THE RHETORIC OF POWER: A QUANTITATIVE, COMPARATIVE
STUDY ON THE RHETORIC OF ADOLF HITLER
AND MAHATMA GANDHI

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iii

ABSTRACT viii

CHAPTER:

I  RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 10
   Introduction 10
   Problem and Need for Study 11

II  BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE 13
   Theoretical Background and Related Literature 13
      Charisma 15
      The Stages of Power: Frame-Breaking, Frame-Moving, Frame-Realigning 16
      Frame-Breaking 16
      Frame-Moving 17
      Frame-Realigning 17
      The Formula 18
   Theoretical Framework of the Hypotheses 18
      Hypothesis I 19
      Hypothesis II 20
      Hypothesis III 21
TABLE OF CONTENTS CONTINUED

APPENDICES

Appendix A 58

Appendix A1 – Hitler’s Speeches 58

Appendix A2 – Gandhi’s Speeches 58

Appendix B – DICTION 5.0 Constructs 59

Appendix C – Constructs Used in Hypotheses 62
ABSTRACT

It has long been known that leaders utilize rhetoric to gain supporters, but this research seeks to understand if there is a rhetorical formula that exists, and is utilized by politicians to gain a following. The rhetorical formula, if it exists, would be able to predict the type of rhetoric used in different stages of a leader’s career. This research quantitatively analyzes political rhetoric from Adolf Hitler and Mahatma Gandhi to find similarities in their use of rhetoric over the time of their rises to power in hopes to identify this formula. The study primarily builds on a previous study from Seyranian and Bligh (2008), who quantitatively analyzed rhetoric of Presidents of the United States, and a study from Robinson and Topping (2012) that quantitatively examines similarities in rhetoric over time from Adolf Hitler and Martin Luther King Jr. Though the results are inconclusive, the results do indicate that both Hitler and Gandhi might follow a pattern similar to that of United States presidents, as studied by Seyranian and Bligh (2008). The results of this thesis warrant further discussion and study in the field of rhetoric and power.
“Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion. This is not a function of any other art. Every other art can instruct or persuade about its own particular subject-matter; for instance, medicine about what is healthy and unhealthy, geometry about the properties of magnitudes, arithmetic about numbers, and the same is true of the other arts and sciences. But rhetoric we look upon as the power of observing the means of persuasion on almost any subject presented to us.”

Aristotle
CHAPTER I
THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Introduction

Social change does not come about by serendipity. On the contrary, social change often arises from an intentional force brought forth by a charismatic leader. Leaders construct social change through discourse, which forms how their followers’ basic assumptions about the world are created, sustained, and inevitably transformed to conform to the leader’s mold. Discourse, defined in this paper as any written or spoken communication or debate, which is often persuasive in nature, allows leaders to form relational bonds; create, transform and maintain structure; and reinforce or challenge beliefs (Barrett, Thomas & Hocevar, 1995, p. 353). In this way, discourse is the main agent for communication and organization, because it allows ideas to be traded and negotiated between listeners and speakers until a consensus is formed. From the perspective of a leader, the consensus is formed by the reactions of the listeners to the ideas put forth by the leader. This consensus, which morphs to accommodate both the motives of the leader, and the desires of the followers, is inherent to the push-pull structure of power.

According to research by Seyranian and Bligh in their work on presidential rhetoric, an effective political leader uses discourse to inspire their followers to carry out some social change. Instead of using rewards and punishments, effective political leaders use specific communication, and specifically, rhetorical strategies to persuade others to adopt their vision of social change (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008, p. 54). The rhetoric of effective political leaders is unique in that it can leverage political outcomes without being a declaration of war or peace. It allows both proponents of the leader to support actions, and can cause opponents to be talked
into a corner, compelled to endorse a stance they would otherwise reject (Jackson & Krebs, 2007, p. 36). All other factors held equal, rhetoric is one of the most important strategies for advancing political agendas in all of history. Jackson and Krebs (2007) argue that the power of rhetoric, or what they define as *rhetorical coercion*, is so effective because it allows the claimant, in this case a leader, to make a statement to the public in a setting in which the opposition has little to no way to respond adversely. Power, then, falls exclusively in the hands of the leader, because those who oppose are not offered a stage in which to voice their grievances (Jackson & Krebs, 2007).

Rhetoric, thus, is a powerful and coercive tool, or some may say weapon, used by leaders. However, what is it about a successful leader’s rhetoric that allows them to rise in power? What separates a series of lectures at a university from a series of speeches that convince millions to engage in war? This study seeks to answer this question. Principally, this study aims to discover if there is a certain formula that leaders consciously or subconsciously adhere to; a formula which creates the most effective rhetoric, and transitively the most effective leadership.

**Problem and Need for Study**

Though there have been studies that have investigated the links between rhetoric and how it relates to power, there have been no studies to my knowledge that have looked to find a specific rhetorical formula that could predict the success of a leader. Thus, for this research I have chosen Adolf Hitler and Mahatma Gandhi to represent two successful, charismatic leaders. I will seek to identify commonalities that exist between their rhetoric through three stages of their rise to power. The purpose of identifying a formula is to first reveal the structure of political speeches throughout the career of a leader, and secondarily to predict the success of a
leader based on adherence to this prototypical model. In a study by Reza Khany and Zohre Hamzelou (2014), “A Systemic Functional Analysis of Dictators’ Speech: Toward a Move-based Model”, the researchers note that “based on the Systemic Functional Grammar theory (Halliday, 1985), which holds the view that there exists a discernible pattern in behavior, speeches [of leaders] reveal a solid pattern of moves laid within them … [and] when the purpose and the target audience are the same, one prototype model can be extracted” (Khany & Hamzelou, 2014, p. 922). This paper will attempt to identify if such a prototypical model exists.

To investigate the link between rhetoric and power, this research compares two leaders who on paper are opposites, Adolf Hitler and Mahatma Gandhi. By studying leaders with vastly different belief systems, morals, and values, it allows us to find similarities in rhetoric that are not biased towards like-minded leaders. This study draws comparisons between the rhetoric of Adolf Hitler and Mahatma Gandhi over the duration of their rise to power. It looks at the changes that occur between their initial breakout into the political sphere to the climax point of their power. This study, unlike others that precede it, only looks at the span of the rise to power of two leaders, because it aims to find specific rhetorical strategies that leaders use to gain a following and subsequently rise to power.
CHAPTER II
BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE

Theoretical Background and Related Literature

Theories of effective leadership and its relation to rhetoric is a well-researched topic, and also the basis for this study. A pivotal study in this field comes from researchers Jay A. Conger and Rabindra N. Kanungo in their work “Charismatic Leadership in Organizations: Perceived Behavioral Attributes and Their Measurement” (1994). This study built upon their 1987 research on charismatic leadership in an organizational setting, in part creating a quantitative scale to measure the development of leadership (Conger & Kanungo, 1994). Conger and Kanungo’s research was the first to create three stages in leadership development, which is the main premise for this study. In Conger and Kanungo’s 1994 study, they identified these three stages as being: (1) environmental assessment, (2) vision formulation, and (3) implementation. Stage one can be identified by a leader’s desire to “change the status quo” (Conger & Kanungo, 1994, p. 442), which leads he or she to be most sensitive to the needs of his or her followers. In stage two, a leader begins to share his or her vision with his or her followers, and create the notion of ideal
circumstances if the followers adhere to the leader’s vision \((\text{ibid})\). Finally, the third stage is characterized by a leader “engaging in exemplary acts that subordinates interpret as involving great personal risk and self-sacrifice” \((\text{ibid})\). The foundation that Conger and Kanungo’s study created opened many doors to quantitative rhetorical research in the years to come.

