

Symbolism in Political Discourse: Analytical Perspectives on Barack Obama's Rhetoric

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الرمزية في الخطاب السياسي وجهات نظر تحليلية حول خطاب باراك أوباما

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الجامعة العراقية، كلية الآداب، قسم اللغة الإنجليزية

Abstract

Political speeches are not only policy-maker tools but also symbolic tools through which political leaders construct identity, legitimacy, and ideological meaning. Although numerous studies have examined Barack Obama's speeches from the rhetorical, stylistic, and Critical Discourse Analysis perspectives, systematic research on symbolism across the pre-presidency, presidency, and post-presidency phases within Fairclough (2015) CDA framework remains limited. Consequently, phase-based comparative analysis have not sufficiently captured shifts in symbolic discourse across these stages, making it difficult to explain how symbolism contributes to power, persuasion, and political identity formation. This study address this gap by applying Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA model to analyse symbolism across Obama's political career with attention to ideology, power relations, and statistical patterns. It adopts a mixed-methods design integrating qualitative discourse analysis with quantitative frequency analysis, using selected speeches from the American Rhetoric archive. The finding indicate consistent use of explicit positive lexicalisation across all phases, while symbolism at the interpretative level is realised through shifts in rhetorical tropes and appeals. At the explanatory level, results reveal an ideological shift from a multicultural American Dream (Pre-presidency), to national renewal and civilizational understanding (presidency), and to a universal American creed (Post-presidency). Statistical analysis shows no significant association between political phases and the frequencies of discourse strategies at the descriptive and interpretative levels. Keywords: Symbolism, Political Discourse, Critical Discourse Analysis, Rhetoric.

ملخص

لا تُعدّ الخطابات السياسية أدواتٍ لصنّاع السياسات فحسب، بل هي أيضًا أدوات رمزية تُشكّل من خلالها القادة السياسيون الهوية والشرعية والمعنى الأيديولوجي. ورغم أن العديد من الدراسات تناولت خطابات باراك أوباما من منظورات البلاغة والأسلوب وتحليل الخطاب النقدي، إلا أن البحث المنهجي حول الرمزية خلال مراحل ما قبل الرئاسة والرئاسة وما بعدها، ضمن إطار تحليل الخطاب النقدي لفيركلوف (٢٠١٥)، لا يزال محدودًا. ونتيجةً لذلك، لم تُعطِ التحليلات المقارنة القائمة على المراحل التحولات في الخطاب الرمزي عبر هذه المراحل بشكلٍ كافٍ، مما يُصعّب تفسير كيفية إسهام الرمزية في السلطة والإقناع وتشكيل الهوية السياسية. تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى سدّ هذه الفجوة من خلال تطبيق نموذج تحليل الخطاب النقدي ثلاثي الأبعاد لفيركلوف لتحليل الرمزية خلال مسيرة أوباما السياسية، مع التركيز على الأيديولوجيا وعلاقات القوة والأنماط الإحصائية. وتعتمد الدراسة منهجيةً مختلطة تجمع بين تحليل الخطاب النوعي وتحليل التكرار الكمي، باستخدام خطابات مختارة من أرشيف البلاغة الأمريكية. تشير النتائج إلى استخدام متسق للمفردات الإيجابية الصريحة في جميع المراحل، بينما يتجلى الرمز على المستوى التأويلي من خلال تحولات في الأساليب البلاغية

والخطابات. وعلى المستوى التفسيري، تكشف النتائج عن تحول أيديولوجي من الحلم الأمريكي متعدد الثقافات (قبل الرئاسة)، إلى التجديد الوطني والتفاهم الحضاري (أثناء الرئاسة)، ثم إلى عقيدة أمريكية عالمية (بعد الرئاسة). ويظهر التحليل الإحصائي عدم وجود ارتباط ذي دلالة إحصائية بين المراحل السياسية وتكرار استراتيجيات الخطاب على المستويين الوصفي والتأويلي. الكلمات المفتاحية: الرمزية، الخطاب السياسي، تحليل الخطاب النقدي، البلاغة.

1. Introduction

Political discourse is not only a means for conveying policies and political positions, but also a symbolic act that helps leaders to create identity, validate authority, and shape ideological meanings. Symbolism is a key element that helps political actors to represent complex social and political realities through symbolic concepts like hope, unity, change, and leadership. Barack Obama is well known for his extensive use of symbolic language, making his political rhetoric a valuable subject for discourse analysis.

