

“I will bring back jobs. You can’t bring back jobs.”:

Polarizing strategies used by the presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump in the United States presidential debates of 2016

Jenni Roivainen  
Master’s Thesis  
English Philology  
Faculty of Humanities  
University of Oulu  
Autumn 2017

## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Political discourse analysis and ideological discourse analysis.....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1	Language in political discourse.....	7
2.2	Previous studies on political discourse in presidential debates.....	12
<b>3</b>	<b>The United States presidential election debates of 2016.....</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1	The candidates.....	14
3.2	The debates.....	15
<b>4</b>	<b>Analysis: Polarization strategies in the debates.....</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1	The use of pronouns.....	18
4.2	Different ideological views in the debates.....	24
4.3	Positioning the other candidate by the past and the present.....	28
4.4	Constructing a negative representation of other.....	33
4.5	Expression of ideology in the debates: meaning and form.....	41
4.6	The use of rhetorical structures.....	53
<b>5</b>	<b>Discussion of results.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>74</b>
	<b>References.....</b>	<b>75</b>

## 1 Introduction

This Master's Thesis analyzes the political discourse and expression of ideology in the United States presidential election debates of 2016. More specifically, it focuses on the polarization strategies of the candidates during the debates. The data concerns the presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump nominated by their respective Democratic Party and Republican Party for the 2016 presidential elections in the United States and the presidential debates between them. The three debates, that took place in September and October 2016, will be analyzed in detail using the theoretical framework of political discourse analysis and ideological discourse analysis.

The topic was chosen out of personal interest towards politics, discourse studies and the North American culture. Analyzing the presidential debates is also a very topical issue as the presidential elections took place during the writing of this paper, and this study was sparked by the debates last fall. The aim of this master's thesis is to analyze in detail the debates between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump and provide new insights into the field of ideological discourse analysis with regard to televised presidential debates.

This study focuses namely on the polarization strategies between the candidates and how ideology is expressed during the debates. The linguistically-oriented analysis concentrates on the use of pronouns, especially on the use of first-person singular *I* and first-person plural *we*; on the differences of ideological views; on how the candidates position each other by the past and the present; on how the candidates construct a negative representation of other; and on the expression of ideology, especially meaning and form (see van Dijk, 2006a). In addition, the use of rhetorical structures, such as repetition, metaphors, personification and hyperboles, is analyzed.

The main findings of the study are that the candidates, Clinton and Trump, vary the use of pronouns according to which role they are taking and to which identity they are referring as they are debating. The first-person singular pronoun *I* is used when the candidates emphasize their own active role in

taking care of the country and making change happen. Furthermore, the first-person plural pronoun *we* is used in order to appeal to the American people and indicate that the candidates are part of the same social group as the Americans are and that they share the same ideology with the people.

When it comes to the different ideological views in the debates, the candidates acknowledge the differences of opinion during the debates. As Clinton is a candidate for the Democratic Party and Trump for the Republican Party, they have different perspectives and ideas when it comes to the suggestions and plans that they make. In addition to acknowledging the different ideological views, the candidates also attack each other's suggestions and consequently defend their own plans and ideas.

Moreover, Clinton and Trump also position the other by their past experiences and past actions. Whereas Clinton has decades of experience in politics, Trump's experience is in business. Clinton reinforces her image by talking a great deal about her time as a senator and as the secretary of state, which Trump in fact uses against her and claims that she has been an ineffective politician. Trump, on the other hand, builds his image by emphasizing his business abilities and history in business, which Clinton in turn uses against him.

Furthermore, when the candidates construct a negative representation of other, they emphasize the other's mistakes and failures and other negative aspects while at the same time emphasize their own positive features and accomplishments in building their own image. In addition, the other candidate's positive aspects are de-emphasized and mitigated in addition to the candidate's own mistakes and negative aspects. In fact, positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation is the overall strategy of ideological discourse (see van Dijk, 2006a) and such polarization also forms the core of this study. Moreover, both Clinton and Trump use various rhetorical structures during the debates in order to persuade people and again present themselves positively and the other negatively, which is done by using repetition, metaphors, personification, hyperbole and number game.

The presidential elections and debates in the United States in 2016 were in many ways different than perhaps ever before. Donald Trump has not been involved in politics before running for president, some of his public appearances and remarks have been controversial and he has not had the full support of his own political party, the Republicans. Yet, he still won the race and was elected president for the United States. In fact, Clinton can be seen as being part of the establishment whereas Trump brings a breath of fresh air with his seemingly fresh approach as an outsider since he has not been involved in politics. It can be argued that since some people have been frustrated with the past and present governments, Trump offered them an appealing new and fresh approach to presidency. In fact, the polarization strategies that are analyzed in this study emphasize the differences between the candidates; Clinton can be seen to perform the role of a traditional politician by being more politically correct and following the rules of the debates, whereas Trump can be seen to assume a role that appears quite impulsive and quick-tempered, which can also be seen in the debates as he disregards the rules of the debates, for instance. Furthermore, Clinton and Trump co-construct a polarized view of themselves and assume different and opposite roles by using, for instance, rhetorical structures, which in fact emphasize the differences of the candidates. The outcome of the elections is not the main focus of this study, but it will also be discussed briefly to see, for example, if there was something in the debates that helped Trump win.

This paper is structured into seven sections, this introduction being the first one. Section two introduces the theoretical background and previous research on political discourse analysis, the focus being on presidential debates, and ideological discourse analysis. The third section presents the data, i.e. the presidential candidates and the three debates between the candidates during September and October 2016. In the fourth section after presenting the data, the debates will be analyzed in detail with reference to the theoretical framework and the focus being on the polarization strategies in the debates. After the analysis, there will be a discussion of results before drawing a conclusion and providing a list of references.

## 2 Political discourse analysis and ideological discourse analysis

In this section, before going into detail what political discourse analysis and ideological discourse analysis are and how they are conducted, the terms *political discourse* and *ideology* have to be defined first. According to van Dijk (1997) political discourse is discourse produced by professional politicians (p. 12). However, according to Wilson (2001), any discourse about politics and the political can be regarded as being political discourse, such as people talking about political events (see Liebes and Ribak, 1991) (p. 399). For the purposes of this study, a more general view about political discourse will be applied, i.e. political discourse takes place in formal political contexts and participants include political actors, such as politicians and political institutions, and their aim is to achieve political goals (Wilson, 2001, p. 398). Furthermore, the context, i.e. where the discourse takes place and who the participants involved in the discourse are, defines the nature of the political discourse (van Dijk, 1997, p. 15).

In the case of this study, the political actors are the Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and the Republican candidate Donald Trump. Their political discourse occurs in a formal political context of a presidential debate as they are having televised debates in a studio. In addition to the candidates, the studio hosts and the audience are also participants in the discourse as they, for example, ask questions and decide which candidate answers first. Furthermore, the nature of a presidential debate is different from, for example, parliamentary sessions or public speeches. The candidates try to be as convincing as possible in order to get people to vote for them instead of the other candidate. In addition to reinforcing their own image, presidential debates are a great opportunity for the candidates to attack each other and make the other candidate seem bad and ineligible to be the president. Moreover, the debate is jointly constructed, which means that the candidates construct the debate and their own turns in relation to the other participants' turns. The candidates respond to questions or comments as well as build their attacks and defenses based on the other candidate's turn as well as the comments and questions of the hosts and the audience. Therefore, there is collaborative effort to keep the discussion going.

Ideological discourse analysis means the study of how ideology is expressed in discourse. According to van Dijk (2006a), “ideologies consist of social representations that define the social identity of a group, that is, its shared beliefs about its fundamental conditions and ways of existence and reproduction” (p. 116). For example, political parties have values, norms and goals that the members of the party share and agree on. These opinions and values separate different political parties, for instance, the Democrats and the Republicans. However, there can be matters that members of the same political party do not agree on, but still identify themselves as part of that ideology. In the case of this study, the main focus of the analysis is on the polarization strategies of ideology. The presidential candidates represent different ideologies: Clinton is a Democrat and Trump is a Republican. In addition to representing their political parties, they both have their personal ideologies, too, that are just as important when selecting the president.

Furthermore, the candidates can take advantage of the other’s ideology in defining his/her own ideology, and therefore a political debate is a fitting venue for reproducing a political ideology and for ideological polarization between in-group and out-group. The context of a presidential debate itself is important, as the candidates are expected to act in a certain way and do or perform candidacy. There is a formal and clear structure for the debate, which will be discussed in section 2.2. In the next subsections, language and ideology in political discourse, political discourse in debates and previous studies on political discourse in presidential debates will be discussed.

## **2.1 Language in political discourse**

The aim of political discourse analysis and ideological discourse analysis is similar in nature. Political discourse analysis focuses on examining the language in the discourse, for example, pronouns, verb tenses, metaphors and chosen topics, whereas ideological discourse analysis, by using the same analytical tools, concentrates more emphatically on how ideology is visible in discourse, and more precisely, how polarization strategies are used between in-group and out-group. Ideology is expressed in discourse especially by contrasting *us* and *them*. *Our* positive and *their* negative actions and features are emphasized, whereas *our* negative and *their* positive features are de-emphasized and mitigated.

This polarization between *us* and *them* is called the ideological square. In addition to pronouns, polarization can be done, for example, by using rhetorical means, such as metaphors, repetition and euphemisms. (van Dijk, 2006a, pp. 116–126)

Van Dijk (1997) remarks that when it comes to topics in political discourse, usually the topic of political discourse is politics itself:

[C]ampaigning politicians will speak about themselves as candidates, about the elections, about voting for them, and the policies they promise to support when elected. They speak about opponents and political enemies and about the bad politics and policies of previous presidents, governments or parliaments. (p. 25)

Political actors, such as campaigning politicians, usually talk about future actions. They make promises focusing on the future, and future is often discussed positively, whereas the past or the present negatively. (ibid. p. 27) Even the slogan of Trump’s presidential campaign, “Make America great again”, relies on this negative viewing of the past and the present and pictures the future positively if Trump is selected president. Presidential candidates often talk negatively about the present government and positively about actions that they will take and changes that they will make if selected president. Furthermore, candidates often involve voters by making them part of the future actions by using the pronoun *we*. In fact, this involvement of the people was used and emphasized in the slogan of Obama’s presidential campaign, “Yes we can”. For example, Hillary Clinton begins her first presidential debate by emphasizing *we*, the American people, as actors:

The central question in this election is really what kind of country *we* want to be and what kind of future *we’ll* build together... *we* have to build an economy that works for everyone, not just those at the top. (Hillary Clinton, September 26, 2016)

By using the pronoun *we*, Clinton identifies herself as part of the American people. She involves the American people in her speech and emphasizes that *we* are all in this together and together *we* are stronger, which was in fact Clinton’s campaign slogan; “Stronger together”. Trump, too, emphasizes the greatness of their nation with his campaign slogan, but from a different perspective. Whereas Clinton emphasizes the strength of the nation by being together, Trump suggests that *he* will make America great again for the American people. Americans are a patriotic people and there is a strong feeling of



togetherness in America. Furthermore, national self-glorification is another way of showing ideology (van Dijk, 2006b, p. 738), and indeed Americans often seem to refer to their country positively and even praise their love for their country. The American ideology is emphasized many times during the presidential debates of 2016.

Further, the classic polarization between *us* and *them* is used in political discourse; as they compete for votes, opponents will talk positively about themselves and emphasize their own positive features and actions and de-emphasize their own negative actions and talk vaguely about them, while at the same time talk negatively about the other, emphasize their bad actions and de-emphasize their positive actions and features. In addition, when talking about their own mistakes or bad actions, politicians tend to downplay the significance of their own adverse actions, when at the same time talk negatively about the opponent. (van Dijk, 1997, p. 28, 33)

From a linguistic point of view, polarization becomes most pronounced in the use of pronouns. The use of *we* or *I* in contrast to *they* or *he/she* separate different ideologies, parties or presidential candidates clearly from each other (van Dijk, 1997, p. 36). Furthermore, according to Fetzer (2014), "In natural-language communication self- and other-references are of key importance to the presentation of self and other, and their interpersonal relationship" (p. 331). Therefore, the use of pronouns in the debates is highly important in the analysis of ideology. Especially competing presidential candidates compare their actions and promises in contrast to the other candidate. In the debates, when the candidates address each other, they either use the opponent's name or the pronoun *you*. However, candidates also talk about the other candidate as if he/she was not present in the situation and instead address the audience by referring to their rival by the pronoun *he* or *she*, which grows the distance between the candidates.

Van Dijk (2006a) suggests that ideology is expressed in discourse by various ways. First of all, when the speaker acts and identifies themselves as a member of their social group, they refer to the group by using the pronoun *we*. Second, ideological discourse, especially debates, contrast the members of

different ideologies by emphasizing *our* good things and *their* bad things, and de-emphasizing *our* bad things and *their* good things. This polarization between *us* and *them* is called the ideological square. Third, relating to the ideological square, topics are selected or changed depending whether they present *us/them* positively or negatively. Fourth, words and terms can be chosen to present *us* positively and *them* negatively, for example ‘terrorist’ or ‘freedom fighter’. (p. 125) Furthermore, repetition, metaphors and comparisons are rhetorical ways to emphasize *our* good and *their* bad things. Last, polarization between *us* and *them*, especially in debates, can be done by promises and accusations. (van Dijk, 2006a, pp. 125–126)

For example, in the first debate, Clinton contrasts herself with Trump by referring to Trump’s belief and her factual knowledge: “Donald thinks that climate change is a hoax perpetrated by the Chinese. I think it’s real... I think science is real”. Trump denies this accusation by interrupting her two times by stating that “I did not. I did not. I do not say that... I do not say that”. However, he merely denies this statement but does not give any defending arguments, but instead uses repetition as a rhetorical structure. Clinton, on the other hand, uses science as her defense. Furthermore, Trump displays opposition and disagreement to Clinton’s comments by interrupting her immediately, which shows his refusal to accept Clinton’s accusations. What is more, there are different kinds of opposing strategies used in the debates; displaying polarity by producing words with negative meaning, repeating parts of the previous turn in order to express denial and disagreement and showing opposition by word choices (see Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987).

Another important aspect in studying language in political discourse is the use of rhetorical structures, i.e. metaphors, repetition, personification, hyperbole and number games, which are used as persuasion devices and as polarization strategies. Metaphors can be used to mitigate meaning or to concretize something complex and abstract. (Beard, 2000, p. 19) Furthermore, according to Cameron (2012),

Metaphors are used when talking about something emotionally charged, often in order to avoid explicit emotion. They are used when talking about something abstract, where the imagination needs some assistance. Metaphor is what we turn to when we have trouble expressing or capturing an idea in discourse... (p. 351)

Rhetorical structures in political discourse are used to persuade people and get them to vote for the candidates. Therefore, metaphors are used to clarify difficult concepts and ideas because “persuasion presupposes comprehension” (van Dijk, 1998, p. 244). For example, a well-known metaphor about the economy is how the pie is divided, i.e. how income and welfare is divided between people: the top one percent gets a larger piece of the pie than people in lower social classes. The abstract concept of economy and income equality might be difficult to understand, but the idea is concretized by using the metaphor. According to Beard (2000), metaphors relating to sports and war are common in political discourse (p. 21). For example, when talking about the presidential election, it is often referred to as *a race* and the opponents are *competing* with each other. When it comes to the presidential debates of 2016, the candidates often talked about setting goals and achieving them, which are metaphors related sports.

According to Tannen (2007), repetition has multiple functions in discourse. Repetition is used, for example, “to produce fluent speech while formulating what to say next” (p. 58). By repeating words or phrases, the candidates maintain their turn of talk in the debates and their speech is linked together coherently. Furthermore, repetition is used to help hearers understand what is being said in addition to giving emphasis to the words and intensifying what is being said. (Tannen, 2007, pp. 58–60) In addition, repetition also has a tying function as well as being used in providing “a list-like rhythm” (ibid. p. 60).

Personification is also used as a persuasion tool to appeal to people. Vestermark (2007) concluded in her study of the political speeches of American presidents that personification of America is used in order to “make the American people identify with and understand their beliefs and goals for America” [abstract]. In the presidential debates of 2016, both Clinton and Trump depict America as a person multiple times. Clinton, for example, states that “... there’s nothing in my opinion that America can’t do” in example 3, and this way presents their country as humane, when in fact she is referring to the people of the country.

According to van Dijk (1995), “hyperbole is a semantic rhetorical device for the enhancement of meaning” (p. 737). Hyperbole is used in the presidential debates of 2016 in order to show negative other-presentation by exaggeration, for instance, when Trump claims that “we have the greatest mess anyone’s ever seen... Under your direction, to a large extent” in example 20 when he attacks Clinton. Furthermore, number game as a rhetorical structure is used in order to enforce credibility and “persuasively display objectivity” (ibid. p. 738) by relying on statistics and numbers.

