

The Power of Words and Polarizing Rhetoric as a Tool of Electoral Seduction: The Anatomy of Donald Trump's Speeches

Georgeta CONDUR

Abstract: *This article analyzes Donald Trump's campaign speeches from the 2024 presidential race, beginning with the launch rally in Waco, Texas (March 2023), and culminating with the Madison Square Garden speech (October 2024). Conducted from a European perspective, the study employs a multimodal approach that combines quantitative measures (lexical diversity, sentence length, readability) with qualitative thematic coding. Results indicate a consistent reliance on short sentences, low readability indices, and repetitive vocabulary, enhancing accessibility and memorability, thereby confirming the conclusions of prior comprehensive studies in the scholarly literature. Thematic analysis highlights recurrent devices such as self-praise, populist appeals, simplification, and the alternation of fear and hope. The rhetorical signature of Trump's discourse is characterized by a cyclical structure—enthusiasm, threat, promise, mobilization—aimed at fostering emotional cohesion and reinforcing collective identity. Without adopting an ideological stance, the study concludes that Trump's discourse is rhetorically effective, regardless of whether one approves of its content, illustrating the enduring power of language to reshape democratic politics.*

Keywords: *Donald Trump, rhetorical strategies, communication, campaign speeches, discourse analysis*

Introduction: Cultural Dissonance and Rhetorical Efficiency

In the contemporary political landscape, Donald Trump's speeches continue to elicit divergent reactions - not only within the United States, but especially beyond its borders. For many authors and especially for European observers, his formulations often appear shocking, aggressive, or even incompatible with the norms of democratic discourse. When analyzing Trump's "rhetorical signature", many authors speak of norm destruction¹, violent rhetoric², hate speech, or dehumanizing language³. Some journalists have even attempted to catalogue cases in which a link can be found between Trump and various concrete attacks or threats carried out by other

¹ Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Doron Taussig, "Disruption, Demonization, Deliverance, and Norm Destruction: The Rhetorical Signature of Donald J. Trump", *Political Science Quarterly*, Volume 132, Issue 4, Winter 2017, pp. 619–650, <https://doi.org/10.1002/polq.12699>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

² Nikita Savin, Daniel Treisman, "We analyzed 9 years of Trump political speeches, and his violent rhetoric has increased dramatically", *The Conversation*, October 26, 2024, <https://theconversation.com/we-analyzed-9-years-of-trump-political-speeches-and-his-violent-rhetoric-has-increased-dramatically-238962>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

³ Brigitte L. Nacos, Robert Y. Shapiro, Yaeli Bloch-Elkon, "Donald Trump: Aggressive Rhetoric and Political Violence", *Perspectives on Terrorism* 14, no. 5 (2020), pp. 2–25, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26940036>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

individuals⁴. When a leader's rhetoric is characterized in this way by multiple sources, one would expect that person to be the representative of an extremist group, most likely a fringe movement. Yet Donald Trump won elections (not just once, but twice), in the country often considered the 'beacon of democracy', and he occupies the position once metaphorically referred to as the 'Leader of the Free World'. This is why it is important to understand why, within the American context, such utterances were not only tolerated, but frequently applauded and internalized by a significant segment of the electorate.

This cultural-discursive dissonance raises essential questions about the function of polarizing rhetoric, the ethos constructed by Trump, and the mechanisms of electoral seduction activated through language. Before adopting any ideological stance, it is useful to explore - through the analytical tools offered by political science and communication studies - how the favorable reception of a discursive style that appears narcissistic, vain, or hyperbolic (his discourse rated high for grandiosity as early as 2015, during the Republican primaries, when Trump secured his first nomination⁵) can be explained.

It remains a puzzling question how Trump managed to remain electorally 'unpunished', despite a considerable series of inappropriate statements, exaggerations, and even demonstrably false claims. The present analysis seeks to identify some of the explanatory factors behind this phenomenon. Of course, numerous elements contributed to Trump's rise, and not all of them are related to rhetoric. Nevertheless, this paper focuses on the discursive dimension, as we argue that Trump did not win *in spite* of his rhetoric, but also *because* of it.

Constructing the Persona: From Entertainment to Political Performance

In political communication, the communicator is part of the electoral offering. It is therefore essential to analyze not only the speeches themselves, but also the persona and communication style. In this regard, we must begin with the way Donald Trump's figure has been constructed and consolidated within the American imaginary.

