MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

HANOI OPEN UNIVERSITY

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**SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL THESIS**

**A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF 2016 AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION DEBATES**

**(PHÂN TÍCH DIỄN NGÔN PHÊ PHÁN CÁC CUỘC TRANH LUẬN BẦU CỬ TỔNG THỐNG MỸ NĂM 2016)**

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**CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

## Rationale of the study

The 2016 American Presidential Election stands as a pivotal moment in contemporary political history, marked by intense polarization, unprecedented levels of media coverage, and significant global attention. Central to this election were the highly contentious debates between the two major candidates, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. These debates were characterized by heated rhetoric, personal attacks, and controversial statements, capturing the public's scrutiny and shaping the discourse surrounding the election. In this doctoral thesis, titled "A Critical Discourse Analysis of 2016 American Presidential Election Debates," we embark on a comprehensive examination of the language, attitudes, and ideologies that permeated the discourse of the candidates during these debates. By employing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), we aim to delve deep into the intricate ways in which language was utilized to construct political identities, mobilize support, and discredit opponents. Organized by the Commission on Presidential Debates, the 2016 debates comprised three pivotal encounters between Clinton and Trump. The first debate, held on September 26, 2016, shattered viewership records, reflecting the magnitude of public interest in the event. Subsequent debates on October 9 and October 19 further fueled the discourse surrounding the election, with the candidates engaging in verbal jousts that reverberated across the nation.

Despite prevailing opinions from scientific polls of likely voters suggesting Clinton's victories in all three debates, the ultimate outcome of the election saw Donald Trump emerge victorious on November 8, 2016. This disjuncture between debate performance and electoral success underscores the complexities inherent in political communication and voter decision-making processes. Critical Discourse Analysis emerges as a powerful analytical tool for unpacking the multifaceted nature of political discourse. Grounded in seminal works by scholars such as Van Dijk, Fairclough, and Wodak, CDA offers a holistic framework that considers the intricate interplay between language, power, and ideology. Unlike traditional approaches to language analysis, CDA acknowledges that language is imbued with socio-political meaning, reflecting and perpetuating unequal power dynamics.

The choice to employ CDA in this thesis is deliberate and informed by its capacity to illuminate the hidden dimensions of language. By scrutinizing the ways in which language constructs power relations and shapes social identities, CDA unveils the underlying ideologies that inform political discourse. This approach enables us to transcend surface-level analysis and delve into the deeper structures that influence political rhetoric and public perception. Through a rigorous application of CDA, this thesis endeavors to offer valuable insights into the intricate political and social dynamics that defined the 2016 American Presidential Election. By interrogating the language used by Clinton and Trump in the debates, we aim to shed light on the complexities of contemporary political communication, contributing to a deeper understanding of the forces at play in democratic processes.

In the subsequent chapters, we will engage in a systematic analysis of the 2016 debates, examining the linguistic strategies employed by the candidates and their implications for the construction of political discourse. Through this exploration, we endeavor to offer a nuanced perspective on the events that shaped one of the most consequential elections in modern history.

## 1.2. Research aims and objectives

The research aims to analyze the 2016 American presidential election debates between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump to understand their ideologies, attitudes, and discourse strategies. The first objective is to investigate the ideologies and attitudes of the candidates through their discourse, uncovering the beliefs and values that shaped their political platforms. The second objective is to examine the linguistic features and devices used by Clinton and Trump during the debates and their effects on public perceptions and reactions. This involves analyzing language strategies and linguistic devices employed by the candidates to convey their messages.

**1.3. Research questions**

In order to achieve its aims and objectives, the dissertation seeks answers to the following research questions:

* What ideologies do Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton represent and how are they linguistically manifested in their speeches?
* What attitudes (towards social issues, their opponent and themselves) they represent and how are they linguistically manifested in their speeches?
* How do the rhetorical styles and linguistic choices of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton differ in expressing their respective ideologies and attitudes?

