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Constructing Legitimacy and Solidarity in Zohran Mamdani's Victory Speech: An Appraisal-Based Discourse Analysis

Abstract


This paper analyses the evaluative and interpersonal meaning constructed in the post-election victory speech given by Zohran Mamdani as the New York Mayor with the help of Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2003) of the Systemic Functional Linguistics. Appraisal Theory gives an orderly manner in terms of which speakers assess occurrences, heighten or pull down meanings, and place themselves relative to other voices. Using a qualitative discourse-analytical methodology, the paper will examine how the three subsystems of appraisal, which include Attitude, Graduation, and Engagement, have been strategically used to bring about political legitimacy, solidarity, and ideological convergence. Engagement analysis reveals a compromise between monoglossic statements of fundamental democratic values and heteroglossic incorporation of other voices in the society. The paper has shown that the victory speech by Mamdani is not just celebration rhetoric but an ideological performance that negotiates the power, inclusion and leadership in pluralistic democratic setting.

Keywords: Appraisal Theory, Attitude, Graduation, Engagement, Mamdani's Speech

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Abstract

This paper analyses the evaluative and interpersonal meaning constructed in the post-election victory speech given by Zohran Mamdani as the New York Mayor with the help of Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2003) of the Systemic Functional Linguistics. Appraisal Theory gives an orderly manner in terms of which speakers assess occurrences, heighten or pull down meanings, and place themselves relative to other voices. Using a qualitative discourse-analytical methodology, the paper will examine how the three subsystems of appraisal, which include Attitude, Graduation, and Engagement, have been strategically used to bring about political legitimacy, solidarity, and ideological convergence. Engagement analysis reveals a compromise between monoglossic statements of fundamental democratic values and heteroglossic incorporation of other voices in the society. The paper has shown that the victory speech by Mamdani is not just celebration rhetoric but an ideological performance that negotiates the power, inclusion and leadership in pluralistic democratic setting.

Keywords:

[Appraisal Theory](#), [Attitude](#), [Graduation](#), [Engagement](#), [Mamdani's Speech](#)

Introduction

The research has used the Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2003) on the winning speech delivered by Mamdani as a Mayor of New York, and specifically, the three fundamental subsystems ordered, which are Attitude, Graduation and Engagement. The theory of Appraisal, which falls under Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), offers an explanatory theory of how speakers assess people,

actions, events and policies; how they strengthen or weaken the evaluation; and how they place themselves dialogically in relation to other voices and perspectives. The victory speech is a specially good point at which to analyse appraisal since it does all three functions of affective congruence to supporters, ethical positioning of a speaker, and ideological bargaining to a wider, heterogeneous audience. The speech of Mamdani creates a moral discourse of social justice, collective struggle, and



the revival of democracy and this discourse is achieved linguistically by making patterned decisions regarding attitude, graduation, and engagement.

Literature Review

The original theory of analyzing evaluative language in discourse is the Appraisal Theory, a systemic functional linguistic theory, which was initially created by Martin and White (2003). It builds upon the interpersonal metafunction presented by Halliday, to offer a taxonomy of evaluative resources that speakers utilize in the expression of emotions (Affect) and ethical evaluations (Judgment) and valuations of phenomena (Appreciation), the scale of such evaluations (Graduation), and their placement with respect to other voices (Engagement) in discourse (Labrador and Ramon, 2024).

The best-known work in the field of appraisal analysis is *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English* by Martin and White that is still the standard reference to the scholars who utilize appraisal analysis (Martin and White, 2003). The book provides a vivid description of the appraisal subsystems and how evaluative language forms interpersonal meanings in texts in the various registers.

Later work has examined how appraisal resources can be identified, categorized, and interpreted as well as observing that they are explanatory but there are still problems in both coding and operationalisation. The review by Wei et al. (2015) demonstrates the wide applicability of the appraisal theory to a wide range of genres (literary, media, legal, academic, etc.), but also makes demands on more specific definitions and categorizations of appraisal markers (Wei et al., 2015).

One of the most prolific areas where the appraisal analysis has been applied was political rhetoric because of the evaluative character of the political discourse. Several studies rely on appraisal theory to analyze the way in which speakers in political situations develop ideological stances and convince audiences. Of example, Mohammed (2024) study on speeches by Ban Ki-moon uses the theory of appraisal to analyse the distribution of Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation in various parts of the formal speech, where Judgment frequently takes

pre-eminent position in anticipated polite address to the audiences and the Affect usually diffuses throughout speech structures.