The research conducted by Conger and Kanungo in 1987 and 1994 was built upon in the research of Shamir, House and Arthur (1993), Fiol et al. (1999), Seyranian and Bligh (2008), and Robinson and Topping (2012), among others. Shamir et al. (1993) looked to build upon Conger and Kanungo’s work by researching how followers could be motivated by charismatic leaders. Moreover, they looked at organizational conditions that might have an effect on the adherence of followers to a charismatic leader. Fiol et al. (1999) also identified three phases, building upon previous research on leader and follower motivations from Lewin’s collection of theoretical papers entitled “Field Theory in Social Science” (Lewin, 1951). It is Fiol et al.’s (1999) conceptualization of three temporal phases (frame-breaking, frame-moving, frame-realigning) of leadership development that this research builds upon.

Seyranian and Bligh (2008) applied the research of Fiol et al. (1999) to study the rhetoric of social change in United States Presidents. Seyranian and Bligh (2008) found that charismatic leaders such as United States Presidents are especially adept at framing and aligning a group identity to be compatible and supportive of a leader’s vision for social change (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008, p. 68). The researchers were able to identify three stages of framing that charismatic leaders use, and were able to pinpoint certain rhetorical strategies used in each stage of framing. However, though their research was comprehensive and offered new light into quantitative analysis of rhetoric, Seyranian and Bligh (2008) emphasized that their results “warrant replication in other leadership samples”, and that “future research in this area is critical in
gaining a complete understanding of charismatic leadership that includes the important knowledge of the process through which social change is brought about” (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008, p. 54). Moreover, they posit that “with continued research efforts in this area, it may eventually be feasible to unravel the mystery surrounding the seemingly ‘magical ability’ (Weber, 1946 in Seyranian & Bligh, 2008, p. 71) of charismatic leaders to institute social change” (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008, p. 54). Finally, this study looks to the efforts of Robinson and Topping (2012) in their work “The Rhetoric of Power: A Comparison of Hitler and Martin Luther King Jr.”. Robinson and Topping (2012) expanded upon research from Conger and Kanungo (1987; 1994), Shamir et al. (1993), and Seyranian and Bligh (2008) to devise a study comparing rhetoric of Martin Luther King Jr. and Adolf Hitler. Robinson and Topping (2012) had hoped to find, in their study of two very different leaders, “variation in their patterns of rhetoric [that would] distinguish between a toxic and a moral leader” (Robinson & Topping, 2012, p. 203). However, while their results pointed to limited support for Seyranian and Bligh’s (2008) study, they were still largely inconclusive. Robinson and Topping (2012) note that while their research contributed to the field of leadership rhetoric, further studies should be conducted to confirm or deny results. Therefore, this study was born of many necessities in this research field, in hopes that it could in some way contribute to the growing, but still relatively small field of the rhetoric of power.

Charisma

What is it that makes a leader charismatic? Qualitatively, it is possible to look objectively at attributes such as vision and articulation, sensitivity to the environment, sensitivity to member needs, personal risk taking, and the performance of unconventional behavior (Conger & Kanungo, 1998). If the leader exhibits these qualities, Conger and Kanungo (1998) posit that we
can deduce that he or she has a charismatic leadership style. Moreover, charisma is defined by the “Weberian Theory of Charisma”. The “Weberian Theory of Charisma” describes charisma as a one of three ideal-typical forms of a leader, the two others being traditional and rational-legal, which are precise, unambiguously-defined abstractions designed from phenomena, and not simply descriptions (Hava & Kwok-Bun, 2011, p. 13). A charismatic leader, unlike a traditional or a rational-legal leader, is chosen to lead based upon the idea that he or she is “extraordinarily gifted, and [whose] authority, based on charismatic grounds, rests on devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of the individual” (Hava & Kwok-Bun, 2011, p. 14).

**The Stages of Power: Frame-Breaking, Frame-Moving, Frame-Realigning**

The speeches in this research are divided into three temporal stages, which have been adopted from a study by Seyranian and Bligh (2008), and from research by Lewin (1951) and Fiol et al. (1999). In “Presidential charismatic leadership: Exploring the Rhetoric of Social Change”, Seyranian and Bligh deduce that in the pursuit of power, leaders convey their influence in three temporal communication phases: frame-breaking, frame-moving, and frame-realigning (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008).

**Frame-Breaking**

The first phase is defined as “frame-breaking”, in which charismatic leaders increase their identification with their followers through inclusive language and emphasize dissatisfaction with the status quo, thereby inducing the urgency for change. Leaders are likely to use negative language to either express distaste with the status quo, or to negate their followers’ fear of change (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008; Shamir et al., 1994). Leaders are also likely to be pessimistic about the current state of the union, so as to encourage moving away from the status quo.
Moreover, leaders are likely in this stage to emphasize commonality with their followers and create a group identity. These tactics work to establish the perception that the leader is a) willing to change the status quo and b) willing to cooperate with the people to do so.

Frame-Moving

The second phase “frame-moving” occurs when leaders attempt to replace ideas that may go against the change the leader is trying to implement with ideas that will further their vision (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008). Leaders attempt to “move people's neutral state of either non-support for convention or non-fear of change to support for change”, and “accomplish this by either: (a) encouraging people's desire for non-convention; or, (b) encouraging people to fear not changing the old convention” (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008). Furthermore, leaders often attempt to obscure their overall goals and intentions by relying heavily on ambiguity, references to the future, and vivid imagery (Fiol et al., 1999). By utilizing these strategies, leaders are able to link their values and visions to utopian outcomes (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008).

Frame-Realigning

Finally, the third phase of “frame-realigning” occurs when charismatic leaders attempt to inspire their followers by affirming their newly held values, those which were encouraged by the leader, and motivating them to embrace change (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008). This stage generally involves solidifying values that have been constructed in the first two stages, and reinforcing them with concrete plans for the future, as well as with optimistic promises. During this time, it becomes most appropriate for leaders to express their tenacity, and take action on issues they
may have shied from during the earlier stages in order to avoid appearing too aggressive. By examining Hitler and Gandhi’s rhetoric in a longitudinal study of their rise to power, it allows us to identify these three phases on a shorter timeline.

**The Formula**

These stages allow us to create the “formula” we are looking to prove exists in the rhetoric of leaders. While this will be expanded upon throughout this paper, the basic formula consists of: High usage of *commonality* and low usage of *optimism* in the frame-breaking stage, low use of *realism* in the frame-moving stage, and high usage of *activity* and *certainty* rhetoric in the frame-realigning stage. Each construct in this formula will be expanded upon in the hypotheses.

**Theoretical Framework of the Hypotheses**

The hypotheses in this research were formed based on research and results of studies mentioned previously, e.g. Fiol et al. (1999), Seyranian and Bligh (2008), and Robinson and Topping (2012), and were modified to fit the direction of this study. This study attempts to confirm some of the hypotheses presented in earlier studies in hopes to build upon the field of rhetoric, and its correlation with power. All hypotheses presented in this paper generate from the idea that leaders, through their rhetoric, attempt to increase “liking”, a concept presented in research by Hogg (2001), and Berscheid and Reis (1998). Liking can be compared to social attraction between followers and a leader, and can “increase compliance with requests [because]…if you like someone you are more likely to agree with them and comply with
requests, suggestions, and orders” (Williams, Forgas, & Hippel, 2005, p. 250). The stronger liking that occurs in a leader-follower distribution, the greater ability the leader has to exercise influence, and overtime, more liking “imbues the leader with prestige and status and begins to reify an intragroup” (Hogg, 2001, p. 187), and in this case the intragroup are the followers of the political figure. Thus, the hypotheses of this research emphasize that leaders use rhetoric to intentionally increase liking, and that this increase of liking correlates to an increase in their power. Leaders are not likely to use language or pursue acts that will in any way decrease their liking, therefore we can assume that Hitler and Gandhi use certain rhetorical strategies only to increase liking.

