

‘We can do something different this time’

A study of rhetoric, personal reference, and modality in the vocabulary of David Cameron, Gordon Brown and Nick Clegg at the 2010 leader debates.

Carina Bjerk Tørud



A Thesis Presented to the Department of Literature, Area Studies and
European Languages

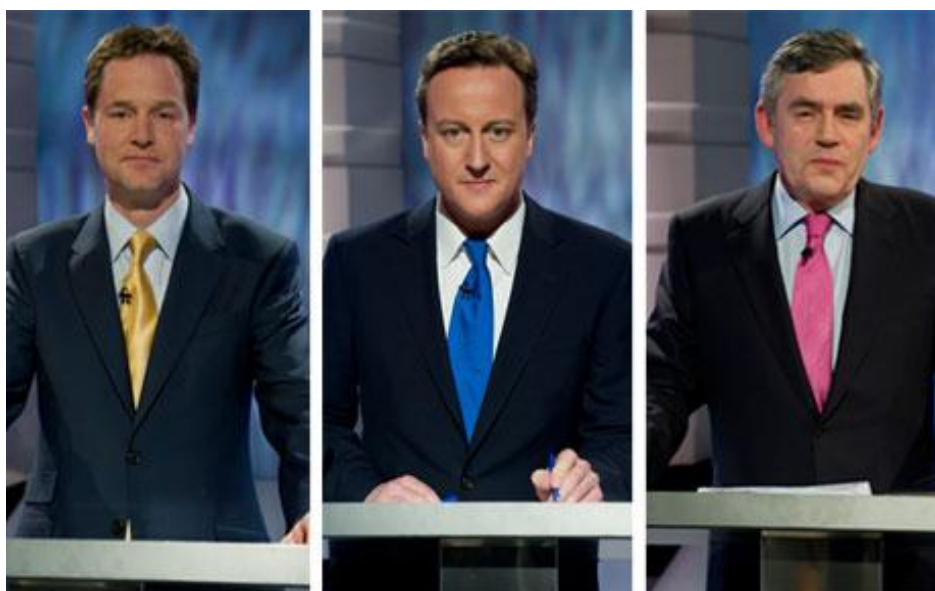
The University of Oslo

Spring Term 2015

‘We can do something different this time’

A study of rhetoric, personal reference, and modality in the vocabulary of David Cameron, Gordon Brown and Nick Clegg at the 2010 leader debates.

Carina B. Tørud



© Carina B. Tørud

2015

‘We can do something different this time’. A study of rhetoric, personal reference, and modality in the vocabulary of David Cameron, Gordon Brown and Nick Clegg at the 2010 leader debates.

Carina Bjerck Tørud

<http://www.duo.uio.no>

Trykk: Reprosentralen, Universitetet i Oslo

IV

Abstract

Britain's parliamentary system of government has traditionally been characterised by a two-party system, in which the two dominating parties, Labour and Conservatives, have alternated the roles of government and opposition. However, the same year as electoral leader debates were introduced in Britain, the election results indicated a shift away from this traditional system: no single party emerged as a winner and a coalition government was formed between the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrats. This thesis aims to investigate differences and similarities in the vocabulary of the three party leaders invited to participate in the 2010 leader debates, namely David Cameron (Conservative), Gordon Brown (Labour) and Nick Clegg (Liberal Democrat). Furthermore, it considers whether their individual performances at the election debates could have influenced the election outcome. The investigation is based on debate transcripts, which forms the basis for three corpora containing the individual statements of the three politicians. The study consists of three main parts investigating the use of rhetorical devices, personal pronouns and modality respectively. A comparison of the findings revealed that there were both similarities and differences in how Cameron, Brown and Clegg used language to communicate their political arguments, which is likely to have contributed to the audiences overall impression of the three candidates.

Acknowledgements

Looking back at my (at times insuperable) journey of writing this thesis, it is clear that the support of friends and family has been invaluable to its completion.

A special thanks to my supervisor Hilde Hasselgård for help and guidance, and for being an inspiration - not only during this project but through years of energetic lectures evoking my fascination for English linguistics.

I am grateful for my roommate Hilde H. Bangen and the students on the 8th floor, without whom the writing of this thesis could have been a lonesome journey. Thank you for the shared frustration, the conversations and all the laughter.

When accidents happen, I am lucky to have an aunt and uncle to save the day. Thank you Marit Kjendlie and Pål H. Flugre for enabling me to finish this thesis by lending me a Macbook in the eleventh hour.

A big hug and thank you to Tim Mills, for kindly doing the tiresome though invaluable job of proofreading this thesis.

Mari Anette Dittmann Solheim, what I would do without you I do not know! Thank you for being my friend and confidant, and for always lending me your ears.

I also owe much to Øyvind W. Karlsen, for always making sure I give priority to my work, for his genuine efforts to understand my linguistic problems, and for making me smile every single day.

Lastly, to my family - my mum, dad and sister - thank you for all your love, support and encouragement through many years of study.

Table of Contents

Abstract	VII
Acknowledgements	IX
Table of Contents	XI
List of Tables	XV
List of Figures	XVI
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Aim and scope	1
1.2 The leader debates of 2010 – how they came to be	2
1.2.1 Three party leaders - three motivations.....	3
1.2.2 The debates created new opportunities	4
1.2.3 Media coverage of the debates.....	5
1.3 Thesis outline	5
Chapter 2: Theoretical background	7
2.1 A brief note on ideology	7
2.2 Rhetoric and Persuasion	8
2.2.1 Tools of rhetoric (ethos, pathos, logos).....	9
2.2.2 <i>Ethos</i> : character and stance	9
2.2.3 <i>Pathos</i> : emotional engagement	10
2.2.4 <i>Logos</i> : modelling and judging argument.....	11
2.3 Rhetorical devices	12
2.3.1 Figurative language	12
2.3.2 Contrastive pairs.....	14
2.3.3 Three-part list	14
2.3.4 The use of questions	15
2.4 Personal pronouns	15
2.4.1 First person pronouns	16
2.4.2 Second person pronouns	16
2.4.3 Third person pronouns	17
2.4.4 Personal pronouns as an expression of ethos	17
2.5 Modality	18
2.5.1 <i>Modality</i> from the perspective of descriptive grammar	18
2.5.2 <i>Modality</i> from the perspective of Systemic Functional Grammar	19
2.5.3 Modal auxiliaries.....	21
2.5.4 Why study the use of modality in campaign discourse?	22
2.6 Review of previous research	22
2.6.1 The Functional Theory of Political Campaign Discourse.....	23
2.6.2 Elements of feminine rhetorical style	24
2.6.3 A study of pronoun choice	24
2.7 Summary of linguistic features	25
Chapter 3: Material and methods	26
3.1 Material	26
3.2 Method	28
3.2.1 Corpus Linguistics	28
3.2.2 Does the research material meet the criteria for being a corpus?	29
3.2.3 Data retrieval and processing.....	29

3.2.4	Quantitative vs. qualitative analysis.....	30
Chapter 4:	Rhetorical devices.....	31
4.1	Metaphors and the creation of imagery	31
4.1.1	Conceptual metaphors.....	32
4.1.2	Metonymy	35
4.1.3	Idioms.....	35
4.1.4	Other occurrences of figurative language	37
4.2	Contrastive pairs (antithesis).....	39
4.3	Three-part list	41
4.3.1	Simple repetition	42
4.3.2	Modification of repetition	43
4.3.3	Three individual arguments.....	44
4.3.4	Listing (clauses and sentences)	45
4.3.5	Listing (phrases and words)	45
4.3.6	Notes on three-part lists	46
4.4	Rhetorical questions	47
4.4.1	Rhetorical questions	48
4.4.2	Questions and answers	49
4.4.3	Questions posed by the politician on behalf of the audience	49
4.5	Elements of feminine rhetoric style.....	50
4.5.1	Reference to personal experience.....	52
4.5.2	Use of anecdotes or examples	53
4.5.3	Notes on the politicians' use of anecdotes	55
4.6	Summary of the politicians' use of rhetorical devices.....	56
Chapter 5:	Personal pronouns.....	58
5.1	First person pronouns	59
5.1.1	Uses of the first person singular: <i>I</i>	61
5.1.2	Summary of findings: <i>I</i>	68
5.1.3	Uses of the first person plural: <i>we</i>	69
5.1.4	Comparison and summary of findings: <i>we</i>	79
5.2	Second person pronouns	80
5.3	Third person pronouns	83
5.4	Personal pronouns as a rhetorical device.....	87
Chapter 6:	Modality	90
6.1	Terminology	90
6.2	The modal auxiliaries used by David Cameron.....	92
6.2.1	<i>May</i> and <i>Might</i>	93
6.2.2	<i>Can</i> and <i>Could</i>	93
6.2.3	<i>Must</i>	97
6.2.4	<i>Shall</i> and <i>Should</i>	98
6.2.5	<i>Will</i> and <i>Would</i>	99
6.2.6	Summary of modal meanings in the Cameron corpus	102
6.3	The modal auxiliaries used by Gordon Brown	103
6.3.1	<i>May</i> and <i>Might</i>	104
6.3.2	<i>Can</i> and <i>Could</i>	105
6.3.3	<i>Must</i>	108
6.3.4	<i>Shall</i> and <i>Should</i>	109
6.3.5	<i>Will</i> and <i>Would</i>	111
6.3.6	Summary of modal meanings in the Brown corpus	114
6.4	The modal auxiliaries used by Nick Clegg	115
6.4.1	<i>May</i> and <i>Might</i>	115
6.4.2	<i>Can</i> and <i>Could</i>	116
6.4.3	<i>Must</i>	119

6.4.4	<i>Shall</i> and <i>Should</i>	119
6.4.5	<i>Will</i> and <i>Would</i>	121
6.4.6	Summary of modal meanings in the Clegg corpus	124
6.5	Modal auxiliary use in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora compared	124
Chapter 7:	Conclusion.....	128
Bibliography	133
Appendix 1:	The questions.....	136

List of Tables

Table 1: Personal, possessive and reflexive pronouns.	16
Table 2: Potential expressions of modality by the central modals.	22
Table 3: Composition and size of the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora.	27
Table 4: Overview of the three-part lists in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora.	42
Table 5: Types of rhetorical or non-rhetorical questions in the three corpora.	48
Table 6: Units containing elements of feminine rhetoric style.	51
Table 7: Personal pronouns (including possessive and reflexive) in proportion to total pronouns used.	58
Table 8: Distribution of first person personal pronouns.	59
Table 9: The weighted distribution of the different uses of <i>I</i>	62
Table 10: The four most frequent expressions of opinion (percentage out of all instances expressing opinion).	63
Table 11: The distribution of expressions denoting past, present and future actions.	65
Table 12: Inclusive vs exclusive uses of <i>we</i>	69
Table 13: David Cameron's referents of <i>we</i>	70
Table 14: Gordon Brown's referents of <i>we</i>	74
Table 15: Nick Clegg's referents of <i>we</i>	77
Table 16: Distribution of second person pronouns.	80
Table 17: Singular referents of <i>you</i> (percentage of the total number of personal <i>you</i>).	81
Table 18: Plural referents of <i>you</i> (percentage of the total number of personal <i>you</i>).	82
Table 19: Distribution of third person personal pronouns.	83
Table 20: Referential and non-referential uses of <i>it</i>	85
Table 21: The distribution of modal auxiliaries in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora (raw frequencies).	92
Table 22: Categorisation of <i>can</i> in the Cameron corpus.	93
Table 23: Categorisation of <i>could</i> in the Cameron corpus.	95
Table 24: Categorisation of <i>must</i> in the Cameron corpus.	97
Table 25: Categorisation of <i>should</i> in the Cameron corpus.	98
Table 26: Categorisation of <i>will</i> in the Cameron corpus.	100
Table 27: Categorisation of <i>would</i> in the Cameron corpus.	101
Table 28: Distribution of extrinsic and intrinsic modal meanings in the Cameron corpus.	103
Table 29: Categorisation of <i>can</i> in the Brown corpus.	105
Table 30: Categorisation of <i>could</i> in the Brown corpus.	107
Table 31: Categorisation of <i>should</i> in the Brown corpus.	109
Table 32: Categorisation of <i>will</i> in the Brown corpus.	111
Table 33: Categorisation of <i>would</i> in the Brown corpus.	112
Table 34: Distribution of extrinsic and intrinsic modal meanings in the Brown corpus.	114
Table 35: Categorisation of <i>can</i> in the Clegg corpus.	116
Table 36: Categorisation of <i>could</i> in the Clegg corpus.	118
Table 37: Categorisation of <i>should</i> in the Clegg corpus.	120
Table 38: Categorisation of <i>will</i> in the Clegg corpus.	121
Table 39: Categorisation of <i>would</i> in the Clegg corpus.	123
Table 40: Distribution of extrinsic and intrinsic modal meanings in the Clegg corpus.	124

List of Figures

Figure 1: Simultaneous systems of modality	20
Figure 2: Screenshot of the PDF debate transcript (BBC 2010b).....	26
Figure 3: Distribution of anecdotes across the three debates.....	55
Figure 4: Singular vs. plural first person personal pronouns.	60
Figure 5: Meaning of the modals (Quirk et al. 1985: 221).	91
Figure 6: Extrinsic vs Intrinsic modality, distribution in percentage.....	126
Figure 7: The various meaning categories, distribution in raw frequencies.	127

Chapter 1: *Introduction*

The year 2010 goes down in history as one of many firsts in British politics: for the first time since the hung parliament of 1974, no single party emerged as a winner; for the first time since the Churchill war ministry of the second world war, a coalition government was formed in place of a minority government; and for the first time in British history, televised pre-election leader debates were held in the United Kingdom.

Political leader debates are not a recent phenomenon. For example, it has been an integral part of the presidential campaigns in the United States for many years. And although much research has been devoted to the study of such debates, Benoit and Benoit-Bryan (2013) notes that ‘little research has studied political leader’s debates in countries with parliamentary systems of government’ (p. 466). The 2010 debates aroused considerable interest among the British people, and it was reported that those who watched the debates not only learned about the politics of the parties but also got to know the character of the party leaders. The aim of this thesis is to study the performances of David Cameron (Conservative), Gordon Brown (Labour) and Nick Clegg (Liberal Democrat) during the televised leader debates to see if it is possible to identify a connection between the individual communication techniques of the three politicians and the unusual election outcome. After all, during this election, the audience perception of the party leaders’ character is likely to have influenced their vote.

1.1 Aim and scope

Politics is about acquiring, maintaining and sustaining power. In order to acquire, maintain and sustain power, a politician must persuade the majority of voters that their politics is the right politics. Thus, the ability to communicate ideological values while also making it sound attractive to potential voters is key to any political success. The communication of politics and ideological values is often done through carefully prepared speeches or party manifestoes, which enable the politician to be well prepared while employing pre-written phrases to communicate his beliefs.¹ However, communicating these beliefs live on television without knowing the questions to be answered in advance is a whole other story. Although debates provide politicians with an opportunity to communicate their politics and distinguish themselves from their opponents, they also provide viewers with a ready means of comparing

¹ The masculine pronouns ‘he/his’ will be used as the general term denoting both sexes throughout.

candidates. This opportunity for direct comparison ‘is most often absent from other campaign information sources such as news coverage, campaign ads and convention discourse’ (Johnson 2005: 3), and thus the televised debates created a unique opportunity for the public to directly compare three different political viewpoints, and party leaders.

It should be noted that the present study does not seek to give a full account of the communication techniques of David Cameron, Gordon Brown and Nick Clegg (henceforth primarily referred to as Cameron, Brown and Clegg). However, it aspires to expose some of the techniques that were utilised during the course of the three leader debates of 2010, and wishes to provide answers to the following research questions:

RQ1: What kind of similarities and differences can be found in the rhetorical style of three political party leaders participating in the same debates?

RQ2: Is it possible to see a link between the communication techniques used by the three politicians in the debates and the outcome of the election?

The study will focus on rhetoric. In addition to examining rhetorical devices such as three-part lists, the use of questions and figurative language, the study will investigate how personal pronouns and modality are used to create persuasive effect. According to Fairclough (1989), the aim of political discourse is ‘to either maintain or create commonality of ideology or allegiance among (the sections of a population represented) an audience’ (p. 170). An examination of Cameron, Brown and Clegg’s use of rhetorical devices can illuminate their strategy for creating a common ideological ground between their party and the voters. Perhaps their success or failure, measured in terms of election outcome, is reflected in their ability to persuade the audience to accept their ideological beliefs and, in extension, their politics.

1.2 The leader debates of 2010 – how they came to be

‘Every party politician that expects to lose tries that trick of debates and every politician who expects to win says no’ - John Major (cited in Cockerell 2010)

Ever since the first US presidential debate between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon in 1960, there have been numerous discussions about whether or not one should hold similar debates in Britain. However, when the Labour leader Harold Wilson first challenged the Tory

prime minister Sir Alec Douglas Home to a leader debate in 1964, Sir Alec dismissed Wilson's proposal stating 'I'm not particularly attracted by confrontations of personality. If we aren't careful you know you'll get a sort of Top of the Pops contest. You'll then get the best actor as leader of the country and the actor will be prompted by a scriptwriter' (Cockerell 2010). In years to follow, arguments against the implementation of televised election debates – including disagreements between TV broadcasters, disagreements between political leaders, and insufficient negotiation time (Bailey 2011, Boulton and Roberts 2011) – have prevented the debates from happening. What was different in 2010?

A key factor was that the broadcasters managed to set aside their differences and decided to cooperate on the negotiation of a workable debate format. Sky News initiated a meeting with BBC and ITV, which resulted in the planning of three debates that were to be aired live and in peak time. Furthermore, none of the party leaders were confident of victory. Considering that Cameron, Brown and Clegg fought their first election as leaders, each believed that there was much to gain from these broadcast encounters (cf. section 1.2.1). Lastly, planning time was not an issue as Sky News began thinking of broadcasting already in early April 2009. After negotiations with the other broadcasters BBC News and ITV had progressed, it took from October until mid-February to secure full agreement on the debates with the three main UK parties; namely the Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrats (Bailey 2011).

The negotiations resulted in a programme format (BBC 2010a) agreed upon by all parties, and presented to the public in early March 2010. The agreement was mainly made up by clauses describing how the debates were to be organised, what they would look like and how to select the debate questions.² There were also strict regulations on how the audience were to be selected and incorporated in the debates without compromising the chief regulations of the programme format.

1.2.1 Three party leaders - three motivations

As mentioned in section 1.2, there was a consensus between the three party leaders that they all had much to gain from participating in televised election debates. However, their reasons for wanting to go through with the debates were quite different. For nearly a century, the Conservative and Labour parties have dominated British politics, alternating in the roles of government and opposition. Before the election in 2010, Brown was the leader of Labour, the

² To see the questions that were asked during the three debates, see Appendix 1.

ruling party in government, while Cameron was the leader of the largest party not in government and thus the leader of the official opposition. Their positions in parliament anticipated a continuation of the old battle in which the incumbent would try to maintain the status quo while the opposition made an attempt to persuade the voters to elect a new government. The curveball was the inclusion of the third largest party, the Liberal Democrats, which was not considered to be a candidate for government on the same level as the two larger parties. Thus, party leader Clegg made for an interesting addition to the debates as the debate format allowed the three party leaders equal status on set. And because Clegg was neither incumbent nor leader of the opposition, his main objective for participating was the likelihood of benefiting from all possible media coverage that would allow him to get his message through to the people without being overshadowed by the two old rival parties. It could also be speculated whether it was a strategy for Clegg, or a possible unintended result of his inclusion, to take votes away from Brown giving Cameron a better chance of winning the election.

Consequently, the debates facilitated the introduction of three potential parties for government rather than the traditional two. This resulted in an interesting dynamic between the three leaders, who clearly had different aspirations and interests in terms of the debates. Brown fought to defend his position while Cameron tried to gain ground. Clegg, on the other hand, was presented with a brilliant opportunity to make himself and his party's politics known to the electorate, and potentially take voters away from would-be Conservative or Labour voters.

1.2.2 The debates created new opportunities

According to Benoit and Benoit-Bryan (2013), 'debates are an extremely important campaign message form because they possess several important advantages over other message forms' (p. 464). Prior to the election campaign of 2010, party political advertisements on broadcast media were restricted to specific circumstances, which gave the parties limited opportunities for communicating their politics on television. Thus, the arrival of televised debates in the UK made way for brand new possibilities. First, obviously, the debates gave each of the three candidates an opportunity to present a considerable amount of information to the public in a short amount of time. Second, since the candidates were presented with the same questions it gave the audience an opportunity to see where the parties stood on different political matters. Thus, the audience could compare and contrast the candidates' answers and the different

political positions. In addition, the candidates could challenge each other, which gave the voters an opportunity to see how well they handled themselves in a pressured situation. Third, the candidates were not allowed to bring notes to the debates, which forced them to present their information extemporaneously and perhaps even to produce impromptu answers to unexpected questions. It should be noted, however, that the candidates doubtlessly spent a lot of time preparing for the debates. Because although the programme format clearly stated that ‘the selected questions will not be shown to anyone outside the editorial team in advance of the programmes’ (2010, point 35), the overall themes of the debates were revealed to the candidates ahead of time. Fourth, because the televised debates were held during an election campaign they generated a lot of attention from both the media and among the voters. This provided the candidates with an opportunity for free media exposure, which were beneficial to those that were able to use this to their own advantage.

1.2.3 Media coverage of the debates

Arguably, the effects of the debates cannot be understood in isolation from the wider media coverage. Considering media’s potential to contaminate the opinion formation of the general public, the numerous headlines and articles published in relation to the debates are worth noting. What is also interesting is the fact that the media seemingly did not necessarily focus on politics when announcing winners and losers, but rather on the candidates’ performances and how they appeared on television (e.g. looking into the camera etc.). On the day after the first debate, the newspapers declared Clegg as the winner who ‘stole the first televised leaders’ debate in British political history by offering himself up as the fresh and honest alternative to two tired old parties’ (Wintour and Curtis 2010). This seemed to reflect the opinion of the people, as the first substantial poll conducted by Populus found Clegg to be the overall winner with 61%, compared to Cameron and Brown with 22% and 17% respectively. Nevertheless, though Clegg was able to generate substantial support for the Liberal Democrats during the first of the three debates, the result of the voting on Election Day revealed a huge last minute swing against the Liberal Democrats that left them with fewer seats than they won in the 2005 election (Roberts 2010).

1.3 Thesis outline

Following this introduction, chapter 2 will give an account of the theoretical background behind the three main fields of linguistic analysis in this study, namely rhetoric, personal

reference and modality. Furthermore, it provides a presentation of some of the previous work conducted on political language and campaign language in particular, which to some extent forms the basis for the present study. Chapter 3 presents the research material and explains the process of constructing the corpora used in the investigation. In addition, it gives an overview of the methods, both quantitative and qualitative, used for analysing the material.

The analyses and discussion of results are presented in three separate chapters. Firstly, chapter 4 will give a brief account of some of the rhetorical devices found in the corpora, viz. figurative language, contrastive pairs, three-part lists, rhetorical questions and elements of ‘feminine rhetoric style’ (anecdotes). Second, chapter 5 focuses on the politicians’ use of personal pronouns and discusses how personal reference may affect the interpersonal relationship between politician and audience as well as how it can contribute to the audience perception of the politicians. Lastly, the final chapter of analysis, chapter 6, gives a presentation of how modality is realised through the use of modal auxiliaries. It is argued that modal auxiliaries can express many shades of meaning, which can affect the persuasive appeal of the politician in a subtle manner. Chapter 7 will offer a summary of the most important findings, provide an answer to the initial research questions, and give suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2: *Theoretical background*

The aim of this chapter is to position this thesis within a system of language functions, which affects my approach to a study of political debates. Considering that the thesis moves between various systems of language functions, including rhetoric, personal pronouns and modality, I will address these various functions in turn. To begin with, the chapter will focus on rhetoric and persuasion, followed by an introduction to some of the rhetorical devices that can be utilised by a speaker in order to enhance his persuasive appeal. Second, a discussion of personal pronouns and its implication for the creation of interpersonal relationships between the speaker and an audience will follow. Lastly, I will discuss modality and its capacity to function as a rhetorical device. But first, a few words about ideology.

2.1 A brief note on ideology

The concept of ideology is a widely contested one. According to Wodak (2011), there are both political and theoretical controversies surrounding the concept, which has been variously defined in both positive and negative terms (pp. 213-14). In his book *Ideologies*, Eagleton (1991) lists as many as 16 possible definitions of ideology (pp. 1-2). To complicate matters further, some of these definitions complement each other while others contradict each other. This illustrates the problematic task of defining ideology within the space of a few paragraphs. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to enter into an in-depth discussion about the possible definitions of ideology. A brief examination, however, is inevitable because ideology traditionally has been associated with politics, which suggests that it may have implications for rhetorical strategies.

Generally, ideology can be defined as ‘a coherent set of ideas and beliefs adhered to by a group of people that provides an organised and systematic representation of the world about which they can agree’ (Charteris-Black 2011: 21-22). Accordingly, it involves a set of ideas that form a common ground for people with similar beliefs and ideas, and thus contributes to the formation of a group identity. Accordingly, it can be seen as an inherently social phenomenon. Furthermore, ideologies provide a basis for communicating a certain worldview to other people. In relation to politics then, ideology may refer to a set of ideas and principles that explains how society should work. It is worth noting that although political parties may be inspired and influenced by an ideology, they do not necessarily follow one particular ideology accurately. The political ideology offers a model of a certain

social order, or in other words, a model of how society should be organised. Ideologies also explain how this model of society can be achieved in the most appropriate way. This implies that political ideologies function as guidelines according to which people who have a common understanding of how society should work come together under a shared system of beliefs. And it is these systems of beliefs politicians attempt to communicate to an electorate when attempting to persuade them into embracing a political position, for example, during an election campaign.

Naturally, different political parties represent various belief systems and differ in their understanding of how society should be organised. The goal of any politician is to get into a position in which they can work towards achieving their model of society, and in order to do so they need support in the public by means of votes. In order to secure votes, they need to persuade their audience when communicating their policies (or ideas). Therefore, one can argue that political ideologies function as a backdrop for any political communication, and thus have implications for rhetorical strategies.

2.2 Rhetoric and Persuasion

In any democracy, politicians are dependent on generating support in the general public. The ambition is to persuade the electorate into acknowledging that their policies are the right policies, i.e. get them to accept their point of view, because only those that are successful persuaders can get into a position in which they can practice politics (Charteris-Black 2011: 13). Naturally, language is essential to this ambition.

Rhetoric, or the ‘art of persuasive discourse’ (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992: 2), is one of the oldest surviving systematic disciplines in the world and has its origin in the culture of ancient Greece and Rome. Its capacity to adapt to ideological and social change has been vital to its continual existence, and helps to explain why rhetoric still remains highly relevant today. Recognising that different contexts require different methods of persuasion, rhetoricians such as Aristotle and Quintilian emphasised the idea of a truth that varied according to time, place and situation (Charteris-Black 2011: 7). Accordingly, different contexts call for different methods of persuasion, and rhetoric has proven to be both effective and reliable in such circumstances because it incorporates the range of linguistic devices that can be used by a speaker to persuade others.

2.2.1 Tools of rhetoric (ethos, pathos, logos)

Aristotle believed that rhetoric provides us with three tools that can be used when attempting to persuade an audience: *ethos* (persuasion through personality and stance); *pathos* (persuasion through the arousal of emotion); and *logos* (persuasion through reasoning) (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992: 3). It should be noted that despite the tripartite division, the tools for persuasion should be seen as simultaneous processes. The next three sections will examine the rhetorical tools separately.

2.2.2 *Ethos*: character and stance

Character is particularly important when politicians attempt to establish a relationship with an audience. Especially in today's political sphere with media controlling as much as they do, 'image' (a modern version of *ethos*, cf. Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992: 20) has come to play a crucial part in how we perceive politicians. Thus, physical features such as appearance, clothing and charisma contribute to the overall impression of character. However, despite such means to enhance their persuasive appeal, their use of language is what ultimately defines their success: 'To be effective, language must be appropriate to the subject of the discourse, its context, and its audience' (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992: 19).

Ethos involves two independent concepts; i.e. *personality* and *stance*. A successful interaction between speaker and audience is essential to the realisation of persuasive discourse, and the communication of personality is the starting point for any interaction. Personality can be expressed in many ways, and not all of these may be the best means to persuade an audience. Therefore, it is important that the speaker knows how he wishes to be perceived. Furthermore, in order to communicate personality, it is essential that the speaker is able to identify with the audience and impress them with individuality (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992: 8-9). When interaction has been successfully established, the audience will also be affected by the *stance* of the persuader. Stance is not *what* someone believes but *how* these beliefs or opinions are expressed. Naturally, these beliefs and opinions will be conveyed in various ways depending on topic and audience (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992: 21-22).

In addition to character, credibility is important to the audience perception of a speaker. Aristotle argued that the three qualities that contribute to credibility are perceived intelligence, virtuous character and goodwill. Furthermore, this entails that trust is a prerequisite for persuasion. Trust is established by convincing the audience that you have the

right intensions for the group and have their interests at heart. Without trust, any narrative or argument made by the politician will not be persuasive (Charteris-Black 2011: 14).

The importance of trust became evident during the first leader debate on 15 April 2010. In May 2009, *the Daily Telegraph* leaked an uncensored copy of expense claims made by members of parliament (henceforth MPs) showing a gross misuse of the expenses system for personal gain by many MPs across all parties.³ Not surprisingly, this aroused widespread anger among the public and a loss of confidence in politics. One of the questions posed by the audience during the first leader debate reflected this loss: ‘Given the recent scandals involving all parties, how are you intending to re-establish the credibility of MPs in the eyes of the electorate?’ (cf. Appendix 1, emphasis added). Nevertheless, politicians are perfectly aware of the importance of ethos and trust in persuasive discourse, which became evident when Cameron said the following during his opening statement:

- (1) I think it's great we're having these debates, and I hope they go some way to restore some of the faith and some of the trust into our politics, because we badly need that once again in this country. The expenses saga brought great shame on parliament. I'm extremely sorry for everything that happened. Your politicians, frankly all of us, let you down. [DC domestic]

By explicitly addressing the problem, Cameron displays humility as well as a desire to rebuild his credibility among the voters at an early stage in the debate. It could also be seen as an attempt to build trust, which can make the audience susceptible to his political ideas.

2.2.3 *Pathos*: emotional engagement

Persuasion through emotions, or ‘the ability to engage emotionally with an audience through empathy, humour or arousing feelings such as fear or hate’ (Charteris-Black 2011: 15), is a much used tool in rhetoric. It is the raw material of rhetoric in the sense that effective persuasion is unlikely to take place without real emotions. Seen in relation to rhetoric as an interactive device, this means that the emotion has to be present in both the speaker and the audience in order to achieve successful persuasion. However, the deliberate play on emotions by politicians has often led to distrust in rhetoric, being associated with insincerity and irrationality (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992: 40).

Our emotional engagement with any topic, occasion and audience is culturally conditioned; how we feel about an issue relates to our understanding of it (Cockcroft and

³ In the UK, MPs can claim expenses, including the cost of accommodation, ‘wholly exclusively and necessarily incurred for the performance of a Member’s parliamentary duties’.

Cockcroft 1992: 43). Thus, it is essential that the speaker is able to predict the audience's likely emotional response and willingness to engage with his persuasion. According to Cockcroft and Cockcroft (1992), there are two ways in which a persuader can use emotion to move his audience in an effective manner. First, it is crucial that the politician is able to feel the emotion himself before he can move others with the same emotion. This can be achieved through imagination (cf. section 2.6.2): by using graphic language, the politician can recreate a scene in which emotion is inherent, as in (2) below:

- (2) I went to Crosby the other day and I was talking to a woman there who had been burgled by someone who had just left prison. He stole everything in her house. As he left, he set fire to the sofa and her son died from the fumes. [DC domestic]

Inevitably, this is likely to arouse the audience's emotions, as they are able to empathise with the situation described by Cameron. Second, words with strong positive or negative connotations, such as *tax credits* or *financial crisis*, can arouse a powerful emotional response in an audience if used in an appropriate context (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992).

