



THE ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

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Annotation

This paper focuses on an analysis of speeches by presidents and presidential candidates; they are texts that were prepared and read or recited at particularly special—nation-building—events, and so they are also generally the most well thought-out and well-structured texts, in which the desired value system is also usually best defined. Using selected examples, we looked for what world and what values are transmitted, or intended to be transmitted, to the addresses (i.e., the people), and how the speeches appeal to them.

Keywords: presidents' speech, metaphor, metonymy, inauguration speeches,

Presidents, prime ministers, and other leaders have a special place among the heroes and celebrities discussed in publications. They are special in many ways, not least because their privileged position, attained through general or parliamentary (e.g., in Germany and Italy) elections, already places them at the center of public discourse. This allows them—and at the same time requires them—to express their opinions on a broad range of topics, events, and other issues. This is how an individual that was “just yesterday” a law professor, whose opinion was important only to a limited number of people (e.g., students), suddenly becomes a central figure that determines which topics take priority and which ones are secondary, which discourses are allowed, what is politically correct, and so on. Suddenly this role ascribes to him or expects him to have knowledge of everything; he has or is supposed to have an opinion and position on everything. All of this happens when he accepts the role, which is defined by the constitution and in most countries gives the selected (or elected) individual the right and obligation to be the country's commander-in-chief, to call general parliamentary elections; promulgate laws; appoint state office also as required by law; appoint and recall the country's ambassadors and envoys, accept the credentials of foreign diplomatic representatives; amend the instrument of ratification; decide on granting clemency; confer decorations and honorary titles; and perform other duties determined by the constitution. In countries with a presidential system, such as the United States, this role is even more demanding, because the individual has to combine both roles: president of the country and leader of the government.

. Generally, the ones selected by parliament are more independent of public opinion in their positions and actions. A president serves as the main official representative of his country abroad, and thus a position of authority in his country is implicitly ascribed to him, not only as the commander in-chief of the military but also as the “leader of the nation.”



This role is especially enhanced by the fact that the parliament can charge him with taking a position on certain issues, the state of the nation, and so on. This involves expressing his opinion on important issues at important state-defining occasions; that is, inaugurations and state-building rituals (such as Independence Day, Statehood Day, and memorial events for partisans or victims of postwar killings). On the one hand, this position is granted by the election itself, and on the other, it realizes itself through a self-affirmative and self-reassuring capacity for self-presentation, something that is particularly evident in the current Slovenian president. There are words and actions that can only be relevantly uttered and

carried out by the president, and in this regard his role is similar to that of a queen, who is the only one allowed to do certain things, such as christen a ship, which she does with the performativity utterance:

A speech is a communication event, generally performed as face-to-face communication between an individual and an audience in a structured, deliberate

manner for the purpose of communication intended to inform, influence, or entertain a listening audience. Speech includes knowledge, attitude, and ideology

moreover, its language shows how the people understand abstract domains such as morality, politics, and so on.

Presidential speeches are one-way communication in which the speaker explains his ideas, knowledge, and attitude to the audience (i. e., citizens). Speeches can be understood as a means of creating authority and respect among a large group in our culture, such as the entire nation, with the characteristics of political

speeches. This is the reason that political speeches are so frequently a part of national commemorations, where the president comments on current political and social events on the one hand, and expresses his vision of the future on the other. The question, however—and it is primarily connected with the media's role—is definitely the following: which portions of the speech are the audience able to grasp immediately, and which parts are received only after media use and interpretation. Some parts of speeches gradually become independent quotations or independent metaphors (e.g., for independence and a warning of war. It is generally known who writes American presidents' speeches. The speechwriter

has a professionalized function—there is even a speechwriting department that requests historical, political, and other analyses—and he shapes the final text together with the president. In this case the president is a type of coauthor, which allows him to identify with the words he speaks. In John F. Kennedy's speech, which was mostly written by Ted Sorensen (2009), the main focus was on the relationship between duty and power. Most speeches probably belong in the third category and for most presidents it is the desired impression and effect, as well as professionalization that determines that speeches are written by a professional writer. As the president animates the speech, he has to be committed to what the words express.

