

The Realization of Interpersonal Meaning of Trump's 2017 Inaugural Speech from the Perspective of Appraisal Theory

Chu Xing

Hangzhou Normal University of Foreign Languages, Hangzhou 311121, China

Email: 1347098240@qq.com

How to cite this paper: Xing, C. (2025). The realization of interpersonal meaning of Trump's 2017 inaugural speech from the perspective of appraisal theory. *Literature, Language and Cultural Studies*, 2(1), 131–146. ISSN Print: 3079-5095; ISSN Online: 3079-5109.
<https://doi.org/10.63313/LLCS.9067>
Published: 2025-07-25

Copyright © 2025 by author(s) and

Erytis Publishing Limited.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Abstract

This study employs Appraisal Theory to analyze the realization of interpersonal meaning in Trump's 2017 inaugural address. By conducting a quantitative analysis of Attitude resources in Trump's speech using the UAM Corpus Tool, coupled with qualitative classification, the research reveals that positive Attitudes in Trump's speech greatly outnumber negative ones, with Affect resources being frequently employed, particularly those expressing insecurity and unhappiness, in order to evoke the audience's emotions and desire for change. Moreover, the study also finds that Trump strategically balances Judgement resources, such as negatively appraising "ability," to raise awareness among listeners of the current situation and their appetite for change. The use of Appreciation resources has also bolstered national pride and a sense of optimism for the future. The research concludes that Trump's speech successfully established an emotional connection with the public to endorse his policies and vision, showcasing his political philosophy and leadership style.

Keywords

Appraisal theory; Attitudes; Trump; Inaugural address; Interpersonal meaning; SFL

1. Introduction

Political speeches play a crucial role in domestic and international political activities, serving as an essential means for politicians to clarify their positions, promote their propositions, and influence the public. American presidential inaugural addresses (APIA), as one kind of political speeches, attract people around the world. They aim to close the relationship with people and to persuade people to accept and support the new government. Trump, as the first president in U.S. history with no prior political or military experience, and with a background as a businessman, brought a distinctive perspective to his inaugural speech. Thus, Trump's inaugural speech is a compelling subject for analysis.

The interpersonal meaning of a speech—the way it constructs relationships, conveys emotions, and influences the audience—is a critical aspect of its communicative power. Appraisal Theory, with its focus on the evaluative nature of language, provides a rich framework for understanding how these interpersonal meanings are realized. Therefore, an in-depth analysis of Trump's inaugural speech, especially from the perspective of Appraisal Theory, is of significant value for understanding its profound interpersonal meanings, revealing the ideological and value positions behind his political stance.

This study is dedicated to an in-depth analysis of Trump's 2017 inaugural speech through the lens of Appraisal Theory. By applying this theory, we aim to uncover the profound interpersonal meanings embedded within his speech, revealing the ideological and value positions that underpin his political stance. The analysis will explore how Trump utilized language to connect with his audience, express his vision, and establish the ethos of his presidency.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Theoretical Framework: Appraisal Theory

Appraisal Theory, an extension of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), was developed by J.R. Martin and his colleagues in the 1990s to delve into the discourse semantics. In Martin's book *Working with Discourse: Meaning Beyond the Clause*, he gives a definition of Appraisal:

Appraisal is concerned with evaluation: the kinds of Attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings involved and the ways in which values are sourced and readers aligned (Martin & Rose, 2003).

Appraisal Theory is concerned with linguistic resources by which the writer or speaker can express their Attitudes, get involved in propositions, and grade the assessments of meanings (Martin & White, 2005). According to White, Appraisal framework is a particular approach to explore, describe and explain the way language is used. By making use of language, the writer/speaker can evaluate resources, adopt stances, and manage interpersonal positioning and relationships.

Martin points out that interpersonal function can not only be realized in grammatical way, but also can be expressed through lexicon resources (2007: 142). Compared with SFG, Appraisal theory is a more lexically-based perspective (Martin & White 2005: 8). It discloses language users' ideology through evaluative lexis (Wang, 2001).

Appraisal Theory contains three main systems. They are Engagement, Attitude and Graduation.

Attitude is divided into 3 subsystems: Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation. And whether voicing people's feelings, judging people's character, or appreciating objects, the Attitude can be the speaker's own or attributed to another resource (Rohmawati, 2016).

