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Pragmatism in American Political Discourse and its Social Perception

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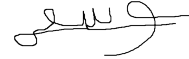
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Declaration of Originality

I, Adnane Yousfi, hereby declare that this thesis is my own personal work. It does not contain any material previously written by another person, nor material which has been accepted for the award of any academic degree of a university or any other institution. I also declare that the results of this work are my own, except where otherwise stated.

Adnane Yousfi

15/06/2025



Dedication

I dedicate this work to my dear parents

To my dear brother and sister

To my friends and those who prayed for my success

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Pr. Mouhadjer Noureddine for his continuous assistance and acceptance.

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Abstract

Abstract

Initially, political discourse is supposedly used to address the public about current situations and issues and the solutions for these issues. However, it has become a tool to persuade and convince the public using different strategies. This study aims at exploring pragmatism usage in American political discourse and its social perception, with a special focus on President Donald Trump. To achieve that, the history of pragmatism and its concepts must be discussed. Donald Trump is currently considered the most controversial president not only in the United States but also globally. His discourses, often described as unconventional and untraditional, are widely studied by academics. However, very little research has been conducted concerning Trump's use of pragmatism and its impact on the American society. This study uses a deductive latent thematic analysis to explore Donald Trump's pragmatism usage in his discourses. Both written and spoken discourses were selected randomly and put to analysis. Thus, this research follows a qualitative approach for Trump's discourse analysis. As for the social perception side, data from different media outlets highlighting the social perception of the selected discourses are extracted and interpreted. The findings suggest that Donald Trump's discourses often include appeals to pragmatism. Through the analysis, patterns of using concepts of pragmatism by Donald Trump are identified. In terms of the social perception of Trump's discourses, segments of the American society who are Republicans approve of Trump's discourses, and those who identify as Democrats strongly disapprove. The study concludes that Trump indeed appeals to pragmatism in his speeches, which seems to cause both political and social polarization in the United States. However, the objectivity of the social perception is still unclear and somewhat inaccurate. Therefore, more research with more participants involved can be conducted to unveil the true reasons of approving or disapproving discourses.

Abstract

Keywords: Pragmatism, Politics, Political discourse, Social perception, Donald Trump.

List of Tables

List of Tables

Title	Page
Table1.1: The Difference and Similarities between Pragmatism and Neopragmatism	37
Table2.1: The Legislations of the First New Deal	67
Table 2.2: The Legislations of the Second New Deal	70
Table 2.3: Funding Amount Allocated to Roads, Bridges, and Major Projects	79
Table 2.4: Funding Amount Allocated to Clean Energy and Power	83
Table 2.5: Funding Amount Allocated to Broadband	87
Table 3.1: Thematic Analysis of the Tax Cut and Job Act	105
Table 3.2: Social Perception of Different Tax Bills	111
Table 3.3: Thematic Analysis of the National Emergency Declaration (2025)	118
Table 3.4: Thematic Analysis of the Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025)	127
Table 4.1: Thematic Analysis of Trump's 2017 Inaugural Speech	139
Table 4.2: Thematic Analysis of Trump's 2018 State of the Union Address	147
Table 4.3: Thematic Analysis of Trump's 2019 State of the Union Address	156
Table 4.4: Thematic Analysis of Trump's 2025 Inaugural Speech	170

List of Figures

List of Figures

Title	Page
Figure 3.1: Social Perception of the Tax Cut and Job Act	113
Figure 4.1: Do you think that Donald Trump’s inaugural speech on Monday was good or bad?	183

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Statement of Originality	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	v
List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	viii
Table of Contents	ix
General Introduction	1
Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism	9
1.1 Introduction	10
1.2 Pragmatism: A Revived Philosophy	10
1.3 Classical Pragmatism: An Original American-Made Philosophy	11
1.3.1 The Ideas of Charles Sanders Pierce	14
1.3.2 The Ideas of William James	18
1.3.3 The Ideas of John Dewey	23
1.4 Neopragmatism	29
1.4.1 The Ideas of Richard Rorty	30
1.5 Pragmatism and Neopragmatism Similarities and Differences	36
1.6 Philosophy and Politics	38
1.7 Pragmatism in American Political Thought	43
1.8 Conclusion	46
Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection	47
2.1 Introduction	48
2.2 Political Discourse	48
2.3 The Gilded Age	52
2.4 The Progressive Era	56
2.4.1 The Politics of the Progressive Era	58
2.5 Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deals Policy	62
2.5.1 The First New Deal	62
2.5.1.1 Banking and Finance	63
2.5.1.2 Unemployment	64
2.5.1.3 Agriculture, Farms and Factories	65
2.5.1.4 The First New Deal Comes to an End	67
2.6 The Second New Deal	68
2.7 The Civil Rights Movement	71
2.8 Welfare Reform Act (1996)	73
2.9 The Affordable Care Act (2010)	76
2.10 The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (2021)	78
2.10.1 Transportation	79
2.10.1.1 Roads, Bridges, and Major Projects	79
2.10.2 Climate, Energy and the Environment	82
2.10.2.1 Clean Energy and Power	83
2.10.3 Broadband	87
2.11 Conclusion	89
Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse	90
3.1 Introduction	91

Table of Contents

3.2 Donald Trump	91
3.3 Donald Trump Policies as a President	92
3.4 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA)	103
3.4.1 Thematic Analysis of the Tax Cut and Job Ac	104
3.4.1.1 Time-bound	108
3.4.1.2 Practicality	108
3.4.1.3 Specificity	109
3.4.1.4 Practical Implementation	109
3.4.1.5 Discussion	110
3.5 The Social Perception of the Tax Cuts and Job Act (2017)	110
3.6 President Trump’s Second Term	114
3.7 The National Emergency Declaration	115
3.7.1 Thematic Analysis of the National Emergency Declaration (2025)	117
3.7.1.1 Justification for Declaring a National Emergency	121
3.7.1.2 Urgency	122
3.7.1.3 Us vs. Others	122
3.7.1.4 Duty and responsibility	123
3.7.1.5 National Security	123
3.7.1.6 Legality	124
3.7.1.7 Discussion	124
3.8 The Social Perception of Trump’s Declaration of National Emergency	125
3.9 The Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025)	126
3.9.1 Thematic Analysis of the Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025)	126
3.9.1.1 Practical Outcomes	131
3.9.1.2 Experience	132
3.9.1.3 Social Context	132
3.9.1.4 Flexibility	133
3.9.1.5 Value of Democracy	133
3.9.1.6 Discussion	134
3.10 The Social Perception of the Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025)	134
3.11 Conclusion	136
Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump Spoken Discourse	137
4.1 Introduction	138
4.2 Thematic Analysis of Donald Trump’s 2017 Inaugural Speech	138
4.2.1 Practicality	141
4.2.2 Focus on Results	142
4.2.3 Public Prosperity	142
4.2.4 Adaptability	143
4.2.5 Focus on Change	143
4.2.6 Idealism	143
4.2.7 Discussion	144
4.3 The Social Perception of Donald Trump’s 2017 Inaugural Speech	144
4.4 Thematic Analysis of Trump’s State of the Union Address (2018)	146
4.4.1 Practicality in Problem-Solving	151
4.4.2 Empiricism and Results	151

Table of Contents

4.4.3 Flexible Strategies	152
4.4.4 Collective Responsibility	152
4.4.5 Anti-Abstractionism	153
4.4.6 Discussion	153
4.5 The Social Perception of Trump's State of the Union Address (2018)	154
4.6 Thematic Analysis of Donald Trump's 2019 State of the Union Address	156
4.6.1 National Unity	165
4.6.2 American Exceptionalism	165
4.6.3 Economic Prosperity	166
4.6.4 National Security	166
4.6.5 Reform	167
4.6.6 Foreign Policy	167
4.6.7 Discussion	168
4.7 The Social Perception of Trump's 2019 State of the Union Address	168
4.8 Thematic Analysis of Donald Trump's 2025 Inaugural Speech	170
4.8.1 Practicality in Results	179
4.8.2 Action-Oriented Thinking	179
4.8.3 Challenges Acknowledgement	179
4.8.4 National Security	180
4.8.5 Economic Solutions	180
4.8.6 Appeal to Results	180
4.8.7 Discussion	181
4.9 The Social Perception of Trump's 2025 Inaugural Speech	181
4.10 Conclusion	184
General Conclusion	185
Bibliography	192
Appendices	198

General Introduction

General Introduction

General Introduction

It is quite hard to assume that people function with no principles or framework. It is fairer to make the assumption that people follow certain principles by which they function and act. Those principles fall under the umbrella of philosophy. So, it is acceptable to say that we all have a philosophy or a set of philosophies we follow. Following a certain philosophy can be either knowingly or unknowingly. It is irrelevant, though, to realize whether someone is following a philosophy knowingly or unknowingly, for the important thing is the result of following that philosophy.

Pragmatism, as an original American philosophy that advocates for practicality and tangible results, has long been misunderstood and neglected. When it first emerged, it was rather famous among the elite. One of the issues with neglecting pragmatism is its complexity and the fact that it deals with several different areas. This along with the circumstances that the United States had to endure at that time, limited the spread of the philosophy. Pragmatists, in their writings, discussed a plethora of subjects. Subjects that tackle almost all aspects of life; they wrote about logic, truth, knowledge, metaphysics, education, politics, and many other fields.

Pragmatism had its fair share of change and improvement. Since it was first discovered, many philosophers considered themselves and were considered pragmatists. Although these philosophers displayed almost similar thoughts concerning pragmatism, there were also some disagreements among these philosophers. For instance, Charles Sanders Peirce, who was among the first philosophers who coined the term “pragmatism”, changed the name to “Pragmaticism” to distinguish his ideas and concepts from other pragmatists, especially William James and John Dewey. Later on, Richard Rorty, who is considered a neo-pragmatist, and though having some common thoughts similar to pragmatists, had several different approaches and views to pragmatism.

General Introduction

One important field that pragmatists wrote extensively about is politics. Although not always explicit, pragmatists had quite strong views on politics and governance. In politics, politicians give their opinions, address the public, or pass laws through both written and spoken discourse. Therefore, language in the political sphere is not just a tool of communication but rather a tool to persuade and convince the public as well as gaining support. Politicians, in the most general sense, cast themselves as non-abstractionists who are only focused on the practical side of issues, which can be very beneficial for them on a social level. Politicians also tend to project total efficiency in dealing with the public problems in order to gain their unwavering support. This does not at all suggest that all politicians function this way, but there certainly is some truth to this theory.

There is no doubt that political discourse is put through scrutiny, which makes total sense, for politicians are in a position of being evaluated. Most individuals in any society are interested in what is taking place in their country politically. These individuals can be very critical of their politicians' discourse. The issue here is that political affiliation plays a significant role in politicians being criticized. This makes it rather hard to evaluate the performance of politicians from an outsider point of view. Critics are even more critical about politicians' discourse. However, the same issue offers itself, as critics, although some are unbiased, a lot of them have political affiliations and sometimes agendas to be pushed.

The interplay between pragmatism and its use in political discourse is not a simple connection in any form. The complexity stems mainly from the fact that the perception of pragmatic political discourse is totally based on personal views and interpretations. For instance, in everyday life, individuals are involved in endless conversations and discussions. It is fair to say that one conversation can be seen and interpreted in many different ways depending on the speaker,

General Introduction

listener, and their beliefs. Political discourse is not at all an exception of this; it might in fact be more extreme. For example, if there is a speech being delivered by a politician, there is a high probability that the supporters of this politician would like the speech while his adversaries would dislike the speech. In this case, political discourse, being pragmatic or not, is not the main concern, for the real issue is the beliefs of the listeners. As a result, the emergence of different social perceptions and political polarization is inevitable.

The presidency of Donald Trump offers a compelling case study for the usage of pragmatism in political discourse and its perception. Trump, being mostly linked to using populist language in his discourse, is an interesting case study due to his controversial rhetoric. Trump's extensive experience and involvement in the business domain also suggests his ability to deliver persuasive and convincing speeches and most importantly his ability to close deals. As a president, Donald Trump challenged most of the conventional political styles. His criticism of the authorities and some social groups has resulted in enormous social divisions and political tension and polarization. The merge between his persona as a businessman and a president produced a character that mainly focuses on practical actions and solutions. This persona is likely apparent in business rather than politics, for common political figures usually use ideologies and abstractions.

Conducting this research of investigating the history of pragmatism and political discourse will not only highlight on facts, but also shed light on their connection. It is neither an attempt to undermine or praise the philosophy of pragmatism, political discourse, and Donald Trump. Each of the previously mentioned points can be both praised and criticized. Pragmatism, as a philosophy, has its advantages and disadvantages, depending on one's beliefs. Political discourse can also be positive or negative, depending on the public's political affiliations and beliefs. Donald Trump has been criticized heavily and praised as well.

General Introduction

Generally, the social perception of any matter is, to a large extent, subjective. Politically, it is highly subjective and biased. There is enough evidence to support the fact that people perceive things positively or negatively not based on a speech itself, but rather depending on who is articulating it. This is evident in the context of the United States politics. For example, Trump, even though enacting some decent and effective laws, his approval rates from Democrats are incredibly low. This situation would not be the same had a Democrat been a president. Therefore, this issue feeds into the political, and ultimately the social polarization of the country.

Thus, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- Who are the main pillars of the philosophy of pragmatism? And what are its main ideas and concepts?
- 2- How is the philosophy of pragmatism connected to American politics, especially political discourse?
- 3- To what extent is the philosophy of pragmatism used in American political discourse?
- 4- Does Donald Trump, as a president, showcase pragmatic characteristics in his written and spoken discourse?

Although the main aim of this research is to explore to what extent the philosophy of pragmatism is used in the context of American political discourse, especially by Donald Trump, there are other aims in this research:

- 1- The study tries to describe the philosophy of pragmatism through its main thinkers in order to provide a concise, yet clear understanding of the philosophy of pragmatism.
- 2- The study aims to show some events in the United States history that demonstrate using a pragmatic approach of governance.

General Introduction

3- To objectively analyze Donald Trump's both written and spoken discourses with the purpose of identifying elements of pragmatism.

4- By analyzing the discourses of Donald Trump, the study can deduce the social perception of these discourses.

The study uses a type of thematic analysis to analyze the discourses of Donald Trump. Thematic Analysis is a method used to identify and analyze recurring themes within qualitative data. The first step of the analysis is to be familiarized with the data. Then, each set of the data is coded accordingly. After the coding phase, themes that are related to the codes of each set are established. Then, the themes are refined and defined. Finally, the report of the analysis is written.

The study applies a deductive latent thematic analysis. It does not only analyze the discourses of Donald Trump on the level of words; it goes beyond that to analyze the hidden meaning. It also uses a deductive approach where themes are predetermined; the themes are extracted and related to the philosophy of pragmatism. In this context, quotes from Trump's discourses are gathered and analyzed to find explicit or implicit elements of pragmatism. Quotes are gathered, categorized, and coded according to predefined themes. Each discourse has its own themes. In this research, the quotes, the codes, and the themes are displayed in a form of tables in order to make the analysis simpler, followed by themes definitions and reports.

The data collected of this research is both primary and secondary. The discourses of Donald Trump are all primary data, as they are extracted from the White House website. The discourses were completely selected randomly. For the written discourses, the Tax Cut and Job Act law, the National Emergency Declaration (2025), and The Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025) were selected and analyzed. For the spoken discourses, the

General Introduction

2017 Inaugural Address, the 2018 State of the Union Address, the 2019 State of the Union Address, and the 2025 Inaugural Address were selected and analyzed. There was no discourse that was selected based on particular reasons.

The social perception of discourses was extracted from secondary sources, mainly from media outlets. The social perception of the previously mentioned discourses is analyzed based on the information that media outlets provided. It is worth noting that not all media outlets are objective. In fact, there are many media companies that explicitly dislike Donald Trump. However, in this research, the used media information is verified to be true and accurate.

The importance of this study lies in the fact that it attempts to investigate the connection between the philosophy of pragmatism and American political discourse. By focusing on one of the most controversial figures not only in the United States but globally, this study offers an insight on how philosophy is integrated in politics. This study tries to contribute to the ongoing Trump studies that are considered contemporary. On the social level, this study tries to capture the American society's perception when pragmatic rhetoric is used. This study comes at a time where social division and political polarization in the United States are in their peak.

This thesis is organized into four chapters. Each chapter deals with particular elements of the study. The first chapter serves as a historical background of the philosophy of pragmatism. It discusses the main pillars of pragmatism and neopragmatism as well as their main beliefs and concepts. Then, it tackles the relationship between philosophy and politics, followed by illustrating the use of pragmatism in American politics. The second chapter discusses the concept of political discourse briefly before providing some events and periods in the United States history. This chapter provides some insight to the use of the philosophy of pragmatism in American politics. The third chapter provides an introduction to the personality of Donald Trump and his terms as a

General Introduction

president. It, then, provides an analysis of some of the written discourses of Donald Trump. The fourth chapter serves as a continuation of the third chapter, by analyzing Trump's spoken discourse.

**Chapter One: A Brief
Historical
Background of the
Philosophy of
Pragmatism**

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

1.1 Introduction

Pragmatism as a philosophy has long been neglected and rather misinterpreted throughout time. The idea that pragmatism constitutes practicality only is rather incomplete. It is true that pragmatism involves a fundamental level of practicality; however, practicality is far from being the only aspect that shapes the philosophy of pragmatism. Pragmatists did not only focus on philosophy. As a matter of fact, many pragmatists were mathematicians and scientists, and as a result, it was rather logical that they discussed several topics other than pure philosophy itself.

The historical progression of the philosophy of pragmatism along with its main pillars and contributors namely Charles Sanders Pierce, William James, John Dewey, and Richard Rorty will be discussed throughout this chapter. Other concepts relating to pragmatism will be introduced, defined, and analyzed. Moreover, the differences and similarities of pragmatism and neopragmatism will be highlighted. A brief description of the relation between philosophy and politics as well as pragmatism usage in American political thought will be introduced.

1.2 Pragmatism: A Revived Philosophy

A late nineteenth-century American philosophical movement, American pragmatism asserts that beliefs are inseparable from actions and attitudes and should be judged depending on their consequences. It opposes dualism, which splits topics into conflicting poles or perspectives, and supports direct experience and experimentation. Pragmatists think even the most precise maps or concepts have to change as knowledge is provisional and conditional. They think knowledge has to alter to fit the shifting territory and experience. Pragmatists think that in a shifting world, striving for perfection often does more damage than good. Success, they say, can come from sharing

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

experiences, checking strengths and weaknesses, and concentrating on the hope that the circumstances will one day get better. Though in theory their relationship is more complex, most academics use the words as coextensive in practice, even if the overlap between American philosophy and pragmatism causes some misunderstanding (Spencer, 2020).

1.3 Classical Pragmatism: An Original American-Made Philosophy

Although other schools of thinking like logical empiricism, ordinary language analysis, phenomenology, structuralism, and critical theory have overshadowed pragmatism as a school during the most part of the 20th century, it has not been absent or unimportant. Moreover, although pragmatists usually concentrated on epistemological questions like truth and knowledge, they also addressed issues of social and political philosophy (Boersema, 2002).

When presenting the pragmatist approach in the most precise manner the word "pragmatism" also offers a rich starting point. In daily use, to call someone "pragmatic" often suggests that this individual is mostly focused on the practicality of outcomes of their actions, and this is a definition that to a great extent corresponds with the definition of pragmatism as a philosophical approach. Many philosophers, however, are still hesitant to be called pragmatists despite their ideas obviously mirroring those of Peirce, James, and Dewey. This finding can be explained in several ways. One explanation is the previously mentioned linguistic closeness to the word pragmatic, which in its daily use usually suggests qualities of a short-term, somewhat cynical kind. We will contend that this linguistic closeness in no way automatically suggests a philosophical one (Sundin & Johannisson, 2005).

The emergence of pragmatism was not a spontaneous occurrence. The origins of its formation can be attributed to the philosophical and literary traditions of Anglo-European descent,

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

which can be traced back to influential thinkers such as Heraclitus, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, and Hegel. Pragmatists were significantly impacted by the scientific advancements of their time, which comprised Darwinian evolution and Einsteinian relativity. The intellectual foundation that cultivated these ideas, and also fostered the development of renowned literary figures like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Thomas Jefferson, possessed a uniquely American character characterized by theological practicality and democratic rationality. The United States of America anticipated a future filled with numerous opportunities, while simultaneously reflecting upon the socially stratified systems of Europe that prioritized customs and familial connections over individual actions and capabilities. The nation's western borders were characterized by openness and intrigue, coinciding with the societal transformations brought about by industrialization and the proliferation of mass industry. From a philosophical standpoint, this era was marked by a multitude of conflicts that pitted science against religion, positivism against romanticism, intuition against empiricism, and the democratic principles of the Enlightenment against the established traditions of aristocracy. Within this particular setting, Pragmatism functioned as a widely accepted approach to philosophical inquiry that aimed to surpass the numerous dichotomies present (Scheffler, 1974).

The classical Pragmatists successfully restored the connections between the mind and matter, facts and values, and the past and present that had been destroyed in modernist thought. The proponents of traditional Pragmatism believed that it is possible to evaluate future possibilities by considering past experiences in a manner that goes beyond mere criticism or opposition to both past decisions and current circumstances. Classical Pragmatism, in its essence, brings forth a form of comprehensive social behaviorist morality, as well as a type of extensive social and political involvement that relies on experimental approaches. It diverges from the conventional dichotomy

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

between facts and values, making it inaccessible to those operating within the modernist framework (Hickman, 2007).

The early Pragmatists had a perspective that was skeptical about the existence of absolutes, wholes, certainties, and finalities. They contested the prevailing universalist and foundationalist assumptions, proposing alternative perspectives such as pluralism and evolutionary emergence as more productive frameworks for understanding the dynamic and unpredictable nature of reality. According to their perspective, "pure experience" served as the foundation for acquiring practical and applicable knowledge. Through our process of experimental and reflexive interaction with one another and the surrounding natural and social environments, we gradually establish patterns of behavior and discover novel understandings that contribute to our continuous conduct. Through these methods, we consistently build and reconstruct interpretations of both our environments and our identities (Scheffler, 1974).

The origins of pragmatism may be subject to discussion, however, there is a consensus regarding the three prominent figures of classical pragmatism during the period spanning from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries: Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and John Dewey. In brief and succinct terms, it can be asserted that classical pragmatism, in its fundamental essence, constitutes a philosophical framework centered around the concept of truth. What sets it apart from previous philosophical assertions is the contention that no timeless truth exists and no absolute conformity with the nature of reality (Strube, 2013).

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

1.3.1 The Ideas of Charles Sanders Peirce

Peirce established a distinction between philosophy and the special sciences in relation to the positive sciences. Special sciences include disciplines such as physics, neurophysiology, and medieval history. Philosophy, in its most expansive sense, explores the realities pertaining to everyday existence. The primary objective of this endeavor is to provide a comprehensive comprehension of the environment in which we reside, so establishing a fundamental basis for the various specialized fields of study. Peirce argues that the discipline of philosophy encompasses three primary sub disciplines: phenomenology, the normative sciences (including aesthetics, ethics, and logic, which respectively concern matters of beauty, goodness, and truth), and metaphysics. He held the belief that phenomenology constituted the most essential aspect among the three (Ormerod, 2006, p. 897).

Peirce's definition of science might be characterized as containing the collective endeavor of individuals, who engage in the quest of knowledge for its own intrinsic value. He categorized the fields of study commonly known as the positive sciences and mathematics as subsequent branches of scientific inquiry. Peirce claims that mathematics is the discipline that deduces the necessary conclusions from ideal or purely speculative frameworks. Peirce contended that within the realm of pure mathematics, the applicability of these structures or their resulting conclusions to the physical world is inconsequential (Ormerod, 2006, pp. 896-897). It is evident that Peirce exhibited a strong inclination towards the concept of inquiry rooted in skepticism. According to Peirce, it is imperative that inquiry not be halted and that a persistent pursuit of truth be strongly

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

advocated. This can be attributed to Pierce's heightened inclination towards the concept of truth, which is a prevalent theme throughout his writings.

According to Peirce, clear thinking is an ongoing and dynamic process that possesses inherent qualities of creativity and aesthetics. The concept of abduction was developed by him as a means of differentiating this impulsive and innovative cognitive process from deductive and inductive modes of thinking. While deduction explores the limits of reasoning within a self-contained framework, and induction organizes data to establish viewpoints, the abductive process entails the imaginative construction of explanatory hypotheses, producing alternative possibilities in answer to speculative questions. Pierce suggested that the foundation of scientific reasoning lies in abductive processing since it is the sole conceivable origin of innovative concepts (Anderson, 1987).

Concerning the philosophy of truth, Pierce has several pieces of writings that discuss truth in a quite deep manner. Copleston (1994) claims that Peirce distinguishes between various categories of truth. Pierce alludes to the concept of transcendental truth, which is an intrinsic quality found in the nature of things. In this context, science can be seen as a pursuit aimed at uncovering truth. We are referring to the exploration of the inherent characteristics of entities, encompassing their personalities, regardless of our familiarity with them. Nevertheless, our focus lies on the concept of complex truth, as described by Peirce, which pertains to the truthfulness of propositions. Ethical truth, often known as veracity, pertains to the alignment between a concept and the beliefs held by the speaker or writer. Additionally, there exists the concept of logical truth, which pertains to the correspondence between a statement and objective reality (pp. 306-307).

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

Peirce's most significant writings revolve around the interconnections between doubt, inquiry, belief, and action. Peirce's scholarly contributions covered a wide range of subjects, including logic, measurement, the theory of signs (referred to as "semiotic"), probability, evidence, and certain speculative cosmological notions. According to Peirce, the process of inquiry is initiated by a state of genuine and active skepticism. The presence of doubt serves as a driving force for conducting investigations, ultimately culminating in the formation of beliefs. Peirce believes that at the heart of believing is the establishment of a habitual pattern of behavior (Smith P. G., 2015, p. 803). Indeed, Ormerod (2006) states that Peirce stated that scientific pursuits are predicated upon the assumption that the universe is comprehensible, such that any concept impeding the progress of inquiry and necessitating the acceptance of unexplained or inexplicable regularities should not be accorded significant consideration. Furthermore, in accordance with Peirce's perspective, it is advocated that investigations have to be approached as a collective endeavor. Additionally, he asserted that in regular inquiries, we tend to accept any allegations that we consider certain at the outset of the inquiry. The quantity and diversity of arguments that substantiate a result are noteworthy in the context of a typical investigation (p. 897). Peirce believed that inquiry is evaluated and valued based on the supporting shreds of evidence conducted by investigators.

Given that Peirce's works do not explicitly articulate his ideas in the conventional vocabulary of politics, it becomes necessary to derive political implications from his texts. According to Ward (2001), Peirce's perspective on politics reveals the inherent deficiencies of instrumentalism and the imprudence of a solely individualistic approach to liberalism. The philosophical significance of Peircean politics lies in its objective to provide the community with

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

a feeling of purpose that transcends the dividing tensions arising from the dichotomy between tradition and development. According to Peirce, the community is only activated within a specific moment that arises from the self-reflective evaluation of both thought and action (pp. 68-69).

Pierce's perspective regarding the potential for fostering a renewed feeling of community is theoretically relevant to American society due to its association with the principles of newness, democracy, and inclusivity. The assertion made here is that Pierce's concept of the community is not fully evident in American culture. However, it may be argued that American society does exhibit certain elements that align with Pierce's views. Nevertheless, the establishment of the community that Pierce aimed to create poses certain challenges. Despite the considerable advancements in human knowledge in contemporary times, the identification of individuals who possess a comprehensive level of awareness within a given group remains a challenging endeavor. The attainment of comprehensive self-awareness throughout all domains of life presents a formidable challenge, irrespective of the underlying factors. In light of the aforementioned rationale, Pierce's conceptualization of the ideal community may be perceived as a utopian society, particularly in contemporary times. Furthermore, the ideas put out by Pierce indicate his endorsement of a pluralistic global order. This, in turn, implies that Pierce campaigned for the establishment of a democratic realm, despite the absence of explicit references to this in his written works. James's publications provide a more extensive analysis and elaboration of the concept of pluralism.