## **2.2 Previous studies on political discourse in presidential debates**

Benoit and Wells (1996) emphasize the importance of the presidential debates for the candidates in their study of the United States presidential debates of 1992. The debates give an excellent opportunity for voters to see the differences of the candidates. In addition to opinions on important topics, the candidates also show how they perform in a public debate and what kind of image they give about themselves. Furthermore, Benoit and Wells (1996) suggest that in addition to convincing the voters about their own positive features and portraying themselves positively, the candidates see the debates as an opportunity to attack the other opponent and emphasize the opponent’s negative features. (pp. 4–5) This idea supports van Dijk’s theory about the ideological square, which was discussed in the previous section.

When a candidate is attacked by their opponent, they feel the need to defend themselves and their actions or thoughts. According to Martel (1983), there are some features in presidential debates regarding the candidates’ interaction: a candidate attacks, for example, their opponent’s character or party and the other candidate defends themselves after the attack. The candidate then tries to convince the others about their credibility, after which the candidate changes the topic and ignores the attacked subject. (as cited in Benoit & Wells, 1996, p. 5)

According to Benoit & Wells (1996), the presidential debates give an excellent opportunity for the candidates to try to hurt their opponents’ image and at the same time enhance their own image by defending their actions and policies against the other candidate’s attack (p. 7). There have been

multiple studies on the influences of presidential debates, and while others found that the debates did not affect greatly the voters' decisions, more studies have found that the debates do have great value in persuading voters (see e.g. Kelley, 1983; Owen, 1995).

More specifically, Owen (1995) remarks that "the media have accorded debates a central role in their election coverage, coming as they do at a crucial point late in the campaign... The press plugs the event like a boxing match..." (p. 136). That is to say, presidential debates are hyped and given a lot of attention in the media, which adds to the importance that presidential debates have during the campaigns and elections. Furthermore, presidential debates offer voters a chance to evaluate and assess the candidates before making the final decision of whom to vote (ibid. p. 136). Kelley (1983) further states that "we believe that voters care most about matters touching their personal interests..., that honesty in candidates is highly valued" (p. 4). In accordance with this view, both Clinton and Trump aim at appealing to people by emphasizing the improvements that they are going to make and which affect the lives of the American people. Furthermore, both candidates claim multiple times during the debates that the other is not being honest and aim at hurting their image by claiming that the other is lying or being dishonest.

### **3 The United States presidential election debates of 2016**

The data of this study consists of the three presidential debates between the candidates, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, in the United States presidential election of 2016. The candidates represent the two major political parties, Clinton the Democrats and Trump the Republicans. The televised debates were held in September and October 2016. The new president of the United States was elected on November 8th, so the debates are by design extremely important to the candidates to convince the American people to vote for them instead of their opponent. The first debate was the most watched presidential debate in the history of the United States with over 80 million viewers, excluding online streaming and public showings of the debate (Stelter, 2016). Even though Clinton had better results from official polls after the debates, Trump was still elected president of the United States (NBC News/Wall Street Journal Survey, 2016).

In this section, the candidates, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, will be introduced and the debates, i.e. the data of this thesis, will be presented and discussed. After introducing the candidates and the data, the debates will be analyzed in the fourth section.

#### **3.1 The candidates**

Hillary Clinton was the first woman to run for the president of the United States as a nominee of a major party, i.e. the Democratic Party or the Republican Party. Clinton has a strong background in politics as she was a United States Senator from New York for eight years, from 2001 to 2009. Clinton run for president in 2008 and served as Secretary of State in the Obama administration from 2009 to 2013. In addition, she has been the First Lady of the United States when her husband, Bill Clinton, was the president from 1993 to 2001. In 2015, Clinton announced that she was running for presidency in the 2016 elections. She competed against other Democratic candidates, last against Bernie Sanders, and in July 2016, Clinton was nominated as the Democratic candidate for president of the United States. After this nomination, she started competing with the Republican nominee, Donald Trump. (Hillary Clinton Bio, 2016)

Before running for president, Donald Trump was known for being a businessman in real estate since the 1970s and hosting a business-related television series *The Apprentice*. In 1999, Trump thought about running for president in the 2000 election, but withdrew his candidacy. In 2012, Trump considered running for president again. In 2015, it was officially announced that Trump would run for president as a Republican. Trump competed against Ted Cruz and John Kasich and was nominated as the Republican candidate for presidency in July 2016. (Donald Trump Biography, 2017)

Trump has had a lot of criticism on his public appearances and controversial comments on women and immigrants, among others. Even some people in the Republican Party announced that they did not support Trump's nomination for president. Moreover, both Clinton and Trump criticized each other quite heavily during their campaigns and even during the presidential debates brought up personal topics that had nothing to do with the given topics and discussion. These accusations and the polarization strategies of the candidates during the debates will be further discussed in the analysis.

### **3.2 The debates**

The context of presidential debate itself is important, as the candidates are expected to act in a certain way and there is a formal and clear structure for the debate. The host of the debate first explains the rules of the debate, divides the debate into topics, introduces the topic and then decides which candidate answers first to the question and gives them a certain amount of time to answer. The candidates have usually two minutes to answer the questions and try to get everything said and persuade the voters at the same time. The host also stops the candidate when the time is up and designates the turn to the other candidate, controls the audience and gives the audience turns to talk.

In the presidential debates of 2016, the candidates interrupted each other quite often and it was visibly difficult for the host to get them to stop speaking when their time was up. The host would use phrases such as "Secretary Clinton, would you like to respond?", "Let me follow up with Mr. Trump, if you can", "Let me interrupt just a moment, but...", "Back to the question, though...", "Let me let Secretary Clinton get in here", "We're going to move on...", "OK, you are unpacking a lot here...", to achieve the shift in

speakership and control the turns of talk. There were many occasions in all the three debates when the host was not able to direct the debate as smoothly as they would have wanted, which the examples show clearly. In addition, because the candidates continued to talk even though their time was up or even though it was not their turn, the hosts did not have enough time to cover all topics and questions. Furthermore, the discussion often changed into something totally different than what was intended by the host, and there was a lot of free discussion where the host did not direct the debate until it was time to move on or the candidate interrupted the other continuously and the host had to calm the situation.

The presidential debates show how the candidates are different from each other and what they will do differently and better if selected president. They answer to questions that show their opinions and how they are going to run the country. The candidates are clearly contrasted in the setting of the debate. In addition to giving their opinions and defending themselves, it is important how the candidates address each other, how they treat each other and what kinds of gestures they use. In the presidential debates of 2016, the candidates quite often drifted from the actual topics that were to be discussed and started accusing each other about their personal actions and even accused the other for being criminal. They also interrupted the other candidate's turn and talked continuously out of turn and overlapped the other.

The first presidential debate between Clinton and Trump took place on September 26th, 2016, at the Hofstra University, in Hempstead, New York. The debate was divided into six segments and three topic areas: Achieving prosperity, America's direction and securing America. The host, Lester Holt, first introduced the topic and asked a question, after which he decided which candidate answered first. After both candidates had answered, they were given some time to reply to each other's comments and continue the conversation. Each segment was approximately 15 minutes long and the debate lasted for approximately 90 minutes. The audience was asked not to applaud during the debate, and they were not allowed to ask the candidates any questions.



The second presidential debate was held on October 9th, 2016, at the Washington University, in Saint Louis, Missouri. Unlike in the first debate, members of the audience and people across the country had the chance to ask the questions. The candidates had two minutes to respond to the questions, after which there was an open discussion on the topic. The members of the audience asked half of the questions and the other half of the questions were asked on social media around the country. The hosts, Martha Raddatz and Anderson Cooper, gave turns to talk and asked some additional questions relating to the topics. The candidates drifted away from the given topics quite often to discuss each other's personal lives. The debate lasted for approximately 90 minutes.

The third presidential debate occurred on October 19th, 2016, at the University of Nevada, in Las Vegas, Nevada. The debate had the same format as the first debate, i.e. the host, Chris Wallace, asked the questions and gave the candidates time to answer the questions and then continue the discussion on the topic. The debate was divided into six segments and lasted for 90 minutes. The audience was asked to keep quiet during the debate. The topics that were discussed were topics that separated Clinton and Trump clearly from each other as they had strong differences of opinion. The topics included gun regulation, abortion, immigration, refugees, growing the economy, eligibility for being the president, foreign policy, national debt and entitlements. The candidates did not stay on topic and many turns of talk ended up accusing and slandering each other. In addition to criticizing each other, Clinton and Trump did not stay on topic and ended up discussing, for example Russia and nuclear weapons, which were not the assigned talking points. As their closing arguments, Clinton and Trump were asked to state reasons why they should be elected president.

The three presidential debates in the United States presidential election of 2016 gave the candidates excellent opportunities to convince why they should be elected president, and more importantly, why the other candidate should not be elected. In fact, the candidates used a lot of time to accuse and criticize each other. They also drifted from the given topics quite often. The presented data, i.e. the debates, will be analyzed in detail in the next section with reference to the theoretical framework of political discourse analysis and ideological discourse analysis.

## 4 Analysis: Polarization strategies in the debates

In this section, the three presidential debates presented above will be analyzed in detail with reference to the theoretical framework of political discourse analysis and ideological discourse analysis. The analysis is divided into six sections, which analyze selected discursive structures and strategies (see van Dijk, 2006a), namely the use of pronouns in promoting unity, differences in ideological views, positioning the other candidate by the past and the present, constructing a negative representation of other, expressions of ideology in meaning and form as well as the use of rhetorical structures. The analysis of the polarization strategies in the debates will begin with focus on smaller lexical units, i.e. pronouns, and move on to larger entities of how polarization is conducted in the debates.

### 4.1 The use of pronouns

Both Clinton and Trump use the pronoun *I* when referring to their own actions and what they will do if selected president. However, in addition to using the first-person singular, both candidates use the pronoun *we* to appeal to the American people and make them part of their future actions. Emphasizing the American ideology and national self-glorification brings the candidates closer to the voters and makes it apparent that the candidates are part of the same social group as the American people, and that together they can achieve anything (see van Dijk, 2006b, p. 738). Furthermore, the pronoun *we* expresses collectivity within a larger group, i.e. the American people, with whom the candidates do not actually have personal relationships (see Pavlidou, 2014, p. 6). In addition to expressing collectivity, by using the pronoun *we*, both Clinton and Trump show to the addressees, i.e. the Americans, their solidarity and commitment (ibid. p. 12).

Even though Clinton emphasizes the “we are all in this together” feeling, in the first debate when answering the first question about creating new jobs in America and that way growing the economy, she changes the pronouns from *we* that demonstrates the American ideology to *I* where *I* am the one that takes care of *you* and makes things better. By changing the pronouns from the first-person plural *we* to the first person singular *I*, Clinton distances herself from the American collectivity and acts as

superior with her capability to make things better for the American people, this way presenting different collective identities (see Pavlidou, 2014, p. 6):

Example 1: *What kind of future we'll build together (Clinton, Debate 1)*

The central question in this election is really what kind of country we want to be and what kind of future we'll build together. Today is my granddaughter's second birthday, so I think about this a lot. First, we have to build an economy that works for everyone, not just those at the top. That means we need new jobs, good jobs, with rising incomes. I want us to invest in you. I want us to invest in your future... How are we going to do it? We're going to do it by having the wealthy pay their fair share and close the corporate loopholes. (Hillary Clinton, September 26, 2016)

These changes in the use of pronouns makes Clinton part of different groups, which demonstrates the many different roles that she has when she is taking part in the debate and campaigning to be the next president. First, she is American, which means that she shares the same social group that all American people do. Second, she is a presidential candidate, which means that she talks as a future member of the government and the leader of the country, and she makes suggestions for how to improve and rebuild America that works for every American. She uses the pronoun *I* when she is emphasizing her role as the future leader and the one that can and wants to improve the American people's lives. Third, she is a Democrat, which dictates the kinds of suggestions that she makes as the presidential candidate. Her Democratic views differ from the Republican views that her opponent, Trump, has. In fact, these ideological views separate the candidates clearly from each other in many major topics. In addition to the abovementioned roles that Clinton has when debating, she also gives the impression that it is the rest of the Americans, including herself, against the wealthiest one percent of the population.

Furthermore, when Clinton mentions that it is her granddaughter's second birthday, it can be argue that she wants the voters to see her as a caring and loving grandmother by presenting that part of her identity (see Fetzer, 2014), and that way she appeals to people's emotions, too. Moreover, there are different types of uses of the first person plural pronoun *we*. First, Clinton uses the *inclusive we* in the first sentence "... what kind of country we want to be and what kind of future we'll build together" with an expressive use including both Clinton herself, the audience while at the same time expressing solidarity. In addition to the inclusive use of the pronoun *we*, Clinton emphasizes this inclusiveness and

collectivity of the hearers by using the word “together”, which reinforces the active role of the audience in building the future of the country. Second, when Clinton states that “I want us to invest in you. I want us to invest in your future”, she uses *exclusive we*, where she is part of the institution, the government, to which she refers by the pronoun *us*, but the audience is not part of this collectivity. The hearers, however, are the ones that benefit from the actions of the government, to which Clinton includes herself. (see Fetzer, 2014)

In the same way as Clinton, Trump also assumes different roles as he is debating. He is the Republican candidate for president, he is American and he is also a businessman, which can be seen in his suggestions and proposals, and which will be discussed in the next section. Trump emphasizes the American ideology throughout the debates, and that way involves the American people in his actions and proposals, but he, too, changes the pronouns according to which role he is taking:

Example 2: *We have to stop our jobs from being stolen from us* (Trump, Debate 1)

But we have to stop our jobs from being stolen from us. We have to stop our companies from leaving the United States and, with it, firing all of their people... We cannot let it happen. Under my plan, I'll be reducing taxes tremendously... It's going to be a beautiful thing to watch. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

In addition to stressing the American ideology, Trump also victimizes America in the same way that Clinton did when talking about the wealthiest one percent. Trump indicates that someone is stealing the American people's jobs and that has to be stopped. First, Trump sets out the problem, i.e. jobs are being stolen and companies are leaving the United States, and clarifies that *we*, the American people, cannot let it happen. Trump, too, uses *inclusive we*, where he as the speaker and the hearers are part of the same collectivity, and this way expresses solidarity to the American people. Then, Trump changes the subject pronoun from *we* to *my* and makes it apparent that he is the one that is going to save America. When Trump states that “Under my plan, I'll be reducing taxes tremendously”, he suggests that the present government does not have such a plan that he has, and that he is going to be able to save the jobs that are being stolen. Furthermore, in order to emphasize his capability in saving jobs, Trump uses a figure of speech by claiming that “It's going to be a beautiful thing to watch”. By using

this figure of speech, Trump makes his words more powerful and sets out a beautiful and positive image about the future, if he is chosen president.

Moreover, in addition to emphasizing the American ideology and collectivity by using the pronoun *we* throughout the debates, both candidates also stress the things and actions that they are going to take to save America. The American ideology and speaking as a member of the same social group that the voters are part of appeals to the emotional and patriotic side of the people, whereas making promises and proposals with an active voice, i.e. using the first-person singular as the agent, emphasizes the candidates' roles as the ones that make the change happen and aims at convincing people that they are the best choice to be the next president and the one that saves America. Clinton, especially, describes in great detail about how the American people can save each other by working together:

Example 3: *Our country is great* (Clinton, Debate 2)

Our country is great because we're good. And we are going to respect one another, lift each other up. We are going to be looking for ways to celebrate our diversity, and we are going to try to reach out to every boy and girl, as well as every adult, to bring them in to working on behalf of our country... I think if we work together, if we overcome the divisiveness that sometimes sets Americans against one another, and instead we make some big goals – and I've set forth some big goals, getting the economy to work for everyone, not just those at the top... and so much else. If we set those goals and we go together to try to achieve them, there's nothing in my opinion that America can't do. (Hillary Clinton, October 9, 2016)

Clinton builds the American ideology by emphasizing the important role of every American. Clinton talks in an abstract way about working on behalf of their country and setting goals and achieving them, without specifying what these actually mean. However, she emphasizes the involvement and participation of every citizen in rebuilding America by repeating the pronoun *we*. The repetition of the entire utterance is analyzed in section 4.6. Clinton also mentions her own role with setting forth goals and her needing of the American people in order to achieve them, and emphasizes this role by using the pronoun *I*. Furthermore, when Clinton paints this positive picture about the Americans and the future of the country, she uses many metaphors and figures of speech as rhetorical structures. The rhetorical structures, including metaphors, used in the debates will be discussed in section 4.6.

