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**Master's Thesis**

**LANGUAGE PROFILES OF BRITISH AND US FEMALE  
POLITICIANS OF THE 20th -21st CENTURIES**

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## АНОТАЦІЯ

У магістерській роботі досліджено мовні профілі жінок-політиків з Великої Британії та США, зосереджуючи увагу на зв'язку між мовою, гендером і впливом у політичній комунікації. Дослідження охоплює події 20-21 століття, підкреслюючи зростаючий вплив жінок у політиці та стратегічне використання мови жінками-лідерами для формування політичного дискурсу.

В основі аналізу лежить детальне вивчення лінгвістичних стратегій, які використовували такі відомі політики, як Тереза Мей, Ліз Трасс, Пенні Мордонт, Гіллари Клінтон, Ненсі Пелосі та Камала Гарріс. Використовуючи якісний дискурс-аналіз, у дослідженні проаналізовано публічні промови, інтерв'ю та заяви, щоб ідентифікувати ключові лінгвістичні моделі, які ці лідери використовують для утвердження впливу, управління політичним простором та постановки своїх програм.

Результати показують, що ці жінки-політики використовують складні риторичні прийоми, включаючи метафоричну мову, регулювання модальності та структуровані наративи. Ці елементи не лише підвищують ефективність їхньої комунікації, але й активно сприяють зміні уявлень про політичне лідерство та авторитет.

Крім того, дослідження інтегрує теоретичні положення гендерних студій та соціолінгвістики, доводячи, що риторичні прийоми жінок-політиків є перформативними актами, які формують політичні ідентичності та кидають виклик загальноприйнятим нормам. Такий міждисциплінарний підхід дозволяє глибше зрозуміти, як мова функціонує як інструмент політичної діяльності та формування ідентичності серед жінок-лідерок у різних культурних і політичних контекстах.

Таким чином, магістерська відображає лінгвістичні стратегії жіночого політичного лідерства, висвітлюючи, як ці стратегії впливають на політичний дискурс і трансформують його. Дослідження робить внесок у поточні дискусії в політичній лінгвістиці, пропонуючи рекомендації для політиків, медіа-практиків та науковців.

**Ключові слова:** жінки-політики, політичний дискурс-аналіз, гендерні дослідження, лінгвістика, риторичні стратегії, Велика Британія, США.

## **ABSTRACT**

The master's thesis examines the language profiles of female politicians from the United Kingdom and the United States, focusing on the connection between language, gender, and power within political communication. The research covers developments from the 20th to the 21st century, emphasizing the increasing influence of women in politics and the strategic use of language by female leaders to shape political discourse.

The core of the analysis involves a detailed examination of linguistic strategies utilized by prominent politicians such as Theresa May, Liz Truss, Penny Mordaunt, Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, and Kamala Harris. Utilizing qualitative discourse analysis, the study assesses public speeches, interviews, and statements to identify key linguistic patterns that these leaders employ to assert power, navigate political landscapes, and articulate their agendas.

Findings indicate that these female politicians employ sophisticated rhetorical techniques including metaphorical language, modality adjustments, and structured narratives. These elements not only enhance the effectiveness of their communication but also actively contribute to reshaping perceptions of political leadership and authority.

Additionally, the research integrates theoretical perspectives from gender studies and sociolinguistics, arguing that the rhetorical practices of female politicians are performative acts that construct political identities and challenge conventional norms. This interdisciplinary approach provides deeper insights into how language functions as a tool for political action and identity formation among female leaders in different cultural and political contexts.

In summary, the thesis maps the linguistic strategies of female political leadership, highlighting how these strategies influence and transform political

discourse. The study contributes to ongoing discussions in political linguistics, offering implications for policymakers, media practitioners, and academics.

**Keywords:** female politicians, political discourse analysis, gender studies, linguistics, rhetorical strategies, United Kingdom, United States.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic arena of politics, language serves as a universal tool operated by leaders to influence public opinion, negotiate power dynamics, and articulate policy agendas. The 20th and 21st centuries have been marked by profound shifts in political landscapes globally, with the increasing presence and influence of women in public life and governance standing as a testament to evolving societal norms and aspirations. Within this realm, the voices of women have emerged with increasing resonance, challenging traditional hierarchies and reshaping the contours of political discourse. The ascendancy of female politicians to positions of leadership has not only reshaped the contours of political discourse but also redefined conventional notions of power, representation, and social change. Against the background of persistent gender disparities and structural inequalities, the articulation of language by women in political spheres emerges as a focal point for scholarly inquiry and social critique. Indeed, the linguistic strategies employed by female politicians serve as potent reflections of broader societal dynamics, power structures, and gendered expectations, shaping public perceptions, influencing policy agendas, and redefining the contours of democratic governance.

This thesis embarks on a nuanced exploration of the language profiles exhibited by prominent female politicians from the United Kingdom and the United States across the 20th and 21st centuries. At its core, this study aims to clarify the complex relationships that exist between language, gender, and power in the context of political communication, interrogating how linguistic choices and discursive practices mediate the construction of political identities, shape public discourse, and navigate the complexities of contemporary governance. By delving into the rhetorical strategies, discursive patterns, and communicative styles employed by female political leaders, this study aspires to offer fresh insights into

the evolving dynamics of gendered political communication, transcending geographical boundaries and temporal contexts.

The choice to study the linguistic profiles of women politicians stems from the recognition of the key role that language plays in the construction of political narratives and the shaping of public discourse. Given the increasing prominence of women in political leadership roles, understanding the linguistic mechanisms through which they communicate with audiences and stakeholders is of high importance. This research is justified by its potential to contribute to scholarly knowledge about the dynamics of gender, language, and politics, offering insights into the evolving nature of democratic representation and governance.

Central to this study is the recognition of language as a primary instrument for political expression, negotiation, and persuasion. **The object** of this paper encompasses the language profiles of female politicians, whose discursive practices serve as windows into broader socio-political dynamics and cultural transformations. **The subject** of this investigation spans a diverse array of female political figures, including Theresa May, Liz Truss, Penny Mordaunt, Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, and Kamala Harris, whose voices and experiences reflect the plurality of women's engagement with political power and public discourse. By centering the sets of narratives and linguistic creations of these prominent figures, this research aims to capture the complexity and diversity of gendered political communication, shedding light on the nuanced ways in which language mediates political representation, legitimacy, and authority.

The primary **aim** of this research is to analyze and interpret the linguistic characteristics exhibited by six distinguished female politicians: Theresa May, Liz Truss, Penny Mordaunt, Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, and Kamala Harris. Through a rigorous examination of their language use in various contexts such as

speeches, interviews, and official documents, this study seeks to achieve the following **objectives**:

- Identify and analyze the specific linguistic features, including vocabulary, emotive constructions, and discourse patterns, employed by female politicians in their public communication;
- Investigate the intersectionality of gender, politics, and language within the socio-cultural contexts of the United Kingdom and the United States, considering historical influences and institutional frameworks.
- Assess the impact of linguistic strategies on audience perception, media representation, and political effectiveness, elucidating how language shapes perceptions of leadership and authority.
- Explore the role of language in constructing and contesting gendered identities, ideologies, and power dynamics within the political arena.

To achieve its objectives, this research employs a methodological framework that integrates qualitative textual analysis and discourse analysis techniques. Data sources include speeches, interviews, debates, and official documents featuring the selected female politicians. The analysis is guided by established theoretical frameworks from linguistics, gender studies, and political science, facilitating the systematic examination of linguistic patterns and rhetorical strategies employed by women in political leadership roles.

At the theoretical forefront of this research lies the interdisciplinary field of political discourse analysis, which offers a robust framework for understanding the complex connection between language, power, and ideology in political contexts. Drawing upon insights from linguistics, discourse studies, and critical discourse analysis, this study adopts a multi-dimensional approach to analyze the linguistic strategies and discursive practices of female politicians. Methodologically, a qualitative content analysis methodology will be employed, facilitated by the

systematic coding, thematic analysis, and discourse parsing of textual data sourced from archival materials, public speeches, and media transcripts. By leveraging qualitative methodologies, this research seeks to uncover underlying patterns, discursive strategies, and linguistic innovations embedded within the corpus of political discourse, offering rich insights into the performative dimensions of political communication and the construction of gendered identities in public life. Furthermore, corpus data provide a systematic and comprehensive means of investigating linguistic patterns at scale, allowing for the identification of recurrent lexical items, syntactic structures, and discourse markers across a diverse range of texts. Methodologically, the study adopts a systematic approach to analyze linguistic data, employing established techniques for identifying patterns, themes, and discursive strategies within political discourse. By integrating theoretical insights with methodological rigor, this research seeks to contribute to the scholarly understanding of the language profiles of female politicians and their implications for democratic governance.

The structural outline of the thesis is organized into three main chapters, contributing to the comprehensive analysis of the language profiles of female politicians: Chapter 1: Historical Overview and Theoretical Framework, Chapter 2: Language Profiles of Female Politicians in the UK, Chapter 3: Language Profiles of Female Politicians in the USA, including the conclusions to all the chapters, final conclusions and summary.

This study aspires to make significant contributions to scholarly debates on language and gender in politics, offering empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks to enrich our understanding of the evolving dynamics of gendered political communication. By foregrounding the voices and experiences of female politicians, this research seeks to challenge conventional narratives, amplify marginalized perspectives, and facilitate inclusive dialogue within democratic

societies. Moreover, the findings of this study hold practical implications for policymakers, media practitioners, and civic actors, informing strategies for enhancing gender equality, promoting women's leadership, and strengthening democratic governance. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, this research seeks to empower individuals and institutions to create more inclusive and equitable political environments, where the voices and contributions of women are recognized, valued, and celebrated.

Summing up, this research contributes to the scholarly discourse on gender and political discourse by offering a systematic analysis of the language profiles of female politicians. By focusing on a select group of leaders from the United Kingdom and the United States, this study aims to uncover unique linguistic patterns, rhetorical strategies, and discursive styles that characterize women's engagement in politics. The novelty of this research lies in its accurate methodology, theoretical grounding, and empirical insights, which collectively advance our understanding of the complex connection between language, gender, and political power in the contemporary world.

## **1. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW of GENDER STUDIES in POLITICS**

The landscape of political discourse has been irrevocably changed by the increasing participation of women in politics, a change that reflects broader societal shifts towards gender equality. The first chapter of this master thesis begins with a historical and theoretical investigation of women's engagement in politics, tying together the development of gender roles in politics with the careful analysis of language and gender in political discourse. This research is based on a multidisciplinary approach that incorporates political science, gender studies, and linguistics to construct a comprehensive understanding of the language profiles of the female politicians.

The journey of women in politics is marked by both collective struggles and individual triumphs. At the turn of the 20th century, women's political participation was largely constrained by legal and societal barriers that excluded them from the formal political arena. However, the suffrage movements in both the United States and the United Kingdom marked a pivotal shift, challenging these barriers and advocating for women's right to vote. The ratification of the 19th Amendment in the United States in 1920 and the Representation of the People Act in 1918 in the United Kingdom served as significant milestones that paved the way for increased female political engagement (McCammon, 2001, p. 77; Pugh, 2000, p. 114).

As the century progressed, the political landscape began to reflect a gradual but undeniable increase in female political leadership and participation. The election of Margaret Thatcher as the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in 1979 and the candidature of Hillary Clinton for the presidency of the United States in 2016 exemplify the heights to which women have risen in political spheres, challenging the once pervasive belief that high political office was the sole preserve of men (Norris, 1996, p. 152). These milestones not only signify

individual achievements but also represent broader trends towards gender parity in political representation, albeit progress that is uneven and fraught with challenges.

The study of language and gender in politics represents a variety of strife that interrogates the communicative strategies, rhetorical styles, and linguistic dynamics employed by female politicians. Language, as a fundamental tool of political expression, plays a central role in shaping public perceptions, disseminating policy agendas, and negotiating power relations. However, the intersection of language and gender introduces complexities that reflect broader societal attitudes and power structures.

The analysis of language and gender in the context of politics extends beyond the identification of stylistic differences to encompass the power dynamics that these linguistic choices reflect and reinforce. The early work of Lakoff posited that the linguistic style attributed to women, characterized by politeness, indirectness, and the use of qualifiers, was a manifestation of their marginalization and lack of authority in society (Lakoff, 1975, p. 10). This premise sparked a significant body of research aimed at uncovering the complex ways in which gender and language cross in political contexts.

Subsequent studies have nuanced Lakoff's initial findings, suggesting that the relationship between gender and language is context-dependent and can vary significantly based on factors such as setting, audience, and the individual's position of power. For instance, research by Philips illustrates how female politicians adeptly navigate linguistic styles to assert authority, challenge opponents, and connect with constituents, demonstrating linguistic flexibility and strategic competence (Philips, 1998, p. 103).

In this regard, investigating the relationship between language and gender in political discourse reveals the complex ways in which gendered expectations and linguistic conventions impact the communication styles of female politicians.

Theoretical frameworks in political discourse analysis offer valuable insights into the dynamics of language and gender in politics. Studies have illuminated the gendered dimensions of political speech, revealing disparities in language use, media representation, and public reception. For instance, research by Lakoff elucidates that gendered language norms and stereotypes often constrain the communicative strategies of female politicians, shaping public perceptions and media representations. He has explored the concept of “gendered speech” and its impact on women's political communication, highlighting the linguistic constraints and double standards faced by female politicians (Lakoff, 1975, p. 37, 550). Moreover, intersectional perspectives, as articulated by scholars like Crenshaw (1989), emphasize the interconnectedness of gender, race, and class in shaping political discourse and power relations (Crenshaw, Kimberlé, 1989, p. 143).

The “double bind” facing women in politics — needing to be assertive but not too aggressive, competent but not cold — continues to be a significant area of inquiry. This concept, explored in depth by Jamieson (1995), captures the tightrope that female politicians walk in their public appearances and speeches. The scrutiny of female politicians' language and demeanor often exceeds that applied to their male counterparts, reflecting broader societal biases that equate femininity with emotionality and masculinity with rationality (Holmes, 2010, p. 3).

Recent scholarship has explored how female politicians from diverse backgrounds and political ideologies navigate these constraints, utilizing a range of rhetorical strategies to construct their public personas and engage with the electorate. For example, the communicative strategies employed by politicians such as Kamala Harris in the United States and Nicola Sturgeon in the United Kingdom showcase how women in power blend assertiveness with empathy, leveraging their gender and identity in ways that resonate with and challenge their audiences (Carlin, 2019, p. 720).

The study of gendered language in political discourse is underpinned by a range of theoretical frameworks that provide insights into how language functions as a tool of power and identity construction. Butler's notion of gender performativity offers a critical lens through which to analyze the public performances of female politicians, arguing that gender is not a fixed attribute but rather an identity that is continuously enacted and negotiated (Butler, 1990, p. 34). This perspective is particularly relevant in the context of political discourse, where the performative aspects of gender can be strategically employed or contested.

Furthermore, the application of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to the study of political language provides a methodology for examining how power relations and ideologies are embedded and reproduced in text and talk. Fairclough's work in this domain emphasizes the importance of analyzing discourse as a social practice that shapes and is shaped by the social structure (Fairclough, 1995, p. 132). Through CDA, the analysis of female politicians' language becomes a window into the broader societal debates about gender, power, and politics.

In light of these considerations, this chapter embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the historical evolution of female politicians and the intersection of language and gender in politics. By exploring the complex web of historical accounts and theoretical frameworks, this chapter aims to illuminate the complexities of female political participation and offer a nuanced understanding of the dynamics of gendered language in political discourse. Through critical engagement with scholarly literature and empirical research, this chapter lays the groundwork for a deeper analysis of language profiles and gender dynamics in the subsequent chapters of this thesis.

## **1.1. Theoretical Framework in Political Discourse Analysis**

Understanding the dynamics of political discourse, particularly through the lens of gender, necessitates an interdisciplinary approach, drawing from linguistics, political science, and feminist theory. The theoretical scaffolding for analyzing political discourse is critical for dissecting the nuanced ways through which language both constructs and reflects gendered power dynamics. This section explores key theoretical frameworks that underpin the analysis of political discourse, offering insights into the complex connection that exists between language, gender, and power in political contexts.

Discourse analysis provides a vital methodological tool for understanding the nuances of political communication. As defined by Gee, discourse analysis examines language in use, emphasizing the ways in which language functions across various contexts to enact identities, social relationships, and systems of knowledge and belief (Gee, 2014, p. 17). Discourse analysis emphasizes the role of language in structuring social practices and power relations. Fairclough's concept of discourse as a form of social practice posits that discourse is a key medium through which power is exercised and resisted in society (Fairclough, 1992, p. 28). This perspective is essential for exploring how political discourse is imbued with gendered assumptions and power structures that shape public perceptions of leadership and authority.

The intersection of gender and language in political discourse has been a focal point of scholarly investigation, revealing how communicative practices are gendered in ways that perpetuate or challenge existing power hierarchies. Deborah Tannen's examination of conversational styles highlights the differential socialization of men and women into distinct communicative practices, which in turn influences their modes of political discourse (Tannen, 1994, p. 77).

Understanding these gendered communication styles is crucial for analyzing the rhetorical strategies employed by female politicians within the predominantly male political arena.

Critical Discourse Analysis, as developed by Fairclough (1995), offers a framework for analyzing the connection between language, power, and ideology in political discourse (Fairclough, 1995, p. 132). Teun and Van Dijk's work emphasizes the role of discourse in the reproduction of power and inequality, suggesting that discourse analysis must critically engage with the ways in which language serves to enact, reproduce, or challenge social hierarchies (Van Dijk, 1993, p. 249). Applying CDA to the study of political discourse from a gender perspective allows for a nuanced exploration of how discursive practices reinforce or subvert gendered norms and expectations.

Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity provides a foundational framework for understanding the construction of gender identities through discourse. Butler argues that gender is not an inherent attribute but rather a performative act that is constituted through repeated linguistic and social practices (Butler, 1990, p. 34). This concept of performativity is particularly relevant in the analysis of political discourse, where female politicians must navigate the performative aspects of gender in a way that aligns with or challenges societal expectations.

