"I'm very Good at and maybe that's Why I'm Center Stage…":

Pronominal Deixis and Trump

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Abstract

Researchers have noted that when delivering speeches, politicians tend to evoke solidarity through the use of linguistic forms such as personal pronouns. This article presents an analysis of pronominal choices (e.g., person deixis *I, you, we, they*) issued by Donald Trump during 10 presentations (e.g., town halls, victory speeches). The study uses a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework in analyzing his speeches using mixed methods. The findings suggest that redundant uses and shifts in deitic expressions were employed as persuasive tools to identify, garner support, and polarize audiences.

Keywords: Trump, Person deixis, Political discourse

1. Introduction

In political discourse analyses, the use of pronominals has been found to represent one of the ways in which politicians make reference to self and interact and address their audience. For instance, in political interviews, Fetzer and Bull (2008) have noted that references to participants can be expressed by proper nouns, forms of address, and other indexical expressions. Personal subject pronouns (PSP) are one set of indexical expressions, which are referred to as person deixis (e.g., *I, you, we*). For example, *I* is considered proximal in that it marks the zero point of a speaker's position with respect to hearers (Fillmore, 1971). In other words, it encodes the perspective of the speaker when addressing his audience. On the other hand, *you* and *they* and lexical forms such as *those people* are considered distal from the speaker's position. Fairclough (2015) has noted that switches in positions occur in political discourse such as *vote for us, vote for me* (Voković, 2012). Furthermore, in using *we*, for example, a speaker may index different hearers or groups or, may use this form for self reference. Thus, a politician's use of pronominals affects her or his way of arguing and how an audience is won. In addition, the choice between proximal and distal pronominal deictic expressions may serve to reveal a speaker's attitudinal orientation (Glover, 2000).

The aim of this study is to investigate the use of several pronominal deictic expressions issued by Donald Trump (Trump) in 10 public presentations with the purpose of unveiling how he 'does' politics. We assume here that he is not a politician per se; he was acting as a politician while running for office. The framework that guided this study is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) following Zupnik (1994) who posits that a great deal of theoretical and practical focus has been placed on the role that communication plays in the arenas of power, politics, and persuasion.

The significance of this study rests on the fact that while there have been studies attending to pronominal deixis in political discourse; this study attends to the discourse of a non-politician, a business person, who was adopting a political role. In it, we examine self reference and the pronominal indexical expressions used as he addressed his audience and critique others.

The article is organized as follows: The next section discusses the literature or materials studied on person deixis in political discourse as it pertains to the phenomenon under investigation. This section is followed by section 3, which discusses the research questions and the study's design. Section 4 presents the results: quantitative and qualitative analyses respectively. Section 5 and 6 present the discussion and conclusion.

2. Material Studied

Van Dijk (1997) maintains that political discourse is 'identified by its *actors* or *authors*, viz., *politicians*' (his emphasis). He goes further to note that the majority of studies of political discourse is about the text and talk of professional politicians, political institutions and stakeholders such as prime ministers, presidents, members of

government, or political parties, etc. However, Wilson (2001) suggests that like other areas of discourse, political discourse covers a wide range of subject matter, and draws upon a variety of analytical tools. Wilson also posits that the term 'political discourse' is ambiguous. He notes it can refer to a discourse that is political in itself and, it can refer to an analysis of political discourse as an example of a discourse type without explicit analysis of political content.

Proctor and I-Wen Su (2011) have noted that American politicians "make use of personal pronouns to evoke nationalistic emotions and achieve their career goals" and, that the use of these linguistic forms varies according to venue (i.e., debates vs. interviews). The study revealed that the internal context rather than topic conditioned the use and distribution of personal pronouns with respect to self reference and how the speaker addressed his/her audience. Similarly, Maitland and Wilson (1987) revealed how politicians shift pronominal usage according to the need to distance themselves or increase involvement of self in relation to their audience. Said differently, pronominal expressions can be used strategically to manipulate, persuade, coerce, and attract an audience.

Deictic expressions are linguistic expressions that are used to denote elements of the situational and/or discourse context, including the speech of participants and the time and space of a speech event (e.g., Fillmore, 1982; Levinson, 1993). Fillmore (1982) maintains that "deixis is the name given those formal properties of utterances which are determined by, and which are interpreted by knowing certain aspects of the communication act in which the utterances in question have a role". Person deixis refers to the ways in which a language encodes features related to referents, pronouns such as *I, you,* etc. English pronouns have different relational values. For instance, Fairclough (2015) has documented that *we* can refer to the speaker and the hearer or can be interpreted as exclusive *we*, only the speaker. We may also find that the plural generic *we* may serve a persuasive function or may be used to exclude others. In other words, the interpretation of the referent relies on context in which the form is employed and can have various interpretations.