The importance of this study is that it attempts to examine symbolism as a discursive and ideological tool in Obama's political rhetoric across different phases of his political career. The study employs Fairclough's (2015) three dimensional framework of Critical Discourse Analysis to analyse the symbolic meanings that are linguistically constructed, discursively realised, and ideologically related to the wider social and political context. The data consist of selected speeches of Barack Obama during the pre-presidency, presidency, and post-presidency phase. Consequently, the current study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How are the discourse strategies employed to realise symbolism on the description level across the three presidential phases?
2. How are the discourse strategies employed to realise symbolism on the interpretation level across the three presidential phases?
3. What are the ideological implications and power aspects that underlie the symbolic discourse across the three presidential phases?
4. Is there a significant statistical association between the presidential phases and the frequencies of the discourse strategies employed on the description and interpretation level of analysis?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) is a method of interdisciplinary discourse analysis. CDA originated from critical linguistics, which emerged in the 1970s at the University of East Anglia in England (Fowler et al., 1979). Ruth Wodak (1989, p. 10) is among the earliest scholars to define CDA as "an approach to language study with a critical perspective aimed at examining language behavior in socially relevant natural speech contexts." Teun A. van Dijk asserts that CDA is a distinctive method of text and discourse analysis, which has its foundations in critical linguistics and critical semiotics, as well as a tendency towards a socio-politically conscious and oppositional approach to language, discourse and communication (1995, p. 17).

Norman Fairclough (1995, p. 132) defines CDA as follows: "By CDA I mean discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events, and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations, and processes; to investigate how such practices, events, and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony" This definition emphasises that discourse is closely connected to ideology and social power, which provides the theoretical basis for the present study to examine how symbolic language in Obama's speeches conveys ideological meanings and shapes political power. van Dijk (2001, p. 352) explains the predominant agenda of CDA as a type of discourse analytical research, which is chiefly concerned with the ways social power abuse, dominance, and inequality can be exercised, condemned, and resisted through the use of texts and talk in social and political contexts. Wodak and Weiss (2002, p. 12) add that CDA focuses on the relationship between language and power, linking language and ideas to societal structures and power dynamics. Wodak and Weiss (2003, p. 15) state that CDA is inclined toward examining the opaque and transparent structural relations of dominance, discrimination, power, and control expressed in language. It also attempts to critically examine social injustice as it is expressed, signified, constituted, and reinforced through language.

2.1.1 Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Framework

One of the key contributors of CDA and one of the first scholars to establish a relationship between linguistic analysis and sociocultural transformation was Norman Fairclough. The integration of linguistics and the social sciences takes place through a unified theoretical and analytical framework of CDA, as assumed by Chuliaraki

and Fairclough (1999, p. 6). This framework can be used to demonstrate the necessity of applying CDA in order to reveal the discursive nature of social and cultural change (Fairclough, 1999, p. 33). This represents one of the major strengths of CDA. Fairclough's study is also premised on two major sources. The first is associated with Foucauldian critical theory and its relation to language as one of the manifestations of social activity. The second source of influence is Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) developed by M. A. K. Halliday (Alazzany, 2008, p. 28).

Fairclough (1989, p. 3) argues that language is not neutral but rather a part of social life, and that discourse is a primary instrument of power and social control. He developed the Dialectical-Relational Approach (DRA), which is based on the dialectical relationship between language and social organisation and informed by the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin, M. A. K. Halliday, and Michel Foucault (Fairclough, 1989, p.37). Fairclough's (1995, p. 132) three-dimensional model of CDA presupposes that social events (texts), social practices (orders of discourse), and social structures enable researchers to understand the dialectically complex relationship between language and social reality. Fairclough does not view discourse as an isolated product of communication. This is because the discourse as such is or constitutes a social structure, which effectually has three fundamental effects:

1. The construction of social identity.
2. The development of interpersonal relationships among people.
3. The formation of philosophical and ideological systems.

Such affects are discussed in the talk with three other purposes, including identificatory, relational, textual, and ideational.

