



INTEGRATING POLITICAL LITERACY INTO ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING CONTENT CREATION WITH SENTIMENT ANALYSES: THE RHETORIC OF 2024 NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Political literacy requires the responsibility of a citizen to generate ideas on public issues and to participate as actively as possible in the processes relevant to him/her as part of society. However, people may feel fear, hesitation, or anxiety about participating in political processes. On the other hand, people behave more relaxed when expressing their opinions regarding foreign elections. Therefore, it would be a good strategy to make use of foreign elections with the potential to nurture political literacy, such as the US elections, as a safe space for its enhancement, a beneficial source of content as a base for the teaching/learning of English as a globally pervasive common language, additionally learned by the speakers of languages other than English. This study analyzes the speeches made by Vice President Kamala Harris and other distinguished speakers at the 2024 Democratic National Convention, focusing on sentiment and rhetorical analysis. By employing Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques, such as NLTK and TextBlob, we examined the speeches' emotional tone, rhetorical strategies, and linguistic features. The results reveal that the overall sentiment was predominantly positive, with strategically negative segments appearing in policy critiques. Additionally, the findings indicate a strong correlation between emotional emphasis and rhetorical effectiveness in political communication. Contributing to conceptualizing language education as a transdisciplinary computational science, this study contributes to political discourse research by integrating linguistic, rhetorical, and sentiment analysis methodologies to evaluate the impact of political speeches. The findings provide valuable insights into how persuasive strategies and emotional appeal influence audience perception, making this study relevant for both political communication scholars and educators involved in the teaching of English language use.

Keywords: Sentiment analysis, natural language processing, political conventions, applied linguistics, political literacy

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1. INTRODUCTION

Given the paramount importance of political literacy, the imperative to produce ideas for its development is urgent. Acting on this urgency, the authors of this article would like to share a practical strategy that can be realized with the transdisciplinary approach of applied linguistics. The strategy proposed is an infusion of political literacy into the teaching and learning of English as a notably pervasive global language that has seeped into a variety of domains and using the content of US presidential elections which matter for millions of nonnative speakers of English since the issues actually overlap across the national borders and the safe space it can provide for the scrutiny and comprehension of political discourse which may also include negative elements like disinformation or manipulation as universal evils, a feature one must confront head-on instead of avoid or pretend as if they do not exist.

The need for a safe space is reflected in several sources in the relevant literature. As Rivers, Carragher, Couzens, Hechler, and Fini state, whether the school can provide a safe space for the scrutiny and comprehension of the political discourse depends on teachers' confidence "in navigating a path where controversial topics arising from political manifestos and candidates' speeches can be discussed". Eichhorn (2015: cited in Deželan, 2023, p. 56) and McNeill (2015: cited in Deželan, 2023, p. 56) state that educational leaders' excessive caution in "their desire to leave day-to-day party politics outside the school walls" they often "create an environment where political knowledge, interest, and general engagement among young people declines". Highlighting evidence of young people's interest in politics and engagement in political conversation, Deželan (2023, p. 56) mentions some campaigns in the form of mock debates and simulated elections.

However, since most learning occurs in informal settings, those involved in language learning/teaching, such as materials developers and educational content creators (part of teachers' roles), may play a larger role in making the most of this effect through digital or social media, which are rich in US election-related content. The validity of such an opinion may be supported by analytical observations of Chadwick and Dennis (2016: cited in Gelkhauri, 2025, p.3) who present social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok) as "new spaces for political engagement, activism, and the dissemination of political information, especially for young people." Digital tools can be used to improve the political participation of youth by "providing information, organizing campaigns, participating in debates, etc." for young people to have more access to political participation (Gelkhauri, 2025, p.3).

Although digital media tools, some of which include transcripts of the

audio content, facilitate exposure to the US election rhetoric, distilling political literacy requires collaborative guidance of a variety of professionals, assuming the roles of an applied linguist for the input to turn into the intake. Selections can be made directly out of the candidates' political speeches in the election campaigns, such as conventions, town halls, and debates. The learner/viewers' direct exposure to the speech, which is unfiltered by any biased media network, may be guided by a range of researchers from diverse fields, including data analysts, for instance, from computational science for computer-assisted language analyses used to identify the form and content of the rhetoric. Since guidance should not have too didactic an overdose, which may get in the way of independent thinking, the process should include a balanced continuum of pedagogy, andragogy, and heutagogy.

"Rhetoric requires understanding a fundamental division between what is communicated through language and how this is communicated" (Burton, 2007, para.1). Aristotle expressed this "as the difference between *logos* (the logical content of a speech) and *lexis* (the style and delivery of a speech) (Burton, 2007, para.2)." To discern the ways form and content work together, such an artificial division between what is being said and how this is said is a must. A comprehensive study of the effectiveness of language and rhetoric studies includes its emotional impact as much as its propositional content (Burton, 2007).

As Kennedy (2007, p. x) states, it was perhaps Aristotle that is the first to recognize clearly that rhetoric "could be used for either good or ill." To Aristotle "persuasion depends on three things: the truth and logical validity of what is being argued, the speaker's success in conveying to the audience a perception that he or she can be trusted, and the emotions that a speaker is able to awaken in an audience to accept the views advanced and act in accordance with them." The three means of persuasion used by modern rhetoricians, are derived from Aristotle "though they have somewhat broadened his definitions: logical argument is called *logos*; the projection of the speaker's character is called *ethos*; awakening the emotions of the audience is called *pathos*."

The infusion of political literacy in language teaching and learning can be efficiently realized with the transdisciplinary approach of applied linguistics. Arguing that "applied linguistics is not an interdisciplinary but a transdisciplinary kind of enquiry" with insights meshed in a conceptual fusion, Widdowson (2018, p.136) views such a representation "particularly well suited to the illumination and handling of language issues in the real world" due to the fact that "language use also transcends the borders that supposedly define different languages and cultures." In their description of applied linguistics,

Berns and Matsuda (2006) highlight its defiance of the traditionally held taxonomic view of disciplinarity, with boundaries sought to be drawn with clarity and unambiguity, and it does not limit it to only studies concerned with solving problems but also improving situations that involve language and its users and uses. The reason for choosing the English language in the content-based strategy proposed can be found in publications by authorities of the field, such as David Crystal, as well as contemporary data from statistical sources.

According to Ethnologue 200, which lists the top 200 most spoken languages based on the total usage of both its native and nonnative speakers counted, the English language ranks first with more than 1.5 billion people worldwide, factoring in those whose mother tongue is English and those speaking it as a second or additional language. Ranking second in the list is Mandarin Chinese with 1.2 billion. The other languages of the top 20 are Hindi (609.1M), Spanish (558.5M), Standard Arabic (334.8M), French (311.9M), Bengali (284.3M), Portuguese (266.6M), Russian (253.4M), Indonesian (252.4M), Urdu (246.0M), Standard German (134.0M), Japanese (125.6M), Nigerian Pidgin (120.7M), Egyptian Arabic (118.6M), Marathi (99.3M), Vietnamese (97.0M), Telugu (95.8M), Hausa (94.4M) and, as the 20th language, Turkish (91.3M) (What Are the Top 200 Most Spoken Languages?, n.d.)

The reason for English being at the top is the factoring in of its non-native speakers (NNSs), who account for approximately 74.5%, a significant majority outnumbering its native speakers by 4 to 1 (NSs: 390.000 out of the total 1528000), in contrast to Mandarin Chinese size of which is mainly due to NSs (990000 out of 1184000). Another feature distinguishing English is its spread-out use in a higher number of countries (186 countries in total, particularly in Africa), which presents a stark difference from the concentrated picture Mandarin reflects (83 countries in total, mainly in Asia). (What Is the Most Spoken Language?, Ethnologue, n.d.-b).

In and of itself, mother-tongue use does not automatically confer a language with global status, which is achieved “when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country” first by developing a considerable official use, and secondly being “a priority in a country’s foreign-language teaching, even though this language has no official status” (Crystal, 2012a, pp.3-4). The most widely taught foreign language is English. In most of the over 100 countries (e.g., China, Russia, Germany, Spain, Egypt, and Brazil), “it is emerging as the chief foreign language to be encountered in schools, often displacing another language in the process” (Crystal, 2012a, p.5). The variety

of reasons for favoring a foreign language “includes historical tradition, political expediency, and the desire for commercial, cultural or technological contact” (Crystal, 2012b, p.157). English is not unique as regards the use by speakers of different first speakers of a communicative medium of choice, other languages might also be used, “but English outstands them all” (Kruse, 2016, p.68). Having provided an account of English, it should also be noted that the attitude of stakeholders in the actualisation of the strategy introduced in this paper should be the one elaborately explained in Matsuda (2018), “challenging the US/UK–bias in English language teaching” (ELT). Teaching English as an international English (TEIL) is about understanding the needs and goals of students and helping them, about being professional but not about being politically correct. It would be a disservice if the diversity and complexity were acknowledged as part of the reality in which ELT practice is situated. “All language curricula and language teaching practices are political to some extent, in the sense that ‘politics is one of the important means by which curriculum is implemented’ (Brown, 1995, p. 190: cited in 2018, p.29), but TEIL is not about being politically correct (Matsuda, 2018, p.32).

In the context of the United States election rhetoric, which is the product of the candidates, their communication consultants, and speechwriters during the presidential election processes in the United States of America, it is possible to observe both the candidates’ issue stances and the way these are communicated to the electorate. It is possible to identify samples of the rhetoric that can be modelled in terms of the interaction of candidates who can exhibit characteristics such as having innovative insights and appealing to the depth of emotion. Partington and Taylor (2017: cited in Strelinger, 2024, p.415) state that “politics is persuasion, and persuasion is conducted predominantly through language. As Chen and Madiyeva (2022) put it, there is an inextricable link between politics and language: Politics and language are inextricably linked. Politics is stated and reflected by language. Obama’s reference to the importance of words has clarity on this matter: “Words matter. And the implication that they don’t, I think, diminishes how important it is to speak to the American people directly about making America as good as its promise” (*The CNN Democratic Presidential Debate in Texas - CNN.com*, 2008).

However, not only the strengths but also the weaknesses in the US rhetoric should be recognised to identify both the favourable and unfavourable aspects and evaluate them in terms of the development of language use skills. Erroneous examples in the rhetoric of election events or their media coverage are invaluable, as summarised by ‘learning from others’ mistakes’, a common

idiom for learning from bad examples. Another advantage of this kind of rhetoric is easy and free direct access to the transcripts of the key events of the US election processes (e.g., debates, conventions, or rallies).

All these features indicate such rhetoric as one of the optimal non-disciplinary contents to optimise an approach to instruction that is based on content or which integrates content and language, an approach in which language skills and political literacy are conceptualised as interwoven, interconnected dual learning outcomes feeding each other. Besides, it is not limited to disciplinary literacy. To illustrate a related excerpt, as Steinberg and Sciarini (2006, p.155) underline, second language learning is better when used for the purpose of getting “information that is interesting, useful, and leads to a desired goal”. Information is constructed and delivered in texts and discourse, viewed as a base for language instruction. It is imperative that real language skills be holistically approached, considering their interconnectedness.

Since the emphasis in CBI is on aiming language learning at interesting, useful information leading to a desired goal and constructed and delivered through texts and discourse viewed as a base for the instruction of holistically approached interconnected skills of language (Steinberg and Sciarini, 2006), one of the election events that can be used in the direction of content-based teaching and learning of English as an additional language is what is called *infomercials*, that is US political conventions. To use NBC's Brian Williams' words, national political conventions have become “four-day infomercials” (Convention Coverage or Infomercial?, 2008). These conventions are carefully stage-managed *infomercials*, as TV likes to call them (TV Convention Coverage Was an Embarrassment, n.d.). After 1980, the convention began to assume its current profile as an extended, four-day *infomercial*” (Karabell, 1998). Combining information and features of commercial advertisements, *infomercials* aim to persuade and educate viewers about the product (for instance, the characteristics of a candidate's argument) and appeal to emotions. Serving to bring the electorate into a persuasive emotional state, the considerable number of performative elements involved in the process is used to favor the candidates' arguments.

“There are few better opportunities than the conventions to become informed about candidates in our system” (Cera & Weinschenk, 2012, p.24). However, when television coverage is preferred instead of direct access to the source, it becomes unclear that “the message is getting through” due to the possibility of personal biases of the talking heads' comments getting in the way of viewers' judging themselves, which they are supposed to be allowed to. “The tension between convention planners and television news organizations

who don't want to be seen as doing the politicians' bidding" (Convention Coverage or Infomercial?, 2008). With the comments being aimed at "an audience of a particular political ideology and manipulating their fears, outrage, and personal biases," some talking heads want to dictate to us what is right and what is wrong. Having an open mind, partaking in a quest for truth, and refusing to be led like sheep into a mob mentality is the last thing they want from us. If everyone were a free-thinker, they'd be out of a job" (Talking Heads and Propaganda, n.d.).

Due to its negative connotations, instead of the negatively loaded term propaganda, new descriptive terms found for persuasive efforts came to fruition as public diplomacy (Bolin & Kunelius, 2023), its "democratic equivalent" (Cull, 2019, p.12), or, in Pamment's words, "diplomatic advertising" (Pamment, 2013, p.2)." If public diplomacy is a practice, then soft power is the resource that it controls or manages (Bolin & Kunelius, 2023, p.7). Based on the description of Nye (2004: Bolin & Kunelius, 2023), who coined the term, it can be said that when soft power is used by countries to affect others, attraction and persuasion, rather than hard power (coercion of weapons or economy), are used. Stemming from an American tradition, soft power is "getting others to want the outcomes that you want" (Nye, 2014: cited in Bolin & Kunelius, 2023, p.7). Other examples to avoid the term propaganda, showing the interface between language use and politics, are cited and explained in Bolin and Kunelius (2023): nation branding, information management, strategic narrative, and fake news. The main difference between all these conceptualisations is "whether they point to the messages themselves (strategic narratives, fake news), the ways in which messages and information are processed (information and meaning management, public diplomacy), or the underlying resource the messages carry (soft power)" (Bolin & Kunelius, 2023, p.8).

As another example of new coinages, terms like sanewashing seemed to take hold. In the hands of those using it consciously, it may contribute to awareness, but unfortunately, hasty judgments related to the sane/insane dichotomy make it a disservice. "In today's environment dominated by social media, new terminology can spread like wildfire and find quick and broad acceptance until its use becomes standard. Sometimes, the breakneck pace of linguistic innovation can lead to many of these new words and phrases being used with no regard for whether or not they are problematic or insensitive" (Loeppky, 2025, para. 1). However well-meaning those who use terms like sanewashing may be, they place "certain words or actions within the sane/insane dichotomy" putting "others in a position to be labeled sane or

insane depending on whether or not they agree or disagree. That dichotomy is already problematic as is, given that describing people as crazy or insane is not a sensitive approach to talking about mental illness in the first place.”(Loepky, 2025).