⁴ Mike Levine, "No Blame? ABC finds 54 Cases involving 'Trump's connection with Violence, Threats, Alleged Assaults'", *ABC News*, May 30, 2020, <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/blame-abc-news-finds-17-cases-invoking-trump/story?id=58912889>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

⁵ Sara Ahmadian, Sara Azarshahi, Delroy L. Paulhus, "Explaining Donald Trump via communication style: Grandiosity, informality, and dynamism", *Personality and Individual Differences*, Volume 107, 2017, pp. 49-53, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2016.11.018>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

As is well known, Donald Trump's public persona did not originate in politics, but in televised entertainment - as the host of the successful show *The Apprentice* (NBC, 2004–2015). There, he was portrayed as an authoritarian, efficient, and unforgiving leader, famous for the catchphrase “You’re fired!” - a line that became emblematic of his direct and unapologetic style. Without dwelling on this well-known part of his biography, it is enough to recall a moment reported in the American press: a child with cancer, a fan of the show, asked Trump to come and personally say “You’re fired!” to him⁶. Episodes like this highlight the emotional imprint and symbolic power of his media presence, which is not always evident to the European public. What is noteworthy is that, upon entering politics, Trump did not seem to attempt to reshape his *Apprentice* persona to enhance credibility, but instead carried that same persona into politics. It is particularly paradoxical that one of the main qualities his supporters value in him is authenticity. As Hall, Goldstein, and Ingram (2016) observed, this suggests that the genre of reality TV may succeed in manufacturing ‘authenticity’ through the seemingly magical qualities that arise from the form’s inherent ambiguity⁷.

Academic literature has frequently addressed Trump’s personality since his entry into politics, most often in critical terms. A simple Google Scholar search reveals at least 49 article and book titles that include both “Trump” and “narcissism” or “narcissist”, and over 21,000 texts that contain these terms simultaneously.

Nevertheless, even in critical articles, certain traits are mentioned that may partially explain the appeal he exerts on the public. One is that he “fills the room”⁸ with his presence - he immediately draws attention and dominates the atmosphere. Another is his almost instinctive ability to radicalize both supporters and opponents. “Despite his fondness for gilded touches, Trump evinces not a Midas touch, but a Moses touch - an extraordinary talent for planting a stake in the ground and dividing the landscape before him”⁹, as one editorialist put it. Finally, another

⁶ Dan P. McAdams, “The Mind of Donald Trump. Narcissism, disagreeableness, grandiosity—a psychologist investigates how Trump’s extraordinary personality might shape his possible presidency.”, *The Atlantic*, June 2016, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/06/the-mind-of-donald-trump/480771/>, (accessed October 5, 2025). According to McAdams, “Trump could not bring himself to do it, but instead wrote the boy a check for several thousand dollars and told him, ‘Go and have the time of your life’”.

⁷ Kira Hall, Donna M. Goldstein, Matthew Bruce Ingram, “The hands of Donald Trump: Entertainment, gesture, spectacle”, *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, Vol. 6(2), 2016, pp. 71-100, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdf/10.14318/hau6.2.009>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

⁸ Dan P. McAdams, *art. cit.*

⁹ Derek Thompson, „Donald Trump's Language Is Reshaping American Politics”, *The Atlantic*, February 15, 2018,

frequently cited trait is his use of humor reminiscent of stand-up comedy¹⁰. This helps explain why, for part of the American public, his statements are not interpreted literally, but as part of a performative “show” convention. This particular characteristic poses significant democratic risks, due to its potential to normalize inappropriate ideas and expressions, making it difficult to discern where stylistic exaggeration ends and serious intent begins. In the same vein, his systematic use of paralipsis/apophasis provides plausible deniability, enabling him to subsequently dismiss controversial remarks as jokes or sarcasm¹¹, or by claiming he never actually uttered them.

Ultimately, we must emphasize the challenge encountered by European audiences — typically exposed only to brief excerpts of Trump’s most provocative statements circulated by their national media — in fully grasping the appeal he exerted over segments of the American electorate and the ways in which such statements are interpreted and accepted within that cultural and political context.

Overall, his supporters perceive him as an authentic leader who “tells it like it is” and rejects the hypocrisy of traditional political discourse. His rhetoric is seen as a form of brutal and sometimes humorous honesty that validates collective frustrations and aspirations. Social media platforms, through algorithms that favor divisive and spectacular content, have amplified this appeal.

