

國立臺東大學英美語文學系
英語教學組碩士學位論文

指導教授：鄭偉成 博士

1992 年美國總統大選辯論中人稱代名詞使
用與其言語行為分析研究
**Pronominal Choice and Illocutionary Acts
in the 1992 United States Presidential
Debates**

研究生：王聖博 撰

中華民國一一一年七月



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Pronominal Choice and Illocutionary Acts in the 1992 United States Presidential Debates

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1992 年美國總統大選辯論中人稱代名詞使用與其言語行為分析研究

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Chinese Abstract

本文旨在探討 1992 年美國總統大選辯論結論中三位候選人使用人稱代名詞及相應的動詞所傳遞的言語行為。有鑑於代名詞之使用和言語行為與總統候選人能否獲得選民支持、能否形塑自身形象與傳達意識形態高度相關，其重要性十分值得重視。

針對總統辯論結論中人稱代名詞與言語行為關聯的研究得以揭示候選人在政治言談中的動機和意圖，根據文獻探討(Bramley 2001, Karapetjana 2011, Håkansson 2012 等)，在政治言談中，人稱代名詞除了能讓候選人指涉特定群體外，還能夠在辯論中傳達各種意識形態與政治訊息。此外本文也針對候選人所使用的人稱代名詞之指涉對象做個案研究，以揭示他們的意圖和意識形態。然而，甚少有文獻針對政治言談中總統辯論的結論部分做有關代名詞和言語行為的研究。結論為總統大選辯論中的最後階段，其目的為使候選人為辯論做出總結，並給選民們留下最後印象。有鑑於結論

之場合、目的與言談內容和其他種類之政治言談有所不同，研究結論中人稱代名詞和其相應動詞所傳遞的言語行為就顯得尤為重要。因此，本文將探討候選人比爾·柯林頓(Bill Clinton)、喬治·布希(George Bush)和羅斯·佩羅(Ross Perot)於 1992 年美國總統大選辯論結論中使用人稱代名詞「我」、「我們」和「他們」之情形，以及其所傳遞的言語行為和指涉對象。

本文選擇三場結論的辯論紀錄做為研究材料。「我」、「我們」和「他們」和五種言語行為的使用次數進行量化統計。本文採用批判性言談分析 critical discourse analysis 分析候選人在使用人稱代名詞傳達意識形態時潛在的意圖。

本文研究總結五大重點，第一，「我」是在三場結論中最常被使用的代名詞，其次為「我們」和「他們」。第二，羅斯·佩羅是最常使用人稱代名詞的候選人，其次為比爾·柯林頓和喬治·布希。第三，在結論當中，羅斯·佩羅(Ross Perot)最常使用「我」和「我們」來傳達斷言行為(assertive act)。第四，沒有候選人在結論當中使用人稱代名詞所對應的動詞來傳達陳述行為(declarative act)。第五，三位候選人經常在結論中使用人稱代名詞「我們」指涉美國人民。有鑑於研究發現，我們可得知候選人傾向在結論中使用「我」和「我們」以形塑自身形象以吸引選民支持。除了以上發現，本文也明確指出意識形態和言語行為是分別由人稱代名詞和

動詞進行傳遞的，此論點也與以往認為代名詞能夠同時傳遞意識形態和言語行為的文獻有所不同

本文希望透過言談分析來研究代名詞選用，揭示候選人如何透過使用人稱代名詞形塑自身形象和傳達意識形態。

關鍵字：代名詞選用、總統辯論、結論、政治言談、言語行為



Pronominal Choice and Illocutionary Acts in the 1992 United States Presidential debates

Sheng-Po Wang

English Abstract

This thesis aims to investigate the intentions underlying pronominal choice and illocutionary acts encoded by performative verbs used by three presidential candidates in the closing statements of the 1992 United States presidential debates. Pronominal choice and illocutionary acts are particularly important in the sense that they have a direct bearing on presidential candidates' strategic success in gaining support from the audience and can serve as a window into how the candidates shape a political image to incarnate their attitudes toward voters and personal traits in political discourse.

The investigation of pronominal choice and illocutionary acts in the presidential debates is essential in revealing the intentions of the candidates in their speeches in political discourse. According to previous studies (Bramley 2001, Karapetjana 2011, Håkansson 2012 etc.), personal pronouns in political discourse enable candidates not only to address the audience but also to express various ideological grounds being established in political discourse. Nevertheless, none of the previous studies pays careful attention to the correlation between illocutionary acts and pronominal choice in political discourse, particularly in the closing statements of presidential debates. Closing statements are the last stage of the presidential debates designed for presidential candidates to leave the final

impression on the audience. In addition, this thesis also investigates the referents of the candidates' pronouns to reveal their intentions and ideology. As the institutional settings and the purpose of the closing statements are different from other types of political discourse, it is essential to discover how pronominal choice and illocutionary acts manifest themselves in the closing statements. Thus, this thesis intends to characterize the use and the referents of *I*, *we* and *they* and the illocutionary acts in the closing statements of the 1992 United States presidential debates attended by Bill Clinton, George Bush and Ross Perot.

The transcripts of three closing statements of the 1992 United States presidential debates are selected for text analysis. The token counts of the personal pronouns *I*, *we* and *they* and the five types of illocutionary act (*assertive*, *directive*, *expressive*, *commissive* and *declarative*) are quantified. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is adopted to decode the potential intentions of the candidates' pronominal choice and ideological grounds underlying their pronominal choice.

According to the findings, five points are made. First, *I* is the most frequently used pronoun in the three closing statements, followed by *we* and *they* in order. Second, Perot is the candidate that used personal pronouns most frequently in the closing statements, followed by Clinton and Bush. Third, when using *I* and *we* in the closing statements, assertive act is the illocutionary act most frequently performed by Perot. Forth, none of the three candidates performed declarative act through performative verbs with *I*, *we* or *they* in the closing statements. Fifth, the three candidates frequently used *we* to refer to the American citizens in the closing statements. Based on the above findings, this thesis argues that the candidates' preferred use of *I* and *we* is to promote a positive image to better persuade the audience to support them. In addition to the above findings, the current thesis

further specifies the division of labor between ideological grounds and illocutionary acts encoded respectively by pronouns and performative verbs, establishing a contrast with previous studies defending that pronouns alone are able to encode ideological grounds and illocutionary acts.

This thesis hopes to provide a comprehensive survey of intentions underpinning presidential candidates' manipulation of pronouns to characterize their ideological grounds and to establish themselves as qualified and eloquent candidates in political discourse.

Keywords: Pronominal choice, presidential debate, closing statement, political discourse, illocutionary act



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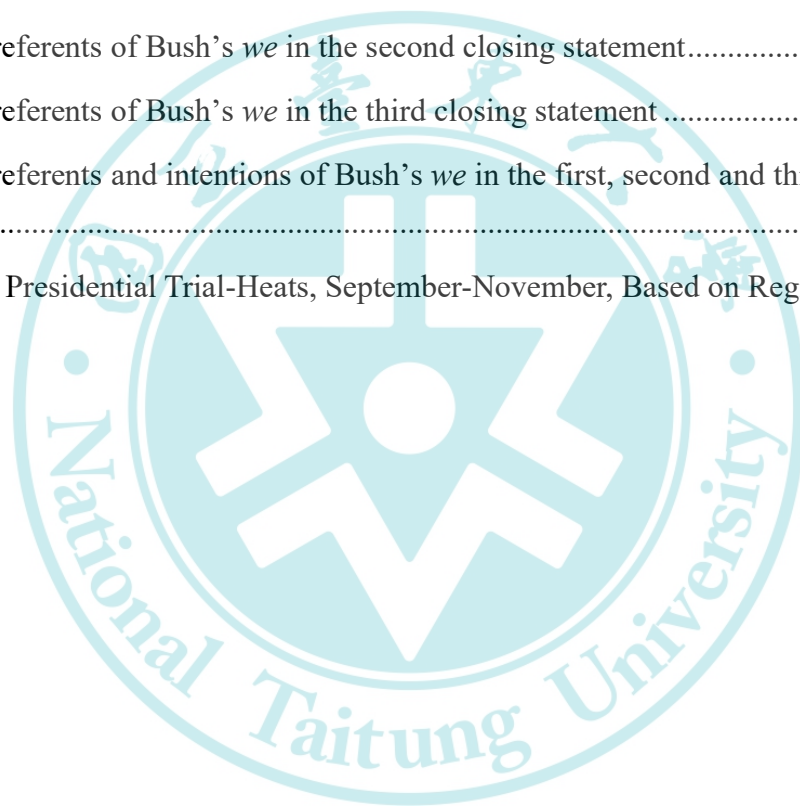
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Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Introduction

In the modern world, politics exists everywhere in our daily life, including choosing a leader, implementing a policy or managing an organization, and language plays an essential role in incarnating how politicians communicate and express their messages to the public. To understand the relation between politics and language, the investigation of pronominal choice and illocutionary acts in political discourse can be the starting point, as pronouns allow the speaker to refer to the whole/ part of the audience to express a certain image and perform certain illocutionary act on the audience (Austin (1962), Searle (1969), among others.). Furthermore, to investigate the relation between politics and language, the United States presidential debates serve as a suitable target of examination, as presidential candidates in the debates tend to manipulate various types of language device (pronouns, speech act, modal verbs, etc.) to seek support from the audience and establish their power and dominance in the debates.

In America, presidential debates receive careful attention from the public and media since they can convey political ideologies of presidential candidates. Van Dijk (1997) states that presidential candidates tend to present a positive image of themselves and emphasize the negative information about the opponents in order to get more support from the audience. To attack their opponents and persuade the audience to support the candidates themselves, pronominal choice and illocutionary acts are essential to the candidates because the former can reveal the candidates' political messages and ideological grounds while referring to the addressee, while the latter directs some actions from the audience which make

their speeches more interactive and at the same time, reveals the candidates' intentions behind their pronominal choice. Therefore, this thesis focuses on the use of personal pronouns and the correlation between illocutionary acts and personal pronouns in the 1992 United States presidential debates.

Pronouns are functional words used to be co-referential with entities mentioned in the discourse and to avoid repetition. Previous studies have defined and categorized pronouns based on the addressee and functions. Collins (1990) classified pronouns into eight types which are: *personal, reflexive, possessive, indefinite, demonstrative, reciprocal, relative* and *interrogative*, in terms of grammatical functions. According to Collins (1990), *personal* pronouns are used to refer to the objects or people the speaker is talking to or talking about, and they can be further divided into subjective pronouns and objective pronouns. The subjective pronouns refer to subject complements, and the objective pronouns are used as either the objects, subject complements or prepositional complements of a clause (Quirk et al 1972:208).

In this thesis, personal pronouns, *I, we,* and *they* are the targets of empirical inquiry, as they are frequently used by candidates to create political messages, identification construction, and positive/negative images of themselves. Bramley (2001) maintains that *I* presents a personal level, and enables the speaker to show personal responsibility, involvement, commitment, and authority. If the candidate uses *I* in political discourse, s/he might want to be seen as an individual, rather than a member of a group, and to present personal feelings or opinions. Karaprtjana (2011) suggests that *we* is used by the candidate for the purpose of sharing responsibility, and creating involvement with the audience. *We* can be further categorized into three types: universal “*we*”, historical “*we*”, and royal “*we*”. The universal “*we*” is the inclusive *we*, which includes the candidate and the audience. The audience contains the audience in the immediate context, and the people who have been implied through television (Wodak et al, 2009 p.76). The historical “*we*” includes the speaker,

audience, and the third person not present in the immediate context. (Wodak et al, 2009, p.46). Finally, the royal “we” is the exclusive pronoun, which excludes the audience but refers to the speaker him/herself and his/her partners/group (Adetunji, 2006, p.183).

Nevertheless, none of the previous studies focus on pronominal choice in the closing statements of a presidential debate, nor did they combine the investigation of illocutionary acts with pronominal choice in the closing statements of the presidential debates. Closing statements are the last stage of a presidential debate, in which each presidential candidate has two minutes to conclude his/her speeches and to sum up his/her political ideology and policies without interruption. Regarded as the last chance to persuade the audience, the closing statements serve to create a positive image of a candidate to earn audience’s support rather than to attack his/her opponents. The intentions underlying the use of pronouns in the closing statements are not the same as the debates, since in the closing statements, candidates tend to present positive images about him/herself rather than attack the opponents. Therefore, the current thesis attempts to investigate pronominal choice, ideological grounds and illocutionary acts performed by the candidates in the closing statements of the 1992 United States presidential debate.

2. Research questions and hypothesis

To unveil the intentions of a candidate’s pronominal choice and illocutionary acts encoded by pronouns, this thesis raises four research questions, as follows.

- How does pronominal choice reflect the presidential candidates’ ideological grounds in the closing statements?
- What are the differences in pronominal choice between Bush, Clinton, and Perot in the context of the closing statements of the 1992 United States presidential debates,

and what are the causes of the differences?

- Are illocutionary acts encoded by personal pronouns or performative verbs, and what is the correlation between them?
- What are common strategies of using pronouns a candidate employs in a debate to sustain his/her ideology and dominance over other candidates in political discourse?

Based on the above questions, I formulate two hypotheses and intend to test them in the current thesis:

- Personal pronouns (*I, we* and *they*) enable the candidates to encode their ideological grounds to sustain the dominance throughout the presidential debate and eventually to achieve strategic success in promoting their qualification as the most eloquent and promising candidates in political discourse.
- Ideological grounds and illocutionary acts are encoded respectively by personal pronouns and performative verbs.

3. Purpose and significance of this study

Three significant contributions this thesis can make are summarized as follows. First, by analyzing pronominal choice in the closing statements, we can have a better understanding of various functions of pronouns operate in political discourse, and how these functions convey political messages. Second, the investigation of illocutionary acts and political discourse demonstrates the interaction between candidates' utterances and the audience, and how different illocutionary acts are performed. Third, the investigation of each candidate's manipulation of pronouns and their referents allows us to understand different strategies each

candidate uses to persuade the audience to support him/herself.

4. Organization of the thesis

The structure of this thesis is as follows. In Chapter 2, the definition of political discourse and previous studies on the classification of pronouns and pronominal choice in the context of political discourse are reviewed and commented, followed by an introduction to illocutionary acts and case studies of pronominal choice in political discourse. Chapter 3 begins with a summary of the background information of the candidates, an introduction to the format of the United States presidential debate and the implementation of critical discourse analysis (CDA), followed by the description of methodology adopted in this thesis. The CDA analysis of the results is provided in Chapter 4 along with case studies of the referents each candidate refers to through pronouns. In Chapter 5, I conclude this thesis with the contributions, implications and limitations.



Chapter 2

Literature Review

1. Introduction

In presidential debates, a candidate persuades an audience to support him/herself by manipulating a sophisticated and impressive political speech. In political discourse, the politician intends to directly/indirectly address or interact with the audience to build a closer relationship by using persuasive linguistic expressions. To achieve the goal of persuasion, pronominal choice is means by which politicians present themselves in relation to individuals or groups in political discourse. Personal pronouns selected by a presidential candidate in a speech indicate his or her political grounds, and they are able to perform multiple types of illocutionary act along with performative verbs that realize his or her intention. As this thesis attempts to examine pronominal choice in presidential debates, defining ‘political discourse’ is the first step toward avoiding complications associated with several aspects of discourse. The following sub-sections are intended to define political discourse and functions of pronouns in political discourse. I will show the affinity between political discourse and ideology in Section 2, while defining the term ‘political discourse’. In Section 3, different functions of pronouns in political discourse are surveyed to establish a framework for discourse analysis and data collection in this thesis. Three previous studies of pronominal choice are discussed in Section 4 to show how pronouns are analyzed in these works and how to interpret intentions behind politicians’ speeches. Section 5 summarizes the definition of Speech acts theory and two relevant previous studies. After reviewing the speech act theory and types of illocutionary acts, studies of pronominal choice in political discourse from different language and social backgrounds are represented in Section 6, followed by a brief

summary in Section 7.

2. Political discourse and ideology

In view of the speech domain, addressee, the goal and intention of the speaker, discourse can be categorized into various types. Despite the different types, they share the same features and overlap with other types of discourse. In addition, the use of pronouns by a candidate provides a window into how his/her hidden political ideology and stance is expressed through pronominal choice.

2.1 Kenzhekanova (2015)

According to Kenzhekanova (2015), political discourse can be distinguished from other types of discourse in four aspects, including *agonistic ability*, *aggressiveness*, *ideological character* and *theatricality*, as summarized in Table 1.

Features of political discourse	Descriptions
Agonistic ability	Competitiveness relations with the politician, concepts of rival & opponents
Aggressiveness	Attacking, hostility, dominance and concept of hierarchy
Ideological character	Constructing group knowledge, value, belief, opinion
Theatricality	Performative

Table 1. The features of political discourse

Agonistic ability demonstrates the competitiveness nature of political discourse. In politics, political discourse serves the tool of prevailing over political opponents by promoting a positive image of the speaker, and presenting a negative image of his/her rivals. Therefore, political discourse gives the image of 'defeating the enemy, rival, opponent in politics', which reflects the agonistic ability and the competitive relations among politicians. Aggressiveness is another feature of political discourse. As mentioned above, political discourse serves the function of attacking the opponents, and presenting negative images of the rival, which reflects the feature of hostility and offense. Apart from the feature of attacking the opponents, Kenzhekanova (2015) mentions that aggressiveness can also be connected to the concept of domination and hierarchy. While establishing his/her political discourse, the speaker also expresses his/her dominant position and authority in the hierarchy. Ideology character represents the system of group knowledge, value, belief, cognition or opinion of a group of people. This feature, on the one hand, helps the speaker unite the audience who share the same system, to create togetherness, and, on the other hand, differentiates the opponents from the politician him/herself. What is more, theatricality symbolizes the performative feature of the political discourse. Political discourse serves the presentation to the indirect audience not involved in the discourse or addressed directly by the speaker, including media, netizens or international viewers. In establishing his/her political discourse, the speaker might want to present a particular political message instead of directly addressing a specific audience. These four features specify the functions of political discourse and distinguish it from other types of discourse.

2.2 Van Dijk (2003)

According to Van Dijk (2003), political discourse is the discourse of politicians, produced in the institutional setting, including parliament, legislation, and election campaign. For

instance, Van Dijk (2003) suggests that everyday conversation about politics or the corporate talk of tax and legislation which may influence political decision making of politics cannot be considered related to political discourse, on the contrary, education policies are in the genre of political discourse. (Van Dijk 2003:212).

In political discourse, ideology is frequently expressed through the use of pronouns in politician's utterances and pronouns. Van Dijk (2003) maintains that political discourse may express group ideology and other beliefs, especially in collective forms of text and talk (Van Dijk 2003: 210). In other words, ideology is the basis of social representation of groups and can be regarded as the belief system of specific social groups.

2.3 Kampf (2015)

Kampf (2015) notes that the term 'political discourse' is tough to define, as it is the mixture of two different disciplines: political science and linguistics. Hence, he then first discusses the term 'political' and 'discourse' respectively.

First, according to Kampf (2015), politics is the process of acquiring and exercising power. Nevertheless, power and politics overlap each other, as 'both concepts may be applied in any type of interaction in which the relationships are negotiated' (Kampf 2015: 2). Thus, Kampf (2015) suggests that the phenomenon of conflating politics and power is common in the academia relating to culture and social practice.

Second, discourse, as Kampf (2015) maintains, can be regarded as the language beyond sentences. The domain of discourse ranges from thematic descriptions to the daily conversations. Along the lines of discourse analysis, he suggests that the main target of discourse analysis is the structure, and how coherent meanings is created. Discourse analysis contains both oral and written language, and it aims to discover how the action is performed, proposition is expressed through different layers of contexts. Thus, Kampf's (2015) definition

of discourse not only pins down its range of domain but also emphasizes the aims and functions of discourses analysis.

To define the term ‘political discourse’, Kampf (2015) proposes that the term can be divided into two parts; ‘political’ entails the political topics presented by political actors (politicians, laymen or journalism), and ‘discourse’ represents the ‘actual (natural, institutional, or mediated) use of talk and text’ (Jampf 2015: 3). He further claims that political discourse is the produced text and talk relevant to specific political issues, and it is also the language of institutional political actors, which even contains utterances of nonpolitical issues.

2.4 David (2014)

The manipulation of different types of linguistic device and rhetoric strategy is vital for politicians to maintain their political influences and persuade the audience to support themselves. David (2014) examines functions of various linguistic devices used in political discourse, and probes into how metaphor, allusion, and rule of three enable the politicians to maintain their political influence.

Metaphor is a rhetorical strategy used by the speaker to depict a subject by comparing it with an irrelevant object. In political discourse, metaphor is used by politicians to simplify complex political concepts for the audience. When using metaphor in political discourse, politicians tend to emphasize “faith” to persuade the audience to accept their ideology, while in Asian or Muslim countries, politicians tend to use religion as the foundation of persuasion (David 2014:166).

Allusion is an indirect reference to a historical event, proverb or literature figure. By referring to a powerful phrase or illustrious quote, allusion is an essential technique for politicians to avoid a direct face threatening act (David 2014: 166). One example from David

(2014) is from the former president Lee Teng-hui's biblical allusion during the 1996 presidential election in which he called himself *Moses*, who leads the Israelites to the Promised Land, to emphasize his leadership and reinforce the positive image of himself.

Finally, the rule of three is a type of repetition strategy to deliver illocutionary acts through three phases. The first phase initiates an argument, the second phase emphasizes and responds to the former one, and the third phase reinforces the first and second phase. For example, in the *Gettysburg Address* (1863), Abraham Lincoln once said “*government of the people, by the people, for the people*” to honor the soldier that fought in the American Civil War (1861-1865). According to David (2014), the rule of three is one of the most effective and frequently used linguistic device in political discourse. When a speech is structured in the three-phase structure, it is more persuasive than other types of language devices to the audience, since the rule of three excludes the irrelevant information but only highlights the three most essential points. Therefore, the rule of three is effective in persuading the audience to accept a politician's ideology.

David (2014) demonstrates the political functions of different rhetoric strategies, and also provides comprehensive insights into the relationship between linguistic devices, political discourse and the audience.

2.5 Lee (2011)

In political discourse, ideology is conveyed through appellations, and how the candidate manipulates address form reveals his/her attitude toward the addressee. Lee (2011) investigates the address forms used by participants in the Taiwanese political talk shows. In the two talk shows (*Dahwaxinwen* (Da) and *Quanminkaijiang* (Quan)), nouns, pronouns and compounds used by participants to address president Ma are examined to demonstrate how ideology is encoded through appellations.

In the discussion of Da, which opposes president Ma's policies and his government, the participants tend to alternate their pronominal choice when addressing Ma. There is no significant difference in the token counts of each type of pronoun *I* (15 tokens: 18%), *you* (14 tokens: 17%), and *he* (18 tokens: 22%). Lee (2011) suggests that the rapid switch of the participants' pronouns reveals their intention of raising antagonism toward Ma. According to Kuo (2003), the increased use of different types of address form in political discourse can project hostility and confrontation.

The participants in Quan have different address forms to refer to Ma. The first person plural pronoun *we* constitutes the largest portion of token counts (83 tokens: 40%). According to Lee (2011), the domination of *we* in the token counts results from the participants' attempt to express solidarity. Compared with Da, the political orientation of the participants in Quan is similar to that of Ma's party and his government. Thus, the participants used *we* more frequently in the topics relevant to Ma to eliminate a misunderstanding between the government and the citizens. As *we* is capable of creating a closer relationship between the speaker, the audience and the referent of the address form, the frequent use of *we* in Quan reveals the participants' attempt to create solidarity with the government.

Lee (2011) points out that the participants in Da preferred to use *we* to address Ma and his party in an ironic way, which is different from previous studies that consider the use of *we* as expressing solidarity (see Bramley (2001), Karapetjana (2011), Håkansson (2012), etc.). Though, the participants in Da addressed Ma with the inclusive *we*, they raised antagonism toward the government and present a negative image of Ma and his party. The participants in Quan, however, used *we* to express solidarity with Ma's government and party.