**Hypothesis I**

*Hitler and Gandhi will use the highest amount of rhetoric that refers to commonality during the frame-breaking stage of their rise to power.*

This hypothesis was developed as a response to the study by Fiol et al. (1999), which found that charismatic leaders tend to use more rhetoric that favors cooperation and inclusion in the earliest phases of their career. Their use of inclusive rhetoric early in their careers during the frame-breaking stage is, in part, due to the leader’s attempts to create social inclusion by means of speech (Fiol et al., 1999). Early on, leaders aim to create a group consciousness, which allows them to more readily identify with their followers, and to change the beliefs of their followers to the beliefs they themselves hold (Fiol et al., 1999). Hogg (2001), in his *Social Identity Theory of Leadership*, posits that leaders attempt to create a group identity by “constructing an intragroup prototypicality gradient that invests the most prototypical member with the appearance of having influence” which then causes “members [to] cognitively and behaviorally conform to the prototype” (Hogg, 2001, p. 184). The prototypical member in the case of a leader-follower power
structure would be the leader. By acting as a prototypical member, it allows the leader to implement his or her ideas in a way that seems as if the group has come to a common consensus, and downplays the power structure in place between leaders and followers. To act as the prototypical member, while still maintaining the identity as part of the group, a leader will use inclusive and cooperative rhetoric.

Furthermore, to support our proposed hypothesis, Shamir et al. (1993) proposes that leaders:

“… point out similarities in background, experiences, and values between him and potential followers in order to demonstrate his belonging to the same collectivity, and to posit himself as a ‘representative character’ and a potential role model, [which] lays the groundwork for potential followers’ identification with the leader, and for their emulation of the leader's beliefs and acceptance of the leader's mission” (p. 65).

In sum, a leader will present himself or herself as common to his or her followers so that the followers feel most fairly and wholly represented by the leader.

**Hypothesis II**

*Hitler and Gandhi will use the least amount of rhetoric that refers to optimism during the frame-breaking stage of their rise to power.*

Fiol et al. (1999) posit that in the early phase, or frame-breaking stage, of a leader’s career, they must create “a sense of dissatisfaction with the current status quo” in order to reinforce the idea that the only way to remedy the problems that may or may not exist is to follow the new plan of the new leader. This, like inclusive language, aids in the frame-breaking process that occurs in the early careers of charismatic leaders. In the frame-breaking stage, it is important for leaders to eradicate their followers’ desire to maintain the status quo and abolish
fears of change (Fiol et al., 1999, p. 453). By using tactics of blame, and emphasizing hardship under the current state, leaders are able to create the idea that their followers should be dissatisfied with the present situation.

Hogg explains how blame can work in a leader’s favor by noting that an “external threat from an outgroup might be particularly effective … as it enhances identification and depersonalization and increases solidarity and social attraction” (Hogg, 2000, p. 194). This, in effect, places more faith in the leader because they are removed from the conflict, and subsequently the people feel united against what they believe to be a common enemy.

**Hypothesis III**

*Hitler and Gandhi will use the least language that pertains to realism in the frame-moving stage of their rise to power.*

In the middle stage of leader’s career, they attempt to employ frame-moving, which happens when they wish to negate values previously held by their followers, and begin to replace those with their own values (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008). This process generally occurs after the leaders have successfully created the idea of a dystopia in the first phase, making their followers open for solutions, and ready to shift their values to those which they perceive will help themselves and their society.

It is in this phase that Fiol et al. (1999) argue that *realism* will be lowest, and abstraction will be highest. They note that “effective change agents enlarge the boundaries of their discourse by employing high levels of abstraction … in their discourse during the frame-moving phase” (Fiol et al., 1999, p. 463). Fiol et al. give the example of President George Bush Senior’s use of abstract language following the Persian Gulf intervention of 1991, where he used the phrase “new world order” to rally around innovation and progress. However, the phrase inherently had
little or no concrete meaning, but still aided in President Bush gaining a large following that was willing to accept his values and trust him as a leader (Fiol et al., 1999, p. 463).

In support of this hypothesis is also the work of Eisenberg (1984) “Ambiguity as strategy in organizational communication”. He argues in this work that ambiguity can, and often is, used strategically by leaders to achieve goals by causing followers with different views to believe they are supporting the same value system. Eisenberg (1984) stresses the necessity of ambiguity as a way to “strategically foster agreement on abstractions without limiting specific interpretations”, “foster the existence of multiple viewpoints” and “facilitate change through the development of relationships among organizational members” who believe they are in agreement (Eisenberg, 1984, p. 236-237). Furthermore, strategic ambiguity used by a leader who has established credibility works to maintain the power structure in any organization. Ambiguity bolsters credibility by not providing the receivers with any new information that may affect the leader negatively (Eisenberg, 1984, p. 241). In essence, the less real, concrete language that the leader is to use during the frame-moving phase, the more unity, credibility, and positive reactions they will gain.

**Hypothesis IV**

*Hitler and Gandhi will exhibit highest levels of activity in the frame-realigning stage of their rise to power.*

In his 1998 study of American presidential proactivity, Deluga (1998) found that exhibition of “presidential proactivity was an important ingredient in the charismatic leader's ability to accomplish impressive results” (Deluga, 1998, p. 287). This proactivity described by Deluga (1998) is exhibited through rhetoric that promotes an active stance, and stresses accomplishment. Using this type of language in the final stage of a leader’s rise to power allows
leaders to assure their followers that they are capable of putting their plans into action, and succeeding when they do. It is important that use of rhetoric that denotes activity and action comes after the leader has broken and moved the frames of their followers. If this language is used too early in their rise to power, it may have a detrimental effect on perceptions of followers. Instead of creating the perception that a leader is ambitious, followers may perceive the leaders as menacing or overly aggressive.

In the frame-realigning stage of a leader’s rise to power, Seyranian and Bligh (2008) argue that a leader will use more activity because of two reasons: the leader is “substituting a desire for non-convention to a desire for change or innovation; or, substituting the fear of not changing the old convention to a desire for innovation” (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008, p. 55). In either case, a leader is working to motivate their followers to take action to support a new vision or value system. Moreover, Seyranian and Bligh posit that rhetoric relating to action is used most frequently during the frame-realigning phase to “highlight past and present activity and accomplishments and to link these accomplishments to the goals of the distal future” (Seyranian & Bligh, 2008, p. 58). By highlighting this activity, it fosters the idea that the leader has accomplished many tasks, which in turn creates the perception that these victories will occur in perpetuity.

Seyranian and Bligh (2008) note two case studies that support this hypothesis as well; they describe the rhetoric of President George W. Bush following September 11, 2001, and the rhetoric of President Bill Clinton while he campaigned for protection of United States’ borders. Bush used active language to motivate followers to rally for invasion of the Middle East, announcing “We're going to hunt them down one at a time…it doesn't matter where they hide, as we work with our friends we will find them and bring them to justice.” (Bush, 2002, in Seyranian
Clinton uses similar language, including a high amount of progressive verbs and “we” statements, when he delivered the State of the Union in 1996, saying, “We are increasing border controls by 50 percent. We are increasing inspections to prevent the hiring of illegal immigrants. And tonight, I announce I will sign an executive order to deny federal contracts to businesses that hire illegal immigrants” (Clinton, 1996 in Seyranian & Bligh, 2008, p. 58).

