

The Pragmatics of Political Accusations in Obama-Romney First Presidential Debate 2012

تداولية الاتهامات السياسية في المناظرة الرئاسية

الأولى بين أوباما وروماني في سنة ٢٠١٢

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Abstract

This study tackles political accusation in the context of Obama-Romney first presidential debate 2012. The participants in the political discourse exploit various pragmatic strategies in order to take over their opponents' arguments. Political accusation, here, is dealt with as a process rather than a product for the operationality of analyzing the data under study. It is political on the principal ground that it tackles political issues. Accordingly, this study sets itself the task of investigating how political accusation takes place in the aforementioned context. It aims, first, at identifying the pragmatic structure of political accusation, second, detecting the pragmatic strategies used by the presidential candidates in the data under scrutiny and, third, tracing whether a candidate's pragmatic strategies are different or not from the other candidate's pragmatic strategies as far as political accusation is concerned.

The hypotheses intended to be tested by this study are: first, the pragmatic structure of political accusation is composed of two stages: attack stage and defense stage, second, both stages are realized via various pragmatic strategies and, third, the use of pragmatic strategies are different from one candidate to another. For achieving the aims of the study and testing its hypotheses, an eclectic model is developed on the basis of various other models which are offered by other studies. This model is used to pragmatically analyze the data of the study. Besides, a statistic analysis by means of the percentage equation is conducted to

quantitatively support the findings of the pragmatic analysis. The analyses of the data under study reveal that the hypotheses adopted are verified.

Key words: political accusation, attack, defense, data, warrant, claim, speech act, presidential debate.

1. Introduction

Hinck and Hinck (2002: 235) declare that in political debate encounter, participants are assumed to be equal in power, “so that the deciding difference is measured in terms of one’s arguments, not wealth, title, or prestige”. As such, disagreement in politics is strongly associated with the term “debate”. Participants, in a debate, defend and attempt to defeat other debaters through argumentation (Kahlos, 2007: 62). Put differently, a debater tries to provide an effective way of resolving clash which is caused by disagreement with their opponents. To do so, presidential candidates agree, as a part of their defense strategy, to attack through providing information about their opponent’s weaknesses (policy or character) to reduce the latter’s perceived preferability; where the latter defends or refutes the attack to help restore their perceived preferability and acclaims through providing information about their strengths (desirable issue stands or qualities) and this works to enhance their perceived preferability (Benoit, 2007: 32).

It is worth mentioning that, when persuasive to the audience, attacks increase an opponent’s costs, defenses reduce alleged costs, and acclaims increase a candidate’s benefits. Accordingly, this contributes to global evaluations of candidates (ibid.: 63).

This linguistic phenomenon is worth investigating especially from a pragmatic point of view. Thus, the present study sets itself the task of tackling it within this context of Obama-Romney 2012 presidential debate. Precisely, it aims, first, at identifying the pragmatic structure of political accusation, second, detecting the pragmatic strategies used by the presidential candidates and, third, tracing whether a candidate’s pragmatic strategies are different or not from the other candidate’s pragmatic strategies as far as political accusation is concerned. As such, the following hypotheses are set forth: first, the pragmatic structure of political accusation in the data under study is composed of two stages viz., attack stage and defense stage, second, both stages are realized via various pragmatic strategies and, third, a candidate’s pragmatic strategies

are different from the other candidate's pragmatic strategies as far as political accusation is concerned.

In order to achieve the aims of the study and test its hypotheses, an eclectic analytical model is developed for the pragmatic analysis of the data under study. Besides, a statistic means represented by the percentage equation is used to calculate the findings of the analysis and quantitatively support the findings of the pragmatic analysis.

2. Accusation

Accusations are those speech acts that attack the person's face. Accusing someone of something brings forward an assertive illocutionary act where the speaker commits himself to the truth of the proposition. Generally, the acceptability of the proposition is expressed and is supposed to have solid grounds for putting it forward (Searle, 1969). The reason behind "accusations" is to serve a communicative purpose of bringing about illocutionary effects and a purpose of interactionally recognizing perlocutionary effects (Eemeren and Grootendorst, 1984).

According to Fritz (2005: 152), accusations belong to complex critical moves in conversations which include speech acts like reproaching, blaming, complaining, criticizing, objecting, and insulting.

To help them learn about issues and decide who they will vote for, as Trent and Friedenberg (2008: 4) argue, voters resort to a debate to gather information. A debate is defined by Załęska (2012: 267) as "a confrontation, in equal and adequate time, of matched contestants, on a stated proposition to gain an audience decision". In other words, it is a discourse with the goal to persuade the audience (Boydston et al, 2013: 254).