2.2.4 Logos: modelling and judging argument

The last of the three rhetorical tools is *logos*, which involves the structuring of argument, such as for example the similarity model (analogy), the opposition model (i.e. contrastive pairs) and the part/whole model (metonymy). Accordingly, logos can be seen as central in a linguistic study as it involves the linguistic resources available to the speaker and how the speaker exploits these resources when presenting his arguments. Thus, the rhetorical devices available to the speaker can be seen as an elaboration on the concept of logos.

As previously mentioned in section 2.2, the tools are simultaneous processes and 'the persuader's personality or stance, together with his or her emotional engagement with the audience, determine the choice of persuasive argument' (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992: 58). Therefore, when the audience is introduced to a political argument, they will evaluate the ethos, pathos and logos of the speaker, and the convincing force of the three in sum will determine whether the audience will be persuaded or not.

The next sections will give an account of some of the rhetorical devices than can be used to achieve a persuasive discourse exchange between politicians and their audience.

2.3 Rhetorical devices

Rhetorical devices are the range of linguistic devices that can be used by a speaker to persuade others. This section gives a brief introduction to the rhetorical devices that have been analysed in this study (with the exception of elements of feminine rhetorical style which will be introduced in section 2.6.2). The results from the investigation will be discussed in chapter 4.

2.3.1 Figurative language

Figurative language is often associated with literature and poetry. Still, extensive research devoted to the study of metaphors have long ago established that metaphor is present in all types of language; political discourse being no exception.

Metaphors are an important, and perhaps even necessary, rhetorical device in political communication. According to Mio (1997), ‘political events are abstract and too numerous for public consumption’ (p. 130). Thus, it is imperative to the success of political communication that politicians use metaphor and symbol to reduce the political world into simpler models that are manageable and easier to manipulate. The use of metaphors ‘allow the general public to grasp the meaning of political events and feel a part of the process’ (Mio 1997: 130).

In light of this, Mio (1997) argues that there are three main reasons why metaphors can be used as a persuasive device in political discourse:

- 1) Metaphors can simplify and make political events understandable.
- 2) Metaphors can resonate to underlying symbolic representations in its recipients.
- 3) Metaphors can stir emotions or bridge the gap between logic and emotional (rational or irrational) forms of persuasion.

The nature of metaphor is essential for understanding how metaphors make political matters intelligible to the general public. Famously, Lakoff and Johnson (2003) suggest that metaphors do not only exist in language, but also in thought and action. Their conceptual metaphor theory posits that our ordinary conceptual system in which we both think and act is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. And because communication is based on the same conceptual system, language is a good source for understanding what that system is like (Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 3).

Metaphors are used to describe one concept in terms of another. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003), a conceptual metaphor is created when the words from a source domain are mapped onto a target domain. A well-known example is the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR.⁴ We think about argumentation in terms of war, which is manifested in our word choices. For example, you can *attack* your *opponent* or *defend* your ideas, as illustrated in (3) below.

- (3) Let me *defend* once again this idea of cutting the size of the House of Commons. [DC domestic]

Furthermore, it is not just our word choices that resemble the structure of war, but also what we do when we argue and how we understand argument as a concept: you can *win* or *lose* an argument, you have an *opponent* that *attacks* your arguments while you try to *defend* your position, you can also lay *plans* and *strategies*. Thus, the metaphorical concept, ARGUMENT IS WAR, structures what we do and how we understand what we are doing when we argue (Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 5).

The understanding of one concept in terms of another forms the basis for why metaphors can facilitate the communication and understanding of political matters. However, in order for the communication to be successful, there has to be a mutual understanding of these concepts, which is why the relationship between politics and culture is important to our metaphorical understanding. According to Kövecses (2005), culture can be seen as a ‘set of shared understandings that characterize smaller or larger groups of people’ (p. 1). If we consider the arguments of Lakoff and Johnson (2003) and think of these shared understandings as conceptual metaphors, we can assume that politicians and voters have similar conceptual mappings and thus a mutual understanding of metaphors. It should be noted, however, that one of the prerequisites for this mutual understanding is that the politicians and the voters are members of the same culture (i.e. have the same ideological standpoint). Considering that ‘linguistic metaphors (i.e. metaphors in language) are expressions of metaphorical concepts in the brain’s conceptual system’ (Kövecses 2005: 8), the metaphors used in political discourse is a manifestation of the shared understandings of that particular culture. Examples of figurative language that were identified in the material are presented and discussed in section 4.1.

⁴ Lowercase capitals are used to indicate the conceptual metaphor according to the convention in Lakoff and Johnson (2003).

2.3.2 Contrastive pairs

The contrastive pair, or antithesis, is an important schematic device that contains two words or parts, ‘which are in some ways in opposition, but in other ways use repetition to make the overall effect’ (Beard 2000: 40). In other words, the contrastive pair contains a rhetorical or semantic relation of opposition or contrast (Charteris-Black 2014: 40). By contrasting two opposing parts, the politician is able to make it very clear to the audience which of the two parts is the better alternative. Furthermore, this clarification could fortify the politician’s argumentation for the preferred alternative. The use of contrast and repetition can involve a number of linguistic features, such as lexical repetition, semantic repetition and/or contrast including the literal contrasted with the metaphorical, syntactic repetition, and phonological repetition (Beard 2000: 40). Examples of contrastive pairs that were identified in the material are presented and discussed in section 4.2.

2.3.3 Three-part list

The three-part list is a commonly used rhetorical device in which a particular point is made by use of a series of three specific components (Hillier 2004: 124). Famous examples include Abraham Lincoln’s ‘Government of the people, by the people, for the people’ and Tony Blair’s ‘Education, education, education’. According to Beard (2000), the reason why lists of three are attractive to both the speaker and the listener is that the number three is embedded in certain cultures as giving a sense of unity and completeness (p. 38); i.e. the three components of a three-part list essentially complement each other.

Many examples of such lists can be found in our own Western culture. For example, in the Christian tradition the concepts of ‘faith, hope and love’ are essential, not to mention the Three Wise Men (also referred to as the Three Kings) who visited Jesus after his birth bearing the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Other examples are Cesar’s well known words ‘I came, I saw, I conquered’ (Lat. *veni, vidi, vici*), and the tripartite national motto of France originating in the French revolution ‘liberty, equality, fraternity’. The number three is even present in folklore and folktales, for example ‘The Three Little Pigs’. Thus, the effect of such lists consisting of three parts can have a powerful effect on the audience when used in a persuasive context. Examples of three-part lists that were identified in the material are presented and discussed in section 4.3.

2.3.4 The use of questions

What distinguishes rhetorical questions from questions in general is the fact that they are asked for effect and not usually designed for an answer. Accordingly, the rhetorical question is a statement that is grammatically an interrogative, but which does not expect an answer (Charteris-Black 2014: 47). Different uses of questions can result in various effects depending on their use, and can for example be used to reinforce an already established opinion (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992: 157).

Famous examples of rhetorical questions include ‘Is the Pope Catholic?’ and ‘What is the meaning of life?’. The difference between the two is that the first question has an obvious answer whereas the second has no correct answer. Examples of rhetorical questions identified in the material are presented and discussed in section 4.4.

2.4 Personal pronouns

According to Hillier (2004), an examination of personal pronoun choices is likely to be fruitful ‘in assessing how personal reference (including to speaker and audience) is manifested and what that might imply about the way the relationship between speaker and audience is perceived’ (pp. 126-27). As was mentioned in section 2.2.2, identification with the audience is important when trying to establish a successful interaction between speaker and audience, which in turn is essential to the realisation of persuasive discourse exchange. The various personal pronouns may refer to different referents. For example, when a politician makes use of the first person plural *we*, it can refer to the government, to the party or to the people. Thus, the possibility to shift between references can be exploited to good effect by the politician (Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg 1998: 126), i.e. the use of *we* can be used in a manipulative way to convince the audience that they are part of the same ‘group’ as the politician and his party.

The analysis will concern itself with what Quirk et al. (1985) categorised as the ‘central pronouns’ presented in Table 1, that is, the personal, possessive and reflexive pronouns.

Person	Personal		Possessive		Reflexive
	Subject	Object	Determiner	Pronoun	
1. singular plural	I we	me us	my our	mine ours	myself ourselves
2. singular plural	you you	you you	your your	yours yours	yourself yourselves
3. singular plural	he she it they	him her it them	his her its their	his hers - theirs	himself herself itself themselves

Table 1: Personal, possessive and reflexive pronouns.⁵

It should be noted that only a selection of the central pronouns will be examined in detail, and the delimitations of the analysis will be outlined in the beginning of chapter 5.

2.4.1 First person pronouns

The central pronouns have in common the distinctions of person (first, second and third) and number (singular and plural). They differ, however, in regard to their potential referents. The first person singular pronouns can only have one referent, namely the speaker himself (self reference). The first person plural pronouns, on the other hand, refer to the speaker + other people. What ‘other people’ entails may vary according to context and the speaker’s intention. The reference of the first person plural is often quite vague, and thus a politician can exploit it to good effect by shifting between references to the government, to the party, and to the people (Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg 1998: 126).

2.4.2 Second person pronouns

Similar to the first person plural, the reference of second person pronouns can be inherently vague considering that there is no distinction between the singular and plural forms (with the exception of the reflexive forms). Accordingly, it is not possible to distinguish between one or more addressees, and both the first and the second person pronouns have to be interpreted in relation to the speech situation (Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg 1998: 127).

Furthermore, the second person pronouns can be used to refer to people in general, in which the reference of *you* is said to be ‘generic’. Typically, *you* is an informal equivalent of *one*, but retains some of its second person meaning, i.e. it can appeal to the hearer’s experiences of life in general or to a specific situation (Quirk et al. 1985: 354).

⁵ Table from (Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg 1998: 126).

2.4.3 Third person pronouns

The reference of the third person pronouns has to be interpreted in relation to the co-text. Normally, the referent can be found in the preceding text, although there are some situations in which the referent can also be dependent on the following text (Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg 1998: 127).

Among the third person pronouns, *it* is special in that it can be both referential and non-referential. The ‘referring it’ is used in a similar manner as the other pronouns to replace a full noun phrase when the context makes it clear what the referent is (Quirk et al. 1985: 348). The ‘dummy it’ or ‘non-referring it’, on the other hand, is a formal element that is needed to produce a grammatical sentence. The ‘dummy it’ is used in three grammatical constructions: (1) as dummy subject anticipating the following clause (i.e. anticipatory it), (2) as empty subject in clauses about weather, time, temperature and distance, and (3) as a focusing device in cleft-sentences (Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg 1998: 322-24).

2.4.4 Personal pronouns as an expression of ethos

The most important way a speaker can present himself towards an audience is by means of personal pronouns. In rhetorical terms, the use of personal pronouns can be seen as an expression of ethos, or personality. Considering that pronouns give agency to actions, the choice of pronoun can have great effect on the audience perception of the speaker’s character. For example, in choosing between the first person singular *I* and the first person plural *we*, the speaker has to decide to what extent he wishes to be personally responsible for a statement or to what extent he wishes to share that responsibility with his audience, party members etc. (Beard 2000: 46). If the speaker chooses *I*, it means that he is prepared to take full responsibility for a statement and the potential responses it may generate, regardless of whether they are positive or negative. If the speaker chooses *we*, on the other hand, it means that he distributes the responsibility of the statement across more parties.

The first and second person pronouns are interesting in that they have particular roles in marking the interpersonal relationship between speaker and listener. According to Fairclough (1989), pronouns in English have relational values of different sorts, which become evident in the usage of *we* and *you*. For example, when a politician uses the pronoun *we* including the audience in the reference, he speaks on behalf of himself as well as the general public, which implicates his authority to speak for others. Furthermore, when the

pronoun *you* is used in situations of mass communication, the identity of the potential and actual addressees is unknown to the politician. Presumably, the politician may exploit this pronoun in an attempt to remedy increasing impersonality, or to imply a relationship of solidarity between himself and the people in general (p. 127-28). Chapter 5 will have a particular focus on the various uses of *I* and *we* during the leader debates.

2.5 Modality

Considering the fact that modality can be used to express humility or conviction, it has been treated as a rhetorical device in the same way as i.e. metaphors and three-part lists in this thesis. Furthermore, Toolan (1998) describes modality as a type of attitude marker seeing that modal expression can reveal the speaker's attitudes and judgements (p. 46). For example, modal auxiliaries can express the politicians' attitude towards their statements and thus fall under the category of persuasion through personality and stance (ethos).

There is a difference between past and present situations compared to future and hypothetical situations, and this difference can be manifested in the use of modal auxiliaries. It has been noted that the incumbent is likely to refer to past deeds in order to convince the audience that his party should continue in government. When talking about past deeds, the speaker is referring to factive events, in the sense that they are open to objective verification. When talking about future and hypothetical situations, on the other hand, the speaker is referring to non-factive situations, which means that it is impossible to say with certainty what the future will bring (Benoit and Benoit-Bryan 2013).

Thus, when a politician is talking about their promises for the future and how they are going to improve government, they cannot be totally confident that the situation will turn out the way they intended it to. So called 'empty promises' and unresolved issues are particularly interesting to the media that gorge on the dismal of 'lying' politicians. It is thus important that politicians are not only able to argue with conviction but also with humility.

2.5.1 Modality from the perspective of descriptive grammar

Quirk et al. (1985) define modality as 'the manner in which the meaning of a clause is qualified so as to reflect the speaker's judgement of the likelihood of the proposition it expresses being true' (p. 219). Accordingly, the term entails that modals signify the speaker's judgement of how likely it is that his proposition is true. The meaning of modal verbs can be divided into two types between which there is a gradient:

- Intrinsic: modals that involve some kind of human control over events (i.e. *permission, obligation* and *volition*), and
- Extrinsic: modals that involve human judgement of what is or is not likely to happen (*possibility, necessity, and prediction*).

Despite the division into two categories, each of the modals has both intrinsic and extrinsic uses. In addition, there are areas of overlap and neutrality between the intrinsic and extrinsic senses. The modals tend to also have overlapping meanings and could be more or less interchangeable in some circumstances.

It should be noted that while Quirk et al. (1985) use the terms *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* modality, other terminology such as *root* and *epistemic* modality, and *modulation* and *modalization* are also widespread (e.g. Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 177-8, Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg 1998: 179). Furthermore, the two terms *root* and *epistemic* modality are also found in the grammar of Quirk et al. (1985), where they are used to define two subcategories of *extrinsic* modality, and should thus not be confused with the alternative terminology mentioned above.

2.5.2 Modality from the perspective of Systemic Functional Grammar

Unlike traditional grammar and semantics, Systemic Functional Grammar (henceforth SFG) is concerned with the study of linguistic forms in relation to the meanings they express, or in other words, meaning is essentially equated with function (Thompson 2014: 28). SFG distinguishes between three metafunctions, which are used as a basis for exploring how meaning is created and understood:

1. The experiential: using language to talk about the world.
2. The interpersonal: using language to interact with other people.
3. The textual: organising language to fit with its context.

Modality is related to the interpersonal metafunction within SFG and the way we use language to interact with other people. This study is concerned with the interaction between speaker and audience, and the realisation of modality in the material can shed light on how the politicians made use of modality to influence the audiences' perception of their

statements. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) define modality as ‘intermediate degrees’ that construe the region of uncertainty that lies between ‘yes’ and ‘no’ (p. 176).

SFG posits that there are three systems of modality that operate simultaneously, namely *type* of modality, modal *commitment* and modal *responsibility*.

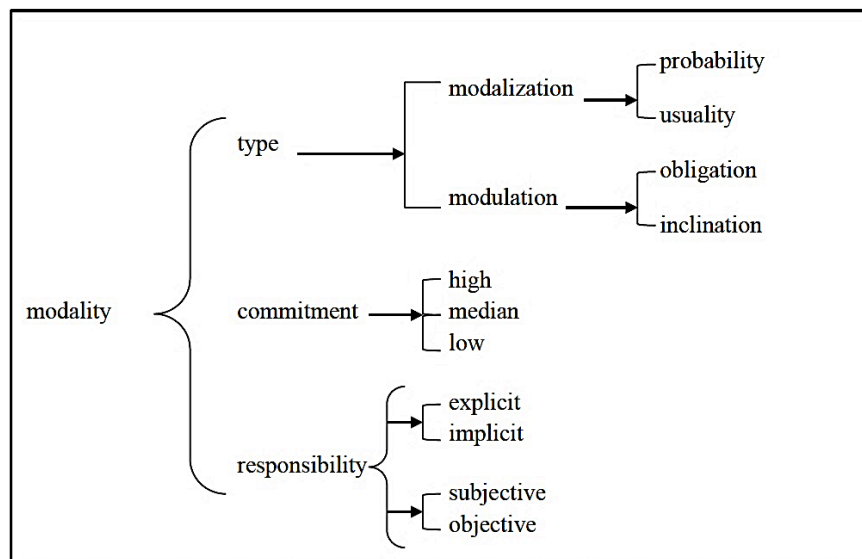


Figure 1: Simultaneous systems of modality

First, going back to what was said in section 2.5.1, it is possible to distinguish between different *types* of modality. While Quirk et al. (1985) use the terms *intrinsic* and *extrinsic*, theorists working within the SFG tradition use the terms *modalization* and *modulation* to describe the same phenomenon. The two types of modality are closely related to what Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) call *speech roles*. Interaction is based on a wish to communicate with another person, and although there could be a number of reasons for why we wish to communicate with someone, the basic purposes are either to give or demand some kind of commodity. Thus interaction can be seen as an exchange ‘in which giving implies receiving and demanding implies giving in response’ (p. 135).

The type of modality is related to the commodities that are being exchanged in an interaction, which is either *goods-&-services* (i.e. offer and commands) or *information* (i.e. statements and questions). If the interaction involves the exchange of information, the utterance is referred to as a proposition. The modality of propositions relate to how valid the information presented is in terms of probability or usuality, and is referred to as *modalization*. If the interaction involves the exchange of goods-&-services, on the other hand, the utterance is referred to as a proposal. The modality of proposals relate to how confident the speaker can

appear to be in the eventual success of the exchange, and is referred to as *modulation*. In commands, this concerns the degree of obligation on the other person to carry out the command, while in offers it concerns the speaker's degree of willingness to fulfil what he offers (Thompson 2014: 70-1).

In addition to different kinds of modality, SFG distinguishes between different values, or degrees of modal *commitment*. The three basic values that can be established are high, median and low (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 180). It should be noted that these values represent areas on a scale rather than absolute categories, and that more delicate distinctions are possible. However, the basic values can be useful when trying to establish the degree to which the speaker commits himself to the validity of what he is saying.

SFG also considers speaker *responsibility*: regardless of how modality is realised in an utterance, it provides information about whether or not the speaker accepts responsibly for the attitude expressed in the utterance (Thompson 2014: 73). This entails that the speaker can present his point of view as a subjective opinion, or objectivise the point of view so it appears to be a quality of the event itself.

2.5.3 Modal auxiliaries

Modality can be expressed through a variety of linguistic elements, such as adverbs (e.g. *possibly, certainly, maybe*) and adjectives (e.g. *unlikely, clear, obvious*). This thesis, however, concerns itself with the expression of modality through what Quirk et al. (1985) classify as central modals: *can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would* and *must*. Modal auxiliaries are flexible in that they can replace each other without affecting the grammaticality of a sentence (Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg 1998: 161), and they can be used to express many shades of meaning.

The possible modal expressions of the modal auxiliaries as suggested by Quirk et al. (1985: 219ff) are presented in Table 2.

	<i>May</i>	<i>Might</i>	<i>Can</i>	<i>Could</i>	<i>Must</i>	<i>Shall</i>	<i>Should</i>	<i>Will</i>	<i>Would</i>
Extrinsic									
Possibility	X	X	X	X					
Ability			X	X					
(Logical) necessity					X				
Tentative inference							X		
Prediction						X		X	X
Intrinsic									
Permission	X	X	X	X					
Obligation					X		X		
Volition						X		X	X

Table 2: Potential expressions of modality by the central modals.

A further introduction to the terminology used in the analysis of modal auxiliaries will be given in chapter 5 followed by a presentation of the results of the investigation.

2.5.4 Why study the use of modality in campaign discourse?

Arguably, an investigation of modal auxiliary use in the material can be fruitful in assessing whether or not the three politicians' use of modal auxiliaries could have been beneficial to the audience's view of their personality and stance. As mentioned, modality is partly about the speaker's judgement of the validity of his own statements (cf. section 2.5.2). In an electoral debate, the participants are likely to focus on both factive past events and non-factive future events. Their party program, which forms the basis for their argumentation, is about what they intend to do should they win the election. The ability to balance their argumentation by means of modal auxiliaries can thus be seen as essential for how well the arguments will be received by the audience. If the politician displays levels of certainty or uncertainty that are too high, it can affect the audience perception of their personality and also credibility. Furthermore, politicians should be careful in their use of modal devices in order to avoid being accused of making 'empty promises'.

2.6 Review of previous research

Political language has been a popular subject of scrutiny among researchers for many years. Notably, there has been a particular focus on rhetoric and how persuasive techniques are utilised in political discourse. Political speeches are commonly used as material in such investigations, although it should be noted that other political material is also used for similar

purposes. For the present investigation, Benoit's (e.g. 1999, 2004, 2013) extensive research on political campaign discourse stands out as particularly interesting. His Functional Theory of Political Campaign Discourse has been applied to various content from every U.S. election since 1962; i.e. political speeches and debates, TV spots and direct-mail pieces. The theory is fascinating because it illuminates the nature of campaign messages and helps explain election outcome. Although Benoit's research is extensive, he has pointed out that political leader's debates are a comparatively understudied phenomenon in countries other than the United States, especially in countries with parliamentary systems of government. Nevertheless, a functional analysis has in fact been carried out on the British leader debates from 2010 (cf. section 2.6.1). The following sections provide a summary of what some researchers have discovered on the use of persuasive techniques in political discourse.

2.6.1 The Functional Theory of Political Campaign Discourse

The Functional Theory of Political Campaign Discourse is based on the assumption that voting is a comparative act in which citizens will vote for the candidate that appears preferable on criteria most important to each voter. Moreover, the theory posits that the candidates seek to distinguish themselves from their opponents by highlighting their differences while attempting to persuade the voters that they are the preferred choice. In order to foster the impression of preferability to their opponents, candidates use three functions: acclaims (or positive statements), attacks (or criticism of opponents), and defence (or refutation of attacks). Furthermore, these functions can occur on two topics: policy (or issues) and character (or personality). When discussing policies, the acclaims and attacks can be about past deeds, future plans and general goals. When concerned with character, on the other hand, the acclaims and attacks normally refer to personal qualities, leader ability, and ideals (Benoit 2008).

This framework for analysis has been applied to every American general election presidential debates and many American presidential primary debates, and recently, also to political leader's debates in other countries. Benoit's extensive research has revealed that the typical distribution of the three functions is that acclaims are more frequent than attacks, which in turn is more frequent than defences. Furthermore, the incumbent is more likely to acclaim more and attack less than his challengers, particularly when discussing past deeds (e.g. Benoit and Harthcock 1999, Benoit and Sheafer 2006).

In 2013, Benoit and Benoit-Bryan conducted a study applying the Functional Theory to the UK leader's debates of 2010. Their result revealed a consistency with the results of previous studies: the candidates acclaimed more than they attacked, and attacked more than they defended themselves. Another consistency with previous results was that the incumbent Brown acclaimed more and attacked less than his challengers (Benoit and Benoit-Bryan 2013). It should be noted that Cameron and Clegg are counted as one entity (the challengers) in the presentation of the results, which makes it impossible to compare and contrast the three candidates individually.

2.6.2 Elements of feminine rhetorical style

Although the Functional Theory provides information about the functions and topics that are utilised in political campaign discourse, Benoit (2000) notes that the exclusion of other textual features is a limitation to the theory (p. 291). Accordingly, there is a discrepancy between his extensive research on topics and function, and research that specifically examines *how* language is used to perform functions and address topics. In an attempt to extend the scope of the functional theory, Johnson (2005) focused on how candidates use evidence and reasoning to present their arguments. Johnson examined the content of presidential debates from 1960-2000 in order to see if elements of feminine rhetorical style were used by candidates in their argumentation. Feminine rhetorical style is a stylistic strategy involving language that relies 'heavily on personal examples and experiences, using inductive reasoning, and identifying with the audience and its experience' (Campbell, 1989 in Johnson 2005: 6). The three elements of feminine style she looked for were reference to personal experience, inductive structure and the use of anecdotes and examples. Her findings illustrate that 'the presidential candidates use reference to personal experiences more than would be expected by chance and inductive reasoning and anecdotes/examples less than would be expected by chance' (Johnson 2005: 14). Instances of feminine elements in the 2010 leader's debates will be discussed in section 4.5.

2.6.3 A study of pronoun choice

In chapter 6 of her book *Analysing Real Texts* (2004), Hillier is concerned with the language of speeches by two British politicians, namely Tony Blair and John Major. By comparing two short extracts, Hillier wished to explore how far the two politicians differ with regards to

their linguistic choices by examining personal pronoun choice, lexical repetition, and grammatical repetition.

The investigation of pronoun choice was based on the observation that there was a notable difference between the two men. Furthermore, it could be fruitful in assessing how personal reference is manifested and what it might imply about how the relationship between speaker and audience is perceived. Her analysis included what Quirk et al. (1985) categorise as the ‘central pronouns’, i.e. the personal, possessive and reflexive pronouns, and addresses potential differences in the overall use of pronouns, and between the use of singular and plural forms. All instances of pronouns in each extract were identified and possible interpretations were considered.

Hillier’s study concludes that both politicians use pronouns to suggest an identity between their own party and the audience (both the immediate audience and the wider electorate). However, they differ in the extent to which they do this and what pronoun they use for this purpose. What Hillier notes as particularly interesting is that Major is a frequent user of *we*, which is a clear marker of group solidarity, while Blair frequently uses *I*, which marks individuality. The present study has adopted Hillier’s framework for studying pronoun choice (cf. section 2.4).

2.7 Summary of linguistic features

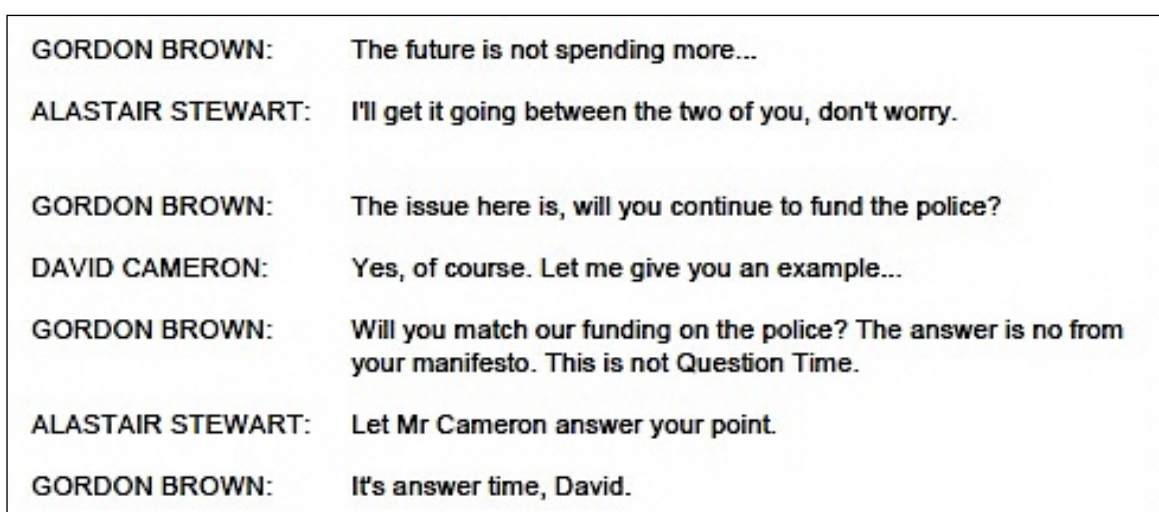
In this chapter I have introduced the linguistic features that will be analysed in chapters 4-6, as well as the theoretical background for the three main areas of interest in this study; rhetoric, personal reference and modality. A politician often utilises special techniques, or rhetorical devices, when attempting to persuade an audience to agree with their political ideas. In chapter 4, I present a discussion of some devices that are used in persuasive discourse; i.e. figurative language, contrastive pairs, three-part lists, rhetorical questions and reference to personal experience. It was argued previously in this chapter (cf. section 2.4) that personal pronouns can be used to manipulate the interpersonal relationship between speaker and listener, and this is discussed in chapter 5. Finally, chapter 6 is concerned with the use of modal auxiliaries in the three corpora. The discussion will focus on how modality can be used to enhance a politician’s persuasive appeal. The findings from the three chapters of analysis will be contrasted and compared by focusing on differences and similarities between the three politicians.

Chapter 3: *Material and methods*

This chapter gives an overview of the material used in this investigation and discusses its adequacy in relation to the principles of corpus design. It also gives an account of the methods employed in order to retrieve the qualitative and quantitative data that has been used in the analysis.

3.1 Material

The research material is based on transcripts of the three leader debates from April 2010.⁶ The transcripts can be accessed from the BBC News website where a full PDF transcript along with a video highlighting key moments was published on the day following each debate.⁷ Each statement is marked with the name of the politician who uttered it, which makes it easy to distinguish between the various speakers, as illustrated in Figure 2.



GORDON BROWN:	The future is not spending more...
ALASTAIR STEWART:	I'll get it going between the two of you, don't worry.
GORDON BROWN:	The issue here is, will you continue to fund the police?
DAVID CAMERON:	Yes, of course. Let me give you an example...
GORDON BROWN:	Will you match our funding on the police? The answer is no from your manifesto. This is not Question Time.
ALASTAIR STEWART:	Let Mr Cameron answer your point.
GORDON BROWN:	It's answer time, David.

Figure 2: Screenshot of the PDF debate transcript (BBC 2010b).

One modification was made to the transcripts in order to produce the material to be used in the study. First, as each of the PDF files contained the complete transcript of a debate, all statements made by the three party leaders, the moderator and the studio audience were included in the same file. Therefore, the transcripts had to be modified in such a way that it

⁶ All corpus examples have been reproduced as they appear in these transcripts, including any errors.

⁷ Download from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/election_2010/the_debates/default.stm. Last accessed on 3 March 2015.

would be possible to distinguish between the statements of each individual speaker while carrying out searches in WordSmith (<http://www.lexically.net/wordsmith/>). Two options were considered, including using UAM Corpus Tool (<http://www.wagsoft.com/CorpusTool/>) to tag all statements according to speaker. However, the decision fell on a simpler and less time consuming option, where the various statements made by one politician were copied from the original transcript and put into a new document in Microsoft Office Word. This enabled the creation of individual documents containing only statements from one politician. The process was repeated until all statements uttered by Cameron, Brown and Clegg had been separated into nine documents: three documents for each debate, each document containing all statements from one of the three politicians.

The three documents containing statements made by one politician during the course of the three debates make up one corpus. Each corpus was named after the politician of whose statements it contains, i.e. the Cameron corpus, the Brown corpus and the Clegg corpus.⁸ The three sub-parts were named with the politicians' initials along with a word describing the overall theme of the debate that the statements were taken from, i.e. domestic affairs, international affairs and economy. The Microsoft Office Word documents were saved as .txt files in order to be compatible with the search tool WordSmith. The composition of the three corpora is illustrated in Table 3.

The Cameron corpus		The Brown corpus		The Clegg corpus	
Debate	Word count	Debate	Word Count	Debate	Word Count
1 [DC domestic]	5566	1 [GB domestic]	5597	1 [NC domestic]	5491
2 [DC international]	5839	2 [GB international]	5840	2 [NC international]	5941
3 [DC economy]	5246	3 [GB economy]	5406	3 [NC economy]	5567
Total	16,651	Total	16,843	Total	16,999

Table 3: Composition and size of the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora.

The programme format includes several points that restrict the time the politicians could spend when answering a question or responding to answers. This restriction was included in order to secure that the three party leaders got equal time in the spotlight. As Table 3 shows, it also resulted in a fairly equal distribution of words in the three corpora, which makes them readily comparable. Because the three corpora are of relatively equal size, the results will be presented in raw frequencies rather than normalised frequencies (e.g. occurrences per 10,000

⁸ The Brown corpus in the present investigation should not be confused with the Brown University Standard Corpus of Present-Day American English compiled in the 1960s.

words), and in percentages where they can be used to shed light on differences between the three politicians.

