

The Rhetoric of Public Speeches
- Manipulation through Words:
Rhetorical Devices in Political Speeches and in Sermons -

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1. Introduction

The present course focuses on the locutor's cognitive, emotional, and behavioural processes in the production of **political** and of **religious speeches** (the latter also known as **sermons**). These linguistic products/texts are the result of the action of **public speaking**, which is a process of speaking to a group of people (listeners, hearers, audience, congregation, etc.) in "a structured, deliberate manner intended to inform, influence or entertain"¹.

In broad lines, the purposes of public speaking range from simply *transmitting information* (informative speeches), to *motivating people to act* (manipulative speeches), to simply *telling them a story* (entertaining speeches). These aims characterise the public speeches as pragmatic products, as means to an end.

Irrespective of the type of speech, there are five basic elements that describe it, which are often succinctly expressed as "who is saying what to whom using what medium with what effects?"² *Who* stands here for the speaker, or **locutor**, which could be a politician, a member of the clergy (a preacher of any denomination or religious conviction), sometimes a public figure, very seldom a person unknown to the listeners. *What* represents the verbal content of the public speech as such, the verbal message or **the text** itself. The *whom* element refers to the **recipients** of the message – hardly ever an individual, most often a group of listeners or hearers considered the audience that could be a whole nation, a religious congregation, etc. The term *medium* here usually refers to the way in which the speech is transmitted: whether it is **spoken** (and addressed directly to the listeners in public places, or indirectly via TV, or it is broadcast on the radio), or **written** (and received via newspapers or they are accessible as (tran)scripts on the Internet, etc.). This distinction is relevant only for the discourse analysis process; most of such speeches are intended to be spoken, and they are or have been delivered orally, but after their delivery they remain accessible only in a recorded or written form. Another meaning for the term *medium*, most relevant to the linguistic analysis throughout the course, is that of *how* the message is put across, i.e., what specific kinds of **artistic techniques, means of expression**, in terms of **rhetorical** and **stylistic devices** are used by the orator in order to achieve certain pragmatic *effects* through his or her speech. The adjective *deliberate* in the definition given above to the concept of **public speaking** is directly related to this meaning of the term *medium* and central to the whole course. Because the corpus for analysis consists of written texts only, the public speeches in point are considered products shaped by each locutor through a process of continuous *deliberation*, not of accidental selection and combination, even though spontaneity in the act of their creation is not denied. But once put on paper, the written words are re-read and their appropriateness in the whole text is weighed or *deliberated* on by the locutor.

Whereas these four elements may be used to describe any type of interpersonal verbal communication, the last element, i.e., the *effects* that such discourses have on their recipients, is a characteristic of major importance: it is the element that makes of such texts pragmatic products; in the case of the speeches with manipulative undertones, where the locutor's intentions, emotions, attitudes, beliefs, values, cultural background, etc. are less visible because they are not overtly linguistically formulated, it is the *effects* achieved on the listeners that account for the locutor's psychological background. It is clear that the *effects* exerted on the recipients of the message depend extensively on the *rhetorical and stylistic devices* employed by the locutor in any specific text. This relationship of interdependence is very largely relied on in both parts of the present course, where the written form of texts as a source is used, with all its formal devices, and the analysis of the locutor's psychology behind the encoding process originates in the possible effects exerted on the recipient/reader of the written text.

¹ <http://www.answers.com/topic/public-speaking>

² Cf. *Idem*.

Public speeches, such as **political speeches** and **sermons**, are monologues intended to influence the audiences without the audience members contributing to the linguistic event in any other way but by actually listening to the locutor's words. However, as good orators should be able to change the emotions of their audiences, not just inform them, sometimes the listeners' emotional participation is expected to be overtly expressed and they are encouraged to applaud, for instance. Such a reaction would be a clear feedback that the message has been put across successfully, the same as a booing could be either a sign of vehement disagreement with the speaker's performance or ideas, or, on the contrary, of total agreement, depending on the situation, and laughter could be a reaction either to a good joke, or a sign that the listeners either do not take the locutor's words too seriously, or they find his words ridiculous, etc.

In order for any specific effect to be achieved, public speakers or speech-writers conceive the text of their public speeches considering the ideal listener whose *benevolence* they have to win. Moreover, a receptive listener is one that does not question the locutor's *credibility*. The listeners' *benevolence* to receive the message and the locutor's *credibility* in front of the listeners are the main ingredients of a successful linguistic event of this type. The formal marks of the locutor's attempt to establish a linguistic environment propitious for the unhindered reception of their speeches are traceable, therefore, analysable, at the level of the linguistic form of the texts that they produce. In the first part of the course, these marks, of rhetorical or stylistic nature, are grouped - according to their frequency and the chronological order in which they are used both in political speeches and in sermons - into: **Introductory Formulas / Appellatives, Collateral Circumstances of Place, Time, Issues, and Persons**, - each of which are further subdivided into several categories - **The Anticipatory Story, Amplification in Argumentation** (which focuses especially on **repetition** at various levels), **Intertextuality, Fallacies in Argumentation**, etc. The comments about these rhetorical devices and structures are of a psychological nature, in that they account for the locutors' **intentions, emotions, and attitudes** that they transmit to the listeners in the wish to achieve certain mentally *persuasive*, emotionally *seductive* and behaviour-*inciting* effects on them. As a unitary synthetic presentation of such effects is quasi-impossible (they depend exclusively on the context), they are presented analytically, beginning from the rhetorical and stylistic device towards the effect achieved.

2. Manipulation through Words: Rhetorical Devices in Political Speeches and in Sermons

2.1. Preliminaries

2.1.1. Rhetorical Devices: Schemes / Figures and Tropes

In any analysis of linguistic style similar to that advanced in the current thesis, a number of **rhetorical devices** are worth considering because they are “important generators and qualifiers of meaning and effect”³.

Although such devices can be employed at times in spontaneous common uses of language, they are especially the mark of **figurative language**. Therefore, they are used in texts in which the language is or can be used figuratively: literary texts, rhetorical discourses - such as political speeches, sermons, legal speeches - also the news discourse, etc. What all these types of texts have in common, beside the ‘permission’ to use the language figuratively, is the fact that their creation involves a process of deliberate organisation of the linguistic material, a process that allows the locutor, be it a speaker or a writer, to select the means of linguistic formulation that best serve his or her ideas, emotions, attitudes, on the one hand, and aims, on the other. Whether the figures of speech are selected consciously or not, the way in which they are given shape in any type of text is a matter of individual creativity.

The rhetorical devices are generally divided into two categories: **schemes** (or **figures**), and **tropes**.

Rhetorical schemes “describe the arrangement of individual sounds (**phonological schemes**), the arrangement of words (**morphological schemes**), and sentence structure (**syntactical schemes**)”⁴. The main **phonological schemes** are: **alliteration**, **assonance**, **consonance**, and **onomatopoeia**. Among the most frequent **morphological schemes** there can be mentioned: **accumulation**, **anadiplosis** (or **reduplicatio**), **anaphora**, **enumeration**, **epiphora** (or **epistrophe**), **epizeuxis**, **gradatio** (or **climax**), **polyptoton**, **symploce**, etc. The **syntactical schemes** include: **asyndeton**, **ellipsis**, **hypotaxis**, **inversion**, **parallelism**, **parataxis**, **polysyndeton**⁵, etc. To this list of rhetorical devices I add three other categories, which can also be considered **rhetorical strategies**: the **introductory formula / appellative**, the **collateral circumstances of place, of time, of issues and of persons**, and the **illustration**. These rhetorical artifices can make use of any of the devices mentioned above. As these categories are specific to rhetorical speeches, their aspects will be analysed in more detail both in the section on the political speeches and in that on sermons.

The **rhetorical tropes**, most frequently referred to as **figures of speech**, represent “a deviation from the common main significance of a word or phrase (semantic figures) or include specific appeals to the audience (pragmatic figures)”⁶. Although the dictionaries of literary terms include a far wider range of figures of speech, the most frequent such devices are: **euphemism**, **hyperbole**, **litotes** (as a special type of **meiosis** or **understatement**), **metaphor**, **metonymy**, **oxymoron**, **paradox**, **personification**, **pun** (or **paronomasia**), **simile**, **synecdoche**, **tautology**, etc.

The use of a **rhetorical scheme** or of a **figure of speech** in a text, be it written or spoken or, cannot pass unnoticed to an observant eye (or ear) as the text in point becomes stylistically marked. The stylistic analysis of such devices aims at pointing out the *effects* that they achieve on the recipients and the possible *reasons* why they were employed in a specific place in the text, as this can account for the locutor’s personality in terms of education and psychological traits of personality

³ Stefanie Lethbridge and Jarmilla Mildorf, 2003, *Basics of English Studies (An introductory course for students of literary studies in English developed at the English departments of the Universities of Tübingen, Stuttgart and Freiburg)*, p. 23.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ Cf. *Ibidem*.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

such as intentions, emotions, and attitudes. The truth is that the effects of any stylistic device “differ from text to text and within texts, depending on the immediate context”⁷. However, among the possible effects achieved through the use of rhetorical and stylistic devices there can be mentioned: *drawing one’s attention* to certain elements in the text, *making a text easier to understand*, *characterising* a certain character in the text or the locutor himself, but “possibly the most interesting effect of style is that it can *elicit certain emotional responses in readers or listeners*. This becomes important especially in texts (spoken or written) that aim to convince other people of something they may not have been convinced of before: **political speeches**, **speeches in court**, and **sermons**.”⁸

In the present course, the **political speech** and the **sermon** are analysed as types of rhetorical discourses that make use of a wide variety of rhetorical devices some of which were mentioned above.

2.1.2. Manipulation through Words. A Definition

In everyday life, when people use the verb **to manipulate** and its nominal and adjectival derivatives, more often than not they associate them with some *skills*, *abilities*, *tactics* that enable a person, a group of people or an institution to get what they want from other people and institutions, or to handle certain objects in nature.

According to various dictionary definitions⁹, these words develop some **negative connotations**, as the aim of the processes that they describe is one of *controlling*, *deceiving*, *influencing*, *handling* people. At the same time, they develop **positive connotations**, too, as such terms as *skill*, *ability*, *dexterity*, *knowledge* are used to explain the physical and intellectual qualities in a person actively engaged in the process of manipulation.

The etymological definition below resolves this apparent semantic contradiction by revealing the processes of **extension** and of **degradation of meaning** the word **manipulation** has been subject to from its initial *neutral meaning*, through an intermediate stage when it carried *positive connotations*, to its current figurative meaning, loaded mainly with *negative connotations*:

“**manipulation** – c.1730s, from Fr. *manipulation*, from *manipule* “handful” (a pharmacists’ measure), from L. *manipulus* “handful, sheaf”, from *manus* “hand” + root of *plere* “to fill”. Originally in Eng. a method of digging ore, sense of “skillful handling of objects” is first recorded in 1826; sense soon extended to “handling of persons” as well as objects; **manipulative** is from 1836.”¹⁰ (all emphases in the original)

In order to cover the complexity of the topic in point, throughout the present course I consider both its negative and its positive implications. The terms **to manipulate**, **manipulation**, and **manipulative** are used to refer to the process by which politicians and clergymen, making use of their psychological and linguistic *abilities*, *skills* and *tactics*, influence their addressees through their speeches.

These influences can manifest either way. The people to whom a particular speech is delivered may change their own opinions for some better or for some worse ones. They may start acting in the name of a good cause or of a bad one. They also may get emotionally touched in a positive or in a negative way. In short, whether *intellectually*, *behaviourally*, or *emotionally*, people can be influenced or manipulated through words. Moreover, manipulation is considered here a matter

⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁹ Cf. *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, 2000, Oxford University Press, *Webster Revised Unabridged Dictionary*, 1913, <http://www.bootlegbooks.com/Reference/Webster/data/950.html>, *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 1995, Third Edition, Longman.

¹⁰ <http://www.geocities.com/etymonline/m1etym.htm>

of speaking to people politely and skilfully without generating negative feelings towards the locutor, therefore, its semantics contains a [+Diplomacy] seme.

The **psychological components** of the process of manipulation belong to the art of rhetoric, also known as the art of persuading by speaking beautifully¹¹. They refer to the way in which the speaker thinks and mentally structures his arguments. These components are mental representations of the **rhetorical devices**; they describe the mental articulation of ideas into coherent and cohesive structures, i.e. they belong to the **paradigmatic** axis of language. But these devices become visible, therefore they can 'do their job' and can be analysed only when they are linguistically formulated. In this respect, they belong to the **syntagmatic** axis of language as well. Moreover, it is their syntagmatic existence that makes their interpretation possible as the public speakers' reasoning behind their argumentation cannot be separated from the way in which they give their thoughts concrete linguistic shape. No matter how logically some orators may reason and may order the ideas in their heads, without a beautiful and clever handling of the language in which they communicate they cannot exert the intended influence on their listeners.

The beauty of orations¹² resides mainly in the **stylistic devices** used for a better illustration of ideas. Thus, in the speeches intended to influence people, rhetorical devices go hand in hand with stylistic devices. As a consequence, my perspective upon the topic of *manipulation through words* is accounted for by a *manipulation of words* in the majority of cases.

I mentioned above the verb *to persuade* in connection with the main aim of rhetoric. In the present course I agree with Giambattista Vico's opinion that "to persuade is to instill in the listener conformity to the spirit of the oration so that the listener wills the same as that which the oration proposes."¹³ It is worth pointing out that in this definition Vico does not refer to the orator, but to the oration as a text with a message only. One can assume that this definition shows its author's certainty that generally it is not the public speakers themselves that make up or write the speeches they deliver. Whether this is true or not is not of major significance here as it is not the actual speaker's works of mind that I am interested in. To put it differently, what is relevant here is the actual form of the speeches and the works of the mind that conceived them. The orator's name, as well as the terms **locutor** and **speaker**, is used for easier reference. It can also be argued, however, that once the form of a speech is approved of by a certain orator who actually delivers it, he or she assumes full responsibility for its possible psychological and pragmatic implications as the recipients of such messages put the equal sign between the words they hear or read and the person who utters or signs them, respectively.

Taking Vico's definition a little further, the term **persuasion** may be considered to encompass three aspects: a **communicative** one, a **seductive** one, and an **inciting** one.¹⁴ That is to say that in order to persuade orators have to communicate ideas, they have to seduce their audiences with the beauty of their words and mind, and, when appropriate, to incite them to action.

Political and religious orators are known to have been the best manipulators of masses of people along the history of mankind. In order to manipulate or to influence people, the political speeches and the sermons they deliver should combine the three above-mentioned components in various proportions.

There is no one best recipe for an effective speech: some inform more, others persuade, others seduce, and still others aim to incite people to action. They are devised according to their **topic**, to the **place** of the event, to the **moment in time** when they are delivered, to the **type of audience** they are addressed, and last but not least, according to the **oratorical skills** of the speaker. Whereas the **communicative** aspect characterises all types of speeches, **persuasion**, **seduction** and

¹¹ Cf. Aristotle, *The Rhetoric*, Book I, Part 1, [http://graduate.gradsch.uga.edu/archive/Aristotle/Rhetoric_\(rhetoric\).txt](http://graduate.gradsch.uga.edu/archive/Aristotle/Rhetoric_(rhetoric).txt)

¹² I.e. formal public speech. Cf. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, p. 997.

¹³ Giambattista Vico, 1996, *The Art of Rhetoric*, Amsterdam – Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, p. 5.

¹⁴ Cf. Gheorghe Mihai, 1998, *Retorica tradițională și retorici moderne*, București: Editura ALL, p. 15.

incitement describe those whose aim is to move the *spirit*, the *emotions*, and the *will*, respectively, namely, the manipulative ones. Thus, in my analysis I consider all these aspects, stressing especially on the last three ones.

The corpus of texts from which I draw my conclusions consists of a series of authentic¹⁵ **political speeches** and **Christian sermons**. The political speeches at issue have been delivered by famous British and American politicians along the time, whereas the sermons selected have either been preached in churches or only put on-line for public access.

Both politics and religion are quicksand to those who practise or analyse them. Therefore, in the present course I avoid any judgmental evaluations, as it is not my intention to show how beneficial or how harmful these human institutions can be to the majority of people. The focus on the rhetorical and stylistic devices visible in the written form of these speeches aims at pointing out their manipulative undertones.

2.2. Political Speeches

2.2.1. The Political Speech as Rhetorical Discourse

Political speeches are a specific sub-genre of **political texts**¹⁶, which are products of the **political discourse**. The term **discourse** in this formulation is used according to Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis integrative approach. This means that their form and content, i.e. the linguistic structures and the message 'transmitted' by the political texts, "are related to larger contexts of communicative settings and political functions"¹⁷.

Although a vague term, a **political speech** is generally seen as a rhetorical product created and delivered in a **political context**: "Political texts are a part of and / or the result of **politics**, they are historically and culturally determined"¹⁸

Such a speech can be described in terms of *target audience* and *informational content*, in terms of *pragmatic function*, etc.

When the **audience** and the **informational content** are considered the main classification criteria, one can distinguish between political speeches that address:

a). **specialised audiences**¹⁹ (i.e. the participants in the so-called **internal political communication** process, which usually takes place in well defined settings²⁰), a case in which their *informational content* is mainly about *politics itself*, namely, "the functioning of politics within political institutions, i.e. governmental bodies, parties or other organizations", and they discuss "political ideas, beliefs, and practices of a society or some part of it"²¹; or

b). **the general public**, i.e. **non-politicians** (i.e. the participants in the so-called **external political communication** process, which can take place in a particular setting²²), and their *informational content* may be about various other topics of general interest: human and civil rights, morality and religion, social, cultural, economic, political, military issues of national and international interest that should be shared with the whole nation or parts of it, etc.

¹⁵ I.e. that have actually been delivered.

¹⁶ Cf. Christina Schäffner, "Editorial: Political Speeches and Discourse Analysis", in *Current Issues in Language and Society*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1996, p. 202.

¹⁷ *Idem*, p. 204.

¹⁸ *Idem*, p. 202.

¹⁹ I.e. political boards and committees, government officials and authorities, members of various political departments and organisations, etc. Such listeners themselves are involved in political activities.

²⁰ Such as *the House of Commons, the Congress, the Parliament, a specific political party's headquarters*, for example.

²¹ Christina Schäffner, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

²² Such as *educational institutions, economic institutions, various public spaces (auditoriums, in the open, on TV, on the radio, on the Internet)*, etc.

However, there is not an inherent relationship between the type of audience addressed and the thematic informational content of the political speech: the same issues can be approached, though in different ways, in both situations. Moreover, there is not such an implicit relationship between the speech being considered political and its locutor as it is not only the politicians who deliver political speeches. But if the audience is 'specialised', such a locutor is expected to be a professional, too.

Useful for my forthcoming analysis is the classification of political speeches in terms of their main **pragmatic function**, i.e. to its *locutor's intention*. According to this criterion, the political speech as a type of rhetorical discourse can be labeled as:

- **Persuasive**. This type of speech focuses on the *informational content* and its *logical argumentation*, rather than on the linguistic ornaments. By addressing the recipients' **mind**, the locutor aims to make them believe in the truth value of his or her words.

- **Seductive**. This type focuses on the *linguistic form* in terms of *rhetorical* and *stylistic* ornaments. By addressing the recipients' **emotions**, the locutor aims to make them have the same feelings as s/he does towards the topic of the speech.

- **Inciting or inflammatory**. This type of speeches address the recipients' **will**²³. They are meant to change the recipients' behaviour in the way the locutor wants them to.

The political speech as a type of rhetorical discourse has an **outline**²⁴ similar to any other such discourse. It consists of:

I. Introduction

- **Greeting and Attention Gatherer**. This is the part at the beginning of the speech in which the locutor greets and capture the attention of the listeners.

- **Thesis**. This is a sentence in the introduction specifying *the purpose* and *the subject* of the speech.

- **Authority**. This part refers to the process of *introducing oneself* to the audience, if necessary, and to the locutor's *establishing credibility* to persuade the audience that s/he is trustworthy enough to speak about the subject.

- **Summary**. This is an overview of *the main points* of the speech.

- **Important Answer**. Now the locutor mentions, as an answer to an implicit question, why the speech will be useful or valuable to the audience.

II. Body

- **Transition**. This is a sentence that signals to the audience the end of the introduction and the beginning of the main part of the speech.

- **Main Points**. The locutor provides a *detailed presentation of the main points* and ideas of the speech along with a *description of the supporting ideas* and *illustrative examples* to explain and clarify the main points.

III. Conclusion

- **Transition**. This takes the form of a sentence that signals to the audience the end of the body part of the speech and the beginning of the concluding part of the speech.

- **Paraphrasing of the Main Points**. The locutor *restates*, usually using a different wording, *the main points* and ideas and *emphasises* on those parts of the speech that s/he wants the audience to remember.

- **Closing Statement**. This is a final sentence where the locutor *emphasises the key statement*. It can be followed, but not necessarily, by

- **The Taking Leave Statement**. This is a sentence that marks the end of the whole speech. The locutor may use a classic *salutation formulation* or he may *invoke God's help* for the audience's wellbeing and for a good course of the future events.

²³ Cf. Gheorghe Mihai, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

²⁴ Cf. *Basic and Detailed Speech Outline*, <http://www.korepetycje.com/speechoutline.html>

The **traditional terminology**²⁵ used to identify the main parts of the ancient public speeches is:

1. The Exordium. Its function is to *introduce the speaker and the issue* and to *make the audience receptive*. Theoretically speaking, this can be accomplished if the audience are *benevolent*, i.e. well disposed to the locutor, if they are *attentive* to and *interested* in the issue, and *docile* or “teachable and receptive”.

2. The Narratio. This refers to a *narration of the facts* or of *the main points* in the whole speech.

3. The Argumentum. This can be divided into three parts:

- **Partitio**, or *division of the main points*;
- **Confirmatio**, or *proof in favor of the locutor's position*;
- **Refutatio**, or *proof against the locutor's opponent*.

4. The Digressio or “digression” on any issue that might be, strictly speaking, outside proper limits of the main points but would provide context or persuasion for the audience. This is not an obligatory component of a speech.

5. Peroratio. Here, by means of a simple and well balanced formulation, the locutor appeals strongly to the emotions. It can also take the form of a prayer to God.

2.2.2. The Locutor's Audience-Awareness

Attracting the audience's *benevolence* from the outset has always been one of the most difficult tasks that orators have had to undertake in their art of speech delivery. The success or failure of their speeches depends to a great extent on their *fame*, their *charismatic attitude* and *pleasant appearance*, but the first words they utter in front of their listeners are crucial in this respect.

Influencing people's thoughts, emotions and actions, that is, *persuading / dissuading, seducing or inciting* them, respectively, always requires that these people should be *sympathetic* with the locutor and they should be *attentive* and *receptive* to the speech. If the people addressed sense from the very beginning that they are looked down upon by the speaker, or that their origins and the place they live in are underestimated, or even that the occasion on which the speech is delivered is of little value to the orator when they feel the opposite, then it is very likely that they should lose interest in what they are told. Consequently, if the locutor lacks what is generally called **audience-awareness**, he loses *credibility*. Once credibility jeopardised, he has to take great pains, if not in vain, to re-gain the audience's sympathy and to channel their attention and receptiveness to the speech.

2.2.3. Introductory Formulas / Appellatives

Irrespective of the topic of the speech, finding the appropriate introductory words is one of the golden keys to the listeners' minds and hearts. Among the rhetorical strategies that politicians use at the beginning of their speeches, the **introductory noun-phrases in the Nominative of Address** are commonplace. Out of 138 speeches listed in the **Annexe 1**, 95 begin with such a formulation.

These **appellatives** develop a **double function**: a **psychological** one, and a **social** one. **Psychologically**, they draw everybody's attention so that they focus their listening: listeners are signalled the moment they are supposed to start concentrating on the speaker and on what he says, as their role as recipients is now acknowledged by both parties in such a speaking process. **Socially**, introductory formulas are sometimes used to show respect to some important members of the audience and then to the whole of it; other times they establish the contact with the whole audience directly, without distinguishing between different categories of addressees.

²⁵ For this presentation cf. *Ancient Oratory: Types, Functions, Parts*,
http://omega.cohums.ohio-state.edu/latin/catiline/ancient_oratory.htm

In what follows, some frequent types of **introductory formulas** are analysed. They are grouped according to whether they single out any specific listeners or categories of listeners in the audience or not.

2.2.3.1. Appellatives That Address the Whole Audience

Employing familiar formulas that address the whole audience at the beginning of a speech has the effect of reducing the distance between the orator and the audience; the psychological barriers between the rostrum and the audience, i.e., between 'I', the famous and more knowledgeable figure, and 'you', the large mass of indefinite common people, are broken down to a great extent. Many times these formulations sound colloquial as they do not single out any specific category of listeners. They are preferred by orators especially when issues of national and social importance are tackled. The main aim of such speeches is that of *persuading* large masses of listeners about the importance of these issues and of the steps to be taken from then on as far as they are concerned. Getting closer to the listeners' minds and hearts is one effective way of persuasion as friendly advice is followed more goodwill than orders. Moreover, ideas presented in a language familiar to everybody both in terms of complexity and of register are more likely to be understood and adopted by those addressed. Here are the most frequent such formulations that appear in the list of speeches in the Annexe 1:

- 1). *Friends and fellow citizens...*²⁶
- 2). *Fellow citizens of the Senate and of the House of Representatives...*²⁷
- 3). *My fellow-citizens...*²⁸ (2 times)
- 4). *Fellow citizens...*²⁹
- 5). *My fellow Americans...*³⁰
- 6). *My friends...*³¹ (2 times)
- 7). *Ladies and gentlemen...*³² (3 times)

Some of these phrases have been used more frequently than others; thus, they have reached the status of linguistic clichés or **stereotypical appellatives**, e.g. *(my) fellow citizens/ Americans, (my) friends, ladies and gentlemen*. However, they have not lost their seductive effects entirely. Even though these appellatives belong to a less formal register of language, usually employed in talks between people of the same social status - such as friends, acquaintances, colleagues - they are felt both warm and respectful formulations as the intention of the high social status locutor who uses

²⁶ Susan B. Anthony, 1873, *On Women's Right to Vote*, <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/anthony.htm>

²⁷ George Washington, 30 April 1789, *First Inaugural Address*, http://douglass.speech.nwu/wash_a35.htm

²⁸ Theodore Roosevelt, 4 March 1905, *Inaugural Address*, <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres42.html>

Also Edward Moore Kennedy, 25 July 1969, *Chappaquiddick*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/tedkenedychappaquiddick.htm>

²⁹ Frederick Douglass, 4 July 1852, *The Hypocrisy of American Slavery*, <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/douglass.htm>

³⁰ Richard Milhous Nixon, 23 September 1952, *Checkers*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/richardnixoncheckers.html>

³¹ Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 20 December 1940, *The Great Arsenal of Democracy*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrarsenalofdemocracy.html>
Also *idem*, 12 March 1933, *First Fireside Chat*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrfirstfiresidechat.html>

³² Robert Francis Kennedy, 4 April 1968, *Remarks on the Assassination of Martin Luther King*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/rfkonmlkdeath.html>

Also Gerald Rudolph Ford, 8 September 1974, *National Address Pardoning Richard N. Nixon*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/geraldfordpardonofnixon.htm>

and Ronald Wilson Reagan, 28 January 1986, *Shuttle "Challenger" Disaster Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ronaldreaganchallenger.htm>

them is not to look down on the addressees or to lower the tone unduly, but to show them that they are acknowledged as equals.

Sometimes, these appellatives are not the first words that orators address the audience. In 5 examples in the list in the **Annexe 1** the locutor begins by only greeting the audience; in other 8, by thanking the audience for the warm welcome or for applause; in both these situations, no appellatives are used. In many other examples, however, the appellatives come after a **thanking formula**, a case in which the locutor may address the whole audience, as in the following examples, or, more usually, he may mention the name of some remarkable figures present together with the reason why he is grateful to them. In such situations, this device combines with the **collateral circumstances of persons**, a rhetorical device that will be taken up later, in section 2.2.4.4.

8). **Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.**³³

9). **Thank you, ladies and gentlemen,** for a very warm reception.³⁴

10). **Thank you very kindly, my friends...**³⁵

When beginning to deliver a speech, it is not unusual to greet the audience and then to address them collectively, as in:

11). **Good evening.** Today, *our fellow citizens...*³⁶

12). **Good evening,** *my fellow Americans...*³⁷ (4 times)

13). **Good evening,** *my fellow citizens...*³⁸ (2 times)

The analysis of the political speeches provided in the **Annexe 1** leads to the conclusion that when such **collective appellatives** are used, the content of the whole speech is organised and formulated linguistically in a less formal and complex way than in the case when the speech begins with a more formal introductory formula. This means that these appellatives can be considered a reliable mark of the form of the whole speech as far as the register used by the locutor in the speech argumentation is concerned.

The appellatives analysed hitherto do not bear any mark of political colour: they have been used by politicians of various political convictions along the time, be them liberals, democrats, republicans, etc. Moreover, they do not distinguish between the addressees' social class, gender, or religion; they are politically correct formulations. However, there exist some formulations, much

³³ Bill Clinton, 11 September 1998, *Speech at the Annual White House Prayer Breakfast for Clergy Following his Testimony and Address to the Nation on the Monica Lewinsky Affair*, Washington, D. C., <http://www.pbs.org/greatspeeches/timeline/index.html>.

³⁴ Barbara Charline Jordan, 12 July 1976, *1976 DNC Keynote Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/barbarajordan1976dnc.html>

³⁵ Martin Luther King Jr., 3 April 1968, *I've Been to the Mountaintop*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkivebeentothemountaintop.htm>

³⁶ George W. Bush, 11 September 2001, *Address Delivered to the Nation*, <http://www.votd.com/bu11.htm>

³⁷ Dwight David Eisenhower, 17 January 1961, *Farewell Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/dwighteisenhowerfarewell.html>
Also Lyndon Baines Johnson, 31 March 1968, *On Vietnam and Not Seeking Re-Election*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/lbjvietnam.htm>

Richard Milhous Nixon, 3 November 1969, *The Great Silent Majority*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/richardnixongreatsilentmajority.html>
Idem, 30 April 1970, *Cambodian Incursion Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/richardnixoncambodia.html>

³⁸ John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 10 June 1963, *American University Commencement Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkamericanuniversityaddress.html>
Also *idem*, 22 October 1962, *Cuban Missile Crisis Address to the Nation*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkubanmissilecrisis.html>

fewer, that can be described as marked from this point of view; the introductory formulas in the examples below suggest that the locutor expects the main part of the audience to be made up of listeners that share the same political convictions as he does. This is so as the first noun phrase in the sequence of Nominatives of Address is a wooden-language term used only by socialists and communists, or the first appellative phrase contains a noun referring to the locutor's political appurtenance, as in the following two examples, respectively:

14). *Comrades*, Ladies and Gentlemen...³⁹

15). My fellow *Democrats*, and my fellow Americans...⁴⁰

In both these last examples the locutors are aware that there are listeners whose political creed is not the same as theirs and they address these categories with less specific appellatives: *ladies and gentlemen*, and *my fellow Americans*. Besides their being stereotypical formulations, these appellatives are said to show the speakers' concern about getting everybody's benevolence, and last but not least, their good manners.

If in most of the cases the appellatives refer both to *female* and *male* listeners (*ladies and gentlemen*) or they are *dual gender noun phrases* (*friends, citizens, fellows*), in the following ones the locutors address only *male* listeners:

16). Fellow-Countrymen...⁴¹

17). *Gentlemen* of the Congress...⁴²

18). *Gentlemen* of the Jury...⁴³

In 1865, when Abraham Lincoln delivered his *Second Inaugural Address*, politics was a male's job only; that is why he addresses the audience using the appellative *fellow countrymen*. It was only later that women won the right to vote and express their political ideas and options legally. Nowadays such a word sounds politically incorrect to the feminist movements; at that time, however, it was the only existent one in such a context.

Similarly, in the following excerpt George Washington addresses the listeners using a masculine appellative as the audience is made up of only male listeners and the issue approached is only their concern:

19). "*Gentlemen*,

By an anonymous summons an attempt has been made to convene you together."⁴⁴

Given the social and political context of the past times in which the last four speeches were delivered, in none of the situations mentioned is the locutor himself disrespectful of the female part of the audience: the system as such was.

³⁹ Eugene Victor Debs, 23 May 1908, *The Issue*, http://douglassarchives.org/debs_a80.htm

⁴⁰ Edward Moore Kennedy, 12 August 1980, *The Cause Endures*, <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/tedkennedy.htm>

⁴¹ Abraham Lincoln, 4 March 1865, *Second Inaugural Address*, <http://www.wisc.edu/english/jdfleming/english550-lincoln.html>

⁴² Thomas Woodrow Wilson, 2 April 1917, *War Message*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wilsonwarmessage.htm>

⁴³ Emma Goldman, 9 July 1917, *Address to the Jury*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/emmagoldmanjuryaddress.htm>

⁴⁴ George Washington, 15 March 1783, *Preventing the Revolt of His Officers*, <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/washington.htm>

2.2.3.2. Appellatives That Address Specific (Categories of) Listeners

In the following examples, one or several high officials or remarkable persons in the audience are addressed **individually**, without any other reference to the rest of the audience:

- 1). *Your Honor...*⁴⁵
- 2). *Mr. President...*⁴⁶
- 3). *Mr. Chairman...*⁴⁷
- 4). *Reverend Meza, Reverend Reck, I'm grateful for your generous invitation...*⁴⁸
- 5). *Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, Mr. President...*⁴⁹
- 6). *Mr. Speaker...*⁵⁰
- 7). *Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman,...*⁵¹
- 8). *Thank you, President and Mrs. Clinton and Chelsea...*⁵²
- 9). *Thanks very much, Barbara Mikulsky, for your very eloquent, your eloquent introduction.*⁵³

This is not to say that these orators disregard the rest of the audience; their resorting to such **individualising appellatives** is strictly related to the content of their speech whose main issue is, most of the times, if not a matter of only these individuals' concern, then it is one of general concern to which these individuals have contributed or can contribute a great share.

2.2.3.3. Appellatives That Address Both Specific (Categories of) Listeners and the Whole Audience

The greatest majority of introductory formulas consist of examples in which the locutor first addresses one or several most important officials present and then the rest of the audience collectively, sometimes using two or more plural noun phrases.

When more than one individual official is nominated, they seem to be arranged according to some rhetorical rules of politeness; in the largest number of cases, the current president or the most important person present is mentioned first, then the other prominent figures in the state, individually or collectively, and then the rest of the audience, collectively:

- 1). *"Mr. Speaker, Mr. President Pro Tempore, members of Congress, and fellow Americans..."*⁵⁴

⁴⁵ Eugene Victor Debs, 18 September 1918, *1918 Statement to the Court*, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/debs/works/1918/court.htm>

⁴⁶ Robert Marion La Follette, 6 October 1917, *Free Speech in Wartime*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/robertlafollette.htm>
Also Margaret Chase Smith, 1 June 1950, *Declaration of Conscience*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/margareтчasesmithconscience.html>

⁴⁷ Joseph N. Welch, 9 June 1954, *Have You No Sense of Decency?* <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/welch-mccarthy.html>

⁴⁸ John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 12 September 1960, *Houston Ministerial Association Speech*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkhoustonministers.html>

⁴⁹ Edward Moore Kennedy, 8 June 1968, *Eulogy for Robert Francis Kennedy*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ekennedytributetorfk.html>

⁵⁰ Shirley Anita St. Hill Chisholm, 10 August 1970, *For the Equal Rights Amendment*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/shirleychisholmequalrights.htm>

⁵¹ Barbara Charline Jordan, 25 July 1974, *Statement on the Articles of Impeachment*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/barbarajordanjudiciarystatement.htm>

⁵² Edward Moore Kennedy, 23 July 1999. *Tribute to John F. Kennedy Jr.*, <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/ted-kennedy-jfk-jr.htm>

⁵³ Ted Kennedy, 12 July 1980, *1980 DNC Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/tedkennedy1980dnc.htm>

⁵⁴ George W. Bush, 20 September 2001, *Freedom and Fear Are at War*, http://www.douglass.speech.nwu.edu/bush_c01.htm

- 2). **"Your Honor, ladies and gentlemen..."**⁵⁵
- 3). **"President Hoover, Mr. Chief Justice, my friends..."**⁵⁶
- 4). **"Vice President Johnson, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chief Justice, President Eisenhower, President Truman, Reverend Clergy, Fellow citizens..."**⁵⁷
- 5). **"Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the 77th Congress..."**⁵⁸
- 6). **"Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives..."**⁵⁹
- 7). **"Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Congress of the U.S.A..."**⁶⁰
- 8). **"Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Convention, My Fellow Citizens..."**⁶¹
- 9). **"Mr. President, fellow delegates..."**⁶²
- 10). **"Mr. Chairman and fellow countrymen..."**⁶³
- 11). **"Mr. Chairman and Members of the Notification Committee..."**⁶⁴
- 12). **"Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen..."**⁶⁵ (2 times)
- 13). **"Mr. Chairman, fellow Democrats, fellow Americans..."**⁶⁶

Comparing the transcripts of the speeches provided in the Annexe with their audio recordings, one example stands out from the rest:

- 14). **"Madam President, Members of the General Assembly..."**⁶⁷

If only the written form of this speech were taken into account, this example of appellative would belong to the category considered here. But the audio recorded speech, which is the broadcast version that was actually delivered by President Eisenhower to the United Nations General Assembly, does not contain the first noun-phrase appellative; it addresses only the whole audience without referring to the official presiding this assembly. The fact that the transcript mentions it may be either a proof of its existence on the original written version and of the fact that President

⁵⁵ Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, 2 February 1953, *Statement at the Smith Act Trial*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/elizabethgurleyflynn.htm>

⁵⁶ Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 4 March 1933, *First Inaugural Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrfirstinaugural.html>

⁵⁷ J. F. Kennedy, 20 January, 1961, *Inauguration Speech*, <http://bcn.boulder.co.us/government/national/speeches/inau3.html>

⁵⁸ Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 6 December 1941, *The Four Freedoms*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrthefourfreedoms.htm>

⁵⁹ *Idem*, 8 December 1941, *Pearl Harbor Address to the Nation*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrpearlharbor.htm>

⁶⁰ Harry S. Truman, 12 March 1947, *The Truman Doctrine*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/harrystrumantrumandoctrine.html>

⁶¹ Adlai Ewing Stevenson, 26 July 1952, *Presidential Nomination Acceptance Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/adlaistevenson1952dnc.html>

⁶² Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, 9 December 1948, *Adopting the Declaration of Human Rights*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/eleanorrooseveltdclarationhumanrights.htm>

⁶³ Thomas Woodrow Wilson, 6 September 1919, *League of Nations Final Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wilsontheleagueofnations.htm>

⁶⁴ William Jennings, 8 August 1900, *Against Imperialism*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wjbryanimperialism.htm>

⁶⁵ Margaret Thatcher, 18 June 1991, *The International Economy & the New World Order*, Economic Club of New York, <http://www.margaretthatcher.com/display/index.php?action=display&document=6&id=2798>

Also Margaret Higgins Sanger, March 1925, *The Children's Era*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/margaretsangerchildrensера.html>

⁶⁶ Hubert Horatio Humphrey, 14 July 1948, *1948 DNC Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/huberthumphey1948dnc.html>

⁶⁷ Dwight David Eisenhower, 8 December 1953, *Atoms for Peace*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/dwightdeisenhoweratomsforpeace.html>

Eisenhower, out of various reasons, omitted it, or of its omission on both the original script and the radio broadcast version, and its subsequent insertion on the written form preserved for the posterity. No matter what the explanation may be, what is more important is the fact that the person who transcribed it felt it necessary to ‘correct’ the mistake and insert this appellative. This proves that such standard formulations are considered necessary when a speech is delivered to an audience formed of specific listeners, and not to the whole nation.

In the following three examples, the list of noun phrases in the Nominative of Address is uncommonly long, as if the locutor did not want to omit anybody:

15). “**Vice President Johnson, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chief Justice, President Eisenhower, Vice President Nixon, President Truman, Reverend Clergy, fellow citizens...**”⁶⁸

16). “**President Hatcher, Governor Romney, Senators McNamara and Hart, Congressmen Meader and Staebler, and other members of the fine Michigan delegation, members of the graduating class, my fellow Americans...**”⁶⁹

17). “**President Pitzer, Mr. Vice President, Governor, Congressman Thomas, Senator Wiley, and Congressman Miller, Mr. Webb, Mr. Bell, scientists, distinguished guests, and ladies and gentlemen...**”⁷⁰

Even though the lists of appellatives are long in these last three examples, they can be considered expansions of the type considered in this section. A possible explanation to this rhetorical device of **accumulation of appellatives** may be that the locutor, by remembering and mentioning everybody’s name and political, professional or social appurtenance, shows great respect to every important person or groups of people present without disregarding the majority, who are mentioned last in the list with no exception.

The rhetorical style of the next two examples is different from that in all the previous ones. Because they integrate the appellatives in a more extended piece of discourse in which they alternate with a thanking formula, they are not as succinct as those belonging to the types mentioned above:

18). “Well, thank you. Thank you for that terrific welcome. Thank you, *Bobby*, for that kind introduction and let me also recognize *Dr. Morris Chapman* and *Dr. Richard Land*. I want to thank *all of you...*”⁷¹

19). “Thank you very, very much, *President Keohane, Mrs. Gorbachev, Trustees, faculty*, and I should say, *Julia Porter, class president*, and certainly my new best friend, *Christine Bicknell* – and, of course, *the class of 1990*. I am really thrilled to be here today, and very excited, as I know all of you must be, that *Mrs. Gorbachev* could join us.”⁷²

⁶⁸ John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 20 January 1961, *Inaugural Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkinaugural.htm>

⁶⁹ Lyndon Baines Johnson, 22 May 1964, *The Great Society*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/lbjthegreatsociety.htm>

⁷⁰ John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 12 September 1962, *We Choose to Go to the Moon*, <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/jfk-space.htm>

⁷¹ Condoleezza Rice, *Remarks at the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting*, 14 June 2006, <http://gos.sbc.edu/r/rice2.html>

⁷² Barbara Pierce Bush, 1 June 1990, *1990 Wellesley College Commencement Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/barbarabushwellesleycommencement.htm>

As this type of variation to the stereotypical formulas categorised above is rather rarely used, it stands out as stylistically marked from a rhetorical point of view. It may be so because most of the times political speeches are read out and their written form conforms to the rhetorical rules so long established. In each of the last two examples above it can be argued that the locutor adjusts herself to the situation (i.e. to the long series of welcoming applause⁷³) and improvises the introductory formulation. The pauses between the names of the officials she particularly addresses are filled in with polite remarks that show her appreciation of these people and, possibly, give her more time to think ahead of their name and, last but not least, delay a little the moment when the actual argumentation begins. This is necessary especially when the locutor is welcomed by the audience with long rounds of applause. This ability to improvise quality introductions to the speeches can be considered a measure of the public speaker's eloquence. *Eloquence* is directly related to *spontaneity*, both of them being oratorical skills praised by the great majority of people, be them public speakers or listeners, therefore with highly persuasive, thus manipulative undertones and effects.

Very frequently, the public speakers choose not to use any introductory formulas at all, but to go directly to the introductory paragraph of their speech. This usually happens when the locutor intends to lay more stress than usual on the issues being communicated and tackles them without delay. This is to say that not using appellatives at the beginning of the speech is in itself a rhetorical device whose main aim is to signal the locutor's great concern for the informational content of his argument.

2.2.4. Collateral Circumstances

In the majority of cases, whether they use any introductory formula or not, at the beginning of their speeches orators resort to a rhetorical device or structure whose main function is to win the listeners' *benevolence* and more *credibility* in their eyes by showing the audience that they are well anchored in the realities that they all face⁷⁴— namely, the **collateral circumstances**, as Giambattista Vico calls it. In his *Art of Rhetoric*, he enumerates the **collateral circumstances of place, of time, of issues, and of persons**.⁷⁵

The collateral circumstances of any type are usually formulated in an ornamented language that aims at stimulating the listeners' aesthetic taste and at reducing the natural distance between the speaker and the audience so that their benevolence to listen and willingness to accept the speaker's ideas are very much increased.

Various aspects of this rhetorical device are used by politicians in their orations. A few examples of each type are discussed in more detail in the subsequent sections.

2.2.4.1. Collateral Circumstances of Place

The **collateral circumstances of place** rhetorical device aims at moving the audience's feeling of pride. The speakers *praise* the *beauty* and the *importance of the place* and show their *gratitude* for having been given the opportunity to deliver their speeches in *such remarkable locations*.

