



# Political rhetoric landscape of Ghana: Examining the dominant rhetorical appeals in the 2008 presidential election campaigns

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From the perspective of ethnography of communication, this study attempts to identify and look into the significance of language and its use in politics. The focus is on politics in Ghana and how language was used in campaigns and rhetoric of two major political parties (the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC)) in the country's 2008 presidential elections, and whether or not language used reflected political ideology. Through analysis of data from one presidential debate in particular, the study also presents and explores strategies used and individual word choice by the parties' candidates. Their word choice is then scrutinized against the ideological background of the candidates and parties. These results illustrate the need for understanding language use in political campaigns and rhetoric.

**KEYWORDS:** Language; politics; campaign and rhetoric; political ideology

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This study is an attempt to identify and exhaustively delve into the significance of language and, for that matter, language use in political campaigns and rhetoric. The focus is particularly on politics in Ghana and how language was used in campaigns and rhetoric of two major political parties (*i.e.* the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC)) in the country's 2008 presidential elections, and whether or not language used reflected professed political ideology. This is in line with the suggestion that “language selection often relates to political goals functioning to create or

reinforce boundaries in order to unify speakers as members of a single speech community and to exclude outsiders from intra-group communication” (Saville-Troike [1: 12-13]).

Communication is prominent among the main business of politicians and, therefore, central to politics. As Hague and Harrop [2:105] put it, “Society, with its politics, is created, sustained and modified through communication. Without a continuous exchange of information, attitude and values, neither society nor politics would be possible”. Hague and Harrop [2], agreeing with Habermas's view that democracy is a form of communication, writes that “...democracy can best be understood as a form of communication in which citizens inform, educate and become reconciled to each other in the process of reaching collective agreement.”

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Language is the principal medium by which human beings communicate with each other. That is to say, without language, there could hardly be humanity or any aspect of it. Sapir [3] acknowledges this importance of language as follows:

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone or alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group ... We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation.

[3: 209]

Particularly in the current age of information, language has become a weapon and a powerful tool in winning public sympathy and, often, outright support. This is simply due to the fact that political power struggles, legitimization of authority and political policies as democracy or advocates of it would like it, occur through discourse and verbal representations. Language has, therefore, become the life blood of politics: it propels the conveyance of both the linguistic meaning of what is said and the corpus of the political beliefs underpinning any given statement [4: 7].

The significance and the critical nature of language are observed not only in politics of individual nations and households but, also, in international relations. Debrix [5] puts it all as follows:

...language in contemporary international relations is an inescapable component of the life, behavior, and identity of international actors/agents. ...Diplomatic events generally have a way of reminding us how central language is in everyday international affairs if one cares to pay attention to its meaningful presence.

[5: x]

Analysis of the language use in political campaigns and rhetoric with respect to the noted data on Ghana, specifically snippets of the IEA organized

presidential debate in 2008 (dubbed *IEA 2008*), will be situated in the ethnography of communication approach (e.g. [1], [6]). This approach focuses on a wide range of communicative behavior and with which relationship is established between societal sub-groups and socio-cultural whole, *i.e.* how language is used in real situations with particular reference to speech community and communicative competence. Saville-Troike [7:126], in particular, defines ethnography of communication as the discovery and explication of the rules for contextually appropriate behavior in a community or group or what the individual needs to know to be a functional member of the community. In other words, research in the ethnography of communication presupposes the acknowledgement of the inextricable link between language and the extra-linguistic, cultural context [6]. In this regard, the societal functions of language will include the functions served by such bounding features of separating, unifying, and stratifying [1: 15].

Considering some aspects of the ethnography of communication approach, therefore, particularly the goal of speech event (e.g. [8]), this paper strives to observe the functional behavior of language within society. Garfinkel [10:301-304] finds the goal of speech event as central to the ethnographic approach and, in this paper, we take the same path. It will become evident that, as situated meaning, the goal(s) of each speech event is constructed by a speaker through competence to induce a specific understanding in the listener(s). Following Matei [6: 156], it is assumed that listeners' competence in understanding or interpretation of speaker's discourse is also determined by rationality, accountability of everyday life, shared cultural (knowledge and) rules, and a sort of common-sense knowledge of the world.