3.2 Method

The present investigation employs both corpus investigation and manual sorting as methods for analysing the research material.

3.2.1 Corpus Linguistics

Corpus linguistics can be defined as ‘a methodological basis for pursuing linguistic research’ (Leech, 1992 quoted in Meyer 2002: xi). And indeed, the general consensus among researchers is that corpus linguistics focus upon a set of methods for studying language, which supports the above definition. It should be noted, however, that there is at least one major school of corpus linguists that does not agree with this characterisation. Some scholars, often referred to as neo-Firthians, disagree entirely with this definition and rather consider corpus linguistics to have a theoretical status (McEnery and Hardie 2012: 147). Nevertheless, the view adopted in this thesis is consistent with the methodological definition.

There are several benefits to corpus linguistics. First, it enables the researcher to examine a large quantity of text within a reasonable timeframe. Often, a simple search can compensate for hours of manual inspection of a large collection of texts. Second, a computer-generated result is likely to be more reliable than a search done by a person. It is difficult to eliminate all human errors, and the chance of errors occurring increase in accordance with the size of the corpus. A computer, on the other hand, will generate flawless results as long as the material is error-free and the researcher is careful not to make any mistakes while performing the search.

The starting point for computational research is a corpus. In its widest sense, corpus can be defined as ‘any collection of texts (or partial texts) used for purposes of general linguistic analysis’ (Meyer 2002: xii). This definition entails that any text, regardless of size or composition, that is used for linguistic analysis can be a corpus. Furthermore, some definitions also include the feature of machine-readability (e.g. McEnery and Hardie 2012: 1). Accordingly, corpus is a collection of machine-readable text that can be used for linguistic analysis. Though this is true, there are many factors that should be considered when composing a corpus for linguistic study. What material should be used – spoken or written texts? On what criteria should the texts be selected? Are you permitted to use the material?

What about size – how small or large should it be? These are just some examples, and there is no monolithic, consensually agreed set of answers to these questions. Each question has to be considered in relation to the intended purpose of the corpus: what research questions is it going to answer? Or in other words, ‘the corpus data we select to explore a research question must be well matched to that research question’ (McEnery and Hardie 2012: 2).

3.2.2 Does the research material meet the criteria for being a corpus?

With regards to the previous section, it should be noted that there are some implications to the material used in the present study that need to be acknowledged. First, the size of the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora (approx. 16,500 words) is a great deal smaller than other existing corpora such as LOB or FLOB (1,000,000 words), or the BNC (100,000,000 words). Although it is argued that a corpus should be as large as possible, the choice of material in this case necessarily limits the size of the corpora. The material is based on a series of events with limited extensiveness; there were only three leader debates prior to the election in May 2010. Second, the whole material is taken from one context, and thus the text reflects the communication techniques of Cameron, Brown and Clegg within that context. In other words, the results of the analysis may not be applicable to other situations or contexts. Still, the purpose of the present investigation is not to find results that can give general answers, but rather to look at similarities or differences within that particular snapshot in time. Accordingly, the corpus is considered well matched to the research question.

3.2.3 Data retrieval and processing

The data was partly retrieved using the Concord function in WordSmith and partly through manual search or close reading. The manual search was sometimes assisted by the search function in Microsoft Office Word.

The Concord function in WordSmith has been used to find raw frequencies of words to be used in the analysis on personal pronouns in chapter 5 and modality in chapter 6. The Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora were examined individually and thus only one of the three corpora was uploaded into WordSmith at any time. All three sub-parts of one corpus were examined simultaneously. With every search, a search string consisting of the word chosen for inspection (*viz.* a pronoun or a modal) was typed into the search box in the Concord function and generated a list of all instances found in the corpus. The concordances were then sorted according to the first word that followed the search item.

After using the Concord function to find the frequencies of the various search strings, all data were checked for errors. For example, the corpus search generated one instance of ‘i.e.’ in the Cameron corpus when using ‘I’ as search string. Any such errors that were detected were eliminated from the data. Furthermore, the data from the Concord search was manually sorted and placed into separate categories according to their function.

The data used in the analysis on rhetorical devices in chapter 4, on the other hand, was mainly retrieved by means of close reading. Accordingly, I read through the three debates underlining all instances that were relevant to the analysis, isolating them from the co-text. The search function in Microsoft Office Word was utilised when retrieving instances of rhetorical questions. Similar to the data generated through searches in WordSmith, the manually generated data was also categorised according to function.

It is important to note that all analysis presented in this paper is based on my subjective interpretation of the retrieved data and the material as a whole.

3.2.4 Quantitative vs. qualitative analysis

This thesis employs both quantitative and qualitative forms of analysis. In the simplest sense, one could say that the main difference between the two is that quantitative analysis is based on statistics and numeric data while qualitative analysis is not based on numbers (McEnery and Hardie 2012: 249). When conducting a study based on corpus research, it is important to include both forms of analysis as they illuminate different aspects of language. For example, frequency data (quantitative) can be used to compare the frequencies of different words or compare the frequency of use between individual speakers. Frequency data does not give any information about *how* the words are used but rather how *frequently* they are used.

Concordances (qualitative), on the other hand, can provide information about a word in context. Accordingly, one can see how a word is used in relation to other words and its function in a particular context.

Thus, when seeking an answer to the proposed research questions, it is not sufficient to only note down differences in frequency of use between the three politicians. It is also fruitful to distinguish between particular differences or similarities in their usage of the words or phrases.

Chapter 4: *Rhetorical devices*

This chapter is devoted to the investigation of some of the rhetorical devices mentioned in Beard (2000) and Cockcroft and Cockcroft (1992); viz. figurative language, contrastive pairs, three-part lists, rhetorical questions and elements of feminine rhetoric style (cf. section 2.3). One can argue that such devices seem more artificial and synthetic than pronouns and modality, because ‘devices’ are instrumental in nature, used consciously as means to an end. Accordingly, rhetorical devices distinguish themselves as persuasive tools to a greater extent than pronouns and modality, which due to their essential role in clause structures are likely to be perceived as natural components of the politicians’ vocabulary rather than rhetorical devices.

This investigation will discuss similarities and differences between use and application of rhetorical devices between the three politicians, as well as possible effects the use of the individual devices could have on the audience. Some of the devices will be presented with quantitative data while others only will be discussed in reference to examples. The reason for this is that not all devices are equally prominent or consistent throughout. However, they were all still considered interesting in a study of political language. Instances of rhetorical devices in the three corpora have been identified and divided into categories according to their composition. Unless otherwise stated, this was done manually by means of close reading and manual sorting, as it was impossible to find a search query to use in WordSmith that could identify all instances. Examples have been given bold text or underlining in order to illustrate the workings of the rhetorical devices.

4.1 Metaphors and the creation of imagery

Metaphor and figurative language can be quite prominent in political language as they are commonly used to simplify difficult concepts making them comprehensible to an audience. The overall impression after reading the transcripts is that all three politicians used a variety of metaphorical expressions throughout the three debates. The following sections will present some examples of metaphorical language used by Cameron, Brown and Clegg, as a full account of all metaphors within the transcripts is beyond the scope of the present thesis.

4.1.1 Conceptual metaphors

It was mentioned in section 2.3.1 that when the concepts of a source domain (i.e. warfare) are mapped onto a target domain (i.e. argumentation), it is what Lakoff and Johnson (2003) label a conceptual metaphor. There were many examples of such conceptualisations in the vocabulary of all three politicians, for example, the well-known examples ARGUMENT IS WAR and TIME IS MONEY, as illustrated in (4), (5), (6) and (7) below.

ARGUMENT IS WAR

- (4) I'm not sure if you're like me, but the more they **attack** each other, the more they sound exactly the same. [NC domestic]
- (5) Let me **defend** once again this idea of cutting the size of the House of Commons. [DC domestic]

TIME IS MONEY

- (6) Why don't we **save time**? [NC domestic]
- (7) Under our plans, what we could do immediately is give those million carers who care for the greatest length of time at least a week off - at least a week off - just to have a breather, **spend some time** on their own, visit friends, go on holiday, **have some time** to themselves again. [NC domestic]

Examples (4) and (5) show the contrasting relationship of attacking and defending a position, which is similar in both warfare and argumentation. Emotionally, attacking and defending are likely to evoke different associations (e.g. negative and positive). Examples (6) and (7) illustrate how time is regarded a valuable commodity in our society on the same level as money. Thus, Clegg's suggestion to *save* time in (6) could be perceived as a suggestion to save valuable resources, just as suggesting to give carers time to *spend* in (7) may facilitate the perception of Clegg as a generous person. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that it is not only time that can be conceptualised in terms of money, but also trust.

TRUST IS MONEY

- (8) If you are trying to persuade people to **invest trust again**, which was Mary's question, into politicians, then it's just not good enough to just talk the talk and not walk the walk [NC international]

In (8), Clegg is talking about trust as a valuable commodity, which gives the impression that the trust of the people is not something you can *get for free*. Rather it is something you have to *earn*. This formulation is also an indication that Clegg values the trust of the people, or at least that he wants people to think that he values their trust.

‘Honesty’ and ‘knowledge’ are two concepts with positive connotations in the western world, i.e. we appreciate honesty and disregard liars, and knowledge is believed to create opportunities and possibilities for the future. Furthermore, ‘cleanliness’ and ‘light’ are also concepts with positive connotations, which apparently can be used as source domain for the conceptualisations of ‘honesty’ and ‘knowledge’, as illustrated in (9) and (10).

HONESTY IS CLEAN

(9) I don't think that any politician deserves your trust - and you talked about credibility - deserves any credibility until everybody has **come clean** about what has gone wrong. [NC domestic]

KNOWLEDGE IS LIGHT

(10) If you're a teacher, friends of mine who are teachers say they can't really keep an eye on the troublemakers, but they also can't support the **brightest** children if the classes are huge. [NC domestic]

Again, Clegg is appealing to positive emotions in the audience (pathos), which in turn allows such conceptual metaphors to contribute to the audience's overall impression of his personality and stance (ethos).

Conceptual metaphors were also found in relation to government. Considering that government is an authority, it is natural to talk about the government in terms of another figure of authority, namely a parent.

GOVERNMENT IS A PARENT

(11) And because we believe in fairness, as we cut the deficit, over these next few years, we will **protect** your police, your National Health Service, and we will **protect** your schools. [GB domestic]

By conceptualising government as a parent, using the same vocabulary as a parent would do, Brown is likely to touch the audience on an emotional level. Family is important to most people, and thus talking about government in parental terms could be effective to the realisation of pathos by making the audience feel safe that the government will protect them. Nevertheless, the role of parent is not always about protecting the child from harm, but also to know when to let go.

GOVERNMENT IS CAPTOR

- (12) But let's **set** the schools **free**, so we trust in the vocation of the teachers who do what they want - they're there because they have a vocation they care about. [DC domestic]

Thus, the difference between (11) and (12) above and the conceptualisation of government as parent and captor can be explained in that they are two aspects of the same concept, namely parenthood. And these two aspects of parenthood illustrated in the examples above are used to talk about two different subjects, i.e. possessions of the audience and schools.

Accordingly, in relation to the audience, the government is portrayed as a protective parent, while in relation to schools (or other institutions) it is portrayed as a captor. Allowing the schools to be free of governmental control is likely to get a positive response from the audience, as they are interested in their children's education rather than teachers' obligation to fill out paperwork for the government.

Lastly, some conceptualisations of institutions from the material will be presented, as in (13) and (14).

INSTITUTIONS ARE CONTAINERS

- (13) That's the best way to make sure we keep the money **going into the school**. [DC domestic]
(14) I'm just slightly surprised that there's any discussion going on between you about what money you can **put into public services**, because I read your manifestos this week. [NC domestic]

During the debates, there was much talk about putting money and resources *into* institutions, as if they were containers. Furthermore, there was also an example of schools conceptualised as a ship, as in (15).

SCHOOLS ARE SHIPS

- (15) We say make the head teachers **captain of their ships**, let them have proper discipline, change all the crazy rules that stop teachers searching for banned items. [DC economy]

Accordingly, institutions can be talked about both in terms of our understanding of their form or composition, as well as in terms of other source domains with similar structures. A notable difference between the two conceptualisations can be seen in that it is more likely that the audience notice the metaphor in (15) than in (13) and (14), and thus, they may be more receptive to the political ideas demonstrated by the choice of source domain. Furthermore, the metaphorical portrayal of teachers as 'captain of their ships' underlines the government's

need to 'set the schools free'. Accordingly, here the presentation of Cameron's personality is that of a leader who knows where to focus his resources.

Through the examples in this section, I have attempted to illustrate how the politicians use conceptual metaphors to evoke emotions in the audience, which can contribute to both the audience understanding of political concepts and their perception of the politicians' personality and stance.

4.1.2 Metonymy

Metonymy is when a part is used to stand for the whole, or in other words, when the speaker refers to an entity by naming something associated with it. Thus, it involves a different kind of process than metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 36). One occurrence of metonymy could be seen in relation to the expenses saga and the impact it had on the choice of words at the debates. Channel 4 News wrote on October 12 2009 that 'The MPs' expenses scandal made duck houses, moat-cleaning and "flipping" notorious earlier this year', and these expressions were observed in the Cameron and Clegg corpora, as illustrated in (16), (17), and (18).

- (16) I know how angry I was when I heard about **the moats and the duck houses and the rest of it**. [DC domestic]
- (17) There are MPs who **flipped** one property to the next, buying property, paid by you, the taxpayer, and then they would do the properties up, paid for by you, and pocket the difference in personal profit. [NC domestic]
- (18) Of course, you remember, what was it, **the duck houses and all the rest of it**. [NC domestic]

The three examples indicate that the expressions were used to represent the individual circumstances of the expenses saga as a whole, and can thus be analysed as instances of metonymy. It should be noted that no examples of these particular metonymic expressions were found in the Brown corpus.

4.1.3 Idioms

Idioms are fossilised lexical units, which meaning is not predictable from the meanings of its individual parts but rather from the unit as a whole (Saeed 2009: 60). A selection of the idiomatic expressions found in the corpora has been reproduced together with their meanings below.

- (19) It's absolutely true that **the other side of the coin** is proper welfare reform. [DC domestic]
Meaning: the opposite aspect of a matter⁹
- (20) We say stop the waste in government now so we can stop **the lion's share** of that National Insurance increase and jobs tax next year. [DC domestic]
Meaning: the largest part of something
- (21) So we say **roll up your sleeves now**, let's save the waste where we can to stop the taxes. [DC economy]
Meaning: prepared to fight or work
- (22) Let's not get obsessed about mythical savings and waste, which is **the oldest trick in the book**, to pretend that you can **square a circle** like that. [NC domestic]
Meaning: a trick so overused that it should no longer deceive anyone; to do something that is considered impossible
- (23) If you are trying to persuade people to invest trust again, which was Mary's question, into politicians, then it's just not good enough to just **talk the talk** and not **walk the walk**. [NC international]
Meaning: act in a way that agrees with the things you say
- (24) **Hold your horses**. [NC international]
Meaning: stop and consider your opinion/decision
- (25) Now, of course there are daft rules, of course it does daft things, but it seems to me that we **punch above our weight** when we stand together in Europe in a world, frankly, where you've got a lot of superpowers bumping up against each other and where, **to coin a phrase**, size does matter. [NC international]
Meaning: becoming involved in an activity that needs more power than you seem to have; said when introducing a variation of a familiar expression

Idioms may not be recognised as a rhetorical device on the same level as metaphor and metonymy. However, one can argue that their fixedness, which makes them easily recognisable, can appeal to the audience and thus affect their view of the politician expressing them. For example, the politicians may use idioms as a means to spice up their language. It can be tiresome to listen to a lengthy discussion about political matters, and idioms can catch the attention of inattentive audience members helping them to refocus on the discussion. As can be seen from the examples, none of the idiomatic expressions were found in the Brown corpus.

⁹ The definitions of idiomatic meaning are taken from Cambridge Dictionaries Online (available at: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org>)

4.1.4 Other occurrences of figurative language

There are many examples in the debate transcripts of phrases that seem to have been used to create imagery, i.e. words or phrases that produce clear or vivid mental pictures (Charteris-Black 2014: 268), that can bring about an effect in the audience. In relation to some of the topics that were discussed, the politicians created their own terminology in order to underline certain arguments. For example, when discussing the problem of the crime rate in Britain, Clegg used certain formulations to clarify his view of the situation, as in (26) and (27).

(26) I think what makes me so angry is that again, it's like the immigration debate: so much tough talk from different governments of different parties for so long has turned our prisons into overcrowded **colleges of crime**. [NC domestic]

(27) What we've got to do is stop **the young offenders of today** becoming **the hardened criminals tomorrow**. [NC domestic]

By stating how *young offenders* become *hardened criminals* through *colleges of crime*, Clegg creates images that are bound to evoke an emotional reaction in the audience. Furthermore, the emotional reaction is increased by the contrasts that exist between *young* and *hard*, *offenders* and *criminals*, and *today* and *tomorrow*. Accordingly, Clegg is not only creating vivid imagery, he is creating contrasting imagery to intensify his argument. Furthermore, he is presenting his commitment to deal with crime and save young Britons from a potential criminal future.

Similar uses of imagery were also found in relation to other themes, as in (28) and (29).

(28) The reason is, there is **a chain of terror** that links these Al-Qaeda groups in different parts of the world to action that could happen in the United Kingdom. [GB international]

(29) In order to ensure we that never, ever, ever again have the banks **hold a gun to the head** of the rest of the British economy. [NC economy]

Both (28) and (29) contain images that are familiar and easily imaginable. The image in the first example is likely to evoke fear and concern among the audience, and the politician can exploit such negative feelings to emphasise his argument, e.g. to act against terror. The second example involves personification, i.e. human qualities ascribed to non-human entities (Charteris-Black 2014: 270). Clegg illustrates how the banks violated the British economy by portraying them as a villain threatening his victim with a gun.

There are also examples of imagery that are used to portray the politicians' attitude towards the debate, as in (30) and (31) where Clegg argues that the debates resemble sports.

(30) But can I just say again before this completely collapses into **a game of political ping-pong**. [NC international]

(31) I just feel sorry for Adina who must be completely lost by all this **political points scoring**. [NC economy]

In (30) Clegg uses ping-pong as a metaphor for the debates. Looking back at example (25) from section 4.1.3, Clegg uses a boxing reference to describe the EU's position in relation to other superpowers in the world. What is interesting, however, is the fact that in this setting, ping-pong seems to be bad while it can be argued that boxing seems to be okay. Or in other words, the ping-pong metaphor has been used to illustrate something negative while the boxing metaphor in (25) does not necessarily illustrate something negative: it seems like Clegg is arguing that Europe is stronger against the other superpowers if the different countries stand together, though it may feel as if they *punch above their weight*.

Lastly, there were examples of adjectives, adverbs and nouns that probably have been used to create a linguistic effect, which is indicated by the fact that they are quite infrequent in the British National Corpus (BNC).¹⁰

(32) Let's not get too **holier than thou** over all this. [DC domestic]
BNC: 6 instances

(33) We've got it **topsy-turvy**, the wrong way round, and we really need to change that so that we have proper discipline and order. [DC domestic]
BNC: 39 instances (search for both topsy-turvy and topsy turvy)

(34) They got away **scot-free**. [NC domestic]
BNC: 27 instances (search for both scot-free and scot free)

(35) We've had an immigration system which has been absolutely **shambolic**. [NC international]
BNC: 33 instances

It should be noted that in relation to the presented examples, it seems as though Brown rarely uses figurative language or imagery during the course of the three debates. With the exception of some conceptual metaphors, such as (11), and imagery, such as (28), there were few instances of figurative language identified in the Brown corpus. On the contrary, the

¹⁰ The BNC consists of approximately 100 million words (available at: <http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/>)

investigation detected many examples of figurative language use in the vocabulary of Cameron and Clegg. For example, Clegg used money as a conceptual metaphor for both time and trust, and Cameron used ships as a metaphor for schools. Furthermore, both politicians talked about institutions as if they were containers. The metonymic expressions discussed in section 4.1.2 were found only in the Cameron and Clegg corpora and were thus not used by Brown during any of the debates. Similarly, the majority of idioms were detected in the Clegg corpus, although some idiomatic expressions were also found in the Cameron corpus. Finally, Clegg was also the one that most frequently used language to create imagery.

Considering, however, that this investigation does not address all instances of metaphor in the transcripts, it is not possible to draw any valid conclusions based on this analysis but merely to suggest tendencies. The focus of the discussion will now turn to look at instances of contrastive pairs.

4.2 Contrastive pairs (antithesis)

The contrastive pair is another traditional rhetorical device that has been utilised by all three politicians at the debates. Note that contrastive pairs are closely related to parallelism (cf. section 4.3.2), and similar to metaphors, involves a simplification of the state of affairs. According to Charteris-Black (2014), time is often the basis for comparison in political rhetoric as politicians criticise past performances while making promises of a better future (p. 40). During the opening statements of the first debate, Clegg began his statement with a sentence contrasting the state of affairs and a possible future, as illustrated in (36).

- (36) I believe the way things **are** is **not** the way things **have to be**. [NC domestic]
Contrast: the present situation and a possible future situation

Clegg creates a relation between the contrasting elements by the use of repetition. Below, I have listed some examples from the three corpora to illustrate the themes that are being contrasted. The repetition has been underlined while the contrasted elements are presented in bold.

Example (37) could be said to be a variation of the example from the Clegg corpus as Cameron is also talking about time. But rather than contrasting past/present and future situations, he is contrasting two possible future situations emphasising the fact that the audience have the ability to influence their own future.

- (37) Now there is a big choice at this election: we can go on as we are, or we can say no, Britain can do much better... [DC domestic]
Contrast: two different possible future situations

A famous dichotomy is the contrast of good and evil, or good and bad. In (38), Clegg is utilising this contrast to emphasise his point of view, in what he labels ‘good immigration’ would be what he attempts to persuade the voters to agree on.

- (38) The truth is that there is good immigration and there is bad immigration. [NC domestic]
Contrast: good and bad

Another dichotomy inherent in our culture is the contrast between the individual and the group, as illustrated in (39), (40) and (41).

- (39) But we’re stronger together and we’re weaker apart. [NC international]
Contrast: group and individual

- (40) We are in politics I hope for serving the public, not serving ourselves. [GB domestic]
Contrast: caring and selfish

- (41) So it’s not my future that matters, it’s your future that’s on the ballot paper next Thursday. [GB economy]
Contrast: self and the people

Though these three examples vary in terms of the referent of the individual and the group (i.e. Britain and the European Union, and the people and the politician), the underlying message is the same, namely that it is better to be in a group than alone. Also, examples (40) and (41) show how Brown emphasises his responsibility towards the public while also stating their importance. Arguably, this view is related to the GOVERNMENT AS PARENT metaphor in section 4.1.1, in which government is putting the people first.

Example (42) can be seen as an extension of the foregoing examples, as the contrast indicates that it is not just being part of a group that is important but also to be influential in the group.

- (42) I want us to be in Europe but not run by Europe. [DC international]
Contrast: have influence and be influenced

Similar to the idiom discussed in section 4.1.3 (viz. talk the talk...walk the walk), Clegg also uses a contrastive pair in order to underline that politicians should not only have the ability to make promises, but also have the competence to fulfil that promise, as in (43).

- (43) But, you know, it's not just what you say, it's what you do. [NC domestic]
Contrast: words and action

Lastly, there was an example in the Brown corpus of a contrastive pair used to attack Cameron in a somewhat malicious matter.

- (44) Now, be honest with the public, because you can't airbrush your policies, even though you can airbrush your posters. [GB domestic]
Contrast: different abilities in different situations

In this statement, Brown is suggesting that Cameron is embellishing the truth when presenting his politics, but he does so by means of comparing it to the airbrushing of posters. Possibly, expressing criticism in a humorous fashion is better received by the public than a more straightforward formulation, which can be beneficial for the audience perception of Brown's personality.

Accordingly, it is evident that all three politicians make use of this rhetorical device to the same extent, though with seemingly various intentions for response. There are examples of time-related contrasts in the Cameron and Clegg corpora, which considering the fact that they are the challengers to the position of incumbency is not particularly surprising. Contrasts between dichotomies such as good and bad, and individual and group, were also identified in the corpora. The use of contrastive pairs in general could have a beneficial rhetorical effect on the audience as it allows the politician to contrast two oppositions while making it explicit which of the opposing elements is the better alternative. It should be noted that this is a presentation of some of the examples present in the material, which only gives an insight into the overall use of this device.

4.3 Three-part list

The three-part list can be composed of various elements, from simple repetition of one word to long sentences consisting of three parts. The various examples of three-part lists presented in Beard (2000) formed the basis for the categories used in the present analysis, which will be discussed in greater detail along with examples from the corpora in the following sections.

Note that there were some instances of lists that follow the same patterns as the three-part list (e.g. with four components), however, the analysis has only included lists of three and thus any instances that resemble three-part lists but do not fulfil this requirement have been excluded from the analysis.

The results from the analysis is set out in Table 4 in raw frequencies and percentage out of the total number of instances found in the three corpora.

	Simple repetition		Modified repetition		Three individual arguments		Listing (clause and sentences)		Listing (phrases and words)		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Cameron	1	1.9	36	69.2	7	13.5	1	1.9	7	13.5	52
Brown	-	-	33	51.6	18	28.1	6	9.4	7	10.9	64
Clegg	4	11.4	10	28.6	13	37.1	3	8.6	5	14.3	35

Table 4: Overview of the three-part lists in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora.

It is notable that although all three politicians make use of three-part lists, there is a difference in terms of frequency across the three corpora. While Brown is a frequent user of such lists, they occur only half as frequently in the Clegg corpus. The next sections will discuss the various categories separately.

4.3.1 Simple repetition

This category includes all instances of simple repetition, i.e. one word that is repeated three times. As Table 4 shows, while there are no such instances in the Brown corpus there are only a few instances in the Cameron and the Clegg corpora, which have been reproduced below.

- (45) You're absolutely right, the taxpayer has had to pay **more and more and more** as the Government has spent more... [DC economy]
- (46) **No, no, no.** Very, very easily. [NC domestic]
- (47) So, if we do this again, we **cannot, cannot, cannot** allow eight years to elapse... [NC international]
- (48) It takes a **long, long, long** time to build these nuclear plants. [NC international]

(49) That was lots of people coming here illegally, who are now still living, **years and years and years**, in the shadows of our economy. [NC international]

(45) is the only example found in the Cameron corpus while (46)-(49) are all found in the Clegg corpus. What all these examples have in common is that the words that are being repeated are words that do not have much meaning in themselves. Rather, they are quantifiers, negations and adjectives used in such a way that the repetition of the words has the function of emphasis.

4.3.2 Modification of repetition

This category includes instances of repetition, however, the repeated element, whether it is one word or a phrase, is followed by a new element that occur only once. This could also be described in terms of parallelism, i.e. a device that suggests a connection simply because the form of one sentence or clause repeats the form of another. Accordingly, the connection of meaning is suggested through an echo of form (Cook 1989: 15), as illustrated in (50)-(52).

(50) **We could** quite as well get by with 10% fewer MPs, **we could** cut the cost for you, the taxpayer, and **we could** do a better job at the same time. [DC domestic]

(51) Ahead are huge challenges, delivering the economic recovery in jobs, bringing our brave troops safely home from Afghanistan, keeping our streets free of terrorism, building alliances in Europe **against** nuclear weapons, **against** climate change, **against** poverty and to deal with our banks. [GB international]

(52) **I want us to lead** in Europe, not complain from the sidelines. **I want us to lead** in creating a world free of nuclear weapons. And **I want us to lead** on the biggest challenge of all, climate change. [NC international]

Such devices are often used in discourse such as speeches, prayers, poetry, and advertisements, and can have a powerful emotional effect on the audience (Cook 1989: 15-16). It keeps the element of three that appeals to the audience's cultural identity while also exploiting the possibility to list new information.

In the Cameron corpus, there were four examples of repetition modification that differed from the examples found in the other two corpora. In the examples below, there are only a slight modification of the phrase that is repeated three times; both the beginning of the phrase and the end of the phrase is repeated while only one word in the middle is substituted.

- (53) We have got too many people **who could work, who are offered work but who don't work.** [DC domestic]
- (54) Gordon Brown is trying to make you believe **he can protect health spending, he can protect education spending, he can protect police spending.** [DC domestic]
- (55) Because if you put a tax on jobs, that I think **is a jobs killer, it is a recovery killer, it's an economy killer.** [DC domestic]
- (56) My vision is that **we improve it, we expand it, we develop it**, we make sure that it's got more choice and more control for the patient. [DC domestic]

These shorter, but informative, modifications allow Cameron to put his points forwards in a simple but efficient way. Furthermore, it is sure to appeal to the audience because they are given the arguments in a very clear and straightforward manner, which makes them easy to apprehend.

4.3.3 Three individual arguments

This category differs from the previous in that the three-part list consists of three individual arguments without the element of repetition. It should be noted that some examples included in this category do contain elements that are repeated, however, the repetition does not occur three times.

- (57) So 1stop the National Insurance rise, 2use that money for the cancer drugs and 3help people, so our outcomes can be amongst the best in Europe rather than sadly amongst some of the worst. [DC domestic]
- (58) 1Cut the waste, 2get the money into the classroom, and please 3stop trying to frighten people. [DC economy]
- (59) I'm afraid 1David is anti-European, 2Nick is anti-American, and 3both of them are out of touch with reality. [GB international]
- (60) I think what people want is us 1to solve the employment problem, 2the economic problem and 3get on with the job. [GB international]
- (61) 1Let's move with the times, 2take decisions when we need to take them, and at least 3have this review, which I talked about, after the election and consider everything that is possible. [NC international]
- (62) If there are those people who've lived here for ten years, speak English, want to play by the rules, want to pay their taxes, why don't we say to them, OK, you 1come out of the shadows,

2pay your taxes, 3do some community service to make up for the fact that you came here illegally, and then we can free up resources to go after the criminal gangs. [NC international]

These examples are effective even without the repetition because the element of three is still present, which is what ultimately is giving the audience a sense of completeness.

4.3.4 Listing (clauses and sentences)

This category includes the most obvious three-part lists; which are the ones that the speaker makes explicit himself by using conjuncts like firstly, secondly and thirdly.

- (63) Let me tell you what I would do. **First**, we've got to reward work and tackle welfare dependency. **Second**, we've got to fix our banks: tax them to get our money back, regulate them properly and get them lending again. **Third**, we've got to start making things again in this country. [DC economy]
- (64) What are we doing now? [**Firstly**] We're going to link pensions to earnings in 2012, so every pension will be linked to earnings and not just prices. **Secondly**, women, and you are one of them, who have not had the full state pension, we are making it possible for all women in future to have that full state pension. And **thirdly**, of course, we've got to deal with the poverty that people face as pensioners. [GB international]
- (65) At the moment under the immigration system, if you want to come and work in this country, you have to show two things: **firstly**, that you've got a sponsor who is sponsoring your arrival in this country, and **secondly**, that there is a job for you to do. I want to add a **third** element: that you also only go to a place, to a region, where you are needed. [NC domestic]

It is evident from the examples above that the politicians make use of conjuncts to make three-part lists in various ways. While Cameron uses the numeral (first, second, third) to mark his arguments, Brown and Clegg use the adverbial form (firstly, secondly, thirdly). Also, it is noticeable that in (64), Brown has not explicitly marked the first argument by use of a conjunct, but makes the list explicit when he begins his second sentence with 'secondly'. Furthermore, Clegg builds on what would originally be a two-part list in (65) as he first introduces two points and follows up by stating that he wants 'to add a third element', which makes it a three-part list.

4.3.5 Listing (phrases and words)

While the previous section looked at lists made up of clauses and sentences, this section addresses lists of individual phrases or words. Accordingly, this section illustrates some

occurrences that resemble the examples of ‘faith, hope and love’ and ‘liberty, equality, fraternity’ (cf. section 2.3.3).