## Scope of the study

The thesis, "A Critical Discourse Analysis of 2016 American Presidential Election Debates," undertakes a comprehensive examination of the discourse within the debates, focusing on the ideologies and attitudes of main candidates, Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, utilizing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with Fairclough's 3D model and Martin & White's Appraisal theory. Key areas include discourse analysis, investigating linguistic choices and rhetorical devices; ideological analysis, exploring political beliefs and values; attitudinal analysis, examining candidates' emotional stances; contrasting discourse strategies; and contextual analysis, understanding historical and political contexts. The study transcends textual analysis to explore broader implications, such as impact on voter decisions and construction of political identities, aiming to enhance understanding of election campaigns' complexities and their influence on public opinion.

## Methods of the study

## The methodology of this study integrates both qualitative and quantitative frameworks to analyze the 2016 American presidential election debates. It combines content analysis, Fairclough’s 3D Model in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and Appraisal Theory. Content analysis is first used to identify and categorize language strategies in the debate transcripts. Fairclough’s 3D Model then analyzes these strategies across three levels: textual analysis (specific words and phrases), discursive practice (context and audience reactions), and social practice (socio-political context and ideologies). This comprehensive approach is used in CDA to explore how language reflects and reinforces ideologies. Appraisal Theory is applied to assess the attitudes expressed by the candidates, focusing on emotions, ethics, and aesthetics. Together, these methodologies provide a detailed understanding of the candidates' rhetorical techniques and their ideological significance in the debates.

## Significance of the study

The research, titled "A Critical Discourse Analysis of 2016 American Presidential Election Debates," holds significant importance in understanding the dynamics of political communication, particularly in the context of the contentious 2016 election between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. By delving into the discourse of these two pivotal figures, the study aims to uncover their ideologies, attitudes, and linguistic strategies, providing insights into the role of language in shaping political landscapes. Despite their distinct differences in gender, profession, and style, Trump's unexpected victory presents a compelling subject for linguistic analysis. The research investigates how underlying beliefs influenced the candidates' platforms and strategies, shedding light on the role of political ideologies in shaping the electoral process.

Analyzing the linguistic features and devices used by Clinton and Trump during the debates reveals how language strategies influenced public perceptions and reactions, contributing to a deeper understanding of how political discourse shapes public opinion. Specifically, the study examines whether Trump's rhetoric contributed to his victory and what this reveals about his ambitions and ideology, thus illuminating the ideological dimensions of political discourse and its impact on electoral outcomes.

Through the application of Fairclough's framework for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and a focus on the Appraisal system, the research offers a comprehensive analysis of the interplay between language, ideologies, and attitudes. While the use of Appraisal Theory in discourse analysis is not yet widespread in Vietnam, its application in this thesis represents a theoretical advancement, providing a deeper understanding of speakers' attitudes through their lexical choices. Success in this endeavor would affirm the efficacy of using the Appraisal system to discern ideologies through discourse analysis.

This thesis contributes to the academic field by demonstrating the practical application of CDA methodologies in dissecting political communication. It not only sheds light on the 2016 election but also offers broader insights into the role of political discourse in shaping public opinion and political realities. Through a rigorous analysis of language, ideologies, and attitudes, the research offers valuable contributions to both discourse analysis and political science.

## Structure of the study

This thesis is divided into seven chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research study titled "A Critical Discourse Analysis of 2016 American Presidential Election Debates." It outlines the significance of the study, introduces the main research questions, and provides a brief overview of the methodology employed. Additionally, it highlights the objectives and structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter, an extensive review of relevant literature is presented, focusing on key concepts such as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Fairclough's 3-dimensional framework, and the Appraisal theory by Martin & White. The chapter also reviews existing literature on political discourse, ideological analysis, and linguistic strategies employed in political communication.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

In this chapter, the research methodology employed in the study is outlined. It discusses the rationale behind the chosen methodology, including data collection procedures, analytical frameworks, and ethical considerations. The chapter also addresses any limitations of the methodology.

Chapter 4: Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton’s Ideologies and Linguistic Manifestations in the 2016 American Presidential Debates through Fairclough's 3-Dimensional Framework

This chapter focuses on analyzing the ideologies and linguistic features of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton during the 2016 presidential debates using Fairclough's 3-dimensional framework. It examines how their discourse reflects their political ideologies, values, and perspectives.