The American political figures research demonstrates how the resources of attitude indicate the identity of the speaker and ideology position (Aljuraywi and Alyousef, 2021). Interpretations of interviews with Donald Trump and Joe Biden suggest that the contenders disagreements strategically deploy both affective and appraisal resources to accomplish argumentative objectives; Trump was identified to be more affective oriented, and Biden and his interviewees were identified to be more affective through their use of appreciation (Aljuraywi and Alyousef, 2021).

Moreover, Ross and Caldwell (2020) believe that the use of appraisal analysis when applying to political speeches is also true when it comes to campaign rhetoric. The literature on presidential inaugural or campaign speech in the U.S. points to the trends in the use of the attitudinal language to form unity, moral authority or political position, which reflects ideological promises of a larger scale that lie behind the choice of language (Hackenburg et al., 2023).

Appraisal analysis has also been employed by Ross and Caldwell (2020) to investigate the ways in which political speakers identify themselves among audiences and differentiate themselves among the opponents. Comparative discursive analysis of the speeches of Winston Churchill and Tony Blair explore such concepts as positive and negative judgment, and heteroglossic use of engagement strategies to both understand how both speakers align with the targeted audiences and build legitimacy to reveal the relevance of appraisal resources in the analysis of political placement and group distinction (Ross and Caldwell, 2020).

Subsequent quantitative research, including one contrasting the speeches of Joe Biden and Donald Trump with each other as Engagement strategies, discovers regularities in the utilization of heteroglossic and monoglossic resources in negotiating the alignment of the audience, which show differences in the use of stylistic devices in political communication demonstrative of greater rhetorical temperament (Mori, 2017).

The Engagement subsystem of appraisal that examines the ways in which speakers recognize, invoke, accept, or deny alternative voices and

perspectives has been addressed by an increasing scholarship (Naghizadeh and Afzali, 2018). Furthermore, the strategies of political speech unveiled by Gruber (2023) reveal that while heteroglossic interaction, or recognition of other voices or building of shared voices, is more salient than monoglossic assertions, it serves the interests of political actors to be able to negotiate with the multiple voices of the audience.

Mohammed (2024) point out that heteroglossic interaction enables speakers to decentralize authorship and build consensus, and monoglossia is also employed strategically to introduce some of the values (e.g. justice, dignity) as unrefutable. Mohammed (2024) goes on to state that this subtlety of dialogic resources shows that the issue of political discourse is more than mere persuasion and involves negotiation, alignment, and rhetorical control of opposition.

A spotlight in the studies that explore the process of political speakers dramatizing stakes or softening or sharpening categorical boundaries has been on graduation, which concerns scaling intensity and sharpening or softening categorical boundaries (Miao, 2007; Miao and Xu, 2024). Besides, Mubarak et al. (2024) note that political leaders tend to rely on intensifiers and quantification to elevate the perceived moral urgency and popular support, as well as use language selectively to remain credible to a diverse group of audiences. These observations show the role of graduation resources in stylistic dynamics of speech instead of attitudinal material.

Although most of the literature has paid attention to the qualitative analysis of the speeches, the new interdisciplinary directions were revealed in the recent work. Combei and Reggi (2023) combines the appraisal theory with the multimodal and corpus-assisted paradigm and broadens the frame of study, which is online political communication in media. This publication emphasizes the role of appraisal analysis along with the sentiment and emotion analysis to show the underlying layers of ideological framing and involvement of the audience in online political communication (Combei & Reggi, 2023).

Troiano et al. (2023) show that dimensional modeling of emotions and appraisal variables in corpora is developed at the crossroads of appraisal and computational linguistics, and this method can

be extended in terms of analyzing evaluative language in political speeches in the future.

Scholars of critical discourse analysis (CDA) have often integrated the appraisal theory in order to unravel power, ideology, and persuasion in political speech. As a case in point, CDA mixed with appraisal analysis is used to study how the evaluative decisions of the 2016 campaign speeches by Hillary Clinton build personal image and ideological narratives, with the applications of attitudinal and evaluative language used to mediate the power relationships (Thanh, 2025).