Methodology

There is ample specialized literature offering comprehensive quantitative and/or qualitative analyses of Trump’s speeches, among which we may mention: Lamont, Park, and Ayala-Hurtado (2017) conducted a computer-assisted qualitative analysis (using NVivo) of 73 formal speeches delivered by Donald Trump during the 2016 electoral campaign, which explored his appeal to the American white working class¹²; Conway and Zubrod (2022) analyzed the linguistic complexity of both Trump and Biden, concluding that their low level of complexity is partially the continuation

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/02/donald-trumps-language-is-reshaping-american-politics/553349/>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

¹⁰ Michelle L. Price, “Trump, blending legal battles and campaign, tops long day in court with rambling New Hampshire rally”, Associated Press, January 18, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/trump-new-hampshire-court-sexual-harassment-rally-a0accdc6a0f797ab18551a336cef215>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

¹¹ Jennifer Mercieca, “A field guide to Trump’s dangerous rhetoric”, *The Conversation*, June 19, 2020, <https://theconversation.com/a-field-guide-to-trumps-dangerous-rhetoric-139531>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

¹² Michèle Lamont, Bo Yun Park, Elena Ayala-Hurtado, “Trump’s electoral speeches and his appeal to the American white working class”, *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 68, Issue S1, pp. S153–S180, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12315>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

of an ongoing historical decline in presidential discourse¹³; Zhou et al. (2024) examined 35 presidential debates from 1960 to 2020, 67 State of the Union addresses (1961–2022), and 187 campaign speeches from 2008 to 2020, and found evidence that Donald Trump’s speech patterns diverge from those of all major party nominees for the presidency in recent history, with the observed difference between Democratic and Republican candidates being minor compared to the gap observed between Trump and everyone else¹⁴; Savin and Treisman studied a monthly series of Trump’s addresses from 2015 to 2024, comparing them to speeches by other U.S. presidential candidates and world leaders since 1952, and concluded that Trump’s use of violent vocabulary has intensified over time¹⁵.

Considering the extensive scholarly corpus that has examined a wide range of Donald Trump’s speeches since 2015 (beginning with the Republican primary elections) and traced their diachronic evolution, the present study deliberately adopts a narrower analytical scope, concentrating on the 2024 electoral campaign and, more specifically, on its pivotal moments.

As an initial step, we conducted a multimodal analysis of all campaign speeches broadcast live on the *Right Side Broadcasting Network (RSBN)* YouTube channel¹⁶. This analysis systematically considered both non-verbal dimensions (gestures, facial expressions, posture, proxemics) and para-verbal dimensions (intonation, rhythm, pauses, vocal intensity, and variations in tone). The RSBN broadcasts proved particularly valuable for advancing our understanding of the phenomenon under study. Beyond delivering Trump’s speeches in full, these livestreams began before his arrival, enabling observation of the broader rally environment, including the atmosphere, interactions with participants, and the contributions of introductory speakers.

The purpose of this multimodal approach was to capture how political messages are constructed not only through verbal content but also through expressive and performative elements, to identify rhetorical and persuasive strategies used to reinforce collective identity and

¹³ Lucian G. Conway III, Alivia Zubrod, “Are U.S. Presidents Becoming Less Rhetorically Complex? Evaluating the Integrative Complexity of Joe Biden and Donald Trump in Historical Context”, *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, Vol. 41, Issue 5, 2022, pp. 613-625. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X221081126>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

¹⁴ Karen Zhou, Alexander A Meitus, Milo Chase, Grace Wang, Anne Mykland, William Howell, Chenhao Tan, “Quantifying the uniqueness and divisiveness of presidential discourse”, *PNAS Nexus*, Volume 3, Issue 10, October 2024, pp. 431-441, <https://doi.org/10.1093/pnasnexus/pgae431>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

¹⁵ Nikita Savin, Daniel Treisman, “Donald Trump’s Words”, National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 32665, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.3386/w32665>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

¹⁶ RSBN YouTube Channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@RSBN>, (accessed September 24, 2025).

mobilize audiences, and to assess the consistency between verbal discourse and its nonverbal and paraverbal supports.