In summary, Lee (2011) demonstrates how ideology is conveyed through appellations, and how the types of address form are capable of revealing the speakers' political orientation.

2.6 Summary

The above discussion points out not only the differences between Van Dijk (2003) and Kampf (2015) in defining political discourse, but also demonstrates how illocutionary act (i.e., persuasive) can be encoded by various types of linguistic device.

Compared with that of Kampf (2015), Van Dijk's (2003) definition is narrower, as he states that the identity of the speaker in political discourse is limited to the role of politicians. Therefore, family members engaged in a discussion about political issues or social protesters initiating political speeches cannot be regarded as a part of political discourse. However, according to Kampf's (2015) definition, the speaker of political discourse is not only limited to politicians, but political actors, i.e., people engaged in politics. According to Kampf (2015), political discourse can be either the text produced by political actors or utterances whose themes surround politics. In other words, utterances from a speaker whose role is related to politics or utterances centering around political issues can be treated as involved in political discourse.

To keep the discussion in this thesis at a manageable level, this thesis adopts Van Dijk's (2003) definition of political discourse, because of two reasons. First, the presidential candidate fits Van Dijk's definition of the speaker of the political discourse. Second, Van Dijk (2003) also emphasizes the importance of the institutional settings of political discourse. That is, political discourse is formed under politicians' professional roles. Thus, daily conversation from politicians irrelevant to political issues cannot be regarded as political discourse. In addition, the institutional settings also include the venue of the discourse, for example, political debates, parliament discussion, political speeches, etc. As the presidential candidate and presidential debates fit Van Dijk's (2003) definition of the speakers and institutional settings, this work adopts Van Dijk's (2003) criteria of political discourse.

Moreover, this thesis also applies Van Dijk's (2003) circumscription of ideology; that is, the systematic belief of the specific social group which can be regarded as social

representation, for critical discourse analysis of the speech transcripts.

David (2014) and Lee (2011) have discussed how political orientation can be reflected by rhetoric and linguistic devices. David's (2014) study displays the functions of rhetoric and linguistic devices in political discourse, and how they operate with respect to different cultural backgrounds. Lee (2011) makes two important observations. First, *we* or *our* can be used to attack the opponents and even trigger antagonism. For instance, in Da, the participants used *we* to address themselves and Ma in an ironic way to create hostility toward Ma and his coalition. Second, pronouns can be used to create ambiguity. In Quen, the participants tended to use pronouns rather than full names or titles to address Ma with the intention of avoiding direct criticism. In other words, pronouns are capable of making the attack or critics less straightforward.

3. Pronouns in political discourse

Pronouns are the substitution words of the people or the object that the speaker addresses in a long sketch of communication, and they are used to avoid repetition and redundancies to facilitate clarity and efficacy in communication. However, in political discourse, pronouns used in combination with performative verbs can be treated as carriers of multiple illocutionary acts and political messages presented to the audience. In the following sections, the functions of pronouns in political discourse proposed in previous studies are discussed.

3.1 Collins(1990): Grammatical functions of Pronouns

Collins (1990) classifies pronouns into eight types in terms of their grammatical functions: *personal, reflexive, possessive, indefinite, demonstrative, reciprocal, relative* and *interrogative*, as shown in Table 2.

Personal	to represent the person or the object which the speaker is talking to/ talking about.
Reflexive	to address the object which is the same thing as the subject of the verb
Possessive	to indicate that things or people that are related to other things or people
Indefinite	to refer to things or people without a specific indication
Demonstrative	to refer to people or object as ‘things’
Reciprocal	to suggest that people or things are doing the same action or under the same circumstances.
Relative	to connect two clauses / to refer to things or people which have been mentioned
Interrogative	to refer to the subject or object which is being asked by the speaker

Table 2. The classification of pronouns

There are two types of personal pronouns. Subjective pronouns are *I, we, you, they, he, she, and it*, and these pronouns refer to the subject complement in the sentence. *Me, us, you, him, her, it, and them* are objective pronouns, and they refer to the direct or indirect objects of the verb (Collins 1990:29). The speaker utilizes possessive pronouns to indicate how people or things are related to other things/people. The possessive words are *mine, my, our(s), your(s), his, hers, and their(s)* (Collins 1990:32). Relative pronouns *who, whom, which, and that* are used for two functions: conjunctions, and referring things or people which have been mentioned (Collins 1990:39). Indefinite pronouns are used by the speaker to refer to a wide range of audience instead of directly addressing a specific listener. Indefinite pronouns encompasses *anybody, anyone, anything, everybody, everyone, nobody, no one, nothing, somebody, someone, and something* (Collins 1990:35).

3.2 Functions of *I* in political discourse

In political discourse, the personal pronoun *I* refers to the speaker him/herself. It also encodes various political images. Bramley (2001) maintains that *I* can be used by the speaker to express personal feelings and ideas, which makes the speech more subjective. While using *I* as a personal deixis, the speaker shows his/her authority and compassion with the audience. Bramley (2001) also suggests that the speaker can use *I* to separate him/herself from the speaker's own social group, and convey the personal feelings and involvement, to create a closer relationship with the audience.

Håkansson (2012) examines pronominal choice of the State of the Union ¹Address from president Bush and Obama. He found that Bush used *I* to provide personal information: “*I like teacher so much, I married one*” (Bush 2001). By using *I* to provide personal information, the speaker can be seen as an ordinary person associated with common people rather than a politician. He also states that *I* is used by the speaker to present him/herself as an individual rather than a group of people.

Both Bramley (2001) and Håkansson (2012) propose that *I* serves to show personal levels and to construct individual identity. In this view, politicians who utilize *I* regularly in their speeches might want to be seen as an independent person rather than a representative of a group.

3.3 Functions of *we* in political discourse

The personal pronoun *we* is regularly used by politicians in political speeches, as it conveys

¹ The State of the Union is the annual report delivered by the President of the United States to the Congress, which primarily pertains to the issues of economics, legislations, foreign policy, agenda, and president's primary plans.

the images of togetherness to the audience. According to Bramley (2001), *we* expresses the institutional identity, and allows the speaker to represent a group of people rather than individuals. Using *we* in political discourse, the speaker can separate *us* from *them*, which is crucial in presenting negative images of the opponents and constructing ideology.

Karapetjana (2011) claims that *we* is used to share responsibility and to create involvement with the audience. It conveys the images that the speaker is a member of the audience. She divides *we* into the exclusive *we* and the inclusive *we*. The exclusive *we* refers to the speaker and the speaker's own group while excluding the audience, the inclusive *we*, in contrast, includes both the speaker and the audience.

Beard (2000) further propose a comprehensive categorization of the inclusive and the exclusive *we*. The inclusive *we* can refer to either the politician and the whole nation or the politician and the rest of the humanity. The exclusive *we*, under Beard's definition, is used to address the politician and other people or the politician and his/her group.

universal <i>we</i>	Refers to the speaker and the audience (immediate audience, and the audience through the press or on the Internet)
historical <i>we</i>	Refers to the speaker, the audience, and the third people who is not the audience
royal <i>we</i>	Refers to the speaker's own group

Table 3. The categorization of *we*

According to Wodak (2009) and Adetunji (2006), *we* can be classified as the universal *we*, the historical *we* and royal *we*. The universal *we* is the inclusive *we*, which refers to the speaker and the audience, and the audience contains the immediate audience who have been addressed directly, with the audience being implied through television. The universal *we* is used to express the sense of belonging and unity among the addressees (Wodak et al, 2009,

p.76). The historical *we*, similar to the universal *we*, refers to the speaker and the audience, and it also refers to the people present not in the immediate context. As Wodak (2009) maintains, the pronoun is used to create a large imaginative ‘*we*’ group (Wodak et al, 2009, p.46). The *royal we* is the exclusive *we* which refers to the speaker and his/her partner/group, while excluding the audience. It serves the function of sharing responsibility and maintaining the speaker’s social position/identity (Adetunji, 2006, p.183). To sum up, Bramley’s (2001) work mainly emphasizes the distancing ability of *we* and its identity construction of the speaker’s group. Karapetjana’s (2011) description of *we*, however, demonstrates the speaker’s interaction with the audience, which includes presenting the images of involvement, and sharing responsibility.

3.4 Functions of *they* in political discourse

In political discourse, *they* represents the opposite concept of *we*, and the opponents of the speaker. According to Bramley (2001), politicians use *they* to divide people into groups, and to create the oppositional relations between *us* and *them*. *They* can be used to show ideological differences and to avoid taking responsibility (Bramley 2001, p.182). The politician expresses the negative images of the opponent through the third personal pronouns, including *they* and *them*, while the first personal pronouns *I*, *we*, and *us*, are usually connected with a positive image (Hahn 2003).

Distancing the specific people or group from the politician’s group is another vital feature of *they*, and it is widely adopted by politicians to address their opponents to show ideological differences (Karapetjana 2011:4). *They* in political discourse is mainly used to differentiate between a presidential candidate and other presidential candidates as well as their groups. As Hahn (2003) indicates, *they* is usually connected with a negative image, while *I* and *we* are often relevant to a positive image. Therefore, the flexibility in alternating

between *I*, *we* and *they* is crucial in distancing a political candidate from his/her rivals by creating a positive or negative image. As a politician presents the positive information of him/herself to the audience, s/he not only presents the qualification of the job, but also indicate that s/he is better than the opponents.

3.5 Interim summary

In general, *I* in political discourse is used to promote individual characteristics and identity, and to separate a politician from his/her group. Table 4 provides a summary of the functions of *I* from Bramley(2001) and Håkansson (2012).

Bramley(2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To express personal feelings and ideas ➤ To show authority and compassion with the audience ➤ To separate the speaker from his own group
Håkansson (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To provide personal information ➤ To present the speaker as individual

Table 4. Summary of the functions of *I*

We in political discourse is mostly used to present the images of togetherness and to create involvement with the audience. However, the addressee of *we* is more diverse than *I* in political discourse, since it can address a wide range of people, with the speaker him/herself being excluded under specified circumstances. Therefore, *we* is divided into several types based on the refereny of the deixis. The functions of *we* are summarized in Table 5.

Bramley (2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To speak as representative of a group ➤ To expresses the institutional identity ➤ To separate people 	
Karapetjana (2011)	<p>To share responsibility and to create involvement with the audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Exclusive: To address the politician and the politician's own group ➤ Inclusive: To address both the politician and the politician's audience 	
Beard (2000)	<p>Inclusive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To address the politician and the whole country ➤ To address the politician and the rest of the humanity <p>Exclusive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Refers to the politician and one other people ➤ Refers to the politician and a group 	
Wodak (2009) and Adetunji (2006)	Universal <i>we</i>	Refers to the politician and the audience
	Historical <i>we</i>	Refers to the politician, the audience, and the absent people who are not in the immediate context
	Royal <i>we</i>	Refers to the politician and his group/partner

Table 5. Summary of the functions of *we*

Finally, *they* is usually used to address political rivals and their groups in political discourse, and it is often relevant to a negative image. The functions of *they* in political

discourse in the previous studies are summarized in Table 6.

Bramley (2001)	To divide people into groups To create oppositional relationships and to show ideological differences To avoid responsibility taking
Karapetjana (2011)	To distance other groups from the politician's group
Hahn (2003)	To present negative information/images of the opponents

Table 6. Summary of the functions of *they*

4. Case studies of pronominal choice in political discourse

Previous studies have investigated pronominal choice in different types of political discourse, including state of the Union, presidential debates, and political interviews. Pronominal choice can be distinctly defined in different sets of contexts and various political discourse. In the following sections, previous studies on pronominal choice are reviewed to serve as the basis of discussion for this thesis.

4.1 Kaewrungruang & Yaoharee (2018)

Kaewrungruang & Yaoharee (2018) examine the pronominal choice in the final 2016 United States presidential debate. They calculate the tokens of personal pronouns *I* and *we* from Donald Trump's and Hillary Clinton's scripted speeches in the debate. The results show that Trump had a higher tendency to use *we* (103 tokens: 62%) than that of Clinton (71 tokens: 47%) in the debate, while Clinton used *I* (79 tokens: 53%) more frequently than Trump (62 tokens: 38%). They further investigate and analyze the pronominal choice of the two

candidates based on the issues of economic, national debt, foreign hotspots, immigration, fitness for the presidency, and the supreme court. The results show that in the topic of economic, national debt, foreign hotspots, immigration, Trump used *we* more frequently than *I*, while in the topic of immigration and the supreme court, Clinton used *we* more frequently than *I*. In the discourse analysis, Kaewrungruang & Yaoharee find that *I* is frequently used by both candidates to express the ideology and the personal opinions, and it occurs frequently in the topic of the fitness for the Presidency (Trump: 24 tokens: 39%, Clinton: 17 tokens: 22%). This tendency might be related to the candidates' intention to prove their qualification for being a president and *I* is the most proper pronoun to emphasize the individual characteristics. In Trump's speeches, he regularly used the inclusive *we* to address people, which reflects his attempt to unite himself with the people of the United States. Kaewrungruang & Yaoharee (2018) suggest that Trump's strategy of using *we* has stimulated the nationalistic emotions, as he used *we* to present the image of togetherness while indicating the future and crisis of the nation.

4.2 Alavidze (2017)

Alavidze (2017) investigates and collects the tokens of personal pronouns in the announcement speech of the presidential candidates, including Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. In this study, Alavidze (2017) concludes that the first person plural is the type of pronoun most frequently used by politicians. According to the results, it is found that Trump used pronoun *I* (78 tokens: 39%) and *they* (26 tokens: 13%) more frequently than Clinton *I* (59 tokens: 23%), *they* (21 tokens: 8%), while Clinton's token counts of *we* (99 tokens: 39%) and *you* (76 tokens: 30%) simply outnumber those of Trump's *we* (78 tokens: 39%) and *you* (16 tokens: 8%).

Adopting the discourse analysis, Alavidze (2017) claims that while using *I* in political

discourse, Clinton tends to show personal responsibility and commitment to the audience. Trump, however, often uses *I* to emphasize his personal authority as well as personal responsibility. Alavidze further suggests that *I* creates the sense of “here” and “now”, which allows the politician to “capture the moment” (Alavidze 2017:5). As for the use of *we*, Alavidze (2017) maintains that one of the reasons for politicians to use *we* in political discourse is that they are not sure whether their utterances would be viewed as positive by the public. Consequently, *we* is exploited to spread and share responsibility. However, Alavidze does not further investigate the use of each pronoun, except *we*, in this political discourse.

4.3 Proctor & Su (2011)

Proctor & Su (2011) examine the use of the personal pronoun *we* and the possessive pronoun *our* in the 2008 vice presidential debate and political interview with Sarah Palin, Joe Biden, Barack Obama, and Hillary Clinton. They analyze the percentage of *we* and *our* in the scripted speeches separately based on the addressees of the pronoun. By looking into which entity/individual or issue is most frequently referred to by the politicians' *we* and *our*, Proctor & Su (2011) show the differences of the campaign strategy among the politicians and what issue the politicians value the most.

The results suggest that in the interview with Palin, *we* in her utterances mostly refer to the Americans (31%) and the Alaskans (28%). The percentage seem reasonable, as Palin used to be the governor of Alaskans, and was the vice presidential nominee of the Republican Party. However, as the vice presidential politician, she rarely associated herself with her running mate John McCain, with only 8 % of her *we* referring to herself and McCain.

Biden, on the contrary, exploited *we* extensively to address himself and his presidential running mate Obama. In Biden's scripted speech, 44 % of *we* is used to address himself and Obama. This percentage directly demonstrates Biden's attempt to connect himself to the

presidential running mate. Based on the observations, Proctor & Su (2011) maintain that Palin establishes a strong relationship with the American people, while Biden is successful in creating a connection with his running mate.

In conclusion, Proctor & Su (2011) further explore the connection between the pronominal choice of Biden and Palin and campaign strategies. On the one hand, Biden mainly employs *we* to align himself with his running mate, Obama, which results in his success in promoting himself and his running mate. On the other hand, Palin's pronominal choice of *we* reflects her defective campaign strategy. In the campaign, her weak relationship with her running mate was reflected by her low percentage of *we* to address herself and McCain (8%). However, in the vice presidential debate, Palin changed her pronominal choice, and identified herself with her running mate through the use of *we* frequently (41%). According to Proctor & Su (2011), the inconsistency of Palin's pronominal choice leads to her failure of self-identifying with her party and the candidacy.

This work shows that the pronominal choice is topic-sensitive in political discourse and the politicians need to adapt the use of pronouns to suit their intentions in the speech.

5. Speech acts theory

Speeches and utterances produced by politicians entail various ideological grounds, and they also produce different forces and acts imposed on the audience. To discover the intention behind politicians' utterances and what image they convey to the audience, the speech act theory is capable of providing a starting point for the analysis of politicians' intentions in their speeches in political discourse. The speech acts theory (Austin 1962) aims to serve the purpose of investigating the functions of the language, and has been further classified by Searle (1969) based on the types of the illocutionary act. The following sections are intended to define the speech act theory and types of illocutionary act to create a more systematic

theoretical base for this work.

The produced speeches and utterances can perform various actions through the use of words, as proposed in Austin (1962). Three levels of speech act identified *locutionary act*, *illocutionary act*, and *perlocutionary act*.

Locutionary act is the act of speaking, i.e., the act of producing utterances. Second, *illocutionary act* is the act performed by utterances, in other words, the intended meanings of the speeches which create forces imposed on the listener, including naming, warning, promising, etc. Finally, *perlocutionary act* is the actual effect on the listener, the performance achieved by speeches. For example, the mother asks the boy to wash dishes, if the boy does wash the dishes, then the action of dish washing is regarded as *perlocutionary act*.

According to Searle (1969), five types of *illocutionary act* can be distinguished as follows: *assertive*, *directive*, *commissive*, *expressive*, and *declarative*.

- **Assertive:** Commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition, ex, reporting, claiming, stating, announcing, asserting, etc.
- **Directives:** The function which makes some people take action, ex, ordering, requesting, asking, questioning, etc.
- **Expressive:** The force to express the speaker's psychological state, ex, thanking, congratulating, apologizing, etc.
- **Commissive:** Commit the speaker to some future action, ex: promising, warning, threatening, offering, swearing, etc.
- **Declarative:** The force which makes the proposition affect the state of the reality, ex: naming, accepting, sentencing, resigning, etc.

The five illocutionary acts represent the possible functions and forces of the oral language, and provide a systematic method to reveal the speaker's intention and the intended

meaning of utterances. Hence, this work adopts the Speech act theory for discourse analysis and the investigation of pronouns in political discourse.

The speech act theory is widely adopted in the field of political linguistics, and it serves the kit to interpret the intended meaning and expressed forces in politicians' utterances. Two previous studies, Akinwotu (2013) and Hashim (2016), are summarized below to show which type of illocutionary act is most frequently used by politicians and the potential intention behind illocutionary act in political discourse.

Akinwotu (2013) adopts Searle's (1969) five types of illocutionary act to probe the acceptance of nomination speech of Chief Obafemi and Chief M.K.O Abiola. The occurrence of each type of illocutionary act in Abiola and Obafemi's speech of accepting the nomination of the presidential candidate is calculated and transformed into percentage complemented by discourse analysis. The result reveals that assertive act has the highest occurrence between the five types of illocutionary act (27.3 %), followed by expressive act (22.7%), commissive (22.7%), and directive (18.2%). The declarative act (9.1%) is relatively low.

Akinwotu (2013) suggests that the use of illocutionary acts in the acceptance speeches are similar to the Presidential Inaugural Speeches (PIA), which is dominated by assertive, expressive and commissive act. What is more, Akinwotu's (2013) study also proves that a single utterance is able to encode more than one type of illocutionary act.

Hashim (2016) probes the illocutionary acts in the John Kerry's speech of 2004 Presidential campaign speech and the Inaugural address speech given by George W. Bush in 2001. Twenty utterances in total were selected from the two speeches, 10 from Kerry's speech and 10 from Bush's speech for discourse analysis, and the occurrence of each type of illocutionary act is calculated and transformed into percentage. In Kerry's speech, commissive act appears 5 times, which contains the greatest portion between the five types of illocutionary act (50%), and it is followed by assertive act (3 times: 30%), and directive act occurs twice (20%). As for Bush, assertive act is the most frequent act (4 times: 40%)

performed by him, followed by commissive act (3 times: 30%) and directive act (twice: 20%). In addition, Bush also used expressive act once (10%) in his speech.

Based on the results, Hashim (2016) suggests that Kerry used commissive act most frequently in his speech to commit himself to some future action, which includes promises, threats, pledges and refusals. The high occurrence of commissive act in Kerry's speech demonstrates his attempt to make the future of the reality fit the proposition of his utterances. Unlike Kerry, Bush tends to commit the truth of the expressed proposition through assertive act (40%). The percentage of the Bush's assertive act represents his intention to assert his own authority by stating, maintaining, informing and announcing. (Hashim 2016: 405)

As Hashim (2016) proposes, the illocutionary act in the Kerry and Bush's speeches portray their personality. However, he does not give any evidence to indicate the relationship between the speaker's illocutionary acts and their personality, nor does he make further investigation of the differences of illocutionary act between the two politicians.

6. Case studies of pronominal choice in political discourse: A cross-linguistic perspective

To provide a cross-linguistic perspective on pronominal choice in political discourse, the following sub-sections aim to answer one question as to how pronominal choice in political discourse varies in different language and cultural backgrounds.

6.1 Turkey: Candarli (2012)

Candarli (2012) focuses on the relation between self-identification of the Turkish political leaders and their pronominal choice in different contextual settings. Following the research model of Proctor & Su (2011), Candarli (2012) conducts a critical discourse analysis of

Turkish two political speeches and an interview.

Two speeches and one interview from Recep Tayyip Erdogan (the leader of Justice and Development Party) and Kemal Kilicdaroglu (the leader of Republican People's Party) are collected as the corpus of the research, which aims to answer two questions: 'What are the self-identifications of Turkish political party leaders in different contexts through pronominal choice?' and 'What factors affect the distribution of their possessive pronouns?' (Candarli 2012: 38).

The possessive pronoun *my* and *our* are the research targets in the work. Candarli (2012) classifies the referent of *we* and *our* used by Erdogan and Kilicdaroglu in the corpus. It is found that Erdogan tends to associate himself with all the people in Turkey, 64% of *we* (30 tokens) in the Ankara speech and 74% of *we* (54 tokens) in the Istanbul speech) The percent demonstrates Erdogan's attempt to express solidarity with the himself and the audience, and he also tends to use the term 'my siblings' or 'dear' to address the audience to shorten the distance between himself and the people. What is more, Erdogan's '*our*' refers to a variety of referents, including *the children* (2 tokens), *the women with headscarves* (2 tokens: 10%), *schools* (4 tokens: 20%), *National independent war* (2 tokens: 10%) etc. According to Candarli (2012), the diverse types of referents of Erdogan's *our* might reveal his intention to indicate his interest in a wide range of topics, things and social groups (Candarli 2012: 40).

Kilicdaroglu used *my* for self-identification only once in the Istanbul speech. He also seldom employs self-identification in his pronominal choice; only 13 tokens of *our* were found in his speech in Ankara (Erdogan: 20 tokens). There is no significant difference between types of referent in percent, which includes *the Country* (2 tokens: 15%), *young people* (3 tokens: 23 %), and *all people* (3 tokens: 23%). Compared with his speech in Ankara, 50% (9 tokens) of Kilicdaroglu's *our* in the Istanbul speech refers to the members of his party. Candarli (2012) suggests that the association of his party members with *our* might result from Kilicdaroglu's new identity. As Kilicdaroglu was newly elected the leader of the

Republican People's Party, his frequent referring to the party members can not only create unity among his social group but also further emphasize his party and create a good impression of his own.