One main theme that is strongly tied to politics is ethics. There are several public doubts about politicians and whether they are ethical or not. One of Pierce's central topics of pragmatism

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

is ethics. Pierce put much emphasis on ethics. Copleston (1994) states that Peirce confidently asserts that engaging in a discourse on moral matters is likely to result in one party undergoing a transformation of their perspectives, eventually resulting in complete concurrence. This proposition presupposes the existence of objective foundations for morality, positing that a recognizable ultimate good or objective may be ascertained, and further suggesting the possibility of attaining a consensus within a broad scope of perspectives (p. 319). To a certain degree, it is accurate to assert that there are instances wherein individuals alter their perspectives on a specific topic. By extrapolation, it is reasonable to infer that politicians are also subject to similar circumstances, despite their likely reluctance to acknowledge this fact. Furthermore, this occurrence is frequently observed in the realm of American politics when both the Republican and Democratic parties converge upon a shared point of consensus. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that there exists a range within which the likelihood of convergence is low.

1.3.2 The Ideas of William James

In 1907, William James introduced his publication of a collection of lectures titled "Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking." In these lectures, James initially addressed the philosophical predicament of his time, which involved a fundamental and seemingly unsolvable conflict between two modes of thought. He asserted that pragmatism would provide a resolution to this dilemma. James initiates his discourse by making the observation that the historical development of philosophy can be largely characterized as a battle between two distinct human temperaments: the "tough-minded" and the "tender-minded". Individuals who possess a tough-minded disposition exhibit a strong inclination towards empiricism, prioritizing the acquisition of knowledge from direct experience and reliance on factual evidence. Conversely,

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

those with a tender-minded inclination tend to favor a priori principles that rely on rational thinking and logical deduction. Individuals who possess a tender-minded disposition are characterized by their inclination towards idealism, optimism, and religiosity, as well as their belief in the concept of free will. Conversely, those with a tough-minded nature tend to exhibit materialistic tendencies, pessimism, irreligiosity, dogmatism, and a fatalistic worldview (Legg & Hookway , 2021).

James claimed that the process of understanding alternate futures to shape actions in the present unavoidably necessitates the human mind's engagement both cognitively and emotionally (Barbalet, 2004). Evidently, James psychologized Peirce's initial vision of pragmatism, abandoning the idea that a proposition's meaning is only determined by its application, and replacing it with the idea that meanings are determined by whether or not we believe them to be true (Talissee, 2007).

In his book titled "*Pragmatism*," James provides a description of pragmatism. A pragmatist disavows abstractions, insufficiency, verbal responses, incorrect a priori rationales, rigid principles, closed systems, and erroneous absolutes and origins. However, he gravitates towards the pursuit of appropriateness and concreteness, prioritizing factual information, decisive actions, and influential authority. Furthermore, he asserts that pragmatism can be seen as a tactical approach and a disposition towards orienting. The cognitive approach of disregarding initial elements, fundamental principles, categorical distinctions, and apparent prerequisites in favor of final deductions, outcomes, repercussions, and empirical evidence (James, 1907, pp. 28, 29, as cited in Ormerod, 2006, p. 899). According to James, pragmatism can be understood as a method exclusively. The primary purpose of this strategy is to resolve philosophical debates that have the potential to be interminable. In an alternative formulation, the pragmatist adopts a practical

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

perspective to assess the practical consequences of each theory. For instance, if A posits theory X and B proposes theory Y. In the event that an individual is incapable of discerning the varied practical implications associated with the two theories, they may arrive at the inference that these theories are fundamentally identical, differing only in terminology. In this particular scenario, any additional discord between parties A and B would be deemed futile (Copleston, 1994, p. 334). Thus, James supports the idea that a pragmatist should embrace change and continuity.

In the introductory section of *"The Will to Believe,"* James explicitly characterizes his philosophical stance as one rooted in radical empiricism. He clarifies that by employing the term "empiricism," he is referring to a perspective that is open to regarding its most assured discoveries pertaining to matters of truthfulness as hypotheses that are prone to modification in light of subsequent experiences (Copleston, 1994, p. 331). From the beginning, one can notice that James relied heavily on empiricism more than Pierce himself did. He argues that truths are a type of hypotheses that are changed based on our experiences. James states:

We now begin our study of the mind from within. Most books start with sensations, as the simplest mental facts, and proceed synthetically, constructing each higher stage from those below it. But this is abandoning the empirical method of investigation. No one ever had a simple sensation by itself. Consciousness, from our natal day, is of a teeming multiplicity of objects and relations, and what we call simple sensations are results of discriminative attention, pushed often to a very high degree. (James, 1968, as cited in Spencer, 2020, p. 56)

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

According to (Spencer, 2020), James advocates for the investigation of lived experience in its raw form, characterized by a seamless integration of interconnected thoughts, sensations, perceptions, emotions, and memories, rather than imposing a binary categorization upon it. James outlined five crucial attributes that distinguish his radical empiricism, designating this progression as the stream of thought; nevertheless, it is more widely recognized as the stream of consciousness. To commence, consciousness is inherently subjective and personal in nature. To the best of our knowledge, all thoughts and experiences are attributed to a specific entity or individual. Every idea and experience is attributed to a specific conscious entity. Furthermore, it should be noted that the nature of consciousness exhibits a dynamic quality (p. 57). We can indeed focus on a particular matter; however, it is unlikely that other ideas will not recoil into our minds. (Spencer, 2020) states that one of James' notable attributes is the persistent and uninterrupted flow of consciousness. The utilization of temporal units for the purpose of organizing and communicating our individual experiences is a common practice. However, it is important to recognize that these units are conceptual constructs that are imposed by the human mind onto the fabric of reality. The aforementioned elements do not encompass the authentic lived encounter. Furthermore, it is evident that humans possess knowledge of entities that exist autonomously and outside the realm of our consciousness. Ultimately, consciousness is consistently engaged in the process of making decisions pertaining to the objects of one's experience (pp. 57-58). It seems that James developed more detailed and somewhat different empiricism than the one of Pierce's. James claimed that consciousness is individual, changing, continual, and self-aware.

One of the important ideas that James put forward was pluralism. (Spencer, 2020) argues that James's significant contribution to pragmatism and culture lies in his advocacy for pluralism,

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

a perspective that acknowledges the value of subjective experience while yet embracing the scientific method (p. 60). To clarify, (McKenna & Pratt, 2015) state that James perceived the bounds and limitations of the world as a pluralistic concept that had significant implications for an individual's lifestyle, acquired knowledge, and understanding of objective reality. The author emphasized the tendency for individuals to often overlook or disregard the emotions and perspectives of others when they diverge from their own. An instance of this phenomenon occurs when individuals become emotionally detached from the happiness experienced by others due to their inability to notice the objects or activities that elicit such delight or to realize the underlying reasons for their enjoyment (pp. 57-58). In this claim, James underscores the notion that the interpretation of phenomena varies among individuals. Consequently, he is largely promoting the concept of a pluralistic global society that values and acknowledges diversity. Furthermore, (Spencer, 2020) states that James perceives the scope of human experience to be exceedingly extensive, diverse, and novel (p. 61). The dynamic nature of human experiences can lead to a lack of awareness regarding the sentiments of others, as individuals often have few opportunities to share identical experiences, and even when they do, the outcomes are frequently dissimilar.

The contemporary age witnesses the presence of pluralistic ideologies in various countries, as elucidated by James. Considering the significant multicultural and multiethnic composition of the United States, it is reasonable to assert that James's pluralistic tendencies are evident. The determination of whether a philosophy is used purposefully or unintentionally remains uncertain, although once its presence is established, the significance of its intentional or unintentional application diminishes.

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

Similar to Pierce, James refrained from explicitly stating his political beliefs; yet, it is plausible to infer his political orientation. Determining a philosopher's political allegiance can be a complex task, yet it can be inferred that James leaned towards individualist liberalism due to his ideas regarding the acceptance of diversity. (Bush, 2017) states that Scholars in the fields of political theory, history, and literary academia have consistently argued that James possesses a political philosophy that warrants careful consideration. Nevertheless, there exists a diverse array of perspectives regarding this particular political ideology. Numerous perspectives have emerged on this matter, which can be broadly categorized as quietist, anarchist, communitarian, reformist, anti-imperialist, pluralist, democratic, republican, and liberal (p. 22). It is evident that James possesses associations with multiple political philosophies. This can be attributed to James' exploration of various subjects within his writing, which resulted in diverse interpretations of his political affiliations. Nevertheless, James' significant contribution to pragmatism, sometimes regarded as pluralism, implies that he was an advocate of individualistic liberalism, striving to advance liberal politics.

1.3.3 The Ideas of John Dewey

At the outset, it is worth noting that James's pragmatism exhibited certain resemblances to Dewey's scientifically oriented philosophy, which emerged in the post-1900 era. James himself acknowledged the effect of some of Dewey's ideas on his own work. However, Dewey later redefined pragmatic concepts within a theoretical framework known as "naturalistic," which underscores the significance of social interaction in human existence, while also incorporating a biological understanding of living organisms and their relationships with their surroundings. According to Dewey (year), intelligence provides individuals with the ability to modify their

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

surroundings and uncover solutions to the challenges posed by uncertainty and variability in the natural realm. (Smith P. G., 2015, pp. 804-805). Dewey's perspective diverges from that of Pierce and James, since he believes that the paramount significance lies in human existence rather than the metaphysical domain. Dewey's writings predominantly prioritize the human experience, leading him to largely disregard metaphysics.

Dewey significantly focused on the concept of inquiry. (Ormerod, 2006) states that The theory of inquiry provides a full explanation of the cognitive processes involved in efficient scientific inquiries and problem-solving in both ordinary life and academic contexts, rather than being limited to abstract or entirely formal approaches. Dewey's conceptualization of inquiry involves the transformation of a difficult and ambiguous circumstance into a coherent and unified state that can effectively substantiate a claim or facilitate the development of a logical course of action. The utilization of intelligent inquiry, a self-correcting methodology including the experimental validation of hypotheses derived and refined from past experiences, is vital. Moreover, this approach finds application in the fields of physics, chemistry, ethics, and political science. For example, experimentation may take place within a controlled laboratory setting or be implemented through legislative measures aimed at altering a certain governmental operation. The characteristics of the initial problem and its resolution are influenced by the social context in all situations. The inquiry modifies the social context (pp. 900-901). Dewey unequivocally advocates for the social environment as the decisive factor in every investigation. The social context, albeit subject to potential alteration, remains an essential element in Dewey's concept of inquiry. Indeed, He emphasized the significance of the uninterrupted flow of personal encounters that connect historical events with future outcomes by means of present acts. Drawing on Peirce's concept of

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

abduction, Dewey claimed that critical thinking, also known as inquiry, serves as a means of formulating viable hypotheses or 'warranted assertabilities', which can then be examined through the use of imagination or practical experimentation. While Peirce believed that an individual's doubt serves as the initial stage for engaging in critical thinking, Dewey maintained that it is doubt in the given context that triggers the process of inquiry (Talissee, 2007).

Like Pierce and James, Dewey relied on empiricism; however, he refers to his empiricism as naturalistic. (Copleston, 1994) argues that, according to Dewey, from a metaphysical perspective, it can be argued that thought does not possess the qualities of being ultimate, ideal, or a mechanism responsible for the creation of objective reality. Furthermore, the notion that man represents a non-natural element due to its ability to elevate or oppose Nature is likewise not applicable. In the long run, this phenomenon signifies a significantly advanced form of the dynamic interaction between an organism and its environment. Dewey acknowledges that the cognitive pursuits of individuals include distinct characteristics, albeit a tendency to employ behaviorist terminology (p. 353).

In contrast, Dewey's perspective diverges from the notion of commencing with a definitive and ultimate separation between subject and object. Rather, he states that the intellectual existence of individuals relies on and evolves from preceding connections, thereby situating it entirely within the realm of Nature. Cognition is one among numerous inherent natural processes or activities (Copleston, 1994, p. 354). Dewey's perspective diverged from the "spectator theory of knowing," a viewpoint that portrays the authentic knower as an individual who passively observes events without any form of intervention. On the contrary, the primary purpose of knowledge lies in its

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

ability to empower individuals to enhance their respective conditions (Smith P. G., 2015, p. 805). To do that, Dewey presented instrumentalism. According to (Copleston, 1994), according to Dewey, instrumentalism is a philosophical approach aimed at offering precise and logical explanations of concepts, judgments, and conclusions in diverse forms. It primarily emphasizes the functioning of the mind in experimental predictions of future outcomes (p. 365). This statement serves as another affirmation of Dewey's emphasis on the social context, specifically the interconnectedness between individuals and their surrounding settings.

Based on Dewey's philosophical reflections on inquiry and empiricism, it can be inferred that Dewey espouses the endorsement of embracing transformative processes in our personal and collective experiences. Indeed, Dewey states:

We must either find the appropriate objects and organs of knowledge in the mutual interaction of changing things; or else, to escape the infection of change, we must seek them in some transcendent and supernal region. The human mind, deliberately as it were, exhausted the logic of the changeless, the final, and the transcendent, before it essayed adventure on the pathless wastes of generation and transformation. (Dewey, 1981, p.34, as cited in Spencer, 2020, p. 82)

Furthermore, as per Dewey's perspective, it is argued that no declaration of knowledge, moral standard, principle, or ideal can be deemed as completely certain and immune to rational examination and modification. However, he believed that progress might be achieved through the promotion of intellectual behaviors among individuals and the preservation of societal institutions

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

that facilitate continuous inquiry (Ormerod, 2006, p. 901). This aligns with the principles of dynamic social context transformation and intellectual investigation. According to Dewey, in order to effect change, it is imperative to maintain a continuous process of inquiry, research, and investigation. Similarly, (Ormerod, 2006) argues that Dewey argued that there are intrinsic principles concerning the essence of human beings as a distinct type of evolved organism, engaging with a multifaceted physical environment and an ever-shifting social context (Decker, 2003, as cited in Ormerod, 2006, p. 901).

Moreover, Dewey repudiated the notion of "Dualism". In contrast, Dewey's objective was to supplant these dichotomies by adopting a viewpoint that is firmly rooted in many forms of "continuity." These include the connection between the human mind and the natural environment, the relationship between the physical body and its immediate context, and the correlation between cognitive processes and fundamental biological capacities. Dewey's framework relies on these biological continuities as a basis for reconciling disputes that arise between matters of fact and matters of value. Dewey's later work mostly consists of meticulous construction of systematic frameworks, grounded in the concept of "continuity," and comprehensive historical investigations that trace the historical roots of key philosophical errors spanning millennia (Dewey, 1981, p. 90, as cited in Smith, 2015, p. 805). The rejection of dualism is a fundamental tenet within the framework of pragmatism, as adherents of this philosophical perspective typically disapprove of dualistic notions such as "good and evil" or "black and white".

Dewey, unlike Pierce and James, explicitly expressed his political views, so it is not as challenging to detect his politics as is the case for Pierce and James. According to (Smith P. G.,

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

2015), Dewey exerted significant influence on the political and social ideologies of the United States. In addition to engaging in considerable discourse over the optimal structure of a democratic society, He staunchly advocated for a specific variant of liberalism. At various points, he faced criticism and opposition from both the political left and right. He expressed a desire for a more "democratic" economic structure while maintaining a cautious stance towards communism. One of Dewey's prominent political undertakings involved spearheading a global inquiry of Stalin's persecution of Trotsky. The investigative report was classified as "Not Guilty." (p. 805).

Furthermore, Dewey argues that democracy functions as both a desired outcome and a methodological approach. The perpetual state of transformation in our global society, along with the succession of generations, suggests the existence of a "continuous rhythm of imbalances and subsequent restoration of balance," as described by Dewey. Given that the community plays a crucial role in facilitating the process of recovery, and considering the uncertainty surrounding the origin and nature of the reconstruction efforts, it becomes imperative to solicit the collective input and actions of all community members in order to restore our state of balance. Dewey regarded democracy as a significant endeavor and advocated for its continuous promotion due to its inherently experimental nature (Ormerod, 2006, p. 902). (McKenna & Pratt, 2015) state that According to Dewey, democracy can be described as the governance of intellectual faculties and the repudiation of dogmatic tendencies that employ hostility and force as means to address interpersonal issues (p. 92). The latter term appears to function as a critical analysis of the state of American politics during that particular period. This statement likely pertains to the United States' involvement in the First World War, potentially serving as a commentary on the matter. Dewey wrote: "I know of no greater fallacy than the claim of those who hold to the dogma of the necessity

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

of brute force that this use will be the method of calling genuine democracy into existence." Accordingly, Dewey asserts that democracy should not be associated with acts of violence.

Similar to many philosophers, John Dewey addressed various issues in his written works. Dewey's writings consistently explore themes such as inquiry, naturalistic empiricism, experimentalism, the repudiation of dualism, and democracy. He had numerous parallels and distinctions in comparison to Pierce and James. One apparent distinction lies in Dewey's directness regarding his political beliefs.

1.4 Neopragmatism

Neopragmatism questions conventional beliefs about reality, knowledge, and absolute values. Rorty's neopragmatism opposes these beliefs and supports changing pragmatism by rejecting classical pragmatists for efforts to rebuild concepts including experience, reality, and inquiry. He thinks that classical pragmatists should take a linguistic approach and use a more linguistic approach once CP eliminates conventional foundations (Hildebrand, 2005).

Neopragmatism questions how we can reweave beliefs using new and improved vocabularies in place of philosophical words referring to nonlinguistic entities. He wishes that neopragmatists' use of a language-centric vocabulary would clarify issues and argue that we should evaluate the efficacy of our language with more language instead of using the failed philosophical recourse of splitting the world into objects and contexts. Rorty thinks that reweaving a web of beliefs is all anyone can do; all anyone can do is reweave a web of beliefs (Hildebrand, 2005).

1.4.1 The Ideas of Richard Rorty

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

There is no single philosophical school known as neopragmatism. Since the 1980s, this word has been used to designate some notable philosophers (mainly Americans), emphasizing their extensive knowledge and understanding of classical pragmatism. It is generally acknowledged that Richard Rorty and Hilary Putnam are the two most significant neopragmatists. Neopragmatism is distinguished from "new pragmatism" by certain authors, who argue that despite thematic similarities, the latter need not be based on old pragmatism. The term "neopragmatist" is often used primarily to refer to Rortyan pragmatism, while others use it broadly to embrace other philosophical viewpoints influenced by the pragmatic tradition. It is frequently debatable whether it should be applied to a specific thinker (Pihlström, 2013).

American philosopher Rorty, in his preface to *Philosophy and Social Hope*, attacks the unfavorable effects of two pragmatist philosophers who have shaped his ideas and thoughts about pragmatism, William James and John Dewey. He contends that these contributions, which originate from Plato, reflect a departure from conventional Western philosophical thought. Rorty's neo-pragmatism, which can be characterized as anti-dualism, reveals itself in his anti-representationalist and anti-essentialist beliefs. Rorty's neo-pragmatist ideas, on the other hand, do not imply a negative outlook on philosophy, humanity, or the condition of the world. Rather, he thinks that people create the world, not something discovered; no situation is set or eternally stable. Rorty thinks language is the most useful uniquely human tool; his neo-pragmatism differs from classical pragmatism, which emphasizes experience, in this regard. This change in emphasis stresses the transmission of experiences via language rather than the experiences of individual minds. Rorty's logic builds on arguments made by classical pragmatists like James and Dewey, who are mentioned before more investigation of his method (Sundin & Johannisson, 2005).

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

Smith (2020) states that many philosophers desired to revive the philosophy of pragmatism after Dewey. One of the prominent figures in the after-Deweyan era is Richard Rorty. Rorty was heavily influenced by John Dewey (p. 2). Moreover, the foundation of Rorty's purported acceptance of "pragmatism" (as he defined it) was a severe discontent with analytical philosophy. According to this conception, "pragmatism" was the "opposite" of analytical philosophy (Webb , 2012, p. 55). However, following the release of Richard Rorty's *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* in 1979, pragmatism underwent a more self-aware "reinvention" in the 1980s. By that point, Rorty was attempting to guide analytical philosophy out of the picture it had painted for itself (Smith S. J., 2020, p. 2).

Moreover, the neopragmatists' focus on language's function as a medium of communication or interaction—a mechanism for people to discuss issues and come to a consensus on solutions—rather than as a means of portraying the world as one of their major accomplishments. This has led to the transactional, interpersonal, and entirely social view of knowledge and experience that the classical pragmatists advocated being centered around language, or more specifically, conversation (Smith S. J., 2020, p. 2). It seems that the neopragmatists, namely Rorty, embraced most of the classical pragmatists' views, especially Dewey's and shifted the focus of pragmatism to how language is used. This shift facilitates investigating the extent of pragmatism usage in various life aspects.

According to Rorty, a series of trade-offs between alternatives characterizes pragmatism. For example, philosophy can be combative, argumentative, or communicative. It can also be fundamental, informative, purposeful, or therapeutic. It can also be empirical in nature or

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

interpretive. Finally, it can be the work of a thinker or a poseur. Rorty's pragmatist is communicative, purposeful, therapeutic, and interpretive (Webb , 2012). This thought may be challenging to James's ideas of rejecting dualism; however, Rorty seems to have rejected dualism but favors dichotomies; Rorty advocated subcategorization. In addition,

The goal of classical pragmatism was to bring together philosophical theory and everyday life. The pragmatic maxim, developed by Peirce and James, instructs us to think about any potential practical outcomes that our notion of an object might entail; our conception of these outcomes then serves as our conception of the subject. Neopragmatists share this overarching pragmatic approach to philosophical and scientific issues. However, a neopragmatist is more than just a student of the classical school of pragmatism. Neopragmatists aim to adapt pragmatic perspectives to modern issues, such as the one pertaining to the interactions between science and religion (Pihlström, 2013). One crucial aspect that draws attention is the fact that neopragmatists differ from classical pragmatists in the sense that neopragmatists are more practical. In other words, neopragmatists opt to put ideas into application. This does not suggest that classical pragmatists did not attempt to do the same. Instead, it is to assert that neopragmatists did not desire only to revive classical pragmatism but also to produce new insights.

Webb (2012) argues that the objective of the inquiry is one component of the (Deweyan) inquiry design. Dewey's philosophy can be used as a guide for daily life in the modern setting. The improvement of conditions brought about by industrial capitalism through democratic methods occupies a central place in this context. This necessitates encouraging critical thinking among the general populace. Thus, the philosopher serves as a sort of mediator between science and the rest

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

of culture, applying lessons learned from the most fruitful type of human inquiry—scientific research—to other areas of human concern. With an emphasis on how philosophy might help resolve pressing social issues, Dewey's pragmatism views philosophy as a public endeavor on a variety of levels (p. 56). Similar to classical pragmatists, Rorty accepts the concept of inquiry but with adding a sense of meaning to it. In other words, for Rorty, we ought not to conduct inquiry merely for the sake of it; we initiate inquiry to serve a purpose, apply it to real-life issues, and ultimately resolve problems. Therefore, Rorty believed that critical thinking must be integrated into society.

Rorty, similar to Dewey, declared himself a liberal; however, his idea about liberalism differs largely from the liberalism of classical pragmatists. (Bacon & Dianda , 2021)state that Rorty's most comprehensive political theory arguments are found in *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*. In it, Rorty draws a picture of what he refers to as "the ideally liberal society," a place where liberal institutions are understood as the result of historical coincidences rather than having or needing any philosophical explanation (pp. 161-162). So, according to Rorty, if an incident occurs, it is not quite significant to delve into why it occurred. Accordingly, he believed that liberal institutions should be considered without having to provide any justifications.

Furthermore, Bacon & Dianda (2021) state that a society where people are free to build their own lives is the perfect example of liberalism. By embracing contingency, Rorty means, in particular, viewing one's self and those things that are important to their identity as the outcome of such circumstances and reconstructing them through redescription (pp. 162-163). Here, one may notice that several classical pragmatism thoughts are adopted in Rorty's writings. It is rather clear

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

that Rorty advocated pluralism, liberalism, inquiry, and learning through experience, which are central themes in classical pragmatism.

The concept of redescription is one of Rorty's important notions. Topper (1995) states that Rorty's suggestion that philosophers and political theorists give up their attempts to combine the urges for self-creation and justice logically is the essential strategy in this redescription. Instead, they should be happy to acknowledge the significance and legality of both drives while carefully limiting the space in which each is permitted to grow. Rorty contends that by insisting on a clear division between the public and private spheres, philosophical disagreements that are utterly insurmountable can be transformed into practical questions about how to most effectively strike a balance between the opposing demands for self-creation and human solidarity (p. 962). It is important to note that self-creation achieved by redescription will lead to the belief in Ironism (Bacon & Dianda , 2021, p. 164). Rorty's redescription does not encourage the discard of previous views. It is more in favor of re-describing classical ideas into newly developed ones.

Rorty had a radically different perspective on truth than the classical pragmatists. According to (Webb , 2012), Rorty holds the consensus theory, in which the truth is nothing more or less than an agreement among participants in a pertinent speech community. This is so because Rorty's central claim is that objective knowledge is impossible (p. 58). Rorty said:

We are mistaken in supposing that we can use reality to test ideas; we are mistaken that ideas are in any direct sense about real existences. Propositions do not correspond to, represent or picture an objective world. .

. . We do not compare a description to an object, but only to another

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

description, and there is no neutral criterion for saying one description is better than another. Accordingly, we cannot make distinctions regarding cognitive validity between science, philosophy, poetry, religion, theology, and scriptural faith. All, Rorty insists, are literary genres. Hence also, we cannot distinguish between methods of inquiry as better or worse, and we cannot speak of progress in knowledge, even in science. (Gouinlock, 1995, p. 73, as cited in Webb, 2012, p. 58)

According to Rorty, no one can reach or achieve absolute truth. It seems that Rorty attempted to detach truth in all its forms from reality, which is also apparent in his political philosophy, in which he favors ideal liberalism that encourages an individualistic lifestyle. Moreover, even judgments and opinions, even if supported by scientific inquiry, do not represent an unbiased world because we are incapable of determining the quality of the scientific method. Rorty's ideas are interesting, to say the least; however, it is possible that we can evaluate and assess good and bad methods of scientific inquiry, and if we can do so, we can also measure the degree of knowledge progress.

1.5 Pragmatism and Neopragmatism Similarities and Differences

Although not all pragmatists have the same definition of the essence of pragmatism, a group of beliefs commonly defines it. Often expressed negatively—that is, in terms of what pragmatists reject—these concepts define pragmatism. Pragmatism, for instance, is said to be anti-foundationalist, anti-realist, and to oppose a fact/value dichotomy. Although the above descriptions are not false, they suggest that pragmatism is mostly a response against other philosophical points

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

of view or positions. On the other hand, pragmatic doctrines can be positively expressed. Pragmatism therefore advocates a naturalistic approach to conventional philosophical issues; it supports a comprehensive view of meaning and truth; it stresses the value of no inquiry as disinterested (thus, the rejection of a fact/value dichotomy) and of non-goal-based standards of assessing inquiry (thus, the rejection of metaphysical realism) (Boersema, 2002).

Among pragmatism's doctrines are the following: beliefs are tools for humans to adapt in their environment and the world; the satisfactoriness of a belief is ultimately a function of the degree to which the belief allows the success of adaptability within this world; all beliefs are imperfect; and truth and rationality depend on utility in adapting with future experience. Although directly epistemological, these beliefs pertain to ethical and political issues. "Apply" might be a misnomer here since, for pragmatists, belief, being the product of inquiry, is never disinterested or noninterpretive. In other words, there is no disinterested investigation or one that does not involve conceptualized interpretation since inquiry is related to rejecting or reducing doubt or surprise and we are to grasp belief as flowing from our interaction with the world and utility in handling future experience. This does not imply that there are no objective, or at least intersubjective, standards and criteria for inquiry, belief, truth, etc. This is only to point out that no inquiry or belief is nonconceptualized or interest-free. Thus, once more, "apply" could be a misnomer above in the sense that axiological components (both ethical and political) interact with investigation rather than just being tacked on at the conclusion of the process (Boersema, 2002).