An illustrative example of this type has been taken from Margaret Thatcher's famous *Bruges Speech*:

1). "First, may I thank you for giving me the opportunity to return to *Bruges* [...]"

Second, may I say what a pleasure it is to speak at *the College of Europe* [...] *The College* plays a vital and increasingly important part in the life of the European Community.

⁷³ This is clear from the mp3 audio recordings of the same speeches to be found at the same Internet addresses, respectively.

⁷⁴ What was called, in section 2.2.2, **the locutor's audience-awareness**.

⁷⁵ Cf. Giambattista Vico, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

Third, may I also thank you for inviting me to deliver my address in *this magnificent hall*. What better place to speak of Europe's future than in a building which so gloriously recalls the greatness that Europe had already achieved 600 years ago?"⁷⁶

Although notorious for her toughness and lack of sympathy for her fellow politicians who do not share her conservative views, Margaret Thatcher is a very skilful orator. She always knows how to touch the strings of her audience's souls by using the appropriate words.

In the exordium⁷⁷ to the *Bruges Speech* she shows her great oratorical skills: she proves that she has an organised mind by referring to the **place** she is in from three different perspectives, gradually arranged in her enumeration. First, she mentions *the city*, second, *the host institution*, and then *the hall* in which she is delivering her speech. In doing so, she gains the audience's goodwill by thanking, praising, marvelling – thanking for being given such an opportunity, praising the importance of the place, and implicitly that of the people there, marvelling at the greatness of the place and that of its people in the remote past.

Her linguistic talent is manifest in this excerpt especially in her choice of **superlative constructions** to describe the place, e. g. *a vital part, magnificent hall, what better place*. In addition, the positive connotations of the nouns *opportunity* and *pleasure*, the adverbs of manner that develop a superlative function modifying both adjectives and verbs, such as *increasingly important, gloriously recalls*, and the superlative tinge of the noun *greatness*, all account for her being very good at handling both words and people. Such a skilful use of language may seduce any kind of audience. When addressed in such a manner, the listeners feel proud and important. By considering them important in the world today, as well as praising them for being not only Belgians, but also representative European citizens, the speaker attains one of her major goals: gaining their confidence and respect, which are the major premises for an unhindered reception of her speech message from now on.

This device is employed in the next example, too, where the American speaker delivers her speech to the people of France. She uses an introduction to her argumentation very similar to that used by Margaret Thatcher in the preceding fragment, where the boldfaced adjectives and adverbs acquire superlative value with:

2). "I have come this evening to talk with you on one of **the greatest** issues of our time – that is the preservation of human freedom. I have chosen to discuss it *here in France, at the Sorbonne*, because *here in this soil the roots of human freedom have long ago struck deep* and *here they have been richly nourished*. It was here the Declaration of the Rights of Man was proclaimed, and the **great** slogans of the French Revolution – liberty, equality, fraternity – fired the imagination of men. I have chosen to discuss this issue *in Europe* because *this has been the scene of the greatest historic battles between freedom and tyranny*."⁷⁸

The great stress that Anna Eleanor Roosevelt lays on the importance of the place in terms of its outstanding accomplishments of the past instils a particular feeling of national pride in the listeners: "It was here the Declaration of the Rights of Man was proclaimed", here "the great slogans of the French Revolution – liberty, equality, fraternity – fired the imagination of men", "this has been the scene of the greatest historic battles between freedom and tyranny". This feeling, as already mentioned, seduces the audience and attracts their wilful reception of the speech.

⁷⁶ Margaret Thatcher, 20 September 1988, *Britain & Europe*, Bruges, <http://www.eurocritic.demon.co.uk/mtbruges.htm>

⁷⁷ I.e. the opening part of the oration by which the audience is prepared to listen.

⁷⁸ Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, 28 September 1948, *The Struggle for Human Rights*, France, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/eleanorroosevelt.htm>

In the next example, Thomas Woodrow Wilson addresses the people in Pueblo, Colorado, insisting on the beauty of the place they all are in. Between this and the warm feeling he has about the people here he finds a very seductive connection that reduces significantly the distance between him and the listeners. This cannot but win the listeners' goodwill, therefore their attention and receptiveness to his speech:

3). "[...] It is with *a great deal of genuine pleasure* that *I find myself in Pueblo*, and *I feel it a compliment in this beautiful hall*. One of the advantages of *this hall*, as I look about, is that *you are not too far away from me* [...]"⁷⁹

A shorter example of this kind belongs to Abraham Lincoln:

4). "*I am filled with deep emotion* at finding myself standing *here*, in *this place*, where we collected together *the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle*, from which sprang the institutions under which we live."⁸⁰

The last speaker transmits to his listeners the same deep emotion that he feels both by expressing his own feelings directly and by implying why this place is so special to him. *The Declaration of Independence* - which is metaphorically called by the name of the intellectual and moral values all Americans believe in: *wisdom, patriotism, devotion to principle* - was signed here. As those present identify themselves with their forerunners who are said to have possessed the high intellectual and moral values that Lincoln refers to, their feelings of pride and self-esteem are stimulated. Therefore, his message is received with maximum attention. What is also special about this fragment is Abraham Lincoln's conciseness of expression: in a very few words he expresses what other speakers, some of those mentioned above included, do in more numerous and longer sentences.

After thanking, in her introductory formula, those present for the warm welcome, Barbara Pierce Bush refers to the beauty and the spirit of the college she is delivering her speech at:

5). "[...] More than ten years ago, when I was invited here to talk about our experiences in the People's Republic of China, I was struck by both *the natural beauty of your campus* and *the spirit of this place*.

Wellesley, you see, *is not just a place but an idea – an experiment in excellence in which diversity is not just tolerated, but is embraced*."⁸¹

After greeting those present and thanking President Pitzer for having given him the opportunity to lecture at their college as a visiting professor, John F. Kennedy declares:

6). "I am delighted to be *here* and I'm particularly delighted to be *here* on this occasion.

We meet at **a college** noted for knowledge, in **a city** noted for progress, in **a state** noted for strength [...]"⁸²

⁷⁹ Thomas Woodrow Wilson, 25 September 1919, *League of Nations Final Address*, Pueblo Colorado, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wilsonleagueofnations.htm>

⁸⁰ Abraham Lincoln, 22 February 1861, *Address in the Independence Hall*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, <http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/speeches/philadel.htm>

⁸¹ Barbara Pierce Bush, *op. cit.*

⁸² John F. Kennedy, *op. cit.*

The stylistic mark of this fragment, with evident seductive rhetorical effects, is rendered by the three symmetric constructions linked asyndetically:

“at a” + **PLACE** + “noted for” + *intellectual and social* **VALUES**.

The three **PLACE** coordinates, *college – city – state*, that are arranged in an ascending order of importance⁸³ directly related to the gradual increase in the size of the places referred to, attract the same gradual increasing ordering of the **VALUES** related to each of them, respectively: *knowledge – progress – strength*. In a rather short statement, the locutor manages to render many meanings, stressing in only a few words the idea that the listeners are valuable citizens of the whole country of which he himself is very proud.

All the preceding fragments illustrate the most common ways in which politicians speak highly of the place they deliver their speech in. In the next example, the last in this section, the tone of praise and admiration is replaced by vehemence against a place where the human rights and values are disregarded and disrespected by its inhabitants:

7). “*Washington, D.C., has been called <The Colored Man’s Paradise>. Whether this sobriquet was given to the national capital in bitter irony by a member of the handicapped race, as he reviewed some of his own persecutions and rebuffs, or whether it was given immediately after the war by an ex-slaveholder who for the first time in his life saw colored people walking about like free men, minus the overseer and his whip, history saith not. It is certain that it would be difficult to find a worse misnomer for Washington than <The Colored Man’s Paradise> if so prosaic a consideration as veracity is to determine the appropriateness of a name.*”⁸⁴

The **collateral circumstances of place** device in this excerpt is only a pretext for the speaker to introduce a very serious *issue* of the time: that of racist discrimination among the people of the same country. It is clear that the *place* is mentioned here only to highlight the seriousness of this *issue* and to refer to the lack of consistency in its *people’s* adopting and defending the democratic values. This is to say that this device combines here with that of **collateral circumstances of issues** and **of persons** in a very elaborate manner. There should also be noted that the style of the speaker is rather complex:

- the vocabulary contains words rarely used, including words of French origin (e.g. *sobriquet, handicapped, misnomer, veracity*);
- the long and complex sentence in the middle begins with two coordinated Yes / No Dependent Interrogative clauses with Direct Object value⁸⁵ (*Whether..., or whether...*), both of which are regent clauses for a time clause and a restrictive relative one, respectively (*Whether..., as he reviewed..., or whether... an ex-slaveholder who...*), and ends with the main one (*..., history saith not.*);
- the same complex sentence is preceded by a most simple clause (*Washington, D.C., has been called <The Colored Man’s Paradise>.*) and it is followed by another less complex sentence;
- the passive voice is used as a way of avoiding to name those responsible for the inconceivable situation presented (*has been called, was given*).

⁸³ This figure of speech is known as **auxesis**. Cf. Chris Baldick, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁸⁴ Mary Church Terrel, 10 October 1906, *What It Means to be Colored in Capital of the U. S.*, United Women’s Club, Washington, D. C., <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/marychurchterellcolored.htm>

⁸⁵ Cf. Tamara Lăcătușu, 2000, *Essentials of English Syntax. Complex Structures*, Iași: Casa Editorială Demiurg, p. 81.

All these discursive features describe a minutely elaborated style, characteristic of a speaker with visible oratorical skills, in a period of time when such a carefully built discourse was still highly appreciated and cultivated in order to be distinguished from the everyday speech, considered inappropriate in public speeches.

2.2.4.2. Collateral Circumstances of Time

A few words about the **time** the speech is delivered around and about the **recent events** that have made such a manifestation possible or necessary are sometimes used by politicians to show their knowledge of the audience's history and current preoccupations. Very often, this rhetorical device is used along with that of other **collateral circumstances**: of **place**, of **issues**, and of **persons**.

The first example below is the immediately following part of the fragment in (6) analysed under the **collateral circumstances of place** heading above; it is the final part of the same complex sentence:

1). “[We meet at a college noted for knowledge, in a city noted for progress, in a state noted for strength], and we stand in need of *all three*, for we meet *in an hour of change and challenge, in a decade of hope and fear, in an age of both knowledge and ignorance*. The greater our knowledge increases, the greater our ignorance unfolds.”⁸⁶

It is interesting to notice that what was considered a recursive stylistic mark in the preceding part of this sentence is added to even more in its last part; the same type of **triadic construction** in gradual increasing order is built, this time along a **TIME** axis: *hour – decade – age*. The structure of the component parts asyndetically linked in this construction is:

“in a(n) + **TIME** + “of” + **A and B**,

where **A and B** is another stylistically marked type of phrase made up of two nominal terms: *change and challenge, hope and fear, knowledge and ignorance*. The two nouns in each of these pairs are not randomly linked. Whereas *change* and *challenge* are brought together by both their alliterative effect and their semantic subordination to the idea of *progress*, and *hope* and *fear* are two words that are usually mentally accessed together whenever the idea of *future* is present, *knowledge* and *ignorance* are semantically considered antonymic terms that, when coordinated, very frequently require a relationship of *disjunctive coordination*. In this context, however, they are put side by side - thus eliminating the idea of reciprocal exclusion - by means of asyndetic coordination whose local semantic implicature of *sameness* in the linked terms is reinforced by the parallel construction in which both nouns are modified by the same adjective in the comparative degree, *the greater...*, *the greater...* This is understood as *the greater our knowledge, the greater our ignorance*. Either of the two formulations draws the listener's attention to the philosophical meanings of *knowledge* and *ignorance*, terms that do not exclude each other when interpreted in this light, an interpretation that is accounted for in more detail in what the locutor says next in his argument.

In example (2) below, the locutor refers to the uniqueness of the present moment in a more covert way. First she expresses her gratitude for being given the privilege of addressing the high officials of the Soviet Union. Then, in the exclamatory sentence, *How improbable...*, she shows her utter admiration for the Soviet people's accomplishments in the recent past. The next sentence comes to reinforce this by mentioning the changes in this country, changes which she considers to be of international importance. The emphasis that she lays on the recent events in the history of the Soviet

⁸⁶ John F. Kennedy, *op. cit.*

Union which have made the present political meeting possible is the way in which she indirectly stresses on *the importance of the present moment*:

- 2). “Thank you for giving me the privilege of addressing members of the Supreme Soviet. How improbable such an occasion would have seemed *even two years ago*. It is a measure of how great have been the changes which have taken place – both within the Soviet Union itself and between East and West.”⁸⁷

It is impossible for the audience not to be impressed by such an appreciation made by a famous political figure who comes from the democratic world that they all aspire to. Therefore, their attention and receptiveness to her words are finely focused from the outset and it is highly probable that they should let themselves impressed by the rest of her speech, too.

In the introductory part of his testimony about the Monica Lewinsky affair, of which a fragment is rendered below, Bill Clinton repeats the word *day* three times in close vicinity in a rather sterile and vague linguistic context: **important day**, **unusual (day)**, **unusually important day**:

- 3). “[...] Welcome to the White House and *to this day* to which Hillary and the vice president and I look forward so much every year.

This is always an important day for our country [...]. It is an unusual and, I think, unusually important day today.”⁸⁸

In this fragment, the locutor’s lack of imagination, rendered by lack of linguistic variety, may be interpreted as a sign of lack of self-confidence. It may also be accounted for by the deep feeling of embarrassment that the president is experiencing and wants to share with those present in the given situation, a feeling that impedes him to speak artfully, on the one hand, and, probably, by the inappropriateness he finds in a highly ornamented speech in such an embarrassing situation, on the other. Last but not least, it can be argued that the locutor’s negative emotions, visible in the form of his linguistic message, are a result of the awkward situation in which he himself has put into after having lied to the same people that now he wants to persuade of the ‘innocence’ of his ‘human nature’ mistake; he seems to say that *to err is human* and asks for their forgiveness, which is very difficult to achieve under these circumstances. All these interpretations lead to the conclusion that even the **lack of imagination** and of **creativity** in the form of what one is saying (that can be accounted for by useless repetitions of the type described above, corroborated with the knowledge of the extra-linguistic context prior to a specific speech event) may be considered a stylistic mark of the locutor’s negative emotions, on the one hand, and his intention to manipulate the listeners in the direction of sympathising with his own feelings, on the other.

Here are some other examples of beginning parts of political speeches in which the main references are made to **the moment in time** when certain crucial historic events take place or have occurred:

- 4). “[...] *Yesterday, Dec. 7, 1941- a date* which will live in infamy – the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.”⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Margaret Thatcher, 28 May 1991, *Fundamentals, Principles & Policies*, Moscow, <http://www.margaretthatcher.com/display/index.php?action=display&document=6&id=2797>

⁸⁸ Bill Clinton, *op. cit.*

⁸⁹ Franklin D. Roosevelt, *Pearl Harbor Speech*.

5). “*On the morning of December 11 the Government of Germany [...] declared war against the United States.*”⁹⁰

6). “[...] *This is a day of national consecration. And I am certain that on this day my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into Presidency, I will address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our people impels.*

This is pre-eminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly.”⁹¹

7). “[...] I address you, the members of this new Congress, *at a moment unprecedented in the history of the union.* I use the word <unprecedented> because *at no previous time* has American security been as seriously threatened from without as it is *today.*”⁹²

In the following example, the last one in this section, the locutor combines the **collateral circumstances of time** with the **collateral circumstances of persons** and with the **collateral circumstances of issues** rhetorical devices:

8). “[...] It was *one hundred and forty-four years ago* that members of the Democratic Party first met in convention to select a Presidential candidate. [...] And our meeting *this week* is a continuation of that tradition. But there is something different about *tonight*. There is something special about *tonight*. What is different? What is special?

I, Barbara Jordan, am a keynote speaker. [...] *Now (...)* I have this grand distinction.”⁹³

Besides the above mentioned combination of rhetorical devices, what is special about this fragment is the round-about manner in which the locutor finely leads the listeners to the main **issue** that she wants to point out: the long desired democratic dream of a significant part of the American nation, made up of black people and women, has come true. She expresses her feeling of utter gratitude towards the American democratic accomplishments of the recent past that made it possible for her, a black woman, to deliver the keynote speech to the Democratic National Convention. This is realised by a style ornamented with **rhetorical questions** that increase the suspense by delaying the clear-cut answer that comes only at the end of her exordium. The incursion into the history of the past one century and a half gives the locutor the possibility to build an argument that accounts for the conclusion in a detailed manner and makes it stand out.

2.2.4.3. Collateral Circumstances of Issues

The **collateral circumstances of issues** rhetorical device takes the form of a short introduction of some **facts** to be argued later in the speech. Sometimes it is used immediately after the introductory appellative constructions, other times speakers combine this device with those referring to **place**, **time**, or **persons**. Some other times, however, they begin their orations by resorting to this device only. This happens especially when the issues to be approached by the argument and shared with the listeners are of tremendous importance, and precious time should not be wasted on irrelevancies. Out of the 138 speeches in the list provided in the tables in the **Annexe 1**, 63 use this device in combination with other ones, whereas 37 begin with the collateral circumstances of issues directly or following the introductory appellative formula. The great number of speeches in

⁹⁰ *Idem*, 11 December 1941, *U. S. Declaration of War on Germany*, <http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/ETO/Dip/DecWar-G.html>

⁹¹ *Idem*, *First Inaugural Address*.

⁹² *Idem*, *The Four Freedoms*.

⁹³ Barbara Charline Jordan, *op. cit.*

which this device is resorted to speaks of its undeniable effectiveness in terms of persuasion, and, implicitly, of the manipulative effects it may exert on those addressed.

In a few examples in the preceding sections, this rhetorical device is used along with:

a) **collateral circumstances of time** and **persons**: for instance, the day (**time**) when *the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked (issue)* by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan (**persons**), considered by F. D. Roosevelt *a date which will live in infamy* [e.g. (3) in 2.2.3.2]; or in e.g. (8) in 2.2.3.2, where the locutor praises *the democratic values (issue)* that the American society (**persons** considered collectively as a *nation*) has established in the past one and a half centuries (**time**) since the first Democratic National Convention meeting when neither black people, nor women were allowed to take active part or even to participate;

b) **collateral circumstances of time**: the day (**time**) when *the Government of Germany declared war against the United States* [e.g. (4) in 2.2.3.2] is also an *issue* of tremendous importance to all Americans. That is why Roosevelt's introduction to this speech is very abrupt. This abruptness of approach is the way in which he communicates his deep concern about the gravity of the events, concern that should be transmitted to everybody present.

In the following examples this rhetorical device is used in a similar way, namely, along with the mentioning of *the moment* that the speech is delivered at. When referring to particular issues of general interest to the nation, orators take the chance to show their oratorical competence as well, in accordance with the kind of audience they address:

1). "We meet this evening, not in sorrow, but in gladness of heart. *The evacuation of Petersburg and Richmond, and the surrender of the principal insurgent army*, give hope of a righteous and speedy peace whose joyous expression can not be restrained."⁹⁴

2). "Good evening. Today, our fellow citizens, *our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and terrorist attacks.*"⁹⁵

3). "From the moment that *the French defenses at Sedan and on the Meuse were broken* at the end of the second week of May, *only a rapid retreat to Amiens and the south could have saved the British and French Armies who had entered Belgium at the Appeal of the Belgian King*; but *this strategic fact was not immediately realized.*"⁹⁶

4). "...For several months past *the Nazis have been uttering ferocious threats of what they are going to do to the Western Democracies* - to the British and French Empires - once they set about them. But so far it is the small neutral States that are bearing the brunt of German malice and cruelty. *Neutral ships are sunk* without law or mercy - not only by the blind and wanton mine, but by the coldly considered, deliberately aimed, torpedo."⁹⁷

When the audience is made up of people of the same intellectual level with the speaker, as in example (3), or when the speech is officially broadcast, as in e.g. (4), the sentences are more complex and contain a lot of subordinate clauses of various types. When the members of the audience are addressed directly and they belong to all social classes, the speaker carefully lowers the degree of formality by choosing a more simple syntax (i.e. simple and compound sentences) as in examples (1)

⁹⁴ Abraham Lincoln, 11 April 1865, *Last Public Address*, Washington, D. C., <http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/speeches/last.htm>

⁹⁵ George W. Bush, *Address Delivered to the Nation*.

⁹⁶ Winston Churchill, 4 June 1940, *We Shall Fight on the Beaches*, House of Commons, <http://www.winstonchurchill.org/beaches.htm>

⁹⁷ *Idem*, 20 January 1940, *The War Situation: House of Many Mansions*, Broadcast, London, <http://www.winstonchurchill.org/mansions.htm>

and (2). This respect for the audience's power of concentration and of understanding ultimately reflects the speaker's concern about getting his message across. Monotony and terseness are avoided in the examples above by a skilful use of some stylistic devices, among which **metonymy** comes first. In *the United States of America was... attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan*, in 2.2.3.2. e.g. (3), the attacking Japanese are referred to in terms of their military institutions. In e.g. (2) above, the Americans are referred to by the values they hold on to: *our way of life, our very freedom came under attack*. In *only a rapid retreat...could have saved the British and French Armies*, in e.g. (3) above, the stress is on the means of self-defence, and the logical Subject of the action becomes the Direct Object in the sentence. This is so as the tactics as such were crucial at that moment. All metonymies hitherto mentioned combine with **personifications**, as the personal verbs associated with the grammatical subjects describe human actions. These stylistic devices give the linguistic discourse vitality and colour and help the speaker to seduce the audience.

The fragment below is an illustration of how a skilful orator can insist on the particular *issue* of his speech by resorting to rhetorical and stylistic devices that not only add colour to his words, but also help listeners to understand his reasoning. After the introductory formulation and a short reference to **collateral circumstances of time**, John F. Kennedy develops this device into an argument that can be described as challenging both in terms of rhetoric and of stylistic beauty. Condensing the whole history of mankind in a time-span limited to only 50 years - thus making it easy to grasp by his listeners due to its easy to handle time limits - he creates an imaginary parallelism between the actual history and the historic human achievements, a parallelism that he uses as an instrument for illustrating the importance of the main *issue* he builds his speech around:

5). "No man can fully grasp how far and how fast we have come, but condense, if you will, the 50,000 years of man's recorded history in a time span of but a half century. Stated in these terms, we know very little about the first 40 years, except at the end of them *advanced man had learned to use the skins of animals to cover them*. Then about 10 years ago, under this standard, *man emerged from his caves to construct other kinds of shelter*. Only five years ago *man learned to write and use a cart with wheels*. Christianity began less than two years ago. *The printing press* came this year, and then less than two months ago, during this whole 50-year span of human history, *the steam engine* provided a new source of power. Newton explored *the meaning of gravity*. Last month *electric lights and telephones and automobiles and airplanes* became available. Only last week did we develop *penicillin and television and nuclear power*, and now if America's *new spacecraft* succeeds in reaching Venus, *we will have literally reached the stars before midnight tonight*."⁹⁸

The main *issue* towards which the locutor carefully leads his listeners in the example above is man's capacity to reach the stars by means of the last invention in history that belongs to the American people: the *spacecraft*. Besides this, the fragment provides, in only a few sentences, a wonderful exposition of other related issues, namely, *all man's accomplishments along history*. These accomplishments seem to precipitate around the present moment – which is implicitly related to the outstanding contributions of the more recent, thus more learned man, among which the Americans find their place with their very recent history. This precipitation is rendered by the stylistic device of a special type of enumeration which is **accumulation**: ... *electric lights and telephones and automobiles and airplanes*..., ...*penicillin and television and nuclear power*... The

⁹⁸ John Fitzgerald Kennedy, *op. cit.*

effect of **lexical accumulation** here is increased to a great extent by the stylistic effect of the **polysyndeton**⁹⁹ employed to link the terms in the enumeration.

The following example is an illustration of the **collateral circumstances of issues** rhetorical device, this time used basically alone as the seriousness of the events speaks for itself. This is not to say that there are no references to the moment when the speech is delivered or that the persons involved in the decisions to be taken about the events presented are not mentioned, but these references occupy a secondary place and they are given in a form similar to that of a non-restrictive relative clause. The fragment is delivered in a plain style characterised by the absence of any figures of speech in the sense of “linguistic ornaments”:

6). “*The gravity of the situation which confronts the world today necessitates my appearance before a joint session of the Congress. The foreign policy and the national security of the country are involved. One aspect of the present situation, which I present to you at this time for your consideration and decision, concerns Greece and Turkey. The United States has received from the Greek Government an urgent appeal for financial and economic assistance. Preliminary reports from the American Economic Mission now in Greece and reports from the American Ambassador in Greece corroborate the statement of the Greek Government that assistance is imperative if Greece is to survive as a free nation.*”¹⁰⁰

The plainness of the style in this excerpt stands for the locutor’s linguistic conciseness which is very helpful for the clear presentation of the facts that represent the topic of his speech. The *conciseness* and *clarity* of this fragment can be accounted for by the use of only simple and compound sentences that contain only **kernel clauses**. These clauses are very easy to follow by the human brain in their left-to-right unfolding as they represent the basic **SPCA**¹⁰¹ syntactic structure which is most quickly processed by the brain of the speakers of Indo-European languages. Therefore, the locutor manages to make his point as clear as possible in only a few statements. As if to prove that the Greeks are reasonable beyond any trace of doubt in asking for the Americans’ help and that he truly believes in the righteousness of such an appeal, the locutor resorts to a rhetorical device called **appeal to authority**: he mentions the *reports* received from the American Economic Mission and the American Ambassador in Greece on the same issue. The locutor’s accounting for his own words by referring to *official institutions* that are considered trustworthy due to the importance and credibility invested in them by the whole nation is a matter of *rhetorical persuasive argumentation* whose main aim is to instil in the listeners the same conviction as that advanced by the locutor in the speech itself.

In the next excerpt the issue advanced is of great importance, both to the speaker and to the audience; that is why it is announced first in the speech. This pragmatic interpretation is also backed up by the absence of any introductory formula:

7). “*There has been a change of government. It began two years ago, when the House of Representatives became Democratic by a decisive majority. It has now been completed. The Senate about to assemble will also be Democratic. The offices of President and Vice-President have been put into the hands of Democrats. What does the change mean? That is*

⁹⁹ The **polysyndeton** is “a rhetorical term for the repeated use of conjunctions to link together a succession of words, clauses, or sentences”. Chris Baldick, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

¹⁰⁰ Harry S. Truman, 12 March 1947, *The Truman Doctrine*,
<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/harrystrumantrumandocctrine.html>

¹⁰¹ In this notation, the letter **C** stands for **Complements**, a term that covers both the category of **Objects** (namely, the Direct Object, the Indirect Object and the Prepositional Object) and that of **Complements** (namely, the Subject Complement, the Object Complement and the Adverbial Complement) in traditional grammar. Cf. Dennis Freeborn, 1995, *A Course Book in English Grammar*, Second Edition, MacMillan.

the question that is uppermost in our minds to-day. *That is the question* I am going to try to answer, in order, if I may, to interpret the occasion.”¹⁰²

At first sight, the style of this fragment is rather plain, as it seems to lack figures of speech: the lexical items belong to the **basic word stock**, and every sentence is syntactically formulated according to **basic patterns of language**. At a closer look, however, the whole passage betrays a careful choice of textual structure. This is to say that the speaker could have been more direct if he had tackled the issue of his speech, *the change of government*, without elaborating on it. But in order to make sure that the issue he is about to focus on is clear to everybody in its major details, he first provides the visible details associated with this *change* and only then does he signal the announcement of the issue of his speech: *that is the question* (i.e. his intention is to discuss the less visible implications of the formal change just described). The repetition and the anaphoric reference of this structure, besides its transparent allusion to Hamlet’s famous soliloquy, increase its memorable quality.

2.2.4.4. Collateral Circumstances of Persons

Politicians may begin the exordium to their speeches by **praising the audience**, by **speaking highly of a nation**, of some **famous people**, by **blaming** or **being ironical** about some notorious ones, by praising some **institutions** that are implicitly run by and made of people, by **thanking God** for helping them through difficult situations or for the happy state of affairs they are in, sometimes by **speaking about themselves** when their personality is unknown to the audience or when, out of modesty, they consider themselves unworthy of the high appreciation they receive from those present. All these introductory topics are the substance of the rhetorical device known as **collateral circumstances of persons**, a device very frequently employed in the political speeches due to its manipulative powers.

2.2.4.4.1. Invoking God

In example (1) below, Theodore Roosevelt speaks of the gratefulness the Americans should show **God**, *the Giver of Good*, for the privileged place they were given in this world. The large number of pronouns and pronominal adjectives in the first person plural accounts for his feeling proud of his people and of his country. Both the reference to *God* as their protector and the expression of his personal appreciation of *his nation’s* well deserved achievements ensure the locutor’s getting through to the listeners’ hearts, a pre-condition for the unhindered reception of the message:

1). “My fellow citizens, *no people on earth* have more cause to be thankful than *ours*, and this is said reverently, in no spirit of boastfulness in *our* own strength, but *with gratitude to the Giver of Good who has blessed us with the conditions which have enabled us to achieve so large a measure of well-being and of happiness*. To *us as a people* it has been granted to lay the foundations of *our* national life in a new continent. *We* are the heirs of the ages, and yet we have had to pay few of the penalties which in old countries are exacted by the dead hand of a bygone civilization. *We* have not been obliged to fight for *our* existence against any alien race; and yet *our* life has called for the vigor and effort without which the manlier and hardier virtues wither away.”¹⁰³

¹⁰² Woodrow Wilson, 4 March 1913, *First Inaugural Address*, <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres44.html>

¹⁰³ Theodore Roosevelt, 4 March 1905, *Inaugural Address*, <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres42.html>

The fragment below illustrates the use of **the collateral circumstances of persons** rhetorical device in a very complex formulation. Here **God** is referred to along with the names of many people who have played an important role in the speaker's life and in the nation's history: members of his own *family*, President *Jimmy Carter* and *his family*, *public figures* known to the audience, *less famous Americans* who contributed their share to the history of the nation, the *American nation* as a whole:

2). "Tonight, we pause and give praise and honor to *God* for being good enough to allow us to be at this place, at this time. When I look out at this convention, I see the face of America: Red, Yellow, Brown, Black and White. We are all precious in God's sight – the real rainbow coalition. (Applause)

All of us – all of us who are here think that we are seated. But *we're really standing on someone's shoulders*. Ladies and gentlemen, Mrs. Rosa Parks. (Applause) *The mother of the civil rights movement*.

I want to express my deep love and appreciation for support *my family* has given me over the past months. *They have endured pain, anxiety, threat and fear*. But *they have been strengthened and made secure by our faith in God, in America, and in you*. Your love has protected us and made us strong. To my wife Jackie, the foundation of our family; to our five children whom you met tonight; to my mother, Mrs. Helen Jackson, who is present tonight; and to our grandmother, Mrs. Matilda Burns; to my brother Chuck and his family; to my mother-in-law, Mrs. Gertrude Brown, who just last month at age 61 graduated from Hampton Institute – a marvellous achievement. (Applause)

I offer my appreciation to Mayor Andrew Young who has provided such gracious hospitality to all of us this week.

And a special salute to President Jimmy Carter. (Applause) President Carter restored honor to the White House after Watergate. He gave many of us a special opportunity to grow. For his kind words, for his unwavering commitment to peace in the world, and for the votes that came from his family, every member of his family, led Billy and Amy (sic!), I offer special thanks to the Carter family. (Applause)

My right and my privilege to stand here before you has (sic!) been won, won in my lifetime, by the blood and the sweat of the innocent.

Twenty-four years ago, the late Fannie Lou Hamer and Aaron Henry – who sits here tonight from Mississippi – were locked out into the streets in Atlantic City; the head of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

But tonight, a Black and White delegation from Mississippi is headed by Ed Cole, a Black man from Mississippi; 24 years later. (Applause)

Many were lost in the struggle for the right to vote: Jimmy Lee Jackson, a young student, gave his life; Vila Liuzzo, a White mother from Detroit, called nigger lover, had her brains blown out at point blank range; [Michael] Schwerner, [Andrew] Goodman – two Jews and a Black – found in a common grave, bodies riddled with bullets in Mississippi; the four darling little girls in a church in Birmingham, Alabama. They died that we might have a right to live.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lies only a few miles from us tonight. Tonight he must feel good as he looks down upon us. We sit here together, a rainbow, a coalition – the sons and daughters of slavemasters and the sons and daughters of slaves, sitting together around

a common table, to decide the direction of our party and our country. His heart would be full tonight.”¹⁰⁴

The fact that the listeners are deeply impressed by the locutor’s words is rendered by the presence, in the transcript of this speech, of the places where they applaud. Altogether, this fragment is the beginning of a speech in which the locutor shows his deep appreciation for those who have made such an occasion possible. Its considerable length is the mark of the locutor’s intention not to omit the name of anybody who contributed to the present state of affairs in America.

2.2.4.4.2. Introducing oneself at the beginning of a speech becomes necessary especially when the speaker is not known by the audience. Sometimes there is some famous figure present that makes this introduction. Other times, it is the new speaker that has to introduce himself or herself. As people associate speakers with their words, letting the audience know who they are about to listen to is not only a matter of good manners, but a method of ensuring the reception of a message whose origin has been acknowledged. Out of the 136 speeches in the **Annexe 1**, only three begin in such a way. This small number demonstrates that there have been recorded only the speeches that have made history, namely those delivered by famous personalities and those whose issues were striking for the time in which they were delivered.

1). “[...] *My name is Geraldine Ferraro. I stand before you to proclaim tonight: America is the land where dreams can come true for all of us. As I stand before the American people and think of the honor this great convention has bestowed on me, I recall the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who made America stronger by making America more free. He said, <Occasionally in life there are moments which cannot be completely explained by words. Their meaning can only be articulated by the inaudible language of the heart.> Tonight is such a moment for me.*”¹⁰⁵

The speaker of the words above wins the listeners’ credibility and benevolence by an accumulation of praises towards all the Americans as a nation of a privileged country, towards the members of the convention whose vice-presidential nomination she is accepting, and towards Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a symbolic figure whose famous words she quotes. This quotation helps her to express in a less direct way the deep emotion she feels in such an important and unique situation as the present one. Such a combination of well chosen **collateral circumstances of persons**, where the terms referring to the persons mentioned belong grammatically to various classes of nouns, is the measure of the locutor’s eloquence, a quality with seductive powers.

The **collateral circumstances of persons** device in the next fragment combines with that of **issues**:

2). “*I’m Elizabeth Glasner. [...] (subsequently recounting how she and her two children have been infected accidentally with the AIDS virus in the past eleven years; my note)*

Twenty years ago I wanted to be at the Democratic Convention because it was a way to participate in my country. Today, I am here because it is a matter of life and death. Exactly – Exactly four years ago my daughter died of AIDS. She did not survive *the Reagan Administration*. I am here because my son and I may not survive four more years of *leaders who say they care, but do nothing*. [...] I learned how unfair America can be today, not just

¹⁰⁴ Jesse Louis Jackson, 19 July 1988, *1988 DNC Address*,
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/jesse/speeches/jesse88speech.html>

¹⁰⁵ Geraldine Anne Ferraro, 19 July 1984, *Vice Presidential Acceptance Address*,
<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gferraroacceptanceaddress.html>

for people who have HIV, but for many, many people – poor people, gay people, people of color, children. A strange spokesperson for such a group: a well-to-do white woman. But I have learned my lesson the hard way, and I know that *America* has lost her path and is at risk of losing her soul. *America* wake up: We are all in a struggle between life and death.”¹⁰⁶

Here, it is the issue of her family’s having been accidentally infected with the AIDS virus that has to be mentioned first and get to the listeners’ hearts and minds. Only after the listeners have understood its gravity can they understand the speaker’s vehement attitude towards those responsible for the present situation. The seriousness of the issue is so great that the speaker tackles it very abruptly after introducing herself. It is only a paragraph later that she addresses her bitter remarks to the **persons** she holds responsible for her tragic life experience, namely the political governing party in *the Reagan Administration*, more explicitly referred to as *leaders who say they care, but do nothing*. On the whole, this political group is the main target of her attack¹⁰⁷; the issue she speaks of only justifies her attitude. The entire excerpt is an example of this device in its **negative** instantiation.

The speaker in the following example provides a very detailed account of her experience of life. Under the present circumstances¹⁰⁸ such an endeavour is necessary as she has to win the audience’s credibility by presenting herself as a most reliable person whose words’ truth value cannot and must not be denied. All the details she mentions contribute to the creation of a very respectable image, a prerequisite for the success of her plea in front of the Judiciary Committee she addresses. It is an example of the **collateral circumstances of persons** device in a very elaborated form. Although the speaker does not praise formally anybody, she carefully chooses the personal details that help her in the construction of a persuasive argument with a highly manipulative potential:

3). “[...] *my name is Anita F. Hill, and I am a professor of law at the University of Oklahoma. I was born on a farm in Okmulgee County, Oklahoma, in 1956. I am the youngest of 13 children. I had my early education in Okmulgee County. My father, Albert Hill, is a farmer in that area. My mother’s name is Irma Hill. She is also a farmer and a housewife. [She continues presenting her personal and professional life experience up to the moment; my note].*”¹⁰⁹

What is interesting about this speech is that **the collateral circumstances of persons** rhetorical device is used not only at the beginning; it is the main rhetorical figure that the speaker uses throughout her entire plea. Even though the *Hill – Thomas* legal controversy, as it was called, ended by the latter’s being appointed the Supreme Court office, this speech has made history as after its delivery Anita Hill has been referred to as “the mother of a new wave of awareness of gender

¹⁰⁶ Elizabeth Glasner, 14 July 1992, *1992 Democratic National Convention Address*, New York, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/elizabethglasner1992dnc.htm>

¹⁰⁷ If the speaker were not unknown to the audience and she did not introduce herself, this fragment could be considered to belong to another category, the one that considers **institutions** as the target of the speaker’s either attacks or praises. This category is illustrated and discussed in more detail in 2.2.4.4.4 below.

¹⁰⁸ Anita Hill, the author of the speech, was supposed to convince the members of the Judiciary Committee that Clarence Thomas, her employer, was guilty of sexual harassment against her, and therefore not worthy of the office of Supreme Court nominee that he was given by the George Bush administration in 1991. Cf. Vanessa Beasley, *Anita Hill – Clarence Thomas Hearings*, <http://www.museum.tv/archives/etv/H/htmlH/hill-thomash/hill-thomas.htm>

¹⁰⁹ Anita Hill, 11 October 1991, *Opening Statement to the Senate Judiciary Committee on Clarence Thomas*, United States Judiciary Committee, Washington, D. C. <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/anitahillsenatejudiciarystatement.htm>

discrimination”¹¹⁰. Therefore, the speech was considered persuasive not by its addressees: other categories of people who saw it on TV were convinced that the speaker was right.

When the speaker is famous, this self-introduction is usually not necessary and, therefore, not resorted to. However, there are situations when even prominent public figures choose to **speak about themselves** at the beginning of their speeches. The actual function of their doing so is a psychological one: expressing their deep emotions for having been given the privilege to address the audience or some of its members.

The following two fragments are illustrations of this device: although very famous political figures and well known to the people they address, the locutors here speak about themselves in all their *modesty*, in this way attracting the listeners’ respect and appreciation:

4). “[...] *I am profoundly grateful, touched by the great distinction and honor and great compliment accorded me by the authorities of Harvard this morning. I am overwhelmed, as a matter of fact, and I am rather fearful of my inability to maintain such a high rating as you’ve been generous enough to accord to me. In these historic and lovely surroundings, this perfect day, and this very wonderful assembly, it is a tremendously impressive thing to an individual in my position.*”¹¹¹

Here, George C. Marshall expresses his admiration towards those present and the host institution, the Harvard University, in a series of phrases with superlative value (*profoundly grateful / touched, great distinction / honor / compliment, I am overwhelmed, such a high rating, perfect day, very wonderful assembly, tremendously impressive thing*) against which the opinion he has about himself stands out as one of utter humility and modesty (*my inability, to an individual in my position*). This rhetorical technique has a boomerang effect which is simultaneously achieved: an “individual” with such an exquisite opinion about those present stimulates their self-esteem and, as a result, he cannot be but highly appreciated in terms of oratorical skills and of political personality, both qualities resulting in a benevolent reception of the message of his speech.

In example (5), the locutor’s *lack of pride* is rendered by his modestly not recognising himself in the appreciative words that the preceding speaker used to introduce him to the audience:

5). “*Thank you very kindly, my friends. As I listened to Ralph Abernathy in his eloquent and generous introduction and then thought about myself, I wondered who he was talking about. It’s always good to have your closest friend and associate say something about you. And Ralph is the best friend I have in the world.*

I’m delighted to see each of you here tonight in spite of a storm warning. You reveal that you are determined to go on anyhow.”¹¹²

The tone of modesty is increased even more once the audience understands the syllogism that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. builds by providing the major and the minor premises, and whose possible conclusions are left to the listeners to infer:

¹¹⁰ Cf. Vanessa Beasley, *op. cit.*

¹¹¹ George C. Marshall, 5 June 1947, *The Marshall Plan*, Harvard University, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/georgemarshall.html>

¹¹² Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., 3 April 1968, *I’ve Been to the Mountaintop*, <http://www.afscme.org/about/1549.cfm>

Major premise (general fact): *It's good to have your closest friend say something about you.*

Minor premise 1 (particular fact): *Ralph is the best friend I have in the world.*

Minor premise 2 (particular fact): *Ralph has said X (i.e. eloquent and generous words) about me.*

Minor premise 3 (unstated): *The **best** friend is the **closest** friend.*

Consequent 1 (unstated): *Ralph has said the best words possible about me.*

Consequent 2 (unstated): *I am sure Ralph has said these words because he is my friend, and therefore, subjective, and not because I am worthy of them.*

The notes of self-irony and implied modesty are contained in these two conclusions that the listeners are expected to draw. All these rhetorical subtleties and the fact that he explicitly praises the audience for the effort they have made to attend the present event ensure their wilful reception of his words and, implicitly, the effectiveness of his words.

2.2.4.4.3. Thanking and Praising or Criticising (Some Members of) the Audience

Very often, the **collateral circumstances of persons** device interweaves with the introductory formula that the locutors use at the beginning of their speeches, as in the following examples. They thank the whole audience and some outstanding persons present for various reasons; in the same time, they introduce them by providing short personal descriptions in highly praising terms or they acknowledge these persons' presence among the addressees in and show their great gratitude for having been given the privilege to address such important figures. Short but expressive adjectives and adverbs with superlative value are very frequently used to express the locutors' emotions in such a situation (**terrific** welcome, *It's a **great** honor to...*, *Thank you **very much** / **most sincerely**, **very eloquent** introduction, **great** spokeswoman / land / American / nation, **distinguished** legislator, **wonderful** state / Republican, those who have worked **so heroically**):*

1). "Well, thank you. Thank you for your **terrific** welcome. Thank you, Bobby, for that kind introduction and let me also recognize *Dr. Morris Chapman* and *Dr. Richard Land*. I want to thank *all of you* for giving me the opportunity to be here in Greensboro today and a chance to have a conversation with you.

It's a **great** honor to be joined by *thousands of people of faith* here today at the Southern Baptist Convention. *You are all individual messengers of independent churches*, but today, through you, America's 16 million Southern Baptists celebrate their unity. [...] I would like to congratulate *Pastor Frank Page of Taylors, South Carolina*, who now has the privilege of serving as *the new elected leader of America's Southern Baptists*. (Applause)"¹¹³

¹¹³ Condoleezza Rice, 14 June 2006, *Remarks at the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting*, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/67896.htm>

2). “Thanks **very much**, Barbara Mikulski, for your **very eloquent**, your eloquent introduction. **Distinguished** legislator, **great** spokeswoman for economic democracy and social justice in this country, I thank you for your eloquent introduction.”¹¹⁴

3). “Thank you **very much**, Governor Keating and Mrs. Keating, Reverend Graham, to the families of those who have been lost and wounded, to the people of Oklahoma city, who have endured so much, and the people of this **wonderful** state, to all of you who are here as our fellow Americans.

I am honored to be here today to represent *the American people*. But I have to tell you that Hillary and I also come as parents, as husband and wife, as people who were your neighbors for some of the best years of our lives.