Closer attention to the illocutionary act of accusation is paid by Kauffeld (1986, 1998), who formulates the necessary and sufficient conditions for carrying out an accusation by specifying the felicity conditions that must be met for an accusation to be felicitous. This view can be taken as a starting point for explaining the communicative and interactional purposes of an accusation.

Thus, the speech act of accusation can be decided according to the following felicity conditions:

Propositional content condition: Predicates responsibility to some individual for the existence of a state of affairs

Preparatory condition: The state of affairs is bad

Sincerity condition: The speaker has knowledge of others' behaviours.

Essential condition: H accounts it as accusation (Ribeiro, 2012:164-5).

2.1. Functions of Accusation

One of the basic functions of accusations is associated with determining the structure of the whole controversy. Another major function of accusations is that they work as opening moves. They may be destructive or constructive. They are destructive since they are potentially face threatening acts (Fritz, 2005: 154). Their constructive side resides in the fact that they bank on assumptions interrelated with the validity and applicability of certain rules, which lead to critical explanations of such rules which, in turn, make debates more lively and attractive to the audience (ibid.,: 155). Besides, they add to the dynamics of controversies in the middle of the argumentation, e.g. when they bring about a shift of topic or a change of tone within a continuing controversy (in interviews settings-in the evaluation stage).

The participants of political discourse use various pragmatic strategies in order to influence their opponents' attitudes. In this context, they resort to the most influential strategies to achieve their goals. According to (Castor, 2015: 1), accusations are assertions which indicate that someone has done something wrong. In this regard, they take a variety of forms such as direct statements, questions, or nonverbal cues. Accusations, as such, build social reality and estimate actions as violations of the social and moral norms. They implicate that the accused has to be blamed or held as responsible for the wrongdoing (ibid.,: 2).

In ordinary conversations and institutional discourse where accusatory discourse occurs, in terms of the implications of accusations such features may summarize discursively constructing action, agency, and morality. Through these features, accusations demonstrate their social control aspect in that they are resorted to when something is comprehended as non-routine or unusual. In addition, through the enforcing of normative expectations, they are interconnected with power (ibid.).

When accusations are issued, they trigger a diversity of speech acts such as reproaching, blaming, confronting, challenging, or questioning. They could be direct or indirect, verbal or nonverbal. Hence, they may contain the verb "accuse" ("You are accused of stealing that car"), or they may assert ("You stole that car") or be posed as a question ("Did

you steal that car?”). In this sense, accusatory discourse may imply a wrong doing, as with the situation of posing questions, and they may be presented visually as with the case of political cartoons (ibid.).

In some other contexts, in a court, for instance, an accusation may take different guises. The formal accusation, here, is known as the indictment. As for policemen, they may use a “soft accusation interview” format. In an ordinary conversational sequencing, accusations are issued as the first parts of a two-part conversational adjacency pairs in which after, they may be denied, justify or excuse, counter accuse, accept the charge, or apologize by the accused party. As Sacks et al (1974) point out, the types of the first pair part may be: greeting, question, challenge, offer, request, complaint, invitation, announcement, criticism, accusation and blame.

3. Models to Political Accusation

Various models are introduced by this study to account for political accusation. These models have been developed by many scholars in a way that serves the purposes of their aims. They are utilized to develop the analytical model of the current work in accordance with its aims and hypotheses within the context of Obama-Romney first Presidential debate 2012.

3.1 Toulmin's Model of Argumentation (2003)

To start with, the relationship between 'argumentation' and 'argument' needs to be identified. Quasthoff (1978:8) affirms that the term argumentation refers to "the complete argumentative interaction and its parts". Argumentation, as such, is a broad topic (Benoit, 1992: 49). Van Eemeren et al., 1996:2 state that it is a verbal and social activity of reason which aims at increasing or decreasing the credibility of a controversial issue for the listener or reader, by putting forward a group of propositions planned to justify or refute an issue before a rational judge (cited in Mirza, 2010: 7).

For Johnson (2000:31), “ argument is a component of the practice of argumentation” while Walton (2006: 1-2) believes that the word ‘argumentation’ indicates the active process of relating arguments together for some purpose in a conversation. Walton (ibid.) adds that “the core of an argument is a reason, or a set of reasons, offered to support a claim, called the conclusion of the argument”.