Table 1.1: The Difference and Similarities between Pragmatism and Neopragmatism

Aspect	Pragmatism	Neopragmatism
Key Figures	Charles Sanders Pierce, William James, and John Dewey	Richard Rorty

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

Foundations	Inquiry, Logic, Practicality	Pragmatism
Language Role	A tool for communication and interaction.	Crucial and central in shaping humans' understanding of reality
Stance on Truth	No absolute or timeless truth. Truth is evaluated by its practical consequences	Truth is constructed through society (it is consensual). There is no objective truth.
Stance on Inquiry	Doubt ignites inquiry, which a process to finding practical solutions.	Inquiry is a social process.
Stance on Knowledge and Experience	Knowledge is dependent on experience; knowledge evolves with new different experiences.	Knowledge is subjective and contextual; it is constructed through society.
Ethics and Politics	Social reform and democracy Ethics are changing with the changing of context.	Liberal values Pluralism
Method	Practical problem-solving Empiricism	Consensus Interpretation
Political Thought	Emphasizing practical dimensions Democracy	Pluralistic democracy
Societal Influence	Social change and improvement.	Cultural and political change.

1.6 Philosophy and Politics

Philosophy, in general, has had tremendous influence and impact on all aspects of life. Politics is not an exception to this fact. The connection between philosophy and politics is complex to say the least. From the times of Socrates, the interplay between philosophy and politics has been a rather interesting topic to explore. Philosophy, which mainly constitutes concepts and frameworks, has a crucial role in shaping political thought.

Haijyeva Vasila (2013) stated that values in social life depends on philosophical values, as they are transmitted by means of reflection in the political realm. Philosophy to ideology (political philosophy) to political life defines this path. The process of politization of values entails the

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

vanishing of portions that cannot fit the social structure, privatization of others, and specification of borders' limits and dimensions. The philosophical idea is meant to specify the social-political structure, standards, and rules. The process is circulatory, moving along political life -> political philosophy -> philosophical lines. Realizing philosophical ideas calls on a social base—specifically, masses-carriers—to guarantee their stability and sustainability (p. 1).

Reflection of philosophical ideas in the political sphere brings to the transition of shared values and philosophical thought to political activity. Public opinion, social organizations, and ideologues carry this process, which is required and inescapable for the survival of philosophical values. Rather than the social group and the entire population, the ideological foundation of social stratification is mostly founded on the philosophical value of the ideologue. Once the social group politicizes, presents, and popularizes the concept, consensus becomes feasible. Philosophical concepts have conventional national values; the people privatizes them following long-term social concretization and development (Haijyeva, 2013).

Philosophical values like freedom, justice, equality, conservatism, and modernity are politicized to fit social construction, hence connecting to power and its characteristics for acquiring means and possibilities. Institutional, organizational, subordination, and value conflict define this process. For example, the fight for freedom and equality might happen among ideologies with varying subordination of the same principles or stay a source of instability in the structure of the ideology. Political parties may pass their fundamental value into the background to win public opinion, suggesting conflict and contradiction inside the ideological framework of the political force (Haijyeva, 2013).

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

The loss of key roles in ideology and the replacement of others might result from the concretization of politicized philosophical ideas and their application to practice. For instance, the battle of politicized concepts of freedom and equality as liberalism and social-democracy, their practice in the social, economic, and legal domains, revealed limits and specified their criteria (Haijyeva, 2013).

While its consistent application might cause issues and alienate values, the process of politicization and concretization of value produces its legal position and applicability to all nations. For instance, consistent application of the concept of equality could result in great totalization and tyranny; consistent application of the idea of freedom could result in difficult production relationships and rich stratum's monopolization (Haijyeva, 2013).

Haijyeva's analysis of the connection between Philosophy and politics is important. Basically, she refers to the fact that political ideologies are extracted from philosophical ideas and concepts. She also illustrates how political ideologies are publicized to be socially accepted. The distortion and the adaptation of values is quite necessary in this process, which ultimately raise many questions about them in the political realm. In addition, ideological frameworks are usually inherently conflicted, which lead to instability and fragmentations when applied, especially if the politicians prefer appealing to the public. Therefore, it would be best if philosophical values are applied with consideration to the realities of the societal and political spheres.

Political sensibility gives rise to political insight, discernment, and genius; not the spirit of science or theoretical generalizations. Politicians can understand the particular mix of qualities that make a given scenario so they can act without political science or philosophy. Being a politician calls on ability, intuition, knowledge, and sense rather than generic knowledge (Szulakiewicz,

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

2012).

The pragmatic character of politics has created a paradox between philosopher and politician. While politicians operate in the inter-subjective public sphere, philosophers can reveal the communitarian aspect of the world. For politicians, this is seen as a benefit since political views are more ingrained in society than philosophical theoretical truths (Szulakiewicz, 2012).

These two attitudes toward reality, meantime, are not contradictory. While a politician depends on opinion or rumor, a philosopher seeks truth via theoretical contemplation. The potential of doing political debate in philosophical terms and the shared search for truth help to answer the dilemma raised in Plato's *Gorgias* (Szulakiewicz, 2012).

The contradiction between philosophical truth and the assessing intuition of a politician does not arise from fortuitous events but rather from the reality that a politician cannot use their political intuition. While philosophers can attack social systems, grab power, or counsel others, political genius lies in avoiding traps of linear thinking. But philosophers are not replacements for politicians and their political insight and brilliance. A shift in political discourse and a preference of politics over philosophy have made the conflict between philosophy and politics particularly apparent in the modern world (Szulakiewicz, 2012).

Twentieth-century thinkers wanted to erase the line separating philosophy from politics in order to bring philosophers nearer to politicians. Various means helped to accomplish this, including understanding philosophy in a political context whereby intellectuals worked in tyrants' courts promoting unity of spirit and political authority. This link between philosophy and politics has produced a hazardous notion of identity between the two domains, therefore challenging the notion of reason being separate from politics and the belief that the ideal condition for philosophy

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

is when the public is not preoccupied with philosophy. Political philosophy has been greatly influenced by philosophical ideas; undertakings like liberalism, democracy, communism, and fascism all originate from the theoretical reflection of philosophers. As it appears to be a key to comprehending the twentieth century as a period of unity of thought and action, philosophers and political scientists are committed to finding a theory clarifying this link (Szulakiewicz, 2012).

Over time, the relationship between philosophy and politics has changed; philosophers, intellectuals, and politicians have all contributed knowledge of the character of the relationship. Politics in ancient Greece and later ages was viewed as a domain where individuals pursued the common good. Guided by a thought of better or worse, political activity seeks either preservation or change. The basic foundation of politics is an awareness of the good; all political strategies have to be founded on this awareness (Szulakiewicz, 2012).

Past philosophy contended that political activities cannot be caused by public opinion, emotions, or wishes. Rather, philosophy offers knowledge of the good, so enabling politicians to separate between what should be done and what can be done depending on popular expectations (Szulakiewicz, 2012).

The desire to discover new sense in political acts and demonstrate that practical ought cannot be determined from empirical or theoretical means gives politics its philosophical need. Seducing politics by philosophy, however, poses a risk since it might impose an a priori meaning for political activities, hence fostering dictatorial and ideological governments. The issue is how philosophy has evolved during the twentieth century and what political field changes let a revaluation of conventional areas of culture (Szulakiewicz, 2012).

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

Prominent 20th-century political scholar Hannah Arendt contended that the political nature of the crises in the modern world fuels speculation that philosophy is dead. The routes of philosophy and politics, nevertheless, are still intertwined since the two spheres of human action are identified toward one another. Important 20th century philosopher Paul Natrop held that community cannot be created from the outside but rather must develop from inside. Though their duties cannot be called heaven on earth, both politicians and philosophers acknowledge this reality. Politics is judged in terms of efficiency since it takes precedence over philosophy. Philosophy has acknowledged the dominance of politics even if politics no longer seeks philosophy and views philosophers as hazardous dreamers. Philosophy now has to identify a principle of association and common ground for many individuals. Postmodern philosophy warns that large theories can cause the loss of this privilege and advocates ironic detachment toward all world perspectives (Szulakiewicz, 2012).

Szulakiewicz, in his analysis, highlights the very complex relationship between philosophy and politics. He states that good politicians are the ones who rely on intuition rather than theoretical framework put by philosophers. By reviewing the history of the connection between philosophy and politics, he claims that the closeness of philosophy and politics is more harmful than it is useful. He believes that this connection can be useful and important if dealt with properly and with constraints.

1.7 Pragmatism in American Political Thought

James and Dewey held the belief that democracy encompassed more than mere governmental structures or legal frameworks. They perceived it as a moral paradigm and

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

encouraged us to view it as a personal lifestyle, rather than something institutional and external. They held the belief that democracy is akin to a religious belief, and due to practical considerations, we should not acknowledge its shortcomings. Dewey and James regarded their pragmatism as distinct from their dedication to democracy as an ethical principle. Their conviction was that their opposition to traditional philosophical dichotomies and certainties, their understanding of truth as flexible and shaped by culture, and their belief in the significance of all human experiences were aligned exclusively with democracy, particularly with the ideals of social equality and individual autonomy. They replaced a method of investigation that was both democratic and scientific, integrating ethical considerations into their research. Dewey's writings establish a correlation between his strong commitment to democracy and his philosophical ideas regarding experience and ethics. He stated that democracy necessitates belief in the capability of individuals for astute discernment and initiative, provided that suitable democratic circumstances are provided. He contended that any obstruction to communication fosters "hostile sects and factions" and undermines democracy. Dewey's emphasis on pluralism and diversity reflected his personal belief in the importance of diversity. He held the belief that in order to attain the necessary collaboration for social existence, it was imperative to provide opportunities for differences to manifest themselves, thereby enhancing one's own life-experience. His understanding of democracy entailed broadening the array of options and extending the opportunities for individuals to discover various forms of fulfillment. Dewey's dedication to pluralism and diversity, the acknowledgment and nurturing of differences, and the capacity of communication to foster cooperation and resolve conflicts demonstrates the fallacy of the claim that his focus on a community of inquiry exposes the underlying elitism of pragmatism. James and Dewey's perspectives on democracy and the

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

pursuit of pluralism and diversity underscore the significance of acknowledging and embracing diversity to foster a more inclusive and democratic society (Kloppenber, 1996). It seems apparent that both pragmatism and neopragmatism, although not always explicit, tend to support a democratic system, which serves as a proof of the pragmatism of the United States.

Pragmatism has long been a hallmark of American political discourse. Indeed, a distinction between rhetoric and actual practice is one of the hallmarks of pragmatist thought. Politicians, activists, policymakers, and political pundits have long employed pragmatic language in shaping the actions and perceptions of those with whom they are communicating and seeking to associate. It is not surprising that politicians and political theorists have long used pragmatist rhetoric to justify their policies and proposals to the American people and other members of the non-philosophical class. Pragmatist language is employed by politicians and advocates in communicating with the public in two different, but often intertwined, ways. First, in order to be persuasive—to introduce or advance new ideas or policy initiatives—politicians and their speeches must be pragmatic, connecting with the real-world concerns of potential voters, allowing them to see the potential advantages and value of the new ideas in their own everyday lives. Second, politicians' speeches must be pragmatic in order to address and potentially resolve real-world issues or problems (Phua, 2021).

The focus of pragmatic rhetoric is central to the criticism of a political speech. When evaluating a political speech against the dimension of rhetoric, it is no longer about whether or not the actions taken matched the values of the speaker's principles. Pragmatism of this kind can divide rather than inspire, especially when the public desires a leader who is almost messianic in his ability

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

to faithfully represent them. A leader found that he was in a position to lead hundreds of thousands of people to vote and even more by persuading them as a community organizer, yet he is now in a very different position, one that requires his rational distinction from them. As a political discourse, this is in some ways too impractical, idealistic, and self-congratulatory: it's anti-democratic. It is not about "We the People", but about the values and principles that validate our sense of humanity. The tension lies as much in the disconnection between what we are willing to do and what we wish we could be as a nation. In the end, it is a mistake to rule pragmatism as being committed to neither rhetoric nor principle. Instead, it uses one to shape the other. In doing so, it is alluding to a form of democracy that is trying to initiate. The message of the speech is, perhaps, that this new path must hinge on a new ethical paradigm (Voparil, 2022).

While numerous policies and political actions can be attributed to pragmatism, it is reasonable to assess the pragmatism of American politics itself after the term was coined in the 1870s. This is done to provide a valid assessment of the incorporation of pragmatism in American politics. For instance, one can easily categorize the practical approach of the founding fathers in drafting the constitutions, the Monroe Doctrine, American westward expansion, and Manifest Destiny as pragmatic acts, characterized by practicality and a preference for self-interest over abstract ideologies; however, even if these acts were pragmatic to a certain extent, the philosophy itself was not yet known. Therefore, a brief historical background of some important events that took place in the United States from the 1870s onwards is presented, followed by an assessment of the extent of the use of pragmatism in each event.

1.8 Conclusion

Chapter One: A Brief Historical Background of the Philosophy of Pragmatism

The philosophy of pragmatism is rather vast and complex. Pragmatists did not only write and discuss philosophy in isolation. They went beyond that realm to tackle several and different aspects of life. Mainly, pragmatists advocate for practicality. Practicality may seem a vague concept due to it being too broad. In pragmatism, practical thinking, practical application, and practical outcomes are highly supported and must be reached. For pragmatists, a theory is best verified by its practical and tangible consequences. Pragmatists also believe in experience and inquiry. For pragmatists, things must be seen, verified, and evaluated. So, it can be said that pragmatism is a philosophy that advocates for actions and measurable results.

**Chapter Two:
Pragmatism and
American Political
Discourse: A Deep
Connection**

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is set to explore the meaning of political discourse and connecting it with the philosophy of pragmatism. Then, it discusses some of the main events and periods of the United States history with relation to using pragmatism in these periods. The periods discussed in this chapter are from different timeframes. It attempts to identify pragmatic approaches that the different governments adapted to tackle political and social issues.

2.2 Political Discourse

Political discourse is not a genre but rather a collection of genres determined by a social domain, specifically that of politics. Similarly, scientific discourse, educational discourse and legal discourse reflect the categories of discourse genres of the fields of science, education and law, respectively. Among the various genres that fall under the realm of politics, therefore, are government discussions, parliamentary gatherings, party programs, and political speeches (Van Dijk, 2002).

Having thereby restricted the scope of political discourse to the 'professional' sphere of the actions of politicians, the next remark is that such discourse is by the same token a kind of institutional speech. That is, only those discourses of politicians generated in institutional contexts—such as governments, parliaments, or political parties—are deemed relevant. An informal chat of a politician with their friends does not qualify as a political discourse, so the discourse must be generated by the speaker in their official capacity as a politician and in an institutional context. More action-oriented, we may also argue that language is political when it

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

performs a political act in a political institution, such government, legislation, electoral campaigning, and so forth (Van Dijk, 2002).

Political discourse is a multifaceted area including several genres, including parliamentary debates. These discussions are unusual in their discursive qualities since they can address any subject in society that politicians deem interesting and pertinent. Usually, the subjects are about public domain events, especially those needing group decision-making, regulations, laws, or rules. Often formal, the style of these arguments uses little language unique to politicians and some jargon shared with bureaucracy. There are also ritual formulae for addressing other MPs or the chair, although these by themselves do not define the genre. With a rigorous time plan and turn allocation by the Chair, the general structure of a parliamentary discussion resembles that of other institutional or organizational meetings (Van Dijk, 2002).

Political discourse is mostly defined by context; hence it is not mostly based on the verbal qualities of text or speech. The fact that participants are members of parliament and that the event occurs in a parliamentary institution mostly defines parliamentary debates. They are political acts of legislation or policy-making, and the repercussions of the discussion are determined in the unique institutional conditions of political decision making (Van Dijk, 2002).

A schema that specifies the structure of communicative events represented by participants in their context models is formed by contextual categories including the global domain, global act(s) being implemented, global setting, local political acts being accomplished, political roles of participants, and political cognitions of participants. The 'political' character of debates, speeches, meetings, campaigns, and advertising is characterized in terms of their surrounding features, not mostly by the structural qualities of the text itself (Van Dijk, 2002).

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

Studying the architecture of political discourse is still crucial, though, since it can expose much about the particular nature of such a discourse and suggests about the cognitive, social, and political roles of such discourse (Van Dijk, 2002).

The definition of political discourse is a complex task due to the lack of a single, unambiguous definition of politics. Political science encompasses various aspects of politics, including official and unofficial political actors, events, encounters, settings, actions, and discourses. It also includes political processes, political systems, political ideologies, and political relations. The polity includes social, economic, and cultural aspects. To distinguish political from other forms of discourse, the domain of politics is characterized by certain properties. These properties are selected as major sets of criterion to distinguish political from other forms of discourse. The characterization of each category is minimal, as each concept requires book-length treatment in political science. The aim is to select relevant categories for the definition of political text and context (Van Dijk, 1998).

Politics covers many facets of society including education, health, law, business, and the arts. Its definition of political actions and conversation is absolutely important; it may also be applied to evaluate unethical activities in other fields. Often regarded as political, political systems include communism, dictatorship, democracy, fascism, and social democracy; they relate to the allocation of power and decision-making ideas and structure (Van Dijk, 1998).

Shared cultural ideals common for political systems include political values like freedom, solidarity, equality, and tolerance. Ideological groupings and categories identify themselves and their objectives in terms of their most prized ideals, including political freedom, justice, equality, or independence (Van Dijk, 1998).

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

Political ideologies define the socio-cognitive counterpart of political systems, hence describing the fundamental belief systems that underlie and structure common social representations of groups and their members. Power, power abuse, hegemony, oppression, tolerance, equality, and inequality are among the many relationships linking these systems that shape the State's relationship with its people and the relative positioning of some political groupings with respect to others (Van Dijk, 1998).

The political process classifies complicated, long-term sequences of political activities including governing, legislation, opposition, solidarity, agenda-setting, and policies. At the macro and micro levels of the political sphere, we handle specific actions and interactions normal for the political sphere, including sessions, meetings, passing legislation, voting, protests, campaigns, and revolutions (Van Dijk, 1998).

With genres including propaganda, political advertising, political speeches, media interviews, political talk shows on television, party programs, and ballots, political discourse is a major means of practicing politics. Various kinds of political cognition—such as shared social information and political attitudes, as well as more particular knowledge (models) of concrete political events—guide, interpret, and assess political actors, acts, and speech locally. All things considered, the field of politics includes social domains, political systems, values, ideas, institutions, political players, and political knowledge among other facets of society (Van Dijk, 1998).

This quick categorization of the structures and processes of the political domain offers us a preliminary location of political discourse amid other features of the political system and process. Defined as a special case of political action and as functional or strategic part of the political

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

process, we therefore have a first, still very informal, approximation of its conditions and consequences, and so of the goals and functions that are usual for its accomplishment and contextualization. Therefore, among the many genres of discourse for which we can now at least tentatively spell out the general social domain, as well as the type or nature of the political system, institutions, groups, group relations, actors and general interaction categories that define such genres, are a parliamentary debate, a propaganda leaflet, a campaign speech or a revolutionary slogan (Van Dijk, 1998).

Throughout the history of the United States of America, several policies were passed. An account of some of these policies, and how they show some elements of pragmatism will be presented and analyzed in order to evaluate their degree of pragmatism.

2.3 The Gilded Age

Followed by catastrophic events like the Civil War and the Reconstruction, industrialization in the late 1800s marked a significant role in shaping the United States in all aspects. The book *U.S. History* (2014) states that the late nineteenth century was a dynamic period characterized by a surge of inventions and a strong entrepreneurial drive. Expanding on the advancements made during the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain during the mid-19th century, and in response to the growing demand from Americans for improved efficiency and comfort, the nation experienced an increase of inventiveness, with a larger number of individuals dedicating themselves to pursuing their innovative concepts than ever before. Looking back, the utilization of steam and subsequently electricity during the nineteenth century significantly amplified the

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

capabilities of both humans and machines, thereby enabling further advancements throughout the century (p. 524).

In response to the growing complexities of daily life, Americans sought effective strategies to manage it. Inventions frequently yielded solutions, even though the inventors themselves were largely oblivious to the transformative impact of their ideas. To comprehend the extent of this fervor for innovation, one should take into account the U.S. Patent Office, which, during its initial decade of establishment in 1790, documented a mere 276 inventions. By 1860, the office had granted a cumulative total of 60,000 patents. However, during the period from 1860 to 1890, the population significantly increased to almost 450,000, and an additional 235,000 people were added in the final decade of the century. Although many of these patents were unsuccessful, certain inventions played a crucial role in the growth of large corporations and the transition of the country towards an industrialized economy. This shift allowed most Americans to achieve greater efficiency, comfort, and abundance (OpenStax College, 2014, p. 524).

It is obvious that the American government at that time chose to follow a pragmatic approach characterized by a sense of practicality in order to advance the economic situation of the country. Rather than relying on rigid ideologies, the government decided to open up and allow inventors across the country to start businesses. Granting the number of patents mentioned above, even though a lot failed, is a clear proof of the pragmatic approach taken by the American government.

Evidently, Boyer, in his book *American History: A very Short Introduction*, states that during the early 20th century, the political focus frequently neglected the concerns of workers,

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

consumers, and the urban underprivileged, as politicians prioritized the interests of corporations. The government provided financial support for the construction of railroads, implemented significant tariffs to protect domestic industries, and used force to suppress labor strikes. The Sherman Antitrust Act, enacted in 1890, prohibited conspiracies in restraint of trade, although its enforcement was inconsistent. In 1894, the American Railway Union, led by Eugene Debs, faced its first major prosecution (Boyer, 2012, pp. 67-68).

Occasionally, additional matters emerged, such as Congress bestowing privileges upon Union Army veterans and enacting a civil-service act mandating that certain government positions be filled through examination rather than through political favoritism. The predominant political movement of the time rallied debt-laden wheat and cotton farmers in the Great Plains and the South, who were severely affected by declining prices of agricultural products, limited access to credit, unfair railroad charges, and exorbitant farm machinery costs (Boyer, 2012, p. 68).

In 1892, the presidential nominee of the emerging Populist Party garnered more than one million votes and won in four states located in the western region. In 1896, the Populists joined forces with the Democratic Party and embraced a platform that integrated the Farmers' Alliance reforms. Additionally, they advocated for the unrestricted minting of silver as a means to augment the money supply in the Western region. William Jennings Bryan, the presidential nominee from Nebraska, garnered a total of 6.4 million votes, yet failed to appeal to a significant number of industrial laborers. William McKinley, the Republican candidate, emerged triumphant with substantial financial support from the country's corporate and financial elites (Boyer, 2012, pp. 68-69).

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

Although the agrarian reformers brought energy to the political process and acknowledged the pressing problem of unregulated corporate power, they only represented one economic interest group and were unable to appeal to urban workers or consumers (Boyer, 2012).

The US Department of State's Bureau of International Information Programs in the book *Outline of U.S. History* states that during the period between the Civil War and the First World War, the United States of America underwent a significant transformation and reached a state of maturity. Within a span of fewer than 50 years, the country underwent a significant transformation, transitioning from a predominantly agricultural society to a predominantly urbanized nation. The frontier disappeared. The land was characterized by impressive factories, steel mills, transcontinental railroad lines, thriving cities, and extensive agricultural holdings. The economic growth and affluence were accompanied by corresponding issues. Across the entire nation, a small number of businesses emerged as dominant forces in entire industries, either on their own or through partnerships with other companies. The working conditions frequently exhibited substandard quality. Urban centers experienced rapid expansion, resulting in insufficient infrastructure and governance to accommodate their increasing populations (Bureau of International Information Programs, 2011, p. 156).

The American government, knowing the suffrage of American society at that time, neglected workers and their demands to form unions and instead chose to focus on its interests, which lied in the continuity of dominance of big monopolies. As a result, political decisions were purely made based on interest. The alignment between the government and the big businesses at that time can be considered a pragmatic approach that fostered economic growth at the expense of

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

social prosperity. The suppression of strikes allowed big industries to further expand, which mainly benefited the government and the tycoons of that time. The government; however, tried to respond pragmatically to the uprising and growing concerns of the public by implementing the Antitrust Act in 1890 with the purpose of regulating the power of the corporates at that time, but it was weakly applied and enforced.

2.4 The Progressive Era

Followed by the age of industrialization and the domination of big corporations that monopolized almost every domain, the progressive era marks a significant and crucial period in the U.S. history with the purpose of facing economic, social, and political challenges. The Museum of the City of New York Print Archives states that Progressivism emerged as a response to economic laissez-faire and its focus on an unregulated market. Progressives held the belief that industrialization and urbanization had given rise to numerous social issues. Upon witnessing the destitution of the working class and the misery and criminality prevalent in urban society, reformers started questioning the efficacy of the free market in tackling these issues (p. 520) .

Progressives were affiliated with both major political parties. The majority of individuals were urban, well-educated middle-class Americans. Their leaders included journalists, social workers, educators, politicians, and clergy members. The consensus was that the government should adopt a more proactive approach in resolving societal issues. Simultaneously, they harbored skepticism regarding the government's ability to rectify those issues in its current state. Their conclusion was that the government needed to be repaired before it could be utilized to address other issues (The Museum of the City of New York Print Archives, p. 520).

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

Progressives believed that they could enhance society due to their unwavering confidence in the capabilities of science and technology. The utilization of scientific knowledge resulted in the creation of the lightbulb, the telephone, and the automobile. It had constructed tall buildings and train tracks. Science and technology provided advantages to people; therefore, progressives believed that applying scientific principles could also generate solutions for society (The Museum of the City of New York Print Archives, p. 520).

The Progressive Era was mainly a revolt with the purpose of social and political reform in the United States. Progressives' affiliation with political parties, education, and belief in using science and technology to solve problems during that era demonstrate a practical approach to addressing the challenges of that era. Progressives showed many pragmatic features that classical pragmatists cherished such as practicality and inquiry, which shows the influence of pragmatism on progressives.

Similarly, OpenSlax College (2014) states that the Progressive Era was characterized by a multitude of causes and diverse movements, in which activists and reformers from various backgrounds and with distinct agendas worked towards their goals of improving America. The reformers responded to the various challenges that confronted the nation in the late 19th century, including the rapid expansion of cities, immigration, corruption, harsh working conditions in industries, the rise of big corporations, the fight for women's rights, and the increasing incidents of anti-black violence and white supremacy in the Southern states. Journalists of that era conducted investigations that revealed social disparities and motivated Americans to respond. The origins of the Progressives' campaigns were frequently rooted in grassroots movements. Although there were

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

some common factors, each movement primarily concentrated on its own objectives, such as advocating for women's suffrage, advocating for the prohibition of alcohol in communities, or advocating for a more democratic electoral system (p. 610).

2.4.1 The Politics of the Progressive Era

The politics of the Progressive Era are characterized by the intent and practicality of reforming the United States politically, socially, and economically. The Gilded Age, defined by the domination of big corporations in the market, which ultimately led to political corruption and social misery, was sought to be challenged by progressives. One very notable progressive president was Theodore Roosevelt. The Museum of the City of New York states that Roosevelt was a dedicated progressive who advocated for an active government role in balancing the interests of different groups in American society.

Following the demise of President McKinley, Vice President Theodore Roosevelt, also known as "TR," became president at the age of forty-two. Roosevelt, a former governor of New York, took office in the White House. TR, who came from a notable Dutch immigrant family, advocated for a powerful presidency in order to preserve the welfare of the public and ensure the country's overall excellence. He harbored a strong dislike and suspicion towards wealthy individuals who exerted control over both the corporate and political realms. Roosevelt, with his inexhaustible energy and affinity for attention, revived the presidency following a period of legislative supremacy (Boyer, 2012, p. 78).

Evidently, Teddy Roosevelt and his financial associates were adopting a distinct approach towards the trusts, diverging from the former government's stance. Roosevelt sought guidance

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

from eminent economists, all of whom had pro-government cartel views, instead of advocating for a laissez-faire approach. After major consultations, Roosevelt was firm in his decision to pursue government regulation and cartelization of corporations and companies as a means of control. He advocated for the regulation of trusts, initially by mandatory disclosure, then if needed, through taxes, and ultimately through licensing. Roosevelt believed that trusts and the accumulation of fortune were completely lawful, but he recognized the necessity of regulation when fortunes were earned through exploitative means (Rothbard, 2017, pp. 210-211). It is apparent that Roosevelt's intention was to regulate and exert control over the big businesses of that time, and he adopted a very pragmatic approach in applying controlling measures.