The appraisal analysis of speech literature shows that the appraisal theory is a powerful and flexible tool used to analyze appraisal meaning in political speech. Tarigan et al. (2022) have made efforts in the detailed attitudinal profiling of political actors and genres (e.g., debates, campaigns, formal addresses). Although Mori (2017) provided some insights into the process of negotiating the audience alignment and dissent by speakers with the help of the engagement resources. Additionally, Naghizadeh and Afzali (2018) have revealed the investigation into graduation and scaling to dramatize or restrict political assertions. Moreover, Combei and Reggi (2023) declare emergent integration with multimodal and computational approaches to make it more applicable. In addition, Thanh (2025) have continued to use in the critiques discourse study to reveal ideological and power impacts.

Nonetheless, the difficulties are present such as the necessity of more stable coding conventions, more holistic constructs of analysis that incorporate sociopolitical backgrounds, and multimodal or computational paradigms that would enable the analysis of appraisal to be extended past small qualitative corpora. The subsequent research will probably expand the gap between the conventional systemic functional linguistics and digital techniques and corpus analytics to deepen the appraisal analysis of political speech.

Research Questions

This study will answer the following research questions:

1. In what manner does Mamdani utilize appraisal techniques to assess their relationships with audiences?

2. What role does evaluation serve in shaping ideas, persuading the audience, or influencing power relations in discourse?
3. In what manner can appraisal theory elucidate the underlying attitudes and value systems embedded in discourse?

Methodology

This report follows a qualitative research design that uses a discourse-analytical research design which is based on the Appraisal Theory that was theorized by Martin and White (2003) under the umbrella of the Systemic functional Linguistics (SFL). It is believed that the method of qualitative approach is appropriate since it enables one to provide an in-depth analysis of evaluative language and interpersonal meaning-making in political language, which cannot be effectively addressed using quantitative tools only. The data of this study is the victory speech made by Zohran Mamdani that was given after his election as the Mayor of New York. The speech text has been acquired on publicly available and trustworthy sources and has been viewed as one, self-contained political discourse event (Guardian staff reporter, 2025). It was speech-taped and read carefully on numerous occasions so as to be familiar and analytically precise.

The analysis is based on 3 main subsystems of Appraisal Theory Attitude, Graduation and Engagement. First, there are cases of Attitude that were identified and divided into Effect, Judgment and Appreciation to investigate the construction of emotions, moral judgment and social phenomena valuation. Second, the Graduation resources were considered so as to define how Mamdani heightens or dilutes evaluative meanings using Force and Focus. Lastly, the Engagement resources were analyzed to understand how the speaker places his voice in connection to other perspectives using monoglossic and heteroglossic strategies. The analytical process was systematic and consisted of a system of coding with the identification of significant lexical and grammatical words, their interpretation, and categorization based on the appraisal framework. The analysis is not scientific but explanatory and it is more based on the meaning, functionality as well as ideological connotations. It is a methodological approach that allows us to gain a subtle insight into the mechanism of evaluative language to forge solidarity, authority

and ideological congruency in political victory speeches.

Data Analysis

The data analysis covers three dynamics of analysing the speech focusing on Attitude, Graduation and Engagement.

Attitude

Under the subsystem of Attitude in the context of the Appraisal Theory formulated by Martin and White (2005), linguistic resources in which speakers encode representations of emotions, moral judgments, and values of phenomena are viewed. It responds to the primal interpersonal question of how speakers locate themselves in terms of emotion and morality in their relationship to people, events, and states of affairs, at the same time either agreeing or disagreeing audience with such location. Attitude is a major semiotic material in the victory speech of Zohran Mamdani, where the legitimacy of politics is built, a sense of solidarity is established, and political transformation is brought into perspective as something ethically right, and emotionally motivating.

The strategic use of attitude that Mamdani employs makes him transcend the technical or procedural aspects of electoral achievements and present the victory as a common moral and emotional one. The speech does not tell the audience that the election has been won; it asks the audience to experience the importance of that win, to assess themselves as moral agents of change and to cherish the city, democracy, and prospects in future politics in specific ways. Attitude therefore plays a crucial role in changing the political discourse into a collective affective and moral experience. It is achieved by the three interconnected areas of Affect, Judgment and Appreciation all of which add different but overlapping interpersonal meanings.

Affect

Affect is the linguistic construal of emotion, and it involves happiness, fear, hope, anger, pride, and solidarity. In the victory speech by Mamdani, the affect is massively positive and collectively oriented in its orientation, which is in advance service portraying emotions of hope, gratitude, pride, belief and collective joy. The usage of lexical terms hope,

dream, love, belief, together and we consciously put an emotional touch of optimism and unity. These emotional resources serve the purpose of identifying the audience with the emotional position of the speaker and making the electoral victory to be not just a personal achievement or partisan victory, but an emotional one shared by the city.