Affect is integral to conveying feelings and Attitudes, which are inherently emotional and can be expressed in various ways. Martin and White (2005) emphasize that Affect is central to Attitude resources and can be categorized into quality, process, and comment. It can be positive or negative, reflecting the valence of emotions, and can be direct or implied, indicating the manner of expression. According to UAM corpus tool, Affect has four types: un/happiness, dis/satisfaction, in/security, dis/inclination.

The Judgment system in discourse is a key mechanism for expressing moral assessments of individuals, divided into Social Esteem and Social Sanction. Social Esteem encompasses admiration and criticism, focusing on a person's normality, capacity, and tenacity. Social Sanction, which carries more serious implications, is concerned with veracity and propriety, leading to praise or condemnation. These categories help to articulate the moral and ethical dimensions of a person's character or conduct within a social context.

The Appreciation subsystem is a vital part of our Attitude that assesses the value of various things, from our creations and performances to natural phenomena. It evaluates our immediate emotional reactions to these things, their structural composition, and their overall worth in terms of innovation, authenticity, and relevance. Appreciation in Appraisal Theory is categorized into three types: reaction, composition, and social valuation. Reaction values associate emotional responses with the entity itself, as if these emotions are inherent properties of the entity. Composition assesses the entity based on the integration and harmony of its parts. Social valuation evaluates the entity's significance to society or its value to the community, often relating to its usefulness or contribution.

In addition to Attitude resources, there are also Engagement and Graduation resources. While this paper primarily focuses on the analysis of Attitude resources, it is necessary to provide a brief explanation of Engagement and Graduation resources as well.

Engagement resources express the speaker's position and Attitude towards different viewpoints, including Dialogic Expansion and Dialogic Contraction. Dialogic Expansion indicates that the speaker takes into account or acknowledges alternative perspectives, utilizing phrases such as *may*, *might*, *some people say*, *it is argued that*. In contrast, Dialogic Contraction signifies the speaker's limitation or exclusion of other viewpoints, employing words like *despite*, *although*, *nonetheless*, *ignoring*.

Graduation resources are used to adjust the intensity and focus of the evaluation, comprising Force and Focus. Force refers to the enhancement of the evaluative strength through Intensification and Quantification, using terms such as *very*, *extremely*, *highly*, *a great deal*. Focus, on the other hand, pertains to the adjustment of the evaluative focus through Sharpen and Soften. For instance, *truly*, *genuinely* are used to sharpen the focus, while *kind of*, *arguably* are employed to soften the focus, introducing a degree of ambiguity and flexibility to the evaluation.

2.2. Related Studies

In the field of political communication, political speeches have always been a key area of interest for scholars. These speeches are not just a showcase of politicians' policies and philosophies, but also a means to influence public sentiment through language. With the advancement of linguistics and discourse analysis, Appraisal Theory has become a crucial tool for analyzing political speeches, especially in revealing the ideologies they convey.

Appraisal Theory goes beyond the surface of language, examining how speakers express emotions, judge actions, and make value judgments. It's been widely used in political discourse analysis. For instance, Bao Kun (2009) applied Appraisal Theory to analyze political news discourses in *The New York Times*, especially the engagement resources used by authors. Yang Xiaohong (2013) studied Martin Luther King Jr.'s *I Have a Dream* speech to understand the use of appraisal resources. Li Huifang (2010) used Appraisal Theory to analyze President Obama's victory speech, demonstrating its utility in understanding a speaker's stance. Rohmawati (2016) used the appraisal system to study Attitudes, emotions, and beliefs in Obama's inaugural address, highlighting the use of positive expressions.

The study of Trump's speeches through Appraisal Theory is not new. Munday (2018) conducted an analysis of Trump's inaugural speech, and compared it with translations in Spanish in different media. His findings underscored the consistency of Attitudinal expressions across translations, despite variations in Graduation. Moreover, Zheng Linfeng (2018) conducted an Attitude analysis of the Affect system in both Obama's and Trump's inaugural speeches. Their work emphasized the pedagogical applications of Appraisal Theory in language education, particularly in fostering critical literacy among learners.

More recently, Saleh Alhudaithy (2022) analyzed Trump's inaugural speech using Appraisal Theory, focusing on the Attitude system. The study identified the dominance of positive Attitudes over negative ones and the frequent use of Affect, particularly positive Security. The current study builds on these scholarly works by specifically examining the realization of Interpersonal Meaning in Trump's 2017 Inaugural Speech through the lens of Appraisal Theory. It aims to contribute to the understanding of how Trump's language choices in his speech construct interpersonal stances and engage with the audience, thereby influencing public perception and political ideology.

