

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2022.50.02.15>

How to Cite:

Lykina, V., & Potapenko, S. (2022). Rhetoric of direct and indirect notation of concepts: the procedure of transformation of an idea into an effect. *Amazonia Investiga*, 11(50), 152-160. <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2022.50.02.15>

Rhetoric of direct and indirect notation of concepts: the procedure of transformation of an idea into an effect

Риторика прямого та непрямого позначення концептів: процедура трансформації ідеї в ефект

Received: January 10, 2022

Accepted: February 18, 2022

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Abstract

The paper dwells on the textual ways direct and indirect references to concepts transform into particular effects. The topicality of the publication is brought about by the necessity to study the impact on the audience achieved by verbal formation of particular impressions. The goal of the article is to reveal how the direct reference to the democracy concept or its absence creates the desired effect in the inaugurals by American Presidents Obama and Biden. The paper applies the rhetorical methodology of idea-turned-impression to explain the way the concept named in the beginning of a speech transforms into a particular effect meant to influence the audience. It is found that the indirect reference to the democracy concept is implemented by the units of two groups: basic-level, indicating the people and the government, and axiological, naming freedom, equality, unity etc. The direct reference by the noun 'democracy' performs compositional and persuasive – existential and metaphorical – functions. The methodology of the article includes methods of analysis and synthesis, as well as special methods of knowledge, which are typical for philology.

Keywords: concept, inaugural speech, direct reference, indirect reference, axiological unit, rhetoric.

Анотація

У статті розглядаються текстові способи трансформації прямого і непрямого позначення концептів у певні ефекти. Актуальність теми публікації визначається необхідністю встановлення шляхів впливу на аудиторію через вербальне творення певних вражень. Мета статті полягає у виявленні того, як прямі та непрямі засоби позначення концепту демократії створюють відповідний ефект в інавгураційних виступах американських президентів Обами і Байдена. Пропонована розвідка застосовує лінгвориторичну методіку трансформації ідеї в ефект задля пояснення того, як позначення концепту або його відсутність у вступі промови впливає на формування відповідного враження упродовж тексту. Встановлено, що непряме втілення концепту демократії досягається одиницями двох груп: базовими, що іменують людей та уряд, з якими адресат перебуває у повсякденній взаємодії, та оцінними, що іменують свободу, рівність, єдність тощо. Пряме позначення концепту іменником «демократія» виконує композиційну й переконувальну – екзистенційну та метафоричну – функції. Методологія статті включає методи аналізу і синтезу, а також спеціальні методи пізнання, які характерні для мовознавства.

Ключові слова: концепт, інавгураційна промова, пряма референція, непряма референція, оцінна одиниця, риторика.

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Introduction

The research question is how the direct reference to the democracy concept or its absence influences the creation of the desired effect in American presidents' inaugurals. Therefore, this paper compares President Obama's first inaugural (Obama, 2009) with no lexical units directly referring to democracy with his second address (Obama, 2013) where he uses the corresponding noun two times and with that of President Biden (Biden, 2021) who employs the term quite profusely. The choice of the speeches by these two presidents is explained by their affiliation to the same – Democratic – party bringing forth the specificity of their idiolects. President Trump's address is left aside because of his belongingness to a different party.

We turn to the concept of democracy which becomes commonly referred to in American presidents' inaugurals of the 20th century (Rattner, 2021). It is noted that President Biden employed the noun 'democracy' 11 times, Harry Truman turned to it nine times in his 1949 address, and Franklin D. Roosevelt did the same in 1941 (Rattner, 2021). However, in his 2009 address President Obama failed to use the noun triggering concern that he followed a misguided realism rejecting democracy promotion (Bouchet, 2010). Nevertheless, he is neither the first nor the last to do so being preceded by President Reagan (1981) and followed by President Trump (2017).

Concepts turn out to be the most widespread object of linguistic study (Concepts and Contrasts, 2017). However, their investigation faces a number of challenges in the context of the general research procedures of analysis and synthesis. Concepts are mainly seen as separate memory units denoted by particular words with the explanatory adequacy of a concept-based semantics undermined by a lack of agreement about what the concepts underlying meaning are. If linguists move this way the number of conceptological works may become infinite. For instance, the English language with its million words may require the corresponding number of studies dealing with concepts. If we take into account word combinations and proper names the number of concepts might triple. Turning to other languages and studying concepts from the comparative point of view we are likely to get a false impression that they are the only object of study in linguistics. It means that time has come to turn to the synthetic study of concepts either from the viewpoint of language or speech. The former requires systematizing the bulk of the

known concepts, establishing their interrelations and pinpointing the mental structures they are subordinated to. The latter presupposes a study of the concepts' role of in discourse, i.e. their use in the texts of different genres.