Positive affect is not introduced as abstract and impersonated, it is instead incorporated in the stories of group struggles and endurance. The inclusion of the pronouns and collective references used by Mamdani make certain that the emotions are socialized and not individual. Such grouping of affect is highly interpersonal, as it enables the listeners to not only feel pride and joy with the speaker, but also as co-owners of the political moment. By this sense, affect is a bonding mechanism that strengthens solidarity between the electorate and the leader.

Negative affect though there is, has been handled and placed in strategic positions. Frustration, pain, anger, and fear are also some of the emotions that are linked to the past or current social injustices, which comprise economic disparity, housing insecurity, racial marginalization, and systemic neglect. Notably, these negative effects are seldom personalized or related to suffering as an individual phenomenon. They are rather presented as a communal experience of communities throughout the city. This discursive approach enables Mamdani to recognize real hairy pain without coming off as parting, confrontational, and too adversarial.

In addition, the general affective course of the speech is based on a shift in suffering to hope. Negative affect is utilized as a context in which the necessity of changing something is validated, whereas the positive affect is, in turn, at the end, exuding an image of confidence, optimism, and determination. This emotional development creates the chain of transformation where the shared pain can be redefined as a motivative tool instead of a form of hopelessness. This type of affective arc is especially useful in political victory speeches, because it guarantees them that the future will be different in an essential way than the past.

The essential characteristic of Mamdani affective strategy is the fact that the invoked affect is much more dominant than the emotion inscribed. Instead of regularly describing emotions per se (e.g., we are

angry, we are joyful) Mamdani tends to narrate common experiences, social facts and mutual struggles that prompt the emotional reactions in the audience. The speech engages and identifies the audience more by not dictating the emotions being conveyed but letting the listeners deduce them. This oblique appeal to emotion stimulates the audience to internalize the emotions to make them their own, which increases the persuasive and interpersonal power of the speech.

Judgment

Judgment is the issue of evaluating human behavior in terms of ethics, morality, competence and social esteem. As Mamdani gives his victory speech, judgment is mostly positive, communal, and inclusive, which is made out to voters, grassroots organizers, workers, immigrants, activists, and ordinary New Yorkers. These social actors are estimated to be robust, heroic, dedicated, and dignified thus creating the electorate as morally deserving and politically empowered. These favorable appraisals enhance the social status of the audience and make them the instruments of political change and not the objects of leadership.

Mamdani is successful in redistributing political power by positively assessing the electorate. The idea of leadership is not promoted as a domain of the elected official but a result of group action and civic participation. This discursive gesture corresponds to progressive political thought that places a strong accent on participatory democracy as well as on grassroots mobilization. It also has an interpersonal role in stating the moral worth of the audience and reaffirming them in their emotional stake in the new administration.

When negative judgment occurs, it is re-strategically displaced on the people and on abstract systems and institutional structures. Breach of social justice is blamed in dysfunctional systems, unfair policies or systemic inequalities instead of identified political adversaries. This will enable Mamdani to express a strong ethical position without breaking into overt personal attacks and polarization. The speech is on a serious moral note without open hostility by condemning systems and not individuals.

In cases where the political elites or the past ruling party is implicitly implied, the criticism is usually directed at the shortcomings of the

administration which include lack of concern, responsibility or responsiveness in relation to the needs of the people. These assertions are implicitly and not explicitly presented, which gives Mamdani the benefit of placing his leadership as an act of moral rectification without using confrontational language. This will make him more attractive on ideological grounds and strengthen a sense of moral accountability.

The speech also has a lot to do with self-judgment. Mamdani projects himself as self-declared, responsible and has a sense of responsibility towards the people. He predicts service, duty, and corporate commitment as opposed to individual aspiration or personal achievement. This self-assessment is very objective and ethical credibility (ethos) is increased, and his personality identity is consistent with the values he has expressed in the speech. Mamdani builds trust and legitimacy by applying the same ethical standards that he uses on others to himself.

