

A Critical Pragmatic Study of Identity Representation in American Political Contexts

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Abstract

One's identity can be best represented via his language. Identity representation is a critical issue in social and political studies, especially in the last few years. It is associated with one's ideology since the way we construct, view, or represent our identities is inherent to our ideological reservoir. Critical studies are concerned with ideological issues. In this regard, critical pragmatics is a kind of analysis that utilizes pragmatic theories to conceptualize the reflection of critical aspects in language use. Identity representation in terms of the critical paradigm has not been studied before, to the best of our knowledge. This paper endeavors to investigate how American politicians represent their identities in their political discourse. It analyzes extracts from three randomly selected debates by famous American politicians delivered from 2015 to 2020. Thus, it tries to answer questions like: What are the possible types of identity that are represented in the American political debates? What are the pragmatic phenomena most liable to be utilized in manifesting identity in the contexts under investigation? It is hypothesized that American politicians exploit different identity representations in their debates to win votes. They utilize various pragmatic strategies to convey their identity. Analysis shows that national, political, and personal identity types appear in the data. Speech acts, reference, impoliteness, and maxim breaching are the pragmatic phenomena that are utilized in the manifestation of identity in American political debates.

Keywords: Critical pragmatics, Identity, Political debates, Pragmatic strategies.

1. Introduction

The concept of identity has been scrutinized in different disciplines, especially in social sciences and humanities. The basic function of identity is looking for uniqueness. It is our identification with whom we assume are similar to ourselves or at least in some significant ways (Buckingham, 2008, p.1). When politicians use language to fulfill their purposes, they may reveal their identities. It is argued that the language of authoritative people affects others (Mehdi, 2020, p. 121). By presenting themselves and their nationality, religion, race, or culture, politicians intend to influence their audience and achieve their goals. This paper investigates identity representation that is manifested in the language of American politicians in terms of the critical approach. It aims to find out types of identity representation and what pragmatic strategies are employed by those politicians to represent their identities when they debate with other rivals. The main argument in this paper is that American politicians struggle to positively present their in-groupness and negatively evaluate out-groupness.

2. Aspects of Identity

People reveal their identities according to their roles in society. One may have multiple identities simultaneously. A man can be a husband, father, or politician. Each role of these may entail showing one aspect of one's identity. Identity theory aims to show how one's ideology may reveal the identity of a person. Such an identity may differ from one context to another. It aims as well to show how one's identity impacts his actions, feelings, thoughts, and ideas. Identity theory explains how individuals' identities represent their boundness, sameness, and groupness in society (Burke & Stets, 2009, p.3). The diversity in identity representation pays attention to the distinctions between each type and explains the differences between

them. In this regard, the main types of identities can be discussed. Personal identity means the 'self' which is distinguished by certain features like how a person views himself concerning other members around him or how others distinguish him as a person who is different from others (Layder, 2004, p. 7). National identity is defined by Barrett and Davis (2008, p. 72) as "a set of cognition and emotions that express an individual's relationship with a nation". Racial identity concerns physical and biological attributes like color skin, or ethnic distinction (Baum, 2006 p. 14). Cultural identity refers to an individual's cultural features, attributes, social life, and educational achievement (Gilbert, 2010, p. 2). Political identity can be conceived as "the collective label for a set of characteristics by which persons are recognized by political actors as members of a political group" (Smith, 2004, p. 302). Religious identity refers to the "personal set or institutionalized system of religious attitudes, beliefs, and practices" that one may adhere to (Merriam-Webster dictionary, n.d.). Gender identity introduces the distinctive biological features between men and women, their behaviors, language, and attitudes (Stets & Burke, 2000, p.2). Accordingly, identity representation in the American political context can be defined as the positive representation of the self against a negative representation of others in terms of national, racial, cultural, political, religious, and gender differentiation.

3. Concepts Related to Identity Representation

Power, ideology, and context are key concepts to identity representation. Usually, people who have power are more able to present their identities. Power can be viewed as the domination of an individual over another (Machoul & Grace, 1993, p.22). Power exists in different forms such as legal, administrative, economic, military, and so forth (p.65). Power can be expressed by both institutional and constitutive relations; either it works with interactions when an actor can shape the process of power and control the

condition of a particular action or it works with these interactions to show it is responsible for producing a particular kind of an actor (p.45).

People reflect their ideology through their language. The notion of ideology is defined by Bloor and Bloor (2007, p. 10) as the “set of beliefs and attitudes shared by members of a particular social group”. Hill (2008, p. 34) sees ideology as a way of thinking or a perspective saturated with political and economic interests. Ideology means a set of philosophical theories that exist internally in human minds (individuals and groups); it may refer to beliefs, views, opinions, values, and so forth (Szalay et al., 1972, p. 152). Ideologies comprise shared knowledge and social beliefs that are related to a certain group or society such as identity, position in society, interests, aims, relations to other groups, and the like (van Dijk, 2004, p.12). Verschueren (2012, p.7) avers that ideology “is associated with underlying patterns of meaning, frames of interpretation, world views, or forms of everyday thinking and explanation”.