Feminist theories contribute significantly to the analysis of political discourse, offering critical insights into the ways in which language reflects and constructs gendered power relations. Feminist linguistics, as a field, interrogates the ways in which language perpetuates gender inequalities and seeks to uncover the mechanisms by which gendered power dynamics are maintained and resisted through linguistic practices (Lazar, 2005, p. 5). The work of scholars such as Bell Hooks and Chandra Talpade Mohanty emphasizes the importance of examining

discourse through an intersectional lens, considering how gender intersects with other axes of identity such as race, class, and ethnicity (Hooks, 1984; Mohanty, 1988, p. 71). This intersectional approach is crucial for a comprehensive analysis of political discourse, as it highlights the diverse experiences and challenges faced by female politicians.

Concluding the examination of the theoretical frameworks essential for political discourse analysis from a gendered perspective, we recognize the importance of grounding these concepts within specific historical and cultural contexts. Without taking into account the changing character of political speech and the part that female politicians have played in this evolution, it is impossible to completely comprehend the close connection between language, gender, and power. As such, this section has laid the foundational theories that will inform our analysis—ranging from the fundamentals of discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis to the nuanced theories of gender performativity. These theoretical lenses offer a multipurpose approach to understanding how gendered language shapes and is shaped by political communication, setting the stage for a deeper investigation into the historical and cultural dimensions of political discourse.

## **1.2. Historical Context and Evolution of Political Discourse in the UK and USA**

Building upon this theoretical groundwork, we now turn our focus to the historical context and evolution of political discourse in the UK and USA. This next section will explore how the historical trajectories of political engagement and discourse in these countries have influenced the opportunities and challenges faced by female politicians. By tracing the evolution of political discourse in the UK and the USA, We can obtain a deeper comprehension of the context in which women

have become prominent figures in politics and how their participation has, in turn, influenced the nature of political communication.

The historical context is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it provides insights into the changing norms and expectations surrounding gender and political leadership, illustrating how and why societal attitudes towards female politicians have evolved over time. Secondly, examining the historical evolution of political discourse sheds light on the specific challenges and opportunities that have shaped the communication strategies of female politicians. Finally, this historical exploration will highlight the milestones and setbacks in the journey towards gender equality in political representation, providing a thorough overview of the contemporary landscape of political discourse.

The articulation of political thought and policy through language is a complex connection between power, identity, and societal norms. In the 20th and 21st centuries, the political arenas of the United Kingdom and the United States have seen a transformative inclusion of female voices. Therefore, this section explores the evolution of political discourse through the contributions of female politicians, examining how their linguistic strategies have navigated and reshaped the traditionally male-dominated political landscape.

The fight for women's suffrage in the early 20th century marked the beginning of women's formal engagement with political discourse in both the UK and the USA. The suffrage movement marked the first significant foray of women into political discourse, using pamphlets, speeches, and public demonstrations as platforms to advocate for their rights. These early pioneers employed a rhetoric that was both persuasive and insistent, blending appeals to justice and equality with a strategic use of emotional narrative to galvanize support (Smith, 2014, p. 88; Keyssar, 2009, p. 102). Figures such as Emmeline Pankhurst in the UK and Alice Paul in the USA utilized public speeches, written appeals, and media engagement

to advocate for women's rights, employing rhetorical strategies that combined emotional appeal with logical argumentation, a duality that challenged the prevailing norms of political speech (Eagleton, 1991, p. 73). This period set the stage for the integration of women's perspectives into political discourse, highlighting the initial shifts towards more inclusive and varied political communication styles.

The mid-20th century saw female politicians assuming more prominent roles in the political spheres of both countries. In the UK, Margaret Thatcher's tenure as Prime Minister (1979-1990) was notable not only for her political policies but also for her distinctive communicative style, characterized by a firm tone, precise language, and the strategic use of metaphor and repetition to reinforce her messages (Atkins, 2016, p. 172-173). Thatcher, known for her uncompromising leadership style, characterized by a direct and authoritative use of language, came to be emblematically represented by her “Iron Lady” moniker (Campbell, 2003, p. 158). In the USA, figures like Shirley Chisholm, the first African American woman elected to the United States Congress, utilized a forthright and persuasive speech style that highlighted issues of race, gender, and class, challenging the political establishment and expanding the scope of political discourse (Gallagher, 2012, p. 181).

The advent of digital media has significantly altered the landscape of political discourse, offering new platforms and challenges for female politicians. The communicative strategies employed by women in politics have increasingly leveraged social media to bypass traditional media gatekeepers, directly engaging with the electorate through a more personal and informal style of communication. This era has seen politicians like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in the USA and Theresa May in the UK use Twitter and other social media platforms to address constituents, blending political messaging with personal narrative and colloquial

language, thus broadening the appeal and accessibility of political discourse (Jackson and Lilleker, 2011, p. 100; Pedwell, 2014, p. 80). The informal and direct style of communication favored on these platforms has allowed for a more personal connection with the electorate, demonstrating the evolving nature of political language in the digital age.

The linguistic contributions of female politicians have been pivotal in challenging traditional norms and expanding the stylistic boundaries of political discourse. Their strategic use of language has encompassed a range of techniques, from the employment of ethos and pathos in their rhetorical appeals to the adept use of social media vernacular to engage with a younger, more diverse audience. Moreover, their discourse often reflects a conscious navigation of the double bind, balancing assertiveness with approachability to mitigate against biases that favor traditional, masculine styles of communication (McKay, 2020, p. 208). The evolution of female political discourse is also a reflection of broader linguistic shifts. From a sociolinguistic perspective, the language of female politicians can be analyzed in terms of politeness strategies, code-switching, and the use of gendered language, providing insights into how women navigate the linguistic expectations of political leadership (Lakoff, 1975, p. 53; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2013, p. 46). Further, discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis offer tools for examining how language constructs and is constructed by power dynamics, gender ideologies, and social identities within political contexts (Fairclough, 1992, p. 28).

### **1.3. Women in politics: milestones**

Having explored the historical context and evolution of political discourse in the UK and USA, we have observed the dynamic connection between cultural, social, and political forces in shaping public dialogue and policy discourse. This exploration reveals how shifts in political discourse over time have both mirrored

and influenced changes in societal attitudes towards gender, leadership, and power. As political discourse evolved, it both reflected and contributed to broader societal changes, setting the stage for significant transformations in the political arena, especially concerning gender equality and women's participation.

Understanding the turning points in women's political participation requires an awareness of the story of how political speech has evolved in these two countries. The historical shifts in rhetoric, policy debates, and public engagement have not occurred in a vacuum but have been deeply influenced by and contributory to the changing role of women in politics. As we transition from the broader context of political discourse evolution, we turn our focus to the specific milestones that mark the journey of women's political participation. These milestones are not just points of historical significance but are also moments where the evolving political discourse and the quest for gender equality intersect in profound ways.

Therefore, in this section, we will delve into these pivotal moments, examining how women have navigated, challenged, and reshaped the political discourse in both the UK and USA. From the suffrage movement to contemporary political leadership and activism, this section highlights the accomplishments, challenges, and contributions of women to the political landscape. Through this lens, we will see how the milestones of women's political participation have both been shaped by and have contributed to the ongoing evolution of political discourse, reflecting broader trends of social and political change.

As it was stated previously, the suffrage movement in the early 20th century serves as a pivotal starting point for examining women's political participation. The rhetoric employed by suffragists was marked by a language of empowerment, employing assertive and direct linguistic strategies that challenged the prevailing norms of female passivity. Pioneers like Emmeline Pankhurst in the UK and Susan

B. Anthony in the US utilized a discourse that was both confrontational and persuasive, mobilizing support through public speeches and writings that skillfully blended emotional appeal with logical argumentation (Smith, 2007, p. 45). The suffragists' language not only facilitated political action but also redefined the possibilities for women's public speech, laying the groundwork for future generations of female politicians.

The establishment of the United Nations and subsequent global initiatives for gender equality marked significant milestones for women's political participation on an international scale. The language of international diplomacy and policy-making became arenas in which women's voices began to emerge more prominently. The adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1979, for example, was a result of intense negotiations and the strategic use of legal and diplomatic language to advocate for women's rights (Charlesworth, 1999, p. 386). This period saw women not only participating in political discourse at a global level but also shaping the language of international law to reflect a commitment to gender equality.

The late 20th and early 21st centuries have witnessed numerous women breaking the “glass ceiling” to assume positions of political leadership. Figures such as Margaret Thatcher, Angela Merkel, and Jacinda Ardern have become emblematic of women's evolving role in politics. The linguistic styles of these leaders have been the subject of various studies, highlighting how they navigate the traditionally masculine domain of political speech. For instance, Thatcher's deliberate lowering of her voice pitch and her meticulous choice of language were strategic decisions to assert authority and command respect in a male-dominated political landscape (Atkinson, 1984, p. 72).

The advent of the digital age and the rise of social media have transformed the landscape of political discourse, offering new platforms for women's political

participation and activism. Social media has enabled female politicians and activists to bypass traditional media gatekeepers, crafting their own narratives and engaging directly with the public. The #MeToo movement, for example, showcased the power of digital platforms in mobilizing global conversations about gender, power, and violence, utilizing a concise and impactful hashtag to unite stories and voices across borders (Mendes, 2019, p. 158).

The milestones in women's political participation are not merely historical events; they are indicative of the evolving relationship between gender, language, and power in the political domain. The linguistic strategies employed by women in politics—from the assertive rhetoric of the suffrage movement to the strategic communication of contemporary female leaders—reflect broader shifts in societal norms and perceptions of gender and authority.

#### **1.4. Conceptualizing gendered language in political communication**

Having charted the significant milestones in women's political participation, it becomes evident how each historical achievement not only marked progress in political representation but also in the evolution of political discourse. These milestones, from the suffrage movements to the election of women to high political offices, have paved the way for a more nuanced understanding of how gender intersects with political communication. This historical background sets the stage for a deeper exploration into the realm of gendered language within political communication, shifting our focus from the broader landscape of women's participation to the specific ways in which language embodies and perpetuates gender distinctions in politics.

The intersection of language and gender in political communication is a complex field that reveals much about societal structures, power dynamics, and the ongoing struggle for gender equality. As we build upon the foundational

understanding of how gendered language operates within the political sphere, it becomes imperative to explore the multifaceted ways in which language serves as both a tool for empowerment and a mechanism of gendered constraint.

The study of gendered language in political contexts is enriched by a variety of linguistic and sociolinguistic theories. Beyond Lakoff's pioneering work and Tannen's conversational styles, the framework of politeness theory as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) provides additional insights into the strategic use of language to navigate social hierarchies and maintain relationships. In political discourse, female politicians often employ politeness strategies not just to adhere to feminine stereotypes but also to strategically assert power without alienating potential supporters (Holmes, 1995, p.73).

Moreover, the concept of linguistic relativity suggests that the language we use shapes our perception of reality. From this perspective, the gendered language prevalent in political discourse not only reflects existing gender biases but also reinforces and perpetuates them, influencing how individuals conceptualize leadership and authority (Boroditsky, 2003, p. 920).

Studies have shown that even when discussing policy matters, the language surrounding female politicians often includes unnecessary mentions of their gender, which does not typically occur in discussions about male politicians. This can divert focus from their policy initiatives to their gender, influencing how seriously their contributions are taken (Van der Pas, 2020, p. 138).

Empirical research has provided significant insights into the effects of gendered language on political outcomes. Studies examining the speeches of female politicians have found that those who skillfully navigate gendered expectations, employing a blend of traditionally masculine and feminine linguistic features, are often more successful in gaining public approval (Merchant, 2012, p. 44). This balancing act, however, places an additional burden on female politicians,

requiring them to carefully calibrate their language in ways that their male counterparts are seldom required to consider.

Analyzing linguistic patterns during the 2016 U.S. election revealed that sentences like, for example “after the candidate spoke, *she* shook hands with supporters” were more likely to be misread or cause comprehension difficulties if “she” referred to a female presidential candidate, reflecting a cognitive bias where leadership is subconsciously coded as male (Malsburg, 2020, p. 121). The subconscious coding of leadership as inherently male suggests deep-rooted linguistic biases that can affect the reception and interpretation of communication involving female leaders. This indicates a need for broader societal shifts in how leadership and gender are conceptualized and discussed, potentially through educational reforms and targeted public awareness campaigns.

Recent analyses have also focused on social media as a platform for political communication, highlighting how female politicians use these platforms to craft their public personas, engage with constituents, and navigate the challenges of gendered expectations in a digital landscape (Stromer-Galley, 2014, p. 88).

However, analysis of online interactions shows that female politicians are disproportionately targeted with gendered insults and derogatory language that not only attacks their political stance but also their gender identity, contributing to a hostile environment that discourages women from political participation (Esposito, 2022, pp. 320).

Furthermore, differential linguistic portrayals in media coverage employ varied adjectives for male versus female candidates. Women are frequently described with terms that emphasize emotionality and aesthetics, whereas descriptions for men focus on action and effectiveness. This discrepancy in language use contributes to gender stereotyping in political media (Van der Pas, 2020, pp. 132).

Moreover, the language used in media can shape public perception significantly; for example, when female politicians are frequently discussed in the context of their family roles or through a lens of emotionality, it can undermine their perceived competence in political roles, affecting voter confidence and their perceived suitability for leadership (Rohrbach, 2020, p. 701). Thus, undermining of women's perceived competence due to gendered language in media highlights the pervasive effect of linguistic framing on political careers.

The media plays a crucial role in framing gendered political discourse, often perpetuating stereotypes and biases through the language used to describe female versus male politicians. Media coverage tends to emphasize the appearance and emotional responses of female politicians, while focusing on the achievements and competencies of their male counterparts (Ross, 2008, p. 120). This differential treatment not only affects public perceptions but also influences the language female politicians must use to counteract these narratives and assert their qualifications and leadership capabilities.

As the understanding of gender evolves, so too does the conceptualization of gendered language in political communication. The binary model of gender fails to capture the diversity of gender identities and expressions, necessitating a broader approach to how gendered language is understood and analyzed. This includes recognizing and respecting non-binary and transgender identities in political discourse, challenging traditional gender norms, and advocating for a more inclusive language that transcends binary gendered expressions (Zimman, 2017, p. 101).

The expanded analysis of gendered language in political communication highlights the complexity of navigating gender norms and expectations within the political arena. By understanding the theoretical underpinnings, acknowledging empirical findings, and recognizing the role of media and societal evolution in

shaping discourse, we can begin to conceptualize ways to favor a more equitable political landscape. This requires not only a critical examination of language use and its implications for female politicians but also a concerted effort to challenge and transform the gendered norms that underlie political discourse.

### **Conclusion to Chapter 1**

In Chapter 1, an interdisciplinary exploration of the changing terrain of female political engagement and the complex interactions between language and gender in the context of political discourse were undertaken.. By traversing the historical milestones of women's engagement in politics and delving into the theoretical and empirical studies on gendered language, this chapter has laid a foundational understanding essential for examining the language profiles of female politicians in the 20th and 21st centuries.

The exploration began with the recognition of the suffrage movements in the United States and the United Kingdom as pivotal moments that not only secured women's right to vote but also signaled the beginning of women's formal entry into political discourse. These historical milestones underscored the collective struggles and individual triumphs that have characterized women's journey toward political representation and participation. As we traced the evolution of female political leadership and participation, it became evident that the increasing visibility of women in politics is both a reflection of and a catalyst for broader societal shifts towards gender equality.

Simultaneously, our theoretical exploration into the dynamics of language and gender in politics unveiled the complexities of political communication as a domain where gendered norms and linguistic strategies intersect. From Lakoff's early observations on the linguistic style attributed to women to the nuanced studies that followed, it became clear that the language of politics is imbued with

gendered connotations that influence public perceptions, media representation, and the rhetorical choices of female politicians. The concept of the “double bind,” the performative nature of gender in political discourse, and the role of media in framing gendered political communication emerged as critical themes that define the communicative landscape for women in politics.

Moreover, the discussions highlighted the importance of adopting an intersectional lens in analyzing political discourse, recognizing that gender intersects with other axes of identity, such as race and class, to shape the political and communicative experiences of female politicians. This intersectional perspective enriches our understanding of the diverse challenges and strategies employed by women in navigating the political sphere.

The insights gained from this chapter underscore the significance of language as a powerful tool of political expression and identity construction. Language not only facilitates the articulation of policy agendas and political ideologies but also serves as a battleground where gendered norms and expectations are contested and renegotiated. As female politicians navigate the linguistic landscape of politics, their communicative strategies reflect a conscious engagement with the dual imperative of asserting authority while navigating societal stereotypes about femininity and leadership.

In conclusion, Chapter 1 has not only charted the historical and theoretical contours of female political participation and gendered language in political communication but also highlighted the enduring relationships between language, gender, and power in the political domain. Looking ahead, this chapter sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the language profiles of specific female politicians in the subsequent chapters. By building upon the historical and theoretical groundwork laid here, the thesis will delve into case studies that illuminate the linguistic nuances of female political communication, offering insights into how

individual politicians have navigated the gendered landscape of political discourse to shape their public personas and advance their policy agendas. Furthermore, the insights derived from this chapter will inform a nuanced analysis of how gendered language shapes and is shaped by the political engagement of women, contributing to a broader understanding of the dynamics at play in the language profiles of female politicians in the 20th and 21st centuries. By applying the insights gained from our theoretical foundation, Chapters 2 and 3 will scrutinize the language use of the influential figures, aiming to reveal the linguistic intricacies that underpin their political discourse. Through detailed analysis, we seek to uncover how these women navigate the complexities of gendered communication within the political arena, how they assert authority, manage public perception, and engage with their constituencies through their linguistic choices. This forthcoming chapter is not merely a continuation of our inquiry but a deepening of our engagement with the language of politics through the lens of gender, promising to contribute to a richer understanding of the intersection between language, gender, and political power.

## **2. LANGUAGE PROFILES of FEMALE POLITICIANS in the UK**

As we transition from the historical and theoretical exploration of gendered language in political discourse, Chapter 2 embarks on a philological examination of the language profiles of prominent female politicians in the 20th and 21st centuries. This chapter aims to dissect the communicative strategies, rhetorical nuances, and linguistic idiosyncrasies that characterize the public discourse of the influential figures in British politics. By delving into the specific language profiles of selected female politicians, we seek to understand not only how they navigate the complexities of political communication within a gendered framework but also how their linguistic choices contribute to their political identity, effectiveness, and public perception.