Today our nation joins you in grief. We mourn with you. We share your hope against hope that some may still survive. We thank *all those who have worked so heroically* to save lives and to solve this crime – *those here in Oklahoma* and *those who are all across this great land*, and *many who left their own lives to come here to work hand in hand with you*. We pledge to do all we can to help you heal the injured, to rebuild this city, and to bring to justice those who did this evil.”¹¹⁵

4). “My good friend and great Republican, Dick Nixon, and your charming wife, Pat; my running mate, that **wonderful** Republican who has served us so well for so long, Bill Miller and his wife, Stephanie; to Thurston Morton who’s done such a commendable job in chairmaning this Convention; to Mr. Herbert Hoover, who I hope is watching; and to *that – that great American* and his wife, General and Mrs. Eisenhower; to my own wife, my family, and to *all my fellow Republicans* here assembled, and *Americans across this great nation*.”¹¹⁶

5). “[...] Thank you **most sincerely** for voting to award me the Congressional Gold Medal. But you, like me, know who *the real heroes* are: *those brave servicemen and women*, yours and ours, *who fought the war, and risk their lives still*. Our tribute to them should be measured in this way: by showing them and *their families* that they did not strive or die in vain but that through *their sacrifice*, future generations can live in greater peace, prosperity and hope. Let me also express my gratitude to *President Bush*. Through the troubled times since September 11th changed the world, we have been allies and friends. Thank you, Mr. President, for your leadership.”¹¹⁷

The two examples below are related in a way that will be described subsequently. Both of them combine the rhetorical device of **collateral circumstances of persons** with that of **collateral circumstances of time**:

6). “Four scores and seven years ago *our fathers* brought forth, upon this continent, *a new nation*, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Ted Kennedy, 12 August 1980, *1980 Democratic National Convention Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/tedkennedy1980dnc.htm>

¹¹⁵ William Jefferson Clinton, 23 April 1995, *Oklahoma Bombing Memorial Prayer Service Address*, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wjcoklahomabombingspeech.htm>

¹¹⁶ Barry Goldwater, 16 July 1964, *Speech Accepting the Republican Presidential Nomination*, San Francisco, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/barrygoldwater1964rnc.htm>

¹¹⁷ Tony Blair, 18 July 2003, *Speech to the US Congress*, <http://www.number10.gov.uk/output/Page4220.asp>

¹¹⁸ Abraham Lincoln, 1863, *The Gettysburg Address*, US Historical Documents Archive, <http://w3.one.net/~mweiler/ushda/ushda.htm>

7). “Five score years ago, *a great American*, in whose symbolic shadow we stand signed the Emancipation Proclamation.”¹¹⁹

The relationship between these two fragments is one of style. They both begin with similar noun-phrases by means of which the year of the event they refer to is not explicitly given: a simple mathematical subtraction would reveal it. Whereas Abraham Lincoln uses this paraphrase as an expression of linguistic eloquence that gives rhythm to this statement due to the vowels, diphthongs, the number of syllables and the stresses it contains, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s intention is clear: he knows that his listeners can recognise this structure as belonging to *the great American Abraham Lincoln*. He also knows that there is no need for him to call Lincoln by name: a few hints at his words can make everybody understand his point. This is exactly what Abraham Lincoln himself does in e.g. (6) when referring, without crossing the ‘t’ either, to the Declaration of Independence and *the people* who signed it. Such key words and phrases as: *our fathers, a new nation, liberty, all men are created equal*, all round up the idea he wants to communicate. In their doing so, Abraham Lincoln and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. show great concern and respect both for the people that they speak about and for the listeners’ intellectual capacity, knowledge, and aesthetic taste. The effect is clear: an audience who feel respected and pleased with what they hear and respectful to the speaker in their turn. When an orator begins in such a note, the success of his speech and implicitly the influence that he can exert on the audience are easy to attain.

The next excerpt is an example of the same device used this time by Margaret Thatcher to criticise a Labour MP and the party whose leader he is:

8). “It is, of course, the right and duty of *her Majesty’s Opposition* to challenge the position of the Government of the day. It is also *their* right to test the confidence of the House in the Government if *they* think that the circumstances warrant it. I make no complaint about it. But when the windy rhetoric of *the right hon. Member of Islwyn (Mr. Kinnock)* has blown away, what are *their* real reasons for bringing this motion before the House? There were no alternative policies – just a lot of disjointed, opaque words.”¹²⁰

Here the speaker begins her speech by agreeing to some political rights and duties that describe the political institutions in a democratic society. But she does so not without slyness. When saying *her Majesty’s Opposition* she actually means *the Conservative Party’s Opposition*, the Conservatives being the governing party whose leader *she* is. In other words, she accuses Mr. Kinnock, between the lines, of opposition to the Queen, which is far more serious a charge than the other one would be. This accusation becomes a cynical attack on person when the linguistic style of the Labour leader is metaphorically described as a *windy rhetoric* that *has blown away*, and the motion he brought before the House of Commons – *a lot of disjointed, opaque words*. Her cynicism is amplified by the oxymoronic joining of ideas in *the windy rhetoric of right hon. Member of Islwyn*. Once again, the Iron Lady proves to be a very determined Conservative leader, endowed with the gift of artful speaking. It is true that the evidence she brings here as well as later in the same speech is very important for her influencing the audience’s opinions and attitudes, but as far as her rhetorical qualities are concerned, her linguistic vehemence and straightforwardness may be considered very seductive and very inciting in the same time.

¹¹³ Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., 28 August 1963, *I Have a Dream*, Washington, D. C., US Historical Documents Archive, <http://w3.one.net/~mweiler/ushda/ushda.htm>

¹²⁰ Margaret Thatcher, 22 November 1990, *Vote of No Confidence Debate*, House of Commons, <http://www.margaretthatcher.com/display/index.php?action=display&document=6&id=2738>

The intention to *incite* people to take serious steps towards a change in the present state of affairs is implicit in the next fragment as well. Here the speaker begins her speech vehemently by attacking the social and political system of the U.S.A. which is eminently male-dominated. The object of her attack is disdainfully called *the male element*, seen as *a destructive force* responsible for all the wrongs in the world, as opposed to the appreciatively called *feminine element*, less represented at higher levels, such as political institutions, in the society of the 19th century U.S.A.:

9). "I urge a sixteenth amendment, because '*manhood suffrage*', or a *man's government*, is *civil, religious, and social disorganization*. *The male element* is a *destructive force, stern, selfish, aggrandizing, loving war, violence, conquest, acquisition, breeding in the material and moral world alike discord, disorder, disease, and death*. [...]

The male element has held high carnival thus far; it has fairly run riot from the beginning, overpowering the feminine element everywhere, crushing all the diviner qualities in human nature, until we know but little of true manhood and womanhood, of the latter comparatively nothing, for it has scarce been recognized as a power until within the last century. Society is but the reflection of man himself, untempered by woman's thought; the hard iron rule we feel alike in the church, the state, and the home. No one need wonder at the disorganization, at the fragmentary condition of everything, when we remember that man, who represents but half a complete being, with but half an idea on every subject, has undertaken the absolute control of all sublunary matters."¹²¹

This speaker's **loquacity** resides in a most acid style, characterised by a series of discursive features:

- at the **phonetic level**, multiple alliterative, assonantal and consonantal agglomerations of harsh consonants such as /s/, /st/, /r/, /str/, /z/, /k/, /d/, /g/, /br/, /gr/, /v/ render the locutor's disgust and firm position against the domination of the *male element*, the source of all current evils, in her opinion: *a man's government is civil, religious and social disorganisation; ... is a destructive force, stern, selfish, aggrandizing, loving war, violence, conquest, acquisition, breeding in the material and moral world alike discord, disorder, disease, and death*;

- at the **lexical-morphological level**, the speaker's predilection towards building lists of three and four **adjectives** describing negative human traits (*civil, religious, and social...*; *destructive, stern, selfish, aggrandizing*), of three **nouns** (*the church, the state, and the home*) or of four nouns referring to negative qualities and actions; *war, violence, conquest, acquisition; discord, disorder, disease, and death*) is obvious.

- at the **syntactic level**, **simple** and **compound sentences** alternate, in a rhetorical balance, with the long, **complex** ones. The **double, triple, quadruple structures** mentioned so far add to the strong rhetorical effects of annoyance, disapproval, determination to make a change in the current state of affairs, even disgust that the locutor transmits to the listeners in her wish to make them adopt the same position as she does. Altogether, this is a fragment from an inflammatory speech with inciting intentions.

The accumulation of all these stylistic and rhetorical features in the locutor's linguistic discourse is the mark of her deep **negative feelings** that she wants to put across. Once the audience sympathise with her, the manipulative power that her words exert on them cannot be denied. However, it is very unlikely for the audience not to be subjective: only the female listeners could agree to this locutor's message, those who are the target of her incendiary speech being more difficult to persuade in this situation.

¹²¹ Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 1868, *The Destructive Male*, <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/stanton.htm>

2.2.4.4.4. Thanking and Praising Institutions

Not only specific persons can be thanked and praised for some of their merits that the speaker considers to contribute to the nation's welfare, but also **institutions**, such as *universities*, *political* and *social groups* (conventions, clubs), *religious groups*, *radio* and *television networks*, etc. As these institutions are made up of and represented by people, referring to them at the beginning of a speech falls into the category of the **collateral circumstances of persons** rhetorical device.

The examples in this section illustrate that whenever some **institutions** are spoken highly of, the speaker also acknowledges the important role of (some of) their members in an overt or in a covert way. The speaker's emotions and attitudes towards these institutions are usually expressed by explicit formulations such as: *I should like to express my **gratitude** to...*, *It is with **great pride** that...*, *let me thank you for **the privilege** of...*, *I count it **a privilege** to be invited...*, ***the privilege** of addressing you...*, ***the opportunity** of addressing you...* The highlighted nouns in these expressions make up a rather closed class as they seem not to vary too much from one speaker to another; they can be considered **formulaic clichés**:

1). "[...] First, I should like to express my gratitude to the *radio* and *television networks* for the opportunity *they* have given me over the years to bring reports and messages to our nation. My special thanks go to *them* for the opportunity of addressing you this evening."¹²² (the people in charge of these institutions are implicitly referred to; my note)

2). "[...] It is with great pride that I participate in this ceremony of *the American University*, sponsored by *the Methodist Church*, founded by *Bishop John Fletcher Hurst*, and first opened by *President Woodrow Wilson* in 1914. *This is a young and growing university*, but it has already fulfilled Bishop Hurst's enlightened hope for the study of history and public affairs in a city devoted to the making of history and to the conduct of the public's business. By sponsoring *this institution of higher learning* for all who wish to learn, whatever their color or their creed, *the Methodists* of this area and *the Nation* deserve the *Nation's thanks*, and *I commend all those who are today graduating*."¹²³ (the phrases in italics mark the locutor's overt appreciation of some famous figures who played a major role in the foundation and the good functioning of the institution in point along the years; my note)

3). "[...] On behalf of the great Empire State and the whole family of New York, let me thank *you* for the privilege of being able to address *this convention*."¹²⁴

4). "I count it a privilege to be invited to address *the Commonwealth Club*. It has stood in the life of this city and state, and it is perhaps accurate to add, the nation, *as a group of citizen leaders interested in fundamental problems of government, and chiefly concerned with achievement of progress in government through non-partisan means*. The privilege of addressing *you*, therefore, in the heat of a political campaign, is great."¹²⁵ (the *Commonwealth Club* is explicitly perceived as a *group of citizen leaders*, therefore these are collectively appreciated for their merits; my note)

¹²² Dwight D. Eisenhower, 17 January 1961, *Farewell Address*, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/dwightdeisenhowerfarewell.html>

¹²³ John F. Kennedy, *American University Commencement Address*.

¹²⁴ Mario Cuomo, 16 July 1984, *1984 Democratic National Convention Keynote Address*, San Francisco, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mariocuomo1984dnc.htm>

¹²⁵ Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 23 September 1932, *Commonwealth Club Address*, San Francisco, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrcommonwealth.htm>

The great number of examples available for the illustration of the **collateral circumstances of persons rhetorical device** shows that politicians often use it due to its highly persuasive and seductive, therefore, *manipulative* undertones. It is a device by means of which the people addressed are emotionally touched; they are given reasons to be proud, thankful, grateful, to feel privileged, respected and respectful in their turn. By resorting to it, the public speakers stand great chances to instil in the listeners the same emotions and attitudes as those expressed by the oration itself.

2.2.5. The Anticipatory Story: the Illustration at the Beginning of the Speech

Sometimes, orators finely lead their audiences towards the proper argument of their speech by telling them either a **real story** from their personal lives or an **allegorical** one.

The **main function** of this real or imaginary story is a didactical one: as in the warm-up activities at the beginning of a classroom lesson, everybody's **attention is raised** and **focused** on a subject that can be easily followed due to its accessibility provided by its narrative form. A **second function** is of a pragmatic nature: it implicitly offers the listeners the **framework for reasoning**¹²⁶ that they need for the reception of the ensuing message in the way intended by the speaker. Given that truth is usually of a spiritual nature, therefore very difficult to demonstrate¹²⁷ in the absence of the actual event or person spoken of, a **third function** of this device, directly related to the previous one and developed especially by the real stories and facts, is to provide the listeners with sensible palpable **evidence** from which the **truth value** of the subsequent arguments in the speech can be inferred. The credibility of the locutor contributes to this function to a great extent as well. As erudite people receive great credibility, orators frequently resort to the rhetorical device known as **appeal to authority**. This is meant to give glimpses of their educational background to the listeners, thus to increase the trustworthiness of their words.

The use of **illustrations** at the beginning of a political speech is not obligatory and not very often employed, as compared to their frequency in sermons, for example; the speakers may choose from an enormously wide range of rhetorical devices to begin their proper argumentation with. However, when they decide to choose this device, its functions mentioned above contribute to the *persuasive, seductive, and manipulative* potential of their whole speech.

The **illustration** as a rhetorical device can be used anywhere in a public speech, whether political, religious, or legal: at the beginning, in the argumentation (i.e., the body of the speech), or at the end. When it is used at the beginning, it can be considered an **anticipatory story**, as the understanding of the message and logical reasoning behind the argumentation to follow or of the conclusions to be drawn from the whole speech is based on the understanding of the morals of this introductory story.

Generally, people are very receptive to stories that allow them to identify similarities between the characters and the events described in them and their own personal experience. Nevertheless, these stories are a real asset to an orator *only if* they are skilfully interwoven with the main topic of the speech. If such a connection is not made by the locutor and it is difficult to make by the listeners themselves, the audience may feel confused and frustrated. Their defeated expectancy may turn them into hostile listeners who do not give the speaker too much credibility, if any. As a result, they may lose most of their interest, attention and receptiveness, and their opinions, behaviour and actions may not suffer any visible changes in conformity with those advanced by the oration in a

¹²⁶ This **framework for reasoning** has a syllogistic form: if, for instance, the anticipatory story links various facts in a certain cause-effect relationship, the facts to be presented in the argument proper have to be related in the same way, according to the same logical arrangement, and a similar if not identical conclusion has to be drawn from them. In other words, by resorting to this device, the locutor induces the logical mechanisms that the listeners have to apply in their effort to understand the meanings of the argument, and to accept its truth value in accordance with that proposed by the speech itself.

¹²⁷ Cf. John Wilson, 1967, *Language and the Pursuit of Truth*, London & New York: C. U. P.

more or less explicit way. Subtle manipulation in its positive or negative direction is highly unlikely to be exerted on a frustrated or confused mass of people. In all the examples in this section, the locutors prove great skill in linking smoothly the introductory illustration or the anticipatory story to the body of their speeches.

Although they sometimes resort to introductory stories, the political orators usually begin their speeches in more formal ways: by addressing a few words to those present and by resorting to the collateral circumstances rhetorical device. When an **illustration** is used to begin the political speech with, however, it intertwines with these already mentioned rhetorical devices.

The example below illustrates such a combination of a **real personal story** with the rhetorical devices described in the previous sections. This anticipatory story is told in the third person, so that it is only in the second paragraph that the listeners infer by themselves that the main character in the story is the speaker himself. The **suspense** created by the story told in this way leads to the rhetorical effect of *increasing both the listeners' eagerness to listen* attentively to what follows and *the speaker's credibility* in front of the audience. The narrative content of the story and the locutor's skill to catch attention by acting modestly also contribute to this effect on the audience:

1). "Mr. President, Mrs. Clinton, members of Congress, Ambassador Holbrooke, Excellencies, friends:

Fifty-four years ago to the day, a young Jewish boy from a small town in the Carpathian Mountains woke up, not far from Goethe's beloved Weimar, in a place of eternal infamy called Buchenwald. He was finally free, but there was no joy in his heart. He thought there never would be again. Liberated a day earlier by American soldiers, he remembers their rage at what they saw. And even if he lives to be a very old man, he will always be grateful to them for that rage, and also for their compassion. Though he did not understand their language, their eyes told him what he needed to know – that they, too, would remember, and bear witness.

And now, I stand before you, Mr. President – Commander-in-Chief of the army that freed me, and tens of thousands of others – and I am filled with a profound and abiding gratitude to the American people. Gratitude is a word that I cherish. Gratitude is what defines the humanity of the human being. And I am grateful to you, Hillary, or Mrs. Clinton, for what you said, and for what you are doing for children in the world, for the homeless, for the victims of injustice, the victims of destiny and society. And I thank you all for being here.”¹²⁸

In the introductory formula, the speaker in the fragment above addresses individual listeners (*Mr. President, Mrs. Clinton; Ambassador Holbrooke*) and categories of listeners (*members of Congress, Excellencies*) formally, and everybody else at the end using a familiar appellative (*friends*). This is followed by a **real story** by means of which the locutor shows the character's gratitude towards *the American people*. This story gives the **collateral circumstances of persons device** a narrative form; in the same time, it is used to give this rhetorical device more relevance and substance than in the case when the people addressed were praised without mentioning the reasons for his feeling of gratitude towards them. The combination of these rhetorical devices is very effective in terms of persuasion as the locutor's oratorical skills are outstandingly handled.

The next example is an illustration of how the **anticipatory story** told at the beginning of a speech, after the introductory formula, may be used as a device having the same function and effect as that of **collateral circumstances of place**. The locutor praises, in an implicit way, the importance and beauty of *West Point Academy*, the place he is delivering his speech at:

¹²⁸ Elie Wiesel, 12 April 1999, *The Perils of Indifference*, Washington, D. C., <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ewieselperilsofindifference.html>

2). “General Westmoreland, General Grove, distinguished guests, and gentlemen of the Corps!

*As I was leaving the hotel this morning, a doorman asked me, <Where are you bound for, General?> And when I replied, <West Point>, he remarked, <Beautiful place. Have you ever been there before? >.”*¹²⁹

In the next fragment, the **illustration device** takes a complex form: the locutor builds his whole speech using a long chain of illustrations in the form of **real stories** from his own experience and **anecdotes** full of morals, inserting short comments between them. The function of these comments, most of them humorous, is to account for the relevance these stories have to the informational content of the speech. Below, there are provided only the first two paragraphs of the speech; the first paragraph itself is a **story** that anticipates another story. It is used as a **captatio benevolentiae** device by which the speaker also suggests, without being explicit, his intention to behave like the character he is referring to, that is *to tell story after story*, which he actually does in a remarkably long speech:

3). “When going down the Tigris and Euphrates rivers many years ago with a party of English travelers I found myself under the direction of an old Arab guide we hired up at Baghdad, and I have often thought how that guide resembled our barbers in certain mental characteristics. He thought that it was not only his duty to guide us down those rivers, and do what he was paid for doing, but to entertain us with stories curious and weird, ancient and modern, strange and familiar. Many of them I have forgotten, and I am glad I have, but there is one I shall never forget.

The old guide was leading my camel by its halter along the banks of those ancient rivers, and *he told me story after story* until I grew weary of his story-telling and ceased to listen. I have never been irritated with that guide when he lost his temper as I ceased listening. But I remember that he took off his Turkish cap and swung it in a circle to get my attention. I could see it through the corner of my eye, but I was determined not to look straight at him for fear he would tell another story. But although I am not a woman, I did finally look, and as soon as I did he went right into another story. Said he, <I will tell you a story now which I reserve for my particular friends.> When he emphasised the words <particular friends>, I listened and I have ever been glad I did. I really feel devoutly thankful, that there are 1,674 young men who have been carried through college by this lecture who are also glad that I did listen.”¹³⁰ (Here the actual story about *diamonds*, the key topic of the speech, begins; my note)

Even though the speech this fragment is taken from is very long, it is impossible for the listeners to have got bored or *weary*, as the speaker himself admits to have felt in a similar situation, according to his own declaration at the beginning of the excerpt above. On the contrary, the introduction that he makes to the speech has a moral that has to be inferred by the listeners; the speaker seems to say “Be patient and you’ll be glad in the end that you have listened because the stories I am going to tell you are very interesting. Even I, who was bored by their great number, am glad that I once listened to them”. This implicit moral is to be taken for the **captatio benevolentiae**

¹²⁹ General Douglas MacArthur, 12 May 1962, *Duty, Honor, Country*, West Point, N. Y., <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/douglasmacarthurhayeraward.html>

¹³⁰ Russel Conwell, *Acres of Diamonds*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/rconwellacresofdiamonds.htm> As mentioned at this Internet page, the speech was delivered over 5000 times at various times and places from 1900-1925. The Internet text this fragment is taken from is the transcription of the version recorded in studio.

moment. Moreover, his referring to the great number of 1,674 college students who have enjoyed the same lecture he is about to deliver is another device meant to raise the present students' interest. In what follows, the effect of the listeners' long-time concentration on the speech is achieved by the speaker especially through his method of telling story after story after story. All of these stories are illustrations artfully integrated in the argument. What makes them even more pleasant to listen to is the speaker's style, which very often gets humorous or ironic about particular details.

2.2.6. The Seductive Power of Amplification in Argumentation

Giambattista Vico defines **amplification** as "a certain type of a more elaborate affirmation which, by means of moving the spirits, wins credibility in what must be said."¹³¹ Although the phrase *elaborate affirmation* is vague due to the semantics of the adjective *elaborate*, this definition suggests that **amplification** is both a rhetorical and a stylistic device whose purpose is to persuade or dissuade the recipients of the message by seducing them with the beauty of the locutor's choice of words and complex formulation.

In the present section, the means of **amplification** in political speeches are approached at the **phonetic**, the **lexical**, the **morphological** and the **syntactic** levels of the language.

2.2.6.1. Repetition

The repetition of a **sound**, of a **word**, or of a **morpho-syntactic structure** helps the speaker to lay emphasis on a certain idea that otherwise may pass unnoticed by the listeners.

Examples of repetition are found in abundance in speeches, where it also has a didactic function: listeners 'learn' and, as a consequence, will remember more easily what the speaker repeats. The repeated structures are usually considered catch phrases that the listeners leave home with and it is these phrases that continue to work on their minds, therefore, to affect them in one way or another and may produce attitudinal and behavioural changes in the listeners long after the speech has been delivered to them.

2.2.6.1.1. Phonetic Repetition: Alliteration, Consonance and Assonance

Alliteration is "the repetition of the same sounds – usually *initial consonants* of words or of stressed syllables - in any sequence of neighbouring words."¹³² A similar figure of speech is **consonance**, which repeats "*identical or similar consonants in neighbouring words whose vowel sounds are different*". **Consonance** "may be regarded as the counterpart to [...] **assonance**"¹³³, which is another stylistic sounds figure that repeats "*identical or similar vowel sounds in the stressed syllables (and sometimes in the following unstressed syllables) of neighbouring words*" whose "*consonants differ although the vowels or diphthongs match*."¹³⁴

The following few excerpts illustrate these stylistic devices with rhetorical effects that are discussed in each example:

- 1). "Let us go forth to **lead the land we love**."¹³⁵

The effect of the **alliteration** of the voiced lateral alveolar sound /l/ in three one-syllable words that can be remembered easily, *lead*, *land*, *love*, is increased by the **consonance** of the voiced alveolar plosive /d/, by the progressive opening of the vowel sounds that the three alliterative words contain: /i:/ → /æ/ → /ʌ/, and by the cadenced alternation of one stressed and one unstressed

¹³¹ Giambattista Vico, *op. cit.*, p. 95

¹³² Chris Baldick, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

¹³³ *Idem*, p. 49.

¹³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 20.

¹³⁵ J. F. Kennedy, *op. cit.*

syllables, ending in a stressed syllable, a rhythm that renders the idea of hope for the expressed wish to come true.

- 2). "...we shall **pay any price, bear any burden...**"¹³⁶

In the example above, the two **alliterations** of the bilabial plosives /p/ and /b/, respectively, in two binary constructions identical in terms of structure: V + Direct Object (or one **consonance** of these two voiced and voiceless plosive bilabial sounds) add to the locutor's tone of determination to keep his promise against all possible obstacles rendered by the informational content of the formulation, determination that he wants to instil in those present, too (which is also clear from the use of the personal pronoun *we* as the Subject of both verbs in this sentence).

- 3). "...let us strive on...to do all **which** may **achieve** and **cherish** a **just** and **lasting peace**."¹³⁷

Here, the **consonances** of the voiceless affricate palato-alveolar sound /tʃ/ and of the voiceless fricative alveolar /s/ combined with /st/ achieve a musically pleasant effect which is added to by the alternative stressed and unstressed syllables in the final part of the sentence: a '*just and lasting peace*'. The stressed syllable at the end of the sentence renders the idea of hope and triumph.

- 4). "We've seen the **unfurling of flags**."¹³⁸

The **consonances** of the fricative labio-dentals /v/ and /f/, of the voiced lateral alveolar /l/, and of the voiced plosive velar /g/ build an onomatopoeic formulation suggestive of the sound that flags make when unfurled. Here the linguistic form produces not only acoustic, but also visual effects, very seductive to the listeners' ears.

- 5). "...we shall not **flag** or **fail**."¹³⁹

The **alliteration** of the voiceless fricative labio-dental /f/ and the **consonance** of the voiced lateral alveolar /l/ emphasise the meaning of determination expressed by the informational content of the sentence.

- 6). "If **peace takes place**, never sheathe your **swords**, says he, until you have obtained full and ample justice."¹⁴⁰

In this example, the **alliteration** of the voiced plosive bilabial /p/ and of voiceless fricative alveolar /s/ combines with the **consonance** of the similar fricative alveolar sounds /s/ and /z/, these sounds suggesting that this piece of sound advice were whispered and the locutor lays great emphasis on the importance that it should be followed. The whole sentence seems to express a universal truth, therefore it acquires aphoristic force.

- 7). "...by **sowing the seeds of discord and separation...**"¹⁴¹

¹³⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹³⁷ Abraham Lincoln, *Second Inaugural Address*.

¹³⁸ George W. Bush, *op. cit.*

¹³⁹ Winston Churchill, *We Shall Fight on the Beaches*.

¹⁴⁰ George Washington, *Preventing the Revolt of His Officers*.

¹⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

The **alliterative** and **consonantal** agglomeration of the voiceless alveolar fricative sound /s/ in this example express the locutor's bitter disagreement with, and possibly vehemence against the state of affairs that he describes.

Due to its **auditory effects**, usually pleasant, the repetition of sounds in immediate vicinity - be it **alliteration**, **assonance**, or **consonance** - makes the formulation of ideas linger for a longer time on the audience's minds; being easily remembered, the alliterative, assonantal and consonantal formulations are frequently quoted by people in various other occasions. A similar rhetorical effect is acquired by orators through the use of **rhyming pairs** of words:

8). "...America is held hostage to tactics of *smear and fear*." (**rhyme** based on the **assonance** of the diphthong /iə/)

Rhyme and **rhythm** are combined by Abraham Lincoln in the fragment below:

9) "Fondly do we hope, fervently do we *pray*, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away."¹⁴²

The two inversions of the verb required by the ante-position of the two amplifying adverbs of manner in e.g. (9), *fondly* and *fervently*, add the whole sentence two extra-syllables represented by the auxiliary verb *do*. This gives the sentence **cadence** and it makes **rhyme** possible. The same sentence, if the regular, unmarked word order were used, would be: *We hope fondly, we pray fervently, that this mighty scourge of war may pass away speedily*. It is very clear that a lot of the beauty of the actual formulation would be definitely lost. Abraham Lincoln proves his oratorical talent once more by skilfully turning a sentence otherwise plain from a phonetic point of view into a most seductive and memorable one.

The following two examples illustrate the use of phonetic repetition to achieve memorable auditory effects that double the **negative feelings** expressed directly by the locutors through the informational content of their words.

In example (10), the three figures of sounds under consideration in this section combine beautifully to render the speaker's disagreement with the realities that he describes, whereas in example (11) the negative emotions expressed are far more serious and complex:

10). "Am I to argue that it is wrong [...] to *work* them [i.e. *men*; my note] *without wages*...to *flay their flesh with the lash*, [...] to *starve* them into *submission* to their *masters*?"¹⁴³
(**alliterations**: repetitions of /w/; /f/ / l/; /s/ and /z/; **assonance**: repetition of similar vowel sounds, sometimes in diphthongs /ei/, /Σə/, /e/, /æ/; **consonance**: repetition of /ʃ/)

11). "[...] 'manhood suffrage', or a man's government, is **civil**, religious, and social disorganization. The male element is a destructive **force**, stern, selfish, aggrandizing, loving war, violence, conquest, acquisition, breeding in the **material** and **moral** world alike **discord**, **disorder**, **disease** and **death**. [...]Through what **slavery**, **slaughter**, and **sacrifice**, through what inquisitions and **imprisonments**, **pains** and **persecutions**, **black codes** and gloomy creeds, the soul of humanity has struggled for the **centuries**, while mercy has veiled her face and all **hearts** have been dead alike to love and hope!"¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Abraham Lincoln, *op. cit.*

¹⁴³ Frederick Douglass, *The Hypocrisy of American Slavery*.

¹⁴⁴ Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *op. cit.*

In the last example above, **alliteration** and **consonance** accumulate to such a degree that their sounds are far from creating a pleasant auditory effect on the listeners in soft musical terms. On the contrary, their thunder-like sound renders the speaker's vehemence, sarcasm, outrage, hatred, and abhorrence with the state of affairs described. Most of them are harsh sounds - the alveolar fricatives /s/ and /z/, the bilabial plosives /p/ and /d/ - used in **groups of three** and **four terms** by a most feminist speaker in times of eminently male political domination. The speaker's incisive style is intended to incite the female listeners to action, a rhetorical effect that is undoubtedly achieved due to her careful choice and artful combination of stylistic figures of sounds.

2.2.6.1.2. Lexical, Morphological and Syntactic Repetition

2.2.6.1.2.1. Anaphora

Known as the repetition of a word at the beginning of successive phrases, or of a phrase at the beginning of successive clauses or lines, **anaphora**¹⁴⁵ is by far the most frequent means of amplification used by orators in their speeches. The reason why this is so is mainly of a psychological nature. Because the first words in a sentence or sequence of phrases usually bear the thematic accent and are pronounced in the highest pitch tone, they have the greatest impact on the recipients of the message transmitted. In short, they are very likely to be the most memorable ones to the majority of listeners. When these words are repeated for several times in a row at the beginning of consecutive sentences or groups of phrases, this effect increases.

In the first four examples in this section, the anaphoric repetitions of constructions from **one-word phrases** to **one-clause structures** illustrate various seductive or inciting undertones of this rhetorical device, whose first and most important function is that of **laying emphasis** on the particular details at the beginning of the sentences in which they occur.

Beside their being anaphoral repetitions, all the italicised structures in these examples share other two visible characteristics: they are put together in **groups of three** - which seems to be a number preferred by many orators when it comes to repetitions, as will be shown in some other examples in this section - and they are not linked by any conjunction within the sentence or between the sentences in which each term of the repetition occurs.

- 1). "... I feel it is my first duty to make an unprecedented compact with my countrymen. *Not an inaugural address, not a fireside chat, not a campaign speech – just a little straight talk among friends.*"¹⁴⁶

The **anaphora** of the negative adverb *not* in an triple **asyndetic / juxtaposed** construction whose purpose is that of providing clarifying details about what the key phrase *unprecedented compact* does *not* refer to, clarification that is completed by the synonymous phrase at the end, *just a little straight talk among friends*.

- 2). "But *we will not be* humiliated.
We will not be defeated.
We will not allow American men [...] to be killed [...]"¹⁴⁷

The italicised **anaphora** occurs in an **asyndetic** formulation separated by full stops which increases the effect of strong determination expressed by the modal *will* that it contains.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Chris Baldick, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

¹⁴⁶ Gerald R. Ford, 9 August 1974, *Address on Taking the Oath of the U. S. Presidency*, Washington, D. C., White House, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/geraldfordpresidentialoath.html>

¹⁴⁷ Richard M. Nixon, *Cambodian Incursion Address*.

- 3). “*I do believe that the buck stops here, [...].*
I do believe that right makes might [...].
I do believe, with all my heart and mind and spirit, that I [...] will receive justice
without mercy if I fail to show mercy.”¹⁴⁸

The italicised **clausal anaphora**, the underlined words that make up an **epiphora**, the **consonance** of the voiceless dental fricative /s/ towards the end, *receive justice without mercy if I fail to show mercy*, and the parenthetical (but very relevant, otherwise it would be omitted) three-term **polysyndetical** prepositional structure, *I do believe, with all my heart and mind and spirit*, all work together to emphasise the locutor’s strong commitment to the pledge that he formulates in this way. His wish is to win his credibility in front of the listeners so that they comply benevolently with his appeal to calmness in a time when *domestic tranquillity* has been disturbed. This appeal is made in the subsequent paragraph, rendered below, which illustrates again the locutor’s particular preference for anaphoral repetitions:

- 4). “*My conscience tells me* clearly and certainly that I cannot prolong the bad dreams that continue to reopen a chapter that is closed. *My conscience tells me* that only I, as President, have the constitutional power to firmly shut and seal this book. *My conscience tells me* it is my duty, not merely to proclaim domestic tranquillity but to use every means that I have to ensure it.”¹⁴⁹ (**clausal anaphora**)

In order to give his words more weight and more credibility, in this fragment the locutor shows a stern determination transparent from his use both of **anaphora** and of other means of emphasis, such as and the **rhyming** two-term adverbial phrase after the first occurrence of the clausal construction to be repeated: *My conscience tells me **clearly and certainly***.

The speaker in the next fragment shows great predilection for the use of the same rhetorical device. The highlighted structures - *I speak as briefly as possible*, and *I speak as a...*, repeated 3 and 4 times, respectively - have a clausal form. The locutor’s firmness is transparent:

- 4). “*I speak as briefly as possible* because too much harm has already been done with irresponsible words of bitterness and selfish political opportunism. *I speak as briefly as possible* because the issue is too great to be obscured by eloquence. *I speak as briefly as possible* in the hope that my words will be taken to heart.
I speak as a Republican. *I speak as a* woman. *I speak as a* United States Senator. *I speak as an* American.”¹⁵⁰

The next examples are more complex than the preceding ones in that they illustrate either more extended anaphorae or combinations of anaphora with other rhetorical figures, most of them based on the repetition of sounds.

In the fragment below, the locutor’s intention to persuade his listeners of the necessity to act accordingly, namely to continue the late J. F. Kennedy’s policy, is rendered by the **extended anaphora** that he builds throughout a whole paragraph in which he repeats the same noun, *the dream*, 9 times in structurally identical **noun phrase + prepositional phrase** constructions:

¹⁴⁸ Gerald R. Ford, *Address to the Nation Pardoning Richard M. Nixon*.

¹⁴⁹ *Idem*.

¹⁵⁰ Margaret Chase Smith, *Declaration of Conscience*.

5). “*The dream of conquering the vastness of space, the dream of partnership across the Atlantic – and across the Pacific as well – the dream of a Peace Corps in less developed nations, the dream of education for all our children, the dream of jobs for all who seek them and need them, the dream of care for our elderly, the dream of an all-out attack on mental illness, and above all, the dream of equal rights for all Americans, whatever their race or color. These and other American dreams have been vitalized by his [i.e., J. F. K.’s; my note] drive and by his dedication.*”¹⁵¹

The same speaker’s predilection for this figure of speech becomes very clear a few lines later in the same speech, when he manages to create another remarkable paragraph stylistically based on anaphora (the nominal phrase *strong, forward-looking action* is anaphorally repeated 4 times):

6). “In short, *this is **no** time for **delay**. It is a time for action – strong, forward-looking action* on the pending education bills to help bring the light of learning to every home and hamlet in America; *strong, forward-looking action* on youth employment opportunities; *strong-forward-looking action* on the pending foreign aid bill [...]; and *strong, **prompt**, and forward-looking action* on the remaining appropriation bills.”¹⁵²

This device makes the whole paragraph stand out as a perfect unit. Its wholeness is also achieved through the repetition in the last sentence of the idea in the first: *this is no time for delay* is taken up again, in a totally changed lexical and morphological form, by the adjective *prompt* inserted in the anaphoral structure used between these two synonymous constructions: *strong, **prompt**, and forward-looking action*.

The following example illustrates once more that a locutor who uses anaphora usually builds more than one in close vicinity:

7). “And this party, with its *every action, every word, every breath, and every heartbeat*, has but a single resolve, and that is *freedom – freedom* made orderly for this Nation by our constitutional government; *freedom* under a government limited by the laws of the nature and of nature’s God; *freedom balanced so that **order lacking liberty** [sic] will not become* the slavery of the prison shell [cell]; *balanced so that **liberty lacking order** will not become* the licence of the mob and of the jungle.”¹⁵³

Here, the passage from the first anaphora (*every action, every word, ...*) to the second one, in which the word *freedom* is repeated several times, is realised through a rhetorical figure that consists in the immediate repetition of the same word, with no other words intervening¹⁵⁴, called **epizeuxis**: *...and that is **freedom – freedom** made orderly....* The locutor proves his art of speaking by enriching this latter anaphora first with another phrase, *... freedom **balanced so that**...*, and then with another rhetorical figure in which the words in one clause are repeated in a reversed order in the next one¹⁵⁵ (this figure is signalled by the words written in bold-face type in the excerpt above). Such a complexity of style in such a condensed space without creating the feeling of over-saturation is the mark of a skilful orator, very persuasive, and, consequently, with undeniable linguistic seductive powers.

¹⁵¹ Lyndon Baines Johnson, 27 November 1963, *Let Us Continue*, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/lbjletuscontinue.html>

¹⁵² *Ibidem*.

¹⁵³ Barry Goldwater, *Speech Accepting the Republican Presidential Nomination*.

¹⁵⁴ The word repeated in this way is emphasized. Cf. Chris Baldick, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

¹⁵⁵ This rhetorical figure is called **antistrophe**. Cf. *Ibidem*, p. 14.

In the next fragment, **lexical repetition** combines with **morphological** and **syntactic repetition** so that the conclusion the speaker draws cannot be refuted:

- 8) “*Yesterday, the Japanese government... launched an attack* against Malaya.
Last night, Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.
Last night, Japanese forces attacked Guam.
Last night, Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Island.
Last night, the Japanese attacked Wake Island.
This morning, the Japanese attacked Midway Island.
Japan has, *therefore*, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves.”¹⁵⁶

The repetition of adverbial phrases of past time and the slightly altered repetition of the same subject and predicate build up a **developed anaphora** with highly seductive effects. The audience is persuaded of the seriousness of the events and they are induced the feelings of anger and of disagreement with the Japanese policy. It would be easier for the speaker to state only the conclusion as a fact and then to enumerate the Pacific locations attacked by the Japanese, but then most of his ability to persuade his listeners would remain un-revealed, and so would the emotional effects of tension and of anxiety that it produces. By speaking of the causes first, the speaker expects the listeners to have drawn the same conclusion as he does by the time he articulates it at the end. What he actually does is lead them to the same conclusion. Therefore, his intention to have them follow him closely and agreeing with him – the prerequisites of a persuasive, thus effective speech – is fully met.

Winston Churchill resorts to **anaphora** when he makes his promises in front of the British people, with the clear intention to incite them to act accordingly:

- 9). “...*we shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end, we shall fight* in France, *we shall fight* on the seas and oceans, *we shall fight* with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, *we shall defend* our Island, whatever the cost may be, *we shall fight* on the beaches, *we shall fight* on the landing grounds, *we shall fight* in the fields and in the streets, *we shall fight* in the hills, *we shall never surrender*...”¹⁵⁷

The emphasised repetition of the same **morpho-syntactic structure**,

S (we) +modal auxiliary (shall) + [negation: (not / never)] + V (fight / go / defend / surrender, etc.),

acquires a great stimulating force for everybody present due to the meanings of the modal auxiliary *shall*. This modal is much stronger than any other modal counterparts, such as *must*, *should*, or *have to*. Whereas these last modals insist only on necessity, *shall* expresses both the speaker’s insistence on the necessity of such actions and his determination to keep his promises. Together with the personal pronoun in the first person plural as their subject, the emphasised modal constructions show W. Churchill’s conviction that all British people will help him to fulfil his pledge. The rhetorical **inciting effect** that these words have on the audience cannot be denied: it would be very difficult for anybody present to decline such a firm and patriotic call for action against the German enemy.

¹⁵⁶ F. D Roosevelt, *Pearl Harbor Speech*.

¹⁵⁷ Winston Churchill, *op. cit.*

A similar example belongs to Tony Blair, whose prominent **anaphorae** based on the repetition of identical structures, *We're (not) fighting*, and *Free (not) to...*, combine with **epizeuxis**: ... to be **free**. **Free** to.... As in example (7) above, this latter repetition makes the passage from the first anaphora to the second very smooth:

10). "*We're not fighting for domination.*

We're not fighting for an American world, though we want a world in which America is at ease.

We're not fighting for Christianity but against religious fanaticism of all kinds.

[...]

*We are fighting for the inalienable right of human kind [...] to be **free**.*

Free to raise a family in love and hope.

Free to earn a living and be rewarded by your own efforts.

Free not to bend your knee to any man in fear.

Free to be you as long as being you does not impair the freedom of others.

That's what we're fighting for."¹⁵⁸

Margaret Thatcher in the following excerpt builds her argument by means of a double-fold **anaphoral syntactic repetition**. The adverbial clause of time is placed before the main clause in three successive parallel sentences, both the subordinate and the main clauses beginning with anaphoric expressions, respectively:

11). "... everywhere those who love liberty *look to* Britain. *When they speak of* parliaments, *they look to* Westminster. *When they speak of* justice, *they look to* our common law. And *when they seek to* regenerate their economies, *they look to* the transformations we British have accomplished."¹⁵⁹

This speaker persuades her listeners that Britain as a whole is the symbol of liberty, justice and economic prosperity as everything about this country has become a symbol:

- Westminster – a symbol of parliamentary democracy and freedom,
- the British common law – the symbol of justice,
- the economic transformations in Britain – an example to be followed in economic regeneration everywhere.

The play upon sounds in the last sentence, where instead of *speak* the assonantal verb *seek* is used, is elegantly integrated in the sonorous material of the whole fragment so that the effect of the anaphora is preserved.

A special type of **anaphora** is illustrated below. This time it is developed at the **semantic level**. Although the emphasised indefinite pronouns differ in form, they all share one major seme - the reference to number two:

12). "*Neither party* expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained.

Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with or even before the conflict itself should cease.

Each looked for an easier triumph and a result less fundamental and astounding.

¹⁵⁸ Tony Blair, *Speech to the U. S. Congress*.

¹⁵⁹ Margaret Thatcher, 12 October 1990, *Leader's Speech*, Bournemouth, <http://www.margaretthatcher.com/display/index.php?action=display&document=6&id=2784>

Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and *each* invokes His aid against the other.”¹⁶⁰

Affirmative or negative, individualising or taking the referents together, the italicised indefinite pronouns, *neither*, *each*, *both*, are the mark of the speaker’s eloquence and care for variation in argument formulation, qualities with outstanding seductive effects.

2.2.6.1.2.2. Epiphora

In contrast to anaphora, **epiphora** is the repetition of the same word or phrase at the end of successive sentences¹⁶¹. Sometimes it is used alone, as in example (1) below, but most of the times it combines with other rhetorical devices, such as **anaphora** and **polyptoton**.

- 1). “...Norman Lamont...has been making some of the most effective *speeches* of all. They’re quite short *speeches*.”¹⁶²
- 2). “This is not just America’s *fight*. This is the world’s *fight*. This is civilization’s *fight*. This is the *fight* of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom.”¹⁶³(the underlined words illustrate the **anaphora** in this example, the italics, the **epiphora**)
- 3). “We must expand *our Party*, heal *our Party*, and unify *our Party*. That is our mission in 1984.”¹⁶⁴
- 4). “Here is where we come to the *Navy* – and after all, *we have a Navy*. Some people seem to forget that *we have a Navy*.”¹⁶⁵
- 5). “Yesterday’s jobs have been replaced by new jobs. Better *jobs*. Cleaner *jobs*.”¹⁶⁶ (the underlined words illustrate the **polyptoton** in this example, the italics, the **epiphora**)

In all the fragments above, the stress laid on the reiterated words and phrases gives the speakers’ argumentation a tinge of determination. The short clauses that ended in this way also contribute to this underlying meaning. In example (5) this determination is doubled by the use of short elliptical sentences. All the italicised **epiphorae** also show that besides being very determined about what they are saying, these speakers shoulder full responsibility for their affirmations, a characteristic with highly persuasive effects which is meant to win their credibility in front of the listeners.