Given that the speeches displayed a high degree of structural and rhetorical similarity (with the exception of segments addressing current news or state-specific issues) and a recurring discursive pattern was identified, we ultimately conducted a quantitative and qualitative content analysis limited to the transcripts of two major campaign speeches delivered by Donald Trump:

- Waco, Texas (March 25, 2023)¹⁷ – the first speech of his 2024 presidential campaign;
- Madison Square Garden, New York (October 27, 2024)¹⁸ – delivered near the end of the campaign, an emblematic speech due to the symbolic venue, the massive audience, and the strategic timing just ahead of the election.

For comparative purposes, I also examined selected speeches by Barack Obama and Joe Biden.

The texts were subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analysis, following the exclusion from the transcripts of interventions by other speakers, campaign spots, and time stamps. The quantitative analysis (lexical frequencies, syntactic complexity, readability index) was conducted using Voyant Tools¹⁹, while the qualitative analysis (thematic coding) involved manual tagging of significant excerpts using Taguette²⁰.

Results of the Quantitative Analysis

The *duration* of the two speeches was broadly similar. Donald Trump's speech at the Waco rally in 2024 lasted 1 hour, 30 minutes, and 28 seconds (including very short interventions by other speakers and non-speech elements such as chants or applause) and Trump used 13,688 total words, 2,056 being unique word forms. The Madison Square Garden speech lasted 1 hour, 18 minutes, and 15 seconds (including two video ads), also placing it in the category of long-form addresses, with a total of 10,568 words and 1,642 unique lexical forms.

¹⁷ Rev.com Transcript: *Donald Trump hosts first 2024 presidential campaign rally in Waco, Texas*, <https://www.rev.com/transcripts/donald-trump-hosts-first-2024-presidential-campaign-rally-in-waco-texas-transcript>, (accessed September 24, 2025).

¹⁸ Roll Call Transcript: *Donald Trump speech, campaign rally, Madison Square Garden, October 27, 2024*, <https://rollcall.com/factbase/trump/transcript/donald-trump-speech-campaign-rally-new-york-madison-square-garden-october-27-2024/>, (accessed September 24, 2025).

¹⁹ Voyant Tools, <https://voyant-tools.org/>, (accessed September 24, 2025).

²⁰ Taguette, <https://www.taguette.org/>, (accessed September 24, 2025).

Vocabulary diversity was measured at 0.150 at the Waco rally and 0.155 at Madison Square Garden (MSG), which represents a moderate to low value. This can be attributed to the length of the text and the intentional repetition of thematic terms.

The *average number of words per sentence* is 11.7 in Trump's Waco speech and 10.7 in his MSG speech, compared to 13.3 in Biden's 2024 State of the Union address and 20.6 in Obama's 2008 nomination acceptance speech. This indicator suggests a fragmented and rhythmic style, oriented toward immediate impact. Our findings confirmed previous observations, such as those of Kayam, who noted this tendency²¹ from the early years of Trump's political career. Consistent with this, Zhou et al. (2024) found that Trump's sentences are markedly shorter (10.4–14.5 words), whereas those of other presidents and candidates typically range from 17.6 to 24.4 words²².

The *Readability Index (RI)*, derived from the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level formula, which estimates the educational level required to comprehend a text, is 6.615 in Trump's Waco speech and 5.643 at Madison Square Garden, both corresponding to a middle school level. Obama's speech scores 8.974, and Biden's 9.351, reflecting a high school level and a more complex style typical of institutional discourse. It should be noted, however, that since American politicians typically use teleprompters with pre-written speeches, a lower RI does not necessarily imply an inability to address a more educated audience. While such a score could in some cases reflect limited complexity, it more often indicates a deliberate strategy of accessibility and memorability for broader audiences.

Our findings are fairly consistent with previous research, such as Kayam's analysis of Trump's media interviews and debates during the 2016 US presidential primary campaign. Using three widely employed readability formulas (Flesch-Kincaid, SMOG, and Gunning-Fog), Kayam found that Trump's language required only a fourth- to fifth-grade level of education (9- to 11-year-olds) to be understood, whereas the average score of other candidates was at a ninth-grade level (14- to 15-year-olds)²³. By contrast, our results point to a sixth- to seventh-grade level, which is slightly higher, but still reflects low readability. This difference can be explained by the nature of the material analyzed: Kayam focused on spontaneous interviews and debates broadcast on

²¹ Orly Kayam, "The Readability and Simplicity of Donald Trump's Language", *Political Studies Review*, Volume 16, Issue 1, 2017, pp. 73-88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1478929917706844>, (accessed October 5, 2025).

