

A REPERTOIRE OF PERSUASION STRATEGIES TECHNIQUES IN SPOKEN DISCOURSE

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استراتيجيات الإقناع في الخطاب الشفهي

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المديرة العامة لتربية الانبار

Abstract:

The process of persuasion is fundamental to interactive communication, and its course is inevitably influenced by previous assumptions and anticipated discourses, with its success hinging on the abilities of the audience, including their linguistic and knowledge skills. Discourse is never achieved in a vacuum; it is always connected to preceding or succeeding contexts. Nonetheless, the strategy of persuasion is utilized to fulfill the practical objectives of the sender, which varies across different areas of discourse. This is why we emphasize the diverse aims of discourse and determine the most effective strategies for achieving them. Denzel Washington's speeches, specifically 'Put God First' and 'Fall Forward', serve as exemplary cases of this selection process. Moreover, the research particularly examines these questions: (1) What foundational elements of persuasion are evident in Denzel Washington's speeches? (2) Does Washington employ a consistent set of persuasive techniques in both of his speeches? Each question was addressed individually, and the findings were derived from applying the frameworks of Cialdini (1993), Breuer and Naphthine (2005), and Huggard et al. (2006)

Keywords: linguistic strategies, persuasion strategies, persuasion techniques, discourse, communication process

أن عملية الإقناع تشكل عنصراً أساسياً في عملية الاتصال التفاعلي، ويتأثر مسارها حتماً بالافتراضات السابقة والخطابات المتوقعة، ويعتمد نجاحها على قدرات الجمهور، بما في ذلك مهاراتهم اللغوية والمعرفية. لا يتم إنجاز الخطاب في فراغ؛ فهو مرتبط دائماً بالسياقات السابقة أو اللاحقة. ومع ذلك، تُستخدم استراتيجيات الإقناع لتحقيق الأهداف العملية للمرسل، والتي تختلف عبر مجالات مختلفة من الخطاب. ولهذا السبب نؤكد على الأهداف المتنوعة للخطاب ونحدد الاستراتيجيات الأكثر فعالية لتحقيقها. إن خطابات دينزل واشنطن، وتحديدًا "ضع الله أولاً في كل ما تفعله" و"السقوط للأمام"، تشكل حالات نموذجية لعملية الاختيار هذه. وعلاوة على ذلك، يدرس البحث بشكل خاص هذه الأسئلة: (١) ما هي العناصر الأساسية للإقناع الواضحة في خطابات دينزل واشنطن؟ (٢) هل يستخدم واشنطن مجموعة متسقة من تقنيات الإقناع في كل من خطابيه؟ وقد تم تناول كل سؤال على حدة، وتم استخلاص النتائج من خلال تطبيق أطر سيالديني (١٩٩٣). مفتاح الكلمات: استراتيجيات علم اللغة - استراتيجيات الإقناع - تقنية الإقناع - تحليل - عملية التواصل

Introduction

Discourse refers to the connections between language, discourse itself, and society, examining various relationships, including how language relates to power, ideology, and culture, as well as presenting several theoretical levels and cognitive challenges (Fairclough, 1992). It encompasses topics such as the origins of language, the authority it holds, and the supporting authorities, alongside the distinctions that linguistics draws between language, speech, discourse, and constructed units for both internal and external discourse and linguistics. Furthermore, it addresses some epistemological questions brought forth by this relationship within a knowledge domain striving to define its methods, concepts, and issues (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 2007; Tarish, 2019; Obaid, 2025). This field intersects with linguistics and the sociology of language, presenting numerous challenges, notably the ongoing debate among linguists and sociologists regarding the social essence of language (van Dijk, 2007; Tarish, 2019) Discourse strategies are linguistic semantics or the use of language in organized

and consistent ways that suit the requirements of the context. This is what is interpreted by linguists that the discourse performed is planned from a continuous and conscious basis (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 2007; Tarish, 2019). As for the multiplicity of discourse strategies, including solidarity, directive, insinuating, and persuasion strategies, which are the main objective of the completion of this study. The persuasion factor is the most important in the discourse strategy, and the act of persuasion is the essence of the interactive communicative process (Cialdini, 1993 & 1984, Breuer and Naphthine, 2005; Huggard et al., 2006; and Aydin-Düzgit and Rumelili, 2019; Watkins, 2007). Directing it is inevitably based on prior assumptions and expected discourses, and its achievement depends on the competence of the addressee and his linguistic and scientific capabilities (Aydin-Düzgit and Rumelili, 2019; Chaiken, et.al., 1996). There is no communication without influence, and there is no influence without persuasion (Chaiken, et.al., 1996; Obaid, 2025; Cialdini, 1984). However, the persuasive function is one of the functions of rhetoric. If rhetoric is the art of persuasion through discourse, then there is no discourse accomplished in isolation from other contexts that precede or follow it (Cialdini, 1993). The strategy of persuasion is employed in order to achieve the utilitarian objectives of the sender according to the multiplicity of discourse fields Cialdini, 1993, Breuer and Naphthine, 2005; Huggard et al., 2006). The elected might be used it to persuade his/her constituents, such as, the teacher to persuade his students, the merchant to persuade his customers, and the child to convince his parents of a request. In this context, this article contains the results and discussion of the study. The results have been presented quantitatively, then qualitatively, with the use of extracts and paradigmatic analyses of the selected extracts retrieved from two of Denzel Washington's speeches 'Put God First' and 'Fall Forward'. In both cases, the results have been guided by identifying the relevance of Cialdini's (1993), Breuer and Naphthine's (2005), and Huggard et al.'s (2006) models. Afterward, the discussion provides a context for the corpus and relates them to issues of genre and meaning. Any corpus of sufficient complexity that contains persuasive rhetorical elements can be approached and analyzed from any of a variety of explanatory or exploratory paradigms (Swanepoel, 2006). The larger purpose of applying Cialdini (1993), Breuer and Naphthine (2005), and Huggard et al. (2006) to the Denzel Washington corpus is to explore the persuasive characteristics and qualities of this corpus through alternative means, thus providing a broad appreciation of the persuasive basis of this corpus. As a reminder, quantitative insights have been presented first in order to provide a more relevant focus for the subsequent qualitative results. In mixed methods research, the sequential explanatory approach has been described as follows: Within the sequential explanatory strategy, the researcher collects and analyzes quantitative data and then collects and analyzes qualitative data. Integration of the data occurs during the interpretation phase. The purpose of this approach is to assist in explaining and interpreting quantitative data. It is useful when unexpected quantitative results are revealed. (Grove et al., 2012, p. 209) Corpus analysis carried out with quantitative means revealed aspects of Denzel Washington's persuasive technique that can be described as unexpected. To the researcher's knowledge, Denzel Washington's graduation speeches have not been the subject of any previous corpus or rhetorical analyses. As such, any findings generated by quantitative means could have been expected to be novel. The use of a sequential explanatory approach, therefore, provided the advantage of quantitatively identifying the aspects of Denzel Washington's technique that served as focal points for the subsequent identification and qualitative exploration of extracts in the second subsection of results.

