

Political Rhetoric in Speeches and Remarks, the Virtual Briefing Room of the US White House

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ABSTRAKT

Cílem této bakalářské práce je diskurzivní analýza politické rétoriky prezidenta Spojených států amerických Joe Bidena a viceprezidentky Kamaly Harris v archivech *Speeches and Remarks*, virtuální zasedací místnosti na oficiálních stránkách Bílého domu. Teoretická část se zaměřuje na vysvětlení definic rétoriky, diskurzu, politického jazyka, a také samotných přesvědčovacích strategií, které jsou následně analyzovány v praktické části práce. Tyto přesvědčovací strategie a další jazykové prostředky zachycené v politických projevech jsou v praktické části rozebrány jednotlivě podle tří oblastí, ke kterým se prezident Joe Biden a viceprezidentka Kamala Harris vyjadřují – domácí, mezinárodní a ekonomické záležitosti. Cílem analýzy je sledovat rozdíly v použití jazykových prostředků a shrnout jejich vliv na publikum.

Klíčová slova: politika, Spojené státy americké, Bílý dům, prezident, viceprezidentka, Joe Biden, Kamala Harris, *Speeches and Remarks*, přesvědčovací metody, diskurz, diskurzivní analýza, rétorika

ABSTRACT

This bachelor's thesis aims to conduct a discourse analysis of the political rhetoric of the President of the United States of America Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris in archives of *Speeches and Remarks*, a virtual briefing room on the official website of the U.S. White House. The theoretical part focuses on explaining the definitions of rhetoric, discourse, political language, and finally, the persuasive strategies, which are subsequently analysed in the practical part of the thesis. These persuasive strategies and other rhetorical devices captured in political speeches are analysed in the practical part individually, according to the three areas on which President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris express themselves – domestic, international, and economic matters. The analysis aims to observe the differences between these language devices and summarize their effects on the audience.

Keywords: politics, the United States of America, the White House, President, Vice President, Joe Biden, Kamala Harris, *Speeches and Remarks*, persuasive strategies, discourse, discourse analysis, rhetoric

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I declare that the submitted version of the bachelor's thesis and the electronic version uploaded to IS/STAG are identical.

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION	10
I THEORY.....	11
1 RHETORIC	12
1.1 DEFINING RHETORIC	12
1.1.1 Ethos, logos, pathos.....	13
2 DISCOURSE.....	14
2.1 THE DEFINITION OF DISCOURSE.....	14
2.1.1 Context	14
2.1.2 Implicature and shared knowledge.....	15
2.1.3 The Cooperative Principle/Grice's Maxims.....	15
2.1.4 Speech Act Theory	16
2.2 ORAL, WRITTEN AND E-DISCOURSE.....	16
2.3 DISCOURSE VS. PRAGMATICS	18
2.4 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS	19
3 POLITICAL LANGUAGE	21
3.1 PERSUASION AND MANIPULATION	21
3.2 POWER AND IDEOLOGY	23
4 PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES	24
4.1 METAPHOR.....	24
4.2 METONYMY	25
4.3 REPETITION	25
4.4 THE MARKING OF IMPORTANCE AND EXAGGERATED CLAIMS	26
4.5 HUMOUR	27
4.6 POLARIZATION	27
II ANALYSIS.....	29
5 CORPUS MATERIAL FOR ANALYSIS.....	30
5.1 SPEECHES AND REMARKS ON THE DOMESTIC ISSUES	31
5.1.1 Metaphor	32
5.1.2 Metonymy	33
5.1.3 Polarization	35
5.1.4 Ideology.....	37
5.1.5 Repetition	38
5.1.6 Face-work and humour	39
5.1.7 The marking of importance and exaggerated claims	41
5.2 SPEECHES AND REMARKS ON THE INTERNATIONAL ISSUES	42
5.2.1 Metaphor	42
5.2.2 Metonymy	44
5.2.3 Polarization	45
5.2.4 Ideology.....	46

5.2.5	Repetition	48
5.2.6	Face-work and humour	49
5.2.7	The marking of importance and exaggerated claims	49
5.3	SPEECHES AND REMARKS ON THE ECONOMIC ISSUES	50
5.3.1	Metaphor	51
5.3.2	Metonymy	52
5.3.3	Polarization	54
5.3.4	Ideology.....	55
5.3.5	Repetition	56
5.3.6	Face-work and humour	57
5.3.7	The marking of importance and exaggerated claims	58
5.4	CONCLUSION OF ANALYSIS.....	59
6	CONCLUSION.....	61
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	62
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	66
	APPENDICES.....	67

INTRODUCTION

The key to the success of political representatives is the art of handling language. And this is in such a way that impresses their listeners, provokes certain reactions in them, prompts them to act, and leaves the words etched in their memory. How does one achieve such a speech that wins over an audience? The magic of an excellent speaker lies in the choice of words. By combining politics and language skills, a great influence on people can be achieved. Who else has such power to influence the people than authority figures like politicians? Can such power be combined with manipulation?

The United States of America is one of the most influential countries in the world. That is why anything the President or Vice President of the United States say greatly impacts people. My bachelor's thesis is divided into two parts – theory and analysis - and focuses on political rhetoric in *Speeches and Remarks*, a column that archives all speeches from the Biden-Harris administration that contain various persuasive strategies and other linguistic devices analysts have been trying to capture for several years.

The theory contains four chapters. The first chapter defines rhetoric, its origins, the art of persuasion, describes how a rhetor tries to persuade his/her listeners, and states the main characteristics of rhetoric. The second chapter defines discourse and summarizes knowledge that one must be familiar with before starting the discourse analysis. Then, it describes the characteristics of the oral, written, and E-discourse and explains how pragmatics as a field of study is closely tied to discourse. The third chapter analyses political language and discusses it also from the point of view of manipulation, ideology, and the construction of power. The fourth chapter about persuasive strategies can already be taken as an introductory chapter for the analytical part.

The analytical part attempts to study the political language itself in *Speeches and Remarks* of President Biden and Vice President Harris and observes the use of their persuasive strategies. The part is further divided into three chapters, which I have categorized according to the most discussed topics in the section of *Speeches and Remarks* – the domestic issues, international issues, and economic matters. The goal is to find persuasive methods in collected texts, list the examples, describe their differences when applied to each of the three topics, and trace whether they work in practice.

I. THEORY

1 RHETORIC

Political rhetoric is the main topic of this bachelor thesis. To get familiar with the rhetoric itself from the basic information, this chapter provides a guideline of what rhetoric is, also from the perspective of Aristoteles, what are some of the main characteristics, and how rhetoric is created in general.

1.1 DEFINING RHETORIC

Rhetoric is being studied primarily for the intentions the speakers have behind their utterances and the effect that the utterances have on the speaker's audience. Even though rhetoric can have multiple meanings, it can also be described as a human interaction in which the speaker expresses his attitudes and wants to share them with his audience. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 4) Rhetoric might be an application or the actual performance of discourse that is exchanged with the rhetor's audience by the usage of symbols and verbal or non-verbal gestures. (Martin 2022, 171) It might be considered a tool for persuasion that evokes the audience to social action. (Eyman 2015, 17) Pelclová refers to this persuasion as a relationship between the social actors, which is the initiator of the communicative event, the rhetor, and the target community. According to her, rhetoric occurs in a *public environment*, which "covers a broad spectrum of communication events that happen in the public sphere" (Pelclová 2018, 1).

Rhetoric as an *art of persuasion* was born in Ancient Greek, where rhetoric was used for formal purposes, mainly for law, politics, and speeches to the public (Partington and Taylor 2018, 4), which Eyman marks as speeches for "legal, political and ceremonial" (Eyman 2015, 14) purposes. Aristoteles viewed rhetoric as an application of theoretical background into practise and studied the effectiveness of persuasive strategies in oratory. (Eyman 2015, 14) It was not only Aristoteles who thought of rhetoric as an art of speaking that is not used for spreading false information and manipulation, as it was common for Sophists, but rather as spreading truthful knowledge. Also, the known Roman rhetor Cicero agreed with Aristoteles' opinions. (Browse 2018, 10) Cicero described five technical canons as a process of making a rhetorical argument. First is the *invention*, which is a process of collecting potential arguments, looking for valid information that would have a persuasive effect. (Browse 2018, 11) The next stage is *arrangement*, where the rhetor organizes his speech and formulates the collected information. *Style* as a third stage means selecting the appropriate language to formulate the information that the rhetor wants to share with his/her

audience. The fourth stage is called *memory*, which is the very act of memorizing the speech that leads to its oral presentation, referred to as *delivery*. (Eyman 2015, 65)

1.1.1 Ethos, logos, pathos

In classical rhetoric, to give a successful speech, Aristoteles defined three rhetorical appeals that functioned as a mode of expression: *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*. The argument built on the appeal to *ethos* is built on the character and the image of the speaker. *Logos* is, on the other hand, an argument that is supported by logical and credible sources. Pelclová also defines logos as the “strength of the logical arguments” (Pelclová 2018, 1). *Pathos* is the appeal to the audience’s emotions. (Pelclová 2018, 1)

These three rhetorical appeals function as a manner of targeting the audience’s perception of the rhetor and his message. They lead to the audience’s affecting of reactions, on their agreement and disagreement with the rhetor’s opinions or influencing their emotional state. (Browse 2018, 11) The effect of *ethos* is that the rhetor seems more trustworthy and makes the audience trust his/her words more. With *logos*, it is the words choice and the delivery of the argument itself, what makes the argument seem valid and strong. With *pathos*, it is the connection with the message and emotions that the rhetor targets while delivering his/her message. (Mooney and Evans 2015, 45)

2 DISCOURSE

This chapter will deal with defining discourse, modes of discourse, understanding how discourse is related to pragmatics, and mostly with discourse analysis, which is essential when analysing political rhetoric of Speeches and Remarks.

2.1 THE DEFINITION OF DISCOURSE

Discourse can be understood as the use of language within a certain context. Usually, it is marked by linguists as a language in use. It is a social practise connected with culture, society, and history. (Strauss and Parastou 2014, 2)

Discourse can be either spoken or written, depending on the modality of the text. What is written or spoken by the producer tells us a lot about the producer's stance - beliefs, values, and attitudes toward the topic he is speaking or writing about. "Stance-taking is an inevitable consequence of participating in and producing discourse, of putting the world into words. Stance emerges in a speaker's or writer's choice of one linguistic form over another" (Strauss and Parastou 2014, 4). According to Bhatia, producing discourse reflects what is happening in the society and a *representation of reality* (Bhatia 2015, 46).