OpenStax College (2014) states that In 1904, Roosevelt secured his second term with a resounding 57 percent majority in the popular vote. Following the election, he promptly implemented his unique version of Progressivism, which he referred to as a Square Deal for the American people (p. 629). For instance, upon the formation of a trust by J. P. Morgan and other bankers to gain control over railroading in the Northwest, the attorney general of TR filed a lawsuit against them for breaching the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. The Supreme Court affirmed the lawsuit, solidifying Roosevelt's position as a "trustbuster." Roosevelt was instrumental in the enactment of the 1906 Hepburn Act, which granted authority for regulation to the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) over railroads and prohibited the use of techniques aimed at gaining political and public support. The ICC, established in 1887 to oversee and address issues of railroad misconduct, has faced significant obstacles due to unfavorable judgments from the courts. In that very year, Congress enacted the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act, which

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

aimed to regulate the distribution of hazardous and contaminated food and drugs (Boyer, 2012, p. 79).

President Roosevelt tackled the challenges of that time with pure pragmatism. For example, the Interstate Commerce Commission was established in 1887 but was not fully capable of completely fulfilling its function until Roosevelt was in office. The fact that Roosevelt was able to be practical in resolving some of the problems at that time pragmatically shows that he functioned with a sense of practicality. In addition, Roosevelt's pragmatic approach lied in the fixation on using legislations that regulate the violations of the big businesses along with the fact of enacting more efficient laws with the purpose of social prosperity. OpenStax College (2014) affirms that Roosevelt enacted legislation pertaining to Progressive concerns, including factory inspections, child labor, and commercial control. He advocated for the implementation of the Elkins Act in 1903 and the Hepburn Act of 1906, both of which enhanced the authority of the Interstate Commerce Commission to oversee and control railroad tariffs. Furthermore, these statutes expanded the Commission's jurisdiction to include the regulation of interstate transit on bridges, ferries, and even oil pipelines. Roosevelt was a dedicated progressive who advocated for an active government role in balancing the interests of different groups in American society (p. 630).

Another challenge that progressives paid much attention to was the reform the government on local level first. The Museum of the City of New York Print Archives asserts that Progressives noticed corruption and inefficiency in local government, where, in the majority of cities, the mayor or city council appointed the leaders of city agencies. Historically, these positions were given upon political allies and acquaintances, who frequently possessed limited knowledge regarding the

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

administration of municipal services. As a result, progressives advocated for the implementation of two ideas aimed at restructuring the local government. The initial approach involved implementing a commission model, which entailed dividing the city administration into multiple divisions, each overseen by a proficient commissioner. The alternative method employed was a council-manager arrangement. The municipal council intends to employ a city manager to oversee the operations of the city, rather than relying on the mayor. Experts are heavily involved in the management of the city under both systems. In 1901, Galveston, Texas implemented the commission system. Subsequently, other cities promptly adopted this action (p. 522). The fact that progressives identified a problem, sought solutions, and ultimately suggested and reached solutions is clear proof that progressives were in fact following a pragmatic approach in tackling different challenges. Progressives in this case were extremely practical by not fixating on ideological notions. The presidents who were in office after Roosevelt were also progressives.

The Progressive Era was one of the most prominent and significant periods in United States history. The Progressives, particularly Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson, all adopted a pragmatic approach during their respective presidencies, albeit to varying degrees and in different manners. This pragmatic approach was primarily characterized by the presidents' willingness to take action when necessary, such as in their war against big corporations, where they not only hold to ideologies but also enacted laws that effectively limited the power of the trusts.

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

2.5 Franklin Roosevelt's New Deals Policy

2.5.1 The First New Deal

Basically, by 1939, the New Deal came to its peak. In the immediate aftermath, New Deal measures enhanced the lives of individuals affected by the depression. Ultimately, New Deal programs established a precedent for the federal government to have a significant role in America's economic and social matters (Library of Congress). The occurrence of the stock market crash in October 1929 initiated the Great Depression, but there were more underlying causes that were further exacerbated by a sequence of both human and natural disasters. Due to their expectation of a brief economic decline and their adherence to principles of free trade and individualism, Americans experienced significant hardships during the initial years of the Depression. Amidst deteriorating circumstances and the government's inaction, their demand for change intensified (OpenStax College, 2014, p. 731). Similarly, Boyer (2012) states that in the late 1920s, cautionary indicators steadily increased. Insufficient consumer salary resulted in an excess supply of houses, cars, and consumer products. The building sector had a sharp decline; manufacturing reserves gradually increased. Stock prices surged as speculators and beginners, many purchasing on credit, propelled prices towards ever higher levels. As of 1933, 25 percent of the American population was unemployed, and millions more were underemployed (p. 95). One of the most crucial periods in United States history is the Great Depression. During this period, the United States witnessed the election of one of its famous presidents, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

OpenStax college affirms that Roosevelt introduced an unparalleled quantity of new legislation, all aimed at stabilizing and sustaining the economy, offering assistance to individuals,

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

generating employment, and assisting corporations. A supportive Democrat-majority Congress facilitated the advancement of his initiatives (p. 773).

2.5.1.1 Banking and Finance

Upon Roosevelt's taking office, he confronted one of the most critical periods in the nation's banking history. The states were in turmoil. New York and Illinois mandated the shutdown of their banks to prevent additional "bank runs," which transpired when numerous citizens rushed to withdraw their savings. In total, more than five thousand banks had been closed. Within forty-eight hours after his inauguration, Roosevelt declared an official bank holiday and summoned Congress for a special session to tackle the problem. The Emergency Banking Act of 1933 was enacted on March 9, 1933, only eight hours after its initial presentation to Congress. The legislation formally removed the nation from the gold standard, a restricted measure that, while conservative and historically seen as secure, significantly constrained the circulation of paper currency. Individuals possessing gold were instructed to sell it to the U.S. Treasury at a reduced cost exceeding twenty dollars per ounce. Moreover, dollar bills ceased to be redeemable in gold. The legislation granted the comptroller of currency the authority to restructure all national banks encountering insolvency, a degree of federal supervision rarely observed before the Great Depression. From March 11 to March 14, auditors from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the Treasury Department, and various federal agencies conducted a comprehensive examination of each bank across the nation. By March 15, seventy percent of the banks were deemed solvent and permitted to resume operations (OpenStax College, 2014, p. 770). The fact that there was an immediate action to solve and stabilize the banking system illustrates a pragmatic problem-solving

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

approach, which proved effective, for it prevented a total collapse of the American banking system. Moreover, unlike the laissez-faire policy that was prevalent in the US, a federal intervention seemed necessary to fix the banking problem; the Emergency Banking Act allowed the government to take the necessary steps in order to fix the problem. Furthermore, the rapid assessment and reopening of most banks demonstrates a pragmatic approach.

2.5.1.2 Unemployment

Roosevelt confronted unparalleled widespread unemployment.

Upon taking office, almost 13 million Americans — exceeding a quarter of the workforce — were unemployed. Bread lines were prevalent in numerous urban areas. Hundreds of thousands traversed the nation in pursuit of food, employment, and refuge. “Brother, can you spare a dime?” was the main refrain of a well-known song (Bureau of International Information Programs, 2011, p. 215).

An initial measure for the unemployed was the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a program that provided assistance to young men aged 18 to 25. CCC participants were employed in camps overseen by the military. Approximately two million participated over the course of the decade. They engaged in numerous conservation initiatives: reforestation to mitigate soil erosion and preserve national forests; abating stream pollution; establishing sanctuaries for fish, game, and birds; and safeguarding deposits of coal, petroleum, shale, gas, sodium, and helium (Bureau of International Information Programs, 2011, p. 215).

Moreover, to generate fresh jobs, Roosevelt enacted the Wagner-Peyser Act, establishing the United States Employment Service, which assured states matching funding contingent upon

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

the creation of local job opportunities. He also sanctioned \$500 million in direct allocations via the Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA). This funding was allocated directly to states to provide relief agencies with essential resources to assist approximately fifteen million unemployed individuals. These two bills exemplify Roosevelt's combined objectives of delivering immediate humanitarian assistance and creating employment possibilities that would fortify the economy in the long run (OpenStax College, 2014, p. 773).

Roosevelt exhibited a balanced and effective approach to the crisis by offering immediate relief through initiatives such as the FERA and fostering long-term economic potential via the Wagner-Peyser Act. These programs not only mitigated misery but also established a foundation for a more prosperous future, rendering them a pragmatic solution to the issues of the era.

2.5.1.3 Agriculture, Farms and Factories

In the spring of 1933, the agricultural sector of the economy was in a condition of disintegration. It thus offered an experimental framework for the New Dealers' conviction that more regulation would address numerous national issues. In 1933, Congress enacted the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) to furnish economic help to farmers. The AAA intended to elevate crop prices by providing farmers with a subsidy to offset voluntary reductions in production. Revenue for the payouts would be derived from a tax imposed on businesses that process crops. Crop reduction and further subsidies via the Commodity Credit Corporation, which acquired commodities for storage, decreased output and increased farm prices (Bureau of International Information Programs, 2011, p. 216). The Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) was a practical reaction to the agricultural crisis during the Great Depression. Through specific actions,

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

the implementation of interim measures, the stimulation of the rural economy, and maintaining the balance of supply and demand, the AAA delivered substantial assistance to farmers and sustained the agricultural sector.

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

2.5.1.4 The First New Deal Comes to an End

Table 2.1: The Legislations of the First New Deal

New Deal Legislation	Years Enacted	Brief Description
Agricultural Adjustment Administration	1933–1935	Farm program designed to raise prices by curtailing production
Civil Works Administration	1933–1934	Temporary job relief program
Civilian Conservation Corps	1933–1942	Employed young men to work in rural areas
Farm Credit Administration	1933–today	Low interest mortgages for farm owners
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	1933–today	Insure private bank deposits
Federal Emergency Relief Act	1933	Direct monetary relief to poor unemployed Americans
Glass-Steagall Act	1933	Regulate investment banking
Homeowners Loan Corporation	1933–1951	Government mortgages that allowed people to keep their homes
Indian Reorganization Act	1933	Abandoned federal policy of assimilation
National Recovery Administration	1933–1935	Industries agree to codes of fair practice to set price, wage, production levels
Public Works Administration	1933–1938	Large public works projects
Resettlement Administration	1933–1935	Resettles poor tenant farmers
Securities Act of 1933	1933–today	Created SEC; regulates stock transactions
Tennessee Valley Authority	1933–today	Regional development program; brought electrification to the valley

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

This table provided by OpenStax College (2014) shows Roosevelt's key programs from the First New Deal. The programs were pragmatically designed to solve existing economic, political, and social issues.

One of the flaws with the First New Deal was the fact that the policies and decisions were primarily temporary, but what was considered at the time was the fact that the country was heading to a more prosperous path. Indeed, according to (OpenStax College, 2014), the First New Deal injected fresh capital into struggling banks. It salvaged homeowners and farmers from bankruptcy and assisted individuals in retaining their homes. It provided immediate assistance to the unemployed. It provided fresh motivation for both farmers and industry, while also reinstating employment to stimulate job creation and enhance consumer spending. The total number of employed Americans increased from twenty-four million to twenty-seven million between 1933 and 1935, in contrast to the seven million-worker decrease under the Hoover administration. Significantly, the First New Deal transformed the widespread pessimism that had dominated the nation since late 1929. For the first time in years, individuals experienced optimism (p. 779).

2.6 The Second New Deal

During its initial phase, the New Deal facilitated an impressive array of legislative measures and accomplished notable enhancements in production and pricing; nonetheless, it did not terminate the Depression. As the perception of imminent danger diminished, fresh demands surfaced. In response to these demands, President Roosevelt supported a fresh set of economic and social initiatives. Key initiatives were combating poverty, generating employment for the

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

unemployed, and establishing a social safety net (Bureau of International Information Programs, 2011, pp. 217-218).

Roosevelt faced criticism from both the left and the right; conservatives were apprehensive about his augmentation of government expenditure and authority, while liberals were frustrated by his insufficient assistance to people still in need. The Supreme Court invalidated several crucial components of the First New Deal, aggravating Roosevelt's troubles and prompting him to attempt to alter the composition of the judicial branch during his second term.

He commenced his new term with the clear backing of the electorate and promptly initiated the second part of his economic strategy (OpenStax College, 2014, pp. 779-780).

According to Roosevelt, the Social Security Act of 1935 was an essential component of the New Deal. Social Security established a system of state-managed welfare payments for the disadvantaged, unemployed, and disabled, reliant on matching contributions from both state and federal sources. It also instituted a national retirement benefits scheme funded by a "trust fund" generated from contributions by employers and employees.

Numerous other industrialized countries had already implemented similar schemes, although appeals for such an initiative in the United States had been disregarded.

The Social Security program is currently the largest domestic initiative managed by the U.S. government (Bureau of International Information Programs, 2011, p. 218). In connection with this act, Congress enacted legislation concerning unemployment insurance, financed through a tax placed on businesses, alongside programs for unwed mothers and individuals who are blind, deaf, or disabled (OpenStax College, 2014, p. 783). The Social Security Act can be seen as a pragmatic

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

solution to what was considered a big issue. It was a targeted assistance to specific groups of people. It also provided financial security to millions of Americans.

Table 2.2: The Legislations of the Second New Deal

New Deal Legislation	Years Enacted	Brief Description
Fair Labor Standards Act	1938–today	Established minimum wage and forty-hour workweek
Farm Security Administration	1935–today	Provides poor farmers with education and economic support programs
Federal Crop Insurance Corporation	1938–today	Insures crops and livestock against loss of revenue
National Labor Relations Act	1935–today	Recognized right of workers to unionize & collectively bargain
Rural Electrification Administration	1935–today	Provides public utilities to rural areas
Social Security Act	1935–today	Aid to retirees, unemployed, disabled
Surplus Commodities Program	1936–today	Provides food to the poor (still exists in Food Stamps program)
Works Progress Administration	1935–1943	Jobs program (including artists and youth

Source: (OpenStax College, 2014, p. 784)

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

The table above shows the main programs that the Second Deal included. It is apparent that the programs of the Second Deal were more sustainable and lasting than the programs of the First Deal. Both policies were pragmatic in the sense of practicality and the focus on self-interest. Nevertheless, the Second New Deal can be considered more pragmatic in the sense of the targeted focus, its long-term vision, and experience. Generally, the Second New Deal, unlike the First New Deal, focused on specific areas, which ultimately ensured better use of resources, better applications and better impact and consequences. In addition, the Second New Deal's programs ensured that the policies were sustainable for future generation, so they were not urgent and temporary solutions. Finally, experiencing the First New Deal allowed the American government to build on policies from the First New Deal in order to enact more improved policies in the Second New Deal.

2.7 The Civil Rights Movement

In 1619, the first enslaved Africans arrived in British North America. For the next 246 years, captive Africans and their descendants would experience various forms and structures of American slavery. Formal slavery was abolished and redefined by means of the post-Civil War Reconstruction Amendments and the transformed definition of an enslaved person as a person who has been convicted of a crime. Then followed a period commonly referred to as the nadir of American race relations, characterized by the rise of the white supremacist terrorist group known as the Ku Klux Klan, as well as the urgent need for black political solutions as a means to empower Black communities. Unfortunately, Black political solutions were also met with increased brutal repression with new forms of racist ideology and structural segregation (Hinton, 2021).

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

To address the hyper-racialized structural crisis, the early 20th century saw the rise of various forms of religious and secular, radical and human rights-based, multi-racial and intersectional political and cultural groupings. Many of these groups and organizations embraced a common African proverb, “I am because we are.” The focus, however, is on a slightly later watershed moment, the rise of the modern Civil Rights Movement, which began in the mid-1950s as a result of a historic Supreme Court decision. The majority opinion, written by a fellow Southerner and enlightened conservative Republican, stated that separate was inherently unequal. The decision made Blacks’ and white progressive allies’ growing impatience with a Jim Crow system that consisted of segregated and inferior schools, the constant risk of white-on-Black state-sanctioned terrorism, and Black voter disenfranchisement that much more intense as more and more Black communities and national organizations began to nudge and push the federal government to take a more politically pragmatic and concrete federal action to correct what was increasingly being called in the Black community as “America’s apartheid.” Often referred to as the Long Civil Rights Movement, the Civil Rights Movement extended into the contemporary era, with some historians and scholars dating the period until the mid-70s, ending with the federal implementation of the policies outlined in the Civil Rights Act of 1965 (Eick, 2001).

The discussion with respect to the application of pragmatism addresses how such an idea is practically applicable within the civil rights movement strategies. There was always an emphasis on the adaptability and practicality of any approach that was taken to address the social injustices that marginalized communities had faced across the globe. This was true with regard to the civil rights movement as well. Considerable focus was placed on the tactics employed by the activists throughout the civil rights movement. The use of peaceful protests, legal challenges, sit-ins,

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

boycotts, and lobbying is all tactical approaches to civil rights advocacy that could be pragmatically interpreted.

2.8 Welfare Reform Act (1996)

In 1964, President Johnson proclaimed a war on poverty. The Government dedication to addressing national social issues was limited, as indicated by both the quantity of initiatives and the extent of funding. In that notable year, the Nation initiated a course that resulted in the expansion of programs and expenditures aimed at addressing poverty and other domestic issues. In the subsequent decade, the Federal Government implemented Medicare, Medicaid, Head Start, food stamps, Supplemental Security Income, and various other programs. By 1995, the Nation had more than 300 social programs, and federal and state expenditures on the impoverished had increased from approximately \$40 billion to nearly \$360 billion.

These programs were the Federal Government's initial sustained effort to tackle low income and poverty. The new programs have led to a reduction of almost two-thirds in poverty among the elderly and the establishment of universal inexpensive health care for this demographic. These are significant accomplishments. Nonetheless, the impact of War on Poverty initiatives on children, adolescents, and parents has been far less favorable. Despite a significant rise in programs and expenditures, child poverty remained elevated and even increased from the 1970s to the early 1990s. Moreover, an increasing number of children were born out of wedlock, a situation correlated with elevated levels of poverty, youth violence, crime, and welfare dependency, all of which escalated during this period (White House, 2002).

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

In 1995, the promised benefits of the welfare state did not facilitate financial autonomy for young adults. Republicans proposed legislation to reform welfare programs with the objectives of encouraging employment, fostering healthy marriages, and decreasing non-marital births. Welfare was made conditional on job-seeking efforts, and families were restricted to five years of cash assistance. The 1996 legislation integrated childcare programs, enhanced child support enforcement, modified Medicaid regulations, and decreased non-marital births. On August 22, 1996, Congress enacted a bipartisan bill, which was subsequently signed into law (White House, 2002).

The implementation of welfare reforms during a period of economic growth has led to a significant reduction in welfare rolls for the first time in history. The decline in the number of families on welfare has been significant, leading many analysts to anticipate potential crises during periods of recession. Research indicates that approximately 60% of mothers exiting welfare are employed at any given time, with over 80% achieving employment over an extended period (White House, 2002).

Data from a national survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau corroborates this observation, indicating significant increases in employment starting in the mid-1990s. By the year 2000, more than 73% of mothers leading families were employed, reflecting a 25% increase over a six-year period. The majority of the employment growth was observed among low-income mothers, characterized by lower levels of education, limited job experience, and a higher likelihood of prolonged periods on welfare, frequently exceeding ten years (White House, 2002).

The reduction in welfare rolls has resulted in significant increases in employment among single mothers and former welfare recipients. The observed trend of swiftly rising employment

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

and income levels, alongside a decline in welfare benefits, exemplifies the concept of breaking welfare dependency (White House, 2002).

Child poverty rates have decreased annually since the mid-1990s, resulting in an overall reduction of approximately 30%, from 22.7 percent in 1993 to 16.2 percent in 2000, marking the lowest level of child poverty since 1978. Poverty rates among African-American children have significantly decreased, reaching their lowest level on record, while Hispanic children are experiencing similar improvements (White House, 2002).

Supplementary data from the Census Bureau, not presented here, elucidate the significant decreases in child poverty. Historically, poverty rates for children in female-headed families have been five to six times greater than those for children in married-couple families (White House, 2002).

Welfare adjustments implemented during periods of economic growth represented a pragmatic strategy that harmonized policy objectives with real-life situations. The reforms facilitated the shift of people from welfare to employment during periods of increased job availability, thereby decreasing the probability of economic distress. The emphasis was on reducing welfare dependency through work requirements, resulting in notable increases in employment among low-income mothers. By the year 2000, single mothers experienced a twenty-five percent rise in employment and a rise in salary levels. The yearly decrease in rates of child poverty has resulted in the lowest levels since 1978, especially among African-American and Hispanic children. The reforms recognized possible difficulties, including obstacles encountered by less-experienced employees and weaknesses during economic downturns. Overall, the driven

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

by data, results-oriented approach highlights the practical aspect of welfare reforms intended for lowering reliance and enhancing economic outcomes for families.

2.9 The Affordable Care Act (2010)

The Affordable Care Act (ACA), enacted by President Obama in 2010, sought to lower high levels of uninsurance, reduce out-of-pocket expenses, and eliminate coverage limitations within the U.S. health care system. The ACA affects insurers, providers, state governments, employers, taxpayers, and consumers. The reform modified the existing health insurance framework. The implementation of controlled health insurance exchange markets, or Marketplaces, represented a fundamental change by providing financial assistance for ACA-compliant coverage to individuals lacking traditional insurance sources (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2024).

The Affordable Care Act's aim was to broaden the coverage of health insurance for Americans. People with incomes up to 138% of the federal poverty level, which is \$15,060 for a single person living in the continental U.S. in 2024, were able to get Medicaid. Also, new health insurance exchange markets were set up. These markets let people buy insurance and get help with premiums and cost-sharing. There are also separate exchange markets for small enterprises to get coverage. Employers who lack cheap coverage can be fined, although small businesses may not have to pay the fines. Before the ACA was passed, about 14 to 16 percent of people in the United States, including people of all ages, did not have health insurance. In 2023, the rate of people without health insurance hit a record low of 7.7%. Most of the increases in insurance coverage can

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

be traced back to the ACA's expansion of Medicaid and the creation of exchange marketplaces (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2024).

The Affordable Care Act provides various consumer protections and market regulations for individuals with private health insurance. The Affordable Care Act prohibits health plans from denying coverage, charging higher premiums, or canceling coverage and imposing exclusions based on preexisting health conditions. The Affordable Care Act prohibits annual and lifetime limits on coverage amounts and restricts the extra expenses that individuals and families might face annually for in-network care. The law mandates that the majority of health plans provide coverage for preventive health services without any extra costs. Health insurers are required to provide rebates to those enrolled and businesses annually if they do not comply with Medical Loss Ratio standards. Additionally, individuals with private insurance are permitted to maintain coverage for their young adult children until the age of 26 (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2024).

The Affordable Care Act exemplified a pragmatic approach by resolving progressive objectives with political and economic constraints, resulting in tangible advancements through gradual reforms instead of strict ideological adherence. Rather than completely reforming the U.S. healthcare system, it enhanced existing frameworks—expanding Medicaid to include low-income individuals (with states permitted to opt out following the Supreme Court ruling), maintaining employer-based insurance (imposing penalties on large employers that do not provide affordable coverage), and establishing regulated Marketplaces for private insurers to compete for subsidized consumers. This hybrid approach circumvented divisive proposals such as a single-payer system, opting instead for market-oriented mechanisms (e.g., subsidies, mandates) to stabilize risk pools and broaden coverage for millions. The Affordable Care Act implemented significant consumer

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

protections, including the prohibition of preexisting condition exclusions and lifetime coverage caps, while also incorporating compromises aimed at preserving industry stability, such as postponed cost-control measures and a gradual implementation process to facilitate transitions. The Affordable Care Act demonstrated pragmatic policymaking by prioritizing attainable goals, such as reducing the uninsured rate from approximately 15% to 7.7%, while navigating political constraints. It aimed to enhance equity and access within a fragmented system, despite not fully resolving long-term cost issues.

2.10 The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (2021)

On November 15, 2021, President Biden signed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law into law. This law will change the country's infrastructure, economy, and communities for the better. This law is a one-of-a-kind chance to fix up America's infrastructure, make it easier for everyone to get clean water, make sure everyone has access to high-speed internet, fight climate change, promote environmental justice, and help both urban and rural communities that have been overlooked in the past. This bipartisan effort aims to ease inflationary pressures, improve supply chains by making the necessary upgrades to our country's ports, airports, railroads, and roads, create well-paying union jobs with high labor standards that are open to all workers, especially those from underrepresented groups, and encourage long-term, fair, and sustainable economic growth (The White House, 2022).

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

2.10.1 Transportation

Particularly in rural areas, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law seeks to remedy the bad state of one in five miles of highways and bridges. Roughly \$400 billion is spent under the statute to extend Federal surface transportation programs for five years, including repairing roads and bridges, supporting transformational projects, generating union jobs, expanding economic prospects, and strengthening the transportation system (The White House, 2022).

2.10.1.1 Roads, Bridges, and Major Projects

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

Table 2.3: Funding Amount Allocated to R

Program Name	Agency Name	Funding Amount
National Highway Performance Program	Department of Transportation	\$148,000,000,000
Surface Transportation Block Grant Program	Department of Transportation	\$72,000,000,000
Bridge Formula Program	Department of Transportation	\$26,675,000,000
Tribal Transportation Facility Bridges (Bridge Formula Funding Set-Aside)	Department of Transportation	\$825,000,000
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program	Department of Transportation	\$13,200,000,000
Bridge Investment Program	Department of Transportation	\$12,200,000,000
Grants for Planning, Feasibility Analysis, and Revenue Forecasting (Bridge Investment Program Set-aside)	Department of Transportation	\$100,000,000
Local and Regional Project Assistance Grants (RAISE)	Department of Transportation	\$7,500,000,000
Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects (INFRA)	Department of Transportation	\$7,250,000,000
State Incentives Pilot Program (Set-aside within Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects - INFRA)	Department of Transportation	\$750,000,000
National Highway Freight Program	Department of Transportation	\$7,150,000,000
Carbon Reduction Program	Department of Transportation	\$6,419,999,998
National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Megaprojects)	Department of Transportation	\$5,000,000,000
Tribal Transportation Program	Department of Transportation	\$2,966,800,000
Metropolitan Planning	Department of Transportation	\$2,280,000,000
Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program	Department of Transportation	\$2,000,000,000
Federal Lands Transportation Program (funds for National Park Service)	Department of Transportation	\$1,731,187,250
Federal Lands Access Program	Department of Transportation	\$1,487,875,000
Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act	Department of Transportation	\$1,250,000,000
Appalachian Development Highway System	Department of Transportation	\$1,250,000,000
National Culvert Removal, Replacement, & Restoration Grant	Department of Transportation	\$1,000,000,000
Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program	Department of Transportation	\$1,000,000,000
Puerto Rico Highway Program	Department of Transportation	\$900,995,000
Advanced Transportation Technologies & Innovative Mobility Deployment	Department of Transportation	\$900,000,000

oads, Bridges, and Major Projects

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

Highway Research & Development Program	Department of Transportation	\$310,000,000
Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects	Department of Transportation	\$275,000,000
Congestion Relief Program	Department of Transportation	\$250,000,000
Intelligent Transportation Systems Program	Department of Transportation	\$250,000,000
Territorial Highway Program	Department of Transportation	\$239,505,000
Tribal Transportation Facility Bridge (Set-aside)	Department of Transportation	\$200,000,000
Federal Lands Transportation Program (Funding for U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service)	Department of Transportation	\$180,000,000
Federal Lands Transportation Program (For other Federal Land Management Agencies)	Department of Transportation	\$153,637,750
Federal Lands Transportation Program (Funding for U.S. Forest Service)	Department of Transportation	\$130,000,000
Accelerated Implementation and Deployment of Advanced Digital Construction Management Systems (Set-aside)	Department of Transportation	\$100,000,000
Strategic Innovation for Revenue Collection (Set-aside)	Department of Transportation	\$75,000,000
Accelerated Implementation and Deployment of Pavement Technologies (Set-aside)	Department of Transportation	\$60,000,000
National Motor Vehicle Per-Mile User Fee Pilot (Set-aside)	Department of Transportation	\$50,000,000
Disadvantaged Business Enterprises	Department of Transportation	\$50,000,000
On-the-Job Training Program	Department of Transportation	\$50,000,000
Tribal High Priority Projects Program	Department of Transportation	\$45,000,000
Highway Use Tax Evasion Projects	Department of Transportation	\$20,000,000
TOTAL - ROADS, BRIDGES AND MAJOR		\$326,274,999,998

Source: (The White House, 2022)

Dedicated financing for roadways, bridges, and other important Federal Highway Administration and Department of Transportation projects under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law totals \$40 billion. \$12.5 billion for the Bridge Investment Program—which replaces, rehabilitates, preserves, or protects some of the most vital and economically important bridges in the country—

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

is included in this. The remaining money is under the Bridge Formula Program, which gives States formula financing to repair, rehabilitate, preserve, protect, and build bridges on public highways. Often owned and maintained by cities, counties, and towns, off-system bridges are set aside 15% (\$4 billion). In January 2022, the Department of Transportation announced the first year of Bridge Formula Program financing, making \$5.3 billion available to states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico in fiscal year 2022. Under the Bridge Formula Program for bridges held by local government or Tribe, the Federal government will pay 100% of the cost of off-system bridge improvements. The Law also provides \$8 billion for the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Program, \$7.5 billion for Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) awards, and \$5 billion for the National Infrastructure Project Assistance or "Megaprojects." The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law also provides a five-year reauthorization for the Federal Highway Administration at the Department of Transportation, which allocates \$273.2 billion in Federal-aid highway formula money for States. Representing a more than 20% rise above fiscal year 2021 formula funding, the Federal Highway Administration distributed \$52.5 billion of this formula money for fiscal year 2022 in December 2021 (The White House, 2022).