As for the components of an argument, Toulmin (2003: 87) mentions that it consists of data, warrant and claim. Data is defined as

reasons, facts or supporting evidence that bolster the claim (conclusion) which refers to propositions speakers ask other people to accept and respond to. Data can also be opinions, or quotations. Data and claim are linked to each other by means of inferences as warrants. Toulmin (ibid.,: 90) argues that after a claim is being challenged, participants must be able to make the claim convincing and justifiable. Figure (1) below illustrates the relationship between argumentation and argument:



Figure (1) The Relationship Between Argumentation and Argument

In harmony with the aims of this study, the aspects that will be chosen from this model will include: data, warrant, and claim as a strategy to argue well in the sense that claims need to be explained and then supported with clear logic or quoted evidence.

3.2 Benoit's Functional Model (2007)

The functional theory of campaign discourse is one of the widely used theories in the research on political debates where accusation inevitably is present. The influential developer of the theory is Benoit (2007). His theory has been used especially in studies of American presidential campaigns. The analyses of the discourse of an entire campaign and most often television debates have been its main concern. The theory treats campaigns discourse as a means to a desired goal so that enough votes should be guaranteed to win the election.

Benoit's (ibid.) theory is founded on the principal axiom that candidates establish preferability through attacking, defending and acclaiming. First, candidates may attack their opponents by addressing an opponent's undesirable character or policy position. A successful attack increases the favorability of the attacker by weakening the acceptability of an opponent. Second, if one of the parties chooses to reply to attacks, a defense is launched forward. This means that defense represents the second potential function of discourse. Thus, defense is appealed to as an

effort to prevent any additional destruction to the perceived preferability of a candidate. Third, Candidates could acclaim their advantageous qualities or the strength of their agenda (Benoit, 2007: 37).

As indicated above, the functional theory is well-matched to studying American presidential campaigns. However, with reference to political accusation and in accordance with the aims of this study, the present research will adopt the two stages and their terminology only viz., the attack stage and the defense stage. It is worth noting that acclaim is regarded as one of the speech acts used to support the second stage.

3. The Analytical Model

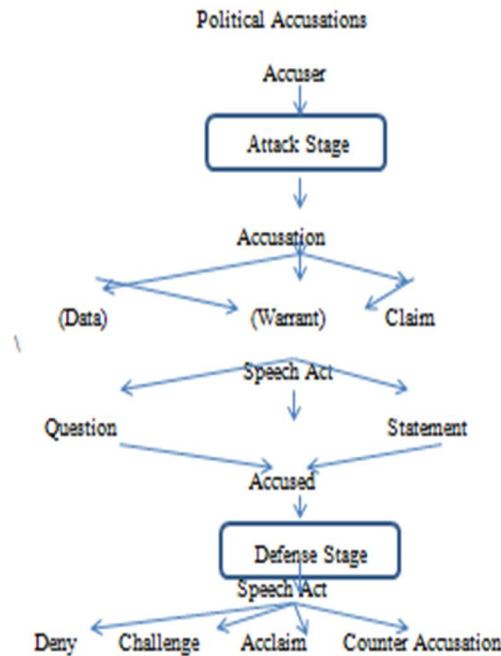
For the operability of the analysis of the data under analysis, the two models to political accusation explained above will be the basis of the analytical model developed by this study to analyze the data under scrutiny. This model is concerned with discovering the pragmatic structure of the process of political accusations and the strategies used for expressing them. It is also concerned with detecting whether a candidate's pragmatic strategies are different or not from the other candidate's pragmatic strategies.

Hence, political accusation involves two stages: the attack stage and the defense stage. These two stages are counted on certain pragmatic elements comprising the pragmatic structure of political accusation. The process can be drawn as follows:

The attack stage ignites political accusation where the accuser begins with data, warrant and claim and the last premise is achieved through issuing speech acts. According to Benoit and Benoit (2006: 62), participants attack others through the utilization of certain speech acts because they want to protect their own face regardless of the face of the other.

The defense stage encompasses the accused's actualization of speech acts of deny, challenge, acclaim, etc. According to Broda-Bahm et al (2004: 296), debaters can attack the data, warrants, and claim of others through denial. They may also challenge and advance acclaims to lessen the effect of the data, warrant, and claim. Furthermore, presidential candidates may resort to counter accusation to make the audience reconsider the accusation triggered at the attack stage. And as speech is issued to perform speech acts, these strategies of the defense stage are surely achieved through the actualization of speech acts.

The eclectic model as such can be portrayed by Figure (2) below:



Key: () = elements are optional.

Figure (2) The Eclectic Model of Political Accusation

4. Data and Analysis

4.1 Data

4.1.1 Data Collection and Description

The debate under study involves two American presidential candidates, namely Barrack Obama from the Democratic Party and his opponent Mitt Romney from the Republican Party moderated by Jim Lehrer of PBS. It is the first presidential debate, Oct. 3, 2012 in University of Denver in Denver.