3. Methodology

This study is dedicated to an in-depth analysis of the distribution of appraisal resources in Trump's 2017 inaugural address and to exploring the role of these resources in shaping interpersonal meaning with the public. The research needs to answer the following two questions:

How are Appraisal Resources distributed in Trump's inaugural address?

2. How is the interpersonal meaning realized in Trump's inaugural address through Appraisal Resources ?

The data for this study is sourced from the American Presidency Project website, an online repository that contains a vast collection of official documents from past U.S. Presidents. This paper selects Trump's 2017 inaugural address as the subject of analysis. The study adopts a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative analyses to provide a comprehensive examination of the data.

In terms of quantitative analysis, this study employs UAMCorpus tool 6 to annotate the corpus of Trump's inaugural address according to the classification of Attitude resources. This includes quantifying the frequency and distribution patterns of Attitude resources, thereby revealing their distribution rules and patterned applications within the speech. Types of Appraisal resources, such as Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation, are meticulously recorded and analyzed, taking into account their specific positions and contexts within the speech.

Qualitative scrutiny concentrates on how these resources serve interpersonal purposes within the speech's communicative framework. Through sample analysis, this study delves into how Attitude resources Affect the audience's emotional responses, value identification, and the construction of social identity.

4. Discussions

4.1. The Distribution of Attitude resources

A presidential inauguration speech is a significant political event that not only conveys the new president's political views and positions but also paints a political blueprint for the populace. Consequently, such speeches are typically replete with rich interpersonal meaning. Drawing upon Appraisal Theory, we can conduct an in-depth analysis of the Attitude resources in Trump's inaugural address, which are primarily categorized into three major subsystems: Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation.

To vividly illustrate the distribution of Attitude resources in Trump's inaugural speech, this paper employs the UAM Corpus tool for visual analysis. The speech consists of 1,471 words, including 142 finite clauses. According to the analysis presented in Table 1 and Figure 1, we have identified a total of 124 Attitude resources, with 62 being Affect resources (accounting for 50%), 43 being judgment resources (representing 34.7%), and 19 being Appreciation resources (constituting 15.3%).

Table 1. The Distribution of Attitude Resource

Attitude-TYPE	N	%
- Affect	62	50.0
- Judgement	43	34.7
- Appreciation	19	15.3
TOTAL:	124	100.0

The analysis indicates that in Trump's inaugural address, the use of Affect resources

was the most extensive, accounting for half of the total. This suggests that Trump tends to employ Affect resources to convey his viewpoints and emotions, a strategy that may be aimed at establishing an emotional connection with the audience and stimulating their resonance. The use of judgment resources was the second most prevalent, at 34.7%, reflecting Trump's moral or value assessments of certain behaviors or decisions within the speech. Appreciation resources were the least used, comprising only 15.3%, which may indicate that Trump infrequently utilized expressions of praise or value assessment in his speech.

The widespread use of Affect resources demonstrates Trump's distinctive personal speaking style, which might be considered overly subjective or emotional in certain contexts. However, this style may also facilitate a more direct emotional bond with his listeners, especially in the backdrop of his need to quickly gain public support and trust as a newly elected president. Although the expression of emotions can be controversial in political speeches, their prominent placement in Trump's inaugural address reflects his attempt to mobilize and inspire the populace through emotional resonance.

Table 2. Distribution of Attitude Polarity

Attitude-POLARITY	N	%
- positive-Attitude	90	72.6
- negative-Attitude	34	27.4
TOTAL:	124	100.0

As observed in Table 2, the use of positive Attitudes in Trump's inaugural address significantly outweighs that of negative ones, a phenomenon that is expected in political speeches since the primary function of an inaugural address is to inspire the populace, convey hope, and articulate a forward-looking vision. Specifically, the deployment of positive Attitudes reached 90 instances, constituting 72.6% of all Attitude resources, while the use of negative Attitudes stood at 34, representing 27.4%. This pronounced inclination reveals that Trump adopted a positive communicative strategy in his inaugural speech, aimed at fostering an optimistic mood among the citizens and instilling confidence in the future. By emphasizing positive Attitudes, Trump communicated an uplifting vision for the nation's future and attempted to cultivate an atmosphere of unity and progress. This strategy not only helped the newly inaugurated president to establish a favorable image among the public but also garnered support for his policies and initiatives.