Appreciation

Appreciation is an assessment of objects, processes, events and states of affairs concentrating on their worth, importance or quality. Appreciation is widely applied in the speech of Mamdani, in which the author expresses a positive review of democracy participation, social diversity, civic participation and the city of New York itself. The city is often praised as an energetic, strong, and potential place making it not just a geographical place but a symbolic place that has the potential to bring about progressive change. This respect creates a shared sense of civic identity and makes people feel more connected to their surroundings.

Democracy is also valued as effective, significant, and radical. The electoral process is presented as sign of collective agency and civic vitality as opposed to an ordinary institutional process. Mamdani gives this election a higher profile by describing it as historic and decisive and further authenticates the validity of the political transition. This positive valuation is an ideologically operational process as well, that establishes belief in democratic institutions and places them as instruments of social justice.

Negative appreciation is mostly applied to social conditions and material reality like the housing crisis, economic inequality, and lack of financing of

state services. Such circumstances are judged to be unacceptable, unfair, and unproven able, which contributes to the ethical standing of maintaining change. By such negative evaluations, Mamdani creates a contrasting environment between the imperfect present and the positively assessed future. This opposition justifies his agenda in terms of his policies since change is not only possible but also required.

Combined, appreciation serves to organize the ideological space of the speech. It determines what is good, what is unacceptable and what can be done. The positive appreciation of democratic participation and collective identity and negative appreciation of systemic injustice make Mamdani build a logical moral vision that makes the audience consistent with his political objectives.

On balance, the subsystem of Attitude in the winning speech by Mamdani does important interpersonal and ideological job. He uses affect to bring together emotions and foster solidarity, makes moral agency and ethical legitimacy through judgment, and frames the social realities and political futures with evaluative expressions through appreciation. All these attitudinal resources combine to make the speech a compelling performance of the political meaning-making, which makes Mamdani not just an elected leader, but a moral agent of shared aspirations.

Graduation

In Appraisal Theory, Graduation has been defined as linguistic resources with the help of which speakers intensity or deflect attitudes and harden or soften categorical frontiers. Where Attitude is the question of what is being rated, Graduation is the issue of the degree of rating and how well categories are defined. Graduation is a key factor in an act of politics in terms of defining the audience alignment, dramatizing as well as controlling ideological commitment. Graduation is an important interpersonal and rhetorical tool applied in Zohran Mamdani in his victory speech to enhance urgency, establish moral understanding and collective determination at the same time, being very inclusive and credible.

The fact that Mamdani is using graduation enables the author to find a fine line between being intense and restrained. On the one hand, he makes use of the high-amplification rates to contextualize

the election as a revolutionary one and a historic event. Conversely, he tactically under-invokes force and de-emphasizes concentration in situations where overconfidence or inflexibility may jeopardize fidelity or put off portions of the electorate. The key element of the speech, therefore, is graduation, which helps Mamdani seem not to be over-confident or dogmatical. Graduation subsystem works in two major dimensions, Force and Focus.

Force

Force is about amplification or diminishing of meanings by intensification and quantification. The use of force is heavily adopted in the speech of Mamdani to create emotional appeal, secure moral urgency, and position the election results as a moment of far-reaching significance and not a run-of-the-mill political transformation.

Among the most salient strategies is the lexical intensification. Mamdani also resorts to high-force adverbs like deeply, truly, fundamentally and adjectives like historic, extraordinary, unprecedented and transformative. These intensifiers add to the emotional and moral significance of the speech, making the victory not a significant event, but a turning point with the past. By making these decisions, Mamdani magnifies the importance of the moment to inviting the audience to view the election as a breakthrough that had extensive consequences.

This enhanced force works on the ideological level, as well. By placing the victory in the framework of historic or unprecedented, Mamdani puts his leadership in the context of a larger story of progressive change and social transformation. The election is not introduced as the outcome of the usual political rivalry, but as a sign of the profound change in the way of thinking and shared values. Regarding the Appraisal terms, this force might serve to enhance the appreciation and the judgment at the same time, which reinforces the emotional investment and morality of the audience.

Another significant source of force is quantification. Mamdani appeals to mass mobilization multiple times, when she mentions the number of thousands of volunteers and millions of New Yorkers and each neighborhood of the city. Being numerically defined or figuratively broadened, these quantitative expressions serve to exaggerate the size of support and involvement.

They build the movement as wide, encompassing, and democratically based, which supports the validity of the mandate of Mamdani.