## Language and campaigns in politics

Politics and campaigning are inseparable. Electioneering campaigns and rhetoric, which can be seen as "cultural tradition, linguistic self-consciousness, skills and methodologies brought into play in shaping the convictions of particular audiences" [10:1], are part and parcel of politics. In Ghana, electioneering campaigns and rhetoric play important role in the political landscape, and this has been greatly demonstrated in various communicative events of a political nature in the country. It is in electioneering campaigns and rhetoric and, of course, other aspects of political fora that the connection between language and politics and what this connection imparts on a

particular community or group of people manifests itself, hence the appeals to some aspects of ethnography of communication.

The use of a particular (piece of utterance or) language must be understood in total on hearing by the listener or before communicating it by the speaker. As Oliver [11:5] notes, “language cannot be understood merely as a symbolic system or code but as a discourse or, more properly, a series of discourses”. In other words, to fully understand an idea or a word, one should observe its usage in a particular context or the discourse of the issues of contention.

Essentially, man is politically inclined and, as Aristotle explicitly and emphatically puts it, man is by nature a political animal. This presupposes that man is in one way or another involved in politics and his involvement, as mainly expressed through language use, is for a particular purpose among other motivations: to get and/hold on to power. This follows from the fact that politics is concerned with power. In other words, politics provides a platform that enables veto-like decision making, control of resources and control of other people’s behavior even to the extent of controlling their values (despite possible constitutional provisions and their limitations of certain powers). It is the desire for this power to control that makes politics and particularly political power attractive to many, if not mankind in general. It is this attraction that drives the desire to seek and to use the tool that enables the acquisition of political power. According to Lamming [12], this tool is language. This is where the connection between language and politics is established: language is a principal tool that is used by politicians or people who seek political power to convey information particularly regarding what they stand for or their ideological orientation.

As if to emphasize the fact that language and politics cannot be separated from each other, Lamming [12:1] notes “language is essentially a very political tool ... we recognize the authority of power in the creation of words and the construction of the sentence”. However, it is important to note that not every use of language is adequate as an effective political tool. In the perspective of ethnography of communication, it is contended here that, for a language to have the accolade of being called a political tool, it must be well-structured: it must have taken all salient aspects of a particular communicative event into consideration, including the speech community. It is further suggested that, for language used by politicians and people who matter in various political fora to be described as well-structured, it should be laced with specific features that favorably attract the attention and

support of those it is directed at. In other words, it should be able to perform the essential task of invoking the right or desired and, most importantly, positive political response from the electorate. We could, therefore, surmise that it is not only the content of a particular message put out there that is important, but even how it is conveyed as well.

### **The stability of rhetoric**

Direct democracy, for example the ancient Athenian democracy which required direct participation of all adult male citizens (see [13] for further details), is increasingly giving way to representative democracy. Representative democracy, unlike direct democracy, favors elected individuals representing sections of the society known as the constituencies (see [2] for details). However, in each case, campaign and rhetoric have been at the heart of the process, hence its description as stable. Representatives, once elected, are supposed to be responsible to their subjects. Thus, Riker [14:37] asserts that campaigns are the nexus of that responsibility: one is expected to fulfill campaign promises made to the electorate.

The campaign message is communicated to the electorate through the media, especially in this so-called information age. The success of any political campaign necessarily depends on a message that is persuasive enough. In many elections, winners are often thought to have had the best arguments on some specific issues that were pressing during the campaign period. At the end of the day, however, it has often been realized that what may have brought victory is not solely or necessarily better argumentation of issues but, rather, a better set of rhetorical skills that were employed in the delivery of any issue at all. Attainment of these skills is dependent on the speaker’s knowledge of aspects of the speech community, whom they are attempting to persuade.

As noted earlier, this paper examines the extent to which the then flag bearers of the two major political parties in Ghana since the 1990s, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), demonstrated rhetorical skills in their effort to win the support of their audience. The flag bearers of the NDC and the NPP were John Evans Atta Mills and Nana Addo Danquah Akuffo Addo respectively.