In order to emphasize his own role in taking actions for the country as well as emphasizing his desire to make things happen, Trump uses the first-person singular pronoun *I*. By repeating the pronoun *I* and the same phrase four times, Trump shows to the audience that he is determined and that the future of their country is very important to him:

Example 4: *I want to get on to things that are important to me* (Trump, Debate 1)

Because I want to get on to defeating ISIS, because I want to get on to creating jobs, because I want to get on to having a strong border, because I want to get on to things that are very important to me and that are very important to the country. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

In addition to emphasizing his own role in rebuilding America, Trump also appeals to the American patriotism and the American ideology of the voters by repeating the pronoun *we*:

Example 5: *Make America great again* (Trump, Debate 2)

We're going to make America safe again. We're going to make America great again, but we're going to make America safe again. And we're going to make America wealthy again... (Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

Trump emphasizes that *we* are going to make America safe, great and wealthy again. However, Trump does not specify in detail how the safety, greatness and wealth of the country are going to be acquired and achieved, except for his plans to build borders in America to stop people from other countries pouring in. Nevertheless, Trump emphasizes the involvement of the American people in making America great again by repeating the first-person plural pronoun *we* as well as the entire structure of the utterance. Such rhetorical structures used in examples 4 and 5 are further discussed in section 4.6.

Furthermore, in addition to using the pronoun *I* when emphasizing the active role of herself as the change maker, Clinton addresses the American people by using the pronoun *you*, and that way involves the American people as those who Clinton truly cares about:

Example 6: *Invest in you* (Clinton, Debate 1)

And so what I believe is the more we can do for the middle class, the more we can invest in you, your education, your skills, your future, the better we will be off and the better we'll grow. That's the kind of economy I want us to see again. (Hillary Clinton, September 26, 2016)

Even though directly addressing the American people by using the pronoun *you*, Clinton also emphasizes the American ideology by using the pronoun *we* and that way stresses the fact that she is part of the same social group as the American people. However, talking also as part of the future government makes it possible for Clinton to do these kinds of changes that will improve the American people's lives. Therefore, when Clinton uses the pronoun *we*, she is both referring to Americans as one social group as well as the future government as one agent. The government is the one that can do improvements and investments and Americans are the ones that benefit from these improvements. Clinton also implies that the United States has had a better economy before and that she *wants* to have that *again*, and by investing in the middle class that can be possible. This extract implies that the middle class is Clinton's target audience.

When Clinton and Trump start attacking each other, they often refer to one another by their name or the third person singular, *he* or *she*. By talking about the rival using their name or the pronoun *he* or *she*, the candidates talk as if the other person is not present in the debate. Furthermore, the candidate that is attacking and criticizing the other, distances themselves from the other by the way they are talking; they are not addressing the other directly but instead aim their speech to the audience, as Trump does in the first debate by stating that "I will release my tax returns... when she releases her 33,000 e-mails that have been deleted. As soon as she releases them, I will release". However, when the candidates start attacking each other directly and defending themselves, there is a change in the use of pronouns as the candidates start addressing each other directly:

Example 7: *You ought to be ashamed of yourself* (Trump, Debate 2)

But when you talk about apology, I think the one that you should really be apologizing for and the thing that you should be apologizing for are the 33,000 e-mails that you deleted, and that you acid washed... People have been — their lives have been destroyed for doing one-fifth of what you've done. And it's a disgrace. And honestly, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. (Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

By addressing Clinton directly by the pronoun *you*, Trump makes Clinton seem more responsible for the actions that he accuses her for doing. The style of the discourse also changes when the candidates do not talk about each other by their respective names or titles but instead address the other one directly.

The discourse seems more hostile or aggressive as the audience is not made part of the discourse anymore, but instead it is just two people attacking each other. In order to emphasize the severity of Clinton's actions, Trump states that people's "lives have been destroyed for doing one-fifth of what you've done". In addition to using powerful terms like *destroyed* and *disgrace*, Trump also uses number game as a rhetorical structure to emphasize his words. Furthermore, Trump acts as superior to Clinton by stating that "you ought to be ashamed of yourself", which is patronizing and demeaning.

#### **4.2 Different ideological views in the debates**

There are clear differences in ideological views between Clinton and Trump. As Clinton is the presidential candidate of the Democratic Party and Trump of the Republican Party, it is clear that they do not share the same political ideology. Clinton and Trump have many common goals and aims, for example, growing the economy and improving trade deals, but they have quite different approaches and solutions for the issues. In fact, the candidates acknowledge this during the debates:

Example 8: *We disagree a little bit* (Trump, Debate 1)

As far as child care is concerned and so many other things, I think Hillary and I agree on that. We probably disagree a little bit as to numbers and amounts and what we're going to do, but perhaps we'll be talking about that later. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

In addition to acknowledging the differences of opinion of the candidates, they also attack each other's suggestions and proposals quite strongly and at the same time try to convince people why their proposals are better. Clinton and Trump even openly mock each other's proposals and attack each other by stating facts against the other's suggestions:

Example 9: *Different perspectives* (Clinton, Debate 1)

We also, though, need to have a tax system that rewards work and not just financial transactions. And the kind of plan that Donald has put forth would be trickle-down economics all over again... That is not how we grow the economy. We just have a different view about what's best for growing the economy, how we make investments that will actually produce jobs and rising incomes. I think we come at it from somewhat different perspectives. (Hillary Clinton, September 26, 2016)



Clinton compares her and Trump's views on how to grow the economy and bases her opinions on facts while at the same time degrades Trump's ideas and enforces this by the choice of words, for example using the word *actually* when emphasizing the fact that her plan will *actually* bring new jobs unlike Trump's. In fact, by using the stance adverbial *actually*, Clinton expresses her attitude to and judgment on Trump's plan (see Biber & Finegan, 1998). Furthermore, Clinton opposes and disagrees with Trump's suggestions directly by stating that "That is not how we grow the economy", which implies that in Clinton's opinion Trump is wrong and she is right. In addition, Clinton reinforces the idea that her ideas are good and Trump's ideas are bad by stating that "We just have a different view about what's best for growing the economy". By saying this, Clinton acknowledges the fact that they have different ideological views with Trump when it comes to economic policy. In fact, there are other occasions as well where the candidates acknowledge their differences of opinion and argue for their own opinions and against the other's ideas:

Example 10: *A very different view about immigrants* (Clinton, Debate 3)

But it is clear when you look at what Donald has been proposing. He started his campaign bashing immigrants, calling Mexican immigrants rapists and criminals and drug dealers, that he has a very different view about what we should do to deal with immigrants... bringing undocumented immigrants out from the shadows, putting them into the formal economy would be good. Because then employers can't exploit them and undercut Americans' wages. And Donald knows a lot about this. He used undocumented labor to build the Trump tower. He underpaid undocumented workers and when they complained, he basically said what a lot of employers do. You complain, I'll get you deported. I want to get everybody out of the shadows. Get the economy working and not let employers like Donald exploit undocumented workers which hurts them but also hurts American workers. (Hillary Clinton, October 19, 2016)

Clinton emphasizes the fact that they have "a very different view" when it comes to immigration. In order to emphasize the difference of opinion, Clinton accuses Trump for attacking the Mexicans by using very descriptive language with words that have strong negative meanings and feelings attached to them, such as *rapists*, *criminals* and *drug dealers*. By accusing Trump for saying these things, Clinton emphasizes the fact that their views about immigration are very different. Furthermore, in order to defend her ideas and attack Trump, Clinton accuses Trump for taking advantage of immigrants and being unfair to them. In fact, Clinton even refers to people taking advantage of undocumented

immigrants as “employers like Donald”. In order to emphasize Trump’s negative things and the differences of ideological views, Clinton uses descriptive language and talks in detail about Trumps actions. The rhetorical structures used in example 10 are discussed in section 4.6.

In addition to the candidates’ political parties that have different ideologies, the past and previous experience separates Clinton and Trump’s views quite strongly. As discussed in section 3.1, where the candidates were presented, Clinton has been involved in politics for many decades, whereas Trump has a strong background in business. Trump’s history in business drives many of his suggestions which both candidates acknowledge during the debates. Trump defends his business background and brings it up many times during the debates as his benefit:

Example 11: *The kind of thinking our country needs* (Trump, Debate 1)

... My father gave me a very small loan in 1975, and I built it into a company that’s worth many, many billions of dollars, with some of the greatest assets in the world, and I say that only because that’s the kind of thinking that our country needs. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Trump reinforces his business abilities by using comparison; his father gave him “a very small loan”, which he was able to turn into “many, many billions of dollars, with some of the greatest assets in the world”. Furthermore, he claims that he is not bragging with his accomplishments, but instead brings it up only because the country needs a leader with that kind of knowledge and ability. In addition to Trump defending his background and using it as his benefit, Clinton views his business history negatively and at the same time attacks Trump while discussing the state of the country during the Great Recession:

Example 12: *That’s called* business (Clinton and Trump, Debate 1)

Clinton: In fact, Donald was one of the people who rooted for the housing crisis. He said, back in 2006, “Gee, I hope it does collapse, because then I can go in and buy some and make some money”. Well, it did collapse.

Trump: That’s called business, by the way.

(Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Trump acknowledges Clinton's accusations and admits to acting like a businessman, which Clinton attempts to use against him. Clinton's word choices, such as "rooted for", when describing his content when the economy of the country was in a crisis, and "gee" when quoting Trump, also reveal her own positioning toward Trump and try to convince the audience to acquire a certain attitude toward Trump. Interestingly, Trump does not deny or defend Clinton's attack and her attempts to hurt his image, but instead states in a careless way that it is business, which can be argued to display that he thinks and acts like a businessman who takes advantage of an economic crisis if it is for his benefit. Soon following this attack on Trump, Clinton continued to attack Trump by claiming that according to independent professionals, Trump's plans on tax reform would increase the national debt enormously and lose millions of jobs in the United States. Furthermore, according to professionals, Clinton's plans would increase new jobs and grow the economy. This comparison and polarization between Clinton and Trump continues:

Example 13: *I did not* (Clinton and Trump, Debate 1)

Clinton:	Donald thinks that climate change is a hoax perpetrated by the Chinese. I think it's real.
Trump:	I did not. I did not. I do not say that.
Clinton:	I think science is real.
Trump:	I do not say that.

(Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Clinton compares herself with Trump by backing her facts on science and using words like "Donald thinks" and this way conveys that Trump does not believe in science. Furthermore, the words "hoax" and "science" are polarized. Both of the candidates use repetition as a rhetorical structure, which is further discussed in section 5.6. Moreover, Trump's way of showing disagreement and opposing can be seen as refusal or disagreement to accept Clinton's invalid accusations, and this disagreement and correction sequences the debate between Clinton and Trump (see Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987, p. 212). Furthermore, Clinton aims at discrediting Trump and hurting his image by portraying him as a candidate

who does not believe in climate change, and therefore does not believe in science, which is an important issue to many people and possible voters.

#### **4.3 Positioning the other candidate by the past and the present**

In the debates, the past and present situation of the country and the present government is repeatedly viewed and presented negatively, which is usual in politics (see van Dijk, 1997, p. 27). The candidates highlight the failures and mistakes of past and present governments and present the future positively and in a better light if they are selected president. The candidates talk in detail about their plans and what has to be done in order to save the country and improve the lives of Americans:

Example 14: *You can't bring back jobs* (Trump, Debate 1)

The Obama administration, from the time they've come in, is over 230 years' worth of debt, and he's topped it. He's doubled it in a course of almost eight years... So I will tell you this. We have to do a much better job at keeping our jobs... because they're not doing it... I will bring back jobs. You can't bring back jobs. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

In addition to criticizing the Obama administration and arguing for what needs to be done, Trump also attacks Clinton and therefore presents Clinton, too, in a negative light compared to himself and what he is capable of. In order to give emphasis and more effect to his words, Trump uses phrases related to degree, such as "he's topped it" and "he's doubled it", when referring to the national debt. Furthermore, Trump repeatedly brings up Clinton's past in politics and criticizes her for not getting anything done despite being involved in politics for nearly thirty years. In fact, Trump criticizes the ineffectiveness of politicians quite often and claims that they are "all talk, no action", which contrasts him and both his opponent, Clinton, and the "usual" politicians. This again enforces his background, as he is not part of the inefficient politicians but instead a renowned businessman. Moreover, the fact that Trump is not a typical presidential candidate with a long history in politics actually worked in his favor as he appealed to people that have not been satisfied with the government and wanted change. Trump emphasizes the fact that Clinton has not been able to get things done while she was secretary of state and because of that, she will not be able to achieve her plans in the future, either, unlike Trump himself:

Example 15: *No business ability* (Trump, Debate 1)

... she's got no business ability. We need heart. We need a lot of things. But you have to have some basic ability. And sadly, she doesn't have that. All of the things that she's talking about could have been taken care of during the last 10 years, let's say, while she had great power. But they weren't taken care of. And if she ever wins this race, they won't be taken care of. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Trump is convinced that Clinton cannot achieve her plans in the future and because of his history in business and his business ability, he can actually get things done unlike Clinton. However, in addition to business knowledge, Trump states that "We need heart", which can be argued to be almost the opposite of hard business thinking. The figure of speech conveys the message that the country needs a leader who has a heart in the right place and that can be compassionate and empathetic. In addition, Trump lists features that are needed from the leader of the country, but these characteristics are quite vague. He does not elaborate what it means to have "heart" and "some basic ability". However, in Trump's opinion Clinton does not have these features, which he points out by stating that "sadly, she doesn't have that". Consequently, Trump states that Clinton is incapable of being the president as she does not obtain these qualities. Furthermore, in order to emphasize Clinton's ineffectiveness, Trump uses repetition as a rhetorical structure, which is discussed in section 4.6.

Clinton's views about the past are not as negative and extreme as Trump's are. This might be due to the fact that Clinton has been part of the past governments and if she talked as negatively about the past as Trump does, she would also acknowledge her responsibility in the actions of the past governments and administrations. In fact, Clinton talks about the past positively in particular when she talks about her time in the senate. By talking about her time as a senator she is both reinforcing her image as an experienced politician as well as contrasting the difference between Trump and herself. Trump, on the other hand, uses Clinton's past against her and accuses her of not getting anything done while she was a senator and the secretary of state, and this way criticizes politicians again:

Example 16: *People like Secretary Clinton* (Trump and Clinton, Debate 1)

Trump: But we have no leadership. And honestly, that starts with Secretary Clinton.  
Clinton: I have a feeling that by the end of this evening, I'm going to be blamed for everything that's ever happened.  
Trump: Why not?

Clinton: Why not?... You know, just join the debate by saying more crazy things...  
Trump: Typical politician. All talk, no action. Sounds good, doesn't work. Never going to happen. Our country is suffering because people like Secretary Clinton have made such bad decisions in terms of our jobs and in terms of what's going on.

(Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

By stating that the United States has no leadership starting with *Secretary Clinton*, Trump puts the blame on Clinton for not being able to run the country with efficient leadership when she was the secretary of state. Before making this accusation, Trump starts the phrase with "honestly", as if he had the truth. Clinton replies to Trump's accusation with humor by implying that Trump's comments are ridiculous. Trump, on the other hand, does not seem to understand or admit the ridiculous tone of his comments and again implies that Clinton is to blame for everything by asking her why she should not be blamed for everything. Clinton opposes to Trump's accusation by stating that his comments are "crazy", which aims at discrediting his invalid comments and writing them off as untrue. Trump, on the other hand, counter attacks Clinton by stating that she is just a typical politician who does not get anything done in spite of having suggestions and proposals. The rhetorical structures that are used in example 16 are discussed in section 4.6.

As Trump views the past and the present negatively, he at the same time emphasizes his background in business and claims multiple times that "that's the kind of thinking that our country needs". Trump reveals his income for the previous year and uses this, too, as an argument for selecting him as president because he has been able to grow a successful business with incomes of 694 million dollars, and according to Trump, that is the kind of thinking that America needs. He criticizes the past and present governments and offers a new kind of leadership by emphasizing his success in business. However, as discussed earlier, whereas Trump sees his history and background as beneficial to the American people, Clinton criticizes his history in business multiple times and even questions his actions and honesty:

Example 17: *Business dealings* (Clinton and Trump, Debate 1)

Clinton: First, maybe he's not as rich as he says he is. Second, maybe he's not as charitable as he claims to be. Third, we don't know all of his business

dealings... Or maybe he doesn't want the American people, all of you watching tonight, to know that he's paid nothing in federal taxes... and they showed he didn't pay any federal income tax.

Trump: That makes me smart.

(Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Clinton continues to question Trump's capability to be the president based on his reluctance to reveal his tax returns and appeals to the American people, again, by stating that the Americans deserve to know the truth. Furthermore, to emphasize her words, Clinton addresses the American people twice: "... he doesn't want the American people, all of you watching tonight..." Trump, however, does not deny Clinton's accusations and in fact defends his business thinking by claiming that it makes him smart to take advantage of the tax laws that allow him not to pay federal income tax if he has losses to depreciate. Clinton's attempts to try to hurt Trump's image by making him seem unfair and greedy do not work as she had planned as Trump does not try to defend himself but simply states that he is smart for acting in the way that Clinton accuses him. At the same time as Clinton attacks Trump for his business actions, however, Clinton avoids answering questions about the e-mail scandal that she has been involved in. After taking responsibility for her mistakes, Trump goes on attacking her and defending himself for her accusations, and again concludes that because of his "tremendous income", "it's about time that this country had somebody running it that has an idea about money". Even though Clinton aimed at using Trump's business background against him, Trump actually got an opportunity to reinforce his image and give credit for himself as a candidate who has business sense and that can understand money.