Among other things, the authors conclude that the rhetoric of direct and indirect reference to concepts with application of the idea-turned impression procedure influences the audience in a complementary way. The indirect reference is achieved by the units of two groups: basic-level, referring to the people and the government, on the one hand, and axiological, naming freedom, equality, unity and other democratic values, on the other. The direct reference by the noun 'democracy' evoking the concept's superordinate level towers over the basic and axiological constituents.

Theoretical Framework or Literature Review

Inaugurals are mainly studied from the viewpoint of speakers delivering them. Some researchers take into account presidents' intentions, discursive strategies and rhetorical devices expressing political views (Biria & Mohammadi, 2012, p. 1290). Others focus on inaugurals' structure singling out elements differing in their specificity. The most schematic view considers the inaugurals' structure in terms of minimal or enhanced topical moves (Gruber, 2013, p. 54). The less general approach outlines more particular constituents: they are meant to unify the audience, to rehearse communal values, to set forth the political principles, to demonstrate the President's appreciation of the requirements and limitations of his executive functions, to urge contemplation not action, to focus on the present while incorporating past and future, to praise the institution of the Presidency and the values and form of the government of which it is a part (Campbell & Jamieson, 1986, p. 396). The particularizing approach concentrates on minute elements of an inaugural: the tone-setting introduction, the acts of thanking the predecessor, of invoking continuity of beliefs and ideals, etc (Cap & Okulska, 2013, p. 4).

However, the approaches outlined above overlook the audience's impressions of the speeches which are studied by the rhetoric of effect (Potapenko, 2016, p. 12) going back to ancient ethos (Burke, 2016, p. 43). The rhetoric of effect employs the idea-turned-impression procedure revealing how the concept named in the beginning transforms throughout the speech

into a particular effect meant to linger with the addressees (Potapenko & Izotova, 2021, p. 165).

This procedure has been applied to the study of several verbalized impressions: freedom celebration and freedom defense in inaugurals of J.F. Kennedy and G.W. Bush (Potapenko, 2016, p. 12); responsibility in the addresses of Russian and Ukrainian presidents (Potapenko & Izotova 2021, p. 165). It appears that the formation of impressions is mainly based on the interaction of two cognitive procedures: categorizing, dealing with the classification of the named entities, and sensorimotor, relating our mental operations to the perceptual activity. The former take into account three categorization levels: basic, connected with our sensorimotor experience (e.g. chair); superordinate, i.e. located above the basic level (e.g. furniture); subordinate, dealing with the instances of the basic-level entities (e.g. easy chair) (Rosch, 2009, p. 41). The sensorimotor procedures are explained by the force-dynamic methodology initially applied to the description of causal and concessive relations drawing on two forces: Agonist, a focal entity, and Antagonist, a unit opposing it (Talmy, 2000, p. 410). Both forces may have two inner tendencies: to motion, revealing their energy, and to rest, implying its lack. The classical “causative” pattern explains the meaning of the sentence “The ball kept rolling because of the wind blowing on it” (ibid.). In the cited example, the noun ‘ball’ denotes an Agonist with an intrinsic tendency to rest. It is opposed by a stronger Antagonist, named by the noun wind: it overcomes the Agonist’s loss of energy and compels it to move. The extension of this theory to the description of discursive relations helps to reveal the addressee’s impressions in the way discussed in the next section.

Methodology

The methodology of the article includes methods of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction. The method of analysis was tested by the authors for the follow-up to the inaugural promotions of Presidents Obama and Biden. The method of synthesis allowed the use of textual methods of transformation of direct and indirect recognition of concepts in song effects, which are featured in promos.

The method of transformation of an idea into an effect is aimed at pinpointing the impressions speeches produce on the audience consists of four stages: identifying, analytical, categorizing and effect-revealing.

The identifying stage is aimed at determining the impression a speaker intends to produce by singling out particular words. The introduction to President Obama’s 2009 inaugural is very personal beginning with the idea of humility followed by references to gratitude and sacrifices, e.g. “I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you have bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our ancestors” (Obama, 2009). Conversely, his 2013 address opens up with the idea of democracy indicated by the corresponding noun, e.g. “Each time we gather to inaugurate a President we bear witness to the enduring strength to our Constitution. We affirm the promise of our democracy” (Obama, 2013). Consequently, the introductions show that the first speech is based on personal sentiments explaining the absence of the noun ‘democracy’ while the second address turns to the concept under discussion at the outset.