As also noted earlier, snippets of two speeches given during the 2008 presidential elections (dubbed *IEA 2008*, and henceforth [15]), were particularly employed for this study, with one speech each from the contestants, Nana Addo Danquah Akuffo-Addo (hereafter, Akuffo-Addo) of the

NPP and John Evans Atta Mills (hereafter, Atta Mills) of the NDC. Three reasons account for the selection of these two parties. First, as mentioned earlier, the NDC and the NPP are the major political parties in Ghana (during the period under consideration) and, therefore, have the majority of the people as their members or sympathizers. The second reason is that these speeches were presented on the same platform and considered the same issues. The third one is that the two parties believe in different political ideologies, at least, in theory: whereas the NPP believes in capitalism, the NDC believes in social democracy. It is particularly on the basis of this reason, and for that matter ideological difference, that how the representatives of the two parties employ rhetorical techniques in their appeal to their audience for support is being looked into.

In the exploration of various speeches and in the rest of the discussions, the names of the presidential candidates and the names of their respective parties will be used interchangeably. Also, there is no conscious attempt to describe one as better or worse than the other; attempts made here are an academic exercise on the usage of rhetorical techniques. In other words, the question we strive to address is: does ideological orientation have anything to do with the rhetorical techniques and/or style of delivery?

### Rhetorical techniques used

The rhetorical techniques we use here are not the traditional ones such as alliteration, allusion, climax and metaphor, which are particularly employed in writing to improve its effectiveness, clarity, and enjoyment. Those we use here, such as the inclusive technique and the fear technique, are oral discourse-oriented and are couched out from some of the utterances of the speeches, following insights of the *Institute of Propaganda Analysis of 1959* (henceforth [16]). The following is the consideration of how the two political parties (or their flag-bearers) employed some of the rhetorical tools.

#### *The inclusive technique*

This technique advocates for a kind of ‘part-in-a-whole’ or ‘I am with you’ position but, perhaps, more than speech community. Indeed, speech community might just be enough; as Saville-Troike [1] notes, language experts generally agree that speech community is not the same as group of people who speak the same language since history, politics and group identification (rather than purely linguistic considerations) might contribute. Thus, the main function of the inclusive technique seems to be assimilation into a group of common ties. It tends to act as a tool of assimilation, thus admitting the

speaker into a group or groups in an attempt to win the support of the members of these groups [10:3]. The inclusive technique [17], puts the politician in the following light:

*The politician directs his appeal to groups held together already by common ties, ties of nationality, religion, race, sex, vocation. Thus, propagandists campaigning for or against a program will appeal to us as Catholics, Protestants, or Jews ... as farmers or schoolteachers; as housewives or as miners. With the aid of all the other propaganda devices, all of the artifices of flattery are used to harness the fears and hatreds, prejudices and biases, convictions and ideals common to a group. Thus is emotion made to push and pull us as members of a group onto a Band Wagon?*

[16:19]

It is obvious from the speeches of the respective flag-bearers that they used the inclusive technique to identify themselves with their targeted groups to the extent that, in terms of communicatory strategy, members of the targeted group seem to embrace them as part of them. Atta Mills, for example, said one time “*Every Ghanaian, no matter where he or she comes from, deserves fair opportunity and a chance to live a healthy and productive life.*” Indeed, the 1992 constitution of Ghana (specifically, Chapter 5) guarantees this. Therefore, it is clear that it would have been needless to utter this line if Atta Mills was not only identifying himself as a Ghanaian and someone who has national unity at heart. Besides the ties of nationality, Mills also invoked ties of vocation by associating himself with the worries of contractors for non-payment of monies long due them, all with the aim of winning their votes. He said, for example:

*When the NDC was in office, we implemented a policy that ensured that whenever funds became available in say the road fund, contractors whom the government owed were all paid a certain percentage to keep their businesses going. It was fair, it was equitable. [and] I intend to restore such fairness into the system .*

[15.3]

The then candidate Atta Mills was not alone in the employment of the inclusive technique; Akufo-Addo used it, as captured in the following:

*I have a strong desire to serve Ghana with a clear conscience, pure motives and a solid character. I will offer leadership of competence, courage, compassion and commitment. From Pusiga to Axim, from Hamile to Keta, we all by fate are Ghanaians first. We have to emphasize the things that bring us together. I believe in Ghana, and I ask you also to believe in Ghana.*

[15:6]

It is already an established fact that Pusiga, Axim, Hamile and Keta are part of Ghana. Therefore, in real or everyday discourse, there would have been no need telling this to the people of Ghana. However, from the point of view of the inclusive technique and as a communicatory strategy, Akuffo-Addo is consciously or unconsciously only attempting to associate himself with the groups that originate or are concentrated in these towns with the hope of garnering their support. In other words, he is implying that he is one of them and, so, they should vote for him, hence the appeal to the inclusiveness technique.