Consequently, Clinton and Trump have very different opinions on Trump's background and history in business. Whereas Clinton brings up the negative sides in his business background, for example, bankruptcies, the unpaid taxes and debt, Trump defends his background and experience in business telling in detail about the history of his company and the high incomes. Clinton even points out that "sometimes there's not a direct transfer of skills from business to government, but sometimes what happened in business would be really bad for government" in an attempt to try to discredit Trump as a

presidential candidate. Trump, however, admits that he has taken advantage of some questionable laws that have been there because he is running a company, and that because Clinton has been involved in politics for a long time, she should have changed the laws. Trump criticizes the budget of the United States and emphasizes his ability to do business:

Example 18: *People that have no idea* (Trump, Debate 1)

... we don't have people that know what they're doing. When we look at the budget, the budget is bad to a large extent because we have people that have no idea as to what to do and how to buy. The Trump International is way under budget and way ahead of schedule. And we should be able to do that for our country. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

In order to emphasize his own abilities, Trump compares the present administration and himself quite powerfully to make a clear polarization between them. Whereas the present government is incapable of setting budgets and doing business properly, Trump's company is "way under budget and way ahead of schedule", which should be the case when it comes to their country, too. The colloquial word *way* is used as a complement to the prepositions *under* and *ahead* to describe that the company is clearly under budget and clearly ahead of schedule. The rhetorical structures used in example 18 are further discussed in section 4.6.

Whereas Trump sees Clinton's past in the senate and the government negatively, Clinton often brings up her time in politics to convince people that she is experienced and understands how the country is run and what is best for the American people. Trump, on the other hand, accuses Clinton for not getting anything done and not being able to do changes that should have been done. In fact, when Trump talks negatively about the past governments, he often refers to the politicians as "people like Secretary Clinton". However, in the same way that Trump accuses Clinton of her past in the government and talks about "people like Secretary Clinton", Clinton accuses Trump for his background in business and the way that he has been involved in the business life. Both candidates see their own history positively and beneficial for being the president, and the other one's past negatively and as proof why they should not be elected as president. Furthermore, Clinton involves her time in the senate and as the secretary of state in the Obama administration as part of her identity by referring multiple times to her



experiences in the Capitol Building, which are references to time and place which reinforce her identity as an experienced politician (see Jan Blommaert, 2005, p. 222). Positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation, as well as attacks and defenses, is common in politics and especially presidential debates, and these polarization strategies will be discussed further in the next section.

#### **4.4 Constructing a negative representation of other**

As discussed in the previous section, both Clinton and Trump focus on presenting the other one negatively and emphasize their own positive features. Furthermore, the other candidate's negative actions and features are talked in detail, while the candidate's own mistakes and failures are mitigated and de-emphasized. This ideological square is common in political discourse, especially in debates (see van Dijk, 2006a, p. 125). Moreover, both Clinton and Trump attack each other multiple times throughout the debates. As discussed in section 2.2, attacking the other candidate and defending yourself is very common in political debates, especially in presidential debates (see Benoit & Wells, 1996). The aim is to attack the other candidate for their personal features or their mistakes and failures and at the same time make themselves look better and more qualified. The attacks during the debates are both about the other candidate's personal lives as well as their ideological views and opinions. In the first debate, Clinton brings up Trump's requests to verify that Barack Obama was born in the United States, which led to both attacks and defenses:

Example 19: *Sued for racial discrimination* (Clinton, Debate 1)

Well, listen to what you heard... He has really started his political activity based on this racist lie that our first black president was not an American citizen. There was absolutely no evidence for it, but he persisted, he persisted year after year... But remember, Donald started his career back in 1973 being sued by the Justice Department for racial discrimination... So he has a long record of engaging in racist behavior. And the birther lie was a very hurtful one. You know, Barack Obama is a man of great dignity. (Hillary Clinton, September 26, 2016)

Clinton starts her comment by addressing the audience and talking about Trump as if he was not even present by talking about him using the pronoun *he*. In addition, by saying that "Well, listen to what you heard" Clinton displays her own positioning toward Trump as Clinton addresses the audience in a way

that implies that Trump is making inaccurate claims and Clinton cannot believe what she just heard. Clinton attacks Trump by claiming that he is a racist and backs up this claim by giving factual evidence about Trump's history and the fact that he has actually been sued for racist behavior. At the same time as Clinton attacks Trump, she defends Barack Obama and talks graciously about Obama to give a better image about herself in comparison to Trump. Clinton also uses repetition as a rhetorical structure by repeating the phrases "he persisted, he persisted year after year". These Clinton's comments aim at hurting Trump's image in the eyes of the voters and make him seem unqualified as president, while at the same time reinforce Clinton's image and credibility as she defends Obama and talks graciously about him. This intention of hurting the other candidate's image while at the same time making themselves look better happens throughout the debates, as is usual in presidential debates (see Martel, 1983). After Clinton attacks Trump, he in turn defends himself and makes counter accusations to Clinton:

Example 20: *It doesn't work that way* (Trump, Debate 1)

... You treated him [Obama] with terrible disrespect. And I watched the way you talk now about how lovely everything is and how wonderful you are. It doesn't work that way... So when you tried to act holier than thou, it really doesn't work. It really doesn't work. Now, as far as the lawsuit, yes, when I was very young... along with many, many other companies throughout the country... were sued. I notice you bring that up a lot... I also notice the very nasty commercials that you do on me in so many different ways, which I don't do on you... In Palm Beach, Florida, tough community... a wealthy community... I opened a club, and really got great credit for it. No discrimination against African-Americans, against Muslims, against anybody. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Trump defends himself against Clinton's accusations by in turn attacking Clinton for her past behavior and tries to hurt Clinton's image by trying to discredit her comments for acting in the opposite way as she does now. Trump uses irony when he describes in an exaggeratory way Clinton's comments by saying that "And I watched the way you talk now about how lovely everything is and how wonderful you are". Trump uses the adjectives *lovely* and *wonderful* sarcastically when describing the way Clinton is acting. In addition to using these word choices, Trump further attacks Clinton by discrediting her attempts to "act holier than thou", which is a figure of speech to show that Clinton thinks that she is morally a better person.

Instead of denying Clinton’s accusations about him being sued in the past for racial behavior, Trump acknowledges Clinton’s accusations by admitting that he has been sued, but mitigates these past mistakes by arguing that he was young and he was not the only one that was sued. This makes it seem that Trump was not personally responsible and that the sue is more acceptable because there were “many, many other companies” that were sued as well. Furthermore, Trump also victimizes himself by stating that Clinton does “nasty commercials” about him, which Trump does not do to Clinton, which therefore makes Trump a better person. Moreover, Trump uses repetition as a rhetorical structure when he attacks Clinton, which is further discussed in section 4.6. After these comments to Clinton, Trump continues to defend himself against Clinton’s claims for being racist and aims to discredit these accusations by giving facts about his actions against racism and even mentions that he has been given credit for it, which all aim at proving Clinton’s claims as untrue and rebuilding his own image against Clinton’s accusations.

As discussed in section 4.3, Clinton and Trump view each other’s backgrounds and past experiences mostly negatively and they talk about each other’s pasts quite often. This way the candidates aim at discrediting the other and aim at making the other look more unqualified. While Clinton talks about her past in the senate and as secretary of state to credit herself and strengthen her image as an experienced politician, Trump uses this against Clinton and in turn attacks Clinton for not getting things done in the nearly thirty years that she has been involved in politics. Trump often questions Clinton’s suggestions because she should have accomplished her proposals when she was a senator or the secretary of state. When the candidates talk about the Middle East and defeating ISIS, Trump attacks Clinton and uses her past against her:

Example 21: *The greatest mess anyone’s ever seen* (Trump, Debate 1)

The secretary said very strongly about working with – we’ve been working with them for many years, and we have the greatest mess anyone’s ever seen. You look at the Middle East, it’s a total mess. Under your direction, to a large extent... we have to knock the hell out of ISIS, and we have to do it fast, when ISIS formed in this vacuum created by Barack Obama and Secretary Clinton... Now, you’re talking about taking out ISIS. But you were there, and you were secretary of state when it was a little infant... And you’re going to stop them? I don’t think so. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

In addition to accusing Clinton for not defeating ISIS and multiple other things, Trump also accuses Obama for not getting anything done, or in this case for allowing ISIS to grow. Trump uses powerful language, for example stating that “we have to knock the hell out of ISIS”, in order to give emphasis to his words. Moreover, Trump uses many metaphors when talking about Clinton’s ineffective history with the ISIS, which aim at concretizing his speech as well as giving his words more power. The rhetorical structures used in example 21, i.e. metaphors, repetition and hyperbole, are discussed in section 4.6. The rhetorical devices are used in order to emphasize Trump’s negative assessment of Clinton and to emphasize his own positive features. Clinton does not respond to Trump’s accusations, but instead says to the host that “We’ve covered this ground” in an attempt to move on to the next subject. Trump, however, goes on attacking her when the host brings up Trump’s past comments about the war in Iraq and tries to get arguments for Trump’s comments:

Example 22: *Better judgment* (Holt and Trump, Debate 1)

Holt: Why is your judgment any different than Mrs. Clinton’s judgment?  
Trump: Well, I have much better judgment than she does. There’s no question about that. I also have a much better temperament than she has, you know?... I think my strongest asset, maybe by far, is my temperament. I have a winning temperament...

(Donald Trump and Lester Holt, September 26, 2016)

Trump attacks Clinton for her judgment and temperament, but he gives few reasons and arguments for why he thinks that. Furthermore, Trump describes his judgment and temperament in detail without giving any arguments to back up and support his claims. His comments seem even bragging and exaggerating, as he describes his temperament as his “strongest asset” and that he has “a winning temperament”, which is actually the opposite of how he has acted during the debates. When Clinton is given the chance to reply to Trump’s accusations, she starts by discrediting Trump’s comments about her inability to get anything done and talks about the actions that the government, including President Obama and John Kerry, took when she was secretary of state and after defending herself against Trump’s attacks, she in turn attacks Trump:

Example 23: *It’s lies* (Clinton and Trump, Debate 1)

Clinton: That's coalition-building. That's working with other nations. The other day, I saw Donald saying... "if they taunted our sailors, I'd blow them out of the water and start another war". That's not good judgment.

Trump: That would not start a war.

Clinton: That is not the right temperament to be commander-in-chief, to be taunted. And the worst part... He even said, well, you know, if there were nuclear war in East Asia, well, you know, that's fine...

Trump: Wrong.

Clinton: ... have a good time, folks.

Trump: It's lies.

Clinton: ... So a man who can be provoked by a tweet should not have his fingers anywhere near the nuclear codes, as far as I think anyone with any sense about this should be concerned.

Trump: That line's getting a little bit old, I must say...

Clinton: It's a good one, though. It well describes the problem.

(Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

When Trump attacks Clinton, she defends herself by stating facts about her actions and describes in detail why she is qualified and at the same time aims at discrediting Trump's accusations. However, when Clinton attacks Trump, he often interrupts her immediately and accuses Clinton for lying or simply states that her accusations are false. Clinton aims at proving that Trump is not qualified to be the president because of his temperament and his quick reactions to provocations. She talks about the great responsibility that the president has and argues that Trump would not be qualified as president, unlike Clinton herself, for which she gives arguments in her first comment as she describes her past experiences. Moreover, Clinton reinforces the existing polarization between herself and Trump by comparing her professional experience with Trump's unprofessional comments which show his bad judgment. When Clinton quotes Trump, she changes the discourse into informal and colloquial and uses words and phrases which make Trump seem hasty and inconsiderate, such as "I'd blow them out of the water and start another war" and when referring to nuclear war "... well, you know, that's fine... have a good time, folks", which are comments that a presidential candidate should not make. It remains unclear if Trump has actually said these comment, or at least in the way that Clinton is now quoting him. However, Clinton's comments about Trump all aim at making him look bad and show features,

such as quick temperament, that a president should not have. Interestingly, Trump does not at first deny Clinton's accusations, but instead states that his commented actions would not start a war.

Furthermore, Clinton and Trump have different kinds of strategies about defense, and Clinton follows the unwritten rules that the presidential debates, and debates in general, have and does not interrupt and talk out of turn as much as Trump does. This might be due to the fact that Clinton has more experience in taking part in political debates, how to represent herself in public and use more politically correct language. Moreover, when it comes to opposing strategies and showing disagreement, Trump immediately produces turns that highlight opposition and disagreement by replying to Clinton's accusations by interrupting her with the opposition "Wrong" and "It's lies". In the first turn of disagreement, Trump simply shows opposition by defending Clinton's comments about him and by disagreeing with her with the denial "That would not start a war", which is an opposition strategy where parts of the previous turn are repeated in the opposing comment (see Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987).

As was discussed in section 4.3, in building a representation of each other, the candidates both argue a lot against the other candidate's history and background and argue for their own experience. While Trump acknowledges the fact that Clinton is more experienced in politics than he is, he still concludes that this experience is not *good* experience and it does not work in favor of Clinton. Whereas Clinton credits herself for having seen the world and being experienced in politics, Trump uses this against her:

Example 24: *Bad experience* (Clinton and Trump, Debate 1)

- Clinton: ... as soon as he travels to 112 countries and negotiates a peace deal, a cease-fire, a release of dissidents, an opening of new opportunities in nations around the world, or even spends 11 hours testifying in front of a congressional committee, he can talk to me about stamina.
- Trump: ... Hillary has experience, but it's bad experience. We have so many bad deals during the last – so she's got experience, that I agree... And this country can't afford to have another four years of that kind of experience.

(Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Clinton argues, again, in detail for her experience and explains in examples what her experience in politics means and this way aims at building her image on her experience and polarizes herself to Trump who does not have history in politics. Furthermore, Clinton uses number game as a rhetorical structure to give more effect and emphasis to her experience in politics by stating facts with numbers. From these attacks on the candidates' professional qualification to be the president, Clinton attacks Trump for his personal features and controversial comments and this way intends to hurt his image and discredit him:

Example 25: *I never said that* (Clinton and Trump, Debate 1)

- Clinton: ... this is a man who has called women pigs, slobs and dogs, and someone who has said pregnancy is an inconvenience to employers, who has said...
- Trump: I never said that.
- Clinton: ... women don't deserve equal pay unless they do as good a job as men.
- Trump: I didn't say that.
- Clinton: And one of the worst things he said was about a woman in a beauty contest... And he called this woman "Miss Piggy". Then he called her "Miss Housekeeping" because she was Latina. Donald, she has a name.
- Trump: Where did you find this? Where did you find this?

(Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Trump attacked Clinton for her inefficiency in politics and therefore Clinton counter attacks him for his personality and politically incorrect comments on women. While Trump's attack on Clinton was aimed at a more general audience, Clinton's aim is to discredit Trump especially in the eyes of women and Latin voters. Furthermore, Clinton uses extremely descriptive language when she talks about the degrading names that Trump has called women, many of which are related to animals, such as *pigs*, *dogs* and *Miss Piggy*. Moreover, Clinton talks in a patronizing way to Trump by addressing him by his first name when she comments on Trump's alleged comments by stating that "Donald, she has a name". Trump interrupts Clinton immediately and simply denies these accusations and demands to know where Clinton has acquired this information. Trump emphasizes the opposition with Clinton by opposing immediately to Clinton's accusations with words that have negative meaning, such as "never" and "did not", which means that there is no mitigation of disagreement and Trump displays polarity distinctly (see Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987, p. 201). However, Trump then victimizes himself and acts for

being hurt and at the same time presents himself as a better person for not hurting Clinton and her family in the same way that Clinton has hurt him:

Example 26: *I don't deserve that* (Trump, Debate 1)

I was going to say something... extremely rough to Hillary, to her family, and I said to myself, "I can't do it. I just can't do it. It's inappropriate. It's not nice." But she spent hundreds of millions of dollars on negative ads on me, many of which are absolutely untrue. They're untrue. And they're misrepresentations... It's not nice. And I don't deserve that. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Trump aims at hurting Clinton's image for saying untrue and hurtful things about Trump and at the same time enforces his own image because he has not hurt Clinton in the same way. Trump tries to get sympathy from people and makes Clinton look like a bully, even though Trump, too, has mocked and criticized Clinton several times during the debates. By stating that "I don't deserve that" Trump reinforces the image that Clinton bullies Trump even though he is innocent and does not deserve that kind of behavior. Moreover, Trump quotes himself by presenting how he has contemplated Clinton's actions and how he is a better person who will not sink as low as Clinton has. The repetition used in example 26 is discussed in section 4.6.