The analytical stage is aimed at examining the definitions of the words naming particular concepts in the introduction. This analysis reveals two main interpretations of democracy: nuclear, i.e. “government by the people”, and extended, i.e. “a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2022). The first definition rests on the semantic features ‘government’ and ‘people’ while the second interpretation is supplemented with the features revealing characteristics of developed democracy: ‘supreme power’ and ‘elections’. However, other dictionaries foreground additional – axiological – semantic features extending the basic understanding of democracy. They are ‘freedom’ and ‘equality’ in the definition “the belief in freedom and equality between people, or a system of government based on this belief, in which power is either held by elected representatives or directly by the people themselves” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022).

The categorization stage relates the indicated semantic features to three levels of the concept. The basic features are ‘people’ and ‘government’ since conceptualizers can interact with the denoted entities at the sensorimotor level. The superordinate features cover entities of two types: existential, denoted by the noun ‘democracy’ which refers to government by people distinguishing it from other concepts; axiological, encompassing freedom and equality. However, the analysis of the inaugurals suggests

that the developed democracy and speakers' preferences may evoke additional features.

The effect-revealing stage concerns determining the relations between different components of the democracy concept, on the one hand, and the phenomena it is related to, on the other. This impression can be triggered directly by the noun 'democracy' and indirectly by the units referring to the concept's basic-level and axiological constituents.

The effect-revealing stage draws on further development of the force-dynamic theory. On the one hand, it is applied to the study of relations within an utterance, paragraph or textual section exemplified by Talmy's utterance discussed above: "The ball kept rolling because of the wind blowing on it" (Talmy, 2000, p. 410). On the other hand, it presupposes a transformation of the original binary opposition between the Agonist and the Antagonist into a sequence of energy transmission from one entity to another, e.g. "We affirm the promise of our democracy" (Obama, 2013). In the cited utterance, the pronoun 'we' represents the speaker together with the audience as an Agonist, i.e. a focal force, with a tendency to motion denoted by the verb 'affirm' while the noun 'promise' denotes an Antagonist passing over energy to another Antagonist indicated by the unit "democracy". It gives grounds to distinguish two textual tendencies to motion employed to characterize event participants: internal, brought about by the inner energy of a focal entity, and sequential, resulting from the impact of external sources. A similar distinction concerns the tendency to rest which may result into Antagonist's subsequent immobility or loss of force with a final decay or demise.

The suggested methodology is employed to analyze direct and indirect verbalization of the democracy concept in the inaugurals under study.

Results and Discussion

The application of the methodology outlined above reveals that inaugurals produce the intended impression in two ways: directly, using the noun 'democracy' in the introduction and throughout the text, and indirectly, by the basic-level and axiological terms.

The indirect appeal to democracy is characteristic of President Obama's first address (Obama, 2009). The impression of democracy is evoked by the nouns referring to the basic-level entities represented by the people and the president, on the one hand, and by the axiological

units referring to freedom and equality, on the other. The textual distribution of the units interacts with particular sections of the inaugural. The introduction to Obama's 2009 address rests on the negative-positive antithesis between the gloomy state of the country described by the basic-level units and the positive axiology denoted by the terms 'equal' and 'free', creating an impression of a powerful nation:

"Homes have been lost, jobs shed, businesses shuttered. Our health care is too costly, our schools fail too many – and each day brings further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries and threaten our planet".

"The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness". (Obama, 2009)

The nouns 'homes', 'jobs', 'businesses', as well as the deictic unit 'we' and the possessive pronoun 'our' combined with the units 'health care' and 'schools' depict America as an Agonist with a tendency to rest evoked by the units referring to failures and weaknesses: 'lost', 'shed', 'shuttered', 'too costly', 'fail'. Moreover, the noun 'adversaries' names a powerful Antagonist with a tendency to motion rendered by the verbs 'strengthen' and 'threaten'. However, the axiological units 'equal' and 'free' convey the nation's success, indicated by the combination of the possessive pronoun 'our' and the quantifier 'all' with the units 'reaffirm', 'better' (history), 'to carry forward' (that precious gift). They render a gradual increase in the dominance of this trend by the adjectives 'equal', 'free' and the noun 'happiness' positioning the axiological component of the concept as an Antagonist with a sequential motion subordinated to the Almighty and the earlier generations.