#### *The transfer technique*

With this technique, a speaker attempts to persuade a group of listeners through the indirect use of something we respect, for example patriotic or religious images, to promote his ideas. Through the technique of transfer, the speaker or propagandist takes over the authority, sanction and prestige that are embodied in something that has commanded the respect and reverence of a group of people and use it as something that others should accept. For example, most citizens respect and revere churches, mosques and the concept of nation. If the propagandist succeeds in getting the church or the nation to approve a campaign relating to some program, he transfers its authority, sanction, and prestige to that program in one way or another. Thus, due to man's reverence for the things of the church or the nation, something which might have been otherwise rejected, may be accepted [10:4].

From the following snippet, it is clear that both candidates used the transfer device in their speeches. Akufo-Addo extensively invoked the sense of national identity and/or appealed to Ghanaians' love for their nation by saying the following, for example:

*Fellow Ghanaians, as a person, I care deeply about the future of this country. Over the last three decades, I have been in the trenches, fighting to establish our democracy, to expand the frontiers of our freedoms and to make our*

*nation better ... I believe in Ghana and I ask you also to believe in Ghana.*

[15:6]

With the use of the expressions 'fellow Ghanaian' and 'I believe in Ghana', Akufo-Addo is employing the transfer technique through appeal to a common platform. Atta Mills also, on numerous occasions exploited Ghanaians' desire for peace and unity, which have almost become a factor of their speech community. He kept preaching and reminding Ghanaians of these desires to such an extent that he was christened *Asomdwoehene* ("king of peace"), though unofficially. He made one of such appeals to the nation as follows:

*I want to claim the future for the people of this country. I am looking ahead, not looking back because I want to leave an enduring legacy of a peaceful and united country where there is opportunity and prosperity for all. I want to be remembered as the President who restored honesty, truth and sincerity to government.*

[15:13]

#### *The testimonial technique*

One of the most common techniques employed by both politicians under scrutiny is that which can be referred to as the testimonial technique. With this technique, politicians list a series of the achievements or deeds of individual parties [10:5]. Consider, for example, the following two claims made by Atta Mills and Akufo-Addo respectively:

**Atta Mills:** *By comparison, during the period when, as Vice-President, I chaired the Economic Management Team, this balance was very positive, registering surpluses – positive 3.21% of GDP in 1997, positive 3.81% of GDP in 1998, positive 2.59% of GDP in 1999 and even in the difficult year, 2000, still positive 2.50% of GDP. This was the measure of prudent fiscal management which we shall resume come January 2009.*

[15:1]

**Akufo-Addo:** *I know that some in this country, who are opposed to us, struggle not to acknowledge the performance of the NPP government. While we are a democracy and they are entitled to their opinions, they are not entitled to create their own facts. I respectfully but strongly disagree with their views about our performance. Here are just*

*some of the facts regarding our achievements.*

[15:1]

We observe, however, in the examples given here that while the NPP's Akufo-Addo used the testimony technique to list the party's records, Atta Mills of the NDC used the technique to convince the electorate that the party has better and more prudent fiscal management skills.

*The fear technique*

The idea that epitomizes the fear technique is the instigation or agitation or fanning of a sense of fright and uncertainty. In other words, it aims to present a dreaded circumstance on which a community may share some background knowledge. These speeches, however, usually include and particularly end with a proposal of steps and/or behavior needed to avoid the possibility of horrible events. So, here, the speaker firstly produces some kind of potential threat to the interests of audience and, then, provides solutions from which the audience can then choose and, usually, the politician puts himself at the centre of the solutions. Also, in reality, solutions that are given constitute choices the politician has made, and not what could have been consensus-based, including input of the audience.