Phillips and Jorgensen (2002, p. 68) take three steps under these three dimensions of discourse: first, the description step, where they describe the text; second, the interpretation step, where they explain the interactive relationship between the text and the social processes; and third, the explanation step, where they explain the relationship between the social processes and social context. Norman Fairclough (1989, p. 29):

Figure 1

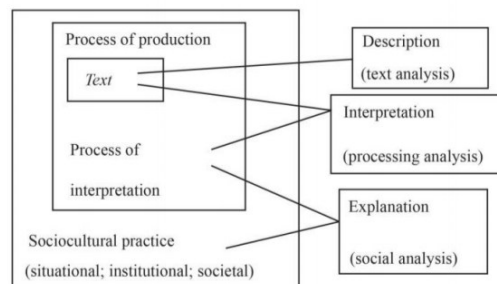


Figure 2.1 Fairclough's DRA (adopted from Fairclough, 1995, p.98)

2.2 Symbolism

Symbolism has been considered central to human life in philosophy, psychology, and linguistics. Ernst Cassirer conceptualised the human being as *animal symbolicum*, implying that symbolic activity is fundamental to human cognition and cultural existence (Cassirer, 1944). From this perspective, human experience is mediated through symbolic systems such as language, myth, and art, which shape perception and process of meaning-making (Cassirer, 1944; Geertz, 1973).

In linguistic theory, Ferdinand de Saussure argued that meaning emerges from the relational structure between the *signifier* (the form of a word or symbol) and the *signified* (the concept it represents). He further maintained that linguistic signs gain meaning through differential relations within a system rather than through any inherent values, which supports the view that symbolic representation is socially and culturally constructed (Saussure, 1916/1983). Consequently, the same symbol may generate different meanings across diverse cultural and social contexts (van Dijk, 2006). Wagoner (2022) explains that the term symbol has a Greek origin that translates to a process of "throwing together," referring to the ability of a human being to transform simple sensory content into a representation medium. From this perspective, symbolism can be seen as an inherent cultural process that explains abstract ideas, values, and feelings. As we have seen in this context, symbols may be easily defined as the ability to convey or depict something in another object or entity. This definition focuses on the representational and mediating processes of symbols in human communication. Objects, gestures, words, and images do not acquire symbolic meaning by themselves but through mutually shared systems of interpretation. In this way, the same sign can be interpreted differently in different cultural, historical, or political contexts. Mikhail Bakhtin describes the sign as not attempting to depict a single meaning, but instead attempting to capture several meanings and possibilities. Bakhtin underlines the polyphonic nature of symbols, which means that they can have multiple meanings and interpretations, which can often be contradictory or even paradoxical. He emphasises that it is the

interactive relationship between text and reader in which different interpretations add to a deeper and more dynamic experience (Bakhtin, 1981).

2.2.1 Symbolism in political discourse

In the political context, the symbol functions as a mediating force between the self (the leader) and the external world. As Louati (2023) describes, the symbol serves as an intermediary between the self and external objects, allowing revelations and experiences to emerge as a result of the psychological effect. It is not an artificial creation; it is a vision that, even though not intentionally constructed, transcends reality to convey underlying meanings embedded within it.

A single interpretation of the relationship between political discourse and the brain is expressed through the prism of emotion, that is, politically relevant sentiments. These attitudes of dependency, patriotism, and family love are fundamentally linked to political discourse (Fowler, 1991, p. 204). Politics is defined depending on circumstances and goals. There are two main definitions:

1. The power struggle is described as the struggle between the powerful and the powerless, those who hold power and those who do not (Dahl, 1957).
2. Politics is defined as cooperation as a method of softening the power struggle, whether it is liberal or otherwise (Lijphart, 2002).

The importance of language is fundamental for engaging in any political endeavour. While additional factors are implicated, dependence mostly rests on language (Chilton & Schaffner, 2002, pp. 3-5). The interconnection of language and politics has been examined in numerous academic studies, including the works of Habermas, Foucault, Bourdieu, critical linguistics, critical discourse analysis, and political discourse analysis (Chilton, 2004, p. 1).

Discourse and politics are intricately linked, both cooperatively and antagonistically. Certain linguistic features are recognised to have a political purpose. Political speech is constrained by specific linguistic elements that are essential for its interpretation and the structuring. Although language patterns are not inherently political, not all linguistic components are required to possess a socio-political function (Chilton, 2004, p. 21).