As with anaphora in the preceding section, some locutors seem to have a predilection for the use of **epiphora** as well. The next few examples illustrate this tendency. They are all taken from the same speech of a very productive political orator whose inflammatory speeches have become memorable especially because of his artful manipulation of figures of speech among which **epiphora** stands out clearly. In the first one, only **a word** is emphasised in this way:

¹⁶⁰ A. Lincoln, *op. cit.*

¹⁶¹ This figure is called **epistrophe** in Chris Baldick’s *op. cit.*, p. 85, where the term **epiphora** is not mentioned.

¹⁶² Margaret Thatcher, *op. cit.*

¹⁶³ George W. Bush, *op. cit.*

¹⁶⁴ Jesse Jackson, 18 July 1984, *1984 Democratic National Convention Keynote Address*, San Francisco, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jessejackson1984dnc.htm>

¹⁶⁵ Winston Churchill, 18 June 1940, *Their Finest Hour*, <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/churchill-hour.htm>

¹⁶⁶ Margaret Thatcher, *op. cit.*

6). “So as you can see, brothers and sisters, today – this afternoon, it’s not our intention to discuss *religion*. We’re going to forget *religion*.”¹⁶⁷

However, this politician prefers the repetition of **a whole multi-word phrase**, sometimes of **a whole clause**. His negative feelings about the state of affairs he is referring to gets more and more transparent implicitly, through epiphoral repetition, and explicitly, through the ideas he formulates:

7). “This government has failed us; the government itself has failed us, and the white liberals who have been posing as our friends *have failed us*.”¹⁶⁸ (the underlining marks the repetition of the same clause in a slightly altered form)

8). “So we’re trapped, trapped, double-trapped, triple-trapped. Anywhere we go we find that *we’re trapped*. And every kind of solution that someone comes up with is just another trap.”¹⁶⁹ (the underlined words represent another figure of speech in this example, namely **epizeuxis**)

His verbal vehemence increases even more in the example below:

9). “We need a self program, a do-it – a do-it-yourself philosophy, a do-it-right-now philosophy, a it’s-already-too-late philosophy.”¹⁷⁰

Here, the underlined nonce-word adjectives add savour to the epiphoral repetition of the noun they modify. Their arrangement in this particular cascade-like order contributes significantly to an increase in the emphasis laid on the idea of necessity announced in the first clause. The same is true about the next example, which is more complex in ways that will be discussed shortly:

10). “Think of the image of something *sitting*. An old woman *can sit*. An old man *can sit*. A chump *can sit*. A coward *can sit*. Anything *can sit*. Well you and I *have been sitting* long enough, and it’s time for us to start doing some standing, and some fighting to back that up.”¹⁷¹

The point aimed at by the speaker here is clearly to incite the listeners to action. As a simple imperative would not be enough, he resorts to an empirical ‘demonstration’ signalled by the sentence: *Think of something sitting*. Although on the face of it what follows seems to be an exemplification by particularisation of the action of *sitting* in its primary meaning, this interpretation soon proves to have been completely wrong. The locutor’s intention was no other than to build a series of metaphors around the idea of *his fellows’ humble attitude and lack of initiative*, a characteristic he strongly fights against in his wish to change the present social and political situation. The nouns and the indefinite pronoun that he uses as Subjects in the clauses in which epiphora is present, *old woman*, *old man*, *chump*, *coward*, *anything*, are not randomly used; all of them, arranged in this particular order, refer to a class of people unable to react and to take any initiative due to either their old age, or their mental and emotional state. The indefinite pronoun *anything*, meaning basically *any thing*, adds a last member to this inactive class, that of *inanimate* object, the most

¹⁶⁷ Malcolm X., 12 April 1964, *The Ballot or the Bullet*, Detroit, MI, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/malcolmxballotorbullet.htm>

¹⁶⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷¹ *Ibidem*.

degradable state one can be in. Such a complex though concise formulation of ideas is impossible not to have the inciting effects the locutor is counting on. Moreover, if we consider the tone of voice that such an inflammatory discourse must have been delivered in, the success of this speech cannot be denied.

The effectiveness of both **anaphora** and **epiphora** as much as their power of persuasion is concerned also resides in the strict **pattern** they provide to the listeners' minds, a pattern that consists in the repetition of the same parser in the sentences in which they occur. It is well known that the human brain processes and stocks more easily and more quickly the information provided in a well articulated and familiar form. In the texts in which these stylistic devices are used, this familiar form or pattern is established by the parser of the sentence or clause in which the word or phrase to be repeated from then on is used first: the next sentences or clauses have exactly the same syntactic structure as this matrix parser and this makes the human brain's work easier and the recipients of the message more receptive to the ideas articulated by the speaker.

2.2.6.1.2.3. Polypoton

Polypoton is "a figure of speech in which a partial repetition arises from the use in close proximity of two related words having different forms"¹⁷². In example (5) in the previous section, and in the first three examples below, **polypoton** illustrates the double use in the same sentence of the same noun in the **Nominative** and the **Accusative** cases. Its rhetorical effects in speeches are similar to those rendered by **anaphora** and by **epiphora**: marking the importance of the meaning of a certain word or phrase by repeating it in the same sentence.

- 1). "It is a *dream* deeply rooted in the American *dream*."¹⁷³
- 2). "... and what we shall do is to deserve *victory* and *victory* will be ours."¹⁷⁴
- 3). "...*their destiny* is tied up with *our destiny*. [...] *their freedom* is inextricably bound to *our freedom*."¹⁷⁵

In the last example above, part of the emphasis laid by the speaker on the highlighted nouns is rendered by the use of possessive adjectival modifiers in parallel symmetrical structures: **their destiny** – **our destiny**, **their freedom** – **our freedom**.

In the next example, the last one in this section, **polypoton** is based on the play upon verb forms:

- 5). "We may *agree to agree*; or *agree to disagree* on issues."¹⁷⁶

The rhetorical effect of the two combinations of **short** and **long infinitives** here, as well as the pair of **affirmative** and **negative** infinitive forms, is enhanced by the **consonance** of the sounds group /gr/ so that the whole sentence sounds memorable.

2.2.6.2. Enumeration

By means of **enumeration**, speakers reveal various facets of the ideas they state in order to persuade listeners of the complexity of these ideas. The terms enumerated belong to the same **lexical**

¹⁷² Cf. Chris Baldick, *op. cit.*, p. 199. I consider that not only the visible formal changes should be taken as illustrations of **polypoton**; a change in the **case** of a noun, where no change of form as such is visible in English, can be discussed under this heading, too.

¹⁷³ Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., *op. cit.*

¹⁷⁴ Barry Goldwater, *op. cit.*

¹⁷⁵ *Ibidem.*

¹⁷⁶ Jesse Jackson, *op. cit.*

or **morphological** class, or they have identical **syntactic** structure, but their form as a whole differs. These terms are constituent parts of the same sentence and in writing they are separated by commas. Many times these three types of enumeration are combined so that the cognitive and the emotional effects that the argument achieves be increased.

The examples (1) and (2) below illustrate the way in which the enumeration of noun phrases achieves rhetorical effects when combined with **anaphora**:

1). "There are *laws against fraud, laws against dangerous goods, laws enforcing contracts, laws setting standards for health and safety at work, laws protecting the consumer, laws to prevent monopolies and laws covering private property.*"¹⁷⁷

Although the enumeration of noun-phrases with the same head *laws* consists of seven terms, it is not monotonous; the speaker slightly changes the form of the modifying attributive constructions from **noun-phrases** into **participles** and then into **infinitives** when passing from one term to the next: *laws against fraud / dangerous goods, laws enforcing..., laws protecting..., laws to prevent..., laws to cover....* The skilful way in which she handles the language has an outstanding seductive power on the audience.

Below, J. F. Kennedy uses enumeration at a **morpho-syntactic** level:

2). "Let every nation know ... that we shall *pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe* to assure the survival and the success of liberty."¹⁷⁸

The emphasised phrases in the examples above are of two similar types:

- a). the first two are made up of the Direct Object nouns *price* and *burden*, which are cognates of the verbs *pay* and *bear* respectively;
- b). the other two Direct Object nouns in this series develop a semantic similarity to the verbs they depend on.

The enumeration of these syntactic structures acquires rhetorical force in spite of their cliché-like form. It shows the speaker's determination in the pledge that he makes, determination transmitted to the listeners, who are a constituent part of the subject *we* the speaker refers to.

In the last example above there is also to be noted the lack of conjunctions between coordinate clauses, a rhetorical device known as **asyndeton**. Generally, the **asyndeton** is "a form of verbal compression which consists of the omission of connecting words (usually conjunctions) between clauses", the most common form of which being "the omission of 'and', leaving only a sequence of phrases linked by commas."¹⁷⁹ By means of this rhetorical figure, the speaker displays ideas of the same importance, leaving the impression that there may be other terms in the same line left for the listeners to infer as the string of thought has not come to an end syntactically marked by a coordinative conjunction. The other terms that are not mentioned in the enumeration do have a psychological presence created by the speaker and felt by the listeners.

By the same token we may consider the following excerpts in which **asyndeton** is used similarly, along with various other stylistic devices:

3). "But, in a larger sense, *we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow* this ground."¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Margaret Thatcher, *Fundamentals, Principles & Policies*.

¹⁷⁸ J. F. Kennedy, *op. cit.*

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Chris Baldick, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹⁸⁰ Abraham Lincoln, *The Gettysburg Address*.

- 4). “We’ve seen *the unfurling of flags, the lighting of candles, the giving of blood, the saying of prayers.*”¹⁸¹

In the last example above, the rhetorical effect of **alliteration** combines with that of the juxtaposed morpho-syntactic **enumeration** of Direct Object verbal-noun phrases, all determined by the definite article. These Direct Objects have the same syntactic structure, a feature that makes them memorable: **verbal noun + analytical Genitive**. The nouns in the Genitive case in this fragment are symbolic details that describe the humanitarian help given by the Americans following the WTC catastrophe. The verbal nouns present the actions in full progress as they have not ended yet. All these phonetic, morpho-syntactic and semantic features grant this sentence a great seductive auditory effect on the audience whose members are implicitly encouraged to go on providing their support in the future.

Below, J. F. Kennedy displays his plans for the future and he calls for everybody’s support by enumerating the actions they all have to carry out under the form of **short infinitives** followed by **Direct Objects**:

- 5). “Together, let us *explore the stars, conquer the deserts, eradicate disease, tap the ocean depths, and encourage the arts and commerce.*”¹⁸²

His pledge reveals a very determined person who knows that in order to persuade his listeners he has to make his point in a limited amount of time by using suggestive words that will always be remembered.

Sometimes, **enumeration** acquires an enhanced rhetorical effect when figures of speech are linked in the same sentence, as **metaphors** are in the next example:

- 6). “We Conservatives know [...] that *crime is not a sickness to be cured – it’s a temptation to be resisted, a threat to be deterred, and an evil to be punished.*”¹⁸³

Instead of using modal or imperative constructions, this locutor resorts to a roundabout metaphorical formulation in the passive, leaving the listeners to infer the inciting message behind it. Moreover, by appealing to the audience’s basic instinct of fear and to their religious principles, Margaret Thatcher gives the emphasised metaphors emotional, thus seductive force.

2.2.6.3. Accumulation

Accumulation as a rhetorical device is similar to **enumeration** in that it puts together a number of linguistic structures. However, between the two devices there are some differences. Whereas enumeration links, in the same sentence, structures identical from a morpho-syntactic point of view and similar semantically, **accumulation** may link – for **a remarkable number of times**, at some **distance** from one another in the same linguistic context - a variety of structures that only partially share syntactic and semantic resemblance. However, it may repeat, at regular intervals, the same linguistic structure, a case in which this structure is perceived as a **refrain** in the context in which it occurs. A borderline case between the two may be considered the situation in which a large number of identical structures are enumerated.

The following excerpts illustrate **accumulations of enumerations of various structures** (counting from three to twelve terms):

¹⁸¹ G. W. Bush, *op. cit.*

¹⁸² J. F. Kennedy, *op. cit.*

¹⁸³ Margaret Thatcher, *Leader’s Speech*.

1). “It is not astonishing that, while we are *plowing, planting, and reaping*, using all kinds of mechanical tools, *erecting houses, constructing bridges, building ships, working in metals of brass, iron, copper, silver, and gold*; that while we are *reading, writing and ciphering, acting as clerks, merchants, and secretaries*, having among us *doctors, ministers, poets, authors, editors, orators, and teachers*; that we are engaged in all the enterprises common to other men – *digging gold in California, capturing the whale in the Pacific, feeding sheep and cattle on the hillside, living, moving, acting, thinking, planning, living in families as husbands, wives, and children*, and above all, *confessing and worshipping the Christian God*, and *looking hopefully for life and immortality beyond the grave* – we are called upon to prove that we are men?”¹⁸⁴

The highlighted structures in the excerpt above show that the locutor’s intention is to be highly explicit and persuasive about the black people emancipation ideas that he advances. By providing as many examples as possible illustrating various facets of these ideas in a society dominated by the white men, he expresses his perplexity at the current state of affairs and gives voice to his vehemence against it, and he manages to transmit these feelings to the listeners as well. To show that this practice of persuading by providing lots of examples is a feature of this locutor’s microstyle, another excerpt from the same speech is provided in what follows:

2). “To him [i.e., the American slave] *your celebration* [i.e., the 4th of July] *is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy licence; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mock; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are to him mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy [...]*.”¹⁸⁵

This time the italicised structures are more complex; they are organised in parallel constructions of a metaphorical type: **X is Y**, where every X refers to the white men’s values, and every Y associated with each X refers to the way in which these values are perceived by or affect the black people. The message is clear: the locutor is filled with disgust at the white men’s hypocrisy in celebrating their most important national holiday. His inflammatory tone is meant to shock, to criticise and to incite the white listeners, and therefore to try to make them understand the black people’s pain of not being considered equal to them.

In the next fragment, General Douglas MacArthur shows his predilection for **accumulation**. All the figures of repetition at the morpho-syntactic level are highlighted differently:

3). “**They build** your basic character. **They mold** you for your future roles as the custodians of the nation’s defense. **They make** you strong enough to know when you are weak, and brave enough to face yourself when you are afraid. **They teach** you *to be proud and unbending* in honest failure, **but** humble and gentle in success; *not to substitute* words for actions, *not to seek* the path of comfort, **but** *to face* the stress and spur of difficulty and challenge; *to learn* to stand up in the storm **but** *to have* compassion on those who fail; *to master* yourself before you seek to master others; *to have* a heart that is clean, a goal that is high; *to learn* to laugh, **yet** *never forget* how to weep; *to reach* into the future **yet** *never neglect* the past; *to be serious* **yet** *never to take yourself* too seriously; *to be modest* so that you will remember *the simplicity of true greatness, the open mind of true wisdom, the*

¹⁸⁴ Frederick Douglass, *op. cit.*

¹⁸⁵ *Ibidem.*

meekness of true strength. They give you a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions, a freshness of the deep springs of life, a temperamental predominance of courage over timidity, of an appetite for adventure over love of ease. They create in your heart the sense of wonder, the unfailing hope of what next, and the joy and inspiration of life. They teach you in this way to be an officer and a gentleman.”¹⁸⁶

This excerpt is very rich in accumulations of various structures, such as:

- **infinitives**, long and short, both in the **affirmative** and in the **negative**: *to be proud and unbending, not to substitute, not to seek, to face, to learn, to have, to master, to have, to learn, (never) forget, to reach, (never) neglect, to be serious, (never) to take, to be modest*;

- the same **syntactic structure S (They) + V** (Indicative, Present Tense Simple): *they build, they mold, they make, they teach, they give, they create, they teach*;

- the use of **enumeration** of three to five identical structures: **3 Direct Objects** composed of a **noun + ‘of’ prepositional phrase** in qualifying position, in which the adjective modifying the noun in the prepositional phrase is the same, *true: the simplicity of true greatness, the open mind of true wisdom, the meekness of true strength*; **5 Direct Objects** structurally identical to the previous ones, the prepositional ‘of’ phrase in the last one beginning a pair of more complex structures: *a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, a vigor of the emotions, a freshness of the deep springs of life, a temperamental predominance of courage over timidity, of an appetite for adventure over love of ease*;

- six contrasts following the pattern ... *(not) to...but to / yet...*, in which the underlined words form antonymic pairs: e.g. *to be proud and unbending in... failure, but humble and gentle in success; not to seek the path of comfort, but to face the stress; to learn to laugh yet never forget how to weep; to reach into the future yet never neglect the past*; etc.

All these, together with other stylistic devices present here, are clear marks of a very elaborate style. The locutor is sure to have spent a long time preparing the speech in this highly ornamented manner with the main aim to make his words find the way to the listeners’ minds and hearts, an aim that that is known to have been attained successfully¹⁸⁷.

The next fragment illustrates a special type of accumulation, namely **gradation**. Although rarely used, its stylistic value and seductive qualities cannot be denied:

4). “Then there’s this plan of Labour’s for smaller, more de-centralised government – which would contain *two* brand ministries, *a couple of* new departments of state, *nine* different bodies in each region, *a hundred* new committees, *heaven knows how many* councils and commissions on top, and *a great herd of* great herd [sic; my note] of quangos thundering up Whitehall. *A mere 2012* new bureaucratic bodies in all.”¹⁸⁸

Once again, Margaret Thatcher’s power of linguistic seduction is at work. Criticising sharply the members of the Labour party, the Conservatives’ opposition, she attacks them in a cynical way, showing her utter disapproval of their politics by building her argument on a cascade accumulation of evidence. Although her dismissive and ironical attitude towards the Labour is slightly visible in her announcing the new topic (*Then there’s this plan of Labour’s...*, where the cataphoric use of the demonstrative adjective sounds derogatory), in the beginning the particular pieces of evidence that she mentions seem to be statistically, thus scientifically provided: *two brand ministries, a couple of new departments of state, nine different bodies..., a hundred new committees*. Nevertheless, the

¹⁸⁶ General Douglass MacArthur, *op. cit.*

¹⁸⁷ This speech is considered one of the most beautiful and seductive ones in the history of Anglo-American oratory.

¹⁸⁸ Margaret Thatcher, *op. cit.*

informal language she uses afterwards (*heaven knows how many councils..., and a great herd of quangos...*) signals clearly the note of sharp irony behind her words and makes the listener reinterpret her previous message in the new light. This irony builds up to a climax through the oxymoron in the last sentence: *a mere 2012 new bureaucratic bodies in all*. The whole fragment above is another sample of this speaker's skilfulness at manipulating both language and the people's emotions and opinions.

Gradation is the main figure in the next excerpt, too. This time it takes the form of a **climactic** or **cascade-like demonstration** that accumulates identical sentence-structures in two linguistic chains, arranged logically identically, meant to persuade the listeners of the necessity of serious changes in their actions. According to the locutor, in order to be capable of such profound changes, people have to start with changes in their *philosophy* that lead to changes in their *thought pattern* that, in their turn, lead to changes in their *attitude*, which lead to changes in their *behavioural pattern* so that they take some *action* against the present political situation, discriminatory of the black people against the black ones. It is an illustration of inciting rhetoric, stylistically very seductive:

5). "Once you change your *philosophy*, you change your *thought pattern*. Once you change your *thought pattern*, you change your – *your attitude*. Once you change *your attitude*, it changes your *behaviour pattern* and then you go into some *action*. As long as you have a *sit-down philosophy*, you'll have a *sit-down thought pattern*, and as long as you think that *old sit-down thought* you'll be in some kind of *sit-down action*."¹⁸⁹

Shortly after the beginning of the next fragment, the locutor uses **gradation** as well, but this is a less important device as compared to another one, more prominent here due to the ostentatious repetition of the same structure that it is based on, namely the **refrain**:

6). "Our time has come. Our time has come. Suffering breeds character. Character breeds faith. In the end, faith will not disappoint. Our time has come. Our faith, hope, and dreams will prevail. Our time has come. Weeping has endured for nights, but now joy cometh in the morning. Our time has come. No grave can hold our body down. Our time has come. No lie can live forever. Our time has come. We must leave racial battle ground and come to economic common ground and moral higher ground. America, our time has come. We come from disgrace to amazing grace. Our time has come. Give me your tired, give me your poor, your huddled masses who yearn to breathe free and come November, there will be a change because *our time has come*."¹⁹⁰ (the italics here mark the **refrain**, the underlining marks the **gradation**)

The **refrain** has an advantage similar to that of **anaphora** and **epiphora**: the repetition of the same phrase or sentence, sometimes in a slightly changed form, at usually equal intervals imprints the idea expressed on the minds of the listeners who remain under its influence for a longer time than they would if the same idea were mentioned only once or twice in a less regular pattern. In the fragment above it repeats ten times. In the next one a **compound sentence** (*you are right, but your patch is not big enough*) is repeated seven times in the same form only to make its eighth occurrence in a significantly altered form more prominent:

¹⁸⁹ Malcolm X., *op. cit.*

¹⁹⁰ Jesse Jackson, 18 July 1984, 1984 Democratic National Convention Keynote Address, also known as *The Rainbow Coalition*, San Francisco, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jessejackson1984dnc.htm>

7). “Farmers, you seek fair prices and *you are right* – but you cannot stand alone. *Your patch is not big enough.*

Workers, you fight for fair wages, *you are right* – but *your patch labor is not big enough.*

Women, you seek comparable worth and pay equity, *you are right* – but *your patch is not big enough.*

Women, mothers, who seek Head Start, and day care and prenatal care on the front side of life, relevant jail care and welfare on the back side of life, *you are right* – but *your patch is not big enough.*

Students, you seek scholarship, *you are right*, but *your patch is not big enough.*

Blacks and Hispanics, when we fight for civil rights, *we are right* – but *our patch is not big enough.*

Gays and Lesbians, when you fight against discrimination and a cure for AIDS, *you are right* – but *your patch is not big enough.*

Conservatives and progressives, when you fight for what you believe, right wing, left wing, hawk, dove, *you are right from your point of view*, but *your point view is not enough.*”¹⁹¹

The change in the refrain comes unexpectedly. The locutor builds the **effect of surprise** achieved in the last sentence by referring, step by step, to irrefutable social, political and economic American realities. When she finally attacks the flaws of the current political system, she narrows the scope of her formulation by inserting supplementary comments into the refrain. These specific details require a change in the pattern she has established down to this point, but the refrain is still recognisable and the idea formulated in this way becomes memorable.

John F. Kennedy uses the **refrain** in the next excerpt. At the end he adds an element of surprise as well: his sudden switch from English to German. It is the same refrain he has repeated several times, only formulated in German as he addresses German people:

8). “There are many people in the world who really don’t understand, or say they don’t, what is the great issue between the free world and the Communist world.

Let them come to Berlin.

There are some who say [...] that communism is the wave of the future.

Let them come to Berlin.

And there are some who say, in Europe and elsewhere, we can work with the Communists.

Let them come to Berlin.

And there are even a few who say that it is true that communism is an evil system, but it permits us to make economic progress.

Lass’ sie nach Berlin kommen.

Let them come to Berlin.”¹⁹²

The semantics of the refrain here is very artfully handled. In all its occurrences, its meaning is: “What other people believe or say is not true, and this is obvious here, in Berlin.” Instead of uttering negative statements every time he refutes an idea, he uses this refrain, less negative in formulation but richer in rhetorical effects.

¹⁹¹ *Idem*, 19 July 1988, 1988 Democratic National Convention Address, Omni Coliseum, Atlanta, GA, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jessejackson1988dnc.htm>

¹⁹² John F. Kennedy, 26 June 1963, *Ich bin ein Berliner*, West Berlin, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkberliner.html>

2.2.6.4. The Superlative Value of Adjectives and Adverbs in the Positive and the Comparative Degrees

In order to persuade listeners by seducing them through words, speakers also resort to **superlative constructions**. The rhetorical effect of such formulations resides in the **intensification of meaning** that the so modified parts of speech - such as nouns and verbs - acquire in the contexts in which superlatives are used.

When pointing out the seriousness or the greatness of certain events, states of affairs, even emotions, speakers frequently use **adjectives in the positive degree of comparison** with a **superlative value**. Sometimes these parts of speech have an inherent [+ Superlative] meaning, i.e. they do not have forms for the comparative and the superlative degrees (e.g. *absolute, awesome, colossal, disastrous, enormous, historic, immortal, maximum, perfect, unparalleled, unprecedented*, etc.). Others are regular adjectives that may form the comparative and the superlative after the usual rules of the language, but they acquire this meaning in the context in which they are used (e. g. *deep, grand, profoundly*, etc.).

The following examples of such structures, alphabetically arranged, have been taken from the political speeches quoted in the preceding sections:

- *absolute* nonsense / God
- *awesome* responsibility
- have *bitterly* fought
- *colossal* investment
- *deep* humility
- *disastrous* economic policies
- *enormous* admiration/ changes/ interest
- *grand* distinction
- *great* American / changes / convention / differences / distinction / endeavour / honor / land / nation / praise / progress / spokeswoman / sympathy; a *great* wrong
- *historic* battles
- *immortal* words and works
- *magnificent* hall
- *massive* rise
- *maximum* power
- *mighty* voice
- *perfect* day
- *profoundly* grateful / touched
- *terrific* welcome
- *tremendous* pride
- *tremendously* impressive thing
- *unanimous* determination
- *unparalleled* prosperity
- *unprecedented* compact
- *vital* part
- *wonderful* Republican / state

These adjectives and adverbs come in handy when the speaker intends to describe in a very few words a most colourful and impressive image that can be quickly grasped by the listeners. The intonation is of much help when pointing them out. There is the danger, however, of overusing them and consequently they may lose their vitality and turn into boring, if not annoying, clichés that can be more harmful than helpful to the impression that the locutor leaves on the listener.

The **comparative degree** of both **adjectives** and **adverbs** may develop an **absolute superlative function** if skilfully integrated in the sentence in which they are employed, as illustrated in the next few fragments taken from Margaret Thatcher's speech *Vote of No Confidence*. Here, the skilful locutor uses the structure below, which contains a comparative adjective or adverb to insist on Britain's uniqueness in the world:

COMPARATIVE DEGREE of ADJ. / ADV. + THAN + ANY (OTHER)

- 1). "Our stewardship of the public finances has been **better than that of any Government** for nearly 50 years."
- 2). "The fact is that Britain has done **more** to shape the Community over the past 11 years **than any other member state**."
- 3). "We have done **more than any other Government** to resist protectionism..."

Although in the next example from the same speech this structure is not used in exactly same form, its meaning is the same, only the word order has been changed due to, probably, a need for variation of linguistic formulation:

- 4). "...**no other member state** has gone **further than Britain** in tabling proposals for the next stage, including the ecu."¹⁹³ (Paraphrase: *Britain has gone further than any other member state*)

The highlighted formally comparative constructions acquire superlative value by comparing one item in a class with all the other items in the same class taken **individually**. If the speaker used the superlative directly, she would not have the possibility to mention the other term of comparison against which the compared term stands out as an **individual** unit. That is to say that if she tried to put (3) above in the superlative, it would sound like: *We have done the most of all Governments to resist protectionism*. By using the comparative construction, she insists both on the *individuality* of *Britain* and that of *any other state*, individuality in which she truly believes and for whose preservation she militates.

2.2.7. Intertextuality as a Rhetorical Device

According to Chris Baldick's *Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms*, the term **intertextuality** was "coined by Julia Kristeva to designate the various relationships that a given text¹⁹⁴ may have with other texts", relationships that "include *anagram, allusion, adaptation, translation, parody, pastiche, imitation*, and other kinds of transformation". He further adds that "The term **intertext** has been used variously for a text drawing on other texts, for a text thus drawn upon, and for the relationship between both."¹⁹⁵

As compared to these definitions, Michael Riffaterre is more specific when he defines the notion of **intertext** as "one or more texts which the reader must know in order to understand the work of literature in terms of its overall significance."¹⁹⁶ He suggests that in a work of literature the author

²¹³ Margaret Thatcher, *Vote of No Confidence*.

¹⁹⁴ I.e. a specific written work chosen as the object of analysis. Cf. Chris Baldick, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

¹⁹⁵ *Idem*, p. 128.

¹⁹⁶ Michael Riffaterre, "Compulsory Reader Response", in Michael Worton and Judith Still (eds.), 1990, *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, Manchester: Manchester U. P., pp. 56 – 78, *apud*. Stephen N Matsuba, *The Play of Reason and Discourse: Intertextual Theory, Cognitive Science, Computational Linguistics, and*

may use some references, such as **quotations** and **allusions** to other previous texts, references that have to be detected and deciphered by the reader in order to grasp the overall meaning of the text.

I consider that such references may occur in any type of text or discourse, either spoken or written, of any length, not only in works of literature. For instance, in everyday conversation, in a very short sentence such as “You are my *Juliet*”, the addressee has to detect the allusion to the Shakespearean story if she is to understand what the speaker means.

In this section I will approach the concept of **intertextuality** to describe the connection between an **allusive text**¹⁹⁷ and the **referent text**¹⁹⁸ - or **intertext** in Riffaterre’s terminology - that the interpreter has to make in order to understand the message.

The examples for analysis are taken from political speeches. I will point out, in due time, the connections between the **allusive text** and the **referent text** that the locutor, in this case a politician, expects the audience to make, and the possible reasons why **intertextuality** is used. It is worth mentioning that, most of the times, the locutors themselves lead their audience to the interpretation of an allusion they make or of a quotation they give, by incorporating an explanation in their speeches. However, in some cases, the intertextual connections are left for the listeners to find.

2.2.7.1. Quotations

Among the rhetorical devices that politicians employ in their attempt to persuade their audiences, providing **relevant evidence** and building a clear and appealing argumentation are the most important ones. Some of the Gricean **maxims of the co-operative principle of conversation** are applicable here too, even if the political discourse is a monologue; in order to persuade, politicians have to be *clear, brief, orderly, to say the truth* or at least to make their words sound true, to *give the right amount of information* so as to make their point credible, and, more importantly, *not to say something for which they do not have enough evidence*. Sometimes it is very difficult to provide personal details or expertise to support the argument. As people have always looked up to religion and the great minds of history, resorting to **authoritative sources** by means of **quotations** from **the Bible** and other **religious texts**, from famous **political speeches** and **scientific works**, by quoting **words of wisdom**, or **literary texts** written by renowned authors has proved to be a very economical and effective rhetorical device in the art of persuasion. The way in which a certain quotation is approached and integrated in the argument is a matter of each locutor’s ingenuity and oratorical talent.

The examples below illustrate the locutor’s **creativity** in selecting and incorporating quotations in the structure of the argument. The examples analysed are structured in four categories: **quotations from religious texts**, **quotations from political speeches**, **quotations from literary works**, and **quotations from unacknowledged sources**.

2.2.7.1.1. Quotations from Religious Texts

Fragments from religious texts are quoted by political speakers mainly in times of conflict and distress to calm down the spirits, to relieve the pain, and to raise hopes in a more serene future. The authority of God is the strongest authority to the majority of people, and the truth value of His words, expressed in the Holy Bible, is hardly ever questioned. Therefore, they are considered metaphysical truths and are taken for granted: there is no need for the locutor to provide any other earthly or logical explanation.

Identifying Allusions in the Works of Shakespeare, Ph.D Dissertation.

<http://www.ece.uwaterloo.ca/~smatsuba/dissert.html>

¹⁹⁷ *I.e.* a specific text - such as the fragments to be analysed in this section - chosen as the object of analysis, in which direct or implicit references to another text, called here **referent text** or **intertext**, are observable.

¹⁹⁸ *I.e.* the text referred to by the allusive text.

When he speaks about the families of the victims of the W. T. C. catastrophe, George W. Bush knows that their pain is very difficult to heal and tries to comfort them with the help of a psalm which is appropriate for such a situation:

1). "And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in **Psalm 23**: *<Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me.>*"¹⁹⁹

When speaking about the American Civil War that destroys the unity of the nation, Abraham Lincoln proves the absurdity of the war by quoting from the Bible. The quotation in (2) below has a premonitory function, therefore, it is used both as a warning and a threat against future *offences* between the two parties involved, when no other solution to the current political problems has been found:

2). "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other.

The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully.

The Almighty has His own purposes.

<Woe unto the world because of offenses! For it must needs that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!>"²⁰⁰

Credibility and benevolence among the religious audience are the main reasons why Ronald Reagan makes use of religious quotations in his speech as illustrated by the next two fragments. Another reason is to persuade them of the necessity of firm steps in the direction that he suggests:

3). "I know that you've been horrified, as have I, by the resurgence of some hate groups preaching bigotry and prejudice. Use the mighty voice of your pulpits and the powerful standing of your churches to denounce and isolate these hate groups in our midst. **The commandment** given us is clear and simple: *"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."*"²⁰¹

4). "I believe we shall rise to the challenge. I believe that communism is another sad, bizarre chapter in human history whose last -- last pages even now are being written. I believe this because the source of our strength in the quest for human freedom is not material, but spiritual. And because it knows no limitation, it must terrify and ultimately triumph over those who would enslave their fellow man. For in **the words of Isaiah**: *"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increased strength. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary."*"²⁰²

Although slightly inciting and contradictory to the basic meaning of the religious saying that he quotes²⁰³ in the example (3) above, the locutor implies that this inciting attitude is not a matter of

¹⁹⁹ G. W. Bush, *Address Delivered to the Nation*.

²⁰⁰ Abraham Lincoln, *Second Inaugural Address*.

²⁰¹ Ronald Reagan, 8 March 1983, *The Evil Empire. Remarks at the Annual Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ronaldreaganevilempire.htm>

²⁰² *Ibidem*.

²⁰³ The element of contradiction here resides in the fact that the saying "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" is invoked whenever *tolerance* for those who are different from you, who think differently and have different values, is the matter of discussion, whereas the right attitude that the audience, made up of religious people, are suggested to adopt here is quite the opposite.

personal opinion: it is justified by the Bible itself in one of the Ten Commandments that God gave people to obey. Therefore, the listeners are skilfully led to the conclusion that he is right. The metaphorical *words of Isaiah* in the example (4) are used as an incentive to persuade the listeners to adopt the locutor's attitude towards the totalitarian regimes referred to in the speech.

The fragment below is taken from a speech given by J. F. Kennedy on topics of great concern to the American people: *peace* and *the human rights*. As *peace* is a notion that falls into the category of abstract and vague terms, it is not very easy to speak persuasively about it without sounding demagogical, patronising, or prescriptive; the word of *the Scriptures* is resorted to as a means of pointing out the universality of such human concern. The way in which *peace* is related to the other issue, that of the *human rights*, is the creativity aspect the locutor contributes to the development of his argument:

5). "All this is not unrelated to world peace. "*When a man's way[s] please the Lord,*" **the Scriptures** tell us, "*he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*" And is not peace, in the last analysis, basically a matter of human rights: the right to live out our lives without fear of devastation; the right to breathe air as nature provided it; the right of future generations to a healthy existence?"²⁰⁴

The *human rights* are the main issue approached by President Bill Clinton in the speech the following extended fragment is taken from. The predilection for this rhetorical device - signalled by the frequent use he makes of religious quotations and paraphrases of Biblical sayings in close vicinity in the same speech - shows clearly that this locutor is convinced of its impact on the listeners. One such quote of or allusion to a Biblical teaching is used by the locutor at the end of each paragraph as a way of diminishing the inciting sounding of the previous words by placing the responsibility for the righteous actions that he suggests in the hands of God's higher authority:

6). "To all my fellow Americans beyond this hall, I say, one thing we owe those who have sacrificed is the duty to purge ourselves of the dark forces which gave rise to this evil. They are forces that threaten our common peace, our freedom, our way of life. Let us teach our children that the God of comfort is also the God of righteousness: *Those who trouble their own house will inherit the wind.*¹ Justice will prevail.

Let us let our own children know that we will stand against the forces of fear. When there is talk of hatred, let us stand up and talk against it. When there is talk of violence, let us stand up and talk against it. In the face of death, let us honor life. As **St. Paul** admonished us, *Let us "not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."*²

Yesterday, Hillary and I had the privilege of speaking with some children of other federal employees - children like those who were lost here. And one little girl said something we will never forget. She said, "We should all plant a tree in memory of the children." So this morning before we got on the plane to come here, at the White House, we planted that tree in honor of the children of Oklahoma. It was a dogwood with its wonderful spring flower and its deep, enduring roots. It embodies *the lesson of the Psalms* -- *that the life of a good person is like a tree whose leaf does not wither.*³ [...] ²⁰⁵

²⁰⁴ John F. Kennedy, 10 June 1963, *American University Commencement Address*.

²⁰⁵ William Jefferson Clinton, *op. cit.*

Each quote / allusion is acknowledged in more detail by the transcriber in the footnotes to the on-line version of the speech at the same Internet address for the reader to identify the referent text. They are provided here in full:

¹Proverbs 11:29 - "He who troubles his own house will inherit the wind, and the fool will be servant to the wise of heart."

Although less frequently, public speakers sometimes quote from religious texts that are very close to the listeners' heart, other than the Bible. In the next example this is what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. does in order to bring hope into the lives of the Black people whose outstanding representative he is:

7). "When we let freedom ring [...] we [...] will be able to join hands and sing in the words of *the old Negro spiritual*, 'Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!'"²⁰⁶

2.2.7.1.2. Quotations from Other Political Speeches

When political speeches have a strong impact on the people, they become authoritative sources for other politicians and public speakers. Parts of them are quoted whenever the locutor considers that their prior circulation accounts for their being self-evident truths with the help of which he can build his own persuasive argument by using fewer, more expressive and authoritative words.

In the example below, the locutor uses this device in order to gain the audience's benevolence: the speaker herself is not a famous public figure, therefore, she introduces herself and her political creed by resorting to a famous figure's words. The mental association the listeners are implicitly invited to make is to put the equal sign between the notoriety of the author whose words she quotes and her own political beliefs:

1). "Ladies and gentlemen of the convention:

My name is Geraldine Ferraro. I stand before you to proclaim tonight: America is the land where dreams can come true for all of us. As I stand before the American people and think of the honor this great convention has bestowed upon me, I recall *the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*, who made America stronger by making America more free. *He said, "Occasionally in life there are moments which cannot be completely explained by words. Their meaning can only be articulated by the inaudible language of the heart."* Tonight is such a moment for me."²⁰⁷

Margaret Thatcher is a very ingenious orator who carefully chooses the right referent text so as her demonstration be pertinent and persuasive.

In the example below, a quotation from Winston Churchill is used as the major premise in a reverted syllogism:

2). "Saddam Hussein took Kuwait by war [...]

This tyrant has taken our people hostage [...]

Mr. President, Saddam Hussein must withdraw from Kuwait and the legitimate government must be restored.

As *Winston Churchill* said in the Thirties:

²Romans 12:21 - "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

³Psalms 1:3 - "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers."

²⁰⁶ Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., *op. cit.*

²⁰⁷ Geraldine Ferraro, *op. cit.*

<If you give in to aggression there will be no end to the humiliation you will have to suffer.>²⁰⁸

If Winston Churchill's words are to be taken for granted – and this is what the locutor expects in the fragment above, as W. Churchill is a prominent British political figure – then the conclusion *Saddam Hussein must withdraw from Kuwait and the legitimate government must be restored* follows logically from it. It is true that the way from this major premise to the conclusion has more than one step and the listener has to make some mental connections himself in order to cover it: If any unopposed aggression leads to sufferance - *and it is only natural that any sufferance has to be eliminated in order for people to be happy* - and Saddam Hussein did this and that – *which are considered types of aggression*²⁰⁹ – then this is what has to happen.

This example can also be interpreted from different other perspectives: the quotation may have been provided in order to reinforce the previous statement, or as a warning of what may happen if firm steps are not taken in this direction.

It is clear that Margaret Thatcher is a very skilful master of words if such a short example is so rich in implications. The way in which she handles this rhetorical device and makes it serve as a launch-pad for her own demonstration is also illustrated below:

3). “In general, however, I recall the words of **Karl Otto Pohl**, former governor of the Bundesbank: <Interest rates should be set according to domestic monetary conditions and the exchange rate should be left to go where it will>. To which I will add: if you fix the exchange rate, then interest rates and domestic monetary conditions go where they will.”²¹⁰

Using a quotation as the basis of an argument, by both agreeing to its truth-value and building a new demonstration around its terms, is very subtle in this example. In fact, what the locutor wants to point out is rendered in her last sentence. Instead of demonstrating - by using ‘self-manufactured’ deductions - the economic mechanisms in point, she uses an expert's opinion, thus making her statement sound true and very convincing in the same time.

The same device of using an expert's opinion at the basis of the argument is employed by Susan B. Anthony in the fragment below. This time, the locutor resorts to a quotation from the Constitution of the United States in order to pick out an authoritative piece of evidence to support the topic idea of her speech:

4). “The preamble of **the Federal Constitution** says:

<We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.>

It was we, the people: not we, the white male citizens; nor yet we, the male citizens: but we, the whole people, who formed the union [...], women as well as men.”²¹¹

In the following examples, the locutor's frequent use of quotations in the same argument is a measure of the rhetorical effect this device is known to acquire in terms of persuasion:

²⁰⁸ Margaret Thatcher, *Leader's Speech*.

²⁰⁹ The words in italics in this sentence are the inferences listeners have to make, basing their deduction on their knowledge of the world.

²¹⁰ Margaret Thatcher, *The International Economy and the New World Order*.

²¹¹ Susan B. Anthony, *op. cit.*

5). “In 1963 **President Kennedy** with his characteristic eloquence and clarity said, “*We want to see a stable Government there,*” carrying on the struggle to maintain its national independence. “*We believe strongly in that. We are not going to withdraw from that effort. In my opinion, for us to withdraw from that effort would mean a collapse not only of South Vietnam but Southeast Asia. So we’re going to stay there.*”

President Eisenhower and **President Johnson** expressed the same conclusion during their terms of office. [...]

Fifty years ago, in this room, and at this very desk, **President Woodrow Wilson** spoke words which caught the imagination of a war-weary world. *He said: “This is the war to end wars.”* His dream for peace after World War I was shattered on the hard reality of great power politics. And Woodrow Wilson died a broken man.”²¹²

The list of notorious political and a few religious figures that shared ideas and ideals the locutor himself intends to make a point about is very long in the next fragment. Their words are quoted and also interpreted by the locutor so as to endorse his personal opinions about the same issues. The locutor here also considers the listeners’ cultural background, as the rhetorical technique he uses resembles the scientific method that the members of the audience are used to: illustrating with reliable acknowledged sources and sound facts the truth value of the theory advanced in a scholarly demonstration. It is another proof of the highly persuasive effect this device can be put to as it increases the listeners’ credibility in the learned locutor’s words. The locutor’s creativity resides in the way in which the commented quotes, though dense and numerous, are integrated in the speech so that they do not bother the audience:

6). “But in saying that, we cannot and should not turn aside from a deeper and more pressing question -- which is whether and how religion should influence government. A generation ago, **a presidential candidate** had to prove his independence of undue religious influence in public life, and he had to do so partly at the insistence of evangelical Protestants. **John Kennedy** said at that time: “*I believe in an America where there is no religious bloc voting of any kind.*” Only twenty years later, **another candidate** was appealing to a[n] evangelical meeting as a religious bloc. **Ronald Reagan** said to 15 thousand evangelicals at the Roundtable in Dallas: “*I know that you can’t endorse me. I want you to know I endorse you and what you are doing.*”

[...]

Thomas Jefferson said his proudest achievement was not the presidency, or the writing the Declaration of Independence, but drafting the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom. **He** stated the vision of the first Americans and the First Amendment very clearly: “*The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time.*”

[...]

Those who favor censorship should recall that one of the first books ever burned was the first English translation of the Bible. As **President Eisenhower** warned in 1953, “*Don’t join the book burners...the right to say ideas, the right to record them, and the right to have them accessible to others is unquestioned -- or this isn’t America.*” And if that right is denied, at some future day the torch can be turned against any other book or any other belief. Let us never forget: Today’s Moral Majority could become tomorrow’s persecuted minority.

[...]