Sterling and Manderson (2011), for example, have suggested that *I* by definition "refers to the current speaker and excludes reference to the current addressee" (1584) and thus, can be considered proximal. Conversely, *you* refers to the audience or interlocutor and is considered distal. However, there are instances in which we find co-occurrences of pronominal referents with distal and proximal spatial deixis such as *these people*, *those people*, *those of us*, *those of you*. The work of Chilton and Schäffner (1997) is particularly of interest since it is suggestive of the ways in which politicians may use language that may be considered political. They point to ways in which pronouns can be used to induce an audience or interpreters to conceptualize group identity, coalitions, movements, parties, etc.

In addition, Zupnik (1994) posits that the resolution of first person pronouns must take into account the interaction between discourse spaces, participants and their roles, and the use of indexical items. The study reveals that pronominal expression may serve a solidarity-building function in political discourse (e.g., *we* to include hearers). The study also revealed how a speaker's power of persuasion may originate from the speaker's ability to shift in and out of various roles and spaces with regard to the use of solidarity-driven deixis.

De Fina (1995) also discusses the deitic nature of pronouns and their ability to encode important features of an utterance. In her work, De Fina uncovers how pronominal choices in political speeches reflect differences in involvement, identification, and goals. She maintains that pronominal reference in political speeches can help define the manner in which a speaker presents her persona as an agent in a conflict and the way the speaker associates to others. She also argues that "speaker involvement should be re-analyzed to distinguish personal participation in a topic, commitment to one's words, and identification and solidarity with others" (403).

Thus, with the aforementioned research in mind, this study aims examine how Trump addresses, persuades, identifies with, and engages his audiences.

3. Method

Given that pronominal deixis and other indexical expression intersect with the semantics of leadership (Fetzer & Bull, 2012); this study addresses the following questions:

1. Within the topics of the Trump corpora, how can we characterize the use and functions of person deitic expressions?

2. How does Trump address, evoke emotions, engage, persuade, and motivate his audiences to believe in him using these linguistic features?

3. Does the topic and type of audience condition the use of deixis?

The framework that informed this study is that of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). In particular, researchers have employed a CDA framework to examine the way dominance and inequality is enacted in speech and text. CDA views political discourse as a form of argumentation, argumentation for or against a particular way of behaving, something that can ground decision (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012). Furthermore, Van Dijk (1997) maintains that campaigning politicians tend to speak about themselves as candidates, about the elections, about voters and policy promises. Thus, the Trump corpus was generated from 10 documented public speaking engagements: town hall meetings, interviews with (1) press, (5) campaign speeches, and (4) debates (see appendix for links).

The current study employed a mixed-method approach: Quantitative and qualitative. The purpose of the quantitative analysis was to determine patterns in the use of person deictic expressions according to topics. The qualitative, on the other hand, focused on an in depth analysis of person deixis employed by Trump.

The public presentations we focus on were produced beginning winter 2015 through March 2016. The study analyzed every clause containing a verb since verbs were considered the heart of an utterance or proposition. Voković (2012), in examining political speech, suggests that for a null subject language, researchers cannot conduct a comprehensive examination of person deixis without taking into account the person of the verb. However, since English is a language in which subjects are expressed, every verb's subject was coded and categorized as having the presence of a lexical subject, PSP (e.g., first, second person) and for person deictic clusters such as *those people*. Then, the data were coded for several variables: the type of expressed subject (e.g., deictic *I, you*, lexical subject), audience (e.g., press interview, campaign). The quantitative analysis yielded 8263 verbs, which were entered into SPPS, a statistical software program.

The qualitative analysis focused on interpreting the use of deitic expressions using cotext and context. as conducted in order to provide a more detailed account of the use of deictic expressions. We define cotext following Janney (2002,) who posits that cotext is ''the immediate linguistic environment in which a unit of discourse of momentary interest to an interpreter (a word, phrase, utterance, a set of utterances) occurs and is interpreted in a discourse sequence" (458).

4. Results

In this section, the quantitative analysis is presented followed by the qualitative, Section 4.1. First, the topics most frequently discussed in his political discourses are illustrated and then we proceed to analyze person deixis and temporal aspects, which emerged in the Trump corpus. For the quantitative analysis, two types of tables are presented: One with raw frequencies which exhibit rankings (most frequent to least frequently employed form) and, another set of tables which shows the intersection between two variables which were found statistically significant at *p = .000* using Chi-Square tests of independence.

