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A Critical Analysis of Humor in the Speech of Donald Trump

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization

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Dedication

First of all, all praise is due to Allah almighty for His endless blessings, and for giving us strength and patience to fulfill this work.

We would like to dedicate our efforts on this dissertation to our beloved parents for always being with us. Without their prayers, love, and encouragement, we could have never reached this moment.

Special thanks go to our colleagues and friends. You are truly such an inspiration for us; we are proud of you, and we hope your light shines bright like the stars.

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Abstract

The current study aims at analyzing selected samples from Donald Trump's humorous speeches delivered in various contexts. It mainly focuses on the strategic and pragmatic functions used in his utterances. To achieve this objective, Gaines's theory (2007) is adopted for the strategic functions analysis, as Searl's (1976) illocutionary acts theory for the pragmatic analysis. The identification of strategic functions shows that Trump used the dispositional, topical, and personal functions in his speech. The analysis of the findings revealed that he overused the topical function to introduce an issue. Besides, the identification of illocutionary acts indicates the presence of representative acts, directive acts, commissive acts, expressive acts, and declarative acts. The interpretation of the results unveiled the dominance of expressive acts, which reflect Trump's psychological state while addressing the audience. The research concludes that the study of both rhetorical and pragmatic functions has made it easy to comprehend the messages in former President Donald Trump's speech. It is recommended that additional studies should be conducted to examine the impact of humor on political discussion. Furthermore, it is important to take into account the public's perspective regarding Trump's use of insulting sarcasm.

Keywords: Humorous Speech, Illocutionary Acts, Pragmatics, Speech Acts, Strategic Functions.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

n.d	No date
para	Paragraph
qtd	Quoted
UFC	Ultimate Fighting Championship
USA	The United States of America

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

At the outset, when Donald Trump announced his intention to run as a candidate for the U.S. presidency, the majority of Americans regarded him as an outcast intruder into the political arena. However, he was nominated as the first American president to win the elections despite having no political background. Plausibly, among the pivotal factors behind this win is the strong and distinctive oratory of Trump. He appears to have a unique manner of speech and use of language that has in many ways contributed to creating a brand for himself. In this regard, Sedensky (2017) points out that Trump is a new brand of political oratory that has never been recorded before and that is very distinct compared to what people have been expecting (as cited in Markman, 2018). One thing that stands out as an interesting and distinctive feature of Trump's speech is the extensive use of humor. As a rhetorical device, humor can be a two-edged sword. Accordingly, this dissertation carried out a critical analysis of the use of humor in the speeches of President Trump. It investigated the importance of humor as a rhetorical device and how it played a major role in consolidating Trump's presidential speeches and elaborating on his popularity and acceptability among the public.

2. Statement of the Problem

The approval of presidents by their people is closely related to the potency of their speeches. On this premise, President Trump has attempted to manifest his ability to govern and lead the U.S. through the adaptation of powerful yet humorous oratory. The use of humor has profoundly contributed to shaping the overall image of President Trump among the American population. The problem that raises here revolves around examining the implications of humorous speeches by Trump and its impact on his presidency and public perception.

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3. Research Questions

This research attempted to answer the following questions:

1-What are the strategic functions of rhetorical humor used by Trump in his speeches?

2-What are the pragmatic functions of using humor in Trump's speeches?

4. Aims of the Study

The current study aims at exploring the different aspects surrounding the use of humor as a rhetorical device. In addition, it aims at analyzing and evaluating the importance of using humor in Donald Trump's speeches.

5. Significance of the Study

This study provides an intelligible understanding of the impact of using humor in presidential rhetoric, specifically that of Donald Trump on his presidency and public perception. On this basis, the reader of the work is supplied with new lenses to explore Trump's language, ideology, and insights. Further, readers are acquainted with the major role that humor plays in promoting the interests of the public.

6. Research Methodology

The current work adopted both critical and analytical methods to investigate and evaluate the significance of the use of humor in Trump's rhetoric. Therefore, the study employed a qualitative thematic data analysis approach to analyze the data and answer the research questions. The data collection for this research was taken from Trump's humorous speeches: live and online (tweets). Live speeches delivered by Trump in real-time, typically in front of an audience. They are characterized by their immediacy. Online tweets are short messages or updates posted on social media platforms, particularly on Twitter. There were 24 speeches delivered in different situations in national and international affairs. The researchers use two theories to analyze the gathered data.

Graines's theory (2007) evaluates the strategic functions (dispositional, topical, and personal) utilized by Trump. The dispositional strategy examines whether his speeches were delivered to secure the attention of the audience, create a positive mood, or establish identification. The topical strategy is to check if he made light of an opposing argument, introduced an issue, or diverted the audience's attention away from an issue. The last strategy is personal, which demonstrates cleverness to win the admiration of the audience, deflect criticism, or attack an opponent while maintaining the esteem of the audience.

The second theory of Searl's (1976) illocutionary acts is used to find out the pragmatic functions employed by Trump. It includes the representative acts of speech which are the linguistic statements that aim to represent or convey information about the world as the speaker sees it. The directive acts are the expressions that intended to influence or direct the behavior of others. The commissive acts aim to commit the speaker to a future course of action. The expressive acts mean to convey the speaker's emotions, feelings, attitudes, or mental states. The declarative acts refer to expressions that convey information, assert facts, or make statements about the world.

7. Structure of the Study

The chapters of this dissertation are organized as follows: the first chapter provides an overview of humor in general and humor in presidential speeches. It also delineates its evolution, definition, types, forms, and theories. In addition, it deals with humor in politics, its functions, significance, and benefits. The second chapter is devoted to the critical analysis of Donald Trump's speeches (both live and online (tweets)) based on Gaines' (2007) theory of rhetoric and Searl's (1976) theory of speech acts.

CHAPTER ONE

An Overview of Humor in Presidential Speeches

Chapter One: An Overview of Humor in Presidential Speeches

Introduction

To better comprehend the effect of using humor as a rhetorical device in political speeches, the current chapter aims at exploring the concept of humor by giving a brief overview of the evolution and definition of the concept. Later, it illustrates several types and forms of humor. Moreover, the chapter highlights the implementation of humor in political oratory. It elaborates on the use of humor as a rhetorical device in political discourse. Finally, the chapter concludes by giving the possible merits and demerits of employing humor in rhetoric.

1.1. Humor: An Overview

1.1.1. Evolution of the Concept of Humor

Ruch (1998) has traced the derivation of "humor," which originally referred to mood (a meaning that still exists when we speak of someone being in good or poor humor) and afterward evolved into a connotation of wittiness, funniness, and laughter, albeit not always in a kindly sense. It was socially acceptable to laugh at unfortunate, handicapped, or mentally ill people until the end of the 17th century, and the exchange of hostile humorous remarks was a common form of engagement in fashionable society. Later, humanistic philosophers and moralists began to envision more socially desirable types of laughter and enjoyment. They appropriated the term "humor" and gave it a limited and specialized definition in order to identify these permissible manifestations of laughing.

Humor refers to a sympathetic, tolerant, and benign enjoyment of the defects of the world and the follies of human nature in general, as opposed to other laughter-related phenomena (e.g., wit, comedy, sarcasm, irony, satire, and mockery). Humor also means not taking oneself too seriously and being able to poke fun at oneself, coupled with a philosophical detachment in one's attitude toward life. Thus, humor was separated from other types of laughter, such as wit, which was perceived as more caustic, cutting, and harsh. Individuals who indulged in the benign, non-hostile, philosophical types of enjoyment contained in this updated definition of humor were regarded as refined and noble,

in contrast to those who engaged in crude joking, clever repartee, and laughter at the expense of others. By the Victorian era, a sense of humor (in this narrow sense) has become a virtue, alongside common sense, tolerance, and compromise (Vandal, 2002).

1.1.2. Definition of Humor

Human interaction involves a combination of complex utterances that naturally serve both intentional and unintentional purposes. Among these, people often participate in humorous speeches and behaviors. Humor represents an important aspect of everyday conversation and is an integral part of human communication.

There is no clear agreement among scholars on how to specifically define the concept of 'humor'. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, humor is "that quality of action, speech, or writing which excites amusement; comicality, oddity, facetiousness, jocularity, and fun" (p.123). It goes to say that humor is also "the faculty of perceiving what is ludicrous or amusing, or of expressing it in speech, writing, or other composition; jocose imagination or treatment of a subject"(The Oxford English Dictionary, n.d., p.123). Phillips (2004) defines humor as "a linguistic act on the part of a speaker that carries with it the intended effect of producing a state of amusement or mirth in the auditor" (p. 9). Otherwise stated, the aforementioned definition suggests that attempts to create humor are based on the speaker's intention and not on people's distinct physiological, psychological, and cognitive responses. In short, humor refers to anything that amuses people and makes them laugh, as well as the ability to perceive what is humorous about a certain situation or person. Therefore, anything that provokes laughter is to be considered humor (Gardner, as cited in Hidiati, 2018).