Moreover, the judicious use of negative Attitudes played a crucial balancing role in the speech. It allowed Trump to demonstrate a clear understanding of and commitment to addressing real challenges rather than disregarding them. This approach not only enhanced the speech's credibility but also provided Trump with opportunities to showcase his problem-solving capabilities. In this manner, Trump was able to convey a realistic Attitude to the public while maintaining a positive tone, which contributed to building trust in the new administration. The employment of such strategic communication undoubtedly enriched the emotional depth and persua-

siveness of the address.

4.2. The distribution of Affect resources

Table 3. The distribution of Affect resources

Affect-TYPE	N	%
- un/happiness	18	29.0
- positive-Attitude (happiness)	11	61.1
- negative-Attitude (unhappiness)	7	38.9
- dis/satisfaction	10	16.1
- positive-Attitude (satisfaction)	5	50.0
- negative-Attitude (dissatisfaction)	5	50.0
- in/security	29	46.8
- positive-Attitude (security)	18	62.1
- negative-Attitude (insecurity)	11	37.9
- dis/inclination	5	8.1
- positive-Attitude (inclination)	5	100.0
- negative-Attitude (disinclination)	0	0.0
TOTAL:	62	100.0
- positive-Attitude	42	64.6
- negative-Attitude	23	35.4

In analyzing the distribution of Affect resources in Trump's 2017 inaugural address, it was observed that 'in/security' constituted the largest proportion at 46.8%, followed by 'un/happiness' at 29%. This was closely trailed by dis/satisfaction (16.1%) and dis/inclination (8%). The distribution and expression of these emotional resources further reveal how Trump leveraged linguistic strategies to engage the audience's emotions, thereby influencing their cognition and actions.

The high prevalence of 'in/security' in Trump's 2017 inaugural speech not only highlights his profound understanding of the nation's status at the time but also forms the core of his oratorical strategy. The employment of this strategy not only uncovers his diagnosis of the socio-economic and political conditions in the United States at that moment but also reflects his attempt to mobilize public support for his policies by invoking a sense of urgency among the populace.

At that time, American society was grappling with significant economic and social inequality, with many middle-class families facing uncertainty and anxiety about the future. Trump's speech directly addressed this societal concern, employing concrete and vivid language to depict the poverty in inner cities, the decay of industry, the inequity in education, and the issues of crime and drug abuse, all of which were pressing issues faced by American society at the time. Through these descriptions, Trump not only accentuated the current state of insecurity in society but also galvanized a strong demand for change among the citizens.

Example1: Mothers and children trapped in poverty in our inner cities; rusted-out factories scattered like tombstones across the landscape of our Nation; an education system, flush with cash, but which leaves our young and beautiful students deprived of all knowledge; and the crime and the gangs and the drugs that have stolen too

many lives and robbed our country of so much unrealized potential.

By employing terms such as "trapped" and "rusted-out," Trump painted a picture of insecurity and decay within American society, evoking a profound awareness among listeners of the current conditions. The use of words like "deprived," "stolen," and "robbed" further emphasized the injustices and insecurities of the society, fueling the audience's desire for change.

In Trump's speech, the expression of this sense of insecurity did not exist in isolation but was coupled with his positive vision for the nation's future. By outlining the challenges and uncertainties of the present, he stimulated the audience's yearning for change while promising to take action to address these issues. This strategy not only helped to shape his image as a leader but also provided emotional legitimacy for his policy agenda.

Example2: There should be no fear: We are protected, and we will always be protected.

This positive assurance provided a sense of security to the public, demonstrating Trump's clear understanding of the issues at hand and conveying a sense of possibility and hope for change, which is instrumental in establishing trust among the populace.

The emotional resource of "un/happiness" accounted for 29%, a proportion that follows closely behind "in/security" at 46.8%. This reflects Trump's intentional integration of a profound insight into and strategic mobilization of the emotional state of the populace within his speech. The distribution and expression of these emotional resources not only reveal how Trump employed linguistic strategies to engage the audience's emotions, thereby influencing their cognition and actions, but also are closely related to the actual social context and Trump's personal situation at the time.

At that time, the United States was grappling with uneven economic growth, social injustice, and political division, leading many Americans to feel marginalized and uncertain about the future. Trump's inaugural address took place against this societal backdrop. By acknowledging the public's unhappiness while simultaneously conveying a message of optimism and hope, this strategy helped stimulate reflection on the status quo and encouraged support for new policies and reforms.