We first begin with Table 1, which presents the topics discussed in the ten presentations. We begin with Trump's hot topics with the purpose of setting the backdrop for the forthcoming person deixis and verb use analyses. Table 1 presents the distribution of the topics in raw frequencies.

Table 1. Raw frequencies of the distribution of topics in all ten speeches (N=8263)

	Frequency	%
Campaign	1726	20.9
Opponents	1173	14.2
War/Terrorism	720	8.7
Business	512	6.2
Middle East	515	6.2
Money/Finance	449	5.4
Government	357	4.3
Immigration/Wall	359	4.3
Asia	307	3.7
Voters	221	2.7
Republicans	174	2.1
Healthcare	160	1.9
Education	107	1.3
His family	90	1.1
Jobs	85	1.0
Latin America and Mexico	77	.9
Democrats	31	.4
Drugs	36	.4
Women	28	.3
Conservatives	17	.2
Other non focused	1119	13.5
Total	8263	100.00%

Table 1 shows that the two most preferred topics in the corpus of the ten presentations were his campaign (20.9%) and opponents (14.2%). Interestingly, topics such as Asia, (3.7%), Voters (2.7%), Republicans (2.1%), Healthcare (1.9%), Education (1.3%), his family (1.1%), Jobs (1.0%), Latin America (.9%), and Drugs (.4%) were discussed in low frequencies. The category of 'other non-focused topics' refers to topics unrelated to the above-mentioned categories (Note 1) (13.5%). We can thus gather that while his preferred topics were his campaign and opponents, the other topics such as jobs, healthcare, education, etc. were subtly represented in the corpus. Interestingly, mention of his party was minimal.

Table 2 shows the distribution of person deixis and how this feature intersected with the topics discussed. The analysis responds to the second research question.

Table 2. Person deixis distributed according to topic discussed (N=8263)

	Person Deixis				
	I	You	We	Other distal subjects (e.g.,'they' 'those' 'guys')	Total
Campaign	40.4%	7.5%	14.0%	38.1%	100.0%
	(697)	(130)	(241)	(658)	(1726)
Opponents	23.6%	10.5%	5.1%	60.8%	100.0%
	(277)	(123)	(60)	(713)	(1173)

War/Terrorism	13.3%	9.0%	19.6%	58.1%	100.0%
	(96)	(65)	(141)	(418)	(720)
Business/Wall St.	29.1%	5.7%	11.5%	53.7%	100.0%
	(149)	(29)	(59)	(275)	(512)
Middle East	19.0%	8.5%	19.6%	52.8%	100.0%
	(98)	(44)	(101)	(272)	(515)
Money/Finance	22.7%	6.2%	20.5%	50.6%	100.0%
	(102)	(28)	(92)	(227)	(449)
Government	10.6%	6.7%	7.3%	75.4%	100.0%
	(38)	(24)	(26)	(269)	(357)
Immigration/Wall	12.8%	6.1%	22.8%	58.2%	100.0%
	(46)	(22)	(82)	(209)	(359)
Asia	14.3%	4.9%	15.3%	65.5%	100.0%
	(44)	(15)	(47)	(201)	(307)
Voters	10.4%	24.4%	30.8%	34.4%	100.0%
	(23)	(54)	(68)	(76)	(221)
Republicans	30.5%	6.3%	17.2%	46.0%	100.0%
	(53)	(11)	(30)	(80)	(174)
Healthcare	8.8%	11.3%	7.5%	72.5%	100.0%
	(14)	(18)	(12)	(116)	(160)
Education	15.0%	6.5%	22.4%	56.1%	100.0%
	(16)	(7)	(24)	(60)	(107)
His family	23.3%	4.4%	6.7%	65.6%	100.0%
	(21)	(4)	(6)	(59)	(90)
Jobs	9.4%	5.9%	17.6%	67.1%	100.0%
	(8)	(5)	(15)	(57)	(85)
Latin America	13.0%	6.5%	10.4%	70.1%	100.0%
	(10)	(5)	(8)	(54)	(77)
Democrats	16.1%	6.5%	0.0	77.4%	100.0%
	(5)	(2)	(0)	(24)	(31)
Drugs	8.3%	16.7%	27.8%	47.2%	100.0%
	(3)	(6)	(10)	(17)	(36)
Women	32.1%	10.7%	14.3%	42.9%	100.0%
	(9)	(3)	(4)	(12)	(28)
Conservatives	47.1%	0.0%	0.0%	52.9%	100.0%
	(8)	(0)	(0)	(9)	(17)
Other non focused (Note 2)	23.7%	8.7%	12.2%	55.4%	100.0%
	(265)	(97)	(137)	(620)	(1119)
Total	24.0%	8.4%	14.1%	53.6%	100.0%
	1982	(692)	(1163)	(4426)	(8263)

p= (.000)