- (66) And open up education, have the big society where we say new bodies that want to come in and set up great schools, including in inner city areas, come on in, we want **choice, diversity and excellence** in our state sector. [DC economy]
- (67) So he's going to be taking money out of every single school in the country, **primary school, secondary school, FE college**. [DC domestic]
- (68) Shrink the economy now, as the Conservatives would do, and they risk your **jobs, living standards and tax credits**. [GB economy]
- (69) **Creativity, discipline, standards in schools**, but we can't evade this question: if we're going to have the best education for our children, we do need the teachers and the teaching assistants. [GB domestic]
- (70) One thing which I think would really help in all of those things - **discipline, creativity, freedom for teachers** - is quite simply good old-fashioned smaller class sizes. [NC domestic]
- (71) I am so proud of the values that have made our country so great. **Democracy, human rights, the rule of law**. [NC international]

When listing individual words, politicians have the opportunity to make certain elements of their argumentation salient to the audience, while also taking advantage of the sense of completeness provided by the listing of three parts. Such lists are not packed with information, but rather emphasise the most important aspects of the argument, possibly making it easier for the audience to remember them after the debates.

4.3.6 Notes on three-part lists

While searching for three-part lists in the three corpora it became obvious to me that not all lists with three components necessarily included strong arguments. In some instances, it was as if the politician presented a three-part list despite the fact that he did not have three good arguments, such as Brown in (72).

- (72) You remember your teacher, you remember what they did for you, and teachers are so so important. [GB economy]

The fact that ‘teachers are so so important’ is not really a well-founded argument, as he is not elaborating on *why* teachers are important. Such cases make me wonder if the politicians

sometimes do create a three-part list for the sake of making a list rather than presenting arguments that support their politics, which incidentally completes a three-part list. If that is the case, it is definitely a good indication that they value the usefulness of the three-part list as a rhetorical device.

4.4 Rhetorical questions

The use of questions is possibly the most familiar and commonly used rhetorical device, both in politics and everyday life. For the present investigation, all questions in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora have been identified using a question mark as search query in the search box in Microsoft Office Word. As a consequence, only questions marked with a question mark in the transcripts will be considered in the analysis. Possible instances in which the transcriber has forgotten to use a question mark where there ought to be one, or where rhetorical questions might be embedded into another clause (i.e. ‘you might ask whether the Pope is a Catholic...’), have not been taken into account.

After the questions had been identified, they were divided into categories reflecting their inherent nature.¹¹ A few points are worth noting. Firstly, not all questions marked with a question mark in the three corpora are examples of rhetorical questions. In fact, there are a number of ‘normal’ questions (11, 12 and 23 respectively) targeted at either the other politicians participating in the debate, the moderator or members of the audience. These are not considered to be rhetorical because they are asked in order to gather information and with an expectation of a direct answer, as in (73).

(73) Do you support the alternative vote system in the House of Commons? [GB domestic]

Second, there were a few instances of questions enclosed in quotation marks in the Cameron and Clegg corpora (1 and 3 respectively), as in (74).

(74) “What’s going on? Why are there no babies being treated?” [NC domestic]

Such instances have also been left out of the investigation, as they do not reflect the language of the politician, but are considered to represent questions they have been asked by others.

The questions that were considered to carry rhetorical meaning, however, can be divided into three categories: 1) rhetorical questions, 2) questions posed by the politician and

¹¹ The categories are based on distinctions made in Cockcroft and Cockcroft (1992: 157)

answered by himself, and 3) questions posed by the politician on behalf of the audience. The distribution of the various categories is presented in Table 5.

	Rhetorical question	Q & A (politician)	Q & A (audience)	Quotes	Other	Total ¹²
Cameron	16	5	5	1	11	38 (26)
Brown	7	0	6	0	12	25 (13)
Clegg	15	3	9	3	23	53 (27)

Table 5: Types of rhetorical or non-rhetorical questions in the three corpora.

Similar to the results of three-part lists, there is a notable difference in the frequency of use of questions between Cameron, Brown and Clegg. However, the difference between Cameron and Clegg is not that great if one only considers rhetorical uses.

4.4.1 Rhetorical questions

The rhetorical question is ‘a question to which the answer is by implication obvious’ (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992: 157). In other words, the rhetorical question is a question that is asked without the expectation of a direct answer and which therefore functions pragmatically as a statement (giving information) rather than a question (demanding information) (cf. section 2.5.2).

(75) We're saying the government could save one pound out of every hundred it spends. Now, what small business, what large business, what family, frankly, hasn't had to do that during this difficult recession? [DC international]
Implied answer: none

(76) We can't just say a cap, what is it? 10, 10,000? A million? What if you reach the cap in the middle of summer and someone wants to come and play football for Manchester United or Manchester City? Do you say they can't come? [NC domestic]
Implied answer: no

Thus, a rhetorical question is asked in order to create an effect; and the effects of rhetorical questions may be very diverse. For instance, they can be used to shake the confidence of an audience opposed to the politician’s view, or to reinforce an already formed opinion among the politician’s supporters (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992: 157). Furthermore, (76) is an example of multiple questions (psyma), where a barrage of rhetorical questions is used to

¹² Total number of rhetorical questions is presented within parenthesis.

create the desirable effect. In this case, Clegg is using psyma to underline the ridiculousness of putting an arbitrary cap on immigration, as he believes that individual cases call for individual treatment.

4.4.2 Questions and answers

Another way the politician can use questions to create an effect is to first ask a series of questions and then provide the answer himself. Not only does this focus the audience attention on what is going to be said, but it can also show a superior stance in relation to audience and topic (Cockcroft and Cockcroft 1992: 157).

(77) **Q:** What have we got to do?

A: We've got to get rid of the paperwork and the bureaucracy and we've got to get the police out on the streets. [DC domestic]

(78) **Q:** When you lent that money to the banks, did you think that money would be used to put people out of work in Britain?

A: No, and it was wrong. [NC economy]

In relation to these examples, and to rhetorical questions in general, one could wonder why the politician goes to the trouble of posing questions rather than just stating what is on his mind. One reason for this could be the fact that it is inherent in us that the form of interrogatives implies that we are required to provide an answer. Accordingly, interrogatives activate our minds, and instead of sitting there as passive observers, we are invited to participate. Thus, when the politician reveals his 'answer' to the question, we are attentive and perhaps even more susceptible to the information presented to us. And because we have not had enough time to come up with an answer to the question ourselves, we are perhaps more willing to accept the answer provided by the politician. Thus, it can function both as a focusing device as well as elevating the politician to a level above the audience.

4.4.3 Questions posed by the politician on behalf of the audience

The final category resembles the questions and answers category, but differs in that the questions seem to be posed by the politician on behalf of the audience. Accordingly, they are used to show that the politician is aware of what the audience may think and what questions they might have about proposals put forward during the debates.

- (79) We've got to rebuild. How do we do that? Let's start with investing in our science base and making sure great universities like this are producing the scientists and entrepreneurs of the future. [DC economy]
- (80) What can we do to help you? First of all, we've got to get spending under control so we stop putting your taxes up. We also say we should have no stamp duty on the first £250,000 that people... if you can buy a property for less than that. I think that would help. But above all, we've also got to build more houses. I think there's no doubt in my mind that we've got to change the planning system right now. [DC economy]

Sometimes, the politician also elaborates on the original questions posed by the audience members. In such situations, they either come up with new questions based on what the audience member was actually saying, or supplement the original question with additional questions with a new angle.

- (81) I think Mary is saying can a vote make a difference? I believe it can. [GB international]
- (82) Joel asked, why are you being tested so much? How can all pupils in our schools feel they're being supported and getting the best out of education? I come back to this need to combine two things: firstly, more freedom for teachers and head teachers. Remember this crazy thing I told you about head teachers getting 4,000 pages of instructions by e-mail, and secondly, smaller class sizes, more one-to-one tuition, Saturday morning classes, evening classes, so that you can help those children in particular who perhaps aren't being supported at home as much as anybody else. [NC domestic]

Accordingly, the use of questions can be a powerful rhetorical device, which can create diverse effects depending on how they are exploited by the politicians.

4.5 Elements of feminine rhetoric style

While reading the transcriptions, it became obvious that the politicians frequently made reference to personal experiences or examples from other people's experiences that were somehow related to the various topics presented for discussion at the debates. Such anecdotes are examples of what Johnson (2005) describes as elements of feminine rhetoric style (cf. section 2.6.2). According to Johnson (2005), politicians may use such elements to 'create relationships or connection with the audience' (p. 7). By giving examples of self-experience, the politician descends from their authoritarian position to become an equal member of the public providing evidence that they understand the public's concerns. As will become evident, this has implications to both ethos and pathos as such anecdotes can evoke various

emotions in the audience while also give the politician an opportunity to present beneficial sides of his personality.

It was noted in Johnson’s article that an analysis of feminine style elements on sentences or phrases is inappropriate for the investigation due to the fact that the types of structures under examination ‘are likely to overlap and take several sentences to complete’ (Johnson 2005: 10). Inevitably, this is also the case with the present investigation, which is why instances of specific feminine style elements have been treated as a unit regardless of how many phrases or sentences it takes to complete it. The results from the investigation are set out in Table 6.

	Personal experience or information		Anecdotes or examples of others’ experiences		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Cameron	12	42.9	16	57.1	28
Brown	13	59.1	9	40.9	22
Clegg	13	52.0	12	48.0	25

Table 6: Units containing elements of feminine rhetoric style.

Considering that this is only a small part of the overall study, only instances that clearly stand out from the rest of the text have been included in the analysis. Thus, it should be noted that there may have been less prominent examples in the transcripts that have been overlooked. Considering that it is the potential persuasive influence of such examples that are important rather than the frequency of use, it is not considered problematic.

Another point worth noting is that although the investigation uses Johnson’s (2005) categories as starting point, it only focuses on the difference set out in two of the categories; namely reference to personal experience and reference to others’ experience. Accordingly, the third category, inductive structure, has been left out. There are at least two reasons for this. Inductive structure is defined as ‘instances where the speaker provides examples or other evidence first and draws a conclusion after the evidence is presented’ (Johnson 2005: 11). It will be evident to the reader that this is the case for most of the following examples that have been analysed within the two other categories. Furthermore, an examination of all inductive structures within the transcripts would have been too time consuming as there seems to be many cases during the three debates. Thus, the instances that have been counted are similar in structure in that they contain information about an example put forward by the politician.

However, the only difference between the two categories is whether the politicians refer to themselves or to others.

4.5.1 Reference to personal experience

Politicians may use anecdotal narratives that disclose personal information or personal feelings or experiences (cf. section 2.6.2). The numbers displayed in Table 6 show that the politicians do this to an equal extent during the course of the three debates. However, a closer look at the various instances show that there is a difference between instances where they refer to personal experience and instances where they disclose personal information which can be connected to the topics they discuss. For example, when they were asked questions about the environment, all the politicians used examples of personal experience, as can be seen in (83), (84) and (85) below.

- (83) When I said to my party we had to get real about the environment, and we to be a party that was a blue-green party, not just a blue party. I did actually once get a letter from someone couldn't really agree with this and said, Mr Cameron, if you're so concerned about carbon emissions why don't you just stop breathing? That was the moment I realised I still have some persuasion to do. In terms of my own life, the biggest thing we've done is to have proper insulation in our house and actually really can cut your energy bill and make life cheaper as well as greener. But I would say in the last six months, the biggest change, or the last year, the biggest change that I've been able to make is actually coming out very strongly against the third runway at Heathrow. [DC international]
- (84) I've been on trains all the time. I don't think I have been on any more than one plane during this campaign time, I have been going around by trains. [GB international]
- (85) I suspect I'm like many people, I of course tried to change my behaviour, when I travel up to my constituency in Sheffield and back again every week, I almost always do that by train, unless there is so much clobber with the kids that I simply can't carry it on the train. [NC international]

Perhaps one could say that these examples show how they try and portray themselves as environmental advocates by giving examples of what actions they themselves have taken in order to reduce their contribution to pollution. Accordingly, such narratives contribute to the overall presentation of the politicians' personality and how the public may perceive them.

Furthermore, when asked about the school system, rather than talking about their own personal experiences or personal accomplishments, Cameron and Clegg disclose personal information about themselves and their families.

(86) I have two children. My eldest is at a state school in London. I want every penny of the education budget to follow children like mine across the playground and into the school. [DC economy]

(87) I have three young children. Two of them go to a local school, at eight and five. I see myself as a father that what happens to a young child in a reception class, years one, two and three, is so important in developing their self-confidence, their social skills, their willingness to learn. [NC economy]

Also, Brown, who is known for his emphasis on family values, disclosed personal information about his upbringing in relation to some of the issues that came up during the debates.

(88) I'd been brought up to believe by my parents that you act honestly, and you act fairly and you act responsibly. [GB domestic]

(89) Now, I believe in work, too, because I've been brought up that work is the way that you reward people but it's also the way you find self-esteem. [GB economy]

In sum, disclosing personal experience or personal information are both potential contributors to how the public conceives the politicians and their personality. Also, it is likely to touch the audience on an emotional level as the themes described in the anecdotes are sure to be matters of importance to the audience, i.e. school, environment, family values. This type of rhetoric can be used to show various sides of the politician: for example anecdotes of personal experience may give the politician an opportunity to portray himself as a good, law-abiding citizen, an example to be followed, while anecdotes disclosing personal information may give them the opportunity to portray themselves as soft men concerned with family values.

4.5.2 Use of anecdotes or examples

In addition to the stories of personal accomplishments and personal experience, there are also examples of the politicians narrating the stories of others, i.e. what Johnson labelled 'speaker reference to others' personal experiences through the use of examples or narratives' (Johnson 2005: 11).

In comparison to the stories referring to the politicians themselves, what seems to be a common feature when the politicians choose to use the stories of others is that they often pinpoint a problem in society which the politician and the people can identify with. It also

gives the politicians a chance to argue that they want to tackle the problem and how they want to tackle the problem. Furthermore, the politicians may do this to show that they are in touch with the general public; i.e. that they are not just doing a 'desk job'.

- (90) I went to Crosby the other day and I was talking to a woman there who had been burgled by someone who had just left prison. He stole everything in her house. As he left, he set fire to the sofa and her son died from the fumes. That burglar, that murderer, could be out of prison in just four-and-a-half years. The system doesn't work, but that sort of sentence is, I think, just completely unacceptable in terms of what the public expect for proper punishment. [DC domestic]
- (91) I've met some of the people who have rightly complained about the abuse that they were subject to when young, and it never leaves them. It is something that is with them always. And no matter what you can try to do to help, there is always this problem that they have to face up to every day, that they were abused, cruelly abused, by people in whom they placed their faith and trust. [GB international]
- (92) I got a letter a few months ago from an elderly couple, who said to me they now found it so difficult to heat their homes on cold winter days, that on those cold winter days, they get into a bus in their town and travel around the bus just to stay warm. [NC international]

It should be noted that there are also examples where the politicians use anecdotes of others' experiences in order to show examples of positive activity among the people.

- (93) I met some young guys yesterday, and girls, who've been working on an energy project in Wales. They'd been taken on as a result of our future jobs fund. They're in the business of helping insulation and giving people advice about the use of energy. [GB international]
- (94) I know it's not fashionable these days, but I was very proud when I was up in Newcastle the other day to see the Liberal Democrat council there has started building some council houses again for the first time in 30 years. [NC economy]
- (95) I was at a small company in Warrington a few weeks ago, very, very good example, they manufacture new environmentally sustainable lighting fixtures. They've got lots of clients, lots of demand. They can't expand because the banks won't lend to them on reasonable rate. [NC economy]

Again, there are potentially different effects that can be achieved by using anecdotes of other people's experiences. Firstly, it can give the audience the impression that the politicians care about the complaints of the general public, and that they are prepared to fix the problem. Secondly, it can reduce the distance between the superior politicians and the general public, which can be important for the credibility and the image of the politicians. Also, when using

such anecdotes to communicate positive stories, the politicians credit the people who try to do something good in the society. And lastly, it is possible that the politicians use such anecdotes simply to show that they are in touch with the people.

4.5.3 Notes on the politicians' use of anecdotes

There is a notable difference in regards to the overall frequency of anecdotes at the various debates, as illustrated in Figure 3.

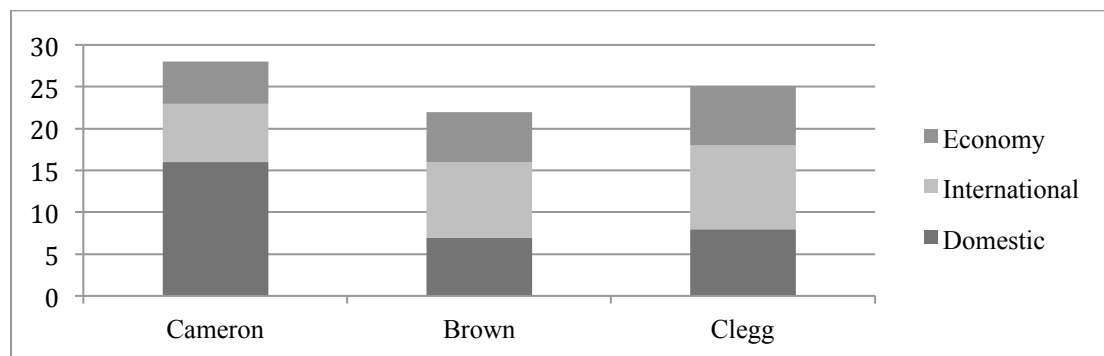


Figure 3: Distribution of anecdotes across the three debates.

As the figure demonstrates, Cameron is the most frequent user of anecdotes, and especially during the first debate about domestic affairs. What is also interesting about his use of anecdotes during this first debate is the distribution between stories of personal experience versus stories of other people: there were 5 instances denoting personal reference compared to 11 instances of others' experiences. This differs from the other two politicians, as well as Cameron himself during the other two debates, as the distribution between personal anecdotes and narratives of others are almost identical in each debate. It is difficult to say if there is a particular reason for this inconsistency, however, it does indicate that Cameron is eager to show the audience that he cares about the people living in Britain and the domestic affairs that concern them.

In conclusion, the analysis have revealed that the politicians' use of anecdotes can be fruitful for the realisation of both ethos and pathos: such narratives are an efficient instrument in evoking emotional responses in the audience, and they provide the politicians with a great opportunity to present certain aspects of their personality and stance to the audience.

4.6 Summary of the politicians' use of rhetorical devices

This chapter has investigated the usage of some rhetorical devices in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora. The devices have different applications and various effects, which became evident in the examples of use presented in the previous sections.

First, the investigation revealed instances of figurative language in all three corpora, however, there were great variations between the three politicians in terms of frequency and usage. Clegg was definitely the one with the most frequent and various uses of metaphor and imagery. Examples of conceptual metaphors in section 4.1.1 illustrated his presumed appreciation for time and trust, honesty and knowledge, concepts that are likely to appeal to the audience perception of Clegg's personality and stance (ethos) as positive. Furthermore, the examples of imagery discussed in section 4.1.4 show how he used imagery to evoke negative emotions (pathos) in the audience, and how he could use the audience's emotional reaction as a tool to persuade them of his political position.

Section 4.2 addressed the use of contrastive pairs in the three corpora. This section revealed a much more identical use among the three politicians than the previous section, however, there were slight differences in relation to the themes that were contrasted. Both Cameron and Clegg used time as contrast in various ways, while examples of dichotomy were found in all three corpora. It was argued that the use of contrastive pairs often involves a simplification of the state of affairs as well as an identification that makes it explicit to the audience which of the two oppositions is the better alternative. Accordingly, it is persuasive in that it assists the audience in drawing conclusions about political matters.

The use of three-part lists was the objective of section 4.3. The quantitative data presented in Table 4 revealed that this construction occurred most frequently in the Brown corpus, and rarely occurred in the Clegg corpus. The modified repetition (or parallelism), which includes both repetition and new information, was the type of three-part list that occurred most often in all three corpora. Considering that the number three appeals to emotions (pathos) inherent in our western culture, it was argued that lists of three give a feeling of completeness, which in turn can intensify the effect of political argument. The fact that the investigation revealed examples of bad argumentation to fulfil a three-part list reflects the politicians' insight in the efficiency of fulfilling the requirement of three.

Section 4.4 investigated the use of questions as a rhetorical device in the three corpora. The most frequent number of questions was identified in the Clegg corpus; however, the difference between him and Cameron was not so great in terms of rhetorical uses. It was

argued that rhetorical questions are used to give information rather than demanding information, which is normal in interrogatives. Thus, the politicians have a possibility to guide the listener in their understanding and concluding of political matters. By utilising the form of interrogatives to give information, the politicians activate the minds of the listener forcing them to participate in the reasoning of an argument, which is likely to make them accept the politicians' conclusion as valid.

Lastly, section 4.5 looked at elements of feminine rhetoric style, or the use of anecdotes in the vocabulary of Cameron, Brown and Clegg. The analysis revealed that all three politicians made reference to personal experience as well as narrating anecdotes of other people's experiences, though with slight variations in frequency. Arguably, both types of anecdotes are efficient to ethos and pathos, however, in various ways. When a politician narrates stories of personal experience, he allows the public to learn personal information about himself, which has the potential to appeal to emotions of compassion in the audience. Secondly, it can be efficient to the audience's perception of his personality and stance considering that it underlines the fact that the politician is a human being on the same level as the audience. Lastly, when the politician narrates anecdotes about other people's experiences, they portray themselves as compassionate individuals that care about the public and are able to see what troubles are out there in society. Accordingly, the public might take this to mean that the politician is observant, which again could be regarded a positive quality of personality.

All things considered, the investigation of rhetorical devices revealed that although all three politicians make use of metaphors, contrastive pairs, three-part lists, rhetorical questions and anecdotes, there is a difference in which devices they seem to favour and/or disfavour. Firstly, Cameron was identified as the most frequent user of anecdotes and the second most frequent user of metaphors, three-part lists and rhetorical questions. Secondly, with the exception of three-part lists (which he used frequently whether he had three strong arguments or not), Brown used rhetorical devices to the smallest extent compared to his two opponents. And lastly, out of the five devices Clegg seemed to disfavour three-part lists, while using metaphors, rhetorical questions and anecdotes to a great extent.

The discussion will now turn to an investigation of the use of personal pronouns in the three corpora.

Chapter 5: *Personal pronouns*

It was argued in section 2.4 that an examination of personal pronoun choices can be used to assess how personal reference is manifested, which in turn may indicate how the relationship between the politicians and the audience can be perceived. Furthermore, an analysis of which pronouns are used in relation to certain statements can give considerable insight into what the politicians are saying and how they want to be perceived (Beard 2000: 46). Accordingly, this chapter will address potential differences in the overall use of pronouns between Cameron, Brown and Clegg. The analysis will look at differences between the first, second and third person pronouns, and between the use of singular and plural forms.

A complete overview of the pronouns used by each party leader during the three debates is presented in Table 7. The quantitative data was found through a corpus investigation that included a search for all the central personal pronouns listed in Table 1 (cf. section 2.4) The results have been calculated according to choice of person in each case and as a proportion of total first, second and third person pronouns used by each speaker.

	Total	First person		Second person		Third person	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Cameron	1988	1167	58.7	323	16.2	498	25.1
Brown	1750	1021	58.3	293	16.7	436	25.0
Clegg	1875	959	51.1	399	21.3	517	27.6

Table 7: Personal pronouns (including possessive and reflexive) in proportion to total pronouns used.

The table shows that there is a difference in actual number of pronouns used by Cameron, Brown and Clegg during the three debates (1988, 1750 and 1875 respectively). Comparing the total number of pronouns with the total number of words spoken by each politician (16,651, 16,843 and 16,999 respectively, cf. Table 3 p. 27), the difference is still notable in that 12.0 %, 10.4 % and 11.0 % of the total number of words are realised as personal pronouns.

Although there is a small variance between the three politicians, the overall use of pronouns alone is not particularly remarkable considering the frequency of personal pronouns in general. Interesting differences do, however, arise in terms of individual choices for first, second and third person pronouns. As Table 7 reveals, the three politicians show a clear preference for first person pronouns, but Clegg distinguishes himself from the other two in

that he makes use of the second and third person pronouns to a greater extent than his opponents. Furthermore, the overall distribution of first, second and third person pronouns is almost identical in the Cameron and Brown corpora, while the overall distribution in the Clegg corpus stands out from the other two.

In consideration of the space and time limitations of the present thesis, a full examination of all pronouns identified through the corpus investigation would not be feasible. Thus, only the results that were likely to generate information that could shed light on the initial research question has been examined in greater detail. The analysis will focus particularly on the varying use of the singular first person *I* and the plural first person *we*, as the usage of these two pronouns can provide information about how the politician wishes to portray his personality (ethos) to the audience. The results of the analysis will be presented in the following sections.

5.1 First person pronouns

The previous section noted that there is a higher percentage of first person pronouns in the Cameron and Brown corpora compared to the Clegg corpus, which in turn has a higher percentage of second and third person pronouns compared to the other corpora. The distribution of all first person pronouns as used by Cameron, Brown and Clegg during the three debates is presented in Table 8. It should be noted that the possessive and reflexive forms of the pronouns were excluded from this part of the analysis.

	Singular				Plural				Total use of 1 st person personal pronouns
	<i>I</i>		<i>Me</i>		<i>We</i>		<i>Us</i>		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Cameron	362	37.1	45	4.6	533	54.5	37	3.8	977
Brown	304	34.9	13	1.5	512	58.9	41	4.7	870
Clegg	411	48.3	20	2.3	394	46.3	26	3.1	851

Table 8: Distribution of first person personal pronouns.

Table 8 shows that there is a clear difference between the three politicians in their use of the singular *I* and the plural *we*. Looking at the proportional distribution, Cameron and Brown show a preference for the plural *we* over the singular *I*, which differs with the results for Clegg who makes use of *I* and *we* almost equally frequently. This preference is also evident if one looks at the overall distribution of singular and plural first person pronouns, as set out in Figure 4.

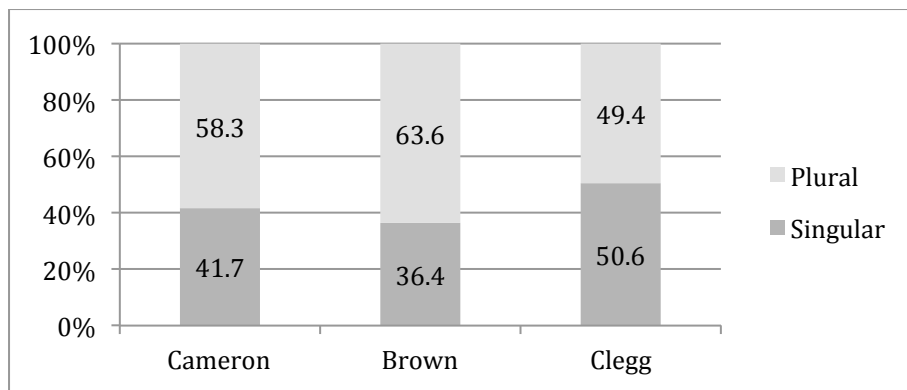


Figure 4: Singular vs. plural first person personal pronouns.

The choice of whether to use the singular or plural first person pronouns during the leader debates is particularly interesting if considered in relation to the fact that the UK has a parliamentary system of government. According to Benoit and Benoit-Bryan (2013), there is a fundamental difference between campaigning in the UK compared to for example the US, which has a presidential system of government. In America, they have direct elections where citizens vote for the presidential candidate of their choice. In the UK (and other countries with parliamentary systems), on the other hand, people vote for a legislative representative (e.g. members of Parliament) and then after the election a member of the majority party (or coalition of parties) becomes prime minister. Accordingly, Benoit and Benoit-Bryan (2013) argue that ‘it is possible that the fact that citizens in such governmental systems cannot vote directly for their leaders could alter the messages produced in such campaigns’ (p. 466). Considering then, that Cameron, Brown and Clegg are participating in the debates as representatives of their respective parties, it would be natural to assume that the instinctive choice of pronoun should be the plural *we*. However, the results presented in Table 8 above do indicate that this was not entirely the case during the leader debates, which is in agreement with the finding of Benoit and Benoit-Bryan (2013), that although the three leaders did speak on behalf of their respective parties, they also spoke as individual candidates (p. 466).

Varying between the singular and the plural first person pronouns, and thus by implication, varying between speaking as individual party leaders and on behalf of the party they represent, say something about how the politicians want to present themselves to the audience. Accordingly, a closer examination of the usage of the singular *I* and the plural *we* can shed light on the politicians’ willingness to accept personal responsibility for statements, or whether they prefer to divide the responsibility across more parties. The individual characteristics of the three politicians will be considered separately at first, followed by a

discussion of how these differences could have implications for the speaker-audience relationship. Note that only the subject forms have been examined further due to the low frequencies of the oblique forms (cf. Table 8).

5.1.1 Uses of the first person singular: *I*

The first person singular *I* can only have one referent, namely the speaker himself. Thus, an analysis of possible referents similar to what has been done in relation to the first person plural *we* (cf. section 5.1.3) were impossible. Instead, the analysis focus on the different contexts in which *I* occur, distinguishing between instances where *I* has been used in statements expressing opinion, as in (96), and instances where *I* has been used in statements denoting e.g. an action or a hypothetical situation, as in (97) and (98).

- (96) **I think** if you put soldiers into harms way, you either do the job properly or you don't do it at all. [NC international]
- (97) First, **I introduced** a points system so no unskilled worker from outside the European Union can come to Britain now. [GB domestic]
- (98) **If I was** your Prime Minister, I would want to think very carefully what's in the nations interest, what will make us safer here in the United Kingdom? [DC international]

The decision to distinguish between statements of personal opinion and statements referring to personal achievements or failures was rooted in an aspiration to see what the politicians were willing to take personal responsibility for, and what it could say about their expression of ethos. The categorisation of each instance was done with the results from the corpus investigation as the starting point. Each concordance was closely read and manually sorted according to their compatibility with the different categories. It should be noted that there were instances that could have been categorised as both expressions of action and opinion, as in (99).

- (99) **I've got to speak** about this because it's simply unfair and immoral for the Conservatives to put this as their election manifesto. [GB economy]

Although the quasi modal *have got to* expresses obligation on behalf of the speaker, this example has been classified as an action because of the verb phrase denoting the action of speaking. When obligation is expressed with a quasi modal rather than the modal auxiliary

must, it is an indication that the obligation lacks speaker authority and rather implies obligation by external forces (Quirk et al. 1985: 226). Accordingly, the example was categorised as an expression of action, as the expression of opinion was more elusive.

Table 9 shows the weighted distribution of *I* used in utterances that expresses personal opinion in comparison to other various uses of *I*. The different categories of other usage will be described along with the analysis in the following sections.

	Expressing opinion (%)	Other (%)					
		Action	Anecdote	Hypothetical	Quote	Miscellaneous	Total
Cameron	60.5	26.0	2.8	1.9	3.9	5.0	39.5
Brown	46.1	50.7	2.6	-	0.3	0.3	53.9
Clegg	58.2	38.7	2.4	-	-	0.7	41.8

Table 9: The weighted distribution of the different uses of *I*.

It is evident from Table 9 that all three politicians made use of the first person singular *I* when expressing opinion (60.5 %, 46.1 % and 58.2 % respectively). However, it is notable that the frequency of such use is greater with the two challengers than with Brown. By using the first person singular, the politicians communicate their political beliefs as personal opinion rather than party politics. Accordingly, if the audience interpret the message as such, it facilitates the opportunity for them to see political opinion in relation to the politician’s personality and stance, which could affect on how the politician is being perceived by the audience.

Furthermore, there is a notable difference between the incumbent Brown and his two opponents Cameron and Clegg in that Brown uses *I* to a greater extent than his opponents when talking about actions, i.e. things that have been done in the past, are being done in the present and planned actions for the future. Expectedly, Brown, being the incumbent who currently holds the executive power, is taking advantage of the opportunity to emphasise his significance. It can be argued that the choice to use *I* when talking about past, present and future deeds illuminates favourable sides of the current prime minister.

The next sections will examine the results for the different categories and discuss how the politicians’ use of *I* can have implications for how their personality is being perceived by the audience.