The concept of context includes language users' beliefs, and assumptions about temporal, spatial, and social settings; prior, ongoing, and future actions (verbal, and nonverbal), and the state of knowledge and attentiveness of those participating in the social interaction at hand” (Ochs, 1979, p. 5). Context may include relevant aspects of the physical or social setting of an utterance (Leech, 1983, p.13). It may mean the conditions under which one expresses his ideology, identity and the like (Dolón Todolí, 2008, p.8). People need to approve their identity in different pictures. Hence, they affirm their beliefs, emotions, or ideas in each situation (Layder, 2004, p.7). Identity, for example, cannot develop in social isolation; people reflect their selfhood through interactions; they reflect their control, feelings, experiences, triumphs or failures, etc. They activate their actions by making decisions, promising, resisting, or shifting their feelings (Ashmore & Jussim, 1997, p.192). All these are associated with the concept of context.

4. Critical Pragmatics

Van Dijk (2008, p.2) argues that critical studies focus mainly on issues associated with racism, sexism, identity representation, and similar social problems. Within the critical studies on discourse, other approaches have been introduced such as critical stylistics (Jeffries, 2010) or critical pragmatics (Mey, 2001; Korta & Perry, 2011, Muhammed, 2018). Verschueren (1999, p. 871) explicates the critical potential of pragmatics clarifying that pragmatics is an area of research and inquiry that can easily lend itself to critical research work. The reason is that it investigates cases of language use, a significant amount of which can be classified as language abuse (p.872). Moreover, he examines the validity of pragmatics as a basic approach within the theories of language by referring to a large number of textbooks, research, and journals, in addition to many conferences that have talked about topics concerning deixis, speech acts, presuppositions, implicatures, conversation about discourse. He argues that many concepts like politeness, cooperative principle, context, functionalism, and culture take a critical distance (p.873). Critical studies are interested in studying the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion in language use (Wodak, 2009, p.35).

Mey (2001) suggests the term critical pragmatics for the first time in his essay entitled "*Towards a critical philosophy of language*". Mey's work is inspired by Norman Fairclough's school "Lancaster School" of critical language knowledge which examines fundamental problems that assign power in society (p.316). Language is one main tool to practice power. Critical pragmatics aims to investigate the social functions of language and its different manifestations of use (Melfa and Emeka, 2014, p.157). Thus, the critical pragmatic approach is a field of study that concentrates on the scrutinization of ideology and power in language abuse rather than language use. Within the framework of this approach, the pragmatic theories of

speech acts, Grice's maxims, reference, implicature, impoliteness, or presupposition are analyzed as the linguistic theories through which an ideology or power is represented and enacted in text or discourse (Mehdi, 2020, p.123). Three main concepts are associated with the critical pragmatic approach. These are stance, critique, and reproduction

People are cognitively designed to evaluate everything they encounter around them negatively or positively. Wodak (1989, p. xvi) holds that researchers and analysts are forced to take sides. Stance refers to the "public act by a social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means of simultaneously evaluating objects, positioning subjects (self and others), and aligning with other subjects, concerning any salient dimension of the sociocultural field" (DuBois, 2007, p. 163). Van Dijk (2001, p. 352) elaborates that stance is a basic and crucial theme and analysts should take it into their consideration. Speakers and writers have their position as far as the propositions they make (Bloor and Bloor, 2007, p. 33). They reflect their points of view, attitudes, social identity representations, or ideologies in what they produce linguistically or conceptually (p. 47). Stance may reflect the socio-cultural value system of the community one belongs to, or it may reflect the value system of the stance taker and thus it can take part in changing that system of values or ideologies. Johnstone (2008, p. 137) argues that stance (stance-taking) plays an important role in discourse production and interpretation. It includes a comparison against a norm. In this respect, a stance needs to be specified in the interpretation of discourse. This study adopts an ethically neutral stance in terms of identity representation.