All these definitions demonstrate that humor is a broad term that refers to utterances or behaviors that can be perceived as funny or tend to make people laugh, and the mental processes

involved in both creating and perceiving such an amusing stimulus, in addition to the effective response involved in enjoying it.

1.1.3. Types of Humor

Many scholars believe that humor analysis should be founded on the presumption that humor can be broken down into several types. According to Berger (1976), there are four categories of humour: "language (verbal humor), logic (ideational humor), identity (humor relating to human existence), and action (physical or nonverbal humor)" (Pollio& Swanson, 1995, p.34). Berger (1976) developed these categories through an inductive analysis of humorous material.

Buijzen and Valkenburg (2004) employed a statistical analysis to look at the ways their methods grouped into higher-order categories. Seven humor categories were determined via several main component analyses for categorical variables, with six items that did not predominantly load into a category being placed into a miscellaneous group. The top-down approach used by Berger made sure that techniques were organized logically and philosophically (Buijzen & Valkenburg, as cited in Goldstein & McGhee, 1972).

Unlike the typology developed by Buijzen and Valkenburg, his initial typology does not include a miscellaneous group. This shows that, from the viewpoints of both the creator and the audience, a bottom-up method might classify humor approaches differently than how they would be organized logically. Because of this, researchers frequently employ and favor Berger's four theoretical categories (Juckel et al., 2016).

1.1.4. Forms of Humor

Humor is a subjective and varied component of human communication that can manifest itself in a variety of ways. It varies across nations, personalities, and situations. Here are some examples of popular types of humor:

1.1.4.1. Sarcasm

There is no clear and exact definition of sarcasm in linguistic and pragmatic theories. However, researchers have always considered verbal irony or sarcasm a pragmatic phenomenon. Sarcasm is often considered a special case of irony, which means if the insult is indirect, it is more positive than the direct insult (Al Anssari & Hadi, 2021). According to the Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.), sarcasm is "a way of using words that are the opposite of what you mean in order to be unpleasant or to criticize something in a humorous way" (n.d, FAQs).

Moreover, Creusere (1999) defines sarcastic utterances as utterances with positive literal meaning, negative intended meaning, and velar targets. Furthermore, according to a common theory, sarcasm is a type of verbal irony that includes, along with the other components of irony, a negative statement about some identified person. One distinguishing feature of verbal irony in general is that the ironic or sarcastic aim is not always obvious when conveyed out of context. For example, "nice hair" might be positive if spoken in the context of someone whose hair has just been nicely done but caustic if said in the context of someone who has just had a bad haircut (Campbell & Katz, 2012).

1.1.4.2. Irony

Irony refers to sarcastic language that has the opposite meaning; this satire aims to mock using utterances that have opposite literal meanings. The irony is expressed through subtle, sarcastic wording. The "parasite" feature of ironic satirical language is that these utterances are expressed under the disguise of other language forms, and the meaning obtained is opposite to the uttered words. In other words, irony refers to a term that has a meaning or function other than that provided in the word arrangement. The irony is sarcastic language with an opposing meaning; this satire seeks to criticize through the use of utterances with contrasting literal meanings. The irony is conveyed through caustic phrasing. The "parasite" property of ironic satirical language is that these utterances are disguised as other language forms, and the meaning acquired is opposed to the said words. The

term "irony" refers to a phrase that has a meaning or purpose that differs from that offered by the word arrangement (Ibrahim &Yucof, 2020).

1.1.4.3. Satire

Despite its growing prominence in modern studies, there is no unified, interdisciplinary definition of satire. It is defined as the use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or mockery to expose and condemn people's foolishness or vices, especially in the context of current politics and other hot topics. However, satire is not limited by its amusing conclusion, and one of its most essential elements is that it conveys criticism. In that sense, not only does the reception of satire depend on cultural norms and symbols, but satire also interprets and produces new ones. As a result, culture is not only ingrained in satire but also created by it (Oxford University Press, n.d.). Moreover, satire is the use of irony, sarcasm, mockery, or the like to expose, denounce, or mock evil, foolishness, or the like. Satire is a type of discourse in which vices or follies are mocked. Satire stresses the weak person more than the weak person's weakness (Singh, 2012).

Currently, satire is a highly effective artistic style for criticizing certain human behaviors. Different experts have described the unique characteristics of this structure in different ways. According to Fletcher (1987), an author of numerous critical volumes on satire, satire is "a verbal aggression in which some aspect of historical reality is exposed to ridicule" (p.62). Nonetheless, this is an extremely wide definition that includes disagreement and evident name-calling.

In recent years, several individuals have started to use the term "satire" to refer to any type of humor that involves ridicule, particularly of authority. Palmer (1990) indicates that "we throw the term 'satire' around rather generously these days, and it is a free upgrade when making simple fun of someone passes as satire" (p.17). His reasoning is valid: using the term "satire" to describe any work that includes jeering undermines the genre. As a result, satire is described as any item, whether literary, artistic, spoken, or otherwise presented that possesses certain characteristics, namely:

critique, irony, and satire. Firstly, satire is usually a critique of some aspect of human conduct, vice, or absurdity to influence the audience to reflect on it and, as a result, urge some type of societal change. Secondly, satire employs irony, sometimes in a hilarious manner, to highlight the flaws in the conduct being criticized. Lastly, satire is neither an overt declaration nor an express judgment; rather, the criticized conduct deconstructs itself inside the satirical work by being manifestly ludicrous, most commonly because it is exaggerated or removed from its regular context (Murphy, as cited in Le Beouf, 2007).

1.2. Humor Theories

The literature on humor and laughter customary distinguishes humor into three main theoretical traditions, focusing on, respectively, the superiority theory (Plato, Aristotle& Hobbes), the relief theory (Spencer& Freud), and the incongruity theory (Cicero, Kant, Schopenhauer & Kierkegaard). Each of these theories attempts to define, explain, and justify humor and how it is perceived and comprehended.

1.2.1. Incongruity Theory

Over the course of extensive research focused on humor, extending from earlier years to the present day, the incongruity theory is acquired a plethora of supporters who adhere to the belief that an understanding of incongruity is vital for comprehending the key mechanisms of humor. From this perspective, it is crucial to first identify precisely what is meant by the incongruity theory.

The concept of "incongruity theory" describes a collection of philosophical interpretations of humor that believe that the perception of incongruity is the source of enjoyment. This theory serves as one of the most prevalent explanations of amusement in the current discussion on the philosophy of humor. There are two interwoven ways in which incongruity theory works. On the one hand, it explains why individuals react to humor in a variety of circumstances. To put it simply, the incongruity theory explains why humans find certain things funny. On the other hand, it provides

explanations for the factors that cause a situation to be humorous in the first place. The flexibility in providing such explanations is one of the most appealing aspects of the theory (Straus, 2014).

In common parlance, the concept of 'incongruity theory' in humor studies refers to the viewpoint that incongruity is the idea that all those things that people find funny have to be somewhat unexpected, ambiguous, illogical, or inappropriate. In this view, Horace illustrates the significance of the techniques of incongruity in creating humor and provoking people's laughter. He implies that:

> If a painter chose to join a human head to the neck of a horse, and to spread feathers of many a hue over limbs picked up now here now there, so that what at the top is a lovely woman ends below in a black and ugly fish, could you, my friends, if favored with a private view, refrain from laughing? (Horace, as cited in Latta, 1999, p.451).

To conclude, the incongruity theory is among the first attempts of philosophers to give a plausible explanation of the nature of humor and how humor is understood. This explanation is founded on the presumption that humor occurs when unexpected behaviors or utterances are perceived as funny.

1.2.2. Relief Theory: Tension Release Theory

The Relief Theory is a hydraulic theory in which laughter performs the same function in the nervous system as a pressure-relief valve in a steam boiler. The notion was outlined in Lord Shaftesbury's 1709 work, "An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humor," the first publication in which humor was used in the contemporary sense of amusement. Scientists at the time recognized that nerves connect the brain to the sense organs and muscles, but they believed that nerves conveyed "animal spirits"-gases and liquids like air and blood. As the neural system became more known over the following two centuries, philosophers such as Herbert Spencer and Sigmund Freud reinterpreted the biology underlying the Relief Theory while maintaining the premise that laughing relieves pent-up nervous energy (Morreal, 2023).