Hypothesis V

*Hitler and Gandhi will demonstrate highest levels of certainty in the frame-realigning stage of their rise to power.*

In the frame-realigning stage, leaders must appear definitively confident in the choices that they have made so that their followers will entrust them to carry out their vision. Throughout the first two phases, the leader must negotiate with followers, remain ambiguous, and be open to changing their position on issues to please followers. However, in the final phase, leaders gain more by being steadfast in their choices, and expressing high levels of *certainty*. This hypothesis corroborates the study by Fiol et al. (1999), who found that in the frame-realigning phase, leaders use the least conceptual language. Lewin (1951) also notes in his research that during the final phase “charismatic leaders seek to refreeze and ensure the permanency of their values” (Lewin, 1951, p. 229)

It is important for the leaders to not become too specific and certain too early in their careers. As Stephen Denning (2007) describes in *The Secret Language of Leadership: How Leaders Inspire Action Through Narrative*, “if reasons are given before the emotional connection is established, they are likely to be heard as so much noise. Worse, if the audience is skeptical, cynical, or hostile, the reasons tend to flip and become ammunition for the opposite point of
view.” Denning (2007) emphasizes that it is important to build a foundation of trust before committing to a certain set of values that followers are to concur with. Denning goes on to contrast the use of a high level of *certainty* and specificity in the final phase noting “if the reasons come after an emotional connection has been established with the change idea, then the reasons can reinforce it, because now listeners are actively searching for reasons to support a decision they have in principle already taken” (Denning, 2008, p. 36). A high level of *certainty* can also be perceived as a high level of finality. Seyranian and Bligh (2008) posit that when actions are perceived to be consistent in nature, “a return to old conventions may no longer be perceived as a viable option” (p. 68).

**Variables**

There is a degree of difficulty in comparing two leader’s speeches and rhetorical strategies. This is in part due to the abundance of variables that must be considered in a content analysis of discourse from leaders of different cultures and time periods. In order to create an unbiased analysis of rhetoric, several variables must be assumed as constants, such as leadership style, time period, and external forces acting that might expedite or abate a leader’s rise to power.

**Charisma in the Research Design**

This paper will first hold *charisma* as an independent variable. The dearth and unreliability of primary accounts of these traits makes qualitative deductions about the charisma of Hitler and Gandhi difficult, though not wholly impossible. Thus, to assess the charisma of
Gandhi, quantitative methods have been employed by a previous study, which used the same software our study will use: DICTION 5.0. Bligh and Robinson (2010) found that Gandhi exhibits traits similar to those of United States Presidents, especially his ability to articulate the “intolerable nature of the present” (Bligh & Robinson, 2010, p. 850). According to “Was Gandhi Charismatic? Exploring the rhetorical leadership of Mahatma Gandhi” (Bligh & Robinson, 2010), Bligh and Robinson conclude that Gandhi, while not exhibiting traditionally thought charismatic attributes, does maintain a charismatic leadership style. Bligh and Robinson (2010) analyze Gandhi’s speech for the constructs of morality, temporal orientation, tangibility, adversity, action, similarity to followers, follower’s worth, and collective focus to arrive at this conclusion. As a result, Gandhi will be considered a charismatic leader in this investigation using the criterion and conclusions put forth by Bligh and Robinson (2010).

A quantitative study on the charisma of Adolf Hitler, to my knowledge, does not presently exist. However, a greater amount of objective resources regarding the personality of Hitler exist, making him a better candidate for a qualitative definition of charisma. There are three basic attributes of a charismatic leader as theorized by Max Weber that are met by Hitler. The first is a “very personal devotion and duty, [whereby] the leader claims ultimate authority [and] the followers accept obedience as their duty” (Lepsius, 2006, p. 175). Hitler maintained during his leadership that he would relieve Germany of the economic and political crisis they had fallen into following World War I. He effectively presented himself as the means by which Germany would reach stability. Hitler presented a situation which stressed only two outcomes: to accept Hitler as the ultimate authority or to let Germany perish; the people of Germany thus accepted obedience as their duty.
The second attribute of a charismatic leader is that he or she is able to create standards under which his followers must comply (Lepsius, 2006, p. 175). Once again, by offering no alternatives to success except by accepting his system of values, Hitler made it impossible for his followers to be in noncompliance with even the most ludicrous of his policies. Though friends and neighbors of Jewish people, many of his German followers were quick to turn in the Jewish people, as long as it meant Germany would be saved. Hitler repeatedly stressed his personal commitment to his policies, suggesting that if he was to make sacrifices, his followers should as well. In his speech on September 1, 1939, Hitler stated, “If I now demand of the German people sacrifices and, if necessary, every sacrifice, then I am entitled to it. For today I am myself, as I was before, just as prepared to make every personal sacrifice” (Lepsius, 2006, p. 185). Those internal to the regime were also in compliance, so as to not fall out of good faith with the leader. Lepsius describes the internal situation as one of submission or rejection: “Those who refused to submit to his authority lost all support within the Party and any charismatic qualifications that they may have achieved” (Lepsius, 2006, p. 182).

The third characteristic of a charismatic leader is their ability to create an “emotional community bound by personal devotion to the leader and organised by followers chosen by him” (Lepsius, 2006, p. 182). This was achieved by Hitler through bribery, perceived socialism, and secret coalitions that promised bright futures for those in the ‘inner circle’. Lepsius notes of Hitler’s regime that “personal relationships, such as patronage, rivalry, or feuds, were of much greater importance than in a hierarchical, regulated bureaucratic organisation” (Lepsius, 2006, p. 182). By creating a sort of brotherhood, or exclusive club, Hitler worked to intensify the bonds he had created with his followers, and with other party members. In essence, Hitler’s charisma led millions to a common ideal that was inspired by motives which were opposite from normal
human morality. Because of his ability to persuade others against the norm, Hitler’s abilities can be considered inaccessible to the ordinary person. This study aims to find rhetorical similarities in charismatic leaders, and time and resource constraints hinder this investigation from forming an independent theory on charisma that can be applied to both Hitler and Gandhi. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, the aforementioned quantitative and qualitative studies allow us to reach the conclusion that Adolf Hitler and Mahatma Gandhi were charismatic leaders, thus also permitting us to use this variable as a constant in this investigation.

Time Frame

Adolf Hitler and Mahatma Gandhi, though existing independently of each other, existed in the same time period. This is important not necessarily for comparing the political atmosphere of the time frame, but rather for comparing the type of language that existed during the period. Both leaders began their rise to power in the 1920s, and remained in power until the late 1940s. Though this study will focus only on their respective rise to power, it is important to note that they were born within twenty years of each other, Gandhi in 1869, and Hitler in 1889, and perished within three years of each other, Gandhi in 1948, and Hitler in 1945. The Apparent-Time Hypothesis of Sociolinguistics posits that the speech of each generation is assumed to reflect the language more or less as it existed at the time when that generation learned the language (Bailey, Wikle, Tillery, & Sand, 1991). By this theory, it is possible to hold that the speech of Hitler is relatively similar to that of Gandhi, despite cultural and language differences. Though born twenty years apart, linguistic change occurs slowly, and it is likely that many of the same conventions that governed Hitler’s speech governed Gandhi’s as well. In effect, the
differences that exist are negligible, and will not be explained as a source of variance. Therefore, the variable of historical speech patterns will be considered a constant for this study.

External Factors

While the variables of leadership type and historical speech patterns can be kept constant, it is much more difficult to treat external forces as such. In fact, it is nearly, if not wholly, impossible to state that the atmospheres surrounding each leader’s rise to power are identical. Therefore, we must instead hold that the speech situations are different, and that there are external factors that aided in the rise to power of Hitler and Gandhi. This will be identified as a limitation of the study. However, though a limitation, we must always assume correlation between rhetoric and rise to power, and never causation. Thus, while rhetoric can very well be argued to be a factor that aided in a leader’s rise to power, it will never be the case that rhetoric will be assumed to have caused a leader’s rise to power.
Hypothesis I

*Hitler and Gandhi will use the highest amount of rhetoric that refers to commonality during the frame-breaking stage of their rise to power*

The first hypothesis proposes that the most language referring to *commonality* with followers will be used in the early stages of the leaders’ careers because of their ardent attempts to form a group identity. Group identification also strengthens liking between the leader and his or her followers.

Centrality, rapport, and cooperation relate to words which connote affinity for others and close, harmonious relationships in which all parties understand each other’s feelings or ideas well (Hart, 2000). This terminology promotes the procuration and sustaining of group ideals, therefore enhancing collectivity. The terms that are subtracted from the operation are those which represent social isolation, freedom from group pressure, and a difference in opinion.