Another American value – equality – is implied by the utterance "We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, and non-believers". (Obama, 2009) The pronoun 'we' portrays the president together with the audience as an Agonist moving towards the unification of different religious groups denoted by the units 'Christians and Muslims', 'Jews and Hindus', 'non-believers'.

The following sections of Obama's 2009 inaugural turn to a number of American values subordinated to freedom. Some of them are connected with its defense discussed in the excerpt about the country's citizens serving in distant lands: "We honor them not only because they are guardians of our liberty, but because they embody the spirit of service; a willingness to find meaning in something greater than themselves". (Obama, 2009)

The passage above suggests that the defenders, denoted by the construction 'guardians of our liberty', act as supporters of freedom due to their internal energy. It provides them with the role of an Agonist with a trend towards motion denoted by the constructions 'the spirit of service', 'a willingness', as well as by the comparative degree of the adjective 'greater' in the construction 'greater than themselves'.

The citizens' access to freedom and equality is exemplified in the 2009 speech by the opportunities opening up for ordinary Americans. They are free to attend the inauguration ceremony and to elect Barack Obama as the first African American president: "This is the meaning of our liberty and our creed - why men and women and children of every race and every faith can join in celebration across this magnificent mall, and why a man whose father less than sixty years ago might not have been served at a local restaurant can now stand before you to take a most sacred oath". (Obama, 2009) The passage above illustrates the triumph of freedom evoking two Agonists with a trend towards motion. First, it is 'men and women and children of every race and every faith' participating in the inauguration ceremony. Second, it is the President who 'takes a most sacred oath'. His Agonist role characterized by motion is underscored by depicting his father as an Antagonist with an inclination to rest rendered by the negative predicate in the subordinate clause 'whose father less than sixty years ago might not have been served at a local restaurant'. Moreover, the use of the indefinite group 'a man' to denote the president implies that anybody might find themselves in that place.

President Obama's 2009 inaugural speech is wrapped up with reference to freedom as the most important value to be passed over to future generations: "Let it be said by our children's children [...] we carried forth that great gift of freedom and delivered it safely to future generations". (Obama, 2009)

The pronoun 'we' unites the president with the American people, portraying them as an Agonist with a tendency to motion by the predicates 'carried forth' and 'delivered' representing freedom as an entity with a tendency to a sequential motion.

Direct references to the democracy concept are found in President Obama's second inaugural (Obama, 2013) and President Biden's address (Biden, 2021).

In President Obama's 2013 speech the noun 'democracy' referring to the concept's superordinate categorization level performs a text-forming function. It opens up the home and foreign policy sections filled in with the units referring to the concept's basic and axiological levels mainly retained from the first speech and enriched with a reference to unity.

In the beginning of the introduction the pronoun 'we' refers to the nation-Agonist with a tendency to motion indicated by the verbs 'gather', 'bear' and 'affirm' while the inception of the home policy section is signaled at the end of the introduction by the noun 'democracy' representing an Antagonist with a tendency to sequential motion dependent on the people: "Each time we gather to inaugurate a President we bear witness to the enduring strength to our Constitution. We affirm the promise of our democracy". (Obama, 2013)

The introduction also turns to the concept's supreme axiological components laid down in the Declaration of Independence with the pronoun 'we' representing the nation as an Agonist with a tendency to sequential motion subordinated to the Antagonists indicated by the nouns 'truths' and 'Creator': "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." "Today we continue a never-ending journey, to bridge the meaning of those words with the realities of our time. For history tells us that while these truths may be self-evident, they have never been self-executing; that while freedom is a gift from God, it must be secured by His people here on Earth". (Obama, 2013)

The second paragraph of the cited passage locates the concept of freedom against the background of history perceived as a journey initiated by the Declaration of Independence positioned as an Agonist with a sequential motion subordinated to a number of superior

Antagonists: from the Almighty ('freedom is a gift from God') to his people on Earth ('it must be secured by His people') and the inauguration ceremony's attendees. In other words, like the 2009 inaugural the prominence of the democracy concept is achieved by reference to the basic-level component representing the people. They act as an Agonist with a tendency to sequential motion triggered by the Creator and the truths.

