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**Values in international political speeches: Investigating their production, content, media coverage, and impact**

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## INTRODUCTION

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When talking about political speeches, people tend to think of Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech or Malcolm X's "The Ballot or the Bullet" speech. Generally, national themed political speeches receive a lot of attention from respective nations' citizens. In academia, this is evident in the number of research conducted on this type of political speeches (e.g., Bruss & Lawrence, 2010; Medhurst, 1987; Vaughn & Villalobos, 2006). However, globalization requires for not only relationships within nations, but also those between nations to be cultivated. This is due to the fact that globalization is a process that leads to greater interdependence and mutual awareness among economic, political, and social units in the world (Guillen, 2001; Petrella, 1996; Waters, 1995). From this, we posit that attention should also be given to political speeches delivered to international audiences. In democratic societies, this specific type of speech can directly affect international public opinion which may shape the political, economic, and social climate of the countries involved in the speech.

Whether the motivation of the speech is to foster economic ties, or to persuade another nation to react in a specific manner, it is important to note that political speeches delivered to international audiences are usually perceived to be a representation made by leaders on behalf of their own nations. According to Schöffner (1996), the values projected in the speech are not of the leader as an individual, but of the government or nation that he or she represents. Not only were previous studies on political speeches dedicated to studying "local" speeches concerning party politics and presidential speeches (Bruss & Lawrence, 2010; Medhurst, 1987; Vaughn & Villalobos, 2006), but, they also did not emphasize much on the extent to which values played a role in them. According to Schwartz (1992), values guide the evaluation of actions, policies, people, and events. Therefore, we believe that values are an important construct in political speeches. To fill the gap in research, this dissertation sets out to investigate: To what extent do values play a role in the production, content, media coverage and impact of international political speeches? The four communication components in focus here are similar to Berlo's (1960) model which consists of source, message, channel, and receiver. We believe that this research topic can clarify the role of values from the speechwriting process to how it affects public opinion. In the long run, this may provide us

with some insight on how to bridge differences between leaders and citizens of different nations to garner a more positive international public opinion that encourages positive relationships politically, economically, and socially.

Investigations of values in international political speeches in the four communication components are guided by several theoretical and conceptual frameworks which will be discussed in the following sections. More specifically, we will discuss values as a salient component of political speeches, the content and structure of values according to the Basic Human Values (BHV) theory, the salience of the tone attached to the values in political speeches, and the differences that may exist in value and tone between nations that are classified as developed and developing.

### **Values**

#### **Values in Political Speeches**

Many of the previous scholars studying values have viewed it as something inherently positive (e.g., Kluckhohn, 1951; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1994; Smith, 1963; Williams, 1968). Similarly, in this dissertation, we subscribe to the definition that values are desirable trans-situational goals, varying in importance, which serves as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity (Schwartz, 1992, 1994). The centrality of values can be traced through its manifestation at early stages of peoples' lives. Some scholars assert that values are relatively stable motivational characteristics that change little during adulthood (Feather, 1971; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1997). Based on this, we posit that values play a central function in all areas of life (e.g., personal and professional relationships). It governs peoples' lives even without them noticing it. Hence, it may be inevitable for people to project their values when speaking.