²² Karen Zhou, Alexander A Meitus, Milo Chase, Grace Wang, Anne Mykland, William Howell, Chenhao Tan, *art. cit.*

²³ Orly Kayam, *art. cit.*

television, while our corpus consists of rally speeches. Finally, Kayam concluded that Trump's use of low readability and simplicity of language functions as a rhetorical strategy to gain popularity, an interpretation that closely parallels our own findings.

Although the changes are not substantial, we note that both the number of words per sentence and the RI decreased from Waco to MSG, suggesting that as the audience grew larger and the elections drew nearer, the complexity of the speech declined - possibly as a deliberate rhetorical strategy.

After excluding connecting words and non-political terms characteristic of the English language, the *25 most frequent terms* in the Waco speech were: *people* (103), *great* (58), *country* (57), *China* (41), *think* (39), *nation* (37), *thank* (36), *good* (36), *right* (28), *time* (27), *president* (25), *years* (26), *America* (22), *guy* (22), *Biden* (22), *Trump* (20), *history* (20), *state* (19), *office* (19), *new* (19), *love* (18), *Russia* (17), *Texas* (17), *states* (17), *man* (17). It is noteworthy that China was explicitly mentioned 41 times, which, given the length of the speech, amounts to an average of almost one mention every two minutes, and that Trump referred to his own name 20 times.

In the symbolic speech at MSG, the *25 most frequent terms* were: *country* (68), *great* (61), *people* (49), *years* (31), *think* (29), *right* (28), *America* (25), *thank* (24), *Kamala* (24), *American* (24), *world* (22), *history* (21), *beautiful* (21), *vote* (19), *new* (19), *love* (18), *win* (17), *president* (17), *little* (17), *good* (17), *border* (17), *nice* (16), *time* (15), *job* (15), *big* (14). Somewhat surprisingly, given his characteristically combative style, positively connoted terms dominate, reinforcing affective cohesion. Statistically, considering the length of the speech, Trump uttered "country" and "great" nearly once per minute, "thank" approximately every 3 minutes, and "love" about every 4 minutes. Furthermore, we note that references to China and Russia, as well as Trump's own name, no longer appear among the most frequent terms.

A word cloud visualization (Cirrus diagram) was also generated, in which higher-frequency words appear larger. For the Madison Square Garden speech, the diagram is presented as shown in Figure 1.

- Populism (collective identity, us vs. the corrupt elite): “This nation does not belong to them. This nation belongs to you”; “I am your warrior. I am your justice”; “We are one movement, one people, one family, and one nation under God”; “We will throw off the corrupt political class.”
- Simplification (short phrases, absolute promises): “I will end inflation”; “I will restore free speech”; “We will totally obliterate the deep state”; “We’re going to clean it up”.
- Authority (centralization of power): “I will protect our borders”; “I will immediately ban all sanctuary cities”.
- Negative emotion – Fear (construction of external threat): “When a criminal crawls into your house at night...”; “They’re allowing criminals from all over the world to enter our country”.
- Positive emotion – Hope (promise, cohesion, pleasant sentiments): “Together, we will make America great again”; “We will win, win, win”.
- Opponent discrediting (direct attack): “Kamala, you’re fired. Get out. Get out”; “Kamala’s gross incompetence disqualifies her from being president of the USA”; “She’s unfit for office”; “You could take the five worst presidents in American history and put them all together, and they would not have done the damage that Joe Biden has done.”

Finally, all Trump’s speeches concluded with a ritualized segment²⁴, repeated across campaign rallies with minor textual variations but tonal shifts. This passage evokes America’s founding mythology and ideals of national unity, functioning as a closure device that is cinematic, emotionally resonant, and ideologically anchoring.

²⁴ „Americans can do anything when they want to. So no matter our differences, when we work together, there is nothing that we cannot achieve.

From New York to Las Vegas, from Philadelphia to Phoenix, from Chicago to Charlotte, from Atlanta to Detroit, this nation was built by generations of American patriots who gave everything they had for our rights, our future, and for our freedom. Through freezing cold winters and hot scorching summers, through storms and setbacks and conflicts and danger, our American ancestors pushed onward, marched forward, and overcame every single obstacle that stood in their way.