Example 3: We all enjoy the same glorious freedom, and we all salute the same great American flag.

In this statement, the use of "enjoy" and "glorious freedom" underscores Trump's emphasis on positive Affect, while the repetition of "we all... the same..." reinforces a message of unity and consensus. This not only conveys that he stands with the people but also makes the speech more fluid and memorable.

Example 4: While they celebrated in our Nation's capital, there was little to celebrate for struggling families all across our land.

This sentence juxtaposes "celebrated" and "struggling," highlighting the disparity in

the distribution of societal resources. While some may be celebrating, many families are still struggling to make ends meet. This contrast not only communicates a sense of unhappiness but also underscores the reality of social inequality. As a non-traditional political figure, Trump's election was itself a challenge and transformation to the American political system. His inaugural address reflected his identity as a political outsider and his commitment to "draining the swamp," a promise to eradicate political corruption and the privileged elite in Washington. In this way, Trump sought to connect with Americans who felt ignored and betrayed by the existing political system.

Regarding the emotional resource of dis/satisfaction, Trump demonstrated a balanced assessment of the status quo, expressing dissatisfaction with the political situation while also conveying gratitude for the assistance provided by the outgoing president and his wife during the transition of power. This balanced expression not only eased political antagonism but also facilitated a smooth transition for the nation.

Example 5: We will no longer accept politicians who are all talk and no action, constantly complaining, but never doing anything about it.

This statement directly addresses the public's discontent with the political status quo, particularly the disappointment with politicians who are perceived as engaging in empty rhetoric without taking concrete actions. The straightforward and candid manner of this expression not only reveals Trump's critique of the current political landscape but also signals his resolve to take tangible steps to alter the situation. It reflects the widespread dissatisfaction with the political elite in American society at the time and a strong desire for change.

Example 6: we are grateful to President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama for their gracious aid throughout this transition.

This statement reflects Trump's expression of gratitude towards the former President and his wife for their assistance during the transition period. The expression of this positive Attitude not only demonstrates Trump's respect and Appreciation for his predecessors but also conveys a spirit of unity and cooperation. This was particularly important in the context of American society at the time, as it helped to alleviate political polarization and facilitate a smooth transition for the nation.

The balanced use of emotional resources was closely related to the backdrop of American society at the time. In 2017, the United States was experiencing profound political divisions and economic challenges. The dissatisfaction of many Americans with the traditional political elite and their desire for economic recovery made Trump's inaugural address a significant political and social event. By acknowledging problems while conveying a positive Attitude, Trump sought to inspire public confidence and support, simultaneously providing emotional legitimacy for his policy agenda.

Furthermore, Trump's use of emotional resources for "dis/inclination" in his speech

is also noteworthy. In this section, all recorded instances were of a positive nature, indicating that Trump adopted an entirely positive stance when expressing his inclinations for decision-making and action. This expression of positivity may have been intended to demonstrate Trump's resolute determination and leadership, signaling that he would continue to advance his policies and reforms despite challenges and opposition. This determination was primarily articulated through the use of future-oriented language.

Example 7: Protection will lead to great prosperity and strength. I will fight for you with every breath in my body and I will never ever let you down.

In this sentence, Trump employs the first-person singular "I" instead of referring to the U.S. government, and he uses "I will" three times to emphasize personal resolve. This strategic mobilization by Trump, through the extensive use of emotional resources, successfully merges his personal image with the national vision, conveying a strong sense of leadership and responsibility. This emotional expression not only deepens the public's support and trust in the new administration's policies but also imbues Trump's inaugural address with profound emotional and political significance, reflecting the crucial role of "Affect" in political communication within Appraisal Theory. In this manner, Trump establishes a connection with the people not only verbally but also emotionally, laying a solid foundation for the achievement of his political objectives.