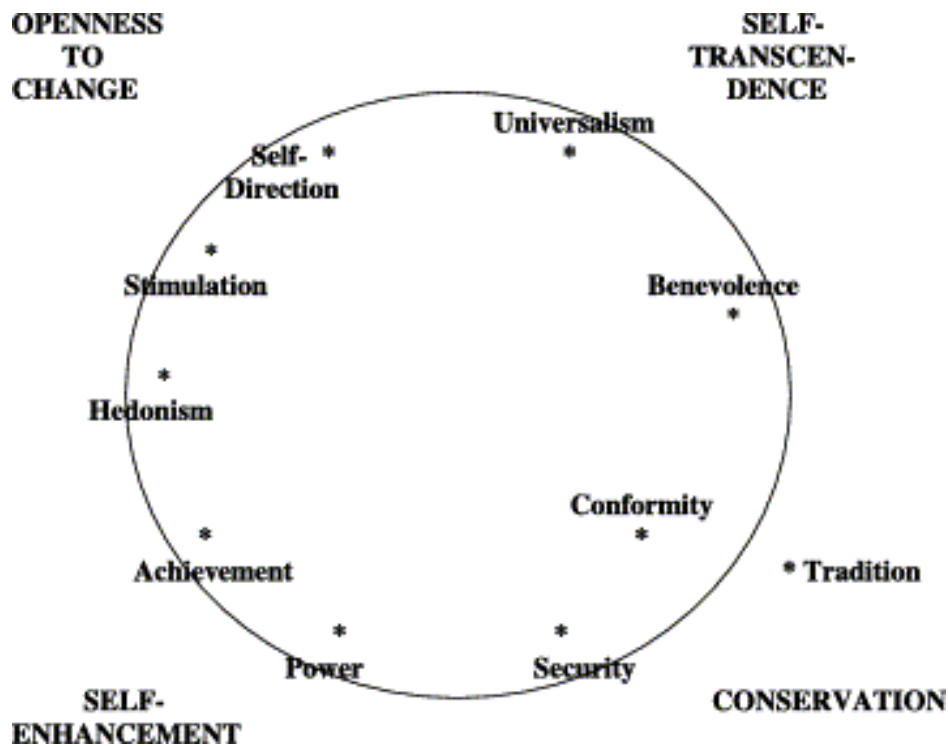
Values have been said to serve the interests of social entities, motivate actions, function as standards for judging and justifying action, and are acquired both through socialization to dominant group values and through the unique learning experiences of individuals (Schwartz, 1994). As representatives of nations, political leaders promote the goals or interests of their nations in their speeches. In democratic societies, these goals and

interests are shaped by their nation's common values. Based on this, we are interested to investigate the extent to which values play a role in international political speeches.

We next turn to a theoretical framework which discusses the content and structure of specific types of values according to the Basic Human Values (BHV) theory.

### **Basic Human Values (BHV) Theory**

The Basic Human Values (BHV) is a theoretical framework that facilitates our investigation in understanding the extent to which values play a role in the production, content, media coverage, and impact of international political speeches. Established by Schwartz (1992, 1994), this theory postulates that there are ten main values: power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security (see the definition for each value in Table 0.1). A confirmatory factor analysis conducted by Schwartz and Boehnke (2004) found that these ten values fall within four dimensions in a circumplex (see Figure 0.1). Values closer to one another have similar motivational goals, whereas those further or opposite to one another have antagonistic motivational goals. Motivational goals refer to the nature of the values which can be understood through their definitions. For example, "security's" motivational goals are safety, harmony, etc. (see Table 0.1). According to Bardi and Schwartz (2003), each value has psychological, practical, and social consequences that may conflict or may be congruent with the pursuit of other values.



**Figure 0.1:** Theoretical model of relations among 10 motivational types of values. Adapted from “Evaluating the Structure of Human Values with Confirmatory Factor Analysis,” by S. H. Schwartz, and K. Boehnke, 2004, *Journal of Research in Personality*, 38, p.233. Copyright 2003 Elsevier Inc.

The BHV has been chosen as the overarching theoretical framework due to two main reasons: First, each of its ten values are clearly defined. This is important because the detailed definition of the individual values is necessary for our studies that identify the types of values present in political speeches as well as their news coverage (see chapters 1, 2, and 3).

**Table 0.1:** Definitions of the 10 Motivational Values

| Type of Value  | Definition   |
|----------------|--|
| <i>Power</i>   | Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources (authority, social power, wealth, preserving my public image).  |
| Achievement    | Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards (ambitious, successful, capable, influential).   |
| Hedonism       | Pleasure or sensuous gratification for oneself (pleasure, enjoying life, self-indulgent).  |
| Stimulation    | Excitement, novelty and challenge, in life (daring, a varied life, an exciting life).  |
| Self-Direction | Independent thought and action – choosing, creating, exploring (creativity, freedom, independent, choosing own goals, curious).  |
| Universalism   | Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature (equality, social justice, wisdom, broadminded, protecting the environment, unity with nature, a world of beauty). |
| Benevolence    | Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact (helpful, honest, forgiving, loyal, responsible).  |
| Tradition      | Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provides (devout, respect for tradition, humble, moderate).  |
| Conformity     | Restraint of actions, inclinations and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms (self-discipline, politeness, honoring parents and elders, obedience).                         |
| Security       | Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self (family security, national security, social order, clean, reciprocation of favors).   |

*Note:* Adapted from “Evaluating the Structure of Human Values with Confirmatory Factor Analysis,” by S.H. Schwartz, and K. Boehnke, 2004, *Journal of Research in Personality*, 38, p.239. Copyright 2003 Elsevier Inc.