As for the interview, a shift occurs in Erdogan's pronominal choice. Compared with the speeches in Istanbul and Ankara, Erdogan used *our* (26 tokens) more frequently, but had fewer tokens of *my* (11 tokens) in the interview. Furthermore, both candidates in the interview addressed their party members with *our* frequently; the percent of 'party members' constitutes the largest portion in the referent of Erdogan (5 tokens: 19%) and Kilicdaroglu's (6 tokens: 25%) *our*. As reported by Candarli (2012), the change in the use of personal pronouns might result from the venue and contextual setting of the interview. The setting of the political interviews is more formal than that of the speeches, as there is no audience in the immediate context. Topics discussed in the interview are primarily restricted to politics and the future plan, rather than a relation between the candidates and the civilians. In this light, the setting and topics might be influential to the candidates' pronominal choice.

A major difference between Erdogan and Kilicdaroglu's pronominal choice is that Erdogan tends to address a more diverse and wider range of social groups (9 groups) with his *our*; while Kilicdaroglu's *our* refers to fewer types of addressee (6 groups). The difference reveals that Erdogan has a deliberate attempt to associate himself with a wider range of social groups, which not only presents himself as a leader who cares about all classes of people but also makes his utterances more attractive to the audience.

To conclude, Candarli (2012) makes two observations relevant to the present thesis. First, the setting of the context and the venue have a direct bearing on a candidate's pronominal choice. Second, the diversity of the referents in a candidate's pronominal choice might determine how persuasive the candidate's speeches can be, as Candarli (2012) associates Erdogan's third-term landslide victory in parliamentary elections in 2011 with his diversity in pronominal choice.

6.2 America, British & Spain: Iñigo-Mora (2013)

Pronominal choice in political discourse can reveal not only politicians' ideology but also their strategies to respond to sharp questions. In Iñigo-Mora (2013), the use of *we* in American, British and Spanish political discourse presents a cross-linguistic perspective on pronominal choice. In addition, Iñigo-Mora (2013) also focuses on the correlation between pronominal choice, Communicative Conflict questions (CC) and Equivocations², to see how politicians use personal pronouns to avoid answering direct questions which will lead to negative effects.

Three interviews were held respectively on 21st April, 2003, 16th November, 2003 and 30th May, 2004 to discuss the event of the Iraq war. Three interviewees were involved: Mr. José M. Aznar (President of Spain), Mr. George W. Bush (President of the USA) and Mr. Tony Blair (Prime Minister of the UK). The three politicians (Aznar, Bush and Blair) are the political leaders of their own countries and they all play important roles in the Iraq war.

Questions raised by the interviewers and responses from the three politicians in the interviews are categorized as CC questions/non-CC questions and equivocation/non-equivocation. To further probe into politicians' intention and their pronominal choice, the use of *we* in the interviews is further categorized into six types:

- Political “*we*” (“Pol.We”): I + my political group (in all these cases the government).
- Coalition Forces “*we*” (“Co.For.We”): I + countries fighting against terrorism.
- Nationalistic “*we*” (“Nat.We”): I + all British/American/Spanish people.
- Blair & Bush “*we*” (“Ton.We”): George Bush + Tony Blair.

² According to Bavelas et al. (1990), ‘equivocation’ is the rhetorical strategy that the speaker avoids answering questions or giving information directly, and Communicative Conflict question is the question which all its answers/ responds will result in negative consequence to the responder (Bavelas et al, 1990: 54).

- United Nations “we” (“UN.We”): I + United Nations.
- European “we” (“Eu.We”): I + all Europeans.

(Iñigo-Mora, 2013: 31)

It is found that the three politicians have the roughly same percentage of CC questions: Blair was asked totally 15 questions (53% of them were CC questions), Bush 18 questions (55% are CC questions) and Aznar 12 questions (50% are CC questions). Interpreted in terms of equivocation, both Blair and Aznar had a higher percentage of equivocation when they faced communicative conflict questions (Blair: 87% vs. Aznar: 83%); in contrast, Bush had a lower percentage of equivocation (70%). According to Iñigo-Mora (2013), the difference in the percentages might pertain to the background of interviewers; both Blair and Aznar were interviewed by local journalists (Blair is interviewed by BBC1, and Aznar is interviewed by TVE 1, a Spanish journalist). As the interview of Blair and Aznar was broadcast by the national journalist, the majority of the viewer are the citizens of their own countries. Thus, Blair and Aznar have a tendency to equivocate, since directly answering CC questions might make them look weaker or illegitimate to their own supporters.

As for pronominal choice in answering questions in the interviews, the three politicians show their different addressing strategies. On the one hand, when having equivocations, both Blair (13 tokens: 54%) and Bush (14 tokens: 77%) tended to use the coalition force “we” to address themselves and the countries fighting against terrorism; on the other hand, Aznar preferred to use European “we” (11 tokens: 57%) to equivocate, when facing CC questions. Historical and political issues are elicited to explain Blair and Aznar’s pronominal choice. According to Iñigo-Mora (2013), British people tend to feel that they have an intimate relationship with the Americans, while Spanish people consider themselves closer to the Europeans (Iñigo-Mora, 2013: 34). Therefore, when being asked whether the action of the Iraq war would violet the unity of Europe, Aznar tended to use European “we” to express

solidarity with his countrymen and Europe, while Blair preferred to use coalition forces “*we*” to address British and its allies, to justify the legitimacy of the war.

As for Bush’s use of *we* in the interview, his pronominal choice reveals an attempt to look for support from the allies. When being told that the Iraq war could be called ‘guerrilla war’ (a long-lasting war), Bush tended to use coalition forces “*we*” in his responses. Iñigo-Mora (2013) connects Bush’s pronominal choice with his identity in the interview. Bush was the only politician interviewed by foreign journalist while most of his viewers were not American, and it is argued that Bush did not possess direct power in context. Therefore, Bush’s coalition forces “*we*” reflects his intention to “look for shelter” in his allies (Iñigo-Mora, 2013: 33).

Iñigo-Mora (2013) makes two points worth our careful attention. First, during the investigation of pronominal choice, she takes into consideration both international relationships and political issues. Second, as the interviews are held in three different countries, Iñigo-Mora (2013) sheds light on how people from different countries discuss the same social issues through pronominal choice.

7. Televised Presidential debates

Case studies of televised presidential debates from the cross-linguistic perspective are presented in this section to broaden our understanding of the presidential debates.

Following functional theory, Isotalus (2011) investigate the characteristic of the Finnish political discourse and use of attack, defense and acclaim during Finnish presidential debates. The results show that the candidates tend to defend themselves more often than attack and acclaim the other candidates. Tymbay (2021) analyzes the communicative style and personality of Joe Biden and Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential debates. Implementing discourse analysis, Tymbay (2021) suggests that Biden tended expressed solidarity with his

supporters in the debate, and distinguished them from Trump by using *us* and *them*. Compared to Biden, Trump's utterances were relatively short and fragmentary, and he preferred to convey his political messages repeatedly. Benoit (2007) also adopts functional theory for the analysis of the 2004 Taiwanese presidential debates and argues that, in general, the challenging presidential candidate tends to attack the opponents more often than the incumbent president with reference to issues of his/her past deeds, while the incumbent president tends to acclaim his/her past deed and accomplishments. As for the topics, during the debates, candidates tend to discuss the issue of policy more often than their character.

Due to the scope and goal of the current thesis, these studies are not discussed in detail in the following chapter but they are provided to broaden our knowledge of presidential debates in the domain of discourse analysis.

8. Summary

Kenzhekanova (2015) provides a survey of characteristics of political discourse and the potential force it might express. Van Dijk's (2003) work addresses the important of the actual speaker, venue and setting of the discourse, and his definition of ideology also serves a criteria for discourse analysis in political discourse. By splitting the term *political discourse* (i.e., 'politics' and 'discourse'), Kampf (2015) defines the division of labor comprising the interpretation of political discourse and further shows the relationship between political science and pragmatics.

The functions of each personal pronoun discussed in Bramley(2001), Håkansson (2012), Beard (2000), Wodak (2009) and Adetunji (2006), and Karapetjana (2011) are reviewed in Section 3. Their definitions of function of *I*, *we* and *they* provide the window into how ideology is presented by politicians, to whom they are actually referring, and what motivates the politicians to use these pronouns.

Speech act theory is employed to discover the speaker's intention in his/her speeches. Searle's (1969) five types of illocutionary act are crucial in analyzing politicians' intentions to use particular pronouns and performative verbs in the context of political discourse. Akinwotu's (2013) study of illocutionary acts shows that a single utterance is able to encode more than one act, and this observation is crucial to data collection and the discourse analysis of pronouns.

By adopting the definition of the pronouns from Bramley (2001), Håkansson (2012) and Karapetjana (2011), and speech act theory, this thesis not only aims to discover the intention behind politicians' utterances, but also reveals the illocutionary acts encoded by performative verbs in the occurrence of pronouns.

In Section 6, Candarli (2012) and Iñigo-Mora (2013) highlight the importance of the referents and have proved that the relationships between countries can alter the candidates' strategies of persuasion. The observations from Candarli (2012) advance a better understanding that the referents of candidates' personal pronouns are essential in reflecting their priority and the social group they try to cater to. In addition, Candarli (2012) shows that pronominal choice in the interview and political speeches indicates that the change of the venue and contextual setting might lead to the shift of the candidates' pronominal choice.

Iñigo-Mora (2013) conducts a cross-linguistic analysis of American, British and Spanish political discourse, and there are two points which need careful attention. First, the audience in the interview can affect the candidates' strategies of persuasion. For example, as Bush was not interviewed by the local journalists, he had much less motivation to have equivocation (70%), compared with Blair (87%) and Aznar (83%). Second, the international relationship between different countries and the ideology of citizens have a strong relation with the politicians' pronominal choice. For instance, in order to cater to Spanish and European citizens, Aznar frequently used European "we" (11 tokens: 57%) to express solidarity.

In sum, for the purpose of persuading people to support them and to cater to the

audience' worldview, political candidates need to consider various factors (context, venue, role and international relations) that may affect their pronominal choice, adding weight to the importance of referents to which personal pronouns refer in political discourse.



Chapter 3

Methodology

1. Introduction

The goal of this thesis is to investigate pronominal choice in the closing statements attended by three presidential debates in the 1992 United States Presidential Election, including George Bush, Bill Clinton and Ross Perot. Critical discourse analysis is conducted to investigate the transcripts of the closing statements, with particular focus on token counts (pronouns) and functions of pronouns used by the presidential candidates in the closing statements. In Section 2, the background of the presidential debates, the format and the significance of the closing statements, and each candidate in the debate are introduced. The data collection and critical discourse analysis are justified and explained in Section 3 along with an introduction to critical discourse analysis and its implementation in political discourse.

2. Materials

Several studies have investigated pronominal choice in presidential debates, including Kaewrungruang & Yaoharee (2018) and Håkansson (2012), etc. Unlike other presidential debates, the 1992 presidential debate was known for its uniqueness in modern history, as it was the first debate attended by three candidates whose political orientations were different, and it is also one of the two debates for which an independent candidate, Ross Perot, was invited. As an independent candidate who represents neither the Republican Party nor the Democratic Party, Perot's ideology construction, if defined in terms of pronominal choice,

might be different from that of the other candidates. Therefore, this thesis aspires to make up for the lack of previous studies on differences in ideology construction between the candidates by investigating pronominal choice in the closing statements. The speech transcripts of the three closing statements of the 1992 United States presidential debates were retrieved from the website (<https://www.debates.org/voter-education/debate-transcripts/>) for pronoun token counts and critical discourse analysis.

2.1 Presidential debates

Televised presidential debates are a political event for presidential candidates to express their policies and introduce themselves to the audience. In the debates, the moderator asks each candidate questions by referring to topics in domestic or foreign policies and affairs. The format and the sessions of presidential debates are not fixed. For example, in the 1960 United States presidential debates, each candidate was allocated four minutes and thirty seconds in a closing statement instead of two minutes, while in the 1980 presidential debates, the candidates were allowed to make rebuttals after their opponents finished responds to questions from the moderator. For another example, there are three presidential debates in 1992: in the first and the third debate, the moderator asked each candidate questions, while in the second debate, questions were raided by the audience on the spot.

The performance of the candidates in the closing statements has a great impact on the results of the presidential election. Therefore, it is vital for the candidates to present positive images and construct their ideological grounds through pronouns and verbs that encode illocutionary acts in the closing statements to attract votes and seek support from the audience.

2.2 Closing statements

The closing statements are the last stage of each presidential debate. Since the first televised presidential debates in 1960, the session of closing statements has been a major and influential part of the debates; that is, it serves as the last chance for presidential candidates to present their images and ideology without any interruption. Each candidate has two minutes to deliver his/her speech, and needs to seize this chance to leave the last impression on the audience for the purpose of gaining more support.

2.3 Background of candidates in the 1992 United States presidential debates

The candidates of the 1992 United States presidential debates were George Bush, Bill Clinton, and Ross Perot. George Bush, the former vice president of president Ronald Reagan for eight years, was the incumbent President and the Republican nominee for reelection. Bill Clinton, the governor of Arkansas, was the presidential nominee of the Democratic Party. He represented the change of the government economic position and a major challenger to the Bush's Trickle-down government³. Ross Perot was the billionaire of Taxes, and the founder of the Electronic Data Systems Corporation (EDS). As the unemployment rate had increased drastically by 7.8% under the Bush administration from 1989 to 1993, he decided to run for the position of the President independently, with the commitment to leading the America out of the economic recession.

3. Data collections & analysis

The transcript is downloaded from the website (<https://www.debates.org/voter->

³ One of the committee members pointed out that this is inconsistent with Bush's response in (5). Due to the scope of the current study, I will leave it for future research.

[education/debate-transcripts/](#)) and processed by Microsoft Word to calculate tokens of *I*, *we*, and *they* used by George Bush, Bill Clinton, and Ross Perot. Each token is counted separately and converted into percentage for comparison and analysis. Searle's (1969) speech act theory is adopted to classify illocutionary acts encoded by verbs. According to the illocutionary act introduced in Section 1.5 in Chapter 2, token counts of *I*, *we* and *they* are categorized with reference to their illocutionary acts, including *assertive*, *expressive*, *commissive*, *directive*, and *declarative*. After the data collection, discourse analysis is conducted to analyze the expressed intentions and acts encoded by each pronoun. To explore the intentions underlying the use of pronouns by each candidate, this work adopts Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) for the examination of the ideological grounds of pronominal choice in the closing statements. As CDA aims to discover power relations between language and society, the implementation of CDA provides an efficient method to investigate how politicians express their ideology and illocutionary acts through pronouns in combination with verbs to persuade the audience to support themselves.

3.1 Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) focuses on how ideology, power and hegemony are demonstrated through language, and it views language as social practice (Wang 2016, p.2768). Scholars in CDA develop new branches and sub-disciplines of CDA. For example, Charteris-Black (2004) proposes the frame of critical metaphor analysis (CMA), which views metaphors as a strategy of persuasion in political discourse, and Xu (2005) supports the use of cultural approach to discourse (CAD), which emphasizes the cultural differences among different discourses when analyzing non-western discourse (Wang 2016, p.2767-2768). As the goal of CDA is to examine the process of power and ideology expressed by language, it is commonly adopted by scholars who scrutinize political discourse.

Cheng (2020) applies CDA for the investigation of the modal choice and language devices used by president Ma Ying-jeou in the 2012 Taiwan televised Presidential debates. The modal verbs are the verbs that used to expressed the possibility, willingness or necessity of an action, and they are frequently used in political discourse to emphasize politicians' intention of making an action. She examines how Ma used modal verbs and language devices to make acclaims, attack the opponents and defend himself during the presidential debates. The modal verbs are divided into four types, which are high value, median value, low value and negation based on the functions and the strength of the tone. For example, *bixu* (must/ought to), *yao*, *xuyao* (need), which express the modality of obligation and necessity, are in the type of high value, and *bu hui* (will not), *bu gan* (dare not) and *jue bu* (absolutely not) are in the type of negation. According to the token counts, the median value modal verb *yao* (will/would, 105 tokens), *hui* (will, 67 tokens), which convey the modality of the speaker's volition and determination, and the low value verb *nenggou* (can/could) are the three most frequently used modal verbs in Ma's presidential debates. As Cheng (2020) observes, while Ma acclaimed his policy, he tended to use *nenggou* (can/ be able to) to make promise of his future plans, and he also exploited *yao* (will) and *xiwang* (hoping) to express his willingness and volition in a positive manner. When attacking the opponent (Ms.Tsai, another presidential candidate) and her party (the Democratic Progressive Party), Ma used the verb *gan* (dare) to question and attack his opponent, and he also utilized *meiyou zuo dao* (couldn't do) to attack his opponent's incapability. Finally, while facing the questions and attacks from the opponents, Ma used the high value verb *buneng* (cannot), *meiyou* (did not) and *bu hui* (never do) to strongly defend his record and past deeds. This strategy not only embodies his determination to take responsibility, but also emphasizes and fortifies his position. In conclusion, Cheng (2020) suggests that Ma's manipulation of modal verbs amounts to his victory of the 2012 presidential election; his usage of modal verbs, on the one hand, creates a positive image of his record and stewardship through acclaiming and

attacking, and, on the other hand, presents a negative image of his opponent through attacking. With the aid of his modality choice, Ma tactically persuaded the voters to support himself and won the presidential election of 2012.

In conclusion, the goal of Critical discourse analysis is to examine the relations between society and language and to probe how power is carried and conveyed through language devices. Hence, due to the function and aims of CDA, the present work adopts the approach of Critical discourse analysis to investigate how candidates manipulate pronominal choice to establish their power/ social dominance and how they gain support from the audience.

3.2 A Case study of CDA: Charteris-Black (2018)

Charteris-Black (2018) provides a more specific definition of power and CDA and demonstrates how CDA is conducted, including the focus of CDA, the definition of power and the process of CDA.

The focus of CDA is the ‘use of power’, which is how a social group exercises power through language. Furthermore, the scholars of CDA also investigate the reasons of the speakers to choose a specific term or language device instead of others and the effects of the language device on social relations, that is, the intention behind the speakers’ utterances and the efficacy of persuasion of these utterances (Charteris-Black 2018:87).

As the goal of CDA is the investigation of exercise of power through language, Charteris-Black (2018) then define power is the capability of a social group (X) to enforce the other group (Y) to achieve what (X) wants, and to prevent the other group (Y) from achieving goals which is their (Y) own best interests. (Charteris-Black 2018, p. 88). For example, the government (X) forces the residents (Y) to move away in order to build a new train station. Therefore, the goal of CDA is to investigate how a speaker manipulates language devices to persuade his/her audience to achieve his/her own goals and how these

language device affects social relations.

The process of CDA defined by Charteris-Black (2018) demonstrates its principle and how it is operated. CDA can be separated into three parts: analysis of speech circumstances, identification and analysis of features and interpretation and explanation.

When applying CDA to political discourse, the priority is to analyze the range of the context, which is 'speech circumstances'. According to Charteris-Black (2018), speech circumstances are classified into three parts, which are situational circumstances, cognitive circumstances and process circumstances. The situational circumstances are the setting of the discourse, which includes the information of the speaker, location, audience, occasion and date. Cognitive circumstances are regarded as 'background knowledge' which deals with the ideology or belief of the speaker, the audience and the speech writer, and the interaction between the speaker, the speechwriter and the audiences' ideology. Finally, process circumstances represent the interaction between the speakers and the speechwriters (Charteris-Black 2018:91). On most occasions, speeches are not created by the speaker's own but the speechwriters, hence, the relations between the speechwriters' ideology, the audience and the speaker's ideology is a vital part of CDA.

The second step of CDA is the identification and analysis of features. As Charteris-Black (2018) maintains, this step includes the investigation of language features and the way they are presented or delivered. The language devices used by the speakers are the target of this step, and they include different sizes of units, for instance, lexical choice, sentence metaphor or stylistic features. In addition, how these language devices are delivered and performed by the speaker is also the main focus. There are five features of performance, including bodily appearance, bodily performance, dress, voice and the use of teleprompts or notes to voice projection (Charteris-Black 2018:95).

Interpretation and explanation is the final step of CDA. This step aims to analyze the purpose and persuasion effect of the utterances. For example, how Bush manipulates his

pronominal choice to create political images and what image it creates.

To conclude, Charteris-Black (2018) not only identifies the aim of CDA, but also discussed the nature of power. The CDA is vital in providing a framework for the analysis of an affinity between political discourse, persuasion and ideology.



Chapter 4

Results and Discussion

1. Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss the observations of each candidate's pronominal choice through token counts and analyze the functions of pronouns (*I*, *we* and *they*) in the closing statements by implementing critical discourse analysis, following the assumptions spelt out in Chapter 3. The token counts of personal pronouns *I*, *we*, and *they* are quantified in the following sections (see Section 2.1, 3.1 and 4.1), and the critical discourse analysis of different functions of pronouns is presented after each chart with the aim of explaining the intention behind the candidates' pronominal choice and functions of the pronouns. The speech acts theory (see Chapter 2, Section 5) and the functions of pronouns (see Chapter 2 Section 3) are adopted as the basis for the discussion in this chapter.

2. *I*

The following sub-sections summarize the observations of each candidate's use of the pronoun *I*. By comparing each candidate's token counts and percentage of *I* in the closing statements, the distinctions in pronominal choice between Clinton, Bush and Perot are analyzed. What follows the results and the token counts is the critical discourse analysis of *I* in the transcript, and functions of *I* and the correlation between illocutionary acts and *I* are discussed with reference to extracts from the transcript.

2.1 Results

The token counts reflect the candidates' preference of using *I* in the closing statements. According to Table 7, Perot used *I* (43 tokens: 37%) as frequently as Clinton (43 tokens: 37%), and Bush is the third (30 tokens: 26%). From the first closing statement to the third one, the tokens of *I* in Perot's utterances gradually decreased, while Clinton used *I* more frequently in each closing statement, and the token counts of Bush's pronoun throughout the three closing statements remain relatively stable. It is worth noting that, the frequency of using *I* in the second closing statement is the highest (37%), followed by the first (34%) and the third (29%). In the third closing statement, both Perot (8 tokens: 24%) and Bush (9 tokens: 26%) used *I* the least in the three closing statements, while Clinton, on the contrary, used *I* most frequently in his third closing statement. The observations of each candidate's token counts of pronouns may have a direct bearing on their victory or defeat in the election. The potential functions they were trying to express are discussed in Section 2.2.

	First closing statement	Second closing statement	Third closing statement	Total
Ross Perot	19 (48%)	16 (37%)	8 (24%)	43 (37%)
Bill Clinton	10 (26%)	16 (37%)	17 (50%)	43 (37%)
Gorge Bush	10 (26%)	11 (26%)	9 (26%)	30 (26%)
Total	39 (34%)	43 (37%)	34 (29%)	116 (100%)

Table 7. The token counts and percentage of *I* in each candidate's closing statements

2.2 Functions of *I*

As mentioned in Section 3.2, Chapter 2, *I* in political discourse can carry multiple functions

and meanings, including expressing personal feelings and ideas, separating the speaker from his/her own group, and providing personal information. With respect to the speech act theory, various illocutionary acts can be also presented through the performative verbs with the co-occurrence of *I* in political discourse. Functions and correlation between illocutionary acts and *I* in the closing statements are discussed below with the illustration of extracts to understand how images and ideology are presented through the candidates' manipulation of *I*.

2.2.1 Presenting personal feelings and ideas

I in political discourse can be used by the candidates to present their personal feelings and ideas to make a speech more subjective and shorten the distance between themselves and the audience. Relevant examples are given as follows.

Perot is an independent candidate from Texas, who represented neither the Democrats nor the Republicans but a group of ordinary citizens. In his closing statements, he often presented his personal feelings and opinions through the use of *I* to the audience, which can be seen in (1).