Firstly, let's define such a notion like a *language profile*. A “language profile” encapsulates the distinctive amalgam of linguistic features, strategies, and stylistic choices that an individual utilizes in communication (Eckert & Rickford, 2001, p. 4). Within the political domain, this profile becomes a critical tool for narrative construction, policy advocacy, and public persuasion. For female politicians, whose linguistic practices are often scrutinized under the magnifying glass of gendered expectations, their language profiles represent a balancing act between asserting authority and navigating the socio-political landscapes shaped by stereotypes and biases.

The analysis of language profiles extends beyond the surface level of speech patterns to include rhetorical strategies, thematic emphasis, interactional styles, and the strategic employment of metaphors and analogies. Such analysis reveals the ways in which language is operated to negotiate power, construct political identities, and engage with constituents on a spectrum of issues (Tannen, 1994, p. 22).

Investigating the language profiles of female politicians offers profound insights into the dynamics of political communication and the role of gender therein. It allows for an understanding of how these leaders harness the power of language to challenge prevailing norms, articulate policy visions, and forge connections with the electorate. Furthermore, it sheds light on the impact of gendered language norms on the communicative strategies adopted by female politicians, revealing how they maneuver within the constraints and opportunities these norms present.

Female politicians often employ a range of linguistic strategies that reflect both gendered expectations and individual communicative goals. Pragmatics, the study of language in use and the contexts that govern use, offers insights into how women in politics navigate the implicit rules and expectations of political discourse (Levinson, 1983, p. 101). Through the pragmatic lens, we can examine how female politicians use implicature, speech acts, and politeness strategies to assert power, convey solidarity, or perform diplomacy.

Speech Act Theory, as proposed by Austin (1962, p. 12) and further developed by Searle (1969, p. 16), explores the performative aspects of language—how utterances not only convey information but also perform actions. Analyzing the speech acts of female politicians, such as assertions, promises, orders, and apologies, can reveal how they use language to accomplish specific political acts, engage with policy issues, and navigate the expectations of assertiveness and authority.

The media plays a crucial role in shaping the public's perception of female politicians' language profiles. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) can be applied to media texts to uncover the ideological constructions and gender biases that influence the portrayal of women in politics (Fairclough, 1995, p. 132). By examining the discourse surrounding female politicians, CDA can reveal how

media representations contribute to or challenge the stereotypical narratives about women's communicative styles and effectiveness as leaders.

The advent of digital communication platforms has transformed the landscape of political discourse, offering new opportunities and challenges for female politicians. The conversational style afforded by social media platforms allows for a direct, less formal mode of communication, enabling politicians to craft their public personas and connect with constituents in unprecedented ways (Page, 2012, p. 184). Analyzing the language profiles of female politicians on digital platforms will shed light on how they leverage these mediums to circumvent traditional media gatekeeping, engage in personal branding, and navigate the complexities of online discourse.

By delving into the language profiles of female politicians in the UK, this chapter aims not only to illuminate the specific linguistic strategies that characterize their political communication but also to contribute to a broader understanding of the role of language in the intersection of gender and politics. The findings from this analysis will have implications for the fields of linguistics, political science, gender studies, and beyond, offering insights into the power of language as a tool for political engagement, identity construction, and social change.

As we move forward, the detailed examination of language profiles in Chapter 2 will lay the groundwork for subsequent analyses, bridging theoretical insights with practical applications. This aim will enrich our understanding of the complexities and nuances of gendered political communication, providing a foundation for future research and discourse in this vital area of study. Structured around in-depth analyses of individual language profiles, this chapter will juxtapose the communicative strategies of a diverse range of female politicians: Theresa May, Liz Truss, and Penny Mordaunt. Each profile will be contextualized

within the politician's historical and cultural milieu, providing insights into how linguistic practices are shaped by and respond to specific political landscapes.

## **2.1. Theresa May**

Theresa May's tenure as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom was marked by significant political challenges, including navigating the complexities of Brexit. Theresa May, who served from July 2016 to July 2019, was not only the second woman to hold the office of Prime Minister in the UK but also a figure whose communicative strategies were closely scrutinized within the context of her leadership during a tumultuous period in British politics. Her language profile, reflecting a blend of traditional conservatism and a nuanced approach to political discourse, provides a fertile ground for analysis (Allen, 2017, p. 642).

Theresa May's public speeches and parliamentary addresses often showcased her commitment to what she termed a “strong and stable” leadership, a phrase that became emblematic of her approach to Brexit negotiations (Smith, 2019, p. 112). This repetitive use of specific phrases highlights a strategic effort to reinforce her political stance and project an image of resilience and reliability in the face of uncertainty. Furthermore, Theresa May's rhetoric frequently invoked the theme of national unity, appealing to a sense of collective identity and responsibility among the British populace (Vucetic, 2020).

Analyzing Theresa May's language profile also involves examining her use of politeness strategies, particularly in the context of parliamentary debates and media interactions. Despite the confrontational nature of British politics, Theresa May often employed a measured and courteous tone, adhering to the principles of politeness theory, which suggests that such strategies can be employed to mitigate conflict and facilitate cooperative discourse (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). However, her critics have sometimes interpreted this politeness as a lack of

assertiveness, highlighting the complex gender dynamics at play in perceptions of female political leadership (Al-Hindawi, 2016, p. 1542).

To conduct a pragmatic analysis of Theresa May's speeches and the context-dependent language and strategies she employs, it's important to examine the key themes, her communication objectives, and the intended impact on her audience.

Theresa May's vision of building a 'shared society' is a recurrent theme, designed to **appeal to a sense of unity** and **collective responsibility** within Britain. She emphasizes social justice and the need to address “*everyday injustices*”, aiming to resonate with individuals feeling marginalized or overlooked by the system. In her “Shared society speech” (2017) Theresa May highlights the disparities and injustices within British society, focusing on mental health as a microcosm of broader societal neglect. She states, “*For too long mental illness has been something of a hidden injustice in our country*”. This reflects her strategy of acknowledging underrepresented issues to facilitate a more inclusive society. In her “Brexit Speech” (2016), Theresa May also balances the perspectives on EU membership: “*The question... is about how we maximize Britain’s security, prosperity, and influence in the world*”, through this pragmatic approach addressing the audience’s concerns about national interest pragmatically, rather than inflaming polarities. Additionally, in her “Shared society speech” (2017), Theresa May addresses mental health, indicating a **commitment to social issues** beyond economic or political concerns: “*I want us to employ the power of government as a force for good to transform the way we deal with mental health problems*”. Theresa May frequently discusses her **leadership role** in guiding Britain through the uncertainties of Brexit. Her rhetoric is designed to portray stability and determination, reassuring the public of her capability to navigate through challenges. In her “Brexit speech” (2016), she asserts, “*We have a*

*plan...not simply to manage our withdrawal from the European Union, but to take this opportunity to fundamentally change Britain for the better*". This statement underscores her dual focus on managing immediate challenges while also striving for long-term national improvement.

Theresa May's Brexit speeches demonstrate a pragmatic approach to language, particularly through her strategic deployment of **personal pronouns**. This technique is evident when Herrero (2020) discusses Theresa May's preferential use of "*We*" over "*I*," signifying a move towards collectivity. As Herrero notes, "In this context, Leung's (2018) analysis of Theresa May's ministerial discourse on the withdrawal of Britain from the EU is of special interest" (Herrero, 2020, p. 112).

A significant aspect of Theresa May's rhetoric is her call to overcome divisions within British society. She employs **conciliatory language** to appeal to a sense of common identity and purpose. Addressing national unity, Theresa May remarks, "*it destroys lives, separates people from each other and deepens the divisions within our society. Changing this goes right to the heart of our humanity; to the heart of the kind of country we are, the attitudes we hold and the values we share.*" (Shared Society Speech, 2017). This reflects her strategic use of language to promote reconciliation and unity among disparate societal groups. The statement "*I'm take responsibility. I led the campaign. And I am sorry.*" (Apologies after speech, 2017) said by Theresa May is conciliatory because it accepts blame and expresses sorrow for the negative consequences of her actions, which is intended to diffuse tension and criticism within her party and among the electorate.

Atkins and Gaffney provide insights into Theresa May's narrative persona, noting her attempt to create a relatable image through **personal stories** and **references to her own experiences**. For example, they highlight how Theresa May's discourse often incorporates elements of her personal life to forge a

connection with the audience, illustrating a pragmatic strategy to humanize her political persona (Atkins, 2020, p. 45). This approach enhances her credibility and relatability, essential aspects of effective political communication.

In the analysis by Mukhortov and Malyavina, the contrast between Theresa May's and Nicola Sturgeon's communication styles is examined, emphasizing Theresa May's preference for **structured, direct communication** that seeks to present her as a stable, reliable leader (Mukhortov, 2019, p. 48). This directness in communication, especially when discussing complex issues like Brexit, serves to clarify her stance and policy intentions, reducing ambiguity and potentially increasing public trust.

Analyzing Theresa May's speeches through the lens of speech act theory involves examining the performative functions of her political discourse. Analyzing Theresa May's speeches through the lens of speech act theory, a concept developed by J.L. Austin and further elaborated by John Searle, reveals how she strategically employs language to perform various actions, such as asserting, promising, and committing.

Theresa May frequently uses **assertives** to state her position or describe the state of affairs, aiming to shape the audience's perceptions. For example, in her speech, she asserts, "*Leaving without a deal... would be a bad outcome for the UK and the EU*" (Conservative Party Conference Speech, 2018). This statement aims to establish a factual basis for her negotiation stance, influencing how the audience perceives the importance of securing a deal. Another example, where Theresa May commits to factual claims about societal challenges: "*We live in a country where if you're born poor, you will die on average 9 years earlier than others*" (Shared Society Speech, 2017). Assertive act was also found in her "Britain, the great meritocracy" speech (2016): "*This government's priorities are those of ordinary, working class people.*"

**Directives** are speech acts where the speaker attempts to get the hearer to do something. Theresa May uses directives to call for action or imply the need for a response. In her conservative Party Conference Speech (2018), she directs, “*We need to come together ... it's time we faced up to what is at risk*”. By using “we need,” Theresa May is not only suggesting action but also inviting her audience to join her in a collective effort, promoting unity and shared responsibility. Another example is: “*Let's sweep away those barriers and encourage more people to join us in the task of delivering a good school place for every child*” (Britain, the great meritocracy, 2016), where Theresa May uses an imperative construction to give a command or a request for the audience.

**Declaratives** speech act involves altering the state of affairs by the authority of the speaker. Theresa May proposes new initiatives, essentially altering the social or institutional state of affairs through the power of her position, declaring, “*So today I can announce that we are scrapping that cap,*” referring to the borrowing cap for local councils for housing. She also outlines policy intentions, such as, “*Our message to them must be this: we get it,*” (Conservative Party Conference Speech, 2018) in the context of addressing the public's hardships and future government actions.

**Commissives** commit the speaker to future action. Theresa May's speeches are replete with commitments to policy goals and objectives. For instance, in her Shared Society Speech (2017), she commits, “*we will ensure that the NHS itself takes the steps it needs...*”. This promise aims to commit the NHS to a specific course of action, intending to hold herself and her party accountable. Furthermore, by saying “*That is good and right – and as long as I am Prime Minister, the pupil premium for the poorest children will remain*” (Britain, the great meritocracy, 2016) Theresa May stressed her intentions for the future deeds.

**Expressives** convey the speaker's psychological state. Theresa May often uses expressives to show empathy or solidarity. In her speech addressing mental health, she empathizes, “*I know that no party has a monopoly on good ideas*” (Conservative Party Conference Speech, 2018). This expression of humility and openness invites a more collaborative and less adversarial political environment. Also with the help of an expressive act in the sentence: “*And thanks to our reforms that is increasingly the case.*” (Britain, the great meritocracy, 2016) - Theresa May stresses her gratitude to the reforms made by her party.

The **argumentative and persuasive nature** of Theresa May's speeches is further dissected by Herrero, who points out the heavy reliance on mental processes to convey intent and desire, thereby engaging the audience through a shared sense of purpose: “Mental processes turned out to have the most notable frequency in all three speeches” (Herrero, 2020, p. 118).

The stylistic analysis of Theresa May's speeches offers a profound insight into her communication strategy, illustrating how she leverages language to not only convey her political ideologies and policies but also to resonate emotionally with her audience. Through a careful examination of her speeches we can discern a deliberate and strategic use of stylistic devices. These devices serve multiple functions: they articulate her vision for Britain, address societal and political challenges, and seek to unify the country amidst the contentious Brexit negotiations and beyond.

Theresa May employs a variety of rhetorical devices that enhance the persuasiveness of her speeches. Notably, her use of anaphora and epistrophe adds rhythm and emphasis to her arguments, making her key points more memorable and impactful. For instance, the repeated use of “*If you're...*” in the “Shared Society Speech” (2017) highlights the systemic inequalities she aims to address, while the consistent structure of “*We will*” in the “Conservative Party Conference

Speech” (2018) reaffirms her commitment to certain actions and policies. Theresa May also effectively uses anaphora “*The dream that...The dream that...*” in her “British dream” speech (2017) to strengthen the message, ensuring that the theme of inclusive opportunity remains central and impactful throughout the discourse.

**Metaphors** like being “*locked out*” of the political discourse appeal to a sense of injustice and exclusion, resonating deeply with her audience’s emotions. The metaphor “*You have your own home, but you worry about paying the mortgage*” (Shared Society Speech, 2017) connects with personal anxieties, making abstract economic issues relatable. The metaphor “*standing at the crossroads*” (Brexit Speech, 2016) suggests that the decision on Brexit is pivotal, a defining moment for the nation, thereby dramatizing the significance of the upcoming choice. By framing challenges and solutions through metaphors of building, construction, and navigation, she not only simplifies complex issues but also invokes a sense of progress and direction.

**Parallelism** is another hallmark of Theresa May's style, creating a harmonious and balanced structure that reinforces her messages. For instance, in her “Conservative Party Conference Speech” (2017) she claimed: “*Security for the nation, security for communities, security for individuals and families*” and by structuring these phrases in parallel, Theresa May rhythmically underscores her commitment across multiple levels of society, reinforcing the comprehensive nature of her policies. Another example of effective use of parallelism in the expert “*If you’re from an ordinary working class family, life is much harder than many people in Westminster realise. You have a job but you don’t always have job security. You have your own home, but you worry about paying a mortgage...*” (Statement from the new Prime Minister Theresa May, 2016) not only reinforces the message of hardship and insecurity experienced by ordinary working-class families but also enhances the emotional and persuasive appeal of the speech.

Additionally, **repetitions** stresses the contemporary relevance of Theresa May's arguments, for instance dismissing historical comparisons to frame the current decision as unique: "*We are not in 1940... We are not in 1957... We are not in 1973...*" (Brexit Speech, 2016). In her "Speech Laying Out the U.K's Plan" (2017) she repeats the word "*shape*" many times during the speech: "*They voted to shape a brighter future for our country...the pioneers and innovators who will shape the world ahead...our ambition of shaping that stronger, fairer, Global Britain that we want to see...They will see that we shaped them a brighter future.*" Such a repetition serves to unify the message, emphasize active participation and responsibility, and inspire optimism and engagement by portraying a dynamic process of continuous improvement and influence over the future. This linguistic strategy enhances both the persuasive power of the speech and its memorability.

Moreover, Theresa May effectively uses **antithesis** to highlight contrasts, strengthening her arguments by juxtaposing opposing ideas. For instance, in the "Brexit Speech," (2016) she contrasts different historical powers and their levels of sovereignty, emphasizing that "*no country or empire in world history has ever been totally sovereign*". This not only clarifies her point but also enriches her argument about the complexities of national autonomy within a global context. Furthermore, in the sentences "*June the 23rd was not the moment Britain chose to step back from the world. It was the moment we chose to build a truly Global Britain.*" (Speech Laying Out the U.K's Plan", 2017) the antithesis strives to create a striking contrast between opposing ideas, enhancing the rhetorical impact of the statement.

Theresa May also rarely employs **hypophora**, posing questions and immediately answering them, which serves to guide her audience's thoughts and keep them engaged. In the "Conservative Party Conference Speech," (2018) she asks, "*What has befallen Labour?*" only to answer with a critique of its current

leadership, directing the audience's focus and reinforcing her perspective on political opposition.

Herrero's analysis also touches upon stylistic elements, particularly Theresa May's use of mental processes as a rhetorical strategy, avoiding direct action or explicit commitments, thus promoting a narrative focused on collective mental activity and alignment: “Rather than embracing the function of a communicator she sees the persuasive potential of her speeches as reaching the audience specifically from her own mental activity” (Herrero, 2020, p. 119).

Analyzing the speeches delivered by Theresa May through the lens of politeness strategies and gendered communication styles offers insightful perspectives on her approach to public speaking and engagement. Politeness strategies refer to the linguistic choices speakers make to mitigate face-threatening acts, show respect, and manage social distance and intimacy. Gendered communication styles, while not strictly binary or universally applicable, often reflect societal norms and expectations about how different genders communicate.

Theresa May employs **positive politeness** strategies to build camaraderie and show admiration or support for her audience and others. For instance, her frequent expressions of gratitude, as seen in her thanking the audience and acknowledging the hard work of public servants, aim to create a sense of solidarity and appreciation. This is evident when she says, “*we say thank you*” (Conservative Party Conference Speech, 2018) to those who have started their own businesses, recognizing their contribution to society. However, Theresa May is employing positive politeness not only with the help of words like ‘thank you’, for instance in her International Women’s Day Speech (2018) she said: “*Across the country thousands of women endure unimaginable abuse in their homes, there are women who know what that means on a daily basis, often at the hands of those they are closest to, every single day*”. While the primary intention of the sentence is to

inform and perhaps mobilize action rather than to engage in politeness per se, there are elements that indirectly relate to the goals of positive politeness by fostering empathy and awareness.