Discourse refers to a produced text which does not rely on literal meaning but semantic or rather intended meaning (pragmatic purpose) of the symbols used in communication. Once the sign is put in a context, it derives its meaning. (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 15)

2.1.1 Context

Context is a trivial element that has a certain effect on the language in use. (Rymes 2009, 8). Every word's meaning varies depending on the context it occurs in. That is why it is essential to recognize the context in which the producer and receiver to whom the message is addressed appear. (Rymes 2009, 20-22)

Talking about the determination by context, a language relativity hypothesis, also called the Saphir-Whorf hypothesis, is based on the belief that the way people produce language determines how they perceive everything around them. According to Waring, people speaking different languages imaginatively put words into categories, which influences the way they perceive things in the world. (Waring 2018, 183) Waring also states that one's language has its own boundaries, and therefore people are "not able to imagine

anything outside the bounds” (Waring 2018, 183) of their knowledge of language. Waring gave an example of children’s usage of swear words, which should be taboo for them because it might signal negative things about how they think and behave. (Waring 2018, 183) Also, each language has a different worldview, and some information can be perceived differently than in other languages. Language and thinking as linked together are, in general, an important case in discourse studies. The producer’s choice of language within a particular context is how his identity is shaped. (Rymes 2009, 19)

2.1.2 Implicature and shared knowledge

Implicature refers to what is meant rather than what is said. Therefore the producer of the text and the perceiver must rely on the shared knowledge. The thoughts producer wants to share are usually expressed indirectly and are not balanced with how the thought is interpreted. (Waring 2018, 184) Our shared knowledge is based on our past experiences, historical events, and the knowledge one has already gained. (Bhatia 2015, 6) These three components shape our language while communicating and perceiving the text in discourse because only then can the text be fully understood and the relationship between the producer and his audience be cooperative. Producer’s presuppositions must meet with presuppositions of the audience – that means the producer presumes that his audience would share the same knowledge to be able to understand his message and possibly participate. (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 22)

2.1.3 The Cooperative Principle/Grice’s Maxims

The next linguistic term where implicatures occur is the cooperative principle. For discourse studies, the cooperative principle helps to recognize how the participants understand the information from the utterance and helps to describe how the agents of the conversation find out the implicatures (Renkema and Schubert 2018, 22-23). The cooperative principle, so called the Grice’s maxims, provides four categories of maxims: the *maxim of quantity*, the *maxim of quality*, the *maxim of relation* and the *maxim of manner*. The *maxim of quantity* refers to the fact that to make the communication comprehensible, the utterance should be “as informative as is required” (Renkema and Schubert 2018, 22-23). It is not relevant to overwhelm the addressee with unnecessary information that would avoid the main concept of the message. Next one is a *maxim of quality*, which states that the conversation should be truthful and should avoid false statements with lack of evidence. (Renkema and Schubert 2018, 22-23) *Maxim of relevance* wants the producer to be relevant

to the point he/she wants to talk about. The last maxim is the *maxim of manner*, requiring the producer to be brief, to avoid obscurity and ambiguity. (Renkema and Schubert 2018, 22-23) All these maxims are stated to make the communication among participants cooperative. These are not the set rules on how to communicate; the theory along just points out the unconscious failures in conversation that are done without trying to misinterpret. (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 24)

2.1.4 Speech Act Theory

Another point investigated in discourse studies is people's behaviour while communicating. A speech act theory states that "all expressions of language must be viewed as acts" (Renkema and Schubert 2018, 17). "When we are talking to each other we are 'doing things' with our words" (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 20).

Speech act theory differentiates three components of acting while producing language. Starting with the *locutionary act*, it is an act where the utterance is pronounced; something was said with some intention. Locutionary act is divided into three more *sub acts*. First sub act is *phonic*, which is tied to phonetics and phonology; in other words, it is about producing vocal sounds in spoken discourse, and written symbols in written discourse. *Phatic* sub act is structuring words into phrases, sentences, etc. and corresponds with morphology and syntax. The third sub act is called *rhetic*, and is the final forming of the pragmatic message, that is why semantics and pragmatics is a field of study related to this sub act. (Huang 2014, 127-128)

The second act, the *illocution*, tells what the implicature of the utterance is. It is the speaker's intention when pronouncing the words. Examples of illocutionary acts are for example apologizing or joking. (Huang 2014, 128)

As an action requires a reaction, the third, *perlocutionary act*, is the effect on the addressee and his reaction itself. (Renkema and Schubert 2018, 17) This theory is vital for discourse mainly for the message the utterance conveys in a particular situation and measures the author's intention and the effect on the target audience.

2.2 ORAL, WRITTEN AND E-DISOURSE

A British linguist Halliday introduced the idea of what influences language selection according to three aspects, which are *field*, *tenor*, and a *mode*. *Field* is, in general, the main topic of the language event, whereas *tenor* indicates the social relationship between the producer and the receiver. The third aspect that might determine the selection of the words

is a *mode*, which shows the essential distinctions among the types of texts. Another synonym for the *mode* is a *modality* of the text, which serves as “a medium through which communication takes place” (Strauss and Feiz 2014, 64). The main types of discourse are spoken, written, or hybrid, a medium that mixes the features of spoken or written text, showing signs of multimodality. (Strauss and Feiz 2014, 64)

Spoken or oral discourse is primarily found in face-to-face communication, whether it is a discussion, a telephone conversation, or even a political speech. When the producer and the receiver are present, directness plays a significant role. The speaker relies on his/her hearer's shared knowledge, and receivers/hearers can react to the producer's utterances right away and even interrupt each other. Oral discourse is not usually planned, so the choice of words is spontaneous. (Strauss and Feiz 2014, 64) This is mostly the case of natural conversation, whereas with examples of political speeches or other public events, the oral discourse can be scripted but performed as it was a non-planned speech. (Strauss and Feiz 2014, 65) At the same time, what is said cannot be taken back.

While producing spoken texts, communication relies heavily on non-linguistic activities called paralanguage. This includes tone of voice, facial expressions, body movement, gestures, pauses, etc. (Widdowson 2007, 8) Other features of paralanguage through which the producers of the text can enhance their delivery of the message include gaze or for example head nods or head shakes. Besides the use of paralanguage, another way of expressing oneself is vocal characteristics such as using stress, volume, or speed of talking. (Strauss and Feiz 2014, 64).

Examples of written discourse might be letters, newspapers, or books. The main difference between the oral and written discourse is that the written text does not require the presence of both producer and receiver, in this case a reader, at the same time. Therefore, the response from the side of the receivers might be delayed, or the text does not need to be responded at all. (Strauss and Feiz 2014, 65) Even if the producer is not able to see receiver's reactions, he/she can expect what the reactions might be depending on the target audience. (Renkema and Schubert 2018, 73), The only actor present while writing is the producer, and the main goal of written texts is the complete “expression of an intended message” (Widdowson 2007, 7). Written discourse is usually planned, because the producer has more time to rethink the resulting statements than in spoken discourse. Because of that, written discourse uses more complex sentences than in oral discourse, which is rather simplified due to its spontaneity.

The term *electronic* or either *E-Discourse*, *netspeak*, *digital discourse*, or *computer-mediated discourse* was first implemented in the 1970s as a result of an adaptation to the era of technologies. (Renkema and Schubert 2018, 84) *E-Discourse* is a mixture of spoken and written texts, but interestingly it is not a hybrid of these two modalities. *E-Discourse* can resemble in some signs of spoken texts, such as interactivity. The agents in electronic communication might interrupt each other as well as in face-to-face communication, especially via chatting and other types of messaging systems. Also, the lack of face-to-face communication might be solved by using the artificial expression of emotions with the help of emojis or abbreviations such as *brb* instead of *be right back*, or repetitions of letters to enhance the communication such as *hiiiiii*. (Renkema and Schubert 2018, 86)

E-Discourse disposes of wide variety of genres, including social media, e-mails, text messages, games, etc. (Strauss and Feiz 2014, 65) The oldest genre of *E-Discourse* is prominently an e-mail, which can be compared to a letter in written discourse, differing in the level of formality. (Renkema and Schubert 2018, 90) *E-Discourse* genres might be synchronous (happening in real time) and asynchronous. Whether the genre is synchronous or asynchronous is dependent on the level of responsiveness – synchronous genre might be online chatting, whereas asynchronous might be for example an e-mail or a blog, where the response might be delayed. (Renkema and Schubert 2018, 84)

2.3 DISCOURSE VS. PRAGMATICS

As was already mentioned, discourse as a study of language in context is tied to pragmatics, which is a field of study, that focuses mainly on the speaker's intended message, far beyond the literal meaning of the utterance. Analysing what is unsaid is what makes pragmatics so appealing to linguists. (Yule 1996, 3) According to Yule, "pragmatics is appealing because it's about how people make sense of each other linguistically, but it can be a frustrating area of study because it requires us to make sense of people and what they have in mind" (Yule 1996, 4). In contrast with semantics, pragmatics does not attempt to look at the language but more at the producer's sense and mind while producing language. (Mey 2001, 5)

Pragmatics is a more modern field of linguistic studies. It used to be studied as part of philosophy in the past. Pragmatics became more interesting for linguists in the 1960s-1970s, where the focus was turned to natural everyday language rather than language used by professional speakers. (Huang 2014, 3) The path to finding the importance of pragmatics

started with the shift from studying the theory of language to the language of the producer. (Mey 2001, 4)

Two theorists that significantly contributed to the survey of pragmatics are Grice with his study of conversational implicature and Austin's speech act. However, then the theorists thought of their theories still as part of philosophy. (Yule 1996, 52) As was already mentioned, implicature is an important point in the study of discourse, which refers to the meaning that was not directly said or expressed. Grice's theory infers that conversational implicature "is what is communicated minus what is said. A speaker implies or implicates, and the addressee infers" (Huang 2014, 32). Not always the inference and discovery of speakers' implicatures is successful. The addressee first must decode the speaker's message that he/she tries to express and then infer based on the cooperative principle and observing floating maxims. (Huang 2014, 7; 30) However, decoding the message is possible thanks to the regularity that occurs in language within social groups, where repeating some language patterns leads to better understanding and expecting the meanings of the messages. (Yule 1996, 4-5)

Besides the conversational maxims that make communication and perception of the message more efficient, there is a term called presupposition. The speaker's presupposition refers to the information whose pragmatic intent is expected to be acknowledged by the addressee. The speaker takes for granted that the utterance he/she is about to share with the addressee will be understandable because relying on the common ground of these two participants. (Huang 2014. 85)

2.4 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Discourse analysis is one of the linguistic disciplines whose field of study is language in its actual use - the language that we encounter in everyday communication. Discourse analysis does not analyse just the grammar and syntax of the words and sentences but focuses on the whole structure of sentences and how the pieces of information are spread across these sentences, how can the addressees react to this information, etc. (Johnstone 2017, 5) Looking more detailly on the producer's actual talk, discourse analysis can reveal how the discourse is culturally and socially motivated, e.g., what is the ideology of the producer or for example how the power is depicted in the discourse. According to Johnstone, also the world situations reflect in the language use, and discourse analysts also study this determination as such. (Johnstone 2017, 5) Since we take into account this social determination, we are able to

observe how and why people interact with each other, how they influence each other during the interaction, how people hold different views on the world and, in general, “how the societies in which we live are put together and how they are maintained through our day to day activities of speaking, writing and making use of other modes of communication” (Jones 2012, 5).

Discourse analysis points out four main beliefs. First, it says that “language is ambiguous” (Jones 2012, 3). Not always is the communication clear, and the inference depends on the attitudes of the addressees. Everybody thinks differently, which is why one statement can be perceived differently by each. The second belief states that language is “in the real world” (Jones 2012, 3), which means that language is always situated and reflects anything that is happening in the situation in reality. Jones adds to this second belief that the message one tries to convey has a reference to the social context in which it occurs. (Jones 2012, 3)

The third belief says that “the way we use language is inseparable from who we are” (Jones 2012, 3). The way we speak and choose how to use language somehow determines who we are, and through that, we can reveal our social identity. The last belief tells us that “language is never used by itself” (Jones 2012, 3). Since it was common to study discourse primarily in speaking and writing, nowadays, it is crucial to analyse other modes of communication, such as body language and other paralanguage features to encode the pragmatic meaning. (Jones 2012, 2-4)

3 POLITICAL LANGUAGE

To answer the question of what politics in connection with language is, it would be most suitable to say that it is a discussion of governance and solving the social problems by those who are in power. (Mooney and Evans 2015, 43) Language and politics are two inseparable things. Using language is trivial for politicians because their speeches function to call the society to certain social action.