To define humor, relief theories use tension release. According to the theory, laughter functions as a homeostatic mechanism that decreases psychological stress. Hence, humor could, for instance, help to ease the feelings of stress carried on by one's worries. Moreover, instead of defining humor, relief theories go into the psychological mechanisms and fundamental components that underlie laughter. Herbert Spencer and Sigmund Freud are the two most notable proponents of the relief theory. In their view, two variations of the relief theory are taken into account: a strong and a weak version. The strong version maintains that all laughter is the consequence of an excess of energy being released. The weak version contends that amusing laughter frequently includes an excess of tension or energy being released. Despite the fact that Freud provides a more detailed explanation of the energy transfer mechanism, the procedure he describes is not necessary for the main points of the relief theory of humor (Morreall, 2011).

1.2.3. Superiority Theory

The superiority theory proposes the premise that when people laugh at other people's misfortunes, it demonstrates a sense of superiority. The idea is supported in the writings of Plato, Aristotle, and Hobbes. According to Plato, humor is a form of malice directed towards those who are seen as being comparatively powerless. Hobbes goes on to say that people are constantly competing with one another, seeking faults in others. Therefore, he views mirth as a sign of "sudden glory," or the sudden realization that we are superior to others (Lintot, 2016).

Despite the fact that, in the 21st century, this theory seems to have some outdated beliefs, it was developed by Gruner as the superiority theory of humor. His theory has three main tenets. There is always a winner and a loser in humorous situations, a humorous situation is never free from incongruity, and a sense of surprise is always necessary for humor. In other words, this theory holds the premise of superiority as its foundation stone. Moreover, the notion that every act of humor has both a winner and a loser is a matter of human nature; therefore, humor has been constantly used to

compete with others, making them the subject of their amusing quip. The "winner" is the one who effectively mocks the "loser" (Gruner, cited in Mulder &Nijholt, 2002).

1.3.Humor in Politics

Politics and humor, two seemingly unconnected topics, are social functions that have elements of each other. Similar to marriage, politics is predicated on compromise and give and take. Politics, like a relationship, is the art of possibility. For a political person to succeed in the world of politics, they must be flexible in their thinking. The two concepts of humor and politics rely on adaptable thinking. The statement of a stance is one aspect of politics. A politician must be adaptable in order to ensure their continued political viability. They must be able to articulate their opinions while also being willing to modify them in response to changing circumstances. Humor may also be used to communicate a point of view (Coronel etal., 2020).

According to Tsakona and Popa (2006), everyone is political in the sense that they have opinions that they want to persuade others to share. Humor is a kind of expression in which a person generates humor or responds to an amusing situation with laughter, expressing an attitude toward the topic of the joke or towards the person reacting to the humor. In this way, comedy is political, and just as politics deals with all aspects of life, humor can be found anywhere, even in politics. Political comedy is occasionally used to criticize politics. The politics of comedy disrupts the political status quo and enhances the principles and prominent characteristics of politics.

Every manifestation of humor, regardless of its substance, has an element of criticism, implying that the humorist or the person laughing in reaction to the humor is expressing a viewpoint on the subject of the comedy. At its core, humor is not violent, and even when it is, the aggression is hidden or tempered by the humoristic framework that surrounds the text's contents. The criticism stated in comedy is such that, despite it, the regular relations of the person receiving the humor, as

well as the object of the humor, are safeguarded. A political perspective and humor take into account the social context in which they are presented and received (Davis et al., 2018).

1.3.1. Humor as a Rhetorical Device

Humor and rhetoric have a variety of profound and significant relationships because humor is a rhetorical enterprise that is susceptible to and enlightened by the principles of classical rhetoric that helped guide the orations of ancient rhetoricians. Humor, like rhetoric, is a persuasive art form. One cannot compel an audience to laugh; one must persuade an audience to laugh.

The implementation of humor as a rhetorical and pedagogical device by a classical rhetoric specialist should come as no surprise. Although Plato, whose literary persona Socrates opposes when Polus refutes an argument by attempting "to laugh it down, rather than disproving it," has a long history as a rhetorical tactic (and Plato himself employed it to excellent effect), Gorgias of Leontini, whom Aristotle cites as stating "the orator should defeat his opponents' seriousness with laughter, and their laughter with seriousness" (Gran, as cited in Scherwood, n.d., p.45), is the oldest documented remark regarding the use of wit. However, some more contemporary thinkers, such as John Locke and John Quincey Adams, reflect Plato's evident disdain for comedy, arguing that wit plays no important part in "serious" conversation (Adams qtd. In Scherwood, n.d.).

Moreover, one of the many characteristics that distinguish humor as an essential rhetorical technique is its capacity to deliver the most humanitarian and suitable answer to a particular rhetorical circumstance-a response that may achieve agreement without rancor or violence. The type of wit that acts as a successful instrument of persuasion is not prepared but rather emerges from specific rhetorical circumstances. The demands and emotions of the audience members-their tolerance of humor and desire to engage in it-will frequently determine its efficacy (Sherwood, n.d.).

To sum up, humor is a rhetorical device that is regulated and shaped by many of the same classical rhetorical principles that govern and inform other persuasive discourse. Such a device offers insights into the humorous techniques adopted by the speaker to persuade the audience.

1.3.2. Political Discourse

Politics may be found in every aspect of modern life, including education, health care, and employment. It is hard to ignore its pervasiveness in people's daily lives. To say the least, people are constantly faced with political news, speeches, lobbying, campaigns, etc. and are asked to determine which political views they would support. Politicians, being the primary players in the realm of politics, serve as the primary medium for developing and spreading political discourse. This is especially true when they are enacting legislation, making judgments, negotiating and signing treaties, campaigning, issuing press releases, and so on. Aside from political shrewdness and resolve, their principal instrument of commerce is verbosity (Partington, as cited in Neshkovska & Trajkova, 2020).

Persuading the electorate is important to politicians' responsibilities, along with their rhetoric. Politicians believe that hearers, viewers, and readers must be persuaded to embrace a certain ideological perspective; they must support their acts while rejecting those of their political opponents. This is especially vital during election campaigns, when gaining the trust of residents and, consequently, their votes is critical. To achieve that aim, their speech takes on a very distinct binary character. On the one hand, they aim to depict themselves and their positions positively, while on the other, they try to frame their political opponents badly. Furthermore, politicians use a variety of language techniques, such as carefully chosen lexis or numerous figures of speech, such as metaphors, metonymy, and verbal irony (Neshkovska & Trajkova, 2020).

1.3.2.1. Humor in Political Speeches

The use of humor in political speech had not been substantially examined until lately, despite the fact that this trend has always played a significant part in it. One of the primary social roles of humor is to distract people from an unpleasant reality, in order to diminish censorship, fear of authority, and prohibitions.

In his attempts to give a plausible explanation for political humor, Schutz (1977) describes it as "the political sport of comic insults". He asserts that" political humor is like sports in general, a kind of mock warfare"(as cited in Sorenson, p.31). Such sport, according to Schutz, aims to provide both a redirection of political tensions and a socially acceptable outlet for individual aggressions. Politicians' use of humor as both a sport and mock combat is very proper; politics, like sports and warfare, is typically a fight between sides, with winners and losers. Furthermore, just as both sports and war may be won by adhering to techniques that are appropriate for the contexts in which they are used, political comedy is an art that can be applied to a wide range of situations to achieve an equally wide range of desired outcomes (Schuts, as cited in Sorenson, p. 31).

Political humor was treated differently in society, according to American experts. On the one hand, humor is both a stress reliever and a source of enjoyment. On the other side, it can have a negative impact, such as providing misleading information, causing confusion, and masking issues. This created a conflict of interest in the American political arena: intentionally infusing humor into political discourse vs. rejecting it. By contrast, British academics discussed the growing importance of humor in contemporary society. They contend that humor is considerably more crucial to maintaining social life than social theorists frequently give it credit for. Humor is becoming more and more popular as a linguistic phenomenon. Recently, many academic works devoted to the study of humor have arisen, which marked the start of a technique for investigating and analyzing humor (Lewis, as cited in Gornostaeva & Semenovskaya, 2020).

Apart from relieving stress, political humor creates a pleasant environment for the interlocutors, reduces vertical distance, and assists the author in delivering his or her message to the

audience. Humor contributes to improving the impression of the speaker on the audience, making a politician's speech bright, appealing, and captivating. It is usually an effective technique for influencing people during pre-election campaigns, building ties, and defusing aggression. Moreover, when people seek to release stress and discomfort, express their wrath, and strengthen the boundaries between in- and out-group members, they frequently resort to humor in their speech (Bilig, 2005).

In a nutshell, the use of humor is an omnipresent phenomenon within the political arena that gained a place as a main element of presidential speeches throughout history. This fact is due to the great influence it offers on people.