However, Theresa May also uses **negative politeness** to respect her audience's freedom and avoid imposition. This is reflected in her careful framing of requests and her acknowledgment of differing opinions within her own party regarding Brexit. For example, she states, “*We have had disagreements in this Party about Britain's membership of the EU for a long time,*” (Conservative Party Conference Speech, 2018) acknowledging the diversity of views and respecting her audience's autonomy to hold different perspectives. In the statement “*I believe we need nothing short of a complete change across the whole of society in the way we think about and tackle domestic abuse. That's why today we are launching a consultation on our proposals for new laws, stronger powers and new prevention measures*” negative politeness technique is implied, by putting emphasis on consultation and inviting input respects the audience's autonomy and acknowledges their expertise and contributions. It minimizes the imposition by showing that their feedback is crucial and valued.

While Theresa May's speeches are collaborative and empathetic, they exhibit not only assertiveness but an **authority** as well, challenging the binary notion of gendered communication styles. Her firm stance on Brexit and clear articulation of her political vision demonstrate a balanced approach that incorporates both traditionally feminine and masculine communication traits. This is particularly evident when she states, “*I will not let them down,*” (Conservative Party Conference Speech, 2017) asserting her commitment to fulfilling the Brexit referendum's mandate. Furthermore, this authoritative concept is reflected in Theresa May's tweets, like for instance “*Only @Conservatives can deliver Brexit*

*and take the UK forward into a brighter future. No one else can get the job done.”* (Twitter, Theresa May, 2018).

The gendered dynamics of Theresa May's communication style are highlighted by Mukhortov and Malyavina, who observe that, despite her senior political role, Theresa May tends to adopt male-marked discourse features to assert her authority: “female politicians can, or have to, switch between male-marked and female-marked discourses in order to achieve certain goals and preserve their current status” (Mukhortov, 2019, p. 1021).

Thus, Theresa May's speeches reveal a sophisticated use of politeness strategies and a nuanced approach to gendered communication styles. By employing both positive and negative politeness, she navigates the complexities of political discourse, showing respect for her audience while also articulating her positions with clarity and conviction. Her communication style transcends simplistic gender binaries, blending empathy and collaboration with assertiveness and authority. Advocating for national unity and addressing social issues like mental health, she demonstrates a strategic, pragmatic language use, seeking to unify and reassure both domestic and international audiences about Britain's post-Brexit role. Her employment of rhetorical devices and metaphors in speeches enhances her arguments, illustrating a sophisticated communication approach that transcends traditional gendered styles, combining assertiveness with empathy.

## **2.2. Liz Truss**

Liz Truss, the UK's former Prime Minister, presents a spectacular subject for the analysis of political language and communication strategies, particularly through the lens of her tenure as Foreign Secretary and then as Prime Minister. Liz Truss's communication style, marked by assertiveness and a distinctive blend of traditional conservatism with a modern, social media-savvy approach, provides

fertile ground for analysis within the broader context of contemporary British politics.

Liz Truss's rhetoric, often characterized by a robust promotion of free market principles and international trade, signifies a continuity of her political ideologies into her communicative strategies. Her speeches and public statements frequently emphasize the UK's global role post-Brexit, underscoring a vision of a “Global Britain” that is open, outward-looking, and dynamic on the world stage (Egan, 2023, p. 14). This narrative not only aligns with her political agenda but also serves to construct a leadership persona that is forward-thinking and unapologetically patriotic.

An analysis of Liz Truss's language profile cannot overlook the gendered dimensions of political communication. As the third female Prime Minister of the UK, Liz Truss operates within a media landscape that is often critically gendered in its narratives and representations of female politicians. Studies have shown that female political figures face unique challenges in the public sphere, where their leadership qualities are frequently scrutinized through a gendered lens, impacting the reception and interpretation of their public communication (Shaw, 2020, p. 248).

Furthermore, Liz Truss's adept use of digital platforms, particularly Twitter, for both political messaging and personal branding, illustrates a strategic approach to digital communication that seeks to engage with a broader audience beyond traditional political discourse (Grossman, 2022, p. 452). This digital engagement strategy not only reflects the changing landscape of political communication but also offers insights into how Liz Truss navigates the complexities of online identity and public perception in the digital age.

As Henry Maher writes, Liz Truss's approach to leadership was marked by a strong adherence to neoliberal principles, advocating for tax cuts, deregulation, and

a focus on market freedoms. Her policies and rhetoric were seen as a continuation of Thatcher-era neoliberalism, with a pronounced emphasis on economic freedoms and prosperity over pragmatic market discipline. Liz Truss's leadership is depicted as embodying a pure form of neoliberal master discourse, contrasting with the more cautious neoliberal university discourse that prioritizes austerity and market discipline (Maher, 2023, p. 334).

In constructing a language profile for Liz Truss, it is essential to consider these comprehensive aspects of her communication - the content and style of her rhetoric, the gendered dynamics at play, and her engagement with digital platforms. Through this analysis, we aim to uncover the rhetorical devices, narrative techniques, and linguistic strategies Liz Truss uses to engage with her audience, articulate her political agenda, and navigate the complexities of modern political communication.

Liz Truss's speeches, marked by ambitious reform promises and bold tax cuts, reveal a pragmatic approach aimed at immediate economic revitalization without a clear outline for long-term growth (Kutllovci, 2022, p. 223). This reflects a pragmatic but arguably shortsighted strategy, prioritizing rapid policy implementation over sustainable development. Liz Truss's failure to present a credible framework for regulatory reform highlights a disconnect between ambitious goals and practical execution (Taniguchi, 2023, p. 2).

In terms of pragmatic analysis Liz Truss's speeches skillfully align with the current socio-political climate, addressing global challenges and national crises to make her messages timely and relevant. Moreover, she employs **strategic inclusivity** and **forward-looking optimism** to foster a sense of collective resilience and capability, reinforcing her leadership in navigating through adversity. For instance, Liz Truss addresses economic concerns by stating, "*We now face severe global headwinds caused by Russia's appalling war in Ukraine and the*

*aftermath of COVID,*” showcasing her ability to anchor her speech within the current global crises, making her message timely and relevant. She mentions further, *“I know that we have what it takes to tackle those challenges,”* (First Downing Street Address, 2022) directly responding to the societal mood of uncertainty and resilience, fostering a sense of **collective capability and optimism**. In her reference to *“the death of Queen Elizabeth II,”* (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2022) Liz Truss aligns her speech with a significant national moment, demonstrating sensitivity and understanding of the country's **emotional landscape**. Also, in the “U-turn press conference” (2022), the mention of *“global economic conditions are worsening”* serves as a backdrop to justify a shift in economic policy. The pragmatic use of context here serves to rationalize policy adjustments in response to changing economic conditions.

The performative functions in Liz Truss's political discourse are evident in her commitments to cut taxes and stimulate the economy. However, her promises culminated in financial instability, as the markets reacted negatively to her “Growth Plan 2022,” deeming it unsuitable and risky due to the timing, content, and approach (Taniguchi, 2023, p. 3). This underscores the performative aspect of her speeches, where the act of promising reform failed to align with financial and economic realities.

Applying speech act analysis notions, we can say that Liz Truss utilizes **declarative speech act** to assert her commitment to action, employing imperatives to rally collective effort, thereby strengthening her political stance and policy intentions. For example, by declaring, *“I will take action this day, and action every day, to make it happen,”* (First Downing Street Address, 2022) she uses declaratives to not just promise but also assert a commitment to proactive governance, instilling confidence in her leadership. While Liz Truss’s statement *“This needs to be a new Marshall Plan for Ukraine and it needs to be driven by*

*Ukraine itself*” (Speech to the UN General Assembly, 2022) could be seen as assertive, it's declarative in the sense that it sets a framework for how Ukraine's reconstruction should be approached, suggesting a policy directive.

**Assertive speech acts** were applied by Liz Truss to convey her belief about the state of the world. For example, talking about the situation in Ukraine, she said: “*Ukraine’s recovery from Russia’s war of aggression will be a symbol of the power of freedom and democracy over autocracy*” (Ukraine Recovery Conference, 2022), projecting a future state and asserting a belief about the symbolic nature of Ukraine's recovery. Furthermore, talking about the UN, Liz Truss has asserted a historical belief about the UN's founding intentions: “*At the time of its foundation, the United Nations was a beacon of promise*” (Speech to the UN General Assembly, 2022).

Moreover, Liz Truss's use of commitments like “*I will pursue three early priorities*” (First Downing Street Address, 2022) acts as a **commissive speech act**, outlining her immediate plans and setting a clear direction for her tenure. Moreover, in regards to Ukraine, she told: “*This commits the UK to ongoing support and leadership in Ukraine’s reconstruction efforts.*” (Ukraine Recovery Conference, 2022), committing the UK to ongoing support and leadership in Ukraine’s reconstruction efforts.

The call for unity (**directive speech act**) in “*Let’s get Tory mayors elected... across the country*” (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2022) functions as a rallying cry, using the imperative form to encourage collective action within her party. Moreover, by stating that “*Geopolitics is entering a new era – one that requires those who believe in the founding principles of the United Nations to stand up and be counted*” (Speech to the UN General Assembly, 2022), Liz Truss calls for action from UN members who support its foundational principles.

In the “Final speech as Prime Minister”, Liz Truss states, “*I believe in Britain. I believe in the British people.*” This is an **expressive act** of invoking national identity and unity, aimed at bolstering a collective spirit among the audience. Another example of Liz Truss impling expressives is when she is talking about the death of Queen Elizabeth II, expressing the UK's collective mourning and respect: “*We deeply mourn her passing and we pay tribute to her service*” (Speech to the UN General Assembly, 2022).

Liz Truss's speeches are characterized by their variability in length, style, and the use of figurative language. She frequently employed metaphors to simplify complex ideas, such as viewing countries, economies, and the world as entities to be built or improved (Trampevska, 2023, p. 56).

According to Pavlíková Liz Truss’s use of metaphors, such as viewing countries, economies, and the world as structures to be built upon, reveals a narrative construction aimed at envisioning growth and prosperity. Her speeches frequently employed the source domain of buildings and persons to represent abstract concepts like the economy and government, aiming to simplify complex ideas and make her policies more relatable to the public. However, this stylistic choice also masked the lack of a concrete, actionable plan (Pavlíková, 2022, p. 316).

So, talking about stylistic analysis, through various metaphors and other figures of speech and narratives of personal and national resilience, Liz Truss constructs a compelling vision for the future, employing personal stories to humanize and legitimize her political agenda. For instance, Liz Truss employs the **metaphor** of Britain as an “*aspiration nation*” (First Downing Street Address, 2022) to encapsulate her vision for the country's future, using uplifting language to inspire and motivate. In the “Conservative Party Conference speech” (2022), the use of “*stormy days*” metaphorically represents the challenges faced by the UK,

aiming to elicit resilience among the populace. Another prominent metaphor sounded when Liz Truss was paying tributes to Queen Elizabeth II (2022), she said “*She [Queen Elizabeth II] was the rock on which modern Britain was built.*”

The **repetition** of “growth” in the sentence “*I have three priorities for our economy: growth, growth, and growth*” (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2022) emphasizes the importance of economic growth as a policy focus. Liz Truss also uses a lot of **anaphors**, like in her “First speech to members” (2022) she repeats the phrase ‘I will’ (“*I will deliver a bold plan to cut taxes and grow our economy. I will deliver on the energy crisis, dealing with people's energy bills, but also dealing with the long term issues we have on energy supply. And I will deliver on the National Health Service... And I will make sure that we use all of the fantastic talents of the Conservative Party.*”) to assert leadership, promise action, and motivate both the audience and the team the speaker represents. It effectively communicates a strong, decisive stance and a clear plan of action. Furthermore, in the same speech she addresses Boris Johnson, repeating the appeal ‘you’: “*Boris, you got Brexit done. You crushed Jeremy Corbyn. You rolled out the vaccine. And you stood up to Vladimir Putin. You are admired from Kyiv to Carlisle.*” The use of an anaphor ‘you’ in this passage serves as a powerful rhetorical device, emphasizing recognition and personal acknowledgment of Boris Johnson's accomplishments. This technique, by directly addressing Johnson, not only personalizes the message but also intensifies the focus on his individual contributions.

Further, we explore how language constructs powerful narratives, illustrating how strategic use of personal stories can significantly enhance public communication. The **narrative of resilience** is emphasized through phrases like “*ride out the storm,*” (First Downing Street Address, 2022) which not only visualizes the challenges faced but also the collective effort required to overcome

them. Additionally, her reference to **personal struggles**, like *“It wasn’t the only time in my life that I have been treated differently for being female or for not fitting in. It made me angry and it made me determined”*, (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2022) employs narrative construction to humanize her image, making her more relatable to her audience. Furthermore, the mention of **historical events** and policy **impacts on individuals**, like mentioning the departure of high-net-worth individuals from the UK (*“Public Sector productivity is woeful, and millionaires are voting with their feet. The UK is third after Russia and China for the departure of high net worth individuals”*, Speech at the Institute for Government, 2023) serves to personify the economic arguments by showing real-world consequences of economic policies. It suggests that the economic environment impacts individual decisions, leading to significant personal and national economic implications.

Liz Truss's speeches are marked by a respectful and inclusive communication style, acknowledging diverse contributions and employing **politeness strategies** that mitigate potential backlash against policy shifts. Liz Truss’s acknowledgment of *“huge reserves of talent, of energy, and determination”* in her “First Downing Street Address” (2022) utilizes **positive politeness** strategies, valuing her audience and their contributions to national resilience. In the sentence *“I also want to take a moment to thank, again, the patriotic team of outstanding civil servants who made this deal possible.”* (Opening statement at International Trade Committee, 2020) she expresses gratitude and appreciation by thanking the team for their hard work, recognizing their contributions and affirming their value, which strengthens morale and loyalty.

Her approach to discussing policy reversals, such as *“I get it and I have listened,”* (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2022) employs **negative politeness** strategies, showing respect for her audience's opinions and concerns, mitigating potential backlash. Furthermore, in the “Opening statement at

International Trade Committee” speech (2020) with the help of negative politeness she shows respect for the process and patience for the U.S. electoral system, acknowledging its impact on negotiations without imposing or rushing: “*We’re making good progress with US and round five of negotiations has now concluded, putting us in an excellent position to continue talks once a final result of the election is known*”. Even when discussing difficult decisions, such as in the “U-turn press conference” (2022), Liz Truss employs **polite formulations** (“*I want to be honest*”) to mitigate potential negative reactions.

The overarching tone of Liz Truss’s public communication, particularly her speeches and policy announcements, was assertive, reflecting a leadership style that is often stereotypically masculine. Liz Truss attempted to project confidence and decisiveness, qualities that, within the context of her short tenure, might not have been tempered with the necessary caution or engagement with critical feedback (Pavlíková, 2022, p. 317).

By applying CDA to the speeches of Liz Truss, we can uncover how language is used to shape public opinion, construct identities, and navigate power dynamics. Let's break down this analysis into several key components typical of CDA: discursive strategies, representation of social actors, and ideological square.

Discursive strategies refer to the ways in which language is used to frame issues, events, or individuals in a manner that supports the speaker's agenda. The use of **passive voice** and **nominalization** can abstract responsibility. For instance, saying “*severe global headwinds caused by Russia’s appalling war in Ukraine and the aftermath of COVID*” (First Downing Street Address, 2022) distances the actor from the action, focusing on the situation rather than who is responsible for it. Liz Truss also employs **positive self-presentation** by highlighting the actions and values of their administration or party, like in the statement “*We helped millions of households with their energy bills and helped thousands of businesses avoid*

*bankruptcy*” (Final speech as Prime Minister, 2022), contrasted with **negative other-presentation** when discussing opponents or challenging countries, such as “*Putin’s war*” (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2022) or criticisms of previous government policies, such as “*Since the 2008 financial crisis, the potential of this great country has been held back by persistently weak growth*” (U-turn press conference, 2022). This dichotomy serves to construct a moral high ground for Liz Truss's party. Furthermore, **symbols** such as “*the bull standing proudly at the heart of Birmingham*” (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2022) are used to evoke emotional responses, creating a narrative of resilience and prosperity under Liz Truss's leadership.

**Representation of social actors** focuses on how different groups or entities are portrayed in the discourse. The frequent use of inclusive pronouns like “**we**” (“*It is because we do not dare that they are difficult*”) and “**our**” (“*Our country continues to battle through a storm*”) (Final speech as Prime Minister, 2022) aims to unify the audience with Liz Truss's vision, while exclusionary language (“*those who try to stop growth*”) (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2022) creates a clear divide between the in-group and out-group, effectively othering those who oppose Liz Truss's policies. Moreover, Liz Truss often positions the British people as both agents of change (“*Our country was built by people who get things done*”) and victims of external circumstances (“*facing unaffordable energy bills*”) (First Downing Street Address, 2022). This **dual representation** can rally support for policy initiatives by invoking a sense of urgency and shared victimhood. By attributing positive characteristics to the British people and negative ones to opponents or external threats, Liz Truss crafts a **narrative with clear heroes** (*the British people, allies*) **and villains** (*oppositional forces, Putin*), simplifying complex issues into a battle between good and evil.

The ideological square involves emphasizing the positive aspects of one's own position while downplaying or negating the positive aspects of the opposition. Liz Truss's speeches frequently employ an “**us vs. them**” rhetoric, particularly in the context of Brexit (“*We are the party who got Brexit done*”) (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2022) , presenting their party as the sole representative of the British people's will against the opposition, seen as out of touch with or actively undermining national interests. Liz Truss's discourse often presents certain **ideologies** as natural or common sense (e.g., *tax cuts, economic growth* as moral imperatives), making alternative viewpoints appear unreasonable or misguided. Also, by framing policy decisions within the context of national crises or moral duties (e.g., *supporting Ukraine, addressing the energy crisis*), Liz Truss legitimizes their administration's actions as not only necessary but **morally right**.

The analysis reveals Liz Truss's adept use of language to not only communicate policy priorities but also to connect with her audience on a personal level. Her speeches demonstrate a keen awareness of the power of language in political discourse, employing a range of linguistic strategies to articulate her vision, engage with societal issues, and navigate the political landscape. Through a comprehensive linguistic and discourse analysis, we observe how strategic language use can serve to articulate a clear political vision, mobilize support, and foster a sense of shared identity and purpose. Through pragmatic strategies, Liz Truss aligns her discourse with the current socio-political context, while her performative utterances actively work to mobilize support. Stylistically, her use of narrative and metaphor enriches her message, making it more relatable and compelling. Moreover, her politeness strategies and exploration of gendered experiences within her communication style not only appeal to a broad audience but also reflect a nuanced understanding of the dynamics of politeness and power in political discourse. Liz Truss's communication strategies highlight the

significance of linguistic proficiency in the effective practice of political leadership.