Hypothesis II
Hitler and Gandhi will use the least amount of rhetoric that refers to optimism during the frame-breaking stage of their rise to power.

I hypothesize that leaders will use the least amount of optimism in the frame-breaking stage of their careers as they stress the horror of maintaining the status quo.

As with the previous equation, each term represents a construct of DICTION 5.0. The first three terms convey positive qualities of a person or situation. Examples of these terms would be words similar to “happiness, pride, success” (Hart, 2000). The final three terms are subtracted from the positive language, and are those words which emphasize human fears, natural disasters, or unsavory political outcomes (Hart, 2000). These terms reify any fears that the leader’s followers have about their current situations, creating a desire to move away from the present, and denote unfortunate circumstances as a result of an external force that does not include the speaker (Hart, 2000).

Hypothesis III

Hitler and Gandhi will use the least language that pertains to realism in the frame-moving stage of their rise to power.

Realism is hypothesized to be lowest during the frame-moving stage of a leader’s rise to power. The first six constructs include words that are tangible and material in nature (Hart, 2000, p. 47), thus eliminating words that might express an ambiguous picture or go beyond the scope of realism. This limits references to a spiritual being or higher power, as well as words that involve cognitive processes. Instead, more tangible items, occupations, and people are included (Hart, 2000, p. 47). Also in these constructs are words based on C.K. Ogden’s (1968) operation
words, which he calculates to be the most common words in the English language, as well as terms which note location or time.

The final two terms that are subtracted in the equation are those which emphasize ambiguity and time frames outside of the present. The complexity construct measures ambiguity by including those words which have a high number of characters per word (Hart, 2000, p. 46). Longer words can add unnecessary convulsion to phrases, and as Rudolph Flesch's research (1949) on human interest and rhetoric concludes, “convoluted phrasings make a text's ideas abstract and its implications unclear” (Flesch, 1949, in Hart, 2000, p. 46).

Hypothesis IV

*Hitler and Gandhi will exhibit highest levels of activity in the frame-realigning stage of their rise to power.*

*Activity* is hypothesized to be the highest in the frame-realigning phase of their rise to power. Words that make up this construct are those that demonstrate tenacity, action, proactivity, personal triumph and goal-directedness make up this construct (Hart, 2000, p. 46). Words that connote passivity are subtracted from this construct, as well as words that denote thinking or pondering.

Hypothesis V

*Hitler and Gandhi will demonstrate highest levels of certainty in the frame-realigning stage of their rise to power.*

*Certainty* is hypothesized to be highest in the frame-realigning stage of power. The construct of *certainty* includes words which demonstrate inflexibility, resoluteness, and
completeness. The first four constructs that are added in the equation exhibit characteristics such as a drive to accomplish tasks, insistence, commonality, and permanence (Hart, 2000, p. 46). The constructs that are subtracted from the equation are those which may represent ambiguity, blanket terms, or words that exclude followers, such as self-reference terms. The equation used to test this hypothesis is: $\text{Certainty} = \left[ \text{Tenacity} + \text{Leveling} + \text{Collectives} + \text{Insistence} \right] - \left[ \text{Numerical Terms} + \text{Ambivalence} + \text{Self Reference} + \text{Variety} \right]$. 

Overview of Hypotheses

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader goals</th>
<th>Frame-Breaking</th>
<th>Frame-Moving</th>
<th>Frame-Realigning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1) Create a group consciousness</td>
<td>1) Offer ambiguous plans for improvement of society</td>
<td>1) Show an active stance on issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Promote inclusion</td>
<td>2) Enhance intragroup relationships by promoting common ideals with wide interpretations</td>
<td>2) Stress accomplishment in past and present to create the idea of perpetual accomplishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3) Create a dystopian view of society</td>
<td></td>
<td>3) Show permanency of leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4) Create dissatisfaction with the status quo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhetorical Strategies</td>
<td>1) High levels of commonality rhetoric</td>
<td>1) High levels of ambiguity</td>
<td>1) High levels of active rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) Low levels of optimism and high levels of negativity</td>
<td>2) Low levels of realism</td>
<td>2) High levels of certainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3) Low ambiguity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER IV

METHODS

Equations Used to Test Hypotheses

**Hypothesis I:** Commonality = [Centrality + Cooperation + Rapport] - [Diversity + Exclusion + Liberation].

**Hypothesis II:** Optimism = [Praise + Satisfaction + Inspiration] - [Blame + Hardship + Denial].

**Hypothesis III:** Realism = [Familiarity + Spatial Terms + Temporal Awareness + Present Condition + Human Interest + Concreteness] - [Past Concern + Complexity].

**Hypothesis IV:** Activity = [Aggression + Accomplishment + Communality + Motion] - [Cognitive Terms + Passivity + Embellishment].
**Hypothesis V:** Certainty = [Tenacity + Leveling + Collectives + Insistence] - [Numerical Terms + Ambivalence + Self Reference + Variety]

**Research Design**

To examine the rhetorical characteristics of these speeches, a qualitative content analysis was conducted through the computer program DICTION 5.0. This is a software which “conducts searches via a 10,000-word corpus, and any number of user created custom dictionaries for particular research needs. [Moreover], DICTION reports about the texts it processes and also writes the results to numeric files for later statistical analysis. Output includes raw totals, percentages, and standardized scores” (Hart, 2000, p. 7). This software allows for a large amount of data to be quantitatively analyzed, thus nineteen speeches could undergo content analysis without the subjectivity that arises in doing so by hand. The program has been used in many past studies to analyze political rhetoric (e.g., Robinson and Topping [2012], Bligh et al. (2004), and Seyranian and Bligh (2008)), which will be referred to throughout this research. The program analyzes thirty-nine constructs pertaining to rhetoric by calculating the occurrence of certain words that make up each construct. The program then tests the results from each entry, in this case speeches, against the statistical mean, and reports the standard scores of each category. Negative results indicate that the construct occurs less frequently than the average range, and positive results can indicate that the construct occurs more frequently than the average range. Because this program is highly standardized, it is useful for looking objectively at data and observing trends in a comparative analysis. The constructs analyzed are available in Appendix B and C.
Sample Selection

The intent of this research is to predict if all leaders adhere to certain rhetorical strategies, which then translates into amassing a greater following overtime. This will be tested by using a small sample size of two very different leaders: Adolf Hitler and Mahatma Gandhi. To test the use of rhetorical strategies overtime, we will look at the data in the context of frame-breaking, frame-moving, and frame-realigning. To accomplish this, the data is split into time periods of early rise to power, middle of rise to power, and climax of power. For this research, the “early” category, or those falling into the frame-breaking stage, consists of speeches given within the first two years of Hitler or Gandhi becoming a political figure. The “late” or frame-realigning category consists of speeches given in the last five years leading up to the time that each figure reached climax of power, or had amassed the greatest quantity of followers before relatively plateauing in follower acquisition. The “middle” or frame-moving speeches are any that fall between the two latter categories.

The data consists of nine speeches for Adolf Hitler, performed publicly between the years of 1920 and 1930. These speeches were chosen on the basis that Hitler performed his first recognized public speech in 1919, for which a transcript is unavailable, and began regularly giving public speeches in 1920. This marks the beginning of his career as both an orator and a political figure. The year 1930 marks the finality of his pre-chancellor career, as he was elected chancellor of Germany in 1933.

There are ten speeches selected for Gandhi between the years of 1919 and 1930. Speeches between these dates are selected due to Gandhi’s first prominent and public speech being given in 1919, and his last speech in 1930 before he became the unofficial leader of the non-violent civil disobedience movement. Therefore, the timelines of these speeches represent
the uprising of both leader’s careers. The speeches had to be greater than 500 words in length. Furthermore, in addition to meeting the criteria of being within a specific timeline, the speeches also had to be delivered to a public audience where there were more than approximately fifty listeners in attendance. Thus, this study excludes those speeches which were delivered in private, or those speeches only delivered to an audience of less than approximately fifty people. This ensured that the style of the speeches was consistent over time.