1.3.2.1.1. The Significance of a Successful Speech for Presidents

Speeches play a vital role in the political realm, serving as a powerful tool for politicians to communicate their ideas, influence public opinion, and rally support for their causes. The importance of speeches for politicians can be understood through several key aspects, such as shaping public opinion, advocating policies, communicating, promoting diplomacy and international affairs, and mobilizing support.

A cornerstone of American political literature is the belief that speeches are essential to the modern president's governing approach. Primarily, presidents use speeches when speaking to the public during times of inter-national or domestic warfare, introducing foreign heads of state and winning sports teams to the White House, and communicating their policy preferences to legislators and bureaucrats, etc. (Kernell, as cited in Eshbaugh, 2014).

Since the 1960s, the number of presidential speeches has significantly risen, with some claiming that the divided and gridlocked Congresses compelled presidents to rely on public support and the "permanent campaign" rather than private negotiations with legislators to pass legislation. Moreover, Congress consolidated and united, and mounting data suggested that speeches have a significant impact on public opinion. Presidents have continued to depend on speeches as a tool for

governance. In sum, speeches have frequently improved a president's standing in Congress while having a profound effect on the national and domestic policy agenda (Edwards and Wood, as cited in Eshbaugh-Soha, 2014).

In summary, speeches are vital for politicians as they provide a platform for effective communication, allow for the shaping of public opinion, help define a politician's image and brand, mobilize support, advocate for policies, and play a crucial role in diplomacy and international relations. A well-delivered speech can be a catalyst for change, propelling a politician's agenda forward and leaving a lasting impact on both domestic and global affairs.

1.3.2.2. Benefits of Political Humor in Presidential Speeches

A sense of humor is usually seen as a very desirable and virtuous personality trait in modern Western culture. Politicians with a stronger sense of humor are regarded as being better able to handle stress, get along with others, and have better mental and even physical health. Numerous studies back up the idea that politicians might benefit from humor in public speeches. In a presidential speech, humor may help a candidate make their point more impactful by increasing their audience's persuasiveness, likeability, and credibility toward them.

1.3.2.2.1. Credibility

In his 1967 research, Gruner (1967) investigated the effects of humor in informative lectures on speaker ethos and information memory. The indicators of authority, curiosity, information retention, character, and seriousness were evaluated after witnessing a speaker deliver a lighthearted and serious speech. According to the manipulation check, serious speech was deemed serious and amusing speech was judged to be amusing. The study also discovered that the speaker who used comedy received a character rating that was much higher than the speaker who delivered a speech with serious content. Humor in discussions is therefore beneficial since it makes speakers look more believable to viewers.

1.3.2.2.2. Persuasiveness

Humor in rhetorical speeches can they discovered that humor may be disarming to audiences but can be persuading for them. Participants were shown both serious and humorous versions of a hair care product's advertising. The study found that humor boosted attention given to the commercial, improved commercial liking, decreased commercial irritability, and increased product liking. Additionally, they discovered that the humor directly contributed to the message being more compelling to an audience by reducing audience members' objections to the message. These results imply that audiences are more likely to pay attention to and like what politicians have to say when they employ humor in their speeches. All of these results might be extremely advantageous (Duncan, 1982).

Furthermore, the findings of a study conducted by Goodchild (1959) support the idea that humor might serve as a powerful persuasion tool. His study compared the influence and popularity of "sarcastic humor," such as mockery, satire, and irony, and "clowning humor," such as whimsical humor and frivolous humor, on audiences. According to his research, sarcastic humor may not be favored by the audience, but its impact is "unusually influential". This was in contrast to clown humor, which was popular with crowds but wasn't particularly effective. In addition, humor techniques like satire, mockery, sarcasm, and irony can be amusing, but they can also be used to indirectly influence people's opinions about a certain individual, group, or situation.

1.3.2.2.3. Promoting Social Communication

Researchers have investigated the social function of humor as a means of communication, especially in group settings. It is shown that humor is a socially facilitated phenomenon; that is, people are more likely to laugh when they are with others. Many academics contend that humor itself, as opposed to laughing, supports a variety of communicative roles. Others have advised greater care, despite the fact that many have received nothing but unqualified acclaim for their use of comedy.

Martineau (1972), for instance, said that humor may be used as both a "lubricant" and an "abrasive" in social contact. Humor serves as a lubricant to start social engagement and to maintain a flow in conversations. As a kind of social control, humor may be used to indicate support or disapproval of activities, particularly infractions of group standards. Humor may be used to manage behavior as well as reinforce social norms and values by making an example of incorrect behavior delightful. Moreover, he found that some joking was used to discipline individuals, both formally and informally, and that joking was employed to control tension caused by competitiveness among employees (Markiewicz, 1974).

1.3.2.3.Failed Humor and its Effects

Humor in casual conversation usually relies on shared background, culture, knowledge, or morals between the speaker and his audience. However, on some occasions, some humoristic utterances withstand failure for multiple reasons.

Humor, according to Attardo, "fails because communication fails, and [communication] fails because systems powerful enough to express what humans need to express cannot be failsafe, i.e., they must rely on input from speakers or hearers"(as cited in Hale, 2018, p.38). In other words, examine what happens in the two-way process of miscommunication humor to determine where the breakdown occurs. It may appear that Attardo is referring to a semantic-structural communicative (or literacy) problem, but the concept of "input" from participants opens up this equation to any communication issue, including attitudinal, ideological, and other discursive variables between participants. Given the immensely individualistic and diverse character of human personalities, we might question whether humor works at all at times (Hale, 2018).

In conclusion, scholars have paid little attention to failed humor as opposed to successful humor because it is widely recognized to disrupt the natural flow of amusing conversation, frequently

leading to communication breakdowns and/or other unpleasant consequences such as inadequate or rude rejoinders, silence, or straining relationships.

Conclusion

Humor can be briefly defined as a natural human phenomenon that serves as a tool to amuse people. It includes several forms such as sarcasm, mockery, ridicule, irony, and so on. According to theories of humor, a sense of humor is viewed from three main perspectives. The incongruity theory, sees that humor is only perceived when people meet unexpected behaviors or actions. The relief or tension release theory, humor and laughter are regarded as a sort of relaxation technique. The superiority theory, considers that humor contains a sense of superiority since there is always a kind of competition between people, with one seeking out the faults of others to mock them. With regard to political discourse, humor has always been utilized as a rhetorical device. The effect of using humor in political oratory is profound when delivering a successful humorous speech. However, in the event of failure, humor can cause massive damage to the speaker.

CHAPTER TWO

Analysis of Humor in Trump's Speeches

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Analysis of Humor in Trump's Speeches

Introduction

The second chapter is devoted to the analysis of Trump's humorous speeches. It is divided into two sections. The first section deals with the rhetorical analysis based on the theory of Gaines (2007), whereas the second section is concerned with the pragmatic analysis drawn upon Searl's (1976) theory of speech acts. The selected samples of speech were live and online (tweets) delivered by Trump on various occasions. These humorous stances and utterances addressing both national and international concerns are critically analyzed, explained, and discussed.

2.1 Rhetorical Analysis of Trump's Humor Speeches

This section deals with the rhetorical analysis of the humorous speeches delivered by former president Trump. In this kind of analysis, we adopted the model of Gaines (2007) which involves examining three different strategies (dispositional, topical, and personal) so as to check whether or not Trump effectively conveyed his messages, engaged the audience, and achieved his goals.

2.1.1 Gaines's (2007) Model

In the field of rhetoric, there are many theories suggested to analyze both speaker's and author's utterances. Graines's theory was first developed in 2007as a result of her PhD project entitled 'A communicative Theory of Leadership Practice'. This framework relies on three strategies which are presented later.

2.1.1.1 Dispositional

Using the dispositional strategy for analyzing the speaker's utterances helps the analyst examine and evaluate that speaker's disposition towards the topic being discussed and the effect of his/ her disposition on the listener's understanding and perception of the speech (Gaines, 2007).For instance, In June 2017, Trump mocked MSNBC celebrities Mika

Brzezinski and Joe Scarborough on Twitter, calling Brzezinski "crazy" (Trump, 2017). In this tweet, Trump shows a negative disposition towards this woman, and he intends to belittle and ridicule her. The use of the adjective "crazy" specifically reflects his desire to draw readers' attention as well as to attack her position and reputation. In general, the term"crazy" reveals a derogatory tone and a lack of respect for Brzezinski.