4.3. The Distribution of Judgement Resources

Table 4. The distribution of Judgement resources

Judgement-TYPE	N	%
- normality	13	30.2
- positive-Attitude	13	100.0
- negative-Attitude	0	0.0
- capacity	12	27.9
- positive-Attitude	5	41.7
- negative-Attitude	7	58.3
- tenacity	11	25.6
- positive-Attitude	10	90.9
- negative-Attitude	1	9.1
- propriety	12	14.0
- positive-Attitude	6	100.0
- negative-Attitude	6	0.0
- veracity	1	2.3
- positive-Attitude	1	100.0
- negative-Attitude	0	0.0
TOTAL:	49	100.0%
- positive-Attitude	35	71.4
- negative-Attitude	14	28.6

In Trump's 2017 inaugural address, the strategic use of judgment resources highlighted their fundamental difference from Affect resources. While Affect resources typically pertain to personal emotional experiences and mental states, judgment

resources focus more on objective evaluations of social behaviors and individual traits. According to the classification by Martin and Rose, judgment resources are divided into two main categories: Social Esteem and Social Sanction. Social Esteem further includes Normality, Capacity, and Tenacity, while Social Sanction encompasses Veracity and Propriety. In Trump's speech, there were 43 instances of judgment resources used, with Normality accounting for 30.2%, Capacity for 27.9%, Tenacity and Propriety at 25.6% and 14% respectively, and Veracity at only 2.3%. Among these 43 instances of judgment resources, the use of positive Attitudes far exceeded that of negative Attitudes.

Example 8: Fellow Americans.

In Trump's inaugural address, the use of the term "fellow Americans" skillfully exemplifies the application of Normality. The first instance of this address conveys a sense of warmth and the spirit of equality. By employing this term, Trump demonstrated to his audience that he was not a distant leader but rather a member of the American populace, just like everyone else. This expression also conveyed a sense of community, emphasizing the importance of unity in facing challenges and sharing a vision for the future. Not only did this usage bridge the psychological gap between him and the public, encouraging listeners to embrace his speech with an open mind, but it also helped to strengthen national identity, fostering support and trust for the new administration's policies. Trump's utilization of Normality served not only the interpersonal meaning of the speech but also created a positive social atmosphere among the people, laying a solid foundation for the advancement of his subsequent policies.

Despite the overall predominance of positive Attitudes over negative ones in Trump's inaugural address, it was observed that within the subcategory of judgment resources related to "Capacity," the use of negative sentiments unexpectedly surpassed that of positive ones. This pattern of usage contrasts sharply with the overall style of the speech, potentially revealing a subtle strategic shift on Trump's part. The negative employment of "Capacity" in his address may have been intended to awaken the audience's awareness of the current situation and their desire for change. By highlighting the challenges and deficiencies faced by the United States, Trump was, in effect, paving the way for presenting solutions and demonstrating his leadership.

Example 9: When America is united, America is totally unstoppable.

In this example, Judgement is primarily achieved through the adjectives "united" and "unstoppable," which correspond to Tenacity and Capacity, respectively. As mentioned earlier, during the 2016 election, the United States was grappling with significant political, cultural, and racial divisions. Trump emphasizes here that it is only when America stands united that it can exert its unstoppable strength to achieve great goals.

Example 10: The forgotten men and women of our country will be forgotten no

longer.

Here, the negative aspect of Capacity is more directly addressed. By using the term "forgotten," Trump not only conveys his attention to those marginalized and overlooked groups but also implies that he will represent these groups and become their savior. This statement, while seemingly positive because it promises change and attention, actually reveals the divisions and inequalities present in American society. Although Trump called for unity and togetherness in his inaugural address, the phrasing in Example 10 may suggest that he is more inclined to represent a specific segment of the population rather than the nation as a whole. This tendency could be related to his political stance and voter base and might also reflect his profound understanding of the divided state of American society.

In Trump's inaugural address, the judgment resource of Propriety demonstrates a balanced use of positive and negative Attitudes.

Example 11: These are just and reasonable demands of righteous people and righteous public.

This sentence reflects the positive Attitude of Propriety. Trump emphasizes the justice and reasonableness of the public's demands here, using the term "righteous" to convey a sense of moral legitimacy. This not only affirms the expectations and needs of the people but also strengthens his position as a leader supportive of these values.

Example 12: We must protect our borders from the ravages of other countries making our products, stealing our companies, and destroying our jobs.

Trump employs a negative Attitude of Propriety here. By using strong language such as "ravages," "stealing," and "destroying," Trump conveys a condemnatory stance towards immigration and international trade. He suggests that immigrants are taking American jobs and harming the nation. Throughout his speech, Trump references immigration and border protection three times, indicating that these issues will be focal points of his policy agenda. This position was clear during his campaign and is further emphasized in his inaugural address. By repeatedly addressing these concerns, Trump demonstrates to his supporters his commitment to keeping promises and signals to opponents that his policies will not be swayed by political pressure.