Together, they crossed the oceans, settle the continent, tame the wilderness, laid down the railroads, raised up those mighty skyscrapers, built the highways, won two world wars, defeated fascism and communism, and launched American astronauts to the moon. It was hardworking patriots like you who built this country. (...)

We bleed the same blood. We share the same home, and we salute the same great American flag. We are one people, one family, and one glorious nation under God. We will never give in. We will never give up. We will never ever back down, and we will never, ever, ever surrender. Together, we will fight, fight, fight, and we will win, win, win.

(...) And together, we will make America powerful again. We will make America wealthy again. We will make America healthy again. We will make America strong again. We will make America proud again. We will make America safe again, and we will make America great again”.

As a recurrent pattern, Trump's speeches follow a cyclical structure: enthusiasm → threat → promise → mobilization, illustrating a performative rhythm designed to generate predictability, cohesion, and collective energy. In a manner perhaps surprising given the way Donald Trump's personality is often perceived, he proved to be rather disciplined during the campaign. With only minor digressions, he maintained the overall structure and rhetoric, and consistently repeated key passages at each rally.

Conclusions

Donald Trump's campaign speeches reveal a polarizing and mobilizing rhetoric that is difficult to fully grasp outside the American cultural context, without engaging with the speeches in their entirety or considering how the Trump persona was shaped through *The Apprentice*. Viewing isolated fragments, often broadcast by mass media, can distort perceptions of the rhetorical and emotional dimensions of his discourse.

The impact and success of these interventions can be explained by a convergence of factors: a political climate shaped by widespread dissatisfaction with Democratic ideology and mounting economic discontent, which left large segments of the public feeling excluded; a communicator with a strong personality who "fills the room" and, drawing on prior celebrity status, positions himself as a powerful, authentic, and unapologetic figure; the use of stand-up comedy-style humor, which allows the audience to laugh at otherwise serious issues and to accept excesses as part of the performance; a message built on repetition, simplification, and the alternation of positive and negative emotions; a fragmented style with short, memorable phrases; accessible language regardless of the audience's educational level; a well-balanced mix of familiar elements and novelty; and, last but not least, the ability to make many voters who felt abandoned by the political system feel good about themselves and proud of who they are.

The voice and tone of the speech are essential in this rhetorical equation: the often-shifting tone - ranging from firmness and authority to more relaxed or humorous moments - keeps the audience alert and engaged. A sustained rhythm, dramatic intonations, and vocal emphasis contribute to shaping a vivid and captivating performance, in which each tonal shift serves to amplify emotional impact and strengthen the affective bond with the audience.

The final segment, ritualistically repeated, functions as a powerful patriotic symbol and mobilizing force, reinforcing the audience's emotional cohesion.

Both the quantitative and qualitative analyses of campaign speeches confirmed the consistent use of themes and formulations that reflect traits of populism and authoritarian style - all integrated into a well-structured discourse rich in appeals to positive emotion.

While there are numerous grounds for a critical approach regarding ideological orientation, intended goals, or the figure himself, this should not prevent recognition of the speech's effectiveness and its communicative strengths. Overall, the discourse represents a strategic rhetorical performance, calibrated to generate maximum impact in contemporary media environments and to consolidate a strong electoral identity.

Being critical of Trump, Jennifer Mercieca²⁵, a researcher who has conducted in-depth analyses of Trump's rhetorical strategies, speaks in the title of her book about the "rhetorical genius of Donald Trump". While the use of the word 'genius' may appear exaggerated, it points to the undeniable effectiveness of Trump's discourse upon a nation and a world adrift, illustrating the enduring power of the Word to shape perceptions, mobilize emotions, and redefine political reality.

References

Books

Mercieca, Jennifer, *Demagogue for President: The Rhetorical Genius of Donald Trump*, Texas A&M University Press, College Station, 2020.

Articles and studies

Ahmadian, Sara; Azarshahi, Sara; Paulhus, Delroy L., "Explaining Donald Trump via communication style: Grandiosity, informality, and dynamism", *Personality and Individual Differences*, Vol. 107, 2017, pp. 49–53, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2016.11.018>.