Other times, both before and during his presidential campaign, Trump openly attacked women's appearance. Before entering politics, he frequently rated female guests on Howard Stern's radio show from 1997 until 2008 while during the campaign; he appeared to mock then-competitor Carly Fiorina, telling Rolling Stone, "Look at that face! Would anyone vote for that? Can you imagine that, the face of our next president?!" (CNNGuardian, 2015). In this case, Trump's statement can be seen as an example of mocking or belittling his then-competitor, Carly Fiorina, based on her physical appearance. By drawing attention to her face and questioning whether anyone would vote for her based on it, Trump follows the strategy of using personality traits to undermine his opponent.

Trump afterward claimed he was referring to her attitude rather than her physical looks. However, Fiorina made it obvious during the following debate that she was not buying it, saying frankly:"Women all over this country heard very clearly what Mr. Trump said" (CNN Guardian, 2015). It could be noted that Trump's subsequent claim that he was referring to Fiorina's attitude rather than her physical looks was an attempt to reduce the negative perception of his remarks. Conversely, Fiorina's response indicates that she interpreted his comments as an attack on her physical appearance.

Trump's perception of women is overshadowed by men's dominance and superiority. This is evident through the constant humiliating mockery and sarcasm directed at various women. This humiliation is not stopped at giving them silly nicknames and calling them the worst titles but is extended to describing them as animals and dehumanizing them under the name of sarcasm.

Regarding Trump's humorous stances during the Covid19 pandemic, he repeatedly referred to the pandemic as the "China virus", "Chinese virus", or "China's corona-virus". In addition, at a campaign rally in Arizona, during a speech delivered to the students of the Republican group Turning Point Action, Trump was ironically recounting the various names he had heard for the virus, he used the phrase "Kung flu" to pin the blame for the spread of the virus on the Chinese government, prompting laughs and roars from the crowd (Itkowitz, 2020). Trump uses such terms as a reflection of his attitudes and beliefs toward the Chinese government. He also intends to point out the source of the virus. These terms imply derogatory and offensive language as he associates the virus with a specific ethnicity or culture. This type of language can create stereotypes and lead to the stigmatization of certain groups of people (Chinese people in general and Kung ones specifically).

Concerning Trump's tweet storms with the North Korean president, he tweeted: "Why would Kim Jong-Un insult me by calling me "old", when I would NEVER call him "short and fat?"(Ward, 2017). This tweet question demonstrates Trump's response to being called"old" by KimJong-Un. He retaliates by stating that he would never call Kim "short and fat".

Thirty minutes before the aforementioned tweet, Trump tweeted expressing his desire to improve ties with North Korea and build friendships with Kim Jong Un. He claimed that the two countries are better off as allies than enemies. This initiative was welcomed by many experts. However, many others refuted Trump calling Jong Un "short and fat", considering it an insult instead of an act of humor, which can do more damage than it can repair (Ward, 2017). From a dispositional perspective, we could interpret Trump's behavior as a reflection of his tendency to respond defensively and engage in personal attacks when feeling insulted or challenged. This may align with his known personality traits or dispositions, which have been observed in various contexts throughout his public life.

2.1.1.2 Topical

As its name indicates, it focuses on the content and structure of the speech. Thus, it requires analyzing the use of rhetorical devices, reasoning, organization, and evidence (Gaines, 2007).In the speech, where Trump described Congresswoman Maxine Waters, as having a "low I.Q" (Trump, 2017), he makes a judgment about her intelligence or mental state based on his personal opinion. Such comments are considered derogatory, disrespectful, and unproductive.

In a speech to lobbyists and donors, President Trump mocked Mexican immigrants as a "horde of beefy men" who invented hard-luck stories so that softies in the immigration system would allow them in the US (Woodward & Yen, 2019). In this situation, Trump reportedly made derogatory comments about Mexican immigrants, referring to them as a "horde of beefymen" who invented hard-luck stories to exploit the immigration system. Here, he intended to introduce the issue of Mexican immigrants using mockery language.

Trump mimicked the U.S. officials' easygoing attitude, saying, "Oh, give him asylum. He's afraid. He's afraid. And he adds, we don't love the fact that he's got tattoos on his face. That's not a good sign" (Woodward & Yen, 2019). Consequently, this act provoked loud laughter among numerous attendees at the Republican Jewish Coalition gathering. This statement showcases elements of humor, irony, and potentially a form of political satire. Trump's use of mimicry and sarcastic remarks aimed at the U.S. officials' attitude towards granting asylum may be seen as an attempt to criticize their leniency or perceived lack of scrutiny. The mention of tattoos on the person's face adds an element of stereotyping or judgment based on appearance.

During a speech to a group of farmers in New Orleans, Trump mocked immigrants who adhered to the rules. Trump was frequently heightened his efforts to stigmatize illegal

immigrants as part of his sales pitch for his "border wall". In describing Mexican migrants, he said:

> They go into our country, and then you announce -these are the laws- then you say: come back in three years for your trial…Tell me what percentage of people come back. Would you say a hundred percent? No, you're a little off. How about two percents?.And those people you almost don't want, because they cannot be very smart. Two percents. Two percents. Two percents come back! Those two percents are not going to make America great again, that I can tell you. (Rupar, 2019, para. 3)

The statement made by Trump regarding Mexican migrants seems to employ a generalization or stereotyping. He emphasizes the low percentage of migrants who return for their trial, suggesting that they lack intelligence and insinuating that they are not contributing to making America great again. This strategy involves making broad generalizations about a group based on limited or biased information, which can be misleading and promote negative stereotypes. He also uses exaggerated language and repetition ("Two percents. Two percents. Two percents come back!") to convey strong emotions and reinforce his opposing opinion about Mexican migrants.

As an example of Trump's use of humor during the pandemic, he commented on a presentation presented by Bill Bryan, saying that: "As you see, it gets in the lungs, it does a tremendous number on the lungs, so it would be interesting to check that" (Clerck, 2020, Full coverage of the corona virus outbreak).In this case, Trump is expressing his interest in further examining and analyzing the impact of the corona-virus on the lungs, based on the information presented by Bill Byran.

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The comment was widely condemned by medical experts and politicians as dangerous and irresponsible; however, Trump later justified his statement by claiming that he was being sarcastic. Trump also made light of the pandemic at times, often downplaying the severity of the crisis or mocking those who were taking it seriously (Clerck, 2020). It appears that Trump's statements and actions regarding the pandemic can be categorized as a combination of minimization and mockery. Minimization involves downplaying the seriousness of the crisis, while mockery involves making light of the situation or ridiculing those who express concern. Both strategies can be seen as problematic when it comes to addressing a public health emergency.

To avoid discrimination or stigmatization, the World Health Organization advised avoiding using any terminology that relates the COVID-19 virus to China or the city of Wuhan. Ignoring all of its terms, on March 16th, 2020, he tweeted: "The United States will be powerfully supporting those industries, like airlines and others, that are particularly affected by the Chinese virus." We will be stronger than ever before!"(Kuo, 2020, Trending News). In this context, by using the term 'Chinese virus', Trump associated the virus with China, specifically naming the country in connection with the pandemic. This labeling strategy has the potential to create a link between the virus and a specific geographic location, which can to stigmatization and discrimination against people of Chinese descent or those perceived to be from China.

In an attempt to stigmatize his rival in the 2020 presidential election, Trump attempted to speak about the rumors surrounding Biden as a man who consistently harasses women through unwanted intimate attrition. According to Rmpton (2019), he told his audience that he wanted to kiss a general he met in Iraq who pledged an end to a war against Islamic State extremists in Syria as soon as possible. He said, "I said, 'general: come here and give me a kiss'. I felt like Joe Biden" (para. 6).

In this statement, Trump used negative campaigning or mudslinging. He attempts to stigmatize his rival, Biden, by insinuating that he consistently harasses women through unwanted intimate attention, by referencing an incident where he requested a kiss from a general, Trumps draws a parallel between his behavior and what he portrays as Biden's inappropriate conduct. This strategy aims to create a negative perception of Biden's character among the audience. By associating Biden with allegations of harassment, Trump seeks to undermine his credibility and appeal to voters' concerns about moral integrity.

Even after the elections, the dispute between President Trump and Hillary Clinton was not over. For instance, during a dispute about illegal immigration, Donald Trump hit back at his presidential rival, Hillary Clinton, who suggested in a speech that he was mistaken about Germany's crime rate. As a person who does not accept criticism, Trump mocked himself in front of a wide crowd, saying, "I heard somebody say that Crooked Hillary Clinton was questioning that statistic. She said; it is not true. It's not true. Didn't she already have her chance?" (Alba, 2016, para. 5).

Trump used the term 'crooked' to describe Clinton, his political opponent in the 2016 presidential election. This expression is a kind of personal attack and it is a form of negative campaigning that aims to discredit the opponent by assigning negative labels or attributes to her. By using this term, he tries to portray Clinton as untrustworthy, dishonest, or corrupt. This strategy seeks to undermine her credibility and paint a negative image of her character in the minds of the audience.