(1)

“Well, it’s been a privilege to be able to talk to the American people tonight. I make no bones about it. I love this country. I love the principle it’s founded on. I love the people here. I don’t like to see the country’s principles violated. I don’t like to see the people in a deteriorating economy in a deteriorating country because our government has lost touch with the people. The people in Washington are good people. We just have a bad system. We’ve got to change the system.” (Perot, the first closing statement of the debates)

In this extract, Perot presented his personal feelings in a direct way through *I*. Giving those personal feelings can not only shorten the distance between himself and the audience, but also present himself as common people. The observation here is not new at all. In Håkansson's (2012) work, which examines the pronominal choice in Bush and Obama's State of the Union Address, Bush also expresses his personal feelings by the use of *I*, as in (2).

(2)

"I like teachers so much, I married one." (Bush, State of the Union, 2001)

This strategy is frequently observed in Perot's first closing statement (8 tokens), but is less used in the second (0 token) and third closing statement (2 tokens).

Clinton, the presidential candidate from the Democratic Party and the governor of Arkansas, had the exact number of tokens of *I* as Perot (43 tokens). In his speeches, he also utilized *I* to present himself as an individual and to express personal feelings in order to build a closer relationship with the audience. But, unlike Perot, Clinton regularly used *I* to express his thankfulness to the audience and his opponent, as shown in (3).

(3)

"I'd like to thank the people of St. Louis and Washington University, the Presidential Debate Commission and all those who made this night possible. And I'd like to thank those of you who are watching. Most of all, I'd like to thank all of you who have touched me in some way over this last year, all the thousands of you whom I've seen. I'd like to thank the computer executives and the electronics executives in Silicon Valley, two-thirds of whom are Republicans who said they wanted to sign on to a change in America. I'd like to thank the hundreds of executives who came to Chicago, a

third of them Republicans, who said they wanted to change. I'd like to thank the people who've started with Mr. Perot who've come on to help our campaign." (Clinton, the first closing statement of the debates)

As he used *I* to appreciate the audience, it is revealed that Clinton attempted to connect his individual identity with the audience, and to create personal involvement. By appreciating the American citizens, he interacted with the audience directly to create a closer relationship. But, unlike Bush and Perot, Clinton also expressed his respect and thankfulness to his opponents through *I*.

Bush mainly used *I* to present his personal opinions of policies and issues, as demonstrated in (4) and (5), where he often used the pattern '*I believe*' to show his personal stance:

(4)

*"I do **believe** that we need to control mandatory spending. I think we need to invest and save more. I **believe** that we need to educate better and retrain better. I **believe** that we need to export more so I'll keep working for export agreements where we can sell more abroad and I **believe** that we must strengthen the family."* (Bush, the second closing statement of the debates)

(5)

*"that's the number one priority, and I **believe** my program for stimulating investment, encouraging small business, brand-new approach to education, strengthening the American family, and, yes, creating more exports is the way to go. I **don't believe** in*

trickle-down government, I don't believe in larger taxes and larger government spending. On foreign affairs, some think it's irrelevant. I believe it's not." (Bush, the third closing statement of the debates)

The function of presenting personal ideas or opinions, according to Bramley (2001), is to make the speeches more subjective. By using the phrase '*I believe*' frequently in the closing statements, Bush not only confirmed his perspectives on the issues in his closing statements, but further highlighted his individual identity. The above discussion has shown that there are two ways to present personal feelings with *I*. First, the above discussion has demonstrated that the three candidates have distinct strategies for using *I*. In the three closing statements, while presenting the personal feelings and ideas, Clinton mainly used *I* to show his appreciation to the audience, the campaign, or even the opponents. 9 tokens (21%) of *I* in Clinton's closing statements are observed to express the personal feelings of thankfulness. Perot used *I* to express his personal opinions about the country, which manifests his favorability. In the closing statements, Perot expressed his likeness in a direct way, including '*I like...*' or '*I love...*'. According to the results, 6 tokens (14%) of *I* in Perot's speech are observed to express his favorability, and 5 tokens (12%) are found in the first closing statement. Finally, Bush tended to show the audience his personal feelings and opinion. As mentioned above, he regularly used the pattern '*I believe*' in his speech. 9 tokens (30%) of *I* are observed in Bush's closing statements with the aim of conveying personal belief.

2.2.2 Separation

Separation is an essential function of *I* in political discourse, and it enables a candidate to stand out among other candidates. According to Bramley (2001), a candidate can use *I* in

political discourse to separate him/herself from his/her own group, which further emphasize the personal identity of the candidate, as illustrated in (6):

(6)

“I offer a new approach. It’s not trickle-down economics. It’s been tried for 12 years and it’s failed. More people are working harder for less, 100,000 people a month losing their health insurance, unemployment going up, our economy slowing down. We can do better.” (Clinton, the third closing statement of the debates)

In (6), Clinton used *I* to separate himself from his own group. Instead of using ‘the Democratic Party’, Clinton used *I* to suggest that the ‘new approach’ was proposed by himself, not his group or party. Therefore, Clinton’s pronominal choice of *I* not only separates himself from his social group, but also further emphasizes his individual identity and uniqueness.

However, Bush used *I* to separate himself from his opponents, instead of his own party. Another example of separation is shown in (7).

(7)

“One is to raise taxes. One is to reduce spending — controlling that mandatory spending. Another one is to invest and save and to stimulate growth. I do not want to raise taxes. I differ with the 2 here on that. I’m just not going to do that.” (Bush, the second closing statement of the debates)

As (7) shows, when it comes to the issue of economic policies, Bush used *I* to separate himself from his opponents. He used “*I differ with the 2 here on that*” to detach himself from Clinton and Perot. This function can be seen as his attempt to show the differences between himself and his opponents and to emphasize his position on the issue of economic. Note that Clinton and Bush adopt the separating function of *I* in different ways in the closing statements. As shown in (6), Clinton’s use of separating function expresses that the new direction is provided by himself which emphasizes his political role. However, Bush used *I* to separate himself from his opponents, which, further emphasizes his perspective on economic issues. Nonetheless, the use of separating function of *I* is seldom observed in the transcript of the three candidates, and no tokens are observed in Perot’s three closing statements. In the closing statements, Perot seldom attacked or even questioned his opponents but regularly used *I* to promote his identity and to shorten the distance between himself and the audience.

2.3 Illocutionary acts and *I*

In political discourse, When *I* is used in combination with performative verbs, they are capable of encoding illocutionary acts, including asking, questioning, or promising. In this section, the percentage of *I* is quantified with respect to five types of illocutionary act (assertive, expressive, commissive, directive, and declarative) by considering types of verb following *I*. The results are shown in Table 8.

	assertive	Directive	Commissive	Expressive	Declarative	Total
Clinton	14 (33%)	6 (14%)	3 (6%)	20 (47%)	0 (0%)	43 (100%)
Bush	10 (33%)	4 (13%)	0 (0%)	16 (54%)	0 (0%)	30 (100%)
Perot	24 (56%)	2 (4%)	6 (14%)	11 (26%)	0 (0%)	43 (100%)
Total	48 (42%)	12 (10%)	9 (7%)	47 (41%)	0 (0%)	116 (100%)

Table 8. The token counts and percent of each type of illocutionary act encoded by performative verbs in combination with *I*

According to Table 8, assertive act (42%) and expressive act (41%) are the two most frequently expressed types of illocutionary act in the closing statements, followed by directive (10%) and commissive act (7%). In the closing statements, none of the candidates performed declarative act. Clinton (47%) and Bush (54%) performed expressive act the most, while Perot present assertive act (56%) extensively.

2.3.1 Assertive act

According to Searle (1969), assertive act is used to express the truth of the proposition, which includes functions like reporting, stating, claiming, etc. In the closing statements, in order to persuade the audience to support presidential candidates, the candidates have to report the current state of the nation. In addition, the candidates need to utilize assertive act to report their policies and state their concern for controversial issues. As can be expected, the percent of assertive act (42%) is the highest between the five illocutionary acts (Expressive: 41%, Directive: 10%, Commissive: 7%, Declarative: 0%).

In the second closing statement, Perot used assertive act to report and introduce himself to the audience in (8).

(8)

“I’m one person they ought to consider. If they just want to keep slow dancing and talk about it and not do it, I’m not your man. I am results oriented. I am action oriented. I’ve dealt my businesses.” (Perot, the second closing statement of the debates)

In (8), Perot exploited assertive act to commit the truth of his presence to the audience. By using the form ‘I am’ to report himself, Perot introduced his characteristic to the audience, which leads them to gain a better understanding of himself.

The reporting function can be also used to emphasize the candidate’s past deed. In (9) and (10), assertive act is observed in Clinton’s speeches when he was reporting his record:

(9)

“First of all, the people of my state have let me be their governor for 12 years because I made commitments to 2 things — more jobs and better schools.” (Clinton, the second closing statement of the debates)

(10)

“It’s time to put the American people first, to invest and grow this economy. I’m the only person here who’s ever balanced a government budget and I’ve presented 12 of them and cut spending repeatedly. But you cannot just get there by balancing the budget.” (Clinton, the second closing statement of the debates)

In (9) and (10), Clinton reported his record as the governor to the audience. As he used “I am the only person”, Clinton fortified his status of the governor with assertive act, which entails that he has the capability of being a president.

2.3.2 Expressive act

Expressive act is the second most frequently used act by the candidates in the closing statements. As proposed in Searle (1969), expressive act is performed to commit the speaker's psychological states, and it is regularly utilized to express the candidates' personal feelings and viewpoint. In the closing statements, both Bush (54%) and Clinton (47%) frequently performed expressive act with *I*. In (11), Clinton used *I* to express appreciation to the audience, which is one of the functions of expressive act.

(11)

“I’d like to thank the people of St. Louis and Washington University, the Presidential Debate Commission and all those who made this night possible. And I’d like to thank those of you who are watching.” (Clinton, the first closing statement of the debates)

As (11) shows, Clinton mainly used expressive act to present the force of appreciation to the audience, and the use of expressive act reoccurred in his utterances. 7 tokens are found in his first closing statement. In addition to the thanking function, expressive act can be used to express apology and congratulation. The act of apology is observed in Bush's first closing statement. As economic recession happened under Bush's presidency, he received a large number of criticisms of his failure to deal with economic problems. To respond to the criticisms, Bush in the first closing statement apologized by executing expressive act, as shown in (12).

(12)

“I hope as president that I’ve earned your trust. I’ve admitted it when I make a

mistake, but then I go on and help, try to solve the problems.” (Bush, the first closing statement of the debates)

In (12), Bush utilized expressive act to admit his mistakes, which expresses his apology. However, the apologizing function is seldom observed in his speech, with only one token being observed in Bush’s closing statements. As apology and admitting mistakes can be regarded as defending the past deeds and mistakes, the low occurrence of apology can be explained by Benoit & Brazeal (2002). According to Benoit & Brazeal (2002), defending or apologizing in the debates might make candidates appear weak, and also inform the audience of the potential weakness (Benoit & Brazeal 2002, p.228). In this light, the low occurrence of the apologizing function might results from the attempt of the candidates to conceal their weaknesses.

2.4 Correlation between the functions of *I* and illocutionary act

The functions of pronouns and different types of illocutionary act are related. According to the findings, certain functions of *I* and illocutionary acts overlap each other. For example, as a candidate uses *I* to present personal feelings and ideas, the verbs used in combination with pronoun also encodes expressive act. Given the correlation between the functions of pronouns and illocutionary acts, expressive act is often associated with the function of presenting personal feelings and ideas. As shown in (3), when Clinton expressed his appreciation to the audience and the opponents, expressive speech act is also performed. In other words, a particular function of *I* arises from a performative verb which carries various illocutionary acts.

On the contrary, when presenting a illocutionary act with the performative verb went after *I*, the pronoun *I* also carries multiple functions, as can be seen in (13).

(13)

“I want a country where people who work hard and play by the rules are rewarded, not punished. I want a country where people are coming together across the lines of race and region and income.” (Clinton, the first closing statement of the debates)

When Clinton used the pattern ‘*I want*’, he performed directive act to the audience, which entails the act of requesting. Based on Bramley (2001) and Håkansson’s (2012) definition of *I*, ‘*I want*’ in (13) also performs the function of presenting personal ideas and constructing an individual identity. When Clinton used ‘*I want*’ to impose directive act on the audience, he was also presenting his personal ideas, since the utterance “*I want a country where people who work hard and play by the rules are rewarded*” actually infers his personal opinion of the country. In addition, in (13), Clinton also constructed his personal identity; he used ‘*I want*’ to present himself as an individual rather than the representative of a social group. The use of *I* shows the audience Clinton’s personal ideas of the country and emphasizes his individual characteristic, which not only persuades the audience with the same ideology to support himself, but also shortens the distance between himself and the American people.

Finally, the results of the illocutionary acts reveal how Bush, Perot and Clinton persuade the audience through the use of *I* in combination with performative verbs. In the closing statements, Clinton (47%) and Bush’s (54%) use of *I* are mostly associated with expressive act, while the assertive act is the most common act with the use of *I* (56%) in Perot’s closing statements. It is obvious that the three candidates have distinct ways to express their intentions in closing statements. Although expressive act is the most frequently performed in Clinton (47%) and Bush’s (54%) speeches, they performed different functions of expressive act in the closing statements. As mentioned above, Clinton’s use of *I* usually performs the

function of appreciating, (7 token: 35%) of his expressive act conveys the function of appreciation. The high percent of appreciation entails Clinton's attempt to present the images of harmony. Bush is the only candidate that utilized expressive act to apologize, and he admitted his mistakes in dealing with economic issues in response to the criticisms and to defend his past deed. Perot, unlike the other two candidates, tended to use assertive act to introduce himself to the audience. In the closing statements, Perot used the pattern 'I'm' frequently to describe himself and to report what he was currently doing (10 tokens). The form 'I'm' which conveys the act of reporting/describing amounts to 42% in Perot's percent of assertive act. It reveals Perot's attempt to reinforce his characteristic and individual identity to the audience. Each candidate's intentions underlying their pronominal choice and the encoding of illocutionary acts through performative verbs are clearly shown.

3. *We*

The observation of each candidate's pronominal choice of *we* and illocutionary acts encoded by performative verbs in combination of *we* are discussed in the following sub-sections below.

3.1 Results

The token counts in Table 9 reveal each candidate's preference for using *we* in the closing statements, and there are three points to be discussed. First, Perot used *we* most frequently (25 tokens: 37%), followed by Bush (24 tokens: 36%), and Clinton is the least (18 tokens: 27%). Second, Bush used *we* most frequently in the first closing statement (14 tokens: 58%), Clinton used *we* the most in the second closing statement (9 tokens: 39%), and Perot's use of *we* constitutes the major portion in the third closing statement (11 tokens: 55%). Third,

Bush's tokens of *we* decreased drastically from the first closing statement (14 tokens: 58%) to the second (8 tokens: 35%), and in the third closing statement, his token counts and percent is the lowest (2 tokens: 10%). The token counts are quantified and discussed with respect to illocutionary acts and functions of pronouns in the following sub-sections.

	Closing statement 1	Closing statement 2	Closing statement 3	Total
Ross Perot	8 (33%)	6 (26%)	11 (55%)	25 (37%)
Bill Clinton	2 (9%)	9 (39%)	7 (35%)	18 (27%)
Gorge Bush	14 (58%)	8 (35%)	2 (10%)	24 (36%)
Total	24 (36%)	23 (34%)	20 (30%)	67 (100%)

Table 9. The token counts and percent of *we* in each candidate's closing statements

In political discourse and presidential debates, many functions of *we* are performed through the manipulation of the exclusive and the inclusive *we*, as these two sub-categories of *we* are capable of including or eliminating a specific group of people. Table 10 summarizes the token counts and percentage of the exclusive and the inclusive *we* for investigating how candidates create involvement or to separate themselves from the audience.

Candidate	Type	Closing statement 1	Closing statement 2	Closing statement 3	Total
Clinton	Inclusive	2 (17%)	5 (41.5%)	5 (41.5%)	12 (100%)
	Exclusive	0 (0%)	4 (67%)	2 (33%)	6 (100%)
Bush	Inclusive	7 (64%)	3 (27%)	1 (9%)	11 (100%)
	Exclusive	7 (54%)	5 (38%)	1 (8%)	13 (100%)
Perot	Inclusive	4 (21%)	4 (21%)	11 (58%)	19 (100%)
	Exclusive	4 (67%)	2 (33%)	0 (0%)	6 (100%)

Table 10. The token counts and percent of the exclusive and the inclusive *we* in each candidate's closing statements

According to Table 10, there are three points which need further discussion. First, both Perot and Clinton used the inclusive *we* more often than the exclusive *we*, while Bush is the only candidate that used the exclusive *we* more than the inclusive *we*. Second, in the first closing statement, both Bush (the inclusive *we*: 7 tokens, the exclusive *we*: 7 tokens) and Perot (the inclusive *we*: 4 tokens, the exclusive *we*: 4 tokens) had the same tokens of the exclusive and the inclusive *we*. Thirdly, Clinton in the first closing statement did not use any exclusive *we*, and Perot only used the inclusive *we* (11 tokens: 58%) in his final closing statement. The percent of the inclusive and the exclusive *we* of each candidate serves as a window onto how they separated or grouped people, and the observations are discussed along the lines of critical discourse analysis.

3.2 Functions of *we*

We in the closing statements is regularly utilized by the candidates to present different

images. In Section 2.2.3 in Chapter 2, Karapetjana (2011) states that *we* allows a candidate to share responsibility (avoid responsibility taking) with others and to create involvement with the audience, and according to Karapetjana (2011), *we* can be divided into the exclusive and the inclusive for the purpose of separating people to further emphasize one specific group of people. Each function of *we* is discussed to reveal how images and functions are conveyed.

3.2.1 Creating involvement

To persuade the audience to vote for a particular candidate in the election, using *we* to create involvement is an essential tactic in the closing statements. Karapetjana (2011) maintains that *we* enable a candidate to present him/herself as a member of the audience to express solidarity. When a candidate used the inclusive *we* in the closing statements to address him/herself, the candidate presents an image that s/he is working with the citizens and s/he is a member of the public. Using the inclusive *we* to create involvement with the audience can not only present a sense of participation, but also closely connect the candidate with the audience.

According to the observations, 76% of Perot's *we* are the inclusive *we*, and one example can be seen in (14).

(14)

*“Now, finally, if you can't pay the bills you're dead in the water. And **we** have got to put our nation back to work.”* (Perot, the second closing statement of the debates)

In (14), Perot used the inclusive *we* to include himself in the audience in order to create involvement and participation. When Perot said that *“**we** have got to put our nation back to work.”* he was implying that he would work with the audience to put the nation back to work.

Thus, the inclusive *we* in (14) presents Perot as a participant of the ordinary citizen, and connects his identity with the audience.

As mentioned above, the goal of creating involvement with the audience in the closing statements is to connect a candidate with the audience to persuade them to support the candidate. In this light, emphasizing the relationship between the candidate and the audience is a vital function of *we*. An example of creating involvement with the inclusive *we* is shown in (15).

(15)

“Then the question is, can we govern? I love that one. The “we” is you and me. You bet your hat we can govern because we will be in there together and we will figure out what to do, and you won’t tolerate gridlock, you won’t tolerate endless meandering and wandering around, and you won’t tolerate non-performance.” (Perot, the third closing statement of the debates)

In (15), Perot explicitly pointed out the referent of ‘*we*’, which is ‘*you and me*’ to the audience. The same as (14), Perot used the inclusive *we* to address himself and the audience, to create connection and involvement with the audience, and by referring to *we* as *you*, he fortified the connection between the audience and himself.

In (16), Clinton used the inclusive *we* to encourage and persuade the audience to support himself, which presents the sense of involvement.

(16)

“I know we can do better. It won’t take miracles and it won’t happen overnight, but we can do much, much better if we have the courage to change. Thank you very much.”
(Clinton, the third closing statement of the debates)

In (16), the utterance ‘*we can do better*’ does not only create the involvement with the audience, but also convey the act of encouragement. The use of the inclusive *we* in the utterance ‘*we can do better*’ entails that ‘it is a better choice to work with Clinton’ or ‘working with Clinton will be better’.

Creating involvement is an essential function of *we* in political discourse, and it can only be performed by the inclusive *we* since it addressee both the candidates and audience. As Table 10 shows, the percent of the inclusive *we* (19 tokens: 76%) in Perot’s closing statements are much higher than that of Clinton (12 tokens: 67%) and Bush (11 tokens: 46%). The results suggest that Perot had a stronger intention, especially in the third closing statement, to express solidarity with the audience and persuade the audience to support himself. Bush however, has a higher tendency to address his own group with the exclusive *we* (the inclusive: 46%, the exclusive: 54%).

3.2.2 Separation

Separation is the function which plays an important role in political discourse. Using *we* to separate people into groups can gather support from the audience with similar ideology and personal opinions and promote the image of the candidate’s group.

Both the inclusive and the exclusive *we* are capable of separating people. When using the inclusive *we* in political discourse, the candidate arranges the audience and him/herself in a group, which is different from the opponent’s group or anyone that has different ideology. There are two advantages of using the inclusive *we* to perform separating function: first, it unites the audience and the candidate into a group based on their ideology, and fortifies togetherness of the group; second, it allows the candidate to categorize the opponent into ‘the other group’ to present negative images of the political rivals.

The exclusive *we* carries different separating functions. When using the exclusive *we* in political discourse, a candidate excludes the audience from him/herself and gathers his/her partner into a group (government/administration/campaign). The separating function of the exclusive *we* is usually used for self-promotion and self-defense for the candidate, as shown in (17).

(17)

“I do believe that we need to control mandatory spending. I think we need to invest and save more. I believe that we need to educate better and retrain better. I believe that we need to export more so I’ll keep working for export agreements where we can sell more abroad……” (Bush, the second closing statement of the debates)

Bush used the exclusive *we* to separate himself from the audience and promoted his administrative abilities to the audience. The exclusive *we* in (17) was used by Bush to emphasize the significance of his group and the administration staff and to show the audience the direction of his future policies. In this light, the exclusive *we* in (17) was not intended to create involvement but to promote the image of the candidate’s group. In short, Bush’s *we* separates himself from the audience to emphasize the likability of his own group and gather support from the audience with similar ideology.

Using separating function of the exclusive *we* to promote the leadership and charisma of a candidate’s own group is an effective way to persuade the audience to support the candidate, as can be seen in (18).

(18)

“Our schools are now better. Our children get off to a better start from pre-school programs and smaller classes in the early grades, and we have one of the most

aggressive adult education programs in the country. We talked about that. This year my state ranks first in the country in job growth, 4th in manufacturing in job growth, 4th in income growth, 4th in the decline of poverty.” (Clinton, the second closing statement of the debates)

As can be seen in (18), Clinton’s exclusive *we* does not refer to the audience but to the citizens in Arkansas under his administration, and he used it to separate himself from the audience and create another group which includes himself and his people in Arkansas. When using *we* to refer to the people in Arkansas under Clinton’s administration, he connected the himself and the people from Arkansas with positive images (*‘one of the most aggressive adult education programs in the country’* and *‘This year my state ranks first in the country in job growth’*.) Therefore, the newly created group which includes Clinton and his people in Arkansas by the exclusive *we* was used to emphasize Clinton’s capability of governing to persuade the audience to support Clinton. In conclusion, the function of separation of the exclusive *we* can be used to create a new group for self-promotion, and to persuade the audience to support the candidate.

3.2.3 Sharing responsibility

Bramley (2001) suggests that a candidate sometimes uses *we* to avoid speaking as individuals, and include other people in his/her group to capture attention. When a candidate does not want to take the responsibility of some issues, using *we* to include other people allows the candidate to share responsibility, and it can be performed in both positive or negative way. On the one hand, when the candidate talks about positive things (ex., good policies or accomplishments), s/he might use *we* to share responsibility with their group to give credit to their group members. On the other hand, if the candidate refers to issues which

might create negative images of themselves (scandal, bad policies or mistakes), s/he might use *we* to avoid taking responsibility alone. The example of using *we* to share responsibility can be seen in (19).