The last sentence of the paragraph indicates that language is a tool for making an argument, persuasion, and other actions in the political field, and states that without using this tool, politics would lose its meaning. Political language belongs to an institutional discourse, which functions in form of questions and responses. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 157) The political discourse can be defined as “the language of politics narrowly as the language used by institutions of governance to conduct their business, to communicate with other institutions and with the rest of society” (Partington and Taylor 2018, 1). It is important to note that politics responds to situations filled with uncertainty, where a relevant reaction is required. Politicians hold the ability to move to a particular direction by stating what to do – generally by making decisions. (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 26)

Nowadays, we live in the world, where we can encounter politics by mediums such as television, a radio, websites, newspapers and so on, which means, that politics are mediated by a press and mass media. An example of mediated political speech are briefings, where politicians talk about their message to the audience that includes representatives mainly of press agencies, who try to catch as much new information as possible and sell it then further to the news. For these press conferences, politicians hire employees responsible for archiving what the politician has said. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 9)

3.1 PERSUASION AND MANIPULATION

In politics, a person who wants to spread a message to persuade his/her audience is called *a persuader*; however, the politician does not necessarily have to be the one, who wants to communicate this message, but some entity who created this message with intend to spread this message with use of the politician as a speaker. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 7)

It is experienced to call rhetoric political, mainly for its purpose of persuasion, that had been done by speakers mainly in Greek democracy, where speakers/persuaders had the

right to give a free speech. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 7) That is why rhetoric in democracy is known as “the act of persuasion” (Partington and Taylor 2018, 3). To be able to persuade requires a skilful speaker, and in politics these days, persuasion is visible mostly in election campaigns and political debates. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 3)

One of the aims of political discourse is to create a convincing argument, often with the help of colourful words and various rhetorical devices. A good argument is one that is rational, which means supported by rational evidence and leads to a proper conclusion. It might be difficult to recognize a rational argument from the bad argument, that is sometimes based on insufficient evidence, which can cause many fallacies and might be misleading, but still appear as persuasive for some people. (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 52) For an argument to be persuasive, *framing* plays a huge role in delivering arguer’s message and functions as a persuasive strategy. *Framing* refers to shaping the message accordingly to the audience, mainly to achieve the evaluation the arguer expects to achieve. (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 93)

In fact, a politician and his agents try to spread their persuasive messages in favourable way to be appealing to people, with the help of *spin*, which is “tailoring of news and information on its release to the public to cast a favourable light on the institutions of authority” (Partington and Taylor 2018, 8) That is done primarily because of interventions of media, that attempt to twist the information, which the politician shared, with a purpose to damage their campaign or to make people vote the competition. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 8)

Fairclough and Fairclough state that when a speaker manipulates, he/she intentionally deceives his/her audience without its awareness, thus presents his/her message and justifies it without the actual belief that what the speaker presents is true. (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012, 93) Political discourse is primarily intended to encourage people to certain political actions, and thus, the government has an *influential power* over people, which the advantage can be taken of in the form of *linguistic manipulation*. Nowadays, mass media is an intermediary of political discourse, such as e. g. “modified forms of press conferences and press statements, updated texts in slogans, application of catch phrases, phrasal allusions, the connotative meanings of words, a combination of language and visual imagery” (Rozina and Karapetjana 2009, 113).

3.2 POWER AND IDEOLOGY

To call the society to certain action is done by authoritative power with the use of language, and the power can be used with both oral and written discourse. These expressions of power “may change, or reinforce, the views, arguments and ideological configurations of their potential audience” (Li et al. 2020, 4). The spreading of an ideology might be also spread through language/discourse. Ideology in discourse refers to the set of “beliefs of individuals or groups” (Statham 2022, 9).

Because of the reasoning called appeal to authority, it is known that most people tend to obey authority’s opinion because of the power they hold and use for influencing society with the use of language. The meaning behind *holding a power* is the ability to evoke a reaction and bring some effects. (Li et. Al 2020, 3)

The reason why the government’s institutions or politicians are given the power to be obeyed is done by a strategy called *legitimation*, that was achieved by the authorities through discourse. For a politician to seem like a reliable authority in their listeners’ eyes is the legitimation achieved through using statistics based on sources, that offer evidence to support their facts, through self-representation as the *good ones*, etc. Establishing legitimation can be done in the opposite way, called *deligitimation*, which is humiliating the opposite side by attacking their ideas, which is done primarily in election campaigns. (Statham 2022, 147) Once the institution or politician acquires legitimacy, they can persuade society and manage their views.

4 PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES

The following chapter is about some of the persuasive strategies the arguer helps himself/herself to reach the audience and persuade them.

4.1 Metaphor

Politicians use metaphors as a tool to engage more with their audience. (Prabhakaran et al. 2021, 504) Not only is metaphor an effective tool to persuade, but also to target emotions in both positive or negative way. (Breeze 2020, 16) The metaphor works on the basis of people's experience, which helps them make assumptions about certain topics. By hearing metaphor, people can organize the information in their brain. (Breeze 2020, 18)

While using metaphor, an arguer exchanges the literal meaning of the words into the non-literal, which is relevant to the literal word and there is some kind of resemblance. What can be said specifically and concretely is converted into an abstract term. As Partington and Taylor said, metaphor in politics is a "kind of play on words" (Partington and Tylor 2018, 126).

Within a framing strategy, metaphors express how people see the real world and come from human imagination. That is why politicians use this tool – to make people connect their metaphorical language with what they've experienced before, as from society or history. (Zinken 2003, 508) Breeze points out that awareness of using metaphor should be stricter because hearing metaphor can influence our thinking process and the representation of reality and can evoke certain reactions. (Breeze 2020, 11) On a press conference in 2012 in Stockholm, former U.S. President Barack Obama gave a speech about warning the Assad regime about them 'crossing a red line' if they wouldn't stop using chemical weapons, which put America in a difficult situation. The metaphor *red-line* could have multiple explanations, but the opponent's one was connecting *crossing a red-line* as a pretext for the outbreak of a war conflict. As President Obama tried to explain later clearly, he was talking about 'crossing humanity's red line'. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 133-134)

A subcategory of metaphor is a simile, which also has an evaluative function and works based on resemblance. Simile uses expressions such as *be like*, *sound like*, *is similar to*, to make a comparison and to give reasons why something is *like* something. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 135) Simile is mostly visible in political election campaigns, where values and opinions are expressed and compared.

4.2 Metonymy

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which some term is used in relation to a concept that is associated with. It refers to two entities that occur in the same semantic domain. The relation of these two entities that are associated with each other is that 'y stands for x'. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 138)

In political discourse, toponymical metonymy is prevailing. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 139) That means that names of places, institutions or even countries are used frequently to put emphasis on the message the politicians or political journalists want to share. In Salamurović's study of the conceptualization of 'nation' as metonymy, it was found out that place name is the most used metonymy in political discourse. (Salamurović 2020, 187) Lenard and Ćosić identified these types of metonymies: *country for the government*, *state for the event*, *year for the event*, *institution for people responsible*, and *party for politicians* (Lenard and Ćosić 2017, 74-78).

The first metonymy In Lenard and Ćosić's research, political discourse uses metonymy, where a country's name is used in relation to government's action. In an example: *Washington made a decision in...* it actually does not mean that everyone in the city of Washington D.C. made the decision, but the American government did. The purpose of this generalization is to make the argument more powerful and to put bigger significance to it.

Another significant use of metonymy is using the institution's name instead of the people responsible for these actions to make the institution seem more admirable. It is not necessary to include all politicians' names, who took part in that certain action; instead, make visible to everyone that people in the institution are working cooperatively, as seen in the example: "*The European Union wants 3% for monetary union. For those member states that want to introduce euro the deficit is 3%*" (Lenard and Ćosić 2017, 76) The similar way is used while referring to the whole political party instead of the politicians that are part of the political party. (Lenard and Ćosić 2017, 77)

4.3 Repetition

Intentional repeating of certain phrases during a political speech influences the audience in way of memorizing the information which the arguer wants to put emphasis on. Once the message is repeated many times, it creates a certain ideology that the arguer wants the audience to accept. (David 2014, 167) As Martin Luther King used the phrase *I have a*

dream several times in his public speech in 1963 in his demonstration for freedom, he wanted to stress the hope for a better future without judging people according to their skin colour. The popularity of this phrase over decades is a real example of what effect can repetition cause.

One of the examples of repetition is shown in a scheme called *a three-part list*, where three pieces of ideas are mentioned similarly. In political speeches, the first idea introduces the argument, the second one stresses the point of the argument, and the third part mixes the first two parts together and makes the whole argument united. Once the third idea is pronounced, it usually tells the audience that this is the final statement, and it is time to applaud. (David 2014, 168) The example of the three-part list repetition is the following:

- a) *There is no sweeter word than freedom. There is no nobler goal than freedom. There is no higher aspiration than freedom.* (Biden, Remarks by President Biden and President Zelenskyy of Ukraine in Joint Statement, 2023)

4.4 The marking of importance and exaggerated claims

During the speech, the politician also marks the importance of his words to catch the audience's attention and to make sure the audience recognizes which idea is the important one. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 118)

There are several ways to highlight important words. The arguer can add phrases of suggestions or instructions to the public (*I think it is really important to...; There are several steps to do...*), he/she can add his own comment (*I believe we are able to...; What the problem might be is...*) and so on. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 119) The most used attributes that the arguers help themselves to put emphasis on the message are key and important. Also, for example, the use of superlatives support the uniqueness of the message even more. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 121) Another strategy how to frame an important message can be done through exaggeration/hyperbole. Hyperbole or overstatement is a way of exaggerating a weaker argument in order to put bigger emphasis on it. There are two types of hyperboles according to the degree of appeal to emotions, *conventional* and *creative* hyperbole. *Conventional hyperbole* has less effective emotional appeal to the audience because it is conventionally used. In the contrary, *creative hyperbole* is used depending on its context and seems surprising and not common. Hyperbole might be marked as a persuasive strategy because it does not match with Grice's maxim of quality, because the

information is not depicted accurately, but rather more informatively than required, which can be viewed also as a form of manipulation. (Abbas 2019, 507)

4.5 Humour

A part of a persuasive strategy, where a politician wants to seem like a normal person, is to show that he/she does not take himself/herself too seriously and can make fun in the form of jokes, parodies, or criticism. It is still questionable for analysts whether humour and politics go along each other, and whether humour belongs to the persuasion. Making a certain issue humorous might emphasize the issue but might not seem too forced, but rather easy-going, which might seem that the issue is being underestimated and that the argument is not persuasive. Humour can, on the other hand, make light of the situation and distract people from sensitive topics. Humour, in general, can determine emotional processes.