²¹² Richard M. Nixon, 3 November 1969, *The Great Silent Majority*,
<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speechesrichardnixongreatsilentmajority.html>

Pluralism obviously does not and cannot mean that all of them are right; but it does mean that there are areas where government cannot and should not decide what it is wrong to believe, to think, to read, and to do. As **Professor Larry Tribe**, one of the nation's leading constitutional scholars has written, "*Law in a non-theocratic state cannot measure religious truth, nor can the state impose it.*"

President Kennedy, who said that "*no religious body should seek to impose its will,*" also urged religious leaders to state their views and give their commitment when the public debate involved ethical issues. In drawing the line between imposed will and essential witness, we keep church and state separate, and at the same time we recognize that the City of God should speak to the civic duties of men and women.

[...]

Let me offer another illustration. **Dr. Falwell** has written -- and I quote: "*To stand against Israel is to stand against God.*" Now there is no one in the Senate who has stood more firmly for Israel than I have. Yet, I do not doubt the faith of those on the other side. Their error is not one of religion, but of policy. And I hope to be able to persuade them that they are wrong in terms of both America's interest and the justice of Israel's cause.

[...]

Where it is right to apply moral values to public life, let all of us avoid the temptation to be self-righteous and absolutely certain of ourselves. And if that temptation ever comes, let us recall **Winston Churchill's** humbling description of an intolerant and inflexible colleague: "*There but for the grace of God goes God.*"

[...]

And it does not advance the debate to contend that the arms race is more divine punishment than human problem, or that in any event, the final days are near. As **Pope John** said two decades ago, at the opening of the Second Vatican Council: "*We must beware of those who burn with zeal, but are not endowed with much sense... we must disagree with the prophets of doom, who are always forecasting disasters, as though the end of the earth was at hand.*" The message which echoes across the years is very clear: The earth is still here; and if we wish to keep it, a prophecy of doom is no alternative to a policy of arms control.

[...]

Twenty years ago this fall, in New York City, President Kennedy met for the last time with a Protestant assembly. [...] Now, three years later, in November of 1963, he was appearing before the Protestant Council of New York City to reaffirm what he regarded as some fundamental truths. On that occasion, **John Kennedy** said: "*The family of man is not limited to a single race or religion, to a single city, or country...the family of man is nearly 3 billion strong. Most of its members are not white and most of them are not Christian.*" And as **President Kennedy** reflected on that reality, he restated an ideal for which he had lived his life -- that "*the members of this family should be at peace with one another*".

[...]

That ideal shines across all the generations of our history and all the ages of our faith, carrying with it the most ancient dream. For as **the Apostle Paul** wrote long ago in Romans: "*If it be possible, as much as it lieth in you, live peaceable with all men.*"²¹³

Criticising publicly one's political views is a difficult task for a politician. Speaking against a famous figure that may be very popular among the audience requires a careful choice of words as such an attitude may cause the locutor's losing credibility in front of those who dislike negative

²¹³ Edward M. Kennedy, 3 October 1983, *Truth and Tolerance in America*, Liberty Baptist College, Lynchburg, VA, <http://www.americanrhretoric.com/speeches/tedkennedytruth&tolerance.htm>

politics. In the next fragment, Ted Kennedy's intention is to demolish Ronald Reagan's political views and tactics by speaking highly of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and avoiding direct attacks.

7). "The Grand Old Party thinks it has found a great new trick, but 40 years ago an earlier generation of Republicans attempted the same trick. And **Franklin Roosevelt** himself replied, "*Most Republican leaders have bitterly fought and blocked the forward surge of average men and women in their pursuit of happiness. Let us not be deluded that overnight those leaders have suddenly become the friends of average men and women.*"

"You know," he continued, "*very few of us are that gullible.*" And four years later when the Republicans tried that trick again, **Franklin Roosevelt** asked, "*Can the Old Guard pass itself off as the New Deal? I think not. We have all seen many marvelous stunts in the circus, but no performing elephant could turn a handspring without falling flat on its back.*"

[...]

And the same Republicans who are invoking Franklin Roosevelt have nominated **a man** who said in 1976, and these are his exact words, "*Fascism was really the basis of the New Deal.*" And **that nominee whose name is Ronald Reagan** has no right to quote Franklin Delano Roosevelt."²¹⁴

The argumentation here is endorsed with quotes from F. D. Roosevelt's speeches - whose political creed the locutor agrees to - leaving the audience to infer his negative attitude towards the target of his criticism and indirectly trying to make them embrace his attitude and opinion. What the locutor implies in this fragment can be read between the lines and rephrased as "I, Ted Kennedy, fully agree with what Franklin Roosevelt said about the Republicans. Had it not been said by Franklin Roosevelt before, this is what I would say about Ronald Reagan's political attitude. As Roosevelt expressed it so clearly, I choose to quote him instead of attacking Reagan".

2.2.7.1.3. Literary Quotations

The good poets and writers of fiction have long been considered among the brightest minds of the world. Their authority in this respect is impossible to deny. Therefore, literature is a vast source of wisdom to which people turn in their attempt to find answers in all ways of life.

Politicians too are aware of this and they sometimes use literary evidence in their argumentation. As the **ancient Greeks** are the beacon of universal spiritual culture, both in terms of literature and of philosophy, they are referred to and quoted in various public speeches. Their words are taken for granted due to various reasons: their works are known throughout the world (the principle of fame), these works are very old and have survived the passing of time (the principle of old age or seniority) and have also been referred to as valuable in the majority of works along the history of the human kind. In addition to these, referring to them is considered a sign of erudition. The same is true about any other famous writer who contributed to the development of the spiritual culture of the world: as the spatial conceptual metaphor *ERUDITION is UP* is universally present in the human brain, the practice of resorting to the words of a famous, therefore, more credible figure, to replace one's own words is very likely to ensure the locutor's credibility among listeners or readers.

Being loaded with so many positive and highly valued connotations, it is easy to understand why public speakers resort to this rhetorical device. Robert F. Kennedy in the fragment below uses this device when he delivers his speech on the death of Reverend Martin Luther King, who has just been assassinated:

²¹⁴ Ted Kennedy, *op. cit.*

1). “My favorite poet was **Aeschylus**. He once wrote: ‘*Even in our sleep, pain which we cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart, until, in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God*’.

What we need in the United States is not division [...] is not violence [...] but is love and wisdom, and the compassion to one another. [...]

Let us dedicate ourselves to what **the Greeks** wrote so many years ago: to tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world.”²¹⁵

The quote from Aeschylus is used here by R. F. Kennedy as a means of backing up his own argument with reliable evidence: if people do not believe in the truth value of his own words, even though he is a prominent contemporary political figure, if they have not believed in Martin Luther King’s similar principles, they may believe in the Greeks’ formulation that states the same principles.

The literary quotations inserted in the public speeches may provide the audience a *model of thinking*, rather than a base for logical inferences, as in the next example:

2). “Mr President, this year the world seems to have relieved the opening sentence of **A Tale of Two Cities** <*It was the best of times, it was the worst of times*>.

The worst of times as a tyrant [Saddam Hussein] struck down a small country that stands at the gate-way to the Gulf; *the best of times* as tyranny crumbled and freedom triumphed across the continent of Europe.”²¹⁶

Here, Margaret Thatcher uses a literary quotation in order to present, in a few words, the universal current state of affairs. The locutor’s structural ingenuity in this fragment resides in her skilful construction of the argument by elaborating on the reverted order of the key phrases in the quote – *the worst of times* with *the best of times*. In this way she gets very concise in her formulation and she also adds a note of optimism to the sad war-news about Saddam Hussein. As a result, at the end of this short argument, the listener is left with the optimistic idea that the end of tyranny in Europe is a sign of its end and of the triumph of freedom throughout the world, including Iraq and Kuwait, even though these ideas are not overtly expressed and can only be read between the lines. As far as her rhetorical ingenuity is concerned, there should be noted that in e.g. (2) the locutor does not mention the author of the quote she uses, as it is usually done by those who resort to such a rhetorical device in their speeches. A possible explanation to this may be that Margaret Thatcher, as well as other orators, omits the ‘redundant’ information – in this case the name of the famous Charles Dickens – as a way of showing respect to the listeners’ cultural background. This gives both the speech and the orator who is delivering it more of the audience’s benevolence.

The same famous work of literature is referred to in the next fragment with the purpose to refute a politician’s statement:

3). “**The President** said that he didn't understand that fear. He said, “*Why, this country is a shining city on a hill.*” And the President is right. In many ways we are a shining city on a hill. [...]

In fact, Mr. President, this is a nation -- Mr. President, you ought to know that this nation is more a “*Tale of Two Cities*” than it is just a “*Shining City on a Hill.*””²¹⁷

²¹⁵ Robert F. Kennedy, 1968, *On the Death of Martin Luther King*, <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/rfk.htm>

²¹⁶ Margaret Thatcher, *op. cit.*

²¹⁷ Mario Cuomo, 16 July 1984, *1984 Democratic National Convention Keynote. A Tale of Two Cities*, San Francisco, <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mariocuomo1984dnc.htm>

In the following example one of Oscar Wilde's aphorisms gives the locutor the possibility to avoid making overt critical remarks about her own country and her people. Even if she does not use entirely the same device as in the fragment above, as she actually mentions the name of the author whose words she quotes, Margaret Thatcher does not pay less respect to the listeners' power of mental processing of information; they actually need to use some cognitive mechanisms in order to grasp the beauty of the phrasing, thus the entire meaning of the message:

- 4). "<Experience>, said **Oscar Wilde**, <is the name we give to our mistakes.> And the conclusion to be drawn from our experience [...] is that governments should commit themselves to price stability [...]"²¹⁸

Margaret Thatcher's sound command of the language and of Logic enables her to find a very civil, harmless, in a word, *euphemistic* way of getting an unpleasant message through. Oscar Wilde's aphorism can be visualized mathematically, as well as using the propositional language of Logics, as an $A = B$ formula, where **A** stands for *experience* and **B** for *our mistakes*. Linguistically, it is a metaphorical definition of *experience* in terms of *our mistakes*. Given that any mathematical formula of equality is commutative, this aphorism can also be understood as a metaphorical definition of *our mistakes* in terms of *experience*, in other words $B = A$. This is made possible by the fact that the quality of being commutative that a formula of equality shares is deeply rooted in the cognitive mechanisms of the human brain. This quality of being commutative has a strong natural influence on the two-way understanding of such a situation. That is why when in the next sentence Margaret Thatcher chooses to speak of the term that has positive connotations in this aphorism, i.e. *our experience*, the meaning of the negative one that was mentioned in the previous linguistic context, i.e. *mistakes*, lingers in the listeners' head. The *implicature* of what Margaret Thatcher is saying is: "Our governments have not committed themselves to price stability so far. This has been a *big mistake* that has contributed to our *bitter experience* of life and we do not want it repeated in the future." As such a formulation in the negative would be highly offensive to the members of the governments she is speaking of, the 'trick' of playing with the listeners' minds in the good sense of the phrase, by inviting them to make all these mental connections and by focusing on the positive direction of saying what is to be done rather than what has been done wrong, is very seductive and effective. This device of using an affirmative formulation instead of a negative one when commenting on an unpleasant situation or giving advice indirectly is considered very encouraging to the target people; the negative one would be judgmental and a direct piece of advice, too imposing, both of them prone to revolt or refusal.

The next example illustrates once more some public speakers' predilection for quotes and paraphrases of illustrious writers' words, a practice that speaks of the locutor's learnedness. Especially with the Black speakers, who had to fight their way onto the political stage in times when the colour of the skin was relevant in politics, learnedness was a highly appreciated quality in a politician. Although in the next fragment the locutor makes grammatical mistakes and uses a mixture of linguistic registers, i. e. the formal and the colloquial ones, his references to men of letters by means of quotes or paraphrases cannot have passed unnoticed to the listeners:

- 5). "Oh, for my members and friends of the press, my self-appointed white critics, I was reading **Mr. Bernard Shaw** two days ago, and I came across a very important quote which I think is most apropos for you. He says, "*All criticism is a[n] autobiography.*" Dig yourself. Okay.

²¹⁸ Margaret Thatcher, *op. cit.*

The philosophers **Camus** and **Sartre** raise the question whether or not a man can condemn himself. The black existentialist philosopher who is pragmatic, **Frantz Fanon**, answered the question. He said that man could not. **Camus** and **Sartre** was [sic!] not. We in SNCC tend to agree with **Camus** and **Sartre**, that a man cannot condemn himself. Were he to condemn himself, he would then have to inflict punishment upon himself. An example would be the Nazis. Any prisoner who -- any of the Nazi prisoners who admitted, after he was caught and incarcerated, that he committed crimes, that he killed all the many people that he killed, he committed suicide. The only ones who were able to stay alive were the ones who never admitted that they committed a crimes [sic!] against people -- that is, the ones who rationalized that Jews were not human beings and deserved to be killed, or that they were only following orders.”²¹⁹

Giving advice to a foreign people from the perspective of a powerful nation may sound patronising from the part of a political speaker visiting that foreign country. As hurting the listeners’ patriotic and personal feelings would make the locutor lose face, advice can be given in a more covert way. Below, there is an illustration of how this can be done by means of a literary quotation:

6). “If today you decide to learn something from British experience, it would not be for the first time. You may recall that *Alexander Pushkin’s Yevgheny Onegin* learned all his knowlegde of political economy from us British. I quote:

<He spurned great poetry and myth/ But how he knew his Adam Smith!/ As an economist profound/ He understood and could expound/ The means by which a state gets wealthy/ And how its livelihood’s controlled./ Smith said it has no need of gold -/ Producing goods will keep it healthy.> So you have a good precedent and some excellent advice!”²²⁰

Quoting from an outstanding and beloved compatriot of the listeners’, the great Russian poet Alexander Pushkin, Margaret Thatcher diverts their attention from the function of the message she transmits – i.e. that of making them follow in the British people’s footsteps in terms of political economy - towards this author’s personality. Usually, such a device is resorted to by orators in order to gain their audience’s benevolence and to persuade them to do what they advise them to in an easier and more pleasant way. Margaret Thatcher is well acquainted with this device and she manages to use it without sounding patronising.

I will end this analysis of quotations from literary texts by giving a humorous example in which this rhetorical device acquires sarcastic undertones. The speaker expresses her utter disapproval of the Liberal Democratic party. But she does this shrewdly:

7). “I gather that during the last few days there have been some ill-natured *jokes* about their new symbol, *a bird of some kind*, adopted by the Liberal Democrats at Blackpool. Politics is a serious business, and one should not lower the tone unduly. So I will say only this of the Liberal Democrat symbol and of the party it symbolises:

<*This is an ex-parrot. It is not merely stunned. It has ceased to be, expired and gone to meet its maker. It is a parrot no more. It has rung down the curtain and joined the choir invisible. This is a late parrot.*>

And now for something completely different...”²²¹

²¹⁹ Stokely Carmichael, October 1966, *Black Power*, Berkeley, CA, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/stokelycarmichaelblackpower.html>

²²⁰ Margaret Thatcher, *Fundamentals, Principles and Policies*.

²²¹ Margaret Thatcher, *Leader’s Speech*.

The joke that Margaret Thatcher quotes here is very famous among the British people. Even though its topic is death, the joke is considered humorous due to the unexpected agglomeration of metaphors on this topic. The inferences the politician lets the listeners draw from her use of this joke suggest her negative attitude towards the Liberals. The source of humour in the fragment above, apart from the joke itself, consists in the apparent contradictions she builds in her argument. She says that *politics is a serious business*, then she starts joking. She says that the tone should not be lowered unduly, then she lowers it. Moreover, by giving an indefinite detail about the Liberal party symbol, *a bird of some kind*, as if she could not remember exactly what bird it is, she shows lack of consideration for this party's values. Altogether, she seems to totally disapprove of anything related to this party. What is most interesting in this fragment is that, although the speaker seems to constantly demolish all the principles she establishes in the first place, she is consistent with them. And this last contradiction is the subtlest source of her sarcastic humour. Being known as a woman of strong principle, it is easy to see that she actually does not lower the tone *unduly* and that behind the joke there is a serious problem she brings about: the Liberal Democrats are gone from the political stage and they have to accept that. As if these were not enough to make her point clear, she abruptly goes to *something completely different*²²², as if this topic did not deserve any more attention. If in some other situations discussed above the same politician proved to be very careful about not hurting anybody's feelings with her words and attitude, this time she hurts the liberal Democrats' feelings on purpose.

2.2.7.1.4. Quotations from Unacknowledged Sources

On many occasions, locutors choose not to provide any details about the origin of the referent text. The reasons why they give quotations without mentioning their author are various: sometimes the referent text is so famous among the listeners that such a detail is not necessary; other times, its author is not known to the audience; other times, greater emphasis is laid on the quote itself as it is the informational content of the words that counts rather than the source; some other times, however, even though the original author of the quoted words may be known by the listeners, the locutor chooses to not popularise his name in order not to humiliate him. This is the motivation behind such an enterprise in the following fragment:

1). "Some years ago, I heard *a speaker* here – *a young man* - deliver the line:

<*Women are the backbone of the Conservative Party. They must be brought to the fore.*> That showed an uncertain knowledge of anatomy, but a very sound grasp of politics."²²³

Speakers who are spiritual in their argumentation are considered very persuasive. By creating a relaxed atmosphere, they attract the listeners' benevolence and attention, and their quality humorous remarks make the message get through more easily. In the last example above, Margaret Thatcher is, at first, bitterly ironical about the author of the words she quotes; mentioning that he was young is another way of saying that she might have thought this an excuse for his not paying

²²² During the discussions that followed my presentation of this issue to the *Messages, Sages, and Ages International Conference* of the "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava, Romania, held on 20th October 2006, Professor Wladislaw Chlopicki from the Jagellonian Catholic University of Krakow, Poland, made a comment that I found very interesting: the phrasing *and now for something completely different* is taken, in this very form, from the Monte Python cartoons, very famous in the Anglo-American world. As the referent text was unknown to me and in the original speech this transitional phrase was not commented and there were used neither specific quotation marks, nor any other kind of highlighting, I could not grasp the allusion to the referent text. Once this reference signalled to me, the passage got richer in humorous undertones. It is clear that Margaret Thatcher's audience did grasp this allusion and tasted its biting effect.

²²³ Margaret Thatcher, *op. cit.*

attention to the form of his argumentation, and the euphemistic understatement *uncertain knowledge of anatomy* shows a certain magisterial compassion for her less experienced colleague. However, when the young man's *sound grasp of politics* is praised, the previous subtle criticism proves to have been not judgmental, but developmental, and her previous ironical criticism turns abruptly into a positive remark.

Sometimes, when the name of the authors of the quoted words are not mentioned, these authors, usually common people, are as unknown to the speakers themselves as they are to the listeners. Such quotes contribute a great deal to the locutors leaving the impression that such common people count to them even more than anybody else. This is a largely used rhetorical technique among the speakers who want to gain credibility among the common people along with their consent and benevolence. In short, it is a rhetorical device with highly persuasive powers. Whether the referent text really exists or not may be relevant only to a very thorough listener who believes only in authentic evidence.

In the next fragment, such a quote whose author's name is irrelevant is used as a starting point for a piece of rhetorical discourse. The fragment is also an illustration of an extended anaphora based on a phrase taken from the quote, a phrase that is underlined in what follows:

2). "It came out in the New York Times the next morning, that if I had merely sneezed, I would have died. Well, about four days later, they allowed me, after the operation, after my chest had been opened, and the blade had been taken out, to move around in the wheel chair in the hospital. They allowed me to read some of the mail that came in, and from all over the states and the world, kind letters came in. I read a few, but one of them I will never forget. I had received one from the President and the Vice-President. I've forgotten what those telegrams said. I'd received a visit and a letter from the Governor of New York, but I've forgotten what that letter said. But there was another letter that came from **a little girl, a young girl** who was **a student at the White Plains High School**. And I looked at that letter, and I'll never forget it. It said simply,

Dear Dr. King,

I am a ninth-grade student at the White Plains High School."

And she said,

While it should not matter, I would like to mention that I'm a white girl. I read in the paper of your misfortune, and of your suffering. And I read that if you had sneezed, you would have died. And I'm simply writing you to say that I'm so happy that you didn't sneeze.

And I want to say tonight -- I want to say tonight that I too am happy that I didn't sneeze. Because if I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been around here in 1960, when students all over the South started sitting-in at lunch counters.[...]

If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been around here in 1961, when we decided to take a ride for freedom and ended segregation in inter-state travel.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been around here in 1962, when Negroes in Albany, Georgia, decided to straighten their backs up. And whenever men and women straighten their backs up, they are going somewhere, because a man can't ride your back unless it is bent.

If I had sneezed -- If I had sneezed I wouldn't have been here in 1963, when the black people of Birmingham, Alabama, aroused the conscience of this nation, and brought into being the Civil Rights Bill.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have had a chance later that year, in August, to try to tell America about a dream that I had had.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been down in Selma, Alabama, to see the great Movement there.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn't have been in Memphis to see a community rally around those brothers and sisters who are suffering.
I'm so happy that I didn't sneeze.²²⁴

In the fragment below, Ronald Reagan speaks about a recent unfortunate event that has affected deeply both the speaker and all the Americans: the Space Shuttle Challenger's unsuccessfully completed mission. He quotes an unknown historian's words about a tragic event similar to that which is the topic of his speech; this offers him a good opportunity to draw an implicit parallel between the two tragedies, the quote he uses sparing him all the explanations he would have to give about the possible mistakes the crew might have made. The quote speaks highly of somebody else's feats, and, by way of **parallelism**, the listeners are led to think highly and compassionately of the victims:

3). "There's a coincidence today. On this day three hundred and ninety years ago, the great explorer Sir Francis Drake died aboard ship off the coast of Panama. In his lifetime the great frontiers were the oceans, and *a historian later said, "He lived by the sea, died on it, and was buried in it."* Well, today, we can say of the Challenger crew: Their dedication was, like Drake's, complete."²²⁵

In the next example, it is clear that the speaker deliberately avoids acknowledging the sources of the quotes he uses in his speech, sources that are known to everybody present: the first one is Lyndon Baines Johnson's speech *The Great Society*, the other quotes belong to this politician's party colleagues who are referred to as *voice(s)* that say things the locutor tries to demolish. The impression that he leaves by his constantly doing so is that of **minimisation** of the political opponent whose political views he disagrees with and, implicitly, of the whole political party this opponent belongs to. This rhetorical effect of minimisation is increased by the locutor's using personal references in the 3rd person plural that mark the intentional distance the locutor places between his political enemy and himself:

4). "In this vote-harvesting time, they use terms like the "*Great Society*," or as we were told a few days ago by the President, we must accept a greater government activity in the affairs of the people. But they've been a little more explicit in the past and among themselves; and all of the things I now will quote have appeared in print. These are not Republican accusations. For example, they have **voices that say**, "*The cold war will end through our acceptance of a not undemocratic socialism.*" **Another voice says**, "*The profit motive has become outmoded. It must be replaced by the incentives of the welfare state.*" Or, "*Our traditional system of individual freedom is incapable of solving the complex problems of the 20th century.*"²²⁶

Generally, when quotes of unspecified origin are used by a public speaker, the common listener does not question the reliability of the source and, therefore, the locutor's truthfulness about it. Some more resistant listeners, however, may have serious doubts about these, a situation in which the locutor should be careful and become more specific about his sources.

²²⁴ Martin Luther King, *I've Been to the Mountaintop*.

²²⁵ Ronald Reagan, *The Space Shuttle "Challenger" Tragedy Address*.

²²⁶ *Idem*, 27 October 1964, *A Time for Choosing*, Los Angeles, CA,
<http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ronaldreaganatimeforchoosing.htm>

2.2.7.2. Allusions

Even if neither the author or the title of the referent text is explicitly mentioned, nor its words are literally quoted, a knowledgeable and careful listener may detect them in the allusive text. Usually, what makes this correlation possible is the **similarity of topic** or of **function** between the **allusive text** and the **referent text**.

The main reason why allusions to renowned texts and authors are made in political speeches is that such a practice contributes to an increase of the locutor's *credibility* in front of the listeners. Showing great respect for the forerunners' memorable words attracts the knowledgeable listeners' respect for an equally knowledgeable locutor. Although in a written text such a practice would be labeled as plagiarism, the fact that a politician does not acknowledge the original author in the allusive text is not a sign of lack of consideration, or of his intention to appropriate somebody else's words; it only means that these words have made history and should be mentioned reverently when a certain context favours it. The locutor is perceived as paying great homage to the person whose words he alludes to. As this attitude is highly praised by the listeners, the allusive text stands great chances to persuade. Moreover, such a practice saves time and the allusive text gains in expressiveness and effectiveness as it is not necessary for the locutor to make lengthy linguistic efforts to demonstrate the truth value of his words: the universally acknowledged truth value of the words alluded to does this for him.

As I will point out in this section, the referent texts alluded more often are those which have made history on the political stage. Among these there can be mentioned: *The Declaration of Independence* and Abraham Lincoln's *The Gettysburg Address*.

In the corpus of texts considered for analysis, *The Declaration of Independence* is more often alluded to than *The Gettysburg Address*. Even the latter alludes to it. This is due to the fact that *The Declaration* speaks more of the values most important to all people: *life, liberty, happiness*.

Here are two fragments from this text:

1). "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that *all men are created equal*, that they are endowed by their Creator with *certain unalienable rights*, that among these are *Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness*."²²⁷

2). "When *in the course of human events*, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another...."²²⁸

This text was at the base of the Constitution of the United States. It is alluded to when the human rights it mentions come under attack as its memorable formulations are very easily accessed by the listeners:

3). "Well, I think it's time we ask ourselves if we still know *the freedoms* that were intended for us by *the Founding Fathers*."²²⁹

Even if in this example the locutor does not repeat any words from the referent text, the two highlighted expressions refer to its general content and to those who wrote it respectively.

In the next three fragments, the allusions to the *Declaration* are transparent as the locutor includes in his argument easily detectible words, phrases and even sentences from it:

²²⁷ *The Declaration of Independence. The Constitution of the United States of America*, United States Department of State, p. 1.

²²⁸ *Ibidem*.

²²⁹ Ronald Reagan, *op. cit.*

4). I hope that every American, regardless of where he lives, will stop and examine his conscience about this and other related incidents. This Nation was founded by men of many nations and backgrounds. It was founded on *the principle that all men are created equal*, and that the rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened.”²³⁰

5). I have come today from the turmoil of your capital to the tranquility of your campus to speak about the future of your country. The purpose of protecting *the life* of our Nation and preserving *the liberty* of our citizens is to *pursue the happiness* of our people.”²³¹

6). “*In the normal course of events*, Presidents come to this chamber to report on the state of the Union.”²³²

Due to the strong influence that the referent text in the subsidiary exerts on the alluding text, in e. g. (6) the President’s first words sound ominous. Not only the situation of tension in which G. W. Bush delivered this speech is similar to that in the times when the *Declaration* was signed, but also its function: people are indirectly requested to defend their liberties now under attack. If the current president may not stand great chances to persuade those present of the necessity for the serious steps towards national defense against terrorism that he is about to ask them to take, the original authors of the allusive words will as nobody could ever deny their authority and well-meant intentions.

Even the British people borrowed the highlighted phrase below from the American *Declaration*:

7). “Freedom is not something which governments can grant to people and take away at will: it is *an unalienable right*.”²³³

This proves the strong impact of the referent text on the people of similar values throughout the world.

The Gettysburg Address, from which I will quote a short fragment below, alludes to the above mentioned text too:

8). “*Four score and seven years ago* our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that *all men are created equal*”.”²³⁴

The idea of equality between people brought to the fore by the *Declaration of Independence* entered literature as well. Memorable in this respect is George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* in which he reveals the unseen political strings that destroy this equality. Even if in the example below Margaret Thatcher’s allusion to Orwell’s novel is very strong, indirectly it reminds of the *Declaration*, whose principles have been broken:

9). “You can forbid families to employ their talents to better their families: but in the end *some will be more equal than others*.”²³⁵

²³⁰ John F. Kennedy, 11 June 1963, *Civil Rights Address*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkcivilrights.htm>

²³¹ Lyndon Baines Johnson, *The Great Society*.

²³² G. W. Bush, 2001, *Freedom and Fear Are at War*, http://douglass.speech.nwu.edu/bush_c01.htm

²³³ Margaret Thatcher, *Fundamentals, Principles and Policies*.

²³⁴ Abraham Lincoln, *The Gettysburg Address*.

In the next fragment, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. uses the linguistic pattern of the first sentence in *The Gettysburg Address* to refer to its author. The implied message transmitted in this way is that Lincoln's personality, which survived through the years due to his deeds and memorable words, is highly praised. This fragment is very expressive as it both refers directly and alludes to the same person, Abraham Lincoln, by repeating the memorable structure attributed to him:

10). "Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light..."²³⁶

The last two examples in this section illustrate a combination of allusion and quoting, this time the referent text being contemporary to the allusive one:

11). "Let any nation know [...] that we shall pay any price [...] to assure the survival and the success of liberty."²³⁷

12). "You and I have the courage to say to our enemies, 'There is a price we will not pay.' There is a point beyond which they must not advance! This is the meaning in the phrase of Barry Goldwater's *peace through strength*."²³⁸

It is possible for both texts above to have used the same set phrase in which the two terms are cognates: *to pay a price*, as this phrase is frequent in everyday verbal communication. But it is also possible for Ronald Reagan to have referred to the J. F. Kennedy's words. Because every new candidate to a high political position has to catch the voters' ears with something new and to their taste while speaking in the same time of realities familiar to them, Ronald Reagan may have chosen the famous words of the late J. F. K. just to show where the stress was laid in Barry Goldwater's politics. It is interesting to notice that this phrase in Reagan's speech has a similar, not opposite, meaning to that in J. F. K.'s, even though it is used in the negative. Both say that peace and liberty will be defended by all means possible. This draws the attention to the fact that in the latter example the indefinite reference of *price* is only apparent: it refers exactly to *peace*. In the previous one this exact reference is impossible as this would undermine the logic of the speech; here *price* stands for the "means" while *liberty* stands for the "end" or "major goal" of J. F. Kennedy's politics.

Quoting and alluding to someone else's words or ideas can be very resourceful and effective in the art of persuasion when the locutor handles them artfully. As long as a referent text is carefully chosen and smoothly incorporated in the locutor's speech, there are higher chances for the allusive text to get across to the listeners.

2.2.8. The Arbitrariness of Truth in Public Speeches

2.2.8.1. A Definition of the Terms

The title of the present section contains a euphemistic expression. In order to explain why such a formulation sounds better than the corresponding straightforward term, **lying**, in what follows I will dwell upon the dictionary definitions of the terms **truth** and **lie**.

Generally, whenever the concept of **lie** is referred to, the concept of **truth** is present in the background. This is to say that, sociologically and philosophically, the phenomenon of **lying** could not exist independently of what is called **truth**. Moreover, the term **lie** is placed not only in a

²³⁵ Margaret Thatcher, *op. cit.*

²³⁶ Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., *op. cit.*

²³⁷ J. F. Kennedy, 20 January 1961, *Inauguration Speech*,
<http://www.geocities.com/Pentagon/Barracks/6106/jfk.html>

²³⁸ Ronald Reagan, *op. cit.*

relationship of semantic opposition, or antonymy, to that of **truth**, but also in a temporal one to it: that of posteriority. This philosophical dependence is deeply rooted in the archetypal collective subconscious²³⁹, thus in the mental-cognitive mechanisms of ontological perception. What is interesting is that this opposition is only one-directional; the concept of **truth** does not necessarily require a direct reference to **lying**. Ontologically speaking, in any situation there could be only one truth, but the number of lies that can be made up around it is practically infinite. This is so as **truth** is understood as a concept rendering the “correspondence between our knowledge and the objective reality”; it is “a faithful representation of the objective reality in the mind”; it refers to “that which has actually happened or actually exists”²⁴⁰.

The **objective reality** cannot be but unique in all its manifestations; psychologically speaking, however, the conceiving of it, in other words, its **representation in the mind** can be done in countless ways, differing from it either partially or totally. When the differences between the objective reality and its representation in the mind are **partial** and not necessarily in a relationship of opposition, but rather in one of complementariness, we tend to use a phrase less categorical in terms of the truth value it encapsulates: **interpretation of reality**. This process is only natural as everybody’s cognitive capacities are different and multidimensional, thus reality can be perceived in as many ways as the number of interpreters. Although this **interpretation of reality** bears the mark of subjectivity, it is essentially made by the interpreter in accordance with the reality s/he relates. When the differences between the interpretation of the objective reality and the corresponding reality are made **intentionally** they affect the very essence of this reality, a case in which we can speak of **lying**. This is what the majority of dictionaries point out when defining the two concepts. The noun **lie** and the act of **lying** refer to “an *intentional* distortion of the truth, with the main purpose of deceiving somebody”²⁴¹, or “something that you say or write that *you know* is untrue”²⁴², or “something that you say or write that is not true and that *you know* is not true”²⁴³ (my emphases). If one considers the emphasised words in these three dictionary definitions, one can draw the conclusion that telling a lie involves a **volitional, intentional act** of veiling or avoiding the pre-existing truth from the part of the speaker or writer. When it comes to authentic, non-literary linguistic discourses, such as public speeches, scientific texts, or newspaper articles analysed from this perspective, the reasons behind these practices are multiple and difficult to pinpoint beyond any trace of doubt most of the times.

The selection of the examples for analysis in this section is made from **non-literary, authentic materials**. There is a good reason for this: in literature the real-world / objective truth is irrelevant; one cannot, and for that matter, need not account for the truth value of the facts presented in literary works. This would ruin the very *raison d’être* of literature. In **political speeches**, in **sermons**, as well as in newspapers, however, people look for facts to count on in everyday life, facts that they can label as true. If they should find out that behind the words they are supposed to take for

²³⁹ Even in the Holy Bible **truth** existed before **lying** and when the first lie was told by the first people to God, they *knew* that they had abdicated the truth because they had eaten from the tree of knowledge. The feeling of shame and guilt that they felt after doing so is a symbol of the **immorality** usually associated with such an act. (For the interpretation of this Biblical event, however, a better term would be that of **amorality**, given the context in which Adam and Eve, acting as children in front of interdictions rather than adults shouldering full responsibility for their acts, made the first mistake in the history of mankind).

²⁴⁰ Cf. *Dicționar Explicativ al Limbii Române*, 1975, București: Editura Academiei, p. 11, *apud*. Traian D. Stănciulescu, “Despre semnele minciunii”, (introductory study), in J. A. Barnes, 1994, *Sociologia minciunii*, Iași: Institutul European, p. 58 (my translation).

²⁴¹ The definition provided by *DEX*, p. 550, *apud*. Traian D. Stănciulescu, *op. cit.*, in J. A. Barnes, *op. cit.*, p. 58 (my translation).

²⁴² *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, p. 815.

²⁴³ *MacMillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*, p. 822.

granted there is even the smallest seed of inaccuracy as far as their truth value²⁴⁴ is concerned, there are high chances for them to lose credibility in such sources in the future or in those who have produced them. This is a risk that politicians, priests and newspaper reporters cannot take overtly, as they would be harshly punished by the public opprobrium and by the law in the same time, in most of the cases.

2.2.8.2. The Logic of Speaking and the Logic of Thinking. Logical Fallacies in Political Speeches

Linguistics and **Logic** as sciences have different objects of study. However, both language and logic share common features. Firstly, they are both products of the human mind. Secondly, logic is articulated and manifests itself by resorting to language. Thirdly, in everyday life a linguistic discourse that does not follow the basic rules of logical thinking can hardly be conceived.

Despite this last feature, there are situations in which there is not a 100% overlapping between the logic of speaking and the logic of thinking. There are people who seem very logical in what they say without this necessarily implying fairness or correctness of thinking. There are also people whose thinking is very logical, still they cannot express themselves accordingly. Manipulative speakers, who persuade by trusting not necessarily in the right argument (i.e., logical articulation of ideas) but in the right word (i.e., skilful choice and use of rhetorical and stylistic devices)²⁴⁵, belong to the former category, to the latter – those who are not endowed with the gift of public speaking.

By analysing somebody's linguistic performance, one can draw conclusions about how logical the speaker is in his process of thinking. Moreover, the manipulative intentions can be detected by an observant eye if there is a visible discrepancy between the logic of the speech and the logic of the underlying thinking process.

One of the issues that this section approaches is that of **the discrepancy between the logic of speaking and that of thinking**. I analyse fragments from a series of famous **political speeches** in which the speakers break the rules of logic and truth in order to put across their own opinions. I consider their doing so an example of **logical fallacy** with manipulative undertones, especially when this is intentional.

Generally, famous politicians try to avoid logical fallacies when they elaborate their speeches before delivery. This is partly due to the fact that they are well aware that their words may circulate later in a written form and their fallacies may be detected, and thus their reputation may suffer great damage. However, I have found a few examples of fallacious argumentation even in some famous speeches.

The fragment below illustrates a genuine logical fallacy. It has been taken from Susan B. Anthony's speech *On Women's Right to Vote* that was delivered in 1873 in USA, after her arrest for casting an illegal vote in the presidential election of 1872, a time when women were not allowed to vote:

- 1) "Webster, Worcester, and Bouvier all define a *citizen* to be a *person in the United States, entitled to vote and hold office*.

²⁴⁴ I use the notion of **truth value** here to refer to the high correspondence between the actual facts and events and the way they are spoken of or written about in non-literary texts, such as political speeches. It is directly related to what is called **objectivity** in common language. When it comes to the **religious truth**, however, **truth value** refers to the so called **dogmatic / metaphysical truth**, that which, when necessary, is proved by recourse to parallels with the word of the Bible. However, the religious truth is usually accepted without questioning its objectivity.

²⁴⁵ Cf. Joseph Conrad's proverbial reference to the art of persuasion, "He who wants to persuade should put his trust not in the right argument, but in the right word. The power of sound has always been greater than the power of sense". <http://en.proverbia.net/citastema.asp?tematica=888&page=3>

The only question left to be settled now is: *are women persons?* And I hardly believe any of our opponents will have the hardihood to say they are not. *Being persons, then, women are citizens*; and no state has a right to make any law, or to enforce any old law, that shall abridge their privileges or immunities.”²⁴⁶

The speaker’s argumentation in the fragment above is based on a **fallacious enthymeme**²⁴⁷ whose **major premise** is the dictionary definition she provides:

citizen = a person in the USA, entitled to vote and hold office

Her question, *are women persons?*, which nobody can ever answer in the negative, is the first logical mistake that she makes in her demonstration²⁴⁸. This mistake, however, leads to a very appealing conclusion, though logically inappropriate to a fine observer: *then, women are citizens*, and implicitly they have the right to vote and to hold office. This is an incorrect conclusion as it is the answer not to the question that she actually asks, but to that *whether women are citizens*. The reasons why she avoids this question are not difficult to infer. First, she should come up with other proofs rather than the definition around which she builds her demonstration, and this would nullify the major premise. Second, the issue she approaches is so important from a social and political point of view, that it is easy both for her and the interested audience to overlook the deep rules of logic behind the grammar of the words.

As a conclusion, what this speaker does is twist words around giving the impression that what she says is logical, thus true. Many people can be persuaded of the rightness of the speaker’s opinion in this way, as they are sure that what is true is always logical. But fewer are aware that what *seems* to be logical is *not always* logical and it is *not always* true. And it is in the people’s ignorance in this respect that orators can find the propitious conditions for manipulation.

The next fragment provides a common type of fallacy, which is based on the use of a **metaphysical statement**, a statement whose truth value cannot be proved by means of factual observation and of logical deduction.²⁴⁹ When provided and accepted as dogmatic truths, such statements can influence people’s opinions, behaviour, emotions, and attitudes.

Basing one’s argument on such statements, one passes one’s own responsibilities to the supreme authority of God. This is what President George W. Bush does in his speech *Freedom & Fear Are at War* when he says:

2) “Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that *God is not neutral between them*.”²⁵⁰

²⁴⁶Susan B. Anthony, *op. cit.*

²⁴⁷ An **enthymeme** is the rhetorical counterpart of a syllogism – the basic logical instrument used in Dialectic. The difference between the two, however, resides in the fact that the enthymeme lacks one of the three parts that form a perfect syllogism: either one of the major or minor premises, or the consequent. Cf. Aristotle, *op. cit.*

²⁴⁸ There may be persons in the U. S. A., as there are in other countries as well, that are not entitled to vote and hold office; children may be considered here. By using the same reasoning pattern as the speaker, and according to the definition provided, if children are persons, which is an irrefutable statement, then there can be inferred that they are citizens, therefore entitled to vote and hold office. Clearly, this is a completely fallacious conclusion.

²⁴⁹ According to John Wilson, metaphysical are “those statements about whose meaning and method of verification we are not agreed, or which [...] seem to have no meaning or method of verification at all. This does not imply, of course, that we can classify them at once as ‘meaningless’, ‘nonsense’, or ‘unverifiable’, and forget about them. [...] we do not yet know what it (i.e. the metaphysical statement; my note) means or how to verify it, and...therefore we must reserve judgment about whether it is true or not”. John Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

²⁵⁰ George Bush, *Address Delivered to the Nation*.

In the aftermath of the WTC catastrophe, people know that *freedom* and *justice* are metonymical terms for *we, Americans, and our democratic values*, whereas *fear* and *cruelty* stand for *they, the terrorists and their oppressive, non-democratic regime*. The metaphysical statement, *God is not neutral between them*, implies that *God is always on the side of freedom and justice in the fight against fear and cruelty*. Therefore, the people addressed are implicitly assured that God is on their side. By invoking God, the speaker induces hope and trust among Americans, who believe in God. Hope and trust is what the president needs among his people in order to make them feel safe and to keep them under control in times of maximum tension.

The fallacies in the examples below consist in the speaker's **providing only one possible cause** for a terrible present effect. The allegedly single cause for the events at WTC (i.e. *the terrorists' regime and their social, political, even religious values, and, consequently, the power they hold in their state may be seriously shaken by our democratic regime and its values if the common people under their leadership get acquainted with what we have here, in America*) is the same in both examples below, though more expanded in the latter. This shows that the speaker is consistent with himself, and by repeating the same thing in different forms he intends to make his listeners assume it as *the only truth*. This is what he wants people to believe. Of course, there may be other causes as well, maybe more important than this, but they are kept away from the public:

3) "America was targeted for attack *because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world.*"²⁵¹

4) "Americans are asking: Why do they hate us?"

They hate what we see right in this chamber – *a democratically elected government*. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate *our freedoms – our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.*"²⁵²

As the people's trustworthy representative, the president knows that they can be touched in their deepest emotions if their most precious national values, such as freedom and prosperity, come under attack. Therefore, they are given what they need: an explanation advantageous both to the politics of the state and to its citizens. The fallacy G. W. Bush uses in the two speeches above is what D. A. Carson names as **reductive fallacy**, which "reduces complexity to simplicity, or diversity to uniformity, in causal explanations."²⁵³ Its manipulative powers reside in the speaker's repeating the same part of the truth while consistently hiding the other less appealing facets of it.

2.2.9. The Peroration – The Place Where Politics and Religion Meet

The **peroration** is the summary of the entire oration at the end of it. It consists of two parts: **the enumeration of the arguments**, i.e. of the ideas dealt with hitherto in a speech, and **the moving of emotions**.²⁵⁴

In the present section I approach the part of the peroration in which the political orator arouses the audience's emotions so that they think, behave, and act in accordance with his intentions.

Politics and **religion** are the human institutions that have exerted the greatest power of persuasion and manipulation upon people along the time. Successful politicians and clergymen have generally been given great credit as visionary representatives of the human race. Their interpretations of past and present facts and their predictions of the future have helped people to understand the

²⁵¹ *Idem, Freedom and Fear Are at War.*

²⁵² *Ibidem.*

²⁵³ D. A. Carson, 1996, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd edition, Grand Rapids, MI, USA, and Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Baker Book House and Paternoster Press, p.133.

²⁵⁴ Cf. Giambattista Vico, *op. cit.*, p.101.

connections between events and their possible outcomes, and they have given them hope in the future. Politicians and clergymen themselves are aware of their power over the others. Their last words in a speech leave a great impression on the audience. It is in the peroration that an orator can make a final appeal to the people's conscience in times of tension when certain attitudes and actions are considered necessary.