Donald Trump spoke with Tucker Carlson of Fox News Channel in an interview about U.S. foreign policy. When questioned about French President, Emmanuel Macron's, visit to China during which he sought to urge Chinese President Xi to use his influence to persuade Russia to pursue a peace agreement with Ukraine, Trump made fun of his French rival. He said: "You got this crazy world that's blowing up and the United States has absolutely no say

and Macron, who's a friend of mine, is over with China kissing his a**. In China, I said France is now going to China?" (Schwab, 2023, para. 5).

In this instance, Trump employs sarcasm to belittle Macron, the French president, for his visit to China and his efforts to discuss important international matters. By using the phrase "kissing" his a**, Trump suggests that Macron is behaving subserviently or excessively flattering toward China. The sarcastic tone undermines Macron's actions and seeks to portray him as weak or ineffective in dealing with global affairs. Furthermore, by expressing surprise with the rhetorical question,"I said France is now going to China?"Trump implies that Macron's decision to engage with China on matters related to Russia and Ukraine is unexpected or inappropriate.

Later in the same year, during the Paris Climate Agreement summit, Trump took other sarcastic tweets at Macron in response to France's problems with violent protests over fuel taxes, where French police used fire and tear gas. At the beginning of the protests, he tweeted, "The Paris Agreement is fatally flawed because it raises the price of energy for responsible countries while whitewashing some of the worst polluters", said Trump (Reuters Staff, 2018, para. 3).

In this tweet, Trump uses sarcasm to criticize the effectiveness of the Paris Agreement by suggesting that it is not working well for Paris itself, given the unrest and protests happening in the city. By linking the protests to the agreement, Trump implies that the dissatisfaction expressed by the demonstrators is a result of the policies and regulations associated with the climate accord. Moreover, Trump tries to discredit Macron's leadership and portray him as ineffective in addressing the concerns of the French people.

2.1.1.3 Personal

Personal strategies are very important in understanding the speaker's characteristics such as background, experiences, values, and biases, and the impact of these personal attributes on his/ her speech (Gaines, 2007).For instance, Trump mocked MSNBC celebrities Mika Brzezinski and Joe Scarborough on Twitter, alleging she was "bleeding badly from a face-lift" (Trump, 2017) a few months prior. That was hardly his first jab at Brzezinski. In three tweets over five days in August 2016, he labeled her "off the wall, a neurotic and not very bright mess", "very insecure", and "crazy" (Trump, 2016).

Trump used a series of derogatory and insulting remarks to attack Brzezinski's character and appearance. By calling her 'crazy', 'off the wall', and 'neurotic', Trump used derogatory language to undermine her credibility and mental stability. These adjectives are aimed at discrediting her opinions and portraying her as unreliable or irrational. Additionally, Trump's comment about Brzezinski allegedly 'bleeding badly from a face-lift' is a personal attack that crosses the line of acceptable discourse. This remark not only attacks her appearance but also attempts to degrade her by referencing a private medical procedure. By consistently using derogatory language and personal attacks towards Brzezinski, Trump sought to diminish her professional reputation and credibility. This strategy of attacking an individual's character rather than engaging with their ideas is a common tactic in personal-focused rhetoric.

In another context, Trump described asylum seekers as:"People that look like they should be fighting for the UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship). They read a little page given by lawyers that are all over the place, coaching them to say, I am very fearful for my life. I am very worried that I will be accosted if I'm sent back home" (Woodward & Yen, 2019, para. 4). In this statement, Trump made a generalization based on the asylum seekers' appearance and portrayed them in a negative light. By saying, "People that look like they

should be fighting for the UFC", he is implying that asylum seekers have a physical appearance associated with combat sports, which can be seen as an attempt to dehumanize and stereotype them.

Additionally, Trumps suggests that asylum seekers are coached by lawyers to use specific phrases when presenting their case, stating, "They read a little page given by lawyers that are all over the place, coaching them to say, 'I am very fearful for my life. I am very worried that I will be accosted if I'm sent back home'. This insinuation implies that asylum seekers are being dishonest or coached to manipulate the asylum process, undermining the credibility and validity of their claims. Furthermore, Trump attempts to create a negative perception of asylum seekers, framing them as deceitful individuals who exploit the legal system. Such rhetoric may contribute to biased views and misconceptions about the motivations and experiences of those seeking asylum.

One example of Trump's use of humor during the pandemic was his suggestion during a press briefing in April 2020 that people could potentially be treated for COVID-19 by injecting disinfectants into their bodies. In commenting on a presentation presented by Bill Bryan, leader of the Department of Homeland Security's science and technology division, Trump suggested: "I see the disinfectant that knocks it out in a minute, one minute. And is there a way we can do something like that by injection inside or almost a cleaning?" (Clark, 2020).

In this case, it seems that Trump used rhetorical questions and exaggerated language to make a point or provoke a reaction. By suggesting the idea of injecting disinfectants, he may have been trying to explore alternative methods of fighting the virus. However, it is crucial to emphasize that his suggestion was not grounded in scientific evidence and was widely criticized by medical professionals.

Throughout the pandemic, Trump repeatedly mocked wearing masks. For instance, on a national debate platform in front of 73 million viewers, he made fun of Democratic candidate Joe Biden for wearing one. He bragged in front of big masses of followers at his outdoor rallies, many of whom were not wearing masks, saying, "I don't wear masks like him. Every time you see him, he's wearing a mask. He could be speaking 200 feet away from it, and he shows up with the biggest mask I've seen"(Cathey, 2020, para. 2).

Trump's approach to mask-wearing differed from that of other public figures and health professionals. His repeated mocking of mask-wearing may have influenced some of his supporters to downplay the importance of masks in preventing the spread of COVID-19. From a communicative standpoint, Trump used his platform during debates and rallies to express his views on mask-wearing. However, his mocking of Joe Biden's mask usage and comments about wearing masks himself may have sent mixed messages to the public, undermining the consistent messaging promoted by public health professionals.

Trump, who is only three years younger than Biden, frequently criticized him as "slow", and "sleepy" (Trump, 2015). In this context, Trump's choice of words may have been aimed at questioning Biden's mental acuity and overall fitness for the role of president. In addition, he mocked Clinton, for tripping during a 9/11 commemoration after being sick with pneumonia. Mocking her ability to lead the U.S., Trump stated "She is supposed to fight all these different things, and she cannot make it 15 feet to her car"(CNN, 2016). This statement implies that Trump was questioning Clinton's ability to handle the challenges and responsibilities of the presidency if she struggled with a short physical distance. In the same period, he referred to her "she is such a nasty woman"(CNN, 2016). This remark was seen as derogatory and disrespectful. It is a kind of personal attack so as to gain an advantage.

Regarding Trump's tweet storms with Kim, Trump referred to him as a "little rocket man" and a "madman"(BBC, 2019). In response to this, Kim answered by labeling Trump a

"dotard". Apparently, "dotard" is how the Korean Central News Agency, North Korea's state-run media organization, translates the Korean word for "old lunatic". According to NBC News, this is North Korea's second use of it. The first instance was when Kim himself declared that he "will surely tame the mentally deranged US dotard with fire" (Helsel, 2017, para. 2). It is clear that both presidents use derogatory and disrespectful language which does not reflect the values of constructive communication.

2.1.2 Discussion

The analyzed instances showed that the President Trump's speech included all the strategic functions of Gaines's theory in shaping his ideas into irony and humor for his audience. He overused the topical functions more than personal and dispositional ones. This result helps us in answering the first research question (What are the strategic functions of rhetorical humor used by Trump in his political speech?).

In the first strategy, he showed negative dispositions, beliefs, and attitudes towards his opponents, Corona-virus, the North Korean president, and other different situations so as to keep the attention of the audience. He also spotlighted his opponents' physical appearance to undermine them by utilizing derogatory language. In the second strategy, he presented new issues and highlighted opposing arguments using humor, irony, stereotyping, minimization, and mockery. In the last strategy, he used the common tactics in personal-focused rhetoric, including character assassination, stereotyping, and generalization.

2.2 Speech Acts Analysis of Trump's Humor Speeches

This section provides an explanation and discussion of Trump's humorous speech based on Searl's (1976) theory of illocutionary acts. He classified them into five major categories so that they can be distinguished: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives.

2.2.1 Searl's (1976) Model

2.2.1.1 Representatives

Actions that represent situations or events in the world: binding the speaker/ addresser to the truth of the expressed statement, e.g., affirming, reporting, assessing, describing, and others (Searl, 1976). Representative speech acts are the most frequent illocutionary act performed therein. Some of the Representatives are indicated by the use of assertive verbs, while others are inferred from the meanings of the sentences.