The debate which lasts for 90 minutes is about domestic issues. There are six roughly 15-minute sections: the answer to the first question should be finished within two minutes, then the remaining sections proceed as an open discussion.

People propose questions via the internet and other means on the subjects discussed. Some of these questions, based on their relatedness to the topics, are chosen by the moderator, and they are not submitted for approval to the commission or the presidential nominees.

Four political issues are discussed and they are related to economy, health care, the role of government, and governing. Both nominees have two minutes to close speech. The audience in the debate room must keep quiet.

Twenty eight examples are analyzed. However, due to the fact that pragmatically analyzing all of them occupies a large space in this study, only two illustratively representative examples are presented while the statistic analysis involves all of them. The context of these two extracts is about political issues involving taxes, energy, business, economy, and employment.

4.2 Analysis

4.2.1 Methods of Analysis

The model developed in (Section 3 above) and schematized in Figure (1) will be the basic apparatus for pragmatically analyzing the data under scrutiny. Besides, the percentage equation is used to statistically calculate the findings in order to quantitatively support the findings of the pragmatic analysis. Two extracts are pragmatically analyzed by means of the eclectic model. The findings of the quantitative analysis will be presented in the form of a table (see Table 1 below) and shown in the form of a figure (see Figure 3 below).

4.2.2 Pragmatic Analysis

Extract (1)

Romney: This is obviously a very tender topic. I've had the occasion over the last couple of years of meeting people across the country. I was in Dayton, Ohio, and a woman grabbed my arm, and she said, I've been out of work since May. Can you help me?

Ann yesterday was a rally in Denver, and a woman came up to her with a baby in her arms and said, Ann, my husband has had four jobs in three years, part-time jobs. He's lost his most recent job, and we've now just lost our home. Can you help us?

And the answer is yes, we can help, but it's going to take a different path, not the one we've been on, not the one the president describes as a top-down, cut taxes for the rich. That's not what I'm going to do.

My plan has five basic parts. One, get us energy independent, North American energy independent. That creates about four million jobs. Number two, open up more trade, particularly in Latin America; crack down on China if and when they cheat. Number three, make sure our people have the skills they need to succeed and the best schools in the

world. We're far away from that now. Number four, get us to a balanced budget. Number five, champion small business.

It's small business that creates the jobs in America. And over the last four years small-business people have decided that America may not be the place to open a new business, because new business startups are down to a 30-year low. I know what it takes to get small business growing again, to hire people.

Now, I'm concerned that the path that we're on has just been unsuccessful. The president has a view very similar to the view he had when he ran four years ago, that a bigger government, spending more, taxing more, regulating more — if you will, trickle-down government would work. That's not the right answer for America. I'll restore the vitality that gets America working again.

OBAMA: Well, let me talk specifically about what I think we need to do. First, we've got to improve our education system. And we've made enormous progress drawing on ideas both from Democrats and Republicans that are already starting to show gains in some of the toughest-to-deal-with schools. We've got a program called Race to the Top that has prompted reforms in 46 states around the country, raising standards, improving how we train teachers. So now I want to hire another hundred thousand new math and science teachers and create 2 million more slots in our community colleges so that people can get trained for the jobs that are out there right now. And I want to make sure that we keep tuition low for our young people.

When it comes to our tax code, Governor Romney and I both agree that our corporate tax rate is too high. So I want to lower it, particularly for manufacturing, taking it down to 25 percent. But I also want to close those loopholes that are giving incentives for companies that are shipping jobs overseas. I want to provide tax breaks for companies that are investing here in the United States.

On energy, Governor Romney and I, we both agree that we've got to boost American energy production.

And oil and natural gas production are higher than they've been in years. But I also believe that we've got to look at the energy source of the future, like wind and solar and biofuels, and make those investments.

So, all of this is possible. Now, in order for us to do it, we do have to close our deficit, and one of the things I'm sure we'll be discussing tonight is, how do we deal with our tax code, and how do we make sure that we are reducing spending in a responsible way, but also how do we

have enough revenue to make those investments? And this is where there's a difference because Governor Romney's central economic plan calls for a \$5 trillion tax cut, on top of the extension of the Bush tax cuts, so that's another \$2 trillion, and \$2 trillion in additional military spending that the military hasn't asked for. That's \$8 trillion. How we pay for that, reduce the deficit and make the investments that we need to make without dumping those costs on the middle-class Americans I think is one of the central questions of this campaign (Website Source 1).

