

Obama inauguration



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

On January 20, 2009, President Obama was officially elected and sworn in as the forty-fourth president of the United States of America. The tradition of being elected requires the president to give a speech about the goals they want to reach during their presidency. The president must make a speech that, appeals to the audience while being professional. Obama uses rhetoric to achieve presenting his message of creating hope and change together in America while fixing the economic and social challenges and issues left behind from the previous president.

Obama uses a repetition of words to introduce sentences, or uses them to begin clauses of sentences. In one of his paragraphs, Obama repeats the word “ to” to bring parallel structure. When he says “ The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift” he is making himself seem powerful and influential. He is explaining his desires for the country in a list that is easy to understand and is influential. A second rhetorical syntax strategy used by Obama is his use of phrases similar to “ not only, but also”.

Obama uses this strategy to show that there is more than one outcome to each of his propositions. One example is when he says “... not only to create new jobs, but to lay a new foundation for growth” (Barack Obama's Inaugural Address 2). Barack Obama is telling the audience that we need to take multiple steps in order to grow as a nation. When Obama says “ The success of our economy has always depended not just on the size of our gross domestic product, but on the reach of our prosperity”, he is again showing how more than one cause is and will be responsible for an outcome (Barack Obama's Inaugural Address 2).

When Obama tells the nation about these causes and effects, the audience is given direct orders to try and make the causes possible. Obama also uses the strategy of allusions. At the very end of Obama's speech, he alludes to a quotation from the father of our nation, George Washington. The quotation talks about how “ that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive... that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet [it]” (Barack Obama's Inaugural Address 4).

The quotation means that no matter how tough times are, the nation must hope and work together to face the future and embrace it to the best ability. Obama relates this to the rough times going on at the moment he gave the speech to win over the feelings of the audience. The audience is also able to relate to the story of how our nation was created to the current events going on at the moment they listened to the speech. Obama's use of syntax helps emphasize the importance of his goals and ambitions. Another rhetorical strategy used by Obama is the rhetorical triangle. The first part of the triangle Obama implements in his speech is ethos.

Ethos is the appearance of the speaker. Obama's appearance through rhetoric places him on the same level as the audience. Throughout the speech, Obama uses words and phrases such as “ the task before us”, “ our nation”, “ We the People”, “ for us”, and “ we will defeat you” (Barack Obama's Inaugural Address 1-4). All of the phrases and words involve not just Obama, but the entire nation coming as one. Adding the audience to the commands and promises, Obama is able to steer the audience into the direction that they are in charge of the nation and that they have the power and control to change the nation for the better.

A second part of the rhetorical triangle Obama incorporates in his speech is logos. Logos is using facts, surveys, polls, statistics, and any information possible to validate an argument. Obama mentions how costly health care, failing schools, job shedding, lost housing, and high energy use are all “ data and statistics” that are “ indicators of crisis” (Barack Obama's Inaugural Address 1). Using the data and statistics to show how our nation is falling also sparks an emotional reaction from the audience.

Proving that a country is failing is a huge and serious issue which everybody in the audience would be concerned about. This not only captures the audiences' attention, but gives them more of a reason to want to do something about it. Obama refers to historic events to invoke emotion in the readers. In reference to the rhetorical triangle, emotion is called pathos. At the end of Obama's speech, he mentions how “ a man whose father less than 60 years ago might not have been served at a local restaurant can now stand before you to take a most sacred oath” (Barack Obama's Inaugural Address 4).

This reference to the past relates to anybody in the audience who has lived in the time of slavery or has had relatives who were slaves. This reference sparks emotional attachment to the speech and makes the speech influential and easy to correlate to. Obama's use of the rhetorical triangle appeals to the audience, establishes the speaker, and defines the text. Obama uses diction to help portray his message. Obama uses modest words like “ humbled” and “ grateful” to show how honored he is to have been elected president (Barack Obama's Inaugural Address 1).

This modest diction also applies to Obama relating to the audience and their emotions. If a President is too proud, he or she may come off as too powerful. Modesty allows the people to see that Obama is a person just like them which makes him more identifiable and easier to be convinced by. Obama uses hopeful diction when he uses words such as “light”, “success”, “generate”, “expand”, “ideals”, “ambitions”, “action”, “prosperity”, “journey”, and “freedom” (Barack Obama's Inaugural Address 2).

All of these words relate to completing a goal and having the outcome be the best possible. These words give hope to the nation in that they can improve the poor condition of the country. Obama also uses sad and depressing words to represent the turmoil and bad situation that the country is in. Some of these words and phrases include “bad habits”, “toiled”, “fought”, “unpleasant”, “lost”, “shed”, “shuttered”, and “crisis” (Barack Obama's Inaugural Address 2). Obama uses these words to acknowledge that there is a crisis.

Obama uses the hopeful diction to overpower the despairing diction, which results in a speech that is more hopeful than not. The varying diction in Obama's speech sets a hopeful yet slightly despairing tone. In a quotation by Barack Obama on November 4, 2008, he says “That is the true genius of America-which America can change. Our union can be perfected. And what we have already achieved gives us hope for what we can and must achieve tomorrow”. Obama's inauguration speech mirrors the ideas expressed by that quote.

Barack Obama's message in his speech is that through hope and change, we can pull the country out of recession, out of turmoil, and out of any difficult

tasks we'll have ahead of us. What we have achieved shows that we can achieve it again, and the only reason these feats were achieved was because we were one nation working together. Obama successfully incorporate rhetoric into his speech to make it emotional, believable, and logical. His speech is a great representation of a well written rhetorical essay.