Chapter 5: Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton’s Attitudes and Linguistic Manifestations through the Appraisal Theory

This chapter explores the attitudes and linguistic expressions of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton during the debates through the lens of the Appraisal theory. It analyzes their evaluative language, emotions, and viewpoints, providing insights into their attitudes towards various issues.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The final chapter offers a comprehensive summary of the research findings, highlighting key insights and contributions. It discusses the implications of the study for political discourse analysis and offers recommendations for future research in this field. Additionally, it reflects on the broader significance of the research in understanding the role of language in shaping political realities.

**CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.1. Basic notions in the thesis**

In this section, the author will introduce some key terms commonly used throughout the dissertation, including "critical," "discourse," "power," "ideology," and "attitude." Understanding these concepts is essential for interpreting the research findings and the analytical framework employed in this study. "Critical" refers to the analytical approach that challenges assumptions and explores underlying meanings. "Discourse" involves the use of language in social contexts, while "power" and "ideology" relate to how language can shape and maintain social hierarchies and beliefs. Finally, "attitude" examines the evaluative stance conveyed through language, reflecting the speaker's feelings, judgments, and values.

**2.2. An Overview of Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a multidisciplinary approach that scrutinizes language's role in perpetuating power dynamics and social inequalities. It delves into the social and political implications of discourse, unveiling underlying ideologies and power structures. Drawing from linguistics and sociology, CDA analyzes various discursive practices, emphasizing a critical and socially just perspective. Language is recognized as a tool that reflects and perpetuates power relations, legitimizing dominant ideologies while marginalizing alternative viewpoints. CDA involves stages such as data collection, analysis, pattern identification, and interpretation. It has been applied in diverse contexts, including politics, media, gender studies, and education, facilitating social and political interventions. In essence, CDA offers a critical lens to understand how language reproduces and challenges power dynamics and social inequalities.

* + 1. ***Fairclough’s Model of analysis***

Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a comprehensive framework for examining language in its social and cultural contexts. The framework consists of three dimensions: the textual dimension, the discourse practice dimension, and the sociocultural practice dimension. The textual dimension involves analyzing the language itself, focusing on linguistic features and structures within a given text. The discourse practice dimension looks beyond individual texts to examine broader patterns of language use within specific contexts or domains, considering how language accomplishes social actions and maintains power relations. The sociocultural practice dimension zooms out to analyze the social and cultural contexts in which discursive practices occur, emphasizing the larger structures, institutions, and power relations that shape language use.

In this thesis, Fairclough's framework is applied to analyze the discourse of the 2016 American presidential election debates. The researcher adopts Fairclough's three stages of analysis: Description, Interpretation, and Explanation. Description involves identifying linguistic features and structures of the debates, while Interpretation focuses on understanding underlying meanings and implications, particularly regarding ideologies and power relations. Contextualization places the discourse within broader social, political, and historical contexts. Ideological analysis uncovers embedded ideologies within the discourse, while Critical Reflection considers the discourse's impact on society and power dynamics. Finally, Explanation provides insights into the broader social significance of the discourse, connecting language use to social practices, power structures, and ideological frameworks. Through this approach, the researcher aims to uncover deeper meanings and social implications of the discourse, contributing to a critical examination of language and ideology in political discourse.

* + 1. ***Discourse strategies and Intertextual analysis***

Discourse strategies are pivotal in political communication, shaping public opinion and establishing narrative dominance. Norman Fairclough's work emphasizes the significance of discourse strategies, including repetition, plain language, emotive language, rhetoric, attack-defend language, simplification of complex issues, use of evidence and facts, personal narratives, staying calm and composed, and the use of humor. Repetition reinforces key messages, aids memory retention, and builds consistency in messaging. Plain language enhances accessibility, clarity, and inclusivity in communication. Emotive language evokes specific emotions, shaping perceptions and fostering empathy. Rhetoric persuades and influences through persuasive language techniques. Attack-defend language critiques opposing viewpoints and defends one's position. Simplification of complex issues makes intricate topics more understandable and relevant. Use of evidence and facts enhances credibility and persuasiveness. Personal narratives create relatability and shape identity. Staying calm and composed promotes rational thinking and conflict resolution. Humor fosters connection, eases tension, and enhances engagement. These discourse strategies play critical roles in effective communication across various contexts, including politics, ensuring messages are clear, persuasive, and impactful.