Literature review

This research utilizes an eclectic framework to identify the primary persuasive techniques found within the study's data. This framework incorporates techniques outlined in Cialdini's (1993) model, which includes elements such as contrast, reciprocity, consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity. Breuer and Naphthine's (2005) model contains elements like action, adjective usage, inclusive/exclusive language, rhetorical questions, alliteration/assonance, generalizations, and connotations. Huggard et al.'s (2006) model features techniques such as anecdotes, attacks/praise, exaggeration, graphs/diagrams, irony, language style, metaphor, repetition, reason/logic, simile, and evidence. Therefore, this section organizes the techniques in chronological order, from the earliest to the most recent, as detailed below:

Cialdini's Persuasive Techniques

Cialdini (1993) presented seven techniques as being basic to social influence (Walton, 2007:24-25), which included,

1. Contrast involves presenting a persuasive message by comparing two or more items in a sequence in order to sway others' opinions.
2. Reciprocity is a method where a proponent makes it more likely for a respondent to consider or accept their argument by creating a sense of obligation to the proponent prior to the argument being made.

- 3.Consistency is the approach of leveraging a person's prior commitments or encouraging them to agree to statements that bolster the conclusion you wish to persuade them to accept.
- 4.Social proof offers evidence regarding the beliefs of others as justification for accepting a claim or following a suggested course of action.
- 5.Liking refers to the favorable perception that the person or group being persuaded has towards the persuader.
- 6.Authority relies on utilizing expert opinions or established authorities as a persuasive technique.
- 7.Scarcity employs the strategy of indicating to the respondent that the item they are considering purchasing is limited in availability, perhaps due to competitive demand.

These seven strategies are categorized as Cognitive Shortcuts, which means they lead directly to a conclusion when there isn't enough time for a more in-depth analytical thought process. According to Cialdini's principle, these strategies are applied in scenarios where concrete evidence is inadequate to address a problem or make a decision through more careful cognitive evaluation, allowing for a swift decision based on an intuition or presumption (Walton, 2007: 25). Therefore, when employed by the debater at the right time during discussions, they can serve as effective persuasive methods (Walton, 2007: 25).

Breuer and Naphine's Persuasive Techniques

Breuer and Naphine (2005) identified seven persuasive strategies (Sallomi and Nayel, 2020: 12-13), which comprise:

- 1.Action: The speaker often encourages the audience to take action, frequently by instilling a sense of urgency with phrases like (now, today, immediately).
- 2.Adjective: The speaker tends to embellish nouns with adjectives that are closely associated with those nouns.
- 3.Inclusive and Exclusive Language: Inclusive language, for instance, uses terms like (we, our, and us) to foster a sense of unity between the speaker/writer and the audience/reader, suggesting that the speaker/writer is addressing only them. Conversely, exclusive language employs "them" to persuade by differentiating the reader/audience.
- 4.Rhetorical Questions: These are inquiries posed for effect rather than answers, where the response is apparent and aimed at guiding the audience or reader towards a specific conclusion.
- 5.Alliteration and Assonance: To emphasize key points in an argument, initial consonant sounds (alliteration) or vowel sounds (assonance) are often repeated.
- 6.Generalization: The speaker makes a broad assertion claiming that what is being stated applies to most individuals or the majority, based on its truth in certain instances.
- 7.Connotations (Associations): Persuasive speakers generally choose their words with care, selecting terms that carry emotional implications.

Huggard et al.'s Persuasive Techniques

Huggard et al. (2006) introduced new methods detailed by Sallomi and Nayel (2020: 13-15), which encompassed:

- 1.Anecdote: This involves sharing a brief story or account of an amusing or intriguing incident, often evoking sympathy from the reader/listener and making them more open to the presented idea. It can introduce a character and position the reader/listener to either endorse or reject that character.
- 2.Attacks/Praise: Occasionally, the writer or reader may criticize or commend a specific idea. This method emphasizes the perspective of the writer or speaker.
- 3.Exaggeration: The speaker may present their case with undue emphasis; such exaggeration can serve to ridicule opposing views, create a shock effect, or invoke fear.
- 4.Graphs and Diagrams: Utilization of diagrams or graphs can enhance persuasion. They serve to clarify and interpret information, presenting the argument in a more accessible way that appears scientific and credible.
- 5.Irony: A speaker might present ironic situations where the intended or implied meaning diverges, often contrasting with the literal interpretation.
- 6.Language Style: The type of language chosen to align with the speaker's intentions is a technique employed for persuasion in arguments. This may vary from formal to informal, poetic, literary, informative, plain, elaborate, reasoned, etc.
- 7.Metaphor: The application of imagery in arguments refers to comparing one thing to another. This approach enables the speaker to reinforce a message without simple repetition; the chosen image captures interest and engages the audience.