Data Analysis

The data was collected from DICTION 5.0, and the standard scores were uploaded into an excel spreadsheet. From this, the speech data was divided into the three time-frames, and an average was taken of the data in each time frame. This resulted in three data points that were the average standard score of the speeches in the frame-breaking, frame-moving, and frame-realigning stages. This allowed the data to be analyzed on a more manageable scale. While each category was analyzed, this study looks mainly at the five constructs created by the DICTION 5.0 software: Activity, Optimism, Certainty, Realism, and Commonality. These constructs contain many of the categories that DICTION 5.0 analyzes, and thus present the larger picture of trends in political rhetoric overtime. Therefore, to analyze the data, this study looks the averages of the five previously mentioned constructs in each of the three temporal phases. The averages of each phase from each leader were then compared against each other to see if their data adhered to the hypotheses outlined above.
CHAPTER V

RESULTS

Numerical Values

Each value presented in the charts below indicates an average of the amount of words relating to each construct used per every 500 words in each speech. DICTION 5.0 calculates the number of instances that a word relating to, for example, a construct of commonality occurs in every 500 words of a speech. The program then takes these raw numbers and averages them to show a per speech average use. Then, the values from all speeches in each category (frame-breaking, frame-moving, and frame-realigning) were averaged to create three values presented below. Thus, these final numbers in the graphs below represent the average use of words of any construct per 500 words of all speeches in one entire stage. This allows us to view the data aggregately by stage, and therefore better observe the changes that occurred over time. To abbreviate the explanation of each data point, w/500w will be used to signify “words per every 500 words of a speech”
Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>HITLER</th>
<th>Frame-Breaking</th>
<th>Frame-Moving</th>
<th>Frame-Realigning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Commonality</td>
<td>48.495</td>
<td>50.527</td>
<td>47.395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>47.935</td>
<td>50.443</td>
<td>49.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Realism</td>
<td>50.675</td>
<td>53.087</td>
<td>50.705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>53.250</td>
<td>51.413</td>
<td>48.365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Certainty</td>
<td>46.795</td>
<td>47.260</td>
<td>52.323</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GANDHI</th>
<th>Frame-Breaking</th>
<th>Frame-Moving</th>
<th>Frame-Realigning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Commonality</td>
<td>49.713</td>
<td>49.307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>48.260</td>
<td>49.820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Realism</td>
<td>51.175</td>
<td>50.690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>48.953</td>
<td>49.647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Certainty</td>
<td>47.990</td>
<td>48.157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis I**

The first hypothesis predicted that Hitler and Gandhi would use the highest amount of rhetoric that refers to *commonality* during the frame-breaking phase of their rise to power. The results of the study do not wholly corroborate with the first hypothesis. The first hypothesis proves to be correct only for Gandhi. In the graph below, Gandhi uses an average of 49.713 w/500w relating to *commonality*, and this number declines as time goes on. Confirmation of the original hypothesis would be evidence of social inclusion and cooperation in the frame-breaking phase of Hitler and Gandhi’s rule, however Hitler did not exhibit the highest levels of *commonality* during this stage. Instead, he showed highest levels of use in the middle phase of his rise to power. This can be seen on the graph below, which indicates Hitler used an average of 50.527 w/500w relating to *commonality*, compared to only 48.495 w/500w in the frame-breaking stage, and 47.395 w/500w in the frame-realigning stage. However, both Hitler and
Gandhi show lowest levels of *commonality* in the frame-realigning phase of their rise to power, which means the data does indicate a relative downward trend over time. Perhaps with more speeches included, we would see that Hitler does, in fact, use the highest levels of *commonality* during the frame-breaking stage. Further research would need to be conducted to investigate this.

Hypothesis I: The Commonality Construct

![Graph showing commonality scores for Hitler and Gandhi across frame phases.]

Hypothesis II

The second hypothesis predicted that Hitler and Gandhi would use the least amount of rhetoric that refers to *optimism* during the frame-breaking stage of their rise to power. The data confirms this hypothesis for Hitler and for Gandhi. The data supports the proposed hypothesis completely. Hitler and Gandhi’s usage of *optimism* is lowest, and nearly equal in the frame-breaking stage, with an average difference in use of only .325 w/500w relating to *optimism*, as
well as in the frame-moving stage (difference = .623 w/500w), and in the frame-realigning stage (difference = .611 w/500w). Both experienced similar trajectories, using the least level of *optimism* in the frame-breaking stages with Hitler using an average of 47.935 w/500w, and Gandhi using an average of 48.260 w/500w. The use of *optimism* is highest in the frame-realigning stage as indicated by the data below which shows Hitler and Gandhi peaking their use at 50.443 w/500w and 49.820 w/500w, respectively.

**Hypothesis II: The Optimism Construct**

![Graph showing the use of optimism for Hitler and Gandhi across different stages of their rise to power.](image)

**Hypothesis III**

The third hypothesis predicted that Hitler and Gandhi would use the least language that pertained to *realism* in the frame-moving stage of their rise to power. This hypothesis was
supported by the data from Gandhi, but was not supported by the data from Hitler. In the graph below, we can see that Gandhi uses a significantly lower amount of words relating to realism than Hitler in the frame moving stage, with a difference of 2.397 w/500w. This is much higher of a difference than we see in the frame-breaking and frame-realigning stage, which only show a difference of 0.5 w/500w and 0.582 w/500w, respectively. There was an obvious difference, then, in the stage that was examined for this hypothesis. We see that Hitler exhibited the highest use of language pertaining to realism in the frame-moving stage of rise to power, at 53.087 w/500w. This result was surprising, as plentiful research concluded that a charismatic leader would be highly unlikely to use high levels of realism in the frame-moving stage. Breaking down the category, it is evident that Hitler scored highly in this category in part because of his increased use of spatial terms. In the frame-breaking and frame-realigning phase, he used a low level of spatial terms (.065 w/500w and .008 w/500w, respectively), compared to his frame-moving phase where he used (.387 w/500w). This might indicate that his speeches at this time were focused on describing locations, perhaps outlining the countries he planned to invade soon after the speeches were delivered.
Hypothesis IV

The fourth hypothesis predicted that Hitler and Gandhi would exhibit highest levels of activity in the frame-realigning stage of their rise to power. The data supports this hypothesis only for Gandhi. Gandhi exhibits a strong upward trend of use of language pertaining to activity throughout his rise to power, and peaks in the climax of his power. This is indicated by the data below, which shows Gandhi using an average of 48.953 w/500w in the frame-breaking stage, 49.647 w/500w in the frame-moving stage, and 53.867 w/500w in the frame-realigning stage. His greatest increase of use comes between the frame-moving and frame-realigning stage, with an increase of an average of 4.22 w/500w. He exhibits a more modest increase between the frame-breaking and frame-moving stage at an increase of only 0.694 w/500w. Though the data from Hitler does not support our hypothesis, and goes contrary to the hypothesis, we actually see the same trends in his data as in Gandhi’s. Between the frame-moving and frame-realigning
stage, Hitler exhibits the greatest change in use, decreasing by an average of 3.048 w/500w, whereas between the frame-breaking and frame-moving stages he only decreases by an average of 1.837 w/500w. This data is interesting in that it correlates even though it is opposite in nature. There is perhaps something that occurs between these two stages that can dramatically change the use of words relating to *activity*, however further research would need to be conducted.