Usually, the blessings addressed to the audience, where God's name is mentioned, the thanks addressed to Him and sometimes the appeal to His help and mercy are very short and expressed in the last few sentences of a speech. In such a case, the reference to God has merely a ritualistic function and overlaps with the final thanking-and-taking-leave formula, marking the end of the speech:

1). "Thank you for listening. Good night and *God bless you all*."²⁵⁵

2). "And so I'm happy, tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man! Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of *the Lord!*"²⁵⁶

3). "And on this Thanksgiving eve, as we gather to ask *the Lord's blessing*, and give *Him* our thanks, let us unite in those familiar and cherished words:

America, America,
God shed *His* grace on thee,
And crown thy good
With brotherhood
From sea to shining sea."²⁵⁷

However, the references to divinity may cover more than the last few sentences. In the next fragment, which is the final part of the speech, the locutor makes one final point. By drawing a contrast between the gorgeous gifts that *God* gave to the American people, on the one hand, and some earthly figures who have stolen these gifts from the people to their own benefit and welfare, on the other, the locutor implicitly incites the listeners to action against the culprits. This call to action is realised indirectly by the rhetorical negative conditional clause placed at the end:

4). "Well. Ladies and gentlemen, America, all the people of America have been invited to a barbeque. *God* invited us all to come and eat and drink all we wanted. *He* smiled on our land and we grew crops of plenty to eat and wear. *He* showed us in the earth the iron and other things to make everything we wanted. *He* unfolded to us the secrets of science so that our work might be easy. *God* called: 'Come to my feast!'

Then what happened? Rockefeller, Morgan, and their crowd stepped up and took enough for 120 million people and left only enough for 5 million for all the other 125 million to eat. And so many million must go hungry and without these good things *God* gave us **unless we call on them to put some of it back**."²⁵⁸

In the following excerpt from the peroration of a political speech, George W. Bush combines religion with politics in order to calm down the spirits and to raise hopes in the future:

²⁵⁵ Lyndon Baines Johnson, *Renunciation Speech: On Vietnam and Not Seeking Re-Election*.

²⁵⁶ Martin Luther King, Jr., *op. cit.*

²⁵⁷ Lyndon Baines Johnson, *Let Us Continue*.

²⁵⁸ Huey P. Long, 7 March 1935, *Share Our Wealth*, Broadcast, Washington, D. C., <http://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/hueyplongshare.htm>

5). “America and our friends and allies join with those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism. Tonight I ask for your *prayers* for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all those whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in *Psalms* 23: ‘Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for *You* are with me.’ [...]”

None of us will ever forget this day. Yet, we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world. Thank you. Good night, and *God* bless America.”²⁵⁹

In the sad and dangerous moments the American people go through, the president calms them down by appealing to their sense of compassion for the affected families. In the same time, he raises hopes of a just victory against terrorism assuring people that God is on their side.

Given his awareness of the danger of panic and hatred among his people, President Bush’s recourse to religion is an example of positive manipulation as he invites Americans to common sense, to moderation and to the spiritual values that can keep them under control.

A similar intention is transparent in the peroration of the following Catholic sermon. Here, the priest appeals to the listeners’ empathy for the people in Afghanistan, making them understand that it is not these who terrorise America, but the Taliban in that country. The narration of Biblical events from which listeners can draw conclusions for their own earthly lives is a commonly used method of preaching in Christian churches. Seeing that their misfortunes are less serious or similar to those of other people who suffered in the past or who still suffer in a different part of the world has a psychological relaxing effect. This excerpt provides another illustration of manipulation positively used:

6). “...recent events should prompt all of us to understand just how much our *God* has given us and how we have had Christmas everyday of our lives. As the young girls and the women here read about the mind boggling experiences of the women in Afghanistan, it should prompt tremendous gratitude for the unbelievable gifts *God* has given to all of us. In Afghanistan a woman could be executed for wearing what members of the Taliban considered inappropriate clothing. The men there could be sentenced to death because of the length of their beards. Everyone was deprived of the basic freedoms which we enjoy. Hearing of the conditions under which the normal person lived should prompt us to understand what has been given to us and to motivate us to express gratitude by our actions. Mary and Joseph didn’t just say, ‘Yes *God*, we’ll assume this responsibility but don’t make it too difficult’. They agreed to shoulder their responsibility and endure whatever difficulties that might entail. Certainly the first year or so was difficult but their love of *God* and of *Jesus* paid great dividends.”²⁶⁰

The priest feels the moral obligation to set things clear in order to avoid any confusion and any misdirected act of violence against ordinary people in Afghanistan or against the Afghans in the USA. And he does this in a clever way. He arouses the listeners’ feelings of pity for the Afghan women and men by comparing the hardships in their lives with the Americans’ fortunate destiny. His underlying message is: *we have to thank God for the blessings that he gave us and be sympathetic with the Afghan people whose life is so bad*. The political message in the end is also subtly transmitted: the example of Mary and Joseph’s power of endurance has to be followed in the year to

²⁵⁹ George W. Bush, *op. cit.*

²³⁶ *Fourth Sunday of Advent*, 23 December 2001, Homilies Alive, www.homiliesalive.com, Homily Code: Y-3.

come, a year that will be very difficult for all Americans. But hope and love of God and Jesus will bring them the long desired victory against the country's enemies.

The following example is an illustration of the way in which a politician appeals to the listeners' religious feelings by acting humble and pious:

7). "I thank you for being here. I ask you to share my prayers that *God* will search me and know my heart, try me and know my anxious thoughts, see if there is any hurtfulness in me, and lead me toward the life everlasting. I ask that *God* give me a clean heart, let me walk by faith and not by sight.

I ask once again to be able to love my neighbor – all my neighbors – as myself, to be an instrument of *God's* peace, to let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart and, in the end, the work of my hands, be pleasing.

This is what I wanted to say to you today.

Thank you. *God* bless America."²⁶¹

This is a situation in which the listeners are very difficult to seduce and persuade given their knowledge of the speaker's character and previous behaviour. If it were not for the seriousness of his acts prior to this speech, Bill Clinton's words would sound very seductive and convincing. But under the current circumstances his manipulative intentions are transparent. Not long ago he was vehemently denying all the accusations against him in the Monica Lewinsky affair. Now he has already recognised his guilt. The inconsistency of his declarations has already cast serious doubts on his trustworthiness. Therefore, his peroration may hardly be considered sincere and well-meant. His most pious words that sound like a prayer addressed to God are used here as a means of self-defence in front of a merciless jury whose traditional religious values he has violated. However, these words are not very likely to get his lost credibility back to him. All that he can seek for now is only a milder moral punishment. In all he says he shows submission, repentance, and a wish to improve his conduct as a true Christian, attitudes that are known to attract God's forgiveness. Whether he will be successful in his self-defending plea and his words will move the clergy's feelings and will attract their forgiveness as well are debatable matters not to be approached here. What is important is the locutor's clear intention to influence his audience to act in accordance with his words.

As most people are interested both in politics and in religion, in some of their speeches, audience-aware politicians prove that they are also religious, as well as audience-aware clergymen show that they are well anchored in the socio-political and economic realities of the moment. The **peroration** of a speech is the place where politicians usually appeal to God's blessings, or make references to Him and other issues within the religion's realm. Clergymen may show that they are interested in the current state of a nation's affairs in the peroration as well, but, more often, they do that at the beginning, in the illustration of the sermon.

²⁶¹ Bill Clinton, *op. cit.*

3. Sermons

3.1. The Sermon as Rhetorical Discourse

A **sermon** / **homily** as “a representative genre of religious discourse”²⁶² is “delivered in public usually by a clergyman as part of a worship service”²⁶³, and addresses a Biblical, theological, or religious topic.

There are a number of different types of sermons that differ in their subject matter, in the methods that the preachers may use in their delivery, and in their main aim.

Although there are various classifications that consider the sermon subject matter, all of them mention three major types:

- **Topical sermons**, developed from a Biblical topic, whose main points are supported by various scriptures and the sub-points, by various passages;

- **Textual sermons**, developed from a short passage of 2–3 verses from the Bible, whose main points are developed from this one passage and the sub-points from other passages;

- **Expository sermons**, developed from one extended passage of three or more verses and whose main points and sub-points are developed from the same passage. This type of sermon not only imparts information to the mind, but also seeks to change the hearers’ behaviour. It is addressed not only to their mind, but also to their will. The proper expository preaching requires a rich knowledge of human nature and life experience from the part of the preacher so that he or she be able to apply the text to the lives of the hearers.²⁶⁴

According to the **method of delivery**, sermons differ on the amount of time and effort used to prepare them. This classification includes:

- **Scripted or prewritten sermons**, which involve previous preparation. They are preached with the help of notes or rely on the memory of the preacher;

- **Extemporaneous sermons**, which are preached without notes and sometimes without preparation;

- **Impromptu sermons**, which are preached without any previous preparation²⁶⁵.

The sermons held as part of the religious service throughout the year and others delivered for specific ministry settings, such as weddings and funerals, are usually prewritten. There are situations, much more rare, in which the preacher is supposed to deliver a sermon without previous preparation, especially when unexpected events, such as somebody’s sudden death, do not give him the time for this (this is especially the case of funeral sermons). In such cases, the preacher has to address a few words without losing face. This can be done successfully if he handles well the structure of such a discourse, rhetorical and stylistic devices to ornament his argumentation with, and, equally importantly, if he is spontaneous, charismatic and has oratorical skills.

As for **the structure** of a sermon, this is, in broad lines, the same for all the types mentioned above. It is articulated in four main parts that follow **the title**, which has to be interesting and related to the subject of the sermon. These parts are:

- **The introductory example**, which consists of one or more **anecdotes** (also called **illustrations**, or **stories**²⁶⁶) that either demonstrate the point that the preacher is trying to make or have a strong parallel to the Bible quotation that is the occasion for the sermon. The preacher begins with the example to *awaken the congregation’s interest* and to *draw them into the chosen topic*

²⁶² Maria Nicolescu, “The Rhetoric of the Sermon”, in Horia Hulban (ed.), 2005, *Style in Language, Discourses and Literature III*, Iași: Tehnopress.

²⁶³ Merriam – Webster Dictionary on-line, <http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary>

²⁶⁴ Cf. Jess Hall Jr., December 1996, *Types of Sermons*, http://www.bible-infonet.org/ff/articles/preaching/111_12_01.htm

²⁶⁵ Cf. <http://www.answers.com/topic/sermon>

²⁶⁶ In the present thesis, I choose to call these examples **anticipatory stories** due to their pragmatic function of preparing the listeners mentally and emotionally to receive the message transmitted by the preacher through the text of the sermon.

unawares. Beginning a sermon with an example makes it easier to get started un-abruptly, and many times the listeners will have difficulty figuring out exactly where in the sermon the preaching actually begins;

- **The thesis**, also called **proposition**, which is a single declarative sentence that summarises the eternal truth that the preacher intends to convey in the sermon;

- **The body**, which consists of all the preacher's argumentation about the reasons why *the thesis* is true. This is where the context of the Bible verse, the exegesis of the verse, the original linguistic and cultural setting of the verse and the believability of the story are brought in. It usually begins with an **interrogative sentence**. This is a question that follows naturally from the *thesis* and is answered by the **main points** in the sermon; the link between *the interrogative* and *the main points* is realised by **the transitional sentence**, which uses a keyword, but does not answer *the interrogative*. The **main points** represent the **logical argumentation** which has an *emotional appeal*; it is recommended that the *logical argumentation* should occur naturally and easily to the preacher's mind, and this is the result only of thorough preparation and 'rehearsal', so that it could be *persuasive* for the congregation as well. Various **illustrations** or **stories** are largely used in this part of the sermon as well.

- **The conclusion**, which although is the same as the thesis may be worded differently. It is a brief statement - strictly related to the sermon - that essentially vindicates the thesis. It also challenges the hearers to make a decision or commitment.²⁶⁷

When preparing any sermon, the preacher chooses *the method* knowing exactly *what* he wants the sermon to accomplish, i.e., what its **main aim** or **objective** is. This is a list of possible **main aims** of a sermon:

- **Exegesis**. This is a term used to show that the aim of the sermon is *Biblical interpretation*. The preacher's wish is to *clarify the meaning* of a difficult or misunderstood portion of scripture. The Bible is used as its own best interpreter, other scripture fragments are used to clarify the intent of the passage in question.

- **Exhortation**. This refers to an ethical, social, or devotional teaching whose aim is to *encourage the listeners' improvement in character and commitment to Christ*.

- **Education**. The sermon's aim is to improve the audience's knowledge and comprehension of a particular matter. This aim is also called **doctrinal**.

- **Evidences**. This classification is sometimes called **apologetics**. When this is the main aim, the preacher delivers the sermon in order to justify the belief in something which the Bible itself simply states as fact: e.g., the existence of God, the inspiration of the scriptures, miracles, creation, resurrection, heaven and hell, the devil, etc.

- **Evangelism**. Evangelical or gospel sermons attempt to persuade the non-Christian to believe in Christ and obey Him.²⁶⁸

The corpus of texts used in this section consists of fragments of sermons available on the Internet in their written form. Therefore, they fall into the category of **deliberate preaching**, or **scripted sermons**. The sermon **subject matter** is not a criterion relevant for the selection of my examples. No matter what this may be, the sermon **method of delivery** is the one that counts most, as it involves the locutor's being careful about how to organise the material in advance –i.e., what structure to give the sermon - and what **rhetorical** and **stylistic devices** to employ in order to achieve the expected effects on the religious listeners. This is exactly what experienced preachers as Jess Hall Jr. state: as "people listen psychologically", "the wise preacher does not neglect **methods** and **tools** that assist him in acquiring his hearers' *attention* and *heightening their anticipation* to hear the

²⁶⁷ Cf. Ken W. Collin, *How to Speak Extemporaneously*, <http://www.kencollins.com/how-13.htm>
Also *Sermon Preparation*, <https://www.globaluniversity.edu/courses/bsb/PTH323/sermonprep.ppt>

²⁶⁸ Cf. Ron Graham, 2004, *Success in the Pulpit. Training Teachers, Preachers, and Worship Leaders*.
<http://www.ansonic.com.au/sggram/f517.htm>

Word.²⁶⁹, where the word *tool* includes - apart from the preacher's charismatic attitude described by appropriate tone of voice and body language - the linguistic ornaments as well.

The analysis of the examples in this section focuses mainly on these linguistic ornaments, which are the same **rhetorical** and **stylistic devices** tackled previously in the analysis of political speeches. These are also frequently used by a religious locutor in his attempt to manipulate the audience by stimulating them psychologically and to get the message of the sermon across: **the collateral circumstances, the anticipatory story, amplification in argumentation** - with emphasis on various types of **repetition** at the **phonetic, morphological** and **syntactic** levels, **enumeration**, and **accumulation**. The topic of **logical fallacies** is included in a two-part section: **Clarity - a Prerequisite for an Effective Sermon** and is followed by the section **Metalingual Explanations: Etymological and Dictionary Definitions, Paraphrasing, Illustrating with Examples**, a topic that was not discussed in the preceding part on political speeches because there the device in point has a rather low frequency.

As with the political speeches, these devices are arranged in the same order except for **the anticipatory story** and **the collateral circumstances**. There is a good reason for this inversion: in sermons **the anticipatory story** is far more frequently used to begin with than in the political speeches, therefore, in this section it is approached before the **collateral circumstances**. The psychological effects exerted on the listeners and the locutor's psychology in terms of emotions, possible intentions and attitudes both towards the informational content of the sermon and towards the listeners are described in each example or group of examples in close connection with the device employed in each case in turn.

3.2. The Anticipatory Story

Comparing it to the **collateral circumstances** rhetorical device, which is the predominant device employed at the beginning of the political speeches, the **anticipatory story** - a rhetorical artifice with highly persuasive potential - is more largely used at the beginning of sermons. As the universal truths of the spiritual events and concepts in the scriptures are very often difficult to sift, and, therefore, to understand and internalise by the common believers without the preacher's help, these truths have to be made available in a way that facilitates understanding. Very often, this help takes the form of **stories** or **illustrations** that are inserted anywhere in a sermon, whenever the need for clarification by concrete illustration requires it. The **anticipatory story** is an **illustration** used as the concrete example at the beginning of the sermon.

The table in the **Annexe 2** illustrates in more detail the wide range of possible **categories of topics** that are used by this device in **sermons** (94 categories of topics of stories or illustrations are provided by the Internet source²⁷⁰). It also shows the frequency with which these topics occur in this type of public discourse. These categories cover topics from the most expected ones in the religious context of the church, due to their **purely religious** nature (e.g. *the teachings of the Holy Bible, the Creation, the Church, cults, Jesus Christ's life, death and resurrection, His miracles, His teachings, Christian values, God and His work, Faith, religious holidays such as Easter, Christmas, religious figures in the Old and the New Testament, parables, prayer, sin, temptation, the ten commandments, the twelve Apostles, world religions, worship, etc.*) to those related to **everyday life and concerns** (e.g. *abortion, addiction, children, communication, divorce, emotions, entertainment, family, freedom, friendship, fund-raising rallies, love, marriage, money, men and women, parenting, poverty, racism, sexuality, singleness, truth, weddings, workplace issues etc.*). In their attempt to keep the pace with the latest people's preoccupations especially in the spiritual life, the religious locutors approach some **very new topics**, usually controversial, that have but recently entered the scientific

²⁶⁹ Jess Hall Jr., *op. cit.*

²⁷⁰ I.e. www.sermoncentral.com

and the religious debates: *Da Vinci Code*, *Narnia*, *the paranormal*. This permanent renewal of the topics is caused by the fact that people try to find in the Church they attend the answers to the debatable issues that may confuse a common believer.

The illustrations in the **Annexe 2** are also grouped according to the general **contents-type description**: some of them are **humorous**, others allude to the narrative of a famous or controversial **movie** or **video film**, the locutor may give accurate **quotes** from well known sources, they may provide **statistics** or tell **stories** either from their personal lives, or from somebody else's.

Given the complexity of the issue, it would be difficult to analyse in all details each type of illustration. Therefore, in the present section I exemplify only some that are used at the beginning of the sermon and whose content in terms of the seductive effect that they may exert on the listeners or readers is outstandingly interesting.

The stories below are taken from sermons in which they play an **anticipatory role**: they psychologically prepare the listeners for the reception of the teachings of the Holy Bible in different ways. Some of them are **real stories** from either the locutor's own experience (first hand experiences), or from some other people's lives; others are **imaginary** creations of the locutor's in his attempt to provide the listeners with a framework for easier reasoning. Considering the major role they play in the listeners' preparation for the argumentation itself, their length is sometimes remarkable.

1). "I remember as a child treasuring these days of August, realising that they were the last precious moments of summer. In early June, the summer seemed almost endless. With three full months of freedom from school and with so many days of baseball, of swimming, of vacation with my Indiana cousins, there seemed no end to the joy of summer. Even in July, the summer seemed substantial and the anxieties about the resumption of school remote. With August, however, the mortality of the summer was all too real. Each day was precious and to be treasured. I remember wishing somehow that I could freeze time so that summer vacation could truly be endless."²⁷¹

In this story, the connection that the priest makes between the old happy days of summer vacation in his childhood and the natural passing of summer towards the Transfiguration holiday is transparent. When listening to the story, the assembly automatically remember the happy days of their own childhood. In this way, they relax and get prepared for the interpretation of the fragment about the Feast of Transfiguration in the Bible with its metaphorical implications. Finely led by their priest, they metaphorically associate this passing of the summer towards Transfiguration with the road from childhood to maturity.

The next story is very vividly told. The reverend is a genuinely expressive story-teller who knows how to build the *suspense* that will keep his listeners in permanent contact with him:

2). "He sat there, perched in the tree. How long? We don't know. From time to time, above the chirping of the birds, and the gurgle of the stream, he would hear them. Wait, listen... yes! Somewhere in the distance, there was a rustling in the brush as they passed. He peered through the bright profusion of vividly colored flowers... there they were! Then, as rapidly as they had come, they were gone. He heard her joyful giggle and his pleasant laughter above the wind, but it soon passed from hearing. And there he remained perched in the tree; his eyes steady, peering; his ears intently listening, hoping above hope that they would return; that they would come close to where he was; to the tree..."

²⁷¹ *Transfiguration*, 6 August 2000, Homilies Alive, www.homiliesalive.com, Homily Code: K-3.

...To the tree in the midst of the garden.

His name was not Walt Disney, or Hannah Barbera. But he was a cartoon maker. And that is all that he can make – just cartoons. But that’s his business. He’s a story teller, and he has a story to tell about God. But he needs some help, and he thinks he can get it here, on planet earth, from us. And he is desperate, because he has no where else to turn. He is imprisoned here. You know by now that we are discussing the being we know as Satan, the Adversary. I would like you to join me today in looking at him in a new way: as an animator – as a cartoonist – if you will.

Turn with me to Revelation 12:9, 12 [...]”²⁷²

Most of the seductive effect of this story resides in the pastor’s consistent use of personal pronouns and demonstrative adverbs and definite articles with cataphoric reference which help create an effect of suspense (**He** sat **there**, **he** would hear **them**, as **they** passed, **He** heard **her** joyful giggle and **his** pleasant laughter, etc., all the boldfaced words inviting the hearers to wonder *who she*, and the two different **he**, and **they** were and *where* they were). It is true that any Christian would easily recognise the some Biblical symbols in this story: the tree, the garden, the two happy people, he and she, etc. so that part of it is anticipated by the listeners. But the connection the pastor makes between Satan, one of the two referents of the personal pronoun *he* in the story, and cartoon-makers is unexpected; it is the surprise element. The reverend makes himself indispensable to the listeners: they will need him to explain this interesting association of ideas and so they will not lose their interest in the sermon and they will also remember its teachings more easily.

The allegory that this locutor conceives at the beginning of his sermon represents the preliminaries for the pastor’s further comments on fragments from the Gospel. It is closely related to the topic to be discussed. It advances the major premise from which all further conclusions will be drawn. Therefore, the pastor has attained his primary seductive goal: keeping the listeners with him, attentively following his argument in order to understand the other similar connections among the facts presented from now on.

The following illustration is very complex. The priest’s main aim is also to anticipate the thesis of the sermon, or its main issue - the necessity of people’s faith in Christ - by dismantling a newly emerged mass phenomenon considered by him as *primitive* and *uncivilized*, therefore, dangerous for being totally foreign to the Christian faith that it seems to compete with in terms of spiritual matters. As it is very difficult to contradict and criticise successfully something that is very popular and generally acknowledged as interesting and, consequently, good - in this case, the Harry Potter book series and movie - the priest builds his argumentation gradually from a seemingly sympathetic attitude (*I have immensely enjoyed reading Harry Potter and Philosopher’s Stone*) towards one of utter disapproval (*to me, the fuss over the Potterworld is a symptom of the spiritual emptiness of the Western world*):

3). “One of my New Year resolutions was to read *Harry Potter – Book 1*. I am proud to say that it didn’t take me too long to put the resolution into action. I have immensely enjoyed reading *Harry Potter & Philosopher’s Stone*. I impatiently wait for the movie version to arrive in our part of the world.

What led me into this “*Pottermania*”? I was intrigued by the reports in the press, including the 5 page write-up in *Time* (Nov 5, 2001), similar write-ups in *The Tablet* and other email news deliveries.

²⁷² Reverend Larry Kirkpatrick, *The Cartoon-Makers*,
<http://www.greatcontroversy.org/documents/sermons/sermonsLK/kir-toon.html>

I kept wondering what was all this fuss about? No doubt, *J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter series* is no mere fiction. It is literature. Still, why so much excitement? From the making of a 125 million movie to the commercial tactics of Harry Potter toothbrushes? Over 100 million copies of the books have been sold; and *Harry Potter & The Goblet of Fire*, fourth in the series, published in 2000, holds the record as the fastest selling book in history. Even a certain Anglican Pastor, Francis Bridger has written a spiritual reflection on the story in his *A Charmed Life: the Spirituality of Potterworld*. Now you see the fuss?

Harry Potter – Book 1 is a story of a “Cinderella-type of a boy” who has magical powers. He is taken to Hogwarts to be taught the art of magic and witchcraft...from potion making to flying on broomsticks. In Hogwarts, Harry Potter not only discovers his own history but becomes a hero defending the Philosopher’s Stone from the evil Lord Voldemort.

Despite some beautiful aspects in *Harry Potter*, looked from a cynical point of view, it is not much different from the Famous Five, Secret Seven or Hardy Boys. Yet the series is a sensation and *J. K. Rowling* is now an international celebrity. **Yes, the story is the usual conflict between good and evil.** But the difference is that Potterworld is a world of the mysterious. A world of owls and dragons, spells and potions, magic and witchcraft. It is the world of *the spiritual of another kind!* Similar phenomena if it were to be described by Africans we would call it *primitive and uncivilized!*

Coming from the East, having lived in Africa for ten years, and being a teacher of Philosophy of Religion, to me the fuss over the Potterworld is a symptom of the spiritual emptiness of the Western world.

It is an emptiness that only Christ can fill.²⁷³

The impression created by the priest in the first two paragraphs of this excerpt is that of being positively impressed by the famous book series he is talking about and the effect it has had on the ordinary people that can recognise themselves in his words. By showing human understanding to a widely spread social phenomenon to which the listeners themselves probably subscribe, the priest wins their benevolence as sympathetic listeners. What contributes to this impression is the list of reasons he provides for his having become interested in the phenomenon as such. These are probably the same sound reasons as those shared by the people he is addressing as they refer to reliable means of mass information: *reports in the press, write-ups in famous magazines, email news deliveries that intrigued him.* The vocabulary he uses when talking about these reasons helps create the same impression: he is *proud of his putting this resolution into action*, he has *immensely enjoyed* reading a previously published book in the same series and he *impatiently waits for the movie version*. The first sign of his disagreement is finely introduced through the coined term *Pottermania*, whose suffix – *mania* bears negative connotations. These implications may pass unnoticed, so he reinforces them by using a more explicit informal word that is felt as misplaced, therefore stylistically marked, in such a laudatory context: *fuss*. From now on his attitude against this mass phenomenon becomes clearer and clearer until he plainly formulates it in the last paragraph. Here he metaphorically associates the *fuss over the Potterworld* with *symptom* and so he implicitly builds another metaphor whose ground is *Pottermania*: this is a *disease called the spiritual emptiness of the Western world* and he finally makes his point clear: “It is an emptiness that only Christ can fill”. This suggests a more general attitude shared by the religious people: the Christian religion is the only salvation when facing mass cultural phenomena like the one in point here.

In terms of **manipulation**, what is remarkable in this excerpt is the fact that the priest puts his judgmental message across without imposing any prefabricated ideas on the listeners who may

²⁷³ Sahaya Selvam, 27 January 2002, *The Emptiness of the Potterworld & the Abundance of Cana*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=50504>

have enjoyed J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series. As an impartial intellectual, very careful not to seem patronising²⁷⁴, he approaches *Pottermania* from the perspective of its positive aspects first. Moreover, in order for his remarks to be credible he proves that he is in the know when discussing about this mass phenomenon: he has read the books and is familiar with the subsequent effects the series has had on various walks of life especially of commercial nature. He provides figures and mentions the name of a *certain Anglican Pastor* who has written a spiritual reflection based on the series. However, by skilfully inserting cynical remarks in his speech, he suggests that these positive aspects have to be taken with a pinch of salt, as what the books in this series advance are only matters of literature that should not be mistaken for the Christian truth. He speaks of his life experience (*coming from the East, having lived in Africa for ten years*) and professional training (*being a teacher of Philosophy of Religion*) to the same purpose: to win the listeners' credibility and, therefore, to make them readily accept his ideas as true. Due to the complexity of this fragment in terms of style and rhetoric, its manipulative undertones are obvious.

It is not unusual for a religious speaker to begin the sermon by resorting to a well known **anecdote** as **anticipatory story**, as in the following excerpt:

4). "Diogenes was one day standing on a street corner laughing like a mad man. <Why are you laughing?> he was asked. <Do you see that stone in the middle of the street? More than ten persons have already stumbled on it, then looked at the stone and cursed it but nobody had removed it to prevent someone else's stumbling>.

Our actions whether good or evil have an ultimate significance and have effects of infinite range and scope. We stand under incalculable responsibility. We must be faithful in little things because there are no little things; we must be faithful in God's absence because God is never absent."²⁷⁵

Here the anecdotal illustration is not interpreted in any way by the priest. It is used only as a pretext for generalisations related to it in their essence. He could have begun the sermon directly with these generalisations, but in such a case they would seem abrupt, prescriptive and their meaning would be vague. The listeners, unable to grasp the message, would feel confused or frustrated, thus very difficult to convince of their truth value. This is to say that this anticipatory story is told with the purpose of providing the listeners with the framework for the logical associations that they need in the process of understanding the ensuing arguments²⁷⁶ that relate other facts in a *cause-effect* sequence in the same way in which the particular facts in the illustration are connected. When he later speaks generally of *our actions whether good or evil* the priest has already provided an example of a bad action (the people disregarding the stone in the middle of the street); when referring to the *effects* that people's actions have, he has already mentioned such an effect related to that particular action (other people stumbling on the stone). This priest proves that the method of *fine tuning*, or *logical induction*, i.e. exemplification through particularisation before generalisation, is an effective

²⁷⁴ As mentioned earlier, a patronising speaker is very likely to arouse negative emotions in the audience and this could affect their willingness to listen. Therefore, the manipulative powers of such a locutor's speech are considerably reduced.

²⁷⁵ Arulselvam Rayappan, March 2005, *Responsible Servants*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=77029>

²⁷⁶ This is a method largely used in the classroom lessons, known as **the inductive method**, or the method of **fine tuning**. This method stipulates that the teacher should carefully lead the learners to discover some universal rule by themselves by providing them first with a well chosen illustration in which this rule is easily observable (the *observation* stage dealing with particular facts). Further on, learners are required to notice that the same rule functions similarly in various other contexts as well (i.e., the *generalisation* stage). Psychologically, the understanding based on **personal observation** and **logical induction** is considered more effective in terms of quality and long term learning, which is the main aim of the educational process in schools and of the preaching process in churches.

way to put one's message across. He is aware that he can make his listeners accept his ideas more easily if they base their understanding on particular facts.

A similar example is provided below, where it is the priest who makes the logical connection between the anticipatory story and its application in the sermon. In this way, the story is elegantly integrated in the main argument of the sermon:

5). "An ancient story is told about a slave who travelled with his master to Baghdad. As he walked the busy streets he found himself in the market place where he saw Death in human form. Death looked at him with such a piercing look that it frightened the slave, and he interpreted that look to mean that Death was planning soon to take his life.

He quickly rushed back to his master and told him what he had seen in the market place and asked if he might ride his camel to Samara, 15 hours away, because he was sure that he would be safe there, for Death would not know where to find him. The master gave him permission, and quickly the slave was on his way to Samara.

A few hours later the master was in the market place where he also saw Death in human form. He walked up to Death and asked, "Why did you look at my slave with such a threatening look?" Death answered, "That was not a threatening look. That was a look of surprise. I had a date with him tonight in Samara and I was surprised to see him here in Baghdad."

*Now we may question the imagery of this story, **but the truth is very clear. Death is inescapable.** The time of our death is unknown, and the means of our death, perhaps, is uncertain. But ready or not, willing or not, death is one great certainty that we all face.*"²⁷⁷

The italicised **application** takes the form of a generalisation of the moral of the anticipatory story. In this situation, the reasons why the anticipatory story is used are transparent; besides catching everybody's ears due to its attractive narrative content, the priest's intention is to prove the truth value of the main issue of the sermon, or its thesis, namely, *death is inescapable*, in a non-theoretical way. All the remarks made earlier about the impact on the listeners and the effectiveness that such an inductive method has in terms of persuasion are applicable here, too.

The next fragment is a shorter example of the same device, the pastor using a **real story** to make a smooth passage to the thesis of the sermon:

6). "What really matters?

This week I watched part of a documentary about the crash of a Concorde jet in France. Over 100 people died, and it all started because of a strip of metal that had fallen on the runway.

It was only 16 inches long.

I could hold it here in my hand.

Sometimes it's hard for us to see what really matters, but God knows. God knows what's most important in your life and mine. (my emphasis of the **generalisation** based on the previous illustration)

So let's look into the word of God this morning and see some of the greatest priorities He has for our lives."²⁷⁸ (the words in bold face type mark the passage to the **thesis** of the sermon, which is underlined)

²⁷⁷ Melvin Newland, September 1991, *God Will Judge!*
<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=34027&ContributorID=4572>

²⁷⁸ Rick Crandall, 16 January 2005, *God's Priorities for You*,
<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=86634&ContributorID=13821>

A real tragic story of this kind is very likely to stimulate the listeners' feelings of compassion; it usually makes them get into a pensive and introspective mood, emotions that are necessary both for a wilful reception of the argument to follow, and for its message to be accepted as true.

As a conclusion, the selection of an appropriate anticipatory story and its smooth linking to the body of the sermon are not easy tasks to carry out. Although the Internet provides anyone interested with thousands of illustrations grouped according to various criteria, in the last resort it is the preacher's *oratorical talent*²⁷⁹ that helps him select (many times, invent or remember) the most appropriate one and gives any selected item seductive force when put in the linguistic context of the whole sermon.

3.3. Collateral Circumstances

The people who come to church are usually familiar with the **time** of the holidays related to the course of the Biblical events celebrated throughout the year and with the **place** where Biblical issues are preached about, namely, the church they go to. Therefore, the **collateral circumstances of time** and **of place** rhetorical devices are almost never used in sermons as compared to their frequency in the political speeches. For the **collateral circumstances of place** rhetorical device, there is not even one example to illustrate it. As for the **collateral circumstances of time** device, very rarely do we come across a sermon that begins with a wording similar to "This is a blessed *time* of year. Excitement fills the air, a sense of nostalgia pervades our minds, and there is a warmth in our hearts"²⁸⁰, where the priest speaks of Christmas *time* in metaphorical terms in his wish to introduce the hearers into an atmosphere of calmness, relaxation, meditation in accordance with the nature of the event he preaches about.

As far as the other types of this device are concerned, preachers largely employ the **collateral circumstances of issues** and **of persons** in the introductory part of their sermons.

3.3.1. Collateral Circumstances of Issues

The first two examples below illustrate the way in which the solemnity of a religious occasion is evoked. Here, the main issue of both sermons, namely, the Easter holiday, is not stated directly but metaphorically described in superlative noun-phrases: *the greatest mystery in our faith*, *the great feast*..., leaving the audience to identify it:

- 1). "Today we celebrate *the greatest mystery in our faith* [...] *the resurrection of Jesus Christ*".²⁸¹
- 2). "Today is *the great feast that makes everything in our faith suddenly come together*".²⁸²

If it were called simply *Easter Day*, a lot of the linguistic seductive effect in both formulations above would be lost. Listeners usually expect the priest to surprise them with stylistic ornaments when referring to the events that they already know about. Such an ornament in both these examples is **metaphor**. However, the two formulations differ in that in the former the metaphor is made explicit by the end of the sentence: *the greatest mystery in our faith* (**vehicle**) = *the resurrection of Jesus Christ* (explicit **tenor**), whereas in the latter only the **vehicle** of the metaphor is provided (*the great feast that makes everything in our faith suddenly come together*), the listeners

²⁷⁹ The preacher is expected to be a very good story-teller, otherwise the story loses its seductive effects on the listeners.

²⁸⁰ David P. Nolte, *A Miracle, a Mother, a Manger and a Message*, <http://id.mind.net/~dnol/miraclemother.html>

²⁸¹ *Easter Sunday*, 23 April 2000, Homilies Alive, Homily Code: B-3, www.homiliesalive.com

²⁸² *Easter Sunday*, 23 April 2000, Homilies Alive, Homily Code: A-6, www.homiliesalive.com

being indirectly invited to think of the **tenor** themselves. This is not difficult to them as it is this holiday that has made them to attend Mass on this day. Avoiding a boring, plain, fully referential language able to transmit information but void of any emotional touch, the priest gives the listeners the motivation to listen attentively and gladly to the sermon. By making them get into the magic atmosphere of the Biblical event unawares, he fulfils their aesthetic expectations. Such seductive linguistic ‘tricks’ are necessary if the message is to be transmitted across successfully.

A situation similar to that above in terms of metaphorical language is exemplified in the fragment below, where the priest introduces the issue of the sermon, *the Baptism of our Lord*, in an elaborate way that seduces with the associations that the listeners are required to make between the Biblical event that they celebrate and its importance to them in everyday life:

- 3). “Today marks the beginning of the Ordinary Time section of our Church’s calendar and with that, the liturgical colours change again from the pure and joyous white to the green of hope. Coincidentally, with *today’s feast marking the Baptism of our Lord and the beginning of His public ministry*, we are called to reflect on our baptized selves as beacons of hope...”²⁸³

The priest announces the *topic* or the *issue* of the sermon in the next paragraph in a way that raises the listeners’ interest in it. Instead of revealing it directly at the very beginning, he delays this moment so as to take some precautions related to it. This is necessary as this *issue* has been *controversial* and the person that tackles it must choose his words carefully in order not to give rise to misinterpretations and not to offend anybody:

- 4). “Today I’m going to speak *on a topic* that I’ve dreaded preaching about for over fifteen years. *The topic* is controversial and the preacher delivering the sermon is immediately judged unfavorably. *My topic is clergy compensation*.”²⁸⁴

The fact that the locutor expresses his personal reservations about the issue of the sermon – *a topic that I’ve dreaded preaching, the preacher... is immediately judged unfavorably* - increases the audience’s curiosity, benevolence listen, and their willingness to sympathise with him, factors that contribute to a substantial increasing of their receptiveness, and, therefore, to an increase in the manipulative power the sermon may exert on them.

In contrast with the example above, in the next five fragments the priest announces the main topic of the sermon in a very concise way in the first sentence he utters. However, the short, direct, and unornamented formulation is didactically used: the audience is indirectly required to focus on the issue of the day in the minimum number of words:

- 5). “Today we celebrate *Christmas*.”²⁸⁵
 6). “Today we celebrate *the resurrection of Christ*.”²⁸⁶
 7). “The Advent is over. Tonight we celebrate *the birth of the Messiah*.”²⁸⁷
 8). “Tonight we are going to continue reflecting upon *the cross of Jesus Christ and His suffering* in particular.”²⁸⁸

²⁸³ Collin Nunis, January 2005, *Hope for the Better*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=75202>

²⁸⁴ Kenneth Anthony, August 2006, *The Right to Get Paid*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=94184>

²⁸⁵ Paul Kallan, December 2002, *God Gives Us His Face*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/asp?SermonID=53425>

²⁸⁶ *Idem*, April 2003, *Gateways to Faith*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/asp?SermonID=57366>

²⁸⁷ *Idem*, December 2002, *A Home for Others*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/asp?SermonID=53424>

9). “Today we celebrate *the resurrection of Jesus*.”²⁸⁹

In the examples above, the main issue of the sermon is very succinctly stated and its clarity is obvious. **Conciseness** and **clarity** are some of the prerequisites for the listeners’ benevolent reception of the message as their comprehension is very much facilitated in this way. Although it neither reveals any new information to the listeners, nor does it seduce with the beauty of its formulation, an introductory statement that has both these qualities is very likely to be effective in terms of focusing everybody’s attention on the speaker by signalling the beginning of the speech. In all the sermons these fragments were selected from, the issue announced in this way is immediately tackled in one or more of its aspects, very frequently in a manner that seduces the listeners.

In e.g. (10) below, the priest first greets the parishioners, as the occasion requires such a ritualistic introductory formula in the Orthodox Church, and then he announces the issue of the sermon, even though it is well known to everybody. Such redundancy provides him with the opportunity to address a warm welcome to those present, a device meant to attract the listeners’ benevolent attention:

10). “Alleluia! Christ is risen! Happy Easter. It is wonderful to have you here today *as we celebrate Christ’s resurrection and the new life he gives us*.”²⁹⁰

The same is true about the following excerpt, only the formulation of the greeting is more elaborate. The topics the priest is about to approach in the ensuing sermon are presented in the form of a short **outline**:

11). “Once again, do allow me to take this opportunity to greet everyone a Blessed Christmas, and I pray that the LORD had blessed your gatherings with your presence.

Our Readings tonight clearly bring out the theme of family. With the grace of the Holy Spirit, I shall expound on each Reading accordingly and conclude with some practical Directions for the Community.”²⁹¹

Revealing the outline to the listeners is a very effective method to help them get a full grasp of what will be said next in the whole sermon. Usually, the sermons that begin in this way are also concluded by a short recapitulation of the main issues that have been tackled throughout it, in other words, a repetition of the same outline provided in the beginning, in the same order, usually in a slightly different linguistic form. Thus, the listeners leave the church with a very clear image of what has been explained to them, of what they have ‘learnt’. The things that can be easily remembered stand greater chances to influence people’s way of thinking and behaving outside the church; therefore, the latent manipulative power of such a practice is undeniable.

A great number of sermons begin with a short introduction to the still un-stated issue of the day, an introduction with mainly an explanatory function. It is only after this that the clear-cut formulation of the issue comes. One of the reasons why this device is resorted to is that of its having the main effect of raising the listeners’ curiosity and interest in what will be said next. Another reason is that it provides a justification for the necessity of concentrating on and dealing with the issue to be stated and argued soon afterwards. This is a more elaborated form of the **captatio benevolentiae** device by means of which the listeners’ are smoothly attracted to listen to the sermon.

²⁸⁸ Christopher Nerreau, March 2005, *Jesus Paid It All*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/asp?SermonID=77380>

²⁸⁹ Michael Nesmith, March 2005, *Easter Resurrection – Why Believe?*
<http://www.sermoncentral.com/asp?SermonID=77667>

²⁹⁰ Paul Larsen, April 2004, *New Clothes / New Life*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/asp?SermonID=67409>

²⁹¹ Robert Tomas, 29 December 1999, *The Holy Family*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/asp?SermonID=45948>

This is the situation illustrated by the two examples below, where the italics mark the part that introduces the announcement of the issue, which is written in boldface:

12). “*The Ressurrection* stands out forever as the mightiest and most impressive display of the LORD’s redeeming power, the significance of which is so great that it is beyond all human conception. Not only does it demand *intellectual assent*, but, more importantly, the element of *faith*. Thus, **we shall look at three kinds of faith emerging from our Readings, which are meant, perhaps, to evaluate the condition of our own faith.**”²⁹²

13). “According to Scriptures (e.g. Cor. 15:14-19; Pet. 1:3), *had the LORD Jesus not risen from the dead*, the entire Christian faith would have no foundation and there would be no Gospel to preach. *Without the Ressurrection*, Christians would be the most hopeless of all people. Therefore, **tonight, we reflect on that crowning truth of our faith in Jesus Christ, which is documented by Scriptures and is a matter of supreme importance in the faith and life of the Church. It is that unsurpassed victory marked by the promise of new life to those who would witness to the truth of the LORD’s salvation.**”²⁹³

The similarity between the textual structure of both these fragments is blatant. In each of them, the boldfaced issue of the day is semantically related to the underlined words and phrases in the introductory part that anticipate it: *The Ressurrection* demands *intellectual assent* and *faith* and the main issues of the day are **three kinds of faith** described by the biblical Ressurrection Readings, in (12), and ...*had the lord Jesus not risen from the dead*... *Without Ressurrection*... which anticipates **that crowning truth** (i.e., that Jesus rose from the dead) **of our faith in Jesus Christ...**, in (13). Moreover, the transition from the anticipatory introduction to the announcement of the issue is realised through two morphologically and semantically similar structures: *Thus, we shall look at...*, and *Therefore, we reflect on...* The textual structure of these fragments reveals **a pattern** preferred by this pastor in his introductions to his sermons, a pattern that can be schematically represented as:

Introduction + *Thus, we shall look at...* + **Issue**
Introduction + *Therefore [...]* we reflect on.... + **Issue**

Sometimes, the fact that the main issue as such is concisely stated at the very beginning may result in **vague formulations**, as in the following extended excerpt. Here, it is the whole introductory part of the sermon that clarifies the semantics of the intended issue and where the priest is providing possible suggestions for clarification by basing his argument on his knowledge of his listeners’ everyday actions and habits (smoking, eating donuts and cakes during the fasting period). The italicised sections in the fragment below highlight the **collateral circumstances of issues** device, which overlaps semantically with the core informational content of the whole introduction. These alone would be enough for the listeners to understand what the issue of the current sermon is, but the priest’s seductive influence on his audience would be diminished significantly if the rest were left out:

14). “*What to do?*

Once again, *we find ourselves at the beginning of the Lenten season*. And perhaps *we are still wondering what we should be doing during this time of renewal* – is it time once again to try to kick the smoking habit, or are we going to try to keep ourselves at a safe distance from all those lovely donuts and cakes that seem to give us so much pleasure? Or

²⁹² *Idem*, 5 April 2002, *The Ressurrection Faith*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/asp?SermonID=45866>

²⁹³ *Idem*, 20 April 2001, *The Ressurrection and New Life*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/asp?SermonID=45864>

maybe we think that besides just giving up things, we should be doing something – like being extra kind to our husband or wife, or going out of our way to provide some kind of help for those who could use a hand.