2.10.2 Climate, Energy and the Environment

To boost resilience and offer low-cost clean energy to more Americans, the US energy system needs to be modernized and reformed. One in three families finds it difficult to pay their energy bills, and power outages run the economy up to \$70 billion year. Many of the lab's promising clean energy technologies have yet to be shown at scale. Inefficient offices, schools, and houses add to air pollution and high energy costs. Aiming to update the power grid, fund

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

energy efficiency, and assist the creation, demonstration, and deployment of innovative clean energy technologies, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is the biggest investment in clean energy infrastructure in American history. This will generate good-paying employment, hasten the shift to a zero-emission economy, and support manufacturing in towns all around the nation (The White House, 2022).

2.10.2.1 Clean Energy and Power

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

Table 2.4: Funding Amount Allocated to Clean Energy and Power

Program Name	Agency Name	Funding Amount
Power Marketing Administration Transmission Borrowing Authority	Department of Energy	\$10,000,000,000
Regional Clean Hydrogen Hubs	Department of Energy	\$8,000,000,000
Civil Nuclear Credit Program	Department of Energy	\$6,000,000,000
Program Upgrading Our Electric Grid and Ensuring Reliability and Resiliency	Department of Energy	\$5,000,000,000
Preventing Outages and Enhancing the Resilience of the Electric Grid / Hazard Hardening	Department of Energy	\$5,000,000,000
Four Regional Clean Direct Air Capture Hubs	Department of Energy	\$3,500,000,000
Weatherization Assistance Program	Department of Energy	\$3,500,000,000
Battery Materials Processing Grants	Department of Energy	\$3,000,000,000
Battery Manufacturing and Recycling Grants	Department of Energy	\$3,000,000,000
Smart Grid Investment Matching Grant Program	Department of Energy	\$3,000,000,000
Carbon Capture Demonstration Projects Program	Department of Energy	\$2,537,000,000
Transmission Facilitation Program	Department of Energy	\$2,500,000,000
Carbon Storage Validation and Testing	Department of Energy	\$2,500,000,000
Advanced Reactor Demonstration Program	Department of Energy	\$2,477,000,000
Carbon Dioxide Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Program	Department of Energy	\$2,100,000,000
Energy Improvement in Rural or Remote Areas	Department of Energy	\$1,000,000,000
Clean Hydrogen Electrolysis Program	Department of Energy	\$1,000,000,000
Carbon Capture Large-Scale Pilot Programs	Department of Energy	\$937,000,000
Advanced Energy Manufacturing and Recycling Grants	Department of Energy	\$750,000,000

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

Critical Material Innovation, Efficiency, And Alternatives	Department of Energy	\$600,000,000
Rehabilitation of High Hazard Potential Dams	Department of Homeland Security	\$585,000,000
Maintaining and Enhancing Hydroelectricity Incentives	Department of Energy	\$553,600,000
Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program	Department of Energy	\$550,000,000
Purchase of Power and Transmission Services	Department of Energy	\$500,000,000
State Energy Program	Department of Energy	\$500,000,000
Clean Hydrogen Manufacturing Recycling Research, Development, and Demonstration Program	Department of Energy	\$500,000,000
Industrial Emission Demonstration Projects	Department of Energy	\$500,000,000
Grants for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Improvements at Public School Facilities	Department of Energy	\$500,000,000
Industrial Research and Assessment Center Implementation Grants	Department of Energy	\$400,000,000
Energy Storage Demonstration and Pilot Grant Program	Department of Energy	\$355,000,000
Earth Mapping Resources Initiative	Department of the Interior	\$320,000,000
Carbon Utilization Program	Department of Energy	\$310,140,781
Assisting Federal Facilities with Energy Conservation Technologies Grant Program	Department of Energy	\$250,000,000
Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund Capitalization Grant Program	Department of Energy	\$250,000,000
Cost-effective Codes Implementation for Efficiency and Resilience	Department of Energy	\$225,000,000
National Dam Safety Program	Department of Homeland	\$215,000,000

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

Energy and Minerals Research Facility	Department of the Interior	\$167,000,000
Industrial Research and Assessment Centers	Department of Energy	\$150,000,000
Long-Duration Energy Storage Demonstration Initiative and Joint Program	Department of Energy	\$150,000,000
Rare Earth Elements Demonstration Facility	Department of Energy	\$140,000,000
Rare Earth Security Activities	Department of Energy	\$127,000,000
Battery and Critical Mineral Recycling	Department of Energy	\$125,000,000
Hydroelectric Production Incentives	Department of Energy	\$125,000,000
Watershed Rehabilitation Program	Department of Agriculture	\$118,000,000
Front-End Engineering and Design Program Out Activities Under Carbon Capture Tech Program 962 Of EPA (Sec 40303)	Department of Energy	\$100,000,000
Commercial Direct Air Capture Technology Prize Competition	Department of Energy	\$100,000,000
Enhanced Geothermal Systems and Pilot Demonstrations	Department of Energy	\$84,000,000
Section 243 Hydroelectric Efficiency Improvement Incentives (Sec 40332)	Department of Energy	\$75,000,000
Critical Material Supply Chain Research Facility	Department of Energy	\$75,000,000
Marine Energy Research, Development, and Demonstration	Department of Energy	\$70,400,000
Wind Energy Technology Program	Department of Energy	\$60,000,000
Energy Efficiency Materials Pilot Program	Department of Energy	\$50,000,000
Energy Auditor Training Grant Program	Department of Energy	\$40,000,000
Solar Energy Research and Development	Department of Energy	\$40,000,000
Wind Energy Tech Recycling Research & Development	Department of Energy	\$40,000,000

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

National Marine Energy Centers	Department of Energy	\$40,000,000
Hydropower Research, Development, and Demonstration	Department of Energy	\$36,000,000
Solar Recycling Research & Development	Department of Energy	\$20,000,000
New Solar Research & Development	Department of Energy	\$20,000,000
Pre-Commercial Direct Air Capture Prize Competitions	Department of Energy	\$15,000,000
Pumped Storage Hydropower Wind and Solar Integration and System Reliability Initiative	Department of Energy	\$10,000,000
Extended Product System Rebates	Department of Energy	\$10,000,000
Energy Efficient Transformer Rebates	Department of Energy	\$10,000,000
Lithium-Ion Recycling Prize	Department of Energy	\$10,000,000
Career Skills Training	Department of Energy	\$10,000,000
Building, Training, And Assessment Centers	Department of Energy	\$10,000,000
Capital Improvement and Maintenance for Dams	Department of Agriculture	\$10,000,000
TOTAL - CLEAN ENERGY AND POWER		\$74,952,140,781

Source: (The White House, 2022)

To hasten the installation of new transmission lines, link Americans to cleaner, more affordable power, and strengthen grid resilience, the Department of Energy has started a new "Building a Better Grid Initiative." Roughly \$16.5 billion in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding will be used by the project to provide clean, affordable power to more people, enhance grid infrastructure, and meet the President's target of 100% carbon pollution-free electricity by 2035. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law also allocates more than \$700 million for hydropower fleet

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

upgrades and \$6 billion for a Civil Nuclear Credit Program. To supervise \$21.5 billion in clean energy demonstration project funding, the Department of Energy has created a new Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations. The legislation also allocates \$6.5 billion for energy efficiency enhancements, therefore supporting weatherization and other initiatives generating employment in localities. Most of the money will go to domestic clean energy manufacturing sites (The White House, 2022).

2.10.3 Broadband

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law seeks to guarantee affordable, dependable, high-speed internet access for all Americans. Particularly in rural areas, more than 30 million Americans live in places lacking broadband infrastructure. Among 35 nations examined, the US has the second most expensive broadband. Through historic broadband infrastructure deployment, the law spends about \$65 billion to guarantee every American has consistent high-speed internet. It will help to reduce internet service costs and bridge the digital gap so that more Americans can make full use of internet access. American employment, education, healthcare, and general connectivity all depend on this (The White House, 2022).

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

Table 2.5: Funding Amount Allocated to Broadband

Program Name	Agency Name	Funding Amount
Broadband Equity, Access, And Deployment Program	Department of Commerce	\$42,450,000,000
Affordable Connectivity Program	Federal Communications Commission	\$14,200,000,000
Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program	Department of Commerce	\$2,000,000,000
Distance Learning, Telemedicine, And Broadband Program: Reconnect Program	Department of Agriculture	\$1,926,000,000
State Digital Equity Capacity Grant	Department of Commerce	\$1,440,000,000
State Digital Equity Competitive Grant	Department of Commerce	\$1,250,000,000
Middle Mile Grant Program	Department of Commerce	\$1,000,000,000
Distance Learning, Telemedicine, And Broadband Program: Broadband Loans	Department of Agriculture	\$74,000,000
State Digital Equity Planning Grant	Department of Commerce	\$60,000,000
Broadband Deployment Locations Map	Federal Communications Commission	\$10,000,000
Denali Commission Broadband Funding	Denali Commission	\$250,000
TOTAL - BROADBAND		\$64,410,250,000

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has released a Notice requesting feedback on seven significant financing programs. The Middle Mile Grant Program allocates funds for the construction of middle-mile infrastructure, whereas the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment program is a formula-based grant initiative aimed at state broadband planning and implementation. The Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program provides Digital Equity Planning, Digital Equity Capacity, and Competitive Grants to enhance digital inclusion and equity for communities deficient in requisite skills, technology, and support for utilizing broadband connections. These projects emphasize broadband expansion on Tribal territories, telemedicine services, distant education, and the cost of broadband access. Low-income households qualifying for the Affordable Connectivity Program obtain a subsidy to access internet

Chapter Two: Pragmatism and American Political Discourse: A Deep Connection

service plans from affiliated providers. The Broadband ReConnect Program allocates more than \$2 billion in loans and subsidies for broadband services in rural areas (The White House, 2022).

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law contains several pragmatic elements. It is quite direct in its response to practical needs. The mentioned examples illustrate the practical response to the needs of modernizing the infrastructure of many different sectors. The law, by allocating huge funding to different projects across the country, focuses on practical outcomes like job creation and improvement of life conditions, which suggest and reflect a focus on real-life problems and solutions.

2.11 Conclusion

Throughout history and in every government, issues take place. Political discourse has always been a tool that is used to address the public about certain issues. The identification of one or more philosophies within a political discourse is inevitable, for politicians possess principles that are derived from philosophies. One of the aims of this thesis is to explore the influence of the philosophy of pragmatism in American political discourse. This chapter attempted to show pragmatism usage during different periods throughout the history of the United States.

**Chapter Three:
Exploring Donald
Trump's Written
Discourse**

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

3.1 Introduction

Donald Trump is considered one of the most controversial presidents in the history of the United States. His discourses and actions are widely debated not in the United States only but worldwide. Donald Trump both terms are characterized by policies and discourses that need to be studied. This chapter is set to discuss the background of Donald Trump. Then it moves to analyze three written discourses of Donald Trump with the purpose of exploring pragmatism usage in these discourses.

3.2 Donald Trump

To say the least, Donald Trump has been one of the most controversial characters in the last decade, especially during his rise to power. During his first term, his policies, speeches, and tweets were rather interesting and debatable, which was more than logical given the fact that he was at the time the president of the United States. Recently, when he was elected as a president again, the controversy has surfaced yet again around President Trump. A brief background about Donald Trump might serve some insight about his personality.

Born to a rather wealthy family, Donald Trump attended the renowned Wharton School, part of the University of Pennsylvania, and earned a bachelor's degree in economics. Therefore, his past experiences and academic background have helped him to develop his business sense, consequently influencing his present position as a successful business owner (Blair, 2015).

By claiming he did not learn from people with MBAs, Trump cleverly uses rhetorical strategies to present himself as a typical person from an underprivileged background who, by relentless effort, has reached the American Dream. His education came from people with doctorates in common sense (Reicher & Haslam, 2017). Moreover, his discourse shifts focus from personal self-improvement to the goal of defeating or destroying adversaries. The emphasis is

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

more on the lack of compassion for people who have suffered injustice than on the hatred directed toward those who have obtained what is seen as justifiably "ours" (Wodak, 2015).

The only person to take the presidency without previous military or government knowledge was Donald Trump. As a result, he neglected to absorb the values of respect for the Constitution, military discipline, and national obligation. His father was his only superior; he did not work for a major corporation; therefore, he did not absorb the ideas of large, efficient bureaucracies. When talking about how foreign policy is created, he expressed his general perspective: "I am the only important person" (Pfiffner, 2021).

Most of the activities considered basic to the presidency are not clearly defined in the brief wording of the Constitution, which lists the official powers of the office: executive authority, commander-in-chief authority, veto authority, and so forth. Especially in the 20th century, when it comes to the commander in chief's authority, the range of these powers has been greatly expanded. Trump's breaches of presidential standards, such as undermining US elections and seeking political help from foreign countries, were qualitatively different from the actions of other presidents. His violations of norms used the president's constitutional power to an unprecedented degree, including the politicization of his commander-in-chief powers and the abuse of the pardon authority (Pfiffner, 2021).

3.3 Donald Trump Policies as a President

According to the National Archives, President Trump's first 100 days show significant acts to make the U.S economy better in the first initial months of the administration. One of the key achievements in this 100 days is the creation of over 533000 jobs across several sectors, which resulted in a 4.5% decrease in the unemployment rate. Moreover, rising stock indices and surveys demonstrated a significant surge in economy. The "Buy American, Hire American" policies were

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

supported by rather generous investments from major big corporations, which ultimately helped in creating thousands of jobs. There was also a change in regulations that saved the government over 86 billion dollars (The National Archives, 2017).

Donald Trump's administration was marked by a governing style that sometimes gave pragmatic outcomes top priority over ideological consistency. Spanning economic, domestic, and diplomatic domains, his policies showed a strategic flexibility that let him adjust to changing political and global situations. Reflecting a concern on quick, visible results rather than long-term ideological aspirations, Trump's choices often strayed from conventional partisan lines from tax reform and deregulation to immigration and trade policies. This practical approach formed both the achievements and difficulties of his administration, reflecting a notable change from traditional political strategies and affecting the American political scene. Thus, a brief summary, based on data provided by The White House of President Trump's achievements in his first term, is presented. Then, an analysis is conducted to assess the involvement of pragmatic characteristics in some of the policies.

Our country had already confirmed its place as home to the world's most thriving economy before the start of the so-called China Virus. Groundbreaking accomplishments in every field of economic activity defined this time, so laying a basis of strength and opportunity that improved millions of lives. Astonishing job growth, higher salaries, and a historic drop in unemployment all while preparing the way for a future full of hope for every citizen helped the United States of America not only meet but also exceed expectations and break long-held records (The White House, 2021).

Central to these successes was the generation of seven million fresh jobs, a number that surpassed government estimates by more than three times and revitalized the American labor.

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

Nearly six thousand dollars more in middle-class family income was a gain that greatly outstripped the slight increases observed under the last administration. An unemployment rate that dropped to an incredible three point five percent, the lowest in fifty years, and a record stretch of forty consecutive months during which the number of job opportunities outnumbered the number of actual job hires further underlined this economic revival. Such successes resulted in about one hundred sixty million working people; the number of people applying for unemployment benefits fell to levels not seen in almost fifty years (The White House, 2021).

The economic recovery and expansion were not limited to urban areas. Reflecting an inclusive prosperity that benefited people regardless of their locales, every metropolitan area in the United States of America experienced a gain in income for the first time in almost three decades. Unemployment rates for historically underprivileged groups—including African American citizens, Hispanic American citizens, Asian American citizens, Native American citizens, military veterans, people with disabilities, and those without a high school diploma—fell to all-time lows during this time. The unemployment rate among women also dropped to its lowest point in almost seventy years. At the same time, almost seven million Americans were lifted off the reliance on food assistance programs, and poverty rates among African American and Hispanic American populations reached historically low levels, signifying a notable progress toward closing income disparity and promoting a fairer society (The White House, 2021).

A revival of the manufacturing, construction, and small business sectors showed likewise the American economy's recovery. Accompanied by initiatives meant to repatriate supply chains that had hitherto been outsourced abroad, more than one million two hundred thousand manufacturing and construction jobs were generated. The financial markets celebrated historic milestones as small company confidence shattered a thirty-five-year record. Rising above twenty

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

thousand points for the first time in the year two thousand seventeen, the Dow Jones Industrial Average shot past thirty thousand points by the year two thousand twenty. Likewise, the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations market indices and the Standard and Poor's Five Hundred both established consistent record highs. While house prices rose to unprecedented levels, these financial successes were matched by dramatic shifts in household net worth, which grew by seven trillion four hundred billion dollars during the second quarter of the year two thousand twenty alone to reach an all-time high of one hundred and twelve trillion dollars (The White House, 2021).

The economy showed amazing resilience even in the face of unparalleled difficulties the coronavirus epidemic created. The country started a fast recovery by refusing to apply universal lockdowns that could have harmed public health as well as economic activity. Reversing more than half of the job losses suffered during the crisis, over twelve million jobs were restored. From a high of fourteen point seven percent in April to six point seven percent by December, unemployment fell, a recovery that significantly outstripped the speed of the prior administration. Furthermore, while about eighty percent of small firms reopened and confidence levels rose in industries like residential construction and manufacturing, unemployment rates among Hispanic American, Asian American, and African American populations saw notable drops (The White House, 2021).

Strategic fiscal and regulatory policies worked hand in hand with these economic milestones to help stabilize the financial markets and strengthen investor confidence. Treasury-backed actions carried out by the Federal Reserve guaranteed that financial stability was preserved during a time of great uncertainty. The rise in business confidence was clear as people and

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

investors all around the country welcomed a vision of innovation, opportunity, and ongoing economic expansion (The White House, 2021).

The time preceding and during the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic was marked by unprecedented economic achievements. Collectively, the creation of millions of new jobs, the fast growth in earnings, and the unprecedented drop in unemployment show a policy framework that produced record-breaking outcomes. This period not only set the groundwork for a vibrant and strong economy but also changed the scene of opportunity, so guaranteeing that all part of society reaped the rewards of economic expansion. The achievements of this time serve as proof of the country's ability to create, succeed, and construct a future of more promise and wealth for all its people (The White House, 2021).

The previous passages present an unusually upbeat picture of the American economy before and during the early stage of the coronavirus outbreak. It emphasizes that even before the so-called China Virus appeared, the country had already confirmed its position as a worldwide economic powerhouse by means of exceptional job creation—seven million new employments much above government projections—and significant rises in middle-class wages. While all urban regions saw income increases for the first time in decades, unemployment rates fell to historic lows, including record levels for several impoverished populations. Thriving industries including manufacturing and construction as well as rising financial markets and family net wealth highlighted the general success as well. The rejection to implement broad lockdowns helped to hasten recovery despite the difficulties the pandemic created; millions of jobs were restored and unemployment dropped significantly. Strategic fiscal and regulatory policies helped to strengthen stability and investor confidence even more, hence supporting a strong story of a resilient and

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

inclusive economy that produced unprecedented successes and opened the path for a future of ongoing opportunity for all American people.

A fundamental component of our administration's economic policy, Fair and Reciprocal Trade seeks to protect American workers and businesses by changing the country's involvement with world trade. Historic trade agreements were obtained by a sequence of decisive steps reorienting the world trading system in favor of United States interests. The administration fast withdrew from the job-killing Trans-Pacific Partnership, realizing that such multinational treaties were not fulfilling their promises of fair competition for American labor and business. Likewise, the North American Free Trade Agreement was ended and the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement took its place. This new deal not only redefines trade relations amongst our neighbors but also has strong protections for American businesses, auto-makers, farmers, dairy producers, and workers. Projected to produce more than sixty-eight billion dollars in economic activity, it might also generate more than five hundred and fifty thousand new employments over the following ten years (The White House, 2021).

Apart from reworking trade deals, the administration released a federal strategy to Buy American and Hire American, so limiting the outsourcing of jobs abroad. Important talks were also held with major commercial partners including Japan, South Korea, China, and the European Union. Tariffs were lowered with Japan and market access for American agricultural goods and digital trade was broadened. A Phase One trade agreement from a crucial pact with China mandated that country to buy an extra two hundred billion dollars' worth of American products and to improve protection of American intellectual property. Including a significant drop on American lobster, the European Union agreed on policies boosting duty-free exports and lowering tariffs (The White House, 2021).

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

Furthermore, by implementing taxes on Chinese imports and protective charges on foreign steel, aluminum, washing machines, and solar panels, among others, the government took strong measures against unjust trade practices. It also fought digital services taxes from nations including France, and helped American farmers by obtaining more than fifty agreements to increase agricultural exports and approving billions in assistance to balance trade disturbances. Rapid actions like the Coronavirus Food Assistance initiative and the Farmers to Families Food Box initiative were implemented to preserve the integrity of the American food supply chain in reaction to the COVID-19 outbreak (The White House, 2021).

Moreover, a main focus has been investing in America's families and workers, reflected in policies meant to increase economic security, open doors, and promote long-term competitiveness. Among these initiatives, notable was the significant increase in child care and family stability support. Eligibility was widened and the Child Tax Credit was quadrupled from one thousand to two thousand dollars per child, helping about forty million households with an average credit of around two thousand two hundred dollars per kid—totaling nearly eighty-eight billion dollars in advantages. At the same time, the biggest increase in Child Care and Development Block Grants ever greatly increased access to affordable, high-quality child care for nearly eight hundred thousand low-income families. Families in difficult times got more help from extra actions including dedicated funding under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, the establishment of a paid family leave tax credit for workers making seventy-two thousand dollars or less, and laws assuring paid parental leave for federal employees (The White House, 2021).

Alongside these family-oriented projects, the government pushed apprenticeship programs, increasing possibilities for more than eight hundred fifty thousand people and building new industry-recognized routes in developing sectors, all backed by the formation of the National

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

Council for the American Worker and related advisory boards. Ensuring that practical talents are valued, over four hundred sixty businesses promised to generate more than sixteen million job and training possibilities under an executive order changing government hiring from degree-based to skills-based standards (The White House, 2021).

American women's empowerment was also quite important. Supported by historic laws and programs like the Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative, women's empowerment was officially included into national security policy. These measures, together with the creation of committed funds and alliances such the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative, helped to mobilize billions in private investment and offered fresh money for women-owned companies (The White House, 2021).

Establishing national research objectives for artificial intelligence, quantum information science, and five-gigahertz communications, the policy welcomed American leadership in technology and innovation. Projects like the American Broadband Initiative, the American Artificial Intelligence Initiative, and the National Quantum Initiative Act guaranteed major investments in advanced technologies, guaranteed widespread 5G deployment—especially in rural America—and promoted international cooperation to preserve world technological leadership. Furthermore, by opposing the admission of low-cost foreign labor, aggressive steps were made to safeguard American employment, particularly through forceful activities with the Tennessee Valley Authority (The White House, 2021).

In addition, by increasing healthcare choice, openness, and affordability, the Trump Administration significantly empowered American patients. Removing the individual mandate under the Affordable Care Act gave low- and middle-income families—nearly 80% of those formerly penalized—immediate financial relief. With more than 90 percent of counties now

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

providing many plans, this shift together with improved competition in the individual health insurance market produced lower premiums for three years running and more choices for consumers. The administration also encouraged creative ideas like Association Health Plans and increased short-term, limited-duration health plans, which provided savings of up to 60%, and broadened Health Reimbursement Arrangements to enable millions of Americans choose plans that best suit their needs (The White House, 2021).

Alongside these changes, significant changes were made to Medicare and prescription drug rules. While reducing premiums by 34 percent overall, the government also provided more than 2,100 additional Medicare Advantage plan choices—a 76 percent rise—which produced almost \$1.5 billion in savings for recipients. Reducing medicine prices meant putting into effect the Most Favored Nation Rule, which guaranteed pharmaceutical corporations gave U.S. consumers the same discounts given to other countries, and finishing regulations allowing for the importation of Canadian prescription drugs. Legislative measures also abolished some expensive fees and gag clauses, encouraged hospital and insurance price transparency, increased telemedicine and electronic health record access, and more. A number of focused projects also highlighted a dedication to promoting medical innovation and safeguarding patients with pre-existing conditions: more funding for Alzheimer's and pediatric cancer research, anti-HIV/AIDS campaigns, and modernized flu vaccine development. These initiatives taken together greatly improved Medicare, protected at-risk populations, and guaranteed that American healthcare stays accessible, competitive, and focused on the needs of its people (The White House, 2021).

The administration also concentrated on legislative and economic policies to promote public safety, help ex-inmates, and lower recidivism. Key initiatives are signing the First Step Act to change sentencing rules and enhance prison conditions, supporting "second chance hiring" to

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

engage former convicts into society, and increasing educational possibilities for jailed people via Pell Grants. While projects like "Ready to Work" and fidelity bonds encouraged companies to employ ex-prisoners, over \$333 million in funds were set aside for reintegration programs. By tackling systematic obstacles to reintegration, these initiatives sought to end cycles of criminality. At the same time, the government gave law enforcement assistance first priority, sending federal troops to fight city crime (e.g., Operation Legend), financing police departments, and reviving initiatives such Project Safe Neighborhoods. Stronger public safety infrastructure was supported by measures including FirstNet's deployment and harsher fines for vandalizing federal property (The White House, 2021).

Moreover, anti-abortion policies and safeguards for religious liberties. Initiatives included restoring the Mexico City Policy to prevent international abortion funding, defunding Planned Parenthood, and upholding conscience rights for healthcare professionals against abortion. The administration also signed the Geneva Consensus Declaration, which opposed an international right to abortion. Regarding religious freedom, the Johnson Amendment encouraged free expression for religious leaders, protected faith-based adoption agencies, and removed limitations on disaster aid for religious groups. The government created the International Religious Freedom Alliance and penalized organizations abusing religious minorities including China's treatment of Uighur Muslims on a global scale (The White House, 2021).

Trump's administration also put much emphasis on environmental issues. Environmental initiatives emphasized public lands, clean infrastructure, and emissions reduction. Clean water systems received more than \$38 billion in investment; the U.S. recorded drops in carbon emissions even under the Paris Climate Accord. While projects like the One Trillion Trees Initiative encouraged reforestation, the Great American Outdoors Act guaranteed record financing for

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

national parks. Regulatory measures covered lead pollution, offshore drilling in sensitive coastal areas, and restoration of access to national monuments. The administration also gave marine conservation first priority by means of the Save Our Seas Act and updated wildfire management techniques (The White House, 2021).

Furthermore, Policies on education stressed school choice, vocational training, and assistance for underprivileged institutions. While the 1776 Commission pushed patriotic courses, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act let 529 savings plans pay K–12 private educations. Legislation such as the FUTURE Act permanently financed historically black colleges and universities; catastrophe debts for these schools were repaid. The Strengthening Career and Technical Education Act broadened vocational training; women and minorities were given first priority for Science, technology, engineering prospects. Reforms also mandated free speech on campuses, changed Title IX protections for victims of sexual abuse, and made higher education expenses more open (The White House, 2021).