* 1. **An Overview of Appraisal Theory**

Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Language (SFL) theory underscores language as a reflection and organizer of social relationships, comprising Metafunctions: Ideational (content), Interpersonal (interaction), and Textual (structure). Martin, a follower of Halliday, introduced the Appraisal System within the Interpersonal Metafunction, analyzing language's expression of emotions, evaluations, and attitudes, making it vital for social analysis.

 ***2.2.1. Appraisal Framework***

The Appraisal Framework, as articulated by Martin and White (2005), delves into language as a multifaceted system for expressing attitudes, emotions, and evaluations across various dimensions. Positioned within discourse semantics, it transcends grammatical boundaries to encompass layers of meaning, including affect, judgment, and appreciation. The framework categorizes language resources into three main domains: attitude, engagement, and graduation. Attitude encompasses affective, judgmental, and appreciative responses to stimuli, while engagement focuses on alignment with discourse perspectives and graduation deals with the intensity or force of evaluative language. The framework's rich array of linguistic tools enables the analysis of texts ranging from political debates to literary works, offering insights into how language shapes perceptions, ideologies, and interpersonal dynamics. Martin and White's approach underscores the subjective and evaluative nature of language use, shedding light on how individuals navigate social interactions, express persuasive arguments, and convey cultural values through linguistic expression. While the framework allows for nuanced analysis across multiple dimensions, its application can be tailored to suit the specific goals and contexts of text analysis, emphasizing the flexibility and adaptability of linguistic analysis frameworks in exploring the intricacies of human communication.

***2.2.2. The Framework for the Study***

The authors suggest the following study framework for the thesis based on the applicability and relationships of attitude, ideology in the model that combines Fairclough's Discourse Analysis and Appraisal Theory:

**Figure 1: *The analytical framework***

The analytical framework presented in the figure titled "The Analytical Framework for Research" incorporates two powerful tools: Fairclough's 3D Model and Appraisal Theory. This comprehensive approach aims to delve into the complexities of discourse analysis by examining both the structural and evaluative dimensions. The primary focus is on uncovering ideologies through Fairclough's model and attitudes through Appraisal Theory, recognizing the dialectical relationship between these two crucial elements.

Fairclough's 3D Model, encompassing Description, Interpretation, and Explanation, provides a systematic and multifaceted lens for dissecting discourse. Description involves the surface-level understanding of language use, focusing on what is explicitly stated. Interpretation delves deeper into the implied meanings and hidden structures within the discourse. Finally, Explanation seeks to uncover the underlying social, political, or cultural forces that shape the language use. By employing this model, researchers can unveil the ideologies embedded in the language, providing insights into power structures, social norms, and cultural nuances.

Simultaneously, Appraisal Theory contributes to the analysis by exploring the evaluative aspects of discourse. The triad of Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation serves as a guide for understanding how language expresses emotions, assesses phenomena, and expresses values. Affect captures the emotional stance conveyed in the discourse, Judgement evaluates the worth or desirability of entities, and Appreciation assesses the aesthetic or ethical values present. Through Appraisal Theory, researchers gain a nuanced understanding of attitudes embedded in the language, allowing for a more comprehensive exploration of the discourse's evaluative dimensions.

The synergy between Fairclough's model and Appraisal Theory is evident in the recognition that ideologies and attitudes are dialectical. Ideologies, representing the underlying beliefs and values shaping discourse, are intertwined with attitudes, which reflect the evaluative stance towards entities or phenomena. This dialectical relationship underscores the intricate interplay between language, social structures, and individual perceptions.

By adopting this analytical framework, researchers can uncover the intricate layers of meaning within discourse, bridging the structural and evaluative dimensions. This comprehensive approach not only enhances our understanding of language use but also provides a valuable tool for exploring the dynamic interconnections between ideologies and attitudes in various social, political, and cultural contexts.

**CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology employed in this study adopts Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), a well-established approach suitable for scrutinizing political discourse by exposing power structures, ideologies, and social inequalities within language. Grounded in various theoretical frameworks ranging from microsociological perspectives to Michel Foucault's theories on society and power, CDA seeks to bridge grand theories with concrete social interactions—the focal point of analysis. The integration of qualitative and quantitative methods, known as mixed-methods, alongside critical discourse analysis offers a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to analyzing debates. Qualitative methods delve into emotional and evaluative expressions, capturing nuances and context-specific meanings, while content or discourse analysis uncovers rhetorical strategies, linguistic patterns, and power dynamics. Quantitative methods complement qualitative findings by quantifying emotional tones and validating evaluative judgments. Critical discourse analysis enhances the analysis by uncovering hidden discourses, challenging dominant narratives, and understanding social and political implications. Norman Fairclough's 3D model and Martin & White's Appraisal theory serve as vital tools for this analysis. Fairclough's model aids in identifying the ideologies of candidates, while Appraisal theory reveals their attitudes towards critical election issues, such as the economy and national security. Through this methodological framework, the study compares the ideologies and attitudes of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton in the 2016 U.S. presidential election debates, shedding light on their campaign strategies and interactions with voters.

Norman Fairclough's 3D model and Martin & White's Appraisal theory form the backbone of the discourse analysis method used in this study to examine political discourse, specifically the ideologies and attitudes of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election debates. Fairclough's model allows for a nuanced exploration of how each candidate employed discursive critiques to convey their ideologies, while Appraisal theory facilitates the identification of attitudes towards critical election issues. Appraisal theory categorizes attitudes into Appraisal, Engagement, and Gradation, providing insights into how candidates evaluate events, convey engagement or organization of information, and express interaction within the evaluation. By applying these methods, the study aims to decipher how language is utilized to create varying levels of respect and interaction with different subjects and topics. Through a meticulous comparison of ideologies and attitudes, the study aims to delineate differences and similarities between Trump and Clinton, elucidating their campaign strategies and voter engagement tactics. This comparative analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play in the 2016 U.S. presidential election debates, offering valuable insights into the candidates' presentations and interactions with voters on critical issues.

**CHAPTER 4: DONALD TRUMP AND HILLARY CLINTON’S IDEOLOGIES AND LINGUISTIC MANIFESTATIONS IN THE 2016 AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES THROUGH FAIRCLOUGH’S 3-DIMENSIONAL FRAMEWORK**

In the 2016 American Presidential debates, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump clashed on key issues like the economy, foreign policy, race, taxes, and healthcare. Fairclough's 3-Dimensional Framework was applied to analyze their linguistic strategies and ideological differences. The debate was characterized by heated exchanges and personal attacks.

Chapter four of the thesis delves into an analysis of the ideological and linguistic manifestations of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton during the 2016 American presidential debates, using Fairclough's 3-dimensional framework. The chapter aims to dissect the political discourse employed by both candidates, highlighting how their language choices reflected their respective ideologies and strategies.

Fairclough's framework, which encompasses the dimensions of text, processing, and sociocultural practices, serves as a lens through which the linguistic strategies of Trump and Clinton are examined. The text dimension focuses on the actual language used by the candidates, analyzing their language strategies. Trump's discourse is characterized by simplicity, repetition, and directness, often employing emotionally charged language to appeal to his base and project strength. On the other hand, Clinton's language tends to be more nuanced and policy-oriented, reflecting her experience as a seasoned politician. She utilizes complex sentences and evidence-based arguments to convey her policy proposals and expertise.

In terms of processing, the chapter explores how the candidates' linguistic strategies were interpreted and received by the audience. Trump's blunt and straightforward communication style resonated with many voters who were disillusioned with traditional politics and yearned for change. His use of populist rhetoric and appeals to nationalism tapped into the grievances of working-class Americans, amplifying his anti-establishment message. Conversely, Clinton's carefully crafted messages were sometimes perceived as overly rehearsed or insincere, contributing to concerns about her trustworthiness among certain segments of the electorate.

The sociocultural practices dimension examines the broader sociopolitical context in which the debates took place, considering factors such as media coverage, public opinion, and cultural norms. Trump's unorthodox communication style challenged conventional norms of political discourse, garnering significant media attention and fueling debates about the role of authenticity in politics. His controversial statements and provocative language often dominated headlines, shaping public discourse and influencing voter perceptions. Meanwhile, Clinton faced scrutiny over her ties to the political establishment and was subjected to gendered critiques and double standards in media coverage, highlighting the intersectionality of language, power, and identity in the political arena.

In summary, the chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of how Trump and Clinton's ideologies were manifested through their linguistic choices during the 2016 presidential debates. By applying Fairclough's framework, the authors offer valuable insights into the ways in which language shapes political discourse and influences public opinion, shedding light on the dynamics of power and persuasion in contemporary American politics.