### **2.3. Penny Mordaunt**

Penny Mordaunt's career and public persona present a compelling case study in the intersection of politics, gender, and communication within the British political landscape. As a prominent figure in the Conservative Party, her trajectory from Royal Navy reservist to Member of Parliament for Portsmouth North, and eventually to her role as the first female Secretary of State for Defence, exemplifies a journey marked by breaking traditional gender barriers in politics. Penny Mordaunt's public speeches and her engagement with media and constituents reveal a nuanced approach to political communication, embodying a blend of assertiveness, humor, and rhetorical skill that distinguishes her linguistic profile.

Scholarly works that explore the relationships between politics, gender, and language provide a valuable framework for analyzing Penny Mordaunt's communicative approach. For example, Deborah Tannen's exploration of gendered communication in "Talking from 9 to 5" (1994) offers insights into the broader dynamics at play in Penny Mordaunt's public speeches. Similarly, research on women in politics, such as "Women, Gender, and Politics: A Reader" by Sarah Childs and Mona Lena Krook, sheds light on the challenges and strategies of female politicians navigating the political arena (Childs, 2010).

Further we will dissect the linguistic elements of Penny Mordaunt's communication, evaluating her use of narrative, metaphor, and rhetorical devices within the broader context of her political messaging and objectives. The study of political linguistics, as outlined by Chilton and Schäffner in their foundational work, "Politics as Text and Talk: Analytic Approaches to Political Discourse," provides a theoretical foundation for analyzing Penny Mordaunt's linguistic

strategies (Chilton, 2002). This, by applying the principles of political linguistics to Penny Mordaunt's speeches and public statements, the precise analysis of Penny Mordaunt's language analysis seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse on language and politics, offering perspectives on how linguistic choices reflect and influence political leadership in contemporary Britain.

Analyzing Penny Mordaunt's speeches through the lens of pragmatic **analysis**, we can claim that they demonstrate a keen awareness of the context-dependent nature of language. She adeptly tailors her message to resonate with specific audiences, employing shared experiences and challenges to forge a strong connection. For instance, in her famous Conservative Party Conference speech (2023), Penny Mordaunt tailors her message to resonate with her audience's experiences and challenges (“*You’ve had your offices graffitied, you’ve been trolled online, you’ve been called scum, you’ve had physical threats*”; “*39 years ago, this conference met, in the aftermath of the Brighton bomb. Standing up to bullies is what we do*”). This use of **shared experiences** strengthens her connection with the audience. Moreover, in discussing the opposition, Penny Mordaunt pragmatically positions them as antithetical to the audience's values (“*...the sanctimonious clap trap of a Labour Party who have forgotten their MRSA infected hospitals...*”) (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2023), using **contrast** to clarify her stance and strengthen in-group cohesion. In her speech to the UK Youth Parliament (2023), Penny Mordaunt employs **positive politeness** strategies to encourage and empower her young audience, framing the experience of dread as a shared, normal feeling that can be overcome for greater achievements (“*But to be here, many of you, in fact all of you, will have had to show courage*”). In her Address on women's suffrage (2018), Penny Mordaunt uses the strategy of **direct address and inclusion** to forge a connection with her audience, emphasizing their shared

journey and the collective goal of women's empowerment (*"I see a chamber filled with powerful, strong and courageous women..."*).

Penny Mordaunt's use of speech acts is strategic and varied, encompassing assertive, directive, expressive, and declarative acts. Throughout her speeches, Penny Mordaunt asserts a collective identity and a moral high ground, especially when talking about historical resilience and courage (*"We are the party and country that stood up and fought against Nazis and fascists... We are the party and country that has stood from the start with Ukraine."*) (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2023). **Assertions** also could be found in her "Parliamentarian speech" (2020), when she says: *"It took a leadership contest, it took an election."*, stating facts about recent political events to set the historical context of the discussion.

**Directive speech acts**, which are focused on attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something, also appear in Penny Mordaunt's speeches. For instance, in her "Delivering through Parliament for the British people" (2023) she encourages awareness and engagement, by motivating the audience to acknowledge the challenges and consider their roles in addressing them: *"If you're here today, or watching online, or reading this speech after the event, it is likely you already have a good sense of the challenges facing us."* Calls to action are pervasive in Penny Mordaunt's speeches, directing her audience towards collective action against perceived threats and challenges (*"Stand up and fight for our families. For workers, for the protectors, for the wealth creators."*) (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2023).

As for the **declaration speech acts**, she states, for instance: *"This fills me full of hope because I believe in the character of the British people."* (Trust in Britain, 2023), declaring personal hope and belief in the character of the people to inspire and uplift the audience, reinforcing a positive view of the collective

national character. She also declares a policy decision that has been made, like in the sentence: “*We have now chosen a different framework...*” (Speech at the Carter Center, Atlanta, 2021), altering the approach to regulation. With the help of declarations Penny Mordaunt also declares a state of pride and satisfaction with the ongoing partnership, shaping perceptions of the relationship, for example in her “Speech at the DFID and UN Somalia meeting” (2018) she says: “*I am proud of the UK’s partnership with Somalia.*”

Penny Mordaunt also commits to certain stances and future actions, **promising** support and policy direction (**commissive speech act**), particularly evident in her speech on education in the Syria region (“*The UK will continue to provide long-term, multi-year support to the region...*”) (Speech on education in the Syria region, 2018). Moreover, in the utterances, like “*We are seeking out ways to unlock barriers for businesses at state level*” (Speech at the Carter Center, Atlanta, 2021), Penny Mordaunt commits to actions intended to facilitate business operations and trade.

Moreover, Penny Mordaunt expresses solidarity and empathy with her audience, especially in the context of historical struggles and challenges (“*It was deeply moving. And it moves me still to think of it.*”) (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2023). This **expressive act** serves to emotionally connect with her audience. Additionally, by utilizing expressives, she conveys optimism and positive emotions, like, for instance in the statement: “*And having recently visited, I am optimistic about the future*” (Speech at the DFID and UN Somalia meeting, 2018), which conveys the speaker's optimism about the situation based on recent personal observations.

Stylistically, Penny Mordaunt's speeches employ a range of rhetorical devices to enhance persuasiveness and memorability. The use of anaphora, personal stories, and symbolic language not only enriches the narrative but also

personalizes her message, making it more relatable and emotionally resonant. Use of **metaphors** such as “*the iron fist*” and “*the velvet glove*” (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2023) in her criticism of opposition strategies vividly conveys her perspective on political opposition and frames the discourse in terms of conflict and resistance. In her “Trust in Britain” speech (2023) she uses metaphors, like “*world being turned upside down*” and “*world has been Amazonked*”, both to evoke a dramatic reversal of order or normalcy, illustrating profound change or upheaval in people’s lives and to metaphorically represent the overwhelming impact of online retail on traditional commerce and lifestyle. Moreover, the **neologism** “Amazonked” personalizes the effect of corporate dominance in everyday life, suggesting an overpowering and transformative influence. Furthermore, in the “Speech to Belgian Trade Delegation” (2022) Penny Mordaunt describes the UK as a ‘gateway’ (“*The UK’s role as a gateway to the world.*”), utilising a spatial metaphor where the UK is portrayed as an entry point or portal offering access to global opportunities. This metaphor emphasizes the UK’s strategic position in international trade, suggesting openness and connectivity.

The recurrent use of the phrase “*Stand up and fight*” as **anaphora** throughout her Conservative Party Conference speech serves to reinforce her key message, create **rhythm**, and enhance memorability. However, having repeated this phrase many times during her Conservative Party Conference Speech (2023), Penny Mordaunt became a star of social media and newspapers, as she provoked controversial feelings in the audience with such a “repetitive” speech. The Independent newspaper noted: “Penny Mordaunt demands people ‘stand up and fight’ 12 times in bizarre speech... She walked off to rapturous applause, but left many rather puzzled.” (Romain, 2023). In the speech “Speech to Belgian Trade Delegation” (2022) she repeats the phrase ‘it is businesses, not governments’ (“*Because it is businesses, not governments, that deliver prosperity. It is*

*businesses, not governments, that create sustainable jobs and drive innovation. And it is businesses, not governments, that forge the trade and investment ties which bring nations together.*”) to reinforce the central theme of the speech, accentuate the benefits of empowering businesses, and effectively persuade the audience of the need to prioritize business initiatives over governmental intervention in certain economic activities.

Continuing with stylistic analysis, we can claim that Penny Mordaunt constructs narratives that link past struggles with current challenges, particularly in her Speech on women’s suffrage (2018), drawing **parallels** between historical fights for rights and contemporary struggles (“*Those incredible women who fought and suffered and endured to secure that right and paved the way for others.*”). Furthermore, Penny Mordaunt uses **personal stories** to ground her political messages in tangible experiences (“*One of my first memories was standing on the Hot Walls in Portsmouth...*”) (Conservative Party Conference Speech, 2023). This narrative technique personalizes her speech and makes her message more relatable. Referring to **historical and cultural symbols** (e.g., *Churchill, the Falklands taskforce, Zelenskyy*) also enriches her narrative, evoking a sense of pride and continuity.

Penny Mordaunt navigates the nuances of **politeness and gendered communication** with finesse, employing inclusive language, expressions of gratitude, and empathetic acknowledgements to foster a sense of community and solidarity. Through expressions of gratitude and appreciation, Penny Mordaunt employs **positive politeness** to value her audience's contributions and experiences, reducing social distance (“*Thank you for being here today, for all you have done on this agenda.*”). Additionally, Penny Mordaunt extensively uses **inclusive language** to foster a sense of community and shared purpose among women (“*You are heroines too.*”) in her Speech on women’s suffrage (2018). As for the negative

politeness strategies, she applies them as well, for instance in the “Trust in Britain” speech (2023) the statement “*I want to reassure you that the UK is as open as ever and committed to supporting your firms*” softens the assertion, making it less direct and therefore less threatening to the audience’s autonomy, allowing them to accept the reassurance at their discretion. As well as the statement “*They want a stake, responsibility, security and accountability - put another way - fairness*” (Delivering through Parliament for the British people, 2023) respects the audience's views and feelings, allowing for personal interpretation and agreement.

Penny Mordaunt’s speeches reflect a careful balance between asserting authority and maintaining relatability, particularly when addressing issues of gender and empowerment. By acknowledging the challenges faced by women and the achievements of those in the political sphere, Penny Mordaunt utilizes her platform to reinforce solidarity among women and encourage empowerment through **collective action** (“*And you, who sit in this chamber today, have come to support the spirit of their cause.*”) (Address on women’s suffrage, 2018). Moreover, Penny Mordaunt exhibits **modesty**, a key politeness strategy, by sharing credit with others and acknowledging collective efforts (“*And every single person who stood with her and fought for a better future.*”) (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2023). This strategy fosters a sense of equality and community. Penny Mordaunt’s speech to the UK Youth Parliament (2023) directly appeals to the younger audience's potential for making a difference, employing a **gender-neutral** but **empowering** communication style that encourages active participation and resilience (“*People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centred. Love them anyway.*”).

These examples demonstrate how Penny Mordaunt’s speeches are carefully constructed to engage the audience through shared experiences, emotional connection, stylistic choices that enhance message delivery, and communication

strategies that promote politeness, empathy, and solidarity. Through these linguistic and rhetorical techniques, Penny Mordaunt seeks to inspire, mobilize, and sustain collective action among her audience.

Through analyzing Penny Mordaunt's speeches, we can uncover how she constructs identity, exercises power, and negotiates social change. Next, we will apply CDA to dissect her discourse, highlighting how it reflects and seeks to influence socio-political contexts.

Penny Mordaunt adeptly constructs and **reinforces collective identities**, often creating an in-group versus out-group dynamic. For instance, in her Conservative Party Conference speech (2023), she leverages shared experiences of adversity to solidify a collective identity among her audience: "*Whether you're a new member and this is your first conference, or you have been a stalwart of the party for decades. You have all had to stand up to bullies.*" This narrative technique not only fosters a sense of unity and belonging but also demarcates an ideological boundary between her party (the in-group) and its opponents (the out-group).

Penny Mordaunt's speeches frequently exercise power by delegitimizing opponents and reinforcing her own political stance. For example, she disparages the opposition's ability to govern effectively by **recounting past failures**: "*against the sanctimonious claptrap of a Labour Party who have forgotten their MRSA infected hospitals, their soaring council tax and fuel duty, mass youth unemployment and the economic mess they left us to sort out*" (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2023). This not only serves to undermine the credibility of the opposition but also reinforces her own party's narrative of competency and resilience.

Penny Mordaunt's speeches are laden with ideological constructs that reflect and promote a particular view of society. For instance, her portrayal of historical

events and figures often carries a distinct ideological message: “*We are the party and the country that sent my classmates’ father and ships from my dockyard to stand up and fight for the rights of the Falkland Islanders to self-determination*” (Conservative Party Conference speech, 2023). This example illustrates how Penny Mordaunt employs **historical narratives** to construct a particular ideological stance that valorizes national sovereignty and military intervention as noble pursuits, thereby reinforcing a hegemonic discourse of nationalism and patriotism.

Penny Mordaunt’s discourse also engages in the negotiation of social change, particularly around issues of gender and empowerment. In her Speech on women’s suffrage (2018), she invokes the struggles and achievements of the women’s suffrage movement to **frame contemporary challenges**: “*100 years ago women in the UK were unable to run for office, or vote, or even be present in the public gallery.*” This not only honors the legacy of the suffrage movement but also leverages historical progress to advocate for continued social change in the realm of gender equality.

Through Critical Discourse Analysis, we observe how Pen Mont’s speeches serve not only as vehicles for conveying political messages but also as instruments for shaping social identities, exercising power, reinforcing ideologies, legitimizing political actions, and negotiating social change. Mont’s discourse is strategically crafted to resonate with her audience, challenge opponents, and shape the socio-political landscape in line with her party’s agenda.

## **Conclusion to Chapter 2**

The analysis above examines language profiles and communicative strategies of Theresa May, Liz Truss, and Penny Mordaunt, elucidating the nuanced application of language in political leadership. Analyzing their rhetorical approaches, this chapter outlines the distinctive yet interconnected methodologies

these politicians employ in articulating their political narratives and engaging with the electorate.

Theresa May, Liz Truss, and Penny Mordaunt exhibit a profound understanding of strategic communication's role in achieving political objectives. Theresa May's rhetoric is steeped in appeals for national unity, leveraging stability as a cornerstone. Liz Truss, contrastingly, emphasizes a neoliberal agenda, prioritizing economic policies and market liberalization. Penny Mordaunt integrates assertiveness with a distinct use of humor, marking her communicative strategy as uniquely engaging. These variances underscore the tailored approach each politician adopts in resonating with their audience, highlighting the adaptability required in political communication. All the findings reflect strategic communication principles outlined by Hallahan, who posits that effective political communication must resonate with specific audiences and broader public sentiment (Hallahan, 1999, p. 229).

Furthermore, the analysis reveals a shared proficiency in the use of rhetorical devices across the three British politicians. Their adept employment of anaphora and metaphors, alongside a strategic deployment of personal and historical narratives, serves to amplify their messages, facilitating deeper audience connection. This shared characteristic underscores the critical function of rhetorical skillfulness in enhancing the impact of political discourse. The rhetorical skillfulness demonstrated by three politicians in employing anaphora, metaphors, and personal narratives aligns with Charteris-Black's analysis of political rhetoric as a tool for enhancing persuasiveness and facilitating a deeper connection with audiences (Charteris-Black, 2011).

The balancing act of assertiveness and empathy within their communication styles addresses the gendered landscape of political discourse. Theresa May, Liz Truss, and Penny Mordaunt maneuver in this area with apparent accuracy,

employing politeness strategies and showcasing resilience, thus contributing to the redefinition of perceived leadership attributes. Their communicative practices reflect a conscientious engagement with, and often a subversion of, traditional gender expectations within the sphere of political leadership.

From this examination, several conclusions are drawn that contribute to the broader academic discourse on political communication and leadership. First, the adaptability and strategic orientation of communication underscore the importance of audience engagement in political discourse. Second, the shared reliance on rhetorical devices across the politicians signals a universal acknowledgment of narrative's power in shaping political identities and agendas. Lastly, the manner in which these politicians navigate gendered expectations reveals a dynamic interaction between language, power, and gender in political discourse. This chapter posits that the communication strategies of Theresa May, Liz Truss, and Penny Mordaunt not only define their political legacies but also contribute to a reevaluation of leadership paradigms within the UK's political landscape. Their individual approaches to communication reflect a broader trend towards a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of political leadership, emphasizing the pivotal role of language in navigating the complexities of modern governance and public engagement. Through this analysis, a deeper appreciation for the strategic, rhetorical, and gender-informed dimensions of political communication is achieved, enriching the field's understanding of how language shapes and is shaped by the contours of political leadership.

### **3. LANGUAGE PROFILES of FEMALE POLITICIANS in the USA**

The exploration of language profiles of female politicians in the USA, as embarked upon in this chapter, intertwines with the broader narratives of gender, power, and political discourse that are pivotal in understanding the dynamics of political communication in contemporary society.

As elucidated by scholars such as Petlyuchenko and Chernyakova, the examination of expressive female speech within political discourse reveals a multimodal complexity that transcends traditional linguistic analysis, integrating paraverbal, prosodic, and gesture features that are emblematic of female political communication in diverse sociolinguistic contexts. This approach aligns with the trends in modern sociolinguistics that aim to dissect the gender-related specifics of oral female speech, emphasizing the connection between verbal and paraverbal elements to construct a comprehensive profile of female political expressiveness (Petlyuchenko, 2019, p. 215). Moreover, research indicates that female politicians often employ distinct linguistic and communicative strategies compared to their male counterparts. These strategies are not merely reflective of individual stylistic choices but are deeply rooted in societal expectations and the challenges women face in the political sphere. The language used by female politicians can both challenge and reinforce gender stereotypes, thereby influencing public perceptions of women's roles and capabilities in leadership positions (Hessami, 2020, p. 14; Petlyuchenko, 2019, p. 212).