From a political perspective, symbolism may be seen as a political gesture, such as voting, conducted by the populace in democratic nations. Elections are not only a symbolic expression of the will of the people in terms of their attitude and outlook on the political administration, but also an indicator of the consent or dissatisfaction of voters with the existing government (Cline & Graham, 1996). Based on these theoretical foundations, political discourse illustrates how symbolism operates in meaning construction and shaping audience interpretation. Political symbols are embedded within shared cultural and ideological contexts, enabling them to influence perception and ideological framing (Chilton, 2004; Edelman, 1988).

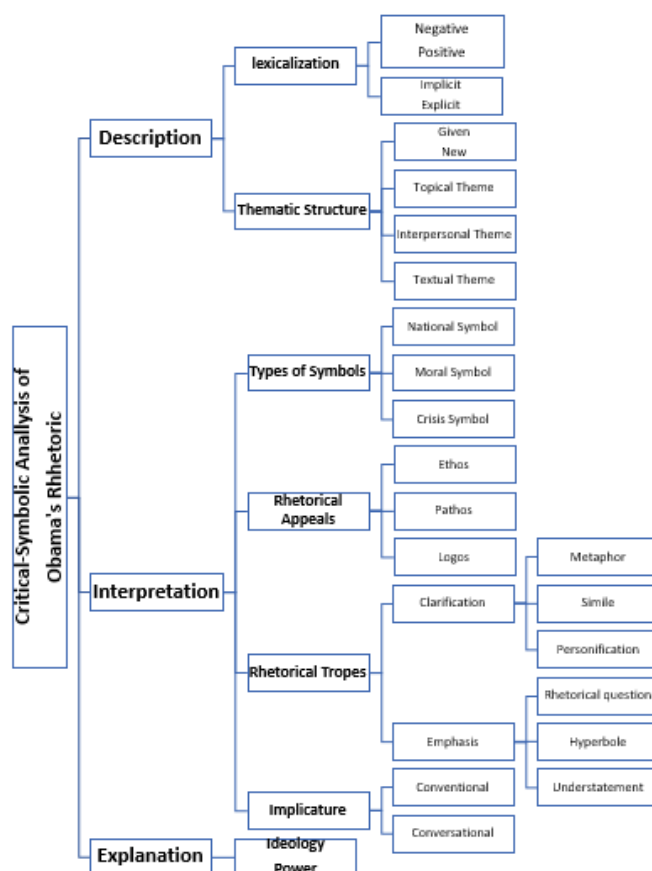
٣. Methodology

Qualitative research is typically conceptualised as an approach concerned with exploring and understanding the meanings that individuals or communities relate to social phenomena. The research process also includes the formulation of research enquiries that can be refined during the study period, data gathering in natural environments, inductive data analysis that involves the transformation of particular cases into general themes, and the interpretation of the meaning of such themes by the researcher (Creswell, 2009). Regarding quantitative research, Creswell (2018, p. 4) defines it as a method of objective theory testing by analysing relationships between variables that can be quantified and statistically examined. The present study adopts a mixed methods design that involves both qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the symbolism in Barack Obama's political discourse. The qualitative dimension is used to analyse the construction and interpretation of symbolic meanings in the selected speeches, while the quantitative dimension is utilised to identify frequencies and distribution of analytical categories in order to support the qualitative findings statistically. The data consist of selected speeches delivered by Barack Obama during three major phases of his political career: pre-presidency, presidency, and post-presidency. The speeches were purposively chosen due to the presence of significant examples of symbolic discourse and the fact that they reflect important political contexts across the three phases. To analyse the data, the study adopts Fairclough's (2015) three-dimensional framework of CDA. The framework examines discourse at three interrelated levels: text, discursive practice, and social practice. At the descriptive level, the analysis focuses on linguistic features related to symbolic representation. At the interpretative level, the study examines the discursive realisation of symbolism in terms of symbolic categories, rhetorical appeals, rhetorical tropes, and implicature. At the explanatory level, the analysis explores the ideologies and power relations embedded within symbolic discourse. The quantitative analysis was conducted using the SPSS software. Frequencies and percentages were calculated to identify the distribution of symbolic categories and their

occurrences during the three political phases. The statistical findings were then integrated with the qualitative interpretation to provide a comprehensive account of Obama's symbolic discourse. Figure 2 presents the analytical model adopted in the present study.

Figure 2

The model of the Analysis



4. Data Analysis and Results Discussion

4.1 Data Analysis

The following extracts represent the most significant examples of symbolic discourse and are analysed according to Fairclough's three dimensional framework to examine their linguistic, discursive, and ideological dimensions.