Notably, quantification does not rely on numbers only. Spatial and social quantification is another method used by Mamdani who appeals to the size of the city and the multiplicity of communities. The feeling of collective ownership and responsibility is enhanced by phrases that point in the direction of the wider involvement of the city. Through this, force serves to build up a mass movement as opposed to the elite political project, and popular will is consistent with leadership.

Simultaneously, Mamdani exercised strategic moderation by selective reduction of force especially in dealing with the future. Although the obligations to justice, reform and accountability are put in terms of determination, they are hardly said in absolutist or deterministic ways. The language of promises is that of effort, struggle, and collective responsibility, but not promising results. This softening of power is more believable, an indicator of realism and moral gravitas and not a populist caricature.

This balancing can be very crucial in political discussions, where too much amplification might break trust. Mamdani avoids being too confident, which makes him responsible and made, which strengthens the ethical validity of his position. There is actually no constant high force throughout the speech, but an expert control of force is applied to make moral urgency more urgent but pragmatic structures more viable.

Focus

Force looks at how strong and how much something is, while Focus looks at how clear or blurry the lines between categories are—how much meaning is made out and how clear the distinction is. Focus in the speech of victory of Mamdani is very important in his ideological clarity and social inclusiveness.

Mamdani often uses sharpened focus in expressing the main values like justice, equality, solidarity and dignity. These are the values that are stated as absolute and nonnegotiable values and they are the basis of the ethics of the new administration. This polishing is linguistically obtained with a certain set of final formulations, parallelism and contrasting schemes of the matters and structures that stand in opposition with the

opposing practices that are linked to exclusion, negligence or indifference.

Giving greater concentration to these values, Mamdani forms a solid ideological core of the speech. The audience too is welcomed to conform to a well-established moral system where justice and equality are not only foregrounded as the guiding principles but also not aspirations. Appraisal wise, sharpened focus enhances attitudinal meanings by enhancing ambiguity and commitment to the evaluation.

This sharpening works contrarily as well. Mamdani does not address his opponents directly, but ideological alternatives are implied as morally insufficient or socially degrading. The explicitness of values establishes an implicit divide between progressive and inclusive politics and strategies that are linked to systemic injustice. Focus is therefore part of ideological positioning without necessarily the direct confrontation.

On the other hand, Mamdani tactfully blurs attention when it comes to discussing social makeup of the city and the voters. It is described over and over again that New York can be diverse, pluralistic, and multifaceted, and the diversity is presented as an asset instead of a weakness. Inclusive language that takes into account multiple identities, experiences, and methods does not have strict divisions and is not easily divided into opposites.

This blurring of vision helps Mamdani to build unity without obfuscation. Instead of characterized the electorate by exclusionary or restrictive politics, he stresses up as overlapping and similar aspirations. In a linguistic sense, this would be achieved by using inclusive pronouns, flexible descriptors, and sentences focused to emphasize commonality and yet permits differentiation. In this case, focus is used to blur the categorical boundaries, developing a sense of belonging to the social, ethnic and ideological boundaries.

One of the most convincing aspects of the speech is the interaction of sharpened focus and softened focus. As the ideological principles are expressed in a clear and firm manner, the social identities are approached in an open and flexible manner. The balance helps Mamdani to offer moral conviction but not dogmatism and inclusivity but not ideological dilution. The speech exhibits a high level of control over the focus, in Appraisal terms,

changing the categorical sharpness in accordance with communicative purposes.

The Interpersonal Role of Graduation

Combined, force and focus carry out vital interpersonal and rhetorical roles in the victory speech by Mamdani. Graduation strengthens emotional commitment, boosts collective agency, clarifies moral orientation, manages risk, and maintains audience trust. The speech dramatizes the stakes of the political change through an increased intensity of force and creates momentum. It brings about ideological clarity and flexibility to diversity through the calibrated focus.

Graduation is therefore a facilitator between appraisal and persuasion. It dictates the degree of feelings of attitudes, the extent to which they extend, and boundaries are well delimited. This subsystem allows the speaker in the speech of Mamdani to rally the will of the people without straining the core values, to drive a point without being compulsive and to instill hope in people without being promising anything unattainable.

In general, the subsystem of Graduation is a key to the strongest convincing power of the speech by Mamdani. Through the expertly ascending intensity, and fine-tuning the categorical limits, Mamdani creates a discourse seemingly emotive, morally-equipped and politically accommodating. Graduation improves the effectiveness of attitude, turning the judgments into action and values into common commitments. This way, it solidifies the image of Mamdani as a leader who can integrate moral clarity and democratic sensitivity, which is the balance that is required of a successful political leader in an urban environment with diversity.