Getting its start outside of politics, the term sanewashing later moved into the politics of the present. A radical or beyond-the-pale political idea is portrayed as “being within the mainstream of political discourse” modelling what is done in “greenwashing making an ecologically untenable idea or practice seem environmentally friendly) and whitewashing” (Sanewashing, 2024, para.1). The term made it to Urban Dictionary “A portmanteau of "sane" + "whitewashing" (portraying something as better than it is)” (Urban Dictionary, n.d.). The term made it to the Urban Dictionary. The definition can be paraphrased as attempting to play down the radicalism or radical nature of an individual or an idea with the intention of rendering it more palatable or acceptable to the general public. “A portmanteau of "sane" + "whitewashing" (portraying something as better than it is)” (Urban Dictionary, n.d)

Such words as normal should not be used, sounding like we are the authority on normal. However, campaigners may make use of some concepts. Although it may be used in the research literature, it should be interpreted ironically, as if the translations of different perspectives, as in Arnold-Murray (2024, p.574), who focused on “the downscaling language of the Instagram campaign” in the Settle for Biden campaign. It’s often-humorous posts depicted “Biden as a boring, normal candidate who is ‘good enough’ to be president and who counters the abnormal danger posed by his competitor.” As focused by Arnold-Murray (2024, p.575), Biden is marketed “as a kind of mediocre consumer good—as a non-extreme middle ground that is a safe bet. The campaign’s focus on ‘settling’ for a mediocre candidate was feasible only in the sociopolitical context of 2020, at a time when Trump’s leadership had come to be perceived as chaotic and dangerous.”

Out of the postgraduate theses searched in the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) National Thesis Center in December 2023, analysis of the 368 accessed with the bibliometry method demonstrated that the 97 titles included the word ‘persuasion’ (36 doctoral and 61 masters), and the 271 titles included the word ‘propaganda’ (46 doctoral and 225 masters). Most of them were found to be written by students affiliated with the institutes of social sciences; however, studies on related concepts were also conducted by students affiliated with the institutes of sciences and informatics. Out of all the departments, those related to communication gave more priority to persuasion and propaganda (Öksüz & Şendoğan, 2024, p.20). As a recommendation for

future studies, Öksüz and Şendoğan (2024, p.21) indicated the need to focus on new technologies, stating that “developments such as artificial intelligence technologies and social media platforms should be blended with persuasion and propaganda studies to address current issues”. The study (Tomašević & Major, 2024, pp.13-14) “provides novel insights into the dynamics of emotions in political speeches through the application of advanced computational and network analysis techniques” and reveals “the interconnected nature of emotional expressions and the differences between populist and pluralist leaders” opening “new avenues for understanding the strategic use of emotions in political communication.”

In order to make the most of the conventions in terms of content and the way this content is expressed, it is necessary for the language materials developed to be fed directly from the source (the audio-visual content of the conventions and their transcripts) for the consumers of these materials to judge the content for themselves as independent thinkers. To support independent thinking, awareness-raising notes should be part of the discourse of the materials that encourage the learners to focus on policy issues and records of candidates with independent thinking attitudes and take heed of partisanship, smears, and lies. Attempting to supplement aggregate level understanding of the impact on the electorate of presidential nominating conventions with individual-level investigation, Cera and Weinschenk (2012, p.22) detected that the speeches by the candidates and their close supporters had “an instrumental, information-consumption-driven persuasive effect, and a separate, atmospheric, social-psychological partisan bias-activating effect” Besides they “found evidence that although partisanship influences “the initial decision to expose oneself to convention speeches, it “does not appear to regularly condition the persuasive impact of speech consumption on postconvention candidate evaluations” (Cera & Weinschenk, 2012, p.23).

Obama’s political ascendance started with his speech at the 2008 Keynote Democratic National Convention. The speech marked the beginning of scholarly interest in Obama’s rhetoric (Coe & Reitzes, 2010). In this speech, Obama emphasized a hope that the USA could be more unified and inclusive when the people of the nation appreciated their core values (Atwater, 2007), and “a contemporary vision of an inclusive America and the American dream” is discussed (Atwater, 2007, p.121). Obama’s hopeful vision for America was based on shared identity and opportunity (Rowland & Jones, 2007). Obama’s historic campaign in the 2008 presidential election was marked by a two-fold rhetorical approach focusing primarily on policy appeals and thematic appeals, with the former leading the way. The second component was the careful

downplay of factious appeals (Coe & Reitzes, 2010).

To illustrate first-person plural in American politicians' political discourse, Proctor and Su (2011) aimed to analyze the personal pronouns 'we' and the possessive pronoun 'our' determining their distribution "in the 2008 US vice-presidential debate and interviews with Palin, Biden, Obama, and Clinton. The second goal is to find what influences the pronominal choice and how politicians use it to convey their message" (Proctor & Su, 2011, p.3254). Biden's interviews demonstrate strong (44%) identification with Obama, his running mate, in contrast to Palin's lack of identification with John McCain, her running mate. Biden's identification with Americans was less successful (20%). Of the six categories (economy, state, politics, environment, military, and family), "politics emerges as the most frequent category (39%) used by Biden for the object of the pronoun 'our.'" (Proctor et al., 2011, p.3257). In the debate, Biden's employment of the personal pronoun 'we' was to self-identify almost exclusively with Obama (82%), which was followed by self-identification with Americans (12 times, 16%), and the middle class (three times, 2%) (Proctor et al. 2011, p.3263). In Hillary Clinton's interviews, she "almost never identified herself with Americans (4%)." It can be inferred that "her main focus may not have been winning people's hearts, but demonstrating her qualifications, connections/resources and capability to be the best candidate for the position" (Proctor et al., 2011, p.3259). Research has shown a correlation between interpersonal closeness and plural pronouns (Fitzsimons & Kay, 2004).

The popular belief is that the increased use of the first-person pronoun ('I') is indicative of the presence of narcissism, but, on the contrary, it is an increased use of second-person pronouns ('you', 'your') Holtzman et al, (2019). What experimental and observational evidence suggests with respect to the use of collective references (e.g., we, our, us) is that high-status people tend to use more of these than the low status, "since their focus needs to consider more people than the self" (Kacewicz et al., 2014: cited in Markowitz & Slovic, 2020, p.600). In one of the Rev transcripts in this work (Vice President Kamala Harris Speaks in Jacksonville Transcript, n.d.-a), it is possible to count seven (7) 'let us' in a talk lasting about 20 minutes.

Given the significant pay-off of integrating political literacy into the teaching and learning of English as an additional language in this manner, teachers of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) and these learners themselves should be encouraged to activate their materials development roles. Tomlinson (1998) underlines the need to "innovate and experiment if we really want to find out how we could make language learning materials more

effective and motivating.” This attitude of innovation and experimentation involves learners, as Tomlinson’s (1998, p.2) definition of materials development refers to anything “done by writers, teachers, or learners to provide sources of language input and to exploit those sources in ways which maximize the likelihood of intake.”

The transcript availability facilitates the job of those involved in the language learning materials development to tap into these sources of content directly instead of using the media coverage. Direct access is advantageous for the learners to think for themselves, since it is frequently seen in the convention coverage of major US television channels that some critical parts of the convention speeches are not aired; these end up being ignored. However, although a better approach than television coverage, direct access does not guarantee immunity to misleading, bipartisan, biased, or manipulative by-products of exposure to the discourse in and around the elections.

Examples of Coverage of the US election in Turkish media

Following primaries, both RNCs and DNCs are significant parts of the US election process, ending with one-on-one presidential debates and finally, election day. The entire process is covered by the US media, and their transcripts are accessible on the net. Out of all the events, one-on-one presidential debates and election day are covered by the major mainstream TV channels around the world. Pundits who express comments, opinions, or analyses on this topic appear as guests in these programs. Since major TV channels in Türkiye air US election-related content of high quality as well, it is beneficial to cite these pundits’ analyses viewed on Turkish media outlets.

The two-time pollie winner, political communication expert, Dr. Sanver, speaking on a Youtube series, Üsküdar Motoru, hosted by Yunus Emre Erdölen, listed three main aspects of the US election. The first is the long time an election takes (two years, including primaries) in the US. The second is the form of the shows the elections take. The third is the huge amount of money involved (Daktilo1984, 2020).

On one of the HT360 shows, a HaberTurk TV program moderated by Afşin Yurdakul, the topic was shy voters, who feel embarrassed to admit their preferences in public since Trump’s vote in 2020 was underestimated in many polls, which were criticised for their methods. Despite their significance, emotions can be neglected in political polls. In the 2020 US presidential election, pollsters’ predictions were erroneous due to shy voters who did not admit to supporting Trump but still voted for him. Underlining social desirability as the reason for ‘shy voters’ feeling of embarrassment to admit

their preferences, Prof. Dr. Emre Erdoğan's comments can be interpreted to be in favor of the importance of emotions as well. Erdoğan also drew attention to another aspect misinterpreted due to erroneous poll methods overlooking emotions, stating that when the election race is reflected in the media as a tight/close race, or treated, so to speak, as a horse race, those more educated (and socialised) tend to demonstrate more active participation in surveys. It may be assumed from his comment that this type of voter feels that it is necessary for the candidate they intend to vote for. Another guest of the program, the political communication expert, Dr. Gülfem Saydan Sanver, posits the necessity of integrating emotion analyses (in-depth interviews, neuro-marketing) with quantitative analysis to enhance the precision of understanding 'shyness' and to evaluate the utilisation of demagoguery in campaigns that are not solely predicated on issues but also emotions.

Political apathy is an important part of the literature on the importance of emotions in elections. Another authority was invited by mainstream media in Türkiye. Prof. Dr. Seda Demiralp has a doctoral degree in comparative politics, a background reflected by her comments on the relevance of US elections to other elections in the world and the influence of political apathy. Her presence on mainstream television channels makes it possible for the viewers to have comments based on scientific findings, one of which is the findings of Emotics Lab at Işık University. Her presence on popular television channels might motivate the viewers to get interested in her scientific work. "What we see more often in Türkiye is that instead of politicians talking about the concerns of citizens, citizens on the street have ended up talking about the concerns of politicians. This, in turn, slightly fuels the issue of trust in politics or the issue of increasing indecision" If the answer to the citizens' question whether politicians suffer as much as I do is to a large extent no, "the gap between politicians and citizens truly begins, and if we lose control here, we'll be in serious trouble with the democratic system. Let's not forget that societies that lose democracy don't lose it through opposition. They lose it when indifference and apathy begin. So, when apathy sets in, nothing will happen. Politicians can't solve my problem. The moment you say they're all the same, it means the democratic system has already collapsed." (SÖZCÜ Televizyonu, 2025, October 4). If an opposition claims a difference, the voters need to see how they would do what they would do, demanding a clear picture, but clear does not mean detailed. So instead of long-term complex, abstract economic plans, their preference is a demand for what can be changed in the short term, in daily life, to such a degree that a little radicalism is expected. Their demand is for hearing something brand new, concrete in the rhetoric. For instance, direct democracy

methods (e.g., digital democracy, participatory budget) can create excitement.

There is an intellectual flexibility regarding the undecided group of voters. Their preferences are not calcified. So, they look at what the other side is saying. They change positions, unlike partisan voters. But what we can call the glass half empty is what we call intellectual apathy, that is, not having much of an appetite for learning “ So when coming across a piece of news, they “don’t have the motivation to take the second, third, fourth steps to verify it left and right” not wanting to bear too much cognitive cost, economizing their energy a little bit there, which makes them “a little open to disinformation” Even though looking at different media channels, they can be exposed to disinformation. From that perspective, the significance of the media is much greater in this group because other groups choose media channels that suit their preferences. “There is not much independent media influence there,” they can act much more intuitively. In the case of a piece of news coming their way, sometimes its emotionally stimulating nature “can overshadow the content,” with a tendency to focus more on a striking, dramatic news item and be less likely to pay attention to more complex content. “Therefore, it can be very easy to be prone to disinformation and make very quick, intuitive decisions. So, the media has an impact, but how positive an impact it is needs to be discussed in terms of quality” (Medyascope TV, 2025).

Demiralp (2025a) shares her findings on Emotics with a report in Turkish together with its English translations. This focus group study recently conducted “at the Emotics Lab at Işık University on Turkish voters” political attachment, reveals that in a society with consistently high voter turnout, political disaffection may still run deep (Demiralp, 2025a, p.1). In the notes part of the report, she provides the reader with publications of outstanding scholars, one of which is an article by Abadi et al. (2024). Re-analyzing data from four different studies, all of which include “measures on populism, conspiracy mentality, emotions,” Abadi et al. (2024, p.1254) found that both realistic and symbolic “types of threat are significant predictors of anti-establishment attitudes. All studies also indicate that realistic threats, operationalised as economic and safety threats, are somewhat stronger predictors than symbolic threats.

In one of the recent TV programs she was a guest, Prof. Dr. Seda Demiralp provided her research findings based on focus group discussions with undecided voters, swing voters, and those who position themselves squarely in the middle: Titled “Undecided voters and Anxious choices,” the second Emotics lab report includes significant content which are highly comparable to the rhetoric and emotional strategies employed at US political conventions since the main emotional pillars covered are polarization, fear, trust, and the appeal to the

undecided. Here are seven significant direct quotes from the report, increased from the previous selection, with translations and their relevance to US convention rhetoric:

1. Polarization and Negative Motivation (Base Mobilization)

These sentences describe the emotional dynamics of highly partisan groups, which is the main focus of many convention speeches. These speeches are designed to rally the base by attacking the opposition.

Original Turkish Quote (Page/Context)	English Translation	Relevance to US Conventions
"Nitekim, siyasette duyguların rolüne ilgi duyan pek çok araştırmacı... histerik öfkeyi ve 'ötekine kaybettirme' motivasyonlu oy verme eğilimlerini incelemiştir." (Demiralp & Sayan-Cengiz, 2023, İyengar, Sood, & Lelkes, 2012; İyengar, & Westwood, 2015; Huddy, Mason, & Aarøe, 2015 as cited in Demiralp, 2025b, p.1)	"Indeed, many researchers interested in the role of emotions in politics... have examined hysterical anger and voting tendencies motivated by a desire to "make the other lose".	This directly supports sentiment analysis on negative partisanship and attack rhetoric. Conventions are known to place significant emphasis on the cultivation of a motivation that can be characterised as making the other side lose.
"Bu bulgular, güncel siyasete şekil veren duyguların yalnızca kutuplaşmanın uçlarındaki öfke ve aidiyet duygularıyla sınırlı olmadığını ortaya koymaktadır." (Demiralp, 2025b, p.10)	These findings reveal that the emotions shaping current politics are not limited to the anger and sense of belonging found at the extremes of polarisation.	This statement serves as a thesis statement for the analysis of conventional rhetoric. While anger and belonging are considered fundamental elements, it is imperative to also examine the utilisation of appeals to anxiety and uncertainty (the swing voter emotions).