In this lengthy example, Romney triggers the attack stage with facts and evidences. To make the audience react and prepare them for the impending conclusion, he resorts to data and warrants. He begins with the premise of data "This is obviously a very tender topic" where (topic) refers to economy and creating new jobs as mentioned earlier by the moderator. Then, he provides warrant to explain how it is a tender topic which is represented by having met a woman who grabbed his arm and told him "I've been out of work since May. Can you help me?" and that another woman came up with a baby in her arms and said "my husband has had four jobs in three years, part time jobs. He's lost his most recent job and we've now just lost our home. Can you help us?". The warrant is that people are losing their jobs, homes and taxes are cut for the rich. Paving his way to his claim, Romney uncovers what is that at his chest: Obama is taking a wrong path. This claim is advanced through issuing the pragmatic strategy represented by the speech act of statement "...but it is going to take a different path, not the one we've been on, not the one the president describes as a top-down..." with the speech act of accusation. It is an accusation on the basic grounds that the felicity conditions are met (see Pages 4-5). The claim is that Obama is not doing his job. Romney has explained that the government, represented by Obama, is not doing its job on the principal ground (or data): people need help with reference to economy and creating new jobs.

This finding accords with that of the statistic analysis in this regard, that is, the speech act of statement, with the illocutionary act of accusation has the highest frequency (see Table 1 and Figure 3 below).

At the defense stage, Obama begins his speech with a pragmatic strategy, that is, a series of acclaims: "we've made enormous progress drawing on ideas both from Democrats and Republicans; we've got a program called Race to the Top that has prompted reforms in 46 states around the country, raising standards, improving how we train teachers; I want to hire another hundred thousand new math and science teachers

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and create 2 million more slots in our community colleges so that people can get trained for the jobs that are out there right now. And I want to make sure that we keep tuition low for our young people". These acclaims have been used by Obama to lessen the effect of accusation. Then, Obama develops his argument through the pragmatic strategy of issuing the speech act of challenge "Romney and I both agree...but I also want to close those loopholes...that are shipping jobs overseas...". After that, Obama goes a step further to add another point to support his challenge to Romney's claiming "we do have to close our deficit". As a kind of defense, president Obama issues another pragmatic strategy viz., a counter accusation "Romney's central economic plan calls for a 5\$ trillion tax cut ... another trillion dollars and 2\$ billion dollars ...that the military hasn't asked for" which can be read as how the government can pay for that, reduce the deficit and make investments. He gives justification for his plan and that one of the central questions of this campaign is to make sure that there is no costs dumping onto middle-class Americans. It is important here to state that the accusation sense to Romney is clearer through Obama's " ...that the military hasn't asked for...".

The finding of this extract agrees with that of the statistic analysis in that political accusation is composed of two stages: attack stage and defense stage (see Table 1 and Figure 3 below).

Extract (2)

Obama: Well, I think — let's talk about taxes because I think it's instructive. Now, four years ago when I stood on this stage I said that I would cut taxes for middle-class families. And that's exactly what I did. We cut taxes for middle-class families by about \$3,600. And the reason is because I believe we do best when the middle class is doing well. And by giving them those tax cuts, they had a little more money in their pocket and so maybe they can buy a new car. They are certainly in a better position to weather the extraordinary recession that we went through. They can buy a computer for their kid who's going off to college, which means they're spending more money, businesses have more customers, businesses make more profits and then hire more workers.

Now, Governor Romney's proposal that he has been promoting for 18 months calls for a \$5 trillion tax cut on top of \$2 trillion of additional spending for our military. And he is saying that he is going to pay for it by closing loopholes and deductions. The problem is that he's been asked

a — over a hundred times how you would close those deductions and loopholes and he hasn't been able to identify them.

But I'm going to make an important point here, Jim.

When you add up all the loopholes and deductions that upper income individuals can — are currently taking advantage of — if you take those all away — you don't come close to paying for \$5 trillion in tax cuts and \$2 trillion in additional military spending. And that's why independent studies looking at this said the only way to meet Governor Romney's pledge of not reducing the deficit — or — or — or not adding to the deficit, is by burdening middle-class families.

The average middle-class family with children would pay about \$2,000 more. Now, that's not my analysis; that's the analysis of economists who have looked at this. And — and that kind of top — top-down economics, where folks at the top are doing well so the average person making 3 million bucks is getting a \$250,000 tax break while middle-class families are burdened further, that's not what I believe is a recipe for economic growth.

Lehrer: All right. What is the difference?

Romney: Well —

Lehrer: Let's just stay on taxes for —

Romney: But I — but I — right, right.

Lehrer: OK. Yeah, just — let's just stay on taxes for a moment.

Romney: Yeah. Well, but — but —

Lehrer: What is the difference?

Romney: — virtually every — virtually everything he just said about my tax plan is inaccurate.