Conway III, Lucian G.; Zubrod, Alivia, "Are U.S. Presidents Becoming Less Rhetorically Complex? Evaluating the Integrative Complexity of Joe Biden and Donald Trump in Historical Context", *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, Vol. 41, Issue 5, 2022, pp. 613–625, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X221081126>.

Hall, Kira; Goldstein, Donna M.; Ingram, Matthew Bruce, "The hands of Donald Trump: Entertainment, gesture, spectacle", *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, Vol. 6(2), 2016, pp. 71–100, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdf/10.14318/hau6.2.009>.

Jamieson, Kathleen Hall; Taussig, Doron, "Disruption, Demonization, Deliverance, and Norm Destruction: The Rhetorical Signature of Donald J. Trump", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 132, Issue 4, Winter 2017, pp. 619–650, <https://doi.org/10.1002/polq.12699>.

Kayam, Orly, "The Readability and Simplicity of Donald Trump's Language", *Political Studies Review*, Vol. 16, Issue 1, 2017, pp. 73–88, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1478929917706844>.

²⁵ Jennifer Mercieca, *Demagogue for President: The Rhetorical Genius of Donald Trump*, Texas A&M University Press, College Station, 2020.

Lamont, Michèle; Park, Bo Yun; Ayala-Hurtado, Elena, “Trump’s electoral speeches and his appeal to the American white working class”, *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 68, Issue S1, 2017, pp. S153–S180, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12315>.

Levine, Mike, “No Blame? ABC finds 54 Cases involving Trump’s connection with Violence, Threats, Alleged Assaults”, *ABC News*, May 30, 2020, <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/blame-abc-news-finds-17-cases-invoking-trump/story?id=58912889>.

McAdams, Dan P., “The Mind of Donald Trump. Narcissism, disagreeableness, grandiosity—a psychologist investigates how Trump’s extraordinary personality might shape his possible presidency”, *The Atlantic*, June 2016, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/06/the-mind-of-donald-trump/480771/>.

Mercieca, Jennifer, “A field guide to Trump’s dangerous rhetoric”, *The Conversation*, June 19, 2020, <https://theconversation.com/a-field-guide-to-trumps-dangerous-rhetoric-139531>.
Nacos, Brigitte L.; Shapiro, Robert Y.; Bloch-Elkon, Yaeli, “Donald Trump: Aggressive Rhetoric and Political Violence”, *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol. 14, No. 5, 2020, pp. 2–25. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26940036>.

Price, Michelle L., “Trump, blending legal battles and campaign, tops long day in court with rambling New Hampshire rally”, *Associated Press*, January 18, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/trump-new-hampshire-court-sexual-harassment-rally-a0accdc6a0f797ab18551a336cef215>.

Savin, Nikita, Treisman, Daniel, “We analyzed 9 years of Trump political speeches, and his violent rhetoric has increased dramatically”, *The Conversation*, October 26, 2024, <https://theconversation.com/we-analyzed-9-years-of-trump-political-speeches-and-his-violent-rhetoric-has-increased-dramatically-238962>.

Savin, Nikita, Treisman, Daniel, “Donald Trump’s Words”, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 32665, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.3386/w32665>.

Thompson, Derek, “Donald Trump’s Language Is Reshaping American Politics”, *The Atlantic*, February 15, 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/02/donald-trumps-language-is-reshaping-american-politics/553349/>.

Zhou, Karen Meitus, Alexander A. Chase, Milo, Wang, Grace, Mykland, Anne, Howell, William; Tan, Chenhao, “Quantifying the uniqueness and divisiveness of presidential discourse”, *PNAS Nexus*, Vol. 3, Issue 10, October 2024, pp. 431–441, <https://doi.org/10.1093/pnasnexus/pgae431>.

Online Sources

Rev.com Transcript: *Donald Trump hosts first 2024 presidential campaign rally in Waco, Texas*, <https://www.rev.com/transcripts/donald-trump-hosts-first-2024-presidential-campaign-rally-in-waco-texas-transcript>.

Roll Call Transcript: *Donald Trump speech, campaign rally, Madison Square Garden, October 27, 2024*, <https://rollcall.com/factbase/trump/transcript/donald-trump-speech-campaign-rally-new-york-madison-square-garden-october-27-2024/>.

RSBN YouTube Channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@RSBN>.

Taguette, <https://www.taguette.org/>.

Voyant Tools, <https://voyant-tools.org/>.