2. Fear, Uncertainty, and Trust (Swing Voter Appeal)

These sentences focus on the feelings of people who are not sure who to vote for or people who are not fully convinced by either candidate. These people must be taken care of in the final presidential nomination speech at a convention.

Original Turkish Quote (Page/Context)	English Translation	Relevance to US Conventions
"Belirsizlik, kaygı, güven arayışı ve kandırılma korkusu, özellikle kararsız seçmenlerde siyasal davranışın merkezinde yer almaktadır." (Demiralp, 2025b, p.10)	"Uncertainty, anxiety, the search for trust and the fear of deception are central to political behaviour, particularly among undecided voters."	The four key emotional variables that are provided by this process are then used to analyse a candidate's appeal to moderates and swing voters. It is incumbent upon the candidate to allay these concerns.
"Buna karşılık, belirsizlik duygusunun anlaşılması... kararsız seçmenlerin hem kaygılarını azaltabilir hem de onlara yeniden güven ve aidiyet hissi verebilir." (Demiralp, 2025b, p.10)	Conversely, understanding the feeling of uncertainty... can both alleviate the concerns of undecided voters and restore their sense of confidence and belonging.	The prescriptive emotional objective of a speech of acceptance is to demonstrate empathy for the nation's anxieties and to offer a unifying vision built on trust.
"...siyasilerin sorunların farklı fikirleri kapsayan, kutuplaştırıcı olmayan bir anlayışla ele alınabileceğine dair verilen sinyaller..." (Demiralp, 2025b, p.10)	"...signals that politicians can address issues with an understanding that encompasses different opinions and is not polarising..."	This rhetorical strategy is employed by candidates who aim to unify the country, a common theme in the closing of political conventions. The present study calls for sentiment analysis on non-polarising language.

3. Rhetoric and Emotional Fallout (Strategy Critique)

These sentences talk about how well certain types of political communication work in terms of emotions. This is an important thing to think about when judging how successful a convention is.

Original Turkish Quote (Page/Context)	English Translation	Relevance to US Conventions
"Sert ve kutuplaştırıcı söylemler, bu seçmenlerin hibrit pozisyonlarını görmezden gelerek onları uzaklaştırabilir." (Demiralp, 2025b, p.10)	"Harsh and polarising rhetoric may alienate these voters by ignoring their hybrid positions."	This serves to caution that the deployment of excessive negative rhetoric at a convention, while potentially effective among the base, carries the risk of alienating the crucial swing electorate.
"... sorunların farklı fikirleri kapsayan, kutuplaştırıcı olmayan bir anlayışla ele alınabileceğine dair verilen sinyaller kararsız seçmenlerin hem kaygılarını azaltabilir hem de onlara yeniden güven ve aidiyet hissi verebilir." (Demiralp, 2025b, s.10)	Signals that problems can be addressed with an understanding that encompasses different ideas and is not polarising can both alleviate the concerns of undecided voters and restore their sense of trust and belonging.	This forms the basis of unifying rhetoric: signals of embracing different ideas and demonstrating a non-polarising understanding. The present study provides a point of comparison for examining how such language resonates with the undecided audience.

One of the articles cited in the report is co-authored by Demiralp & Sayan-Cengiz (2023). If we go directly to the source cited in the reports, we can select some political literacy awareness raising verbatim quotes: "The defining characteristic of populism is the lack of room for a stance between the exaggerated display of narcissistic affection directed at the shouting masses and the tyrannical violence directed at others. In other words, populism has little ideological depth and a limited emotional repertoire." (Demiralp & Sayan-Cengiz, 2023, p.308)

"Populist politics typically involves a sharp distinction between 'us' and 'them,' which is interpreted as a bipolar attitude and emotions oscillating between narcissistic love directed towards the 'similar' and hysterical violence directed towards the 'different.' (Demiralp & Sayan-Cengiz, 2023, p.308)

"The emotional analysis of authoritarian populist discourse demonstrates the

necessity of analysing the emotional dynamics confronting the political imagination that could be developed against authoritarian populism and serves as a guide for future studies. Combating authoritarian populism is not merely about suppressing populist movements or strengthening liberal reflexes, but about understanding and countering the emotions underlying populist demands. The emotional analysis of authoritarian populist discourse highlights the need to examine the emotional dynamics confronting the political imagination that could be developed against authoritarian populism and serves as a guide for future studies. Combating authoritarian populism requires not only suppressing populist movements or strengthening liberal reflexes, but also understanding and countering the emotions behind populist demands” (Demiralp & Sayan-Cengiz, 2023, p.309).

What Demiralp (2025) wrote on Scrolli has implications for emotions in politics. So, it is necessary to select and highlight from this since it is relevant to political literacy. The selection below has parallels to US elections as well, especially to conventions, which are infomercials associated with stage performances. The article overlaps with personal branding, and it is as if Demiralp gives the validity of an argument that politics has already become personal branding.

Here are parts detected for their relevance:

In today's age of uncertainty, Saran captured his audience by playing on their ‘fear of being deceived,’ presenting himself as ‘a figure of trust and clarity in a hazy and unsettling environment’ (Demiralp, 2025, para. 8). Defining his rival as insincere, Saran, in today's politics where authenticity is considered one of the most important leadership criteria, stated that ‘there are no hopeless moments, only hopeless people,’ thus not tying hope to circumstances (Demiralp, 2025, para. 9).

As for Saran’s campaign, in social media videos where masculinity is portrayed as a sign of strength, men shared the masculine content with admiration and enjoyment, creating an atmosphere reminiscent of a bromance. In this way, Saran became branded not only as a leader but also as a ‘big brother’ figure who is fun to be around, to go crazy with, and to work out with (Demiralp, 2025, para. 13).

In social media videos where masculinity is portrayed as a sign of strength, men shared the masculine content with admiration and enjoyment, creating an atmosphere reminiscent of a bromance. In this way, Saran became branded not only as a leader but also as a ‘big brother’ figure with whom one could have fun, engage in crazy antics, and build muscle together (Demiralp, 2025, para. 13).

“Political competition is increasingly turning into a contest of stage

performances rather than long-term programmes, and on this stage, it is not the ‘narrator’ who wins, but the one who ‘makes you feel’” (Demiralp, 2025, para. 16). Demiralp (2025, para. 17) states Saran’s story has implications for politics in that “it is not the words themselves that are decisive, but the emotions attached to them” (silence at the mention of democracy vs the audience’s standing up at the mention of change, which promises movement, risk and hope). The determining factor in politics is the tone, rhythm, and emotional resonance the words carry (today’s-tired concept of democracy failing to generate sufficient excitement). The first makes you think, the second makes you act, and today voters want to feel rather than think (Demiralp, 2025, para. 17).

The fact that voters are influenced by a 30-second Instagram video rather than pages of election manifestos or PowerPoint presentations can be explained by the sense of leadership potential being conveyed to the voter and their scoring of this, as it is certainly not the details of the vision being presented. Strong leadership requires the creation of an emotional experience rather than the articulation of ideas or vision. Voters are seeking those leaders who have the ability to “make abstract concepts tangible, simplify complex plans and bring the future to life in a few seconds” (Demiralp, 2025, para. 18).

With a tweet, Demiralp commented on what she has written on Scrolli (Demiralp, 2025). According to Demiralp (Seda Demiralp on X, 2025), who points out that the scenes depicted in the campaign videos of Saran, the winner of the recent Fenerbahçe presidential election, which are still circulating, are not merely a sports campaign but rather the figure of the ‘desired leader’ in today’s performative politics, “in doing so, he draws heavily on the codes of performative masculinity. The leader portrayed is both ordinary enough to be relatable and extraordinary enough to be admired. In times of crisis, he is “strong and decisive”; in everyday life, he is “sincere and fun”; he is wealthy but not aristocratic; he is both rebellious and rule-breaking, yet protective and nurturing; he is both fearless and reassuring; he takes risks yet does not put us in danger. This is, of course, a surreal description of a superhero, an object of desire. But an image doesn’t have to be realistic to win an election. After all, people seek emotion, not reality” (Seda Demiralp in X, 2025).

“Evaluation of election polls is beneficial empathy-wise and emotion-wise, which is significant for language and literature majors with their focus on emotions” (Zengin, 2021). As noted by Breeze (2019, p.26), much ideological use of language becomes powerful precisely because it engages people’s feelings. Affect/emotion is a cultural-material hybrid that cannot be understood without its discursive productions. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods in combination, Breeze (2019, p.24) aimed to explore ‘affective-

discursive practices' characterising "the discourses of two opposition parties in the United Kingdom. They state that the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) "sustains the stronger emotions of anger (and invokes fear), indicating negativity with high arousal, while Labour's characteristic emotional leitmotiv is worry/concern, which is a more passive emotion." The former characteristically mobilises fear and especially anger, while the latter engages vague concern (2019, p.40). The word vague indicates a lack of competence in translating the feelings of at least not an insignificant number of people, not being able to demonstrate clearly that they need to listen to their people. The overdose of being politically correct and mixed messages is rejected by people who do not favor pretense. Related background may be found in Gibson (2016: cited in Matsuda, 2018, p. 26), which states that "it was once used with 'a spirit of inclusiveness and open-mindedness' even though the term 'political correctness' has acquired a negative connotation."

As well put by Whaley (n.d.), the aim of using pathos in rhetoric "is to bring the audience into an emotional state in which they are more likely to hear out the speaker's ideas and thus be more likely to consider the validity of said ideas. Consequently, it is in the speaker's interest to design their speech so as to spark the appropriate emotional response from their listeners" (Whaley, n.d.). A frequent guest on US election-related television and YouTube programs, Yunus Emre Erdölen was the guest of the Foreign News Director of Sözcü Television, Burak Tatari, for his comments on the Kamala Harris – Trump presidential debate. Erdölen underlined the characteristics of Harris' approach, enthusiasm, but also noted that her discourse was incoherent and ultimately ambiguous (SÖZCÜ Televizyonu, 2024).

Metaphors as tools of persuasive language

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) consider metaphor to be a powerful cognitive tool in the conceptualisation of the world, in structuring the way people perceive and think, and what they do. The pervasiveness of metaphor in everyday life is "not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 3). The argument that "most of our ordinary conceptual system is largely metaphorical in nature" is primarily based on linguistic evidence (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p.4). The reason for this pervasiveness of metaphor is that so many concepts important to us "are either abstract or not clearly delineated in our experience (the emotions, ideas, time, etc.), we need to get a grasp on them by means of other concepts that we understand in clearer terms (spatial orientations, objects,

etc.)” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p.115).

Writing on the metaphors used in the political speeches of Donald Trump and Kamala Harris, Strelinger (2024) praises them for their use of metaphors as efficient and strong tools of persuasion for the vote of the electorate. It is stated that politicians benefit from the application of metaphors in political discourse in the making of abstract and intangible concepts, specific and vivid, publicizing policies, and conveying political strategies. Metaphors express political candidates’ priorities and issues through metaphors and “reveal political intentions, help to construct political ideology, convince the masses and shape the image of politicians” (Strelinger, 2024, p.407). In order to communicate more effectively, politicians benefit from metaphors. Abstract and intangible concepts are broken down into simplified patches of messages for the public to facilitate their processing of political information (Strelinger, 2024, p.408). Strelinger presents a sample of metaphors used by Trump and Harris in categories. The following are those used by

Kamala Harris:

I am a product of a public school education (Harris, 2023). These are the folks who have been by your side, literally and virtually, since your first day as a Tiger (Harris, 2022). (Note: “Tennessee State University (TSU) is represented by the Tiger, a symbol of strength, courage, and pride”(Tennessee State University Mascot, 2024). Together, let us write the next great chapter in the most extraordinary story ever told. (Kamala Harris [@KamalaHarris], 2024) “Graduates, you stand on the brink of a new frontier” (Harris, 2022)

Having foregrounded the need to notice the importance of English and rhetorical skills and political literacy, the main research question in this paper is whether the infusion of the rhetoric of the US conventions into English language learning materials can bring efficiency in reaching dual outcomes such as developing political literacy and rhetorical skills.

2. METHODOLOGY

The Google search query method has been used to access transcripts of 2024 DNC speakers. For instance, such a query as ["2024 democratic national" site: rev.com] provides relevant content. The source Rev.com provides files with different extensions, including the .txt extension. Globally well-known speakers at the forefront of the Democratic Party have been included in the appendix. The sentimental analysis method was used to analyze the convention speech of Kamala Harris, who was officially nominated by the Democratic Party in the 2024 presidential election. Besides sentimental analysis, the discourse of the DNC speeches made by guest speakers who are globally well-known was analyzed. So, the machine plus human approach was preferred instead of the human-only or machine-only approach.

Discourse analysis helps us “notice patternings of language in use and the circumstances (participants, situations, purposes, outcomes) with which these are typically associated.” The discourse analysts’ particular contribution is conscious, deliberate, systematic, and as far as possible, objective noticing and producing “accounts (descriptions, interpretations, explanations) of what their investigations have revealed” (Trappes-Lomax 2004, p.133).

2.1 Data Collection

The dataset consists of speech transcripts from the 2024 Democratic National Convention (DNC), primarily sourced from Rev.com, official government archives, and media transcripts (CNN, Today.com, and presidency.ucsb.edu). These transcripts include timestamps, speaker metadata, and contextual notes, ensuring an accurate representation of the speeches.

Before analysis, text data underwent preprocessing steps, including:

- Removing stopwords
- Converting text to lowercase
- Removing punctuation and special characters
- Performing lemmatization
- Removing irrelevant metadata (e.g., speaker names, timestamps)

2.2 Preprocessing and Sentiment Analysis

The text was processed using the Natural Language Toolkit (NLTK) and spaCy for various preprocessing steps, including tokenization, stopword removal, stemming, and lemmatization to enhance the quality of sentiment analysis. Three different sentiment analysis approaches were tested to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of emotional tones within the speeches. Firstly, a

lexicon-based approach was implemented using the VADER sentiment analysis tool, which applies a rule-based method for sentiment classification. Secondly, a machine learning-based approach was employed, where a Naive Bayes classifier and a Support Vector Machine (SVM) were trained on pre-labeled political speech sentiment datasets to detect patterns in emotional expressions. Lastly, a deep learning-based approach utilizing a BERT-based transformer model was fine-tuned on political discourse datasets, providing a more nuanced and context-aware sentiment classification. Sentiment scores were calculated at the sentence level, and moving average sentiment trends were visualized to track emotional shifts throughout the speeches, offering insights into how sentiment evolves throughout the discourse.