4.1.1 Extract 1 (2004 Democratic National Convention Keynote Address)

Delivered 27 July 2004 at Fleet Center, Boston

"Tonight is a particular honor for me because, let's face it, my presence on this stage is pretty unlikely. [...] My father was a foreign student, born and raised in a small village in Kenya. Through hard work and perseverance my father got a scholarship to study in a magical place, America, that shone as a beacon of freedom and opportunity to so many who had come before.[...]I stand here knowing that my story is part of the larger American story, that I owe a debt to all of those who came before me, and that, in no other country on earth, is my story even possible."

1. Description

Table 4.1

Description Level Analysis of Extract 1

Discourse triggers	Lexicalisation	Given / new	Type of theme
Tonight is a particular honor for me	PL. Ex.	New	Topical
my presence on this stage is pretty unlikely	PL. Ex.	Given	Interpersonal
My father was a foreign student, born and raised in a small village in Kenya.	PL. Ex.	New	Topical

Through hard work and perseverance my father got a scholarship to study in a magical place	PL. Ex.	New	Textual
America, that shone as a beacon of freedom and opportunity to so many who had come before	PL. Ex.	New	Topical
I stand here knowing that my story is part of the larger American story	PL. Ex.	Given	Interpersonal
I owe a debt to all of those who came before me, and that, in no other country on earth, is my story even possible."	PL. Im.	New	Interpersonal

In terms of lexicalisation manifesting symbolism in Extract 1, Obama's word choices are mainly positive and explicit, and create a strong narrative about his life and America. The phrases "particular honor," "hard work," "perseverance," "magical place," "beacon of freedom and opportunity" and "larger American story" express admiration, gratitude and hope, and also serve as a way to make his personal story seem important and morally correct. The lexicalisation creates the image of America as a "magical place" and a "beacon" and the United States is itself a symbol of brightness, attraction and guidance, thus making the country itself a powerful symbol of freedom and opportunity. Meanwhile, the phrases "my presence on this stage is pretty unlikely" introduce a contrast, as they gently remind the audience of the social and historical challenges that a man of his background would normally have to overcome to achieve such success.

The last line "in no other country on earth is my story even possible" is a strong, expressive statement that makes America a unique and superior country to other countries, and suggests that only the American system can make such a story come true. The positive, mostly explicit lexical choices, with a few implicit references to struggle, help Obama to demonstrate his authenticity as an American dreamer and reinforce his image as a leader who embodies diversity and American democratic values.

In terms of thematic structure of the symbolic discourse in Extract 1, the arrangement of themes is gradual, from the personal to the national level to form a coherent story. Obama was the focus of the themes, such as "Tonight is a particular honor for me" and "my presence on this stage." Then the theme shifts to "My father was a foreign student" and then to "America that shown as a beacon of freedom and opportunity" which shifts the focus from the speaker's family background to the country as a whole. Obama starts with familiar personal references "I" and "my presence" as given information, and then moves to new information about his father's journey, and about America as an exceptional nation; this makes for a smooth transition from the personal story to the collective national story. The symbols of "freedom," "opportunity," and "larger American story" are now in the new position, and they now have new meanings that reinforce the image of the United States as a place where unlikely success is possible.

Thematically, these structures enable Obama to make his life a clear demonstration of American inclusion and social mobility.

On the part of themes types, the extract uses several thematic types:

- Topical theme: main topical themes are "Tonight is a particular honor for me," "my father was a foreign student," and "America that shone as a beacon of freedom and opportunity." These themes emphasised important issues: the specialness of the moment of speech, his father's background, and the image of America.
- Interpersonal themes: clauses like "my presence on this stage is pretty unlikely," "I stand here knowing that my story is part of the larger American story" and "I owe a debt to all those who came before me" convey Obama's attitude and invite the audience to share his sense of surprise and gratitude. This establishes a close personal connection with listeners and makes speech sound sincere and emotionally involved.
- Textual theme: connective expressions such as "through," "because," "and," and "that," connect the clauses and show cause and addition. They organise the story shifting from effort and struggle, to a strong statement that his story is only possible in America.

The thematic choices assist Obama in making the transition from his personal life and his father's path to the symbolic life of America, making his life story a powerful example of American values such as freedom, opportunity and responsibility.