(19)

“We owe you a debt we can never repay you. And the greatest repayment I can ever give is to recreate the American dream for your children and grandchildren. I’ll give you everything I have, if you want me to do it.” (Perot, the first closing statement of the debates)

In (19), Perot used the exclusive *we* to create a group and present the sense that the government and the politicians owe a lot to the citizens and it is about time for the candidate to repay. Nonetheless, Perot used *we* to share responsibility with other politicians and members of the government. Since, ‘owe a debt to the audience that can never repay’ is not usually regarded as a positive image, Perot used *we* to avoid taking responsibility alone and indicated that he is the candidate who is able to make a repayment. To sum up, the purpose of using *we* to share responsibility is to indicate that every politician should be held accountable for owning debt to citizens, and Perot is the only candidate that is able to repay the debt.

The function of sharing responsibility with *we* can be found in Bush’s first closing statement in (20), as he mentioned an accomplishment with the use of the inclusive *we* to give credit to the audience.

(20)

“Take a look at the Middle East. We had to stand up against a tyrant. The US came together as we haven’t in many, many years. And we kicked this man out of Kuwait. And in the process, as a result of that will and that decision and that toughness” (Bush,

the first closing statement of the debates)

As (20) shows, Bush used another way to share responsibility with the audience. As Bush just prevailed Saddam Hussein in the Gulf war in 1990, the utterance “*we kicked this man out of Kuwait*” was referring to his accomplishment of winning the war, and Bush associated victory of the war to the American citizens. In this light, the use of sharing responsibility of *we* is to report that the audience play an important role in this achievement to better persuade them to support the candidate.

In conclusion, using *we* to share responsibility reveals the intention of the candidate to avoid taking the responsibility alone, and it can be utilized to give credit to other people (the candidate’s own group/ audience) or to escape from negative images or attention. However, the function of sharing responsibility with the audience is seldom observed in the closing statements by the three candidates (Clinton: 0 token, Bush: 1 token, Perot: 4 tokens). Usually, the function of sharing responsibility of *we* should be used most frequently by the incumbent presidential candidates, as they need to defend their past deed, promote the achievement or justify their mistakes. Nonetheless, the function of sharing responsibility is seldom observed in Bush’s closing statement (1 token), and Perot used the function more frequently than that of Clinton and Bush (4 tokens). All the tokens are found in the first closing statement, and the reason why Perot used the function of sharing responsibility extensively might be to present the image that a politician owes a lot to citizens and s/he is the only candidate to make a repayment, to further promote his positive image.

3.3 Illocutionary acts and *we*

In the closing statements, *we* allows a candidate to perform illocutionary acts in combination with performative verbs to the audience, and these acts play an vital role in persuading the

audience to support the candidate. Each type of illocutionary act has different functions and impacts on the audience. Thus, in this section, the token counts and percentage of each act are demonstrated and discussed. The results of each illocutionary act encoded by performative verbs are quantified in Table 11.

	Assertive	Directive	Commissive	Expressive	Declarative	Total
Clinton	15 (83%)	3 (17%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	18 (100%)
Bush	8 (33%)	16 (67%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	24 (100%)
Perot	13 (52%)	6 (24%)	6 (24%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	25 (100%)
Total	36 (54%)	25 (37%)	6 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	67 (100%)

Table 11. The token counts and percent of each type of illocutionary act encoded by performative verbs with the use of *we*

As Table 11 shows, there are four points that need further discussion. First, assertive act has the highest occurrence between the five types of illocutionary act associated with verb after *we*. Second, none of the three candidates present expressive act and declarative act with *we* in the closing statements. Third, both Clinton and Perot used *we* to present assertive act most frequently while Bush is the only candidate that used *we* to perform directive act the most. Finally, Perot is the only candidate that presents commissive act with *we* in the closing statements.

3.3.1 Assertive act

According to Table 11, assertive act was frequently performed by Perot and Clinton in the closing statements. As Searle (1969) maintains, assertive act is to commit the speaker to the

truth of the expressed proposition. The functions of assertive act include reporting, stating, announcing, asserting, claiming, suggesting, concluding etc. An example of assertive act encoded by *we* is represented in (21).

(21)

*“You have to decide whether you want to change or not. **We** do not need 4 more years of an economic theory that doesn’t work. **We**’ve had 12 years of trickle -down economics.”* (Clinton, The second closing statement of the debates)

In (21), Clinton used *we* to suggest that American citizens are suffering from the wrong economic policy under the administration of Bush (1989-1993) and Ronald Reagan (1981-1989), and it was time to change the policy. In the closing statements, Clinton used *we* to perform assertive act to indicate the fact that Bush’s economic policies failed. In this light, assertive act associated with *we* in Clinton’s utterance is not only used to assert the fact, but also to attack the Bush administration, since the policy of ‘trickle -down’ economic was implemented under Bush’s administration.

In the first closing statement, Perot also used *we* to present assertive act to the audience and state the truth of the proposition. The example is shown in (22).

(22)

*“The people in Washington are good people. **We** just have a bad system. **We**’ve got to change the system.”* (Perot, the first closing statement of the debates)

As can be seen in (22), Perot performed assertive act through *we* for the purpose of depicting the current circumstances to the audience and encouraging them support himself

According to (21) and (22), it is suggested that assertive act plays an essential role in

persuading the audience to support the candidate. As the assertive act includes the function of suggesting, indicating, claiming, reporting or concluding, a candidate can use *we* to perform illocutionary acts with performative verbs to the audience by attacking the opponents or stating the truth of the expressed proposition.

3.3.2 Directive act

Searle (1969) proposes that when a speaker performs directive act to the audience, s/he wants to direct/request some action from the hearer. The functions of directive act include requesting, ordering, asking, and questioning etc. In political discourse, assertive act is usually presented by a candidate to ask the audience directly to support the him/herself, and the example can be seen in (23).

(23)

“and I believe that we must strengthen the family. We’ve got to strengthen the family.”

(Bush, the second closing statement of the debates)

As directive act is used to request some action from the audience, the candidate can perform it with pronouns to make the closing statements more interactive. By performing directive act, Bush not only shortens the distance between the audience and himself but also creates involvement with the audience. In addition, as the utterance in (23) shows Bush’s future policy, directive act performed by *we* serves to attract the audience with the similar ideology.

Directive act can be executed to ask the audience to help or support the candidate, and it can also be utilized to encourage the audience to join the candidate’s group. With the

manipulation of directive act encoded by *we*, the candidates can make the speech more interactive and persuasive to attract votes from the audience.

3.3.3 Commissive act

Commissive act commits the speaker to some future action. In political discourse, it is usually presented by candidates to make a promise or offer things to the audience. Nevertheless, commissive act is seldom observed in the closing statements (6 tokens). Perot is the only candidate that used *we* to perform commissive act, and it is used to make a promise and depict the future to persuade the audience to support the candidate. One example is provided in (24).

(24)

*“You bet your hat we can govern because **we will be in there together and we will figure out what to do,**”* (Perot, the third closing statement of the debates)

In (24), Perot used commissive act to create a positive image of the future and create unity between himself and the audience. While using commissive act, the candidate conveys a message that working with him will make the future become better, which is crucial in attracting more votes from the audience.

3.4 Correlation between the functions of *we* and illocutionary acts

There is an inseparable relation between illocutionary acts and the functions of *we* in the closing statements. Using *we* and performative verbs to perform illocutionary acts allows a

candidate to achieve his/her communicative goals.

Based on the above discussion, there is one point that needs further investigation, which is, no token of expressive and declarative act encoded by the performative verbs in combination with *we* is found in the closing statements. According to Table 11, none of the three candidates used expressive act and declarative act in the closing statements, and the reasons may be due to the nature of the closing statements and the functions of these two illocutionary acts. As expressive act is performed to commit the psychological state of the speaker, it is impossible for the candidates perform expressive act with *we* in the closing statements, since expressive act cannot commit the psychological state of other people but only the speaker. As for declarative act, it is performed to change the state of the reality. Nevertheless, closing statements and presidential debates are held before the election, and none of the candidates can be elected at the stage of the closing statements. Therefore, as there was nothing to be changed by the candidates in the closing statements, it was natural that no token of declarative act is observed.

4. *They*

In the closing statements, the pronoun *they* is often used by candidates to separate the opponents from the his/her own group, and *they* is essential for presenting negative images of the opponents. In the following sub-sections, the token counts and percentage of *they* and illocutionary acts performed by performative verbs in combination with *they* are discussed, to explore the intention of the candidates behind *they*.

4.1 Results

Table 12 displays the token counts and percentage of *they* in the three closing statements, and

as it shows, Perot used *they* most frequently (20 tokens: 80%), compared with Clinton (4 tokens: 16 %) and Bush (1 token: 4%). The results of *they* make three crucial observations. First, Perot dominated the use of *they* in the closing statements (20 tokens: 80%). Second, a great portion of the token counts of *they* is observed in the second closing statement (15 tokens: 60%), and there is only one token observed in the third closing statement (Clinton: 1 token, Bush: 0 token, Perot: 0 token).

	Closing statement 1	Closing statement 2	Closing statement 3	Total
Ross Perot	6 (67%)	14 (93%)	0 (0%)	20 (80%)
Bill Clinton	2 (22%)	1 (7%)	1 (100%)	4 (16%)
Gorge Bush	1 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (4%)
Total	9 (100%)	15 (100%)	1 (100%)	25 (100%)

Table 12. The token counts and percent of *they* in each candidate's closing statements

4.2 Functions of *they*

According to the previous studies, *they* contains separating function, and the function of dividing people into groups or excluding the people that do not belong to the candidate's group (Bramley 2001, Karapetjana 2011, Hahn 2003, etc.). The goal of separating function of *they* is to attack the candidate's opponents and to demonstrate differences in leadership style, characteristics, and his/her perspectives on the policies.

4.2.1 Separation and presenting negative images

When a candidate used *they* to refer to people in the closing statements, s/he not only referred to other people, but also carried out separating function of the pronoun. By using *they* to exclude the opponents from the candidate's own group, the candidate finds it easier to attack the opponents and demonstrate their weaknesses. An example is provided below to address this point in (25).

(25)

*“Aren't you sick of being treated like an unprogrammed robot? Every 4 years, **they** send you all kinds of messages to tell you how to vote and then go back to business as usual. **They** told you at the tax and budget summit that if you agreed to a tax increase, we could balance the budget. **They** didn't tell you that that same year **they** increased spending \$1.83 for every dollar we increased taxes. That's Washington in a nutshell right there.”* (Perot, the first closing statement of the debates)

In (25), *they* refers to the government and the stale political system, which is under Perot's opponent's (Bush: 1989-1993) administration. As Hahn (2003) claims, *they* in political discourse is often connected with a negative image, while *I* and *we* are usually related to a positive image. In Perot's speech, he was trying to use *they* to indicate that the current government concealed some information from citizens to further attacked Bush's administration staff. Moreover, Perot not only utilized *they* to attack the opponent's administration, but also separated himself from the current government to emphasize his positive identity, as he was the outsider of the current system. Therefore, *they* enables the candidates to categorize people into another group which does not belong to the candidates' coalition, and to create the oppositional relations.

4.3 Illocutionary acts and *they*

The types of illocutionary acts encoded by performative verbs with *they* are much more restricted, compared with those of *I* and *we*. The percent and token counts of each type of illocutionary act are shown in Table 13.

	Assertive	Directive	Commissive	Expressive	Declarative	Total
Clinton	3 (75%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)
Bush	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
Perot	18 (90%)	0 (0%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	20(100%)
Total	22 (88%)	0 (0%)	3 (12%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	25 (100%)

Table 13. The token counts and percent of each type of illocutionary act encoded by performative verbs with the use of *they*

First, assertive act constitutes the large percentage of the illocutionary act (22 tokens: 88%), followed by commissive act (3tokens:12%). Second, no candidate used *they* to perform directive, expressive and declarative act to the audience.

4.3.1 Assertive act

In the closing statements, a candidate performs assertive act by the use of *they* to state the fact, indicate the truth or present the information for the audience. Assertive act is performed to the audience for many reasons, including presenting a negative image of the opponents or reporting the current circumstances of the country. In (26), Clinton performed assertive act to the audience when he used *they* to address the Republican.

(26)

*“I’d like to thank the computer executives and the electronics executives in Silicon Valley, two-thirds of whom are Republicans who said **they wanted to sign on to a change in America**. I’d like to thank the hundreds of executives who came to Chicago, a third of them Republicans, who said **they wanted to change**.”* (Clinton, the first closing statement of the debates)

In (26), Clinton used *they* to refer to the Republicans, which are the people from his opponent’s (Bush) party. However, he did not use *they* to connect the republicans with negative images but reported the truth that some of the republicans decided to endorse Clinton. Hence, Clinton’s manipulation of *they* and assertive act did not serves to assail the opponents’ group but to promote his own identity and positive image.

Some of the tokens of assertive act associated with *they* in the closing statements conveys neither positive nor negative images of the addressee but just report the facts and some information for the audience, as can be seen in (27).

(27)

*“Starting when **they**’re 3 and going to this school until **they**’re 9 and then going into the public school in the 4th grade. Ninety percent are on the honor role. Now that will change America. Those children will all go to college. **They** will live the American dream. And I beg the American people, any time **they** think about reforming education to take this piece of society that doesn’t have a chance and take these little pieces of clay that can be shaped and molded and give them the same love and nurture and affection and support you give your children and teach them that **they**’re unique and that **they**’re precious and that there’s only one person in the world like them and you*

will see this nation bloom.” (Perot, the second closing statement of the debates)

As (27) shows, Perot’s *they* refers to the children in the current education system, which is a neutral third group rather than the opponents’ group. Accordingly, assertive act in (27) carries neither positive nor negative images but simply present information and the fact to the audience. The intention of Perot’s execution of assertive act in (27) is to bring up the issue of education to the public to make more people alert to the future of the youth.

4.4 Correlation between the functions of *they* and illocutionary acts

In the closing statements, assertive act is the dominant illocutionary act. Examples from (26) to (27) show that when assertive act is encoded by performative verb after *they*, it is primarily associated with the function of presenting certain images (positive, negative or neutral). In the closing statements, candidates tend to exploit assertive act with *they* to connect the addressee with a negative image (see (25)). Nonetheless, as (26) and (27) show, when using *they* with performative verbs to present assertive act in the closing statements, the candidates can also convey neutral or even positive images to the audience.

The low occurrence of other types of illocutionary act, including expressive act, directive act, declarative act (0 tokens: 0%) might be due to the content and setting of the closing statements and the functions. As mentioned in Section 5, Chapter 2, expressive act commits the psychology state of the speaker and declarative act is performed to change the state of the reality. Therefore, it is impossible for the candidate to use *they* to perform expressive act and declarative act in the closing statements, since s/he had not been elected yet from the election so there was nothing that could be changed in reality and expressive act cannot express the psychology states of other people. As for directive act (0 tokens: 0%), it is performed to direct some action from the audience, which enables the candidate to shorten

the distance between him/herself and the audience. Nevertheless, as *they* usually refers to the absent third person which does not belong to the audience or the candidate's group, it is difficult for the candidate to perform directive act with *they* in the closing statements.

5. Case studies of three candidates' pronominal choice

As indicated in Candarli (2012), a candidate's pronominal choice can be altered by venue, the setting of context, cultural backgrounds or even international relations (see Iñigo-Mora 2013). Compared with the speeches held in Istanbul and Ankara, both Erdogan and Kilicdaroglu have a stronger tendency to use *our* to connect themselves to their party members in the interview. The shift of their use of pronouns reflects the differences in setting and topics between the speeches and the interview. Iñigo-Mora (2013) shows that the international relations between European countries have a direct bearing on the candidate's pronominal choice. On the one hand, Blair preferred to use coalition forces "*we*" to justify the action of invading Iraq in the interview; on the other hand, Aznar tends to use European "*we*" to express the image of unity between his countryman, himself and the European. It is obvious that one candidate's pronominal choice reflects his/her intention to cater to the world view of his/her own people.

In this light, the referents of a candidate's personal pronouns can demonstrate his/her strategies to persuade the audience. In the following sections (Sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3), the referents each candidate refers to with the use of pronouns (*we* and *they*) are analyzed separately to show how social groups or issues the candidate highly values.

5.1 Perot

Each case study of Perot, Bush and Clinton is divided into two parts: the first part discusses

the referents of *we* in the closing statements and the second part discusses the referents of *they* in the closing statements. Both the first and second part of the case study are further divided into the first, second and third closing statements to see whether the candidate's strategies of using pronouns and referents which *we* and *they* refer to differ from one closing statement to another.

5.1.1 Perot's use of *we*

5.1.1.1 The first closing statement

In the first closing statement, 8 tokens of *we* are observed in Perot's speech and the percent of the referents *we* refers are shown in Table 14.

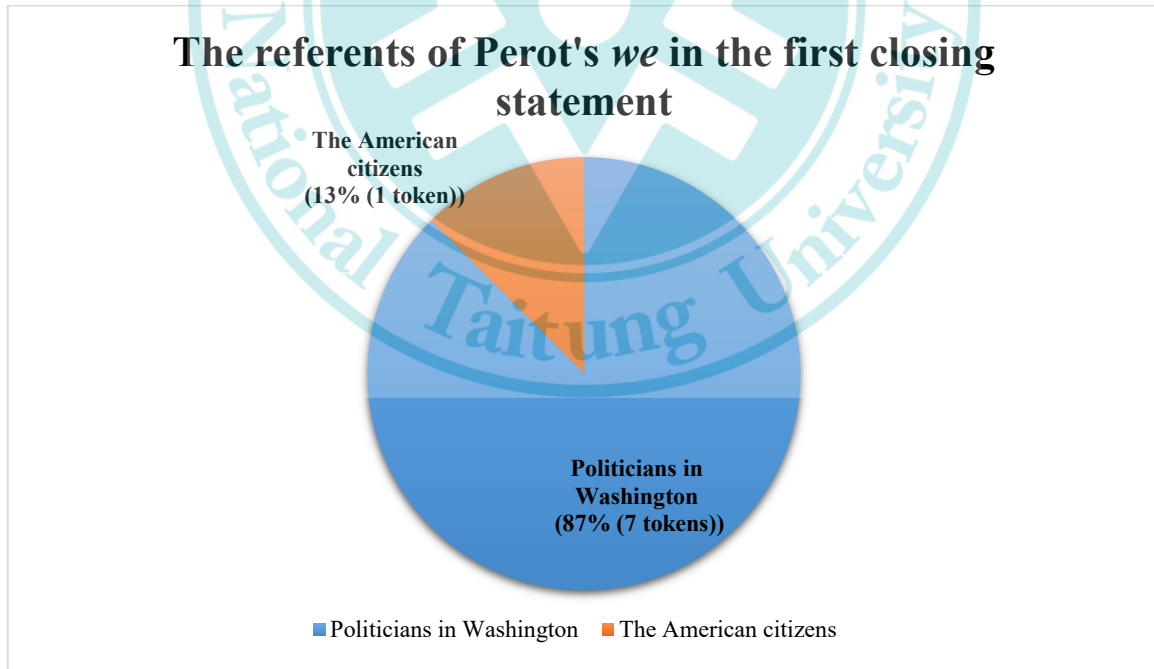


Table 14. The referents of Perot's *we* in the first closing statement

According to Table 14, Perot frequently addressed politicians in Washington with the

exclusive *we* (7 tokens: 87%) in the first closing statement, and he only used the inclusive *we* once (1 token: 13%) to refer to the American citizens. The significant percent of *we* referring to ‘politicians in Washington’ indicates that Perot’s attempt to imply the poor management of Bush’s government and the society. In the closing statement, Perot used the exclusive *we* to present negative images of the current system and the government, as shown in (28).

(28) (Politicians in Washington)

“we could balance the budget. They didn’t tell you that that same year they increased spending \$1.83 for every dollar we increased taxes. That’s Washington in a nutshell right there.” (Perot, the first closing statement of the debate)

By frequently using the exclusive *we* to present negative images of the current government, Perot not only reported the fact that it was time to make a change, but also attacked his political rival (Bush). The referent referring to ‘People in Washington’ (7 tokens: 87%) expressed through the use of *we* reveals his intention of bring to light the problem of the system and the current administration.

In addition to addressing the people in Washington, Perot used the inclusive *we* (1 token:13%) to include himself in the audience (The American citizens), as exemplified in (29).

(29) (American citizens)

“The people in Washington are good people. We just have a bad system.” (Perot, the first closing statement of the debate)

The strategy of referring to the American citizens with the inclusive *we* has two

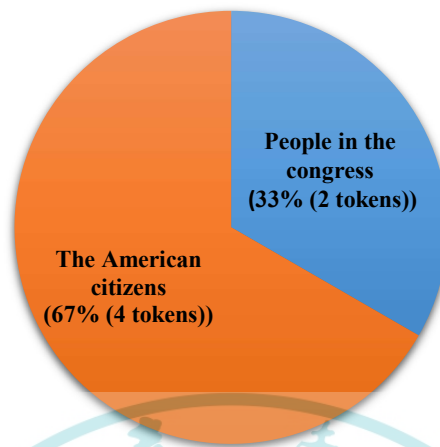
purposes. First, as mentioned by Bramley (2001) and Karapetjana (2011), the inclusive *we* enables a candidate to express solidarity and to present him/herself as a member of the audience. Thus, Perot's use of *we* to refer to the American citizens shortens the distance between the audience and himself. Second, as Perot used the inclusive *we* to indicate that him and the American people were suffering from 'a bad system', he not only united himself and the audience but also expressed antipathy toward the current government, which is the Bush's administration.

In summary, according to Perot's pronominal choice, his priority in the first closing statement emphasizes the issue of the government and the system by attacking the Bush's administration. As 87% of Perot's *we* (7 tokens) is the exclusive and is used to refer to people in Washington, he illustrated the hostility toward the incumbent president and his government by indicating that the government was concealing relevant information from the citizens (see (29)). The small percent of the inclusive *we* (1 token: 13%) referring to the American citizens displays that Perot's focus in the first closing statement is not to express solidarity and togetherness with the audience, but to attack the current government and the system.

5.1.1.2 The second closing statement

In the second closing statement, 6 tokens of *we* are observed in Perot's speech and refer to two referents: 'the American citizens' and 'people in the congress', as shown in Table 15.

The referents of Perot's *we* in the second closing statement



■ People in the congress ■ The American citizens

Table 15. The referents of Perot's *we* in the second closing statement

Table 15 displays a shift in Perot's referents of the pronoun, and makes two points. First, the percent of the referent referring to 'the American citizens' drastically increases (from 1 token: 13 % to 4 tokens: 67%). Second, instead of referring to the people in Washington, Perot changed the referent of *we* from Washington to the Congress, and the percent of the referent referring to the people in Washington also dwindles (from 7 tokens: 87% to 2 tokens: 33%).

The increase in the percent of referents of *we* referring to 'the American citizens' reflects that Perot gradually valued the importance of persuading the audience with the inclusive *we*. As the inclusive *we* is capable of presenting a candidate as a member of the audience, Perot's increased use of the inclusive *we* demonstrates his stronger attempt to associate with the audience, which is the American citizens, as shown in (30).

(30) (American citizens)

"Now, finally, if you can't pay the bills you're dead in the water. And we have got to put our nation back to work. Now, if you don't want to really do that I'm not your man." (Perot, the second closing statement of the debate)

In (30), Perot used the inclusive *we* to create an intimate relationship with the audience and present himself as a leader who would work with the citizens.

As mentioned above, (2 tokens: 33%) of Perot's *we* refers to the people in the congress, and he exploited it to indicate that he is able to work with people with different political orientations, as shown in (31).