The notion of 'critique' is crucial to critical studies, especially in the field of social sciences and humanities (Nonhoff, 2017, p. 2). Critical discourse analysts like Wodak, Fairclough, van Dijk, and others introduced the concept of the "political

meaning of social critique” (Reisigl, 2018, p. 50). As such, political critique is taken out to “judge the status quo e.g., a specific discourse or (dis)order of discourse, against the background of an alternative (ideal) state and preferred values, norms, standards or criteria concerning shortcomings or contradictions” (p.50). Wodak (2007, p. 209) suggests that the term critique can have different meanings that have a connection with the Frankfurt School, Marx's notions, or literary criticism. Van Eemeren et al. (2009, p. 23) argue that critique is a knowledge-based term in the first place. It is concerned with assessing issues like conflicts, inconsistencies, or contradictions in the internal structure of a text focusing on formal linguistic issues. It aims to detect problematic social and political goals that are viewed as functions of discursive practices. It seeks to uncover speakers' disguised, hidden, or contradictory intentions, aims, claims, and interests (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, p. 32). These intentions, aims, claims, or interests are liable to be inferred from the discourse or the contextual, social, and political knowledge. The main function of critique is to formulate a set of alternatives based on analyzed utterances (p.24).

Critical analysts are interested in understanding texts and the social processes that create them. They tend to think of other linguistic choices that construct the ideological manifestation as they adhere to a stance that is ethical and neutral to the issue under scrutiny (Muhammed, 2018, p. 89). They tend to propose alternatives and point out other possibilities that can be available to speakers or writers other than the ideology-loaded ones. The basic meaning of the word 'production' involves the primary act of generating whatever is being produced. Moreover, the word 'reproduction' entails the meaning of 'production again'. Reproduction is a key term in critical analysis that offers a mechanism or procedure which can be beneficial in providing alternatives to avoid expressions or utterances that are negatively characterized as ideologically-based ones (Muhammed, 2018, p. 89). The

reproduction mechanism in critical pragmatics postulates the choice of a candidate out of other various alternatives to replace the offensive one. Thus, it requires a linguistic mechanism. This study adopts the Optimality Theory approach of Prince and Smolensky (1993) because it offers an appropriate mechanism for providing a change or avoidance for the utterances carrying identity representation in the data of the study. The field of pragmatics focuses on what is communicated and how properly conveyed. The optimization procedure is based on several variables and ranked constraints. The selected, optimal proposition is the one that best satisfies the constraints. This selection is performed by the pragmatic system whose role is to interpret the semantic representation of an utterance in a given setting (Mey, 2001, p. 115). After examining the data, this study proposes the following alternatives to reproduce less negatively-ideological identity representation utterances. The set of alternatives is invited from previous work on racism by Mohammed (2018, p.54). The set of alternatives can be as follows: using a hedge, adding a word or a phrase, modifying a word or a phrase, deleting a word or a phrase, putting the statement in a form of a question, or total avoidance.

5. Relevant Pragmatic Strategies

Some pragmatic strategies are expected to be utilized in identity representation. These are speech acts, breaching maxims, reference, and impoliteness. They are presented as follows:

5.1 Speech Acts

It was Austin (1962) who put the basic tenants of the theory of speech acts. He claimed that sentences have many functions like accusing, promising, suggesting, etc. Searle (1969) made modifications to Austin's work and formulated four requirements for the successful execution of illocutions. These are the felicity

conditions that concern each speech act: propositional, preparatory, sincerity and essential. Searle (1979) classified the illocutionary acts into five classes. Directives are to fit the world to the word. Assertives try to fit the words to the world. Commissives make the speaker to fit the world to the words. Expressives emphasize psychological affairs where the speaker needs to fit the words to neither the world nor the world to the words. Declarations link between the propositional content and reality.

5.2. Maxims Breaching

Grice (1975, p. 45) suggests that the cooperative principle and its subordinate maxims are found normally in any standard conversation. They fall under three strategies: what is said, what is implicated and what is non-conventionally implicated. According to Mey (2001, p.77), floating any of the four maxims of quality, quantity, relation and manner appears either pragmatically. When people breach these maxims, figures of speech like metaphor, irony and so on may result. Making successful communication depends on the speaker's implications behind words on one hand, and on the hearer's inferences on the other (Horn, 2004, p.7). Grice (1989, p.25) argues that implicature is of two categories: conventional and non-conventional. In the case of conventional implicatures, the lexical meaning of the words determines what is implicated besides what is said. For example, *Joe is poor but happy*. It depends on particles like "but, even, too, however, yet, nevertheless, moreover, etc..." that handle non-truth-conditional aspects of lexical meaning (Horn, 2004, p.3). Non-conventional implicature, on the other hand, occurs when a hearer cannot observe one of the four maxims of the cooperative principle (p.26). The presence of non-conventional meaning works when the Gricean principle is breached; otherwise, it will be treated as conventional meaning. Linking what is mentioned above with the term of identity representation, people convey

implicature behind their identities in order to achieve certain goals in their interactions.