A close examination of table 2 yields two significant findings. At first glance, we find that distal *they* was deployed in all topics with the highest frequency than other topics (53.6% or 4426 tokens). Therefore, in the qualitative analyses section we further elaborate on this matter. A second observation points to the use of self referent *I*; it was issued in campaign-related speech (40.4%) and presentations when compared to other forms.

To address another research question, which delved into how Trump employed person deixis in his political discourse, table 3 is presented. It shows the use of person deixis (i.e., first personal singular and plural pronoun proximal *I* and *we* and, second person singular pronoun *you* and the category "other" (e.g., referents and deixis such as *guys, people, they, these*) according to the category of presentation or speech.

Table 3. The distribution of person deixis subjects according to audience (N=8263)

	Person Deixis and other Subjects				
	I	You	We	Other subjects (e.g.) *lexical subjects, they, guys, those*	Total
Victory speech	17.2%	20.2%	26.1%	17.9%	19.1%
	(341)	(140)	(304)	(793)	(1578)
Press	26.5%	35.5%	24.8%	29.1%	28.4%
	(525)	(246)	(289)	(1286)	(2346)
Campaign	12.8%	9.8%	12.3%	14.8%	13.5%
	(254)	(68)	(143)	(654)	(1119)
Town Hall	5.7%	10.7%	7.3%	9.1%	8.1%
	(113)	(74)	(85)	(401)	(673)
Debate	29.9%	18.2%	26.2%	23.7%	25.1%
	(592)	(126)	(305)	(1050)	(2073)
Other (e.g., interview)	7.9%	5.5%	3.2%	5.5%	5.7%
	(157)	(38)	(37)	(242)	(474)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0
	(1982)	(692)	(1163)	(4426)	(8263)

p= (.000)

Since a correlation between these two variables was found statistically significant (*p=.000*), we can make several observations. One finding that this table reveals is the use of distal as opposed to proximal deixis. For example, the all-inclusive and proximal *we* was favored in victory-related discourse (26.1%) and debates (26.2%). The use of this form is suggestive of how Trump situated himself in relation to others as being a part of a group, as an authoritative figure or, a member of a community. However, he exhibited a tendency to employ distal forms with more frequency than proximal ones. For instance, distal and generalized *you* was preferred in addressing the press, 35.5%, *they* in his campaign-related utterances (14.8%), and, *you* in town halls (10.7%). Noticeable, however, is that in debates he had a tendency of using the proximal *I* (29.9%). This latter observation suggests that when competing with other candidates, Trump issued more utterances with the singular PSP *I* as a means of drawing attention to himself.

4.1. Qualitative Results

The next section serves to substantiate the quantitative findings and provides a fine grained analysis of personal deixis found in the corpus. The section is guided by topics.

Topic: Opponents and campaign

Excerpt (1)

Trump: *"I look at this guy Jeb Bush. He spent $59 million on* his *campaign and he is down in the grave."... "I'm under budget, I'm ahead of schedule. Hey, look at the campaign. The guy's at $59 million and he's down at the bottom.*

I'm   nothing   and   I'm   at   the   top."   Source:
http://www.kansascity.com/news/local/news-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article55604115.html

Excerpt (1) is illustrative of the ways in which Trump positioned himself and issued self reference by using first person proximal *I*. First, and most noticeable in this excerpt, is the redundant use of *I* to position himself in a positive light (e.g., *I'm at the top.*). Second, we can observe how he referred to his rival, Jeb Bush: *he, the guy*, in clauses containing negative assertions (i.e., *the guy's at his grave', he's down at the bottom*).