Lehrer: All right, go —

Romney: So — so if — if the tax plan he described were a tax plan I was asked to support, I'd say absolutely not. I'm not looking for a \$5 trillion tax cut. What I've said is I won't put in place a tax cut that adds to the deficit. That's part one. So there's no economist can say Mitt Romney's tax plan adds 5 trillion (dollars) if I say I will not add to the deficit with my tax plan.

Number two, I will not reduce the share paid by high-income individuals. I — I know that you and your running mate keep saying that, and I know it's a popular thing to say with a lot of people, but it's just not the case. Look, I got five boys. I'm used to people saying something that's not always true, but just keep on repeating it and ultimately hoping

I'll believe it — (scattered laughter) — but that — that is not the case, all right? I will not reduce the taxes paid by high-income Americans.

And number three, I will not, under any circumstances, raise taxes on middle-income families. I will lower taxes on middle-income families. Now, you cite a study. There are six other studies that looked at the study you describe and say it's completely wrong. I saw a study that came out today that said you're going to raise taxes by 3,000 dollars to \$4,000 on — on middle-income families. There are all these studies out there.

But let's get to the bottom line. That is, I want to bring down rates. I want to bring down the rates down, at the same time lower deductions and exemptions and credits and so forth so we keep getting the revenue we need.

And you think, well, then why lower the rates? And the reason is because small business pays that individual rate. Fifty-four percent of America's workers work in businesses that are taxed not at the corporate tax rate but at the individual tax rate. And if we lower that rate, they will be able to hire more people.

For me, this is about jobs (Website Source 1).

This is another lengthy example. Obama starts the attack stage by presenting the following data "...let's talk about taxes because I think it's instructive...I said that I would cut taxes for middle-class families. And that's exactly what I did. We cut taxes for middle-class families by about \$3,600". He tries to support his stance by saying that he will reduce the tax imposed on the middle class. This is supported by presenting the following warrant in which he says that he wants to improve the living conditions of the middle class "And the reason is because I believe we do best when the middle class is doing well. And by giving them those tax cuts, they had a little more money in their pocket and so maybe they can buy a new car. They are certainly in a better position to weather the extraordinary recession that we went through. They can buy a computer for their kid who's going off to college, which means they're spending more money, businesses have more customers, businesses make more profits and then hire more workers". Finally, the ground is furnished with the following claim whereby he accuses Romney since the latter is unable to justify how he would implement the tax deduction though he asks over a hundred times for 18 months promoting his proposal for the tax cut "Governor Romney's proposal that he has been promoting for 18 months calls for a \$5 trillion tax cut on top of \$2 trillion of additional spending for our military. And he is saying that he is going to pay for it by closing loopholes and deductions. The problem is that he's been asked

a — over a hundred times how you would close those deductions and loopholes and he hasn't been able to identify them". The accusation is achieved through a rhetorical question "he's been asked a — over a hundred times how you would close those deductions and loopholes". It is an accusation on the basic grounds that the felicity conditions are being satisfied here (see Pages 4-5).

In the defense stage, Romney, first, resorts to the speech act of deny "...virtually everything he just said about my tax plan is inaccurate". He adds that he is "not looking for \$5 trillion tax cut" and challenges Obama's claim through a pragmatic strategy by releasing a series of statements to defend his stand "I won't put in place a tax cut that adds to the deficit... I will not reduce the share paid by high-income individuals... I will not reduce the taxes paid by high-income Americans...I will not, under any circumstances, raise taxes on middle-income families...I will lower taxes on middle-income families...Now, you cite a study. There are six other studies that looked at the study you describe and say it's completely wrong. I saw a study that came out today that said you're going to raise taxes by 3,000 dollars to \$4,000 on — on middle-income families. There are all these studies out there". This argument is further developed via providing the future acclaims where he alludes to his future attempt to bring down the rates "I want to bring down rates. I want to bring down the rates down, at the same time lower deductions and exemptions and credits and so forth so we keep getting the revenue we need". Moreover, Romney resorts to a counter accusation "I — I know that you and your running mate keep saying that, and I know it's a popular things to say with a lot of people, but it's just not the case. Look, I got five boys. I'm used to people saying something that's not always true, but just keep on repeating it and ultimately hoping I'll believe it — but that — that is not the case, all right?" with the intention to lessen the accusation force triggered by Obama and overturn its effect. The accusation is traced on the grounds that Obama is not always saying true things. Besides, he refutes Obama accusing him that he will not reduce the taxes paid by high-income Americans as Obama described. Another accusation is triggered by Romney with a counter effect is that "There are six other studies that looked at the study you describe and say it's completely wrong. I saw a study that came out today that said you're going to raise taxes by 3,000 dollars to \$4,000 on — on middle-income families. There are all these studies out there". The accusation means that Obama doesn't want to bring down rates and lower deductions, exemptions and credits and so forth which Romney will try to do and

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thus people with small businesses will be able to hire more people and as such American people can get jobs.