5.3. Reference

People usually use language to refer to persons or things (Mey, 2001, p. 52). The speaker utters his words within a certain context. Reference is a type of verbal indication to a certain object or person that someone refers to or wishes to speak about (Carlson, 2004, p.76). One main type of referencing is deictic expressions. Deixis can be classified into personal like “I, me, you”, spatial like “here, there” and temporal like “now, then” (Levinson, 1983, p. 54). Other linguistic expressions of reference can be proper nouns like “Shakespeare” or noun phrases like “the White House”. The purpose of these expressions depends on the speaker's intention and the listener's inference (Yule, 1996, p.17). According to Kortt and Perry (2011, p.64), deictic expressions are elements used to convey a piece of information, beliefs, thoughts, intentions and ideas in certain situations. For example, using “I” is an important representation for the speaker. In terms of identity representation, one may refer to the ideology of in-group by using expressions like “we, our, us” to denote his own identity or uses “they, their, them” to refer to others' identity or out-groups.

5.4. Impoliteness

Impoliteness is a behavioral attack that happens intentionally by a speaker, and/or the hearer infers that the speaker has made an offense to him. Thus, impoliteness comes as a combination of these two cases or even one of them (Culpeper, 2011, p.19). Building on Culpeper's (1996, p. 356) work of impoliteness, these strategies represent the main model of impoliteness strategies. The most relevant ones to this paper are:

1. Bald on record impoliteness which is performed in a clear and direct way without any ambiguity in circumstances where face is not irrelevant or minimized.
2. Positive impoliteness is designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants. For example, ignoring others or failing to acknowledge the other's presence and so forth.
3. Negative impoliteness is primarily concerned with damaging the addressee's negative face like frightening, ridiculing, or belittling the other.
4. Off-record impoliteness have strategies that come to damage an interactant's face indirectly by means of implicature (Culpeper, 2005, p. 44).

This last strategy has been introduced by Bousfield (2008, p.138) as a modification to the basic strategies of impoliteness of Culpeper (1996).

6. The Analytical Framework

The analytical framework developed in this study is divided into three levels. The first level is about the type of identity which includes the national, personal, political, cultural, racial, religious, and gender identities. The second level examines the pragmatic aspects to be investigated. These four theories are: speech acts (Searle, 1969), reference (Korta and Perry, 2011), impoliteness (Culpeper, 1996) and maxims breaching (Grice 1975). The third level introduces a more detailed scrutinization for these macro pragmatic strategies. Speech acts are divided into commissives, expressives, directives, and representatives. Declaratives are excluded as they are not expected to be found in the data. Reference hosts proper nouns, deixis, and descriptions. Maxim breaching has metaphor, hyperbole, personification, and oxymoron. Impoliteness is classified into: on- record, off- record, positive and negative impoliteness. Finally, the three levels are encapsulated inside

the critical pragmatic mechanisms of critique, stance and reproduction. Since the whole critical pragmatic analysis is achieved under the mechanisms of stance and critique in all the extracts, only the reproduction mechanism is activated in each extract. The aim is to suggest another alternative that minimizes the negatively loaded ideological representation of identity in the data. Figure (1) figures out these details.