Commendable as those and other actions may be, *today's readings point out the deeper meaning of this season.* And perhaps by looking at the basic lesson taught by the scriptures *we can get a better idea of what we should be about for the next forty days.*"²⁹⁴

The priest's speaking informally at times about everyday human habits (*try to kick the smoking habit*) and his constant use of the pronoun *we* as Subject for the majority of the verbs (*we find ourselves, we are wondering, what we should be doing, are we going to try*, etc.) show his knowledge and understanding of the human nature, and his concern about getting warm and closer to his audience, characteristics that increase his chances to be carefully listened to and his advice willingly followed. The listeners' personal experience, acknowledged by the priest in this introduction, is only a launch pad for his interpretation of the text of the Bible; afterwards, he succeeds in finely tuning them into the more esoteric meanings of the scriptures.

3.3.2. Collateral Circumstances of Persons

As illustrated earlier, in the political speeches this device is very frequently employed. In sermons, however, it stands out less frequently as a separate rhetorical figure. Here, the **collateral circumstances of persons** rhetorical device is usually a part of the rhetorical device called the **illustration**, or the **anticipatory story**, in which the priest may tell the listeners stories from his or other people's personal lives.

The situations in which the locutor has either to acknowledge those present, or to introduce himself are rare. These two roles are pre-established in the context of the church: the locutor is the priest (or, according to the ministry setting, a preacher of a certain denomination), and the recipients of the message are the religious people going to church; these are very often well known by the priest, due to the visits that the priest pays to them as required by the religious rituals of the holidays throughout the year and to the ritual of confession.

In the first example below, this device is used by the priest in order to show his appreciation of the people's warm attitude towards him and his family - newcomers to the parish he currently preaches in. The main function of this formulation is that of **reducing the distance** that exists naturally between people who do not know each other very well:

1). "Thank *you* for the welcome *my family and I* have received from *many of you*. I have had opportunity to meet a lot of people and learn names. That will take some time and I thank you for your patience as we get to know each other."²⁹⁵

The priest manifests his respect for those addressed also by showing that he is interested in their names and in all of them as individuals. Expressing great appreciation for the people's understanding of his human nature through the words of gratitude for their patience in the process of his learning everybody's name is clearly a subtle, polite, and, consequently, effective request for a similar attitude in the future, and, at the same time, a way of excusing himself for not having managed to meet everybody and to learn everybody's name. All these are ingredients of a seductively manipulative discourse whose very probable result is the listeners' complying with the locutor's skilful request.

²⁹⁴ John Vella, November 2001, *Getting to the Bottom of It All*,
<http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=43375>

²⁹⁵ Matthew Bushnell, February 2003, *Barbarians, Sythians and Other Dead People (or "Get over Yourself")*,
<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=98840&ContributorID=28321>

A person speaking publicly to an audience among which he is famous stands greater chances to put his message across if his attitude in front of his addressees is not one of domination, of superiority, of overt and oppressive power, but one of modesty, sympathy and understanding of the listeners' human nature. In the fragment below, the locutor begins his sermon by a very short announcement of the **issue** in a very vague formulation that raises interest and curiosity: *we are going to discuss things that should be known by all*:

2). "As we discussed Wednesday night, we are going to discuss things that should be known by all. *I have never been accused of being the most intelligent man in the world but there are a few things that I can say I know without a doubt.* My prayer is that you can say that you to know these things beyond the shadow of a doubt."²⁹⁶

Before mentioning any more specific details related to this issue, he speaks modestly and even ironically about himself: *I've never been accused of being the most intelligent man in the world.* This is an example of the **collateral circumstances of persons** rhetorical device that focuses on a **specific person**, namely, the locutor himself. His modest and friendly attitude reduces significantly the distance between him and the listeners and attracts their benevolence to let themselves seduced by his words and persuaded by the truth value of the issue.

The same friendly and understanding attitude from the part of the preacher is illustrated in the two examples below, where he acknowledges his position among the religious community that he addresses as their *brother* and *friend*, respectively, therefore sharing the same religious creed, values, and religious emotions. The metaphors *the religious assembly is a family* and *a group of friends*, respectively, reduce considerably the distance between the pulpit and the pews and the locutor makes sure that the successful reception of the message takes place in an atmosphere that lacks any trace of hostility:

3). "One thing we have enjoyed in our time here, has always been *the worship assembly*. The time when we can come together with you, as a family, and worship God in spirit and truth. Not only because *I* get to preach sometimes, but to be with you **as a brother**. This morning our goal is to look at the importance of the assembly and what good things come from it."²⁹⁷

4). "*I speak to you this morning not only as your preacher, but your friend.* And friends can speak heart to heart. What we are focusing on today is not just an exercise in religious communication--it is deeply personal."²⁹⁸

Each locutor above uses one of these two nouns in the introduction in order to make a smooth transition to the main issue of the sermon. As *brothers* get together or *assemble* as a family united by the beliefs in the same values, and as they are all spiritual brothers, they share the same knowledge on the topic of *religious assembling*. *Friends speak heart to heart*, i.e., they *communicate emotionally*, therefore their approach of the topic of *religious communication* is realised in a setting of *friendly togetherness* in which it is very easy for the priest to get his message across.

In the following example, the beginning of a Catholic sermon, a **specific person**, whose name has not been mentioned yet, is referred to. Its linguistic formulation seduces through its uniqueness in terms of style:

²⁹⁶ Steve Barlow, *Things I Know*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00508.htm>

²⁹⁷ Steve Barlow, *Why Are You Here?*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00515.htm>

²⁹⁸ Grady D. King, *Marriage: Love of Another Kind #4. Broken Covenants and God's Eternal Mercy*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00425.htm>

5). “Pure. Whole. Intact. Spotless. Stainless. Sinless. Unsoiled. Unsullied. Unblemished. Uncorrupted. Immaculate!”²⁹⁹

This enumeration of Thesaurus-like word definitions is easy to process once the title of the sermon is known. If the title is not announced in advance - and it is very likely that this is the situation here - the listeners are expected to identify the person described step by step until the priest reaches the end of the sentence, every time adding another meaning ingredient to the already existing sum. All these evaluative adjectives are synonymous to, or hyponyms of the last one: *immaculate*. The reverend builds a sense of mystery around the referent by mentioning all the possible exquisite qualities in this person (all of the adjectives in this list having a superlative meaning), so that the listeners can associate them with the person described, namely, Virgin Mary, by themselves. In this way, they are actively involved in the process of preaching, their interest is kept awake, and they are more receptive to what the priest has to say about Virgin Mary’s life and the Immaculate Conception of Jesus Christ, which is the main topic of the sermon of the day.

It is interesting to notice the captivating **music** and **rhythm** of these words when enumerated in this order. The first six ones are stressed on the first syllable, the last ones, except for *uncorrupted*, on the second. It is as if these last five adjectives were balancing echoes to the others. The relief is reached by the last term due to its most open stressed vowel of all: /æ/. Also, the number of syllables in these words increases from one, in *pure* and *whole*, to two, in *spotless*, *stainless*, *sinless*, *unsoiled*, then to three, in *unsullied*, and finally to four, in *uncorrupted* and *immaculate*. **Alliteration** is the stylistic device used by the reverend in the series of six adjectives that contain the liquid consonant /l/. Moreover, the alliterative beginning sound /s/ and the negative adjectiviser *-less* which contains both the /s/ and the /l/ sounds - *spotless*, *stainless*, *sinless* – are very effective from a stylistic point of view. The sounds /s/ and /l/ are also present in the next two words: *unsoiled*, *unsullied*; here the alliteration is made even more pregnant by the presence of an **assonantal** group of sounds representing the negative prefix, /ʌn/, that repeats four times. It is unlikely for somebody to arrange a list of words so beautifully unless he has an innate inclination towards linguistics and music. And it is certain that this gift can touch even the most knowledgeable people³⁰⁰ and it can draw their attention and receptiveness to the speaker’s words. This is to say that the priests, pastors, reverends, ministers, any kind of preacher, as well as the politicians who have it make the most seductive manipulators of masses.

The following excerpt is the beginning fragment of a sermon where the reverend makes use of the two rhetorical devices considered in this section that are usually employed in such a combination in the political speeches:

6). “Good morning! **God** is good all the time. Another day – another opportunity to praise **God**. Today is Youth Sunday... **We** are so blessed this beautiful morning because **we** still have the freedom to express our faith in the open.

Again, my sincerest thanks to **Rev. Paul Kelly** and to **the Administrative Council** and the **Staff Parish Relations Committee** for giving me the opportunity to serve as your volunteer Assistant Pastor. **My wife – Myrna** and **I** are so delighted to work with **you** for the **Glory of God**. [...]

Before I proceed to the message, *let us take this opportunity to give honor to **our Veterans** for their heroic efforts for the sake of **the American people***. Let us have a moment of silence and prayer as we *pay tribute to **them***.

²⁹⁹ Reverend Paul Mankowski, *Why the Immaculate Conception*, www.homiliesalive.com

³⁰⁰ Considered the most resistant to any influences exerted by orators through their speeches. Cf. Gheorghe Mihai, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.

To all **the unsung heroes of this nation** – I salute **you** all! May **God** bless **you** always.”³⁰¹ (the words and phrases in boldface highlight the **collateral circumstances of persons**, which is the predominant device here)

He first **greet**s the listeners (*Good morning!*), and then he mentions the **collateral circumstances of issues** (the underlined sentence *Today is Youth Sunday*) but not before expressing a few words of gratitude towards *God*. What follows is also part of this last device in its elaborate form: **individual persons** (*God, Rev. Paul Kelly*), **institutions** (*the Administrative Council, the Staff Parish Relations Committee*), **groups of people** (*you, the parishioners, our Veterans, the unsung heroes of this nation, the American people*) are mentioned and addressed a few words each as a token of gratitude and appreciation of their merits. The locutor’s deep emotions are directly communicated to the listeners by means of superlative constructions (*we are **so blessed**, we are **so delighted***), words of gratitude and praise (*my sincerest thanks to... for giving me the opportunity..., let us ... give honor to... and pay tribute to ...*), and words of salutation and of blessing (*I salute you all! May God bless you always!*). Altogether, this fragment expresses an outburst of positive emotions and good intentions that the priest succeeds in transmitting to the audience. His credibility gained by his reverential tone and attitude, the locutor cannot but expect his listeners to let themselves impressed by rest of the sermon as well.

Throughout this section, a few examples in each of the two categories of collateral circumstances frequently employed by preachers at the beginning of a sermon – collateral circumstances of issues and of persons – have been analysed from the perspective of the **psychological impact** that they may have on the hearers: *attracting and focusing their attention; raising their curiosity; winning their receptiveness and benevolence to listen; reducing the psychological distance between the preacher and the audience; stimulating their aesthetic taste and stirring their emotions by inducing a sense of magic and mystery with the beauty of linguistic formulation*, etc. All these effects - which, in the last resort, are of a pragmatic nature as they aim at the sermon’s teachings be listened to, understood, accepted and internalised by the hearers – have been mentioned in each case in turn.

In what follows, a special attention will be paid on the psychological effects achieved by the preacher on the hearers through the deliberately ornamented linguistic formulation at word and sentence level.

3.4. Amplification in Argumentation

3.4.1. Repetition

3.4.1.1. Phonetic Repetition

The euphonic effects achieved through the skilful use of figures of sounds are not foreign to the religious speakers. **Alliterative**, **assonantal**, and **consonantal** repetitions leave a strong impression on the listeners. Implicitly, the locutor’s *credibility* in front of the congregation increases due to this elaboration of formulation which is a sign of full dedication, commitment to his profession and consideration for the listeners. The careful deliberation upon the form that such rhetorical and stylistic figures of speech involve attracts the listeners’ *respect, appreciation* for the preacher, and *greater receptiveness* to the content of the sermon. Therefore, such punchy formulations, which are very effective because they express ideas clearly in only a few words, become *memorable*. Being easily stocked on the brain due to their condensed and stylistically marked structure, they and are very likely to produce a change in the listeners’ behaviour as

³⁰¹ Rev. Sol Madlambayan, 10 November 2002, *Now! & When?*
<http://sermoncentral.com?sermon.asp?SermonID=52878&ContributorID=8995>

suggested by the content of the sermon. This change is a major effect of to the process of **manipulation** that the religious locutors wish to exert on the listeners.

Every sound, especially when repeated in various ways, suggests the locutor's state of mind, his or her emotions and attitudes related to the ideas that form the content of the sermon. The same psychological responses are expected from the recipients of the message as well.

- 1). "There are **so** many of us just **s**leeping and **s**lumbering while **s**ouls all around are perishing."³⁰² (**alliteration** of the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/, and of the group of sounds /sl/)

The beauty and effect of the alliterative formulation in this example are increased by the combination of these voiceless consonants with regularly employed vowels, avoiding in this way clusters of consonants disturbing to the ear. This euphonic combination suggests silence and the locutor's deep feeling of sadness and bitter resignation at the thought of earthly lack of attitude and compassion for those in need whose *souls...are perishing* all around. It is clearly an intentionally chosen and carefully balanced formulation. This locutor's wish is to impress the listeners emotionally (not only to transmit them an idea in a patronising way) and to make them ponder upon the seriousness of this sad situation and, as a consequence, to willingly find solutions to improve it. This intention to seduce is also proved by the tautological association, with an outstanding rhetorical effect of emphasis, of the two coordinated present participles *sleeping* and *slumbering*, verbs denoting the same state, but belonging to two different registers, the neutral and the literary one, respectively.

In what follows, the repetitions of various sounds transmit the locutor's determination, firmness and insistence on some parts of the formulation that have to be easily remembered so that they work on their mind and souls even after the sermon is over.

- 2). "Today, I encourage you **to take ten minutes to talk** with someone about Jesus."³⁰³

Here, the **alliteration** of the voiceless dental plosive /t/ - which occurs five times in one-syllable words: *to take ten ... to talk* - creates an effect of military cadence, easy to remember and to process by the brain, which is in full agreement with the heavy weight that the locutor places on the piece of advice that he gives the listeners by means of such a carefully chosen formulation.

- 3). "... **that there are things that one might be addicted to**..."³⁰⁴

The **alliteration** of the voiced dental fricative /ð/ combined with its voiceless counterpart /θ/, and the **consonance** of the pair of the dental plosive voiced /t/ and voiceless /d/ help the preacher emphasise the idea of seriousness already expressed by the informational content of the sentence.

- 4). "...to do our very **best in bringing glory to God**?"³⁰⁵

The **alliterations** of the two voiced sounds, the bilabial plosive /b/ and the velar plosive /g/, the latter sounding as the echo of a **consonance** of the same sound, make this formulation memorable through its sonority. The locutor's determination and commitment to fulfil this plea are also rendered by these figures of sounds.

³⁰² Dallas Burdette, *Where Are You?*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00268.htm>

³⁰³ *Idem*, *Ministers of Reconciliation*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00266.htm>

³⁰⁴ Richard L. Thetford, *Addicted*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00260>

³⁰⁵ Ted Edwards, *Going the "Second Mile"*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00195>

- 5). “A new creature cannot continue living the life of the old creature, and remain a new creature.”³⁰⁶

Here, the **alliteration** of the voiceless velar plosive /k/ and of the voiced alveolar lateral // (the latter being the initial consonant of the two clause constituents in a V + cognate Object structure, *living the life*) and especially the underlined **polyptoton** work together to create an emphasizing effect for the locutor’s trenchancy about the truth value of his words. His wish is to persuade those present that he is right and, consequently, to make them want either to improve their Christian behaviour, or to embrace the path towards Christianity (for those who have not become *new creatures* yet, i.e., faithful believers). He does this by means of a seductive formulation, more convincing than the underlying informational content, whose metaphorical implications [*old creature* (vehicle) = *sinful, non-Christian person* (unexpressed tenor); *new creature* (vehicle) = *Christian, sinless person* (unexpressed tenor)] add to the effect created by the figure of sounds employed here.

- 6). “One of the most difficult questions Christians face has to do with sin.”³⁰⁷

The harshness of the **consonantal** repetition of similar fricative sounds, /s/, /z/, /st/ in the example above renders the preacher’s firmness and confidence that the idea that he advances cannot and should never be refuted. The whole sentence seems to have been given this sonorous form beginning with the keyword in it, *sin*, which contains the sound repeated in the other highlighted words.

- 7). “It was the voice of grace, the voice of mercy, and the voice of love.”³⁰⁸

In this example, the **alliteration** of /v/, combined with the **consonances** of /s/ and of /v/ as the letter *f* in *of* is pronounced /v/ due to its being regressively assimilated by the voiced consonant in the next word, *grace*, *mercy*, *love*, and with the **assonance** of the diphthong /oi/ alternating with /ei/ in *voice of grace*, *voice*... produce a euphonic effect that seduces the listeners’ ears. The underlined **anaphora** in a triple Subject Complement structure contributes to the balanced arrangement of the three phrases combined in this way and gives equal weight to all three elements. The nouns *grace*, *mercy*, *love* are all **metaphors** for God and the whole structures in which they occur, *the voice of X*, are **metonymies** for God, as well. Such an agglomeration of sound effects and stylistic devices turns the whole construction into a memorable sentence that will linger on the listeners’ minds for a long time after they have left the church.

- 8). “Jesus was always honest with those people with whom He dealt [...] if you are trying to please God by keeping a legalistic religion of rules and regulations, frustrated by your total inability to measure up and be good enough, you will be thrilled with the truth of salvation by grace through faith.”³⁰⁹ (the underlining marks the **assonances** of /i/ and /ei/)

The overwhelming **alliterative** and **consonantal** combinations of various sounds in this example, such as /r/, //, /s/, /z/, /θ/, /θr/, /fr/, /tr/, /gr/, are suggestive of the locutor’s emotions and attitude towards the ideational content of his words. A feeling of serenity and gratitude pervades the

³⁰⁶ *Christians Cannot Sin*, Radio Sermon No. 85,
<http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writerser/ser00095.htm>

³⁰⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁰⁸ Dallas Burdette, *Where Are You?*

³⁰⁹ D. James Lewis, *The Cost of Discipleship*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writerser/s00733.shtml>

sentence *Jesus was always honest with those people with whom he dealt*, an impression created not only by the soft sound of the fricatives that repeat, but also by the alternation of simple consonants, never groups of two or three, with usually simple vocalic sounds, /i:/, /ə/, /o:/, /i/, /u:/, /e/. In the places where the consonants get clustered into harsh voiced groups, /lz/ and /nz/ in *rules and regulations*, /fr/ and /str/, in *frustrated*, they render strong disapproval. The **assonances** of /i/, in *will be thrilled with*, and /ei/, in *salvation by grace through faith*, in the last clause of the fragment re-establishes the serene tone of hope transmitted by the first sentence, in agreement with its informational content. These positive meanings associated with the first and the last sentences in this fragment may be also a result of the fact that they both begin and end in stressed syllables, '*Jesus ... dealt*; '*you ... faith*, suggesting the idea of 'upness' that accompany any positive feeling.

All the examples in this section have been used to support the idea that sounds are suggestive of expressed and expected feelings, emotions and behavioural attitudes towards the ideational content of the message of a sermon. Similar effects may be achieved through other rhetorical figures (also known as rhetorical schemes) based on repetition, which are analysed in more detail in the following sections.

3.4.1.2. Morphological and Syntactic Repetition

3.4.1.2.1. Anaphora

As shown in the previous section, political speeches abound in **anaphorae**. **Sermons** make use of this rhetorical scheme to the same purpose and their effect on the religious listener is comparable to that achieved by politicians through their speeches: **laying emphasis** on the particular details at the beginning of the phrases or sentences in which they occur so that the details repeated in this way could be memorised and continue to work on the believers' minds long after the sermon is over.

Persuading the listeners of the truth value of the spiritual ideas advanced by religion and its discourse requires more faith than logical demonstration from their part. The religious speakers draw the congregation's special attention by resorting to the repetition of the same **word**, **phrase** or of a more **complex syntactic structure** to insist on the spiritual and philosophical ideas in the scriptures. They appeal to the listeners' faith rather than demonstrate these ideas logically, though logical deduction is sometimes encouraged.

The repetition of such spiritual ideas in **parallel constructions**³¹⁰ may result in the listeners' accepting and remembering them more easily, as in the next example:

1). "As Christians we believe that there are important *truths* that govern life, and that *these truths* are absolute. *These truths* do not come from us, they are beyond us. That is, *they are truths* that cannot be influenced or changed by human behaviour. *They are true whether anyone* believes in them or not. *They are true whether anyone* agrees with them or not. *They are true whether anyone* likes them or not. *They are absolute truths* because they come from an absolute God, and they are the foundation of life itself."³¹¹

Although here not all the italicised structures are identical, they contain the repeated keyword, *truth*, sometimes in the form of a **polyptoton** in which the main repeated words belong to the same semantic class but not to the same morphological class, as in *That is, they are truths* (plural noun) *that cannot be influenced or changed... They are true* (adjective) *whether...*, and the last pair

³¹⁰ I. e. Sentences with **identical parser / syntactic structure**.

³¹¹ Rodney Buchanan, October 2002, *What Is Truth?*

<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=51253&ContributorID=3883>

of sentences at the end that begin with the same construction only in the inverted form: *They are **true** ... They are absolute **truths**...*

- 2). “No man or woman on the face of the earth can be out of communion with the Creator and, at the same time, truly know *what* peace is, *what* joy is, *what* happiness is, and *what* true comfort is.”³¹²

In this example, the combination of **anaphora** (*what...*, *what...*, *what...*, and *what...*) and **epiphora** (*...is*, *...is*, *...is*, *...is*), a combination also called **symploce**, places heavy emphasis on the four nominal elements embraced by the two repeated terms, *joy*, *happiness*, *true comfort*. All these nouns enumerated in this way in a context about the *communion with the Creator* get metonymical undertones, their sum describing what the feeling of communion with God is like. The priest could have formulated this idea more directly, without stylistic ornaments: “The man or woman in communion with the Creator feels peace, joy, happiness, and comfort.” But because between form and content there is an intrinsic relationship in that form produces meaning, this locutor is very careful about the form and produces a memorable linguistic formulation.

The same combination of figures of sounds, also consisting of four terms each, is present in the example below, too, where the locutor’s disagreement with the material everyday concerns to the detriment of the spiritual ones is emphasised in this way:

- 3). “We get concerned about *how big* the bank accounts are, *how big* our cars are, *how big* our homes are or *how big* our congregations are.”³¹³

Four **anaphorae** combined with three **epiphorae** are illustrated in the following excerpt:

- 4). “*Everyone here* is a minister **of God**. *Everyone here* is a servant **of God**. *Everyone here* is a minister of the proclamation of the good news **of God**. *Everyone* is to be actively engaged in kingdom work.”³¹⁴ (Anaphora in italics + Epiphora in boldface)

The fact that the main parts of the simple sentences in this fragment, i.e., the Subject and the Verb, are anaphorally repeated contributes to an increase in the missionary tone of the formulation that transmits an otherwise vague message in terms of informational content.

The following fragment illustrates how the religious speaker builds a logical argument in which anaphoral repetition plays a major role: it is meant to demonstrate the truth value of the general moral idea formulated at the beginning (*It costs to be faithful*). Part of this (*It cost / costs*) is repeated seven times at the beginning of successive sentences to introduce specific familiar details related to this moral.

- 5). “*It costs* to be faithful. *It cost* Daniel being cast into the den of lions. *It cost* Shandrach, Meshach and Abednego being put into a fiery furnace. *It cost* Stephen death by stoning. *It cost* Peter a martyr’s death. *It cost* Paul his life. *Does it cost* you anything to be faithful to your Lord and King?”³¹⁵

³¹² Dallas Burdette, *op. cit.*

³¹³ Dr. James Walter Clifton, *Three Types of Love*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00400.htm>

³¹⁴ Dallas Burdette, *God’s Initiative in You (I)*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00264.htm>

³¹⁵ Arulselvam Rayappan, *op. cit.*

This locutor's wish is to persuade the listeners to strengthen their faith in God by contrasting the much more privileged position they are in with that of the biblical characters he is speaking of in terms of the price they had to pay to defend their faith. This price, although referred to by different formulations, was *death*. When placed in such a context, the question at the end becomes rhetorical. There is only one possible answer, cleverly suggested by the priest, and the answer would be "*No, if we consider what the price paid by the others was*".

The informational content of the next fragment, used as the **illustration / anticipatory story** at the beginning of a sermon, revolves around an issue of utmost importance in social and political life: the contemporary problem of the war in Iraq. As the American people always have good reasons for everything they undertake as a nation in all walks of life and in every corner of the world, they make these reasons known, and they stress upon them, through the voices of the greatest manipulators of masses, the Christian religious speakers of all denominations included. It is also interesting to notice that the fragment as such, although part of a sermon, sounds exactly like a political speech: there is nothing religious in its content. It is used only to make a smooth introduction to the key issue of the sermon, *freedom*:

6). "In just one word, what is the reason that thousands of our young men and women are being deployed half-way around the world to Iraq? Well, if you had to boil it down to just one word, that reason would be: **freedom**. **Freedom** for the Iraqi people from the dictator that's been ruling over them for years. *Freedom* for the Middle East from one less volatile person to worry about. *Freedom* for our country from one less terrorist to be concerned about. We Americans are all about **freedom**. And **freedom** is exactly what our text is about this morning."³¹⁶

Anaphora combines in the fragment above with **epizeuxis** (... *freedom. Freedom...*), and with **polyptoton**³¹⁷ (illustrated by the last occurrence of the repeated term in bold-face type); this last figure adds the whole **anticipatory story** a final touch and comes to mark the end of a whole introductory paragraph built on repetition. In the remaining part of the sermon, even though the priest uses the term *freedom* several times, as it is the key issue of the meeting, this is not done in the same condensed way.

The two differently highlighted phrases at the beginning of the first sentence in the next example are separated, then they repeat several times throughout the paragraph as alternative **anaphorae** or as an extended **symploce**. This alternation is realised through identical syntactic constructions: complex sentences (*Main Clause + Adverbial Clause of Reason*, all subordinate clauses introduced by the same conjunction, *because* which occurs 8 times). The two phrases thus repeated reunite semantically in the last sentence giving the whole fragment a beautiful unitary structure. The syntactic parallelism in which anaphora plays a major role has definitely been achieved through a process of long deliberation aimed to impress the listeners:

7). "Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. *It is costly* because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. *It is costly* because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, *it is costly* because it cost God the life of His Son; 'You were bought with a price,' and what cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all, it is grace because God

³¹⁶ Peter Schmidt, February 2003, *Christ Gives Us Total Freedom?*
<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=63276&ContributorID=10566>

³¹⁷ **Polyptoton** is exemplified and discussed in more detail in 2.3.4.1.2.3.

did not reckon His Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered Him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God.”³¹⁸

The **anaphora** and the **syntactic parallelism** are not the only marks of careful linguistic selection and combination in this fragment. Some notional words are repeated several times, so that they stand out as key words: *life* (4 times), *God* (4 times), *calls* (twice in the same sentence, in the subordinate adverbial clauses, increasing the effect of the above mentioned syntactic parallelism). Moreover, the formulation acquires seductive force through the accumulation of lexical items that contain the dental fricative sounds /s/ and /z/ which occur in the two anaphoral structures, *it is costly*, (*it is*) *grace*: out of the 123 words that the whole fragment contains, in 50 (i.e., 40%) one of the two sounds is present and sometimes both (as in *Jesus* and in *justifies*). This repetition of sounds turns the whole fragment into an extended **consonance** with exquisite sonorous undertones that can only attract the listeners by creating a mysterious atmosphere.

The seductive undertones of **anaphora** (4 repeated V + cognate Object structures) combine with those achieved through **alliteration** (of /p/ and /l/) and **consonance** (of /l/ and the similar labiodental fricatives /f/ and /v/) in the next example to create a pleasant and memorable linguistic formulation:

8). “**Paul** appealed to the **Philippians** *to live a life of* holiness, *to live a life of* love, *to live a life of* forbearance, and *to live a life of* faithfulness to God—come what may.”³¹⁹ (the italics mark **anaphora**, whereas the boldfaced characters point out the **alliteration** and the **consonance** of the sounds /p/, /l/, /v/ and /f/)

In the example below, the priest provides a tautological definition to God, where the Subject Complement structure introduces an **alliterative** noun phrase that is the starting point for the **anaphora**:

9). “God is *a God of* grace, *a God of* mercy, and *a God of* love to all men.”³²⁰

In the next example, the last one in this section, the **anaphoral repetition** of *I remember*, which is the structural nucleus of all the sentences in this fragment, by laying extra stress on the ensuing Direct Objects, individualises each of the personal war memories that the locutor mentions:

10). “The earliest memory I have of the war is Southampton and the doodlebugs. Even as a child *I remember* the fear there was all around. *I remember* the devastation of wrecked buildings and living with my auntie on the outskirts of the town because it was thought safer. *I remember* being woken in the night and taken to air raid shelters with lots of other people. *I remember* standing in a school playground discussing what we thought could be the end of the world when the Atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. *I remember* victory in Europe and the way Southampton went wild with bonfires in the streets, parties and pianos and singing and dancing.”³²¹

If the personal story above were told without repeating the highlighted structure, it would turn the whole fragment into a long enumeration of events that could be felt as monotonous. Monotony leads to boredom and boredom leads to lack of concentration, of attention and, finally, to

³¹⁸ D. James Lewis, *op. cit.*

³¹⁹ Dallas Burdette, *op. cit.*

³²⁰ *Idem*, *Where are you.*

³²¹ Jeff Jones, *Rememberance*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/s00737.htm>

lack of receptiveness, which could result in lack of comprehension. All these negative effects are avoided by the skilful locutor, for the benefit of his listeners, and, implicitly, for the effectiveness of his sermon.

3.4.1.2.2. Epiphora

Reiterated words and phrases give the speakers' argumentation a tinge of determination. When such repetitions occur at the end of sentences or phrases, i.e., **epiphorally**, they become instruments for emphasis, an effect that increases the listeners' attention to the parts thus pointed out. Therefore, they become memorable and are learned effortlessly.

In a few examples in the preceding section **anaphora** combines with **epiphora** and other rhetorical figures, but outnumbers all of them. It is not infrequent for epiphora to get into similar rhetorical combinations in which it is the predominant device. This is the situation in the first example below, where the 6-term epiphora consists of the repetition of the key word *truth*:

1). "These truths are not **new truths**. *There is no such thing as new truths [...]* *There is such a thing as freshly discovered **truth**, or freshly applied **truth**, or freshly revealed **truth**, but there is no such thing as new truth.* That is why we receive truth by revelation - revelation implies by its very nature seeing something that is already there."³²² (the boldfaced words are the terms of the **epiphora**, the italics mark the **anaphora**, and the underlining, the **epizeuxis**)

The locutor's point in the fragment above is that the Christian religion with all its *truths* is the only true religion, but instead of perorating on this idea, he directs the listeners' attention on the general idea of truthfulness. By firmly insisting on the fact that *there is no such thing as new truths* (and that what is true has always been there, waiting for the people to discover it, or apply it, or to get it by revelation), his wish is to persuade those present that all the truths in the Bible, because they were received by the Biblical characters through revelation, are the only reliable ones. The **epiphora**, combined with the other devices, gives the priest the right means to make his words sound as heavy as hammer-hits in the listeners' ears; determination, firmness, a strong conviction that he is right, all these are transmitted to the listeners who are expected to believe in and to embrace the same opinions in their life as Christians.

The length of each **epiphoral term** in the fragment below covers two clauses, a finite main clause and its infinitival subordinate final clause: *we have used / use the holy scriptures // to give book, chapter, verse*. The Direct Object in this adverbial clause, *book, chapter, verse*, is then repeated **epiphorally** twice more, without the preceding structure:

2). "When it comes to the plan of salvation, *we have used the holy scriptures to give **book, chapter, verse**. When it comes to doctrinal issues, *we have used the scriptures to give **book, chapter, verse**. When it comes to exposing false teaching and teachers, *we use the bible to give us **book, chapter, verse**. If we rely so much on **book, chapter, verse**, why don't we live according to **book, chapter, verse**? Let me explain by this parable.*"³²³ (the underlining marks **anaphora** and the italics, **epiphora**)**

The epiphoral reference to the Christians' practice of referring to the scriptures of the Bible in detail whenever religious matters (introduced by means of the **anaphora** *When it comes to X*) are approached is used here as a rhetorical instrument: it draws a contrast between this habit and the

³²² Emile Wolfaardt, April 2001, *Our Principle of Life - Christ Centered*, <http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=37775&ContributorID=6323>

³²³ Carey Scott, *Parable of the Sower*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writerser/ser00463.htm>

everyday behaviour mentioned in the conditional sentence at the end (which also contains two epiphoral terms). The three sentences in which both **anaphora** and **epiphora** are present are structurally identical. All these rhetorical devices are marks of a carefully prepared discourse whose persuasive undertones cannot be overlooked.

Between the lines, the priest points out that people usually draw a separating line between spiritual matters and earthly matters, and insists on the fact that such a separation should not exist in the life of a true believer.

The same tone of insistence in the wish to be persuasive is present in the next example, too, where the undeniable importance of God is pointed out not by means of a plain formulation, but of three short compound two-clause sentences identically built, in which anaphora and epiphora find an outstanding place:

3). “It is not Paul (i.e., St. Paul), *but God that matters*; it is not Bob Lewis (i.e., another famous preacher), *but God that matters*; it is not Dallas Burdette (i.e., the speaker himself), *but God that matters*.”³²⁴ (the underlining marks **anaphora**, the italics, **epiphora**)

Here, the **anaphora** *It is not* introduces proper names of famous believers. The **epiphoral** structure is introduced by the adversative conjunction *but*, which establishes a contrast between the meanings of the two clauses that, however, do not exclude each other. Repeated three times, the **epiphoral** structure comes to counterbalance the preceding **anaphora** and the idea that it expresses outranks that expressed by the anaphora. The two rhetorical devices are expressively combined in sentences that display the same structure, a parallelism in which the two devices manifest their manipulative potential through their power of persuasion.

A very similar example, both in terms of rhetorical and syntactic composition is provided below. However, the meanings conveyed are totally different.

4). “God has done even more for you and me. He performed a miracle through a mother in a manger to deliver His message of hope. He didn't have to choose the lowly, *but He did*. He didn't have to leave heaven's glory, *but He did*. He didn't have to come to save us, *but He did*. He didn't have to suffer injustice, poverty, and rejection, *but He did*. He didn't have to give His life on the cross, *but He did*.”³²⁵

A comparison between the last two examples that employ identical rhetorical devices and use the same syntactic structure proves that it is not only the choice of these formal characteristics that counts, but also the content given this shape. This time, although **epiphora** establishes a formal counterbalance to the preceding **anaphora** as in the previous example, it has the same referent. As a result, the formal contrast between the two structures (negative verb in the anaphora, the same verb in the affirmative in the epiphora) does not attract a contrast in the overall idea, but an amplification of the unitary underlying meaning: God's disinterested love for humanity is immense.

The constitutive words of the 5-term **epiphora** below do not remain the same throughout the whole fragment; they vary from an initially negative structure, *yet they do not believe*, to an affirmative one at the end, *yet believe*:

5). “In the Gospel Jesus is recounting their unbelief – The two women return from the tomb and tell the apostles of Jesus Christ Resurrection, *yet they do not believe*. Jesus meets two of the apostles on the road to Emmaus and breaks bread with them. They go back and tell the

³²⁴ Dallas Burdette, *God's Initiative in You (1)*.

³²⁵ David P. Nolte, *op. cit.*

other apostles, *yet they do not believe*. Finally, Jesus reveals himself to the eleven, and *initially they do not believe* – they think he is a ghost. It is only after they have seen that *they believe*. This is why Jesus has said: blessed are those who have not seen and *yet believe*.³²⁶

Although in a slightly altered form from one occurrence to another, all the phrases repeated epiphorally in this example contain the same key word, the verb *to believe* in the Present Tense, three times in the negative, then twice in the affirmative: *yet they do not believe* (twice), *initially they do not believe*, *they believe*, *yet believe*. This verb generally refers to an ambivalently mental-and-emotional process that is the result of strong conviction. Conviction is usually gained through immediate experiences, directly perceived through the senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching. This idea is also expressed by the idiom *Seeing is believing*, which it is deeply rooted in the people's minds. The priest seems to attempt to dismantle this human inclination towards finding palpable visible proofs in order to believe in something as this is not compatible with the religious faith. He does this step by step offering supporting examples. Each of these examples ends in the same structure, whose epiphoral repetition is meant to work on the listeners' minds so that they (start to) believe without reservations.

The **epiphora** in the next fragment combines beautifully with **anaphora** and with **epizeuxis** in a most persuasive formulation:

6). "When you are under spiritual attack, meaning that you are being tempted to sin, or an evil thought crosses your mind tempting you to do wrong, the first thing you need to do is *go to God in prayer* and **ask Him to help** you to defeat it. If you are angry, and are about to say something ugly, *go to God in prayer* and **ask Him for help**. If you are about to lust over another human being, *go to God in prayer*. If you are about to gossip about someone, *go to God in prayer*. *Go to God in prayer* and **ask Him to give** you the strength to overcome the sin. When you ask, He will help you escape that temptation."³²⁷ (the italics highlight the **epiphora**, the boldfaced type, the **anaphora**, the underlining, the **epizeuxis**)

The idea expressed in the first sentence in this paragraph is a generalisation, and, therefore, it is difficult for the common listener to grasp its possible meanings. The priest helps them to understand it by providing, in the next sentences, some clarifying particularisations. All these being considered sins that may tempt any believer, the **epiphora** *Go to God in prayer* is offered as a solution to all of them. It sounds like a leitmotif at regular intervals that cannot pass unnoticed and it is sure that the listeners will remember it easily. The regular syntactic structure (conditional sentences in which the whole main clause is epiphorally repeated), the imperative form of the verb, the **anaphora**, and the **epizeuxis** considerably increase this effect.

3.4.1.2.3. Polypoton

As compared to the political speeches, the **polypoton** in sermons is far more frequently employed. Nouns in various cases, nouns in the singular close to a dependent analytical Genitive in the plural, the same pronoun in different cases, verbs in different moods and tenses, in the singular and the plural, verbs with cognate nouns³²⁸ are used more frequently in the same sentence.

As usually the items repeated in this way are single words, this rhetorical device provides the locutors who use it a good instrument for 'minimal-structure' emphasis very easy to notice and learn

³²⁶ Mark Ripper, *Contrast / Baptismal Call*, April 2001,

<http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=35622>

³²⁷ Keith Smith, *How to Defeat Satan and His Demons?(Part 2)*,

<http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writerser/ser00572.htm>

³²⁸ Cf. <http://soamc.org/tfh/FILES/Sermons%20-%20Various%20Authors/MARK4D/>

by the listeners. It is this kind of formulations that are more often quoted by them, due to the happy combination of short length with maximum expressiveness.

Maybe one of the most classic **polyptotonic formulations** in the religious context is:

- 1). “You are here because of your desire to pay homage to Him who is also called *King of Kings* and *Lord of Lords*.”³²⁹

The Nominative and the plural analytical Genitive of the noun in the same phrase functioning here as a Subject Complement have a superlative function with emphatic effects: the person thus identified is singled out as the greatest one in the corresponding classes, of kings and lords, respectively. As the two italicised phrases have been used only to refer to God, they can never be associated with anybody else, be it a human being or a saint. Therefore, both these metonymical constructions have acquired a proper noun value with a unique referent.

In an example discussed in the section on anaphora, the **polyptoton** is also present. The two figures overlap and the alliterative euphonic effects add to their expressiveness:

- 2). “...to live a life of holiness, to live a life of love, to live a life of forbearance, and to live a life of faithfulness ...”³³⁰

The positive manipulative undertones of this combination of an infinitive verb with its cognate Object (also called **figura etymologica**³³¹) and the quadruple anaphoral repetition of this polyptotonic structure are outstanding in this fragment. Such a dense formulation in a most simple syntactic structure (where only the asyndetical and copulative coordination are present), cannot but remain on the listeners’ minds and put the mark on their everyday life behaviour in the four directions mentioned here: religious purity (*holiness*), *love*, *forbearance*, and *faithfulness* to God.

The **polyptotonic** combinations of nouns in the Nominative, in the Accusative, and in the Genitive cases show the locutor’s insistence on the key-elements thus highlighted. However, this device is sometimes accompanied by others, such as **personification** and **metaphor**:

- 3). “If we’re saved *by faith*, can we be saved if our *faith* suffers shipwreck?”³³² (Accusative + Nominative)

The terms of the **polyptoton** here combine with **personification** in the former occurrence of the noun *faith* (as it *saves us*), and with **metaphor**, in the latter, where it is implicitly associated with a vessel. All these three figures of speech contribute to a considerable amplification of the seductive undertones of the phrasing.

- 4). “*Possession* never comes through the efforts of *the possession* itself.”³³³ (Nominative + analytical Genitive)

Here, the emphatic undertones expressed by the **polyptoton** are increased both by the periphrastic Genitive and the reflexive pronoun *itself*. The idea transmitted here could be more

³²⁹ Emile Wolfaardt, *Jesus Is Alive*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writerser/ser00269.htm>

³³⁰ Dallas Burdette, *op. cit.*

³³¹ **Figura etymologica** is “a special case of **polyptoton**”. It “repeats two or more words of the same stem”. Cf. Stefanie Lethbridge and Jarmilla Mildorf, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

³³² Wayne Wells, *Can a Christian Lose His Salvation?*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writerser/ser00338.htm>

³³³ *How to Become a Christian*, Radio Sermon No. 133, 11 July 1994, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writerser/ser00143.htm>

plainly formulated as: “You can never get / possess something effortlessly”. The noun *possession* bears a [- Animate] meaning, but given the **personification** present here - pointed out especially by the regent element *efforts* which has a [+ Animate] meaning - and the title of the sermon, the listeners associate it with a whole complex idea, that of Jesus Christ and the faith in Him. What they understand is: “It is not enough for Jesus to want to come to you and transform you into a true Christian. It is you that have to make some efforts so that He can enter your life, so that you can *possess* Him.” Between this aphoristic meaning acquired by the locutor’s skilful choice of words and stylistic devices and the one expressed by the plain formulation that would transmit bare ideas, there is a worth noting difference.

In the following example, the locutor uses two **polyptotons**, one combining a verb with its cognate noun (*be willing* and *will*), the other one, the synthetic Genitive with the Nominative (*God’s* and *God*):

- 5). “As the Bible would teach us in several passages one must be willing to do *God’s will* before *God* can hear their prayers.”³³⁴

Below, the same verb and its cognate noun as above are used in a sentence in which a personal pronoun forms a polyptotonic structure by combining the Nominative with the Genitive. The assonantal repetition of the vowels /i/ and /i:/ is also an element that sounds seductive to the listeners’ ears and stimulates their emotions:

- 6). “...you need to *be willing* to surrender your will to His...”³³⁵

Two verbs in the Imperative Mood and in the Indicative, Past Tense Simple, form **polyptotons** that amplify the illocutionary force of the verb in the main regent clause:

- 7). “I urge you, dear friend, *hear* the same gospel they *heard*, believe in the same Christ they believed in...”³³⁶

The negative form of the same verb used in different tenses in the example below lays extra emphasis on its negative meaning. The locutor sounds very confident that what he says is true:

- 8). “God *did not* and *does not* give this certain covenant and the promises to a people different than the true chosen people called Israel.”³³⁷

The following example illustrates two polyptotons in a special arrangement:

- 9). “**God** sought *Adam*, but *Adam* ought to have sought **God**...”³³⁸

The two corresponding pairs of words, combined in different forms, are arranged in a mirror-like order. They can be considered polyptotons as the Nominative of the noun is combined with the Accusative of the same noun, and the Past Tense of the verb is combined with its Perfect Infinitive

³³⁴ Steve Barlow, *The Christian and Prayer*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00512.htm>

³³⁵ Carey Scott, *Counting the Cost of Discipleship*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00451.htm>

³³⁶ Steve Barlow, *ibidem*.

³³⁷ Mahlon Wickey, *Who Are the Modern Day Israelites?*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00391.htm>

³³⁸ Dallas Burdette, *Where Are You?*

form. However, this figure is called **chiasmus**³³⁹, but when the repeated elements belong to the same lexical class, it can be analysed in this way, too.