The role of the country's president is to be the leader of the nation; in this regard, speeches at national commemorations represent a special communication practice with the public. This practice includes both a focus on the content and a specific articulation of wording, word figures, and language patterns;



all of this creates both a vision of the country and establishes the image of a good leader and nation-keeper.

In any case, the problem is that the audience receives the speech very differently; many listeners do not listen to it at all, or only superficially. Naturally in such a context a speech is just part of protocol, a part of ritual practice carried out. The president is thus just a figure in the performance; a figure that is an inescapable part of the show both for his symbolic significance and metaphorical authority. The protocol also includes the audience as part of the speech event, “adding and contributing to its text in a collaborative way. Yet another problem arises in listening to the speech. Although the aim of the speech is that it be noticed and perhaps even remembered by the listeners, they usually don’t follow it attentively, mostly because it is performed in a monotone way: the president stands still and slowly reads the written text; his speaking is monotone and his posture is rigid; his gestures are minimalized to thoughtfully chosen small arm gestures; his affect is serious, his gaze is oriented toward the general listening public or to some object point in the hall; in essence, the one-way communication becomes impersonal. They maintain full control over their gestures, affect, voice, and words. This presentation style is the most common for presidential speeches. The monotone delivery results from the simple fact that there is limited eye contact with the audience, because the presidents read their texts from a sheet of paper. A different type of communication with the audience is displayed by American speakers. Trump uses a teleprompter, which helps the speaker especially at moments when he or she must transition from one mental and spoken passage to another. It allows a lively connection with the audience and the appearance of a dialogue. Another function of these texts is to show the president’s sophistication in national (political and social) themes as well as in cultural dimensions, especially in the nation’s literature. Presidents recall memories of events in their speeches, offering casual explanations or expressing their thoughts on them

Inauguration speeches are texts that are prepared for and read at the president’s inauguration ceremony.¹⁰ The texts are presumably written by the presidents themselves. Taken as a whole, these speeches mainly contain perceptions of the country’s future, visions, what should be done in the country during the president’s mandate, a promise that the president will work within the limits of this vision, numerous ethical and friendly claims, and indications that he accepts the responsibility. The words of the oath are defined in the Constitution (Article 104), and reading them in front of the parliament is obligatory for all top officials: the speaker of the National Assembly, the prime minister ministers, and of course the president of the country. Presidential speeches and even oaths also apply to the listeners, because presidents will be one of them; president and citizens work together for the national welfare.

Performative words in presidential speeches are in the form of first-person singular speech and are explicitly expressed only in presidential oaths during the act of promising. In this case the president promises personal responsibility. In other cases they are expressed in the first-person plural, because the whole nation is included in creating its future.



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In their inauguration speeches presidents express their visions and plans for the future, points of focus, and their view of the country. The nature of this discourse requires a positive perspective on the history and state of the nation and an optimistic, affirmative attitude about the country's development. Some linguists started to discuss ecology and the need to join the European Union and NATO, was a successful economy that increases the national welfare; schematized crisis and looked for positive aspects of it, especially in the necessity of strengthening the collective spirit in dealing with difficulties.

All presidents speak as though they are one of many using the first-person plural form. Although the president is on stage and metaphorically on the pedestal of the highest authority in state, in these speeches he steps down to be one of common people, to make people believe that he sees and understands their problems. But at the same time he still maintains the voice of a moral and ethical pillar and gives guidelines regarding what is right and what is wrong. They represent a moral and ethical pillar, and they are perceived as a moral and ethical role model for citizens. All these "ideal attributes" are expressed in their speeches at national commemorations, where on the stage they play the role of the leader of the nation. It is obvious that the function of these speeches is to use the symbolic power of language to influence the citizens and to establish authority.

The material analyzed makes it obvious that presidents try to evoke patriotic feelings with the concepts that nation is family, our homeland is our home; we are on the same boat and we should work as a collective, hand in hand, and take care of each other, as a truly healthy family would.

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