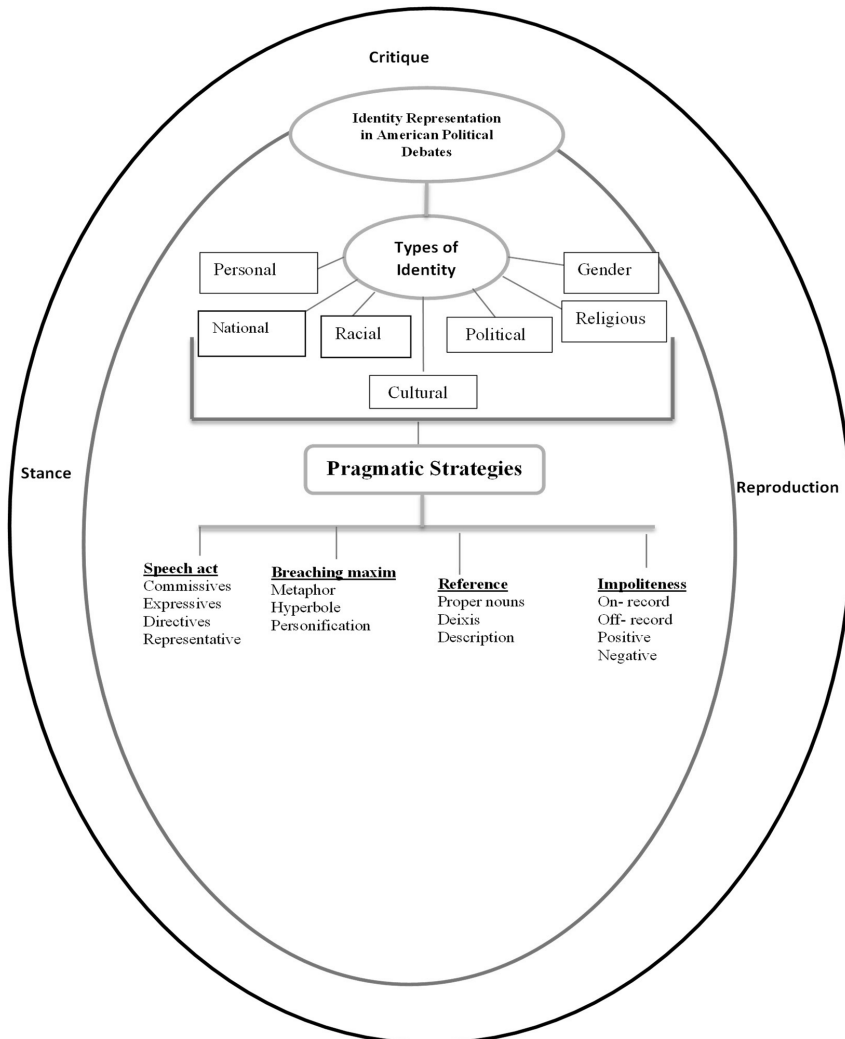


Figure (1): The Analytical Framework of American Identity Representation in Political Debates

7. Data and Analysis

The data are twelve extracts quoted from three American political debates. They are confined to the years from 2015 to 2020. These extracts focus on identity representation which are taken from famous American politicians during their election campaigns. Conducting a critical pragmatic analysis requires a close inspection of the context and the related contextual factors of the data under investigation. The purpose is to form a detailed comprehensive idea about the data. The contextual factors in this study are adopted from Hymes (1974). Only those relevant factors are highlighted from his SPEAKING model. These are settings, participants and the end. Genre is specified in all the data as the analysis concentrates on debates. Here are some representative examples.

7.1 First Debate

Democratic candidates took the stage to participate in a campaign for the 2016 presidential election in the heart of Las Vegas. A group of candidates is clashing with presidency campaign rivals. The contextual factors capture the information of this debate in Table (1) below.

Table (1): The contextual Factors of the First Debate

Contextual Factors	Description
Settings	October 13. 2015, Las Vegas
Participants	Political candidates
End	Presidential election

Extract (1)

"We're the United States of America, and it's our job to reign in the excesses of capitalism so that it doesn't run amuck and doesn't cause the kind of inequities that we're seeing in our economic system, but we

would be making a grave mistake to turn our backs on what built the greatest middle class in the history of the world."

Analysis

Hillary reflects her political identity in a rhetorical style that creates a sense of control and dominance. She refers to herself saying 'We are the United State' hinting at her social power as a leader claiming that it is her job to enhance the economic system. It is common knowledge now that political candidates in their rival elections campaigns make commitments. One of these vows is to do something in the future to improve the system. Hillary criticizes the current economic system and assures that she wants to change it in the future. Hillary feels dissatisfied with the current economic system and she issues the expressive speech act of criticizing (see Nashmi, & Mehdi, 2022, p. 23). In breaching the maxims, she supports her identity when using a hyperbolic expression, i.e., 'grave mistake'. Thus, she compares the depth of the current mistake if they turn their backs without changing the economic system. In this way she violates the **quantity maxim** to indicate the big mistake concerning American economy. In terms of reference, she uses the personal deixis like 'we, our' and the proper noun which is 'the United State' as a representation to her party. The reproduction mechanism may replace 'grave' with the word "big" to minimize the effect of her metaphor.

Extract (2)

"I have always supported Affirmative Action for African-Americans."

Analysis

The racial identity is indirectly depicted in Jim Webb's utterance, when saying 'African Americans'. He claims that they are part of American society though they are treated as minorities. His claim implies the sense of discrimination (in-group vs. out-group). He uses superior status in supporting them to indicate their vulnerability.

In terms of racism, Webb's words (like black or African-American) reflect his power and superiority towards those minorities. Those minorities are treated as being weak, poor and unemployed in the American society.

Webb represents his racial identity via the expressive speech act of belittling (See Mehdi, 2020, p. 128). His words are offensive because he implicates that African American are vulnerable and they are in need of help. In terms of reference strategies, he uses personal deixis 'I'. He utilizes the personal description as well by referring to the African- American people. In terms of impoliteness, the phrase 'African Americans' falls under the categorization of off-record impoliteness. His implication that he always supports the African -American means that they are helpless and weak. The reproduction mechanism may opt to replace such a phrase like 'African Americans' by saying that "he always wants to help all those who need help".

Extract (3)

"I am very comfortable that I am the most qualified person by standing up here today to be your Commander-in-Chief"

Analysis

In this extract, Jim Webb spells out his personal identity as a means to win the presidential race. He focuses on his social power with the expression "*the most qualified*". His intention is to introduce the positive side of his personality. Webb wants to present himself as the best leader among other candidates. The idea portrays his positive picture and implicates that other candidates are not qualified as he is.