(31) (People in the congress)

“Everybody says you can't do that with Congress. Sure, you can do that with Congress. Congress — they're all good people. They're all patriots but you've got to link arms and work with them. Sure, you'll have arguments. Sure, you'll have fights. We have them all day every day. But we get the job done.” (Perot, the second closing statement of the debate)

In (31) Perot used the exclusive *we* to refer to the people in the congress to indicate the importance of teamwork, which he emphasized his moderate political position and the capability of working with people with different political backgrounds.

To sum up, the increase in the percent of the referent referring to 'the American citizens' in the use of *we* demonstrates that Perot's focus had shifted from attacking the opponents to creating a closer relationship with the audience and promoting his own capability. Perot's frequent use of the inclusive *we* explains his intention of expressing solidarity, and his pronouns referring to the people in the congress conveys the message that he is the leader who respects every voice from different political parties.

5.1.1.3 The third closing statement

Perot mainly focused on the relationship between himself and the audience, which is the American citizens in the third closing statement. The referents of his *we* are demonstrated in Table 16.

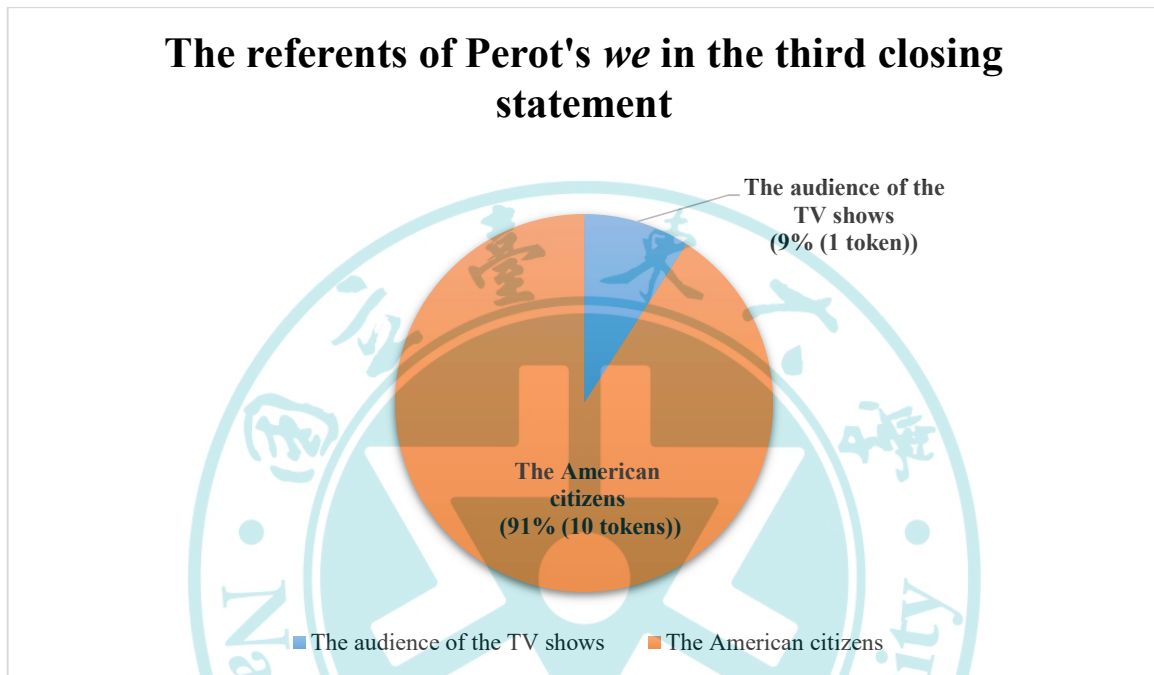


Table 16. The referents of Perot's *we* in the third closing statement

According to Table 16, Perot had a strong tendency to refer to the American citizens through the inclusive *we*; 91% (10 tokens) of Perot's *we* in the third closing statement refers to "American citizens" and 9% (1 token) to 'the audience of the TV shows'. The referent of *we* which refers to 'the American citizens (10 tokens: 91%)' from Perot's speeches implies his tendency to shorten the distance between himself and the audience. As pointed out by Bramley (2001) and Karapetjana (2011), the inclusive *we* includes both the candidate and the his/her audience and enables the candidate to express involvement and togetherness. The examples of using *we* to refer to the American citizens and the audience of the TV shows are exemplified in (32) and (33).

(32) (American citizens)

“And, believe me, anybody that knows me understands I have a very low tolerance for non-performance also. Together we can get anything done.” (Perot, the third closing statement of the debates)

The purpose of using the inclusive *we* in (32) to refer to the American citizens is the same as the use of the inclusive *we* in the second and the first closing statement, that is, to express solidarity and create a more intimate relation between himself and the audience.

As mentioned above, 1 token of *we* (9 %) from Perot’s speeches refers to the ‘audience of the TV shows’ and can be seen in (33).

(33) (The audience of the TV shows)

“This Thursday night on ABC from 8:30 to 9, Friday night on NBC from 8 to 8:30, and Saturday night on CBS from 8 to 8:30, we’ll be down in the trenches under the hood working on fixin’ the old car to get it back on the road.” (Perot, the third closing statement of the debates)

In the third closing statement, Perot also used the exclusive *we* to refer to his audience of the TV shows (1 token: 9%) to remind people to watch him on the television. Perot frequently attended television talk shows (ABC News, CBS News etc.) to expound his opinions on the government and economic issues. Thus, mentioning the talk shows in the closing statement with *we* provides Perot with more opportunities to discuss his ideology and future plans with the audience, and to prolong the process of persuading the audience to support him. The low

percentage of ‘the audience of the TV shows’ (1 token: 9%) reflects the effects of context and setting of the closing statements on Perot’s pronominal choice. As the setting and form of closing statements are formal, and the topic discussed in the debates are relevant to political issues, making direct reference to the audience of the TV shows might be digressive and inappropriate. Hence, only one token (9%) of *we* referring to ‘the audience of the TV shows’ is observed in the third closing statement.

5.1.1.4 Summary

According to the observations, two points are made: the referent of ‘the American citizens’ is identified and the percent of referent referring to ‘the American citizens’ increases from the first closing statement (1 token: 13%), the second closing statement (4 tokens: 67%) to the third closing statement (10 tokens: 91%). First, from the first to the third closing statement, Perot kept using the inclusive *we* to refer to the American citizens to emphasize his connection with the audience. To persuade the audience to support a candidate, the priority is to keep emphasizing the relationship between the audience and the candidate, and as mentioned in Karapetjana (2011) and Bramley (2001), *we* enables a candidate to achieve this goal. Thus, Perot’s frequently referring to the American citizens with *we* is supported by Karapetjana (2011) and Bramley (2001).

Second, the percent of the referent referring to ‘the American citizens’ increases gradually through the three closing statements. It can be seen that the increase results from Perot’s strategy of persuasion. As the closing statements were about to end, a candidate had fewer opportunities to persuade the audience to vote for him/herself. Hence, the candidate needs to use the inclusive *we* to create an intimate connection with the audience and eventually to seek greater support. The referents of Perot’s *we* in the three closing statements and the shift of Perot’s persuasion strategy are summarized in the flow chart below.

The first closing statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The referents of <i>we</i>: <i>The American citizens</i> (13%) & <i>Politicians in Washington</i> (87%) • Intention: attacking the opponent (Bush)
The second closing statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The referents of <i>we</i>: <i>The American citizens</i> (67%) & <i>People in the congress</i> (33%) • Intention: expressing solidarity & promoting capability
The third closing statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The referents of <i>we</i>: <i>The American citizens</i> (91%) & <i>The audience of the TV shows</i> (9%) • Intention: expressing solidarity

Table 17. The referents and intention of Perot's *we* in the first, second and third closing statement

The referents of Perot's *we* in the first, second and third closing statement reveal the shift of his persuading strategy. In the first closing statement, in order to show the opponents' inferiority and incapability, Perot frequently referred to 'the politicians in Washington' with the exclusive *we* to raise the issue surrounding the problems of the government (7 tokens: 87%). For example, in (28), Perot referred to the people in Washington to indicate that the government did not tell the truth when they increase the spending. The second closing statement serves the bridge between the first and the third closing statement; on the one hand, Perot referred to 'the people in the congress' (2 tokens: 33%) to promote his capability of working with people with different political orientations, on the other hands, he repeatedly used the inclusive *we* (4 tokens: 67%) to present himself as a part of the citizens, to create a connection between himself and the audience. The third closing statement is the final stage of the debate, which serves as the last chance to seek support from the audience. Aware of the uniqueness of the third closing statement, the candidate tend to manipulate their pronominal

choice to express the sense of harmony and solidarity, and Perot's pronominal choice reflects his intention to strengthen the unification within the American citizens. In the third closing statement, Perot frequently referred to 'the American citizens' (10 tokens: 91%) with the inclusive *we*, to indicate that he is a leader who will work with the citizens, which not only reinforces the unity of his own social group but also persuades more people to join his coalition.

5.1.2 Perot's use of *they*

Section 5.1.2 discusses the referents of Perot's *they* in the closing statements. Since no token of *they* is observed in the third closing statement, this section focuses on Perot's first and second closing statement.

5.1.2.1 The first closing statement

Two referents of Perot's *they* are observed in the first closing statement, which are 'the government' and 'the older generations', and their token counts are summarized in Table 18.

The referents of Perot's *they* in the first closing statement

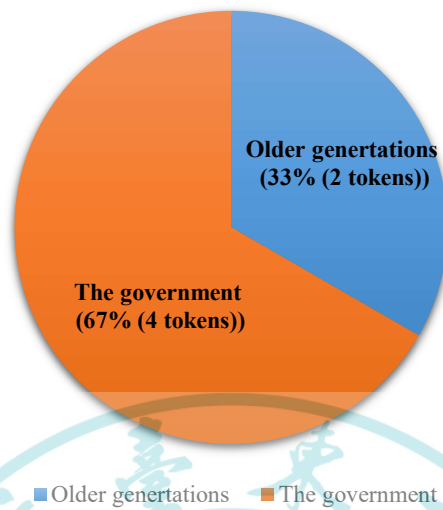


Table 18. The referents of Perot's *they* in the first closing statement

In Table 18, 67% of Perot's *they* (4 tokens) refers to the government, and 33% refers to 'older generations' (2 tokens). According to Bramley (2001) and Hahn (2003), *they* enables a candidate to separate people from his/her own social group, and it is frequently connected with a negative image. In light of the function of *they*, the large percent of Perot's *they* referring to 'the government' can be explained as his attempt to attack the Bush's administration. In the following extract, Perot used *they* to address his opponents and to imply that Bush's government concealed some information from the public.

(34) The government

"They didn't tell you that that same year they increased spending \$1.83 for every dollar we increased taxes." (Perot, the first closing statement of the debates)

The frequent use of *they* (4 tokens: 67%) to refer to the opponent reveals Perot's strategy of attacking the Bush's administration, which is the same as the goal of using *we* in the first closing statement. By reporting the negative informations of Bush, the attacking strategy

makes the opponents look inferior in the debate, which demonstrates the feature of agonistic ability and aggressiveness of political discourse (Kenzhekanova 2015).

Perot's use of *they* to refer to the 'older generations' is shown in (35).

(35) Older generations

*“And I can't tell you what it means to me at these rallies when I see you and you come up and the look in your eyes — and I know how you feel and you know how I feel. And then I think of the older people who are retired. **They** grew up in the Depression. **They** fought and won World War II.”* (Perot, the first closing statement of the debates)

Perot's use of *they* in (36) refers to the elders who lived through great depression and had fought in the World War II. According to Candarli (2012), the referents of a candidate's personal pronouns can reflect his/her priority issue and the social groups which s/he wants to cater to. In this light, the referents of Perot's pronoun demonstrate his intention to connect with the elderly. Nevertheless, due to the fact that most of the 'older generations' are not the audience in the immediate context, Perot used *they* to address them, which also shows that he is the leader who cares about all walks of life.

It is suggested that the main focus of Perot's issues in the first closing statement is attacking the opponent, which is the same as the use of *we*. The significance in the percent of the referent referring to 'the government' through *they* represents Perot's attempt to criticize Bush's administration. In addition, Perot also valued the promotion of his own image; the addressee of the 'older generations' with *they* (2 tokens: 33%) demonstrates his strategy of persuasion.

5.1.2.2 The second closing statement

In the second closing statement, Perot used *they* more frequently (14 tokens), compared with the first closing statement (6 tokens), and the referents of his pronominal choice are more diverse. Table 18 displays the percent of each type of referent of Perot’s *they*.

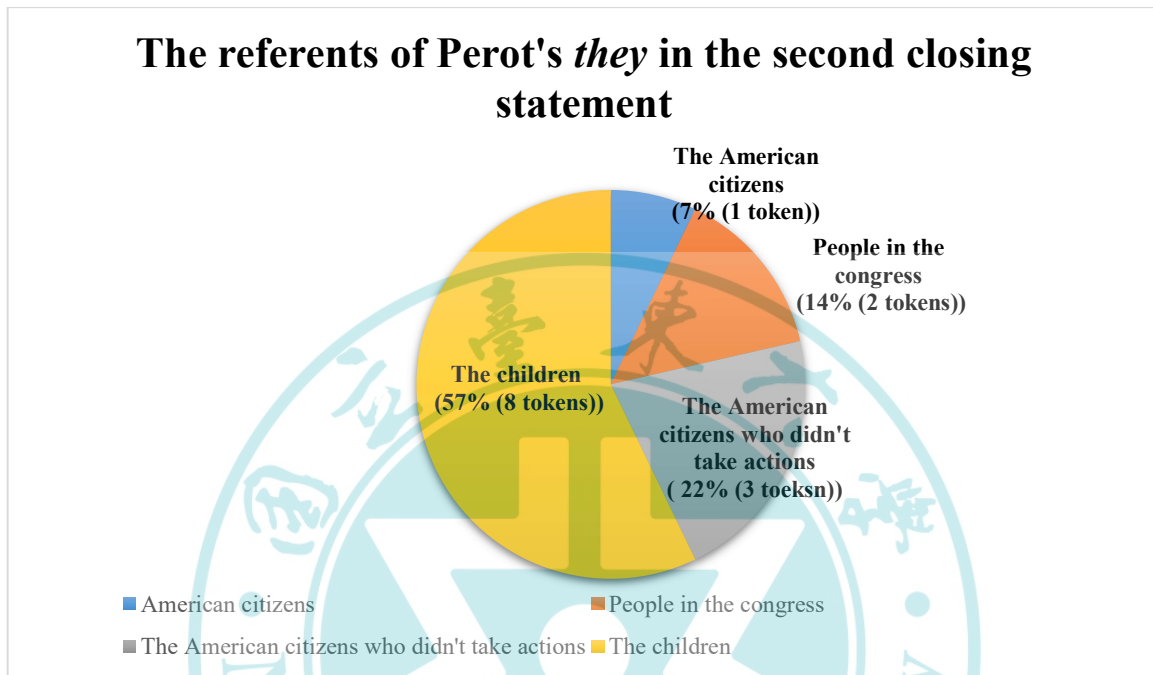


Table 19. The referents of Perot’s *they* in the second closing statement

There are four referents of Perot’s *they* observed in the second closing statement, which are ‘the children’ (8 tokens: 57%), ‘the American citizens who didn’t take actions’ (3 tokens: 22%), ‘people in the congress’ (2 tokens: 14%) and ‘American citizens’ (1 token: 7%). Over half of Perot’s *they* refers to the children (8 tokens: 57%), and he regularly referred to them when he discussed education issues, as can be seen in (36).

(36) The children

*Now we’re going back to when the mother’s pregnant and **they**’ll start right after **they**’re born. Starting when **they**’re 3 and going to this school until **they**’re 9 and then going into the public school in the 4th grade. Ninety percent are on the honor role.*

*Now that will change America. Those children will all go to college. **They** will live the American dream.* (Perot, the second closing statement of the debates)

The use of *they* to refer to children conveys an image that Perot cares about the education system and the youth. The same as referring to the ‘older generations’ with *they* in the first closing statement, reference to the children with *they* reflects Perot’s intention of persuading parents to support himself. As Candarli (2012) indicates, the referents of a candidate’s pronominal choice have a direct bearing on his/her valued social group and issues. As Perot had been viewed by public as a candidate who focused on economic issues, referring to the youth in the education system presents himself as a candidate that values a variety of social issues.

In addition, Perot used *they* to separate the citizens who did not take any action to change the country from his own coalition, and thus he used *they* to classify them as the people who would not vote for Perot. The example is exemplified in (37).

(37) The American citizens who did not take actions

*If the American people want to do it and not talk about it, then **they** ought to — you know, I’m one person **they** ought to consider. If **they** just want to keep slow dancing and talk about it and not do it, I’m not your man.* (Perot, the second closing statement of the debates)

Perot’s use of *they* to refer to ‘the American citizens who do not take actions’ present his intention of dividing people into groups, which he alienated the people who will not vote for him from his own supporters, and to further strengthen the unity within his group.

As Table 19 demonstrates, the major goal of Perot’s use of *they* is to persuade the

parents who care about their children in the education system to support Perot and to alienate the people who do not want to change (vote for Perot) from his group. The diverse referents of Perot's pronouns symbolize his attempt of persuasion. It is noted that Perot's strategy of diversifying the referents of the pronouns is not new, as pointed out by Candarli (2012), diversity in referents of a candidate's pronominal choice can be more attractive to the audience.

5.1.2.3 Summary

In conclusion, Perot's priority of using *they* to refer to other people has changed from attacking the rival (the first closing statement) to self-promotion and separation (the second closing statement). The diversify of Perot's referents of the *they* explained his desire to cater to a wider range of social groups, and his separation strategy through *they* further unites his own supporters. The following flow chart illustrates Perot's referents of *they*, and his purpose of using these strategies in the first and second closing statement.

The first closing statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The referents of <i>they</i>: <i>The government (67%) & the older generations (33%)</i> • Intention: attacking the opponent (Bush)
The second closing statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The referents of <i>they</i>: <i>The children (57%) , the American citizens who didn't take action (22%), People in the congress (14%), the American citizens (7%)</i> • Intention: separation & self-promotion

Table 20. The referents and intentions of Perot's *they* in the first and second closing statement

According to Table 20, it is shown that Perot's purpose of using *they* in the first and second closing statement is similar to his use of *we*. In the first closing statement, the same as *we*, Perot used *they* (4 tokens: 67%) to refer to the government, which is the Bush administration, to present negative images of Bush. As for the second closing statement, Perot diversified his referent choice by referring to a wider range of social groups with *they* (the children (57%), people in the congress (14%), etc.), and his strategy is similar to Erdogan's strategy to refer to more types of social groups (Candarli 2012), which is to present him/herself as a candidate that shows concern for different social groups and issues. In addition, Perot also used *they* to refer to the 'American citizens who do not take actions' (3 tokens: 22%) to separate the people who do not support him from his own social group and to strengthen the unity within his coalition. As for the third closing statement, since it is the last stage of the debates, expressing solidarity and unity is more efficient in persuading the audience to support the candidate than separating or attacking the opponent, which is the reason that no token of *they* is observed in the third closing statement. In conclusion, Perot's

use of *they* has shifted from attacking the opponent (the first closing statement) to self-promotion (the second closing statement).

5.2 Clinton

This section analyzes the referents of Clinton's *we* and *they* in the first, second and third closing statement.

5.2.1 Clinton's use of *we*

5.2.1.1 The first closing statement

Two tokens of *we* are observed in Clinton's first closing statement, and both of them are the inclusive *we* which refers to 'the American citizens', as can be seen in Table 21.

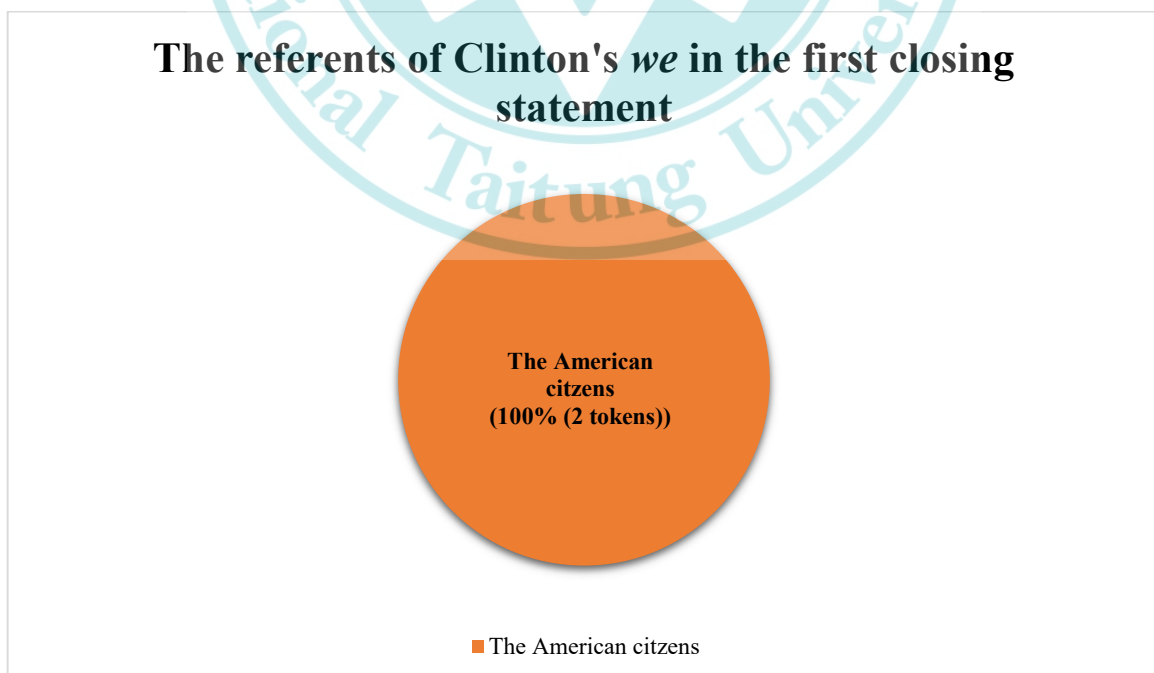


Table 21. The referents of Clinton's *we* in the first closing statement

According to Table 21, both of Clinton's *we* refer to 'the American citizens' (100%), as exemplified in (38).

(38) The American citizens

I want the future of this country to be as bright and brilliant as its past, and it can be if we have the courage to change. (Clinton, the first closing statement of the debates)

Clinton tended to refer to the American citizens with the inclusive *we* to present himself as a member of the audience. *We*, according to Bramley (2001), allows a candidate to speak as a member of a social group or to express the institutional identity, and it is suggested that Clinton's priority of persuasion in the first closing statement is to express solidarity and to connect with the American citizens.

5.2.1.2 The second closing statement

Three referents of Clinton's *we* are observed in his second closing statement, which are 'the American citizens', 'people from Arkansas' and 'Clinton's campaign', and the percent of *we*'s referent is demonstrated in Table 22.