Included in Public Safety and Crime Prevention were initiatives to fight gun violence, human trafficking, and hate crimes. While the Fix NICS Act improved background checks, a consolidated hate crime reporting system was established. School safety and missing Indigenous women were handled under the STOP School Violence Act and a committed task group. Targeting businesses supporting exploitation, creating a White House anti-trafficking position, and reauthorizing the Trafficking Victims Protection Act were all part of anti-trafficking initiatives. Grants and programs such Foster Youth to Independence sought to lower homelessness among underprivileged groups (The White House, 2021).

So, Trump’s first term achievement list is quite full according to the White House. According to the White House, Trump’s administration focused and successfully managed to

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

tackle several issues that the previous administration could not. From economy, trade, politics, domestic policy all the way to foreign policy, Trump's administration was rather successful in making circumstances better for the American people.

Whether Trump's policies were successful or not is not the concern of this study. Its main focus is to identify pragmatic characteristics in some of the policies presented by the Trump administration. Therefore, an analysis of a selected set of policies are presented and analyzed with the sole purpose of determining the existence of pragmatic elements within these policies.

3.4 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA)

Among other things, the Tax Cut and Jobs Act changed income tax rates across various categories, from a maximum of 39.6% to 37%. Though personal exemptions were abolished, the standard deduction was almost doubled, therefore many taxpayers' tax filing was made easier. The Child Tax Credit was also enlarged, with more money per kid and greater phase-out limits. The State and Local Tax deduction was limited to \$10,000. Though the mortgage interest deduction was kept with restrictions for new loans, key itemized deductions as for moving expenses and unreimbursed employee expenses were eliminated (Professional Education Services, LP, 2017).

Notably lowering the corporation tax rate from 35% to 21%, the TCJA brought significant changes to business taxation. This was meant to help American companies compete more worldwide. The tax reform also changed the United States from a worldwide to a territorial tax structure. Under a one-time repatriation tax, businesses can bring home profits at a lower rate. Corporations no longer have an Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT). Though carrying losses back was removed, the capacity to carry losses forward forever was added (Professional Education Services, LP, 2017).

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

Companies experienced a lower tax rate as a move toward a territorial system exempting overseas income from U.S. tax. This shift sought to promote the return of overseas profits. Foreign profits were subject to a one-time tax; cash and other assets had lower rates. By eliminating the corporate Alternative Minimum Tax, the TCJA simplified company tax filing (Professional Education Services, LP, 2017).

By raising the estate tax exemption under the TCJA, people might pass on as much as \$11 million (\$22 million for couples) free of estate taxes. Beginning in 2019, the Affordable Care Act's lack of health insurance individual mandate penalty was all but abolished. There were also measures meant to streamline tax filing procedures and lessen individual and corporate compliance obligations (Professional Education Services, LP, 2017).

Included in the TCJA were energy policy-related clauses such as those allowing oil drilling in sections of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It also gave some sectors tax breaks, therefore promoting energy generation and environmental measures in line with corporate interests (Professional Education Services, LP, 2017).

3.4.1 Thematic Analysis of the Tax Cut and Job Act

The following report presents and analyzes Section 11001 of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. The analysis explores the elements of pragmatism evident in the legislation. The main question that drives this analysis is: How does Section 11001 of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act demonstrate pragmatic approaches to tax legislation? The data used in this analysis is Section 11001 itself.

This analysis utilized a deductive latent thematic analysis of Section 11001 of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. This analysis used the data with pre-determined themes. In this case, the concept from which the themes were derived is pragmatism, especially the pragmatism of Charles Sanders

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

Pierce, John Dewey, William James, and Richard Rorty. First, the familiarization with the data phase was done by reading thoroughly Section 11001 of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act with the purpose of capturing pragmatic elements within the text. Moreover, determining and generating codes from the text led to establishing themes among the codes. Segments from the text were coded to represent the principles of pragmatism outlined in the first chapter. Reviewing, refining, naming, and refining themes took place after the coding phase. This approach goes beyond merely describing data; it explains and explores the latent meanings, focusing on elements of pragmatism within Section 11001.

Table 3.1: Thematic Analysis of the Tax Cut and Job Act

Text Segment	Code(s) Applied	Theme(s) Linked To
"taxable year beginning after December 31, 2017, and before January 1, 2026"	Time-Bound 2018-2025	Theme 1: Specific Timeframe
"subsection (i) shall not apply, and this section ... shall be applied as provided in paragraphs (2) through (6)."	Temporary Rule Substitution	Theme 1: Specific Timeframe , Theme 2: Practicality
"RATE TABLES.— (A) MARRIED INDIVIDUALS FILING JOINT RETURNS..."	Specific Group - Joint Filers, Rate Adjustment	Theme 3: Targeted Application , Theme 2: Practical Adjustments
"The following table shall be applied in lieu of the table contained in subsection (a)"	Rule Replacement - Joint Filers	Theme 2: Practicality
"(B) HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS.— The following table shall be applied in lieu of the table contained in subsection (b)"	Specific Group - Heads of Household, Rule Replacement - HOH, Rate Adjustment	Theme 3: Specificity , Theme 2: Practicality

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

<p>"(C) UNMARRIED INDIVIDUALS OTHER THAN SURVIVING SPOUSES AND HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS.—The following table shall be applied in lieu of the table contained in subsection (c)"</p>	<p>Specific Group - Unmarried Individuals, Rule Replacement - Unmarried, Rate Adjustment</p>	<p>Theme 3: Specificity, Theme 2: Practicality</p>
<p>"(D) MARRIED INDIVIDUALS FILING SEPA7 RATE RETURNS.— The following table shall be applied in lieu of the table contained in subsection (d)"</p>	<p>Specific Group - Separate Filers, Rule Replacement - Separate, Rate Adjustment</p>	<p>Theme 3: Specificity, Theme 2: Practicality</p>
<p>"(E) ESTATES AND TRUSTS.—The following table shall be applied in lieu of the table contained in subsection (e)"</p>	<p>Specific Group - Estates/Trusts, Rule Replacement - Estates/Trusts, Rate Adjustment</p>	<p>Theme 3: Specificity, Theme 2: Practicality</p>
<p>"(F) REFERENCES TO RATE TABLES.— Any reference in this title to a rate of tax under subsection (c) shall be treated as a reference to the corresponding rate bracket under subparagraph (C) of this paragraph..."</p>	<p>Practical Coordination, Rule Interpretation</p>	<p>Theme 2: Practicality, Theme 4: Practical Implementation</p>
<p>"(3) ADJUSTMENTS.— (A) NO ADJUSTMENT IN 2018.—The tables contained in paragraph (2) shall apply without adjustment for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2017, and before January 1, 2019."</p>	<p>Delayed Adjustment, Specific Timeframe - 2018</p>	<p>Theme 1: Specific Timeframe, Theme 2: Practicality</p>
<p>"(B) SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—For taxable years beginning after December 31, 2018, the Secretary shall prescribe tables which shall apply in lieu of the tables contained in paragraph (2) in the same manner as under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (f) (applied without regard to clauses (i) and (ii) of subsection (f)(2)(A)), except that in prescribing such tables— ... substituting ‘calendar year 2017’ for ‘calendar year</p>	<p>Future Adjustment Mechanism, Specific Rule Application, Rule Exclusion, Adaptation</p>	<p>Theme 2: Practicality, Theme 4: Practical Implementation</p>

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

<p>2016’ ... subsection (f)(7)(B) shall apply ... subsection (f)(8) shall not apply."</p>		
<p>"(4) SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN CHILDREN WITH UNEARNED INCOME.— (A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a child to whom subsection (g) applies for the taxable year, the rules of subparagraphs (B) and (C) shall apply in lieu of the rule under subsection 2 (g)(1)."</p>	<p>Targeted Rule for Specific Group - Children, Rule Substitution - Kiddie Tax</p>	<p>Theme 3: Specificity, Theme 2: Practicality, Theme 4: Practical Implementation</p>
<p>"(5) APPLICATION OF CURRENT INCOME TAX BRACKETS TO CAPITAL GAINS BRACKETS.— (A) IN GENERAL.—Section 1(h)(1) shall be applied— ... (B) MAXIMUM AMOUNTS DEFINED.(C) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—In the case of any taxable year beginning after 2018, each of the dollar amounts in clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (B) shall be increased by an amount equal to If any increase under this subparagraph is not a multiple of \$50, such increase shall be rounded to the next lowest multiple of \$50."</p>	<p>Cross-Referencing Existing Rules, Definition of Specific Amounts, Inflation Adjustment Mechanism - Capital Gains, Practical Rounding Rule</p>	<p>Theme 2: Practicality, Theme 4: Practical Implementation</p>
<p>"(6) SECTION 15 NOT TO APPLY.— Section 15 shall not apply to any change in a rate of tax by reason of this subsection."</p>	<p>Exclusion of Specific Rule, Practical Simplification</p>	<p>Theme 2: Practicality, Theme 4: Practical Implementation</p>
<p>"(b) DUE DILIGENCE TAX PREPARER REQUIREMENT WITH RESPECT TO HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD FILING STATUS.— Subsection (g) of section 6695 is amended to read as follows: ... shall pay a penalty of \$500 for each such failure."</p>	<p>Behavioral Incentive (Penalty), Focus on Accurate Application</p>	<p>Theme 4: Practical Implementation</p>
<p>"(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall</p>	<p>Clear Start Date</p>	<p>Theme 1: Specific Timeframe</p>

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2017."		
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3.4.1.1 Time-bound

This theme is concerned with the clarity of the start and end of the Section 11001 adjustment. It highlights the changes that the law states over time as well as the law’s limitation by specific dates. This is a proof of a strategy that solely focuses on temporary changes instead of permeant ones to the tax system, which as a result, would allow evaluation and modification as conditions change. Therefore, acknowledgment to different changing conditions created a sense of flexibility. This theme can be directly connected with Pierce’s pragmatism; Pierce states that beliefs must evolve collective affirmation over time. This law shows the rejection of rigidity apparent in Pierce’s rejection of absolutes and his advocacy to continuous adjustments.

3.4.1.2 Practicality

This theme focuses on changes made to the tax system as a whole with the purpose of functioning more effectively. The changes themselves are not simple changes. This implies not just adding or deleting rules from the previous laws but also replacing them wholly. The law is aimed to make simpler rules rather than complex ones. This practical element is rather crucial; these modifications are aimed to simplify processes, enhance efficiency, and make the tax code simpler and more useful to both taxpayers and administrators. This theme reflects John Dewey’s idea of instrumentalism. Dewey claims that practical application to real-world issues is the core of knowledge. For Dewey, solutions are found within pragmatic engagements in real- life situations. The modifications made to this law ensure that a system exists to enact adjustments to real-world challenges, which mirrors Dewey’s encouragement of constant inquiry.

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

3.4.1.3 Specificity

This theme underlines the accuracy and specificity of the implementation of clauses mentioned in Section 11001. The law does not requisite constant application to all taxpayers; it makes clear and different distinctions, categories, and standards depending on the filing statuses of the taxpayers. This strategy proves that there is knowledge and awareness that taxpayers will have different reactions and perceptions to tax changes depending on their financial circumstances. Therefore, this law is efficient in recognizing that some circumstances will not suit all taxpayer. This theme is directly correlated to Pierce and James's pluralism. James argues that lived experiences lead to the emergence of truths, which is a clear advocacy of context-specific solutions. Similarly, Pierce believed that different groups of people experience life very differently, which ultimately leads to several diverse interpretations. In this legislation, different groups receive different tax treatment depending on their socio-economic status.

3.4.1.4 Practical Implementation

This theme emphasizes the application and upholding the tax law. It goes beyond just mere written rules; it is concerned with how these rules will operate realistically. Certain measures needed to be implemented to ensure that this legislation stays relevant. Inflation adjustments, penalties, and clarifying vague parts of the section to avoid misunderstanding and misconception made the law more functional. This theme relates both to Rorty and Dewey's systemic pragmatism and inquiry. For Rorty, the rejection of metaphysical discussion in favor of social consensus must be prioritized. For Dewey, inquiry inevitably leads to transformation. This law clearly shows both aspects.

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

3.4.1.5 Discussion

The four themes identified in this analysis show continuous pragmatic elements evident in Section 11001. The law mainly focuses on specific timeframes, different rules for different groups, practical rules, and measures to ensure the application of the law. The time-bond element demonstrates a policy goal that is guided by temporal changes that can be altered later. The specificity of the law suggests a sense of awareness and recognition of the population's different economic statuses. Moreover, the practicality in the legislation shows that the policymakers were rather keen to enact a law that is efficient. Finally, the practical implementation of the law shows a degree of emphasis from the government to enforce the law. Therefore, based on the evidence, it is fair to conclude that Section 11001 of the Tax Cut and Job Act shows a notable degree of pragmatism.

3.5 The Social Perception of the Tax Cuts and Job Act (2017)

Trump said he will shortly sign the Senate bill enacted last week. With just 29% of U.S. adults agreeing and 56% disapproving in a recent Gallup survey, the Republican tax plan is quite unpopular. The legislation is even less popular than tax increases enacted under presidents Clinton and George H.W. Bush. Trump lauded the measure as a great middle-class resolve and job generator, saying more and more individuals are noticing its advantages. The Senate bill, according to a Tax Policy Center study, would leave low and middle-income Americans with minimal change in their tax bills by 2027. The measure is anticipated to be approved shortly (Beckwith, 2017) .

Senate Republicans are trying to enact tax reform; polls indicate more people oppose the bill than support it. With only 25% of voters accepting it, roughly one-third of existing voters back the Republican tax reform plan. Forty-six percent oppose. Many believe the low support is due to

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

worries the measure favors the wealthy disproportionately. With 51% of Americans supporting and 26% against, the Reagan tax cut plan was more popular in 1981 than the present GOP legislation. Usually, significant tax cut proposals are more well-liked than those less desirable (Enten, 2018).

Table 3.2: Social Perception of Different Tax Bills

YEAR	POLLSTER	TAX BILL	YES	NO	DIFF.
1981	Gallup	Reagan tax cut I	51%	26%	+25
2001	Harris	W. Bush tax cut I	49	37	+12
2010	ABC/WaPo	Extending Bush tax cuts I	54	42	+12
2013	ABC/WaPo	Extending Bush tax cuts II	45	38	+7
2003	Harris	W. Bush tax cut II	45	39	+6
1986	CBS/NYT	Reagan tax cut II	38	34	+4
1993	Gallup	Clinton tax hike	34	44	-10
1990	Voter News Service	H.W. Bush tax hike	41	52	-11
2017	November average*	Trump tax cut	32	46	-14

Source: (Enten, 2018)

However, overwhelming popular backing for making the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) permanent has been shown by a recent U.S. Chamber of Commerce poll. Because of its capacity to lower and simplify the federal tax load on households and businesses, 64% of people support making the Tax Cut and Job Act permanent while 20% oppose it. The Tax Cut and Job Act also promotes economic growth, job creation, and global competitiveness. 81% of Republicans, 55% of Independents, and even a majority of Democrats supported the measure. 65% of people say they are more inclined to back a candidate who votes to make the tax cuts permanent

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

(Stephenson, 2025).

75% of those polled backed permanently restoring the deduction for R&D expenditures; 73% backed full capital expensing; 73% backed maintaining lower tax rates by making the 20% deduction for pass-through business income permanent; and 69% backed permanently restoring a less-restrictive deduction for interest expenses. 78% think the greatest approach to balance the budget is to maintain the line on taxes, reduce wasteful expenditure, and support pro-growth initiatives (Stephenson, 2025).

Evidently, The Americans for Prosperity (AFP) (2023) poll has found that the majority of Americans agree that Congress must renew the 2017 Trump tax cuts while reducing the federal deficit through responsible spending cuts. The poll, conducted by Public Opinion Strategies, warns that any Congressman who chooses to vote against extending these tax cuts would be placing themselves in political peril. The poll's timing was chosen to have the biggest impact on policy fights and has been featured in the New York Post, the Washington Times, and Breitbart.

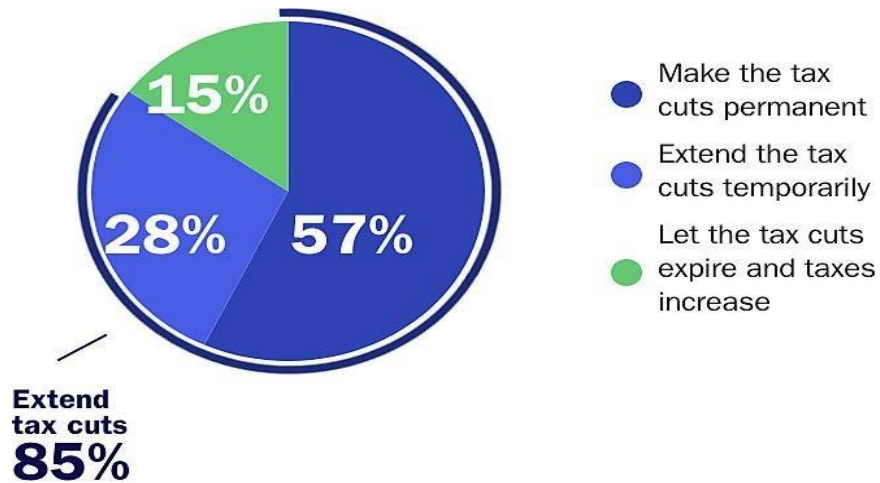
American voters are just starting to recover from high inflation and the disastrous economic policies of the Biden administration. They recognize the harmful higher taxes would be and are willing to pay more for the federal deficit. 84% of American voters believe Congress should keep the current tax rates, even 74% of Democrats agree. Almost 3 in 4 Americans believe allowing the Trump tax cuts to expire would hurt middle-class Americans and mom-and-pop businesses the most (Protect Prosperity , 2023).

Extending the Trump tax cuts is a clear political winner, as voters are increasingly aware that the tax cuts expire at the end of 2025. 63% of American voters are more willing to vote for a lawmaker who votes to extend the Trump tax cuts, including majorities of key swing groups. 60%

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

of voters consider it the same as their member of Congress voting to increase taxes if the Trump tax cuts are allowed to expire (Protect Prosperity , 2023).

Figure 3.1: Social Perception of the Tax Cut and Job Act



Source: (Michel, 2025)

Since it was first enacted, the perception of the Tax Cuts and Job Act has changed significantly. At first, the bill was disapproved by the majority of the American society. Only 30% of Americans approved the bill, justifying this by claiming that the bill only benefited the wealthy while having no effect towards the middle class. Nevertheless, a huge shift in the polls was noticed. The public opinion has notably changed concerning the bill, as new polls show that more than 60% of Americans favors making the law permanent or at least extending it. In addition, voters are now considering backing politicians that are willing to support the renewal of the Tax Cuts and Job Act. This shift can be attributed to the fact that citizens needed to experience tangible outcomes from the law, which was not quite clear in the first months of passing the bill. This also shows that public opinion can shift depending on the political, economic, and social circumstances of their

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

environment. Moreover, the shift in public opinion and acceptance is strongly and highly related and dependent on tangible outcomes.

3.6 President Trump's Second Term

Basically, the government, led by Trump, focused mainly on border security, parental rights, the accountability of the government, and job preservation. First, the United States was quite successful in securing the southern border with Mexico. This was partially accomplished with the resuming of the wall construction. This along with stricter immigration and asylum procedures resulted in a 95% decrease in border crossings. On the same topic, nearly 139000 illegal immigrants were deported from the United States. Moreover, the government made significant steps to address the weaponization of different federal agencies. The government also made immense efforts to protect and preserve parental rights in their children's education. The government has also instructed schools to comply with the laws in this regard. It is also worth noting that approximately 117000 jobs were lost in the auto manufacturing sector (American First Policy Institute , 2025).

Forty percent of Americans approve of how President Donald Trump has handled the job so far in his second term, which is almost 100 days long. But 59% don't like the administration's tariff hikes, and 55% don't like the cuts that were made to federal departments and agencies. People also don't like how Trump uses executive power. Fifty-one percent of U.S. adults say he is making too many decisions through executive order. The study was done after Trump said he would put new tariffs on almost all of the U.S.'s trading partners. This caused the U.S. and worldwide financial markets to be volatile. There is a lot of bipartisan agreement that the administration would have to stop doing something if a federal court found it to be illegal. This is because many of

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

Trump's acts are being challenged in federal courts. A Pew Research Center survey, on the other hand, indicated that people from different political parties had very different opinions about Trump's overall job performance and some of his important programs (Pew Research Center , 2025).

3.7 The National Emergency Declaration

From the formation of the United States to World War I, U.S. presidents exercised emergency powers at their own discretion, unofficially proclaiming a state of emergency. George Washington's 1794 proclamation to send troops to quell the Whiskey Rebellion is one such instance. Abraham Lincoln's April 1861 announcement starting an embargo on seceded states is another (Little, 2025).

Woodrow Wilson was the first president to officially announce a state of emergency. Wilson signed a proclamation on February 5, 1917—two months before the United States entered World War I—stating there was "a national emergency arising from the insufficiency of maritime tonnage" and urging the nation to fix this. Active until 1921, this proclamation was ended by the U.S. government together with other wartime policies (Little, 2025).

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was the next president to announce a national emergency. Two days into his first term and in the depths of the Great Depression, Franklin Delano Roosevelt said on March 6, 1933, that "heavy bank withdrawals and speculation had 'created a national emergency,'" suspending banks until March 9 in reaction. He rapidly enacted the Emergency Banking Act after prolonging this "bank holiday" and then signed an executive order on March 10 stating banks might reopen under specific criteria (Little, 2025).

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

After World War II had started but before the United States entered it, FDR proclaimed two further national emergencies in September 1939 and May 1941. Though a national emergency proclamation Harry S. Truman issued during the Korean War was not the same, the U.S. government ceased these war-related proclamations after WWII (Little, 2025).

Presidents substantially increased the use of national emergency declarations after Carter, which can provide them access to at least 150 statutory authorities. During his presidency, Reagan proclaimed seven new situations of emergency, two of which lasted into George W. Bush's term. During his two administrations, Bill Clinton announced 17 new states of emergency, five of which remained active when Joe Biden departed office in January 2025 (Little, 2025).

Many of the emergency declarations presidents keep renewing let them apply economic penalties on foreign entities. Goitein, a known scholar, claims others, such the 9/11 statement, let the president order stop-loss or call in military reservists. Stop-loss is the unintentional prolongation of a military tour of service (Little, 2025).

Importantly, these statements let presidents decide on foreign policy, the military and other matters without involving Congress. This has led academics to denounce the continual declaration of national crises as an executive power overreach (Little, 2025).

Technically, the United States has been under a continuous state of emergency since November 1979, when Jimmy Carter reacted to the Iran hostage crisis by issuing an executive order proclaiming a national emergency and freezing Iranian government property. Reagan extended Carter's emergency declaration yearly during his presidency despite Iran's release of the hostages on Ronald Reagan's inauguration day in 1981. Every president since then has kept declaring the 1979 emergency as well as numerous of their own (Little, 2025).

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

When Donald Trump started his second term on January 20, 2025, the United States had around 40 active emergency declarations (no really, we are serious), including the national emergency George W. Bush declared in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. On his inauguration day, Trump initiated two more: a national energy emergency and an emergency at the U.S.-Mexican border (Little, 2025).

According to a national emergency declared by Trump, America's sovereignty is being challenged. Cartels, criminal gangs, known terrorists, human traffickers, smugglers, unvetted military-age guys from foreign enemies, and illegal drugs harming Americans—including America—overrun our southern border. Over the last four years, this invasion has created great disorder and hardship in our nation. At the hands of illegal aliens, it has resulted in the terrible and unforgivable deaths of many innocent American people, especially women and children. Beginning to take control of city areas, foreign criminal gangs and cartels are assaulting our most defenseless people and harassing Americans outside the reach of local law enforcement. Just south of our southern border, cartels control large areas, hence determining who can and cannot enter the United States from Mexico. Tragically, hundreds of thousands of Americans have perished from drug overdoses brought on by illegal narcotics streaming over the southern border (Trump, 2025). Due to this considered threat, President Trump declared a national emergency.

3.7.1 Thematic Analysis of the National Emergency Declaration (2025)

The following report presents and analyzes the National Emergency Declaration (2025). The analysis explores the elements of pragmatism evident in the declaration. The main question that drives this analysis is: How does the National Emergency Declaration (2025) show pragmatic approaches? The data used in this analysis is the text derived from the website of the White House that was the official declaration of the national emergency.

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

This analysis utilized a deductive latent thematic analysis of National Emergency Declaration (2025). This analysis used the data with pre-determined themes. In this case, the concept from which the themes were derived is pragmatism, especially the pragmatism of Charles Sanders Pierce, John Dewey, William James. First, the familiarization with the data phase was done by reading thoroughly the whole declaration with a special attention to capturing pragmatic elements within the text. Moreover, determining and generating codes from the text led to establishing themes among the codes. Segments from the text were coded to represent the principles of pragmatism outlined in the first chapter. Reviewing, refining, naming, and refining themes took place after the coding phase. This approach goes beyond merely describing data; it explains and explores the latent meanings, focusing on elements of pragmatism within the National Emergency Declaration (2025).

Table 3.3: Thematic Analysis of the National Emergency Declaration (2025)

Text Segment	Code(s) Applied	Theme(s) Linked To
<p>“America’s sovereignty is under attack. Our southern border is overrun by cartels, criminal gangs, known terrorists, human traffickers, smugglers, unvetted military-age males from foreign adversaries, and illicit narcotics that harm Americans, including America.”</p> <p>"widespread chaos and suffering in our country over the last 4 years."</p> <p>"horrific and inexcusable murders of many innocent American citizens, including women and children. "</p>	<p>Threat framing, Danger, Crisis, Invasion</p>	<p>Theme 1: Justification for Declaring a National Emergency</p>

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

<p>"Hundreds of thousands of Americans have tragically died from drug overdoses because of the illicit narcotics that have flowed across the southern border."</p> <p>"This assault on the American people and the integrity of America’s sovereign borders represents a grave threat to our Nation."</p> <p>"Our southern border is overrun..."</p> <p>"This invasion has caused widespread chaos and suffering ..."</p>		
<p>“This assault on the American people and the integrity of America’s sovereign borders represents a grave threat to our Nation.”</p> <p>"Because of the gravity and emergency of this present danger and imminent threat..."</p> <p>“...be immediately and entirely stopped."</p> <p>"NOW, THEREFORE, I... hereby declare that a national emergency exists..."</p> <p>"immediately take all appropriate action..."</p>	<p>Urgency, emergency, immediacy, emergency powers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theme 2: Urgency</p>
<p>“This invasion has caused widespread chaos and suffering in our country over the last 4 years... It has led to the horrific and inexcusable murders of many innocent American citizens, including women and children, at the hands of illegal aliens.”</p> <p>“...known terrorists, human traffickers, smugglers, unvetted military-age males from foreign adversaries...”</p> <p>"Foreign criminal gangs and cartels have begun seizing control of parts of cities, attacking our most vulnerable citizens, and terrorizing Americans beyond the control of local law enforcement"</p>	<p>Invasion, external threats, othering</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theme 3: Us vs. Others</p>

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

<p>“To protect each of the States against invasion...”</p> <p>“...prioritize the impedance and denial of the unauthorized physical entry of aliens across the southern border of the United States...”</p>		
<p>“As Commander in Chief, I have no more solemn duty than to protect the American people.”</p> <p>“To protect the security and safety of United States citizens, to protect each of the States against invasion...”</p> <p>“...to ensure that the illegal entry of aliens into the United States via the southern border be immediately and entirely stopped.”</p> <p>“To protect the security and safety...it is my responsibility as President to ensure that the illegal entry...be immediately and entirely stopped.”</p>	<p>Constitutional duty, Commander-in-Chief, law enforcement, military responsibility</p>	<p>Theme 4: Duty and responsibility</p>
<p>“The Secretary of Defense shall order as many units or members of the Armed Forces... to support the activities of the Secretary of Homeland Security...”</p> <p>“To protect the security and safety of United States citizens, to protect each of the States against invasion...”</p> <p>“Deployment of Personnel and Resources...to support the activities of the Secretary of Homeland Security in obtaining complete operational control of the southern border of the United States.”</p> <p>“Construct additional physical barriers along the southern border.”</p>	<p>Military deployment, military construction, defense mobilization</p>	<p>Theme 5: National Security</p>

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

<p>"...prioritize the impedance and denial of the unauthorized physical entry of aliens across the southern border of the United States..."</p> <p>"Ensure that use of force policies prioritize the safety and security of Department of Homeland Security personnel and of members of the Armed Forces."</p>		
<p>“...by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America...”</p> <p>"submit to the President...a report outlining all actions taken to fulfill the requirements and objectives of this proclamation"</p> <p>"submit a joint report to the President about the conditions at the southern border of the United States and any recommendations regarding additional actions that may be necessary to obtain complete operational control..."</p> <p>Reporting requirements within 30 and 90 days indicate a focus on near-term actions and assessments.</p>	<p>Legal references, authority, constitutional duties</p>	<p>Theme 6: Legality</p>

3.7.1.1 Justification for Declaring a National Emergency

This theme highlights the declaration’s emphasis of the negative and harmful situation in southern borders of the United States. It serves as a justification to the critical decision and drastic measures of declaring a national emergency based on the consequences taking place. Therefore, it was basically adopted upon the idea of the ends justify the means. In this case, declaring a national emergency would secure the borders and protect the citizens and states. This proves that there was

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

a sense of intent to create fear and danger among citizens to legitimize the declaration of a national emergency. This theme is directly connected to both Pierce and Dewey's ideas. One of Pierce's ideas was that beliefs guide behavior. So, the justification of declaring a national emergency through instilling fear and danger aligns perfectly with Pierce's idea.