Webb reflects his identity through the expressive speech act of boasting. He feels proud of himself. Webb presents himself as the most qualified person to be the representative of his country. In terms of referencing, he utilizes the personal deixis

'I'. He intends to drive people's attention and gain supporters during his campaign. He uses spatial and temporal deictic expressions (here, today). The reproduction mechanism may delete the emphasis imposed by the word 'most'.

Extract (4)

"Black lives matter, and we have a lot of work to do to reform our criminal justice system, and to address race relations in our country."

Analysis

Bernie Sanders identifies his racial identity when he uses the word 'black' to refer to 'Black people'. This word is considered unacceptable towards those people. It implies the racial distinction between Black and White people in America. Such distinction indicates the superiority of the White people in American society. Sanders exploits social power to adopt reforms like solving social issues and combat institutional racism from top to bottom. The implication is that Black people are weak, poor and they need help and support.

Sanders reflects that within the expressive speech act of criticizing. He expresses his discomfort against the criminal justice system. He intends to reform this state of affairs. He insists to stand against any movements that endeavor to threaten the security of his nation. In reference strategies, he uses the personal deixis as part of the noun phrase 'our county'. Besides, Sanders reflects his racial attitudes by using the descriptive noun Black. In terms of impoliteness strategies, the phrase 'Black' falls under the **off-record** offence. In terms of reproduction, Sanders may replace 'Black' with the word citizen to minimize the effect of his words.

7.2 Second Debate

In November 2019, The Democrats Party held its 5th presidential debate in Atlanta. A group of Democrats elucidates their identity to their supporters to gain

more votes. The contextual factors capture the whole information of this debate as shown in Table (2).

Table (2): The Contextual Factors of the Second Debate

Contextual Factors	Description
Settings	Nonmember. 21. 2019, Atlanta
Participants	Political leaders
End	Presidential election

Extract (5)

"I think it is very, very important that we have a president that's going to put our country first. I was thinking about this when I was at the Carter Presidential Museum, and on the wall are etched the words of Walter Mondale when he looked back at their four years, not perfect, and he said this, "We told the truth. We obey the law. We kept the peace." We told the truth, we obeyed the law. We kept the peace. That is the minimum that we should expect in a President of the United States."

Analysis

Amy Klobuchar, the Democratic candidate, opens her debate by using the phrase 'I think'. She urges her supporters to go and vote for a new president. She uses the adverbial intensifier 'very, very' to give more emphasis to the necessity of choosing a new president whose policy is to be different from the current one. Amy thinks that choosing a good president who cares for his people and country is indispensable. She tries to present the positive face of the Democratic Party by attacking the Republican president, Donald Trump.

Amy expresses her political identity in this the debate by the expressive speech act of criticizing. She insists that a new president will put the country in real

consideration. Klobuchar reinforces her speech by using the linguistic marker 'Walter Mondale', the vice president of America (1977/1981). She presents this political and Democratic figure to the public as a reference in order to remind her supporters to choose the suitable president. The reproduction mechanism may delete the emphasis in the word 'very'.

Extract (6)

"We as Democrats need to fight for a just taxation system. But as I travel around the country, we Democrats also have to talk about how to grow wealth as well."

Analysis

Senator Cory Booker, the Democratic candidate, introduces his electoral program to the public. The linguistic trigger 'Democratic' entails his political identity. Booker highlights the necessity to change the economic system, by assuring that the Democratic Party has a new vision in solving the economic crisis in United State.

Booker uses the directive speech act of requesting. He wants to change this crisis in future. He refers to the party he represents by using the personal deixis 'we' to identify the ideology of being different from others. Thus, the personal deixis reflects the comparison between the Democratic (the positive party), and the Republican (negative party). This comparison is commonly used between politicians during their campaigns to win the presidential race. The reproduction mechanism may replace 'Democrats' with word 'senators.'

Extract (7)

"I think a woman's qualified to be president and there's no reason why. If you think the woman is the most qualified person now you should vote for them."

Analysis

Joe Biden, the Democratic candidate, is asking his supporters to vote for the qualified person. He touches on the distinctive features between men and women in power and dominance by questioning the eligibility of women to be the next leader by saying that if you find women quite suitable to occupy this position, then you can vote for them. Biden explicates his gender identity. Men think that they are more powerful than women due to their biological features. They can control their minds and not their passion, as women do.

Biden manifests this identity within the directive speech act of requesting "*now you should vote for them.*" In terms of referencing, Biden refers to the comparison between men and women, by using personal deixis 'I' giving his opinion to his supporters to think well before they vote. He uses his superiority towards women and creates a sense of in-group comparisons. In terms of reproduction, Biden could have put his utterance in the form of offering. Giving voters the right in choosing their president whether it is a man or women erases his discrimination against women candidates.