At the end of the first debate, when asked if the candidates would accept the outcome of the election, Clinton stated simply that it is up to the people to decide and she supports democracy. Trump, however, uses his final opportunity to attack Clinton:

Example 27: *I'm going to be able to* (Trump, Debate 1)

I want to make America great again. I'm going to be able to do it. I don't believe Hillary will. The answer is, if she wins, I will absolutely support her. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Trump repeats his campaign slogan one more time and reinforces his capability by stating that Clinton cannot do what he can. However, Trump still adds that he would support Clinton if she won, even though he claimed during his campaign that he would not accept the result of the election if Clinton was elected president. Trump polarizes himself and Clinton and compares himself with her by



presenting himself as a capable candidate who can and will make America great again which Clinton is incapable of doing.

#### **4.5 Expression of ideology in the debates: meaning and form**

The overall strategy of ideological discourse is positive presentation of us and negative presentation of them. As discussed in section 2, ideology is expressed in multiple ways in the debates and there are certain expressions of ideology that are present in the debates (see van Dijk, 2006a). When it comes to meaning, and more specifically topics, both Clinton and Trump tend to select positive topics about themselves and negative topics about the other. For example, both candidates bring up the other one's personal lives and more importantly the mistakes and bad things and features about the other, and on the other hand positive topics about themselves. Clinton, for example uses her experience in politics as a benefit for becoming the president and talks in detail about her achievements while at the same time aims to discredit Trump for his comments on the media and his lawsuits and so on. Trump, on the other hand changes the topic almost immediately when he is confronted for his controversial comments on women:

Example 28: *Locker room talk* (Cooper and Trump, Debate 2)

- Cooper: ...You described kissing women without consent, grabbing their genitals. That is sexual assault. You bragged that you have sexually assaulted women. Do you understand that?
- Trump: No, I didn't say that at all... this was locker room talk. I'm not proud of it. I apologize to my family. I apologize to the American people. Certainly I'm not proud of it. But this is locker room talk... When we have a world where you have ISIS chopping off heads..., this is like medieval times... Yes, I'm very embarrassed by it. I hate it. But it's locker room talk, and it's one of those things. I will knock the hell out of ISIS. We're going to defeat ISIS... And we should get on to much more important things and much bigger things.

(Anderson Cooper and Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

First, Trump denies saying the things that the host, Cooper, claims and then mitigates the negative topic about himself and tries to change the subject. Trump apologizes first to his family and then to the

American people for saying those things but still mitigates his apology by adding that “but this is locker room talk” and this way does not take full responsibility for his comments and tries to justify his comments because it is just locker room talk and “it’s one of those things”. This is called a disclaimer, where *our* bad things are denied and mitigated (see van Dijk, 2006a). Trump aims at rebuilding his image and acquire the trust and forgiveness of the American people by apologizing to the Americans in addition to his family. However, by calling his comments “locker room talk”, Trump diminishes his own responsibility because his comments were not supposed to leave the *locker room* where those types of comments are supposedly acceptable and not meant to be taken seriously. Moreover, Trump does not admit his comments to being insulting and about sexual assault, but instead uses the term “locker room talk”, which is a metonym and a euphemism to make his comments more acceptable and less serious.

In addition to the disclaimer of mitigating responsibility, Trump also attempts to change the negative topic about him and even says that the topic should be changed into “much more important things and much bigger things”. In fact, his attempt to change the negative topic about him is done very abruptly and not coherently as he states that “I hate it. But it’s locker room talk, and it’s one of those things. I will knock the hell out of ISIS. We’re going to defeat ISIS...”. Even though Trump talked about defeating ISIS before these comments, the changes of topic seem sudden as the sentences are not linked together in any way. Trump tries to change the subject into something more favorable to him, and talks about defeating ISIS in powerful terms, which he has used earlier in the first debate, too, by talking about “knocking the hell out of ISIS” and describing the current state of the world as “medieval times” where there is “ISIS chopping off heads”, which is far more serious and important than Trump’s comments on women. Trump aims at getting the unfavorable topic and attention from him to worse things that are happening in the world, on which the debate should be focusing. Trump uses powerful language with figures of speech and this way aims at getting the negative attention away from him. By claiming that he will defeat ISIS, Trump aims at rebuilding his image and changing the topic. The rhetorical structures used in example 28 are further discussed in section 4.6.

Furthermore, when the host continues on the topic and asks three times if Trump has done the things that he claims on the tape, Trump does not answer the question straight away and when he does answer, he changes the subject again:

Example 29: *Respect for women* (Cooper and Trump, Debate 2)

- Cooper: ... Are you saying that what you said on that bus 11 years ago that you did not actually kiss women without consent or grope women without consent?
- Trump: I have great respect for women. Nobody has more respect for women than I do.
- Cooper: ... You're saying you never did that?
- Trump: I've said things that, frankly, you hear these things I said. And I was embarrassed by it. But I have tremendous respect for women.
- Cooper: Have you ever done those things?
- Trump: And women have respect for me. And I will tell you: No, I have not. And I will tell you that I'm going to make our country safe. We're going to have borders in our country, which we don't have now...

(Anderson Cooper and Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

Instead of answering the questions, Trump attempts to save face by claiming that he has respect for women, and moreover that women have respect for him, and again mitigates his comments because “you hear these things”. Furthermore, Trump uses hyperbole as a rhetorical structure when he states that “Nobody has more respect for women than I do”. In addition, Trump also uses repetition in his defense, which is discussed in section 4.6. Trump also states in his defense that “I was embarrassed by it”, which is an attempt to make his comments seem less serious because he felt embarrassed about it. After Trump finally answers the question, he then changes the subject abruptly and goes on talking about making America safe again, which is an attempt to rebuild his image and gain back the trust of the American people. The sudden change of topic for something more convenient for himself is common in ideological discourse.

As the audience and the host brought up the negative topic about Trump's comments on women, which hurt his image quite a lot, Clinton got a great opportunity to use this against Trump and at the same time polarize herself against Trump and make the distance between the two candidates greater. Clinton

talks in detail about Trump's comments and appearances and this way attacks Trump directly. In addition to attacking Trump, Clinton also appeals to the American people and talks about the American ideology:

Example 30: *This is who Donald Trump is* (Clinton, Debate 2)

... This is who Donald Trump is. But it's not only women, and it's not only this video that raises questions about his fitness to be out president, because he has also targeted immigrants, African-Americans, Latinos, people with disabilities, POWs, Muslims and so many others. So this is who Donald Trump is. And the question for us, the question our country must answer is that this is not who we are. That's why... I want to send a message – we all should – to every boy and girl and, indeed, to the entire world that America already is great, but we are great because we are good, and we will respect one another, and we will work with one another, and we will celebrate our diversity. (Hillary Clinton, October 9, 2016)

In addition to setting up polarization between herself and Trump and distancing herself from him, Clinton also distances the American people from Trump and claims that he does not represent who Americans are as a people. Furthermore, Clinton acts as a role model and a better person than Trump is, and this way aims at hurting his image as well as building and reinforcing her own image in comparison to Trump. In addition to talking about his degrading comments and attitude towards women, Clinton also claims that Trump has made the same kinds of comments against minorities and people with disabilities. When it comes to rhetorical structures, Clinton uses repetition and personification, which are discussed in section 4.6. Furthermore, Clinton reinforces her own active role in supporting the American people and acting as a role model by stating that “I want to send a message...”, but in addition in-groups the American people to reinforce the American ideology and the fact that she is part of the same social group as the Americans are, by adding that “we all should [send a message]... that America already is great...”. In fact, by making this comment, Clinton is referring to Trump's campaign slogan “Make America great again”, as she states that “America already is great”. At last, Clinton says that “we will celebrate our diversity”, which is a direct polarization to Trump who has, according to Clinton, attacked people from different minorities and different backgrounds.

After Clinton's attack on Trump, the host continues on the subject and Trump defends his comments again and aims at rebuilding his image while at the same time counter attacks Clinton for her personal life:

Example 31: *I'm not proud of it* (Trump, Debate 2)

It was locker room talk, as I told you. That was locker room talk. I'm not proud of it. I am a person who has great respect for people, for my family, for the people of this country. And certainly, I'm not proud of it. But that was something that happened. If you look at Bill Clinton, far worse. Mine are words, and his was action... So don't tell me about words. I am absolutely – I apologize for those words. But it is things that people say... (Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

Even though Trump, again, apologizes for his comments, he still mitigates the apology by the disclaimer that it is just words that people say and just *locker room talk*. In addition to defending himself, Trump also attacks Clinton by comparing his words to her husband, Bill Clinton's, claimed actions in the past. In fact, Trump attacks Clinton because of her husband's actions. Furthermore, Trump uses repetition as a rhetorical structure and repeats the same phrases, such as "that/it was locker room talk", and "I'm not proud of it". In a defense to Clinton's descriptions of what kind of person Trump is, Trump replies to those descriptions by describing himself as "a person who has great respect for people... for the people of this country" and this way aims at discrediting Clinton's accusations and rebuilding his image. In addition to repeating the phrase "it was locker room talk", Trump also expresses impatience by stating that "as I told you".

There are various representations of ideological speech acts in the debates, i.e. threats, promises and accusations that emphasize the other candidate's negative things and their own positive things, as well as argumentation structures. When it comes to attacking the other candidate, Clinton and Trump talk in detail about the other one's ineligibility to serve as the next president:

Example 32: *It's a disgrace* (Trump and Clinton, Debate 2)

Trump: ... I was so surprised to see him [Bernie Sanders] sign on with the devil. But when you talk about apology, I think the one that you should really be apologizing for... are the 33,000 e-mails that you deleted... And I'll tell you what. I didn't think I'd say this, but I'm going to say it, and I hate to say it. But if I win, I am going to instruct my attorney general to get a special

prosecutor to look into your situation, because there has been so many lies, so much deception... And it's a disgrace. And honestly, you ought to be ashamed of yourself.

Clinton: ... everything he just said is absolutely false, but I'm not surprised... it's just awfully good that someone with the temperament of Donald Trump is not in charge of the law in the country.

Trump: Because you'd be in jail.

(Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

Trump uses a figure of speech when referring to the fact that Bernie Sanders decided to support Clinton on her campaign, and refers to Clinton as the devil. Furthermore, Trump counter attacks Clinton for her accusations about his comments on women and brings up Clinton's e-mail scandal and this way aims at in turn hurting Clinton's image and her eligibility to be the president. Moreover, Trump then makes a threat, or a promise, to have Clinton investigated if he is elected president. Before making this threat, however, Trump also attempts to appeal to the emotional side of the people to show that he did not want to do this to Clinton and feels bad about it, which aim at making him look more humane. Trump used the same kind of strategy in the first debate when he claimed that he did not want to say bad things about Clinton, but he still says them anyway. By showing hesitation when contemplating out loud his reluctance to attack Clinton, Trump aims at appealing to people and act that he did not have any other choice but to attack Clinton, even though he did not want to do that. Trump in fact utters four sentences, "And I'll tell you what. I didn't think I'd say this, but I'm going to say it, and I hate to say it", before making the actual threat to Clinton. Trump adds effect to his words and emphasizes his hesitation by repeating the same kind of structure in the sentences. In addition to making the threat to Clinton, Trump also acts as a better person than Clinton and talks in a condescending way to her by stating that Clinton should be ashamed of herself and by describing Clinton's actions as a "disgrace".

Clinton first defends herself by stating that he is lying and also attacks Trump by first saying that she is not surprised that he is telling lies, and then refers to Trump's quick temperament. By stating that Clinton is not surprised that Trump tells lies about her implies Clinton's attitude to Trump and her

feelings about him. Trump, on the other hand, replies to Clinton's accusations by simply stating that if he was in charge of the law of their country, Clinton would be in jail because of her criminal actions for deleting the e-mails. Trump accuses Clinton for deleting the classified e-mails that were evidence in an investigation, but the host talks about Clinton's use of her personal e-mail for classified correspondence. Even though confronted multiple times about the e-mail scandal, Clinton does not admit to deleting them, but just that it was a mistake to use her personal e-mail for official matters:

Example 33: *It was a mistake* (Raddatz and Clinton, Debate 2)

- Raddatz: ... The FBI said that there were 110 classified e-mails that were exchanged, eight of which were top secret, and that it was possible hostile actors did gain access to those e-mails. You don't call that extremely careless?
- Clinton: ... let me say – and I've said before, but I'll repeat it, because I want everyone to hear it that was a mistake, and I take responsibility for using a personal e-mail account. Obviously, if I were to do it over again, I would not. I'm not making any excuses. It was a mistake. And I am very sorry about that. But I think it's also important to point out where there are some misleading accusations from critics and others... there is no evidence that any classified information ended up in the wrong hands.

(Martha Raddatz and Hillary Clinton, October 9, 2016)

First, Clinton emphasizes the fact that she has already taken responsibility for her mistake and that she wants everyone to understand that she acknowledges the mistake. Then, she stresses the fact that she would not repeat that mistake and after these multiple phrases she apologizes, but still mitigates the apology in the same way that Trump did when confronted about his comments. Clinton apologizes, but points out that the classified e-mails were not hacked and that nothing serious happened because of her mistake. Therefore, even though Clinton takes responsibility for her actions and apologizes for them, her actions are not as severe because there are no facts that the e-mails were actually hacked. Clinton even points out that there are "misleading accusations" about her actions, which she uses as her defense in addition to the fact that the e-mails were not accessed. Furthermore, Clinton uses repetition as a rhetorical structure as she repeats the phrase "it was a mistake" in order to express her regretting. Consequently, Trump uses this opportunity to attack Clinton and state facts about her mistake:

Example 34: *She's lying again* (Trump, Debate 2)

You know, it's amazing. I'm watching Hillary go over facts. And she's going after fact after fact, and she's lying again, because she said she – you know, what she did with the email was fine. You think it was fine to delete 33,000 e-mails? I don't think so. She said the 33,000 e-mails had to do with her daughter's wedding, number one, and a yoga class... 33,000 e-mails deleted, and now she's saying there wasn't anything wrong... But for you to say that there was nothing wrong with you deleting 39,000 e-mails, again, you should be ashamed of yourself... If you did that in the private sector, you'd be put in jail, let alone after getting a subpoena from the United States Congress. (Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

Trump uses various rhetorical structures when he attacks Clinton, which are discussed in section 4.6. Trump also comments, again, that Clinton ought to be ashamed of herself, which he has done several times from the beginning of the second debate. Moreover, Trump aims at appealing to the American people at the same time as he aims at hurting Clinton's image by trying to convince people that she is lying and that she is a bad person and not suitable to be the president. Clinton then tries to reply to Trump's accusations and defend herself while Trump continues with the accusations:

Example 35: *Get off this question* (Clinton, Trump and Cooper, Debate 2)

Clinton: Look, it's just not true...  
Trump: Oh, you didn't delete them?  
Clinton: It was personal e-mails, not official.  
Trump: Oh, 33,000? Yeah.  
Clinton: Not – well, we turned over 35,000, so...  
Trump: Oh, yeah. What about the other 15,000?  
Cooper: Please allow her to respond. She didn't talk while you talked.  
Clinton: Yes, that's true, I didn't.  
Trump: Because you have nothing to say.  
Clinton: I didn't in the first debate, and I'm going to try not to in this debate, because I'd like to get to the questions that the people have brought here tonight to talk to us about.  
Trump: Get off this question.  
Clinton: OK, Donald. I know you're into big diversion tonight, anything to avoid talking about your campaign and the way it's exploding and the way Republicans are leaving you...

(Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump and Anderson Cooper, October 9, 2016)



Trump keeps attacking Clinton and repeats the question about deleting the e-mails, which Clinton keeps avoiding. She simply states that they were not official e-mails, but she does not answer the question if she deleted them. Clinton then defends herself by stating that she has turned over a number of e-mails, which again is not enough for Trump. Even the host interrupts the debate by demanding Trump to let Clinton respond. Trump uses this, too, as an attack on Clinton. However, Clinton tries to change the subject by being a better person and wanting to give the audience the chance to ask questions, as was the intention of the second debate. Trump, however, sees Clinton's desire to get to the audience questions as her intent to change the negative topic about her. Furthermore, Clinton, too, accuses Trump for wanting to change the negative subject about him and his campaign to the negative subject about Clinton. When it comes to rhetorical structures, Trump uses repetition, irony and number game, which are discussed in section 4.6. Clinton, on the other hand does not answer directly to questions and clearly wants to change the negative topic about her to something where she can rebuild her image and reinforce positive things about her. In addition, Clinton is very vague when it comes to the topic of her deleting the e-mails, whereas Trump aims at being precise and detailed about his accusations. Being vague about their own negative things and precise about the other's negative thing is common in ideological discourse (see van Dijk, 2006a, p. 126).