3.7.1.2 Urgency

This theme showcases a language of urgency, which intended to instill a sense of imminent threat and crisis among citizens with the purpose of creating a sense of urgent and immediate actions. This language of urgency serves as a justification to take all necessary measures, bypassing conventional political and military processes. One of James's claims is that pragmatism must constitute practical consequences. For him, a theory is best tested and evaluated upon its practical result, and in this case, the action of declaring a national emergency was reached by creating a sense of urgency as a justification. Moreover, Dewey emphasized immediate actions to solve issues. So, it is fair to connect the action of declaring a national emergency using a language of urgency to Dewey and James's pragmatism.

3.7.1.3 Us vs. Others

This theme primarily highlights the language of alienation. The declaration clearly established difference between Americans and others. For Trump, the others are the threatening entities in the southern borders of the United States. In addition, the declaration makes this distinction by referring to the others using negative characteristics and attributes. It a clear attempt to strengthen a sense of shared values and identity among Americans and at the same time portraying the non-Americans as a threat and invasion. This idea of creating an external threat in

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

order to unite people against a so-called foreign enemy resonated with Pierce’s idea of inquiry. Pierce stated that the identification of a certain problem inevitably results in collective action. Moreover, creating a division as a way to facilitate pragmatic action in order to declare a national emergency aligns perfectly with James’s idea of pluralism.

3.7.1.4 Duty and responsibility

This theme mainly focuses on the president’s responsibility and duty to protect the nation and its citizens. It is explicitly stated in the declaration that the president has the authority to declare a national emergency and make all the necessary procedures to protect the country and its citizens. It is also stated that the president’s responsibility is to ensure the prohibition of the entry of illegal immigrants into the United States. Therefore, this part of the declaration serves as a justification as to why the president has the duty and responsibility to enact a national emergency. The president needed an established foundation to justify declaring a national emergency, which can be labeled “legitimacy”. For Pierce, the legitimacy of an action must be derived from an already established foundation, which in this case is the United States Constitution.

3.7.1.5 National Security

The declaration frequently implies to national security. The portrayal of the situation in the United States southern borders as being dangerous and threatening is mentioned many times in the declaration. The purpose of invoking the concept of national security is to increase the degree of importance of this issue and to justify the deployment of the military in the southern border of the country. This connects very well with the responsibility and duty of the president to protect the nation and its citizens. This can be seen in James and Dewey’s instrumentalism. They both stated

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

that practical problems must be solved using practical solutions. So, for the president, the problem in the southern border of the country needed the intervention of military deployment.

3.7.1.6 Legality

This theme highlights the declaration's legal references to legitimize the declaration of the national emergency. In the declaration, sections from the National Emergency Act and title 10 of the United States code were cited in order to justify the legality of the national emergency declaration, the deployment of the army, and the establishment of physical obstacles in the southern borders. So, the purpose of citing legal foundation in the declaration was mainly to legitimize and enforce the president's decisions and actions. This idea can be found in the principles of classical pragmatism. The idea that actions are not to be taken based on ideology. In this case, the actions were taken based on established legal and institutional frameworks.

3.7.1.7 Discussion

The six themes identified in this analysis show constant pragmatic elements evident in the Declaration of National Emergency. The declaration basically focuses on the justification of declaring a national emergency, the urgency of declaring the emergency, the distinction between Americans and non-Americans the duty and responsibility of the president, the deployment of the army, and the legality of the declaration. All the themes, to some extent, attempt to justify the president's decision to declare a national emergency. Throughout the declaration, a language of urgency and justification is apparent in order to legitimize the declaration, which ultimately gives the authority to the president to take all the necessary measures to declare a national emergency.

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

Therefore, based on the evidence, the Declaration of National Emergency contains several elements of pragmatism.

3.8 The Social Perception of Trump's Declaration of National Emergency

The major reason Trump declared a national emergency is because of the so-called threat at the southern borders of the United States. Although there have been no clear data or polls that explicitly and directly connected to the declaration of national emergency, other data and information can be used in order to deduce the perception of society to the declaration.

According to a poll done by Marquette University (2025), 59% of the participants in the poll favored the declaration of a national emergency due to the illegal immigrants crossings at the southern border. Moreover 60% approved of deporting illegal immigrants that are currently living in the United States. On the other hand, 57% disapproved of deporting illegal immigrants who already have jobs and do not have any criminal records. In addition, 70% of the population were exposed to plans and strategies related to deporting illegal immigrants. According to Pew Research Center (2025), the things Americans admire most about the government are Trump's immigration policies: 20% say immigration is the problem, while 7% say Trump's deportation activities are the problem. But 11% of Americans say that immigration activities, such deportations, are the thing they like least about the government.

There is an obvious polarization concerning the social perception of Trump's national emergency declaration, especially relating to immigration and deportation. A significant difference is notable in Americas' perception of immigrants whether legal or illegal. Moreover, the fact that almost 70% of the population were interested in discourses concerning immigration and deportation reflect a deep and genuine concern towards this topic. Although a lot of Americans

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

avored an immigration-threat driven national emergency, other Americans were concerned about the deportation of legal and illegal immigrants who fulfil their duties perfectly.

3.9 The Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025)

To protect and advance religious freedom in America, President Donald Trump has created the Religious Liberty Commission. Comprising a Chairman and Vice Chairman, ex officio government officials, and members from various religious and professional backgrounds, the commission will be structured as follows. Important topics are parental rights in religious education, school choice, conscience safeguards, assaults on houses of worship, free speech for religious organizations, and institutional autonomy. On religious-liberty policy, the panel will counsel the Domestic Policy Council and White House Faith Office; it will also suggest executive or legislative measures to safeguard these rights. Among his many accomplishments, President Trump has defended religious freedom by signing executive orders to encourage free expression and religious liberty, fighting anti-Semitism, founding a White House Faith Office, and forming the "Task Force to Eradicate Anti-Christian Bias" at the Department of Justice (The White House, 2025).

3.9.1 Thematic Analysis of the Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025)

The following report presents and analyzes the Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025). The analysis explores the elements of pragmatism evident in the declaration. The main question that drives this analysis is: How does Executive

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025) contain pragmatic approaches? The data used in this analysis is the text derived from the website of the White House that was the official declaration of the national emergency.

This analysis utilized a deductive latent thematic analysis of Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025). This analysis used the data with pre-determined themes. In this case, the concept from which the themes were derived is pragmatism, especially the pragmatism of Charles Sanders Pierce, John Dewey, William James. First, the familiarization with the data phase was done by reading thoroughly the whole declaration with a special attention to capturing pragmatic elements within the text. Moreover, determining and generating codes from the text led to establishing themes among the codes. Segments from the text were coded to represent the principles of pragmatism outlined in the first chapter. Reviewing, refining, naming, and refining themes took place after the coding phase. This approach goes beyond merely describing data; it explains and explores the latent meanings, focusing on elements of pragmatism within Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025).

Table 3.4: Thematic Analysis of the Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025)

Text Segment	Code(s) Applied	Theme(s) Linked To
<p>“It shall be the policy of the executive branch to vigorously enforce the historic and robust protections for religious liberty enshrined in Federal law.”</p> <p>"The Commission shall produce a comprehensive report on the foundations of</p>	<p>Implementation of Policies, Result-Oriented, Immediate Effect, Targeted Actions</p>	<p>Theme 1: Practical Outcomes</p>

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

religious liberty in America, the impact of religious liberty on American society, current threats to domestic religious liberty, strategies to preserve and enhance religious liberty protections for future generations, and programs to increase awareness of and celebrate America's peaceful religious pluralism."

"The Commission shall advise the White House Faith Office and the Domestic Policy Council on religious liberty policies of the United States. Specific activities of the Commission shall include, to the extent permitted by law, recommending steps to secure domestic religious liberty by executive or legislative actions..."

"...identifying opportunities for the White House Faith Office to partner with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom to further the cause of religious liberty around the world."

"The Department of Justice shall provide such funding and administrative and technical support as the Commission may require, to the extent permitted by law and as authorized by existing appropriations."

"This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations."

"The Federal Government will promote citizens' pride in our foundational history, identify emerging threats to religious liberty, uphold Federal laws that protect all citizens' full participation in a pluralistic democracy, and protect the free exercise of religion."

"These policies attempt to infringe upon longstanding conscience protections, prevent parents from sending their children to religious schools, threaten loss of funding or denial of non-profit tax status for faith-based entities,

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

<p>and single out religious groups and institutions for exclusion from governmental programs."</p>		
<p>"During my first term, I issued Executive Order 13798 of May 4, 2017 (Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty)."</p> <p>"Americans need to be reacquainted with our Nation’s superb experiment in religious freedom in order to preserve it against emerging threats."</p> <p>"The Founders envisioned a Nation in which religious voices and views are integral to a vibrant public square and human flourishing."</p> <p>"The principle of religious liberty was enshrined in American law with the First Amendment to the Constitution in 1791."</p> <p>"The roots of religious liberty stretch back to the early settlers who fled religious persecution in Europe."</p> <p>"Religions’ vital roles in the abolition of slavery; the passage of Federal civil rights laws; and the provision of indispensable social, educational, and health services."</p> <p>"The Supreme Court has also continued to vindicate the Founders’ commitment to religious liberty, including by giving effect to the principle that religious voices should be welcomed on an equal basis in the public square."</p>	<p>References from the Past, Inquiry, Experimentation,</p>	<p>Theme 2: Experience</p>
<p>"Members of the Commission shall include individuals chosen to serve as educated representatives of various sectors of society, including the private sector, employers, educational institutions, religious communities, and States."</p>	<p>Religious Role in Society, Pluralism, Collaboration</p>	<p>Theme 3: Social Context</p>

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

<p>"The Advisory Board of Religious Leaders shall be designated by the President and shall consist of not more than 15 members." "Protect all citizens’ full participation in a pluralistic democracy."</p> <p>"The Advisory Board of Legal Experts shall be a subcomponent of the Commission and report to the Chairman of the Commission."</p> <p>"The Commission shall be composed of up to 14 members appointed by the President."</p> <p>"Specific topics to be considered by the Commission under these categories shall include the following areas: the First Amendment rights of pastors, religious leaders, houses of worship, faith-based institutions, and religious speakers; attacks across America on houses of worship of many religions; debanking of religious entities; the First Amendment rights of teachers, students, military chaplains, service members, employers, and employees; conscience protections in the health care field and concerning vaccine mandates; parents’ authority to direct the care, upbringing, and education of their children, including the right to choose a religious education; permitting time for voluntary prayer and religious instruction at public schools; Government displays with religious imagery; and the right of all Americans to freely exercise their faith without fear or Government censorship or retaliation."</p>		
<p>"If the term of the Commission is extended by the President beyond July 4, 2026, members shall be eligible for reappointment for a 2-year term."</p>	<p>Addressing Threats, Adjusting to the Context, Funding Allocation</p>	<p>Theme 4: Flexibility</p>

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump’s Written Discourse

<p>"The Commission shall terminate on July 4, 2026, unless extended by the President."</p> <p>"If any provision of this order, or the application of any provision to any agency, person, or circumstance, is held to be invalid, the remainder of this order and the application of its provisions to any other agencies, persons, or circumstances shall not be affected thereby."</p> <p>"Recommending steps to secure domestic religious liberty by executive or legislative actions."</p> <p>"Identifying opportunities for the White House Faith Office to partner with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom."</p>		
<p>"The Federal Government will promote citizens’ pride in our foundational history."</p> <p>"Religious voices should be welcomed on an equal basis in the public square."</p> <p>"Protect the free exercise of religion."</p> <p>"The Advisory Board of Religious Leaders shall report to the Chairman of the Commission."</p> <p>"Protect all citizens’ full participation in a pluralistic democracy."</p> <p>"Celebrate America’s peaceful religious pluralism."</p>	<p>Public Participation, Equality, Decision- Making</p>	<p>Theme 5: Value of Democracy</p>

3.9.1.1 Practical Outcomes

This theme highlights the emphasis of practical consequences. It focuses on tangible outcomes through effective policy-making. It also shows an approach of governance that is mainly

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

result-oriented by producing measurable and tangible decisions and results. In the executive order, Trump showed a priority towards actionable policies that can be effectively implemented to benefit the society. One of the pragmatic core ideas is the evaluation of ideas through their practical outcomes. William James stressed the fact that a theory is to be understood and evaluated only by its real-world impact and consequences. Trump, in the executive order, kept promoting for the protection of religious liberty. He also ordered to establish a commission outlining the practical missions of that commission.

3.9.1.2 Experience

This theme shows the significance of history and empiricism in shaping decision-making. It highlights the fact that grasping past and historical experiences is vital for the development of effective policies in the present. Moreover, this theme shows that evidence and experimentation are crucial in reaching effective decisions. So, this theme advocates adopting practices based on inquiry. The theme of experience and inquiry is closely associated with pragmatism. Both John Dewey and William James discussed this concept. James stressed the idea of empiricism, where experience is treated as a source of knowledge. Dewey also discussed the concept of inquiry.

3.9.1.3 Social Context

This theme focuses on the social interaction and engagement in the policy-making process. It shows the government's awareness and understanding that individual actions are mainly influenced by the social environment. It also shows that the government is knowledgeable about the diverse beliefs and need of the several different groups within society. As a result, the government stressed the importance of inclusivity in the process of policy-making, which reflects

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

a sense on connectedness between the communities and the government in tackling social issues. One of Dewey's significant ideas is the role of social sphere in shaping actions. Dewey considered social interaction an effective tool to understand society better.

3.9.1.4 Flexibility

This theme showcases the obligation of adaptable behavior in the policy-making process. It shows how the government must be prepared and responsive to the inevitable changing circumstances and challenges. This suggests that the government must be rather dynamic in the process of policy-making, for strategies might be exposed to adjustments and improvement depending on the evolving social needs and the emergence of new information. This is evident in pragmatism's idea of rejecting absolutes, dogmas, and certainties; pragmatism, instead, embraces continuous change.

3.9.1.5 Value of Democracy

This theme highlights the importance of collaboration and participation. It shows that good governance must include the effective and positive inclusion of citizens. So, it advocates for the basic democratic values and principles of including citizens in the process of policy-making, which ensures serving the interests of all members of society as well as igniting a sense of responsibility in tackling social issues. The idea of democracy can be connected to Pierce, James, and Dewey. Pierce discussed ideas about community inclusivity, and pluralism. James advocated and supported a pluralistic approach in governing, and Dewey viewed democracy as a way of life rather than a system that governs people.

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

3.9.1.6 Discussion

The five themes identified in this analysis show the existence of pragmatic elements apparent in the Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025). The executive order basically focuses on the practical outcomes of establishing a commission that protects religious liberty. Moreover, it refers to past experiences to build upon to create policies in the present. It also takes into consideration the social contexts and needs of all portions of society. Furthermore, the establishment of the commission and its work illustrate the government flexibility in facing the challenges of this issue. Finally, the Trump, issuing the establishment of the commission stressed the fact that citizens can be a part of the process of decision-making. Throughout the executive order, a language of practicality, inquiry, and inclusion is apparent. Therefore, based on the evidence, the Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025) presents several elements of pragmatism.

3.10 The Social Perception of the Executive Order of the Establishment of the Religious Liberty Commission (2025)

The Religious Liberty Commission is in charge of suggesting measures to maintain and promote America's peaceful religious diversity. The committee has backed laws that let children pray. It also looks into rights for religious beliefs in healthcare and government displays that use religious images. There are Catholic bishops, Protestant evangelists, a rabbi, and lawyers who work on religious freedom cases on the committee. Christian, Jewish, and Muslim people are all on its advisory boards. Eric Metaxas, an author and broadcaster, backs the commission's work. He

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

says its objective is to protect the rights of all Americans, no matter what their faith, and restore rights that have been challenged by hostile secularists (Smith, 2025).

Charles Haynes, a senior fellow for religious freedom at the Freedom Forum, said that Trump's actions are in line with what his conservative Christian followers want. Haynes says that the First Amendment has been used incorrectly to keep Christians out of the public square and to discriminate against Christianity. Trump's actions and recent Supreme Court judgments are changing the idea that the First Amendment severely forbids government-sponsored religion at both the federal and state levels. Haynes says that the First Amendment protects a wide range of religious expressions in places like public schools. For example, students are free to pray on their own time, show their faith in class assignments, hand out religious literature, start religious clubs at school, and get accommodations based on their religious beliefs (Smith, 2025).

Seventy-two percent of white evangelicals like how President Trump is doing his job, but only fifty-one percent of white non-evangelical Protestants and fifty-one percent of white Catholics do. Black Protestants, Hispanic Catholics, and adults who don't belong to any religion and say they are atheist, agnostic, or "nothing in particular" don't like it. These religious tendencies are mostly based on political disparities. For example, most white evangelicals identify as or lean Republican, whereas most Black Protestants, Hispanic Catholics, and adults who don't belong to any religion are Democrats or Democratic-leaning independents. Since February, Trump's job approval rating has dropped by 7 percentage points, and various religious groups have seen similar drops. But Trump's current approval numbers are about the same as they were in April 2017, which was around the same time in his first term (Rotolo, 2025).

For many religious groups in the United States, Trump recent actions relating to religious freedom and practices favor only conservative Christians. The supporters of this commission

Chapter Three: Exploring Donald Trump's Written Discourse

praise it, for it ensures religious freedom and right to all religious groups. Moreover, they believe that these actions preserve religious groups rights in public spaces like educational and healthcare institutions. However, some religious groups considered this commission as another tool for Trump to gain conservative Christians' unwavering support. For instance, Protestants and Catholics show apparent opposition to Trump's decisions. In addition, some critics view this decision as a potential threat to the separation of state and church. This issue is rather complex; the disapproval and approval rating in this case might not be completely related to religion. It is probable that the members of the religious groups who are not in favor of Trump's actions, are leaning towards the Democratic party. In this case, it is hard to distinguish and be completely sure that the perceptions are 100% driven by religious factors.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter attempted to provide a brief background about Trump and his terms as president. In addition, three selected written discourses were analyzed using a deductive latent thematic analysis trying to identify elements of pragmatism. Text segments extracted from the original discourses were categorized and analyzed accordingly to explore the usage of pragmatism in these discourses. It is fair to say that elements of pragmatism were indeed identified in all the three discourses.

**Chapter Four:
Exploring Donald
Trump's Spoken
Discourse**

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

4.1 Introduction

Unlike his policies, which are backed and refined by lawyers and specialists, Donald Trump's speeches offer a different tone compared to his policies. Trump has been known to be reckless and direct in his speeches. This chapter is a continuation of the previous chapter; it follows the same exact methodology, and it serves the same purpose. The only difference is that this chapter analyzes the spoken discourse of Donald Trump. The chapter analyzes four spoken discourses of Donald Trump.

4.2 Thematic Analysis of Donald Trump's 2017 Inaugural Speech

The following report presents and analyzes Donald Trump's 2017 inaugural speech. The analysis explores the elements of pragmatism evident in the speech. The main question that drives this analysis is: How does Donald Trump's 2017 inaugural speech showcase elements of pragmatism? The data used in this analysis is the transcribed speech available in the White House website.

This analysis utilized a deductive latent thematic analysis of Donald Trump's 2017 inaugural speech. This analysis used the data with pre-determined themes. In this case, the concept from which the themes were derived is pragmatism, especially the pragmatism of Charles Sanders Pierce, John Dewey, William James, and Richard Rorty. First, the familiarization with the data phase was done by listening and then reading the transcribed speech with the purpose of capturing pragmatic elements within the text. Moreover, determining and generating codes from the text led to establishing themes among the codes. Segments from the text were coded to represent the principles of pragmatism outlined in the first chapter. Reviewing, refining, naming, and refining themes took place after the coding phase. This approach goes beyond merely describing data; it

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

explains and explores the latent meanings, focusing on elements of pragmatism within Donald Trump’s 2017 inaugural speech.

Table 4.1: Thematic Analysis of Trump’s 2017 Inaugural Speech

Text Segment	Code(s) Applied	Theme(s) Linked To
<p>We will no longer accept politicians who are all talk and no action – constantly complaining but never doing anything about it. The time for empty talk is over. Now arrives the hour of action"</p> <p>"From this day forward, it's going to be only America First."</p> <p>"build new roads, and highways, and bridges, and airports, and tunnels, and railways all across our wonderful nation"</p>	<p>Practical Commitment, Action over Rhetoric, Domestic Focus</p>	<p>Theme 1: Practicality</p>
<p>"We will follow two simple rules: Buy American and Hire American."</p> <p>"We will bring back our jobs. We will bring back our borders. We will bring back our wealth."</p> <p>"We will bring back our factories, we will bring back our jobs, and we will bring back our wealth."</p>	<p>Practical Outcomes, National Prosperity, Job Creation</p>	<p>Theme 2: Focus on Results</p>
<p>"The forgotten men and women of our country will be forgotten no longer."</p> <p>"We will get our people off of welfare and back to work."</p>	<p>Restoring Dignity, Public Welfare, Public Benefit, Empowerment</p>	<p>Theme 3: Public Prosperity</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>"This moment is your moment; it belongs to you."</p> <p>"For the forgotten men and women, we are going to bring you back to the forefront of this country."</p> <p>"We are one nation – and their pain is our pain. Their dreams are our dreams; and their success will be our success. We share one heart, one home, and one glorious destiny”</p>		
<p>"We are one nation and their pain is our pain. Their dreams are our dreams. And their success will be our success."</p> <p>"This American carnage stops right here and stops right now."</p> <p>"The establishment protected itself, but not the citizens of our country."</p> <p>“What truly matters is not which party controls our government, but whether our government is controlled by the people."</p> <p>"We will face challenges, we will get through them, and we will succeed."</p>	<p>Shared Struggles, National Unity, Immediate Change, Political Reform, Corruption</p>	<p>Theme 4: Adaptability</p>
<p>"This is the day the people become the rulers of this nation again.</p> <p>"We will reshape our government and rediscover our purpose."</p> <p>"For too long, a small group in our nation's Capital has reaped the rewards of government while the people have borne the cost."</p>	<p>Return of Power to People, Democratic Change, Reform, Power Redistribution, People’s Power</p>	<p>Theme 5: Focus on Change</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>"January 20th 2017 will be remembered as the day the people became the rulers of this nation again."</p> <p>"We will no longer accept politicians who are more concerned about the special interests of the powerful and wealthy."</p> <p>"The people will rule again." "We are going to bring change to Washington, D.C."</p>		
<p>"We will make America strong again. We will make America wealthy again. We will make America proud again."</p> <p>"We are the richest nation in the world. We will start winning again."</p> <p>"Together, we will determine the course of America and the world for many, many years to come."</p> <p>"America will start winning again, winning like never before."</p>	<p>National Success, Practical Action, Collective Responsibility, Long-term Vision</p>	<p>Theme 6: Idealism</p>

4.2.1 Practicality

This theme highlights the rhetoric of action rather than “empty talk”. It focuses on the need to move from talks to actually focus on practical solutions. It shows the move from abstract ideologies to a willingness to focus on tangible policies. For example, “We will no longer accept politicians who are all talk and no action – constantly complaining but never doing anything about it. The time for empty talk is over. Now arrives the hour of action” stands out as an apparent desire

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

to only focus on actionable and concrete policies instead of abstract ones. This theme is directly related to Dewey's pragmatic action idea. Dewey considered action as crucial in reaching practical solutions through practical experimentation, which this theme refers to.

4.2.2 Focus on Results

This theme showcases Trump's speech's degree of prioritizing results as opposed to abstract promises. In the speech, there is a clear emphasis on what can be tangibly achieved for the benefits of the American society. It moves from rules and complex political procedures to achieving tangible objectives. One of Pierce's ideas is that practical results determine whether an idea is useful or not. Pierce believed that the value of an idea must be evaluated not by its abstract definition but with the consequences they produce and offer. This is evident when Trump focused on concrete results such as job creation.

4.2.3 Public Prosperity

This theme mainly discusses the speech's focus on the well-being of the American society. Usually, mentioning public prosperity involves addressing mainly economic security of the citizens, which what Trump tackled in the speech. It also includes addressing employments opportunities and the enhancement of the quality of life. It also suggests that there some portions of the American society that have been neglected. William James believed that pragmatism is not just about the ideas and actions being evaluated based on their practical outcomes; the most important factor is to evaluate them based on their impact of people's lives. Therefore, there is a clear connection between James's idea and Trump's attempt to empower people's lives.

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

4.2.4 Adaptability

This theme shows the Trump's ability to be flexible. In the speech, there is a sense of capacity to adapt to changing and different circumstances. Moreover, one of the most important things that the speech shows is the willingness to be flexible with policies depending on experience. This is a perfect example of one of Dewey's ideas. Dewey emphasized the fact that problems should be solved with flexibility. He believed that changing circumstances are crucial to experimentation.

4.2.5 Focus on Change

This theme focuses on the speech's emphasis on a big change from the status quo to new ways of governance and policy making. In the speech, Trump directly attacked political institutions, which clearly shows that he was ready to challenge the preceding system. It is usual for a president to show that a new era will start under his leadership, paving the way to his administration agenda. Richard Rorty focused on progressive reform and constant improvement. He believed that ideas must change to fit societal needs, which would help achieving practical outcomes that address real-world issues.

4.2.6 Idealism

In the speech, Trump tried to invoke a sense of unity among the American society. Appealing to national values and identity is largely present in the speech. Through them, Trump expressed future aspirations and a commitment to ideals and values. The concept of idealism, being quite abstract, seems to have no connection to the philosophy of pragmatism. However, James advocated for idealistic objectives, but only if tangible steps are taken to achieve these objectives.

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

4.2.7 Discussion

The analysis of the 2017 inaugural speech by Trump shows a significant presence of elements of pragmatism. There is a constant emphasis on practicality, results, and the well-being of Americans. Throughout the speech, there is a big focus on job creation coupled with an advocacy of tangible actions instead of “empty talk”. This approach suggests that there is a result-oriented approach from Trump. Moreover, this approach is mixed with an aspiration of change and an idealized United States that is hoped to be achieved through tangible actions. The identification of these pragmatic elements within Trump's inaugural speech suggests that he was rather willing to govern prioritizing tangible actions and results over abstract rhetoric.

