

Explore how tim
collins addresses his
troops essay



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Tim Collins utilises many effective language devices to motivate and inspire his troops in the speech. First of all, you can see he emphasises unity through his word choice: he says “ **We** are going into Iraq”. In the transcript the word “ **We**” is in bold which means that he put emphasis on it through his tone of voice which again reinforces unity further. This gives a sense of unity and empowers the troops through a sense of security which is gained by the feeling that they are all in this together.

He also extensively uses emotive language : He is sensitive towards his troops’ feelings and emotions as he says “ those of them who do not wish to go on that journey we will not send them” this shows that he cares for his troops. However, it could be argued that he is isolating those who are not going as he uses “ them” when he could have said “ us” saying “ those of them” makes it sound as if he is isolating them. He demands his troops are “ magnanimous in victory”. The use of the complex emotive word “ magnanimous” shows how he reminds them to act respectfully thus emphasising he also cares for the Iraqis.

Collins uses quite a complex word when he could have just used a simpler adjective such as “ noble”: It could be argued that the high complexity of the adjective “ magnanimous” mirrors the level of nobility and respect he expects from his troops. To add to the effect the word is emphasised through his tone of voice as shown by the fact that it is written in bold in the text. Another interesting device he uses is biblical allusion. This is particularly effective as his men are Northern Irish thus would be religious which means that they fully understand and identify with the use of Allusion.

He states that Iraq is “steeped in history”. The verb choice here, “steeped”, emphasises how much history Iraq possesses. He states that is the site of the “garden of Eden (3) of the great flood” It could be argued that he is implying that Iraq is where history began thus emphasising its importance and value. The long 3 second pause almost implies that this is such an important fact through giving them time to comprehend and digest what they just heard. He states it is the “birthplace of Abraham” which again adds value to Iraq.

Collin’s verb choice is of great importance in this motivational speech. He says: “you tread (4)” The verb here -“tread”- commands them to move “lightly” and shows that he expects them to be thoughtful. Along with this comes his use of anaphora as he repeats the first part of the sentence which emphasise the importance of the message he is conveying. The 4 second pause emphasises this and allows what he had just said to sink in the soldiers’ minds. Moving on, more emotive language is used alongside hyperbole and alliteration.

Collins calls the Iraqis “decent, generous and upright”. This use of tripling emphasises his previous statement that used Biblical Allusion as he adds more value to Iraq and its people in the hope that his troops act respectfully. Tim Collins uses hyperbole as he exclaims that Iraq has “nothing” which in turn amplifies how “generous” they are as it raises the question of who would give so much and be as kind as Collins described when they have “nothing” : Again he adds value to Iraq.

Regarding civilian casualties of war he demands that they are given “dignity in death”: The strong D sound in this phrase emphasises the amount of dignity and respect he expects them to give the Iraqis. He also uses some about how they didn’t “plan to die” and that they should be buried with and that they will just have to put them in “sleeping bags” which almost degrades the soldiers to a level below the Iraqis which shows how much he respects them and he expects his troops to do the same.

Collins also uses an anecdote to full effect here: He mentions how he knew “men” who have “taken life needlessly” and now they live with the mark of “Cain”; this combination of using an anecdote and biblical allusion helps drive his point home and emphasises the way he expects them to behave. Another point that is of great importance is his varied sentence structures and pauses. Generally, short sentences are used for effect and pauses are used after important to add effect and emphasis but more importantly to allow his soldiers to digest what they just heard.

The longer pauses also allow him to scan his audience and make eye contact with them which brings him down to their level thus a rapport of trust and respect is established so they are much more attentive to his speech. Tim Collins also uses Colloquialism : He says their “ma’s will be in the queue at the co-op” The “co-op” is a warm reminder of home something that they are all familiar with, this also gives them something to look forward to which acts as a source of motivation !

In conclusion Tim Collins delivers a thorough speech without any notes or aids thus adding the power and significance of the speech. He manipulates a

wide range of paralinguistic devices to his advantage and does so with ease (while some may argue that some of his pauses were simply fillers that allow him to think of his next point). He is able to motivate his troops and give them a goal to work towards while at the same time giving them boundaries to adhere by. Overall this is an incredibly well constructed inspirational speech.