, persuasive strategies

1. Rationale

Language is a multi-layered mode of communication. It is believed that words or their combinations are always socially and politically loaded. To understand various hidden agendas carried by the language, discourse analysis helps us understand hidden meanings which reside in discourse or language (Baker & Ellece, 2011). Politicians often

instrumentalize language to manipulate people. It will be observed how and to what extent language could be meticulously used by politicians to mediate specific ideology (van Dijk, 1997).

Political speeches, the purpose of which is primarily persuasion rather than entertainment, can be seen as purposeful interaction between the speaker and the audience, in which the communicative intention of the speaker is to manipulate the audience to accept the speaker's views and support his/her suggestions. In order to achieve his/her communicative purpose, the speaker uses discourse strategies and a variety of related linguistic resources aimed at creating a credible representation of him/herself, aligning him/herself with the views of others, claiming solidarity with the audience, modulating power relations and legitimizing the proposed ideology and course of action. This talk focuses on strategies the orator can use to open a dialogic space and construct a representation of the world imposing ideologies, social roles and identities of interactants, while projecting and maintaining an existentially coherent image of him/herself and the institution he/she represents, i.e. the representation of his/her behavior and attitude of people, values, facts and ideas as consistent and continuous (Duranti, 2006). The repertoire of linguistic resources taken into consideration aims at reconstructing reality and changing individuals' or groups' attitudes or behaviour towards specific issues, ideologies or objects by employing written or spoken discourse (Borchers, 2002 & Dediach, 2006).

Politics is a struggle for power in order to put certain political, economic and social ideas into practice. In this process, language plays a crucial role, for every political action is prepared, accompanied, influenced and played by language (Stobbs, 2012) believed that political speeches are very cautiously written. They might be creation of several speech writers other than the addresser. Persuasion is expounded as an effort to "influence a person's beliefs, attitudes, intentions, motivations or behavior (Gass & Seiter, 2010). A politician ideology is occasionally expressed with clarity, but generally the profound ideology is concealed in rhetoric (Gazani, 2016) Politics cannot be conducted without language. Politics is the most global sphere of human logical and emotive terms. Language is the total device of politicians to provoke the mind and feeling of their audience and consequently to gain their persuasion (Newmark, 1991). Johnstone (2008) states that discourse is consciously designed for strategic aims, namely when addressers have the intention to persuade people to certain beliefs or a course of action. Johnson and Johnson (2000) believe that political discourse is intended to involve all citizens in the process of decision making, to gain the persuasion of others through valid information and logic, and to determine what course of action would be mostly influential in solving a social or a political problem. The aim of political discourse is basically to create consensus among citizens as to which course of action can be adopted to solve problems such as poverty, crime, social inequality and racism. This paper endeavors to analyze discourse of political speaking, namely three speeches of Hillary Clinton in her presidential campaign.

2. Theoretical Underpinnings

2.1 Political Discourse

Much has been said about discourse analysis. Simply, discourse, as such, is a broad term with various definitions, which "integrates a whole palette of meanings" (Titscher et al., 1998),

ranging from linguistics, through sociology, philosophy and other disciplines. For the purposes of this paper we apply the definition of discourse offered by Fairclough (1989: 24) “I shall use the term discourse to refer to the whole process of social interaction of which a text is just a part”.

A political discourse contains some features that must be constant in them to be recognized and understood by the audience as such, but it must, at the same time, fulfill the purpose of persuading the addressees. (Ghazani, 2016)

The term political discourse is simply used to refer to the discourse that is produced by politicians. For many political discourse analysts, this term is centered on the language of professional politicians or political institutions. Crucial in this case is to realize that the actors of political process do not include only politicians, but also people, the masses, the public and citizens (Simpson & Mayr, 2010). According to Chilton and Schaffer (1997) the term political discourse can be defined in terms of certain issues, such as power, conflict or control and domination which are considered to be basic components of political discourse.

3. Methodology

This paper deals with the persuasive strategies in Hilary Clinton's selected speeches aiming to uncover those strategies as well as covert ideologies. It is qualitative in nature, techniques and procedures have been based on the approach of discourse analysis. With the help of tools offered by discourse analysis, a rigorous methodological process has been followed to analyze Hilary Clinton's election speeches. This study seeks to uncover hidden ideology and meanings of her speeches by looking into various linguistic strategies used by her to persuade people for believing into her political manifesto. Though a politician's ideology is sometimes expressed unambiguously, but generally the profound ideology is concealed in rhetoric. For analysis, the researchers have integrated Barbra Johnstone's (2008) framework for persuasive strategies to analyze the speeches. With the help of this framework, the researchers have observed how political and ideological agendas are embedded in discourse which may play a significant role in shaping the views of the voters.