Moreover, though Hitler’s data revealed an overall decreasing trend of *activity* use, with the lowest use during the frame-realigning stage at an average of 48.365 w/500w, some data does help to explain the results. Research from Bligh et al. (2004) notes that leaders might be more inclined to use less *activity* following any sort of crisis. During the final years of Hitler’s rise to power, the country was suffering from an economic crisis, with unemployment at thirty percent and increasing as Germany struggled to repay their debts from World War I. Hitler focused many of his speeches at this time around pacifying the German people, and convincing them that Germany would survive this crisis (Frey, 1983). Moreover, Robinson and Topping (2012) found that Hitler used less powerful rhetoric than they had anticipated, and hypothesized that it could perhaps be due to Hitler recognizing aggressive rhetoric might scare away his followers, and thus he could have toned down his rhetoric until he gained more power and did not have to worry about losing followers (Robinson & Topping, 2012, p. 11). Both theories could be offered as an explanation, but further research would need to be conducted.
Hypothesis V

The final hypothesis predicted Hitler and Gandhi would demonstrate highest levels of language pertaining to *certainty* during the frame-realigning stage of their rise to power. The data supports this hypothesis for Hitler, but does not support this hypothesis for Gandhi. The data from Hitler demonstrates a very strong upward trend of *certainty* throughout his rise to power. He increases from a low of an average use of 46.795 w/500w in the frame-breaking stage, to a high of an average use of 52.323 w/500w in the frame-realigning stage. The biggest change occurs between the final two stages, with an increase of 5.063 w/500w versus an increase of only 0.465 w/500w between the first two stages. Again, though the data from Gandhi did not corroborate with our hypothesis, his data shows a similar trend to Hitler’s, with the greatest
change in use occurring between the frame-moving and frame-realigning stages – a change of 2.26 w/500w versus only 0.167 between the first two stages.

Though Gandhi exhibits the highest levels of *certainty* in the frame-moving stage, and not in the frame-realigning stage as predicted, using an average of 48.157 w/500w versus 45.897 w/500w, it could have much to do with external, qualitative factors. In fact, this data is perhaps unsurprising, when looking at the external factors that surrounded these times. Towards the climax and end of his rise to power, Gandhi was very uncertain about the world he was experiencing as he became increasingly aware of the atrocities of the government and their effect on the people. He struggled to understand why innocent people were perishing more and more each day, and this uncertainty is likely reflected in his final speeches.
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Supported (Hitler)?</th>
<th>Supported (Gandhi)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis I</td>
<td>Hitler and Gandhi will use the highest amount of rhetoric that refers to commonality during the frame-breaking stage of their rise to power.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis II</td>
<td>Hitler and Gandhi will use the least amount of rhetoric that refers to optimism during the frame-breaking stage of their rise to power.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis III</td>
<td>Hitler and Gandhi will use the least language that pertains to realism in the frame-moving stage of their rise to power.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis IV</td>
<td>Hitler and Gandhi will exhibit highest levels of activity in the frame-realigning stage of their rise to power.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis V</td>
<td>Hitler and Gandhi will demonstrate highest levels of certainty in the frame-realigning stage of their rise to power.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Study and Discussion of Findings

This study principally aimed to expand upon the research of Seyranian and Bligh (2008), Fiol et al. (1999), and Robinson and Topping (2012). To this end, this research was able to build upon these studies, and offer more insight into similarities in rhetorical strategies in two very different leaders. Although the findings of this research were not always consistent with expectations, the findings offered interesting perspectives as to how leaders utilize rhetoric during their rise to power. This study is part of a less-developed area of quantitative research regarding rhetoric and its correlation to power, and one of the only to our knowledge that looks specifically at the rise to power, versus the entire career of a leader.

The results of this study did not completely match the theories laid out by Seyranian and Bligh (2008) in their research on charismatic leadership. It was found that two out of five hypotheses were supported by data from Hitler, and four out of five were supported by Gandhi. However, only a single hypothesis was supported by both leaders, and thus it can be inferred that between Adolf Hitler and Mahatma Gandhi, there is no single rhetorical formula that both leaders adhered to to aid in their rise to power.

This can be explained by many reasons. As noted by Robinson and Topping (2012) in their study of the rhetoric of Hitler and Martin Luther King, this study merely looks at a fraction of the big picture, and “the complexity of behaviors, traits, and situational factors” also has effects on the rhetoric of the leaders. Similarly, Seyranian and Bligh (2008) comment that factors such as “speed of speech, nonverbal communications such as expressiveness, and prosody of
speech” may also have effects on the success of powerful rhetoric. Nonetheless, this study contributes to the ongoing research that assesses rhetoric qualitatively in hopes to draw comparisons between seemingly opposite leadership styles in order to discover an innate formula that results in leadership success. This study was especially useful in its analysis of Gandhi in that it corroborated many findings from Seyranian & Bligh (2008), and Fiol et al. (1999).
Summary

In summary, we can conclude that Gandhi exhibits a pattern of rhetorical strategies similar to that of other charismatic leaders. Throughout his rise to power, Gandhi followed a pattern of promoting inclusion, voicing dissatisfaction with the status quo, utilizing ambiguous language, and then maintaining an active stance on issues to create the perception of tenacity in his leadership. The only rhetorical construct that Gandhi did not seem to utilize was that of certainty; instead Gandhi remained relatively uncertain throughout his rise to power. Hitler, surprisingly, did not conform to the majority of the hypotheses. However, it is worth noting that in Robinson and Topping's (2012) study, they did not find that Hitler conformed to many of the hypotheses established by Seyranian and Bligh (2008). Thus, it may be possible that Hitler did not utilize the same strategies as United States Presidents, or as other charismatic leaders. Robinson and Topping (2012) concluded that rhetoric strategies as they relate to increase power may differ between a moral and a toxic leader, and therefore this may be the case for the differences that exist between Hitler and Gandhi. This is also supported by the notion that a moral leader would include both Gandhi and presumably a United States President, and thus both would use different rhetorical strategies than a toxic leader such as Hitler. This point warrants further investigation and discussion.

Limitations of the Study

While this study has many strengths, the limitations of the study should also be recognized. In this study there were only ten speeches studied for Gandhi and nine for Hitler,
because this study was limited by time constraints and depth of study. A greater amount of speeches would aid in drawing a more complete and accurate picture of the rhetorical strategies of both leaders. Moreover, only two leaders were analyzed, which also limited the study because it was indiscernible whether or not differences existed as a result of leadership style (e.g. moral versus toxic), or as a result of other factors. While the leaders were specifically chosen for their diversity, concrete conclusions about rhetorical trends cannot be drawn without a comparison amongst many leaders.

The benefit of conducting a quantitative study is that it eliminates bias that might come from the researcher; however it also eliminates qualitative factors that might interplay with the rhetorical strategies. As previously noted, the information gathered in this research is taken out of any social, political, and cultural contexts, and thus should be analyzed as such. It is important to not ignore these factors that also play into the success of a leader, but this study did not choose to focus on them. Examining how culture and political or economic climate might also have an influence on a leader’s rise to power would be interesting to examine for a future study. Also with a quantitative study comes the inability for the computer to recognize polysemous words, thus discounting the use of some words that may have added to or subtracted from a category. However, though a limitation, the amount of words not recognized by the computer program is likely slim, and while noted as a limitation, should not be given too much weight when analyzing results.

The three stages of early phase of frame-breaking, frame-moving, and frame-realigning were adopted from several other studies of rhetoric and power. It should be recognized that these categories may not best fit this study, as it was adopted from a structure that divided a leader’s entire political career in three and applied to only the rise to power of a leader. It was often
difficult to characterize which speeches should fall into which category, as it was up to the researcher’s discretion. Available information in how to categorize the speeches was helpful, but the process was not foolproof. However, there was strength in choosing three separate stages, in that change over time can be analyzed in a way that does not require viewing each speech as a separate data point.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study attempted to discover if there was a certain “formula for success” in political rhetoric. By analyzing two very different leaders, it was hoped that glaring similarities could be found that would aid in this research. While some findings pointed loosely at a formula, there are obvious opportunities for furthering this research to strengthen the results. This study can be expanded in the breadth of information analyzed, and the type of information analyzed. For the breadth, more leaders can be analyzed to discover general trends in all leaders. Even comparing two toxic leaders as Hitler, and two moral leaders as Gandhi (Robinson & Topping, 2012) could offer more insight into trends in political rhetoric.