When a politician agitates the public's fear against crime, poverty and other enemies of an upright society, and proposes that voting for him will end the threat or exert some reduction to it, he or she has made use of the fear technique. A study of some individual speeches by both Atta Mills and Nana Akufo Addo indicate the use of the technique as a tool to gaining popular support. Indeed, as respectively illustrated below, both Atta Mills and Akufo-Addo use the fear technique in a similar way.

**Atta Mills:** *We know Ghanaians at this time are very concerned about the future of this country. The harsh living conditions most of us are experiencing, the insecurity in our lives with armed robberies and crime, the low self-esteem as drug barons diminish the international reputation of our country; these are matters of great concern to Ghanaians and I fully share these concerns. One of my priorities on assuming office, therefore, will be to fight the menace of crime.*

[15:1]

**Akufo-Addo:** *Democracy and the rule of law are twins. We cannot be a democracy when we honour the law in the breach, when we fear the night because of criminals or die unacceptably on our roads that have become*

*lawless spaces. Even though, this government has increased the Police force by 66% from 15 to 25 thousand while increasing their vehicles ten-fold, our work is not yet done. The reports in our newspapers of armed and violent crime, like the Madina robbery of a bank a few days ago, remind all of us of how much more we need to do. My administration will double the Police Force to fifty (50) thousand in the next five years while committing more resources for training, better pay and technology to increase professionalism and accountability of our Police Force.*

[15:4]

*The glittering generality technique*

This approach is closely related to 'transfer'. Here, generally accepted virtues or facts are usually employed to stir up favorable emotions for the speaker or the group for which the speaker stands. Facts, however, mean different things to different people, so they are often manipulated for the propagandist's use. The important thing to note about this technique is that the propagandist uses these words in a positive sense; this technique seeks to cause us to approve and accept an informative item without seeking or examining the associated evidence. They often include words like freedom, family values, rights, civilization, truth, etc. which establish man's sense of humanity or, in this case, the essence of being a Ghanaian. For instance, when someone talks about freedom, we immediately think of definite ideas about it (e.g. democracy) and understanding of the general sense of it: the ideals learnt at home, at school, in the mosques and churches, etc. The first and natural reaction is to assume that the speaker is using the word in the sense that we would have; we assume that he believes as we do on this positive term. This subtle concurrence makes us far less critical and suspicious than we ought to be when the propagandist speaks. Akufo-Addo and Atta Mills used the technique as indicated in the following.

**Akufo-Addo:** *Fellow Ghanaians, as a person, I care deeply about the future of this country. Over the last three decades, I have been in the trenches, fighting to establish our democracy, to expand the frontiers of our freedoms and to make our nation better. From UNIGOV to KUMEPREKO, I have always been there – on the side of right, on the side of the people. I know, therefore, in a very personal way, the price we have paid for*

*our freedoms and our current growing prosperity* [emphasis added].

[15:6]

**Mills:** *I am committed to a decent, honest, humble and truthful government to mend the broken trust between government and the people.*

[15:2]

*The lexical choice technique*

Lexical choice technique is a subtask of natural language use, which involves choosing content words (*i.e.* nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) in a generated text. “Lexical choice can be used to enforce or attenuate illocutionary force. This is because certain types of words can, for instance, activate particular presuppositions, reveal speaker attitudes, and require reader agreement for interpretation” [10:10]. Here, we look into the use of content words in the discourse of the two candidates (Atta Mills and Akufo-Addo) in connection with political campaigns and rhetoric. Pronouns as non-content words are also analyzed in terms of their purposeful uses.

Going by the statistics on Table I below, this study further observes how Atta Mills and Akufo-Addo used some specific content words and pronouns in order to achieve thematic emphasis and topical development. That is to say, the overriding objective of the politician’s use of words or speech is to gain the support of the people or electorate. The words used here (see Table I below) were identified and taken from an equal number of speeches, and throughout the whole presentation of their speeches.

With the use of pronouns in particular, as Fairclough [17] observes that they represent certain values that are encoded in different formal aspects of language, hence the need to look at their uses in the present case of political campaign and rhetoric critically. Crystal [18] gives the simplest definition of personal pronouns as grammatical forms referring directly to the speaker (first person), addressee (second person) or others involved in an interaction (third person).