Excerpt (2)

Trump: *"No. I just will tell you that, you know, Jeb made the statement. I'm not only referring to him. I — a lot of money was raised by a lot of different people that are standing up here. And the donors, the special interests, the lobbyists have very strong power over these people."* Source: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=110756

In excerpt (2) we evidence the deployment of proximal and distal person deixis such as *I* and *you*, a nominal subject Jeb and, *these people*. First, Trump strategically situated himself in a position of power in prefacing his speech with *I just want to tell you*. This clause entails the speech act of a command while simultaneously employing distal *you* instead of using *I just want to say* or *I would like to say*, conveying politeness. Second, to approach critiquing one of his opponents, he issued the lexical subject *Jeb* and *him*. The strategy of shifting from employing the lexical subject *Jeb* suggests closeness but, in shifting to *him*, Trump created distance. We also find the use of distal *these* in *these people* to refer to other candidates, his rivals, also suggestive of how he deployed distal references to influence his audience's thoughts about his opponents. Finally, in issuing the statement *"I — a lot of money was raised by a lot of different people that are standing up here."* We note a repair; how he switched from an overt to a null subject using a passive voice construction in *a lot of money was raised* as opposed to a more direct *they raised a lot of money*. In this utterance he mitigated the effect of an accusation; he avoided overtly accusing or directly naming his opponents of wrong doing.

Excerpt (3)

Trump: *I'm not getting millions of dollars from all of these special interests and lobbyists and donors that once they get it   they   literally   do   whatever   the   politicians   want.*   Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/02/20/transcript-donald-trumps-victory-speech-after-the-south-carolina-gop-primary/

In (3) proximal *I* was used when positioning himself against other candidates and self-referencing. We also can observe several tokens of the distal deictic forms *these* and *they* to refer to special interest groups and lobbyists. In this instance, he avoided using lexical forms to refer to these groups. Interestingly, this excerpt also reflects the use of *I+copula*, present tense, and verbs of action such as *get* as opposed to *receive*, which implicitly shifts the weight of agency to outsiders.

Topic: Terrorism/War

Excerpt (4)

Trump: *I began this journey six months ago. My total focus was on building up our military, building up our strength, building up our borders, making sure that China, Japan, Mexico, both at the border and in trade, no longer takes advantage of our country…And those things are things that I'm very good at and maybe that's why I'm center stage. People saw it. People liked it. People respected it.* Source: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=111177

In excerpt (4) he initiated his narrative using past tense as in "*I began…*" and "*my focus was*" priming the audience about a forthcoming change or a shift conveying the before and after effects. We also find several redundant structures that include the personal self reference proximal pronoun *I* in addition to other forms of reference. First, he issued *I* to begin his narrative about his journey. Then, he employed the possessive pronoun *my* in the clause that explained his focus of building up the country. Noticeable also is the redundant uses the possessive pronoun *our* in *our military*, *our strength*, *our borders*, and *our country*, ways in which Trump made an attempt to be inclusive and appeal to his audience while at the same time conveying a message of possession or ownership. Second, we can also observe the use of the plural *they* when speaking of others such as the country of Iran. In it we find *they get*, *they're a terrorist nation*, omitting the referents. These two utterances point to ways in which Trump polarized the audience between the *us* versus *them*, an implicit way to situate the audience on the opposite side of the spectrum. Third, he again employed the proximal self referent *I* to indicate how he considered himself good in "*I'm very good at…*" and "*I'm center stage…*". However, instead of next indicating that he is liked by people using the first person *I* in the active voice as in '*I am*

respected by people', he used the referent '*people'* as agent in a passive construction '*People respected it'* to convey a more pluralizing effect.

Excerpt (5)

Trump: *A month ago things changed. Radical Islamic terrorism came into effect even more so than it has been in the past. People like what I say. People respect what I say. And we've opened up a very big discussion that needed to be opened up.* Source: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=111177

In (5) when speaking of terrorism, Trump employed the subject referent *people* as in "*people like what I say…"*, *"people respect what I say*", all generalized referents to show he had support from a mass of voters and audiences. The last utterance, represents a switch in the subject *people* to a pronominal *we* in '*we've opened up…'*, an ambiguous referent. In this instance, he took credit for what he has done to open a discussion instead of repeating the referent *people*. In other words, he did not attribute credit or success of this action to the referent *people*.