The referents of Clinton's *we* in the second closing statement

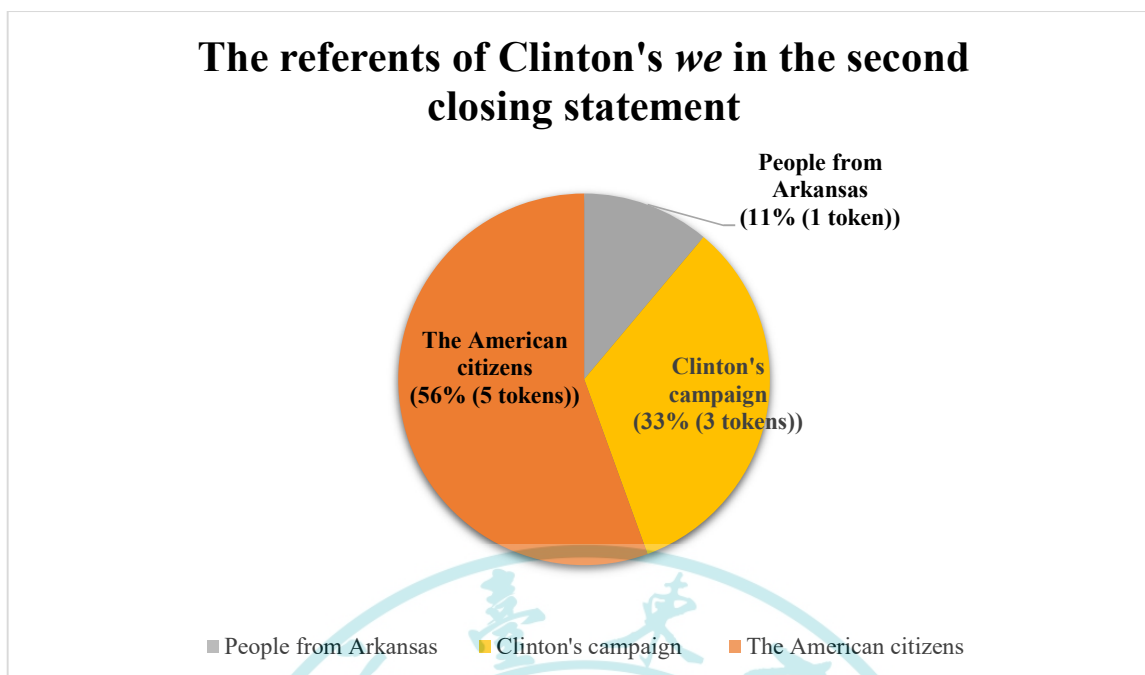


Table 22. The referents of Clinton's *we* in the second closing statement

As Table 22 shows, Clinton's priority issue in the second closing statement is still expressing solidarity to persuade the audience, as over half of his *we* (5 tokens: 56%) refers to 'the American citizens', which is exemplified in (39).

(39) The American citizens

I got into this race because I did not want my child to grow up to be part of the first generation of Americans to do worse than her parents. We're better than that. We can do better than that. I want to make America as great as it can be and I ask for your help in doing it. (Clinton, the second closing statement of the debates)

The same as the use of the inclusive *we* in the first closing statement, Clinton's frequent reference to the American citizens demonstrates his willingness to shorten the distance between himself and the audience and to better persuade them to support himself.

In addition, Clinton also referred to his campaign in this closing statement to strengthen

the unity within his own group, and as the percent suggests (3 tokens: 33%), his campaign teammates are his second valued social group. One corresponding example is provided in (40).

(40) Clinton's campaign

*Since I suggested this format I hope it's been good for all of you. I really tried to be faithful to your request that **we** answer the questions specifically and pointedly.*

(Clinton, the second closing statement of the debates)

According to Bramley (2001), *we* not only enables a candidate to speak as the representative of a group, but also allows him/her to express institutional identity. Thus, Clinton's utilization of the exclusive *we* represents the strategy of expressing solidarity within his own team and strengthening the ideology of his coalition. Furthermore, the use of *we* to refer to Clinton's campaign reveals the attempt to shorten the distance between his group and the audience. By referring to and introducing Clinton's campaign to the audience, he tried to make his group more appealing to the citizens to better get support from them.

As mentioned above, Clinton also referred to 'the people from Arkansas' (1 token: 11%), as shown in (41).

(41) The people from Arkansas

First of all, the people of my state have let me be their governor for 12 years because I made commitments to 2 things — more jobs and better schools. Our schools are now better. Our children get off to a better start from pre-school programs and smaller classes in the early grades, and we have one of the most aggressive adult education programs in the country. (Clinton, the second closing statement of the debates)

As discussed in Chapter 4 (see p.61), the intention underlying the use of *we* to refer to ‘the people from Arkansas’ serves to promote Clinton’s capability of running a government. By referring to the people under Clinton’s administration, he presented a positive image of his own to further persuade the audience to support him.

To conclude, it is suggested that Clinton’s main goals of using *we* in the second closing statement are to express solidarity and create involvement with the audience. However, he manipulated his use of pronouns to promote the reputation of his campaign and his capability.

5.2.1.3 The third closing statement

In the third closing statement, Clinton’s *we* refers to two referents: ‘the American citizens’ and ‘Clinton and Perot’ and the percent is illustrated in Table 23.

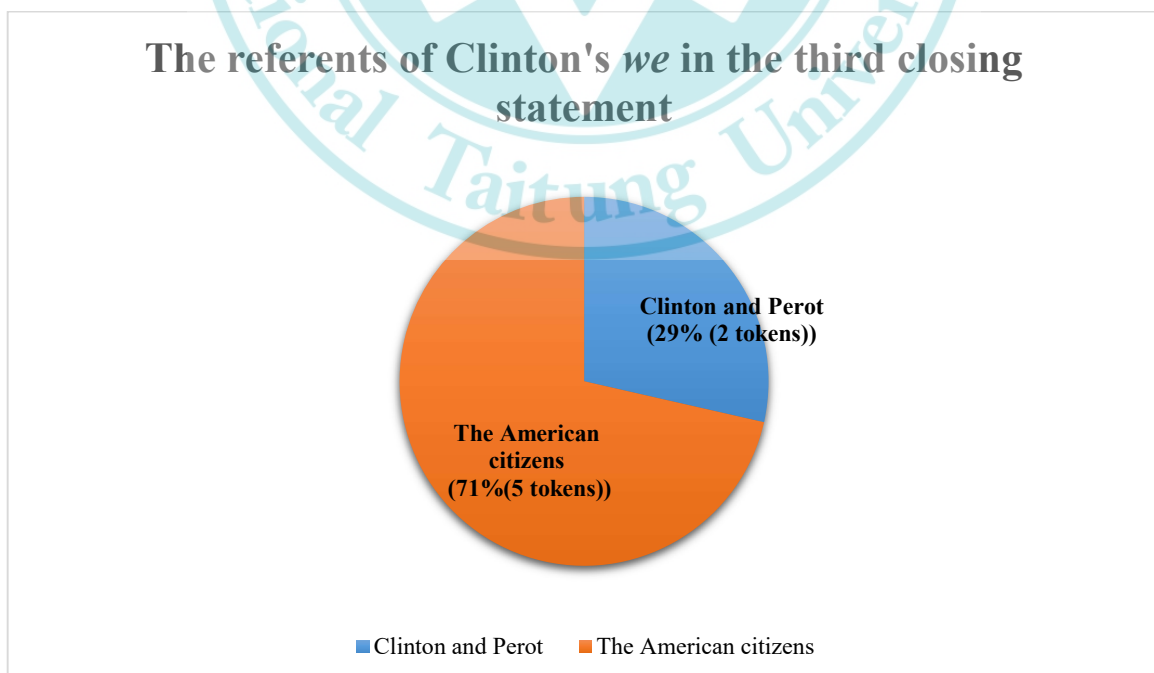


Table 23. The referents of Clinton’s *we* in the third closing statement

According to the percentage of Clinton's referents of *we*, it is suggested that his strategy of persuasion is similar to his strategy in the first and second closing statement, which is to express solidarity and create involvement with the audience. The percent of Clinton's *we* referring to 'the American citizens' implies that the connection with the audience is still his priority issue. An example is displayed in (42).

(42) The American citizens

I know we can do better. It won't take miracles and it won't happen overnight, but we can do much, much better if we have the courage to change. Thank you very much.

(Clinton, the third closing statement of the debates)

As pointed out by Bramley (2001) and Karapetjana (2011), the inclusive *we* conveys the message of involvement, since it presents the candidate as a member of the audience.

The second referent of *we* is 'Clinton and Perot' (2 tokens: 29%), which Clinton utilized to appreciate the opponents while also differentiating their ideology and opinions of economic from his. The use of exclusive *we* is exemplified in (43).

(43) Clinton and Perot

*"I'll be on a platform with my opponents, that even though I disagree with Mr. Perot on how fast **we** can reduce the deficit and how much **we** can increase taxes on the middle class, I really respect what he's done in this campaign to bring the issue of deficit reduction to our attention."* (Clinton, the third closing statement of the debates)

In the third closing statement, Clinton's exclusive *we* refer to himself and Perot, which indicates the ideological difference between Perot and Clinton. As shown in (43), although

Clinton expressed his respect for Perot, he utilized the exclusive *we* to refer to the themselves to indicate that his ideology is different from that of Clinton. Thus, Clinton's *we* serves the function of separation (Bramley 2001).

According to the token counts and the percentage, Clinton's goal in the third closing statement is to strengthen the unity between himself and the audience, while at the same time separating his ideology from that of his opponents.

5.2.1.1 Summary

The following flow chart illustrates the referents of Clinton's use of *we* and his intention in each closing statement.

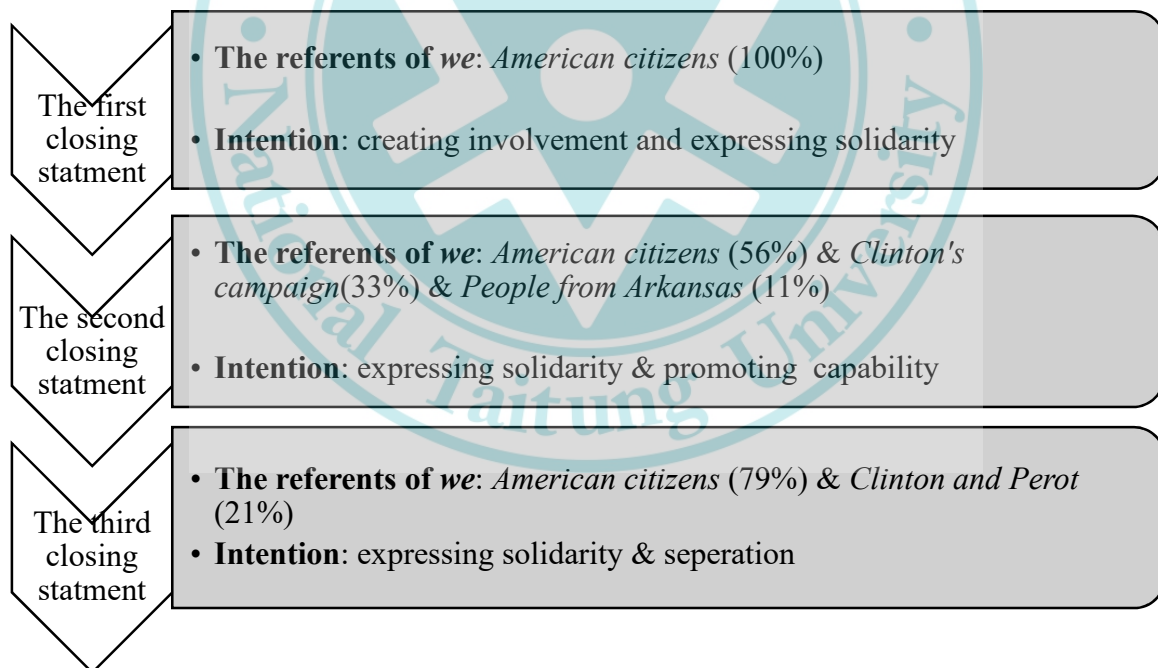


Table 24. The referents and intentions of Clinton's *we* in the first, second and third closing statement

According to the flow chart, there are two points which need careful attention. First,

throughout the three closing statements, the referents of *we* which refers to ‘the American citizens’ goes beyond 50%, suggesting that Clinton values the strategy of persuading the audience by using the inclusive *we* to refer to the American citizens. Second, according to Clinton’s referents of *we*, his strategy of gaining support from the audience through speeches can be divided into three stages. In the first closing statement, Clinton used the inclusive *we* to refer to all the Americans to build a stronger connection between himself and the audience. In the second closing statement, Clinton used both the inclusive and the exclusive *we* to express solidarity within different groups (the American citizens, Clinton’s campaign, people from Arkansas) and at the same time, to promote his capability of governing people by referring to the people under his administration. Finally, Clinton expressed solidarity and strengthen the unity with the audience with the inclusive *we* and separate his ideology from his opponents (Perot and Bush) through the use of the exclusive *we*.

5.2.2 Clinton’s use of *they*

5.2.2.1 The first closing statement

Two tokens of *they* are observed in Clinton’s first closing statement, and they are presented in Table 25.

The referents of Clinton's *they* in the first closing statement

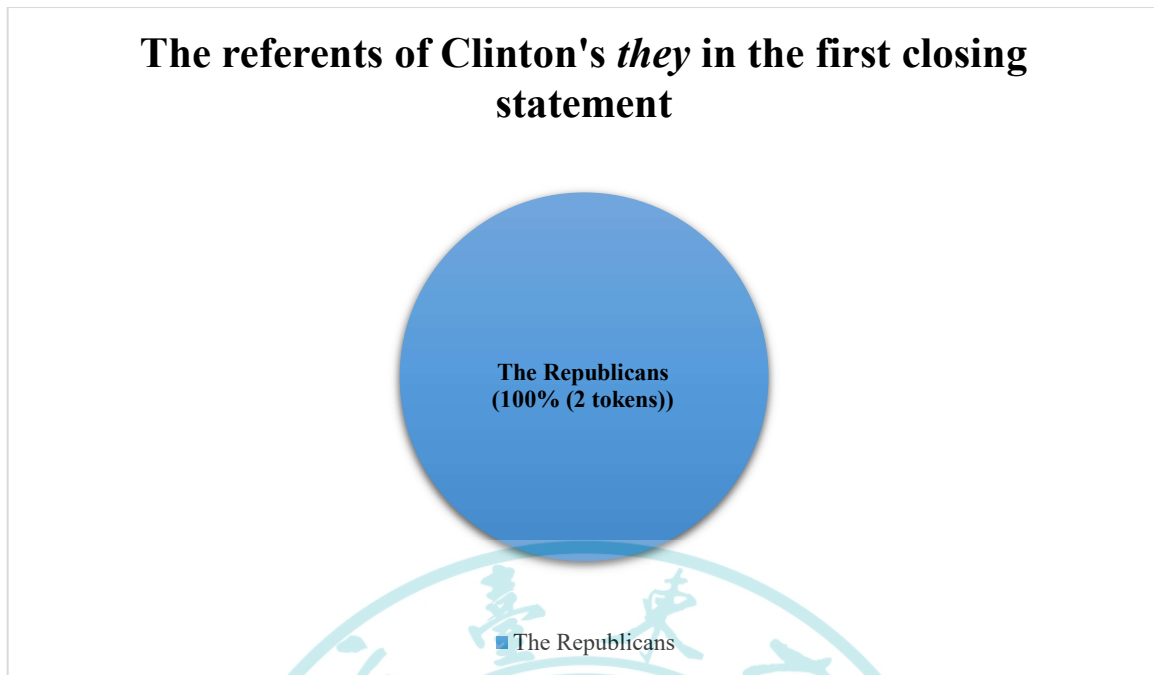


Table 25. The referents of Clinton's *they* in the first closing statement

As Table 25 shows, both of Clinton's *they* refer to the republicans, and it is provided in (44).

(44) The Republicans

*I'd like to thank the computer executives and the electronics executives in Silicon Valley, two-thirds of whom are Republicans who said **they** wanted to sign on to a change in America. I'd like to thank the hundreds of executives who came to Chicago, a third of them Republicans, who said **they** wanted to change. (Clinton, the first closing statement of the debates)*

In the first closing statement, Clinton used *they* twice to refer to the Republicans who support Clinton, and his intention behind the referent is self-promotion. By indicating that even the people from the opponent's (Bush) coalition support Clinton, he presented himself as a candidate who has supporters from various political parties. In addition, Clinton's use of *they* also serves to extend his supporting base and coalition.

Based on the previous studies (Bramley (2001), Karapetjana (2011), Hahn (2003)), Clinton's use of *they* cannot be classified as separation, distancing, avoiding responsibility or presenting negative images of the opponent but self-promotion. Indicating the fact that some members of the Republican party support Clinton is not relevant to the function of presenting negative images of the opponent. Furthermore, since the Republican member support Clinton's policy, his use of *they* does not carry the function of showing ideological differences. In addition, as the candidate in the closing statements have not been elected as president, Clinton's *they* does not serve the function of avoiding responsibility. In conclusion, the use of *they* in referring to the Republican supporter serves Clinton's strategy of self-promotion, by referring to the supporter from the Republican party, Clinton presented himself as a moderate candidate who has supporter from both Liberal and Conservative coalition.

5.2.2.2 The second closing statement

In the second closing statement, only one token of *they* is observed, which refers to the economic problems.

The referents of Clinton's *they* in the second closing statement



Table 26. The referents of Clinton's *they* in the second closing statement

Clinton used *they* once in the second closing statement to address the economic problems. One, example is presented down below.

(45) The economic problems

*These problems are not easy. **They**'re not going to be solved overnight. But I want you to think about just 2 or 3 things. First of all, the people of my state have let me be their governor for 12 years because I made commitments to 2 things — more jobs and better schools. (Clinton, the second closing statement of the debates)*

In (45), *they* refers to the economic problems, which carries neither positive nor negative images. That is, Clinton used *they* to refer to economic problems without expressing any political messages, the use of *they* in (45) is a referential pronoun.

5.2.2.3 The third closing statement

In the final closing statement, Clinton used *they* once to refer to the audience in the closing statement, and it can be seen in Table 27.

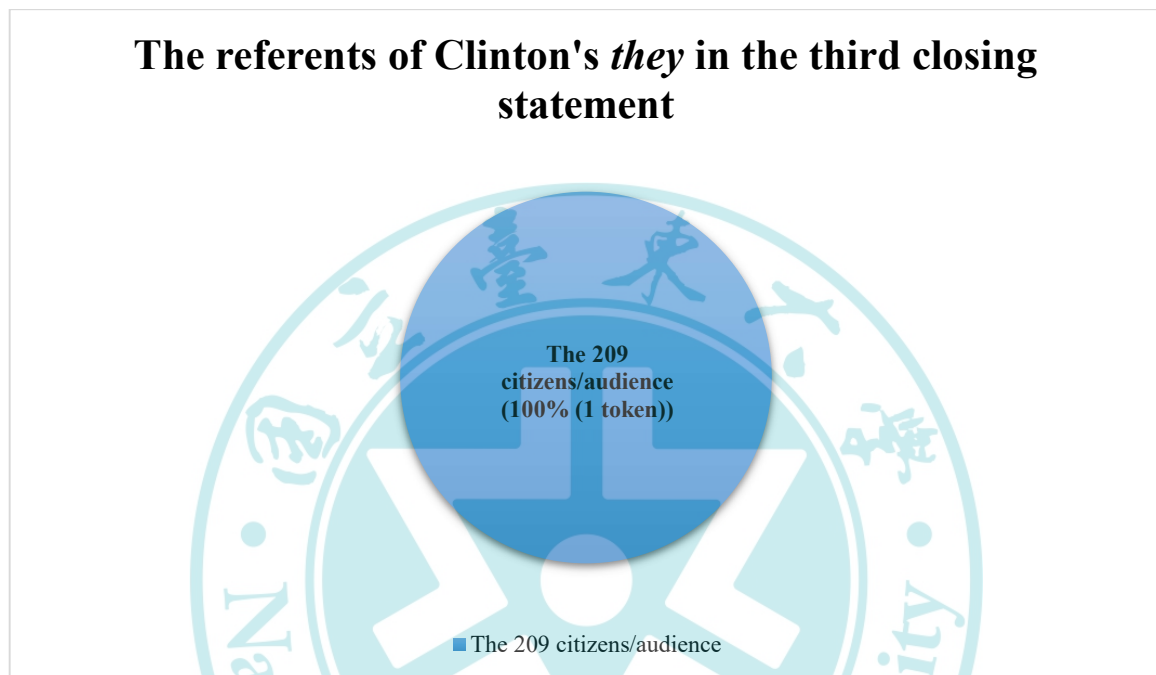


Table 27. The referents of Clinton's *they* in the third closing statement

Different from the previous studies (Bramley (2001), Karapetjana (2011), Hahn (2003)), which maintain that *they* in political discourse is used to divide, separate people or to present negative images of the opponents, Clinton utilized *they* to refer to the 209 American citizens (the audience of the third closing statement) to promote his image. The use of *they* is exemplified in (46).

(46) The 209 citizens

*I was especially moved in Richmond a few days ago when 209 of our fellow citizens got to ask us questions. **They** went a long way toward reclaiming this election for the American people and taking their country back.* (Clinton, the third closing statement)

As (46) demonstrates, Clinton used *they* to refer to the 209 fellow citizens, which is the audience of the third closing statement. Based on Clinton's use of *they* and the function of *they* mentioned by Bramley (2001), Karapetjana (2011) and Hahn (2003), Clinton's intention behind his pronouns cannot be classified as avoiding responsibility, separation or presenting negative images; instead, it serves to promote himself. As the audience of the closing statements are the voters of the election, it is impossible for Clinton to present negative images or separate them from Clinton himself. As Clinton reported the participation of the audience in the closing statement through the use of *they*, he depicted himself as a candidate who cares not only the policies, but also the citizens and the audience. Thus, Clinton's intention of using *they* in the third closing statement is regarded as self-promotion.

5.2.2.4 Summary

It is important to note that the functions of *they* in the three closing statements of Clinton is different from the functions proposed in the previous studies (Bramley (2001), Karapetjana (2011), Hahn (2003)), which aims to separate and differentiate people. The following flow chart demonstrates Clinton' intention behind his pronouns and strategy of persuading people to support him.

The first closing statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The referents of <i>they</i>: <i>The Republicans</i> (100%) • Intention: self-promotion
The second closing statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The referents of <i>they</i>: <i>The economic</i> (100%) • Intention: referring to other individuals in the context
The third closing statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The referents of <i>they</i>: <i>The 209 citizens</i> (100%) • Intention: self-promotion

Table 28. The referents and intentions of Clinton’s *they* in the first, second and third closing statement

Table 28 reveals the uniqueness in Clinton’s use of *they*. It is found that Clinton never uses *they* to attack, separate or differentiate people during the debates. All of Clinton’s *they* in the three closing statements either present positive images of himself indirectly, or serves as a referential pronoun. Thus, Clinton prefers to exploit his third personal pronoun to promote his own image and create relationships with the audience rather than attacking the opponents or separating people.

5.3 Bush

Section 5.3 is to discuss the referents of Bush’s *we* and *they* to reveal his valued issues and social groups.

5.3.1 Bush’s use of *we*

5.3.1.1 The first closing statement

In the first closing statement, 14 tokens of *we* are found and there are two referents of his *we*, which are ‘the American citizens’ and ‘Bush’s government’.