The next direct appeal to democracy opens up the international section of the speech: "We will support democracy from Asia to Africa, from the Americas to the Middle East, because our interests and our conscience compel us to act on behalf of those who long for freedom". (Obama, 2013)

In this passage the pattern evoking the concept is very much similar to that of the home section. The pronoun 'we' unites the nation around the president while the verb 'support' represents them as an Agonist with a clear tendency to motion which is intensified by the modifiers 'from Asia to Africa', 'from the Americas to the Middle East' representing democracy as an Antagonist with a sequential motion. Against this backdrop, freedom as a global value is depicted as an Antagonist inclined to rest by the verb 'long for' implying lack of liberty in individual countries. The analyzed excerpt implies that thanks to the Americans democracy is spreading all over the globe, since the nation as a strong Agonist acts on the weaker Antagonists world over urging them to embrace the concept's axiological components.

President Obama's 2013 speech ends up with an appeal to freedom as the leading democracy component subordinated to human activity. It is endowed with a tendency to sequential motion by the verbs 'carry forth' and 'carry' (into an uncertain future that precious light of freedom): "With common effort and common purpose, with passion and dedication, let us answer the call of history, and carry into an uncertain future that precious light of freedom". (Obama, 2013)

It is clear that President Obama's 2013 speech evokes the basic-level and axiological components of the 2009 address with the noun 'democracy' towering over them in its compositional function.

In President Biden's 2021 inaugural the concept's superordinate-level component performs more functions than in his predecessor's: it structures the introduction and represents democracy as an existential entity.

The introduction employs the noun 'democracy' five times portraying the concept as a supreme existential entity with its strengths and weaknesses: "This is America's day. This is democracy's day. [...] Today, we celebrate the triumph not of a candidate, but of a cause, the cause of democracy. The will of the people has been heard and the will of the people has been heeded. We have learned again that democracy is precious. Democracy is fragile. And at this hour, my friends, democracy has prevailed". (Biden, 2021)

At the introduction's outset the existential essence of democracy is emphasized by the statement 'this is democracy's day' followed by the verb 'celebrate' and the noun 'triumph' in the third utterance. Those units portray democracy as an Antagonist with a more pronounced tendency to motion than the people indicated by the pronoun 'we' in the third utterance. The supremacy of democracy is additionally emphasized by contrast between the noun 'candidate' denoting a single individual and the phrase 'cause of democracy' referring to a movement to which one is committed.

The introduction underscores the importance of democracy by the adjectives 'precious' meaning a highly esteemed entity and 'fragile' referring to something easily broken or destroyed. The contrast between these two metaphors implies that democracy requires human assistance. The introduction ends with the verb 'prevail' returning the listener to the dominance of democracy and portraying it as an Agonist with a tendency to motion which paves the way for its further discussion in the speech.

The existential essence of democracy interacts with reference to the axiological components of justice and unity.

First and foremost, racial justice is depicted as an inseparable part of a democratic state serving the people: "A cry for racial justice some 400 years in the making moves us. The dream of justice for all will be deferred no longer". (Biden, 2021)

In the utterance above the phrase 'racial justice' represents the concept's axiological component as an Antagonist with a tendency to sequential motion triggered by the human activities denoted by the nouns 'cry' and 'dream'. The consequence is indicated by the verb 'move' representing the nation denoted by the pronoun 'us' as another Antagonist with sequential motion. Further dissemination of this value is underscored by the combination of the noun 'justice' with the

quantifier ‘all’ and the predicative group ‘will be deferred no longer’.

The value of unity is emphasized by the repetition of the noun naming it after the unit ‘democracy’ in the next paragraph: “To overcome these challenges – to restore the soul and to secure the future of America – requires more than words. It requires that most elusive of things in a democracy: Unity. Unity”. (Biden, 2021)

The quoted passage contrasts two Antagonists with a tendency to motion. The first one is denoted by the unit ‘these challenges’ combined with the predicate ‘requires’ while the second one is designated by the noun ‘unity’ interacting with the construction ‘most elusive of things’.

The national section addressing the country reunites the concept’s basic and superordinate levels, criticizing those who have tried to destroy the country’s democracy:

“And here we stand, just days after a riotous mob thought they could use violence to silence the will of the people, to stop the work of our democracy, and to drive us from this sacred ground”. (Biden, 2021)

“To all those who did not support us, let me say this: Hear me out as we move forward. Take a measure of me and my heart. And if you still disagree, so be it. That’s democracy. That’s America. The right to dissent peaceably, within the guardrails of our Republic, is perhaps our nation’s greatest strength”. (Biden, 2021)

The phrase ‘here we stand’ in the first utterance of the cited passage conveys the steadfastness of the nation, endowing it with the role of an Agonist with a tendency to rest opposing the mob depicted in the subordinate clause as another Agonist though with an inclination to chaotic motion indicated by the adjective ‘riotous’. Instead, the Antagonist with an overpowering inclination to rest meant to inspire confidence is denoted by the phrase ‘the will of the people’, the noun ‘democracy’ in conjunction with the verbs ‘silence’, ‘stop’, and the phrase ‘to drive us from this sacred ground’.