2.3. Libraries and Tools Used

In this study, the Python programming language and various data science tools were utilized to develop machine learning and natural language processing (NLP) models. The development environment was based on Anaconda, a comprehensive package manager and virtual environment tool widely used for data analysis, machine learning, and scientific computing. The coding and execution were conducted in Jupyter Notebook, an interactive programming environment that facilitates dynamic data visualization, analysis, and modeling processes.

For building and training machine learning models, the TensorFlow library was employed. TensorFlow is an open-source machine learning framework that provides powerful tools for designing, training, and optimizing deep learning models. In this study, GPU-accelerated processing capabilities of TensorFlow were leveraged to optimize model training time. Additionally, supplementary Python libraries such as Pandas, NumPy, Matplotlib, and Seaborn were used for data processing and visualization. These tools were essential for handling large datasets, conducting statistical analyses, and effectively visualizing model outputs.

The libraries used in this study are widely utilized Python-based tools in the fields of text analysis and natural language processing. NLTK (Natural Language Toolkit), TextBlob, Pandas, NumPy, Matplotlib, and Seaborn were employed in data analysis and visualization processes. NLTK provides essential functions for text tokenization, word frequency analysis, and sentiment analysis, while TextBlob was used for sentiment polarity and subjectivity-objectivity measurements. Pandas was utilized to create data frames and perform statistical calculations, whereas Matplotlib and Seaborn were used to visualize the analysis results.

2.3.1. NLTK (Natural Language Toolkit)

NLTK (Natural Language Toolkit) is a comprehensive Python library developed for natural language processing. This library contains a large collection of basic text processing and analysis tools. The main functions of NLTK include tokenization (parsing into words and sentences), word type tagging (POS tagging), noun entity recognition (NER), syntactic analysis (parsing), and semantic analysis. It also offers rich data sources such as pre-processed text corpora and word lists in various languages. The library can analyze semantic relationships (synonyms, antonyms, parent-child concepts) between words by accessing lexical databases such as WordNet (Bird et al., 2009; Jurafsky, 2020).

Tokenization is one of the most fundamental functions of NLTK and involves the process of breaking down text data into analyzable pieces. This process occurs at two levels: word and sentence tokenization. Word tokenization (word tokenize) divides the text into individual words, while sentence tokenization (sent tokenize) divides the text into sentences. During these operations, linguistic features such as punctuation, abbreviations, and special cases are considered. The mathematical basis of tokenization is based on regular expressions (regex) and probability theory. In sentence tokenization, ambiguities such as whether a period is a sentence end or an abbreviation are resolved using contextual clues and probability distributions (Manning and Schütze, 1999; Manning et al., 2008)

Another important feature of NLTK is stop word extraction. This process involves identifying and elaborating on words that are frequently used in the text but have low meaningful value (e.g., “and,” “or,” “for”). The length of this process is calculated by continuous frequency analysis and the Term Frequency (TF) formula. TF programming normalizes by dividing by the total number of words appearing in a file. Words with high frequency but low meaningful value are marked as stop words and are removed from the analysis process. These processes form the result of natural language processing and make the data ready for more complex analysis. Correct implementation of tokenization and stop word removal directly affects the success of subsequent analysis steps (NLTK Project, 2023).

$$TF = \frac{f_t}{N}$$

- TF = Term Frequency
- f_t = Number of times the term appears in the document
- N = Total number of words

2.3.2. TextBlob (Natural Language Processing)

a) Sentiment Analysis

TextBlob is a powerful Python library developed for natural language processing tasks and offers particularly effective tools for sentiment analysis. This library can analyze the emotional tone of text content and classify it as positive, negative, or neutral. TextBlob's sentiment analysis system works by evaluating both the emotional values of individual words and the relationships of these words with each other (Bird et al., 2009).

TextBlob's sentiment analysis works based on Naive Bayes classification and assigns predetermined polarity scores to each word. These scores represent the emotional orientation of words with a value between -1 (most negative) and +1 (most positive). The system can analyze more complex structures using these basic polarity scores. For example, a phrase like “so beautiful” also considers the influence of strengthening words and adjusts the overall polarity score accordingly (Jurafsky and Martin).

When calculating the overall sentiment score of a sentence, TextBlob takes a weighted average of the polarity scores of all words. This calculation is obtained by dividing the sum of each word's polarity score ($p(w_i)$) by the total number of words (N). This mathematical approach allows the expression of the general emotional tone of the sentence with a single numerical value (Manning and Schütze, 1999).

$$S = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N p(w_i) \quad (2)$$

- S = Emotion score of the sentence
- N = Number of words
- $p(w_i)$ = Predetermined polarity score of the word

TextBlob also evaluates contextual factors, such as the impact of negation expressions or idiomatic usage and adjusts the scoring accordingly.

2.3.3. Pandas (Data Analysis)

- Data frame operations: Performs data manipulation using a matrix-like structure.

- Statistical analysis: Includes calculations such as average, standard deviation, and correlation.

Mathematical Basis:

- Average:

$$\mu = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N x_i \quad (3)$$

- Standard Deviation:

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (x_i - \mu)^2} \quad (4)$$

- Correlation Coefficient:

$$r = \frac{\sum (x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum (x_i - \bar{x})^2} \sqrt{\sum (y_i - \bar{y})^2}} \quad (5)$$

2.3.4. Matplotlib & Seaborn (Data Visualization)

- Creates histograms, scatter plots, and heat maps.
- Uses mathematical functions to show the distribution and relationships of data.

Mathematical Basis:

- Density function used for the histogram (PDF - Probability Density Function)

$$f(x) = -\frac{1}{\sigma\sqrt{2\pi}} e^{-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{2\sigma^2}} \quad (6)$$

- This is the basic formula of the normal distribution curve.
- Regression line (Seaborn regplot)

$$y = mx + b \quad (7)$$

- m = Coefficient of slope
- b = Y-axis intersection point

Collections (Counter)

- Calculates word or character frequencies in the text.

Mathematical Basis:

- Frequency distribution:

$$P(w) = \frac{\text{number of occurrences of the word}}{\text{total word count}} \quad (8)$$

Regex (Regular Expressions)

- Uses automata theory and string-matching algorithms to find specific patterns in text.

- It is based on a Deterministic Finite Automaton (DFA).

Mathematical Basis:

- State Machine principle:

$$Q = (\Sigma, \delta, q_0, F) \quad (9)$$

- Σ = Input alphabet

- δ = State transition function

- q_0 = Initial state

- F = Acceptable situations

2.3.5. NumPy (Numerical Python)

NumPy provides multidimensional arrays and matrix operations optimized for scientific calculations.

a) Linear Algebra and Matrix Operations

NumPy includes operations such as matrix multiplication, inversion, and eigenvalue calculation.

- Matrix Multiplication:

$$C = A \times B \quad (10)$$

If the dimension of matrix A is $m \times n$ and the dimension of matrix B is $n \times p$, the output matrix C is calculated as follows:

$$C_{ij} = \sum_{k=1}^n A_{ik} B_{kj} \quad (11)$$

Inverse Matrix (If A is a square matrix and invertible):

$$A^{-1} \times A = I \quad (12)$$

Here I is the identity matrix.

- Eigenvalues and Eigenvectors: Eigenvalues are one of the basic characteristics of a matrix and are found by the equation:

$$Av = \lambda v \quad (13)$$

Here:

- A = Square matrix

- v = Eigenvector

- λ = Eigenvalue

b) Probability and Statistics

NumPy is used for normal distribution, random number generation, and various statistical operations.

Average:

$$\mu = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N x_i \quad (14)$$

Variance:

$$\sigma^2 = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (x_i - \mu)^2 \quad (15)$$

• Standard Deviation:

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\sigma^2} \quad (16)$$

Normal Distribution (Gaussian Distribution):

$$f(x) = -\frac{1}{\sigma\sqrt{2\pi}} e^{-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{2\sigma^2}} \quad (17)$$

Here:

- μ = Average
- σ = Standard deviation
- x = Random variable

Sentiment Intensity Analyzer (NLTK - Sentiment Analysis)

It performs sentiment analysis of texts using NLTK's method called VADER (Valence Aware Dictionary and Sentiment Reasoner).

a) Emotion Score Calculation

VADER uses a dictionary that contains the positive, negative, or neutral sentiment score of each word. The overall sentiment score of the text is calculated as follows:

$$S = \sum_{i=1}^N w_i p(w_i) \quad (18)$$

Here:

- S = Total emotion score of the text
- w_i = Weight coefficient of the word (some words contain stronger emotions)
- $p(w_i)$ = Sentiment score of the word in the dictionary

For example:

- The score of the word "good" is +2.0+2.0+2.0
- The score of the word "bad" is -2.5-2.5-2.5
- The word "very" increases the effect of the following word (used as a multiplier).

b) Polarity Score

To calculate the overall polarity score of a text, the following components are calculated:

1. Positive Score (P)
2. Negative Score (N)
3. Neutral Score (NEU)
4. Compound Score: Normalized emotion score derived from all scores.

VADER's composite score is based on the formula:

$$C = \frac{P - N}{\sqrt{P^2 + N^2 + NEU^2}} \quad (19)$$

Here:

- P = Weighted sum of positive words
- N = Weighted sum of negative words
- NEU = Weighted sum of neutral words

This score is usually normalized between -1 and +1 and interpreted as follows:

- $C > 0.05 \rightarrow$ Positive
- $C < -0.05 \rightarrow$ Negative
- $-0.05 \leq C \leq 0.05 \rightarrow$ Neutral

RESULTS

This work presents a comprehensive sentiment analysis of Vice President Kamala Harris's 2024 DNC speech using Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques. The analysis employed Python-based tools, including NLTK (Natural Language Toolkit) and TextBlob, to examine the emotional content and rhetorical patterns throughout the speech.

As shown in Figure 1, the analysis included several key components examining different aspects of the speech: sentiment polarity analysis ranging from -1 to +1, objectivity versus subjectivity scoring, topic-based sentiment breakdown, word frequency analysis, and temporal sentiment flow throughout the speech delivery. These multiple analytical approaches provided a nuanced understanding of the speech's emotional and rhetorical impact.

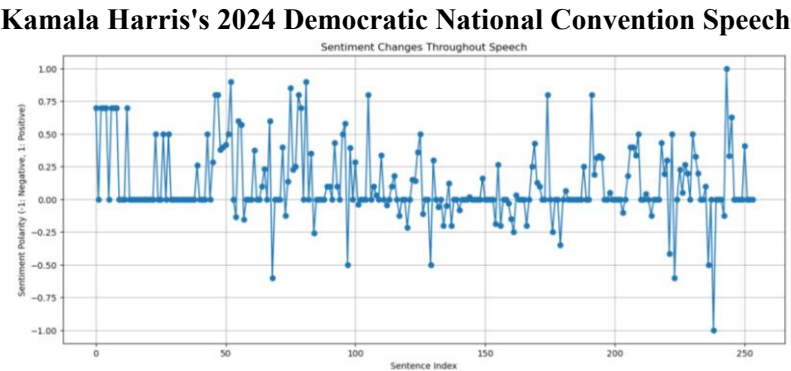


Figure 1. *Sentence-level sentiment polarity of Kamala Harris’s 2024 DNC speech*

The graph displays the sentiment analysis of Kamala Harris's DNC speech, with the x-axis representing the sentence index (0-250 sentences) and the y-axis showing sentiment polarity ranging from -1 (most negative) to +1 (most positive). Each point on the graph represents the emotional tone of individual sentences throughout the speech.

Opening Segment (Sentences 0-50): The speech begins with consistently positive sentiment scores, hovering around +0.7. This corresponds to Harris's opening remarks, including greetings and expressions of gratitude. The stable positive sentiment reflects her warm welcome and acknowledgments to the audience, family, and colleagues.

Personal History Section (Sentences 50-100): There's notable variation in sentiment during this section, with scores fluctuating between -0.6 and +0.9. This corresponds to Harris sharing her personal story, including her parents'

journey and childhood experiences. The emotional peaks represent uplifting family moments, while the dips likely correspond to discussions of challenges and hardships her family faced.

Policy and Vision Discussion (Sentences 100-175): The middle portion of the speech shows more moderate sentiment fluctuations, generally ranging between -0.2 and +0.5. This section aligns with Harris's discussion of her career as a prosecutor and her vision for America. The relatively balanced sentiment reflects her mixing of serious policy discussions with hopeful messages about the future.

Trump Criticism Section (Sentences 175-225): This segment shows some of the most pronounced negative sentiments in the speech, with several points dipping below -0.5. These low points correspond to Harris's critical discussion of Donald Trump's presidency and potential future impact. The sharp downward spikes align with her addressing specific concerns about democracy and national security.

Concluding Section (Sentences 225-250): The graph shows a return to positive sentiment values, with some dramatic fluctuations, including both the lowest point (-1.0) and some high positive peaks (+1.0). This pattern reflects Harris's concluding remarks, where she contrasts current challenges with her optimistic vision for America's future, ending on an inspirational note about American democracy and possibilities.

Technical Observations:

The overall sentiment pattern shows more positive than negative values, indicating a generally optimistic speech. The most extreme sentiment variations occur in the final quarter of the speech.

When Figure 2 is examined, the visualized sentiment trajectory, illustrated in the figure titled "Sentiment Changes Throughout Speech", offers a detailed representation of emotional polarity shifts across the entire speech corpus. The x-axis denotes sentence index, while the y-axis quantifies sentiment polarity ranging from -1.0 (strongly negative) to +1.0 (strongly positive). Each point signifies the emotional tone assigned to a specific sentence based on sentiment analysis.

In the initial segment of the speech (Sentence Index 0–300), the sentiment polarity exhibits moderate variability, with scores frequently oscillating between mildly negative and highly positive values. This suggests an introductory rhetorical strategy that combines expressions of gratitude and foundational messages with some reflections on past struggles or concerns. Peaks reaching close to +1.0 during this segment imply intentional emotional uplift, likely to establish rapport and trust with the audience.