A politician that is a good communicator needs to know how to use his/her facework – that is showing the public the image (*face*) of ourselves we want to reveal and behave in that way. In politics, we differentiate two types of faces: *competence face* and *affective face*. The *competence face* is when a politician seems to be a professional speaker, educated, informed, and powerful. On the other hand, the affective face makes a politician seem like a normal person, outgoing and funny. But sometimes it is not even possible to act in favour of both faceworks, and it is a politician's skill to know which face to choose within a particular situation. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 45-46)

Some ways of using humour, such as irony or satire in political discourse, is rather intentional. As Chernobrov states, the delivery, the way how the ideas are expressed in front of the audience, is more important than whether the idea is true. Humorous expressions are the factors that catch the attention of the media rather than plain speeches. (Chernobrov 2022, 278)

The ideology of boundaries of *us* vs. *them* is also expressed in humour. As can be often seen in election campaigns, politicians make fun of each other indirectly, but in reality, it is about criticism. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 188)

4.6 Polarization

Using two polarized entities in political discourse, mostly in political campaigns, where one of the competing sides should seem like the better one, is highly evaluative – one is perceived as positive and one as negative. In polarization *us* vs. *them*, politicians are

concerned about the comparison among nations, certain behaviours, policies, affairs from the past, etc. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 54)

Van Dijk's ideological square is based on the concept of conflicts among entities with the capability of power and explains how *us* – the winning side, usually the speakers, are represented and how *them*, the opponents or losers, are depicted. The concept of this is called self-representation and other-representation. Usually, the speakers try to take advantage of the good self-representation and express them as trustworthy and likeable with right set of behaviour. The other-representation is usually based on pointing out the negative aspects of the other entity, which leads to being successful in their propaganda. (Wirth-Koliba 2016, 29)

In election campaigns, politicians need to emphasize their will and actions over the competition. Political agenda is primarily positive or negative, where the positive wants to show voters that a bright future will come by making slogans about a change to better than current situation is. In comparison, negative campaigns choose to make slogans about potential danger of voting the competitive side. Competing political parties also like to attack one's mistakes. But to attempt to remove the overall attention from the competition, it is better to choose positive campaigning as an act of persuasion. (Partington and Taylor 2018, 51)

To find out who exactly belongs to the boundaries of *us* and *them* is analysed according to the *degree ofclusivity*. (Wirth-Koliba 2016, 28) Inclusive pronouns express belonging to a certain group, and exclusive ones the non-belonginess. Wirth-Koliba used this example:

“But we're gonna deal with that not by taking on the Muslims, because they just do what they do. You can't blame them for coming here and taking our taxes, and having lots of kids at our expense. It's the politicians who've let them into this country [...] The people who should be talking about it are our politicians, our court masters, and they don't.” (Wirth-Koliba 2016, 28)

The paragraph above is a statement from the speech of British politician Griffin, where he does not blame Muslims but talks about mistakes made by the British government. He himself is also a politician but does not define himself as a part of those politicians he mentions in the text. In this case, *us* is Griffin and his addressees, that do some actions to change it and *them* the government, the politicians that are passive in making any change. Griffin also uses the *possessive our* (Wirth-Koliba 2016, 28) to reach the effect of cooperation with his addressees as a response to his statement. (Wirth-Koliba 2016, 28)

II. ANALYSIS

5 CORPUS MATERIAL FOR ANALYSIS

For my bachelor thesis analysis, I will focus on political rhetoric, that is to be found on one of the sections of the U.S. White House's official web page, that is called *Speeches and Remarks*. *Speeches and Remarks* is a subsection of the *Briefing Room*, which is a virtual space of archived speeches given by the U.S. President Joe Biden, and Vice President Kamala Harris. Every word that is being pronounced by President Biden and Vice President Harris during their speeches is then transcribed there in detail, therefore, an archive with *Speeches and Remarks* is a perfect way to look at their political speeches from the point of view of written, but mostly oral discourse. *Speeches and Remarks* are archived on the U.S. White House official website in every presidential mandate but are removed once another president is elected. That is the reason why we are able to trace just speeches of President Biden and Vice President Harris, whose first article in this section appeared on January 20th in 2021.

I will divide this chapter into three main sections that can best summarize the issues debated in *Speeches and Remarks*:

- **the domestic issues**
- **international issues**
- **the economic issues**

The word choice might vary in adaptation to these topics, and for that reason, I would like to look at these three topics separately to describe the differences among the rhetorical devices used for discussion of each topic, as well as the persuasive tools that President Biden and Vice President Harris use. In my analysis, I will shortly introduce each of the three sections and then examine the excerpts from the articles I selected for analysis. The examples that appear in the analysis are selected from individual years from 2021 to 2023. For each of the three sections, I have collected twenty-five articles for analysis, where some of the articles are repeatedly used in several examples.

The goal of this analysis is to find out whether the political rhetoric in *Speeches and Remarks* contains the persuasive tools that analysts of political discourse are concerned about, and to explain their function in practice. Besides the persuasive tools, I want to analyse the discourse as the construction of power and ideology.

All the examples used for the analysis are available on the link: [Speeches and Remarks Archives | The White House](#), on the official website of the U.S. White House: [The White House](#).

The selected articles from *Speeches and Remarks* are available on the enclosed CD, where **the marking system** for examples and their associated articles is as follows:

- Every example in the analytical part is followed by a marking, which should facilitate the search for associated articles from *Speeches and Remarks* for readers of this work.
- **The first letter** in the marking system indicates who was the speaker in the example, whether President Biden, marked as (B), or Vice President Harris, marked as (H).
- Because I will divide the analytical part into three categories according to the discussed topics (domestic, international, and economic issues), **the second letter** in the marking system always corresponds to which of the three categories the example is from – domestic issues (D), international issues (I), and economic issues (E).
- The third character in the marking system is **the number** that matches the order of the given example.
- Since I will be analysing selected articles from a total of three years (2021-2023) corresponding to the length of President Biden's administration, **the last number** of a marking system is the year the examples come from.
- Examples of such marking system are: (B-D-1-2021); (H-I-14-2022); (B-E-15-2023); etc.

5.1 SPEECHES AND REMARKS ON THE DOMESTIC ISSUES

Firstly, I would like to begin the whole chapter with an analysis of the articles from *Speeches and Remarks*, that are somehow related to the topics which are trivial for American citizens, in general with Speeches and Remarks on what is happening in the country, inside the borders of the United States of America. The topics which I have included as domestic are the ones that, for example, deal with ceremonies held usually on American National Holidays, where it is customary for a president to give a speech, then with the responses to

some difficulties on a larger scale, that trouble American people, or speeches related to political parties or even elections.

The reason why Speeches and Remarks on domestic issues are significant in terms of discourse is a more prevailing display of American identity, where the ideology is expressed mostly in the form of frequent gratitude for being part of American nation, and that means using varieties of rhetorical devices, that President Biden and Vice President Harris use to speak to their audience. In this chapter, I have summarized some of the persuasive strategies that I have noticed in the Speeches and Remarks on domestic issues.

5.1.1 Metaphor

Metaphor as a persuasive tool is used primarily for the audience's evaluation, better imagination about the topic and making assumptions. There are some examples of how the metaphor used in connection with debating domestic issues might be:

- (1) *A year ago, we were hit with a virus that **was met with silence** and spread unchecked.* (B-D-1-2021)
- (2) ***We shoot for the moon**, and then we **plant our flag on it**.* (H-D-2-2021)
- (3) *It's a powerful reminder of the history of the journey of America and the power each of us hold **to write** a more just and hopeful **chapter**.* (B-D-3-2022)
- (4) *And we have also made historic strides **to strengthen the bench**.* (H-D-4-2022)
- (5) *Survivors who will always **carry the physical and emotional scars**.* (B-D-5-2023)
- (6) *... to say that **a democracy hears the cries, hears the pleas**, who hears the demands of its people who say that children should be able to live and be safe and go to school and not be in fear.* (H-D-6-2023)

In the first example, President Biden comments on how the pandemic crept into the country in an unexpected way and without citizens' awareness, for which he indirectly uses the metaphor *the virus that was met with silence*. In the second example, Vice President Harris' words include two metaphors: *shoot for the moon* and *plant our flag*. By the metaphor *shoot for the moon*, meaning *doing their best*, she is praising the will and strength of the American nation. To *plant the flag* is a symbolism of *doing anything significant* for the country. In the third example (3), President Biden expresses his hope in younger generation in making great changes in the future, as for respecting Black culture. Here he refers to Justice Marshall's

quote that *America has no choice but to do better*. (Remarks by President Biden at a Celebration to Mark Black History Month, 2022), which he completes with a statement that America has the ability to *write a more just and hopeful chapter*. By Vice President's usage of metaphor in (4), that they have *strengthened the bench*, she wants to point to the steps which the U.S. government has taken to improve infrastructure, create new jobs, as well as reopen businesses and schools after Biden and Harris took over the administration after the pandemic ended. *To strengthen the bench* does not have an explicit explanation of its meaning, but if I wanted to connect it with the context of the Vice President's speech topic, it might mean that America is getting back on track or has the ability to recover and sustain in critical times. In the example (5), President Biden talks about "one of the worst mass shootings in California history" (Remarks by President Biden on Efforts to Reduce Gun Violence, 2023), and speaks about survivors, that *carry the physical and emotional scars*, meaning they were marked by this tragedy. In April 2023, Vice President Harris visited the Fisk University in Tennessee after the tornadoes that took place in the state. In this remark, that example (6) comes from, she shows the regret for the lives lost due to natural disasters as well as the harm caused by gun violence, and adds that their country, whose privilege is democracy, will not allow such things to happen again. She says that *democracy hears the cries and hears the pleas* of students that should not be scared to attend school every day due the shootings. All the metaphors used in the three examples are intended to express some message indirectly, which makes the effect on the audience in better memorizing the statement that includes a metaphor.

5.1.2 Metonymy

As was mentioned in the theoretical part, metonymy is a figure of speech where one entity from the same semantic field (x) stands for another entity (y). The fact that the metonymy in the political rhetoric of Speeches and Remarks is toponymical, where names of places are alternatively used as the actions of political parties, institutions or for example government, is proven in the following examples (7), (9), (10), (11) and (12):

- (7) *So now, on this hallowed ground where just days ago violence sought to shake this **Capitol's** very foundation, we come together as one nation, under God, indivisible, to carry out the peaceful transfer of power as we have for more than two centuries.* (B-D-7-2021)

- (8) *The world before **the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941** and the world after. The world before **the Civil Rights Act in 1964** and the world after. The world before **the Berlin Wall fell in 1989** and the world after.* (H-D-8-2021)
- (9) *We finally took on **Big Pharma** and beat them.* (B-D-9-2022)
- (10) *So I urge everyone to pay attention to this election and understand that right now, with the **Court's** decision, a lot of the rules and the laws that are being put in place are occurring and the enforcement of those laws occurring at a local and state level.* (H-D-10-2022)
- (11) *And **the House** invites you to come to the floor today — all 1,300 of you.* (B-D-11-2023)
- (12) *We also know that **Iowa** is on the frontline in this fight, not unlike the United States as a whole.* (H-D-12-2023)

In Speeches and Remarks on domestic topics, President Biden and Vice President Harris put the main emphasis on their country and their people, and that is the reason why it is possible to find only the metonymy, including the names of entities from the American environment, which is the main difference between the Speeches and Remarks on domestic and international issues. In example (7), President Biden talks about the changes that would come once his presidential mandate started after former President Trump, which was a big deal for the American people, on whom President Biden wanted to appeal. The implication of the use of metonymy *Capitol* is actually the seat of the U.S. Congress but can be meant as a symbol of all American people. *The Big Pharma* metonymy in (9) President Biden generally uses for pharmaceutical corporations, which he fights against as a Democrat by trying to lower the costs of drugs. Because this remark was released approximately nine months before the midterm elections, President Biden wants to convince people that their political party can maintain this change and aims mainly at seniors over sixty. Example (10) shows the *institution for people responsible* (Lenard and Ćosić 2017, 74-78) metonymy, where Vice President Harris talks about the *Court's decision* to give women's rights to abortion away. In fact, she refers to justices in the Supreme Court of the United States who are responsible for such a decision. A similar case appears in example (11), where *the House* is a frequent metonymy for the President and the government, that wills to invite people inside, which he means as a joke. Another example of metonymy is shown in example (12), where Vice President Harris talks about *Iowa* as an inspiring country that fights against the attacks

on reproductive rights. It is an example of *country for the government* (Lenard and Čosić 2017, 74-78) metonymy, and it is a generalized way to refer to the country's government actions. The only exception, where the name of the place is not used as metonymy, is in example (8). Here Vice President Harris uses the historical events as milestones to show America's historical perspective before these events. She wants to point to the good preparedness of the American nation in critical moments in history.

5.1.3 Polarization

The Biden-Harris Administration began after the inauguration in the year 2021, and the two remarks below (13) and (14) are the first remarks by President Biden and Vice President Harris that appeared on the website for the first time. After being elected, it was the right time to thank their voters and turn the attention to the changes that awaited the whole state as one shaped identity, as can be seen in both (13) and (14):

(13) *We look ahead in **our** uniquely American way – restless, bold, optimistic – and set **our** sights on the nation **we** know **we** can be and **we** must be.* (B-D-13-2021)

(14) *We are undaunted in **our** belief that **we** shall overcome, that **we** will rise up.* (H-D-14-2021)

Even though the use of polarization in the form of pronouns *us* and *them* would be more expectable in international topics, polarization occurs in domestic issues as well. In case I wanted to consider the *us vs. them* polarization, I researched mostly throughout topics related to elections. The following examples (15) and (16) are remarks from President Biden's and President Harris' speeches, which were held in November 2022, when Midterm Elections took place.