Extract (8)

"We have a criminal living in the White House, and there is no question that in 2020, the biggest issue before us, until we get to that tender moment is justice is on the ballot."

Analysis

Kamala Harris, an American politician, uses strong language to identify her racial identity. She expresses her negative attitude against the current president by saying 'criminal'. Harris introduces her racial attitudes because of Trump's disrespected attitudes against African Americans that resulted in widespread discontent among Americans.

Harris issues the expressive speech act of accusation (See Nashmi & Mehdi, 2022, p. 27). She considers Trump a bad president. She assures that he is unfavorable because of his irrational behaviors against minorities ‘African American, and Hispanic’. Moreover, her claim is considered an invitation to change this state of affairs. In terms of referencing, she uses the proper noun, the White House, as a means to attack the Republican President Trump, the place where he resides. In impoliteness strategies, Harris directly says that there is a criminal in the White House. Thus, the phrase criminal is a bald on-record offense. The reproduction mechanism may opt to avoid such a presentation for the public.

7. 3 Third Debate

On September 29, 2020, the first presidential debate is held between Trump and Biden in Cleveland, Ohio. Trump is the representative of the Republicans and Biden is of the Democrats. The two candidates are running to win the Presidential election. The debate was moderated by Chris Wallace of Fox News. The contextual factors are shown in Table (3).

Table 3: The Contextual Factors of the Third Debate

Contextual Factors	Description
Settings	September 9, 2020, Ohio
Participants	Political leaders
End	Presidential election

Extract (9)

“I will tell you very simply. We won the election. Elections have consequences. We have the Senate, we have the White House, and we have a phenomenal nominee respected by all. Top, top academic, good in every way. Good in every way.”

Analysis

In this extract, Trump replies to a question by the debate moderator. His answer is full of confidence, confirming his determination to win the election. Trump feels very proud of himself. He thinks that he will win the elections. Using linguistic markers like: 'election, the Senate, and the White House' entail the political identity.

Trump confirms his political identity via the expressive speech act of boasting. Trump claims that he is respected by all. Thus, he believes that he is suitable for the presidency. In terms of maxims breaching, Trump repeats words like 'good in every way. Good in every way. This repetition indicates hyperbole. It violates the maxim of quantity. In terms of reference strategies, he uses the personal deixis 'we' which indicates the in-group comparisons. It refers to the higher status of the Republicans for being well-qualified. Moreover, he uses proper nouns 'the Senate, the White House' which means they are suitable to occupy the presidency. The reproduction mechanism may modify the utterance into a form of expectation instead of boasting. Trump can say: (we expect to win the election).

Extract (10)

"The American people have a right to have a say in who the Supreme Court nominee is and that says occurs when they vote for United States Senators and when they vote for the President of United States."

Analysis

Here in this extract, Biden, the Democratic candidate, urges voters to choose the right president who represents them to reflect his political identity. He clarifies the reason behind standing here to be the representative of the American people. In other words, Biden directs voters to decide who is the right person who can represent them and their demands.

Biden urges the American people to vote for him by using the directive speech act of requesting. He wants them to go and vote for the senator who will be the president of the United States. Indirectly, Biden asks his supporters to vote for the right nominee who will represent them next time. In terms of referencing, the speaker refers to different things like 'the Supreme Court and the Senator of the United States'. These phrases are conventionally known by American society; therefore, these words involve the election process. The reproduction mechanism can modify the utterance. People can have the right to say what they want in every aspect of life. It is not only restricted to the election and voting process.

Extract (11)

"The party is me. Right now, I am in the Democratic Party. The platform of the Democratic Party is what I have approved of."

Analysis

In this utterance, Biden tells the audience that he is the representative of the Democratic Party. He introduces his political affiliation to this Party. Biden replies to Trump's claim that the Democratic nominee is not in control of his party.

Biden expresses his political identity by using the expressive speech act of praising. He praises himself in front of the public for all the achievements that he has made to his party. He explains this state of affairs by using a reference strategy. He uses the personal deixis 'I' to explicate his social power in society which makes him feel different from others, especially the Republicans. As it is understood, Biden intends to reflect in-group ideology, utilizing the temporal deixis 'Right now' to represent the time that he occupies this position. The reproduction mechanism can replace the use of personal deixis 'me and I' and say the Democratic Party represents his people.

Extract (12):

"You did a crime bill, 1994, where you call them super predators. African-Americans are super predators and they've never forgotten it. They've never forgotten it."