Second, these ten values have been found to be flexible in terms of their application to cross cultural samples (Schwartz 1992, 1994; Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995), different research topics (e.g., prediction of behavior [Bardi & Schwartz, 2003]; trust in institutions [Devos, Spini, & Schwartz, 2002]); trust in intergroup relations [Schwartz, Struch, & Bilsky, 1990]; correlation of values to political views [Schwartz, 1996]; correlation of values across differing religions [Soroglou & Dupuis, 2006]), and in different types of research methods (e.g., survey [Schwartz, 1992] and content analysis [Hoffman & Slater, 2007]). This flexibility is important because our research involves cross cultural samples. Furthermore, different research methods will be employed to investigate the extent to which values play a role in different components of the communication process.

From understanding the type of values present in political speeches, we next turn to discuss the valence of these values which could affect the speeches and their outcome.

### **Tone attached to Values in Political Speeches**

In addition to investigating the values in political speeches, our research also looks into their valence (see chapters 1, 2, and 3). In our investigations, valence is equated to tone, which refers to the attractiveness or aversion towards a subject (Feather, 1995). It is a dimension of emotional response that represents positive or negative feelings (Bolls, Lang, & Potter, 2001). Simply put, tone refers to the positivity or negativity attached to a value with reference to a particular subject in a sentence or a paragraph of a political speech.

If a political leader expresses a value positively in one speech, it does not mean that he or she will always express it in that manner at all times and vice versa. This is because unlike values which may be perceived as a quality of a person, tone is linked to a specific subject and to a present time frame (Feather, 1995). Therefore, a leader may express “power” in a negative manner because of the subject he or she is addressing (e.g., at a rally which champions for better democracy, a person may say “the current authorities have been abusing their positions in this country”). However, there may be times when “power” is expressed positively by the same leader when he/she speaks of a different but related subject in the same speech (e.g., “we have the ability to free ourselves from this oppression”). From this, we can

see that tone changes the impact of values in political speeches and that different subjects call for different types of tone.

We believe that investigating the tone in political speeches is important because it influences the impact of a speech which helps to explain how people perceive certain political actors or issues. For instance, we expect sentences in a speech containing the value “self-direction” expressed positively to achieve different effects as to those expressed negatively. Consider the following: 1) “by continuing our debates on the principle and modus operandi of a United Africa, we will be able to see some improvements in the future” (positive tone), and 2) “we have debated the principle and modus operandi of a United Africa for years and still we have not seen much improvements” (negative tone). There may be other values that coincide with “self-direction” in these sentences. Nevertheless, the positive tone attached to “self-direction” may lead audiences exposed to this message to perceive the politician delivering the speech positively and vice versa.

Besides the presence of values in political speeches and the tone attached to them, our research is also concerned with making cross-cultural comparisons. Previously, it was stated that people of different cultures appreciate different values (Barna, 1994). Therefore, in this dissertation, we compare values in political speeches and the tone attached to them between those delivered to audiences of developed and developing countries (see chapter 1), by leaders from these two cultures (see chapter 1, 2, and 3).

### **Comparing Developed and Developing Countries**

There have been various ways in how previous scholars have distinguished different cultures. For instance, Hofstede’s (1983) work differentiated cultures in terms of nations or nationality and Triandis (1995) focused on the psychology of people from different regions of the world. However, in this dissertation, we try to contribute to the field of social sciences by being one of the first few to research differences or similarities of cultures in terms of values in political speeches and the tone attached to them by comparing developed and developing countries. We expect this method of classification to add a new perspective of studying cultural differences.



According to Shweder and LeVine (1984), people of a same culture have similar standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and communicating. They also share a language, a history, and a geographic region which have been handed down from generations before. However, modifications in these shared elements are bound to occur as a result of development. Inglehart and Baker (2000) posit that with development comes industrialization which causes several cultural consequences. This includes rising educational levels, occupational specialization, rising income levels, changes in gender roles, sexual norms, declining fertility rates, attitude towards authority and higher political participation. These wide ranges of effects have led us to view cultural differences through the industrialization perspective. Therefore, we focus our research by investigating differences or similarities of cultures in terms of values in political speeches and the tone attached to them by comparing developed and developing countries.