When it comes to evidentiality, which is part of local meanings and coherence in ideological discourse, both Clinton and Trump accuse each other for being wrong and misguided, while at the same time reinforce their own image and the fact that they themselves have the truth and they themselves know what is best for the future of the country, unlike the other candidate. This can be seen throughout the debates, as also discussed in the previous sections:

Example 36: *Bad judgment* (Trump, Debate 2)

... I understand the border. She doesn't. She wants amnesty for everybody. Come right in. Come right over. It's a horrible thing she's doing. She's got bad judgment, and honestly, so bad that she should never be president of the United States. That I can tell you. (Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

Trump compares himself to Clinton quite vividly by stating that he understands something that Clinton does not. Trump claims that Clinton does not understand the immigration issues like he does and

imitates her as if she would let anyone in their country, which is something truly horrible according to Trump. In addition, Trump states, again, that Clinton has bad judgment and she should not be elected president, ever. To reinforce his factual knowledge about the immigration and border issues, Trump also stated that he has the endorsement of the border officials because he understands the issues. Trump polarizes himself clearly with Clinton as he says quite short sentences which are in opposition with each other to demonstrate the difference between Trump and Clinton, such as “I understand the border. She doesn’t”. Furthermore, by stating that Clinton “should never be president of the United States. That I can tell you”, Trump reinforces his own image as the one who has the truth.

In order to emphasize their ideological differences of opinion, Clinton polarizes herself with Trump by using figures of speech:

Example 37: *He lives in an alternative reality* (Clinton, Debate 2)

Well, everything you’ve heard just now from Donald is not true. I’m sorry I have to keep saying this, but he lives in an alternative reality... His plan will give the wealthy and corporations the biggest tax cuts they’ve ever had... Donald always takes care of Donald and people like Donald, and this would be a massive gift. (Hillary Clinton, October 9, 2016)

To give effect to her words, Clinton uses metaphors and other rhetorical structures, which are discussed in section 4.6. Furthermore, when Clinton refers to Trump living “in an alternative reality”, she is questioning his competence and expertise in addition to opposing to his comments (see Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987, p. 210). She apologizes for having to say it, which can be seen as a disclaimer and mitigation of her apology. She is apologetic but it seems more like a common phrase before saying the insult, and it actually has no true meaning behind it. Moreover, as Clinton states that “I’m sorry I have to keep saying this”, she suggests that she has made these kinds of accusations to Trump several times before. Trump, however, does not completely deny Clinton’s accusations, and in fact admits to taking advantage of some laws that Clinton has made possible when she was the senator:

Example 38: *Things that Hillary allowed* (Cooper and Trump, Debate 2)

Cooper: Did you use that \$916 million loss to avoid paying personal federal income taxes for years?  
Trump: Of course I do. Of course I do. And so do all of her donors, or most of her donors. I know many of her donors. Her donors took massive tax write-offs.

A lot of my... write-off was depreciation and other things that Hillary as a senator allowed. And she'll always allow it, because the people that give her all this money, they want it. No, but I pay tax, and I pay federal tax, too. But I have a write-off, a lot of it's depreciation, which is a wonderful charge. I love depreciation. You know, she's given it to us... If she had a problem – for 30 years she's been doing this... She doesn't do anything about anything other than talk. With her, it's all talk and no action.

(Anderson Cooper and Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

First, when Trump answers the question he does not reply with the same verb tense. The host asks if Trump has used his financial loss in the past to avoid paying taxes, but Trump answers the question by using a present verb form “I do”, which implies that he still takes advantage of this tax law in the present, too. When Trump is commenting his use of the depreciation tax laws, he seems even boastful and bragging. He admits to taking advantage of the law, but also blames Clinton for allowing it to happen. Therefore, he does not take full responsibility and even emphasizes the fact that many of Clinton's supporters and donors have also taken advantage of the law that she has made possible. Furthermore, Trump even suggests that Clinton wants to make it possible in the future, too, because that is how she has acquired her donors. To emphasize his accusation and blame for Clinton, Trump uses words that express positive emotion, such as *love* and *wonderful* when referring to taking advantage of the depreciation law. It even seems that he uses irony as a rhetorical structure, as he points out that it is thanks to Clinton that he is able to do these *wonderful* things with his taxes. Moreover, Trump, again, emphasizes the fact that Clinton is “all talk and no action”, and because she has been involved in politics for 30 years, she should have been able to make change happen earlier instead of blaming Trump for taking advantage of the laws. In addition, Trump uses repetition, too, as he repeats phrases like “of course I do” and “her donors”. Trump goes on attacking Clinton for her incapability to make things happen:

Example 39: *She's made bad judgments* (Trump, Debate 2)

She has made bad judgment not only on taxes. She's made bad judgments on Libya, on Syria, on Iraq. I mean, her and Obama, whether you like it or not, the way they got out of Iraq, the vacuum they've left, that's why ISIS formed in the first place. They started from that little area, and now they're in 32 different nations, Hillary. Congratulations. Great job. (Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

However, when Trump continues attacking Clinton, he suddenly changes his tone about the taxation, and now accuses Clinton for having bad judgment when it comes to making the tax laws possible that he also has taken advantage of, and which he claimed to love in the previous extract. In addition to taxes, Trump attacks Clinton for her foreign actions when she was secretary of state. Trump has repeated multiple times that it is because of Clinton and Obama ISIS was born in the first place.

Many times, during the debates when Trump attacks Clinton, she replies to his attacks by commenting how untrue or ridiculous his comments are, and then starts building a defense against his attack and accusations. However, Trump also interrupts her often when she starts to defend herself, and uses a lot of repetition in his comments. The debate continues often as an argument with constant interruptions and fairly short segments between the candidates:

Example 40: *Not an effective senator* (Clinton and Trump, Debate 2)

Clinton: Well, here we go again. I've been in favor of getting rid of carried interest for years, starting when I was a senator from New York. But that's not the point here.

Trump: Why didn't you do it? Why didn't you do it?

Clinton: Because I was a senator with a Republican president.

Trump: Oh, really?

Clinton: I will be the president and we will get it done. That's exactly right.

Trump: You could have done it, if you were an effective – if you were an effective senator, you could have done it. If you were an effective senator, you could have done it. But you were not an effective senator.

(Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

First, Clinton defends Trump's attack on the tax laws that Clinton has made possible when she was a senator, but clarifies that that is not the point of the debate, and implies that the point was that Trump has not paid income taxes. Trump, however, questions this and repeats the question why Clinton did not get rid of carried interest. When Clinton answers his question, she aims at giving reasons why she was not able to get rid of carried interest, but she also mitigates and diminishes her own responsibility, or ineffectiveness, by stating that it was not because of her, but because of the then Republican president that she was not able to get the change happen. Trump uses irony when he replies "Oh,

really”, which implies his misbelief to Clinton’s reasons and arguments for not getting the change done. Clinton tries to make the conversation in her favor by claiming that she will get it done once she is president. Clinton expresses determination by stating that “I will be the president and we will get it done. That’s exactly right”. Clinton emphasizes her own role in getting rid of carried interest, but also changes the subject pronoun to *we* in order to emphasize the fact that it will get done together. Trump’s last reply is interesting, as he repeats the same phrases multiple times with only slight changes in the order of the sentences. In fact, Trump recycles more or less the same sentence four times, first using the conditional tense “you could have done it” with the modal verb *could*, and at last he concludes his point by stating that “But you were not an effective senator”, which means that Clinton was not able to get rid of carried interest, even though she *could* have done it.

#### 4.6 The use of rhetorical structures

In this section, the use of rhetorical structures, namely repetition, metaphors and personification, in the debates are analyzed. Both Clinton and Trump use a lot of repetition as a rhetorical structure in order to add effect and power to their words as well as emphasize what is being said. Moreover, metaphors are used in order to concretize abstract concepts and to make words more powerful. Furthermore, repetition, metaphor and personification are used in political discourse as persuasion tools. (see Cameron, 2012; Tannen, 2007; Vestermark, 2007)

The extracts from the debates that have been analyzed from different perspectives in the earlier parts of the analysis are now analyzed with focus on the rhetorical structures and rhetorical devices that are used. When Clinton is trying to appeal to the American people, she uses various rhetorical structures in her speech:

Example 1: *What kind of future we’ll build together* (Clinton, Debate 1)

The central question in this election is really what kind of country we want to be and what kind of future we'll build together. Today is my granddaughter’s second birthday, so I think about this a lot. First, we have to build an economy that works for everyone, not just those at the top. That means we need new jobs, good jobs, with rising incomes. I want us to invest in you. I want us to invest in your future... How are we going to do it? We're going

to do it by having the wealthy pay their fair share and close the corporate loopholes.  
(Hillary Clinton, September 26, 2016)

First, Clinton uses repetition in order to emphasize her words and persuade the voters by stating, for example, that “I want us to invest in you, I want us to invest in your future”. By repeating the phrase “I want us to invest in...”, Clinton adds effect to her words. In addition, Clinton also repeats the phrase “what kind of” as well as “new jobs, good jobs”, in order to specify what kind of jobs they need. Moreover, Clinton asks a rhetorical question which she answers herself by repeating the same phrase as in the question: “How are we going to do it? We are going to do it by...”. In addition, Clinton uses personification as a rhetorical structure as she personifies the country by stating that “... what kind of country we want to be...”, even though she is referring to the people of the country.

Furthermore, Clinton uses metaphors which concretize abstract terms and make them easier for the audience to comprehend. The metaphors in example 1 include “what kind of future we’ll build together”, where the future is concretized by using the verb *build*, which gives the idea that Clinton and the American people can and should have an effect on their future as well as having responsibility of their own future. In addition, Clinton talks about building an economy that works for everyone, which has the same verb *build* as with *building the future*. The concept of economy is abstract in the same way as the concept of future is, so therefore Clinton uses the verb *build* in order to emphasize her own and the American people’s roles in affecting the future and the economy. Furthermore, when Clinton talks about the economy, she refers to it only working for “those at the top”, which means the wealthiest people in the country, which is also referred to as the one percent of the population. By using the metaphor “those at the top” gives the listeners the idea of an economic ladder, which is another common metaphor that is used when talking about the different socio-economic classes in the United States, and where the wealthiest people are at the top of the ladder. Moreover, Clinton also talks about closing “the corporate loopholes”, which refers to the possibilities that the wealthy people have to get and stay wealthy as well as perhaps avoid some laws thanks to these “corporate loopholes”. These metaphors all have a negative meaning and by using these kinds of metaphors Clinton aims at appealing to people that are not at the top of the economic ladder, as well as communicate her negative

attitude towards the wealthiest one percent to the voters. However, even though Clinton talks negatively about the wealthiest people and the economy working only for them, she, too, is above most people in the economic ladder. Clinton is persuading people by using metaphors to concretize the abstract concepts and help them understand what is being said (see Cameron, 2012).

Furthermore, when Clinton appeals to the American people, she paints a positive picture about the Americans and the future of the country by using multiple metaphors and figures of speech:

Example 3: *Our country is great* (Clinton, Debate 2)

Our country is great because we're good. And we are going to respect one another, lift each other up. We are going to be looking for ways to celebrate our diversity, and we are going to try to reach out to every boy and girl, as well as every adult, to bring them in to working on behalf of our country... I think if we work together, if we overcome the divisiveness that sometimes sets Americans against one another, and instead we make some big goals – and I've set forth some big goals, getting the economy to work for everyone, not just those at the top... and so much else. If we set those goals and we go together to try to achieve them, there's nothing in my opinion that America can't do. (Hillary Clinton, October 9, 2016)

When Clinton talks about respecting each other, she says that Americans are going to “lift each other up”, which sets a strong image of helping one another, and not tear each other down, which is the other half of the metaphor. Furthermore, Clinton says that “We are going to be looking for ways to celebrate our diversity”, which also sets an image of respecting one another as well as respecting people with different ethnicities or from different backgrounds. In addition, Clinton talks about plans to “reach out to every boy and girl... to bring them in to working on behalf of our country”, which have strong meanings as well. *Reaching out to someone* means an attempt to communicate with someone, especially with people that need help. Moreover, when Clinton talks about “working on behalf of the country”, she is insinuating that every American citizen needs to do their responsibility in rebuilding America. In addition, Clinton also uses personification as a rhetorical structure as she personifies the country. Furthermore, when Clinton talks about Americans working together, and overcoming the divisiveness “that sometimes sets Americans against one another”, she uses again rich language filled with figures of speech and metaphors and in this way reinforces the meaning behind her words and the

attempt to get Americans unified. Lastly, when Clinton talks about *setting goals* and *achieving them*, she concretizes her words by using metaphors often connotated with sports (see Beard, 2000). Consequently, there are a lot of figures of speech and playing with the language when Clinton aims at concretizing her words and meanings and this way attempts to clarify them to people in order to persuade them.

In order to emphasize his own role in making things happen and the future actions that he is going to take, Trump uses repetition to give more effect to his speech and to make it more powerful and persuasive to the audience. In the same way as Clinton, Trump also uses repetition as a rhetorical structure throughout the debates from smaller units to longer phrases:

Example 4: *I want to get on to things that are important to me* (Trump, Debate 1)

Because I want to get on to defeating ISIS, because I want to get on to creating jobs, because I want to get on to having a strong border, because I want to get on to things that are very important to me and that are very important to the country. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Trump emphasizes the actions and improvements that he *wants* to take and that are important to both himself and the United States. He repeats the same phrase “because I want to get on to...” four times, as well as the phrase “that are very important”. Using repetition as a rhetorical structure gives emphasis to his words and provides “a list-like rhythm” (Tannen, 2007, p. 60), as Trump repeats phrases with the same structure. His choice of words, such as repeating the verb *want*, are also powerful and make him seem passionate about the future of his country. He also gives the impression that these actions that are important for him and the country have not been taken by the past and the present government, and he is the one that wants to get them done. Furthermore, when Trump talks about “things... that are very important to the country”, he refers to America as an entity and personifies the country. When he refers to the country, he truly means the people of the country, and the things that are important to the American people. Personification is one of the rhetorical structures that is used throughout the debates by both candidates, especially when referring to their country.



In addition to emphasizing his own role in rebuilding America, Trump also uses repetition when appealing to the American patriotism and the American ideology of the voters:

Example 5: *Make America great again* (Trump, Debate 2)

We're going to make America safe again. We're going to make America great again, but we're going to make America safe again. And we're going to make America wealthy again... (Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

Furthermore, Trump uses repetition by repeating four times his campaign slogan with a change of adjectives. By using his campaign slogan "Make America great again" with some adjustments, Trump aims at appealing to people. Furthermore, because of the familiarity of the slogan, it is likely that people will remember better his promises that are associated with his campaign slogan, which is a rhetorical strategy to give more effect to his words. In fact, Trump uses repetition again to list phrases with the same kind of rhythm (see Tannen, 2007, p. 60), which was also used in example 4. Moreover, Trump emphasizes the involvement of the American people by repeating the phrase "we're going to make...", which was discussed in section 4.1.

Moreover, Clinton uses repetition as a rhetorical structure when she addresses the American people directly and emphasizes the importance of the Americans to her:

Example 6: *Invest in you* (Clinton, Debate 1)

And so what I believe is the more we can do for the middle class, the more we can invest in you, your education, your skills, your future, the better we will be off and the better we'll grow. That's the kind of economy I want us to see again. (Hillary Clinton, September 26, 2016)

In order to add effect, Clinton repeats same structures and same words in her speech. She, for example, repeats the phrases "the more we can", "the better we will" and the pronoun "your". Furthermore, Clinton uses figures of speech when she talks about making America and the lives of Americans better. She uses abstract language when she talks about growing the economy as well as investing in the lives of the American people, and more specifically investing in the middle class. In fact, the concept of the middle class itself is a well-known metaphor used when talked about people in the middle of the economic ladder. Furthermore, Clinton talks about "the kind of economy I want us to see again", which

is a figure of speech as the concept of economy is abstract and cannot actually be seen. Moreover, when Trump talked about the changes that he is going to make if elected president in example 2, he, too, used a figure of speech related with sight when he stated that “It’s going to be a beautiful thing to watch”, referring to the positive future. Example 2 was further discussed in section 4.1.