The analysis of language and gender in political discourse, as undertaken by Knyazyan and Hakobyan, further accentuates the necessity to delve into the gendered nuances of political communication, highlighting how male and female politicians utilize distinct linguistic tools to resonate with their audiences. Their study underscores the evolving role of women in political activities and the

gendered narratives that shape verbal communication in political contexts, pointing toward a gender approach in analyzing political speech (Knyazyan, 2018, p. 68).

Furthermore, the intersectionality of gender and politics offers a critical lens through which to analyze the linguistic profiles of female politicians in the USA. Drawing upon the conceptual framework of intersectionality (Hancock, “Intersectionality: An Intellectual History”), this analysis endeavors to unravel how gendered narratives and biases interlace with other dimensions of identity, such as race, class, and political ideology, to shape the communicative strategies and rhetoric employed by female politicians.

Additionally, the exploration of language profiles of female politicians in the United States is deeply rooted in the country's rich history of gender politics and the struggle for women's rights. Alana S. Jeydel’s “Political Women” connects the historical milestones of the women’s movement with the modern political landscape, exploring how women’s engagement with political institutions has evolved. Jeydel’s analysis of the battle for women’s suffrage and the Equal Rights Amendment provides crucial context for studying the rhetoric and communication strategies of female politicians, who continue to navigate a political environment shaped by these foundational struggles (Jeydel, 2004).

In synthesizing these scholarly insights, this chapter aims to construct a nuanced understanding of the language profiles of female politicians in the USA, situating their communicative strategies within the broader discourse on gender, power, and political communication. The analysis seeks to illuminate the distinctive linguistic and rhetorical strategies deployed by female politicians to navigate the complex landscape of American politics, contributing to a deeper comprehension of the connection between gender, language, and political agency in shaping political discourse.

### **3.1. Hillary Clinton**

Hillary Clinton's career as a prominent figure in American politics offers a compelling case study for analyzing the language profiles of female politicians in the USA. Hillary Clinton's extensive public service career, including roles as the First Lady of the United States, U.S. Senator, Secretary of State, and two-time presidential candidate, provides a rich corpus of speeches, interviews, and public communications for linguistic and rhetorical analysis. Her linguistic strategies, communication styles, and rhetorical approaches reflect not only her individual political and ideological stances but also embody broader themes related to gender dynamics, political leadership, and public perception in the American political landscape.

The study by Jennifer J. Jones reveals that Hillary Clinton's linguistic style became increasingly masculine over time, correlating with her growing involvement and power in politics. This shift is aligned with the broader literature suggesting that female politicians often adopt masculine communication styles within male-dominated political institutions to conform to the normative, masculine prototype of political leaders. The study also posits that female politicians must cultivate an effective self-presentation that balances symbolic attitudes toward gender with the masculine prototypes of political leaders to be successful (Jones, 2016, p. 631-637).

In the thesis Cornelia Selly Amanda claims that Hillary Clinton utilized seven out of ten identified women's language features: lexical hedges or fillers, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, superpolite forms, and emphatic stress. This suggests a strategic use of linguistic strategies to navigate the political and gendered expectations of her as a female candidate in a high-stakes political context. Moreover, the study found no

evidence of tag questions, precise color terms, or avoidance of strong swear words in Hillary Clinton's debates. This absence might reflect her confidence and strategic positioning as knowledgeable and assertive, challenging the traditional assumptions about women's linguistic behavior indicating uncertainty or tentativeness (Amanda, 2017, p. 47-49).

The scholarly article by Bunga Darma Uli and Komala Dwi Syaputri explores the use of language functions in four of Hillary Clinton's speeches. The analysis reveals that Hillary Clinton's speeches predominantly employ the referential function, indicative of her intent to convey factual and informative content to the audience. However, other functions such as the emotive and phatic are also strategically used to express personal feelings, establish communication with the audience, and reinforce social bonds. This blend of functions showcases Hillary Clinton's ability to engage her audience effectively, merging the conveyance of information with personal connection and emotional appeal (Uli, 2018, p. 48-50).

Additionally, in the scholarly article by Xueliang Chen, Yuanle Yan, and Jie Hu presented that Hillary Clinton exhibited a more diverse vocabulary compared to Trump, suggesting a more complex linguistic style. The type/token ratio and standardized type/token ratio indicated that Hillary Clinton's speeches utilized a wider range of vocabulary, potentially appealing to an audience seeking detailed and nuanced discussions of policy issues. In comparison with Donald Trump Hillary Clinton favored rational discussions of public policy, demonstrating a tendency to engage in detailed policy discourse; adopted a more positive tone, focusing on a vision for the future and addressing concerns directly related to the American people, such as education and health care; and aimed to establish commonalities with voters, emphasizing inclusivity and shared values (Chen, 2019, p. 20).

Hillary Clinton's linguistic approach is notably characterized by its expressiveness and indirectness, diverging from the more direct and emotionally charged rhetoric of her opponent, Donald Trump. The study highlights the prevalent use of directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative speech acts in the political discourse of both candidates. Hillary Clinton is characterized as more indirect and tends to be expressive. This emphasizes Hillary Clinton's preference for engaging with her audience by articulating personal beliefs and values, potentially as a strategic effort to foster a more relatable and empathetic persona (Edward, 2018, p. 2-4).

We have explored how context-dependent language use reveals Hillary Clinton's strategic engagement with current events and societal issues, emphasizing communal ethos and collective identity. In the DNC speech (2020), Hillary Clinton invokes the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on American society to argue for compassionate leadership: *“Throughout this crisis, Americans have kept going—checking on neighbors, showing up to jobs at grocery stores and nursing homes. Because it still takes a village.”* Here, the pragmatic use of the **pandemic context** serves to underline the importance of community and resilience, values that Hillary Clinton associates with the proposed leadership. Furthermore, the phrase: *“Our constitutional democracy enshrines the peaceful transfer of power.”* (Concession speech, 2016) - acknowledges the **context of democratic norms** to frame her concession as a commitment to these principles. During her speeches, Hillary Clinton also utilizes the **historical and societal context** of civil rights struggles to connect with the audience's sense of justice, for instance: *“We were asking urgent questions about whether women, people of color, religious minorities, immigrants, would ever be treated with dignity and respect.”* (Commencement speech at Wellesley College, 2017). Moreover, in phrases like, *“Tonight belongs to all of you.”* (Victory speech, 2016), she employs the **context of**

a **collective** campaign **effort** to share the success with her supporters, reflecting an understanding of the communal effort in her victory.

Speech acts in political discourse can assert, evaluate, or commit the speaker to a particular stance. **Assertives** could be found in her speeches dedicated to LGBT, like for example in the sentences “*Like being a woman, like being a racial, religious, tribal, or ethnic minority, being LGBT does not make you less human. And that is why gay rights are human rights, and human rights are gay rights.*” (Human Rights Day Speech, 2011), where Hillary Clinton asserts the equivalence of human rights with gay rights and underscores the fundamental human dignity of all individuals. Furthermore, in the sentences “*That means end-to-end reform in our criminal justice system, not half measures, but a full commitment with real follow-through*”, and “*And we need to do -- all of us need to do, and I look forward to working with the NAACP. We need to do a much better job helping people who have paid their debt to society find jobs and support when they get out.*” (NAACP Speech, 2016) assertive calls for comprehensive reforms and collective action. The speaker clearly outlines what needs to be done and commits to specific policies, which also calls on others to join in these efforts.

In the Concession speech (2016), Hillary Clinton uses the speech **act of promising (commissive act)** continued advocacy and support for democratic values: “*Let's do all we can to keep advancing the causes and values we all hold dear.*” This commitment frames the speaker not just as a politician but as a community member invested in the collective future, performing an act of solidarity. Furthermore, in the “Human Rights Day Speech” (2011) she also commits to future actions: “*And in the coming months, we will provide every embassy with a toolkit to help improve their efforts. And we have created a program that offers emergency support to defenders of human rights for LGBT people.*” This commissive speech act effectively communicates Hillary Clinton’s

future actions and ongoing projects aimed at supporting human rights, particularly for the LGBT community. It underscores a proactive approach and the speaker's dedication to making substantive changes and support mechanisms, which are crucial for its mission and the communities it serves.

**Directive** act (“*We need leaders equal to this moment.*” - DNS speech, 2020) serves as a **call for action** in Hillary Clinton’s speeches to elect leaders fit for current challenges. Such claims like, for example, “*Don't be afraid of your ambition, of your dreams, or even your anger.*” (Commencement speech at Wellesley College, 2017), operates as an advisory, guiding the graduates on how to navigate their futures. In her “Human Rights Day Speech” (2011) she also makes a few calls for action, for instance: “*Let us be on the right side of history, for our people, our nations, and future generations, whose lives will be shaped by the work we do today.*”, or “*Now, we must go further and work here and in every region of the world to galvanize more support for the human rights of the LGBT community.*” These directive speech acts effectively call for proactive involvement and greater commitment to human rights causes, particularly in support of the LGBT community. They leverage the authority and moral positioning of the speaker to influence and drive collective action towards these goals.

Additionally, Hillary Clinton utilizes **declarative speech acts**, for instance, “*This campaign is about making sure there are no ceilings, no limits on any of us*” (Victory speech, 2016), declaring the purpose and vision of her campaign. She also was declaring the universal stake and relevance of the conference discussions in 1995 (Women’s Rights are Human Rights speech): “*That is why every woman, every man, every child, every family, and every nation on this planet, does have a stake in the discussion that takes place here*”. By stating this, the speaker is not just expressing an opinion but formally asserting the significance of the conference’s

outcomes as universally pertinent, thereby framing the discussions as globally inclusive and important.

Hillary Clinton also likes to convey her emotions, attitudes, or reactions with the help of **expressive speech acts**. For instance, in her “Remarks at a Conference for Women in Business” (2017) she expresses gratitude and happiness about being among the audience: *“Thank you, thank you all so much. It is great to be back in San Francisco, a place that has a big big spot in my heart...I am thrilled to be out of the woods and in the company of so many inspiring women and there is no place I’d rather be than here with you other than the White House.”* These expressions help to establish a connection with the audience by sharing personal feelings and reactions. As well she conveys her feelings and emotions in the sentence *“I come before you with great hope and confidence that no matter how long the road ahead, we will travel it successfully together. Thank you very much.”* (Human Rights Day speech, 2011), by expressing feelings of hope, gratitude and confidence.

Stylistic elements in Hillary Clinton's speeches include metaphor use and narrative construction. In the Commencement speech at Wellesley College (2017), a **metaphor** for ongoing struggle and progress is evident: *“And to all of the little girls who are watching this, never doubt that you are valuable and powerful and deserving of every chance and opportunity in the world to pursue and achieve your own dreams.”* This metaphorical invitation to young girls to see themselves as powerful agents of change is both inspirational and strategic, aiming to mobilize and empower a future generation. Further, metaphorical language in *“It's often during the darkest times when you can do the most good,”* also was used to inspire resilience and action. The use of metaphors is huge during Hillary Clinton’s First presidential debates with Donald Trump (2016), for instance: *“I am not going to slam the door on women and children”, “I don't want to rip families apart.”, “I want to get everybody out of the shadows.”* etc. Thus, metaphors enrich the speech

by making it more engaging, understandable, and resonant, ultimately enhancing the speaker's ability to communicate effectively and connect with the audience on both intellectual and emotional levels.

Hillary Clinton does not hesitate to use the repetitions from time to time, for example, in her DNC speech (2020), the **repetition** of “*We need*” at the beginning of several statements was used to emphasize urgency and priority, as well as **anaphora** “*Vote*” at the end of her speech. Furthermore, parallel structure, like in “*We have seen that our nation is more deeply divided than we thought. But I still believe in America, and I always will.*” (Concession speech, 2016), are used by Hillary Clinton to contrast disappointment with hope. Another stylistic device she uses is symbolic references, for example to “*standing under a glass ceiling*” (Victory speech, 2016) to evoke the historical struggle for women's rights and achievements.

Hillary Clinton frequently employs **politeness strategies** that emphasize empathy, solidarity, and respect. In the victory speech, the use of inclusive language and collective pronouns (“we,” “us”) signifies an approach that values **collaboration** over confrontation: “*We are stronger when every family and every community knows they’re not on their own. Because we are in this together*” (Victory speech, 2016). This approach reflects gendered communication styles that prioritize communal success and shared values, challenging traditional narratives of political power dynamics. **Encouragement and empowerment** (“*And to all of the little girls who are watching this, never doubt that you are valuable and powerful,*” - Commencement speech at Wellesley College, 2017) exemplifies a nurturing and inclusive approach utilized by Hillary Clinton. Moreover, she often uses **gratitude** to maintain a positive and respectful tone, a strategy often found in female speech patterns, for instance, in her statement during Concession speech

(2016), *“But I feel pride and gratitude for this wonderful campaign that we built together”*.

These examples further illustrate how Hillary Clinton strategically employs pragmatic cues, speech acts, stylistic devices, and gendered communication styles to connect with the audience, critique opponents, and promote a political agenda focused on inclusivity, empathy, and resilience.

Applying CDA to Hillary Clinton speeches, we can uncover the underlying social dynamics, power structures, and ideological commitments represented in her language. Hillary Clinton often **constructs an identity** of solidarity with the American people and positions herself as an advocate for unity and inclusivity. *“America needs a president who shows the same compassion, determination, and leadership in the White House that we see in our communities”* (DNC speech, 2020) - this statement constructs an identity of a communal leader aligned with the values and resilience observed in everyday Americans, positioning herself alongside the audience against perceived external challenges.

**Representation of social practices** examines how actions and social practices are depicted within discourse, often revealing underlying power structures or ideologies. By saying *“Our constitutional democracy enshrines the peaceful transfer of power. We don't just respect that. We cherish it.”* (Concession speech, 2016), Hillary Clinton is representing democratic transition not just as a political practice but as a cherished value, reinforcing the ideology of democracy as central to American identity and the peaceful transfer of power as a noble, shared practice.

Furthermore, Hillary Clinton often addresses **power dynamics** directly, challenging existing power structures while advocating for a more equitable distribution of power. By critiquing the current state of political discourse in her Commencement speech at Wellesley College (2017), *“You are graduating at a time*

*when there is a full-fledged assault on truth and reason*”, Hillary Clinton challenges the hegemony of misinformation and advocates for the empowerment of truth and critical thinking, positioning herself and the graduates as part of a resistance against the erosion of democratic values.

The “**ideological square**” in CDA highlights how speakers emphasize positive aspects of the in-group (us) and negative aspects of the out-group (them) to construct a biased representation that serves their ideological stance. For instance, in the Victory speech (2016), “*We are stronger when we work with our allies and we're stronger when we respect each other, listen to each other, and act with a sense of common purpose... Because we are in this together*”, Hillary Clinton depicts opponents (implicitly) as divisive or exclusionary, using the inclusive “we” to foster a sense of unity and collective identity against those who would divide or exclude, reinforcing her ideological commitment to inclusivity and communal support.

Finally, Hillary Clinton employs various **strategies to legitimize** her political stance and the actions she advocates. “*Vote like our lives and livelihoods are on the line, because they are*” (DNC speech, 2020) - this is an example of moral legitimation, where Hillary Clinton frames voting as not only a right but a moral duty given the stakes, thereby legitimizing political participation as a necessary action for self-preservation and communal well-being.

These examples from Hillary Clinton’s speeches reveal how she utilizes discourse to construct identities, represent social practices, negotiate power relations, and legitimize her political ideologies. Through CDA, we can see the various ways in which her language works to shape and is shaped by the broader social and political context.

The speeches of Hillary Clinton exemplify the power of political rhetoric as a tool for shaping public opinion, constructing social identities, and engaging with

the political sphere. Through both linguistic skillfulness and discursive practice, her rhetoric offers a rich site for analysis, reflecting broader trends and strategies within contemporary political discourse.

### **3.2. Nancy Pelosi**

Nancy Pelosi's language profile is a compelling study in political communication, illustrating how language can be wielded as a tool of power, persuasion, and leadership. As the first female Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi's communicative strategies have been instrumental in navigating the intricacies of legislative leadership and policy advocacy, reflecting broader themes of gender, power, and politeness in political discourse. Her rhetorical style is marked by clarity, deliberation, and an unwavering commitment to the values she espouses, characteristics that have defined her political persona and contributed to her effectiveness as a leader.

Nancy Pelosi's leadership is marked by a strategic use of language to advance her legislative agenda and to unite her party. Her tenure as Speaker of the House is distinguished by her ability to marshal support for significant legislative milestones, such as the Affordable Care Act. Nancy Pelosi's approach to communication often involves balancing the authoritative language typical of her high-ranking position with a more approachable, inclusive tone. This duality allows her to engage effectively with both her political peers and the public (Huder, 2023, p. 155).

Furthermore, Nancy Pelosi's speeches demonstrate a nuanced understanding of gender dynamics in political communication. She skillfully balances traditional “feminine” and “masculine” communication styles, a strategy that enables her to challenge and redefine gender norms within the political arena. For instance, Nancy Pelosi's tribute speech to Dennis Hastert employs both formal address (“Mr.

Speaker”) and personalization (use of first names), illustrating her ability to blend respect for tradition with a more personal, relational approach (Zheng, 2009, p. 29-31). This strategy not only enhances her relatability but also challenges traditional gender norms in political discourse.

Additionally, Zimmann's analysis of Nancy Pelosi's language profile also indicates that her rhetorical effectiveness partly derives from her ability to leverage gendered language styles traditionally associated with women. Nancy Pelosi's speeches reflect a strategic blend of authority and approachability, challenging the stereotype that women must adopt a masculine style to be taken seriously in leadership positions. This finding underscores the complexity of gender dynamics in political rhetoric and suggests that “feminine” language can be a powerful tool in the public sphere (Zimmann, 2007, p. 152-168).

Moreover, Nancy Pelosi's speeches demonstrate a rhetorical agility that aligns with contemporary efforts toward gender inclusivity in language. Her use of gender-neutral terms and collective nouns reflects a commitment to language that respects and acknowledges gender diversity. This approach is evident in her strategic use of titles and roles, avoiding gender-specific language unless it serves a specific relational purpose, thus promoting an ethos of equality and respect (Zheng, 2009, p. 29-31).