The finding of this stage (defense stage) is in line with that of the statistic analysis which shows that the speech act of challenge has the highest frequency (see Table 1 and Figure 3 below).

The analysis of all the examples is presented in Table (1) in percentages and demonstrated in Figure (3) in percentages below.

3. Statistic Analysis

The aim of this section is to statistically analyze the data under scrutiny and thus, as mentioned before, quantitatively support the findings of the pragmatic analysis. The results which are achieved by means of this analysis are introduced in Table (1) below and schematized in Figure (3) below:

Table (1) Rates of Pragmatic Strategies of Political Accusation

Debaters	Attack Stage Accuser Accusation								Defense Stage Accused							
	(data)		(warrant)		claim				deny		challenge		c o u n t e r a c c u s a t i o n		acclaim	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	statement	question	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Obama	9	32 %	9	32 %	8	28 %	3	10 %	0	0 %	13	46.4 %	4	14 - 2 %	14	50 %
Romney	16	57 %	15	53 %	16	57 %	1	3.5 %	4	14.2 %	3	10.7 %	4	14 - 2 %	10	35.7 %
Both	25	89.2 %	24	85.7 %	24	85.7 %	4	14.2 %	4	14.2 %	16	57.14 %	8	28 - 5.7 %	24	85.7 %
Total	28	100 %	28	100 %	28		100 %		28		100 %		28	100 %		

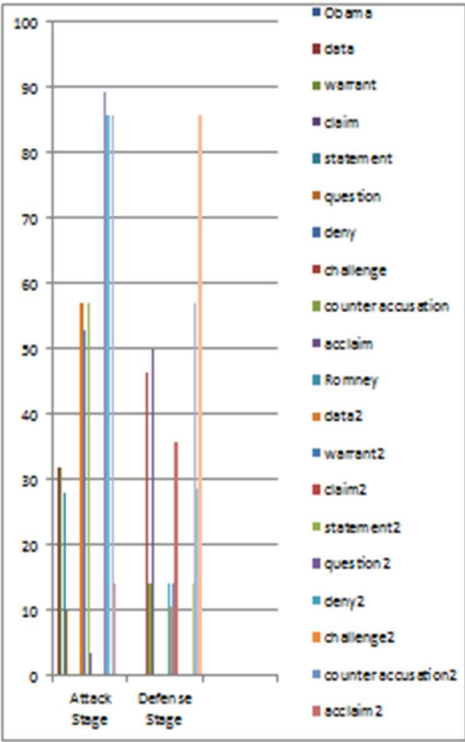


Figure (3) Rates of Pragmatic strategies of Political Accusation

The table and the figure above illustrate the two stages of political accusation and as such the different rates of percentages of each of the pragmatic strategies used by the debaters in the data under study are shown.

In the attack stage, the statistic analysis introduced in Table (1) and shown in Figure (3) above demonstrates that Romney uses more data (57%) and warrant (53%) than Obama's (32%) for data and warrant each. As for claim, the speech act of statement scores the highest percentage (85.7%) by both Romney (57%) and Obama (28%). Obama's claims are usually in the form of issuing the speech act of question which amounts to (10%) with the illocutionary force of accusation over Romney's (3.5%). Accordingly, the second hypothesis of this study is verified and this accords with the second aim as well.

In the defense stage, the analysis shows that challenge has the highest percentage which amounts to (57.14%) while counter accusation scores (28.57%). It is worth mentioning that Obama resorts to the speech act of

challenge more often than Romney and this is evident in the high frequencies which amount to (46.4%) and (10.7%) respectively. This verifies the third hypothesis and complies with third aim of this study. Moreover, both candidates resort to counter accusation as the percentage (28.57%) shows (divided into 14.2% each). Finally, acclaim has been used by both parties with a percentage that amounts to (85.7%). Thus, the second hypothesis of this study is verified and this agrees with the second aim set in this regard. Obama makes use of acclaim more often than Romney does: Obama's frequency scores (50%) over Romney's (35.7%). However, Obama never makes use of the speech act of deny whereas Romney does such a thing with the percentage of (14.2%). This verifies the third hypothesis and goes in line with the third aim as well.

Given the type of statistic analysis at the two stages, one can say that political accusation can be conveyed via the stages of attack and defense. Accordingly, this verifies the first hypothesis and accords with the first aim as well.