Topic: Healthcare

Excerpt (6)

Trump: *Look, we've got to be tough, we've got to be smart, we've got to have heart too. We've got to have heart, we've got to take care of people. We've got to fix our health care program. This Obamacare is a disaster. You people know…You people know. Obamacare is a total catastrophe. It's going to be repealed and replaced. It will die in '17 anyway. I don't know if you heard what's happening. But it's so bad, all the people that they didn't think were signing up are signing up. And the other people that are really paying for it are not signing up. And your rates are going up 25 percent, 35 percent, 45 percent. Your deductibles are so high that unless you get hit by a tractor, you're never going to be able to use your deductible. You're never going to be able to use it. So Obamacare is a disaster. We are going to repeal it, we are going to replace it. There are so many great things we can do on health care. So many good things."*

Source: http://www.kansascity.com/news/local/news-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article55604115.html

In this excerpt (6) on healthcare, there are multiple and redundant uses of *we*, a proximal form. In it, Trump appealed to his audience by issuing a directive as in '*we've got to be tough'*, '*we've got to be smart'* to evoke mutual sentiment to repeal Obamacare. He also appealed to the audience's emotions in*, "we've got to have heart too".* Also noticeable are redundant uses of other referents such as *you people* and *other people*, distal forms which emerged in utterances that conveyed his negative attitude regarding Obamacare. This proposition, an indirect speech act, conveys accusatory statement. In other words, the audience owns the catastrophe, not him. To further explain the negative effects of Obamacare, Trump also switched from the first person plural *we* to *you*, *all the people*, *your rates*, and *your deductibles*. Interesting, he avoided using the possessive pronoun *our* in this sequence, another linguistic behavior that distances himself from being party to and subject to the same conditions of the populace.

Excerpt (7)

Trump: *We have to change our whole way, our health care system is a disaster. It's going to implode in 2017, just like you're sitting there. It doesn't work. Nothing works in our country. If I'm elected president, we will win again. We will win a lot. And we're going to have a great, great country, greater than ever before.* Source: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=111177

Excerpt (7) paints a bleak or negative picture in the first utterances, almost a threat, while informing the audience of how bad the country is. In it, there are redundant uses of the proximal *we* as a generic pronoun and possessive *our*, all-inclusive to persuade his audience to change as in "*We have to change our whole way, our health care system is a disaster."* The form *our* also indexes unity with his audience. Furthermore, he issued several promises with the purpose of persuading his audience as in "*If I'm elected president, we will win again. We will win a lot. And we're going to have a great, great country, greater than ever before."* With regard to verb tense, we detect the use of definitive future *will win* as opposed to the periphrastic *going to win*, a linguistic choice that entails certainty.

Topic: Education

Excerpt (8)

Trump: "*I'm not cutting services. But I'm cutting spending. But I may cut Department of Education. I believe common core is a very bad thing. I believe that we should be lo -- you know, educating our children from Iowa, from New Hampshire, from South Carolina, from California, from New York. I think that it should be local education."*
Source:

http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2015/10/18/full_replay_and_transcript_donald_trump_with_fncs_chris_wallace.html

We attest in (8) to redundant uses of the proximal *I* with the copula, mental verbs *believe* regarding his opinion and the action he may take. These features, coupled with the use of the mitigator *may* in *I may cut* and the use of the present tense in *I'm not cutting...* are suggestive of ways in which vague language was issued. Noticeable is his objection to the Common Core, which he expressed with *I*. In issuing this form, he strategically positioned himself as the sole decision maker. That is, the consultative behavior characteristic of leadership roles in decision making was omitted; he is taking full control.

Excerpt (9)

Trump: *Common core is gone. We are getting rid of common core. We're bringing education to a local level. The people in this community -- every time I see them they want education locally. The parents, the teachers. They want to do it -- they don't want bureaucrats in Washington telling them how to educate their children.* Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/02/20/transcript-donald-trumps-victory-speech-after-the-south-carolina-gop-primary/

In excerpt (9) Trump's contention with education is further expressed by employing the all-inclusive generic *we* instead of issuing *I* as seen in excerpt (7). Furthermore, he also employed the distal *they* when he referred to the people in the community, parents, and teachers and, he also indirectly evoked support from the community by saying that these key figures were behind his proposal. Contrary to excerpt (8), implicit in this assertion is that there was a consultative interaction with the stakeholders.

Topic: Immigration

Excerpt (10)

Trump: *Well, I would have been much different, I must tell you. Somebody said, well, it wouldn't have been any different. Well, it would have been. I am extremely, extremely tough on illegal immigration. I'm extremely tough on people coming into this country. I believe that if I were running things, I doubt those families would have - I doubt that those people would have been in the country. So there's a good chance that those people would not have been in our country.* Source: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=111177

Excerpt (10) is partially expressed using the conditional, a hypothetical as in '*If I were running*'. But more interesting is how he references himself and individuals who inform him: the proximal *I*, distal *somebody*, *those*, *those families*, and *those people*, all representative of how he does not identify with the referents. For instance, he redundantly employed *I* to indicate the action he would have taken, a hypothetical past, and to express information with a verb of volition in *I must tell you*, a direct speech act, almost a command. This latter opening conveys power and authority. He also employed a distal form *somebody* to refer to an informant. Then, he used the distal deictic expression of *those* in *people*, *those families*, etc. to refer to undocumented immigrants. In doing so, he polarized the audience, the outsiders versus the insiders, a strategy employed to garner audience support.