8.Repetition: The speaker can strengthen an argument by reiterating letters, words, phrases, and sentences. This technique is valuable as it helps the speaker's viewpoint linger in the listeners' minds.

9.Reason and Logic: Arguments may be constructed progressively through reasonable and logical justifications. In this manner, the speaker supports each major point and appeals to the listener's reasoning rather than their emotions.

10. Simile (Analogy): Analogies function as a means of reasoning where one thing is compared to another to clarify a specific point or issue, often utilizing the words 'like' or 'as ...as'.

11. Evidence / Proof: This involves providing evidence of others' opinions as justification for endorsing a proposition or following a suggested course of action.

Corpus collected from two speeches '*Put God First*' and '*Fall Forward*' that Denzel Washington addressed before the college graduates during the commencement ceremony at Dillard University on May 9, 2015. The data is included in the form of #18 extracts which can be useful in the analysis. The following corpus (#18 extracts) that used for the analysis,

Methodology

The corpus analyzed and evaluated through the application of three sections: first, Cialdini's (1993) model, second, Breuer and Naphine's (2005) model, and third, Huggard et al.'s (2006) model. The use of three analytical approaches allows for the identification of the main persuasive elements of speeches widely described as persuasive. As such, the primary intent is to determine why Denzel Washington's speeches are persuasive. The secondary intent is to compare the speeches to determine whether Denzel Washington's repertoire of persuasive techniques is similar. The results were statistically analyzed and visually presented.

Results: Qualitative Explorations

In this subsection of the results, extracts from Denzel Washington's corpus have been explored to better document and explore how Denzel Washington applies persuasive techniques.

Theory applied to data

Consider extract #1 in light of consistency, which, in this extract, overlaps with repetition: Repetition is, in fact, the simplest form of consistency in persuasion, because repetition unambiguously signals the consistency of both the message and the messenger. In a more sophisticated rhetorical approach, consistency could have been achieved by paraphrasing or by approaching the same point through conceptually related by syntactically different means. However, Denzel Washington's consistency is rooted in a much simpler approach, one whose basis is repetition Cialdini (1993) noted that the strategy of liking was based on applying different methods to signal the speaker's liking of the audience. One of the bases of liking recognized in Cialdini's book is that of contact and cooperation (Cialdini, 1993, p. 151). The extract #2 illustrates how Denzel Washington used contact and cooperation as a means of establishing and strengthening liking. Contrast as a persuasive technique also found out in the Extract #3. Cialdini (1993) demonstrated that contrastive technique is a series of words in speech in which a persuasive message is offered by comparing two or more things in order to influence others. In this situation, he tried to create a contrast by making a description to the between happiness and no happiness to give it higher status or favoring it as a preferred position for him, or the contrast between good and bad, joy and misery, as well as between failure and successfulness. This technique is considered one of the means that affects the listener, leaving an effect that is tough to erase from memory about the orator. There is a huge difference between persuasion and manipulation. Persuasion strengthens the position of all involved. It is a positive social endeavor that directs the recipient of the message to accept the truth Cialdini (1993). Humans value equality and balance to some extent. This means that humans do not like to feel indebted to others. In general, when people have these social obligations, they try to settle them. This persuasive technique called Reciprocity or the favor will be returned Cialdini (1993). As I found out that reciprocity as a persuasive strategy is eminent in Denzel Washington speeches #1 and #2. Reciprocity can be used to influence the behavior of others. As shown in the Extract #4, I discovered that the technique of reciprocity serves to convey what included the exchanges between him and his mother. There is no expectation of returning the favor; Instead, Denzel Washington is simply relaying what he did to millions of people based on the assumption that people would do the same for them. Scarcity, from a persuasion and influence perspective technique means to increase interest in the orator thoughts, he/she may benefit from decreasing its availability (or at least creating a sense of scarcity) Cialdini (1993). Nonetheless, the principle of scarcity basically states that everything that is rare is made, and when it is revealed that something is rare or difficult to obtain, the first thing that comes to mind is that this