Analysis

In this extract, Trump, the Republican candidate, shows a racial conflict by using tough language when addressing his opponent, the Democratic rival Biden. Moreover, Trump makes use of this situation to remind the African-American people of Biden's racial attitudes. Trump accuses Biden that he has committed crimes against the African-American community. Trump insists on his accusation while Biden denies it. In addition, Trump exploits the situation to gain more voices. He confirms his claim by using the speech act of accusation. He accuses Biden because of his bad and negative deeds and opinions against minorities in America calling those with negative names like 'super predators'. Trump believes that this act is inappropriate and brings unfavorable consequences to those minorities.

In beaching maxims, Trump uses the metaphorical expression 'predators'. It is used to compare people with animals. This reflects aggressive attitudes against Black people. It violates the maxim of quality. In terms of referencing, the use of the personal deixis "them" reflects the racial identity, based on the ideology of "*Us vs. Them*". In terms of impoliteness, Trump assures that African-American people will never forget the offense when they are named 'predators' by Biden. This expression is considered a bald on-record offense towards the African-American people. In reproduction mechanism, Trump might opt to avoid such phrases as 'super predators' to minimize the effect of insulting.

8. Findings and Discussions

The analysis above investigates the different types of identity representation that are manifested in three American political debates. This section presents the results of the critical pragmatic analysis in terms of the research questions in this study. The analysis reveals that national, political, personal gender and racial identities appear in the data unevenly. The cultural and religious identities show no appearance in the three debates. Results show that American politicians emphasize their national and political identities in debates. The results show that the pragmatic phenomena that are utilized in presenting identity in American debates are speech acts, breaching the maxim, referencing, and impoliteness.

9. Conclusions

The analysis comes up with the following conclusions:

1. Several types of identities are identified in the political debates. National and political identities are highly used in American debates.
2. Racial identity shows when Black or African American are rival candidates. Religious identity does not appear as it is not important in the context of debates.
3. Politicians try to present their national identity to convey their patriotism to their nation (America) which is the best and strongest among other nations in their points of view.
4. American politicians tend to represent their political identity to convince the audience to vote for them or their political parties so that they may win the race and/or their parties as well.
5. American politicians utilize several speech acts in representing their identities like criticizing or belittling their rivals and promising their voters.

6. American politicians need to refer to themselves, their parties, and their nation, and thus they utilize some reference strategies.
7. Maxim breaching is rarely utilized in debates. Politicians need direct clear language that addresses their different audiences. Figures of speech that result from breaching cooperative maxims are used as persuasive devices. However, they require a longer mental processing and debates are speed in rhythm.
8. American politicians present the positive aspects of their parties during the period of election to win voices in their campaigns. Simultaneously, they present negative ones against their rivals. This is associated with impoliteness.
9. Politicians make use of impoliteness strategies to present inequity, and racial attitudes against other nations, parties, or immigrants.

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المستخلص

يمكن تمثيل هوية الفرد من خلال لغته، وتعد هذه قضية مهمة في الدراسات الاجتماعية والسياسية خاصة في السنوات القليلة الماضية. حيث يرتبط تمثيل هوية المرء بأيدولوجيته لأن الطريقة التي نبني بها هوياتنا أو نمثلها تكون متأصلة في مخزوننا الأيدولوجي. تهتم الدراسات النقدية بالقضايا الأيدولوجية، وفي هذا الصدد، تعتبر التداولية النقدية نوعاً من التحليل الذي يستخدم النظريات التداولية لتكوين صورة ذهنية عن انعكاس النواحي النقدي بالاستخدام اللغوي. لم يُدرس تمثيل الهوية وفقاً للنموذج النقدي من قبل، حسب علمنا. لذا تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى بحث كيفية تمثيل السياسيين الأمريكيين لهوياتهم في خطابهم السياسي. ويتم تحليل مقتطفات من ثلاث مناظرات قام بالقاءها ساسة مشهورين للفترة من 2015 إلى 2020. وعليه، يحاول البحث الحالي الإجابة عن أسئلة مثل: ما هي أنواع الهوية المحتملة التي يتم تمثيلها في المناظرات السياسية الأمريكية؟ وما هي الظواهر التداولية الأكثر استخداماً في بيان الهوية في السياقات قيد التحقيق؟ من المفترض أن يستغل هؤلاء السياسيون تمثيلات الهوية المختلفة لكسب الأصوات، حيث يستعملون استراتيجيات تداولية مختلفة للتعبير عن هوياتهم. ويظهر التحليل أن الهوية الوطنية والسياسية والشخصية تبرز في البيانات قيد الدراسة. وأن أفعال الكلام، والاشارة المرجعية و اللاتأدب و خرق قواعد التعاون هي أكثر الظواهر التي يتم الافادة منها لإبراز هوية المرء في المناظرات السياسية الأمريكية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تداولية نقدية، الهوية، مناظرات سياسية، استراتيجيات تداولية