In pragmatic analysis, we explore the context-dependent use of language and strategies. Nancy Pelosi's speeches often invoke a deep sense of American patriotism and unity, emphasizing **collective identity** and **shared values**. For instance, in the “Announcement on the House floor,” (2022) Nancy Pelosi reflects on the historical significance of the Capitol and its symbolism for American democracy, stating, “*The Capitol is a temple of our democracy, of our Constitution, of our highest ideals.*” This invocation of sacred national symbols serves to unify listeners under a shared banner of national pride and democratic values. In the

“Floor Speech on Ukraine,” (2023) Nancy Pelosi articulates the **necessity of American support** for Ukraine, stating, “*Your money is not charity. It is an investment in the global security and in democracy.*” This pragmatic strategy emphasizes the strategic importance of support beyond mere altruism, framing it as an investment in broader global values that benefit the American people and the world. This recontextualizes the narrative around foreign aid and aligns it with national and global security interests. Furthermore, she emphasizes the bipartisan nature of the legislation, stating, “*This year's strong, bipartisan, bicameral National Defense Authorization Act...*” (Speech on the National Defense Authorization Act, 2022) to highlight the **unity and shared commitment** to national security.

Speech act analysis examines the performative functions of political discourse, looking at how politicians use language to accomplish certain actions. In Nancy Pelosi's “Speech on the National Defense Authorization Act,” (2022) the act of thanking (**expressive speech act**) various colleagues and acknowledging bipartisan efforts serves not only as expressions of gratitude but also performs the function of reinforcing a collaborative and respectful political environment. She states, “*Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding and thank you for your tremendous leadership...*” This speech act fosters a sense of cooperation and mutual respect among political peers. Another example is her statements “*I accept this gavel in the spirit of partnership, not partisanship, and I look forward to working with you...In this House we may be different parties but we serve one country*” (Let us work together, 2007), where Nancy Pelosi conveys honor and pride in taking up the role and the inclusive sentiment towards collaborative governance.

In her “Agenda for the Most Diverse Congress Ever” speech (2019), Nancy Pelosi performs the act of envisioning a collaborative future (**commissive act**), saying, “*I look forward to working with you in a bipartisan way for the good of our*

*country...*” Here, the speech act of expressing forward-looking optimism performs the function of opening a dialogue for bipartisan cooperation, setting a tone of unity and shared purpose for the legislative session. Commissive speech acts could also present the past events that were important for the future. For instance, a reflection made by Nancy Pelosi: *“It was the confidence and education that I gained at an all-women's college that helped me go from the kitchen to the Congress.”* (Pelosi Addresses Grads, 2010), reflected a personal commitment to leveraging her educational background for advancing her career in public service, indicating that her past experiences shape her ongoing dedication.

**Directive speech acts** are intended to cause the listener to take some action. Nancy Pelosi uses directives as calls to action, urging collective efforts and cooperation among congressional members, like for example in the sentence: *“Let us be the Congress that strongly honors our responsibility to protect the American people from terrorism.”* (Let us work together, 2007). She also utilizes directives to invite others to join in prayer in her “Speech After Capitol Building Riots” (2021), aiming to inspire collective action towards peace and reflection: *“So on this holy day of epiphany, let us pray.”* Moreover, Nancy Pelosi directs the legislative body’s commitment to transparency and duty, motivating continued adherence to constitutional responsibilities: *“We must and we will show to the country and indeed to the world that we will not be diverted from our duty.”* (Climate Summit Press Conference, 2021), guiding and encouraging specific actions or behaviors, aimed at promoting collective action.

**Declarative speech acts** change the state of the world via their utterance, often formalizing decisions, appointments, or legal statuses. In the sentence *“Today, we're doing the Continuing Resolution. It, again, ensures that full government services will be – we'll have full government funding through December 16th”* (Remarks at Weekly Press Conference, 2022) the references to

legislative decisions, such as passing the Continuing Resolution (CR) imply declarative acts by Congress that change legal and financial states through legislative authority. Furthermore, Nancy Pelosi also declared the House's commitment to take specific legislative actions, setting an official agenda, for instance *“This House will take action on overdue legislation that has bipartisan support in the Congress and across the country.”* (Agenda for the Most Diverse Congress Ever, 2019).

The use of **assertive speech acts** is also prominent in Nancy Pelosi's speeches. It involves statements that assert or declare a belief, opinion, or fact, and are used to convey the speaker's stance or the position of a group. For instance, *“Guided by the vision and values of our founders, the sacrifice of our men and women in uniform and the aspirations that we have for our children, let us meet that responsibility with courage, wisdom and grace.”* (Agenda for the Most Diverse Congress Ever, 2019), here Nancy Pelosi asserts the guiding principles and values that will steer your actions and decisions, affirming a moral and ethical framework. Additionally, in the statement *“We must and we will show to the country and indeed to the world that we will not be diverted from our duty, that we will respect that responsibility to the constitution and to the American people.”* (Speech After Capitol Building Riots, 2021), the speaker is asserting a commitment to fulfill their constitutional duties despite challenges.

Throughout the speeches, Nancy Pelosi employs the stylistic device of invoking **historical and cultural references** to construct a narrative that connects past achievements with current and future endeavors. For example, in her “Announcement on the House floor,” (2022) she references figures like Abraham Lincoln and Shirley Chisholm: *“And it is the oath that stitches us together in a long and storied heritage. Colleagues who served before us are all our colleagues. Colleagues like Abraham Lincoln, Daniel Webster, Shirley Chisholm...”*, placing

her narrative within a broader historical context and aligning her mission with their legacy of democratic ideals and social progress. This rhetorical strategy not only enriches her narrative but also positions her within a lineage of revered American leaders.

**Repetition** is strategically used to emphasize important themes and concepts. For instance, the repetition of "*historic moment*" (Let us work together, 2007) underscores the significance of the event being described—the election of the speaker as a pivotal moment for Congress and particularly for women. This not only stresses the importance but also serves to remind the audience repeatedly of the gravity of the moment. Furthermore, The repeated references to historical continuity and change ("*a new America*," "*a new direction*", Let us work together, 2007) help to construct a narrative arc that positions the current events as both a continuation of and a departure from the past. Nancy Pelosi also employs repetitions, like "*thank you*" in all her speeches to emphasize gratitude and unity. Repetition in her speeches also serves to affirm a collective identity and shared goals. Phrases like "*For our daughters and granddaughters*," (Let us work together, 2007) repeated with positive future-oriented statements, foster a sense of unity and common purpose among the listeners, emphasizing that the achievements and challenges are shared by the community as a whole. Moreover, Nancy Pelosi also uses repetitions to emphasize her groundbreaking role in politics, highlighting the breaking of gender barriers in high political offices, like for instance repetitive use of "*the first woman*" in her "Address to Grads" (2010).

She also uses a **metaphors**, like "*we stand on sacred ground: the chamber of the United States House of Representatives, the heart of American democracy*" (Announcement on the House floor, 2022), to reinforces the authority and legitimacy of political actors, aligning them with a higher moral and democratic duty. Furthermore, we found out such metaphors used by Nancy Pelosi like

“*broken the marble ceiling*” (Let us work together, 2007), which refers to the invisible barriers that prevent minorities and women from rising to the top despite their qualifications; “*a seat at the table*” (Pelosi Addresses Grads, 2010) - commonly used metaphor to describe participation in decision-making processes; and “*under the dome of this temple of our democracy*” (Agenda for the Most Diverse Congress Ever, 2019), which refers to the Capitol building as a ‘temple,’ which elevates the place to a sacred status, emphasizing the solemn and serious nature of governmental proceedings. It aligns the concept of governance with religious sanctity, suggesting that what happens in Congress is vital and sacred.

Stylistically, Nancy Pelosi uses **vivid descriptions** of the challenges faced by Ukraine, like for example: “*Women are subjected to rape as a weapon of war; murdered in front of their parents or in front of their children — raped in the same way. Tens of thousands of children kidnapped by the Russian soldiers.*” (Floor Speech on Ukraine, 2023), to create an emotional appeal, urging action through a narrative that highlights resilience and the fight for democracy. She also uses **specific examples** of bipartisan efforts to illustrate the collaborative work environment of Congress: “*In order to uphold our sacred responsibility and ensure that Americans are safe and America is secure, I urge a strong, bipartisan vote for the NDAA...*” (Speech on the National Defense Authorization Act, 2022).

Nancy Pelosi’s speeches reflect an acute awareness of gendered communication styles, employing **politeness strategies** that emphasize collaboration, acknowledgment of others, and the expression of gratitude. In her speech on the “National Defense Authorization Act,” (2022) she consistently credits her colleagues, regardless of gender, showcasing a leadership style that values inclusiveness and recognition of contributions: “*Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding and thank you for your tremendous leadership...*” This approach underscores a communication style often attributed to female leaders, focusing on

communal success rather than individual achievement. Moreover, in her “Agenda for the Most Diverse Congress Ever” speech (2019), Nancy Pelosi celebrates the diversity of Congress, particularly highlighting the increase in female representation: “...*serving with more than 100 women in the House of Representatives – the highest number in history.*” This acknowledgment not only serves as a recognition of the progress made in gender equality but also as a call to action for continued efforts towards inclusivity in political representation.

These examples from Nancy Pelosi's speeches illustrate how pragmatic considerations, performative functions, stylistic choices, and gendered communication strategies intertwine to create powerful political discourse. Through these varied linguistic strategies, Nancy Pelosi navigates the complexities of political communication, crafting messages that resonate with diverse audiences while advancing her political objectives.

Nancy Pelosi's rhetoric often navigates and negotiates **power dynamics** through the strategic use of discourse. For instance, in her “Announcement on the House Floor,” (2022) she speaks of standing on “*sacred ground,*” a metaphor that not only elevates the significance of the political arena but also implicitly positions those within it as stewards of a revered democratic tradition. Moreover, Nancy Pelosi's speeches are rich in the construction of **collective and individual identities**. In her “Agenda for the Most Diverse Congress Ever,” (2019) she identifies herself as a “*woman Speaker of the House,*” marking 100 years of women's suffrage, and highlights the record number of women in Congress. This not only celebrates gender diversity but also constructs an identity of progressiveness and inclusivity, positioning the Democratic Party as a champion of gender equality and social change. This strategic identity construction serves to align the party with broader social movements and values, thus appealing to a wider electorate.

Furthermore, in her “Floor Speech on Ukraine,” (2023) Nancy Pelosi articulates a strong stance on global democracy and security, stating, “*Your money is not charity. It is an investment in the global security and in democracy.*” This represents a discourse strategy that seeks to **reframe the narrative** around foreign aid, challenging the perception of it as a one-sided benevolence and instead positioning it as a strategic, mutually beneficial investment. This reframing attempts to influence social attitudes and policy perspectives towards a more interconnected and reciprocal understanding of international relations. Nancy Pelosi also skillfully navigates the “**us vs. them**” **dichotomy**, a common feature in political discourse, to foster a sense of unity and shared purpose. However, she does so in a manner that emphasizes inclusivity over division. For example, in discussing the bipartisan effort in the “*Speech on the National Defense Authorization Act,*” (2022) she bridges potential partisan divides by focusing on shared goals and achievements, thereby promoting an ideology of unity and cooperation over conflict.

Through the application of Critical Discourse Analysis to Nancy Pelosi's speeches, it becomes evident how discourse not only reflects but actively constructs social reality, shaping identities, ideologies, and power relations. Nancy Pelosi's rhetorical strategies—ranging from the construction of collective identities to the negotiation of power and advocacy for social change—reveal a sophisticated engagement with the discursive practices that underpin political life.

Thus, the linguistic strategies employed by Nancy Pelosi in her speeches offer a rich variety of rhetorical devices, narrative construction, and performative functions, all carefully combined together to engage, inspire, and mobilize her audience. Through a wise understanding of the power of language in political communication, Nancy Pelosi's rhetoric serves as a compelling example of how

words can shape perceptions, influence actions, and contribute to the broader discourse of democracy and governance.

### **3.3. Kamala Harris**

Kamala Harris, Vice President of the United States, represents a compelling figure in contemporary American politics. Not only does she hold historical significance as the first female Vice President, the first African American, and the first South Asian American to occupy this office, but her communication style also encapsulates a blend of assertiveness, clarity, and empathy. Kamala Harris's public speeches and debates are rich with rhetoric that is both persuasive and relatable, often aimed at fostering a connection with a diverse American electorate. Her language profile reveals a strategic use of storytelling and personal anecdotes, which she adeptly employs to underline her political and social justice agendas.

Due to the article from Elysian Journal Kamala Harris uses her speeches to address specific societal stakeholders like the feminist movement and minority groups, connecting historical struggles for rights with current issues like structural racism. For instance, she is quoted saying, “*Yet so many of the Black women who helped secure that victory were still prohibited from voting, long after its ratification.*” This demonstrates her focus on both historical and present injustices, aiming to resonate with and mobilize her audience on these bases. Moreover, Kamala Harris's choice of words in her speech underscores her ideological values. Words like “*equality,*” “*justice,*” “*racism,*” and “*democracy*” are frequently used to anchor her speech in political and social contexts that resonate with her audience. This not only reflects her stance on these issues but also appeals to the emotional and moral sensibilities of her listeners. The analysis further points out the effective use of rhetorical devices in Kamala Harris's speech. For example, the use of alliteration, parallelism, and euphemism serves to make her message more

memorable and persuasive. These techniques help her emphasize the significance of collective action and the importance of acknowledging and addressing historical and systemic injustices (Wibhisana, 2023).

In the study by Joseph it was investigated with the help of a quantitative method that Kamala Harris used lexical hedges such as “*you know*” and “*I think*” 11 times, accounting for 16% of the women’s language features identified. These hedges may indicate uncertainty or politeness, softening the delivery of statements to appear less confrontational and more agreeable. For example, Kamala Harris starts her response with “*You know, Joe and I were raised in a very similar way...*” which introduces her statement with a conversational, inclusive tone. Moreover, intensifiers were the most frequently used feature, appearing 27 times (39%). Kamala Harris used words like “*absolutely*” and “*incredibly*” to strengthen her assertions, as seen in her statement praising Joe Biden's transparency. This choice amplifies the positive attributes of her campaign while contrasting it against the opposition. Furthermore, Kamala Harris employed hypercorrect grammar 23 times (33%), using more formal and precise language such as “*have had to sacrifice*” instead of simpler alternatives like “*had sacrificed.*” This not only conveys a formal tone but also indicates a higher level of linguistic competence and professionalism, which can be crucial in a high-stakes political debate (Joseph, 2021, p. 288-289)

In the dissertation by Piccioni it is stated that Kamala Harris effectively utilizes a variety of rhetorical devices to engage and persuade her audience. The work mentions her use of metaphors, such as referring to America as “*a nation built by immigrants,*” which serves to underscore her message of inclusivity and diversity. Kamala Harris's strategic use of pronouns like “*we*” and “*I*” helps to either include the audience in her narrative or emphasize her personal commitment and credibility. For example, she often uses “*we*” to create a sense of unity and

collective responsibility, which is a key aspect of her public speaking strategy. Moreover, by employing contrast in her speeches, Kamala Harris highlights differences between her political stance and those of her opponents, helping to clarify her positions and values. This method is particularly evident when she delineates the contrasts between Democratic and Republican policies (Piccioni, 2021, p. 45).

Srikandi and Lubis also claim that Kamala Harris uses her platform to reinforce the idea that women's rights and issues are central to broader social and political progress. Her language and thematic choices resonate with feminist principles, seeking to inspire and mobilize support for gender equality across all sectors of society. For instance, Kamala Harris states: *"We have also witnessed your courage, your resilience, and the generosity of your spirit,"* reflecting on the collective spirit of women who have fought for equality and rights throughout U.S. history (Srikandi, 2024, p. 254).

Through pragmatic analysis, we figured out that Kamala Harris's speeches showcase a sophisticated application of **context-dependent language** use. For example, in her "Commencement Address at Howard University," (2017) Kamala Harris connects personally with the audience by reminiscing about **her own experiences** at Howard University: *"But this one is particularly special for me. Because decades ago, I sat just where you sit now, feeling the embrace of my Howard family..."*, enhancing the relevance and engagement of her speech. This pragmatic technique fosters a connection between the speaker and the audience, reinforcing solidarity and shared identity. Furthermore, in her Launch Speech in Oakland (2019) she mentions **local landmarks** and **personal history** (*"born just up the road at Kaiser Hospital"*), which roots her speech in the specific context and experiences of her audience. **References to contemporary political events and figures** (e.g., *"Democracy is not a state. It is an act"* quoting John Lewis in the

Victory Speech in Wilmington, 2020) establish a direct link to the political and social moment in Kamala Harris's speeches, emphasizing the urgency of civic engagement.

The performative functions in Kamala Harris's speeches often include assertive and **commissive acts**. In her “Victory Speech in Wilmington,” (2020) she uses the phrase, “*We... have the power to build a better future,*” which is not only assertive but also commissive, promising continued effort towards democratic ideals. This serves as a commitment to action and evokes a collective responsibility among her audience. In her Commencement Address at Howard University (2017) she also uses commissive speech acts, promising continued allegiance to the values taught and shared at Howard (“*And it’s a pretty exclusive club...*”). Commissive acts also could be found in utterances concerning future actions, for instance “...we should agree we should not have weapons of war on the streets of America.” (Face the Nation, 2022). This implies a commitment to legislative action regarding gun control, indicating future policy directions. Furthermore, **assertive acts** dominate as she declares her intentions and vision for the country (“*America, we are better than this.*” - Launch Speech in Oakland, California, 2019), calling for a collective response to societal issues. She also asserts a belief about the nation's resilience and proactive nature: “*Even in dark times, we not only dream, we do.*” (Inauguration Speech, 2021).

Moreover, the speech “DNC Winter Meeting” (2022) contains **directives** aimed at motivating the audience to continue their political engagement and support for democracy (“*And defending democracy, then, takes all of us.*”). Kamala Harris also used to get the listener to do something with the help of declaratives in such sentences: “*We must pass the voting rights bills that are now before the Senate.*” (Remarks on January 6, 2022); “*And if you do not yet have those freedoms, fight for them and know we will fight alongside you.*” (Generation

Equality Forum, 2021); “*we must think beyond government*” (Washington Conference, 2021) etc.