thing must be of value Cialdini (1993). In the extract #5. shows that Denzel Washington provides positive thoughts what he acquired from his life experiences as a successful movie star. Herein, He creates a sense of scarcity by increasing interest his thoughts about providing a motive for success, and not despair of colliding with the wall of failure. Humans are social by nature and generally feel it is important to adhere to the norms of a social group. This means that when it comes to making a decision, people often look around to see what other people are doing, before making a decision. Through the extract #6., Denzel Washington tried to include in his speech a touching example as proof of the courage he gained from his mother's support when he failed in college and made another decision after failure. It is a bit difficult to use the consensus principle or social proof from a personal perspective in the world of successful work, but by managing your reputation and personal notoriety, it may be possible to do so. One of the bases of liking recognized in Cialdini's book is that of contact and cooperation (Cialdini, 1993, p. 151). The extract #7. shows how Denzel Washington used communication and cooperation as a technique of establishing and strengthening liking. The next extract shows how Denzel Washington used communication and cooperation of liking as a technique of establishing and strengthening toward the listeners. Specifically, when he mentioned the woman who opened the gate to success for him. It might seem quite clear, but individuals are more often swayed and convinced by those they have positive feelings towards than by those they do not. Considering human behavior, people tend to have a preference for those who offer compliments and maintain a harmonious relationship, rather than for those who do not. This implies that when an audience holds a favorable view of someone, they are more inclined to concur with their opinions. However, the authority principle is also demonstrated in this excerpt, where Denzel Washington shares the valuable insights he gained from his mother. He conveyed to the audience, "the most crucial aspect is that what she imparted to me, and what she expressed that day, has remained with me ever since." Those who possess authority, credibility, and expertise in their respective areas or in life at large wield greater influence and persuasiveness compared to those lacking these qualities. Part of the explanation for this is that authority and credibility contribute significantly to the foundation of trust. When we have confidence in people, we are more apt to follow them. As a prominent actor, Denzel Washington encounters significant challenges when addressing a large crowd of college students, particularly regarding the challenge of connection. To the students, Denzel Washington may seem to belong to an entirely different realm. However, in the second excerpt, he closes the gap (and thus fosters rapport) by bridging the distance between himself and his audience. Denzel Washington portrays the audience as possessing the power of being able to scrutinize, critique, or ignore him, whereas he portrays himself as being nervous and powerless. This strategy is effective in applying Cialdini's (1993) technique of liking because it places Denzel Washington and his audience in extremely close contact. In fact, in jokingly asking the audience to not look at their phones or scratch their backs, Denzel Washington is also explicitly calling for cooperation from the audience, which, along with contact, is one of the two liking techniques recognized by Cialdini. Denzel Washington's body of work provides numerous instances of action. He consistently encourages his audience to engage in action, with the term action encompassing feelings, thoughts, and behaviors more broadly. Take a look at extract #8; one noteworthy aspect in this extract is the differentiation that Denzel Washington makes between dreams and goals, which are inherently connected to actions. While he acknowledges the significance of dreams, the bulk of his focus—both in this extract and throughout his speech—lies on action. He urges his audience to take initiative and outlines how his own achievements stem from taking action. Additionally, he characterizes effective action as being driven by purpose and resilient in the face of setbacks. From Breuer and Naphine's (2005) framework, action serves as the foundation of Denzel Washington's persuasive strategy in these texts. Denzel Washington uses inclusive language, another element in Breuer and Naphine's (2005) model, in the sense of addressing his audience uniformly. In this respect, consider the extract #9. In this extract. Denzel Washington acknowledges the differences between students in terms of talent, vocation, etc., but he makes the same recommendation to all of them, that is, to be giving, charitable, compassionate, and loving. Denzel Washington's concept of, and rhetoric relating to, inclusion is not naïve; however, for Denzel Washington, inclusion begins with the insight that people were all divinely created to help each other, and this theological vision of inclusion pervades Denzel Washington's use of inclusive language. In extract #10, like in extract #11, Denzel Washington uses the persuasive technique of generalization. For instance, he asserts that everyone would gain satisfaction from being helpful. While it is true that some individuals do not find joy in assisting others, Washington's generalization becomes more impactful by overlooking these people. He chooses to connect with what he perceives as universal among individuals, which is an effective strategy for inclusivity (as noted by Cialdini, 1993, who

identifies inclusion as a vital persuasive technique). Generalization is also evident in Extract #3, where Washington states that successful individuals put in hard work. Logically and realistically, not every successful person works diligently. For example, individuals with significant inherited wealth might achieve success without hard work, and there are certainly those who succeed purely due to luck rather than effort. Nonetheless, Washington does not recognize these exceptions. Across various extracts in the corpus, he consistently favors generalization, which aligns with the clarity and straightforwardness of his message. Recognizing complexities and counterexamples would undermine his effective use of the generalization technique. Additionally, Washington tends to describe himself using adjectives that are closely associated with his identity. As noted in extract #11, he attempts to highlight the distinct aspects of his character, which has persevered and battled to attain his achievements. Through these traits, he seeks to create a vivid image in the audience's mind of his lifestyle. This ability to shape perception is one of Washington's greatest strengths in influencing the public, contributing to his considerable popularity in the United States today. However, the primary persuasive strategy employed in the first speech is 'Repetition.' Washington utilizes repetition to reinforce a cause or ensure that the audience understands a particular point. He emphasizes the term 'prayer' to capture the audience's attention and to convince them of the importance of prayer in their lives. The key to dreams, insight, and understanding lies in prayer. The persuasive approach used in extract #12 is 'Inclusive/Exclusive Language', as the speaker distances himself from those who pray for him to achieve his aspirations and improve his life, given that he endures significant suffering due to his unfortunate circumstances. In the first speech, I noticed only two rhetorical questions, as highlighted in extract #13, whereas the second speech contains four. This indicates that Denzel Washington did not excessively rely on rhetorical questions in the first speech; he posed them solely to influence without anticipating any answers. The responses could be evident or supplied by the asker. A rhetorical question is often recognized as a direct statement. In extract #14, the persuasive technique utilized is 'repetition'; for instance, Denzel Washington repeatedly uses the verb 'kept' to stress a point and capture the audience's attention. He aims to inspire his listeners to share their deepest wishes with God, confess their wrongdoings, and give praise and gratitude to Him. His repeated phrasing serves to highlight the importance of the message. Repetition serves as a crucial element that bolsters the act of persuasion. He is conveying the message to engage with God in all aspects of life. Furthermore, another technique present in extract #14 is 'Alliteration/Assonance'. Denzel's speech showcases the phonetic English elements of alliteration and assonance, wherein the same vowel sound recurs in consecutive syllables (protected, directed, corrected). This technique is employed to make a point in an argument stand out more prominently. A person's actions are directed, corrected, and guided by the grace of God. Everyone possesses the ability to distinguish between right and wrong. Individuals have consciences that lead them to feel remorse when they make poor choices. Connotations are from a strategy that was used several times in Denzel Washington's speech. It is considered that connotation has a distinguished position in rhetorical speech, due to its great informative capabilities, based on brevity and insinuation that characterized the art of saying. Many of the popular phrases take from the connotation an informative value that gives the phrase a kind of elegance in pronunciation and aesthetic expression. Which prompted rhetoricians and critics to express their admiration for it, and their preference for hinting over declaration, because this is more informative and self-inflicted. The connotation thus arouses the recipient's admiration with its informativeness, and prompts the recipient to link the meanings to each other, thus achieving a rapid psychological response. The connotation accompanied by the truth or an evidence presents a force to the meaning that easily creates stability in the human self. In addition, the connotation gives the speech-maker the ability to avoid obscene words that may generate unwanted emotions in the society. For example, In the following extract #8., Denzel Washington used connotations to clarify the meaning of the issue of getting out of the path that leads to failure and taking the path of achieving future dreams that lead you to happiness, in short or in brief terms as found in the extract #15. Anecdotes are a cornerstone of Denzel Washington's persuasive approach. Consider extract #16. In this extract, Washington is making the larger point that people can and should be resilient. In addressing new college graduates, he is emphasizing that they are going to have low points and failures that they need to be able to persevere through and be resilient against. This point could be made without an anecdote, and, in fact, Denzel Washington goes on to generally recommend a stance of psychological and emotional resilience. However, he devotes significant space to the anecdote that appears in extract #16, and, where feasible, he resorts to anecdotes as a means of (a) personalizing his recommendations, (b) establishing that he has an experiential basis for making recommendations, and (c) building closeness and rapport between himself and his audience. Repetition is a key aspect of Denzel