2. Interpretation

Table 4.2

Interpretation Level Analysis of Extract ١

Discourse Triggers	Type of Sym.	R. Appeal	R. Tropes	Type of Imp.
Tonight is a particular honor for me	Moral	Ethos	Hyperbole	Conversational
my presence on this stage is pretty unlikely	Moral	Pathos	Hyperbole	Conversational
My father was a foreign student, born and raised in a small village in Kenya.	Crisis	Ethos	Metaphor	Conversational
Through hard work and perseverance my father got a scholarship to study in a magical place	Moral	Logos Pathos	Hyperbole	Conversational
America, that shone as a beacon of freedom and opportunity to so many who had come before	National	Logos Pathos	Simile Hyperbole	Conventional
I stand here knowing that my story is part of the larger American story	National	Ethos	Metaphor	Conversational
I owe a debt to all of those who came before me, and that, in no other country on earth, is my story even possible.	Moral National	Pathos	Metaphor Hyperbole	Conventional

The extract has strong symbolic meanings in various types of symbols. The national symbol is represented in “America” which symbolises the country as a land of freedom, opportunity and hope. America is described as a “beacon of freedom” which emphasise its role as a guiding light for those who want to have a better life.

The moral symbol is employed in phrases like “hard work” and “perseverance” that denote determination and personal effort needed to achieve success. These sayings convey the concept of discipline and commitment leading to achievement.

The crisis symbol is evident in the portrayal of Obama's father as a “foreign student” from a “small village in Kenya” and that his presence is “unlikely” The struggle, the marginality and the difficulties of overcoming social and cultural barriers are represented by these elements, which make the success more significant. Together, these symbols help to define Obama's political persona as one of opportunity, inclusion and progress. The symbolism suggests that the United States is a powerful nation that can overcome challenges.

The extract makes all three rhetorical appeals to persuade and influence the audience. Ethos is employed when Obama establishes credibility by talking about his own background and his father's story. He is making himself a part of the story he is telling, which makes him seem sincere and trustworthy. Pathos is used in emotional terms like “pretty unlikely” “magical place,” “beacon of freedom,” and “debt.” The phrases evoke admiration, hope, and pride, and make the audience feel a part of his story and the concept of America. Logos is used in the logical sequence of events: his father was born in a poor neighborhood, worked hard to get a scholarship, and by his hard work, Obama became a successful person. This is the argument for the opportunities America provides for advancement by effort. These rhetorical appeals help to reinforce Obama's message, allowing him to establish trust, evoke emotion and present a logical argument regarding opportunity and success in the American context.

The extract is rich in rhetorical devices that help to convey strong and persuasive messages. In “America that shone as a beacon of freedom and opportunity,” the word “as” is used to make a comparison between America and a beacon. This simile depicts the country as a beacon of hope, direction and leadership. Hyperbole is used in expressions like “pretty unlikely,” “no other country on earth,” “tonight is a particular honor,” and “a magical place.” These exaggerated statements emphasise the uniqueness of Obama's story and the exceptional nature of America. They add to the emotional and persuasive impact of the speech. The phrase “I owe a debt to all of those who came before me” is a metaphor, because “debt” is not a financial debt, but a moral debt and a sense of gratitude to those who came before him and who have made his success possible. Likewise, “In no other country on earth is my story even possible” is also metaphoric, implying that his life story is possible in America because of the values

of inclusiveness. The statement “my father was a foreign student, born and raised in a small village in Kenya” includes the idea of humble beginnings, distance and social difference. These expressions enrich the extract with emotional and ideological content and contribute to the development of Obama's political image as an individual who links personal experience with national ideals.

The extract suggests that America is linked to freedom, opportunity and personal success, in terms of implicature. The phrase “America that shone as a beacon of freedom and opportunity” indirectly implies that the country is a model of hope and progress, even it is not explicitly stated. It also implies that Obama's success is linked not only to his own effort, but also to the opportunities and values provided by his country. The extract also has a deeper connotation of struggle and achievement. Obama's "pretty unlikely" is an implication that his ascent was hard and that he overcame social and historical barriers. Similarly, by stating that he owes a “debt” to all of those who have come before him, he is also expressing gratitude, respect, and recognition of the sacrifices of others that led to his success. The implied meanings make the speech more persuasive because they expose the hidden meanings that tie Obama's personal story with the larger American story.