4. Literature Review

Johnstone (2008) expresses that for persuasion to take effect, in certain contexts, displays of rationality and logic are required, while emotions are needed in others. What is significant to realize in this regard is that the persuasive strategy which proves to be effective in one context might not be so in another. She identifies three linguistic strategies for persuasive discourse. They are quasilogical, presentational and analogical (see Table 1 below).

Table 1. Persuasive strategies and techniques

Persuasive Strategy	Techniques
Quasilogical Strategy (arguments based on rationality)	The quasi-logical arguer utilizes the following techniques: a. informal use of Mathematical notion of transitivity or syllogistic reasoning in constructing arguments, b. logical connectives, such as "thus", "hence", "therefore", "accordingly", "consequently", etc.,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">c. subordinate clauses that relate premises to conclusions, such as "conditional clauses" and "cause clauses",d. enthymeme, ande. rhetorical questions, so as to arrive at a valid logical conclusion.
Presentational Strategy (arguments based on involvement)	<p>The speaker can create involvement and arouse audience's consciousness by utilizing the following techniques:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. rhythmical flow of words,b. rhythmical flow of sounds or poetic alliteration,c. imagery,d. parallelism,e. repeating claims, paraphrasing them, and calling attention to them,f. visual metaphors ("look", "see", "behold")g. deixes, such as "here", "now", "this", etc.h. simile, andi. metaphor.
Analogical Strategy (arguments based on teaching using narrative)	<p>Analogical arguer constructs his argument throughout:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. calling to mind a traditional wisdom in the mode of storytelling,b. reminding audience of the time-tested values,c. making use of formulaic language such as "that reminds me of ...", "you know that what they say",d. utilizing the words and proverbs of the ancestors, ande. referring to timeless past events ("once upon a time...").

Johnstone, 2008.

5. Data Analysis, Results, and Discussion

The data chosen for analysis is represented by three speeches delivered by *Hillary Clinton* in her presidential campaign. It is worth mentioning that these speeches are too long and hence the analysis will make references only to some extracts of them and the whole speeches can be retrieved from Web Resources 1, 2, and 3. In the following lines, a discourse analysis is executed depending on the model sketched in section 3 above.

Analysis of Text (1)

- 1) *It's America's basic bargain. If you do your part you ought to be able to get ahead. And when everybody does their part, America gets ahead too.*
- 2) *We're still working our way back from a crisis that happened because time-tested values were replaced by false promises.*

- 3) (a) *What happened?*
(b) *When does my hard work pay off?*
(c) *When does my family get ahead?*
(d) *Well, then, why don't they start listening to those who are?*

As the above examples illustrate, Hillary Clinton in this speech (Web Resource 1) utilizes the quasilogical persuasive strategy. More specifically, she uses two techniques within this strategy, namely: *subordinate clauses that relate premises to conclusions* and *rhetorical questions*. In example (1), she uses reasoning in order to convince her audience with what she is saying; more specifically she uses the *conditional clause* to achieve this aim. Dependent conditional clauses containing "if" and "when" that express implication, in that the above conditional sentences bear a sense of truism and the conclusion of which can be drawn from their premises. Here, the candidate expresses the idea of active participation in the election campaign and encourages the voters to do their part and determine the form of future presidency. As such, conditionals play a significant role in logical argumentation in that if "A" is true then "B" is likewise. This means that if the voters make a valid stand, then America will go ahead in achieving the goal of shaping the coming government. In this vein, conditionals are deployed as "a rhetorical device for gaining acceptance for one's claims" (Warchal, 2010). More over, these clauses are seen as a linguistic tool by means of which a politician tries to reach a consensus with his/her supporters. That is why conditionality is used here because it is useful for establishing semantic links between the premises and the conclusion in an argument, and "the strength of this relation forms a cline from conditionals that are sufficient and necessary to those that are merely probable, thus determining the degree of certainty of the conclusions reached" (Horsella & Sindermann, 1992).