C**HAPTER 5: DONALD TRUMP AND HILLARY CLINTON’S ATTITUDES AND LINGUISTIC MANIFESTATIONS THROUGH THE APPRAISAL THEORY**

Chapter five explores the attitudes and linguistic manifestations of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton using the Appraisal Theory. This theory provides a framework for analyzing how language is used to evaluate and express opinions, emotions, and interpersonal stances. The chapter examines the ways in which Trump and Clinton conveyed their attitudes and assessed events, individuals, and policies throughout the 2016 American presidential campaign.

Appraisal Theory highlights three main subsystems: Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation. The Affect subsystem focuses on the expression of emotions and feelings. Trump's discourse often exhibited a strong affective dimension, characterized by expressions of anger, disgust, and contempt towards his opponents, the media, and various political adversaries. He used emotive language to evoke fear and resentment among his supporters, tapping into their frustrations and grievances. In contrast, Clinton's language tended to be more restrained in terms of affect, with a greater emphasis on rationality and composure. She conveyed empathy and compassion towards marginalized groups and emphasized the importance of unity and inclusivity in her messaging.

The Judgement subsystem involves the assessment of people, actions, and events. Trump frequently employed evaluative language to frame issues in stark terms of success or failure, strength or weakness. He often used hyperbolic language to praise himself and denigrate his opponents, positioning himself as a decisive leader who could "Make America Great Again." Clinton, meanwhile, utilized a more nuanced approach to judgement, offering nuanced critiques of policies and presenting herself as a pragmatic problem-solver with a wealth of experience. She highlighted her qualifications and criticized Trump's temperament and lack of preparedness for the presidency.

The Appreciation subsystem focuses on the evaluation of things such as quality, value, or significance. Trump's rhetoric often emphasized the importance of material wealth, status, and power, reflecting his background as a businessman and reality television personality. He frequently boasted about his accomplishments and portrayed himself as a successful dealmaker who could negotiate better trade deals and revitalize the economy. Clinton, on the other hand, emphasized the value of diversity, democracy, and human rights, framing her campaign as a defense of American values and principles against the threat posed by Trump's divisive rhetoric.

In conclusion, Chapter 6 provides a comprehensive analysis of how Trump and Clinton's attitudes were manifested through their linguistic choices during the 2016 presidential campaign. By applying the Appraisal Theory, the chapter offers valuable insights into the ways in which language is used to convey emotions, judgements, and evaluations in political discourse, shedding light on the rhetorical strategies employed by both candidates to persuade voters and shape public opinion.

**CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION**

Through the analysis presented in Chapters 4 and 5, the contrasting rhetorical styles and linguistic choices of Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton during the 2016 American presidential campaign become evident. Employing Fairclough's 3-dimensional framework in Chapter 5, Trump's discourse emerges as emotive, simplistic, and ideologically charged. He employs direct language, repetition, and emotive rhetoric to appeal to his base and convey a sense of strength and authority. In contrast, Clinton's language is characterized by nuance, policy orientation, and a measured approach. She employs complex sentences, evidence-based arguments, and rational appeals, reflecting her experience and expertise as a seasoned politician.

In Chapter 5, utilizing the Appraisal Theory, Trump's rhetoric is further characterized by expressions of anger, contempt, and evaluative language that frame issues in binary terms of success or failure. He emphasizes material wealth, status, and his own accomplishments, positioning himself as a decisive leader who can deliver results. Clinton, however, adopts a more restrained approach, emphasizing empathy, inclusivity, and rationality in her messaging. She offers nuanced critiques of policies and presents herself as a pragmatic problem-solver with a wealth of experience.

These findings underscore the fundamental differences in rhetorical strategies employed by Trump and Clinton. Trump's reliance on emotive language, repetition, and evaluative rhetoric aligns with his populist and nationalist ideologies, resonating strongly with certain segments of the electorate. Conversely, Clinton's measured and policy-oriented approach reflects her commitment to rationality, expertise, and inclusivity. These divergent linguistic manifestations shed light on broader ideological contrasts between the two candidates and highlight the complex interplay between language, ideology, and political persuasion in contemporary American politics.