**Expressives** that convey the speaker's psychological state or attitude also could be found in Kamala Harris's speeches. For instance, in her “Remarks on January 6” (2022) speech she expresses sympathy and solidarity with the victims and their families: “*Our thoughts are with all of the families who have lost a loved one*”. Furthermore, such statements, like “*Truly, words we all needed to hear*” (Inauguration Speech, 2021), reflect an emotional evaluation of the speech's content as being necessary and timely.

**Declaratives**, as speech acts, which change the state of affairs by their utterance, rarely could be found in Kamala Harris's speeches. However, she used this speech act in her “Remarks on January 6” speech (2022), declaring: “*It is my honor to introduce a public servant with the character and fortitude to meet this moment, President Joe Biden*” - not only to introduce the President but formally shifts the focus and control of the speech to him.

Kamala Harris employs various rhetorical devices across her speeches. In the “Launch speech in Oakland, California,” (2019) she uses **anaphora** extensively: “*We are here because... We are here because...*”; “*For the people meant fighting... For the people meant standing up...*” etc. These repetitions emphasize the critical nature of the moment and galvanize the audience. In the Victory Speech in Wilmington (2020) the **repetition** of “*You chose*” emphasizes the power of the electorate's choice and reinforces the legitimacy and importance of their decision. Furthermore, Kamala Harris's use of anaphora is evident in the “Commencement Address at Howard University” (2017) where she repeats the phrase “*Remember*” to emphasize the shared experiences and the collective memory of her audience, reinforcing community bonds and shared values: “*Remember — those first days on the Yard... Remember — or maybe even try to*

*forget — all those late nights at Founders...”. Repetitions also used by Kamala Harris for emphasis, especially in stressing the importance of public health measures like vaccination (e.g., repeating "vaccinated" and "boosted" in ‘Face the Nation’ speech, 2021).*

Moreover, use of **metaphors** such as “[*America’s*] *democracy is not a state. It is an act*” from her Victory Speech (2020) frame democracy as an ongoing, active engagement rather than a static condition, which encourages continual participation and vigilance. As well as metaphors from her Commencement Address at Howard University (2017): “*Howard has endured and thrived*”, - where metaphor usage highlights the transformative power of education. Metaphors like “*medieval vanity project*” (Launch Speech in Oakland, California, 2019) are used to describe a political opponent's policies not only disparage those policies but also frame them as outdated and irrational, enhancing her argument through vivid imagery. Kamala Harris also uses metaphorical language such as “*we have let the world know, America is back,*” (Washington Conference, 2021) which symbolizes a renewed presence and engagement in global affairs. Moreover, phrases like “*We shoot for the moon, and then we plant our flag on it*” (Inauguration Speech, 2021) use metaphorical language to encapsulate high aspirations and achievements, enriching the speech's visionary appeal.

Furthermore, Kamala Harris does not hesitate to use **hyperboles**, for example at the DNC Winter Meeting (2022) she said: “*The extraordinary dedication, commitment, and work...*” - to intensify the significance of the audience’s efforts in political processes. She also skillfully uses **parallelism**, especially in the list that defines the strength of democracy: “*...the strength of democracy is the rule of law. The strength of democracy is the principle that everyone should be treated equally, that elections should be free and fair, that corruption should be given no quarter. The strength of democracy is that it*

*empowers the people.*" (Remarks on January 6, 2022). This rhetorical device emphasizes the qualities that make democracy robust and diverse. Moreover, Kamala Harris also uses parallelism in **repeated** structure in phrases like "*To do what is hard, to do what is good, to unite, to believe in ourselves, believe in our country, believe in what we can do together*" (Inauguration Speech, 2021) to create a rhythmic buildup, enhancing the emotional impact and making the call to action more compelling.

Moving forward to examination of politeness strategies, we discovered that Kamala Harris speeches often reflect gendered communication styles, particularly in the use of **politeness strategies** and **inclusive language**. In her "DNC Winter Meeting" speech (2022), she acknowledges various demographic groups, reflecting an inclusive approach that is often associated with female communication styles, by saying "*everybody in this room*" and "*this group of friends*". This not only honors the diversity of her audience but also reinforces her message of unity and collective effort. Kamala Harris also uses inclusive language, frequently addressing the collective experience and achievements: "*Our Howard family...*" Commencement Address at Howard University (2017). Moreover, she expresses **empathy and solidarity** with those suffering injustice, using language that reflects understanding and shared responsibility: "*...and don't give up the fight!*" (Launch Speech in Oakland, California, 2019). Furthermore, Kamala Harris employs **affiliative speech** to build a connection with the audience, reflecting on shared experiences and mutual aspirations ("*And I know times have been challenging...*" - Victory Speech in Wilmington (2020).

Through the lens of CDA, we investigated that Kamala Harris frequently uses the **active voice** to assign agency, particularly when discussing her actions against social injustices or economic challenges, for instance in her "Launch Speech in Oakland, California" (2019) she said: "*So we went after the five biggest*

*banks in the United States.*” This syntactic choice highlights her proactive stance and leadership in challenging powerful entities, positioning her as a defender of the common people. In her Victory Speech in Wilmington (2020) Kamala Harris also employed the active voice to depict herself and her audience as agents of change: *“You chose hope and unity, decency, science, and, yes, truth.”* This contrasts with the passive constructions sometimes used to describe adversities, diluting the agency of opponents. As for the lexical choice, Kamala Harris’ choice of words serves to elevate the political stakes by associating her campaign with a **higher moral cause**: *“And when our very democracy was on the ballot in this election, with the very soul of America at stake...”* (Victory Speech in Wilmington, 2020). She also uses **collective nouns** like *“our family,” “our Howard family”* (Commencement Address at Howard University, 2017) to forge a bond with her audience, emphasizing unity and shared values. Moreover, she uses terms like *“fight,” “battle,”* and *“struggle”* frequently throughout many of her speeches to portray her political campaign as a moral crusade, thus mobilizing support through a shared **sense of urgency and righteousness**.

In essence, Kamala Harris’s speeches provide a rich ground for linguistic analysis, revealing a leader who skillfully uses language to inspire, unify, and mobilize her audience. These speeches are exemplary in demonstrating how political discourse can be strategically crafted to resonate with and engage diverse audiences, emphasizing common values, shared struggles, and collective futures.

### **Conclusion to Chapter 3**

By comparing and contrasting three prominent USA politicians: Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, and Kamala Harris, we can uncover commonalities and differences that illuminate broader themes in political communication, gender dynamics, and rhetorical strategy.

All three politicians skillfully manage the dynamics of gender in their rhetoric. Hillary Clinton's shift towards a more masculine linguistic style over time, as noted by Jennifer J. Jones, correlates with her increasing prominence and authority in the political sphere. Nancy Pelosi blends masculine authority with feminine approachability, a balance that enhances her effectiveness and relatability. Similarly, Kamala Harris employs a mix of assertiveness and empathy, demonstrating a nuanced understanding of gender dynamics in communication.

Each politician utilizes their platform to address key societal and political issues. Hillary Clinton emphasizes themes of communal ethos and resilience, particularly in contexts like the COVID-19 pandemic. Nancy Pelosi frequently invokes American patriotism and democratic values, while Kamala Harris focuses on social justice, specifically addressing the concerns of minority and feminist groups.

The use of various rhetorical devices such as metaphors, anaphora, and repetition is prominent across the speeches of all three. These devices serve to enhance the memorability and emotional impact of their messages. Hillary Clinton's use of metaphorical language and repetitions, Nancy Pelosi's historical references, and Kamala Harris's use of alliteration and metaphors demonstrate their skill in crafting impactful speeches.

There is a notable difference in the complexity and diversity of vocabulary across the three. Hillary Clinton shows a preference for a diverse vocabulary that appeals to a nuanced discussion of policy issues, which contrasts with Kamala Harris's focus on clarity and directness in addressing social justice and minority issues. Nancy Pelosi's speech, while clear and deliberate, often incorporates both a formal legislative lexicon and approachable, inclusive language.

Hillary Clinton frequently discusses broader national and global issues with a focus on policy and leadership, whereas Nancy Pelosi is more focused on

legislative achievements and bipartisan cooperation. Kamala Harris, on the other hand, emphasizes personal anecdotes and societal challenges, fostering a connection with a diverse electorate through personal engagement and storytelling.

The approach to politeness and inclusivity also varies. Hillary Clinton's politeness strategies emphasize empathy and solidarity, often using inclusive language that stresses communal success. Nancy Pelosi's communication style is inclusive but also shows a strong acknowledgment of bipartisan efforts, reflecting her role in a diverse legislative environment. Kamala Harris uses inclusivity to forge a connection with her audience, reflecting an empathetic and supportive stance toward those facing social injustices.

The analysis of these three politicians illustrates the complexity of political communication and the strategic use of language in shaping public perception and engaging with voters. Each politician's linguistic strategy is tailored to their personal identity, political goals, and the specific demands of their audience and political context. Hillary Clinton uses her linguistic prowess to position herself as a knowledgeable and resilient leader, capable of guiding the nation through complex issues with a focus on communal ethos and policy depth. Nancy Pelosi showcases her leadership through a balanced rhetorical approach that emphasizes legislative success and bipartisan cooperation, reflecting her role in navigating the complexities of legislative politics. Kamala Harris leverages her unique position as a representative of diverse and historically marginalized groups to foster a connection with a wide electorate, emphasizing social justice and the power of storytelling.

Summing up, their rhetoric not only reflects their personal political strategies but also mirrors broader societal discussions about gender, power, and leadership. This analysis underscores the significant role that language plays in political

leadership, revealing the nuances of how gender, identity, and power are negotiated and articulated in the public sphere.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

The British politicians showcased a nuanced blend of traditional rhetoric and modern communicative strategies. For example, Theresa May's discourse, characterized by a call for "strong and stable" governance during turbulent times, and Liz Truss and Penny Mordaunt's digital engagement reflect a balance between traditional British politeness and the necessities of modern leadership. On the contrary, American politicians, such as Hillary Clinton and Kamala Harris, demonstrated a more direct engagement with socio-political issues, such as civil rights and social justice, reflecting the American political culture's emphasis on individualism and advocacy. Whereas Nancy Pelosi's leadership style, combining clarity and deliberation, highlights the confrontational and dynamic nature of U.S. politics.

Furthermore, British female politicians often negotiate their public image carefully, balancing assertiveness with traditional femininity to align with the public's expectations. Media portrayal in the UK sometimes reinforces traditional gender roles, which can influence how female politicians' messages are received. In contrast, U.S. politicians faced a dual challenge of being assertive yet likable, a reflection of the broader gender biases that influence political leadership perceptions in the U.S. Media scrutiny often focuses on their personal traits rather than purely on policy or leadership qualities.

Finally, the linguistic strategies of UK politicians tend to emphasize unity and continuity, with a strong focus on maintaining societal stability through traditional values and collective responsibility. While American politicians often leverage their linguistic choices to challenge existing power structures and advocate for systemic change, reflecting a more revolutionary approach to leadership and governance.

Overall, the comparative analysis underscores that while female politicians in both countries face similar challenges related to gender expectations, the strategies they employ are tailored to their specific political and cultural contexts. British politicians tend to navigate these challenges by integrating traditional and modern communication tactics, whereas their American counterparts more frequently adopt a confrontational style that aligns with the U.S.'s more individualistic and advocacy-oriented political culture.

Summing up, this thesis has explored the complex connection between language, gender, and power through the linguistic profiles of three British politicians - Theresa May, Liz Truss and Penny Mordaunt - and three American politicians - Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi and Kamala Harris. The investigation revealed distinct rhetorical strategies, discourse patterns, and communicative styles employed by these leaders, reflecting broader socio-political dynamics and cultural transformations.

All six politicians demonstrated a strategic use of language that served to navigate and negotiate their identities and political agendas within the gendered landscapes of their respective countries. For instance, Theresa May's use of "strong and stable" rhetoric during Brexit negotiations highlighted her approach to convey reliability and resilience, while Hillary Clinton's adaptation of masculine and feminine linguistic styles in various public engagements illustrated her navigational strategies within the male-dominated political arena of the USA.

Moreover, the thesis underscored how gender impacts communication styles. British politicians like Liz Truss used digital platforms to blend traditional conservatism with a modern, savvy approach, contrasting with Nancy Pelosi's more deliberate, inclusive communicative style that helped navigate her leadership as Speaker of the House. This suggests a dynamic interaction between gender expectations and communicative strategies.

Thus, media portrayal significantly affected the public perception of these politicians. The analysis showed a recurring theme of gendered media bias, where personal attributes often overshadowed the professional achievements of female politicians. The case of Theresa May highlighted how the media often framed her leadership through a gendered lens, affecting public perception and possibly her political efficacy.

The findings suggest that female politicians employ complex linguistic strategies that are both reflective and constitutive of their political and social realities. Understanding these strategies can provide deeper insights into the subtle ways language shapes political landscapes and influences public policy and perception. This is crucial for developing more effective communication strategies in politics, especially for women in leadership positions.

Further research could explore a broader spectrum of politicians across different political systems to compare how cultural, social, and political contexts influence linguistic strategies. Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide insights into how the language profiles of female politicians evolve over time in response to changing political climates and advancements in gender equality.

In conclusion, the language profiles of Theresa May, Liz Truss, Penny Mordaunt, Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi and Kamala Harris provide valuable case studies on the intersection of language, gender, and power in political communication. By examining their rhetorical strategies and linguistic adaptations, this thesis contributes to a deeper understanding of how gender shapes political discourse and how politicians navigate their roles within gendered power structures. As the political landscape continues to evolve, the insights garnered from this study will be invaluable in shaping future research and practices in political communication, with a particular focus on enhancing the visibility and effectiveness of female politicians in global politics.

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## SUMMARY

У магістерській роботі досліджено мовні профілі жінок-політиків з Великої Британії та США 20-го та 21-го століть, їхні лінгвістичні стратегії, а також взаємодія між мовою, гендером та впливом в політичному дискурсі. У дослідженні розглядається, як такі політичні лідери, як Тереза Мей, Ліз Трасс, Пенні Мордонт, Гілларі Клінтон, Ненсі Пелосі та Камала Гарріс, використовують мову як інструмент для утвердження впливу, управління політичним простором та постановки своїх політичних завдань. Аналіз висвітлює еволюцію політичної комунікації через призму гендеру, показуючи, як використання мови формує сприйняття лідерства та впливає на політичну активність.

Магістерська розпочинається з історичного огляду гендерних досліджень у політиці, де простежується динаміка залучення жінок до політичної сфери. У цьому розділі йдеться про розвиток політичного дискурсу та важливі віхи в політичній активності жінок, починаючи з суфражистських рухів на початку 20-го століття і закінчуючи нинішнім залученням жінок на високі політичні посади. Перший теоретичний розділ закладає теоретичну базу, що ґрунтується на дискурсивному аналізі з використанням лінгвістики, гендерних досліджень та політології, та створює підґрунтя для подальшого детального вивчення окремих лінгвістичних профілів.

Докладні практичні розділи присвячені вивченню лінгвістичних профілів обраних жінок-політиків з Великої Британії та Сполучених Штатів Америки. Використовуючи якісний дискурс-аналіз, у дослідженні ретельно проаналізовано публічні промови, інтерв'ю та офіційні заяви жінок-політиків, щоб виявити різноманітні мовні патерни, які ці лідерки використовують для

досягнення своїх цілей. Отримані дані свідчать про використання жінками-політиками складних риторичних прийомів, таких як, наприклад, використання метафор, модальності та структурованих наративів. Ці мовні засоби не лише підвищують ефективність їхньої комунікації, але й активно сприяють зміні традиційних уявлень про політичне лідерство та владу. Аналіз також охоплює те, як ці політики враховують гендерні очікування, поєднуючи традиційно маскулінні та фемінінні мовні елементи, щоб залучати ширшу аудиторію, зберігаючи при цьому свій авторитет. У дисертації висвітлюється, як такі комунікаційні стратегії впливають на ширшу суспільну динаміку, структури влади та еволюцію ролі жінок у публічних сферах.

Також здійснено критичний аналіз ролі засобів масової інформації у формуванні громадського сприйняття жінок-політиків. У магістерській роботі обговорюється, як гендерні упередження в медіа-репрезентації впливають на сприйняття та інтерпретацію комунікації жінок-лідерок, що позначається на їхній політичній кар'єрі та публічному іміджі. У дослідженні стверджується, що, незважаючи на стратегічне та ефективне використання мовних засобів, жінки-політики часто стикаються з медійним простором, який може спотворювати та підривати їхню комунікативну ефективність через панівні гендерні стереотипи.

Дослідження спирається на надійну методологічну базу, що поєднує якісний аналіз текстів та методи дискурс-аналізу. Дані включають промови, інтерв'ю, дебати та офіційні документи обраних політиків, які систематично аналізуються для розкриття складної взаємодії між мовою, гендером і впливом у політичній комунікації. Такий підхід забезпечує всебічне дослідження нюансів того, як жінки-політики використовують мову для формування своєї політичної ідентичності та взаємодії зі своїми виборцями.

Отримані результати підкреслюють стратегічне використання мови жінками-політиками для того, щоб кидати виклик традиційним нормам, виступати за зміни в політиці та взаємодіяти з громадськістю. Магістерська робота висвітлює трансформаційний потенціал мови в політичному дискурсі, демонструючи, як жінки-політики змінюють політичні наративи, щоб включити в них ширший спектр голосів і поглядів. Ця робота робить внесок у політичну лінгвістику, висвітлюючи перформативні характеристики політичної комунікації та роль мови в конструюванні гендерних політичних ідентичностей. Дослідження має важливе значення для політиків, медіа-практиків та науковців. Воно дає уявлення про те, як можна використовувати мову для просування більш інклюзивних і толерантних практик політичної комунікації. Дана робота закликає до переоцінки того, як гендер впливає на політичний дискурс, і закликає до стратегій, які підвищують видимість і вплив жінок-політиків, не посилюючи стереотипні уявлення.

Отже, ця магістерська робота не лише розглядає лінгвістичні профілі жінок-політиків та простежує мовний шлях жіночого політичного лідерства, але й підкреслює вирішальну роль мови в формуванні думок суспільства, ширшому прагненні до гендерної рівності та розширення політичних прав і можливостей. Це дослідження є свідченням могутності мови як інструменту політичного впливу та каталізатора соціальних змін.