Similarly, in example (2), Clinton also uses a subordinating clause that relates premises to conclusions, namely: *cause clause*. In persuasion, it is important to link ideas. The use of subordination guides and glides the audience from the thesis statement to the main ideas. In this respect, Hilary Clinton makes liberal use of subordination to enrich her speech with sentence to sentence transition where subordination establishes and sets up cause and effect relationship. She relates the "crisis" to conclusion, i.e. cause "values ..replaced.. false promises". She presupposes that the cause behind the crisis America has witnessed is the replacement of good values by false ones in her attempt to hold previous presidents accountable for such dilemma. Presupposition is normally associated with or triggered by particular lexical items and syntactic structures. Among these formal features used to presuppose are subordinate clauses, which constantly and cumulatively impose assumptions upon text interpreters and producers (Kuzio, 2014). Hilary Clinton uses subordination quite well. This conveys competence and assures listeners that the speaker thinks coherent thoughts and holds reasonable positions. It suggests that the speaker cares about the truth of his claims.

Political speeches, especially those delivered to the public at large, are particularly important part of election campaign since they allow candidates to promote themselves and their policies and motivate followers or gain power through persuasion (Hems, 2012), So they frequently rely on various rhetorical strategies, one of which is the use of rhetorical questions, whereby the candidates strategize and compete against each other (Ephratt, 2008). Interestingly, Clinton

in this speech makes extensive use of rhetorical questions (example 3) which are questions that do not require an answer and are asked for effect only in that they engage the audience and encourage them to see things from the persuader's perspective. In other words, the questions are asked to make a point rather than to elicit an answer as an answer would be obvious and therefore redundant. By doing so, she plans every thing with unfailing assiduity. Politicians are often excellent speakers, and language of politics is an excellent device for politicians to act and achieve their goals. Public utterances are usually persuasive, emotional and charismatic (Perloff, 2003). She deploys these questions "what happened?" "when my family get ahead?" "when does my hard work pay off?" in a way to provoke reflection of the economic situation which she claims to fix if elected and make the audience fall into reverie. These questions add variety to her speech and make the audience more focused on the topic, i.e. economic crisis. *Rhetorical questions are counted among linguistic means of persuasion used in speeches to (a) urge the audience members on to draw conclusions or understand arguments, (b) make them to be more attentive, (c) focus primarily on the topic so that the speaker can gain approval by finding a common ground for reflection with the audience* (Helms, 2012). Hilary Clinton builds credibility so as to convince her audience that she is similar to them and shares their beliefs, i.e. one way to do this is by asking the audience agreeing with her "Well, why don't they start listening to those who are"? . Accordingly, these questions are an effective means of persuasion to get the approval and support of the audience by affecting their attitude, emotion and psychology in political speeches (Nguyen, 2010).

4. (a) To be **here** in **this** beautiful park dedicated to Franklin Roosevelt's enduring vision of America, the nation we want to be.

(b) **Now** it's time — your time to secure the gains and move ahead.

(c) **Here**, on Roosevelt Island, I believe we have a continuing rendezvous with destiny.

(d) **Now, this** will create millions of jobs and countless new businesses, and enable America to lead the global fight against climate change.

5. (a) That **still sounds** good to me.

(b) It's America's **basic bargain**.

(c) The **same Scranton** lace mill.

(d) He **scrimped and saved**, his **small** business.

(e) For the **successful** and the **struggling**.

For those **breaking barriers** in technology and discovering cures for diseases.

6. You **worked extra shifts, took second jobs, postponed home repairs...** you figured out how to make it work. And now people are **beginning to think** about their future again – **going to college, starting a business, buying a house, finally being able to put away something for retirement.**

7. **No other country** on Earth is better positioned to thrive in the 21st century. **No other country** is better equipped to meet traditional threats from countries like Russia, North Korea, and Iran – and to deal with the rise of new powers like China. **No other country** is better prepared to meet emerging threats from cyber attacks, transnational terror networks like ISIS, and diseases that spread across oceans and continents.

In these examples, Clinton exploits the presentational persuasive strategy by employing various linguistic and rhetorical devices through which she skillfully manipulates her audience. By doing so, she is basing her argument on involvement of the audience, attracting their attention, and gaining their support.

Like any other types of discourse, the American political speeches are loaded with deictic expressions. The most common categories are those of person, place and time (Cornish, 2005). In (4), she uses *deixis* such as 'here', 'now', and 'this' to force her audience to follow her speech to know the co-referents of these words. The understanding of certain expressions in an utterance requires contextual information. In 4(a) and(c), she uses the "this" and "here" deictic expressions that center on the place of speaking. She relates the place "park" to Roosevelt's vision in which he espouses a moderate but progressive agenda to preserve capitalism by reforming it. (Web. Resource 4). In 4(b) the deictic "now" is used to emphasize the time of speaking and by means of which she drops the audience a hint about the current crisis the country is undergoing. It is believed that *deixis* plays an important role in political discourse, where it has been studied "ranging from personal to political, from persuasive to manipulative", taking into account "both the context of production and the speaker's intentions" (Adetunji, 2006: 181).