(15) *MR PRESIDENT: If **Republicans** try to cut Social Security and Medicare, I will not let that happen. (Applause.) And if **they** try to cut taxes for the super wealthy again and the biggest corporations, like **they** did the last administration, I will not let that happen either.* (B-D-15-2022)

(16) *We love our country. We know what **we** can do. We are prepared to stand. We are prepared to organize. We are prepared to talk to our neighbors and our friends. We know what we can do in two days.* (H-D-16-2022)

As mentioned in the theoretical part, polarization is used to put emphasis on *us* as the winning side, and to point out the opponent side's negative features as a form of propaganda in the elections, when one political party persuades voters to choose their party over another. (Wirth-Koliba 2016, 29) The polarization *us vs. them* is used in the example (15), where the pronoun *they* is used in reference to Republicans, the opponents of Democrats. Here President Biden says that he would refute the actions that Republicans, as the losing party, would take if they got more votes and won the elections. President Biden is probably concerned with the interest from the side of his audience in the Democrats, and a persuasive strategy *us vs. them* here might function as lowering Republican's abilities in the eyes of the Democrats' partisans, which the Democratic Party can take advantage of. In connection with the elections, Vice President Harris also uses the pronoun *we* in a remark from November 2022 (16), where she encourages people to get to the polls. She wants to ensure voters that they as Democrats are prepared to come to power, and with a the pronoun *we*, she referred to her, President Biden and the whole political party.

Use of the pronoun *we* is not just the case of the elections-related topics. President Biden uses this pronoun to create an identity that would refer in one case to the government's actions or to all American people as one united nation, as can be seen in the example below:

(17) ***We're the United States of America – the United States of America. We're born out of an idea. No other nation in the world is born of an idea. They're based on ethnicity, geography, and so many other things.*** (B-D-17-2023)

(18) ***Democrats, we are delivering. Actually, we are delivering big time!*** (H-D-18-2023)

In example (17), President Biden praises the American nation and uses the pronoun *we* in reference to all the American citizens – including both him and his audience. The polarization *us vs. them* is also used in this example in comparison with all the other states (*they*) except of the U.S. – *we*. In example (18), Vice President Harris refers to all the Democrats by the pronoun *we*, with telling what everything they are able to do in contrast with Republicans, even though the polarization is not directly mentioned here.

5.1.4 Ideology

Ideology in political discourse is, as mentioned in chapter 3 in a theoretical part, a set of beliefs, which are held collectively. The spreading of ideology can influence the decision-making and, in general, thinking and speaking processes.

America's shared vision is expressed in the form of emphasising the country's values, strengths, mostly by pointing out the liberty, democracy, freedom, rights, and talent, and in general, values and strengths that Americans call the *American aspiration*, as follows in examples (19), (20), (21). In example (22), it is visible that Americans might view themselves as a role model of democracy for other states.

(19) *That must be this — we must start with **diplomacy** rooted in **America's most cherished democratic values**: defending **freedom**, championing **opportunity**, upholding **universal rights**, respecting **the rule of law**, and treating every person with **dignity**.* (B-D-19-2021)

(20) *You are ambitious. You are a fierce fighting force. You are idealists in the truest sense. You are the embodiment of **American aspiration**.* (H-D-20-2021)

(21) *That's **America** – a nation full of talent and aspirations, daring and **undaunted**. A nation that hurts and heals but never, never, never, ever gives up.* (B-D-21-2022)

(22) *So, one of my great fears is that autocrats and dictators around the world can point to what's happening to say to their people, "**You want to protest about civil rights, human rights, rule of law? You want to hold out the United States as your example? Well, look what they're doing.**"* (H-D-22-2022)

The United States of America is a country with strong religionism, where most of the society are Christians. Giving thanks to God and professing belief in God is not unusual even in political rhetoric, as can be seen in (23) and (24):

(23) *There's nothing beyond our capacity. We have to remember **who in God's name** we are.* (B-D-23-2023)

(24) *And **God bless you**. And **God bless the United States of America**. Thank you.* (H-D-24-2023)

Blessings and mentioning of God's name are frequent in political speeches and appear mostly in headlines or in the conclusion of the speeches. (Paraschivescu 2012, 26) The

religiousness of Americans has its reference in the founding fathers, which is why American people like to express faith in God and the ideals and future of America. (Paraschivescu 2012, 30) References to God and religion in general are to be found in almost every presidential speech, as we can look back on J. F. Kennedy's *City upon a Hill* or the common phrase *God bless America*. Showing respect to God in political speeches is proved to have larger impact on people.

5.1.5 Repetition

Repeating phrases leads to better memorizing of an idea that the speaker wants his/her audience to be more aware of. Presidential speeches in Speeches and Remarks on domestic issues contain repetitions, mostly to put emphasis on an important topic that is again connected to the construction of an identity and ideology of a nation.

(25) *This nation will smile again. This nation will know sunny days again. This nation will know joy again.* (B-D-25-2021)

(26) *Class of 2021, you are prepared for all of this. You are prepared for any threat. And you are prepared for this new era.* (H-D-26-2021)

(27) *And the more people we get out to vote, we win. We win. So let's go win.* (B-D-27-2022)

(28) *Because our babies should not have to be drinking toxic water, which is having a direct impact on their health and ability to learn. Because you voted. Because people voted.*

...
And because they voted, we have now capped the cost of insulin at \$35 a month. (Applause.) Because you voted.

...
And because people voted, we now have allowed Medicare to negotiate against the pharmaceutical companies on behalf of 60 million Americans. (Applause.) Because you voted. (H-D-28-2022)

(29) *So let's finish the job. Ban assault weapons. Ban them again. Do it now. Enough. Do something. Do something big. (Applause.)* (B-D-29-2023)

- (30) *In order to make sure the voices were represented in that place where elected leaders are supposed to lead in a democracy, these leaders had to get a bullhorn. (Applause.) They had to get a bullhorn to be heard. (Applause.)* (H-D-30-2023)

As can be proved according to the reference to the theoretical part, the *three-part list* is the most used repetition and occurs in the majority of the analysed Speeches and Remarks. In one paragraph, one word or phrase occurs exactly three times, as can be seen in examples (25), (26), (27), and (29). It is noticeable that in the *three-part list* repetition, the repeated phrase stands at the beginning of each sentence, and the last sentence unites the whole argument into one official argument that summarizes the most important message. In example (25), President Biden repeats *the nation* several times to emphasize the power of union, which is the cooperation that has the power to beat the cruel times of COVID-19. With the repeated phrase in (26) *you are prepared*, Vice President wants to give the students of the Naval Academy strength to the future. The example (27) deals again with the elections, where President Biden repeats the word *win* three times and prepares him and his voters for the potential victory. The *three-part list* occurs also in the example (29) in President Biden's speech that indents to protest against the possession of weapons, where it is visible that the third statement with repeated word *do* prompts the audience to applaud.

The *three-part list* is not the only way to use repetition. The exception is shown in example (28), where the repeated phrase *because you voted* occurs across several paragraphs. On the other hand, in (30), the example proves that the repeated phrase can occur only twice, as it is with the case of *the bullhorn*, where Vice President repeats the phrase, that also functions as a metaphor for *assert one's voice more*.

5.1.6 Face-work and humour

The goal of the affective face-work of the speaker is to show the audience that self-depreciating humour and other humoristic expressions are no problem for the politician. On the other hand, humour can help the speaker to soften the sensitive topic, or to show the audience that the speaker delivering the message is like one of them, therefore the speaker seems more trustworthy. Speeches and Remarks contain lots of humour, but only on the events that are supposed to be more comfortable for the audience, such as National Holidays speeches. The humour is more likely to be avoided on the topics with more sensitive and tragic information. President Biden uses humour primarily to start his speech or to invite

anyone into the discussion and give thanks. The use of humour is balanced and not overused, which gives an impression of an elegant and professional speaker. Some examples are used below:

- (31) *May God bless you all. May God protect our troops — **and take care of the Easter Bunny.** (Laughter.) (B-D-31-2021)*
- (32) *Community banks are going to know and say, “**Ah, you can’t afford that house. Get out of here.**” (Laughter.) (H-D-32-2021)*
- (33) ***This won’t take more than half an hour.** (Laughter.) (B-D-33-2022)*
- (34) *To the young leaders who are here, I thank you. **You talked about a Harry Styles concert; that would be fun.** (Laughter.) (H-D-34-2022)*
- (35) *THE PRESIDENT: Please sit — sit down. (Applause.) **I told Governor Murphy once, every time I hear “the President of the United States,” I look around and say, “Where the hell is he?”** (Laughter.) (B-D-35-2023)*
- (36) *VICE PRESIDENT: We got to the game on time. And, yes, the Warriors did win. (Applause.) It was a glorious day. **And I even caught my Lakers-fan husband cheering them on.** (Laughter.) (H-D-36-2023)*

In example (31), President Biden concludes the speech with traditional blessings and adds a joke about the Easter Bunny, which is a person dressed in an Easter Bunny costume, which annually stands next to the President giving the speech. President here shows his affective face by making jokes, that relieves the atmosphere of a pleasant event. In (32), Vice President Harris talks about the honesty of employees of community banks and makes jokes about it by quoting them: “*Ah, you can’t afford that house. Get out of here.*” The usage of quotes is very common while showing the affective face because politicians here mention some of their experiences from everyday life, from childhood, or just pieces from some previous conversations, as can be seen in example (35), where President uses self-deprecating humour in a way that he sometimes forgets that he himself is the president of the U.S. For President Biden, it is typical to start with jokes both in the introduction and the conclusion of his speech. In (33), he gives a speech on the Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, which is again a traditional event where no serious topics are addressed, and joking is appropriate here. One of the features to reveal the affective face to

the audience is to make oneself seem like a normal person by telling some stories from their private life, as Vice President Harris does in (34) and (36).

5.1.7 The marking of importance and exaggerated claims

The emphasis on uniqueness as importance is used throughout Speeches and Remarks many times, mainly in form of attributes, as it is in examples (37) and (38). In the example (37), President Biden wants to put an emphasis on the number of victims that died of COVID-19 with attributes *truly grim, heart breaking*. The expressing of uniqueness is done by adding attributes *extraordinary* and *profound*, when President Biden talks about the future impact of the American Rescue Plan that was passed the day the speech was given. The *with the narrowest of margins* in (39) might be marked as a metaphorical hyperbole of *with the least chance of success*. Here President Biden wants to give thanks to the voters of the Democratic party and says that without them, the chance to succeed would be small. In example (40), Vice President Harris points out an important idea by calling it trivial before saying the idea itself, thus emphasizing its essence.

(37) *Today, we mark a **truly grim, heart breaking** milestone: 500,071 dead. (B-D-37-2021)*

(38) *What you did — along with Speaker Pelosi, with Whip Clyburn — is an **extraordinary** feat and is going to have such a **profound** impact on the American people. (H-D-38-2021)*

(39) *You've helped generate support for our agenda for the past 20 months and some of the most consequential things we've ever accomplished with the **narrowest of margins**. (B-D-39-2022)*

(40) *And, you know, on this subject, **I think it's really important to note**: One does not have to abandon their faith or deeply held beliefs to agree the government should not be telling her what to do with her body. (H-D-40-2022)*

President Biden uses hyperbole in the example (41) to convince the audience that his relationship with former Senator Mark Pryor and his dad is strong, and they worked together before. In example (42), Vice President Harris uses *metaphorical hyperbole* when she attempts to highlight the potential changes with the implementation of investments in climate by hyperbole *jumping to a new plateau*, which might be described as *implementing something new*.