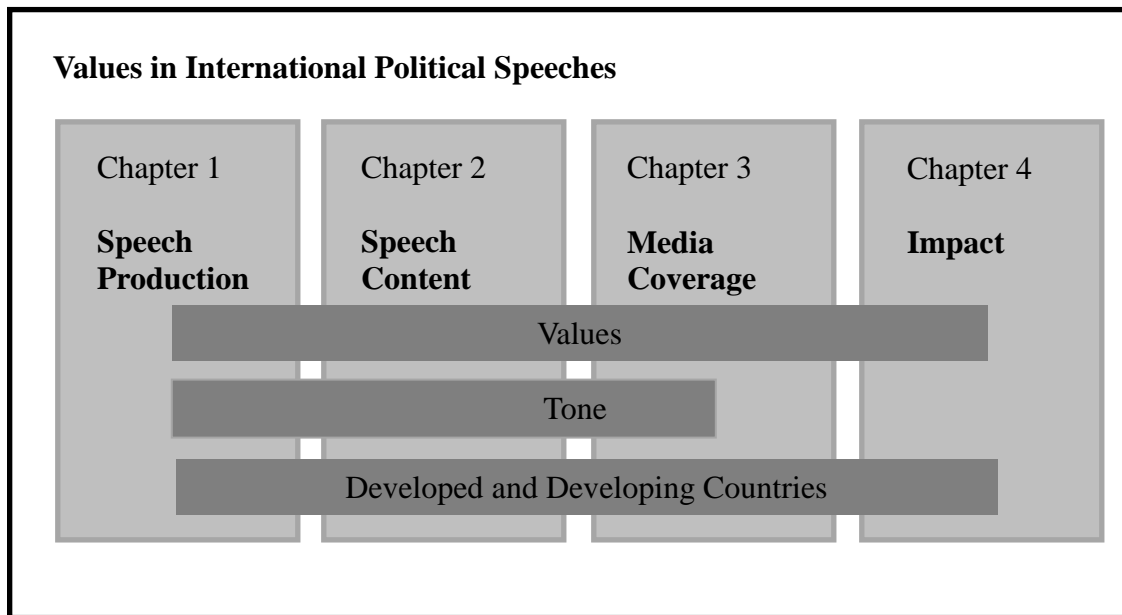
Although we make comparisons between values in political speeches and the tone attached to them between those from developed and developing countries, we do not claim that the values of people within these classifications are homogenous. The comparisons are made for the sole purpose of understanding the indication of values in political speeches in different parts of the world.

In the next section, we discuss the individual studies that are conducted at each step of the communication process: production, content, media coverage, and impact. We also explain their role in answering the main research question of this dissertation as well as their respective research methods.

### **Outline of Dissertation Chapters**

The chapters of this dissertation consist of articles from individual studies that can be read as such. In a consecutive manner, each study provides a contribution to investigating the overall research question of this dissertation: To what extent do values play a role in the production, content, media coverage and impact of international political speeches? Each chapter will focus on values at individual components of the communication process (see Table 0.2)

As the dissertation focuses only on one type of speech (i.e., international political speeches), therefore, this allows for the reoccurrence of the following themes in each chapter: values, tone, and the notion of developed and developing countries (see Figure 0.2). Due to this designed inter-relation, findings from earlier chapters will contribute to the formulation of hypotheses and/or research questions in the subsequent chapters.