3. Explanation: Ideology and Power

The dominant ideology in Extract 1, is the ideology of the American dream. The text depicts America as a place where one's background does not completely dictate his future. It implies that hard work, perseverance and determination can lead to success, even for someone who comes from a foreign family and humble beginnings. The extract also conveys the ideology of inclusion and a feeling of national belonging. Obama's personal narrative is connected to “the larger American story,” making him not an outsider, but part of the American identity. This reinforces the notion of diversity and social mobility in America. The extract illustrates Obama's use of discourse to make himself a legitimate political leader in terms of power. He shares his family background and personal experiences, making his life story a source of authority and credibility. This makes his words have symbolic power, as they are his own experience and the values of the American nation.

5. The Results of the Description Level Analysis

On the description level, the employment of textual strategies including lexicalisation, thematic structure, and types of themes varies in frequencies as shown in Table 5.1 across the three presidential phases to answer the research question reads “How are the discourse strategies employed to realise symbolism on the description level across the three presidential phases?”

Table 5.1

The Quantitative Analysis of the Description Level

phase	Lexicalisation				Information Structure		Types of Themes		
	+	-	EX	IM	G	N	TP	IN	TX
Pre-presidency	٣٣	١٥	١٧	٣	٦	١٨	١٥	٢	٧
Presidency	٣٨	٥٠	٢٨	٤	٨	٢١	١١	٤	١٦
Post-presidency	٤١	١٥	١٩	٥	٣	١٩	١٣	٤	٥
Total	١١٢	٨٠	٦٤	١٢	١٧	٥٨	٣٩	١٠	٢٨

Table 5.1 shows a consistent positive increase in the positive symbolic language starting at 33 (Pre-presidency) up to 41 (post-presidency). This is in symbolic terms an expression of Obama's approach to "hope, unity, and renewal" to create a "multicultural version of the American dream" and to sustain a legacy of "moral progress. There is a difference in the Presidency (50) and during the other two periods (15 each), negative lexicalisation has taken place. This is something with a “social and political reality aspect” to it when it comes to governing. Obama employs negative language, such as "crisis," "war," and "greed," as a way to draw a sense of urgency and then shifts to symbolic responses to the problems. The implicit vs. explicit lexicalisation category is used to note the way symbolic information is presented to the audience. Symbolism is realised explicitly throughout all phases but this reaches its peak with 28 in the Presidency phase. In terms of information structure, New (N) vs. Given (G) Information, symbolism is generally added on to the Given information (G) (58 of 177) but to the New

information (N) (17 of 177). This enables Obama to put "new meanings" (Given) on familiar ideas, like replacing his own family experience with "the American experience, what America claims to be."

In terms of theme, most common Topical Themes (TP): Pre-presidency (15); post-presidency (13). These themes are qualitatively focused on "key topics" such as his father's history, "The American idea," "One nation" and "a united America," and are used to "form identity" to the exclusion of direct power dynamics. An increase in the Presidency (16) compared to the other phases (TX): more than doubled increases. Conditional structures" and cause and effect relations are produced by using these themes, as forbidding by "but," so-because by "rather," or "but, because".

The themes that emerge are interpersonal in nature (IN) and are less frequent (from 2 to 4). They are employed to establish a direct dialogic relationship with the audience, giving them opportunities to share his sense of surprise and gratitude or collective responsibility.

Overall, the quantitative data in Table 13 indicates that Obama's symbolic speeches are linguistically most complex during his Presidency (180 total units). The high occurrence of negative lexicalization and textual themes in this period lends substantiation that symbolism is a managing resource of "crisis and renewal" for "policy-maker" during his presidency.

6. Conclusions

The researcher derives the following conclusions based on the results obtained in chapter four to achieve the aims of the study:

1. The analysis shows a consistent use of explicit positive lexicalisation by Obama at all levels of linguistic development are used to construct symbolism.
2. On the interpretation level, symbolism is realised through the change of hierarchy of the rhetorical tropes and appeals.
3. On the explanation level, there is an ideological shift from a multicultural American Dream (before the presidency) to national renewal and civilizational understanding (during the presidency) to a universal American creed (after the presidency), which provide the foundation for the symbolic discourse
4. The statistical findings display that there is no statistical difference association (no significant) between the presidency phases and the frequencies of the discourse strategy both at the description level and at the interpretation level.

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