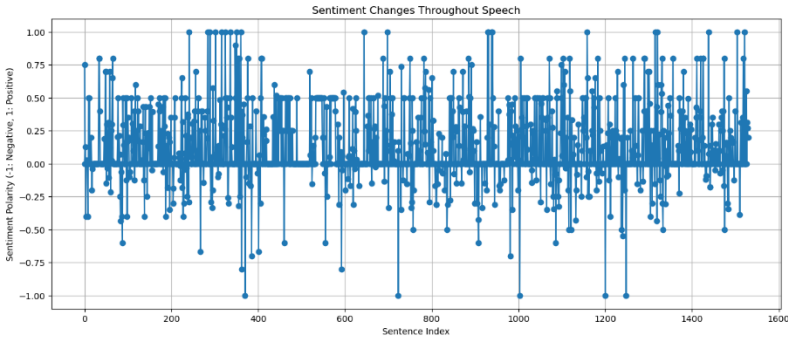


Figure 2. *Sentence-level sentiment polarity of the significant speeches of major speakers at the 2024 DNC.*

Between indices 300 and 800, the sentiment remains highly dynamic with frequent and pronounced shifts, indicating a mixture of critical content and affirmative statements. This phase may correspond to discussions involving both policy achievements and opposition critiques. The coexistence of strong positive and negative polarities within short intervals suggests the use of contrast as a persuasive rhetorical device, a common tactic in political speeches to juxtapose one's platform with that of opponents (Figure 2).

The midsection (approximately indices 800–1200) reveals relatively more consistent polarity with frequent yet smaller magnitude changes. This likely reflects sections of the speech dominated by factual elaboration, outlining policy agendas or structural issues in a balanced tone. Despite occasional emotional spikes, the general trend leans toward neutrality, indicating an emphasis on objective or policy-heavy content (Figure 2).

The final portion (Sentence Index 1200–1500+) resumes heightened variability in sentiment polarity. Notably, this section includes several spikes reaching both +1.0 and -1.0 extremes, which likely align with the speech's concluding elements. Such intense emotional fluctuations are often observed during closing remarks that aim to inspire, rally support, and create memorable emotional resonance with the audience. The emergence of both hope-inducing messages and warnings about political alternatives may explain the polarity extremes.

There are several neutral periods (around 0.0) throughout, typically during transitional moments or factual statements. The speech maintains a dynamic emotional range, regularly shifting between positive and negative sentiments to keep the audience engaged. This is shown as follows in Figure 3.

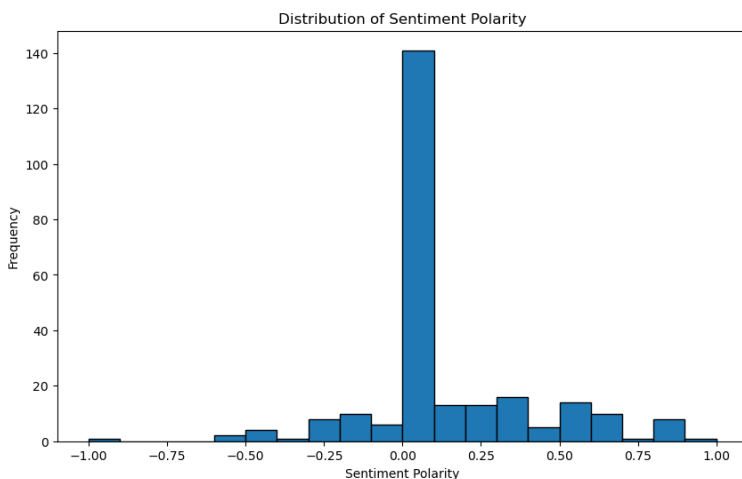


Figure 3. *Distribution of sentiment polarity scores throughout the speech of Kamala Harris's 2024 DNC speech.*

The histogram displays the distribution of sentiment polarity scores ranging from -1.0 (most negative) to +1.0 (most positive), with frequency on the y-axis showing how many sentences fall into each polarity range. The most striking feature is a prominent peak at the 0.0 mark, indicating a large number of neutral statements in the speech.

Central Tendency: The distribution shows a notable concentration around the neutral point (0.0), with approximately 140 sentences displaying neutral sentiment. This suggests that a significant portion of the speech consisted of factual statements, policy descriptions, or balanced rhetoric that neither leaned strongly positive nor negative. Positive emotion is shown in the range of 0.25-1.0. Negative emotion is displayed between -1.0 and 0.0.

Speech Characteristics Indicated: This distribution suggests that Harris's speech was:

- Predominantly balanced and measured in tone
- More inclined toward positive messaging than negative criticism
- Strategic in its use of strong emotional appeals, both positive and negative
- Grounded in neutral, factual statements that formed the foundation of her message
- This pattern is typical of a well-crafted political speech that balances inspiration and criticism while maintaining a professional and presidential tone.

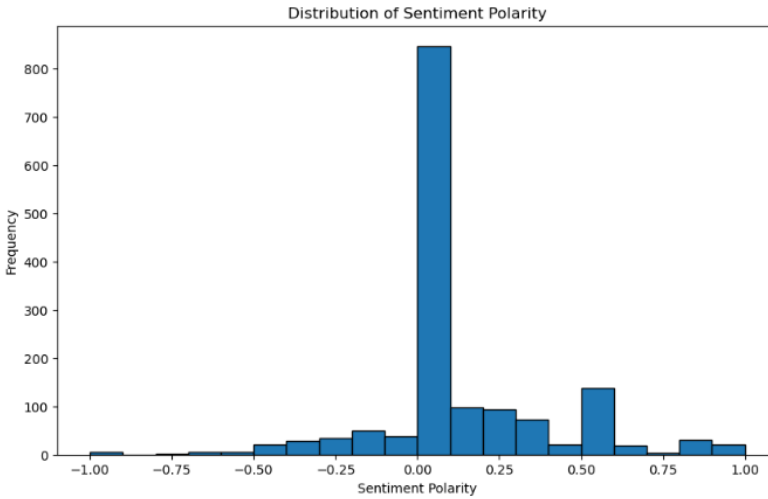


Figure 4. *Distribution of sentiment polarity scores throughout the speeches of the significant speakers at the 2024 DNC*

Figure 4 presents a histogram of sentiment scores assigned to individual sentences within the analyzed speech corpus. The x-axis represents the sentiment polarity values, which range from -1.0 (strongly negative) to +1.0 (strongly positive), while the y-axis displays the frequency, indicating how many sentences fall into each sentiment.

A striking feature of the distribution is the extremely tall bar centered at 0.0, indicating that a substantial number of sentences (over 800 instances) were assessed as neutral. This concentration around the neutral polarity suggests that the speech is predominantly composed of fact-based, declarative, or non-emotive statements, such as policy descriptions, institutional references, or objective information.

This finding aligns with earlier objectivity scores and reinforces the interpretation that the speaker employed a measured, informational tone, particularly suited for political discourse aiming to maintain credibility and clarity.

Positive Polarity Range

A considerable portion of the remaining sentences fall within the positive polarity range (0.25 to 1.0), forming a noticeable secondary distribution peak around +0.5. This distribution confirms a deliberate rhetorical strategy to intersperse hopeful, inclusive, and affirmative language throughout the speech. Words such as “thank,” “love,” and “America” likely contribute to these elevated positive sentiment scores.

Negative Polarity Range

The negative polarity segment (-1.0 to 0.0) is comparatively sparse and scattered. Although present, negative sentiment is used strategically and selectively, most likely during moments of criticism or contrast (e.g., references to political opponents or socio-economic issues). This controlled use of negativity supports the narrative that the speech aimed to avoid polarization, instead emphasizing unity and national optimism.

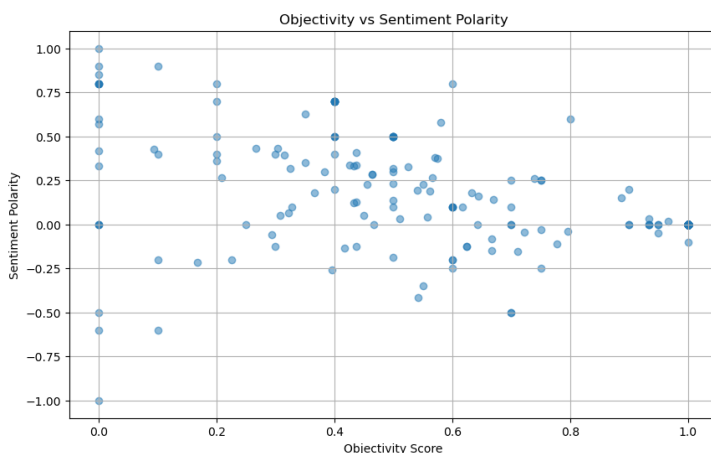


Figure 5. *Scatter plot showing the relationship between objectivity and sentiment polarity.*

The scatter plot shown as Figure 3 displays the relationship between objectivity scores (x-axis, 0 to 1) and sentiment polarity (y-axis, -1 to +1) for each sentence in the speech. The distribution of points shows a complex pattern that reveals key aspects of Harris's rhetorical strategy.

The analysis of the objectivity distribution and sentiment range reveals fascinating patterns in Harris's speech. The objectivity scores, ranging from 0 to 1, demonstrate a comprehensive spectrum from highly subjective to highly objective statements. Notably, there's a significant concentration of points within the middle range (0.3 to 0.7), indicating a carefully balanced approach to message delivery. This distribution suggests a deliberate strategy in combining different rhetorical elements.

When examining the sentiment polarity, which spans from -1 to +1, we observe that most points cluster between -0.5 and +1.0, with a higher density in the positive range. This clustering pattern is particularly interesting as it shows a clear tendency toward optimistic messaging while still maintaining some negative elements for contrast and emphasis. The scarcity of extremely

negative values (-0.75 to -1.0) suggests a conscious choice to limit strongly negative messaging.

The wide distribution of points across both axes demonstrates Harris's ability to effectively balance factual statements with emotional appeals. This mixed approach is evidenced by the data points' spread, which shows a sophisticated integration of objective policy discussions and subjective emotional elements. The concentration of points in the middle objectivity range particularly highlights her pragmatic speaking style, while the strategic placement of highly objective statements ($x \approx 1.0$) across various sentiment values likely represents key policy points.

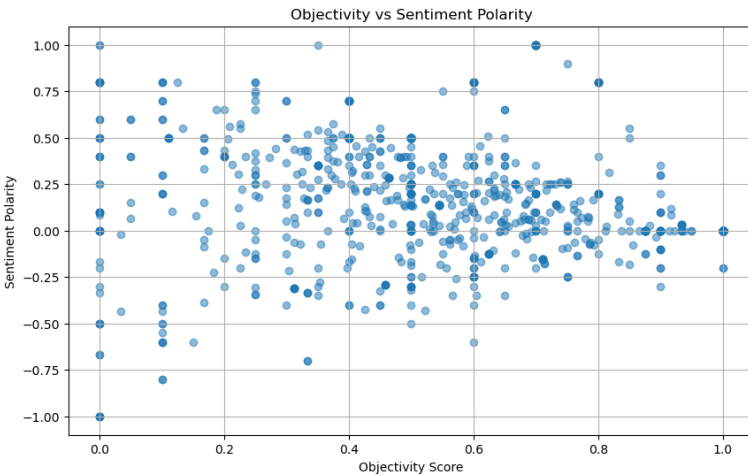


Figure 6. *Scatter plot showing the relationship between objectivity and sentiment polarity of the significant speeches of major speakers at the 2024 DNC*

Figure 6 illustrates the relationship between textual objectivity and sentiment polarity. The horizontal axis represents the objectivity score, ranging from 0 (fully subjective) to 1 (fully objective), while the vertical axis denotes sentiment polarity, ranging from -1 (completely negative) to +1 (completely positive).

The scatter plot reveals a negative association between objectivity and sentiment polarity extremity. As objectivity scores increase, sentiment polarity values tend to converge toward zero, indicating more neutral expressions. In particular, sentences with an objectivity score above 0.7 generally lack strong emotional content and instead reflect a neutral or informational tone.

Conversely, statements with low objectivity scores (below 0.5) exhibit a

wider spread of sentiment polarity, spanning both positive and negative extremes. This suggests that subjective language is more likely to carry a pronounced emotional tone, either positively or negatively. Notably, highly subjective texts (objectivity < 0.2) are associated with polarity values closer to -1 or +1, reflecting heightened emotional intensity.

Overall, the concentration of data points around mid-level objectivity scores (0.4–0.6) and sentiment values near zero indicates that most texts in the dataset are moderately objective and emotionally neutral or weakly positive. This pattern suggests a generally balanced linguistic tone in the dataset and highlights the potential influence of subjectivity on emotional expression within textual data.

From a rhetorical strategy perspective, the visualization reveals a sophisticated speaking style that successfully combines objective policy discussions with emotional appeals in Table 1. Harris maintained credibility through objective statements while effectively engaging audiences on an emotional level. The positive sentiment bias aligns well with traditional presidential campaign rhetoric, which typically emphasizes hope and optimism. The sparing use of extreme negative sentiments suggests a careful approach to criticism, likely reserved for specific policy critiques or cautionary messages about opposing viewpoints. This pattern is typical of a well-crafted political speech that balances inspiration and criticism while maintaining a professional and presidential tone.

Table 1. *Summary of sentiment and objectivity analysis results for Kamala Harris's speech.*

=== SENTIMENT ANALYSIS RESULTS ===
Overall Sentiment Polarity: 0.115
Overall Objectivity Score: 0.698
Most Positive Sentence:
We are the heirs to the greatest democracy in the history of the world.
Most Negative Sentence:
Our opponents in this race are out there every day, denigrating America, talking about how terrible everything is.
Top 10 Most Frequent Words:
thank: 28
us: 25
america: 21
let: 18
trump: 16
president: 15
one: 14
know: 14
would: 14
people: 14
Topic-Based Sentiment Analysis:
economy: 0.033
security: 0.099
healthcare: -0.203
democracy: 0.223
foreign_policy: 0.154

The speech demonstrates a slightly positive overall sentiment polarity of 0.115, indicating a moderately optimistic tone. The high objectivity score of 0.698 suggests that Harris maintained a predominantly factual and measured approach while delivering her message. This balance between positivity and objectivity is typical of presidential campaign speeches, where candidates must combine inspiration with substantive policy discussions.

Most Impactful Sentences:

The most positive sentence, "We are the heirs to the greatest democracy in the history of the world," embodies traditional American exceptionalism and pride. In contrast, the most negative sentence criticizes opponents' pessimistic

portrayal of America, strategically positioning Harris's campaign as more optimistic and constructive. This juxtaposition effectively frames the narrative of hope versus negativity.