Washington's persuasive approach. In this sense, it would be appropriate to reprint extract #1, which illustrates not only Cialdini's (1993) technique of consistency but also Huggard et al.'s (2006) technique of repetition as noted in the extract #17. Note that, in "I'll say it again," Denzel Washington is aware that he is using repetition, and he is acknowledging this technique as part of his general persuasive appeal to the audience. Huggard et al. (2006) emphasized the significance of language style within persuasive methods. The primary language styles identified in the corpus coding were (a) theological and informal. Extract #18 showcases the theological language style used by Denzel Washington. He is direct and unabashed in referencing God. Theology serves as a fundamental element of the corpus, with Denzel Washington drawing on a religious framework to interpret his life's meaning and offer guidance to others. The theological language employed by Denzel Washington is inherently persuasive, as he invites his audience to view his success as an expression of God's grace. Nonetheless, this persuasive aspect is subtle; for the majority of the time, Denzel Washington's language directly presupposes the existence of God.

Results: Quantitative Insights

The language of discourse is usually determined by the relationship between speaker and listener. Therefore, the form, content, relevance, and impact of the speaker language are formulated through persuasive techniques. In addition to influencing factors, such as, the speaker's culture, knowledge, personal inclinations, political attitudes, speech objectives, and internal and external speech conditions. All these factors influence the language of discourse and the number, quality and nature of terms used in a discourse.

Applying Cialdini's Model

Cialdini's (1993) model consists of the elements of contrast, reciprocity, consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity. Table 1 below tracks the appearances of each of the elements in Cialdini's model in speeches #1 ('Put God First') and 2 ('Fall Forward'). Figure 1 below is the bar graph of these elements.

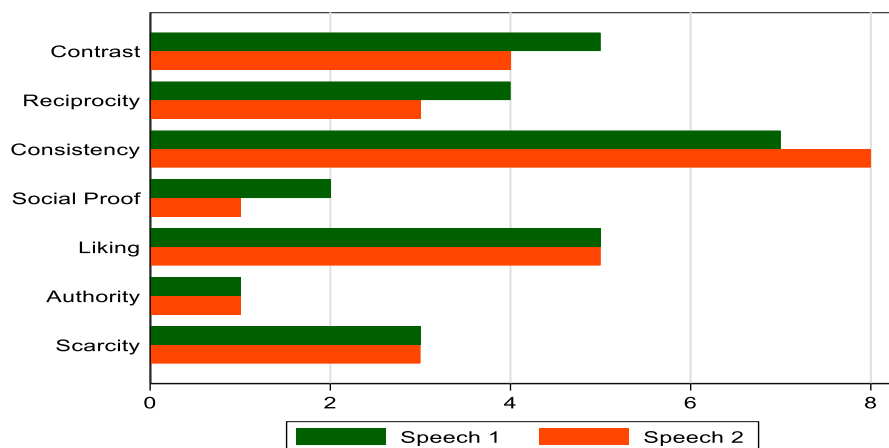


Figure 1. Bar graph, Cialdini's (1993) model.

Table 1 Applying Cialdini's (1993) Model

Element	Prevalence in Speech # 1	Prevalence in Speech # 2	Difference between Speech # 1 & Speech # 2
Contrast	5	4	-20%
Reciprocity	4	3	-25%
Consistency	7	8	14.29%
Social Proof	2	1	-50%
Liking	5	5	0%
Authority	1	1	0%

Scarcity	3	3	0%
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Consistency, contrast, and liking are the most commonly used elements in Cialdini's (1993) model that is utilized in the speeches by Denzel Washington. As Figure 1 and Table 1 indicate, these elements were stably recurrent in the two spaces. By contrast, authority and social proof were the least utilized elements in Cialdini's model when applied to the two speeches made by Denzel Washington. The subsequent qualitative presentation of results includes extracts from the Denzel Washington corpus that have been analyzed according to Cialdini's (1993) persuasive model. In this qualitative portion of the analysis, particular attention has been paid to some of the most prevalent techniques in Cialdini's model that appear in Denzel Washington's corpus, including consistency and liking.