Engagement

The subsystem of Engagement within the Appraisal Theory analyses the way speakers place their voices relative to other voices, perspectives and possible counter-positions in the discourse. It is interested in dialogism: the degree to which a text recognizes, inserts, predicts or precludes other points of view. So, engagement isn't just about what is being said; it's also about how ideas are put together in relation to a larger discursive area. Political engagement is particularly important in the political discourse because leaders have to bargain, deal with

opposition, and build legitimacy in pluralistic environments.

The main interpersonal resource, where authority is matched by inclusiveness is engagement in Zohran Mamdani victory speech. The speech has a dialogic richness, as it is able to balance the strength of saying that something is morally clear with admitting social diversity. Mamdani does not address himself as a single and unchallenged expert; he positions himself as a member of a collective voice, which he is a member of larger social movements, communities, and common civic values. The speech creates an authoritative and democratic political voice through a calculated movement of monoglossic and heteroglossic formulations, and controlled expansion and contraction of dialogic.

Monogloss and Heterogloss

Engagement is used at a fundamental level to identify monoglossic and heteroglossic utterances. The monoglossic statements include propositions in which they are considered to be unquestioned truths with limited space in which alternative perspectives can be accommodated. Heteroglossic statements, in their turn, clearly or unspokenly acknowledge that there are other voices, views, or positions and align themselves with them, claim them, or negotiate with them.

In the victory speech by Mamdani, there are statements about values of justice, democracy, dignity and equality which are core statements and presented monoglossically. These ideals are presented as moral truths that are self evident instead of being political views that are debatable. Through such monoglossic presentation of values, Mamdani creates a common set of ethical principles, marking all these principles as unquestionable and accepted in society. This monoglossic framing provides the effect that stabilizes the moral foundation of the speech and restricts the right to disagree with these values.

Nonetheless, the discourse, in general, is highly heteroglossic even though there are monoglossic claims. Mamdani always recognizes and includes the voices of others, thus making it less likely to create the impression of one-sided authority. Instead of seeking exclusive credit on the meaning of politics, he shares agency and voice among a variety of social actors, such as voters, workers, immigrants,

activists, and community organizers. This heteroglossic orientation falls in line with his larger ideological orientation as a grassroots movement leader and not an elite political figure.

Attributing the speech to a collective voice is one of the most salient heteroglossic strategies in the speech. There are phrases like New Yorkers have said, this city believes and together we know which presuppose that propositions belong not to the speaker but to the people. Such formulations in Appraisal terms make the source of evaluation external, and the claims are offered as socially based instead of the personally imposed ones. The strategy plays numerous inter-personal roles: it justifies the claims of the speaker, it forms consensus and it pre-emptly counter-arguments by framing the position as already collective.

Mamdani identifies himself as a channel instead of a source of political will by appealing to the voice of the city or the we. This decreases the hierarchical gap between the leader and audience and strengthens democratic authority. Meanwhile, it is through heteroglossia that Mamdani is able to play with the ideological plurality without overtly arguing or opposing. Other views do exist, but they are implicitly admitted, and they are engulfed into the greater discourse of mutuality and shared purpose.

Dialogic Expansion

Linguistic resources are called dialogic expansion; they open the dialogic space, where alternative viewpoints, interpretations, or alignments are possible. Expanded utterances welcome engagement, negotiation, and co-understanding as opposed to putting a full stop on meaning. Dialogic expansion is an eminent strategy used in the victory speech by Mamdani, which represents an inclusiveness and communal approach.

The outstanding use of inclusive pronouns especially we and our is one major asset of dialogic expansion. These pronouns are useful not just in grammar but in ideology and they create a collective subject position which involves both the speaker and the audience. Mamdani does not want to be seen as different or better than the electorate and by addressing people as we, he has managed to do it. Rather, it is viewed as a shared project and the vision of the future is seen as a shared construction.

The modal auxiliaries can, will, and must also play a role in dialogic expansion, especially when they are employed to convey the sense of possibility, will and commitment in a shared way and not by force. Statements that are expressed in terms of what is possible or what we are striving to accomplish evoke congruence in the audience as opposed to stating definite decisions. Such a modality creates room of interpretation within the minds of the listeners to place their own aspirations and priorities into the proposed political vision.