Word Frequency Analysis:

The top 10 most frequent words reveal interesting patterns: "Thank" (28 occurrences) tops the list, reflecting the speech's opening gratitude and diplomatic tone

Words like "America" (21) and "people" (14) emphasize national unity and public service. "Trump" (16 occurrences) indicates significant attention to drawing contrasts with her opponent. The frequent use of "us" (25) and "let" (18) suggests an inclusive, action-oriented approach. The prevalence of "president" (15) reinforces the speech's presidential campaign context.

Topic-Based Sentiment Analysis:

- Democracy (0.223): Shows the most positive sentiment, reflecting a strong emphasis on democratic values and institutions
- Foreign Policy (0.154): Demonstrates positive sentiment, likely due to discussions of international leadership and allies
- Security (0.099): Slightly positive, balancing concerns with reassurance about national security
- Economy (0.033): Nearly neutral, suggesting a balanced discussion of economic challenges and opportunities
- Healthcare (-0.203): The only negative score, indicating critical discussion of healthcare challenges and needed reforms.

This detailed breakdown reveals a speech that strategically combined optimism about American democracy and leadership with pragmatic acknowledgment of challenges in areas like healthcare and the economy. The balanced approach, weighted slightly toward positive messaging, aligns with effective presidential campaign communication strategies.

Table 2. *Summary of sentiment and objectivity analysis results of the significant speeches of major speakers at the 2024 DNC*

=== SENTIMENT ANALYSIS RESULTS ===
Overall Sentiment Polarity: 0.107
Overall Objectivity Score: 0.720
Most Positive Sentence:
They weren't impressed with braggarts or bullies.
Most Negative Sentence:
He viciously attacks Democrats and Republicans.
Top 10 Most Frequent Words:
kamala: 131
thank: 128
america: 117
president: 115
us: 112
people: 103
joe: 103
love: 82
know: 79
harris: 61
Topic-Based Sentiment Analysis:
economy: 0.128
security: 0.021
healthcare: 0.094
democracy: 0.125
foreign_policy: 0.081

The overall sentiment polarity of the dataset was measured at 0.107 in Table 2, indicating a slightly positive general tone across the analyzed texts. This suggests that, while the discourse is not overtly emotional or polarized, it leans marginally toward positive sentiment. Correspondingly, the overall objectivity score of 0.720 reflects a predominantly factual and neutral language style, implying that the majority of statements rely on information delivery rather than emotional persuasion.

The most positive sentence, "They weren't impressed with braggarts or bullies," conveys approval of modesty and integrity—values often emphasized in political rhetoric. On the contrary, the most negative sentence, "He viciously attacks Democrats and Republicans," expresses strong disapproval and

hostility, illustrating the use of emotionally charged language when referring to political conflict or personal attacks.

A frequency analysis of the lexical items reveals that the most commonly used terms include kamala, thank, america, president, us, people, joe, love, know, and harris. These results underscore the speech's focus on key political figures (e.g., Kamala Harris, Joe Biden), national identity (e.g., America, us, people), and emotional appeals (e.g., thank, love, know). The high frequency of gratitude-related terms (e.g., thank, love) aligns with the overall mild positivity observed in sentiment polarity.

A topic-based breakdown of sentiment polarity across key policy domains shows varying levels of emotional tone:

Economy: 0.128

Democracy: 0.125

Healthcare: 0.094

Foreign Policy: 0.081

Security: 0.021

These values indicate that economic and democratic themes were discussed in the most emotionally positive manner, whereas security-related content remained largely neutral. The relatively low sentiment scores for healthcare and foreign policy may reflect a more analytical or problem-focused discourse, avoiding overt emotional language.

In summary, the sentiment analysis reveals a moderately objective and mildly positive tone, with emotional intensity primarily emerging in specific topic areas and in isolated, strongly worded sentences. This balanced rhetorical style may reflect a deliberate communicative strategy aimed at maintaining credibility while appealing to shared values.

CONCLUSION

This study conducted an in-depth analysis of Vice President Kamala Harris's speech at the 2024 Democratic National Convention using natural language processing (NLP) techniques. Our findings indicate that Harris's speech represents a carefully structured example of political discourse, particularly in terms of emotional tone, objective-subjective balance, and rhetorical strategies.

The analysis results reveal that the speech generally carries a slightly positive emotional tone (0.115 polarity score) while maintaining a predominantly objective narrative (0.698 objectivity score). This balance reflects Harris' effort to present an optimistic vision while delivering concrete policy proposals. Emotional fluctuations in different sections of the speech are particularly evident in personal storytelling and criticisms of Trump.

Topic-based sentiment analysis shows that Harris used the most positive tone when discussing democracy (0.223) and foreign policy (0.154 while adopting a more critical stance on healthcare (-0.203). This suggests that her campaign strategy aims to build trust in American democracy and leadership while highlighting issues in areas such as healthcare.

Word frequency analysis indicates that words such as "America," "people," "us," and "let" were frequently used, suggesting Harris' attempt to adopt an inclusive and unifying rhetoric. This study demonstrates that the emotional and linguistic analysis of political discourse can provide valuable insights into politicians' communication strategies and their efforts to connect with voters.

The guest speakers who attended the congress in support of Kamala Harris articulated a consistent message that aligned with Kamala's emphasis on the United States. The key point of the speeches was the emotional appeal to the voters, to whom they attributed an important role in influencing the outcome, to become actively involved in the process. The objective was to encourage voter participation in the electoral process, transcending mere involvement. The objective of the speeches was to convey this sentiment to the electorate.

The analyses demonstrated clearly that the infusion of the rhetoric of the 2024 Democratic convention into English language learning materials can bring efficiency in reaching dual outcomes such as developing political literacy and rhetorical skills.

The analysis of the discourse in The DNC 2024 speeches demonstrates a patterning that needs noticing. The pattern that stands out in the speeches frequently enough to make generalizations is that the speakers, as if all together, told the voters in an emotionally profound way that 'we will win if each of us intervenes in the process in unity and solidarity'. The highlighted

parts showing the patterning are given in the appendix, but even a simple count would give an idea. The search for “we” in Kamala Harris’ speech gave forty-seven (47) we’s (Kamala Harris Speaks at 2024 Democratic National Convention, n.d.).

In the analysis of the discourse, it is also necessary to have the analysis of experts. Asked for her comments on the idea of making use of US election discourses (e.g., town hall, debate) in English language learning/practice materials to serve political literacy, Seda Demiralp (personal communication, Nov 25, 2023) responded: “I guess this falls into the field of education and science. But personally, of course, it would be beneficial for the students who come to us to have not only general knowledge of English but also to be familiar with the concepts of Political Science. However, if the instructors from whom they will learn these concepts in the preparatory course are not political science instructors, this may present other problems/drawbacks. The dictionary meaning of these concepts will not be sufficient, and it may be better for them not to know a concept at all than to start the chapter knowing it independently of context, incorrectly or incompletely. So, it is not an easy question. Let us say it is a tight road to walk.” Based on her response, it can be said that learners of the English language should learn political science concepts from the political science instructors to learn them completely and correctly. This idea is in line with the emphasis in the content-based instruction of English on the language instructors’ collaborations with those specialized in whatever subject they base their language teaching on.

For instance, Demiralp shares her analysis of a message Bill Clinton tried to get across. well known for his eloquence, Bill Clinton (Bill Clinton Speaks at 2024 Democratic National Convention, n.d.) implied what he believes to be a self-centered attitude of Kamala’s rival: don’t count the lies. Count the I’s. Count the I’s. “Me, me, me, me, me, me.”. Analyzing this on her tweet, Demiralp (Seda Demiralp [@sedademiralp], 2024) finds this understandable according to those who study disinformation, and she provides justification that since “we now know that when voters feel an emotional connection with a leader, they do not easily punish him for his lies. This is especially true for populist leaders and their voters because the number one expectation of populist voters is that the leader they will vote for will fight for them. Therefore, voters who believe that ‘if he wins, I win too’ do not turn away because the lies are exposed. However, when they realise that the leader is not after those who line up behind him, but after his prosperity, things change. At that point, the voter’s moral dilemma of ‘honesty or my interests?’ ends because it becomes clear that the lies were not told for his/her interests. In

short, in a campaign that involves the fight against disinformation, it is difficult to get results only through ‘confirmation’ without touching the emotions.”

Noticing the patterns is facilitated by the sources giving information about the background. As mentioned, Arnold-Murray (2024, p.575) referred to marketing Biden “as a kind of mediocre consumer good—as a non-extreme middle ground that is a safe bet” in the Settle for Biden campaign, which “frames voting as a consumer choice and thus one of personal taste and sensibilities—a choice that only loosely connects to the candidates’ values or policies and more strongly connects to audience perceptions of what kinds of things are desirable, normal, and negative.”

Having seen this background in the Settle for Biden campaign, it is easier to understand Vivek Ramaswamy’s criticism of the so-called normalcy or mediocrity in his arguments for exceptionalism. Vivek Ramaswamy, who is running for the Republican presidential nomination, has made reviving America’s national identity a priority. Ramaswamy is calling for a “national revival” and calling for Americans to renew their faith in the principles of the American Founding. In other words, Ramaswamy is arguing for a return to American exceptionalism.

Vivek Ramaswamy, who ran for the Republican presidential nomination, made “reviving America’s national identity as a priority”, called for a “national revival” and called for “Americans to renew their faith in the principles of the American Founding,” making his argument for “a return to American exceptionalism” (Hendrickson, 2023). Ramaswamy also criticized the Democratic Party’s nominee for Vice President, Tim Walz, calling the opponents weird, linking it to an acceptance of being mediocre or average or so-called normal. Retrospectively, it can be seen more clearly why Ramaswamy recommended that the Trump campaign focus on policies and avoid personal attacks.

Consequently, this article highlights the demand expressed in the DNC for participation of the electorate, but on the other hand, it should also be noted that this demand has fallen short of appealing to the conscience of those who needed clear assurance on Gaza. Covering the DNC as part of a program with Syracuse University’s School of Public Communications, Flaming and Brown (2024) state that uncommitted primary voters and the delegates they elected” echoed the demand of protesters in their “trying to push the Democratic party for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza” and quoted the skepticism observed among voters which the administration needs to address and assuage according to Nura Sedique, “assistant professor at Michigan State University’s

Political Science department and Muslim Studies program”: “Will the Harris campaign push a specific policy forward before the election, or is this more just promises?” Sedique also referred to the recent sense of betrayal among the democratic base in Michigan, “many of whom are Arab American and Muslim, have been loyal to the Democratic party,” (Fleming & Brown, 2024). However, “A group of pro-Palestinian Democrats said their request for a speaking slot at this week's Democratic National Convention has been denied by party leaders,” although the “uncommitted” delegates’ hope “that a Palestinian-American politician would be allowed to speak critically about Israel's war in Gaza” (Wendling, 2024).

An investigative reporter, Gupta (2024) mentions “a group of oligarchs working feverishly to crush any opposition to unconditional U.S. support for Israel.” Gupta (2024) also mentions a long list of Palestinian speakers presented to the DNC, all of whom were rejected, a decision risking the bulk of key votes in the must-win state of Michigan. As a result, while her DNC speech included the words “dignity, security, freedom, and self-determination” for Palestinians, there was no specific reference to “ceasefire, occupation, or settlements”.

This strategy suggested in this study seems to contribute to the research on political apathy. Well known for her research on apathy in politics, Demiralp stated in one of the TV programs that the reasons for apathy in politics demonstrate differences in various countries. While it can be caused by insensitivity in various countries, the apathy in Türkiye is, in fact, observed to be a kind of self-protection mechanism, that is, a self-protective distancing from politics by voters who are very disillusioned with politics. This observation also included, for example, the feeling that “no matter who is elected, nothing much changes in my life” or the belief that “one of the alternatives is not much better than the other” (SÖZCÜ Televizyonu, 2025, April 7). Demiralp then shares her comment on the fact that it is mostly young people who prefer to remain distant and unengaged. Demiralp states that apathy or political distance is measured higher in young people than in older age groups, and the reason for this is that party affiliation is more common in older age groups, so even if they have resentment and anger towards politics, party affiliation and party loyalty still attract them to politics, whereas party affiliation is lower and cognitive flexibility is higher in young people, which is why apathy or political distance is measured higher (SÖZCÜ Televizyonu, 2025, April 7). To Demiralp, among the causes pushing citizens away from politics are the uncertainties (e.g., Artificial intelligence (AI) generated videos and other factors causing post-truth), mental confusion, and lack of belief in

one's own agency, that is, being unable to say I know (e.g., the perception that it is only possible to know the tip of the iceberg in political matters) (SÖZCÜ Televizyonu, 2025, April 7). Recent Turkish youth research also demonstrates that young people are not apathetic but emotionally distant; not hopeless but anxious; not conformist but pragmatically self-protective. The prevailing emotional disposition manifests as a combination of minimal outward emotional expression and elevated internal anxiety. Consequently, procedural fairness, established rules, and predictability are regarded as more emotionally significant than charismatic leadership (Karataş, 2025).

Demiralp's tweet on her article in Panorama summarizes her work and serves as an alternative conclusion to her work: "They are not 'undecided,' but flexible. In polarised societies like ours, where most voters have set preferences, it is important to understand swing voters and how they make decisions. Yes, they are less analytical, more impulsive. They have less appetite for learning and are more vulnerable to disinformation and conspiracy theories. On the other hand, they are less ideologically rigid, exposed to a wider variety of media channels, and more likely to re-evaluate their existing beliefs in light of new information. They are democracy's dynamic but fragile constituency" (*X'te Seda Demiralp*, 2025).

On the other hand, going directly to the source of her article, some quotes can strengthen her message getting across. So here are two of these, one from the end of the abstract, the other from the end of the conclusion part:

"Swing voters are neither purely undecided nor disengaged; their relationship with politics is shaped by a terrain where doubt, flexibility, and the search for trust are intertwined. Therefore, political communication efforts targeting these voters should focus on building trust rather than generating partisan anger" (Demiralp, 2025, para. 3).

"The most effective approach to engaging swing voters is not to appeal to partisan anger, but rather to cultivate trust. For these voters, the paramount concern is not the relative merits of specific systems, ideologies, or parties, but rather the authenticity of the candidates and their commitment to transparency. The relationship between floating voters and the political arena is characterised more by a sense of trepidation regarding potential deceit and a fundamental need for trust than by anger. Consequently, these voters' orientation is towards seeking rather than settling scores, towards the politics of tomorrow that promises trust rather than the polarisation of today" (Demiralp, 2025).

The political literacy through foreign language education strategy in our study overlaps with the related learning outcomes of the Center for Civic Education located in California, USA, considering the two flagship curricular

programs, namely We the People and Project Citizen. The website of the center shares adaptations by several international partners. The countries adapting Project Citizen number 75, those adapting the Foundation of Democracy series number over 40, and other materials number eleven.