**Table 1.** Most frequently used words in the speeches of Atta Mills and Akufo-Addo in selected speeches before Election 2008

Word	Frequency	
	A. Mills	A. Addo
We	81	78
Me	5	4
Our	37	111
I	65	87
My	10	20
Government	34	22
Will	95	46
Shall	11	20

Studies in pronoun usage assume that ‘we’ and ‘our’ indicate inclusiveness. However, ‘our’ indicates greater intimacy and, thus a higher form of inclusiveness. Looking at Table I, Akufo-Addo used ‘our’ 111 times. Atta Mills also used it, but only 37 times. By these statistics, one could suggest that Akufo-Addo demonstrated a better understanding of governance and/or democracy which, per the general knowledge of democracy, suggests a sense of inclusiveness. In other words, Akufo-Addo used language implying the inclusion of all Ghanaians in the NPP’s future plans and policies for the country. However, against the background of ideological orientation, this is interesting. With his capitalist background, Akufo-Addo (and, for that matter, NPP) was expected to demonstrate more interest in the running of even public entities by private institutions and individuals, in which case growth and/or development of private sector is more favoured than the public sector (where the government is the employer and employs more people).

The data also presupposes that Atta Mills (and, for that matter, the NDC) sees governance as more of a party’s agenda than of all Ghanaians, a position contrary to the socialist background of the NDC. This presupposition is buttressed by the fact that, out of the 81 times Atta Mills uses the word ‘we’, 65 times were mainly in reference to the NDC as a party, such as during a speech at NDC functions or in relation to matters that have to do with the NDC. For example, he said “When the NDC was in office we ...” [15:3].

On the use of content words, specifically the verbs ‘will’ and ‘shall’, which are often used interchangeably, the candidates used them to indicate future programmes of their respective potential governments. Thus, they could be deemed

as indicators of promise to the electorate. Atta Mills and Akufo-Addo used 'will' 93 and 46 times respectively, and 'shall' 11 and 20 times respectively. So, all things being equal, this is probably an indication of greater possibility and determination on the part of the NDC to be committed to their promises on future programmes. It is important, however, to note here that the use of these words or indicators do not necessarily impute or suggest commitment to promises; *i.e.* it must be understood that making promises is not the same as being committed to them. Indeed, as to whether or not they can succeed in delivering anything if given the mandate is a different matter.

Though the candidates were representing their parties, there were also instances where they presented their personal views rather than that of their respective parties or what is said in their manifestoes. This is explained by the use of the first person singular pronoun 'I' and its related forms (instead of its plural counterpart 'we'). Bramley [20: 27], for instance, following Wilson [21] and Watson [22], suggests among others that the use of 'I' determines or projects a "personal voice" and that it can be used to separate self from others, thereby stating the speaker's own position that distances him or her from others. In this regard, Akufo-Addo could be described as having presented more personal views. He used 'I' 87 times while Atta Mills used the same pronoun 63 times. Bramley [20: 27], however, also observes that a politician is also mostly motivated to use 'I' in speech in order to come across as good and responsible, and to describe oneself in a positive light; e.g. someone with principles, morals, power and who is not afraid to take action when necessary.

## Conclusion

We have attempted to identify and observe language use and the significance of it in political campaigns and rhetoric between Ghana's two major political parties (i.e. the New Patriotic Party and the National Democratic Congress) in the country's 2008 presidential elections and, to some extent, whether or not specific languages used reflected the parties professed political ideologies. Through aspects of ethnography of communication, we have explained that communication is at the heart of political campaigns and rhetoric, and that language and effective use of it are at the centre of communication. The use of a particular language (or piece of utterance) then must be understood in total if one is to be well informed. In connection with this, we have contended that the politician often employs various strategies through language to communicate well

and to persuade the electorate and ultimately win power. Considering snippets from an Institute of Economic Affairs document on presidential debate in 2008 dubbed IEA 2008 in particular, we have observed and looked into some of these strategies. Specifically, we have observed and analyzed some techniques of the Institute of Propaganda Analysis of 1939 in connection with IEA 2008. We have further given some insights into the use of some verbs and pronouns in political campaign and rhetoric. On the basis of these and against the individual ideological backgrounds of the two parties in focus and their individual candidates at some point, we have sought to make claims (albeit cautiously) about one party or the other that are implicitly or explicitly intended to enable the electorate to discern and to sift through utterances, in an attempt to be well informed.

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