5. Conclusions

On the basis of the findings revealed by the two types of analysis, the following conclusions can be introduced:

1. Political accusation extends over two stages: the attack stage which is initiated by the accuser and the defense stage which is performed by the accused.
2. The attack stage is composed of data, warrant, and claim. Claim is realized via the issuance of certain kinds of pragmatic strategies realized by speech acts like statement and question.
3. The rate of using the premises data and warrant has the highest frequencies that amount to (89.2%) and (85.7%) for each of the presidential candidates in question and this indicates that both, Obama and Romney, base their claims on solid grounds since they both present facts and concrete evidences. It is worth mentioning here that Romney makes use of data premise which amounts to (57%) and warrant premise which amounts to (53%) more often than Obama who scores (32%) for both the data and the warrant.
4. The pragmatic strategy or the premise of the claim is converted by the speech act of statement which has the highest frequency that amounts to (85.7%) by both debaters in order to issue the speech act of accusation and this indicates that both Obama and Romney resort to indirect speech acts in this regard. While Romney makes use of statement more often

- (57%) than Obama (28%), the latter resorts to rhetorical questions (10%), to issue the speech act of accusation, more often than the former (3.5%) to highlight the strong assertion of his claims.
5. The defense stage is mostly composed of two or more speech acts. In most, if not all, cases the speech act of acclaim is used as an escort to other speech acts. This gives the idea that it is a supportive speech act reinforcing the other speech acts. One of these speech acts is challenge which has the highest frequency that amounts to (57.14%). Accusation comes second in the frequency of use which amounts to (28.57%). This reveals that both debaters make use of challenge and resort to counter accusations in order to lessen and reverse the effect of accusation which is triggered in the attack stage. Obama's challenges are more frequent (46.4%) than those of Romney (10.7%). Therefore, Obama's claims are stronger than Romney's. Another finding revealed by the two types of analysis reveals that Obama never uses the speech act of deny whereas Romney does this as the percentage (14.2%) of his recourse to this type of speech act shows. One more finding is that each candidate resorts to the speech act of accusation to reverse the illocutionary force of such a speech act used in the attack stage into a counter accusation and this is manifest by the percentage of the frequency of using this speech act which amounts to (14.2%).
 6. The speech act of acclaim has been widely used by both debaters as the percentage (85.7%) demonstrates. Obama's frequency of using this speech act amounts to (50%) whereas Romney's frequency of using it amounts to (35.7%). This means that Obama prefers using the speech act of acclaim more often than Romney in an attempt to provide information of how his administration has done favourable things for the state.
 7. The eclectically developed model has been found to be adequately workable for pragmatically analyzing political accusation in the presidential debate under analysis.

ملخص البحث

يدرس هذا البحث الاتهام السياسي في سياق المناظرة الرئاسية الاولى بين اوباما وروماني في سنة ٢٠١٢. يستعمل المشاركون في الخطاب السياسي استراتيجيات تداولية متنوعة لدحض حجج خصومهم. يُعامل الاتهام السياسي في هذا البحث على انه عملية اكثر من كونه نتاج ليتلاءم مع اجراء تحليل مادة البحث. يُعد الاتهام سياسي كونه يتناول

قضايا سياسية. وبموجبه، كرست هذه الدراسة نفسها لتقصي كيفية حدوث الاتهام السياسي في السياق الذي سبق ذكره. يهدف البحث اولا الى تحديد كيفية حدوث الاتهام السياسي و ثانيا تقصي الاستراتيجيات التداولية في مادة البحث والتي يستعملها المرشحان الرئاسيان في اعلاه وثالثا تتبع فيما اذا كانت الاستراتيجيات التداولية التي يستعملها احد المرشحين تختلف عن تلك التي يستخدمها الاخر.

وتشمل الفرضيات التي يجهز مصداقيتها البحث: اولا ان البناء التداولي للاتهام السياسي يتكون من مرحلتين: مرحلة الهجوم ومرحلة الدفاع وثانيا تتحقق كلا المرحلتين باستعمال استراتيجيات تداولية وثالثا تختلف هذه الاستراتيجيات التداولية من مرشح الى اخر. لتحقيق اهداف البحث واثبات فرضياته، طور البحث نموذج تحليل تداولي مبني على نماذج عدة لدراسات اخر. استعمل هذا النموذج لتحليل مادة البحث تداوليا. بالإضافة الى ذلك سلك البحث تحليلا احصائيا باستعمال النسبة المئوية لدعم نتائج التحليل التداولي كميًا. واثبت التحليل التداولي والاحصائي صدق جميع فرضيات البحث.

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¹ Premises and pragmatic strategies are used interchangeably at this stage.