Applying Breuer and Napthine's Model

Breuer and Napthine's (2005) model consists of the elements of action, adjective, inclusive/exclusive language, rhetorical questions, alliteration/assonance, generalization, and connotations. Table 2 below tracks the appearances of each of the elements in Breuer and Napthine's model in speeches #1 ('Put God First') and #2 ('Fall Forward'). Figure 2 below is a graph bar of the utilization of these elements in the first and second speeches. The subsequent qualitative presentation of results includes extracts from the Denzel Washington corpus that have been analyzed according to Breuer and Napthine's (2005) persuasive model. In this qualitative portion of the analysis, particular attention has been paid to some of the most prevalent techniques in Breuer and Napthine's model that appear in Denzel Washington's corpus, including action and inclusive language.

Table 2 Applying Breuer and Napthine's (2005) Model

Element	Prevalence in Speech # 1	Prevalence in Speech # 2	Difference between S# 1 & S # 2
Action	21	24	14.29%
Adjective	14	11	-21.43%
Inclusive language	15	13	-13.33%
Exclusive language	3	2	-33.33%
Rhetorical questions	4	2	-50%
Alliteration/assonance	2	1	-50%
Generalization	11	9	-18.18%
Connotations	7	9	28.57%

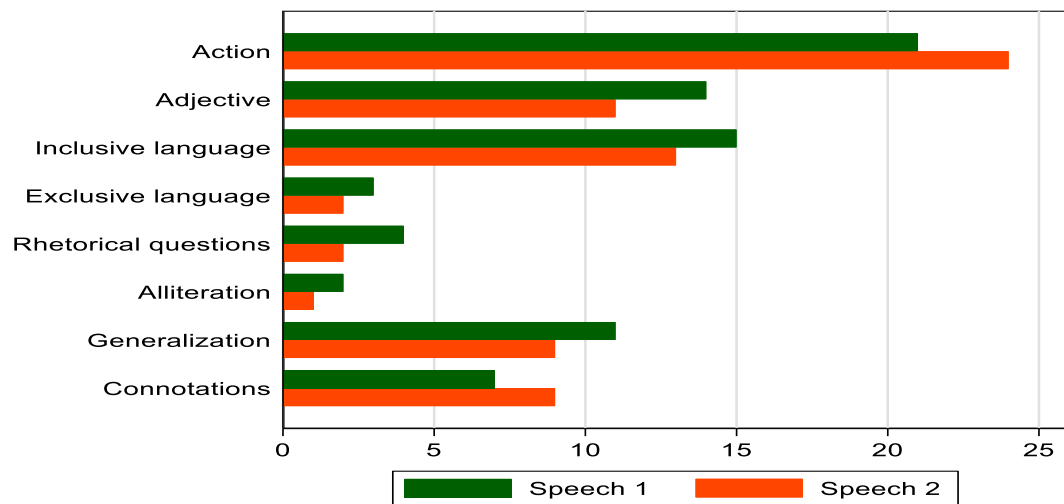


Figure 2. Bar graph, Breuer and Napthine's (2005) model.

Applying Huggard et al.'s Model

Huggard et al.'s (2006) model includes an anecdote, attacks/praise, exaggeration, graphs/diagrams, irony, language style, metaphor, repetition, reason/logic, simile, and evidence. Of these elements, language style needs to be expanded upon, as several distinct language styles can be employed in any given instance of persuasive speech. Table 3 below tracks the appearances of each of the elements in Huggard et al.'s model in speeches #1 ('Put God First') and #2 ('Fall Forward'). Note that the two kinds of language styles discerned in the corpus were (a) theological and (b) folksy. The theological language style was characterized by invocations of religion. The folksy language style was characterized by the use of deliberately simple, friendly language.

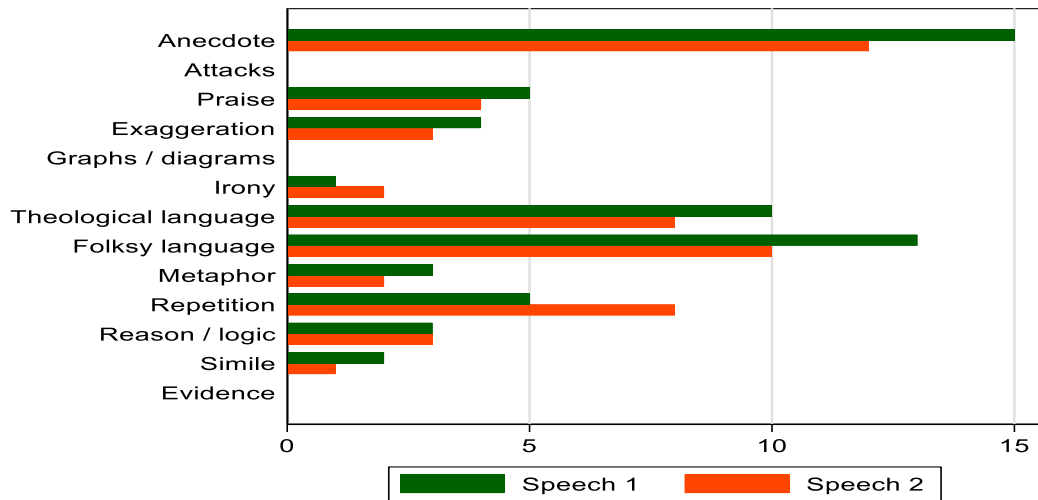


Figure 3. Bar graph, Huggard et al.'s (2006) model. Table 3 Applying Huggard et al.'s (2006) Model