For more clarification about this function, the following examples include the list of illocutionary of representative performed by Trump. He has called MSNBC personality Mika Brzezinski "off the wall, a neurotic and not very bright mess", "very insecure", and "crazy" (Trump, 2016). The pragmatic intention of such utterance includes describing the personality of Mika Brzezinski with disrespectful adjectives.

In addition, Trump said that Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., has a "low-I.Q.," (Trump, 2017). Thus, he asserted that she has a lower level of intellectual functioning compared to the average population. Moreover, he mocked Mexican immigrants as a "horde of beefy men"(Woodward & Yen, 2019). In this statement, Trump makes assertion by using stereotyping and discrimination between Americans and Mexican immigrants.

In a tweet storm with Kim Jong Un, Trump said "Why would Kim Jong-un insult me by calling me "old," when I would NEVER call him "short and fat?"(Ward, 2017). The illocutionary force of this utterance is that of affirming. Trump affirmed that he never insulted Kim, who in turn attacks him by being old. In other context, He referred to Kim as a "little rocket man" and a "madman"(BBC, 2019). In this act, he performed the force of description. He described him with expressions and words that lack respect. Within the same function, Trump referred to the novel corona-virus as "Kung flu" or "the Chinese virus" (Itkowitz, 2020; Kuo, 2020). By this description force, he points to the source of the disease with the intention of making discrimination and prejudice against people of Chinese or Asian descent.

In a tweet, Trump attacked Biden, "Biden for Resident" (Elfrink, 2023). Trump showed his opposing to Biden's candidacy by using this phrase that indicates he is a strong competitor to him. Besides, he stated, concerning wearing masks during the pandemic, "I don't wear masks like him. Every time you see him, he's wearing a mask. He could be speaking 200 feet away from it, and he shows up with the biggest mask I've seen"(Cathey, 2020). This act's intention is a kind of assertion of the fact that wearing masks is not as much important as Biden considers it. In this context, "The Paris Agreement is fatally flawed because it raises the price of energy for responsible countries while whitewashing some of the worst polluters," said Trump (Reuters Staff, 2018). Here, the speech also performed the force of assertion because Trump asserted that Macron is ineffective leader in addressing the problems of the French people.

2.2.1.2 Directives

The acts that endeavor to persuade the listener or addressee to do something e.g., warning, advising, requesting, begging, asking, and others (Searl, 1976). In our samples, directive speech acts are only four speeches in which the illocutionary forces are requesting, ordering, and suggesting. In the following statement, the act is realized through the use of Wh- question or with the help of the auxiliary do.

Trump described Mexican immigrants as: They go into our country, and then you announce-these are the laws-then you say: come back in three years for your trial…Tell me what percentage of people come back. Would you say a hundred percent? No, you're a little off. How about two percents? And those people you almost don't want, because they cannot be very smart. Two percents. Two percents. Two percents come back! Those two percents are not going to make America great again, that I can tell you (Rupar, 2019, New Orleans).

In this case, Trump performs the directive act of implicit requesting which can be inferred as his desire to discourage immigration and promote his campaign slogan of "Make America Great Again".

During the 2015 presidential campaign, Trump commented on the physical appearance of his opponent, Carly Fiorina, "Look at that face!"(CNN Guardian, 2015), he ordered the audience to do so is considered a kind of disrespect to her character and a way to attract as much vote as possible.

In commenting on Bill Bryan's presentation, Trump suggested that:"I see the disinfectant that knocks it out in a minute, one minute. And is there a way we can do something like that by injection inside or almost a cleaning? As you see, it gets in the lungs, it does a tremendous number on the lungs, so it would be interesting to check that " (Clark, 2020). This directive act performed through the use of Wh- question and with the help of the auxiliary do. One can infer that the suggestion of injecting or using disinfectants internally as a treatment for a viral infection is not based on scientific evidence and can be extremely dangerous. Therefore, this act contains suggestion.

2.2.1.3 Commissives

The acts that bind the addresser to do something in the future, e.g., promising, swearing, vowing, and committing, and others (Searl, 1976). As an example, Trump tweeted "The United States will be powerfully supporting those industries, like airlines and others, that are particularly affected by the Chinese virus." We will be stronger than ever before!"(Kuo, 2020). The commissive act expresses the Trump's intention to undertake and support the institutions affected by Corona virus. Such act includes pledging.

2.2.1.4 Expressives

The acts are taken by the speaker to demonstrate his feelings about something, e.g., apologizing, condemning, congratulating, welcoming, thanking, and others (Searl, 1976). They reveal the psychological state of the speaker about the state of affairs in the

speech. For instance, Trump tweeted MSNBC personality Mika Brzezinski, calling her "crazy" (Trump, 2017). This act expresses dislike of Mika Brzezinski by naming her crazy. Similarly, he tweeted her, alleging she was "bleeding badly from a face-lift" (Trump, 2017). The pragmatic's intention from this phrase is that Trump expressed his sadness and sorrow over her face due to the many plastic surgeries she did.

In this statement, Trump mocked then-competitor, Carly Fiorina, telling Rolling Stone, "Look at that face! Would anyone vote for that? Can you imagine that, the face of our next president?!" (CNN Guardian, 2015), he has referred to the expressive illocutionary force to show negative opinion toward Lady Carly Fiorina. To do so, he used her physical appearance as a strategy to belittle her character.

As an example of creating a positive and amusing atmosphere, Trump mimicked the U.S. officials' easygoing attitude, saying, "Oh, give him asylum. He's afraid. He's afraid. And he adds we don't love the fact that he's got tattoos on his face. That's not a good sign"(Woodward & Yen, 2019). To keep the audience attention, he created a type of laugh using humor and irony.

In a similar vein, Trump described asylum seekers as: "People that look like they should be fighting for the UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship). They read a little page given by lawyers that are all over the place, coaching them to say, I am very fearful for my life. I am very worried that I will be accosted if I'm sent back home" (Woodward & Yen, 2019). This illocutionary force of fear and worry expressed by the asylum seekers is used by Trump to dehumanize and stereotype them.

Trump described Mexican immigrants as:

> They go into our country, and then you announce-these are the laws-then you say: come back in three years for your trial…Tell me what percentage of people come back. Would you say a hundred percent? No, you're a little off. How

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about two percents? And those people you almost don't want, because they cannot be very smart. Two percents. Two percents. Two percents come back! Those two percents are not going to make America great again, that I can tell you (Rupar, 2019, New Orleans).

In this act, Trump is questioning the percentage of the Mexican immigrants came back to America, he criticized them with low intelligence which makes them undesirable in his country. Thus, such act consists of criticism. In other situation, he mocked Hillary Clinton, after being sick with pneumonia "She is supposed to fight all these different things and she cannot make it 15 feet to her car" (CNN, 2016). Trump expresses his empathy for Clinton's sickness of pneumonia.

In these two statements, "slow", and "sleepy" Biden (Trump, 2015) and "Crooked Hillary" (Alba, 2016), Trump is inspiring his listeners to continue to support him by criticizing his competitors using mockery and irony adjectives. At the international level, Trump mocked Macron "You got this crazy world that's blowing up and the United States has absolutely no say and Macron, who's a friend of mine, is over with China kissing his a**. In China. I said France is now going to China?" (Schwab, 2023). The illocutionary force expressed here is the feeling of frustration from the relationship between France and China.

In the last sentence of this category, Trump takes a shot at Biden over a kiss complaint "I said, 'General: come here and give me a kiss'. I felt like Joe Biden" (Rampton, 2019). In this speech, Trump has produced the pragmatic force or function of satire towards Biden kiss complaint.

2.2.1.5 Declarations

The acts which, when spoken, cause a condition to occur, eg., quitting, declaring, nominating, appointing, christening, naming, and others (Searl, 1976). In the selected samples, declarative speech acts are only two speeches in which the illocutionary forces are

declaring. In the first statement, Trump attacked Clinton, "She is such a nasty woman" (CNN, 2016). He declared his negative opinion about Clinton to belittle her character.

In the second tweet, during the corona virus pandemic, Mr. Trump tweeted "We will be stronger than ever before" (Kuo, 2020). Trump makes declaration about the fact that United States will maintain its dominance despite the losses left by the corona virus. He said that to let his citizens assume that he can handle the situation in the whole country. All these are meant to reinforce the people's trust in him.