**Figure 0.2:** Inter-relation of Dissertation Chapters

**Table 0.2:** Overview of the Dissertation Setup

| Chapter | Components     | Research Questions  | Research Method         |
|---------|----------------|---|-------------------------|
| 1       | Production     | To what extent do the audiences' demographics, the speechwriters' and the organization's values contribute towards the inclusion of values in political speeches written for audiences of developed and developing countries? | Interviews              |
| 2       | Content        | To what extent are there similarities or differences in the use of values between international political speeches from developed and developing countries?   | Speech content analysis |
| 3       | Media Coverage | To what extent are there similarities or differences in the values extracted from international political speeches for news reporting and how are they depicted by journalists of developed and developing countries?         | Media coverage analysis |
| 4       | Impact         | To what extent do values play a role in affecting citizens' political attitudes when exposed to different news frames and message sources?  | Experiment              |

***Chapter 1: Speech Production***

***Values in U.N. Speeches: Understanding the Speechwriters' Perspectives***

Previous studies on political speeches focused on a variety of different angles (e.g., challenges in speechwriting, (Bruss & Lawrence, 2010); contribution of political speeches to the field of rhetorical studies (Medhurst, 1987; Vaughn and Villalobos, 2006). However, these studies did not look into the contributing factors in political speechwriting, and especially not in terms of value inclusion. Therefore, to fill this gap in research and to help answer the main question of this dissertation, in the first chapter, we aim to investigate values included in the process of political speechwriting. More specifically, it aims to investigate factors that contribute towards the inclusion of values in political speeches written for the delivery of UN representatives to audiences of developed and developing countries. In light of answering the

main research question of the dissertation, findings from this chapter will provide us with some information on values in the production of international political speeches.

Although there may be numerous important factors, but, we will look into three main factors which we believe play the most vital role. They are: audiences' demographics and their country of origin, the speechwriters' values, and the organization's values. Knowing the extent to which each of these factors influences the writing of the political speeches is important because it uncovers the contributors of international public opinion.

To achieve the aim of this chapter, in depth semi-structured interviews with speechwriters will be conducted. In preparation of this, we will first create an interview guide that contains a list of questions following a structure that is flexible enough to allow for open questions and follow up inquiries (Berg, 1989). Although the wording and sequence of the questions are standardized for all speechwriters to allow for reliable comparisons (Gordon, 1975), but, there is still sufficient flexibility within the pre-set questions to accommodate the personal stories or extra information provided by them. This flexibility should also encourage exploration of the speechwriters' perceptions and opinions regarding complex issues (Barriball & While, 1994) such as values and cultural differences.

The in-depth semi-structured interviews will be conducted on speechwriters from the United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ) in New York because this is a very international organization which consists of staff members from all over the world. This makes it possible to find speechwriters from developed and developing countries who write speeches for international audiences.

After we discover the extent to which the three factors contribute towards value inclusion in political speeches, we next focus on the values present in political speeches.

## ***Chapter 2: Speech Content***

### ***More Different Than Similar: Values in Political Speeches of Leaders from Developed and Developing Countries***

There are generally very few studies conducted on values in political speeches. To fill this gap in research, and to help answer the main research question in this dissertation, in the second chapter, we aim to investigate the presence of values in political speeches and also

make the differentiation between those delivered by leaders of developed and developing countries. This differentiation is important because as we previously mentioned, the types of values which people appreciate differ between cultures. In light of answering the main research question of the dissertation, findings from this chapter will provide us with some information on values in the content of international political speeches.

To achieve the main aim of this chapter, a content analysis on political speeches of leaders from developed and developing countries will be conducted. This research method enables the transformation of qualitative information (such as political texts) into quantitative information such as category frequencies and identifying specified characteristics of the text (e.g., the frequency that a specific value is present in the political text and the tone attached to this value whenever it is present) (Krippendorff, 2009; Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 1998)

The content analysis will be conducted on political speeches delivered at various different occasions (e.g., symposiums, conferences, and bilateral agreement meetings) in different parts of the world. These speeches have been chosen because they address international audiences. Therefore, they play an important role in communicating a country's effort to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas, ideals, culture, national goals and current policies (Tuch, 1990).

This dissertation proceeds with the next chapter concerning values in the news coverage of political speeches.

### ***Chapter 3: Media Coverage***

#### ***Values in the News: Comparing the news coverage of political speeches in developed and developing countries***

Studying values in the news coverage of political speeches in developed and developing countries is tied to the topic of journalism practices across different cultures. Previous studies on journalism practices focused on investigations with journalists (e.g., interviews [Hanitzsch, 2006] and surveys [Deuze, 2002; Donsbach & Patterson, 2004; Hanitzsch et al., 2011]). There are only a few that examine the values highlighted in the content of the news articles written by journalists which may be telling of the journalism practices in different parts of the world. To bridge this research gap and to help answer the

main research question of this dissertation, in the third chapter, we aim to investigate the type of values extracted from political speeches that are reported in the news and how they are depicted by journalists of developed and developing countries. The former part of this aim is important because the extracted values, just like values found in the speeches themselves are indicative of the values held by the entities that the political leaders represent. Meanwhile, the latter part of the aim gives us an insight into the extent citizens from different parts of the world are exposed to similar values and interpretations of an issue.