Element	Prevalence in Speech # 1	Prevalence in Speech # 2	Difference between Speech # 1 & Speech # 2
Anecdote	15	12	-20%
Attacks	0	0	0%
Praise	5	4	-20%
Exaggeration	4	3	-25%
Graphs/diagrams	0	0	0%

Irony	1	2	50%
Language style: Theological	10	8	-20%
Language style: Folksy	13	10	-23.08%
Metaphor	3	2	-33.33%
Repetition	5	8	60%
Reason/logic	3	3	0%
Simile	2	1	-50%
Evidence	0	0	0%

The subsequent qualitative presentation of results includes extracts from the Denzel Washington corpus that have been analyzed according to Huggard et al.'s (2006) persuasive model. In this qualitative portion of the analysis, particular attention has been paid to some of the most prevalent techniques in Huggard et al.'s model that appear in Denzel Washington's corpus, including action and inclusive language.

Discussion

Persuasive Basis

Denzel Washington's graduation speeches were well-received by the public and by the audience to which they were presented. One of the reasons for exploring Denzel Washington's speeches by means of the three models applied above is to determine whether the persuasiveness of these speeches can be ascribed to a particular pattern in the use of techniques. Indeed, a synthesis of the coding in Tables 1, 2, and 3 makes it possible to detect the recurring persuasive techniques in Denzel Washington's style that could be responsible for the success of his speeches. Denzel Washington's speeches display a high level of consistency (Table 1), inclusivity (Table 2), a focus on action (Table 2), anecdotal elements (Table 3), a folksy tone (Table 3), and theological references (Table 3). In summary, Denzel Washington's persuasive approach can be characterized as oriented towards meaning. One interpretation of meaning-making is described as: "Meaning-making [manifests] in a variety of forms, such as finding benefit in difficult situations, realizing that growth can occur through hardship, comparing one's own situation to possible worse scenarios, or cherishing the spiritual-religious significance of one's unique life events" (Bluck et al., 2022, p. 57). Denzel Washington seems to encourage his audience to extract meaning from challenges, urging listeners to stay motivated and to have faith in divine grace, while using a combination of folksy, theological, inclusive, and anecdotal language, almost akin to a preaching style. Indeed, the meaning-making advocated by Denzel Washington can be examined within both the rhetorical and philosophical framework of religious meaning-making as articulated by Kierkegaard: "What I really need is to get clear about what I must do, not what I must know, except insofar as knowledge must precede every act. What matters is to find a purpose, to see what it really is that God wills that I shall do; the crucial thing is to find a truth which is truth for me, to find the idea for which I am willing to live and die". (Kierkegaard, 1978, p. 34). Thus, Denzel Washington's persuasiveness is rooted in aspects of faith and meaning. His techniques are allied to this metaphysical foundation, as he invites the audience to discern the same meanings that he discerns. He also invites the audience, through inclusion and folksiness, to share in his own picture of meaning, motivation, and resilience.

Repertoire of Techniques

Twenty-eight persuasive techniques were tracked in the two Denzel Washington speeches. Below, similarity calculations have been provided for each of the three persuasive measurement techniques utilized in the analysis. Afterward, there is an overall conclusion describing the significance of the repertoire of persuasive

techniques utilized by Denzel Washington in terms of (a) contextual expectations of genre and audience and (b) the personal preferences and characteristics of the speaker **Cialdini**. In terms of Cialdini's (1993) model of persuasive techniques, the similarity level of persuasive techniques between the two speeches was calculated by (a) adding together the absolute value of percentage changes in the relative frequency of each technique between speech 1 and speech 2, (b) dividing by 7, (c) converting to a percentage, and (d) subtracting the percentage from 100% to yield a similarity rate. Therefore, for the Cialdini model, $(20 + 25 + 14.29 + 50 + 0 + 0 + 0) / 7 \approx 15.61\%$ $100 - 15.61 = 84.39\%$ Denzel Washington's first and second speeches were therefore 84.39% similar as measured by the Cialdini model Having obtained a mean for speech similarity based on the Cialdini (1993) model, the 95% confidence interval (CI) for similarity was calculated by: (a) Applying the 95% CI formula for average differences between speeches and (b) subtracting the upper and lower bounds of the 95% CI in order to derive upper and lower bounds for similarity. The upper and lower bounds for similarity using the Cialdini model were 67.41% and 100%. In other words, there is a 95% likelihood that the true Cialdini model similarity between speeches 1 and 2 is somewhere between 67.41% and 100%. The formula below presents the 95% calculation for the Cialdini model.

$$\begin{aligned} & \bar{x} \pm 1.96 \left(\frac{s}{\sqrt{n}} \right) \\ & 15.61 \pm 1.96 \left(\frac{18.36}{\sqrt{7}} \right) \\ & 0, 32.59 \\ & 67.41, 100 \end{aligned}$$

The narrow width of the 95% CI for the Cialdini (1993) model is a reflection of the small size of the corpus; a larger corpus would be necessary to generate a narrower and thus more reliable 95% CI.