Expressing opinion

The three politicians used a variety of formulations in connection to *I* when expressing opinion. However, only a handful of the formulations were recurrent throughout the three debates. The concordances generated by the initial corpus investigation revealed that the most frequent expressions of opinion were *I think*, *I believe*, *I want* and *I say*.¹³ The frequencies of all four expressions are presented in Table 10 followed by examples of the expressions in use. Instances of negation have been included in the numbers for each expression.

	<i>I think</i>		<i>I believe</i>		<i>I want</i>		<i>I say</i>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cameron	129	58.9	8	3.7	36	16.4	9	4.1
Brown	32	22.9	14	10.0	45	32.1	17	12.1
Clegg	149	62.3	10	4.2	31	13.0	27	11.3

Table 10: The four most frequent expressions of opinion (percentage out of all instances expressing opinion).

- (100) **I think** what people want is us to solve the employment problem, the economic problem and get on with the job. [GB international]
- (101) **I believe** that we need to do more to help families. [DC international]
- (102) **I want** people to know that public services are personal to people's needs, and that's why we need to give these guarantees to individual patients, and that's what we're going to do from now on. [GB domestic]
- (103) **I say** if we change our priorities, we can provide our brave servicemen and servicewomen, who do the most astonishing job in the most extraordinarily difficult circumstances, we can give them proper pay. [NC domestic]

Notably, it is possible to make a distinction between these four expressions in terms of modality: *I think* and *I believe* seem more tentative than *I want* and *I say*. According to Thompson (2014), instances of explicit subjective modalization (cf. section 2.5.2) can also be realised as explicit objective modality (p. 76), as demonstrated with example (104) and its paraphrase below.

¹³ Other formulations did occur, however, they will not be discussed in this section.

(104) **I think** the pressures we've put on housing and health and education have been too great. [DC domestic]

It is clear that the pressures we've put on housing and health and education have been too great. (Paraphrase)

Accordingly, one can assume that the politicians have made a conscious choice to personalise the content of the message, presumably to achieve a desired effect with the audience. As previously noted, expressing opinion has potential implications for the judgement of the politicians' personality and stance. Not only *what* they say, but also *how* they say it could potentially make an impression with the audience. Thus, considering that such modal expressions do not necessarily indicate an uncertainty with the speaker; they can be exploited by the politicians as appropriate formulations in the context of political debates because they allow the politician to express his opinion without being too bold.

Furthermore, Table 10 shows that *I think* stands out as the most frequent expression, followed by *I want* as the second most frequent. As previously mentioned, the challengers Cameron and Clegg are much more frequent in their use of *I think* than the incumbent Brown, which in turn use *I want* more frequently than the other two. Comparing the frequencies from Table 10 with the results from a search for *I think*, *I believe*, *I want* and *I say* in the spoken section of the BNC confirms that it is normal for *I think* to be more frequent than the other expressions. However, the search also revealed an overuse of *I think* in both the Cameron and Clegg corpora when compared with the frequencies in the BNC (77 and 87 instances per 10,000 words in the Cameron and Clegg corpora compared to 24 instances per 10,000 words in the BNC). Brown, on the other hand, uses *I think* to a similar extent as the result generated from the search in the BNC, namely 19 instances per 10,000 words.

Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg (1998) note that there is a difference in denotation between verbs expressing opinion. While *I think* and *I believe* are verbs denoting cognition, *I want* and *I say* are verbs denoting physical or abstract relationships (p. 182). In (105), there are examples of both denotations. While the statements beginning with *I believe* and *I think* express how Clegg logically relates himself to his own argument, the use of *I want* is different because it refers to his emotional attachment to it.

(105) **I believe** in work. **I think** work is one of the most important things in society, it gives people self-respect, and **I want** to encourage it. [NC economy]

Accordingly, one could argue that there is a difference between expressing opinion as cognition, which gives a logical explanation of the politician's relation to his own argument, and expressing the opinion with emotional involvement. It is likely that the latter also could have the potential to play on the audiences' emotions.

Action

This category comprises the instances where *I* is used in sentences denoting past, present or future actions. The results are presented in Table 11.

	Total		Action					
			Past		Present		Future	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cameron	95	26.0	27	7.5	49	13.5	18	5.0
Brown	154	50.7	51	16.8	76	25.0	27	8.9
Clegg	159	38.7	46	11.2	79	19.2	34	8.3

Table 11: The distribution of expressions denoting past, present and future actions.

As mentioned earlier in this section, it is notable that the incumbent Brown uses *I* when talking about past, present and future actions to a greater extent than his opponents. However, it should be noted that in terms of raw frequencies, Clegg uses *I* in these functions with a similar frequency. Considering that Brown's position is being challenged, it is understandable that he would exploit any possibility to refer to past, present and future deeds in order to give the voters an incentive to let him continue his position as the prime minister. After all, such references give the impression that Brown is a desirable candidate, as in (106) and (107).

(106) David, **I had to nationalise** Northern Rock, and we had also to take over the Royal Bank of Scotland, and Halifax, Lloyd's TSB, and the reason we did so was to save the savings and deposits of families throughout the country, if we hadn't done that then the banks would have collapsed. [GB economy]

(107) Every week **I get** a report, sometimes every day, of terrorist plots, most of which arise in the Afghanistan/Pakistan area, and we have got to deal with. [GB international]

It should be noted that there is also a difference between Brown and his opponents in relation to the information presented in such sentences. As mentioned, Brown makes frequent reference to his accomplishments as prime minister. Cameron and Clegg, on the other hand,

make reference to things they have tried to accomplish by participating in the debates as well as presenting their plans for the future.

(108) First... I'll come to that in a second, but **I've talked** about how I think we need to convert empty properties, **I've talked** about how I think we need to give councils the freedom to build new homes, they know the best where homes are needed. [NC economy]

(109) Let me tell you one thing **I wouldn't do**: with Greece so much in the news, I can guarantee you that **I would never join** the euro, and **I'd keep** the pound as our currency. [DC economy]

In (108), Clegg refers to arguments he has made earlier in the debate, and (109) illustrates how Cameron presents his reluctance to change the currency in Britain.

Anecdote

The instances counted within this category are formulations of personal experiences (cf. section 2.6.2). Because this topic was explored in section 4.5, it will only be mentioned briefly here. The analysis revealed that all three politicians made formulations of personal experiences during the three debates, as illustrated with (110), (111) and (112).

(110) **I went** to Crosby the other day and **I was talking** to a woman there who had been burgled by someone who had just left prison. [DC domestic]

(111) **I visited** a manufacturer today who is involved in selling to the rest of the world, including to China and Asia, with the most advanced precision manufacturing. [GB economic]

(112) **I was** in a hospital, a paediatric hospital in Cardiff a few months ago, treating very sick premature young babies. [NC domestic]

Such exemplifications show that the politicians are able to identify with the audience and their experiences on a personal level, which can be productive for the development of a relationship between the politician and the addressees. Furthermore, sharing stories of personal experiences related to the issue being discussed can be effective of both ethos and pathos. Not only does it display characteristics of the politicians' character, it might also play on the audience's emotions.

Hypothetical

This category includes all instances where *I* is used in relation to a hypothetical situation, as shown in example (113).

(113) I really want to explain to people that, **if I'm your Prime Minister**, I will do everything I can to protect the front line services. [DC economic]

Cameron is the only one out of the three who has formulations counted within this category and there are only seven instances to be found in all three debates. However, it is worth noting that all instances refer to a hypothetical situation where Cameron is the prime minister of Britain. Thus, it can be seen as an attempt to reinforce his argument by creating a scenario in which it would be realized, and actually communicating to the audience that they need to vote for him if they want to see his promise fulfilled.

Quote

This category contains all instances where it is clear that *I* does not denote self reference, i.e. personal reference to the speaker. Such instances occur when the politician is quoting something they have heard or someone they have been talking to, and the referent of *I* is someone other than the speaker. Again, with one exception shown in (115), this was solely found in the language of Cameron, as illustrated in (114).

(114) Small businesses come to my surgery and say, "**I've never gone** over my overdraft limit, **I've never broken** my covenants, but **I cannot get** a loan." [DC economy]

(115) He'd have to break up the European Union meeting and say, "Look, 26 of you are against this, **I'm** the only one who's standing for this". [GB international]

Such cases seem to have similarities with anecdotes in that they are used as examples to emphasise or highlight an argument. Furthermore, it can be seen as a device used by the politician to give his voters a voice. What could be seen as ironic is that the one instance found with Brown actually refers to Cameron, and is an example of Brown imitating Cameron in a hypothetical situation. Nevertheless, it is a hypothetical quote made up by Brown to make a point.

Miscellaneous

The instances that have been analysed under the miscellaneous category are occurrences that are difficult to determine in general, like example (116).

(116) It's been too high these last few years, and **I would dearly love** to get it down to the levels it was in the past so it is no longer an issue in our politics as it wasn't in the past. [DC domestic]

Furthermore, instances that resemble the other categories, but were found unfit to be placed within these categories, have also been analysed within the miscellaneous category. For example in sentences that most likely should be analysed as quotes, but lack a clear quotation marking, as example (117).

(117) Talk to any carer, they will say the one thing **I need** is a break. [DC international]

5.1.2 Summary of findings: *I*

The preceding section has examined the first person singular pronoun *I*, and the different contextual situations in which it was realised during the three debates. As already indicated, the choice to use self reference does indeed have implications for how the audience may perceive the messages and arguments made by the politicians.

The analysis revealed that there are some distinct differences between Cameron, Brown and Clegg and how they use self reference during the three debates. While all three did express opinion as personal opinion, the challengers Cameron and Clegg did this to a greater extent than the incumbent Brown. Perhaps this could be seen in relation to the fact that he focused more on his past, present and future accomplishments in his argumentation stating what he had achieved as a way of formulating opinion. Furthermore, although both Cameron and Clegg also formulated sentences denoting actions, they were rather connected to accomplishments within the context of the debates and focused on plans for the future. Cameron was also the only one that created a hypothetical context in which he portrayed himself as the prime minister in order to show the audience what that would be like. Finally, all three politicians used anecdotes describing personal experience in relation to problematic areas pointed out by the questioners. By doing this, they identified with the troubles of the people, which probably facilitated the development of a relationship with the voters.

5.1.3 Uses of the first person plural: *we*

Unlike the first person singular *I*, the first person plural *we* can have various referents. As was mentioned in section 2.4.1, *we* is ambiguous in terms of potential meaning and can be inclusive or exclusive of the addressee. This ambiguity gives the pronoun persuasive potential.

The analysis categorises all instances of *we* as used by the three politicians in terms of likely referent. Similar to the analysis of the singular *I*, the concordances from the corpus investigation have been used as a starting point for the analysis. Considering the fact that context is important for determining the referent of ambiguous pronouns, the full transcripts of the three debates have also been used in the process of classifying the various instances of *we*. The pronouns have been categorised according to whether they were believed to be inclusive or exclusive of the addressee, i.e. the electorate, as can be seen in Table 12.

	Exclusive of addressee	Inclusive of addressee	Other
Cameron	55.7 %	43.0 %	1.3 %
Brown	68.0 %	30.9 %	1.2 %
Clegg	67.0 %	32.0 %	1.0 %

Table 12: Inclusive vs exclusive uses of *we*.

(118) **We've talked**₍₁₎ today also about security, and how **we need to be**₍₂₎ part of multilateral disarmament negotiations, so that **we, Britain, do not give up**₍₃₎ our weapons, unless others are prepared to do so, and reduce their weapons as well. [GB international]

Example (118) includes instances of *we* with various referents, both exclusive and inclusive of the addressee. The first instance of *we* in the beginning of the sentence refers to the politicians participating in the debate and is thus exclusive of the addressee. The third instance clearly refers to Britain as a nation and is thus inclusive of the addressee. The second instance, on the other hand, is less clear than the other two: it could potentially refer to either the politicians and be exclusive of the addressee or to Britain and be inclusive of the addressee. In such cases, the classification had to be made on the basis of my subjective understanding of the message as a whole.

In addition to distinguishing between inclusive and exclusive uses of *we*, the various instances have been further divided into categories describing what group, or entity, the pronoun refers to. The various sub-categories will be described in relation to the analysis.

The overall tendency is for all three politicians to favour the use of *we* with reference to an entity exclusive of the addressee. However, it should be noted that there is a slight difference between Cameron and the other politicians in that he includes the addressees to a greater extent than Brown and Clegg. The next section will present the analysis of all instances of *we* according to likely referents, as used by each politician throughout the three debates.

David Cameron

The results from the analysis of Cameron’s uses of *we* are listed in Table 13, and will be discussed throughout the following section.

	Referents of <i>we</i>	N	%
Exclusive of addressee	‘We’ the Conservative Party	122	22.9
	‘We’ the government	144	27.0
	‘We’ the politicians participating in the debate	31	5.8
	Total exclusive	297	55.7
Inclusive of addressee	‘We’ the nation (UK)	168	31.5
	‘We’ the people	53	10.0
	‘We’ the Conservatives and the people (exclusive of the Labour and Liberal Democrats parties)	8	1.5
	Total inclusive	229	43.0
Other	‘We’ used in quotes	2	0.4
	‘We’ in miscellaneous expressions	3	0.6
	‘We’ Cameron and his family	2	0.4
	Total other	7	1.3
	TOTAL	533	100.0

Table 13: David Cameron’s referents of *we*.

The analysis revealed that there were three possible referents of *we* that were exclusive of the addressee in the Cameron corpus: ‘the Conservative Party’, ‘the government’ (i.e. the executive power), and ‘the politicians participating in the debate’ (i.e. Cameron, Brown and Clegg). When ‘the government’ is analysed as likely referent, it is understood to either imply an anticipatory victory, i.e. a future Conservative government, or merely signify an unidentified entity, which makes it difficult to recognise the responsible entity. The message content of sentences containing *we* differs depending on what entity the pronoun refers to, but it generally concerned responsibility and solutions to current problems.

Most instances of *we* with reference to ‘the Conservative Party’ concerned messages denoting the party’s wishes for the future, as in (119), statements of opinion in relation to

current affairs, as in (120), and promises of what they will do if they come to power, as in (121).

(119) **We** want to see net immigration in tens of thousands, not hundreds of thousands. [DC economy]

(120) That's why **we** say start now with efficiency savings to stop the jobs tax next year. [DC economy]

(121) **We** are cutting taxes for businesses in our forthcoming budget **if we win** the election... [DC economy]

These sentences have future focus on mostly positive changes that the Conservative Party intends to make in order to improve the situation in Britain.

In instances where *we* refers to 'the government', on the other hand, the sentences usually denote messages concerned with responsibility as well as pinpointing the government's obligations to the public, as in (122).

(122) **We** have to make sure **we** plan properly, **we've** got to make sure **we** never send our troops into battle again without the proper equipment, without the proper helicopters. [DC international]

Accordingly, it seems like Cameron refers to the Conservative Party when talking about possible positive changes, while putting the responsibility for sorting out Britain's problems on an, as yet unrealised, government.

There are also some uses of *we* that seem to refer to the politicians present at the debate. Some of these sentences are references to the actual debate, as illustrated in (123).

(123) On the issue of Trident, which **we've** covered already tonight, we put the possibility of defeating Labour aside, backed them to do the right thing. [DC international]

However, instances where Cameron seems to include all three when talking about responsibility were also found in the material.

(124) Obviously, if there is a hung parliament, **we** must be responsible, **we** must try and deliver the best government **we** can for this country. [DC international]

Such collective reference in relation to areas of responsibility is probably a strategic move. Not only does Cameron identify what he believes is the responsibility of all three politicians in a way that should make the audience agree with him, he has also managed to make them all accountable for it. Accordingly, he has put himself in a favourable position by making it impossible for his opponents to disagree with him without compromising their integrity.

The instances of *we* with reference inclusive of the addressee can be separated into three subcategories: ‘the UK’, ‘the people’, and ‘the people + the Conservative Party’. In some respects, these three categories could probably be counted as one; however, there are small nuances between the three that are interesting in this context.

Sentences where *we* refers to ‘the UK’, or the nation as a whole, often denote explanations of what the country’s got and what it needs, as illustrated in (125).

(125) I think **we** can go on and do even more incredible things but **we** need two things: a government with the right values and also an understanding that **we**’re all in this together and real change comes when **we** come together and work together. [DC domestic]

What is interesting about this reference is that it seems to bring the politician and the people to the same level, seeing that it emphasises that the politician and the people are part of the same nation and thus have the same needs. Such uses of *we* can be important for building a relationship between the politician and the voters.

Similarly, the creation of an equal ranking of politicians and voters could also be true in instances where the referent of *we* is ‘the people’. The category distinguishes itself from the previous category in that the reference seems to be aimed at the individual rather than the community as a whole, as illustrated in (126).

(126) **We** need to bring up our children properly, **we**’ve got to make sure **we** work with the school, **we**’ve got to make sure **we** help the police, **we** have to make sure there is discipline in schools, real solutions to the problems in a country I think come when **we** all say, I’ve got responsibilities as well that go beyond paying my taxes and obeying the law. [DC international]

The effect of this is that everyone is encouraged to feel responsibility for the collective as individuals. Thus, rather than playing on the emotions connected to being part of a nation, Cameron makes each person accountable for contributing to the creation of a better society.

The last subcategory involves instances of *we* in which both the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats are excluded from the entity the pronoun refers to. Accordingly, Cameron is including only the people and the Conservatives in his reference, as illustrated in (127).

(127) Instead, what **we** keep getting from the other two parties is more institutions, more regulation, more new agreements. [DC international]

In this example, Cameron is clearly setting himself and the people apart from the other two politicians and their opinions. This could have persuasive potential in the sense that he includes the people in his opinion without giving them the option of forming an opinion of their own.

In addition to the exclusive and inclusive references, some of the instances of *we* had reference that was either unclear or not referring to any particular group of people, as in (128).

(128) **We** have the leaders of Britain's biggest and most successful businesses, Marks and Spencer's, Sainsbury's, Mothercare, Corus, the steelmakers, all saying that the risk to the recovery is not cutting waste. [DC economy]

The reference of *we* is quite vague, and it rather seems like the pronoun has been used in a non-referential way, like an existential construction. And indeed, according to Quirk et al. (1985), it is possible to use a noun-phrase subject followed by the verb *have* in existential sentences (p. 1411).

Furthermore, similar to the first person singular *I*, *we* has also been used in quotes as illustrated in (129).

(129) The reason about this European party is I just think it's the hypocrisy that people are fed up with, of British politicians standing here in Bristol saying, "I'm going to stand up for us in Europe and **we** shouldn't give away all these powers and **we** should fight for British interest," and then over they go to Brussels and they do exactly the opposite. [DC economy]

The last type of reference that was found in the Cameron corpus was *we* used with reference to Cameron's own family, as in (130) below.

(130) In terms of my own life, the biggest thing **we've** done is to have proper insulation in our house and actually really can cut your energy bill and make life cheaper as well as greener. [DC international]

Although there were only two instances of this reference in the Cameron corpus, it does show that he used examples of personal experience with his own family in his argumentation (cf. section 4.5).

Gordon Brown

Table 14 displays the results from the analysis of all instances of *we* as used by Brown.

	Referents of <i>we</i>	N	%
Exclusive of addressee	'We' the Labour Party	70	13.7
	'We' the Labour government	159	31.1
	'We' the government	97	18.9
	'We' the politicians participating in the debate	22	4.3
	Total exclusive	348	68.0
Inclusive of addressee	'We' the nation (UK)	134	26.2
	'We' the people	17	3.3
	'We' America and Europe (including Britain)	4	0.8
	'We' the world	3	0.6
	Total inclusive	158	30.9
Other	'We' in miscellaneous expressions	3	0.6
	'We' Gordon Brown's hometown	3	0.6
	Total other	6	1.2
	TOTAL	512	100.0

Table 14: Gordon Brown's referents of *we*.

Similar to the analysis of *we* as used by Cameron, the references of *we* as used by Brown have been divided into three main categories. However, unlike Cameron, it is possible to distinguish a fourth subcategory that has reference exclusive of the addressee, namely 'the Labour government'. Considering that Brown and the Labour Party were in government at the time the debates were held, it is not surprising to find reference to the Labour Party as the executive power in the language of Brown.

Apart from these additional categories, the same categories of referents found with Cameron were also present with Brown. It should be noted that although both 'the Labour Party' and 'the Labour government' may refer to the same entity, a distinction has been made between the two in order to distinguish between references to the party as an executive power and the party in general.

Instances of *we* used to refer to 'the Labour Party' were, as with Cameron, used to denote the party's wishes for the future and statements of opinion. In addition, it was used in

utterances stating what the party would continue to work for should they stay in power, as in (131).

(131) Yes, **we** will give the right of recall, so if you don't like an MP for being corrupt and parliament doesn't take any action, then you can remove him. [GB international]

In comparison, utterances with reference to 'the Labour government' rather focused on past deeds, as in (132), ongoing processes to make improvements, as in (133), and changes that would begin at a later stage in the future (similar to the use of *I* to denote actions, cf. section 5.1.1), as in (134).

(132) And we've also got more helicopters as a result of what **we**'ve done. [GB domestic]

(133) **We**'re trying to do our best to create a new regime for pensioners where women particularly have a full state pension, which they haven't had in the past. [GB economy]

(134) **We**'re introducing that from April next year. [GB domestic]

The division between the two thus helps to distinguish between their ability to act while in power and their aspirations for the future should they be elected again.

Although there is a category for 'the Labour government', it is also possible to find reference to an undefined executive power, i.e. 'the government', in relation to statements of obligation and responsibility, as in (135).

(135) **We**'ve got to take an overall responsibility for the whole economy. [GB domestic]

When the politicians make such reference to an undefined executive power or 'the government', it is as if none of them want to be responsible for the proposition presented. Also, in the cases where they have to display some sense of responsibility, they tend to devolve some of the responsibility onto their opponents by including them in the reference of *we*.

In relation to the categories that are inclusive of the addressee, there is also a slight difference from the categories found with Cameron. Although 'the nation' and 'the people' are found with both politicians, Brown also has two additional categories for instances where the referent of *we* includes 'America and Europe', and also 'the whole world', as in (136) and (137).

(136) The risk to the economy is this year, and every country - America, the rest of Europe, including Britain - is saying, **we**'ve got to make sure **we** invest in the economy this year so that **we** can have the growth **we** need. [GB domestic]

(137) We've had to take ownership of our banks, we've had call the world together in London to have a big summit so that **we** can make decisions that everybody will work together. [GB international]

This indicates that Brown also looks beyond the borders of Britain and talks about Britain as being part of a greater unity when utilising the pronoun *we*.

The characteristics discussed in relation to Cameron have also been used as a basis to distinguish between 'the nation' (138) and 'the people' (139) as used by Brown.

(138) If **we** don't trade with Europe, **we** lose jobs, **we** lose businesses, **we** lose growth. [GB international]

(139) Because that is what **we** all want to see at the end of the day. [GB domestic]

It is evident from the examples that Brown uses *we* to talk about the nation and the people in a similar manner as Cameron.

The analysis also revealed some instances where *we* was used with reference that was insignificant in relation to the addressee, i.e. 'Brown's hometown' and a few miscellaneous expressions.

Nick Clegg

In a similar fashion as both Cameron and Brown, Clegg also used *we* with a number of different referents. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 15.

	Referents of <i>we</i>	N	%
Exclusive of addressee	'We' the Liberal Democrats	67	17.0
	'We' the government	123	31.2
	'We' the politicians participating in the debate	74	18.8
	Total exclusive	264	67.0
Inclusive of addressee	'We' the nation (UK)	88	22.3
	'We' the people	29	7.4
	'We' the Liberal Democrats and the people (exclusive of the Conservatives and Labour parties)	2	0.5
	'We' the UK and the European Union	7	1.8
	Total inclusive	126	32.0
Other	'We' used in quote	1	0.3
	'We' in miscellaneous expressions	2	0.5
	'We' Clegg and his family	1	0.3
	Total other	4	1.0
	TOTAL	394	100

Table 15: Nick Clegg's referents of *we*.

At the time of the debates, the Liberal Democrats were part of the opposition together with the Conservative Party. Accordingly, it is not surprising that the categories with referents exclusive of the addressee are the same as those of Cameron.

The entity that was most frequently referred to was 'the government', followed by 'the politicians participating in the debate' and 'the Liberal Democrats'. In similarity with the other two, and especially Cameron, 'the government' is usually the referent when talking about responsibility and necessity, as illustrated in (140).

(140) The other thing of course **we** need to do is clean up all the murky business of party funding.
[NC international]

In contrast, when presenting ideas for how to make changes to improve the current situation, Clegg tends to refer to his own party when using *we*, as can be seen in (141).

(141) **We've** got a plan to deliver more one-to-one tuition, smaller class sizes, to help those children the most in the crucial early years when they start school. [NC economy]

Clegg is also the one who makes the most frequent reference to the three politicians participating in the debate. As previously mentioned, by doing this he presents the information in the sentence as valid for all three politicians. It can be done to underline that

all three are equally responsible, as in (142), or actually to illustrate that they all agree on matters that will benefit the general public, as in (143).

(142) **We've all** had problems with party funding. [NC international]

(143) I do think in the past **we've all** agreed this is something we need to look at, is we need to provide more respite, more time off for people who care for their loved ones in that way. [NC international]

Perhaps this is a result of the fact that the Liberal Democrats are the smallest party of the three, and thus distributing the responsibility across more parties may seem more appropriate than claiming responsibility for his statements alone.

Moving on to the category of referents that are inclusive of the addressee, Clegg has one subcategory of referents which is non-existent with both Cameron and Brown, namely 'the UK and the European Union'. This is quite interesting since despite the fact that all three parties are pro EU, Clegg is the only one that makes this explicit in his argumentation by including the UK and the EU in the same reference, as illustrated in (144).

(144) But **we're** stronger together and **we're** weaker apart. [NC international]

Furthermore, Clegg has a similar division as his two opponents in that it is possible to distinguish between *we* referring to 'the nation' or 'UK', as in (145), and *we* referring to 'the people', as in (146).

(145) Of course **we** can change Europe. [NC international]

(146) Everything I've said during these three television debates is driven by my simple belief that if **we** do things differently, **we** can build a better, fairer Britain. [NC economy]

Like Cameron, he also has a couple of instances of references to the people that exclude the other two party leaders.

(147) If you believe, like I do, that we can do things differently this time, then together **we** really will change Britain. [NC economy]

5.1.4 Comparison and summary of findings: *we*

The analysis revealed that there are both similarities and differences between the three politicians in their use of the first person singular *we*. Firstly, there are fewer instances of *we* in the Clegg corpus compared to the Cameron and Brown corpora, which is expected considering the overall frequency of first person pronouns in the three corpora.

Second, in relation to the instances of *we* referring to entities exclusive of the addressee, it is possible to identify three subcategories shared by all three politicians and one category exclusive to the incumbent Brown. However, the three referents are used with various frequencies by the three politicians, which could be linked to their different positions in the election. Cameron makes frequent reference to both the Conservative Party as well as an unrealised government, as in (148).

(148) But also you've heard a lot of differences on values, how the family comes first for me, how **we** need to do more to help those who actually do the right thing and want their Government behind them. [DC international]

Considering his position as main challenger to the role as prime minister, this could be seen as a result of both an attempt to put through his party politics as well as anticipating his own victory. Brown, on the other hand, makes frequent reference to his own Labour government pointing to both past success and possible future success as a result of their policies, as in (149).

(149) What we need is jobs, and growth, and economic recovery. **We** work with our partners to get that. [GB international]

Considering his position as the incumbent, it is expected that he will defend his position as prime minister (cf. section 2.6.1) by referring to examples of successful politics. Being the leader of the smallest and least known of the three parties represented at the debates, Clegg is perhaps in a weaker position from the beginning of the debates compared to the other two. Thus, the fact that he is the one who makes the most frequent reference to all three politicians when using *we* could be a reflection of the Liberal Democrats' size and position. By including all the politicians in his reference, he does not have to accept responsibility for his statements alone, as in (150).

(150) But as I say, I think **we**'ve all got some ideas, but I don't think any of us - and you don't hear this from politicians very much - I don't think any of us, if **we**'re really honest with you, have got the perfect solution. [NC domestic]

Throughout the debates, the three politicians all seem to make a distinction between reference when talking about intentions, wishes and plans for the future in relation to responsibility, necessity and obligation. When ideas of positive change are presented, the referent of *we* is normally the politician's own party (cf. examples 119, 131 and 141). When talking about what needs to be done, the referent of *we* is usually an undefined or unrealised government. The lack of identification leaves ambiguity about what entity actually carries the responsibility, and it's likely that the politicians exploit this ambiguity as it gives them the opportunity to be persuasive without having to take immediate responsibility for their statements and arguments (cf. examples 122, 135 and 140).

Lastly, it should be noted that Clegg was the only one of the three that made explicit reference to the UK and the EU as one entity. It could be argued that this reflects his view that Britain should stay part of Europe in a more definite manner than Cameron and Brown.

5.2 Second person pronouns

Second person pronouns carry explicit reference to an addressee or a group of addressees who are separate from the speaker. However, there is one exception in that *you* can also be used generically to refer to people in general (cf. section 2.4.2). In addition, the reference of the second person personal *you* is not straightforward considering that English makes no distinction between one or more addressees. Thus, it can be difficult to determine whether the reference is to a singular or plural entity, and such ambiguity can have exploitative potential. Table 16 shows the overall frequency of second person pronouns in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora.

	<i>You</i>		<i>Your</i>		<i>Yours</i>		<i>Yourself</i>		<i>Yourselves</i>		Total use of 2 nd person pronouns
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Cameron	268	83.0	54	16.7	1	0.3	-	-	-	-	323
Brown	245	83.6	46	15.7	-	-	2	0.7	-	-	293
Clegg	337	84.4	60	15.0	1	0.3	1	0.3	-	-	399

Table 16: Distribution of second person pronouns.

It is evident from the table that the possessive and, especially, the reflexive versions of the pronoun are infrequent in the vocabulary of all three politicians. In contrast, the numbers show frequent reference to the personal *you*. Thus, an analysis of the potential references to all instances of *you* in the three corpora was carried out in order to detect any differences between Cameron, Brown and Clegg. As before, the concordances from the initial corpus investigation were used as starting points for the analysis together with the full transcripts of the three debates. The results of the analysis are displayed in Table 17.

	Singular			
	David Cameron	Gordon Brown	Nick Clegg	Audience member ¹⁴
Cameron	0.4 ¹⁵	5.6	3.0	7.5
Brown	23.3	-	7.8	0.8
Clegg	7.4	8.3	-	13.6

Table 17: Singular referents of *you* (percentage of the total number of personal *you*).

There are some variations between the three politicians, especially with regards to singular references. Unremarkably, all three politicians make explicit reference to their opponents during the debates, which is an indication that they are interacting and talking directly at each other. However, the incumbent Brown stands out from his two opponents in that he makes particularly frequent reference to one of his opponents, namely Cameron. Benoit and Benoit-Bryan (2013) argued that the challengers attacked more often than the incumbent (cf. section 2.6.1). However, the frequent use of *you*, meaning ‘David Cameron’, accentuates Brown’s constant attempt to dismiss Cameron’s policies by painting an unfavourable picture of the opposition, as in (151) and (152).

(151) David, let's be honest, **you** voted against taking action against removing hereditary peers from the House of Lords. [GB domestic]

(152) The time to do the deficit reduction is when the recovery is assured, and David, **you**'ve just got it wrong economically. [GB economy]

Accordingly, it could be argued that Brown is particularly anxious about Cameron as a challenger to his position and is thus especially vigilant about attacking his arguments.

¹⁴ During the debates, members of the audience performed the role of questioner.

¹⁵ There was one quote in which *you* occurred twice with reference to David Cameron himself: “I did actually once get a letter from someone couldn't really agree with this and said, Mr Cameron, if **you**'re so concerned about carbon emissions why don't **you** just stop breathing?” [DC international]

Another notable difference in relation to the singular uses of *you* can be seen in that Clegg makes frequent explicit reference to the audience members asking the various questions during the debates. This indicates that he addresses the individual audience members to a greater extent than his two opponents. Brown makes only two such references during the three debates, while Cameron does it more frequently than Brown, but only half as frequently as Clegg.