(41) *And he and his dad and I also spent **an awful lot of time** together. (B-D-41-2023)*

(42) *VICE PRESIDENT: We do think of this moment as being the moment in the history of our nation where it is not about incrementalism, it is truly about **jumping to a new plateau**. (H-D-42-2023)*

5.2 SPEECHES AND REMARKS ON THE INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

The second chapter of the analytical part will deal with the analysis of the Speeches and Remarks that are oriented on the discussion of internationally related issues. What I have included as international are mostly articles where President Biden and Vice President Harris comment on the topics in which other nations play some role and where the rhetorical devices and persuasive strategies might be used slightly differently than in the domestic topics, even though many of them might occur for the same purpose.

Speeches and Remarks on international topics are more numerous articles on the website's section, especially nowadays, where the war in Ukraine impels all nations either to unite and cooperate, or, on the contrary, to enmity. International issues are being discussed in various meetings with other national leaders, such as at summits, conferences held abroad, state dinners, etc. In these meetings, the international leaders mostly talk about matters of partnership and solidarity. In this chapter I will look at all the persuasive strategies, that were used in Speeches and Remarks on domestic issues, to try to find out the differences that varies between the discourses of these two separated topics.

5.2.1 Metaphor

In discussions of international issues, the metaphors functioning as a euphemism, or an indirect statement appear often.

(43) *There's no — there's no comforting distance in history in Section 60. **The grief is raw**. (B-I-43-2021)*

(44) *I will never forget the horror and the heartbreak of January 6, 2021, when our United States Capitol, **a beacon of democracy** for so many, came under siege*

by a violent mob who refused to accept the results of a free and fair election. (H-I-44-2021)

(45) *And, Mr. President, since we both understand that working families **are the backbone of** both our economies, I look forward to discussing how we can keep delivering for those families under the Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity. (B-I-45-2022)*

(46) *I cannot state enough that the commitment of the United States to the defense of the Republic of Korea **is ironclad** and that we will do everything in our power to ensure that it has meaning in every way that the words suggest. (H-I-46-2022)*

(47) *President Putin's **craven lust for land and power will fail**. (B-I-47-2023)*

(48) *I also have no illusions about **the path forward**. There will be **more dark days** in Ukraine. (H-I-48-2023)*

By the use of metaphor *the grief is raw* in the example (43), President Biden wants to show respect for deceased veterans from wars, including the war in Afghanistan, and he wants to express that people will never stop grieving for the victims of war. As the U.S. proclaims itself as *A City Upon a Hill*, they also use a synonymous expression for defending the values of democracy – *A Beacon of Democracy*, which can function as a metaphor. A *beacon* might be a symbol of light, hope, or a guide. That is the reason why the Vice President connects the United States Capitol with *the beacon of democracy* in (44). In (45), President Biden talks about economic integrity with President Lasso of Ecuador and says that *working families are the backbone of their economies*. The expression to be *a backbone of sth* refers to the *most trivial part in sth in order to function/succeed*. He puts an emphasis on the need of economic help to working families, because they stay behind the properly functioning economy of the two discussing countries. To be *an ironclad* is a common metaphor that both President and Vice President use while talking about the strong partnerships with other countries. In the case of (46), Vice President uses the metaphor *to be ironclad* with the relation of the help to defence of the Republic of Korea against the threats of the DPKR. In example (47), President Biden shows his disgust against President Putin and uses the criticism in the form of a metaphor *craven lust for land and power will fail*, with which he indicates that Russia will not win the war in Ukraine. Vice President also comments on the conflict in Ukraine in the same year in the example (48), when she admits that the conflict

will probably continue or will possibly worsen. For this, she uses euphemistic expressions with a metaphor that *she has no illusions about the path forward* and that Ukraine will experience *more darker days*.

Some of the metaphors used by President Biden or Vice President Harris may be noticed in the headlines of several internet news articles, mostly because metaphor sounds catchier than a direct statement and attracts attention. The metaphor *Putin's craven lust for land and power will fail* appeared several times on the pages of American online newspapers.

5.2.2 Metonymy

In following examples all the metonymies are used in the concept of generalization:

- (49) *We have service members who were not yet born when our nation was attacked on 9/11.* (B-I-49-2021)
- (50) *And — and the collaboration and the work that we have done in the past together and that the work we can do going forward through the **Biden-Harris administration** and with the leadership of all of you, I think, is substantial.* (H-I-50-2021)
- (51) *He thought **the West** and **NATO** wouldn't respond.* (B-I-51-2022)
- (52) ***The United States** and the world seek a stable and peaceful **Korean Peninsula** where **the DPRK** is no longer a threat.* (H-I-52-2022)
- (53) *We'll keep our **Alliance** strong and united.* (B-I-53-2023)
- (54) *We are also troubled that **Beijing** has deepened its relationship with **Moscow** since the war began.* (H-I-54-2023)

The metonymy *9/11* used in (49) is used in the form of a date instead of the name of the event. The terrorist attack from September 11th was written itself into American history, and therefore, when the date is mentioned without explanation, probably everyone knows what it is about. The example in (50), the *Biden-Harris administration*, is a simplified name for the term of Biden and Harris' office that began after their inauguration. The same metonymy was used for President Trump and his Vice President Mike Pence from 2017-2021, where this administration was called the *Trump-Pence administration* or the *Obama-Biden administration* from 2009-2017. The *institution for people responsible* metonymy can be seen in example (51), where Biden talks about the war in Ukraine, where he states that President Putin allegedly did not expect that *the West* as “the basic values of

Western/Atlantic civilization, to Western democratic institutions” (Diligensky and Chugrov 2000, 2), and *NATO* as a military organization would not react to the conflict. The generalization also occurs in example (52), where the names of states (*the United States, the DPRK*) are generally used for the government and the state’s citizens, as well as the *Korean Peninsula*, which refers to both North and South Korea. In (53), President Biden again mentions NATO with a synonymous expression *Alliance*. In the example, he says he wants to make sure about NATO’s member states’ strong commitment. The example (54) is a perfect illustration of toponymical metonymy, where the city’s name functions as a synonym for the country’s government. Vice President Harris here speaks about the *deepened relationships* between Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin after President Xi Jinping’s invitation to Russia. Since the central seat of the Chinese political system is the capital city of China – *Beijing*, and the seat of the Russian government is *Moscow*, it is the reason why the names of the places were used instead of each president’s name.

5.2.3 Polarization

As in Speeches and Remarks about domestic topics, international issues contain a variety of persuasive strategies, where polarization, use of personal pronouns *we/us/our* or *them* are common. The use of these persuasive methods is suggested out of context, mainly because there is more than one social actor in international topics besides the United States of America. To start with the analysis of polarization in the political speeches on international issues, I have noticed one specific feature, and that is the contrast of good vs. bad, just in a way how the names of the social actors in the discourse of President Biden and Vice President Harris are mentioned (55), (56):

(55) *Putin thought Ukraine was weak and the West was divided.* (B-I-55-2023)

(56) *I met with **President** Macron yesterday and **Chancellor** Scholz.* (H-I-56-2023)

In example (55), President Putin lacks the mention of his political function, whereas in example (56), Vice President Harris mentions the social actors together with their political functions or titles as far as the chancellor is concerned. This persuasive strategy is related to self and other representation, where President Biden intentionally erases President Putin’s authority which makes him seem less trustworthy. It appeals to the people in a way that they can form the same opinions as President Biden share. Regarding the war in Ukraine, which

has been the major issue debated in international topics since 2022 until this year, here is how *us vs. them* is being depicted in President Biden and Vice President Harris' words:

(57) *And Russia is just continuing to act in ways that are almost unbelievable — the brutality with which **they're** acting.* (B-I-57-2023)

(58) *We recently were able to break up a Russian spy network. **They** are very active all over Europe, and the Russian propaganda is enormous.* (H-I-58-2023)

Even though it is not directly mentioned in the example (57), who President Biden believes is meant to be behind the pronoun *we*, but due to shared knowledge, it is clear that he means the United States and all their allies. Example (58) shows that the pronoun *they*, which is in this article only used for Russia, is an illustration of non-belonginess, non-cooperation, and hostility. Not to only give examples from the international conflict related to the war in Ukraine, the degree of clusivity seems much higher when President Biden and Vice President Harris use several times pronouns *we* and *our* while talking about friendship with Prime Minister Trudeau of Canada (59), with Prime Minister Lee of Singapore (60), President Macron of France (61) or when Vice President speaks to African leaders in (62):

(59) *There's nothing **we** cannot achieve when **we** commit **ourselves** to it. And when **we** work together, as the closest of friends should, **we** only make each other stronger.* (B-I-59-2021)

(60) *We work together at these forums reflecting **our** shared commitment to multilateralism to tackle regional and global issues like climate change.* (H-I-60-2021)

(61) *We stick up for one another in **our** — and democratic values to which Washington and Lafayette dedicated their lives.* (B-I-61-2022)

(62) *We gather at a time when many of these international rules and norms are under threat.* (H-I-62-2022)

5.2.4 Ideology

Ideology is one of the features of persuasion techniques that does not change its purpose and appears again in international topics. It can be noticeable that ideological mentioning of America's faith in God became traditional for domestic topics, whereas in

international topics are prayers and uttering reverence to God diminishing. On the other hand, picking up the abilities, values, and strengths of the American people as well as mentioning the freedom and democracy appear more often. President Biden recalls these values, *universal rights* and *democratic freedoms*, of both the U.S. and Canada in (63) as well as *democracy, liberty, equality, opportunity, and freedom* in (65) when he wants to point out these partnerships' shared values. Vice President talks about what shared values do the states have common with the U.S. in examples (64) and (68).

(63) *Canada and the United States will stand together against the abuse of **universal rights and democratic freedoms**.* (B-I-63-2021)

(64) *And we share a border, of course, but we also share the **values of dignity and respect**.* (H-I-64-2021)

(65) *Today, we're still united by the greatest causes: **democracy, liberty, equality, opportunity, and freedom**.* (B-I-65-2022)

(66) *And the thing about who we are as a country — as Americans, as the United States — is, we have been able to walk in these rooms with confidence, talking about the importance of **democracies**, talking about the **importance of rule of law, human rights**. We have held ourselves out to be **a role model** of all of those things...* (H-I-66-2022)

(67) *The past 13 months have united us all who believe in **freedom and democracy and the rule of law and the U.N. Charter**.* (B-I-67-2023)

(68) *And it reinforces what you and I have continued to discuss during our time together, which is our collective commitment to **principles of freedom, justice, and democracy**.* (H-I-68-2023)

Unlike the first two examples (63), (64), (65), and (68), in example (67), President Biden also mentions *the U.N. Charter*, which is a pattern that is significant for the use of ideology in international issues. One of the purposes of The Charter of the United Nations is the security of the international peace and sovereignty of the United Nations, which both the U.S. and Ireland are members of. *The rule of law* is a political principle which the United States as well as the United Kingdom uphold along with other states and is mentioned in examples (66) and (67). Besides that, the vision of *The City Upon a Hill* or the U.S. as *A Beacon of Democracy* is shown in the words of the Vice President in (66) when she refers to the U.S. as a *role model* of democracy for other nations.

5.2.5 Repetition

The emphasis on cooperation among the U.S. allies is also formed by repetition. For example, in (69), President Biden states several times at the Virtual Munich Conference in 2021 that after his start of a career as a President, *America is back*, and *the transatlantic alliance is back*, meaning Europe and the U.S. will cooperate in new challenges. In (70), Vice President Harris warns folks not to travel to the borders with Mexico, which she finds a dangerous journey, and that is why she makes sure she repeats *Do not come* twice. In the example (71) from the Joint Press Conference with President Zelenskyy, President Biden puts emphasis on the sovereignty that the U.S. keeps with Ukraine in the ongoing conflict, with the repetition of the *significant help* and that Ukraine *never stands alone*. The repetition of word *stand* also appears two more times in (72) and (73). In (74), Vice President gives an example of a four-year old child that was sexually abused by a Russian soldier and repeats the child's age twice, which adds importance to a serious topic.