Breuer and Naphthine. In terms of Breuer and Naphthine's (2005) model of persuasive techniques, the similarity level of persuasive techniques between the two speeches was calculated by (a) adding together the absolute value of percentage changes in the relative frequency of each technique between speech 1 and speech 2, (b) dividing by 8, (c) converting to a percentage, and (d) subtracting the percentage from 100% to yield a similarity rate. Therefore, for the Breuer and Naphthine model,

$$(14.29 + 21.43 + 13.33 + 33.33 + 50 + 50 + 18.18 + 28.57) / 8 \approx 28.64\%$$

$$100 - 28.64 = 71.36\%$$

Denzel Washington's first and second speeches were therefore 71.36% similar as measured by the Breuer and Naphthine model. Having obtained a mean for speech similarity based on the Breuer and Naphthine (2005) model, the 95% CI for similarity was calculated by: (a) Applying the 95% CI formula for average differences between speeches and (b) subtracting the upper and lower bounds of the 95% CI in order to derive upper and lower bounds for similarity. The upper and lower bounds for similarity using the Breuer and Naphthine model were 58.97% and 83.74%. In other words, there is a 95% likelihood that the true Breuer and Naphthine model similarity between speeches 1 and 2 is somewhere between 58.97% and 83.74%. The formula below presents the 95% calculation for the Breuer and Naphthine model.

$$\begin{aligned} & \bar{x} \pm 1.96 \left(\frac{s}{\sqrt{n}} \right) \\ & 28.64 \pm 1.96 \left(\frac{14.81}{\sqrt{8}} \right) \\ & 16.26, 41.03 \\ & 58.97, 83.74 \end{aligned}$$

The narrow width of the 95% CI for the Breuer and Naphthine (2005) model is a reflection of the small size of the corpus; a larger corpus would be necessary to generate a narrower and thus more reliable 95% CI. **Huggard et al.** In terms of Huggard et al.'s (2006) model of persuasive techniques, the similarity level of persuasive techniques between the two speeches was calculated by (a) adding together the absolute value of percentage changes in the relative frequency of each technique between speech 1 and speech 2, (b) dividing by 13, (c)

converting to a percentage, and (d) subtracting the percentage from 100% to yield a similarity rate. Therefore, for the Huggard et al. model,

$$(20 + 0 + 20 + 25 + 0 + 50 + 20 + 23.08 + 33.33 + 60 + 0 + 50 + 0) / 13 \approx 23.19\%$$

$$100 - 23.19 = 76.81\%$$

Denzel Washington's first and second speeches were therefore 76.81% similar as measured by the Huggard et al. model. Having obtained a mean for speech similarity based on the Huggard et al. (2006) model, the 95% *CI* for similarity was calculated by: (a) Applying the 95% *CI* formula for average differences between speeches and (b) subtracting the upper and lower bounds of the 95% *CI* in order to derive upper and lower bounds for similarity. The upper and lower bounds for similarity using the Huggard et al. model were 64.38% and 89.25%. In other words, there is a 95% likelihood that the true Huggard et al. model similarity between speeches 1 and 2 is somewhere between 64.38% and 89.25%. The formula below presents the 95% calculation for the Huggard et al. model.

$$\begin{aligned} & \bar{x} \pm 1.96 \left(\frac{s}{\sqrt{n}} \right) \\ & 23.19 \pm 1.96 \left(\frac{20.58}{\sqrt{13}} \right) \\ & 10.75, 35.62 \\ & 64.38, 89.25 \end{aligned}$$

The narrow width of the 95% *CI* for the Huggard et al. (2006) model is a reflection of the small size of the corpus; a larger corpus would be necessary to generate a narrower and thus more reliable 95% *CI*. Speeches 1 and 2 were highly similar in their utilization of persuasive techniques, whether measured by Cialdini's (1993) model, Breuer and Naphthine's (2005) model, or Huggard et al.'s (2006) model. Therefore, it is accurate to conclude that Denzel Washington employed a repertoire of persuasive techniques, a repertoire that was applied similarly in each of the two speeches. One possible reason for the existence of a persuasive repertoire could be that the contexts of the speeches were highly similar; both speeches were made to an audience of graduating college students. As such, Denzel Washington might have been working with the same persuasive scheme in both instances, a schema that ended up drawing on a similar mix of persuasive techniques. It is also possible that Denzel Washington's own vision pertaining to topics such as motivation, resilience, and faith expressed itself in a repertoire of persuasive techniques designed to express and support this vision. Indeed, there is support for both of these interpretations in the literature. In some instances, speakers form persuasive techniques in response to what they receive as the context and requirements for communication (Cockcroft et al., 2013; Walton 2007). In addition, speakers tend to develop idiosyncratic repertoires of persuasive techniques (Cockcroft et al., 2013; Walton, 2007).

Conclusion

This article contained the results and discussion of the study. The results were presented quantitatively, then qualitatively, with the use of extracts and paradigmatic analyses of the selected extracts. Overall, it was found that Cialdini's (1993), Breuer and Naphthine's (2005), and Huggard et al.'s (2006) models were useful frameworks through which to explore the persuasive cornerstones of Denzel Washington's corpus. Denzel Washington was found to rely on a stable, simple fund of persuasive techniques; this stability and simplicity likely accounts for the persuasive power of these speeches. In general, speech analysis, as mentioned above, is part of the linguistics analysis, which investigates the bonds of relations between language and the message that wants to convert. It is commonly used by politicians themselves, in various forms including speeches, interviews, and writing documents. This field of language is linked to the process of communication between the sender and the receiver through persuasive techniques to convey the ideas within the contexts of their positions and tasks to communicate with the public at all levels. The process of interpreting and analyzing communications between sender and society is important not only because of its ability to convey the views of its message, but also because of what the speech reveals about the senders themselves. In this way, the term 'rhetorical devices' can be used as a basis for understanding it. The intersection between linguistics and the general perception of senders gives a general impression of the personality, strength and effectiveness of the sender.

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