(153) Part of the problem, because **you** referred specifically, Nicola, to airplanes, and **you're** quite right that flights at least when they are able to fly, and there isn't too much volcanic ash around, do create a growing proportion of the CO2 emissions, so we need to tackle it. [NC international]

The fact that Clegg addresses the questioner in such an explicit manner indicates that he is interested in establishing a relationship with the individual addressee. This could have positive effects on how the audience and the voters in general perceive his personality, which in turn would have a favourable effect on his expression of ethos.

With regards to the uses of the second person plural *you*, the difference was not quite as marked between the three. The numbers are presented in Table 18.

	Plural			Miscellaneous
	The audience	Generic reference	Cameron and Brown	
Cameron	56.3	22.8	-	4.5
Brown	36.3	26.1	-	5.7
Clegg	41.8	21.7	4.7	2.4

Table 18: Plural referents of *you* (percentage of the total number of personal *you*).

Except for variations in percentage, the biggest difference is that Clegg is the only one who has plural reference that includes the other two politicians, as illustrated in (154).

(154) I think the world has moved on and I think **you two** need to move with it. [NC domestic]

Furthermore, the most common plural reference in relation to the second person *you* was ‘the audience’ or the electorate, as in (155).

(155) Of course there are people who will try to block change, of course there are people who are spreading fear to stop the change **you** want. [NC international]

Similar to the singular reference to the audience questioners, personal reference to the audience as a whole will likely be fruitful for the development of a relationship with the audience.

Many instances of *you* have been analysed as having generic reference, i.e. reference to people in general. When *you* is used generically, it resembles the function of *one*, as illustrated in (156) and its paraphrase below.

(156) Because if **you** put a tax on jobs, that I think is a jobs killer, it is a recovery killer, it's an economy killer. [DC domestic]

Because if **one** puts a tax on jobs, that I think is a jobs killer, it is a recovery killer, it's an economy killer. (paraphrase)

However, there is a difference between *you* and *one* in that *you* is the more informal variant. In addition, *you* also retains some of its second person meaning when used generically. Thus, the generic *you* suggests that the politician is appealing to the listener's experience of life in general, or of some specific situation (Quirk et al. 1985: 354), as in (157).

(157) If **you** want to be fair, **you** don't give people an inheritance tax and then cut child tax credits for middle-class families, **you** don't cut the child trust fund, **you** don't cut the schools budget, **you** don't have a do-it-yourself society... [GB international]

5.3 Third person pronouns

In contrast to the first and second person pronouns that have to be interpreted in relation to the speech situation, the referents of third person pronouns are found in the co-text. The concordance from the initial corpus investigation was used as a starting point for the analysis. The frequencies of all the third person personal pronouns found in the corpora are set out in Table 19.

	Singular										Plural				Total use of 3 rd person pronouns
	<i>He</i>		<i>Him</i>		<i>She</i>		<i>Her</i>		<i>It</i>		<i>They</i>		<i>Them</i>		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Cameron	36	8.1	3	0.7	4	0.9	2	0.4	264	59.2	100	22.4	37	8.3	446
Brown	52	14.0	4	1.1	1	0.3	-	-	160	43.0	119	32.0	36	9.6	372
Clegg	6	1.3	1	0.2	2	0.4	1	0.2	254	56.1	136	30.0	53	11.7	453

Table 19: Distribution of third person personal pronouns.

It is the pronoun that occurs most frequently out of all of the third person pronouns and is the only pronoun that will be discussed in greater detail in this section. After *it*, *he* is the second most frequent pronoun among the third person singular pronouns. There were only six instances of *he* in the Clegg corpus. While two of them referred to Cameron the remaining four referred to the questioner and people appearing in personal anecdotes.

(158) David Cameron says **he**'ll try and make a hung parliament work but spends all his time in the newspapers this week making those ludicrous claims about total meltdown as if the world will end. [NC international]

The second most frequent user of *he* was Cameron with 36 instances in total. 24 instances had reference to Brown compared to only one instance with reference to Clegg. The remaining instances were references to other entities similar to those found in the Clegg corpus.

(159) I'm a little bit unsure about which country Gordon Brown thinks **he**'s Prime Minister of. [DC economy]

Brown was the most frequent user of *he*, with 52 instances in total. The majority of references were to Cameron, but there were also a few references to Clegg and other entities.

(160) David says **he** will support the National Health Service, which assumes **he** will not give the same guarantees to education and policing as I asked him earlier this evening. [GB domestic]

This shows that especially Brown and Cameron have a tendency to talk about each other in their argumentation.

A quick analysis was also carried out for *they* and *them*, and the results revealed that the pronouns referred to a variety of entities within the co-text, usually related to the topics that were discussed, as illustrated in (161) and (162).

(161) Something else we need to do is this, retail banks, banks that you and I put our deposits into, **they** should not be behaving like casinos, taking wild bets. [DC economy]

(162) Because I don't want people who are actually running those businesses, which **they** should be running for the long-term interests of the business and, indeed, for their clients, to be kind of susceptible to the temptations of the bonus incentive. By all means, pay **them** lots of money,

give **them** a fancy membership of a golf club, but don't give **them** these bonuses. [NC economy]

However, it was problematic to sum up the various referents within a few categories. Furthermore, in the multitude of references, none was particularly outstanding and thus a more thorough analysis was considered unnecessary for the present purpose.

The next section will focus on *it*, as some instances of special use were found in the three corpora.

Special uses of *it*

As mentioned in section 2.4.3, *it* can be both referential and non-referential. Accordingly, *it* usually refers to an item in the co-text, but can also be used as a structuring device to create texture. Thus, it is likely that any instances where *it* is used non-referentially is a result of the politician's wish to mark something in his argument by focusing parts of his message and thus making it explicit to the audience. Table 20 shows the distribution of referential and non-referential uses of *it* in the three corpora.

	Referential				Non-referential				Other			
	Anaphoric		Cataphoric		Clefting		Anticipatory		Phrase		Misc.	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cameron	210	79.5	19	7.2	11	4.2	19	7.2	3	1.1	2	0.8
Brown	117	73.1	15	9.4	14	8.8	11	6.9	2	1.2	1	0.6
Clegg	191	75.2	38	15.0	8	3.1	8	3.1	5	2.0	4	1.6

Table 20: Referential and non-referential uses of *it*.

The overall majority of instances of *it* with all three politicians refer to an entity in the preceding text, i.e. anaphoric reference. This is the most common point of reference, and considering that the reference of the various instances only reflects the topics that are being discussed, it will not be examined in greater detail.

Instances of *it* with cataphoric reference, on the other hand, are more interesting as its referent is found in the text following the pronoun, and is thus not given at the time the pronoun is used. The instances found in the three corpora show how cataphoric reference gives the speaker an opportunity to comment on and express additional information about the message before it is actually announced. An illustration of this can be seen in (163). The reference of the pronoun has been underlined.

(163) Firstly, **it** sounds draconian, but I think **it's** now necessary, we should say no bonuses whatsoever for the directors of banks at board level. [NC economy]

Although Clegg made use of cataphoric reference to a greater extent than his two opponents, similar instances were found with all three politicians, as in (164) and (165).

(164) **It's** science, **it's** technology, apprenticeships, raising the status of science teachers, making sure we reward entrepreneurship and, yes, having low taxes for businesses. That's part of getting them here and keeping them here. [DC economy]

(165) I accept **it's** been tough in these last two years with the recession, but what we've tried to do, when people are in difficulty, is provide tax credits. [GB economy]

In relation to instances of the non-referential uses of *it*, the analysis revealed both cleft constructions and instances where *it* was used as anticipatory subject, i.e. extraposition. By using *it* as an anticipatory subject, the politician has the possibility of stating opinion as explicit and objective (Thompson 2014: 156). However, in most instances these sentences were introduced by 'I think', which then made it clear that the opinion was subjective (cf. section 5.1.1).

(166) I think, for instance, **it's** fairly obvious, if you look at the huge number of offshore wind turbines which are now being installed off the coast of Britain in all sorts of places, that we should be a world leader in manufacturing this new green technology. [NC economy]

Furthermore, instances of cleft constructions, where an element of the sentence receives special focus, were found in all three corpora.

(167) **It was actually this Government** that gave this man a Knighthood for services to banking. [DC economy]

(168) So **it's not my future** that matters, it's your future that's on the ballot paper next Thursday. [GB economy]

(169) **It was a Conservative government** that removed the exit controls so we knew who was leaving as well as who was coming in. [NC domestic]

Many of the instances of cleft constructions in the corpora were like examples (167) and (169) above, where the focused element had reference to one of the three parties and then followed a negative fact about the party.

The analysis also revealed several instances of sentences that look like incomplete cleft-constructions in the Brown corpus, as in (170) and (171).

(170) **It's** not the size of the banks. [GB economy]
(It's not the size of the banks that matters.)

(171) **It's** for the voters to decide. [GB international]
(It's for the voters to decide who will form the next government.)

With both these examples, there is nothing in the previous context to anchor *it* to. However, it is still possible to interpret the meaning of the sentence.

Finally, there were a few instances in the three corpora where *it* was part of a set phrase, and thus did not carry any specific meaning.

(172) **As it happens**, I agree - I think we all must agree on the points about investing in new technologies, investing in our young people. [NC economy]

5.4 Personal pronouns as a rhetorical device

It is crucial to the realisation of persuasive discourse exchange that a politician creates a relationship with his audience. I argued in the beginning of this chapter that the various manifestations of personal reference in the leader debates can say something about the way the relationship between the politicians and their audience can be perceived. Thus, it was hypothesised that the various analyses that have been conducted throughout this chapter would give indications about the nature of the speaker-listener relationship, as manifested between the individual candidates, i.e. Cameron, Brown and Clegg, and the audience, i.e. the electorate.

Many of the central pronouns have persuasive potential, and it is clear from the analysis that the way in which the three politicians made use of personal reference during the debates arguably did contribute to the audience impression of their personality, which in consequence can facilitate the establishment of a relationship with the audience.

Firstly, all three politicians were able to distinguish themselves as individual candidates while also fulfilling their role as leaders acting on behalf of their respective

parties. This was evident in their frequent use of the first person *I* in relation to i.e. statements of opinion and anecdotes of personal experiences. Though this may be unexpected in countries with parliamentary systems of government (cf. section 5.1), it could be seen as a rhetorical strategy arising from this new campaign setting: at the debates the politicians are visual representations of their parties, or the personifications of their parties. Thus, if the politician makes a good impression on the audience, their impression will consequently affect his party as a whole.

Secondly, all three politicians were willing to accept responsibility for some statements, but also chose to divide responsibility across more groups. This was evident in their alternate use of the first person singular *I* and the first person plural *we*. Arguably, this could also be seen as a strategic move in that they can manipulate the use of personal pronouns to their advantage by deciding what to accept personal responsibility for, what their respective party is responsible for, and in what situations all three politicians (or parties) share equal responsibility. Also, the inherent ambiguity of *we* makes the pronoun a valuable rhetorical device since it is not always clear to the audience who the speakers are including in their reference.

Thirdly, all three politicians interacted with the audience. The analysis revealed that although only Cameron and, especially, Clegg made direct reference to the audience questioners by means of the singular *you*, all three made reference to the audience as a whole by means of the plural *you*. This arguably facilitated the establishment of a relationship with the audience as such reference includes them in the discourse making the statements valid to the audience as well as the politicians.

Individually, Cameron differed from his two opponents in that he repeatedly made linguistic choices in which he anticipated his own victory. This is evident both in relation to the first person singular *I*, where he occasionally used hypothetical situations in order to illustrate a reality in which he was prime minister, and in relation to the first person plural *we*, where he anticipated a new Conservative government. Accordingly, Cameron portrayed himself as a person certain of an imminent change in government. This certainty together with his lack of fear related to change could possibly have made a good impression on the audience, portraying himself as a safe, innovative, including person.

Clegg is particularly interesting considering his somewhat less prominent status as a potential candidate for the prime ministership (compared to Cameron and Brown) prior to the 2010 election campaign. However, the election outcome suggests that he made a good impression on the audience during the debates, which the analysis of pronouns reflects to

some extent. Clegg was actually the one who was the most frequent user of the first person singular *I*, and, in similarity with Cameron, he also frequently communicated opinions as personal opinions. However, his frequent use of all three politicians as referents of the first person plural *we* could arguably be seen as a strategic move. Considering that this gave him an opportunity to state his opinions as being valid to all three politicians, he might have avoided the possibility that the audience could perceive him as arrogant. Perhaps, because the audience was less familiar with Clegg than with his two opponents prior to the debates, it was easier for him to give a good impression of his personality and win the trust of the audience.

Brown differs from his two challengers: he and the Labour Party are the current holders of the executive power at the time of the debates. Accordingly, they are defenders of the desired position that the challengers are fighting for. It is evident that Brown believed that 'the best defence is a good offence'. This was reflected in the analysis of both first person singular *I* and first person plural *we*. Brown frequently uses *I* in connection with statements denoting his accomplishments as prime minister. Similarly, he frequently uses *we* in connection with statements denoting the achievements of the Labour government. Such references to past success and current initiatives to deal with ongoing problems could be seen as an attempt to win the trust of the people. However, the frequent attacks on Cameron, which was evident in relation to his use of *you* and *he*, gives the impression that Brown is unsure of his own status, and is thus dependent on making his challengers look bad in order to shine himself. Accordingly, he attempts to expose the weaker sides of his challenger. This insecurity is perhaps not a good basis for the establishment of a fruitful relationship with the audience.

Chapter 6: *Modality*

The subtlety of modal auxiliaries makes it difficult to judge whether the choice to use them is based on a conscious decision or not. Unlike overt comments such as ‘I think’ and ‘I believe’, modal auxiliaries provide an implicit way to express attitudes. Moreover, modal auxiliaries are very flexible and can be used to express many shades of meaning, which in turn can be exploited to the politicians’ advantage. Thus, an investigation of how the three politicians made use of modal auxiliaries in their argumentation is likely to offer insight into their persuasive techniques. As was mentioned in section 2.5, modality can express humility and conviction, which can be linked to personality and stance, and thus the ethos of the politician. Modal auxiliaries can be very useful in situations where the speaker is concerned to tread carefully. According to Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg (1998), ‘the historical past tense forms *could*, *might*, *should*, and *would* make the utterance sound even more detached from the moment of speaking than the forms *can*, *may*, *shall*, and *will* (p. 195). Therefore, the past forms tend to have implications of tentativeness or politeness. Especially *could*, *might* and *would* can be used in this sense to denote tentative permission, volition or possibility. In addition, they can mark hypothetical (or unreal) meaning (Quirk et al. 1985: 232-33).

Section 6.1 will give a brief account of the terminology that has been used to discuss and categorise occurrences of modal auxiliaries in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora. Furthermore, sections 6.2-6.4 will investigate the modal auxiliaries *may*, *might*, *can*, *could*, *must*, *shall*, *should*, *will* and *would*, as used by the three politicians during the leader debates. Accordingly, the investigation is limited to the central modals (Quirk et al. 1985: 137), which will exclude other expressions of modality in the three corpora. The occurrences of modal auxiliaries found in the three corpora will be presented and discussed separately. Finally, section 6.5 will summarise the findings in the three corpora and discuss these results in relation to the initial research questions.

6.1 Terminology

The terminology and meaning categories used in this chapter are taken from Quirk et al. (1985: 221), who divide modality into two types: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic modality concerns the exchange of goods and services as it involves ‘some kind of human control over events’ (Quirk et al. 1985: 219). Thus, modals denoting permission, obligation and volition fall into the category of intrinsic modality. Extrinsic modality, on the other hand, is

concerned with the exchange of information and, rather than involving human control over events, typically involve ‘human judgement of what is or is not likely to happen’ (Quirk et al. 1985: 219). Modals denoting possibility, necessity and prediction thus fall into the category of extrinsic modality. It is important to note that there are areas of neutrality and overlap between extrinsic and intrinsic modality, and also between the modals themselves. Figure 5 illustrates how Quirk et al. (1985) divide the modals into three groups based on their similarity of meaning and overlap.

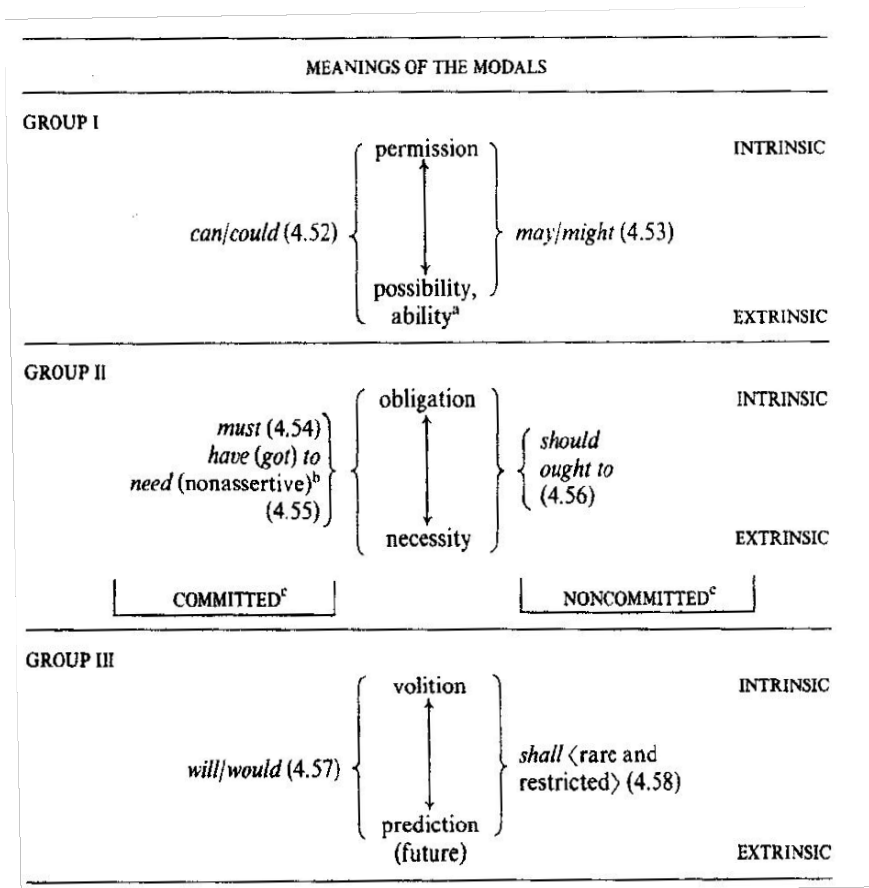


Figure 5: Meaning of the modals (Quirk et al. 1985: 221).

Group I consists of the modal auxiliary pairs *can/could* and *may/might*. It is worth noting that the root/epistemic distinction is regarded as a sub-categorisation of extrinsic modality in relation to these modals: while the ‘possibility’ meaning equals the root use of the modal, the ‘ability’ meaning is considered a special case of possibility in that ‘the possibility of an action is due to some skill or capability on the part of the subject referent’ (Quirk et al. 1985: 222). Accordingly, it is considered to be epistemic. In group II, a distinction is made between committed and non-committed modals. The two modal auxiliaries included in this group are *must* and *should*, that both express modalities of ‘obligation’ and ‘necessity’, though are

different degrees of speaker commitment to a proposition (Quirk et al. 1985: 227). Lastly, group III includes the modal auxiliary pair *will/would* and the rare auxiliary *shall*.

The results from the initial corpus search are presented in Table 21 and will form the basis for the following analysis.

	<i>May</i>	<i>Might</i>	<i>Can</i>	<i>Could</i>	<i>Must</i>	<i>Shall</i>	<i>Should</i>	<i>Will</i> ¹⁶	<i>Would</i> ¹⁷	Total
Cameron	-	-	132	30	10	-	72	62	102	408
Brown	5	3	112	10	6	-	30	135	64	365
Clegg	-	6	147	19	2	1	45	50	83	353

Table 21: The distribution of modal auxiliaries in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora (raw frequencies).

The table includes instances of contracted forms, i.e. *'ll* and *'d*, and contracted negation, i.e. *can't*, *cannot* and *won't*. By including these forms in the result, it was possible to present the complete numbers of modal auxiliaries used by each politician. Due to space and time limitations, it was decided to not distinguish the negated forms in the table, but rather draw on examples from the corpora if there were instances of negation that could shed light on noteworthy differences and similarities between the three politicians.

6.2 The modal auxiliaries used by David Cameron

All modal auxiliaries have been analysed according to the meaning categories set out in Figure 5. The following tables distinguish between types of intrinsic and extrinsic modality, and instances of usage that do not fall within either category, i.e. modal auxiliaries occurring in quotes.¹⁸ Such instances have been included in the tables in order to give a full account of auxiliary usage, however, they will not be considered in the discussion. Considering that the three politicians will be presented in separate sections, the various categories will mainly be explained in relation to the results from the Cameron corpus and will not be repeated for Brown and Clegg. The results from the analysis of modal auxiliaries in the Cameron corpus are presented in sections 6.2.1-6.2.5.

¹⁶ All instances including the negated contraction *won't* and the contracted form *'ll*.

¹⁷ All instances including the contracted form *'d*.

¹⁸ The categories are separated in the tables with a bold line.

6.2.1 *May and Might*

The search for *may* and *might* in the Cameron corpus revealed that Cameron did not make use of either modal auxiliary during the course of the three leader debates. The corpus search generated two occurrences of *may* with reference to the month of May that were excluded from the result.

(173) If you vote Conservative, you will get a new team running the country from **May** 7th. [DC international]

6.2.2 *Can and Could*

Can

Can occurs 132 times in the Cameron corpus. Out of the total number of occurrences there were 109 instances of *can*, 17 instances of *can't* and 6 instances of *cannot*. As previously mentioned, *can* is primarily used to express either possibility or permission.

	Possibility		Ability		Permission		Request		Quote	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cameron	21	15.9	91	68.9	15	11.4	1	0.8	4	3.0

Table 22: Categorisation of *can* in the Cameron corpus.

Table 22 shows that the majority of occurrences of *can* express ability, which is considered as special form of possibility (cf. section 6.1).

Possibility (extrinsic)

When *can* is used to express possibility, it can be paraphrased by ‘it is possible’ followed by an infinitive clause (Quirk et al. 1985: 222).

(174) Now, there is a big choice at this election: we **can** go on as we are, or we **can** say no, Britain can do much better; we can deal with our debts, we can get our economy growing and avoid this jobs tax, and we can build a bigger society. [DC domestic]

Paraphrase ...it is possible for us to go on as we are, or it is possible for us to say no...

According to Cameron in example (174), the people have a choice between two possibilities: to maintain the status quo or to make a change. The modal *can* indicates stronger speaker commitment to the proposition than the more tentative options *could* or *may/might*.

Can may also indicate future possibility, in which case it can be paraphrased by ‘it will be possible’ (Quirk et al. 1985: 222).

(175) If you vote Conservative, you know you **can** get fresh, new leadership, from a new team on May 7th, rather than being stuck with what we have now. [DC international]

Paraphrase It will be possible for you to get fresh, new leadership from a new team on May 7th...

Ability (extrinsic)

In situations where an action is due to some skill or capability on the part of the subject referent, the modal *can* expresses ability rather than possibility. In such cases, the utterance can be paraphrased by ‘be able to/be capable of/know how to’ (Quirk et al. 1985: 222).

Example (176) from the previous section also includes instances of *can* expressing ability.

(176) Now, there is a big choice at this election: we can go on as we are, or we can say no, Britain **can** do much better; we **can** deal with our debts, we **can** get our economy growing and avoid this jobs tax, and we **can** build a bigger society. [DC domestic]

Paraphrase ...Britain is able to do much better; we are capable of dealing with our debts, we know how to get our economy growing and avoid this jobs tax, and we are capable of building a bigger society.

Accordingly, Cameron first introduces two possible situations, which he follows up by presenting what he believes Britain and its people are capable of doing. Accordingly, he argues that the people should not ‘take the easy way out’ because they are afraid of not being capable of achieving the results they want, but rather trust in their own abilities and have the courage to vote for the Conservative Party that wants to make a change.

Permission (intrinsic)

When *can* is used to express permission, it is less formal than *may*. It can be paraphrased by ‘be allowed to’ (Quirk et al. 1985: 222) and is the least frequent meaning expressed with only 15 occurrences in the Cameron corpus.

(177) I also think when new countries join the European Union, that actually we should have transitional controls so they **can't** all come here at once. [DC domestic]

Paraphrase ...they are not allowed to come here all at once.

(178) First of all, **can** I thank you for what you do, and I join with Gordon in paying tribute to our forces. [DC domestic]

Paraphrase ...can I get your permission to thank you for what you do...

In (177), Cameron is talking about restricting the number of immigrants that are permitted into the country at any time. Thus, the expression of permission is aimed at immigrants.

Example (178) shows Cameron asking an audience member for permission to give thanks, which can be seen as a polite way of saying thank you.

Could

Could occurs 30 times in the Cameron corpus, out of which there were 25 instances of *could* and 5 instances of the negated form *couldn't*.

	Possibility		Ability		Permission		Hypothetical	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cameron	8	26.7	19	63.3	1	3.3	2	6.7

Table 23: Categorisation of *could* in the Cameron corpus.

Table 23 shows that *could* also expresses ability in most cases. According to Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg (1998) ‘*Could* is used in much the same way as *can*, but conveys a stronger sense of tact or tentativeness’ (p. 196). In some cases, *could* can also refer to past time.

Possibility (extrinsic)

Could is used to indicate either present or past possibility, and is often more tentative than *can* (Quirk et al. 1985: 222).

(179) A great vision where we build a bigger society, where we get our economy moving, where we stop Labour's jobs tax which **could** destroy that economy. [DC domestic]

Paraphrase ...it is possible for Labour to destroy that economy with their jobs tax.

(180) I even went to a drug rehab recently in my own constituency, and met a young man who told me that he committed a certain amount of crimes so he **could** get in front of a judge who **could** then get him a place in a residential rehab centre. [DC domestic]

Paraphrase ...so it was possible for him to get in front of a judge who was able to get him a place in a residential rehab centre.

In example (179), Cameron is tentatively suggesting that Labour makes bad decisions that possibly could be devastating for the British economy. Example (180) has expressions of both possibility and ability. The young man in Cameron's anecdote creates a possibility to get in front of a judge by breaking the law, and the judge has authority, which enables him or her to sentence the young man and put him in a residential rehab centre.

Ability (extrinsic)

Example (181) shows how a skill or capability on the part of the subject referent impacts the possibility of an action.

(181) We have got too many people who **could** work, who are offered work but who don't work. [DC domestic]

Paraphrase We have got too many people who are able to work...

Nevertheless, in this sentence Cameron argues that although people do have the ability and the opportunity to work they choose not to.

Permission (intrinsic)

There was only one instance of *could* expressing permission in the Cameron corpus.

(182) That could mean that some 600,000 people who are here illegally would actually be allowed to stay here and be given full citizenship, access to welfare and council housing, and **could** also bring a relative each into our country. [DC economy]

Paraphrase ... and also be allowed to bring a relative each into our country.

In this example, the meaning of permission is already expressed earlier in the sentence, which makes it reasonable to believe that the modal *could* also expresses similar meaning.

Hypothetical

The past tense modals can also be used in the hypothetical sense describing unreal situations or conditions (Quirk et al. 1985: 232). There were only two instances of *could* expressing hypothetical meaning in the Cameron corpus.

(183) I fear if we put them off, we **could** have a situation where we see interest rates rise, we see confidence taken out of our economy. [DC international]

Paraphrase If we could deal with this now, we do not have to see interest rates rise and confidence taken out of our economy.

When *could* is used to express a hypothetical situation, it indicates a potential situation that can develop if certain conditions are met.

6.2.3 *Must*

10 instances of *must* were found in the Cameron corpus. Out of the 10, there were only one example of the negated form *mustn't*.

	(Logical) Necessity		Obligation	
	N	%	N	%
Cameron	1	10.0	9	90.0

Table 24: Categorisation of *must* in the Cameron corpus.

Necessity (extrinsic)

When *must* expresses (logical) necessity, it ‘implies that the speaker judges the proposition expressed by the clause to be necessarily true, or at least to have a high likelihood of being true’ (Quirk et al. 1985: 225). Accordingly, the speaker draws a conclusion on the basis of what he already knows or has observed. There was only one such example in the Cameron corpus.

(184) We **must** be mad as a country not to get people into that residential rehab to get them to clean up their lives, so we cut the crime on our own streets. [DC domestic]

Paraphrase We have to be mad...

In example (184), Cameron points to a problem that can be dealt with, and draws the conclusion that the country necessarily is mad because of the fact that the problem has not been dealt with already.

Obligation (intrinsic)

When *must* expresses obligation, the speaker is exercising his authority. All instances of *must* expressing obligation in the Cameron corpus are found in relation to the collective pronoun *we*.

(185) Let me make one important point which is having learned the lesson of having to bail out the banks, I think the next lesson we **must** learn is we **must** not put ourselves in the position of having to bail out other European economies. [DC economy]

Paraphrase ...I think the next lesson we are obliged to learn is we are obliged to not put ourselves in the position of having to bail out other European economies.

Accordingly, it seems as though Cameron exercises his authority when telling the people what to do in order to underline the importance of his arguments, but includes himself in the group with the obligation by using *we*.

6.2.4 Shall and Should

Shall

The corpus search did not generate any results for *shall* in the Cameron corpus. For a presentation of the only instance of *shall* found in the Clegg corpus, see section 6.4.4.

Should

72 instances of *should* were found in the Cameron corpus, of which there were 60 instances of *should* and 12 instances of the contracted negation *shouldn't*.

	Obligation		Putative		Used in question		Quote	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cameron	48	66.7	16	22.2	6	8.3	2	2.8

Table 25: Categorisation of *should* in the Cameron corpus.

Obligation (intrinsic)

When *should* expresses obligation it also implies speaker authority, however, it implies more tentative authority than *must* (Quirk et al. 1985: 227).

(186) This whole agenda **should** be about putting power and control in people's hands, letting them do more, because if Britain's armies of carers gave up, that would cost our country £50 billion and actually would lead heartbreak for many people. [DC international]

Paraphrase It is recommended that this whole agenda is to be about putting power and control in people's hands...

In fact, unlike *must should* does not imply that the speaker has confidence that his recommendation will be carried out. Especially if used with the perfective aspect, which strongly implies that the recommendation has not been carried out despite the fact that it should have been carried out.

(187) We didn't have enough helicopters. We needed more helicopters. We **should have had** helicopters. [DC domestic]

Paraphrase If the recommendation had been followed, we would have had helicopters.

Putative (intrinsic)

Should is often used in *that*-constructions to convey a 'putative' situation, i.e. a situation that is recognised as possibly existing or coming into existence. The putative *should* is used 'when the matrix clause contain verbs, adjective or nouns that convey an emotional reaction or that express a necessity, plan or intention for the future' (Quirk et al. 1985: 1014).

(188) ... but we **think that** the NHS budget **should** grow in real terms, i.e., more than inflation, every year under a Conservative government. [DC domestic]

Paraphrase ...but we think that the NHS budget in a perfect world will grow in real terms...

6.2.5 Will and Would

Will

There were 65 instances of *will* found in the Cameron corpus. Three instances were examples of the compound noun 'political will', and were eliminated from the results. Out of the 62 remaining instances, there were 46 instances of *will*, 14 instances of the contracted form 'll and 5 instances of the negated contracted form *won't*.

	Prediction				Volition			
	Future		Habitual		Willingness		Intention	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cameron	30	48.4	13	21.0	5	8.1	14	22.5

Table 26: Categorisation of *will* in the Cameron corpus.

Prediction (extrinsic)

When *will* is used to express prediction, we can distinguish between three different sub-senses: future predictive, present predictive and habitual predictive. The most common sub-sense is the future predictive, which includes uses from a close to neutral future marker to the speaker's predictions for the future (Quirk et al. 1985: 229).

(189) ...because we simply don't know what the world **will** look like in 40 years time. [DC international]

(190) Talk to any carer, they **will** say the one thing I need is a break. [DC international]

There were also instances of the habitual predictive, which occurs in conditional sentences or in descriptions of personal characteristics (Quirk et al. 1985: 229), as illustrated in (191) and (192).