In (5), Clinton presents rhythmical flow of sounds, i.e. *alliteration*. The use of "c" sound in "a", "c" and "e" and the use of consonant clusters "scr" and "str" in "c" and "d" and "e" as well as the repetitive use of "b" in "b" and "f" gives rhythm to her speech.. Naturally speaking, human beings remember things better if they are rhythmic; hence alliteration is a good device to make a speech memorable (Harandi & Jahantigh, 2017). Whether immediately juxtaposed or non immediately the utilization of alliteration is taken to emphasize the tone of voice for the audience, while readers of the text plainly see mere alliteration. The use of alliterative pairs here reinforces a sense of balance. Balance and ordered phrasing is something which the audience warms to at neurological level, regardless of whether it maps on to anything meaningful or true. They also create powerful impressions and associations, in that they help the "rhetor produce the impression of a coherent set". (Lancaster, 2015).

In (6), Hilary Clinton recourses to repetitive or parallelistic structures to make her speech cohesive, solid and memorable. The extracts above contain similar syntactic structures which have the pattern: perfect transitive verb followed by direct object. This part talks about Hilary's vision for America. She promises to secure the economic future and expands the opportunities through greater access to education and more evenly distributed economic wealth, which consists in a fair tax system, labor and workers' rights and immigration reform (Johnston, 2016).

In (7) she repeats the structures to reinforce her argument and ensure that her point of view will stay in the audience's minds. Moreover, repetition is useful here to make explicit her ideology that America is the best country to live in, it is the home of democracy, it is the savior, and it is the only country that deserves to lead the globe. She wisely shows her deep faith in America which takes the lead in combating all perils and peace threatening countries.

8. (a) *President Roosevelt's Four Freedoms are a testament to our nation's unmatched aspirations and a reminder of our unfinished work at home and abroad. He said there's no mystery about what it takes to build a strong and prosperous America: "Equality of*

opportunity... Jobs for those who can work... Security for those who need it... The ending of special privilege for the few... The preservation of civil liberties for all... a wider and constantly rising standard of living."

(b) My mother taught me that everybody needs a chance and a champion. She knew what it was like not to have either one. Her own parents abandoned her, and by 14 she was out on her own, working as a housemaid. Years later, when I was old enough to understand, I asked what kept her going. You know what her answer was? Something very simple: Kindness from someone who believed she mattered.

In these extracts, Hillary Clinton is utilizing the analogical persuasive strategy basing her argument on narration or storytelling.

In (a), she makes reference to time tested values by quoting President Roosevelt's statements about what it takes to build a strong country in her attempt to convince the audience that she endeavors to follow the steps of the president who stresses health care, equitable tax policy, workers' rights, civil liberties, genuine public assistance for the needy, and the reestablishment of America's moral authority in the world of politics. He offers a hope to a population battered by years of economic hardships , including ailing economy , failing financial markets and unstable pyramids of holding companies that plunge the nation into a great depression (McCutcheon, 1931). By referring to the president's statements, she presents herself as mausoleum of hope in an attempt to convince the audience to put similar bona fide plans for relief, recovery, and reform into action

In (b), she mentions a story about her mother's hard times in the past. This strategy is very advantageous in that it attracts the attention of the audience and moves them. The great news about telling the story is she can lean on the imagery and emotion from that story throughout the rest of her speech. In political speeches, narrative functions as a device that supports the fundamental persuasive intentions by presenting an ideologically biased selection of past events. Storytelling gives a speech the qualitative elements that help the audience engage with the speaker and recall the key points. Tapping into stories that are apart of human experience is a powerful strategy to build deep and instant rapport with the audience. She excels at storytelling. She reconstructs stories using re-created "Americanized" myth such as "The American way of life" and "The American dream". These stories interweave culturally dominance ideologies, religious beliefs and myths into powerful persuasive frameworks for political leaders to deploy (Elsa, 2013; Green & Brock, 2000).

Since this paper is loaded with details, the rest of the analysis is better presented in Tables 2 and (3). These tables summarize pattern of findings of texts (2) and (3) which are directly in line with previous findings and as such digression and repetition are avoided.