In order to emphasize their different ideological views, Clinton uses repetition and metaphors. By using repetition and metaphors as rhetorical structures, Clinton aims at comparing herself to Trump and to persuade people into agreeing with her:

Example 10: *A very different view about immigrants* (Clinton, Debate 3)

But it is clear when you look at what Donald has been proposing. He started his campaign bashing immigrants, calling Mexican immigrants rapists and criminals and drug dealers, that he has a very different view about what we should do to deal with immigrants... bringing undocumented immigrants out from the shadows, putting them into the formal economy would be good. Because then employers can’t exploit them and undercut Americans’ wages. And Donald knows a lot about this. He used undocumented labor to build the Trump tower. He underpaid undocumented workers and when they complained, he basically said what a lot of employers do. You complain, I’ll get you deported. I want to get everybody out of the shadows. Get the economy working and not let employers like Donald exploit undocumented workers which hurts them but also hurts American workers. (Hillary Clinton, October 19, 2016)

Clinton repeats the words “undocumented workers/labor” and “out of the shadows” in order to emphasize Trump’s negative things and persuade people to agree with her. Furthermore, Clinton uses metaphors “bring undocumented immigrants out from the shadows/get everybody out of the shadows”, “putting them into the formal economy” as well as using figurative language when stating that exploiting “undocumented workers... hurts them but also hurts American workers”. By talking about “bringing undocumented immigrants out from the shadows”, Clinton means that illegal immigrants should be made legal and they should not have to live a secret life or in fear. Furthermore, by using the metaphor “put them into the formal economy”, Clinton is referring to the fact that the undocumented immigrants that live in the shadows do not have the same wages as Americans do and that they might not contribute to the economy by paying taxes, but instead get underpaid because they cannot demand anything more. Moreover, because there is exploitation of illegal immigrants, both the

workers as well as the American workers are hurting. By this figure of speech Clinton means that the underpaid wages affect other people negatively in addition to having a negative effect on the economy.

In addition to emphasizing differences of ideological views, repetition is also used as a way of showing strong opposition and disagreement. Trump interrupts Clinton abruptly when she makes accusations about Trump's belief and uses repetition as a tool to show opposition:

Example 13: *I did not* (Clinton and Trump, Debate 1)

Clinton: Donald thinks that climate change is a hoax perpetrated by the Chinese.  
I think it's real.  
Trump: I did not.  
I did not.  
I do not say that.  
Clinton: I think science is real.  
Trump: I do not say that.

(Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

In example 13, both of the candidates use repetition as a rhetorical structure. Trump interrupts Clinton's turn of talk and replies immediately to Clinton's accusations about his alleged beliefs by repeating the phrases "I did not" and "I do not say that", whereas Clinton repeats the phrase "I think it's real", "I think science is real". Trump uses repetition in order to emphasize his opposition to Clinton's accusations and adds effect to his disagreement by repeating phrases with the negative word "not". Example 13 and the opposing strategies used in the example were further discussed in section 4.2.

In order to make negative assessment of Clinton and emphasize her ineligibility to be the president, Trump uses repetition to persuade the voters:

Example 15: *No business ability* (Trump, Debate 1)

... she's got no business ability. We need heart. We need a lot of things. But you have to have some basic ability. And sadly, she doesn't have that. All of the things that she's talking about could have been taken care of during the last 10 years, let's say, while she had great power. But they weren't taken care of. And if she ever wins this race, they won't be taken care of. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Trump emphasizes Clinton's ineffectiveness by using repetition as he states that "All of the things that she's talking about could have been taken care of... But they weren't taken care of. And if she ever wins this race, they won't be taken care of". By repeating phrases with the structure *taken care of*, Trump adds emphasis and effect to the fact that Clinton has not and will not get things done. The only thing that changes in the phrases are the modal verbs from *could have*, which implies that she had the chance to accomplish her suggestions, to *weren't*, which states that she did not do the things and to *won't*, which signals that the things will not be accomplished in the future, either. Furthermore, Trump is referring to the presidential elections as *a race* which is a metaphor relating to sports. What is more, Trump acknowledges that Clinton has had *great power*, which is actually used in order to emphasize the fact that Clinton had the chance to make things happen because of her position, but she did not take advantage of it and use it correctly, and now it is too late. In addition to giving emphasis to what is being said, repetition is also used as a form of meaning to emphasize *our* good things and *their* bad things as well as de-emphasize *our* bad things and *their* good things (see van Dijk, 2006a, p. 126).

Furthermore, personification is also used in order to make the other candidate look bad in front of the voters. Trump personifies their country and appeals to people's emotions by accusing Clinton for not doing what is best for their country:

Example 16: *People like Secretary Clinton* (Trump and Clinton, Debate 1)

Trump: But we have no leadership. And honestly, that starts with Secretary Clinton.  
Clinton: I have a feeling that by the end of this evening, I'm going to be blamed for everything that's ever happened.  
Trump: Why not?  
Clinton: Why not?... You know, just join the debate by saying more crazy things...  
Trump: Typical politician. All talk, no action. Sounds good, doesn't work. Never going to happen. Our country is suffering because people like Secretary Clinton have made such bad decisions in terms of our jobs and in terms of what's going on.

(Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

In order to enforce his comments, Trump repeats phrases that have opposite meanings: "All talk, no action" and "Sounds good, doesn't work". In addition to polarizing the words, Trump uses words that

almost rhyme together and that have rhythm when they are uttered out loud. Furthermore, Trump emphasizes the fact that Clinton is a typical politician who talks a lot but does not get things done and talks in an appealing way but has ideas that do not actually work. Moreover, Trump, again, personifies their country by stating that it is suffering because of people like Clinton. The verb, *suffering*, in itself is a powerful term to provoke people's thoughts about what is best for their beloved country. When Trump states that "Our country is suffering", he truly means that the people of the country are suffering. In addition to the powerful word *suffering* and the feelings that it provokes among people, Trump also aims at appealing to people's emotions by using the phrase *our country*, which implies that Clinton has made their country suffer and she is not part of this ideology.

Furthermore, when Trump talks negatively about the present government and emphasizes his capabilities in running the country, he uses personification as a rhetorical device in order to persuade people:

Example 18: *People that have no idea* (Trump, Debate 1)

... we don't have people that know what they're doing. When we look at the budget, the budget is bad to a large extent because we have people that have no idea as to what to do and how to buy. The Trump International is way under budget and way ahead of schedule. And we should be able to do that for our country. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Trump personifies the country by stating that "we should be able to do that for our country". Trump implies that the country deserves better and people who know what they are doing, as Trump does. In addition to personification, Trump also uses repetition when he repeats the word *way* to add effect to the phrases that describe the state of his company: "way under budget and way ahead of schedule". By using repetition, Trump compares the state of the country to the state of his company and emphasizes the fact that his company is doing well.

Furthermore, repetition is also used when the candidates attack each other and defend themselves. By using repetition in attacks and defenses, Clinton and Trump add effect and power to their words when they are constructing a negative representation of other. For instance, when Trump attacks Clinton, he uses repetition to emphasize what is being said:

Example 20: *It doesn't work that way* (Trump, Debate 1)

... You treated him [Obama] with terrible disrespect. And I watched the way you talk now about how lovely everything is and how wonderful you are. It doesn't work that way... So when you tried to act holier than thou, it really doesn't work. It really doesn't work. Now, as far as the lawsuit, yes, when I was very young... along with many, many other companies throughout the country... were sued. I notice you bring that up a lot... I also notice the very nasty commercials that you do on me in so many different ways, which I don't do on you... In Palm Beach, Florida, tough community... a wealthy community... I opened a club, and really got great credit for it. No discrimination against African-Americans, against Muslims, against anybody. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Trump repeats phrases with same kinds of structures when attacking Clinton by stating that “it doesn't work that way... So when you tried to act holier than thou, it really doesn't work. It really doesn't work”. By repeating the phrases Trump aims at disqualifying Clinton's comments and behavior by implying that she is not as sincere and honest as she acts. In addition, as mitigation of his responsibility, Trump repeats the word “many” when he defends himself by stating that there were “many, many other companies throughout the country” that were sued in addition to Trump himself being sued. By repeating the word *many*, Trump emphasizes the great number of companies that were sued.

In addition to repetition, metaphors are also used when the candidates attack each other. The use of metaphors and figures of speech aim at concretizing abstract concepts and terms in addition to giving more power and effect to words:

Example 21: *The greatest mess anyone's ever seen* (Trump, Debate 1)

The secretary said very strongly about working with – we've been working with them for many years, and we have the greatest mess anyone's ever seen. You look at the Middle East, it's a total mess. Under your direction, to a large extent... we have to knock the hell out of ISIS, and we have to do it fast, when ISIS formed in this vacuum created by Barack Obama and Secretary Clinton... Now, you're talking about taking out ISIS. But you were there, and you were secretary of state when it was a little infant... And you're going to stop them? I don't think so. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

Trump uses many metaphors when talking about Clinton's ineffective history with the ISIS, such as “a total mess”, “knock the hell out of ISIS”, “ISIS formed in this vacuum” and “it was a little infant”. By stating that “we have to knock the hell out of ISIS”, Trump uses powerful language and appeals to

people's emotions by using the phrase "knock the hell out of", which sets out an image of defeating a bully with violence. By describing ISIS as being "a little infant", Trump gives the impression that when ISIS had not spread as largely as it is now, it could have been stopped while it did not have as much power as they do now. In addition, because Clinton was involved in politics and she was secretary of state when ISIS was formed, she should have taken care of it when it was possible. Furthermore, by describing ISIS as being "a little infant" makes it seem that ISIS would have been really easy to defeat. Moreover, Trump puts all the blame on Clinton by stating that "... we have the greatest mess anyone's ever seen... Under your direction, to a large extent" and accuses her for being responsible for almost everything that has happened in the Middle East. In addition, Trump repeats the word "mess" in order to emphasize the situation in the Middle East and the responsibility of Clinton. Furthermore, Trump uses hyperbole as a rhetorical structure by first putting the blame personally on Clinton and second describing the situation in the Middle East as "the greatest mess anyone's ever seen". In addition, Trump asks a rhetorical question "And you're going to stop them?" and answers it himself by stating that "I don't think so" in order to emphasize Clinton's inability to defeat ISIS in comparison to Trump himself.

In addition to using repetition when the candidates attack each other and defend themselves, repetition is also used as a tool to appeal to people's emotions. Trump victimizes himself and attacks Clinton by showing her as a bully and emphasizes this by using repetition:

Example 26: *I don't deserve that* (Trump, Debate 1)

I was going to say something... extremely rough to Hillary, to her family, and I said to myself, "I can't do it. I just can't do it. It's inappropriate. It's not nice." But she spent hundreds of millions of dollars on negative ads on me, many of which are absolutely untrue. They're untrue. And they're misrepresentations... It's not nice. And I don't deserve that. (Donald Trump, September 26, 2016)

In reporting his own thoughts, Trump uses repetition as a rhetorical structure by repeating words and phrases, such as "I can't do it..." and "it's not nice", to emphasize his words and give more effect to his comments. This strategy is used to indirectly display him in a favorable light. That is, by using repetition when stating that "I can't do it. I just can't do it." and adding the word *just* when repeating the phrase,

Trump emphasizes his contemplation and reluctance to hurt Clinton in the same way that Clinton has hurt him. In addition, when talking about the supposed lies that Clinton has made up of Trump, he repeats the phrase “They’re untrue” twice and finally rephrases and repeats the same meaning by adding that “they’re misrepresentations”. All in all, repetition as a rhetoric devise is used frequently by Trump not only when presenting himself in good light but also when trying to bring the other candidate into disrepute.

Further, in an attempt to change the negative topic about himself into something more favorable, Trump uses repetition when he describes the terrible things that are happening in the world, on which the debate should be focusing:

Example 28: *Locker room talk* (Cooper and Trump, Debate 2)

Cooper: ...You described kissing women without consent, grabbing their genitals. That is sexual assault. You bragged that you have sexually assaulted women. Do you understand that?

Trump: No, I didn’t say that at all... this was locker room talk. I’m not proud of it. I apologize to my family. I apologize to the American people. Certainly I’m not proud of it. But this is locker room talk... When we have a world where you have ISIS chopping off heads..., this is like medieval times... Yes, I’m very embarrassed by it. I hate it. But it’s locker room talk, and it’s one of those things. I will knock the hell out of ISIS. We’re going to defeat ISIS... And we should get on to much more important things and much bigger things.

(Anderson Cooper and Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

By using the figures of speech “knock the hell out of ISIS” and “medieval times” as well as talking about “ISIS chopping off heads”, Trump adds emphasis and effect to the terrible things that are happening in the world and which Trump is capable of stopping and which he will do. By talking about his plans to “knock the hell out of ISIS”, Trump shows his determination and capability to defeat ISIS. Trump used the same metaphor in example 20, and which was discussed earlier in this section. Moreover, Trump uses repetition as a rhetorical structure by repeating the phrase “I’m not proud of it” and the term “locker room talk” many times during his reply. By repeating these phrases, Trump mitigates the



seriousness and responsibility of his actions in addition to emphasizing the fact that his comments were not meant to be leaked.

Furthermore, Trump uses repetition when he defends himself and repeats the word *respect*, which has a positive meaning and which aims at rebuilding his image after getting attacked by his controversial comments about women:

Example 29: *Respect for women* (Cooper and Trump, Debate 2)

- Cooper: ... Are you saying that what you said on that bus 11 years ago that you did not actually kiss women without consent or grope women without consent?
- Trump: I have great respect for women. Nobody has more respect for women than I do.
- Cooper: ... You're saying you never did that?
- Trump: I've said things that, frankly, you hear these things I said. And I was embarrassed by it. But I have tremendous respect for women.
- Cooper: Have you ever done those things?
- Trump: And women have respect for me. And I will tell you: No, I have not. And I will tell you that I'm going to make our country safe. We're going to have borders in our country, which we don't have now...

(Anderson Cooper and Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

In order to give emphasis to his defense, Trump repeats the word *respect* multiple times, as well as the phrase "I will tell you" when he finally answers the question and then changes the subject. By repeating the word *respect*, Trump aims at rebuilding his image and emphasize the fact that he respects women instead of having disrespect for women which his comments in fact imply. In addition to emphasizing the fact that Trump respects women, he also states that women have respect for him, too.

Clinton, in turn, uses repetition and personification as she attacks Trump for his comments:

Example 30: *This is who Donald Trump is* (Clinton, Debate 2)

- ... This is who Donald Trump is. But it's not only women, and it's not only this video that raises questions about his fitness to be out president, because he has also targeted immigrants, African-Americans, Latinos, people with disabilities, POWs, Muslims and so many others. So this is who Donald Trump is. And the question for us, the question our country must answer is that this is not who we are. That's why... I want to send a message

– we all should – to every boy and girl and, indeed, to the entire world that America already is great, but we are great because we are good, and we will respect one another, and we will work with one another, and we will celebrate our diversity. (Hillary Clinton, October 9, 2016)

Clinton repeats the phrase “this is who Donald Trump is” to give emphasis to her words and describe in detail what kind of person Trump is. Clinton emphasizes the fact that Trump’s comments are not just words but instead reflect deeper what kind of person he is. In addition, Clinton also repeats the words “we will” when she describes the future actions of the Americans and paints a positive future at the end of her turn. In addition to repetition, Clinton also uses personification as a rhetorical structure by personifying the country as she says that “the question our country must answer is that this is not who we are”. By personifying the country, Clinton means the people of the country, as she then changes the subject from *our country* to *we*. Clinton phrases the sentence in an interesting way as there is in fact no question following the phrase “the question our country must answer”.

After Clinton’s attacks and accusations to Trump, Trump in turn attacks Clinton using various different rhetorical structures in order to give more effect to his accusations and his aim to hurt Clinton’s image:

Example 34: *She’s lying again* (Trump, Debate 2)

You know, it’s amazing. I’m watching Hillary go over facts. And she’s going after fact after fact, and she’s lying again, because she said she – you know, what she did with the email was fine. You think it was fine to delete 33,000 e-mails? I don’t think so. She said the 33,000 e-mails had to do with her daughter’s wedding, number one, and a yoga class... 33,000 e-mails deleted, and now she’s saying there wasn’t anything wrong... But for you to say that there was nothing wrong with you deleting 39,000 e-mails, again, you should be ashamed of yourself... If you did that in the private sector, you’d be put in jail, let alone after getting a subpoena from the United States Congress. (Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

Trump uses a variety of rhetorical structures when he attacks Clinton. First, he uses irony when he comments that “it’s amazing” when he is referring to Clinton’s actions. Second, he uses repetition as he repeats words and phrases such as “you know”, “facts” as well as the phrase “it was fine” in addition to repeating the number 33,000. Third, he asks a rhetorical question which he answers himself, even though he addresses Clinton with the question “You think it was fine to delete 33,000 e-mails?” but

then answers “I don’t think so” without actually giving Clinton the chance to answer. By asking the question and answering it himself, Trump adds emphasis to the fact that in his opinion it certainly was not *fine* to delete the e-mails. Fourth, Trump uses number game by repeating multiple times the number 33,000. Furthermore, his threat about Clinton going to jail can be seen as a hyperbole.