Knowing the type of values which receive media coverage and how the journalists depict them is vital because citizens do not usually listen to an entire speech. Values that they are exposed to are selected by journalists. This provides us with some information on the extent to which values play a role in the media coverage of international political speeches.

A content analysis on the news coverage of political speeches will be conducted to achieve the aims of this chapter. The first aim (the types of values), will be addressed by the extraction of values and the second aim (the depiction of values by journalists) will be addressed by the identification of tone that the journalists use to express those values.

The content analysis of political speeches will be conducted on the news coverage of speeches delivered at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). Speeches at the UNGA are delivered annually by heads of states (or their representatives) of member states from both developed and developing countries to international audiences. The international nature of the speeches and the ample amounts of news coverage gained through this annual affair makes it highly suitable for the aim of this chapter and this dissertation.

From knowing the factors involved in the inclusion of values in political speeches, to the values actually present in them as well as their news coverage, this dissertation proceeds to investigate the extent to which values play a role in influencing citizens' political attitude when exposed to different news frames and sources in the media.

### *Chapter 4: Impact*

#### *The moderating role of values: An investigation of news frames and speech sources on political attitudes*

Previous studies have shown that values play a central function in peoples' lives (Schwartz, 1992). Therefore, they are expected to guide citizens' interpretation of political information that they receive from the media. Although the effects of values in combination with media effects have received some research attention (see Shen & Edwards, 2005), but, relatively little is known on the interaction of values with other factors in affecting political attitudes. To fill this gap in research, and to help answer the main research question of this dissertation, in the fourth chapter, we investigate the effect of news frames and message sources on political attitudes when moderated by values. More specifically, we will test the effects on citizens' attitudes towards immigrants when the news coverage of a political speech is framed in different ways, when the speech source is foreign or domestic, and when different levels of importance are placed on values. In light of answering the main research question of the dissertation, findings from this chapter will provide us with some information on the extent to which values in the news coverage of international political speeches affect citizens' political attitudes.

To achieve the aim of this study, we will conduct an experiment because it enables the manipulation of the independent variables (i.e., news frames and speech sources) and allows us to observe the outcome (i.e., citizens' attitude towards immigrants) (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002). The experiment design will be a 2 (news frame: episodic and thematic) X 2 (speech source: domestic vs. foreign politician) between-subjects survey experiment which will result in four experimental conditions (episodic domestic, episodic foreign, thematic domestic, and thematic foreign). The stimulus in the experimental conditions will be different versions of news coverage of a political speech concerning the cultural practices of immigrants in a host country. The experimental stimulus will be created rather than selected to minimize any bias which may occur if existing politicians, speeches, and events are used.

### **Relevance of the Dissertation**

Considering the large scale of influence that international political speeches may have on the people and the political climate of different countries, it is rather surprising that till date, not much is known about the production, content, media coverage, and impact of these speeches. With the primary focus on the role of values, this dissertation attempts to fill in this void. Each of the four chapters will contribute to the knowledge on the role of values in the individual elements in the communication process. The chapters will collectively show the importance of values from the beginning of the speechwriting process to the time they reach the public and affects their behavior. This research path has not yet been explored by previous scholars. From this, we can expect to contribute a fair deal to several research fields and areas. Given our emphasis on elements in the communication process, the chapters in this dissertation will provide useful insights primarily to the field of communication science. Within this field, the findings will enrich the research areas of political communication, speech communication (chapters 1 and 2), intercultural communication, organizational communication (chapter 1), journalism (chapter 3), and media effects (chapter 4).

The last section of this dissertation is the conclusion. This section presents an overview of the results obtained in each of the chapters and how they collectively contribute to answering the main research question of this dissertation. In the conclusion section, the limitations of the four studies as well as the implications for further studies are also discussed.



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