Table 2. Analysis of Text (2)

Persuasive Strategy	Techniques
Quasilogical Strategy (arguments based on rationality)	<u>Cause clauses:</u> <i>Because of you, this campaign is the only one, Democrat or Republican, to win more than 10 million votes. I'm going</i>

Presentation Strategy (arguments based on involvement)	<p><i>forward because more voices remain to be heard.</i></p> <p><u>Parallelism</u>: <i>We are going to keep our families safe and our country strong.</i></p> <p><u>Repetition</u>: <i>So I want you with me to imagine a tomorrow where no barriers hold you back, and all of our people can share in the promise of America. Imagine a tomorrow where every parent can find a good job and every grandparent can enjoy a secure retirement ... a tomorrow where we trust and respect each other despite our differences.</i></p> <p><u>Deixis</u>: <i>Now, we all know – we all know many people who are still hurting.</i></p>
Analogical Strategy (arguments based on teaching using narrative)	<p><u>Storytelling</u>: <i>Like John, the firefighter from the South Bronx that I met shortly after 9/11 as he searched for survivors at Ground Zero, and like so many others, John got sick breathing the toxic air.</i></p> <p><u>Utilizing the words and proverbs of the ancestors</u>: <i>There's no place like home.</i></p>

Table 3. Analysis of Text (3)

Persuasive Strategy	Techniques
Quasilogical Strategy (arguments based on rationality)	<p><u>Cause clauses</u>: <i>I know how hard this is because we've done it before.</i></p>
Presentation Strategy (arguments based on involvement)	<p><u>Parallelism</u>: <i>Our allies treated that attack against one as an attack against all.</i></p> <p><u>Repetition</u>: (a) <i>When New York was attacked on 9/11, we had a Republican president, a Republican governor and a Republican mayor, and I worked with all of them.</i> (b) <i>Our allies treated that attack against one as an attack against all.</i></p> <p><u>Deixis</u>: (a) <i>I wanted to come here to our city, which has shown such resilience in the face of terrorism.</i> (b) <i>Now, let's be clear about what we're facing.</i></p>

**Analogical Strategy
(arguments based on
teaching using narrative)**

Storytelling: *As I watched the tragic scenes from France, I kept thinking back to a young man in the world met in January after the last attack in Paris. His name was Lassana, a Muslim immigrant from Mali.*

Referring to past events: *When the United States was hit on 9/11, our allies treated that attack against one as an attack against all.*

6. Concluding Remakes

It has always been preferable for the governed to be ruled by the spoken word rather than by the whip, the chain or the gun. For this reason power is based upon language. Leadership is a social act which necessitates two parties: individuals who excel in self-representation and others who are keen to follow when they are persuaded by rhetoric. The language of persuasion promises a better future – often based on what is wrong with the present. This vision activates deep-seated ideas, values and feelings hidden within the audience. Successful politicians can have credible stories to tell, who can involve the audience with the drama of the present by explaining in simple terms what is right and what is wrong and who can convince the audience that they are better than their opponents. The most rhetorically successful speech performance is the most persuasive one as measured by audience responses. The interplay between overlapping rhetorical strategies ensures political communication is persuasive because it conceals the contribution of any single strategy, and this escapes alerting the audience to the fact that they are being persuaded (Black, 2011).

Persuasion is an important art of communication process to persuade other using stimulation to get response from the listener. One of the areas that apply persuasion is a political campaign speech. It uses persuasive language to promote and persuade the audience to vote the candidate of president's election (Chen, 2018). From a linguistic viewpoint, Hillary Clinton is undoubtedly a skilled orator, and a prolific speech giver, able to utilize the most striking rhetorical features in the political speeches genre. Her charismatic ability captures the audiences' attention, and evokes atmosphere of emotion and sentiment. In her speeches Hillary Clinton deploys various persuasive means to gain a sense of empathy from the audience and thus lay the emotional foundation for her speeches., She has impressed the world with her speech talent, intelligence and passion. Her multiple social identities, her personal experiences, her relation with the audience and her speech purpose dynamically interact with each other, bringing into the emergence of her particular speech style that is worth researching (Giordano, 2010).

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Web Resources

(Web Resource 1)

<http://time.com/3920332/transcript-full-text-hillary-clinton-campaign-launch/>

(Web Resource 2)

<https://www.hillaryclinton.com/briefing/updates/2016/04/20/hillary-clinton-celebrates-primary-win-in-new-york-city/>

(Web Resource 3)

<http://time.com/4120295/hillary-clinton-foreign-policy-isis/?iid=sr-link3>

(Web Resource 4)

<http://www.independent.co.uk>

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