- (69) *But I said at that time, “We will be **back**.” And I’m a man of my word. America is **back**. I speak today as President of the United States at the very start of my administration, and I’m sending a clear message to the world: America is **back**. The transatlantic alliance is **back**.* (B-I-69-2021)
- (70) *At the same time, I want to be clear to folks in this region who are thinking about making that dangerous trek to the United States-Mexico border: **Do not come. Do not come.*** (H-I-70-2021)
- (71) *You have had **significant, significant** help. We’ve **never stand alone** — you will **never stand** alone.* (B-I-71-2022)
- (72) *We **stand** with our allies. We **stand** with our friends. We **stand** to defend and protect rules and norms such as the integrity and importance of sovereignty and territorial integrity.* (H-I-72-2022)
- (73) *Well, I have just come from a visit to Kyiv, and I can report: Kyiv **stands strong!** (Applause.) Kyiv **stands** proud. It **stands** tall. And most important, it **stands** free.* (B-I-73-2023)
- (74) *Think of the **four-year-old** girl who the United Nations recently reported was sexually assaulted by a Russian soldier. A **four-year-old** child.* (H-I-74-2023)

5.2.6 Face-work and humour

International topics are more diverse in terms of the seriousness of the topics debated, and therefore there are more turns of *faces* during President Biden or Vice President Harris' speeches. For example, in topics dealing with the military conflict in Ukraine, understandably, the speakers do not use humour, more likely they speak straightforwardly about the topic. They keep their competence face to show they are acknowledging and respecting the seriousness of the situation. That is why I have just shown two examples, where the seriousness of topics allowed the politicians to show their affective face and use humour (75) and (76).

(75) *THE VICE PRESIDENT: I love to cook. I love to cook, and I come from a family of good cooks. And probably most of the — most important conversations that ever took place in my family intergenerationally took place in the kitchen.* (H-I-75-2022)

(76) *And my grandfather used to say that, you know, the — when anything — every time I'd walk out of his house in Scranton, Pennsylvania, when I lived there for a while, he'd look at me and say, "Joey, remember, the best drop of blood in you is Irish."* (Laughter.) (B-I-76-2023)

Vice President Harris shows off her affective face in example (75), not intended to be humorous, but by remembering some moments from her life. In example (76), President Biden recalls one of the quotes from the memories of his grandparents in humorous way, which not only makes the audience laugh or applaud but also shows that both leaders of the United States and Ireland maintain sovereignty.

5.2.7 The marking of importance and exaggerated claims

In the following three examples, President Biden and Vice President Harris use both hyperbole or attributes signifying importance:

(77) *Women are dropping out of work — the workforce at **alarming rates**.* (B-I-77-2021)

(78) *So let's discourage our friends, our neighbors, our family members from embarking on what is otherwise an **extremely dangerous** journey where, in large part, the only people who benefit are coyotes.* (H-I-78-2021)

- (79) *Today, I am proud to welcome and offer the **strong** support of the United States for the applications of two **great** democracies and two close, **highly** capable partners to join the strongest, **most powerful** defensive alliance in the history of the world.* (B-I-79-2022)
- (80) *And that's — **that's a burden to carry**, no doubt.* (H-I-80-2022)
- (81) *Stolen Ukrainian children in an attempt to — in an attempt **to steal Ukraine's future**.* (B-I-81-2023)
- (82) *And our two countries, as we know — and the Taoiseach and I were able to discuss a bit before we came in — our two nations have such **a deep, long, and enduring history** together.* (H-I-82-2023)

President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau consider the consequences of COVID-19 in (77), where one of these consequences were the citizens losing their job. President Biden pointed the attention on this topic with the use of hyperbole, that *the workforce was at alarming rates*. Vice President Harris uses an attribute *extremely dangerous* in (78), when she again wants to warn about the approaching US-Mexico borders. Several attributes expressing the uniqueness of the U.S. and Finland's and Sweden's partnership occur in (79), where he claims that their support to Ukraine is being *strong*, their democracies as *great*, Finland and Sweden as *highly capable partners*, and NATO as the *most powerful alliance*. The metaphorical hyperbole occurs in (80), where Vice President talks about the huge responsibility of inspiring people, which she marks as a huge *burden to carry*. The metaphorical hyperbole is also used in (81), when President Biden talks about Russia's attempts to *steal Ukraine's future*, meaning that they want to win over Ukraine in the ongoing conflict. The exaggeration is also visible in (82), where Vice President uses attributes *deep, long and enduring history*, that Ireland and the United States have together.

5.3 SPEECHES AND REMARKS ON THE ECONOMIC ISSUES

The last chapter of the analysis of Speeches and Remarks deals with the issues related to the economy, which President Biden and Vice President Harris address when debating the economic situation in the country. In this section of Speeches and Remarks, President Biden and Vice President Harris mainly try to introduce the problem and offer the solution. Even though it might seem that Speeches and Remarks on economic issues could have been analysed as a part of domestic issues, it is not possible because the economic situation might

also be influenced by external factors coming from the situation abroad, not just the ones that are happening inside the country.

The Speeches and Remarks that I have marked as responding to some economic matters are those considering affordable healthcare, employment, national budget, supporting businesses, and other areas addressing the economic situation. This chapter might function as a summary of all the persuasive strategies that were used primarily in the two chapters above.

5.3.1 Metaphor

- (83) *A once-in-a-century virus has decimated our economy, and it's still **wreaking havoc** on our economy today.* (B-E-83-2021)
- (84) *We not only see what has been, we see what can be. **We shoot for the moon, and then we plant our flag on it.*** (H-E-84-2021)
- (85) *Gas prices hit almost every family in this country, and they **squeeze their family budgets.*** (B-E-85-2022)
- (86) *We owe it to our children to, right now, take these issues very seriously. **The clock is ticking loudly.*** (H-E-86-2022)
- (87) *My plan that's in stark contrast to not – by the way, there's an awful lot of really good Republicans, but the MAGA Republicans are **a different breed of cat.*** (B-E-87-2023)
- (88) *But — but I want to — I also will say this: **Our future is not yet written, and the solutions are at hand.*** (H-E-88-2023)

In (83), President Biden uses the metaphor that refers to COVID-19 as a *wreaking havoc* of the economy, which was a particularly significant topic in 2021, when the pandemic hit the economies of many nations. The metaphor *we shoot for the moon, and then we plant our flag on it* used by Vice President Harris in (84) is the same example of metaphor that she used in a topic related to domestic issues within the event the *Celebration of America*. This metaphorical expression is a part of the ideology that the Vice President often uses. In (85), President Biden uses a metaphor that gas prices *squeeze family budgets* to an already serious topic that worries American citizens, and that is why he uses this figure of speech as a form of euphemism. The metaphor *the clock is ticking loudly* in example (86) that Vice President uses in their speech about the implementation of new clean electric school buses for pupils,

and thus contributes to the topic of climate change for future generations. With the metaphor *the clock is ticking* means *there is no more time to hesitate solving this problem*. Metaphor in the analysed chapters of economic matters is constructed in the way of euphemism of the criticism of another political party, as can be seen in example (87), where President Biden mocks the *MAGA Republicans*, which are by Biden's definition of those Republicans in alliance with former President Trump and with whom President Biden most often disagree. *A different breed of cat* is a satirical expression, a euphemism of a criticism of how to say that this part of Republicans is different from the rest of the political party. The question of solving global warming appears in (88), where Vice President uses the metaphor that *the future is not written yet, but the solutions are at hand*. She wants to express that the global warming will probably have a great impact on the climate in the future, but the issue can start to be solved today.

5.3.2 Metonymy

In example (89), President Biden states that *Congress* as a legislative body has the right to decide whether to approve the plan called the American Jobs plan. With this *institution for people responsible* metonymy (Lenard and Ćosić 2017, 74-78), he probably refers to the congressmen in both House of Representatives and Senate, who can decide whether to pass the plan or not. A similar case appears in (90), where President Biden uses the institution *The House* in reference to passing the bill. It is an abbreviation for the legislative branch, The House of Representatives, which is one of the two houses of the U.S. Congress. *MAGA crowd* is President Biden's labelling for *Made America Great Again* folks who are Trump supporters and with whom President Biden often disagrees. In the Remarks on Economic Growth, Jobs, and Deficit Reduction, President marks these supporters as a *MAGA crowd as the most extreme political organization in the U.S.*

In (92), Vice President appeals to the audience in which she has given the speech by calling them generally *Local 17 Boston*. In example (93), President Biden wants to share that it was the middle class who *build America*, not the wealthy people, whom he names according to the event/place of the stock exchange – *Wall Street*. It is easier for a politician to refer to all the people in the audience with the name of the locality, especially the state in which the speech has been given. In (94), Vice President concludes her speech by addressing the whole *Georgia* instead of the audience.

- (89) *Congress* should debate my plan, change it, and offer alternatives if they think that's what they have to do. But **Congress** should act. (B-E-89-2021)
- (90) And **the House**, this morning — talked to Nancy Pelosi and congratulated her and Joyce Beatty and so many others — **the House** passed the bill just this morning. (H-E-90-2021)
- (91) Because this **MAGA crowd** is really the most extreme political organization that's existed in American history — in recent American history. (B-E-91-2022)
- (92) So, **Local 17 Boston**, here is the point: We are working, all of us together, at the intersection of so many important priorities. (H-E-92-2022)
- (93) As you heard me say many times, **Wall Street** didn't build America. (B-E-93-2023)
- (94) So, **Georgia**, I'm here today because all of this work demonstrates a very important and probably obvious point. (H-E-94-2023)

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5.3.3 Polarization

Speeches and Remarks on economic matters involve pronouns *us/we* for the government's actions, primarily to convince people by whatever the U.S. government arranges to solve some economic problem, as can be seen in examples (95), (96), (98) and (100). In the first example (95), President Biden talks about the March Jobs Numbers and lists all the progress they have made since the pandemic hit, which includes the vaccinations and creating new job positions. In (96), Vice President also uses the pronoun *we* when she convinces people that they, as government *brought electricity* to American's households. The same purpose shows up in example (98), where Vice President states what they, as the government had done in a prevention against the harm caused by lead pipes and lead in the water of households. When Harris talks about investing in the American economy in (100), she again uses the pronoun *we* in connection with what the government does for its people. Apart from that, the polarization can be seen in examples (97) and (99), where President Biden shows disagreement with the Republican party, referring to them as *they/them*, to point out the contrast between the Republican and Democratic party.