The website of We the People (n.d.) provides information about the former as “a comprehensive curriculum for elementary, middle, and high school students covering the history and principles of constitutional democracy in the United States,” which culminated in simulated congressional hearings where students testify as witnesses before panels of judges acting as Congressional members.

The latter is a hands-on civic education program promotes engagement of students (middle, secondary and post-secondary) and groups at all levels (both youth and adult) in government at state, local and federal levels in monitoring and influencing public policy, identifying and studying real community problems as well as creating portfolios to be presented to classes, organizations or policymakers (Project Citizen, n.d.). The leading scholar from Türkiye on studies related to Project Citizen, Öztürk (2022), shows the feasibility of implementing civic education through project-based learning through research centers of universities, foregrounding Project Citizen, one of the flagship curricular programs of the Center for Civic Education located in California, USA. Öztürk (2022, p. 64) highlights clearly that “Project Citizen is an effective citizenship education that could be a viable option for a country’s citizenship education course.” Öztürk (2022, p. 64) refers to “the necessary in-service training support” provided for the teachers’ “in-service training support”. Öztürk (2022, p.55) also adds that “the school community, teachers, students, school management, and the university professors decide whether it be in-curricular or extra-curricular activity”.

Öztürk, Rapoport, and Zayimoğlu Öztürk (2021) examined the application process of preparation and presentation of Project Citizen by pre-service teachers applying “critical and analytical thinking skills, information search skills, critical literacy skills, and other skills relevant to the development of inquiry. The participants “positive opinions have been reported “about the project, curricular and pedagogical tools they used, and new knowledge they acquired during the preparatory work” (Öztürk et al., 2021, pp.394-395).

As an active and constructivist teaching method in citizenship education, helping with internalising knowledge, Project Citizen can be used as an alternative to traditional learning, considering its implementation in some countries for several years (Öztürk & Zayimoğlu Öztürk, 2021, p. 25).

Another important civic education study is Sungur’s (2025) article, which

deals with the concept of "citizen" as how it was framed in civic education textbooks used in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the interviews conducted at the Ministry of Education in Kabul in 2018, as well as how relevant issues relate to "state-building" during the Western intervention. Sungur (2025, p.1) concludes that the Civic Education textbooks do not reflect a specific goal for generating citizens, and it was naïve to expect the republic to survive on its own without citizens, despite the entire Western machinery resources (military, financial, institutional, and technological) intended to transplant and sustain. Sungur (2025, p. 15) stated that this situation is not unique to Afghanistan, and although the other examples were not as tragic as the Afghan case, “non-Western countries have gone through diverse struggles in their encounter with Western institutions like citizenship, not even having vernacular terms for citizen or citizenship”.

The abovementioned civic education studies are provided as samples that can provide a representative demand for civic education. Political literacy is at its heart. The strategy suggested in our work (infusing political literacy into English language learning) needs the kind of culture that can bring about its realisation.

For those interested in drawing parallels between the conventions, the Republican Party convention has also been analyzed using the same model structure employed in the Democratic Party convention analysis report. This enables readers to make an independent comparison. The following presentation will provide further information on this matter. In the following section, an analysis of Trump's convention speech is provided. This is followed by an analysis of the speeches delivered by guest speakers who best represent the convention as a whole.

The sentiment analysis of Trump’s 2024 Republican National Convention speech

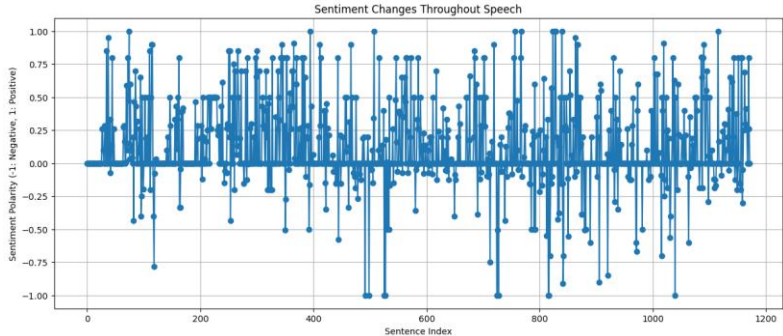


Figure 7. *Sentence-level sentiment polarity of Donald Trump’s 2024 DNC speech*

Figure 7 illustrates the sentiment fluctuations throughout Donald Trump's 2024 RNC speech, with the horizontal axis showing the progression of sentences from the beginning to the end and the vertical axis indicating sentiment polarity, ranging from -1 for strongly negative tones to +1 for strongly positive tones. Overall, the distribution of points reveals a highly dynamic emotional flow, alternating between positive and negative peaks, which reflects the deliberate rhetorical strategy of the speech.

At the very beginning, the speech maintains a predominantly positive tone. The sentiment values are mostly above +0.5, corresponding to Trump's warm introduction, his gratitude towards supporters, and the uplifting message of unity and hope. In this part, he emphasizes faith, resilience, and the shared destiny of Americans, setting an optimistic mood. This early section, filled with acknowledgments and personal reflections, creates an immediate emotional connection with the audience.

As the speech moves into the recounting of the assassination attempt, the graph shows sharper oscillations between positive and negative values. The sentiment temporarily drops into negative ranges as he describes the attack, the chaos, and the bloodshed. However, it quickly rises again when he highlights the bravery of the crowd and Secret Service agents and expresses gratitude for surviving the incident. This portion of the speech carries both sorrow and appreciation, which creates a mixed emotional tone mirrored in the sentiment analysis.

In the middle segment, the sentiment trends more negatively as Trump focuses on criticisms of the current administration, inflation, immigration issues, and international crises. These discussions bring the polarity closer to zero or into the negative side, reflecting the seriousness and critical nature of this part of the speech. However, even within this critique-heavy section, there are occasional positive spikes when he shifts from outlining problems to proposing solutions and reassuring the audience of his capability to lead America out of crisis.

Toward the later stages, as Trump transitions to policy promises and a vision for America's future, the sentiment stabilizes in the positive range. Here he speaks about economic recovery, energy independence, and restoring national strength, which elevates the emotional tone again. This section is marked by messages of hope and renewal, bringing a more confident and encouraging atmosphere to the audience.

The concluding part of the speech shows the most dramatic sentiment swings. There are sharp negative dips when he emphasizes the threats facing America and honors those who have suffered, but these are followed by

equally strong positive peaks as he delivers an inspiring closing message. He ends with a call for unity, resilience, and the promise of a brighter future, leaving the audience on a hopeful and motivational note. Overall, while the speech contains moments of fear, grief, and criticism, the dominant sentiment leans slightly positive due to the uplifting conclusion and repeated emphasis on collective strength and renewal.

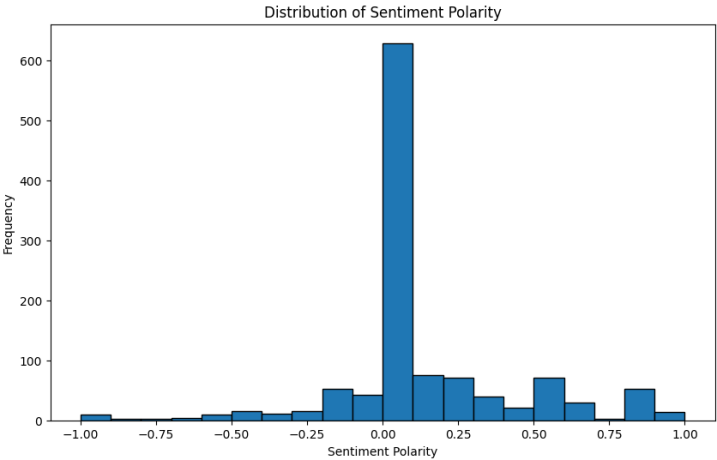


Figure 8. *Distribution of sentiment polarity scores throughout the speech of Donald Trump’s 2024 DNC speech.*

Figure 8 illustrates a histogram of sentiment scores calculated for each sentence within Donald Trump’s RNC 2024 speech. On the x-axis, sentiment polarity values range from 1.0 (strongly negative) to +1.0 (strongly positive), while the y-axis reflects the frequency of sentences falling into each polarity interval.

A prominent feature of this distribution is the very tall bar centered around 0.0, representing a large cluster of neutral sentences. In this speech, the majority of sentences remain close to a neutral tone, with over 600 instances classified as neither overtly positive nor negative. This strong central concentration suggests that the speech was dominated by declarative or fact-oriented language, where Trump likely provided descriptive statements about policies, past achievements, or institutional matters without embedding excessive emotional charge.

This tendency toward neutrality aligns with the overall high objectivity score, reinforcing the interpretation that much of the speech adopted an informational style. Such a measured tone is common in political addresses designed to maintain credibility, establish authority, and convey structured messaging without overwhelming emotional bias.

Moving toward the positive polarity range, a noticeable portion of the remaining sentences falls between +0.25 and +1.0, with a secondary peak around +0.5. These positively charged statements likely correspond to moments where Trump expressed gratitude, optimism, and calls for unity—such as thanking supporters, affirming national pride, and projecting a hopeful vision for America’s future. Frequent use of uplifting language, including words like “great,” “thank,” and “America,” contributes to these elevated sentiment scores, subtly reinforcing a unifying and motivational narrative.

In contrast, the negative polarity range (from -1.0 to 0.0) is much more sparsely populated and scattered. While negative sentiment appears in certain parts of the speech, it is clearly limited and strategically applied. These moments likely align with criticisms of political opponents, references to crises such as immigration or economic challenges, and warnings about potential threats. The selective use of negativity indicates a controlled rhetorical approach, where Trump avoids prolonged negativity to minimize alienation and instead focuses on contrast—presenting problems briefly before shifting back to hopeful or solution-oriented messaging.

Overall, the histogram reveals a speech that is largely neutral in tone with a mild positive leaning, punctuated by occasional emotional highlights. This balance suggests a deliberate communicative strategy, combining credibility through objective statements with intermittent emotional appeals to maintain audience engagement and reinforce key messages.

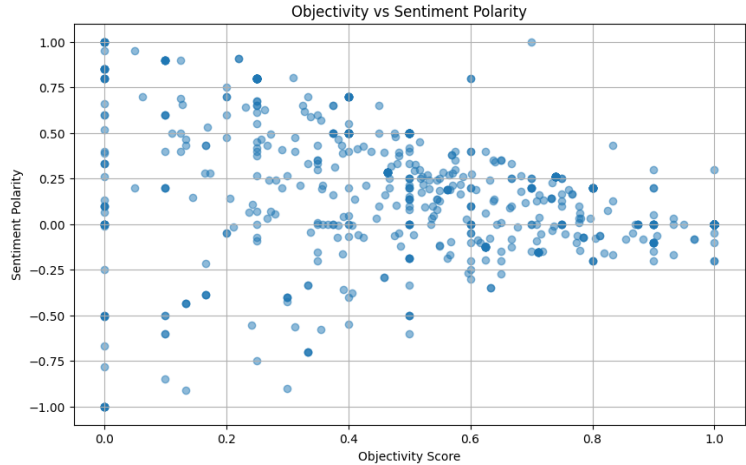


Figure 9. Scatter plot showing the relationship between objectivity and sentiment polarity.

Figure 9 illustrates the relationship between textual objectivity and sentiment polarity in Donald Trump's RNC 2024 speech. The horizontal axis represents the objectivity score, ranging from 0 (fully subjective) to 1 (fully objective), while the vertical axis denotes sentiment polarity, spanning from -1 for strongly negative sentiment to +1 for strongly positive sentiment. Each data point corresponds to a sentence from the speech, reflecting both its emotional tone and its level of subjectivity or objectivity.

The scatter plot reveals a clear pattern: as objectivity increases, sentiment polarity values tend to cluster closer to zero, indicating more neutral expressions. Sentences with high objectivity scores, particularly those above 0.7, exhibit little emotional variation, suggesting they are primarily informational or descriptive. These portions of the speech likely include factual statements about policies, achievements, or statistics, which naturally adopt a more measured tone and avoid extreme emotional language.

Conversely, statements with lower objectivity scores, particularly those below 0.5, display a much wider range of sentiment polarity. In this subjective range, sentences are more likely to express strong emotions, either highly positive or deeply negative. For example, strongly subjective language would appear during moments of praise for supporters or intense criticism of opponents, producing polarity values closer to +1 or -1. Highly subjective texts, with objectivity below 0.2, are most associated with these emotional extremes, highlighting how personal and opinion-driven rhetoric amplifies sentiment.

Most data points are concentrated around mid-level objectivity scores between 0.4 and 0.6 and polarity values near zero, indicating that a significant portion of the speech is moderately objective and carries either neutral or only mildly positive emotional tones. This balanced distribution suggests that while Trump employs emotionally charged language in certain key segments, a large part of the speech maintains a relatively controlled and structured tone. Overall, the plot highlights how subjectivity influences the emotional intensity of the speech, with objective language remaining neutral while subjective language drives the strongest emotional impact.

Table 3. *Summary of sentiment and objectivity analysis results for Donald Trump’s speech.*

=== SENTIMENT ANALYSIS RESULTS ===
Overall Sentiment Polarity: 0.109 Overall Objectivity Score: 0.703 Most Positive Sentence: We were very proud of it. Most Negative Sentence: And then we had that horrible, horrible result that will never let happen again.
Top 10 Most Frequent Words: going: 99 people: 70 great: 69 country: 66 said: 53 trump: 51 thank: 46 usa: 41 one: 39 ever: 38
Topic-Based Sentiment Analysis: economy: 0.121 security: 0.036 healthcare: 0.000 democracy: 0.061 foreign_policy: -0.021

Table 3 illustrates that the overall sentiment polarity of the dataset was measured at 0.109, indicating a slightly positive general tone across the analyzed speech. This value suggests that while the language is not overtly emotional or heavily polarized, it leans marginally toward positivity. In parallel, the overall objectivity score of 0.703 reflects a predominantly factual and neutral style of delivery, implying that much of the speech relies on information sharing rather than excessive emotional persuasion. This balance between mild positivity and relatively high objectivity suggests a controlled rhetorical approach, blending moments of emotional appeal with a foundation of seemingly factual statements.

The most positive sentence, “We were very proud of it,” exemplifies a simple but affirming emotional tone. It conveys a sense of achievement and shared pride, which is often a hallmark of political messaging aimed at reinforcing unity and collective success. On the other hand, the most negative sentence, “And then we had that horrible, horrible result that will never let happen again,” introduces a distinctly emotional and negative tone, emphasizing a past failure or crisis with repeated intensifiers. This illustrates how the speech occasionally departs from its neutral baseline to underscore critical points or invoke a sense of urgency and resolve.