Sometimes, the **polytoton** spreads out over more than one sentence (be it simple, compound or complex) as in the fragment below, where Reverend Kenneth E. Thomas repeats the noun *seed* metaphorically eight times, both in the Nominative and in the Accusative cases, in the singular and in the plural, in a succession of 3 complex sentences. In the phrase *seed store* it is used with adjectival value. A whole fragment based on this device becomes very rich in hidden meanings and deserves special attention:

10). “Any teaching which results in making folks other than, or in addition to, ‘Christians’ is not the pure *seed* of the kingdom of Christ don’t you see? If a person should go to a *seed* store and purchase some *seed* with the understanding that it was a particular type *seed*, when they planted the *seed* they could be assured that the plant it would produce be identical to the parent plant from which the *seed* was harvested! [...] If when the *seeds* came up there was a variety of plants all different, one would know immediately that someone had knowingly or unknowingly mixed the *seeds*.”³⁴⁰

The pastor leaves some space between repetitions so that the listeners may have enough time to understand the contextual implications of the background metaphor that is also the key they are provided with at the beginning of the argument:

genuine Christian teaching = pure seed

The basic structure of this metaphor is **A is B**, in which **A** is the **topic**³⁴¹ or **tenor**³⁴², i.e. *the thing somebody is speaking about*, and **B** is the **vehicle**, i.e. *the thing to which the tenor is compared*. As with metaphors in general, the meaning of this one results from the *interaction* between its **vehicle** and its **tenor**. This **interaction** in terms of what the tenor and the vehicle have in common is called the **ground** of the metaphor.³⁴³ The **ground** in this example is represented by the analogy the pastor makes between the two terms. As the **tenor** of this metaphor is very abstract and, therefore, vague, the pastor illustrates it with the help of a concrete vehicle taken from the immediate reality, thus clear and easy to understand to everybody. The analogy between people’s need for genuine Christian teachings in the spiritual life and their need for quality pure seeds in the material life is made in terms of the results of the corresponding processes of teaching and of sowing: a *genuine Christian* and a *pure plant*, respectively. This is a second metaphor that this argument builds:

genuine Christian = pure plant

The meaning that lingers about these two metaphors discussed so far, however, is related to the Actors involved in such processes: the *teacher*, i.e. *clergyman*, who provides Christian teachings, and the *seed seller*, whose moral duty is not to mix seeds up in order not to deceive the *buyers*. Therefore, between the lines, the pastor succeeds in building another metaphor which seems to be even more important than the preceding ones. This implicit metaphor is:

³³⁹ Cf. Stefanie Lethbridge and Jarmilla Mildorf, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

³⁴⁰ Reverend Kenneth E. Thomas, *Christians Only*, <http://sermons.11net.com/sermons/christiansonly.txt>

³⁴¹ Cf. Allan Paivio, “Psychological Processes in the Comprehension of Metaphor”, In Andrew Ortony (ed.), 1979, *Metaphor and Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 150-171.

³⁴² Cf. I. A. Richards, 1936, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, London: Oxford University Press, p. 93, *apud*. Horia Hulban, 2001, *Syntheses in English Lexicology and Semantics*, Iași: Spanda, pp. 127-128.

³⁴³ Cf. Stephen Ullmann, 1970, *Semantics. An Introduction to the Science of Meaning*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, p. 213, *apud*. Horia Hulban, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

genuine Christian pastor = moral seeds seller

Another metaphor that results, by logical deduction, from this one is:

Christian man = seeds buyer

The number of **metaphors** employed in this fragment is very large. Some of them are developed by the pastor himself. The two general **conceptual metaphors** that are built inductively by the pastor through the other metaphorical associations mentioned above, namely *Christian religion is good*, and *Lack of Christian religion is bad*, are implicit and they are both sociologically and philosophically motivated.

Such a complexity both of explicit and of latent meanings in so short a fragment is proof enough that a rhetorical and stylistic device such as **polyptoton** in our case becomes very expressive and time saving when skilfully employed by a locutor in a piece of discourse. It is also a measure of the locutor's ingenuity and creativity, qualities highly praised in good speakers, therefore with real manipulative powers on the recipients of such speeches.

3.4.2. Enumeration and Accumulation

In sermons, where the religious locutors tend to add an emotional touch to their words in order to speak more convincingly about religious things old and new, they approach various topics by analysing them minutely. A largely preferred device that helps them extract a religious moral by mentioning all the facets of a problem or event, and by speaking in detail about certain people and their actions, be them praiseworthy or condemnable, is **enumeration**. As will be illustrated in this section, this device can combine with **anaphora** and with **epiphora** and it often turns into **accumulation**, when the list of enumerated items is exceedingly long.

In the following fragment, the anaphoral repetition of the same modifying phrase *all your*, combined with the **enumeration** of the nouns that define a true Christian's spiritual parts, such as *heart, mind, soul*, and *strength*, is very suggestive. Instead of putting it plainly, *Love God as true Christians*, the speaker points out the importance of each part so that the listeners focus their thoughts and feelings on each of them in turn. It is very likely that they may leave the church with this formulation lingering on their minds:

- 1). "Love God above all else, with *all your heart, all your mind, all your soul and all your strength*."³⁴⁴ (the italics highlight the **enumeration** and the underlining marks the **anaphora**)

Each term in such an enumeration starting with anaphoral terms is equally insisted on and given the same importance. Only the chronological limitations of speech and the spatial arrangement from left to right in writing require such an arrangement; if it were possible, all the terms would be said at once.

The same is true about the next fragment where the great number of enumerated terms, all of them repeating anaphorally the indefinite adjective *every*, turns the whole formulation into an **accumulation**. The distance between the locutor and the hearers is considerably reduced by his not sparing any effort to mention all the possible members of a family.

- 2). "My prayer is that God will wake up *every mother, every grandmother, every father, every grandfather, every aunt, every uncle, every brother, and every sister* to God consciousness and to the value of the soul."³⁴⁵ (the underlining marks the **anaphora**)

³⁴⁴ *Baptism of the Lord*, 13 January 2002, Homilies Alive, www.homiliesalive.com, Homily Code: AA-4.

As in the previous example, all the family members thus mentioned are given equal importance. Moreover, each listener has the occasion to visualise them as they are enumerated. In this situation, an indefinite pronoun, such as *everybody*, or a structure like *all the members of your families*, would have the same informational meaning if used instead the whole enumeration, but either would sound neutral and would create an unwanted cold relationship between the priest and the listeners.

The enumeration of the same structure **S + V + Direct Object** in the next fragment overlaps with anaphora, as well:

3). “You gave up teaching in the Sunday school; you gave up all work for Christ; you gave up Bible reading; you gave up prayers; and you gave up church attendance.”³⁴⁶ (the underlining marks the **anaphora** in this example, the italics, the **enumeration**)

Here, the list of Christian-wise bad habits is carefully arranged in a chronological order. They all refer to the condemnable behaviour of the “backsliders”, as the priest calls those who used to be “professed Christians”, members of the church and also Sunday school teachers, and gave up all they used to do for the church and their own faith and chose a different life³⁴⁷. Their unpardonable behaviour is severely criticised by the locutor. His tone of deep emotional involvement and sharp reproof is also rendered by the use of the second person pronoun *you* instead of *they* to refer to people who are not present.

The excerpt below is an illustration of how **enumeration** leads to **accumulation** even in the same context:

4). “The Bible calls God's people Christians, priests, children, disciples, saints, or brethren [...] Christians are taught to do all in the name (by the authority) of Jesus rather than by the authority of the Pope, Joseph Smith, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Mary Baker Eddy, or any other man or woman [...]. Therefore, [...] people are not called *Adventists, Amish, Anglicans, Apostolic, Baptist, Buddhist, Catholics, Congregationalist, Deist, Episcopalians, Holiness, Jehovah Witnesses, Jews, Lutherans, Masons, Mennonites, Methodist, Moonies, Moravians, Mormons, Moslems, Muslims, Nazarenes, Orthodox, Pentecostals, Presbyterians, Protestants, Quakers, Reformed, Unitarians, Universalists*, etc.”³⁴⁸ (the underlining marks the **enumeration**, the italics, the **accumulation** of enumerated items)

It is clear that this locutor finds highly persuasive undertones in these two devices. The two enumerations at the beginning are used to prepare the listeners for what is yet to come, an overwhelmingly long list of all religious denominations alphabetically arranged, carefully deliberated on in advance. By saying what religious people are **not** called, and mentioning that all that should count for the true believers is not their name or the name of their religion, he militates for a faithful non-denominational Christian.

Another example in which the two rhetorical devices combine is given below:

5). “He is *the Son of David, the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*. He is *the Holy One of Israel*. He is *Emmanuel*. [...] Jesus Christ the Lord means that Jesus [...] is *the Anointed One*, and *He is Master, He is Owner, He is*

³⁴⁵ Dallas Burdette, *Where Are You?*

³⁴⁶ *Ibidem*.

³⁴⁷ Cf. *Ibidem*.

³⁴⁸ Samuel A. Matthews, *How to Be Just a Christian*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writeser/ser00403.htm>

*Ruler and He is God Incarnate. Jesus is God in human flesh. [...] Have You accepted and Received Jesus as the Savior who was born just for you? Is He the One in whom you find the fulfillment of all God's Promises? Is He the Word made flesh in your Life? Is Jesus Christ, not only the Savior, but do you allow Him to be Lord, Owner, Master, Ruler over your heart and over your life? Do you accept that Jesus is God?*³⁴⁹ (the italics mark the **enumeration** and the underlining, the **accumulation**)

All the terms in the list of the numerated Subject Complements have, naturally, the same referent: *He is **the Son of David, the Wonderful Counselor,..., the Prince of Peace***. This is not necessarily a way by which the priest communicates to the listeners that these are the possible names used to refer to Jesus Christ. More likely, it is a way of paying reverential homage to Him and to instill the same feeling of religious reverence in the listeners. The most important such elements, however, are not mentioned within the enumeration itself, but are individually marked by separate simple clauses in which they also function as Subject Complements: *He is **the Holy One of Israel***. *He is **Emmanuel***. The second enumeration follows in this newly settled fashion and its terms are whole clauses in which the Subject and the relational verb are anaphorally mentioned: *Jesus...is the Anointed One, He is Master, He is Owner, He is Ruler and He is God Incarnate*. The immediately following simple sentence comes as a conclusion to all these individualisations, or as a super-ordinate term to all the preceding ones: *Jesus is God in human flesh*. The cascade of appellatives is followed by another cascade, of **rhetorical interrogative sentences**, one of them containing a four-term enumeration as well. All these questions expect the same answer, Yes. Therefore, they are not *genuine* questions. They are used with a different aim and pragmatic function. Instead of being patronising, prescriptive and dogmatic by perorating on the necessity for all the beliefs and attitudes thus mentioned to conform with their religious rules, the priest chooses an more effective, though not less controlling, indirect method: he first says what Jesus is, according to the scriptures, and then he asks 'questions' about whether the listeners have accepted the presence of Jesus in their life. As it is very difficult to give an answer other than in the affirmative to these questions, the manipulative powers of such a practice are obvious.

In the fragment below, the rhetorical questions suggest negative answers. Here, **accumulation** combines with **anaphora**, as all sentences begin in the same wh- interrogative construction. However, the expected answer is not very clear as in the example above; it is not a simple No. The main function of these questions is to make listeners reflect on their past Christian behaviour and to take visible steps towards improving it. By asking questions instead of formulating requests or orders, and by considering himself one of those invited to reflect more seriously (*How many of us...?*), the locutor reduces the distance between him and the listeners so that there be higher chances for his message to get across and for the believers to change their Christian attitude in the future in conformity with the informational content of his discourse:

6). *"How many of you have, in the past, opened up your Bible to explain the Plan of Salvation to someone? How many of you have, in the past, even shown a belief in the Bible to others? How many of you have explained to your neighbor where you go every Sunday morning at the same time? How many of us have even rebuked error or pointed out to someone that their actions do not meet God's approval? How many of you have allowed your opportunities to*

³⁴⁹ Dr. D. James Lewis, *A Savior Is Born*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writerser/ser00392.htm>

pass away because you were too embarrassed to say something about the Bible?”³⁵⁰
(**anaphora** is italicised)

The next fragment illustrates how the repeated use of the same phrase may be felt as **accumulation** even though the repetitions are not in very close vicinity:

7). “[...] The story presents Abraham as a believer who lets *his faith* be corrected and improved. The correction of *his faith* in human sacrifice has many advantages. The transformation of *his faith* is not a failure of *his faith*; on the contrary, it strengthens and refines *his faith*. And he proves his absolute trust on and obedience to God through this transformed *faith*. That gives Isaac his life back. Moreover, Abraham gives a new orientation to *faith* in the biblical history...”³⁵¹ (+ the italics mark the repeated term, the underlining, the **epiphora**)

All the highlighted terms are Accusatives. The over-insistence on the concept of *faith* is realised here not only by its repetition, but also by its not being replaced (not even once!) by the co-referential pronoun with anaphoric reference, *it*, or by paraphrases that avoid it, as a non-emphatic formulation and tone would require. The effect of such obsessive a repetition combines with that of **epiphora**, which uses the same key term as constituent.

In the example below, **accumulation** consists in putting in the same context similar **syntactic structures** (i.e., interrogative sentences) for 12 times in two successive paragraphs:

8). “*What did Daniel really see? What does this vision bring before you? What do you see with your eyes of faith? Does this vision of God give you hope? Does this vision of God promise life for you? Does this vision of God fill you with love and joy and peace?*

*What did Peter, James and John see in our Gospel story today? Was Jesus radically changed before their eyes? Did they see this ‘risen Jesus’ even before the sacrifice of Calvary? Was Jesus fully divine one moment and just human the next? What did these three people see? Who did they hear?”*³⁵²

Asking so many questions at a time may seem an inappropriate methodological procedure: nobody can keep so many questions in mind so that to attempt to answer them all later. The priest’s intention, however, is to focus the listeners’ attention on the aspects he emphasises in the form of interrogative sentences. What he does next is tell the story of the Biblical Transfiguration experience, he himself answering the questions previously asked. The priest’s awareness of his parishioners’ religious knowledge allows him to use such a rhetorical device. Therefore, what he actually does is not only offer them a sermon outline, but also invite them to recollect these details that they already know. Methodologically speaking, he stimulates listeners to take a less passive part in the preaching process, an activation technique that leads to easier understanding and more solid learning.

The **accumulation of interrogative sentences** is a device preferred by some preachers more than any other device. In what follows two more examples, taken from two sermons by the same preacher, are given to prove such preference and that the sermon fragments in which such accumulation is used can be outstandingly long:

³⁵⁰ Carey Scott, *Parable of the Sower*.

³⁵¹ Paul Kallan, March 2003, *From Sacrifice to Liberation*,
<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=56071>

³⁵² *Transfiguration*, August 6, 2000, Homilies Alive, www.homiliesalive.com, Homily Code: MM-1.

9). “First, I would like to ask professing Christians this question, or rather let God ask it – ‘Where are you?’ *What is your relationship to the church? Do your friends know you to be on the Lord’s side? How long have you been a Christian? Is it twenty years, thirty years, or forty years? Well, ‘Where are you now?’ Are you making progress towards heaven? And can you give a reason for the hope that is within you? [...] Actions speak louder than words. Do your neighbors know that you are a Christian? Do your co-workers know that you are a Christian? Do your family members know that you are a Christian? Does everyone know you to be on the Lord’s side? Let every professed Christian ask, ‘Where am I in the sight of God?’ ‘Is my heart loyal to the King of heaven?’ ‘Is my life here as it should be in the community in which I live?’ ‘Am I a light in this dark world?’ [...] Are you a living epistle? Are you standing up for Jesus? Are you known and read by all men? Are you standing up for Christ in this dark and sinful world? If you are for God, then come out of the world and be counted. Are you trying to serve God and the world at the same time?’*”³⁵³

10). “Are we a united people? Are we a divided people? What attitude do we exhibit toward other believers in other denominations who also accept Jesus as the Savior of the world? How do we relate to others within our own denomination (Churches of Christ) when there are disagreements over the so-called ‘five-acts of worship’? How do we relate to one another when others do not dot every ‘i’ or cross every ‘t’ exactly like us? How do we relate to one another in this congregation? Do we love one another in spite of our differences? Do we only love one another if there is complete harmony with my wishes? Do we feel the burden of Jesus’ prayer? Do we emphasize spiritual unity? Just how do we put into practice the unity for which our Lord Jesus prayed? Are we constantly shooting arrows to wound or to kill those for whom Christ died?”³⁵⁴

The preacher Dallas Burdette employs the **accumulation of interrogatives** to a great extent in his sermons. This can be considered a predominant mark of his linguistic style. It is clear that the main function of these questions is not that of eliciting information from the listeners; he does not expect any answer to such questions, because they are so many and it would take a lot of time to discuss each of them in detail, on the one hand, and because the sermon as rhetorical discourse is a monologue and does not give the addressees the chance to respond verbally, on the other. As not a verbal response as such is expected, more important in such situations is the listeners’ emotional response and their behavioural attitude in their everyday life after thus being signalled the aspects they should consider.

That “Content and form go hand in hand”³⁵⁵ or “*form and content* are not...clearly separable”, that “one is intrinsically dependent on the other”, that “a paraphrase never expresses exactly the same thing as the original utterance”, and, consequently, that “form...produces meaning”³⁵⁶ are facts largely agreed upon by linguists, literary critics, and philosophers of language. These ideas have been considered throughout the present section. Some **phonological**, **morphological** and **syntactic rhetorical schemes** have been analysed in more detail to prove that behind the informational content transmitted by any linguistic formulation there lay many other meanings that can be retrieved from its surface structure when this formulation is stylistically marked.

³⁵³ Dallas Burdette, *God’s Initiative in You* (1)

³⁵⁴ *Idem*, *Christ’s Prayer for a United People*, <http://thousandsofsermons.com/sermons/writerser/ser00263.htm>

³⁵⁵ Horia Hulban, “Stylistic Structures”, in Horia Hulban (ed.), 2004, *Style in Language, Discourses and Literature II*, Iași: Lumen, p. 20.

³⁵⁶ Stefanie Lethbridge and Jarmilla Mildorf, *Basics of English Studies*.

3.5. Clarity - a Prerequisite for an Effective Sermon

As mentioned in a previous section, when delivering a sermon, the main pragmatic aims of the religious speakers, irrespective of their denomination, are to address both the listeners' mind and their will. This is to say that they should be *persuasive* about the righteousness of the spiritual truths in the religious texts that they are analysing, and able change the listeners' behaviour for the better in line with the Bible teachings.

Persuasion goes hand in hand with comprehension; that is, in order to be accepted as true, and, therefore, willingly followed, the religious texts have to be clear, easily accessible to the religious listener, both in terms of linguistic form and of logical mastering of the arguments at the level of the content, and delivered in a tone of full support and understanding of the common listener's mental capacity. Given that the society as a whole, with all its values, has changed from the time when the religious texts currently preached in churches were written, the Christian priests of all denominations around the world have to interpret the teachings of the Holy Book to everybody's understanding in their current socio-cultural contexts. This is not an easy task to carry out as these interpretations have to be constantly re-actualised and adapted to the parishioners' way of life without losing their universal moral connotations. Therefore, they bear the marks of the priest's subjectivity and personal capacity of understanding. Subjectivity favours speculations, and these are often fallacious; they impress but they may lack consistency.

In the two following sections, the locutor's concern about the listeners' power of understanding in his attempt to help them process and internalise the message of the sermon is the starting point for analysis.

3.5.1. Logical Fallacies in Sermons

The fragments analysed in this section are samples of religious verbosity apparently logically articulated, whose manipulative effects are discussed in each case in turn. The locutors seem to offer a logical, therefore, clear explanation to the truth value of the Biblical facts and events, but actually their reasoning behind their discourse is fallacious. As mentioned before, given that the sermons used for analysis are deliberate texts that circulate in written form, the preachers that put them online are careful not to use faulty argumentation as this would be easy to detect at a repeated look at the text. However, I have found some examples of fallacious reasoning, which are analysed individually in more detail in what follows.

What the priest does in the following sermon is put words into the listeners' mouths by providing them with a lame logical deduction:

1) "So, let me ask you a question [...] 'Do you really believe that Jesus rose from the dead?'

Other than Jesus raising Lazarus, the widow's son, and the Jewish official's daughter from the dead, have you ever heard of anyone else who was raised from the dead? I have discussed this question with a few Catholic experts and there doesn't seem to be any record of it happening [...] The simple truth is that Jesus, and the other two individuals I mentioned, were the only people in history to rise from the dead. Therefore, the significance of our presence here today is that we believe He rose from the dead and proved that He was God. And so our answer to the question would be, 'Yes, I believe Jesus rose from the dead'."³⁵⁷

The question in the beginning of this fragment is a rhetorical one: the listeners already know what answer is expected from them. But in his eagerness to be persuasive and to eliminate any trace of doubt in the parishioners' minds the priest wants to lead them to the understanding of its truth value. He overlooks the very essence of the metaphysical, dogmatic truth behind this statement and

³⁵⁷ *Easter Sunday*, Homily Code A-6.

makes an attempt to come up with objective pieces of evidence that verifies it. He uses these proofs to articulate a logical demonstration of a syllogistic type. Only this evidence is circumstantial and, consequently, so is the demonstration that makes use of it³⁵⁸. This demonstration is based on what people have not *heard* of and on the testimony of *some experts* whose name the priest does not mention.

His fallacious demonstration can be enthymematically put as follows:

Major premise (not stated): *What people have never heard of has never existed.*

Minor premise: *You and I and a few Catholic experts have never heard of **that**.*

Consequent: *Therefore, **that** has never existed.*

There is a double fallacy in this enthymeme:

1. The implied major premise is not always true as *there have always existed things* that people have *never heard of*.

2. The evidence in the minor premise is restricted to a minority of people. There may be other people who do not fall in with this evidence.

As a result, the allegedly *simple truth* in the consequent is fallacious. Nevertheless, the whole demonstration seems logically articulated and very difficult to refute to a dogmatic person. This is why it is accepted as it is.

By leading his listeners step by step through this demonstration and by using a simple language in which the direct contact with them is maintained all the time, the priest proves to be a charismatic figure with real manipulative powers. Moreover, by skilfully placing the listeners first in the list of those who are great authorities and can decide on the matter in point - i.e. before *I, a reliable source because educated*, and *a few experts, a more reliable source because very educated* - the priest shows great respect for the parishioners' religious knowledge and, implicitly, their power of decision. Even if he does this in the indirect way described above, the impact of his words on them cannot be denied.

In the following example, the exegesis³⁵⁹ of a verse from James' gospel turns into a genuine lesson of ethics:

2) “‘Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above’. (James 1:17)

[...] But who here needs gifts from the Father of Lights? Well, only those of us who have sinned. I guess that would be all of us. Only those of us who need to let God work on us and change some of our less-than-dynamic personality traits. By that I mean maybe some of us need to loosen up, while some of us need to get more serious about our life. I'm not your pharmacist, so I'm not standing here prescribing for you. You listen to the Holy Spirit. Let Him convict you.”³⁶⁰

The reverend here does not interpret the actual verse; he uses it as a starting point for a lesson about moral principles: he makes assumptions, he gives advice. But he does this artfully. First, he makes a few comments, identifying himself with his parishioners in order not to seem patronising: *only those of us, all of us, some of us*. Then, as if sensing that he has become too prescriptive, he

³⁵⁸ This argument is an illustration mainly of the **appeal to misleading authority** type of formal fallacy. Cf. Gary N. Curtis, *Fallacy Files*, <http://www.fallacyfiles.org/authorit.html>

³⁵⁹ **Exegesis** is used here in its theological meaning. It refers to the *interpretation that draws out the meaning of the Bible*.

³⁶⁰ Reverend Larry Kirkpatrick, 25 September 1999, *Turning on the Lights*, Price S. D .A. Church, <http://www.greatcontroversy.org/documents/sermons/sermonsLK/kir-totl.html>

abruptly replaces his voice with that of the Holy Spirit: if he, as a human being, has not convinced his listeners of the truth value of his words, he knows that speaking in the name of the Holy Spirit will.

Using the name of a higher authority gives priests the opportunity, and the instrument as well, to sound more convincing and more seductive. It is a method of persuasion and manipulation largely used in churches everywhere.

In the next example I approach another method that the priest resorts to in his intention to make the listeners accept the truth value of the biblical teachings. In section 3.2. I underlined the reasons why authentic stories from the speaker's life are used at the beginning of sermons to anticipate the thesis with. In the fragment below, a similar story is told by the priest, as part of his argumentation, in order to persuade his listeners of the truthfulness of their own gospel as opposed to the falsehood of *junk* gospels, as he calls them:

3) "It is important that we get exercise. We use the expression *keep in shape*. Not long ago my wife and I joined Bally's. We go there to walk, to swim and to use the conditioning machines. I have heard that weight lifters say *no pain, no gain*. If that is true in muscle building it is also true in the spiritual life. If you hear a gospel that doesn't cause pain and death to the life of sin then you are hearing a junk gospel."³⁶¹(emphases in the original)

The priest's approach of the topic in point is very seductive, though not very consistent: a conclusion drawn from a story about a particular personal pastime is hardly enough to point out the relevance of his disagreement. It is known that most people need to understand the logic of somebody's opinions before they accept them as true. Aware of this, R O'Ffill provides them with a seemingly logical correlation between what is already known as true – i.e., the universal truth condensed in the maxim *no pain, no gain* – and what is still new and has to be accepted as true – i.e., the falsehood of the *junk* gospels. His method is effective in that it leads the people who look up to him and trust his logic to fully agree to what he says. This locutor's discourse is very clearly articulated: the sentences are short; they contain no more than two clauses. Although in these clauses coordination by means of juxtaposition is predominant, there are also several complex sentences. Two of them contain subordinate conditional clauses that arrange the facts presented in a condition-result logical relationship, very helpful for his deductive discourse: "*If that is true in muscle building it is also true in the spiritual life*"; "*If you hear a gospel [...] then you are hearing a junk gospel*". By means of a clear-cut linguistic formulation, he manages to transmit his firm conviction that he is right in what he says. As self-confidence attracts respect and respect attracts credibility, his success in front of the listeners is almost guaranteed, despite the faulty reasoning behind the nice personal story.

In analysing the fallacies above, I stressed on their characteristics as faulty logical arguments aiming at *persuading* the congregation. Some of the rhetorical and the stylistic devices that speakers adorn their arguments with to the clear purpose of *seducing* their audience were presented in more detail in the previous sections and have not been insisted on in present one.

3.5.2. Metalingual Explanations: Etymological and Dictionary Definitions, Paraphrasing, Illustrating with Examples

Whenever the language of a religious fragment from the scriptures contains specialised terminology that may raise questions about its possible meanings, the religious locutor's **explanatory comments** are provided in such a manner as to impress the listener. This is to say that the preacher's comments focus not only on the universality of the esoteric meanings of the facts and events in the Bible, but on **linguistic terminology** as well. In what follows, some illustrations of the ways in

³⁶¹ Reverend Richard O'Ffill, *He Speaks Your Language*, <http://216.92.178.65/documents/sermons/off-lang.html>

which the meanings of Biblical linguistic terms are provided and analysed from the perspective of the explanatory method used by the preacher in sermon delivery.

Very often, the **etymology** of a lexical item is provided in order to explain the meaning closest to the original one³⁶². A priest is expected to know foreign languages, especially the classical languages, such as Latin, Greek, Hebrew; if he proves that he does, the credibility of his words increases and, consequently, his own credibility among his listeners.

In the first example below, the locutor makes lexical associations between the etymological meaning of the key-word he needs to clarify - i.e. *discernment* - and the Latin for *disciple*, which is *discere*. This association of words gives him the opportunity to draw well articulated connections between the meaning of the key-word and the listeners' religious behaviour. The words in bold-face type in the excerpt below mark the smooth passage from the etymological definition to the religious conclusion that the priest wants his listeners to accept as true and, therefore, to adopt as part of their religious behaviour. The way in which he integrates the scientific data into the argument of the sermon is a measure of his linguistic creativity that enhances the chances for his words to be easily remembered and accepted as true:

1). "As we continue our theme on Christian Discernment, we shall now focus on its definition and function in relation to the Cross [...].

Discernment comes from the Latin word "*discernere*" meaning "*to sift or distinguish*". Interestingly, the Latin root has a very close correlation to the word for *disciple*, which is "*discere*" meaning "*to learn or follow*". A student **cannot follow** his teacher closely if he is not able **to distinguish** among the attributes he needs to emulate from those he must not. *Discernment* enables us to know what is from God and allows us to test every spirit and retain what is good, pleasing and acceptable to Him. Therefore, *discernment*, in simple terms, is *following the ways of the Lord Jesus. It is following the ways of the Master!*"³⁶³ (inverted commas in the original text)

In the next fragment the **etymological explanation** of the key-word *suicide* is used as a starting point in an argument about this solution that some people find to their *temporary problems*, a solution which the priest strongly disagrees with. (It is this disagreement that he wants to instill in the listeners as well by further providing them with overwhelming statistics of the phenomenon of suicide among the American people):

2). "*Suicide* has been said to be a permanent solution to a temporary problem. The name *suicide* comes from the Latin word "*sui*", meaning "*of oneself*", and "*-cida*", meaning "*to kill*".³⁶⁴

In the following excerpt, the **etymological explanation** that accompanies a common definition of the key-word in the title of the sermon is provided only to prove that a seemingly opaque word such as *Lent* was and still is full of meaning to those who know its origin. It is clear that the priest is deeply concerned for his listeners' understanding the aspects that he is talking about. He does not assume that this word and the other ones that he mentions from the same semantic area are

³⁶² It is well known that the Bible circulated in Latin for a long period of time. Its translation into English contains a lot of words of Latin origin that may sound unfamiliar to a speaker of a Germanic language, even though they are part of the contemporary English vocabulary.

³⁶³ Robert Tomas, 22 September 2000, *Discernment and Humility*,
<http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=45848>

³⁶⁴ Aaron Jones, March 2001, *Is Suicide Unforgivable*,
<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=34281@ContributorID=5714>

familiar to them and dealt with in passing. On the contrary, they are minutely clarified through historical and Biblical details. This is so as the target listeners are young adults aged 19 – 30³⁶⁵, who, unlike the more knowledgeable adults, need a more detailed presentation of the events and terms in the Bible, in accordance with their age, power of understanding and religious culture:

3). “*Lent* is a common practice among Christian denominations. In the Eastern churches they consider Advent to be *Lent*, and the Western *Lent* to be the *Great Lent*. In most Western churches *Lent* is the 40 days not counting Sundays before Easter. The word **Lent** comes from the Anglo Saxon word “*lencten*”, which means “*spring*”. In 325 the Council of Nicea discussed the Lenten season, but it wasn’t until the time of Gregory the Great that the start of the season was established on a Wednesday.

The 40 days is symbolic of the *40 days* Christ was in desert and the *40 years* Moses had to endure before reaching the Promised Land.

Ash Wednesday is the day when Catholics and other similar denominations allow their priests or ministers to put ashes on the parishioners as a symbolic gesture. *The ash* is made from blessed palm branches the year before. *Palm branches* are used in the mass in remembrance of Christ entering Jerusalem.”³⁶⁶

The same technique of giving the **etymological explanations** of some of the key-words in the next extended fragment is accompanied by another technique: that of providing **particularisations** meant to clarify both the everyday and the religious uses of the concepts represented by all these words. The priest is very thorough in his explanations and also provides statistics of the number of times the terms under discussion are referred to in the Old and the New Testaments. Although some meanings of the words focused on may be considered taboos for a religious discourse, the priest does not avoid them; he understands the human nature and by focusing on their positive connotations he manages to approach these words without sounding condescending, contemptuous or derogatory. His professional attitude ensures the unhindered reception of the message and stands high chances to be appreciated by the listeners:

4). “In the Old Testament the two greatest kinds and degrees of love are *ahab* and *hesed*.

Ahab is a Hebrew verb that occurs over 200 times in the Old Testament to signify a “*spontaneous and outflowing love*”. In human relationships it is the type of love that unites two of the opposite sex together in marriage like the love of Jacob and Rachel. (Genesis 29:18) The type of love that bonds parents with their children as Abraham and Isaac. (Genesis 22:2) This Hebrew verb helps us understand the love we must show towards God. It is this verb found in Deutoronomy 6:4-5 that says “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.” It is also this verb that commands us to love our neighbours and to treat strangers equally as our neighbours. [...]

The second word, **hesed**, is a Hebrew noun that occurs over 250 times in the Old Testament to signify a “*deliberate choice of affection of kindness*”. This noun can also be translated as the English word “*mercy*”. In human relationships it is the type of love that initiates unrequested acts of love and service for another person. [...] This is the type of love that is not forced or coerced. One who renders this love does so willingly and not out of self-interest. It comes out of a willful commitment to the one being helped. [...]

³⁶⁵ This aspect is mentioned at the Internet address this text was found at.

³⁶⁶ Steven Ostrowski, February 2006, *Lent*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=88731>

Just by using the Old Testament we can see that love is more than emotion, more than just something that we feel or experience. This is why the New Testament sheds even more light on *what love is all about*. [...]

Three forms of love are introduced in the New Testament: *eros*, *philos*, and *agape*.

Eros love is one of the more familiar yet most abused, misused and misinterpreted types of love. Although it never appears in the Bible it pertains to an erotic, sexual love and desire that is sensual and spontaneous. One that is expressed, undefiled, between a husband and wife.

Philos love is a love more on the level of affection as would be found in a casual friendship. With at least 25 references in the New Testament, it can also mean “*friend*” or “*affection*”. The best example is between Jesus and Lazarus. This type of love for a friend is commonly expressed through a hug or handshake. In some countries it is expressed by kissing both cheeks.

Then there is **agape love**. This love is based on a deliberate choice to love. We also refer to this as unconditional love. This kind of love goes against natural human tendencies. It is a giving, selfless, expect-nothing-in-return kind of love. This highest form of love is referenced in the New Testament 137 times as a verb and 116 times as a noun. [...]”³⁶⁷ (inverted commas in the text)

The examples analysed so far illustrated the frequent technique of resorting to a scientific method of clarifying **new**, **unfamiliar**, or **rare terms** to the listeners.

In the following example, the same technique is illustrated together with another one, namely, providing **dictionary definitions** and **reliable-books references** that help the listener to understand the terms in point and the priest to provide a scientific base for religious and moral conclusions. As will be noted, the sources referred to are among the most famous and reliable ones; this aspect increases the priest’s credibility as a professional who is careful about the materials used in his work. On the other hand, by his doing so, the locutor replaces his own voice by one of a higher authority, that of the printed word. Such a method increases the chances for the ideas advanced to be accepted as true by the listeners. The source text from which the next fragment was taken is available in the form of sermon notes³⁶⁸:

5). “A. GAMBLING DEFINED

Merriam-Webster – *to play a game for money or property*

American Heritage Dictionary – *To bet on an uncertain outcome, as of a contest. To play a game of chance for stakes. To take a risk in the hope of gaining an advantage or a benefit.*

World Book Encyclopedia - “*Gamblers usually bet money or something else of value as a stake on the outcome they predict. When the outcome is settled, the winner collects the loser’s stakes.*” [...]

[Later in the sermon, when referring to the causes for gambling; my note]

“*Greed*” is an eager desire for base gain.

“*Covetousness*” is translated from two Greek words. One means a “*greedy desire to have more*”. The second literally means “*loving money*”. ”³⁶⁹ (inverted commas in the text)

³⁶⁷ Charles Mallory, January 2001, *Unfailing Love*,
<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=33758&ContributorID=5712>

³⁶⁸ Very often, an on-line sermon takes this form. By doing so, the sermon writers’ intention is to provide the users with some ideas about what to introduce in their personal sermon rather than to give it a final form themselves.

³⁶⁹ Don McClain, December 2002, *Gambling – What Does One Really Stand to Lose?*
<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=54269&ContributorID=9293>

Sometimes, the religious locutors resort neither to etymological explanations nor to dictionary definitions as such when they clarify the meanings of a rare word or phrase in their sermons. They explain these words by **paraphrasing** them, a technique that is very similar to that of providing dictionary-like definitions only the sources for these explanations are not acknowledged. Very often they are the locutor's own formulations and sound very philosophical. This technique enables priests to make their own free connections between the concepts they clarify and the teachings of the Bible.

In the following examples this technique is illustrated in its most frequent form: by providing **illustrative examples** or **hyponyms** to particularise a certain concept, the priest helps listeners to follow his train of thought and consequently to understand the fragments in the Bible that the sermon of the day approaches:

6). "[...] And *freedom* is exactly what our text is about this morning. Jesus died to make us free. But *what does that word mean: **freedom**?* I didn't look this up in Webster's, but ***my definition of freedom** would be: not having to answer to anyone. Being perfectly independent in all of your decisions. Not having anyone tell you what to think or do.*"³⁷⁰

7). "Now to define what **I mean. Veneration** is defined as respect, honor, giving what is due, etc. It can be expressed through imitation, bowing, kneeling, falling to the ground, a simple nod, etc."³⁷¹

8). "Jesus goes on to tell us that three things can harden our hearts: *debauchery*, drunkenness and the cares of life. **Debauchery** is the extreme indulgence of our appetites, especially for sensual pleasure. It can include **lust** and **gluttony** among other things. A person is caught up in debauchery when their goal in life is to satisfy their **physical cravings**."³⁷²

9). "**To repent** means to change the mind. And it is not merely a change of mind, but a change of mind that results in a change of attitude and therefore affects behavior."³⁷³

Not only less frequent or unfamiliar words and phrases are explained by priests. As long as the content of the sermon requires it, the meanings of **set phrases** and **idiomatic expressions** are explained usually in the same manner as above:

10). "**Living life to the extreme** means not following the crowd and doing what everyone else is doing. Or in the words of all of our mothers, <If everyone else jumped off a cliff, would you?> [...]"

Living life to the extreme means you are willing to use your brain and your own faith to make up your own mind. It is a willingness to take the road less traveled by, not just to be different, but to experience the difference.³⁷⁴

³⁷⁰ Peter Schmidt, February 2003, *Christ Gives Us Total Freedom?*

<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=63276&ContributorID=10566>

³⁷¹ Steven Ostrowski, February 2006, *Role of Veneration*,

<http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=88280>

³⁷² John Vella, July 2000, *A Watchful Heart*, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=31754>

³⁷³ Doug Smith, September 2005, *What Jesus Says about Calamities*,

<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=91925&ContributorID=14584>

³⁷⁴ James Wilson, March 2000, *Extreme Intimacy*,

<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=31593&ContributorID=56>

In a previous section on rhetorical devices whose main aim is to *seduce* the listeners, the topic of **illustrations** used in sermons was analysed. Such an illustration is used by the priest in the fragment below to explain the origin and the meaning of an **idiomatic phrase**:

11). “Many years ago a man conned his way into the orchestra of the emperor of China although he could not play a note. Whenever the group practiced or performed, he would hold his flute against his lips, pretending to play but not making a sound. He received a modest salary and enjoyed a comfortable living. Then one day the emperor requested a solo from each musician. The flutist got nervous. There wasn’t enough time to learn the instrument. He pretended to be sick, but the royal physician wasn’t fooled. On the day of his performance, the impostor took poison and killed himself. The explanation of his suicide led to a phrase that found its way into the English language: ***He refused to face the music.***”³⁷⁵

The priest in the next example explains the **implicature of a sentence**. The **allusion** - both in the title of this sermon and in his explanations - to a similar fact familiar to the listeners, i.e., to Superman and his weakness, is very helpful in this respect:

12). “Delilah asks Samson an interesting question: *What’s the source of your strength?* Actually her question wasn’t an attempt to discover the source of his strength, but *to find out where his weakness lay*. So, Delilah said to Samson, ‘*Tell me the secret of your great strength and how you can be tied up and subdued.*’ (Judges 16:6)

In her backhanded way this girl was asking Samson ‘*what would make you weak?*’ She’s asking Samson, ‘*where’s the Kryptonite? Where’s the magic stone, the poisonous element that can bring you to your knees? What’s the source of your weakness, Samson?*’”³⁷⁶

From the great number of examples available for the discussion of the **metalingual explanations** in **sermons**, it is clear that the religious locutors are concerned about the listeners understanding the language used in sermon delivery.

However, as long as this type of discourse is a monologue, the locutor always chooses the explanatory technique that best serves his purposes and he adds to his explanations, usually creatively in terms of form and content, whatever details he finds helpful to make a point clear. The aspects of free choice and personal interpretations and associations of ideas have been considered throughout this section as illustrations of the linguistic arsenal that the religious locutors possess and may make use of in their attempt to skilfully talk their audiences into believing in and following willingly the word of God.

³⁷⁵ John Williams, June 2001, *A Prophet Challenges the System*,
<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=44645&page=2>

At this Internet address, John Williams also mentions the source where he found this story that he uses as illustration in his own sermon: “As cited by Max Lucado’s *Just Like Jesus*, Nashville: Word Publishing, 1998, pp. 110-11, from the following source: Paul Lee Tan, 1979, *The Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations*, Rockville, Md.: Assurance Publishers, pp. 562-63.”

³⁷⁶ Jeff Strite, May 2002, *The Superman and His Kryptonite*,
<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=46781&ContributorID=4028>

4. Final Remarks and Conclusions

After a succinct presentation of the meanings associated with the term of **manipulation** at the beginning of this course that approaches the rhetorical devices and structures employed by the political and the religious speakers to the purpose of influencing their audiences in various ways, I pointed out the importance of a good start in the art of speech construction and delivery. In the sections on *Introductory Formulas*, *Collateral Circumstances*, and *The Anticipatory Story* I accounted for the intellectual and emotional implications that a good start has for the audience.

As the listeners' **benevolence**, their **receptiveness** and **attention** to the speech are essential to all public speakers if they are to exert any influence upon the masses of people that they address, by showing concern and respect for their power of understanding by speaking clearly and beautifully from the outset, they stimulate their audience's cognitive and emotional reception of the message. Consequently their words *persuade*, *seduce*, and sometimes manage to *incite*.

In the section *The Seductive Power of Amplification in Argumentation*, I approached some **stylistic devices** often employed by the public speakers in the proper argument of their speeches. Whether of a **phonetic**, **lexical**, **morphological**, or **syntactic** nature, all the devices exemplified and discussed in this section aim at achieving the same rhetorical effects of **persuasion**, **seduction**, **incitement** as those analysed in the previous section. The degree to which this aim is achieved by locutors in their public speeches is a matter of artful and creative handling of the language.

The use of **quotations** and **allusions** as a rhetorical device exerts an undeniable power of manipulation over people. Firstly, they are the mark of the locutor's *erudition*, a quality largely appreciated by everybody that adds to the locutor's *credibility*. Secondly, they are very *expressive* and sometimes they spare the locutor a thousand words as they condense, in a very concise formulation, meanings otherwise strenuous to express. Thirdly, the quoted words usually belong to some renowned figures, thus there are higher chances for the listeners to believe in their truth-value as they already bear the **mark of authority**. Last but not least, they add *vitality* and a sense of *the unexpected* to the argument in which they are inserted. The locutor has to integrate them creatively in the body of the speech so as to give it the note of originality that falls within the listeners's expectations. All these aspects were analysed in more detail in the section approaching the aspect of *Intertextuality in Political Speeches*.

The locutor's intention of **deceiving the interlocutor(s)** can hardly be accounted for in the absence of the locutor's personal declaration of his/her having done so³⁷⁷. Therefore, in the section on *The Arbitrariness of Truth in Public Speeches*, I did not lay great stress on it, but rather relied on provable facts only, which in this context refer to linguistic evidence that I found in the texts I analysed, evidence that revealed the presence of a **distortion** in the logical articulation of the references to the objective reality. The term **logical fallacy** has been employed to refer to the phenomenon of distortion signalled in the logical demonstration of the truth value of the facts or ideas approached by the locutor in political speeches and in sermons.

In the final part of a public speech the locutor has one last chance to impress the audience and to persuade them of the truth value of the whole speech and, implicitly, of his trustworthiness. This is the reason why a political locutor usually makes a final appeal to God's authority and other religious issues in the **peroration** of a speech, an aspect whose psychological and manipulative implications were approached in the section *The Peroration – The Place Where Politics and Religion Meet*.

³⁷⁷ I did not have the intention to fall in the **intentional fallacy** trap that reduces the meanings developed by a piece of linguistic discourse to **authorial intention**.

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