

**A Comparative Analysis of US Presidential Debates
2016 on the Use of Speech Acts and Grice Maxims
by Clinton and Trump**



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In the name of Allah

The Most Beneficent and Merciful

*Read: In the Name of Your
Lord Who Created,
Created Man From A Clot.*

*Read: And your Lord is the
Most Bounteous. Who Taught
by the Pen. Taught Man that
which he did not know.*

At-Duran

DEDICATED TO:-

*TO MY BELOVED PARENTS, BROTHER MUBASHAR
ALI & MY AUNT BUSHRA NAHEED HASSAN
WHOSE TIRELESS EFFORTS,
SPIRITUAL AND IMMORTAL
LOVE, BROUGHT ME TO THIS
HEIGHT OF KNOWLEDGE
WITH THE GRACE OF*

**ALMIGHTY
ALLAH**

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ABSTRACT

The language plays an important role in winning the hearts of the people and gaining their support. The political speeches/debates made by various politicians have been analyzed from different perspectives by the researchers at national and international level. In political speeches/debates politicians interact with the audience with the help of language. Language is used by politicians not only as a medium of communication but also as a tool to influence the public. The present research attempts to analyze US presidential debates 2016 made by Hillary Clinton and Donald trump during the US election 2016. The debates have been analyzed within the framework of Searle's Typology of Speech Acts and Grice Maxims. The data consisted of the answers of the questions asked by both the candidates. Moreover, the questions have been categorized according to the main themes of the debates. The study analyzes the use of speech acts by the candidates in order to make their language more influential and persuasive. They employed assertive, commissive, directive, declarative and expressive speech acts while answering the questions. The study revealed that Trump employed more assertive and directive speech acts as compared to Hillary whereas she employed more commissive speech acts as compared to Trump. The study also revealed that candidates followed/violated maxims of quantity, relevance and manner consciously or unconsciously in order to hide certain information or to show commitment to their words and promises. Trump violated more and followed less number of maxims as compared to Clinton. The employed speech acts and followed/violated maxims by both the candidates have been presented in the form of a table along with each question. The percentages of the employed speech acts and followed/violated maxims have been presented in the form of bar-charts and pi-charts.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of the chapter

This chapter provides an elaborate introduction of the research. It gives a detailed account of the use of language for political objectives in section 1.2. Moreover, the purpose and implication of the study has been discussed in section 1.3 and 1.4 respectively. The objectives of the study have been discussed in section 1.5 followed by research questions in section 1.6. The outline of the study is presented in section 1.7 which is the final section of the chapter i.e. summary of the chapter.

1.2 Introduction

An election can be described as a formal decision making process that gives the people opportunity to use their right to vote and choose a political candidate who could run the Government successfully and would be a better choice for the future of the country. US Presidential Election 2016 was of great importance not only for American people but for the whole world as well because of America being Superpower or the most influential country in the world. This also sparked my interest to analyze the US Presidential debates. I have focused debates as debate is a two-sided clash of competing notions, with the help of which the candidates try to pursue the public by using different linguistic strategies. My hunch is that the analysis of these Presidential debates would provide an insight into the political mind set of the US Presidents. The study is based on a comparative analysis of the use of language by the two political candidates belonging to different parties i.e. Hillary Clinton (Democratic Party) and Donald Trump (Republican Party).