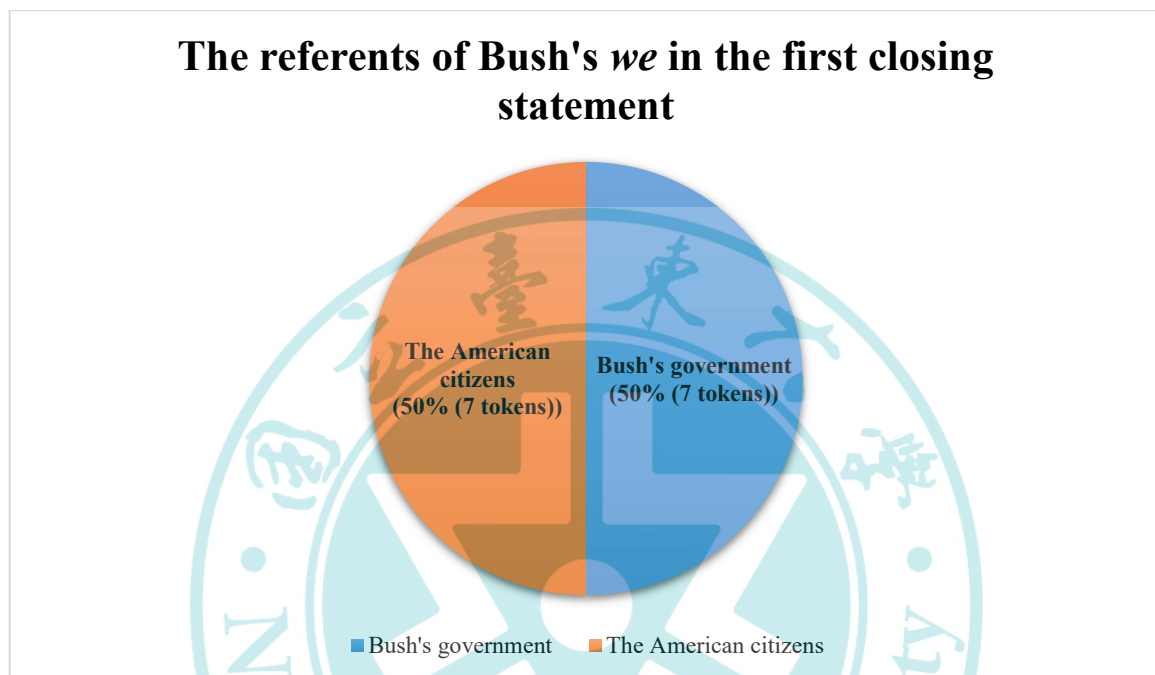


Table 29. The referents of Bush's *we* in the first closing statement

As can be seen in Table 29, one half of Bush's *we* refers to ‘the American citizens’ and the other half of them refers to the Bush's government. Accordingly, it is suggested that Bush's intention of using *we* in the first closing statement is to express solidarity with the audience and to speak as a representative of his group (government). The use of *we* referring to the American citizens is exemplified in (47).

(47) The American citizens

*Take a look at the Middle East. **We** had to stand up against a tyrant. The US came together as **we** haven't in many, many years. And **we** kicked this man out of Kuwait.*

(Bush, the first closing statement of the debates)

Bush tended to connect himself to the audience with the inclusive *we*.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, Bush is the only candidate that used the exclusive *we* more often than the inclusive *we*, and all of his exclusive *we* refer to his own government.

As Bush is the incumbent president, referring to his own groups can be seen as a strategy of self-promotion of his presidency, and this can be seen in (48).

(48) Bush's government

“What we need to do is empower people. We need to invest and save. We need to do better in education. We need to do better in job retraining. We need to expand our exports, and they're going very, very well, indeed.” (Bush, the first closing statement of the debates)

(48) is an example of Bush's manipulation of the exclusive *we* to refer to his own government. According to Bramley's (2001), *we* allows a candidate to speak as the representative of a social group and to express institutional identity. In the first closing statement, Bush utilized both of the functions to persuade the audience, and he also express the institutional identity by connecting his policies and the ideology of his government with his exclusive *we* in his speech.

By applying the two functions of *we* in Bush's speeches, he not only presents a positive image of his own group, but also conveys the group belief of his administration by pointing out the direction of his future policies to gather more supporter who has the same political spectrum.

In addition, (48) is an example of the rule of three. According to David (2004), using the rule of three to present different ideas in a repeated pattern allows a candidate to persuade the audience more efficiently; the speeches are easier for audience to remember and can leave the

audience a stronger impression.

To sum up, according to the percent of Bush's referents in the use of *we*, his priority in the first closing statement is to build a strong connection with the audience and to express group identity of his government through the use of the exclusive *we* to gather more support from the people with the same ideology.

5.3.1.2 The second closing statement

In the second closing statement, 8 tokens of *we* are observed, and they refer to 'the American citizens' and 'Bush's government', which is the same as the referents of *we* in the first closing statement.

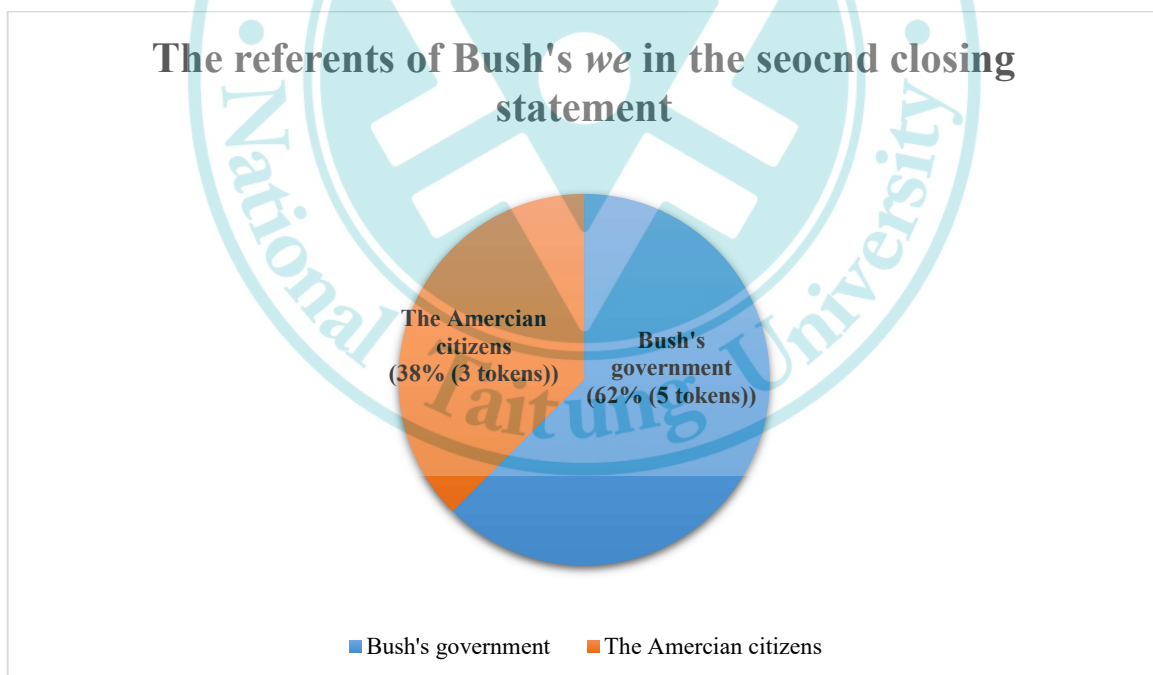


Table 30. The referents of Bush's *we* in the second closing statement

The same as the first closing statement, Bush's *we* refers to his own government and the American citizens, and his intention behind the reference is similar to the first closing statement, which is to express solidarity and group ideology while speaking as the

representative of a group. One example of using *we* to refer to the American citizens is provided in (49).

(49) The American citizens

*“and I believe that **we** must strengthen the family. **We**’ve got to strengthen the family.”*

(Bush, the second closing statement of the debates)

As Bush used the inclusive *we* to refer to himself and the American citizens, he presented himself as a member of the audience and citizens to better persuade them to support himself. In addition, as Bush is the incumbent president during the debate, using the inclusive *we* can create an intimate relationship with the citizens and eliminate the hierarchical relation between the leader and the ordinary people.

In addition to the American citizens, Bush also refers to his own government with the exclusive *we*, and the intention of it is to express group belief and ideology of his coalition and to speak as a representative of a group to present a positive image of his team. The use of the exclusive *we* is exemplified in (50).

(50) Bush’s government

*I do believe that **we** need to control mandatory spending. I think **we** need to invest and save more. I believe that **we** need to educate better and retrain better. I believe that **we** need to export more so I’ll keep working for export agreements where **we** can sell more abroad...* (Bush, the second closing statement of the debates)

As ‘mandatory spending’, ‘education’ and ‘export’ are more relevant to the policies of the government, I classified the referents of the exclusive *we* as ‘Bush’s government. As can be seen in (50), the use of *we* is the same as that in (48); by frequently referring to his own

government, Bush excluded the audience from his group and expressed the institutional identity by pointing out the future plan of his administration to gather support from the audience who share the similar group belief.

Although the referents of *we* in the second closing statement is the same as the first, the percent of the American citizens dwindles (from 50% to 38%), and the percent of the Bush's government increases (from 50% to 62%). In this light, it is suggested that Bush's intention behind his referents is the same as the first closing statement, but he preferred the strategy to express group belief and institutional identity to persuade the audience to support himself.

5.3.1.3 The third closing statement

In the last closing statement, only 2 tokens are observed from Bush's closing statement, and they refer to the American citizens.

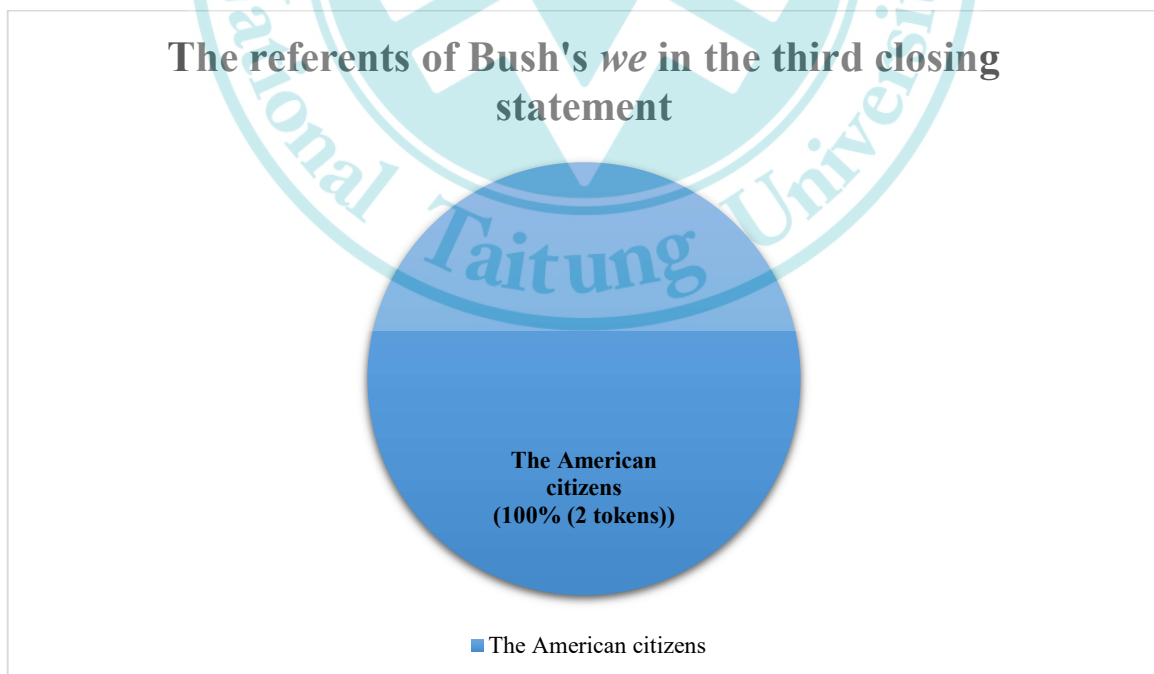


Table 31. The referents of Bush's *we* in the third closing statement

As mentioned, Bush is the candidate with the least token counts of *we* in the third

closing statement, and he used the inclusive *we* to refer to the American citizens, and one example is provided in (51).

(51) The American citizens

On foreign affairs, some think it's irrelevant. I believe it's not. We're living in an interconnected world. The whole world is having economic difficulties. The US is doing better than a lot. But we've got to do even better. (Bush, the third closing statement of the debates)

As can be seen in (52), Bush's referent choice reflects his attempt to create an intimate relation with the audience. According to Karapetjana (2011), *we* has the function of creating involvement with the audience; while a candidate uses the inclusive *we* to refer to the audience, s/he conveys an image that the s/he is working with the audience. Hence, in light of the percent of the referents of Bush's *we*, it is argued that his intention of using *we* in the third closing statement is to express solidarity by creating involvement with the audience.

5.3.1.4 Summary

The following flow chart summarizes the referents and intentions of Bush's use of *we* in the closing statements.

The first closing statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The referents of <i>we</i>: <i>American citizens (50%) & Bush's government (50%)</i> • Intention: express solidarity & express institutional identity and ideology
The second closing statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The referents of <i>we</i>: <i>American citizens (38%) & Bush's government (62%)</i> • Intention: express solidarity & express institutional identity and ideology
The third closing statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The referents of <i>we</i>: <i>American citizens (100%)</i> • Intention: express solidarity

Table 32. The referents and intentions of Bush's *we* in the first, second and third closing statement

Table 32 describes Bush's intentions behind his pronominal choice. In the first closing statement, the phenomenon that each of his referent of *we* constitute 50% implies that he values both the strategy to reinforce the connection between himself and the audience and to express group belief to persuade the audience. However, in the second closing statement, the increase of the percent of the referents which refer to the Bush's government indicates that he utilized the second closing statement to promote his government and coalition, and gather support from the audience who share a similar political view. Finally, in the third closing statement, as it is the last chance to persuade the audience, Bush put his focus on expressing solidarity and creating involvement with the audience through the inclusive *we* to present himself as a leader who is willing to work with the ordinary people.

The sole referent of Bush's pronoun *we* is another point that needs careful attention. Through the three closing statements, Bush's *we* only refers to 'the American citizens' and 'Bush's government'. Compared to Perot and Clinton, Bush's *we* refers to the least types of addressee; that is, his referents of *we* constitutes the smallest range of social groups and

issues. It is argued that Bush’s few types of referents resulted from his low approval rate during the debates. The 1992 Presidential Trial-Heats produced by Gallup is represented in Table 33.

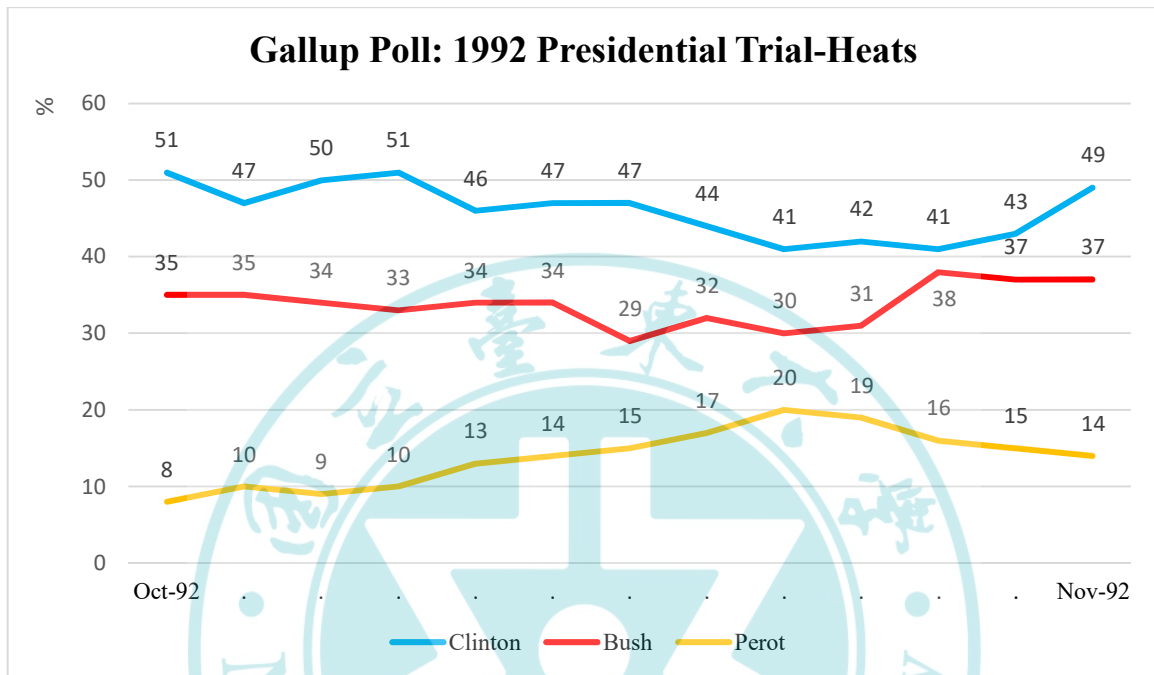


Table 33. 1992 Presidential Trial-Heats, September-November, Based on Registered voter

According to Gallup-polls, Bush’s poll number throughout the campaign is all lower than that of Clinton. Due to the low poll number, Bush need to focus on creating a strong relationship with the voter and audience, to persuade them to vote for him, and the use of the inclusive *we* which refers to the American citizens allows Bush to achieve this goal. In addition, as Bush is the incumbent president who sought for re-election, he needs to present positive images of his administration (government, campaign) and express institutional identity of his coalition to get more support, which explains his frequent use of the exclusive *we* in referring to his government (first closing statement: 50%, second closing statement: 62%). The variety and strategy of Bush’s referents of pronouns is different from the observations made in Candarli (2012), which is, the diversity of the referents of a candidate’s

pronoun is more effective in persuading the audience. According to Candarli (2012), a diversity of referents of a candidate's pronoun can present s/he as the one that considers a wide range of social issues and working class. However, as Bush's poll number is lower than that of his opponent (Clinton) during the debate, he had to put more emphasis on the citizens and audience and promote his government, which explains the less diversity of his referents. In this light, it is suggested that the poll number and approval rate of a candidate is relevant to his/her diversity of referents and pronominal choice.

5.3.2 Bush's use of *they*

As Bush only used *they* once in the three closing statements, and his *they* is a pronoun whose main function is to refer to the exports of the country. Thus, it follows that Bush did not have specific intention to use *they* in the closing statements. One example can be seen in (52).

(52)

We need to do better in job retraining. We need to expand our exports, and they're going very, very well, indeed. (Bush, the first closing statement of the debates)

6. Summary

In Chapter 4, the functions of *I*, *we* and *they*, their referents and illocutionary acts are discussed to reveal the candidates' intentions behind their pronominal choice, and three points are made as follows. First, *I* is the pronoun that is most frequently used by the three candidates throughout the closing statements (*I*: 116 tokens, *we*: 67 tokens, *they*: 25 tokens), and it is different from the observation in Alavidze (2017), which claims that the first personal plural (*we*) is the type of pronoun that is most frequently used by candidates. The

difference between the findings in this thesis and Alavidze (2017) might result from the number of candidates in the debate. As there were three candidates instead of two in the 1992 presidential debates, the candidates not only had to express solidarity with the audience, but also to promote individual identity and popularity to compete with the other candidates. As Kaewrungruang & Yaoharee (2018) maintain, *I* is the most proper pronoun to emphasize individual character, identity and images. Second, the assertive act is the one that is most frequently encoded by *I*, *we* and *they* by the three candidates, and this phenomenon is also supported by the observation in Akinwotu (2013). The reason of the high percentage of the assertive act performed through pronouns among the five acts (*I*: 42%, *we*: 54%, *they*: 88%) is due to the functions of assertive act and pronouns. A candidate in the closing statements is required to convey various political messages and images to persuade the audience, and as assertive act commits the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition, which contains the function of reporting, stating and announcing, it is frequently performed by candidates to persuade the audience. Finally, different from the previous studies (Bramley (2001), Karapetjana (2011) and Hahn (2003)), which propose that *they* in political discourse is used to present negative images of the opponents and separation, it is found that Clinton is able to utilize *they* to promote his likability and positive image. By referring to the citizens and audience with *they*, Clinton presents himself as a candidate who cares about ordinary citizens and is willing to appreciate the participation of the audience. That is, according to the current analysis, *they* also enables a candidate to present a positive image of his/her own.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The goal of this thesis is to investigate the correlation between pronominal choice, illocutionary acts and ideology in political discourse, particularly in the three closing statements attended by the three presidential candidates, and to analyze the candidates' manipulation of pronouns to achieve communicative goals in the debates by implementing critical discourse analysis.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, this thesis aims to answer the following questions:

1. How does pronominal choice reflect the presidential candidates' ideological grounds in the closing statements?
2. What are the differences in pronominal choice between Bush, Clinton, and Perot in the context of the closing statements of the 1992 United States presidential debates, and what are the causes for the differences?
3. Are illocutionary acts encoded by personal pronouns or performative verbs, and what is the correlation between them?
4. What are common strategies of using pronouns a candidate employs in a debate to sustain his/her ideology and dominance over other candidates in political discourse?

Based on the analysis and the discussion in Chapter 4, five points are made in response to the above questions. First, the range of the referents of a candidate's pronoun plays a role in decoding the candidates' ideological grounds and intentions. As pronouns can show who is being addressed by the candidate and who is being excluded, we can understand what is the

candidate's valued social groups and who does not suit his/her ideology. According to Van Dijk (2003), ideology is a group belief or cognitive system that integrates people into a social group, which is the social representation of a group. While a candidate refers to a group with the use of a particular pronoun, his/her intentions and ideology are reflected by the referents; that is, pronominal choice serves the ideology to classify people into different groups based on different group beliefs.

Second, according to the token counts and percent of each candidate's pronouns in the closing statements, it is suggested that Clinton, Bush, and Perot have different strategies of using personal pronouns. The differences in their pronominal choice resulted from their roles in the 1992 presidential election. As Bush was the incumbent president who sought reelection, he not only needed to express solidarity with the audience with the inclusive *we*, but also was required to express institutional identity and present positive images of his own group, the government, with the exclusive *we*. Compared to Bush, both Clinton and Perot were running for the president for the first time, and they had a slim chance to speak to the public. Hence, Perot and Clinton had to put more emphasis on promoting and introducing themselves to the audience in the closing statements, and *I* is the most common pronoun to achieve this goal.

Third, illocutionary acts are encoded by performative verbs rather than pronouns. As Austen (1962) and Searle (1969) maintain, illocutionary acts are the actions expressed in the utterances. In the closing statements, illocutionary acts and candidates' ideological grounds are encoded respectively by their performative verbs and pronouns. It is the performative verbs that determine an action a candidate commits the audience to perform, and the pronouns serve as a window into the encoding of the candidate's political grounds when addressing the audience and referring to any individual or a particular group of individuals.

Forth, the common strategy of using pronouns in the closing statements to sustain ideology and dominance is the use of the inclusive *we*, as it can express solidarity and

personal information. In order to leave impressions and positive images of a candidate on the audience in the final stage of the debates, using *I* in the closing statements allows a candidate to present a positive image (see Hahn (2003)). As the goal of presidential debates and closing statements is to make a candidate win the presidency, the candidate who has the strongest connection with the audience and citizens has a stronger possibility of winning the election. The inclusive *we* is the most efficient pronoun in creating a strong affinity with the audience, since it allows the candidate to unify him/herself with the audience and eliminate the distance between the audience and the candidate.

Finally, this thesis reveals new functions of pronouns which are inconsistent with the functions proposed in the previous studies (see Bramley (2001) & Karapetjana (2011) & Hahn (2003)). In the closing statements, Clinton's use of *they* primarily presents neutral or even positive images of the addressee, which is distinct from the observation made in the previous studies. In addition, Clinton's use of *they* to refer to the American citizens is also inconsistent with what has been proposed in the previous studies, which suggest that *they* is usually connected with negative images of the opponents. The new findings are in need of further investigation but due to the current scope of the thesis, they are left for another occasion.

The current thesis provides a mixed-investigation of pronominal choice, political discourse, illocutionary acts in presidential debates. However, there are several limitations of the current thesis that need to be discussed and solved in the future. First, as the closing statements are short speeches, they are unable to provide a comprehensive perspective on American political discourse. In addition, given the length of the closing statements, topics are not investigated in the current thesis, since the candidates were not able to discuss a variety of topics and issues in one and half minutes. Second, in light of the functions of certain pronouns and illocutionary acts, it is impossible for the candidates to perform illocutionary acts through performative verbs with certain types of pronoun. For instance,

during the closing statements, the candidates were not able to perform expressive act with *we* or *they*, and they were also not allowed to use *they* with performative verbs to perform directive act. Thus, a follow-up study on the above issues is necessary. What is more, there are other factors not taken into account in this thesis, such as gender differences, topics, cultures and political spectrums, which are necessary in enriching the body of political discourse.



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