A frequency analysis of the lexical items reveals that the most commonly used terms include going, people, great, country, said, trump, thank, usa, one, and ever. These results highlight the speech’s focus on national identity and collective belonging (e.g., people, country, USA), personal and direct references to the speaker himself (Trump), and emotionally resonant terms such as great and thank. The frequent use of gratitude-related expressions aligns with the overall mild positivity reflected in the sentiment score, reinforcing the impression of a speech designed to acknowledge supporters while projecting optimism.

A topic-based sentiment analysis shows subtle variations in emotional tone across key policy domains. Economy (0.121) emerges as the most positively framed theme, reflecting optimistic or reassuring language when addressing economic issues. Democracy (0.061) and security (0.036) are discussed with a more neutral to mildly positive tone, likely balancing acknowledgment of challenges with affirmations of stability or strength. Healthcare (0.000) is entirely neutral, suggesting a factual or minimally emotional approach to this topic, while foreign policy (-0.021) slightly dips into the negative range, possibly indicating critical commentary on international affairs.

In summary, the sentiment analysis portrays a moderately objective and mildly positive tone, with emotional intensity appearing primarily in isolated sentences and specific thematic areas. The speech combines a structured and neutral presentation style with carefully placed emotional highlights, a strategy likely intended to maintain credibility while fostering a sense of connection and shared values with the audience.

Sentiment Analysis of the Speeches Selected to be Representative of the 2024 Republican National Convention

This analysis presents a comprehensive sentiment examination of speeches from the Republican National Convention using Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques. The analysis employed Python-based tools, including NLTK and TextBlob, to examine emotional content and rhetorical patterns across multiple speakers

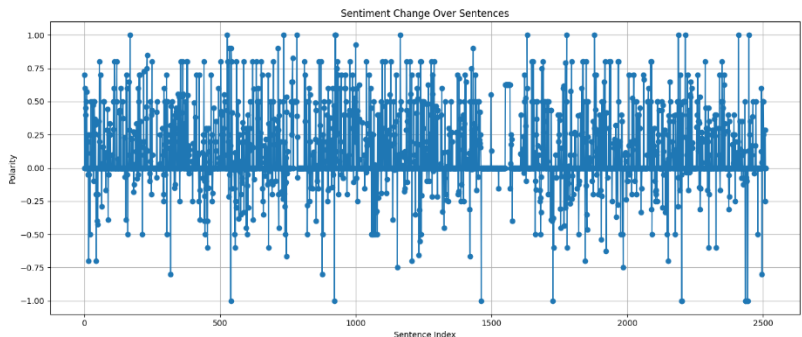


Figure 10: *Sentence-level sentiment polarity of Speeches from the 2024 Republican National Convention*

The bar chart visualizes the top 10 most frequently used words throughout the convention speeches. The x-axis displays individual words while the y-axis represents their frequency count. The visualization reveals a clear hierarchy in messaging priorities.

The word "trump" dominates with 401 occurrences, establishing the central focus of the convention. This is followed by "president" at 216 occurrences, reinforcing the electoral context. "America" (194) and "donald" (179) occupy the third and fourth positions, while "country" appears 172 times. Notably, "fight" registers 142 mentions, reflecting the combative rhetoric intensified after the assassination attempt on the nominee.

The frequency distribution shows a steep decline from the most common term to subsequent words. "American" (134), "people" (123), "know" (110), and "us" (109) complete the top ten. This pattern indicates highly focused messaging centered on the nominee, national identity, and collective action. The prominence of action-oriented vocabulary alongside identity markers suggests a dual rhetorical strategy combining mobilization with unity themes.

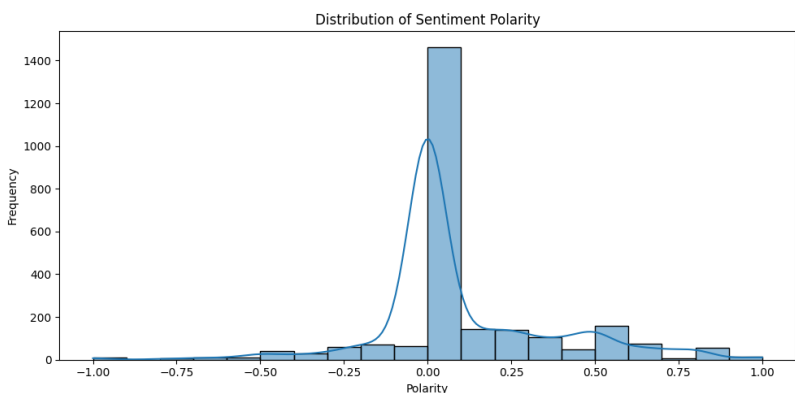


Figure 11: *Distribution of sentiment polarity scores throughout the speeches from the 2024 Republican National Convention*

The histogram displays sentiment polarity distribution across all analyzed sentences, with the x-axis representing polarity scores from -0.4 to +0.6 and the y-axis showing frequency. The distribution exhibits a roughly normal pattern with a slight rightward skew.

The central tendency clusters around 0.096, indicating marginally positive overall sentiment. The majority of sentences fall within the -0.2 to +0.3 range, suggesting measured rhetoric rather than extreme emotional appeals. However, the presence of outliers on both ends—reaching -0.4 in negative territory and +0.6 in positive—indicates strategic deployment of strong emotional rhetoric at key moments.

This distribution pattern reflects a typical convention strategy: balancing criticism of opponents with an optimistic vision for the future. The slight positive skew suggests speakers emphasized hope and opportunity while maintaining sufficient negative contrast when discussing opposition policies. The relatively balanced distribution indicates disciplined message control across multiple speakers.

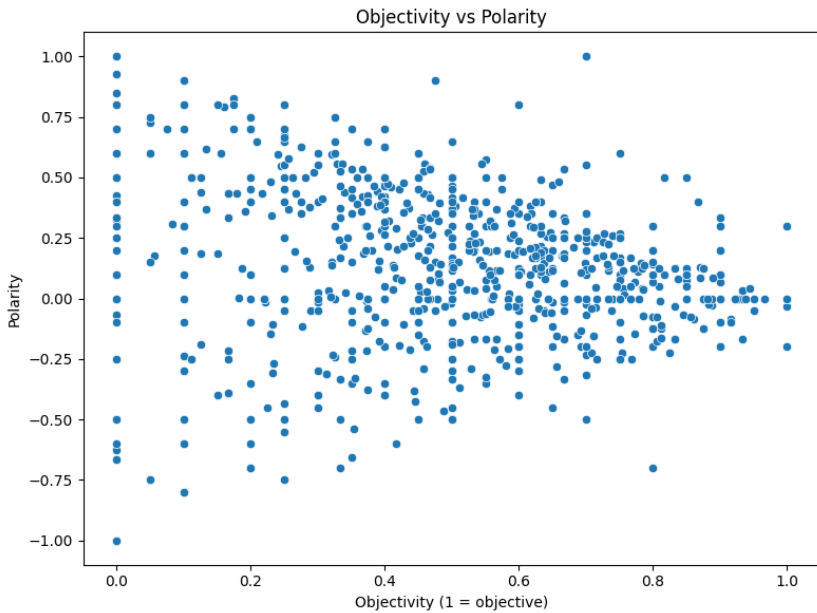


Figure 12: *Scatter plot showing the relationship between objectivity and sentiment polarity of speeches from the 2024 Republican National Convention*

The horizontal bar chart illustrates sentiment scores across five key policy domains. The x-axis represents sentiment values from -0.05 to +0.15, while the y-axis lists policy topics.

Foreign policy emerges as the most positively discussed topic with a score of 0.118, likely reflecting emphasis on Trump's previous foreign policy achievements and promises of restored international strength. Democracy follows closely at 0.110, suggesting strong messaging about electoral integrity and democratic participation. The economy registers 0.091, indicating cautiously optimistic economic messaging despite inflation concerns.

Security discussions remain nearly neutral at 0.021, possibly reflecting a balance between criticizing current border policies and promoting future solutions. Healthcare stands alone with negative sentiment (-0.009), though the magnitude remains minimal, suggesting limited focus on this traditionally Democratic issue.

Table 4: *Summary of sentiment and objectivity analysis results for speeches from the 2024Republican National Convention*

=== SENTIMENT ANALYSIS RESULTS ===
Average Polarity: 0.096 Average Objectivity: 0.733
Most Positive Sentence: And my message to my fellow Americans, those watching from across the country is, shouldn't we be governed by a party that is unafraid to debate ideas and come to the best solution?
Most Negative Sentence: Just days ago, something that once seemed unimaginable, became a terrifying reality.
Top 10 Most Frequent Words: trump: 401 president: 216 america: 194 donald: 179 country: 172 fight: 142 american: 134 people: 123 know: 110 us: 109
Topic-Based Sentiment Scores: economy: 0.091 security: 0.021 healthcare: -0.009 democracy: 0.11 foreign_policy: 0.118

The comprehensive sentiment analysis reveals:

Overall Metrics:

Average Polarity: 0.096 (slightly positive)

Average Objectivity: 0.733 (highly objective)

These metrics indicate speakers maintained factual, policy-focused discourse while leaning slightly positive overall. The high objectivity score (0.733) suggests emphasis on concrete claims and specific policy positions rather than purely emotional appeals.

Extreme Sentences:

Most Positive: "And my message to my fellow Americans, those watching from across the country, is, shouldn't we be governed by a party that is unafraid to debate ideas and come to the best solution?" This sentence embodies themes of inclusive governance and constructive problem-solving.

Most Negative: "Just days ago, something that once seemed unimaginable became a terrifying reality." This directly references the assassination attempt, representing the speech's emotional nadir.

Word Frequency Insights: The frequency analysis reveals strategic message discipline. The dominance of "trump" (401) and related terms demonstrates a unified focus on the nominee. The high frequency of "fight" (142) reflects the rallying cry following the assassination attempt, while inclusive terms like "us" (109) and "people" (123) balance combative rhetoric with unity messaging.

Topic Sentiment Patterns: The topic-based analysis reveals strategic emphasis on areas of Republican strength (foreign policy, democracy) while maintaining measured discussion of challenging areas (healthcare). The near-neutral security sentiment (0.021) suggests a careful balance between criticism and solutions, avoiding alarmist rhetoric while addressing voter concerns.

Technical Observations

The analysis reveals a sophisticated rhetorical strategy across the convention:

1. Message discipline is maintained across multiple speakers, evidenced by consistent sentiment patterns
2. Strategic emotional deployment, using strong sentiment selectively for maximum impact
3. Balance between objective policy discussion (0.733 objectivity) and emotional engagement
4. Successful integration of crisis response (assassination attempt) into broader campaign narrative

This pattern demonstrates professional speechwriting that balances multiple objectives: energizing the base, appealing to undecided voters, responding to current events, and maintaining presidential gravitas. The slight positive bias, combined with high objectivity, creates an authoritative yet optimistic tone appropriate for a nominating convention.

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APPENDICES

Some selected speeches

Michelle Obama emphasized putting country over party: “Look, I don’t care how you identify politically, whether you’re a Democrat, Republican, independent, or none of the above, this is our time to stand up for what we know in our hearts is right” and she continued to remind the audience of what Kamala Harris’ mother said to her in the past: “Don’t just sit around and complain. Do something” and connected it to be proactive and take precaution against possibility of what she claims would be disinformation against her: “So if they lie about her, and they will, we’ve got to do something” and then asked the rhetorical the what question, which was followed by “do something” from the crowd and finished her talk with “Our fate is in our hands” (Michelle Obama Speaks at the Democratic National Convention, n.d.).

Head coach of the Golden State Warriors (NBA team) and the US national team, Steve Kerr spoke at the contention as well. He also emphasized team spirit: “... as Americans who know the greatness of this nation doesn’t come from any one of us but from each of us doing our part ...” (KTVU FOX 2 San Francisco, 2024).

Emphasizing that she is a “registered independent”, Oprah Winfrey (Oprah Winfrey Speaks at Democratic National Convention, n.d.) addressed the crowd: “I’m calling on all you Independents and all you undecideds. She later emphasizes standing together “When we stand together, it is impossible to conquer us” and supports it with what the late Congressman John Lewis said, “No matter what ship our ancestors arrived on, we are all in the same boat now” which seems to include “boat” metaphor. Continuing her speech about the American civil rights leader (John Lewis) she said that “he also knew that the work is not done. The work will never be done because freedom isn’t free. America is an ongoing project. It requires commitment. It requires being open to the hard work and the heart work of democracy (Oprah Winfrey Speaks at Democratic National Convention, n.d.).

Well known for his eloquence, Bill Clinton (Bill Clinton Speaks at 2024 Democratic National Convention, n.d.) implied what he believes to be the self-centered attitude of Kamala’s rival: don’t count the lies. Count the I’s. Count the I’s. “Me, me, me, me, me, me.”. Analyzing this on her tweet, Seda Demiralp (Seda Demiralp [@sedademiralp], 2024) comments that Voters who believe that ‘if he wins, I will have won too’ do not turn away because the lies they have been told have been exposed. However, the realisation that the leader is not after those who line up behind him, but after his own future, changes things. In short, it is difficult to achieve results in a campaign that involves the fight against disinformation by using only the ‘confirmation’ method without touching the emotions.

Tim Walz emphasized the contribution of each and every person, regardless of the quantity, saying that “Our job, our job, our job, our job for everyone watching is to get in the trenches and do the blocking and tackling. One inch at a time, one yard at a time, one phone call at a time, one door knock at a time, one \$5 donation at a time (Tim Walz Speaks at 2024 Democratic National Convention, n.d.). The repetitive use of our is notable.

Arguing against apathy, Pete Buttigieg foregrounded what politics can be in a good way: “I believe America is ready for a better kind of politics. Yes, politics at its worst can be ugly, crushing, demeaning, but it doesn’t have to be. At its best, politics can be empowering, uplifting. It can even be a kind of soul craft” (Pete Buttigieg Speaks at 2024 Democratic National Convention, n.d.).

Despite the eloquence in the DNC rhetoric, it is necessary to benefit from the perspective of the rival side, which can be represented by the former GOP (Republican) presidential contender candidate, then later Trump surrogate, Vivek Ramaswami, who said “Trump’s campaign should reset and focus on policy instead of throwing personal insults at the other side. He then added that he spoke with the former president about it and claimed he was receptive” (Timotija, 2024).

Kamala Harris's speech

<https://www.rev.com/transcripts/kamala-harris-speaks-at-2024-democratic-national-convention>