In Trump's inaugural address, the positive Attitude of Tenacity significantly outweighs the negative Attitude, revealing a strategic intent to emphasize unity and perseverance.

Example 13: We must speak our minds openly, debate our disagreements honestly, but always pursue solidarity.

In this statement, the term "solidarity" conveys the importance of unity, even in the face of disagreements. By employing this phrase, Trump encourages open dialogue and honest debate, ultimately emphasizing the necessity of staying united. This emphasis on the positive Attitude of Tenacity not only demonstrates his commitment to national unity but also reflects his attempt to find common ground amidst

diverse voices to achieve shared goals and visions.

The negative Attitude of Tenacity is less utilized in the speech, perhaps because Trump aims to establish a positive and future-oriented image in his inaugural address. By reducing focus on the negative aspects of Tenacity, Trump avoids conveying messages of division or confrontation in his speech, instead placing emphasis on strengthening national cohesion and collective determination.

Veracity is used with a positive Attitude in only one instance in the speech, indicating that Trump does not overly emphasize issues of sincerity or truthfulness, but rather concentrates more on unity and action.

Overall, Trump's strategic use of judgment resources reflects a precise grasp and clear purpose in his communication strategy. He skillfully employs Social Esteem and Social Sanction to construct political discourse, conveying optimism and momentum for progress through frequent use of positive Attitudes, while laying a solid foundation for the new administration's policy agenda. On specific issues such as immigration and border protection, Trump demonstrates a firm stance on national security and economic interest protection through the use of negative Attitudes. His speech not only reinforces unity and a sense of community, stimulating momentum for change, but also balances moral legitimacy with practical concerns, clarifies policy direction and commitments, and shapes a leadership image that is positive, future-oriented, and ready for action. The comprehensive use of these strategies not only constructs interpersonal meaning but also lays the groundwork for Trump's political objectives and policy agenda, fully displaying his resolve and determination as a national leader.

4.4. The Distribution of Appreciation Resources

Table 5. The distribution of Appreciation resources

Appreciation-TYPE	N	%
- reaction	3	15.8
- positive-Attitude	3	100
- negative-Attitude	0	0
- composition	4	21.1
- positive-Attitude	4	100
- negative-Attitude	0	0
- social-valuation	12	63.2
- positive-Attitude	9	75
- negative-Attitude	3	25
TOTAL:	19	100.0
- positive-Attitude	16	84.2
- negative-Attitude	3	15.8

In Trump's 2017 inaugural address, the use of Appreciation resources was relatively infrequent, yet they played a crucial role in constructing interpersonal meaning and mobilizing public support. According to Appraisal Theory, Appreciation resources can be further divided into three subcategories: Reaction, Composition, and Social

Valuation. Among these, Social Valuation was the most frequently used, appearing 12 times, while Composition and Reaction were used less frequently, with 4 and 3 instances, respectively.

The frequent use of Social Valuation, particularly with a positive Attitude, reflects Trump's attempt to imbue his political movement with a sense of historicity and significance. For example:

Example 14: You came by the tens of millions to become part of a historic movement, the likes of which the world has never seen before.

The term "historic" here not only emphasizes the uniqueness and unprecedented scale of the movement, enhancing its value and significance, but also conveys a deep Appreciation and respect for the participants, making them feel like witnesses and shapers of this historic change. Such Appreciation helps to reinforce the beliefs of supporters, strengthening their sense of identification with and belonging to Trump's policies, adding a mobilizing and inspiring force to Trump's inaugural address.

Example 15: The time for empty talk is over.

This statement reflects a clear negative evaluative Attitude, where Trump uses the term "empty" to convey strong dissatisfaction and criticism towards rhetoric that lacks substance and effectiveness. This expression not only highlights his aversion to the phenomenon of political discourse that does not translate into action but also clearly signals to the audience that he will put an end to a political style that is all talk and no action. By employing this negative Attitude, Trump effectively communicates a desire for change and dissatisfaction with the status quo. It adds a sense of urgency and mission to his inaugural address, while also providing a legitimacy for his policy agenda that is based on action and results. Through the use of such evaluative resources, Trump successfully resonates with those who are disillusioned with traditional politics and stirs their expectations for substantive changes that the new administration can bring.

The evaluative resources of Composition and Reaction in Trump's inaugural address consistently exhibit a positive Attitude, reflecting Trump's affirmation and Appreciation of the American people's aspirations and values. By utilizing these resources, Trump conveys a message of unity and shared purpose, while also inspiring national pride and an optimistic outlook for the future.