(191) If you vote Conservative, you **will** get a new team running the country from May 7th. [DC international]

(192) Well, I said very frankly, if it is a hung parliament, we **will** do our best to make it work. [DC international]

The present predictive sense of *will* is comparatively rare and expresses the likelihood of future events with a similar meaning to *must* in the 'logical necessity' sense. No such instances were found in the Cameron corpus.

Volition (intrinsic)

When *will* express volition, we can also distinguish between three sub-senses expressing the volitional range of the modal: 'weak volition'/willingness, 'median volition'/intention and 'strong volition'/insistence (Quirk et al. 1985: 229). The majority of occurrences of *will* in the Cameron corpus express intention, as in example (193).

(193) I would like to take this opportunity to say very clearly to any pensioner in the audience, anyone listening at home, that we **will** keep the free television license, we **will** keep the pension credit, we'**ll** keep the winter fuel allowance, we'**ll** keep the free bus pass. [DC international]

Paraphrase ...that we intend to keep the free television license, we intend to keep the pension credit, we intend to keep the winter fuel allowance, we intend to keep the free bus pass.

There were also a few occurrences of *will* expressing willingness, as in (194).

(194) It's my society, it's my country, I **will** elect some politicians, but I want to join with them to change the country and make it a better place. [DC international]

Paraphrase ...I am willing to elect some politicians...

Would

There were a total of 102 instances of the modal auxiliary *would* in the Cameron corpus, out of which there were 82 instances of *would*, 17 instances of the contracted form 'd and 3 instances of the negated form *wouldn't*.

	Prediction				Volition				Tentative volition	Hypo.		Question		
	Future		Habitual		Willingness		Intention			N	%	N	%	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cameron	39	38.2	10	9.8	2	2.0	13	12.7	30	29.4	5	4.9	3	2.9

Table 27: Categorisation of *would* in the Cameron corpus.

Prediction (extrinsic)

While (195) is an instance of future prediction, (196) is an instance of habitual prediction.

(195) That **would** actually help to get them going, the great businesses of tomorrow. [DC economy]

(196) If we were in the Euro now, your taxes, your National Insurance **would** not be going on hospitals and schools and police officers, it **would** be going to Greece and possibly other countries as well. [DC economy]

Volition (intrinsic)

There were two instances of *would* expressing willingness in the Cameron corpus.

(197) President Sarkozy of France, he stands up for France in Europe. Angela Merkel in Germany, she stands up for Germany in Europe. I **would** do exactly the same for Europe. [DC international]

Paraphrase I am willing to do exactly the same for Europe.

There were also 13 instances of *would* expressing volitional intention.

(198) One of the things the Liberal Democrats **would** want to do is actually take away Britain's seat on the United Nations Security Council and replace it with a European one. [DC international]

Paraphrase One of the things the Liberal Democrats intend to do is...

Tentative volition (intrinsic)

When *would* expresses tentative volition, it expresses an opinion or advice, and is often used in polite requests (Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg 1998: 202-3, Quirk et al. 1985: 233).

(199) What I **would** say to Graham very simply is we should have a very straightforward approach: we should say to people, if you can work, and if you want to work, we'll do everything we can to help you. [DC economy]

Paraphrase My advice to Graham very simply is we should have a very straightforward approach...

Hypothetical

There was also five instances of *would* used to describe a hypothetical situation, indicating what would happen if certain conditions are met.

(200) That's why I say one of the lessons to learn is let's stay out of the Euro, let's keep our own currency and let's recognise what a massive strategic error the Liberal Democrats **would** have made. [DC economy]

Paraphrase ...and let's recognise what a massive strategic error the Liberal Democrats would have made if they could decide.

6.2.6 Summary of modal meanings in the Cameron corpus

The total proportions of extrinsic and intrinsic modal auxiliaries in the Cameron corpus are presented in Table 28.

	TOTAL	Extrinsic modality		Intrinsic modality		Other	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Cameron	403	228	56.6	152	37.7	23	5.7

Table 28: Distribution of extrinsic and intrinsic modal meanings in the Cameron corpus.

It is evident from the table that Cameron uses modal auxiliaries with extrinsic meanings more frequently than with intrinsic meanings. Accordingly, he often pronounces his judgement of what is or is not likely to happen (cf. section 6.1). The expression of extrinsic meaning is especially frequent in relation to the modal auxiliary pair *can/could*. Both modals are frequently used to express ‘ability’ and ‘possibility’, and only occasionally to express ‘permission’. This indicates that Cameron had opinions about the level of ability inherent in the politicians and the public as well as the possibilities available to them. In relation to *must* and *should*, on the other hand, Cameron frequently used them to express intrinsic meaning, which rather involves human control over events (cf. section 6.1). Accordingly, Cameron used these modals to exercise his authority by imposing obligations upon himself and others. The modal auxiliary pair *will/would* most frequently expressed extrinsic modality, however, there were also frequent expressions of intrinsic modality. Interestingly, Cameron used *will/would* frequently to talk about future predictions (extrinsic) and intentional volition (intrinsic), which is natural in an electoral campaign. Accordingly, he judges what will happen in the future and declares his intentions. And because he has control over his own intentions, he can influence whether they should be realised or not.

The persistent use of *can/could* and complete lack of *may/might* indicates that Cameron avoids using tentative modals in favour of more certain modals. This could be a conscious decision made on the basis of a wish to portray himself as a reliable and confident person.

6.3 The modal auxiliaries used by Gordon Brown

The meanings of the various subcategories of extrinsic and intrinsic modality that were explained in relation to the results from the Cameron corpus will not be repeated in the presentation of the results from the Brown or Clegg corpora. The results from the analysis of modal auxiliaries in the Brown corpus are presented in sections 6.3.1-6.3.5.

6.3.1 *May* and *Might*

May

5 instances of *may* were found in the Brown corpus. All instances express possibility and there were no instances of *may* in relation to negation.

Possibility (extrinsic)

The possibility sense of *may* is different from the possibility sense of *can* in that it is paraphrased by ‘it is possible’ or ‘it may be’ followed by a *that*-clause rather than an infinitive clause. *May* expressing possibility can also be paraphrased by using the adverbs ‘perhaps’ or ‘possibly’ (Quirk et al. 1985: 223).

(201) People then say my health service **may** depend on how much resources Government is prepared to invest in the health service, then people say, yes, politics **may** make a difference. [GB international]

Paraphrase ... it may be that my health service depends on how much resources Government is prepared to invest in the health service... perhaps politics make a difference.

(202) I was really stuck with a number of questions, but particularly the one from Robert about the future of his healthcare trust and about the jobs that **may** be at risk. [GB domestic]

Paraphrase ... the future of his healthcare trust and about the jobs that possibly are at risk.

This is the most common meaning of *may*, i.e. ‘it denotes the possibility of a given proposition’s being or becoming true’ (Quirk et al. 1985: 223). Thus, examples (201) and (202) express the possibility of something that could become true.

Might

3 instances of *might* were found in the Brown corpus, all of which express possibility. Similar to *may*, none of the instances were in relation to negation.

Possibility (extrinsic)

(203) But if you then ask the question, ah, but my job **may** depend on decisions that are made by government, then people say, ah, I **might** be interested. [GB international]

Paraphrase ... it is possible that my job depends on decisions that are made by governments... Perhaps I am interested.

(204) Because Iran, you are saying, **might** be able to have a nuclear weapon, and you wouldn't take action against them, but you're saying we've got to give up our Trident submarines and our nuclear weapon now. [GB international]

Paraphrase It is possible that Iran is able to have a nuclear weapon...

Might can be used as a more tentative alternative to *may*. Accordingly, the alternate use of *may* and *might* in example (203) gives the impression of more speaker certainty in relation to the first proposition while the second proposition is a more tentative suggestion. Perhaps this is related to the first sentence being about government and the latter being about the people. In example (204), the modal functions to weaken the opponent's argument for getting rid of the Trident because its tentative nature implies that it is unlikely that Iran will ever be able to have nuclear weapons.

6.3.2 *Can* and *Could*

Can

112 instances of *can* were found in the Brown corpus, out of which there were 82 instances of *can*, 17 instances of *can't* and 13 instances of *cannot*.

	Possibility		Ability		Permission		Quote	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Brown	33	29.5	69	61.6	9	8.0	1	0.9

Table 29: Categorisation of *can* in the Brown corpus.

Possibility (extrinsic)

(205) The second thing we've got to do is give people the right to petition parliament so that your issues **can** be raised in parliament and that's what we propose to do. [GB domestic]

Paraphrase ...so that it will be possible for you to raise your issues in parliament...

(206) Get the decisions right now, and we **can** have secure jobs, we **can** have standards of living rising, and we **can** have everybody better off. [GB domestic]

Paraphrase ...and it will be possible for us to have secure jobs, to have standards of living rising, and to have everybody better off.

In both examples, *can* expresses future possibility. However, while (205) denotes Brown's plans for the future should he win the election, (206) denotes what could be a possible outcome of electing the Labour Party. It is worth noting that the repetition of *can* three times is regarded as a rhetorical device (cf. section 4.3), in which the politician puts emphasis on important information in order to make a persuasive statement.

Ability (extrinsic)

(207) It's the only way we **can** save jobs and businesses in this country now. [GB domestic]

Paraphrase It's the only way we are able to save jobs and businesses in this country now.

Although the example can be said to carry some sense of possibility, it has been analysed as an expression of ability because it also has a certain connection to abilities of the subject referent. In order to 'save' something there needs to be some kind of human involvement, and accordingly, the sense of *can* in (207) is considered to involve ability.

Permission (intrinsic)

Similar to the use of *can* expressing permission in the Cameron corpus, there were also instances in the Brown corpus related to immigration policy.

(208) No unskilled worker from outside Europe **can** now come into our country. [GB international]

Paraphrase No unskilled worker from outside Europe is now allowed into our country

Example (208) is about how the Labour Party has limited unwanted immigration by not permitting unskilled workers from outside Europe into Britain. Considering that *can* is a quite decisive modal, it also indicates that Brown is confident in his argumentation on this topic.

Could

10 instances of *could* were found in the Brown corpus, out of which there were 4 instances of the negated form *couldn't*.

	Possibility		Ability		Hypothetical	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Brown	2	20.0	7	70.0	1	10.0

Table 30: Categorisation of *could* in the Brown corpus.

Possibility (extrinsic)

There were only two instances of *could* expressing possibility in the Brown corpus.

(209) I will be honest with you, you cannot afford to take money out of the economy now because you will put jobs at risk, businesses at risk, and you put the whole recovery at risk. £6 billion out of the economy means lost jobs, it means lost businesses, it means lost growth. If you take that money out now, I fear for what **could** happen, and we do not want to have a double-dip recession in this country. [GB domestic]

Paraphrase ...I fear for what will possibly happen...

In (209), *could happen* refers back to the previous sentence where Brown lists the possible consequences of taking money out of the economy. It is an expression of future possibility and resembles a warning.

Ability (extrinsic)

(210) To support the economy when there was no private investment happening; to support people who were unemployed so we **could** keep unemployment down; to support mortgages so there were no mortgage repossessions like the 1990s. [GB domestic]

Paraphrase ...to support people who were unemployed so we were capable of keeping unemployment down...

(211) I think it was very interesting when David Cameron was asked, he **couldn't** give a guarantee that we are giving about the funding on schools, he **couldn't** give a guarantee about the funding on policing. And when it came to the National Health Service, he **couldn't** give the same personal guarantees that we're giving about cancer specialist care, about seeing a GP at the evenings and weekends. [GB domestic]

Paraphrase ...he was unable to give a guarantee that we are giving about the funding on schools, he was unable to give a guarantee about the funding on policing...he was unable to give the same personal guarantees that we're giving about cancer specialist care...

Example (210) is an example of *could* used as a past tense marker as well as an expression of ability. Example (211) shows how Brown is criticising Cameron's ability to make the same

guarantees in relation to funding as him. The fact that *couldn't* expresses ability rather than possibility is an attack on Cameron's person making it seem as if he lacks the ability to lead.

Hypothetical

There is only one instance of *could* expressing a hypothetical situation in the Brown corpus.

(212) Get the decisions wrong now, and we **could** have a double-dip recession. [GB economy]

Paraphrase If we do not make the right decisions now, we will have a double-dip recession.

In (212), *could* is an indication that what follows might happen if certain conditions are met, i.e. if they get the decisions wrong now.

6.3.3 Must

6 instances of *must* were found in the Brown corpus, out of which there was only one instance of the negated form *mustn't*. All instances of *must* express obligation.

Obligation (intrinsic)

(213) We **must** maintain the recovery and support it, and please let us not make the mistake of the 1930s and the 1980s and the 1990s, and let us support the economy until the recovery is assured. [GB economy]

Paraphrase We are obliged to maintain the recovery and support it...

(214) But I **must** say, I'm very worried about Nick's policy, because it sends a message to people all around the world, if you come to Britain there'll be some sort of amnesty that will allow you to come here freely in the end, without having to be thrown out of the country. [GB international]

Paraphrase But I have to say...

Example (213) expresses an obligation to do something. With the exception of example (214), all instances of *must* in the Brown corpus are examples of Brown imposing obligations upon people. In some instances, Brown uses *we* as subject and thus includes himself in the reference. However, there are also instances of subjects such as *the public*, in which Brown excludes himself from the reference and, by implication, the obligation. (214), on the other hand, differs in that it expresses obligation on the part of Brown himself considering the self-

reference in the beginning of the sentence. In addition, it rather seems like an example of a set phrase used to justify the following statement.

6.3.4 *Shall and Should*

Shall

There were no instances of the modal auxiliary *shall* in the Brown corpus.

Should

Should occurs 30 times in the Brown corpus, out of which 3 instances were the negated form *shouldn't*. In similarity with *must*, *should* expresses the same basic modalities of ‘necessity’ and ‘obligation’ though not expressing the speaker’s confidence in the occurrence of the event or state described.

	Tentative inference		Obligation		Putative		Hypothetical	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Brown	1	3.3	17	56.7	10	33.3	2	6.7

Table 31: Categorisation of *should* in the Brown corpus.

Tentative inference (extrinsic)

Unlike *must*, which is used to mark committed necessity (i.e. that the speaker judges a proposition to be necessarily true), *should* is used to mark non-committed necessity or tentative inference, i.e. that the speaker does not know if his statement is true, but tentatively concludes that it is true on the basis of whatever he knows (Quirk et al. 1985: 227). There was only one instance of *should* expressing tentative inference in the Brown corpus.

(215) I want to say to adults that there are 50,000 jobs available under the future jobs fund, so they **should** not be redundant for long either. [GB economy]

Paraphrase ...so they will not, as far as I know, be redundant for long either.

In (215), Brown makes a conclusion on the basis of what he knows. Thus, he cannot now if his statement is true or not, but tentatively infer that so is the case.

Obligation (intrinsic)

As previously mentioned, *should* can express speaker authority, although it does not necessarily imply that the speaker has confidence that the recommendation will be carried out.

(216) It's, once again, the Conservative Party concealing something that either they **should** either tell us, or they **should** just say they're not going to do it properly. [GB economy]

Paraphrase ...that they are obliged to either tell us or just say they're not going to do it properly.

There were also instances of *should* used together with the perfective aspect, which typically has a stronger implication that the recommendation has not been carried out.

(217) It was got rid of in the past, it **should not have been** got rid of. [GB international]

Paraphrase ...it should not have been got rid of, but it was.

Accordingly, the difference between the strength of implication can be seen in the two examples above. In (216), Brown makes a recommendation to the Conservative Party, though he cannot be certain whether or not they are going to carry out this recommendation, while in (217) it is clear that decisions have been made that go against what was recommended.

Putative (intrinsic)

In example (218), *should* is used in a zero that-clause expressing a necessity.

(218) I honestly **think** we **should** raise the standard of debate here. [GB domestic]

Paraphrase I honestly think it is necessary that we raise the standard of debate here.

Accordingly, Brown expresses the need to raise the standard of debate so that they do not continue to debate in a similar fashion as they are currently doing.

Hypothetical

There were also two instances of *should* expressing hypothetical meaning in the Brown corpus.

(219) If your MP is misbehaving and is guilty of corrupt practices and parliament doesn't act, you **should** have the right to recall that MP. [GB domestic]

In (219), Brown is explaining what the people should be able to do if a situation like the one he is describing should occur.

6.3.5 *Will and Would*

Will

There were a total of 135 instances of the modal auxiliary *will* in the Brown corpus, out of which 106 instances were the base form *will*, 23 instances were the contracted form *'ll* and 6 instances were the negated contracted form *won't*.

	Prediction				Volition				Quote		Question	
	Future		Habitual		Willingness		Intention		N	%	N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%				
Brown	66	48.9	11	8.1	20	14.8	33	24.4	1	0.7	4	3.0

Table 32: Categorisation of *will* in the Brown corpus.

Prediction (extrinsic)

The majority of instances of *will* in the Brown corpus express predictions about the future. This is explicit in (220) where the adverbial 'in future' is inserted before the utterance containing the modal.

(220) Now, in future, it **will** be free of charge. [GB domestic]

There were also some instances of habitual prediction, especially in relation to conditional clauses, as in (221).

(221) That's why I want to give a guarantee to every young person under 25 that if they're unemployed for a few months, they **will** get a job. [GB economy]

Volition (intrinsic)

There were some instances of *will* expressing willingness in the Brown corpus.

(222) I **will** be honest with you, you cannot afford to take money out of the economy now because you will put jobs at risk, businesses at risk, and you put the whole recovery at risk. [GB domestic]

Paraphrase I am willing to be honest with you...

(223) These are personal guarantees written into the NHS constitution that we **will** give.

Paraphrase ...that we are willing to give.

In (222), Brown gives the impression that it is about willingness when a politician is telling the truth, as if the opposite is the norm. (223) could also be an example of intention; however, there is an indication of willingness also behind this statement. As if going through with it is something they do not have to do unless they are willing to. It is interesting to note that all instances of *won't* in the Brown corpus refers to his two opponents lack of willingness to do something, as in (224).

(224) What David is not telling you is that while we're using the National Insurance to pay for health, policing and schools, he **won't** give the guarantee on policing in schools... [GB domestic]

Paraphrase ...he is not willing to give the guarantee on policing in schools...

Two instances of *will* expressing intention are illustrated in example (225).

(225) The Liberals **will** cut child tax credits and so **will** the Conservatives. [GB economy]

Paraphrase The Liberals intent to cut child tax credits and the Conservatives has the same intentions.

Would

There were a total of 64 instances of the modal auxiliary *would* in the Brown corpus, out of which 57 instances were the base form *would*, 5 instances were the contracted form 'd and 2 instances were the negated form *wouldn't*.

	Prediction				Volition				Tentative volition		Hypo.		Question	
	Future		Habitual		Willingness		Intention		N	%	N	%	N	%
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%							
Brown	24	37.5	4	6.2	4	6.2	9	14.1	17	26.6	5	7.8	1	1.6

Table 33: Categorisation of *would* in the Brown corpus.

Prediction (extrinsic)

Would is also used to express future predictions and habitual predictions in the Brown corpus, as in (226) and (227).

(226) I think that **would** be a wrong policy for this reason. It **would** encourage people to come to this country, thinking that at some point we would legalise their presence. [GB international]

(227) I know that if things stay where they are, perhaps in eight days' time, David Cameron, perhaps supported by Nick Clegg, **would** be in office. [GB economy]

Although Brown uses both *will* and *would* in much the same way, the more tentative option *would* indicates less speaker certainty than *will*.

Volition (intrinsic)

(228) David also wants to charge for nursery education, at the same time he wants to cut the schools budget which we **would** continue to finance, and therefore, he's making the people who are the poorest pay the cost of his policies, while he's still got this ridiculous policy on inheritance tax. [GB economy]

Paraphrase ...which we intend to continue to finance...

(229) I believe too that policing would be at risk from a Conservative government, because they have not said they **would** match us on policing either. [GB economy]

Paraphrase ...because they have not said they are willing to match us on policing either.

In (228), Brown is comparing his own party and their intentions with Cameron's, trying to make his party seem a more attractive choice than his opponent. The same could be said for (229), in which the meaning of *could* denotes willingness rather than intention.

Tentative volition (intrinsic)

Several instances of *would* expressing tentative opinion or advice (Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg 1998: 202) were found in the Brown corpus.

(230) I **would** recommend people if they can to use this form of energy because it allows us to heat our water in a way that is far more environmentally friendly. [GB international]

Paraphrase I advise people to use this form of energy if they can because...

In this way, the speaker is able to express his opinions without coming off as too conclusive or definite. Rather, the audience might experience the politician as humble when expressing his beliefs.

Hypothetical

Lastly, there were a few instances of *would* used in hypothetical situations, as in (231).

(231) David, I had to nationalise Northern Rock, and we had also to take over the Royal Bank of Scotland, and Halifax, Lloyd's TSB, and the reason we did so was to save the savings and deposits of families throughout the country, if we hadn't done that then the banks **would** have collapsed. [GB economy]

6.3.6 Summary of modal meanings in the Brown corpus

The total proportions of extrinsic and intrinsic modal auxiliaries in the Brown corpus are presented in Table 34.

	TOTAL	Extrinsic modality		Intrinsic modality		Other	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Brown	359	225	62.7	119	33.1	15	4.2

Table 34: Distribution of extrinsic and intrinsic modal meanings in the Brown corpus.

There were an even larger proportion of modal auxiliaries expressing extrinsic modality in the Brown corpus than in the Cameron corpus (cf. Table 28). This could be seen in relation to the fact that Brown is the one of the three that by far uses *will* most frequently, and mostly to express extrinsic meaning. Brown frequently makes reference to future predictions when using *will* and *would*. However, he also uses both modals to express volitional intention, and *would* to express tentative volition.

Brown differs in that he is the only one that makes use of the modal auxiliary pair *may/might*, though only to express extrinsic meaning: all instances of *may/might* in the Brown corpus express possibility. Regardless of these instances, Brown makes frequent use

of *can/could* with the meaning ‘ability’ and ‘possibility’, but also ‘permission’ to some extent.

In relation to *must* and *should*, all instances express obligation with one exception of tentative volition. Thus, these modals are mostly used with intrinsic meaning.

It is evident that though Brown makes use of *may* and *might*, for the most part, he avoids such tentative modals. Furthermore, his use of *will* in relation to future predictions, indicates that he talks a lot about how things will be in the future.

6.4 The modal auxiliaries used by Nick Clegg

The results from the analysis of modal auxiliaries in the Clegg corpus are presented in sections 6.4.1-6.4.5.

6.4.1 *May* and *Might*

A search for *may* in the Clegg corpus generated only one hit with reference to the month of May rather than to the modal auxiliary. Accordingly, it was eliminated from the results.

Might

6 instances of *might* were found in the Clegg corpus. All of them express possibility.

(232) They **might** not help you, Anna, and your family, but the more housing you get in supply, the easier it is for everybody. [NC economy]

Paraphrase It is possible that they will not help you, Anna, and your family...

(233) You **might** be able to do one of those things. You can't do all three. [NC domestic]

Paraphrase It may be that you are able to do one of those things. You can't do all three.

Might is often preferred as a tentative alternative to *may* as a modal of epistemic possibility. It is fully possible to replace *might* in each of the examples above with *may* while keeping the same meaning, i.e. ‘It **may** be controversial...’. However, it could change the audience’s impression of the speaker’s level of confidence.

6.4.2 *Can and Could*

Can

147 instances of *can* were found in the Clegg corpus. There were 104 instances of *can*, 38 instances of the negated form *can't* and 5 instances of *cannot*.

	Possibility		Ability		Permission		Request		Quote	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Clegg	11	7.5	120	81.6	13	8.8	1	0.7	2	1.4

Table 35: Categorisation of *can* in the Clegg corpus.

Possibility (extrinsic)

(234) How **can** all pupils in our schools feel they're being supported and getting the best out of education? [NC domestic]

Paraphrase How is it possible that all pupils in our school...

(235) Don't let anyone tell you this time it **can't** be different. It **can**. [NC international]

Paraphrase Don't let anyone tell you that it is not possible for it to be different this time. It is possible.

Similar to both Cameron and Brown, there are fewer instances of *can* expressing possibility in the Clegg corpus than *can* expressing ability. In (234), the modal is used in an interrogative sentence, which most likely has the function of a rhetorical question (cf. section 4.4). Example (235), on the other hand, is a declarative sentence where Clegg is stating that change is potentially possible.

Ability (extrinsic)

The overwhelming majority of instances of *can* in the Clegg corpus express ability.

(236) Whether it is on the questions from Alan on care, Jacqueline on crime, Helen on politics, Joel on schooling, Robert on the deficit, I believe we **can** answer all of those questions. [NC domestic]

Paraphrase ...I believe that we are able to answer all of those questions.

(237) You **can't** undo the tragedies of the past, but you **can** be open about them so people **can** start to move on. [NC economy]

Paraphrase You are unable to undo the tragedies of the past, but you are able to be open about them so it is possible for people to start moving on.

In (236), Clegg refers back to issues that have been aired during the debates and states that the politicians should be able to give them answers to their questions. This is considered ability rather than possibility as the act of providing answers to a question is due to inherent skills on the part of the subject referent. In the second example, there are examples of both ability and possibility. The abilities of the subject referent are what make something possible for others.

Permission (intrinsic)

There was also an instance of *cannot* used with emphasis for rhetorical purposes (cf. section 4.3.1) in the Clegg corpus, as can be seen in example (238).

(238) So, if we do this again, we **cannot, cannot, cannot** allow eight years to elapse, which is what's happened, until proper equipment is finally been provided to our very, very courageous servicemen and servicewomen. [NC international]

Nevertheless, it is difficult to determine the meaning of *cannot* in this sentence. It is unlikely to be an example of possibility or ability, as it is not making something possible or being connected to personal abilities. It rather seems to be an example of not permitting something, or an encouragement to not allow history to repeat itself.

(239) **Can** I go back to Mary's question, which is about people feeling switched off from politics. [NC international]

Paraphrase Am I allowed to go back to Mary's question...

In the last example, *can* is used in an interrogative sentence to ask for permission. It should be noted that this was not the only instance of such constructions in the Clegg corpus. In total, there were 5 instances of *can* used to ask permission. Accordingly, Clegg is being particularly polite while structuring his own arguments, which in turn could be beneficial for the audiences' impression of him and his personality (ethos).

Could

19 instances of *could* was found in the Clegg corpus. There was only one instance of the negated *couldn't*.

	Possibility		Ability		Hypothetical	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Clegg	8	42.1	7	36.8	4	21.1

Table 36: Categorisation of *could* in the Clegg corpus.

Possibility (extrinsic)

This is the only occasion in which there is a majority of *can/could* expressing possibility rather than ability.

(240) I think then we **could** make this election one of the most exciting elections we have had in a very long time. [NC international]

Paraphrase Then, I think it will be possible for us to make this election...

Ability (extrinsic)

(241) Where is Radley? I **could** hear his voice...ah, there you are. [NC economy]

Paraphrase I was able to hear his voice...

(242) I'm acutely aware I don't do enough, I'm like many, many people, I wish I **could** and would do more. [NC international]

Paraphrase ...I wish I were able and willing to do more.

In (241), *could* is used in relation to a human capability, namely hearing, and is thus considered to be an expression of ability rather than possibility. Similarly, (242) is analysed as ability because of the relationship with the other modal in the same sentence *would*, which is analysed as willingness. If someone wishes they were willing to do something, it is reasonable to think that their lack of willingness could be due to lack of capability rather than possibility alone.

Hypothetical

There were also instances of *could* denoting a hypothetical situation, as in (243).

(243) We already **could** have had that law, people already **could** have had the right to sack corrupt MPs. Labour MPs voted against it. Conservative MPs didn't turn up. [NC domestic]

Paraphrase If Labour had not voted against it and Conservative MPs had turned up, we could have had that law and people could have had the right to sack corrupt MPs.

6.4.3 *Must*

There were only 2 instances of *must* in the Clegg corpus, one expressing obligation and one expressing necessity. Neither contained negation.

Necessity (extrinsic)

(244) I just feel sorry for Adina who **must** be completely lost by all this political points scoring. [NC economic]

Paraphrase ...who necessarily is completely lost because of all this political points scoring.

In (244), Clegg draws a conclusion based on known facts: he comments on the fact that he thinks the politicians present at the debate are preoccupied with scoring points with the public rather than focusing on politics. He expresses that this preoccupation is necessarily making Adina confused rather than answering her questions.

Obligation (intrinsic)

(245) As it happens, I agree – I think we all **must** agree on the points about investing in new technologies, investing in our young people. [NC economic]

Paraphrase ...I think we all are obliged to agree on the points about investing in new technologies, investing in our young people.

In (245), on the other hand, Clegg is insisting that all politicians are obliged to agree on certain points that will benefit the young people in Britain.

6.4.4 *Shall and Should*

Shall

In present-day English, *shall* is rare compared to the other modal auxiliaries. Recognising the infrequency of *shall*, Quirk et al. (1985) argue that there are only two uses of the auxiliary

that can be considered generally current: it can be used instead of *will* to mark the neutral future or signal volitional meaning (p. 229-30). Similarly, Hasselgård, Johansson, and Lysvåg (1998) note that *shall* does not have an epistemic meaning and is only used in restricted contexts in present-day English (p. 199).¹⁹

There was only one instance of *shall* in the Clegg corpus, which was used to express volitional meaning.

(246) **Shall** I tell you how we pay for it? [NC domestic]

Such uses of *shall* consult the wishes of the addressee and thus it moves from a volitional towards an obligational meaning, which makes it suitable for making offers (Quirk et al. 1985). And it is precisely what Clegg seems to be doing; he is making an offer to give an account of how the Liberal Democrats plan to finance their proposed tax cut.

Should

Should occurs 45 times in the Clegg corpus, out of which there were 12 instances of the negated form *shouldn't*.

	Obligation		Putative		Hypothetical	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Clegg	23	51.1	18	40.0	4	8.9

Table 37: Categorisation of *should* in the Clegg corpus.

Obligation (intrinsic)

(247) I think they **should** pay you back because you, the taxpayer, have bailed them out, and use that money to deal with the black hole in the finances. [NC Domestic]

Paraphrase I think they are obliged to pay you back...

(248) That's why, as the Governor of the Bank of England says as well, many people are increasingly saying, we **should** split up the banks between investment banking on the one hand and high street banking on another. [NC economy]

Paraphrase ...many people are increasingly saying, it is advisable that we split up the banks...

¹⁹ A search for *shall* in the BNC generated 19,505 hits. It most frequently appears in fiction, spoken language and academic texts, and least frequently in magazines and newspapers.

The two examples show two expressions of obligation that differ slightly from each other, which is evident in the paraphrased sentences. There seems to be a stronger degree of commitment in (247) than in (248). Accordingly, the first can be seen as obligation while the other resembles advice.

Putative (intrinsic)

(249) is another example of a zero that-clause expressing putative meaning.

(249) And the third thing I would do, all these empty flats we see in our city centres, built for one - people... person, I think they **should** be converted into the homes that people need for young families, like yours. [NC economy]

Paraphrase ...in a perfect world, I think they are converted into the homes that people need...

Hypothetical

In both examples, the consequences of a potential situation are outlined and thus represent a hypothetical situation.

(250) So, from that principle, if we need to do that again, we **should**. [NC international]

(251) And if they **shouldn't** be here, of course they **should** be deported. [NC economy]

6.4.5 Will and Would

Will

There were a total of 50 instances of the modal auxiliary *will* in the Clegg corpus, out of which there were 32 instances of *will*, 11 instances of the contracted form *'ll* and 7 instances of the negated contracted form *won't*.

	Prediction				Volition			
	Future		Habitual		Willingness		Intention	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Clegg	29	58.0	9	18.0	9	18.0	3	6.0

Table 38: Categorisation of *will* in the Clegg corpus.

Prediction (extrinsic)

(252) We need to be frank about the cuts that **will** be needed, so we can protect things like schools and hospitals. [NC economy]

(253) Now, if you just ignore it, they **will** carry on living in the shadow of our economy. [NC international]

Example (252) contains *will* expressing future prediction. Accordingly, it denotes an action that will happen in the future. Example (253) is a conditional clause with *will* expressing habitual prediction.