- (95) *So **we've** made significant progress on that front, but the fight is far from over. **We** know that vaccines are safe and effective. **We're** vaccinating more people than any other country on Earth. **We** also have progress on jobs and progress on vaccinations. (B-E-95-2021)*
- (96) *That was true when **we** brought electricity to every household in America. (H-E-96-2021)*
- (97) *But today, if you look at the leaders of the Republican Party, what is **their** agenda? It's not a conservative agenda. It's not an agenda. **They** have no agenda; to stop what we're doing. (B-E-97-2022)*
- (98) *So the work **we** are doing together includes public education; it includes speaking loudly about what **we** must do to let people know about their rights and about the harm. (H-E-98-2022)*
- (99) *Here's what **they** want to do: **They** want to cut taxes for the very wealthy again. (B-E-99-2023)*
- (100) *And **we** will continue to invest in America because **we** know that when **we** do, there is no limit to what **we** can achieve. (H-E-100-2023)*

5.3.4 Ideology

The economic problems are tied with the discussion of change to the future or hope for a better future of the country's economic situation. That is why President Biden and Vice President Harris spread the ideology about the future mostly using the words *nation, dream, optimism, building a future*, etc., which might aim to create a utopian society. Examples (103) and (106) are illustrations of how President Biden and Vice President Harris usually conclude their speeches on economic issues by giving the audience hope for the future and pointing out that they can maintain these changes. In (103), President Biden convinces people about *building a better America* and states that he has *never been more optimistic*, which indicates a potential change. In (106), Vice President convinces people that once the government acts, it knows no bounds, for which she uses the expression *there is no limit to what we can achieve*. The expression *we not only dream, we do* appeared in several titles of web articles after Harris used this expression in her first speech after President Biden's inauguration. The ideology of *The City Upon a Hill* is illustrated in the example (101) and (104), where both President and Vice President believe that American democracy is a role model for the world. Next to the role model of democracy, President also uses superlatives while saying that America is *the most competitive nation in the world* in (105).

- (101) ***We have to show the world*** — and much more importantly, we have to show ourselves — ***that democracy works***; that we can come together on the big things. ***It's the United States of America for God's sake.*** (B-E-101-2021)
- (102) *I talked about how, in America, we not only **dream, we do.*** (H-E-102-2021)
- (103) *I've never been more **optimistic** — and I mean this from — I've been around a long while, as you can see — (laughter) — but I've never been more optimistic about **America's future.** And I really mean that. Never. We're **building a better America.*** (B-E-103-2022)
- (104) *Because, you see, we have been thought of as a **role model** and have certainly held ourselves out to be a **model of the strongest democracy in the world.*** (H-E-104-2022)
- (105) *How in **God's name** can we **remain the most competitive nation in the world** without investing in America?* (B-E-105-2023)

- (106) *And we will continue to invest in America because we know that when we do, there is no limit to what we can achieve.* (H-E-106-2023)

5.3.5 Repetition

In Speeches and Remarks on economic matters, repetition as a persuasive technique to put emphasis on an important message is more often used by President Biden. Economic issues discuss the matters related to finances (e.g., the cost of investments), in general, a lot of numbers and figures are mentioned here. These numbers are crucial in a message, and that is the reason why President Biden repeats them.

- (107) *This morning, we learned that our economy created **266,000** jobs in April. It hadn't been adjusted again yet, but that's what it says: **266**.* (B-E-107-2021)
- (108) ***Help is here. Help is here. And hope is here.*** (H-E-108-2021)
- (109) *You know how much it costs to make that — that particular — that insulin? It costs **\$10. T-E-N. Ten** dollars to make it. That's it — **10**.* (B-E-109-2022)
- (110) *And, on that last piece, by the way, Seattle, do you know: **Not one** Republican in the Senate or House voted in favor of bringing down those healthcare costs? **Not one. Not one.*** (H-E-110-2022)
- (111) *Look, the last two years, we've created **12 million** new jobs. That's more jobs than any President has created in four years. (Applause.) **Twelve million** new jobs.* (B-E-111-2023)
- (112) *We're talking about **the jobs** that are the skills that are required to be a technician, an engineer, an IT specialist, a data analyst. **Jobs** that give folks the opportunity to grow and advance right here in the community. And **jobs** that help our nation fight the climate crisis.* (H-E-112-2023)

President Biden introduces the topic of The April Jobs Report by repeating the number of newly created jobs in that month. In example (109), President Biden gives the audience a thought-provoking question about how expensive insulin is to treat diabetes and then offers a solution to reduce those costs. By the repetition of the *10 dollars*, he moves the attention to this cost to make people feel the need for the solution. The same case is visible in example (111), where President Biden points out how his economy is working and that his administration helps the unemployment with the repetition of *twelve million*. All the

important numbers are used just twice within the paragraphs to put emphasis on them. On the other hand, the three-part list occurs in the example (108), (110), and (112).

5.3.6 Face-work and humour

In the Speeches and Remarks on economic matters, the affective face is flouting more than the competence face.

- (113) *And he said, “Well...” — he said, “It’s a good thing you won.” And I said, “How is that?” He said, “Well...” — he said, “You got yourself a \$38,000 deficit.” (Laughter.) And I said, “Yes, sir.” And he said, “Well, if you hadn’t won, you’d just have a plain old deficit. Now you can have a deficit party.” (Laughter.)* (B-E-113-2021)
- (114) *We’re also going to create as many as 2 million new registered apprenticeship slots, and we’re going to make sure that these opportunities are equally available to women as well as men. (Applause.) Because there’s an interesting fact, in case you didn’t know: **Hardhats are actually unisex.** (Laughter.) **Everybody’s laughing.*** (H-E-114-2021)
- (115) *THE PRESIDENT: Thank you all for being here. And I apologize for my back when I’m speaking to you. **My mother would give me hell for doing that.*** (B-E-115-2022)
- (116) *People put in their order. People said — and I believe — **nobody should have to go to jail for smoking weed.** (Laughter.)* (H-E-116-2022)
- (117) *Thank you. **My name is Joe Biden.** (Laughter.) **I’m Dr. Jill Biden’s husband.** (Laughter.) **And I eat Jeni’s Ice Cream, chocolate chip.** (Laughter.) **I came down because I heard there was chocolate chip ice cream.** (Laughter.)* (B-E-117-2023)
- (118) *THE VICE PRESIDENT: Hi, everyone. Good afternoon. Have a seat. **I think there are chairs.** Yes. (Laughs.)* (H-E-118-2023)

Primarily it is President Biden who introduces the topics with jokes and wants to make the audience laugh by recalling his memories from childhood, as it is in (115), also he quotes a former Democratic politician Russel Long in (113) or shows that even authority can make fun of itself without disparaging this authority in (117). On the other hand, Vice President

Harris uses humour to conclude the discussed idea, as can be seen in relation to equal rights to work for women and men in (114), in relation to pardoning American people who are prisoned for growing marijuana in (116), or just to make the meeting's beginning more pleasant in (118).

5.3.7 The marking of importance and exaggerated claims

As I mentioned earlier in the analysis in the subsection dealing with ideology, Speeches and Remarks on economic matters deal with the consideration of changes to the future and finding possible solutions, which is also reflected in the marking of importance.

(119) *And we knew this wouldn't be a sprint; it would be **a marathon**.* (B-E-119-2021)

(120) *We are going to **take a giant leap** into the future.* (H-E-120-2021)

(121) — *going to prevent the **drastic** cuts to workers' hard-earned pension benefits — cuts that had been scheduled to occur within the next few years.* (B-E-121-2022)

The metaphorical hyperbole can be seen in example (119), where President Biden expresses his worries about the pandemic and economic crisis and said that the moment they found out, they were sure *it wouldn't be a sprint, but a marathon*. The real meaning behind this hyperbole is that he realized they would have a huge responsibility to get the country's economy back on track. In example (120) Vice President Harris talks about the American Jobs Plan, which is intended to secure new jobs, and she states that her and President Biden are going to continue with helping the unemployed with hyperbole *to take a giant leap* into the future. The attribute *drastic* expressing seriousness appears in (121), where the President offers a solution for cutting the pension benefits of workers. In examples (122), (123) and (124), both politicians try to invite the audience to the topic by mentioning what is important, what is the deal of the topic and, what is going to come next or instructing/suggesting people:

(122) *And by the way, on this issue, **I think it's very important to be clear**: One does not have to abandon their faith or deeply held beliefs to agree the government should not be telling her what to do with her body.* (H-E-122-2022)

(123) *Here's the deal: If Republicans try to take away people's healthcare, increase costs for middle-class families, or push Americans into poverty, I'm going to stop them.* (B-E-123-2023)

(124) *So let us just continue to lead with the ambition, to promote and invest in the aspirations, and to do all of this in the best interest of the health, safety, and wellbeing of this beautiful planet.* (H-E-124-2023)

5.4 CONCLUSION OF ANALYSIS

The metaphor was widely used in all three areas of analysis. It seems that this figure of speech was a favourite tool for persuasion of both President and Vice President. For all three areas, the metaphor should function for the audience's evaluation, to catch attention, make assumptions, and for better memorizing. Some metaphors from international issues attracted the attention of journalists so much that they made it to the headlines of news articles, mainly those which contained the metaphor for indirect criticism. In economic matters I encountered a metaphor intended as euphemism and either criticism or mocking the others, mostly Republicans.

The most common metonymies were toponymical, especially those where the names of institutions were an alternative for people responsible or a name of the state for the government's actions. In Speeches and Remarks on domestic issues and economic matters, the main emphasis was on the U.S. government and citizens, whereas in international issues, where there were more states as social actors included, the metonymy of names of states functioned as a generalization for the state's government and all the citizens in it.

President Biden and Vice President Harris used polarization for contrast, visualization of good and bad, and marking the degree ofclusivity. In domestic issues, the attention was again on the U.S. as a united nation, which was often praised by them. They used *we/us/our* either for praising the U.S. above the other states or to them as Democrats against the opponents'/loser's side, the Republicans, which was mainly to be found in speeches held during elections. The polarization was visible the most in international issues, mainly because of the ongoing war in Ukraine, which has been discussed in *Speeches and Remarks* for two years already. Here, President and Vice President usually referred to *we/us* as the U.S. or the U.S. and all its allies against their main enemy Russia, which they called *they/them*. The degree ofclusivity was flouting here and it was visible which social actor did not belong to their allies. In economic matters, President and Vice President wanted to clarify

the government's economic achievements by using the pronoun *we/us* to show what changes they maintained during their administration.

The ideology as a set of collectively held beliefs was expressed here in the way of giving thanks to God and blessings, where a strong American religion was mirrored. In all three areas they were picking up American aspiration, talent, strengths, democratic values, etc., which showed that they as a nation wanted to be an inspiration for other countries as far as democracy is concerned. Especially in economic matters, the words such as *future*, *dream*, *the building of America*, and other words connected to possible change were prevailing.

The most used repetition was a three-part list, all for emphasizing the main message. The repetition was not that used in international issues as in the other two areas, mainly because the international issues were not about giving a speech but rather leading a dialogue among more political leaders. In economic matters, the emphasis was put on counting and numbers, which were often repeated.

I also focused on how humour helped the persuasion. Because the flouting face-work in all three areas was an affective face, President and Vice President wanted to show off that they were one of the citizens by self-deprecating humour or for example recalling some funny quotes from their childhood. The exception came in international topics, where competence face was maintained by both speakers primarily because of respecting the seriousness of the situation in Ukraine.

The last detected persuasive strategy was marking of importance, where besides the hyperbole for exaggeration of weaker argument, many attributes expressing uniqueness, such as *profound*, *extremely important*, or *extraordinary* were used. In economic matters some phrases marking a suggestion and introduction on what was happening were used to discuss the follow-up changes.

6 CONCLUSION

The main aim of my bachelor's thesis was to analyse the political rhetoric of the selected *Speeches and Remarks* as regards the tools of expression of President Biden and Vice President Harris. With the analysis, I wanted to follow up on the theoretical part, which aimed to define and describe the characteristics of rhetoric and discourse, the connection between politics and language, and especially persuasive strategies. In the analytical part, I focused on three areas in which they expressed themselves: domestic, international, and economic issues. For the analysis, I selected the persuasive strategies and other language devices that were found the most in the articles and were significant for all three areas – the construction of metaphor and metonymy, polarization including pronouns *we/us*, *them*, the way the ideology was reflected in the speech, which face-work the President and Vice President chose for each area, how humour was contributing to the persuasion and lastly, how importance was marked.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NATO – The North Atlantic Treaty Organization

The DPRK – The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea; North Korea

MAGA Republicans/crowd/folks – “Make America Great Again” political slogan

APPENDICES

The selected articles from *Speeches and Remarks* are available on the enclosed CD.