Dialogic further expansion is promoted through statements that are future oriented. Mamdani creates a vision of the future as open and participatory instead of predetermined by focusing on collective purposes, transformation through constant struggle, as well as shared accountability to those purposes. This receptiveness is particularly necessary in a multi-ethnic city, where listeners might not share in both experience and anticipations. The differences can be present in a common system of hope and devotion through dialogic expansion.

Notably, dialogic expansion is not an indicator of uncertainty and unbelief. Instead, it is a strategic decision to preempt cooperation and democracy. By creating a gap to fit in, Mamdani allows viewers to imagine themselves as the agents of political transformation as opposed to being passive receivers of policy-making. Expansion serves the purpose of maximizing the audience involvement and identification in Appraisal terms.

Dialogic Contraction

Unlike expansion, dialogic contraction entails the use of linguistic means that open up alternative perspectives reducing the dialogic space and establishing a specific position as final. Prominent application of dialogic contraction in the victory speech of Mamdani is selective and mostly applied in reference to matters of morality and ethics.

The sentences on justice, dignity, equality, and anti-discriminatory messages are usually worded in a way that cannot be refuted easily. These are the values which are made out as uncompromising principles instead of policy preferences which can be discussed. Mamdani demonstrates moral authority by making the dialogic space tighter around such issues and indicating a solid moral commitment. This tightening of the belt makes the political

agenda that much more serious and explains the normative limits of what is a permissible discourse.

Yet, such a contraction is usually based on a mutual set of ethics as opposed to partisanship/ideological attacks. Mamdani does not often narrow down the dialogic space by explicitly discrediting an opponent or labeling opposing standpoints. Rather, contraction works based on appeals to generally recognized moral principles, including fairness, human dignity and social justice. In this way, Mamdani can claim to be morally clear without losing the support of larger groups of voters.

Dialogic contraction also helps to keep meaning stable at important periods in the discourse. Sealing off the discussion about the central values Mamdani makes sure that these values act as bringing-posts of the general discourse. Such anchoring is the key element of a speech otherwise oriented toward plurality and openness. The discourse would probably run the danger of being ideologically diffuse or vague without moments of contraction. Expansion is therefore filled with contraction which gives organization and moral direction.

Participation as a Democratic Style of Strategy

Overall, the system of engagement in the victory speech by Mamdani is an elaborate negotiation of the democratic power. With the help of heteroglossia and dialogic expansion, Mamdani builds up inclusiveness, involvement, and collective ownership. He claims to be morally clear and ethically leadership though he adopts selective monoglossia and dialogic contraction. This interactive relationship enables the speech to reverberate among all the audiences without creating a lack of coherence in the ideological service center.

Another essential aspect in the process of dealing with possible opposition is engagement. Instead of addressing dissent directly, Mamdani tends to pre-empt it by presenting his stands as acts of collective will and collective values. The other perspectives are not suppressed, but they are indirectly pushed into the corner by being placed out of the morality fabricated in the speech.

Altogether, the subsystem of Engagement is the focal point of the effectiveness of the interpersonal interaction of the victory speech of Mamdani. Mamdani creates dialogically open, but ethically

based discourse by placing his voice within the discourse of other voices very carefully. The involvement will help him to provide a balance between authority and humility, conviction and inclusivity and leadership and democratic participation. Through this, the speech is the best example of how political speech can be used to rally people to the cause of collective alignment without negating plurality as this is the balance that is critical towards legitimacy in the modern day democratic settings.

Conclusion

Appraisal Theory allows one to view the victory speech by Mamdani as a well-thought-out interpersonal meaning-making. Attitude resources create a moral and emotional rapport between speaker and audience, which glorifies agency

togetherness, and denounces system injustice. Graduation heightens major gauging, makes the moment of election dramatic, makes the need of political change urgent, although still permits a strategic moderation. Involvement makes the speech situate in a field of dialogue which balances between openness and moral firmness, welcoming feedback as well as asserting values in common. Altogether, the speech illustrates the ways of how the political victory discourse applies appraisal resources not only to praise the success but also to restore social relations, prove the authority, and demonstrate a vision of the future shared by people. According to the appraisal-theoretic approach, the speech of Mamdani is regarded as the act of affective solidarity, ethical positioning, and ideological negotiation, where the force of evaluative language determines the formation of political meaning and democratic participation.

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