Also, as mentioned in the limitations, it would be interesting to study which other factors might have an effect on the speech of a leader. Noted by Robinson and Topping (2012) was the factor of speech writers, and how they might have an effect on the speeches that a leader delivers. Examining speeches that were unscripted would perhaps give more interesting insights into the “formula” that might exist.

Final Thoughts

In all, this study aided in building upon research conducted by Seyranian and Bligh (2008) and Robinson and Topping (2012). The study produced interesting results that suggests
there may be a certain formula to political rhetoric leaders to gain a large following. Presently, the world finds itself in a situation where there are many changes in leadership. It is our duty as researchers, students, and human beings to look past the formulaic political rhetoric and elect leaders that will truly work in our best interests. Furthermore, by understanding certain features of political rhetoric that might aid in the electability of a leader, it becomes easier to predict election results even in seemingly unpredictable elections. Though this research answered many questions, but also created many more to be answered in the future.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDICES

Appendix A

Appendix A1 – Hitler’s Speeches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>10,880</td>
<td>Public at a public meeting in a town hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>4,756</td>
<td>Public in Munich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>Public in Munich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>6,116</td>
<td>Public in Munich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>Public in Munich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>2,377</td>
<td>Public in Munich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>3,181</td>
<td>Public in Nuremburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Appendix A2 – Gandhi’s Speeches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>1,710</td>
<td>Congress and those in attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>4,247</td>
<td>Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>953</td>
<td>Students at a university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>1,069</td>
<td>Public meeting in Bombay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>Public at Mirzapur Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>3,240</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>1,848</td>
<td>London Missionary Society of India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>2,044</td>
<td>Congress and those in attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>1,007</td>
<td>Those 10,000 in attendance at evening prayer at Sabarmati sands at Ahmedabad.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

DICTION 5.0 Constructs

Construct Sample words (not all inclusive)

Accomplishment: Task completion (establish, influence, and proceed), Organized human behavior (motivated and influence), Modes of expansion (grow, increase, and generate), General functionality (strengthen and succeed), and Programmatic language (agenda and enacted)

Aggression: Physical energy (blast, crash, explode, and collide), Social domination (conquest, attacking, and violation), Goal-directedness (commanded and challenging), Personal triumph (mastered, rambunctious, and pushy), Excess human energy (prod, poke, pound, and shove), Disassembly (dismantle, demolish, overturn, and veto), Resistance (prevent, reduce, defend, and curbed)

Ambivalence: Hedges (allegedly and perhaps), Inexactness (vague, approximate, and almost)

Blame: Social inappropriateness (naïve), Evil (fascist and malicious), and Denigrations (cruel and illegitimate)

Centrality: Indigenous terms (native and innate) and Legitimacy (orthodox and constitutional)

Cognitive: Discovery (deliberate and consider), Calculative (analyze and diagnose), Rationalistic (estimate, reasonable, and examine)

Collectives: Social groupings (crowd, team, and humanity), Task groups (army, congress, legislature, and staff), Geographical entities (county, world, and republic)

Communication: Social interaction (listen and speak) and social purposes (respond and rebuke)

Concreteness: Accountancy (finances and wages), Sociological units (Catholics and African American), and Political alignments (Communists and Europeans)

Cooperation: Formal work relations (unions and caucus), Informal associations (chum, partner, and cronies), Intimate interactions (friendship and comrade), Neutral interactions (consolidate and mediate), Job-related tasks (network, détente, and exchange), Personal involvement

1 Source: Hart (2000)
Appendix B (Continued)

Denial: Negative contractions (should not and are not), Null sets (nothing and nobody), and Negative functions (not, not, and nay)

Diversity: Comparatively neutral (inconsistent and nonconformist), Positive (exceptional, unique, and individualistic), Negative (illegitimate, rabble-rouser, and extremist), and Liability (factionalism, deviancy, and quirky)

Exclusion: Seclusion phrased passively (displaced and sequestered), Positively (self-sufficient), Negatively (outlaws and repudiated), Voluntary forces (secede and privacy), Involuntary forces (ostracize and discriminate), and Personality factors (smallmindedness and loneliness)

Hardship: Hostile actions (enemies and vices), censurable behavior (betrayal and despots), unsavory political outcomes (injustice and exploitation), and human fears (grief and apprehension)

Inspiration: Moral qualities (faith, honesty, self-sacrifice, and virtue), Attractive personal qualities (courage and dedication), and Social and political ideals (patriotism and justice)

Leveling: Totalizing terms (everybody, anyone, each, and fully), Adverbs of permanence (always and inevitably), and Resolute adjectives (unconditional and absolute)

Liberation: Individual choice (autonomous and open-minded), Rejection of social conventions (radical), Personality factors (eccentric and impetuous), Political forces (liberty, freedom, and emancipation), Dramatic outcomes (exodus and deliverance), and Subdued effects (loosen, disentangle, and outpouring)

Motion: Movement (leap and hustle) and Physical Processes (momentum and circulate)

Passivity: Compliance (allow, tame, and appeasement), Docility (submit, contented, and sluggish), Cessation (arrested, capitulate, refrain, and yielding), Inertness (backward, immobile, silence, and inhibit), Disinterest (unconcerned, nonchalant, and stoic), and Tranquility (quietly, sleepy, and vacation)

Praise: Terms isolating social qualities (dear and delightful), Physical qualities (mighty, handsome, and beautiful), Intellectual qualities (shrewd, bright, and vigilant), Entrepreneurial
qualities (successful and conscientious), and Moral qualities (faithful, good, and noble)

Appendix B (Continued)

*Rapport:* Affinity (congenial, camaraderie and companion), assent (approve, vouched, and warrants), deference (tolerant, willing, and permission), and identity (equivalent, resemble, and consensus)

*Satisfaction:* Positive affective states (passionate and happiness) and Moments of triumph (pride and celebrating)

*Self-reference:* First person references (I, I have, me, mine, and myself)
Appendix C

Constructs Used in Hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Formula</th>
<th>Normal Ranges</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Optimism   | Language endorsing some person, group, concept, or event, or highlighting their positive entailments | Formula: 
                                                                  

\[
\text{Optimism} = \text{Praise} + \text{Satisfaction} + \text{Inspiration} - \text{Blame} - \text{Hardship} - \text{Denial}
\]                                                                 | 47.97 - 53.07                               |
| Activity   | A measure of movement, change, [and] the implementation of ideas and the avoidance of inertia       | Activity = \[
                                                                  

\[
\text{Activity} = \text{Aggression} + \text{Accomplishment} + \text{Communality} + \text{Motion} - \text{Cog.} - \text{Passivity} - \text{Embellishment}
\]                                                                 | 47.25 - 52.53                               |
| Certainty  | A measure of language indicating resoluteness, inflexibility, and completeness and a tendency to speak ex cathedra | Certainty = \[
                                                                  

\[
\text{Certainty} = \text{Tenacity} + \text{Leveling} + \text{Collectives} + \text{Insistence} - \text{Numerical Terms} - \text{Ambivalence} - \text{Self Reference} - \text{Variety}
\]                                                                 | 47.68 - 52.59                               |
| Realism    | A measure of language describing tangible, immediate, recognizable matters that affect people’s everyday lives | Realism = \[
                                                                  

\[
\text{Realism} = \text{Familiarity} + \text{Spatial Terms} + \text{Temporality} + \text{Present Condition} + \text{Human Interest} + \text{Concreteness} - \text{Past Concern} - \text{Complexity}
\]                                                                 | 48.42 - 53.47                               |
| Commonality| Language highlighting the agreed-upon values of a group and rejecting idiosyncratic modes of engagement  | [\[
                                                                  

\[
\text{Commonality} = \text{Centrality} + \text{Cooperation} + \text{Rapport} - \text{Diversity} - \text{Exclusion} - \text{Liberation}
\]                                                                 | 49.91 - 52.37                               |

Source: Hart (2000)