Topic: Jobs

Excerpt (11)

Trump: *We've lost our manufacturing jobs. We've lost our manufacturing. Millions and millions of jobs, thousands and thousands and thousands of plans, manufacturing plans, warehouses. I mean, we are losing so much. We can't let it happen.* Source: http://time.com/4245134/super-tuesday-donald-trump-victory-speech-transcript-full-text/

The above excerpt (11) contains redundant uses of the proximal and generic *we* to refer to the U.S., his audience, and himself with the purpose of increasing or describing an impressive scale of job losses. In other words, while he could have issued a passive voice construction as in *manufacturing jobs have been lost*, in using *we*, he identified with his audience by including himself as victim to the same job losses, a problem he has never faced. The co-occurrence of this generic form, the public, and himself together with redundant uses of lexical items such as *millions* and *thousands* also point to ways in which Trump strategically created massive appeal while at the same time indirectly he accused the system or current government, not himself, for the job losses.

5. Discussion

The aim of this study was to determine the use and functions of person deitic expressions used in Trump's public presentations. By using a mixed method approach, the study unveiled several significant aspects related to Trump's

discourse. In this summary, the research questions are addressed by first approaching the findings generated by the quantitative analyses then the qualitative analysis.

Of the ten public speeches examined, the topics that garnered the most attention were his campaign and opponents. Topics which received the least attention were: government, immigration, Asia-related, voters, republicans, healthcare, education, his family, jobs, Latin America and Mexico, democrats, drugs, women, and conservatives. The quantitative analysis yielded a correlation between the use of pronominal deitic expressions and the topics discussed. For instance, distal expressions were distributed throughout most topics while Trump issued more proximal *I* in campaign-related utterances.

The study uncovered an audience effect: Trump shifted pronominal deitic expressions and subject referents according to the audience he was addressing. For instance, proximal *I* was attested in debates. However, distal *you* was pervasively employed while addressing the press and in town halls. The generic all inclusive and proximal *we*, on the other hand, was found characteristic of victory speeches.

Another unexpected pattern was uncovered in Trump's speeches and presentations: He spoke in the present tense and issued utterances with the copula forms. The verb tense least employed in the corpora was the future. In other words, he did not speak referencing the future, future plans, future goals, etc.

The qualitative analysis yielded other significant findings. For instance, proximal *I* was attested in utterances related to a positive aspect of Trump's own performance such as being '*on top*', '*winning*', etc. The proximal *I* was also employed in speech acts which related to directives or to implicitly express a threat. On the other hand, the generic all-inclusive proximal *we* was issued in utterances that were related to success, movement, change, and to appeal to his audiences' emotions. A tendency to depict his opponents with other deictic expressions such as *that guy*, immigrants or terrorists with *those people*, and his opponents with *these people*, substantiate the persuasive tone and polarization he created among his audiences.

The qualitative analysis also revealed redundant uses of proximal *I* for self reference and shifts from *I* to *our* and *we* in sequential utterances. Trump employed these shifts to persuade his audience to embrace his opinion or attitude. In doing so, he was aiming to create unity with the use *we* but pitted his audience against an opponent, country, and policy by using *they*, *them*, and *those*, etc. instead of lexical or nominal subjects. Redundant uses of the proximal *we* to index unity were also found pervasive in his speeches, but these were found in victory-related speeches or in speeches when he wished to promote change and provide a sense of solidarity.

The use of the nominal *people* as a subject was also revealed in the qualitative analysis when addressing audiences such as in *you people, those people* and, the use of these expressions functioned to persuade his audiences to support what he was saying.

Interestingly, in expressing his opposition to issues related to education, for instance, we found that he employed *I* to position himself as the sole decision maker. But when he strategically referred to the stakeholders he chose to switch referents and issued statements using lexical subjects as in 'teachers', to garner the support of his audience and indicate that he had massive appeal and support from key stakeholders related to education.

 Finally, the possessive pronoun *your* was not only used to convey ownership. It was employed in an accusatory voice to convey victimization. For instance, when speaking to his audience about health insurance, he employed *your rates* and *your deductibles*, and avoided using *our*, another choice that distanced him from being party and subject to the same conditions as his audience. In other words, he did not identify with the populace.