The second paragraph of the passage above represents the concept’s basic level by the people denoted by the phrase ‘all those who did not support us’, by the president, self-identified by the pronoun ‘me’, by his unification with the nation indicated by the deictic unit ‘we’. The existential dominance of the concept’s

superordinate component is reflected by the nouns ‘democracy’ and ‘America’ in the utterances ‘That’s democracy. That’s America’. Next to them the axiological component of freedom of speech is depicted as an Agonist with a tendency to steady motion due to the combination of the phrase ‘right to dissent’ with the predicative group ‘is our nation’s greatest strength’.

The home affairs section focuses on the threats to democracy drawing on the concept’s basic and superordinate levels:

“We face an attack on democracy and on truth. A raging virus. Growing inequity. The sting of systemic racism. A climate in crisis. America’s role in the world. Any one of these would be enough to challenge us in profound ways. But the fact is we face them all at once, presenting this nation with the gravest of responsibilities”. (Biden, 2021)

This passage emphasizes the threats to democracy positioning the audience denoted by the pronoun ‘we’ as an observer-Agonist with a tendency to rest indicated by the predicative group ‘face them all at once’. Moreover, the noun ‘democracy’ also represents the denoted entity as an Agonist inclined to rest, since the denoted entity is under attack, while the Antagonists with a tendency to motion and dominance are associated with harmful sources denoted by the units ‘virus’, ‘inequity’, ‘racism’, ‘climate crisis’.

The home affairs section is concluded with reference to all components of the concept underscoring the President’s ability to support democracy: “I will defend our democracy. That democracy and hope, truth and justice, did not die on our watch but thrived. That our America secured liberty at home and stood once again as a beacon to the world”. (Biden, 2021)

First, the pronoun ‘I’ together with the verb ‘defend’ referring to blockage depicts the president as an Agonist with a tendency to motion which leads to the perception of democracy as an Antagonist with an inclination to rest. Second, in the next sentence the nouns ‘democracy’, ‘hope’, ‘truth’ and ‘justice’ combined with the verb ‘thrive’ refer to the new leader’s positive achievements representing the axiological components as an Agonist inclined to motion.

Unlike Obama’s inaugural, President Biden concludes his speech with a call for unity and

devotion to the state in the aftermath of the riots which preceded the ceremony:

“So, with purpose and resolve we turn to the tasks of our time. Sustained by faith. Driven by conviction. And, devoted to one another and to this country we love with all our hearts”. (Biden, 2021)

The passage above depicts the nation united around the president as an Agonist with a pronounced inclination to motion, denoted by the nouns ‘purpose’ and ‘resolve’ combined with the verb ‘turn’. This tendency is further emphasized by an appeal to faith and confidence, depicted as a source of motion by the participles ‘sustained’ and ‘driven’.

To sum up, for President Biden the most important component of the concept is the superordinate representation of democracy as an existential entity which opens up the speech and dominates over references to other constituents.

Conclusions

The rhetoric of direct and indirect reference to concepts with application of the idea-turned impression procedure influences the audience in a complementary way. The indirect reference is achieved by the units of two groups: basic-level, referring to the people and the government, on the one hand, and axiological, naming freedom, equality, unity and other democratic values, on the other. The direct reference by the noun ‘democracy’ evoking the concept’s superordinate level towers over the basic and axiological constituents. President Obama’s 2009 inaugural referring to two components of the democracy concept combines the basic-level units naming the people and the president with axiological lexemes denoting freedom and equality depicted as a force with sequential motion subordinated to God and the nation. Meanwhile, the superordinate component denoted by the noun ‘democracy’ performs organizing functions. In Obama’s 2013 address it contributes to the composition of the text marking the beginning of the sections of home and foreign policies which is no surprise since categories are treated as containers. In President Biden’s speech the noun ‘democracy’ acquires a persuasive function representing the concept from varying perspectives: existential, underscoring its supremacy, and metaphorical, describing the fragility of the denoted entity which underscores the president’s ability to preserve it drawing on the values of freedom, equality and justice.

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