Example 16: These are just and reasonable demands of righteous people.

This reflects Trump's positive evaluation of the basic needs of the populace. Here, the term "reasonable" not only indicates that Trump believes the American people's demands for quality education, safer communities, and better jobs are fair and justified, but it also conveys a deep understanding and respect for the voices of the public. Such a statement helps to build Trump's image as a leader who understands and supports the needs of the people.

Example 17: We share one heart, one home, and one glorious destiny.

This further reinforces the message of unity and shared purpose. The use of the word "glorious" not only inspires national pride but also communicates an expectation and confidence in the brilliant achievements that the United States can attain in the future. This expression emotionally connects with the audience, making them feel like they are part of the nation's great destiny and encouraging them to hold hope for the positive changes to come.

In summary, Trump's use of Appreciation resources in his inaugural address, though not numerous, was strategic in every instance, aimed at enhancing the audience's positive perception of the speech content and boosting their confidence and expectations for the political movement and the nation's future. Through positive expressions of social evaluation, composition, and reaction, Trump successfully conveyed his support and Appreciation for the American people, while also critiquing certain aspects of the political status quo. The use of these evaluative resources not only enriched the emotional layers of the speech but also deepened its mobilizing and inspiring effect.

5. Conclusions

This study employs Appraisal Theory, with a particular focus on Attitude resources, to conduct an in-depth analysis of Trump's 2017 inaugural address, examining how he utilized linguistic strategies to achieve interpersonal meaning within his speech. The findings reveal that Trump frequently employed Affect resources (50%), especially those conveying feelings of insecurity and unhappiness, to evoke emotional resonance and a desire for change among his audience. Additionally, the strategic use of Judgement resources (34.7%) demonstrated Trump's profound understanding of the status quo and communicated the necessity for transformation. Furthermore, Trump utilized Appreciation resources (15.3%), effectively enhancing the public's national pride and optimism for the future. In summary, Trump's inaugural address was a successful multi-dimensional communicative act, skillfully using appraised resources to establish an emotional connection with the populace and garner support for his policies and vision. The speech not only showcased Trump's political philosophy and leadership style but also foreshadowed the direction and focus areas of his administration.

However, the study's limitations lie in the fact that, although quantitative analysis was conducted using the UAM Corpus Tool, the tool's reliance on the researcher's subjective judgment when annotating Attitude resources may have introduced bias, thereby affecting the accuracy of the data to a certain extent. Moreover, the research primarily concentrated on Attitude resources, with less exploration of Engagement and Graduation resources. Future studies could expand to more diverse analytical methods and compare Trump's speech with other political addresses to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the construction of interpersonal meaning in his speeches and their role in political communication.

References

- [1] Alhudaithy N S. Appraisal Devices Realizing Attitudes in Donald Trump' s Inaugural Speech: America First[J]. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 2022, 14(5): 65-83.
- [2] Martin J R, Rose D. *Working with Discourse: Meaning Beyond the Clause*. London: Continuum, 2003.
- [3] Martin J R, White P R R. *The evaluation of language: Appraisal in English*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- [4] Munday J. A model of appraisal: Spanish interpretations of President Trump's inaugural address 2017. *Perspectives*, 2018, 26(2): 180-195.
- [5] Rohmawati I. Appraisal devices realizing Attitudes in Barack Obama's inaugural speech. *Vision: Journal for Language and Foreign Language Learning*, 2016, 5(1): 27-56.
- [6] BAO, K. A discourse analysis of English political news from the perspective of appraisal theory. Shandong Normal University, 2009.
- [7] CHEN, H. *Systemic Functional Grammar Perspective Analysis of Trump Inaugural Speech and Obama First Inaugural Speech* [D]. Sichuan Normal University, 2018.
- [8] LI, H. F. Obama President Election Victory Speech from Appraisal Theory Perspective [J]. *Journal of Chifeng University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Chinese Edition)*, 2010, 31(03): 149-151.
- [9] YANG, X. H. Appraisal Theory Perspective Political Speech Interpersonal Meaning Analysis——Take I Have a Dream as Example [J]. *Contemporary Foreign Languages Research*, 2013(04): 16-20+77.
- [10] ZHENG, L. F. *Evaluation Theory Attitude Perspective Comparative Study Obama and Trump President Inaugural Speeches* [D]. Hefei University of Technology, 2018.