Volition (intrinsic)

(254) What I'm suggesting - I don't know whether Gordon Brown and David Cameron **will** take up this invitation - is that regardless of the outcome of the general election, that we get the Chancellor and the shadow Chancellors together, the governor of the Bank of England, the head of the Financial Services Authority, to come clean with you about how big this structural deficit is. [NC domestic]

Paraphrase ...I don't know whether Gordon Brown and David Cameron are willing to take up this invitation...

(255) We've set out clearly not only what we **will** do, but how we **will** pay for it. [NC domestic]

Paraphrase We've set out clearly not only what we intend to do, but how we intend to pay for it.

In (254), *will* expresses volitional willingness on the part of Clegg's opponents Cameron and Brown. There are two instances of *will* expressing volitional intention in (255).

Would

There were a total of 83 instances of the modal auxiliary *would* in the Clegg corpus. There were 70 instances of *would*, 9 instances of the contracted form 'd and 4 instances of the negated form *wouldn't*.

	Prediction				Volition				Tentative volition		Hypothetical		Question	
	Future		Habitual		Intention		Willingness		N	%	N	%	N	%
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%							
Clegg	29	34.9	3	3.6	11	13.3	4	4.8	26	31.3	8	9.6	2	2.4

Table 39: Categorisation of *would* in the Clegg corpus.

Prediction (extrinsic)

(256) I think the regional approach that we're putting forward, which **would** be a major innovation, they do it in Canada, they do it in Australia, it **would** be a major innovation here, which I think **would** restore public confidence in an immigration where people feel it's complete chaos. [NC domestic]

(257) If you changed it to a plane tax, you **would** make a dramatic difference in cutting down on unnecessary aviation pollution. [NC international]

Similar to the findings in relation to *will*, there are many instances of *would* expressing future prediction. In (256) alone, there are three examples. (257) is a conditional sentence with *would* expressing habitual prediction.

Volition (intrinsic)

(258) I've been very upfront, dealing obviously with the fiscal deficit, we've been much more open about how we **would** do that than the other two parties. [NC international]

Paraphrase ...we've been much more open about how we intend to do that than the other two parties.

In (258), Clegg is talking about how the Liberals Democrats have been open about their intentions of how to deal with the fiscal deficit.

Tentative volition (intrinsic)

(259) I **would** argue we should stay in, not because it's perfect but because it's in our interests to do so. [NC international]

Paraphrase My opinion is that we should stay in...

There were many instances of *would* expressing tentative volition, i.e. tentative opinion or advice, as can be seen in example (259).

Hypothetical

(260) What **would** have been a con **would** be to have a referendum on one individual treaty, which, even if we'd had the referendum, and then we'd rejected the treaty, **would** have allowed, Christopher, the European Union to carry on exactly as before. [NC international]

Paraphrase It is a con if a referendum is held on one individual treaty, which, even if we have the referendum and reject the treaty, allows the European Union to carry on exactly as before.

Like with many of the other modal auxiliaries, there were also instances of hypothetical meaning found in relation to *would* in the Clegg corpus.

6.4.6 Summary of modal meanings in the Clegg corpus

The total proportions of extrinsic and intrinsic modal auxiliaries in the Clegg corpus are presented in Table 40.

	TOTAL	Extrinsic modality		Intrinsic modality		Other	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Clegg	346	219	63.3	106	30.6	21	6.0

Table 40: Distribution of extrinsic and intrinsic modal meanings in the Clegg corpus.

The smallest number of modal auxiliaries overall was found in the Clegg corpus. Clegg was also the one of the three with the highest percentage of modals expressing extrinsic modality, and thus also the one with the lowest percentage of modals expressing intrinsic modality.

Notably, Clegg used *can* remarkably more frequently than all the other modal auxiliaries found in the corpus. The majority of these instances express ability, and are mostly used in connection with the pronouns *we*, *you* and *I*.

6.5 Modal auxiliary use in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora compared

The analysis has revealed that there are differences in terms of modal auxiliary use in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora. Firstly, there is a notable difference in the overall

frequency of use between the Cameron corpus and the two other corpora, with approximately 50 more modal auxiliaries in the Cameron corpus compared with the Brown corpus and the Clegg corpus. Secondly, there is a difference in which modal auxiliaries the various politicians make use of and which modals they prefer. A closer description of these will follow in the next paragraphs.

Considering the meanings of the modals outlined in Figure 5, the two sets of modal auxiliaries that can be used to express permission and possibility (ability) is *may/might* and *can/could*. However, the results of the analysis revealed that there was a clear preference among all three politicians to use *can/could* over *may/might*. In fact, there were no instances of neither *may* nor *might* in the Cameron corpus (cf. section 6.2.1). Similarly, no instances of *may* was found in the Clegg corpus, but the analysis revealed six instances of *might*. The only politician that made use of both *may* and *might*, though to a limited extent, was Brown. A search in the BNC generated 13 and 6 instances of *may* and *might* per 10,000 words compared to 3 instances of *may* and 2 instances of *might* per 10,000 words in the Brown corpus, and 3 instances of *might* per 10,000 words in the Clegg corpus. Accordingly, the politicians make use of these two pronouns to a lesser extent than what could be considered a normal distribution. Furthermore, sections 6.3.1 and 6.4.1 show that all instances of *may* and *might* in the Brown and Clegg corpora were expressions of possibility. Neither of the politicians used *may* or *might* to express permission.

Sections 6.2.2, 6.3.2 and 6.4.2 dealt with the modal auxiliary pair *can* and *could*. As mentioned, they can be used to express similar meanings as *may* and *might*, and *can* is notably the preferred choice among all three politicians. Actually, *can* is the most frequent modal auxiliary overall in both the Cameron and Clegg corpora. Compared to the results from a search in the BNC, the politicians use of *can* and *could* during the debate deviates to a great extent from what could be considered normal: while *can* and *could* occur approximately 23 and 16 times per 10,000 words in the BNC, *can* occurs 80, 67 and 86 times per 10,000 words and *could* occurs 18, 6, 11 times per 10,000 words in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora. Some of this overuse can be explained in terms of a compensation for the politicians' underuse of *may* and *might*. There are examples of *can* expressing possibility, ability and permission in all three corpora, and the ability sense is the most frequent overall. *Could* is primarily used to express possibility and ability, except for one instance of permission in the Cameron corpus. The fact that *could* carries a more tentative meaning than *can* may contribute to explain why it is less frequent in all three corpora.

Sections 6.2.3, 6.3.3 and 6.4.3 presented the analysis of *must*, which can express either obligation or necessity. In Figure 5, *must* is presented as a committed modal auxiliary meaning that the speaker exercises his authority and is fully committed to his statement. Accordingly, it is a modal that carries a great degree of certainty, which perhaps is not always compatible with political persuasion. Neither of the politicians uses this modal auxiliary very frequently. The highest number of occurrences was found in the Cameron corpus, in which it occurred 10 times. *Must* is used to express obligation in almost all cases, except for two instances where it was used to express necessity. It should be noted that other expressions can be used to express modality, e.g. the semi-modals *need to* and *have (got) to* (Johansson 2009), however, these have not been included in the present investigation.

Sections 6.2.4, 6.3.4 and 6.4.4 examined the modal auxiliary pair *shall* and *should*. *Shall* is considered to be an infrequent and rare auxiliary in present day English, and only occurred once in the Clegg corpus. *Should* can be used to express similar meanings as *must*, although it expresses less speaker confidence than *must*. Almost every occurrence of *should* express either obligation or putative meaning except for one instance of tentative inference in the Brown corpus.

Finally, sections 6.2.5, 6.3.5 and 6.4.5 dealt with the modal auxiliary pair *will* and *would*. This was the only pair in which one of the politicians has a different distribution between the two modals than his opponents: i.e. there were more occurrences of *will* than *would* in the Brown corpus, while there were more occurrences of *would* than *will* in the Cameron and Clegg corpora. In fact, *will* is the most frequent modal overall in the Brown corpus, which is a result of an extensive use of future reference. *Will* and *would* is used almost equally to express prediction, volition and tentative volition in all three corpora.

The overall distribution of extrinsic and intrinsic expressions of modality in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora is presented in Figure 6.

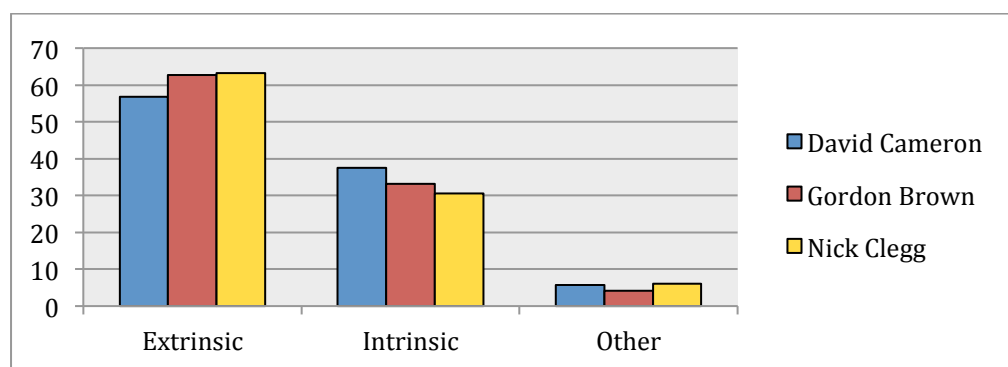


Figure 6: Extrinsic vs Intrinsic modality, distribution in percentage.

It is evident that all three politicians favour the extrinsic meaning of modal auxiliaries (i.e. modals denoting possibility and prediction), and thus the exchange of information over goods and services. This is also evident if one looks at the distribution between the various meaning categories discussed in this chapter, as illustrated in Figure 7.

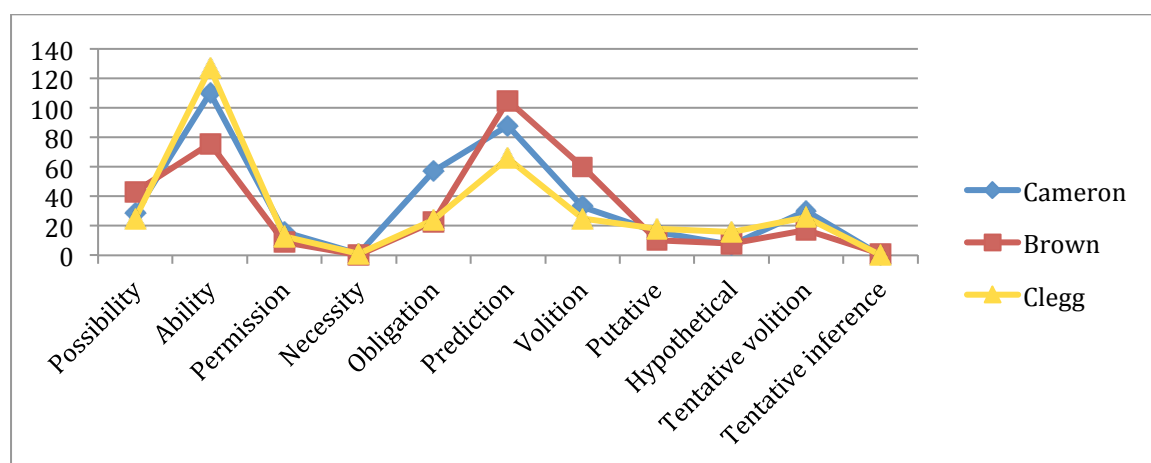


Figure 7: The various meaning categories, distribution in raw frequencies.

It should be noted that although the three politicians vary in terms of frequency, the lines in Figure 7 peak at the same places suggesting a similar pattern of use between the politicians. It was mentioned earlier in this section that *can* occurred more frequently in the Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora than in the BNC. Seeing this in relation to the distributions presented in Figure 7 it is possible to draw a link between the politicians' use of modal auxiliaries and the purpose of their political arguments. Politicians want to show the public what must be done (necessity/obligation) in order to improve the current situation. As Figure 7 shows, obligation is expressed more frequently than necessity, and especially in the Cameron corpus. Furthermore, politicians want to show what they can (possibility/ability) do and what their opponents cannot or won't do. Again, this is reflected in Figure 7 as all three politicians frequently express ability, Cameron and Clegg especially. Lastly, politicians talk about what will (prediction) happen after the election, both if the electorate choose to vote for them but also if the electorate choose to vote for their opponents. Notably, all three lines mark a peak above prediction in Figure 7, indicating that all three politicians, and Brown especially, talks about the effects of the election. Accordingly, one can argue that there is a connection between the situational context, i.e. electoral debates, and the rhetorical purpose and usage of modal auxiliaries, which seems to be very similar for all three politicians.

Chapter 7: *Conclusion*

The aim of this study was to investigate what similarities and differences could be found in the language of David Cameron, Gordon Brown and Nick Clegg at the 2010 leader debates. It was interesting to look at language as a source of information for why the election ended the way it did considering the fact that the 2010 election, which saw the introduction of election debates, had an unusual outcome compared to previous elections. This has been a contrastive study that has compared three politicians, as represented in three corpora of statements, each consisting of one politician's contribution to the debates and containing approximately 16,500 words. Considering that persuasion can only be accomplished through interpersonal interaction, the study has focused on the interpersonal relationship between speaker and audience. Within the limitations of a master's thesis, it is not possible to conduct a full investigation of all rhetorical or linguistic devices used during the three election debates nor their full effect on the audience. For that reason, it was necessary to select some devices for investigation that potentially could uncover some of the differences and similarities that existed in the vocabulary of the three politicians. It is important to keep in mind that a more thorough investigation is necessary to draw more reliable conclusions, however, the analysis did reveal some tendencies that could be interesting in relation to the election outcome.

After having read the debate transcripts in full, I was left with the impression that there were some noteworthy differences between Cameron, Brown and Clegg in the way that they expressed themselves. It did not surprise me that the newspapers had announced Clegg as the obvious winner of the first debate (Wintour and Curtis 2010). He offered a new and fresh alternative to the two 'old' parties, which was well received by the public according to the opinion polls. The announced loser was Brown, who arguably had the worst performance of the three. His vocabulary is messy and at times not even comprehensible, and examples of this sloppiness were evident in some of the examples presented in the analysis.

Chapter 4 gave a brief account of some rhetorical devices: figurative language, contrastive pairs, three-part lists, rhetorical questions and elements of feminine rhetoric style and how these are used in the three corpora. Both metaphors and contrastive pairs involve a simplification of the state of affairs, and can thus be effective when describing complex political matters to an audience. Furthermore, contrastive pairs allow the politician to compare and contrast two opposing elements while also making it clear to the audience which of the two elements he believes is the right one, which the investigation revealed the

politicians utilised to a similar extent. The analysis revealed that Clegg was a frequent user of conceptual metaphors, while also creating imagery to strengthen his arguments. Accordingly, Clegg used figurative language and imagery to evoke emotions (pathos) in the audience, which could help their understanding and appreciation for his argument.

Lists of three are deeply rooted in our western culture and thus the rhetorical use of three-part lists has persuasive potential as it speaks to inherent cultural emotions in the audience. Such lists occurred most frequently in the Brown corpus, however, they were not solely instances of convincing argumentation. Brown, as well as Cameron, mostly used lists that included a modification of repetition, and the element of repetition (parallelism) is likely to appeal to an audience. The majority of three-part lists in the Clegg corpus consisted of three individual arguments with no repetition. Accordingly, the use of lists has the potential to evoke an emotional response (pathos) in the audience, although it should be noted that the validity and strength of arguments within such lists are important for the realisation of its persuasive potential. Thus, weak argumentation in the form of three part lists can possibly be damaging for the audience's perception of the politicians' personality and stance (ethos).

Rhetorical questions are effective in that their interrogative form naturally sharpens the minds of the listener as they prepare themselves to provide an answer to a question. However, the function of rhetorical questions is to *give* information rather than *demanding* information, which can have a powerful effect on the audience who's brains are now susceptible to political influence. This technique, often utilised by both Cameron and Clegg, can create the illusion of communication or dialogue although it is only the thoughts of the politician that are conveyed in the message.

Lastly, chapter 4 investigated the use of feminine rhetoric, or anecdotes, in the three corpora. It was argued that such narratives can be powerful both to the realisation of ethos and pathos because it can evoke emotions in the audience as well as impact the audience's perception of the politician's personality and integrity. The investigation revealed an extensive use during the first debate in the Cameron corpus, which distinguished itself from the other two corpora as well as the results from the other two debates in the Cameron corpus. Talking about domestic affairs, it is possible to argue that Cameron was particularly interested in communicating his compassion for the people of Britain, and that he did so by means of personal anecdotes and, especially, narratives of others experiences.

Chapter 5 discussed how personal reference was manifested in the three corpora, and focused especially on the use of the first person singular pronoun *I* and the first person plural pronoun *we*. It was argued that a study of personal pronouns can give information about the

interpersonal relationship between politician and audience, while also give indications as to how the politician wishes to be perceived. The analysis revealed that although it might be expected that political leaders in countries with parliamentary systems of government would speak on behalf of their respective parties and thus use *we*, there were evidence in all three corpora that the politicians also spoke as individual candidates during the debates. This result was an indication that Cameron, Brown and Clegg were all willing to accept personal responsibility for their statements to some extent. Overall, there was an almost identical distribution of *I* and *we* in the Clegg corpus, while the Cameron and Brown corpora revealed a preference for the plural *we*.

The majority of instances of the singular *I* in the Cameron and Clegg corpora were used in relation to expressions of personal opinion. The majority of instances in the Brown corpus, on the other hand, were used in relation to messages denoting actions. This difference can most likely be explained in terms of the different positions of the three politicians at the time of the debates: the incumbent Brown is referring to past, present and possible future deeds in order to illuminate favourable sides of his incumbency, while the challengers Cameron and Clegg are likely to talk more about intentions and opinions related to political matters.

The analysis of the plural *we* revealed that the politicians made reference to entities that were both inclusive and exclusive of the addressee. Cameron was the one with most references that included the audience, while Brown and Clegg did this to a lesser extent. Arguably, by including the audience in the plural reference, Cameron stepped down from his elevated position as politician to become one with the people. This is likely to have a positive effect on the audience's perception of his personality. One interesting feature in the Clegg corpus was that he was the only one who referred to both the European Union and the UK when using *we*.

Chapter 6 dealt with modality, and modal auxiliaries in particular. Considering the fact that modal auxiliaries have the potential to illustrate the politicians' commitment to statements as well as their attitudes, they were considered a rhetorical device in the present study. The investigation and comparison of modal auxiliaries in the three corpora revealed that there were many similarities in use but also some differences. Compared to frequencies in the BNC, the results of the corpus investigation revealed an underuse of *may* and *might* as well as a major overuse of *can* in all three corpora. It can be argued that the latter carries the sense of stronger speaker commitment than the preceding two. It is possible that the politicians made a conscious choice to use this modal with the intention of portraying

themselves as more certain in their argumentation, which could affect how the audience perceive their reliability.

When expressing obligation, all three preferred the non-committed *should* over the committed *must*, and the most frequent occurrences of both were found in the Cameron corpus. It is interesting to note that the incumbent Brown was modest in his use and application of these modals compared to the other two.

Lastly, there is an interesting difference related to the use of *will* and *would*. Not only are these the most frequent modal auxiliaries in the Brown corpus, but Brown is also the only one to make use of *will* more often than *would* compared to his two challengers. This can be seen in relation to an extensive use of future reference.

This study has involved a broad investigation of many linguistic components that can have an effect on the interpersonal relationship between the politicians and their audience. Although this was considered necessary in order to illuminate different aspects of Cameron, Brown and Clegg's vocabulary, focusing on fewer devices would have allowed a more thorough investigation that could have been fruitful in order to detect more fundamental distinctions between the politicians. Further research could conduct a closer investigation focusing on some of the devices discussed in this thesis. For example, the presentation of conceptual metaphors in section 4.1.1 indicated that a more thorough investigation of the conceptual metaphors utilised in the debates could reveal interesting difference between the three politicians, in terms of how they think and ideological differences hidden within their conceptualisations. Furthermore, it could be interesting to compare how the politicians use rhetorical devices in debates compared to their communication of speeches.

The Cameron, Brown and Clegg corpora are of modest size, however the choice of research questions and research material naturally limited the size of the corpora. It can be argued that though the three corpora do not fulfil the criteria for corpus design, they are well suited for the present investigation, which aimed to uncover possible differences and similarities between the politicians within the limited space and time of the 2010 debates. In light of this, it is not possible to draw any general conclusions as concerns the vocabulary of Cameron, Brown and Clegg on the basis of the investigation, but rather to say something about how they performed at that specific event.

Vocabulary and rhetoric alone cannot explain the outcome of the 2010 election. Obviously, language is likely to have been a contributing factor in the audience's overall impression of the various politicians. For example, the inclusive and exclusive uses of *we* in the Cameron and Brown corpora indicate that Cameron focused on the needs of the people

while Brown was more concerned with the achievements of the Labour government. If the audience is uncertain about their political leaning, the sum of all such linguistic features could sway them in different directions. However, other factors such as personal image, charisma and media coverage in particular contribute to our perception of the politicians. Despite their good effort at the debates, external factors were also likely to have contributed to the audience's overall impression of the politicians and thus have influenced their decision on Election Day. For example, *The Telegraph* posted an article 8 May 2010 describing the three politicians and their performances. According to the article, Gordon Brown had been a failure in government and was announced the worst ever prime minister of Britain by one of his fellow party members. David Cameron, on the other hand, was described as the ice-cool challenger who showed phenomenal energy throughout the entire campaign. Nick Clegg, a hitherto insubstantial political figure, was credited for making an honourable, though failed, attempt of pander to the electorate. Thus, after the election and the people had spoken 'no one was quite sure what they had said, except that they wanted to see the back of Gordon Brown' (Roberts 2010).

During the year I have spent writing this thesis, one question of interest has always been whether or not leader debates were going to be held before the election on 7 May 2015. The introduction of leaders debates in 2010 was discussed in revolutionary terms, indicating the imaginable disappointment should they go down in history as a one-time incidence. Interestingly, one televised debate featuring the leaders of seven political parties, including the incumbent David Cameron (Conservatives), Ed Miliband, the successor of Gordon Brown (Labour), and Nick Clegg (Liberal Democrats), aired on 2 April 2015. Thus, just as this thesis was finalised it became evident that the televised political leader debate had survived, however, in a new format that indicated a turn away from the traditional two-party system of British politics.

Bibliography

- Bailey, Ric. 2011. "What Took So Long? The Later Arrival of TV Debates in the UK General Election of 2010." In *Political Communication in Britain: The Leader Debates, the Campaign and the Media in the 2010 General Election*, edited by Dominic Wring, Roger Mortimore and Simon Atkinson, pp. 7-21. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- BBC. 2010a. "Prime Ministerial Debates - Programme Formate - agreed by all parties 1st March 2010." BBC News Accessed 1 September 2014.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/theeditors/pm_debates_programme_format.pdf.
- BBC. 2010b. "First prime ministerial debate, 15. April 2010, Transcript." BBC News Accessed 1 September 2014.
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/16_04_10_firstdebate.pdf.
- BBC. 2010c. "Second prime ministerial debate, 22 April 2010, Transcript." BBC News Accessed 1 September 2014.
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/23_04_10_seconddebate.pdf.
- BBC. 2010d. "Final prime ministerial debate, 29 April 2010, Transcript." BBC News Accessed 1 September 2014.
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/30_04_10_finaldebate.pdf.
- Beard, Adrian. 2000. *The language of politics*. London: Routledge.
- Benoit, William. 2008. *Functional Theory of Political Campaign Discourse. Encyclopedia of U.S. Campaigns, Elections, and Electoral Behavior. SAGE Publications, Inc.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Benoit, William L. 2000. "A functional analysis of political advertising across media, 1998." *Communication Studies* 51 (3):274-295.
- Benoit, William L. 2004. "Political party affiliation and presidential campaign discourse." *Communication Quarterly* 52 (2):81-97.
- Benoit, William L., and Jennifer M. Benoit-Bryan. 2013. "Debates Come to the United Kingdom: A Functional Analysis of the 2010 British Prime Minister Election Debates." *Communication Quarterly* 61 (4):463-478.
- Benoit, William L., and Tamir Sheafer. 2006. "Functional theory and political discourse: Televised debates in Israel and the United States." *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 83 (2):281-297.
- Benoit, William L., and Allison Harthcock. 1999. "Functions of the great debates: Acclaims, attacks, and defenses in the 1960 presidential debates." *Commun. Monogr.* 66 (4):341-357.
- Boulton, Adam, and Tom D.C. Roberts. 2011. "The Election Debates: Sky News' Perspective on their Genesis and Impact on Media Coverage." In *Political Communication in Britain: The Leader Debates, the Campaign and the Media in the 2010 General Election*, edited by Dominic Wring, Roger Mortimore and Simon Atkinson, pp. 22-36. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Charteris-Black, Jonathan. 2011. *Politicians and rhetoric: the persuasive power of metaphor*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Charteris-Black, Jonathan. 2014. *Analysing political speeches: rhetoric, discourse and metaphor*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Cockcroft, Robert, and Susan M. Cockcroft. 1992. *Persuading people: an introduction to rhetoric*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Cockerell, Michael 2010. "Why 2010 will see the first TV leaders election debate." Last Modified 10 April 2010 Accessed 2 September.
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/election_2010/8612153.stm.
- Cook, Guy. 1989. *Discourse, Language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Eagleton, Terry. 1991. *Ideology: an introduction*. London: Verso.
- Fairclough, Norman. 1989. *Language and Power*. Edited by Professor Christopher N. Candlin, *Language in Social Life Series*. New York: Longman Group UK Limited.
- Halliday, M. A. K., and Christian M. I. M. Matthiessen. 2014. *Halliday's introduction to functional grammar*. 4th ed. ed. London: Routledge.
- Hasselgård, Hilde, Stig Johansson, and Per Lysvåg. 1998. *English grammar: theory and use*. Oslo: Universitetsforl.
- Hillier, Hilary. 2004. *Analysing real texts: research studies in modern English language*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Johansson, Stig. 2009. "Modals and semi-modals of obligation and necessity in American English: Some aspects of developments from 1990 until the present day (manuscript)." University of Oslo.
- Johnson, Danette Ifert. 2005. "Feminine style in presidential debate discourse, 1960–2000." *Communication Quarterly* 53 (1):3-20.
- Kövecses, Zoltán. 2005. *Metaphor in culture: universality and variation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. 2003. *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- McEnery, Tony, and Andrew Hardie. 2012. *Corpus linguistics: method, theory and practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Meyer, Charles F. 2002. *English corpus linguistics: an introduction, Studies in English language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mio, Jeffery Scott. 1997. "Metaphor and Politics." *Metaphor and Symbol* 12 (2):113-133.
- News, Channel 4. 2009. "MPs' expenses: 10 controversial claimants." Channel 4, Last Modified 12. October 2009 Accessed 25. February.
http://www.channel4.com/news/articles/politics/domestic_politics/mpsapos%2Bexpenses%2B10%2Bcontroversial%2Bclaimants/3383512.html.
- Quirk, Randolph, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, and Jan Svartvik. 1985. *A Comprehensive grammar of the English language*. London: Longman.
- Roberts, Andrew. 2010. "General Election 2010: the great debate election." Telegraph Media Group Limited 2015 Accessed 9 April 2015.
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/election-2010/7696467/General-Election-2010-the-great-debate-election.html>.
- Saeed, John Ibrahim. 2009. *Semantics*. 3rd ed. ed. Vol. 2, *Introducing linguistics*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Thompson, Geoff. 2014. *Introducing functional grammar*. 3rd ed. ed. London: Routledge.
- Toolan, Michael J. 1998. *Language in literature : an introduction to stylistics*. London: Arnold.

- Wintour, Patrick, and Polly Curtis. 2010. "Leaders' debate: Nick Clegg seizes his moment in the TV spotlight." *The Guardian* Accessed 29 April.
<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2010/apr/15/leaders-debate-nick-clegg-tv>.
- Wodak, Ruth. 2011. *The discourse of politics in action: politics as usual*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Appendix 1: The questions

Debate 1: domestic affairs

Q1: Good evening. What key elements for a fair, workable immigration policy need to be put in place to actually make it work effectively?

Q2: Good evening. I was born and still work in Burnley, Lancashire. The town has the highest burglary rate per head of population in the entire country. What confidence can you give me that towns such as this all over the UK can be made safer places to live and work?

Q3: I own a pub, and people like to chat over a drink. Nothing's provoked more discussion than MPs' expenses. Given the recent scandals involving all parties, how are you intending to re-establish the credibility of MPs in the eyes of the electorate?

Q4: I'm in my final year of school. I found that the system is incredibly grades-driven, so much so, that often education for its own sake is at sacrifice. We are over-examined and under-taught. What will the party leaders do to improve education?

Q5: How certain can you be that your party's policies will deal with the budget deficits without damaging economic growth?

Q6: Good evening, guys. British troops seem to be dying unnecessarily and far too frequently. In my opinion, they are under-equipped and massively underpaid. What assurances can you give the armed forces that things will improve?

Q7: My question is, what are the parties' visions for the future of healthcare in Britain? In particular, how would they address the cost pressures arising from an ageing population and more expensive new treatments?

Q8: Thank you, Alastair. Gentlemen. When are each individual party going to introduce a fairer system to care for the elderly when it is required, especially those who have worked and contributed towards the country's economy, without the need for them to sell and dispose of their assets? And what are your policies?

Debate 2: international affairs

Q1: Hello, I'm Chris Nelms, I work in the building trade. I can't see any advantage of us being in Europe. I think there's far too much interference politically and legally, and I just wonder what you intend to do to stop it?

Q2: Thank you. Given our involvement in Afghanistan, if there is another multinational operation to remove Al-Qaeda or another terrorist group from a failed state, would the UK participate?

Q3: Given that climate change is one of the biggest global threats we face, what have you personally done in the last six months to use more environmentally friendly and sustainable forms of transport, such as bikes and trains, rather than cars and planes.

Q4: Good evening. The Pope has accepted an invitation to make an official state visit to Britain in September at a cost of millions of pounds to tax-payers. If you win the election, will you disassociate your party from the Pope's protection over many years of Catholic priests who were ultimately tried and convicted of child abuse, and from his fierce opposition to all contraception, embryonic stem cell research, treatment for childless couples, gay equality and the routine use of condoms when HIV is at an all-time high?

Q5: Given the scandals of the last year, it is hard to find a person in my neighbourhood who believes in the power of their vote. How do you plan to restore faith in this political system?

Q6: Having brought up five children, worked most of my life, reached the age of 84, do all of you think that a state pension of £59 per week is a just reward?

Q7: Gentlemen, given the current financial difficulties facing the country, and now the possibility of a hung parliament, according to the polls, is it time to put aside political differences and form a government of the best talents from all the major parties?

Q8: I'm an immigrant, and I have been in the UK for 13 years. I recognise that immigration is becoming a problem in the country. What new measures would you introduce in order to make the system more fair?

Debate 3: economy

Q1: We all know there's going to be spending cuts after the general election, no matter who wins. Why can't you be honest and tell us?

Q2: The tax is taking more and more from the average worker's payslip. If you were elected, what would you do about taxes?

Q3: It is clearly grossly unfair for tax-payers to have funded the banks, yet for bankers to award themselves huge bonuses, whilst ordinary people are worse off and many have lost their jobs. How will each party bring its version of fairness to this very unfair situation?

Q4: Thank you. This area used to be full of businesses that made things. So many of them have been shut down, sold off and gone abroad. I want to know how you propose to rebuild the country's manufacturing industries. We can't just have offices in shops.

Q5: Are the politicians aware that they have become removed from the concerns of the real people, especially on immigration, and why don't you remember that you are there to serve us, not ignore us?

Q6: I am married, my husband is an accountant and we have two children. We work really hard, and between us have a good joint wage, yet still we cannot afford our own family home, nor the larger deposit necessary these days. What will your party do to help families and others in terms of housing, because if a chartered accountant is priced out of the market, then what hope is there for anybody else?

Q7: I'm retired having worked all my life, and find it galling that some who haven't paid into the system abuse it by living off state benefits. What are you going to do to prevent that abuse?

Q8: I teach in a very deprived area of Birmingham. What will each leader do to ensure the children I teach have as many opportunities in life as those from any other school?