

Honing the Rhetorical Tool: Rhetoric in Political Speeches

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審査結果の要旨

Summary

This dissertation focuses on analyzing political speeches for elements of Aristotelian rhetoric. Mori sees this dissertation as a continuation of research devoted to Aristotelian elements in political discourse, part of a resurgence of interest in uses of *The Rhetoric* that began in the 1980s. The first part of the dissertation traces the history of the reception of the work, outlining especially the anti-rhetorical tradition stemming from Plato's rejection of rhetoric and continuing down to Kant. Mori emphasizes Aristotle's own definition of rhetoric as "the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion." Mori claims that Aristotle himself criticized sophistic rhetoric while still maintaining the value of the art.

The dissertation focuses on the detection of the three elements of Aristotelian logic in political speeches from the United Nations and from inaugural addresses of two American presidents. The elements in question are ethos, pathos, and logos. The U.N. speeches are those of Hassan Rouhani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on September 29, 2015, and of Benjamin Netanyahu, the prime minister of the state of Israel, on October 1, 2015. The inaugural addresses are those of Barack Obama on January 20, 2009, and Donald Trump on January 20, 2017. The three elements that Mori is interested in identifying are ethos, logos, and

pathos.

Mori notes that analyses such as his own have followed two trajectories, one in which the researcher himself analyzes a speech and identifies the elements of Aristotelian rhetoric. Mori cites examples such as Ko's 2015 analysis of Taiwan's President Ma Ying-Jeou's speech for this type. He sees the advantage of this type of study as being the researcher's ability to deepen the study bases on his knowledge and intensive analysis; the weakness, on the other hand, he sees as being the study's total dependence on one researcher's cognitive facility.

The second trajectory is one in which the researcher uses trained assistants to identify the rhetorical elements. As an example of this type Mori cites a study by Samuel-Azran et al. (2015) investigating rhetorical strategies used by Israeli politicians on their Facebook walls. Three assistants were employed as coders, and these three had a high level of inter-coder agreement in a reliability test. The obvious advantage of this type of study, Mori claims, is the increased degree of objectivity involved.

Mori's own method of research in this dissertation followed neither type. While he did use coders to identify the rhetorical elements, they were not trained nor given tests for inter-coder agreement or reliability. Mori's idea was to use a "bottom-up" approach in which coders were given some printed definitions of the three rhetorical elements of ethos, logos, and pathos and then asked to read the speeches in question as well as to watch the speeches being given on the internet. They were then asked to identify the presence of the three elements in the speeches on an intuitive basis. Mori used this data from the coders he called "educated but non-trained" together with data from his own analysis to produce a "bottom-up" intuitive analysis of the speeches in question.

One of the advantages he expected was that such an approach would be closer to the intuitive reaction of the general public. An expected disadvantage, on the other hand, was that non-trained coders might produce data characterized by huge differences, and that such data might lack coherence.

In order to address the expected disadvantages, Mori set four guidelines to analyze the data: focus on rhetorical elements in which more than half of the six

coders identified the same rhetorical elements in the paragraph; scrutinize the contents of the target texts with the knowledge of the backdrop to the speech; analyze conceivable reasons that could have led coders to such coding; and discuss those rhetorical elements not identified by coders despite their obvious presence.

Mori used six coders in this study. Five of them were English native speakers, and one was a Bulgarian with native-like English fluency. All coders possessed a B.A. or higher. None of them were specialists in rhetoric. They watched videos of the target speeches, read the speeches, and coded them according to definitions of the three Aristotelian rhetorical elements provided by the researcher.

In addition to the three Aristotelian elements of ethos, logos, and pathos, Mori asked his coders to identify two more rhetorical strategies, bonding and bridging strategies. The former denotes a strategy used when a politician appeals to his own base of supporters; the latter is used to appeal to an audience with less sympathy for the speaker's beliefs. Mori gives examples of Catholic leaders speaking to Catholics on abortion issues or Trump speaking to coal miners in West Virginia as occasions probably characterized by bonding strategies. On the other hand, he suggests that Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela were good examples of speakers who tried to reach out to somewhat hostile white audiences with bridging strategies.

In his analysis, Mori found that coders tended to miss elements related to ethos, especially when they were moved by the speaker's words to identify elements of pathos. Coders tended to identify pathos most of the three rhetorical strategies. Coders had trouble distinguishing between bonding and bridging rhetoric in the inaugural addresses where elements of both strategies were employed.

Evaluation

The committee felt that Mori should provide his own definition of the three rhetorical elements, not simply rely on traditional sources. They also took issue with the fact that, while these addresses were political speeches, the coders experienced them predominantly as texts. Mori should have at least discussed this point. Despite these shortcomings the committee judged the dissertation to reflect a satisfactory level of thought, research, and achievement and worthy of being awarded the degree of PhD in English.