Moreover, in an attempt to hurt Clinton’s image, Trump uses irony, repetition, rhetorical questions and number game as rhetorical devices when he attacks Clinton:

Example 35: *Get off this question* (Clinton, Trump and Cooper, Debate 2)

Clinton: Look, it’s just not true...  
Trump: Oh, you didn’t delete them?  
Clinton: It was personal e-mails, not official.  
Trump: Oh, 33,000? Yeah.  
Clinton: Not – well, we turned over 35,000, so...  
Trump: Oh, yeah. What about the other 15,000?  
Cooper: Please allow her to respond. She didn’t talk while you talked.  
Clinton: Yes, that’s true, I didn’t.  
Trump: Because you have nothing to say.  
Clinton: I didn’t in the first debate, and I’m going to try not to in this debate, because I’d like to get to the questions that the people have brought here tonight to talk to us about.  
Trump: Get off this question.  
Clinton: OK, Donald. I know you’re into big diversion tonight, anything to avoid talking about your campaign and the way it’s exploding and the way Republicans are leaving you...

(Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton and Anderson Cooper, October 9, 2016)

Trump uses irony as a rhetorical structure as he is doubtful about Clinton, which he shows by repeating the interjection “Oh” three times when interrupting Clinton, as well as asking a rhetorical question and answering it himself with the word “Yeah”, which shows disbelief and irony. In addition, Trump uses repetition as he repeats the words “Oh” and “Yeah”, which add effect to his attitude toward Clinton. Furthermore, Trump also uses number game as a rhetorical structure in order to emphasize the severity of Clinton’s actions.

When Clinton attacks Trump, she uses metaphors in order to concretize her words and to make them more powerful. In addition, Clinton uses metaphors in order to polarize herself with Trump and to emphasize his negative things:

Example 37: *He lives in an alternative reality* (Clinton, Debate 2)

Well, everything you've heard just now from Donald is not true. I'm sorry I have to keep saying this, but he lives in an alternative reality... His plan will give the wealthy and corporations the biggest tax cuts they've ever had... Donald always takes care of Donald and people like Donald, and this would be a massive gift. (Hillary Clinton, October 9, 2016)

When Clinton claims that Trump is living in an alternative reality, she aims at hurting Trump's image by stating that his comments are ridiculous and unrealistic, while at the same time writing off his comments as ridiculous and untrue. In addition to referring to Trump living in an alternative reality, Clinton uses another metaphor as well, as she is referring to Trump doing a favor to wealthy people by enforcing his planned tax cuts, and uses the metaphor *a massive gift*. By referring to Trump taking care of himself and other people like him, i.e. wealthy people, and repeating his first name, Donald, Clinton is suggesting that he is a selfish person who only looks out for himself and who is only concerned about what is best for himself.

Furthermore, when Trump attacks Clinton for her experience in politics, he uses repetition and irony as rhetorical structures:

Example 39: *She's made bad judgments* (Trump, Debate 2)

She has made bad judgment not only on taxes. She's made bad judgments on Libya, on Syria, on Iraq. I mean, her and Obama, whether you like it or not, the way they got out of Iraq, the vacuum they've left, that's why ISIS formed in the first place. They started from that little area, and now they're in 32 different nations, Hillary. Congratulations. Great job. (Donald Trump, October 9, 2016)

Trump uses irony as a rhetorical structure when he sarcastically congratulates Clinton for doing such a great job with ISIS. Before congratulating Clinton, Trump refers to Clinton by her first name when addressing her directly, which implies that he wants to make Clinton realize how bad her actions have been. In addition to irony, Trump also uses repetition as a rhetorical structure by repeating the phrase

*bad judgment* to emphasize Clinton's negative things. Moreover, Trump, again, uses the metaphor "the vacuum they've left", when referring to how Clinton and Obama made it possible for ISIS to form.

In an attempt to appeal to people's emotions while at the same time make Clinton look bad and insensitive, Trump uses repetition, metaphor as well as hyperbole as rhetorical structures as the candidates debate on women's right to abortion if the mother's health is in jeopardy:

Example 41: *Rip the baby out* (Trump and Clinton, Debate 3)

Clinton: The kinds of cases that fall at the end of pregnancy are often the most heartbreaking, painful decisions for families to make... So you can regulate if you are doing so with the life and the health of the mother taken into account.

Trump: Well I think it is terrible. If you go with what Hillary is saying, in the ninth month you can take baby and rip the baby out of the womb of the mother just prior to the birth of the baby. Now, you can say that that is okay and Hillary can say that that is okay, but it's not okay with me. Because based on what she is saying and based on where she's going and where she's been, you can take baby and rip the baby out of the womb. In the ninth month. On the final day. And that's not acceptable.

Clinton: Well that is not what happens in these cases. And using that kind of scare rhetoric is just terribly unfortunate... This is one of the worst possible choices that any woman and her family has to make... And I can tell you the government has no business in the decisions that women make with their families in accordance with their faith, with medical advice. And I will stand up for that right.

(Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, October 19, 2016)

Clinton argues for women's right to abortion with descriptive adjectives when the health of the baby or the mother is in danger. Trump, however, exaggerates and twists Clinton's words and uses very rich and descriptive language when appealing to people's emotions and persuading them. He uses words with negative meaning, such as *terrible*, *not okay* and *not acceptable*. In addition, Trump uses hyperbole as he talks about Clinton's opinion of women's right to "rip the baby out of the womb of the mother just prior to the birth of the baby" and "In the ninth month. On the final day". By using the phrase *rip the baby out*, Trump implies that abortion is done with violence and inconsideration. The choice of

words implies Trump's strong feelings about abortion. Furthermore, to add effect to his words, Trump repeats the phrases "take baby and rip the baby out of the womb" as well as repeating the same structure in "you can say that that is okay and Hillary can say that that is okay, but it's not okay with me". Clinton defends herself by attempting to discredit Trump's accusations by showing disagreement and opposition by stating that "Well that is not what happens in these cases. And using that kind of scare rhetoric is just terribly unfortunate" and this way acknowledges the difference of opinion between them. In fact, Clinton accuses Trump for using *scare rhetoric* in order to appeal to people by using powerful words, which in Clinton's opinion is harmful.

## 5 Discussion of results

In this section, the main findings of the study are discussed. As exemplified in section 4.1, there are different uses of pronouns in the debates. As Clinton and Trump are part of different ideologies simultaneously and they have multiple roles as they are speaking, they express their ideologies and identities by using different pronouns in the discourse. Furthermore, Clinton and Trump change the pronouns quite abruptly depending on which identity they are referring to and which role they are taking. The first-person singular pronoun *I* is used when the candidates emphasize their own active roles as change makers and the ones that can make the lives of the American people better if selected president. In addition to using the pronoun *I*, both Clinton and Trump also identify themselves as being part of the same social group as the audience, which they show by using the first-person plural pronoun *we*. Furthermore, the pronoun *we* is used to emphasize the American ideology and the unity of the American people. In addition, the pronoun *we* is used when the candidates identify themselves as being part of the government. Moreover, the pronoun *you* is used in the debates when the candidates address the voters directly and as the ones that benefit from their future actions. When Clinton and Trump talk about each other, they either use the other's name or the pronoun *she* or *he*. However, when the candidates start attacking each other directly, they change the pronoun to *you* and do not involve the audience anymore in the debate.

The different ideological views in the debates were discussed in section 4.2. Even though the candidates share some bigger goals and aims, their perspectives and approaches to the issues vary quite a lot, which the candidates also acknowledge during the debates. Furthermore, both Clinton and Trump attack each other's suggestions and plans and aim at discrediting them while at the same time aim at proving that their own ideas are better. The polarization between the candidates and their suggestions is done by word choices and showing disagreement and opposition. Furthermore, when the candidates position the other by the past and the present, which was discussed in section 4.3, they attack each other's past experiences and actions and use the other's past against them. In fact, Clinton uses her experience and past in politics as her advantage and builds her image on being an experienced politician, while at the same discrediting Trump for not having experience in politics and instead being

a businessman. However, Trump sees Clinton's past in politics negatively and argues multiple times during the debates that Clinton "has experience but it's bad experience". In fact, Trump argues that because Clinton has been involved in politics for so long, she should have taken care of the things that she is now suggesting and planning to do if selected president. Furthermore, Trump also argues for his experience in business and claims that America needs the kind of thinking that he has because he is a businessman. Moreover, Trump views the past governments extremely negatively while Clinton's views are not as extreme because of her involvement in the past governments.

When Clinton and Trump construct a negative representation of other, which was discussed in section 4.4, they attack each other and make accusations and in turn defend themselves when they are attacked. The candidates attack each other for their personal lives and mistakes as well as personal features. When attacking the other, Clinton and Trump aim at being as precise as possible and emphasize the other's negatives by using descriptive language with examples in addition to various rhetorical structures. When the candidates start defending themselves, they aim at discrediting the other's accusations by emphasizing their own positive features in order to rebuild their image. Moreover, in addition to defending themselves, the candidates also counter attack each other in turn to emphasize the other's negative features and actions and get off the negative topic about themselves.

Furthermore, positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation in the debates is done by selecting positive topics about *us* and negative topics about *them*. In addition, the candidates change quickly negative topics about themselves and in turn select positive topics in order to reinforce their image. Moreover, both Clinton and Trump mitigate the negative topics about themselves, for example, by using disclaimers and euphemisms such as "locker room talk", and in turn aim at being precise and detailed about the negative topics about the other candidate. Furthermore, when it comes to expressions of ideological speech acts in the debates, both Clinton and Trump make promises, threats and accusations in order to emphasize their own positive things and the other's negative things. For example, Trump threatened to have Clinton investigated and maybe even sent to jail because of her actions. Moreover, both candidates accuse each other for being misguided whereas they themselves



have the truth. This evidentiality is done, for example, by direct polarizations and comparison such as “I understand the border. She doesn’t.” when discussing the safety of the country. These expressions of ideology, i.e., meaning, form, speech acts and evidentiality, were discussed in section 4.5.

Lastly, the use of rhetorical structures in the debates was analyzed in section 4.6. Both Clinton and Trump use repetition, metaphors, personification as well as number game as rhetorical structures in order to add effect, emphasize what is being said, appeal to people and persuade them. Repetition is used to add effect and power to their words, to emphasize what is being said and to display disagreement and opposition. Furthermore, metaphors are used in order to concretize abstract concepts and to clarify their meanings in order to persuade people and to emphasize positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. Personification, namely of their country, is used to appeal to people in addition to emphasizing the other’s negative things, for example, for making their country *suffer*. In addition, Clinton and Trump use number game to support their accusations and to give them more effect by using numbers as objective facts.

As the findings of the study show, there are multiple different polarization strategies used in the debates in order to present *us* positively and *them* negatively. The main purpose of the presidential debates is to show to the voters why they should be selected president instead of the other candidate, which is done by using the discussed and analyzed polarization strategies. Furthermore, these polarization strategies display and emphasize the differences between Clinton and Trump. In fact, Clinton and Trump polarize themselves into different and opposite roles; whereas Clinton is part of the establishment, Trump is a fresh candidate who offers something new and fresh to voters. In the next section, the outcome of the presidential elections of 2016 in the United States will be discussed briefly in addition to discussing the possibilities for future research.

## 6 Conclusion

Even though the reasons for Trump's victory in the presidential elections of 2016 in the United States cannot be explained linguistically, the rhetorical strategies that Trump used in the debates might have had an effect on the outcome of the election. Furthermore, as Trump has not been involved in politics before running for president, he was a fresh candidate who appealed to people that have been frustrated with the 'typical' politicians. In fact, according to Inglehart & Norris (2016),

[R]ising economic insecurity and social deprivation among the left-behinds has fueled popular resentment of the political classes. This situation is believed to have made the less secure strata of society... susceptible to the anti-establishment, nativist, and xenophobic scare-mongering exploited of populist movements, parties and leaders, blaming 'Them' for stripping prosperity, job opportunities, and public services from 'Us'.  
(p. 2)

In accordance with this view, Trump presented multiple times during the debates the past and present governments negatively and accused them and Clinton for almost everything that has gone wrong in the United States, and this populist view appealed to people. In fact, there are already studies that examine the reasons for Trump's wide support during the elections (see e.g., Inglehart & Norris, 2016; Major, Blodorn & Blascovich, 2016; MacWilliams, 2016; Harnis, 2017).

When it comes to the possibilities of future research, it would be interesting to analyze if Trump's rhetoric and political discourse changed in any way as he was elected president. For example, Trump used quite harsh language, made threats and attacked others in addition to using hyperbole as a rhetorical structure during the debates and presented his ideas and views in a distinctive way, which is not as suitable from the president. In addition, it would be interesting to analyze if Trump has kept the promises that he made during his campaign. Furthermore, as this study analyzed only some of the metaphors used in the debates, future research could concentrate, for example, only on the use and different types of metaphors in the debates.

## References

- Beard, A. (2000). *The language of politics*. London: Routledge.
- Benoit, W. L. & Wells, W. T. (1996). *Candidates in conflict: persuasive attack and defense in the 1992 presidential debates*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
- Biber, D. & Finegan, E. (1988). Adverbial stance types in English. *Discourse Processes*, 11(1), 1–34.
- Blommaert, J. (2005). *Discourse: A critical introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cameron, L. (2012). Metaphor in spoken discourse. In J. P. Gee & M. Handford (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (pp. 342–355). New York: Routledge.
- Clinton, H. & Trump, D. (2016). First Presidential Debate. New York, NY: Hofstra University.
- Clinton, H. & Trump, D. (2016). Second Presidential Debate. St Louis, MO: Washington University.
- Clinton, H. & Trump, D. (2016). Third Presidential Debate. Las Vegas, NV: Nevada University.
- Donald Trump Biography. (2017). Retrieved May 31, 2017, from <https://www.biography.com/people/donald-trump-9511238>
- Fetzer, A. (2014). “Judge us on what we do”: The strategic use of collective *we* in British political discourse. In T-S. Pavlidou (Ed.), *Constructing collectivity: ‘We’ across Languages and Contexts* (pp. 331–350). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Goodwin, M. & Goodwin, C. (1987). Children’s arguing. In S. Philips, S. Steele & C. Tanz (Eds.), *Language, Gender, and Sex in Comparative Perspective* (pp. 200–248). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Harnish, A. (2017). Ableism and the Trump phenomenon. *Disability & Society*, 32(3), 423–428.
- Hillary Clinton Bio. (2016). Retrieved May 30, 2017, from <https://www.hillaryclinton.com/about/hillary/>
- Inglehart, R. & Norris, P. (2016). *Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash*. Harvard Kennedy School.
- Kelley, S. (1983). *Interpreting Elections*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Liebes, T. & Ribak, R. (1991). A mother’s battle against TV news: a case study of political socialisation. *Discourse and Society*, 2(2), 202–22.
- MacWilliams, M. (2016). Who Decides When The Party Doesn’t? Authoritarian Voters and the Rise of Donald Trump. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 49(4), 716–721.
- Major, B., Blodorn, A., Blascovich, G. (2016). The threat of increasing diversity: Why many White Americans support Trump in the 2016 presidential election. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*. University of California.
- Martel, M. (1981). *Political Campaign Debates: Images, Strategies, and Tactics*. New York: Longmans.
- NBC News/Wall Street Journal Survey, Study #161027. (2016). Retrieved May 30, 2017, from <https://www.scribd.com/document/327216789/Public-161027-NBCWSJ-October-N900-Poll-10-11-RELEASE>
- Owen, D. (1995). The Debate Challenge: Candidate Strategies in the New Media Age. In K. E. Kendall (Ed.), *Presidential Campaign Discourse: Strategic Communication Problems* (pp. 135–55). Albany: State University of New York Press.

- Pavlidou, T-S. (2014). Constructing collectivity with 'we': An introduction. In T-S. Pavlidou (Ed.), *Constructing collectivity: 'We' across Languages and Contexts* (pp. 1-20). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Stelter, B. (2016, 27 Sep.). *Debate breaks record as most-watched in U.S. history*. Retrieved from <http://money.cnn.com/2016/09/27/media/debate-ratings-record-viewership/index.html>
- Tannen, D. (2007). *Talking voices: Repetition, dialogue, and imagery in conversational discourse*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- van Dijk, T. A. (1998). *Ideology: a multidisciplinary approach*. London: SAGE Publications.
- van Dijk, T. A. (2006a). Ideology and discourse analysis. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 11(2), 115–140.
- van Dijk, T. A. (2006b). Politics, ideology, and discourse. In R. Wodak (Ed.), *Elsevier Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics. Volume on Politics and Language* (pp. 728–740).
- van Dijk, T. A. (1997). What is political discourse analysis? In J. Blommaert & C. Bulcaen (Eds.), *Political linguistics* (pp. 11–52). Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Vestermark, I. (2007). *Metaphors in Politics: A study of the metaphorical personification of America in political discourse* [Abstract]. Luleå: Luleå University of Technology.
- Wilson, J. (2001). Political Discourse. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen & H. E. Hamilton (Eds.), *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (pp. 398–415). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.