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

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ENGLISH SUMMARY

In democratic societies, political speeches delivered to international audiences can directly affect international public opinion which may shape the political, economic, and social climate of the countries involved in the speech. Some scholars assert that the values projected in the speeches are not of the leader as an individual, but of the government or nation that he or she represents. Therefore, this dissertation focuses on values in the *production, content, media coverage, and impact* of international political speeches. 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.

Studies in this dissertation were guided by several theoretical and conceptual frameworks: 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.

The investigations began with a study which focused on values in the *production* of international political speeches. The main aim of the first study (chapter 1) was to investigate the factors that contribute towards the inclusion of values in international political speeches. To achieve this, speechwriters from the United Nations were interviewed because they are accustomed to writing speeches for delivery by their representatives to audiences all over the world. We found the UN's values to be the most dominating factor in the inclusion of values in political speeches, followed by the audiences' demographics, the audiences' country of origin and finally the speechwriters' values.

After understanding the importance of the contributing factors, we proceeded with the next study (chapter 2) which focused on values in the *content* of international political speeches. The main aim of this study was to discover differences or similarities in the use of values between political speeches from developed and developing countries. For this study, comparisons were made between the speeches of leaders from developed and developing countries using the BHV inventory. By way of a content analysis, we found that despite some

similarities, there were more differences in the values present and the tone attached to those values in the speeches of leaders from developed and developing countries.

Following this, the next study (chapter 3) focused on values in the *media coverage* of international political speeches. Here, we investigated the types of values extracted from political speeches that were reported in the news and how the extracted values were depicted by journalists of developed and developing countries. In order to achieve this, we combined the BHV model with the concept of journalism practices in developed and developing countries. From a content analysis of news articles, results show that although the top four values were the same for both developed and developing countries, further analysis revealed some significant differences. This is similar to the findings in chapter 2 which suggests that the journalists were able to extract the core values from speeches effectively. We also found significant differences in terms of the tone attached to those values which imply that although the journalists of developed and developing countries select similar values, they depict them differently due to the differences in journalism practices in particular parts of the world.

Findings from studies in chapters 2 and 3 provided us with useful insights into the values that were most present in international political speeches. The next chapter (chapter 4) utilized those findings to investigate the *impact* of values in international political speeches. In this study, we examined the extent to which values play a role in affecting citizens' political attitudes when exposed to different media news frames and political speech sources. More specifically, we tested the effects on citizens' attitudes towards immigrants when the news coverage of a political speech is framed episodically or thematically, when the speech source is foreign or domestic, and when different levels of importance are placed on values. Our main finding showed that the effect of media news frames and political speech sources on attitudes towards immigrants is moderated by the importance placed on the value "universalism". Citizens who scored high on 'universalism' were more affected by a foreign source in an episodic news frame, compared to those scoring low on 'universalism' in a thematic news frame. On the other hand, in a thematic news frame, the difference between citizens scoring high and low on universalism was found for the domestic source.

In general, studies in this dissertation collectively show the inclusion and presence of values in international political speeches as well as their effects on citizens' opinion. As this

research path has not yet been explored by previous scholars, this dissertation fills in many gaps in research and contributes to communication science and particularly to the research areas of political communication, speech communication, and journalism. Nevertheless, future research must continue to investigate how values in international political speeches contribute to forming international public opinion in democratic countries which determines the political, economic, and social climate within and between the countries involved in these speeches.