While there were few instances in which he employed the future tense, he favored the use of the periphrastic future as opposed to the definite future. The option to employ the periphrastic *going to* semantically points to uncertainty and vagueness.

Although the study did not attend to the use of syntactic structures, the qualitative analysis attested to switches in structures (i.e., from active to passive voice) with the purpose of suppressing the use of overt subjects or to avoid naming opponents when issuing accusations or stating claims about policies he was against.

6. Conclusion

In using a CDA, the study was able to uncover the ways in which Trump's linguistic choices were used to appeal to audiences (e.g., to persuade, convince, manipulate), namely, to obtain a desired effect. In this section we discuss how Trump attempted to evoke solidarity, polarize his audience, and be non-committal.

Fetzer and Bull (2008) maintain that politicians employ personal pronouns to accept, deny, or distance themselves from responsibility and to encourage solidarity. They go further to suggest that pronominal shifts occur when

discussing political beliefs and personal roles. These shifts serve multiple functions: to downplay roles, personal criticism, to avoid awkward choices, among other reasons, a linguistic behavior that was evidenced in Trump's presentations.

But what do politicians generally talk about? Van Dijk (1997) stresses that campaigning politicians tend to speak about themselves as candidates, about the elections, about voters and policy promises. Van Dijk (1997) also posits that politicians tend to speak about their opponents and the policies they promise to support when elected. While Trump was not a career politician, his most favored topics were his opponents and campaign and, as expected, he self-referenced using several strategies. In sum, we unveiled an expected linguistic behavior from a non-politician.

But if we draw our attention to person deixis, there were instances of strategic manipulation in his presentations. For example, Sterling and Manderson (2011) have suggested that *I* by definition "refers to the current speaker and excludes reference to the current addressee" (1584). Strategic manipulation was attested in his shifts from distal to proximal deictic expressions depending not only on the context of a proposition but also in self promoting and advocating his decision-making prowess. Tannen (1989) has reported that speakers issue a variety of forms to convey interpersonal involvement or to exclude and insult others (Biber, 1988). In general, therefore, the choice between proximal and distal pronominal forms revealed Trump's attitudinal orientation toward the referent being invoked (Glover, 2000). Said differently, his use of pronominal deictic expressions also points to a powerful persuasive function (Zupnik, 1994). In essence, the findings here suggest the use of person deictic expression serve a polarizing function.

Regarding vague language, Channell (1994) posits that a proposition, word, or expression is vague if "a) it can be contrasted with another word or expression which appears to render the same proposition; b) it is purposefully vague; and c) its meaning arises from intrinsic uncertainty" (20). Trump's use of vague language (e.g., use of plurals, indefinite verb tenses) is also indicative of ways in which he avoided being straightforward and committal in his statements. In particular, we suggest here that the use of the present tense kept him safe and the lack thereof of definite future tense allowed him to avoid producing assertions or speech acts such as promises.

Finally, the Trump corpus examined here attested to the use of simple words, short sentences, redundant uses of first person *I*, multiple repetitions, and the use of colloquial language, all which represented strategies he employed in his presentations to gain the confidence of his audiences (Reyes, 2014; Wang, 2010).

Acknowledgements

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Notes

Note 1. This category represents individual topics such as "This has been an amazing evening." (Super Tuesday, 3/11/16) unrelated to the ones mentioned in table 1.

Note 2. This category represents individual topics such as "This has been an amazing evening." (Super Tuesday, 3/11/16) unrelated to the ones mentioned above.

Appendix

1.   Transcript of Donald Trump's December 30th Speech in Hilton Head South Carolina:

Date: 12/30/15

http://www.kansascity.com/news/local/news-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article55604115.html

2.   Republican Candidates Debate in Simi Valley, California

Date: 9/16/15

http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=110756

3.   Trump's Victory Speech after the South Carolina GOP Primary

Date: 2/27/16

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/02/20/transcript-donald-trumps-victory-speech-after-the-south-carolina-gop-primary/

4.   Republican Candidates Debate in Las Vegas, Nevada

Date: 12/15/15

http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=111177

5.   Donald Trump on "FOX News Sunday" with Chris Wallace

Date: 10/18/15

http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2015/10/18/full_replay_and_transcript_donald_trump_with_fncs_chris_wallace.html

6.   Super Tuesday Victory Speech

Date: 3/1/2016

http://time.com/4245134/super-tuesday-donald-trump-victory-speech-transcript-full-text/