2.2.2 Discussion

The results obtained from the pragmatic analysis of Trump's humorous speech showed that the five types of illocutionary acts are found in his speech. The most illocutionary acts are Expressive. Then, it is followed by Representative, Directive, Declaration, and Commissive. It is also found that Trump's speech acts are intended as assertions and criticisms. These political strategies were used by Trump to shape his audience's opinion as well as appeal to a large base of supporters. At last, this discussion provides us with an answer to the second research question:"What are the pragmatic functions of using humor in Trump's speeches?"

Conclusion

This chapter is about the analysis of Trump's humorous speech, both rhetorically and pragmatically. The rhetorical analysis demonstrated that topical strategies were more widely used than personal and dispositional ones. This means that he focused on logical reasoning and personality traits or characterizations of individuals to spot the light on his opponents and pose a new issue rather than creating a positive mood and deflecting criticism. Besides, the pragmatic analysis reveals that the illocutionary act of expressives are often used by Donald Trump in his utterances. This act states his feelings of dislike, sorrow, negative opinion, amusement, fear, criticism, empathy, or frustration. The second most-dominant type of acts is representatives, which represents the informative and supportive nature of the speaker. Then, the directive act shows the power of the speaker's ideas and arguments. In addition, the

illocutionary act of declaration aimed at conveying information, expressing beliefs, or presenting a proposition as true. Finally, the commissive act which was the least used type by Donald Trump in his utterances, and it involved committing or promising to perform a future action.

General Conclusion

The present research was about a critical analysis of humor in the speeches of Donald Trump. It aimed at finding out the strategic and pragmatic functions used in his utterances. It consists of both a theoretical and a practical part. The theoretical part included one chapter that presents an overview of humor. It starts with the evolution of the concept and its definition and then provides a glimpse at its forms and theories. The chapter, later, describes humor as a tool in rhetoric. It explains the importance of humor in speeches and its effects on success or failure. The practical part also consisted of one chapter which reported the findings of the study and their analyses. It included two sections: one for the rhetorical analysis of Trump's humorous speeches and the other section for the pragmatic analysis of those speeches.

To answer the research questions, we opted for the critical and analytical methods of research, where two theories of analyzing speech were used. The theory of Gaines (2007) analyzes the strategic functions (dispositional, topical, and personal) used by Trump in different situations. The theory of Searl (1976) for the illocutionary acts (representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative) analysis.

Based on the analysis conducted, it was observed that Trump used the three strategic functions in his speeches. He relied heavily on the topical function to downplay opposing arguments and introduce new issues. Additionally, he performed all the illocutionary acts, but with the predominance of expressive acts, which shed light on Trump's psychological state while addressing the audience.

As with the majority of studies, the design of the current study is subject to some limitations. Firstly, we faced the challenge of lacking prior research on the topic due to its novelty. Secondly, we were, unfortunately, unable to access some paid resources and books.

Ultimately, the study in hand recommends further studies to address the effect of humor in political discourse and consider the view of the public on the president's use of

insulting sarcasm. Based on the study's conclusions, practitioners should carry out a profound

critical discourse analysis of Trump's speech and statement on Twitter in particular.

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Appendix

-Trump has called MSNBC personality Mika Brzezinski "off the wall, a neurotic and not very bright mess", "very insecure", and "crazy" (Trump, 2016).

-He said that Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., has a "low-I.Q.," (Trump, 2017).

-He mocked Mexican immigrants as a "horde of beefy men"(Woodward & Yen, 2019).

-In a tweet storm with Kim Jong Un, he said "Why would Kim Jong-un insult me by calling me "old," when I would NEVER call him "short and fat?"(Ward, 2017).

-He referred to Kim as a "little rocket man" and a "madman"(BBC, 2019).

-He again referred to the novel corona-virus as **"Kung flu"**(Itkowitz, 2020).

-He tweeted attacking Biden, "Biden For Resident" (Elfrink, 2023).

-He referred to the corona-virus as "the Chinese virus"(Kuo, 2020).

-He stated, concerning wearing masks during the pandemic, "I don't wear masks like him. Every time you see him, he's wearing a mask. He could be speaking 200 feet away from it, and he shows up with the biggest mask I've seen"(Cathey, 2020).

-"The Paris Agreement is fatally flawed because it raises the price of energy for responsible countries while whitewashing some of the worst polluters," said Trump (Reuters Staff, 2018).

-He described Mexican immigrants as: They go into our country, and then you announce -these are the laws- then you say: come back in three years for your trial…Tell me what percentage of people come back. Would you say a hundred percent? No, you're a little off. How about two percents? And those people you almost don't want, because they cannot be very smart. Two percents. Two percents. Two percents come back! Those two percents are not going to make America great again, that I can tell you (Rupar, 2019).

-In commenting on Bill Bryan's presentation, Trump suggested that:"I see the disinfectant that knocks it out in a minute, one minute. And is there a way we can do something like that by injection inside or almost a cleaning?"(Clark, 2020).

-He commented on Bill Bryan's presentation, "As you see, it gets in the lungs, it does a tremendous number on the lungs, so it would be interesting to check that "(Clark, 2020).

-Trump tweeted "The United States will be powerfully supporting those industries, like airlines and others, that are particularly affected by the Chinese virus." We will be stronger than ever before!"(Kuo, 2020).

-Trump tweeted MSNBC personality Mika Brzezinski, calling her "crazy" (Trump, 2017).

-Trump tweeted MSNBC celebrity Mika Brzezinski, alleging she was "bleeding badly from a face-lift" (Trump, 2017).

-He mocked then-competitor, Carly Fiorina, telling Rolling Stone, "Look at that face! Would anyone vote for that? Can you imagine that, the face of our next president?!" (CNN Guardian, 2015)

-Trump mimicked the U.S. officials' easygoing attitude, saying, "Oh, give him asylum. He's afraid. He's afraid. And he adds we don't love the fact that he's got tattoos on his face. That's not a good sign"(Woodward & Yen, 2019)

-Trump described asylum seekers as: "People that look like they should be fighting for the UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship). They read a little page given by lawyers that are all over the place, coaching them to say, I am very fearful for my life. I am very worried that I will be accosted if I'm sent back home" (Woodward & Yen, 2019).

-He described Mexican immigrants as: They go into our country, and then you announce-these are the laws-then you say: come back in three years for your trial…Tell me what percentage of people come back. Would you say a hundred percent? No, you're a little off. How about two percents?

And those people you almost don't want, because they cannot be very smart. Two percents. Two percents. Two percents come back! Those two percents are not going to make America great again, that I can tell you (Rupar, 2019).

-Trump mocked Hillary Clinton, after being sick with pneumonia "She is supposed to fight all these different things, and she cannot make it 15 feet to her car" (CNN, 2016).

-Trump has frequently criticized Biden as "slow", and "sleepy" (Trump, 2015).

-Trump mocked Macron "You got this crazy world that's blowing up and the United States has absolutely no say and Macron, who's a friend of mine, is over with China kissing his a**. In China. I said France is now going to China?" (Schwab, 2023).

-Trump recently started calling the former secretary of state "Crooked Hillary" (Alba, 2016).

-Trump takes a shot at Biden over a kiss complaint "I said, 'General: come here and give me a kiss'. I felt like Joe Biden" (Rampton, 2019).

-He attacked Clinton, "She is such a nasty woman" (CNN, 2016).

ملخص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى تحليل عينات مختارة من خطاب دونالد ترامب الساخر الذي ألقاه في سياقات مختلفة. ركزت بشكل رئيسي على الوظائف الإستراتيجية والبراغماتية المستخدمة في تصريحاته. لتحقيق هذا الهدف، اعتمدنا نظرية جاينز (2007) لتحليل الوظائف الإستراتيجية ،بالإضافة إلى نظرية أعمال الكلام العملية لسيرل (1976) للتحليل البراغماتي. أظهر تحديد الوظائف الإستراتيجية أن ترامب استخدم الوظيفة التصرفية ، الوظيفة الموضوعية، والوظيفة الشخصية. كشف تحليل النتائج أنه أفرط في استخدام الوظيفة الموضوعية لإلقاء الضوء على حجة معارضة وتقديم قضية أو مسالة ما .بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أشار تحديد أعمال الكلام إلى وجود أعمال تمثيلية، أعمال توجيهية، أعمال وعدية، أعمال تعبيرية، وأعمال إعلانية (7.14٪). كشف تفسير النتائج عن سيطرة الأعمال التعبيرية التي تعكس الحالة النفسية لترامب أثناء مخاطبته للجمهور. في الأخير يمكن القول ان دراسة كل من الوظائف البلاغية والبراغماتية سهلت فهم رسائل الرئيس دونالد ترامب في خطابه.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الخطاب الساخر، أعمال الكلام الدالة، البراغماتية، أعمال الكلام، الوظائف الإستراتيجية.