4.3 The Social Perception of Donald Trump's 2017 Inaugural Speech

A POLITICO/Morning Consult survey revealed that respondents liked President Trump's "America First" agenda. This proves that he did not flop his first address as commander in chief. The poll indicated that 49% of people who saw or heard the speech thought it was great or good, while only 39% thought it was simply fair or bad. The poll also indicated that 61% of people agreed with Trump's desire for the federal government to "buy American and hire American." Some Democrats are hoping that Trump stays undisciplined because they are worried about how the Republicans would benefit politically if he stops sending out unpredictable messages and statements. Furthermore, A POLITICO/Morning Consult poll of 1,922 registered voters found that Trump is keeping his campaign pledges, such as pulling out of the Trans Pacific Partnership and signing executive orders to get rid of Obamacare. Trump has also signed orders to stop new regulations, hire people for the federal workforce, and restart the Keystone XL pipeline. Trump and Vice President Mike Pence are going to meet with House and Senate Republicans in

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

Philadelphia. They will talk about what they want to do in Washington, which is all-Republican. Americans agree with Trump's nationalist language. For example, 72% support deporting only undocumented immigrants with criminal records, and 41% think it's okay for the president to use executive authority to change rules. There are, however, reservations about Obamacare. 36% want it fixed and rebuilt, and 68% think that undocumented immigrants should be allowed to stay in the country if they meet specific requirements (Sherman, 2017).

Another poll was conducted in order to gather Americans opinions on Trump's 2017 inaugural speech. According to GALLUP, More Americans liked Donald Trump's inauguration rituals than didn't like them. 39% say they feel more positive about the next four years because of what they saw, heard, or read about Friday's inauguration. 30% say they feel less hopeful, and thirty percent say what they heard or read made no difference. That response is like what Gallup found for George W. Bush's and Barack Obama's second inaugurations, but not as good as what it found for Obama's first (Jones, 2017).

People's reactions to Trump's ceremonies were predictably politicized, but Republicans had stronger responses than Democrats were. Seventy-eight percent of Republicans, including independents who lean Republican, say they feel better about the next four years after the inauguration. On the other hand, 56% of Democrats and Democratic leaners are less hopeful about the next four years, and 36% say it does not matter. More Democrats (87%) were hopeful about Obama's inauguration in 2009 than Republicans are about Trump's this year. But in 2009, Republicans were significantly less critical of Obama than Democrats are of Trump now. In fact, Republicans were about as likely to say that Obama's inauguration in 2009 made them more hopeful about the coming four years as they were to say it made them less hopeful (Jones, 2017).

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

It is quite logical for a leader to gain much support from his party, as it is also logical to receive opposition from the opposing party. The fact that politics functions this way makes it very complex and challenging for analysts to accurately describe the political sphere. Donald Trump's presidency is no exception to this view. It is obvious that Trump gains the support of the Republican Party and those who lean towards Republicans, and it is also obvious that he receives a lot of criticism and disapproval from the Democratic Party and its supporters. This means that there is a clear polarization that continues to exist politically in the United States. Moreover, Trump's temper and rhetoric style feed his critics to criticize him even more. It also falls under the strategy of keeping him undisciplined so that it would benefit them politically.

4.4 Thematic Analysis of Trump's State of the Union Address (2018)

The following report presents and analyzes Donald Trump's 2018 State of the Union Address. The analysis explores the elements of pragmatism evident in the speech. The main question that drives this analysis is: How does Donald Trump's 2018 State of the Union Address show elements of pragmatism? The data used in this analysis is the transcribed speech available in the White House website.

This analysis utilized a deductive latent thematic analysis of Donald Trump's 2018 State of the Union Address. This analysis used the data with pre-determined themes. In this case, the concept from which the themes were derived is pragmatism, especially the pragmatism of Charles Sanders Pierce, John Dewey, William James, and Richard Rorty. First, the familiarization with the data phase was done by listening and then reading the transcribed speech with the purpose of capturing pragmatic elements within the text. Moreover, determining and generating codes from the text led to establishing themes among the codes. Segments from the text were coded to

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

represent the principles of pragmatism outlined in the first chapter. Reviewing, refining, naming, and refining themes took place after the coding phase. This approach goes beyond merely describing data; it explains and explores the latent meanings, focusing on elements of pragmatism within Donald Trump’s 2018 State of the Union Address.

Table 4.2: Thematic Analysis of Trump’s 2018 State of the Union Address

Text Segment	Code(s) Applied	Theme(s) Linked To
<p>"Tonight, I want to talk about what kind of future we are going to have, and what kind of Nation we are going to be. All of us, together, as one team, one people, and one American family."</p> <p>"Together, we are rediscovering the American way. In America, we know that faith and family, not government and bureaucracy, are the center of the American life."</p> <p>"We enacted the biggest tax cuts and reforms in American history.... Slashing their tax bill in half."</p> <p>"Let us invest in workforce development... open great vocational schools."</p> <p>"I am asking the Congress to produce a bill that generates at least 1.5 trillion dollars for infrastructure."</p> <p>"We have eliminated more regulations in our first year than any administration in history."</p>	<p>Addressing Specific Issues, Proposing Concrete Solutions, Tax Cuts, Infrastructure Development, challenging bureaucracy, deregulation</p>	<p>Theme 1: Practicality in Problem-Solving</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>“We built the Empire State Building in just 1 year- is it not a disgrace that it can now take 10 years just to get a permit approved for a simple road?”</p> <p>“We will build gleaming new roads, bridges, highways, railways, and waterways across our land.”</p>		
<p>“In 2016, we lost 64,000 Americans to drug overdose: 174 deaths per day. Seven per hour.”</p> <p>"Since the election, we have created 2.4 million new jobs, including 200,000 new jobs in manufacturing alone. After years of wage stagnation, we are finally seeing rising wages. Unemployment claims have hit a 45-year low. African-American unemployment stands at the lowest rate ever recorded, and Hispanic American unemployment has also reached the lowest levels in history."</p> <p>"And just as I promised the American people from this podium 11 months ago, we enacted the biggest tax cuts and reforms in American history."</p> <p>“Our massive tax cuts provide tremendous relief for the middle class and small businesses.”</p> <p>“3 million workers have already gotten tax cut bonuses.”</p> <p>“The stock market has smashed one record after another, gaining 8 trillion dollars in value.”</p>	<p>Statistics, Job Creation, Reduction in unemployment, Economic Indicators, Suggesting tangible Solutions</p>	<p>Theme 2: Empiricism and Results</p>
<p>"Tonight, I am extending an open hand to work with members of both parties — Democrats and Republicans — to</p>	<p>Immigration Reform, Trade Deals</p>	<p>Theme 3: Flexible Strategies</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>protect our citizens of every background, color, religion, and creed.”</p> <p>"Most importantly, these four pillars will produce legislation that fulfills my ironclad pledge to only sign a bill that puts America first. So let us come together, set politics aside, and finally get the job done."</p> <p>“We will work to fix bad trade deals and negotiate new ones.... We expect trading relationships to be fair and reciprocal.”</p> <p>“We have proposed new legislation that will fix our immigration laws.... a bipartisan approach to immigration reform.”</p> <p>“We are now an exporter of energy to the world.... ended the war on clean coal.”</p> <p>“Our plan closes... loopholes exploited by criminals and terrorists.”</p>	<p>Reconsideration, Cooperation,</p>	
<p>"Tonight, I want to talk about what kind of future we are going to have, and what kind of Nation we are going to be. All of us, together, as one team, one people, and one American family."</p> <p>"Here tonight is Preston Sharp, a 12-year-old boy from Redding, California, who noticed that veterans’ graves were not marked with flags on Veterans Day. He decided to change that, and started a movement that has now placed 40,000 flags at the graves of our great heroes."</p> <p>"Young patriots like Preston teach all of us about our civic duty as Americans."</p>	<p>Unity, Support for law Enforcement, Focus on the American People</p>	<p>Theme 4: Collective Responsibility</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>“To everyone still recovering in Texas, Florida, Louisiana we are with you, we love you, and we will pull through together.”</p> <p>“We are serving our brave veterans, including giving our veterans choice in their healthcare decisions.”</p> <p>“I call upon all of us to set aside our differences. . . . summon the unity we need.”</p> <p>“We will protect American workers. . . through strong enforcement of our trade rules.”</p> <p>"When we work together, we can overcome any obstacle.”</p> <p>“We are defending our Second Amendment, and have taken historic actions to protect religious liberty.”</p>		
<p>"But it is not enough to come together only in times of tragedy. Tonight, I call upon all of us to set aside our differences, to seek out common ground, and to summon the unity we need to deliver for the people we were elected to serve."</p> <p>"Tonight, I am calling on the Congress to produce a bill that generates at least \$1.5 trillion for the new infrastructure investment we need."</p> <p>“Corey plans to invest his tax-cut raise into his new home and his two daughters’ education.”</p> <p>“We need... a merit-based immigration system—one that admits people who are skilled.”</p>	<p>Personal Examples, Direct Appeals, Focus on Action, Specific Proposals</p>	<p>Theme 5: Anti- Abstractionism</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

<p>"We have eliminated more regulations in our first year than any administration in history."</p> <p>"This April will be the last time you ever file under the old broken system."</p> <p>"I want to give [terminally ill patients] a chance right here at home. It is time for the Congress to give these wonderful Americans the 'right to try.'"</p>		
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4.4.1 Practicality in Problem-Solving

This theme focuses on the emphasis on actionable and practical solutions instead of abstract ideologies. In the speech, Trump frequently tackled real challenges with straightforward solutions that have immediate and concrete consequences. For example, Trump focused on the modernization of infrastructure, which is a clear indication of emphasizing tangible actions rather than abstract discussions and promises. The basis of problem-solving is instrumentalism and inquiry, which happen to be one of Dewey's core ideas of pragmatism. Trump's focus on practical solutions like jobs creation and infrastructure projects aligns with Dewey's idea that practical actions and experimentation are crucial in the process of solving problems.

4.4.2 Empiricism and Results

This theme stresses the fact that policies are judged and evaluated based on their impact on real-world situations rather than on theoretical ideas. It focuses on results that are observable, measurable, and fitted to reality. In the speech, Trump cited some statistics in relation to economic growth and job creation. These statistics serve as an empirical evidence of Trump's administration

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

success in tackling some issues. For instance, Trump claimed that his administration created 2.4 million new jobs, which showcases the use of empirical data to strengthen his arguments. Both Pierce and James's ideas are present in this context, as they both favored the idea of empiricism. For Pierce, the scientific method, in which empirical results are vital in judging and evaluating ideas, focuses on measurable and concrete consequences.

4.4.3 Flexible Strategies

Flexible strategies show the importance of adaptability in policy-making. It is highly important to recognize and be aware of the changing circumstances that would ultimately lead to changing policies accordingly. So, this theme highlights the flexibility in changing policies based on needs and challenges. In the speech, Trump stressed the fact to adapt to the changing political and economic spheres. For example, he was willing to modify some policies like infrastructure spending and some trade relations. Dewey's adaptive thinking and naturalistic empiricism align perfectly with this theme. Dewey believed that it is essential in a dynamic sphere to have the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. This along with his belief that context and natural environment of circumstances dictate potential solutions are mirrored in Trump's approach to flexible strategies.

4.4.4 Collective Responsibility

This theme focuses on the responsibility of all actors within the United States. It shows how taking responsibility as a group would lead to success, progress, and national prosperity. In the speech, Trump constantly appealed to the American people's unity and the shared responsibility of the people and the government with the purpose of achieving domestic goals. Trump was trying to involve the citizens in solving some issues in the speech. Dewey viewed

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

democracy as more than just a political system; he considered democracy as a way of life that necessitates the collaboration and participation from all the members of society in order to solve domestic issues. This is evident in Trump's speech, as he clearly called for everyone to contribute to achieve the nation's goals.

4.4.5 Anti-Abstractionism

This theme refers to the total rejection of abstract ideas and discussions. It focuses on the need for tangible and actionable approaches in order to solve problems and face challenges. In the speech, Trump showed an extremely clear approach in rejecting abstract and ideological discussions in favor for concrete actions and consequences. For example, he focused on the impact of the tax cuts that resulted in significant effects for the middle class and small businesses. He also focused on job creation and the decrease of unemployment rate. This idea of anti-abstractionism is prevalent in pragmatism. Pragmatists, in general, strongly eject abstract theories in favor of practical thinking. For pragmatists, abstract thinking tends to disregard real-world situations, which disconnects it from reality; therefore, they prefer practical thinking, as it can be tested and evaluated.

4.4.6 Discussion

The analysis of Trump's 2018 State of the Union Address shows that the speech contains several pragmatic principles. These principles are evident in Trump's emphasis on practicality in solving problems, empirical approach, and adaptability. Depending on Dewey's instrumentalism, some policies like the tax cuts proved to be practical solutions that benefited the American people rather than being ideological debates. These policies have also contributed in citizens' economic

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

growth. Moreover, reconsidering trade relations and immigration plans show a highly flexible and adaptive approach from the administration. In addition, Dewey's democratic society is quite evident in Trump's appeal to unity and shared responsibility between the government and the American people. Finally, the rejection of abstraction throughout the whole speech highlights pragmatism core idea of prioritizing practical thinking and practical outcomes. These themes suggest that the speech is a call for tangible actions and outcomes; it calls for results instead of abstract debate.

4.5 The Social Perception of Trump's State of the Union Address (2018)

Three out of four Americans who watched President Trump's State of the Union address tonight liked what he said. Only a quarter of people disliked it. Eight out of ten Americans who watched tonight thought the president was trying to bring the country together, not divide it. Two-thirds of people said the speech made them feel proud, but only a third said it made them feel safer. In addition, fewer people stated the speech made them feel terrified or angry. But like many State of the Union speeches, most of the people who watched the speech were members of the president's own party, at least relative to all Americans. According to the most recent CBS national poll, which came out earlier this month, 24% of Americans said they were Republicans. That number was 42 percent of people who saw the address tonight, which adds to the total approval of the address. Republicans liked the speech, but most Democrats who saw it did not. Nine out of ten Republicans said the speech made them feel proud, while just over half of Democrats said it made them upset. Almost half of the independents who saw the speech indicated they were supporters of the President. They liked the speech and said it made them feel proud. Most people who saw his State of the Union address thought the ideas he talked about would assist them directly, but Democrats

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

disagreed. Most people liked what Mr. Trump had to say regarding the country's infrastructure, immigration, and national security, which were some of the specific problems the President talked about. After watching him speak tonight, 54 percent of speech watchers gave him a lot of credit for the current status of the nation's economy, up from 51 percent before they watched the status of the Union (CBS News, 2018).

Another poll conducted by POLITICO states that Americans who watched President Donald Trump's first State of the Union address revealed that 62% of people thought Trump's speech was "excellent" or "good." Only 17% thought it was "fair," and 20% thought it was "poor." The people in the sample were Americans who were 18 years old or older who saw the speech live or later. The sample had a much higher percentage of Republicans than the general electorate. 43% of poll respondents were Republicans, 29% were Democrats, and 28% were independents. Most of the 2,209 people who saw the speech also indicated that Trump did better than they thought he would. Most people thought the speech was hopeful, presidential, and instructive. Only 28% thought it was depressing and 27% said it was boring (Shepard, 2018).

The polls conducted show that there was an overwhelmingly positive reception of Trump's 2018 State of the Union. The polls show that there was a significant approval of Trump's speech. Most viewers believed that Trump, through his speech, attempted to unify the country. However, the polls do not accurately reflect the full perception of the society, for most of the viewers were Republicans, which makes the support for Trump logical. Another logical point is the fact that Democrats perceived the speech negatively. It can be deduced that Trump was successful to gain more support from his own party as well as showing a will to unify the country. Nevertheless, the speech was not quite successful in convincing or persuading Democrats, which seemed to expand the political polarization between the two parties.

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

4.6 Thematic Analysis of Donald Trump’s 2019 State of the Union Address

The following report presents and analyzes Donald Trump’s 2019 State of the Union Address. The analysis explores the elements of pragmatism evident in the speech. The main question that drives this analysis is: How does Donald Trump’s 2019 State of the Union Address show elements of pragmatism? The data used in this analysis is the transcribed speech available in the White House website.

This analysis utilized a deductive latent thematic analysis of Donald Trump’s 2019 State of the Union Address. This analysis used the data with pre-determined themes. In this case, the concept from which the themes were derived is pragmatism, especially the pragmatism of Charles Sanders Pierce, John Dewey, William James, and Richard Rorty. First, the familiarization with the data phase was done by listening and then reading the transcribed speech with the purpose of capturing pragmatic elements within the text. Moreover, determining and generating codes from the text led to establishing themes among the codes. Segments from the text were coded to represent the principles of pragmatism outlined in the first chapter. Reviewing, refining, naming, and refining themes took place after the coding phase. This approach goes beyond merely describing data; it explains and explores the latent meanings, focusing on elements of pragmatism within Donald Trump’s 2019 State of the Union Address.

Table 4.3: Thematic Analysis of Trump’s 2019 State of the Union Address

Text Segment	Code(s) Applied	Theme(s) Linked To
"We meet tonight at a moment of unlimited potential. As we begin a new Congress, I stand here ready to	Cooperation, Unity, Practical Ruling, Emphasis on Common Goals, Addressing Specific Issues,	Theme 1: National Unity

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

<p>work with you to achieve historic breakthroughs for all Americans."</p> <p>"Tonight, I ask you to choose greatness."</p> <p>"Millions of our fellow citizens are watching us now, gathered in this great chamber, hoping that we will govern not as two parties but as one Nation."</p> <p>"The agenda I will lay out this evening is not a Republican agenda or a Democrat agenda. It is the agenda of the American people."</p> <p>"Victory is not winning for our party. Victory is winning for our country."</p> <p>"We must choose whether we are defined by our differences — or whether we dare to transcend them."</p> <p>"We must be united at home to defeat our adversaries abroad."</p> <p>"We must choose whether we will squander our inheritance — or whether we will proudly declare that we are Americans."</p> <p>"Let us work together to build a culture that cherishes innocent life."</p> <p>"Together, we can break decades of political stalemate. We can bridge old divisions, heal old wounds, build new coalitions, forge new solutions, and unlock the extraordinary promise of America's future."</p> <p>"In the last Congress, both parties came together to pass unprecedented legislation to confront the opioid</p>	<p>Rejection of Division, Call for Compromise</p>	
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Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>crisis, a sweeping new Farm Bill, historic VA reforms, and after four decades of rejection, we passed VA Accountability..."</p> <p>"And just weeks ago, both parties united for groundbreaking criminal justice reform."</p> <p>"Inspired by stories like Alice’s, my Administration worked closely with members of both parties to sign the First Step Act into law."</p> <p>"But we must reject the politics of revenge, resistance, and retribution — and embrace the boundless potential of cooperation, compromise, and the common good."</p> <p>"We must choose between greatness or gridlock, results or resistance, vision or vengeance, incredible progress or pointless destruction."</p> <p>"So let’s work together, compromise, and reach a deal that will truly make America safe."</p> <p>"Perhaps we can negotiate a different agreement, adding China and others, or perhaps we can’t..."</p>		
<p>"In the 20th century, America saved freedom, transformed science, and redefined the middle-class standard of living for the entire world to see."</p> <p>"This year, American astronauts will go back to space on American rockets."</p> <p>"We stand with the Venezuelan people in their noble quest for freedom."</p>	<p>Historical Accomplishments, National Strength, Assertion of International Leadership, Resilience, Self-Reliance</p>	<p>Theme 2: American Exceptionalism</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

"America was founded on liberty and independence — not government coercion, domination, and control."

"America is a Nation that believes in redemption."

"No one has benefitted more from our thriving economy than women."

"We are the richest nation in the world."

"We are one Nation, and our collective potential is unlimited."

"In 2019, we also celebrate 50 years since brave young pilots flew a quarter of a million miles through space to plant the American flag on the face of the moon."

"Our military is the most powerful on earth, and America is winning each and every day."

"Under my Administration, we will never apologize for advancing America's interests."

"This is the time to re-ignite the American imagination. This is the time to search for the tallest summit, and set our sights on the brightest star. This is the time to rekindle the bonds of love and loyalty and memory that link us together as citizens, as neighbors, as patriots."

"to pursue a foreign policy that puts America's interests first."

"We must keep America first in our hearts."

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

<p>"In just over 2 years since the election, we have launched an unprecedented economic boom."</p> <p>"We have created 5.3 million new jobs and added 600,000 new manufacturing jobs."</p> <p>"Unemployment has reached the lowest rate in half a century."</p> <p>"We passed a massive tax cut for working families."</p> <p>"We have unleashed a revolution in American energy — the United States is now the number one producer of oil and natural gas in the world."</p> <p>"The United States economy is growing almost twice as fast today as when I took office."</p> <p>"The United States is now the number one producer of oil and natural gas in the world."</p> <p>"Our economy is the envy of the world, our military is the most powerful on earth, and America is winning each and every day."</p> <p>"Members of Congress: the State of our Union is strong. Our country is vibrant and our economy is thriving like never before"</p> <p>"On Friday, it was announced that we added another 304,000 jobs last month alone — almost double what was expected."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Job Creation, Economic Growth, Reform, Energy Independence, Booming Economy</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theme 3: Economic Prosperity</p>
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Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>"An economic miracle is taking place in the United States — and the only thing that can stop it are foolish wars, politics, or ridiculous partisan investigations."</p>		
<p>"Now is the time for the Congress to show the world that America is committed to ending illegal immigration and putting the ruthless coyotes, cartels, drug dealers, and human traffickers out of business."</p> <p>"Tonight, I am asking you to defend our very dangerous southern border out of love and devotion to our fellow citizens and to our country."</p> <p>"The lawless state of our southern border is a threat to the safety, security, and financial well-being of all Americans."</p> <p>"Tens of thousands of innocent Americans are killed by lethal drugs that cross our border and flood into our cities — including meth, heroin, cocaine, and fentanyl."</p> <p>"Year after year, countless Americans are murdered by criminal illegal aliens."</p> <p>"plans for a new physical barrier, or wall, to secure the vast areas between our ports of entry."</p> <p>"I'll get it built."</p> <p>"We will always support the brave men and women of Law Enforcement — and I pledge to you tonight that we will never abolish our heroes from ICE."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Border Security, Military Growth and development, Domestic Protection, Moral Duty</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theme 4: National Security</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>"Over the last 2 years, we have begun to fully rebuild the United States Military — with \$700 billion last year and \$716 billion this year."</p> <p>"Smugglers use migrant children as human pawns to exploit our laws and gain access to our country."</p> <p>"This is a moral issue... it is a threat to our citizens."</p> <p>"We have made tremendous progress in eliminating the threat from ISIS."</p> <p>"My Administration has sent to Congress a commonsense proposal to end the crisis on our southern border."</p>		
<p>"America is a Nation that believes in redemption."</p> <p>"Inspired by stories like Alice’s, my Administration worked closely with members of both parties to sign the First Step Act into law."</p> <p>"This legislation reformed sentencing laws that have wrongly and disproportionately harmed the African-American community."</p> <p>"Both parties came together to pass groundbreaking criminal justice reform."</p> <p>"To defend the dignity of every person, I am asking the Congress to pass legislation to prohibit the late-term abortion of children who can feel pain in the mother’s womb."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Redemption, Criminal Justice Reform, Support for Specific Groups, Abortion Discussion</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theme 5: Reform</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

"The next major priority for me, and for all of us, should be to lower the cost of healthcare and prescription drugs — and to protect patients with pre-existing conditions."

"As part of our commitment to improving opportunity for women everywhere, this Thursday we are launching the first ever Government-wide initiative focused on economic empowerment for women in developing countries."

"To help support working parents, the time has come to pass school choice for America's children."

"I am also proud to be the first President to include in my budget a plan for nationwide paid family leave — so that every new parent has the chance to bond with their newborn child."

"My budget will ask Democrats and Republicans to make the needed commitment to eliminate the HIV epidemic in the United States within 10 years."

"Many childhood cancers have not seen new therapies in decades. My budget will ask the Congress for \$500 million over the next 10 years to fund this critical life-saving research."

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>"That is why I announced that the United States is officially withdrawing from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, or INF Treaty."</p> <p>"To ensure this corrupt dictatorship never acquires nuclear weapons, I withdrew the United States from the disastrous Iran nuclear deal."</p> <p>"Perhaps we can negotiate a different agreement, adding China and others, or perhaps we can't..."</p> <p>"We are now making it clear to China that after years of targeting our industries, the theft of American jobs and wealth has come to an end."</p> <p>"For years, the United States was being treated very unfairly by NATO — but now we have secured a \$100 billion increase in defense spending from NATO allies."</p> <p>"Much work remains to be done, but my relationship with Kim Jong Un is a good one. And Chairman Kim and I will meet again on February 27 and 28 in Vietnam."</p> <p>"In Afghanistan, my Administration is holding constructive talks with a number of Afghan groups, including the Taliban."</p> <p>"Now, as we work with our allies to destroy the remnants of ISIS, it is time to give our brave warriors in Syria a warm welcome home."</p> <p>"As we make progress in these negotiations, we will be able to reduce our troop presence and focus</p>	<p>America First Policy, Alliances, Trade Reconsideration, Diplomacy, Withdrawals.</p>	<p>Theme 6: Foreign Policy</p>
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Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

on counter-terrorism. We do not know whether we will achieve an agreement — but we do know that after two decades of war, the hour has come to at least try for peace."		
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4.6.1 National Unity

This theme focuses on Trump's attempts to unite the nation. It does not only call citizens to be the same; it actually calls citizens to reach a common ground and to leave their differences aside in order to accomplish the greater good. It is also an appeal for both parties, Democratic and Republican, to forget their differences and have collective responsibility and collaboration towards the country. The concept of democracy as Dewey defined it is apparent and evident in this theme. Dewey considered democracy as a continuous process of problem-solving through collective efforts with the purpose of achieving practical advancement.

4.6.2 American Exceptionalism

This theme shows the pride of being American. It suggests that the United States is, in many ways and forms, unique and exceptional. Through mentioning historical achievements and glorifying its values and qualities, Trump attempted to show that the United States has a crucial role to play and is destined to be superior. Trump, sometimes implicitly, calls for a renewed national pride. One of James's concepts is the role of beliefs in shaping both individual and collective identity. This is particularly mirrored in Trump's glorification of American values and beliefs and his call for the destiny of the country.

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

4.6.3 Economic Prosperity

This theme highlights the causes of economic prosperity. It does not only state that there was an economic growth; it shows how this economic growth was reached. In the speech, Trump went into details about how different groups of the American people benefited from this economic prosperity. He also offered some plans for future economic and job opportunities. Therefore, this part of the speech mainly focused on tangible economic results that were seen by Americans. Pragmatism, in its essence, advocates for practical actions and practical outcomes. Trump's statements highlighting job creation, tax cuts, and economic growth align perfectly with pragmatism's core idea.

4.6.4 National Security

This theme mainly tackles the United States' security and protection. In the speech, Trump delves into the national security challenges that the country faces constantly. He put much emphasis on the so-called issue of immigration. He continuously tackled the immigration issue through security, portraying immigration as a constant threat on the citizens and the country as well. So, he emphasized the need of border control and stricter measures to protect the borders and American interests. The policy discussion and his focus on solving the problem of immigration is displayed in Dewey's approach that aims at providing logical explanations of concepts and decisions. This is evident in Trump's border security and public safety discussions.

4.6.5 Reform

This theme deals with addressing some reforms that took and will take place in the United States. In the speech, it is evident that Trump and his administration acknowledged that there were

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

some shortcomings within the American society. Trump, in the speech, proposed some reforms, especially criminal justice ones, that targeted the improvement of social conditions in the country. Other sectors like healthcare, education, identity, and equality were also mentioned in the speech. One of Dewey's beliefs was the use of inquiry in order to address and solve social issues, which is present in the speech of Trump.

4.6.6 Foreign Policy

This theme involves the approach with which the United States was conducting foreign affairs. In the speech, Trump tried to clarify the United States role as a global leader. He also clearly identified the United States' allies and adversaries internationally with the purpose of determining future challenges and the way to address them. Moreover, he stressed the idea of the importance of advancing the United States globally. Trump's focus on national interests from the interactions with international entities align with James's concept of evaluating theories according to their practical results.

4.6.7 Discussion

The analysis of Trump's 2019 State of the Union Address shows that the speech has several pragmatic elements. These elements are evident in Trump's emphasis on unity, economic prosperity, national security, reform, and foreign policy. Depending on Dewey's concept of democracy, unity is essential in solving problems with the collaboration of the citizens and the country. Furthermore, pragmatism supports the idea of empowering beliefs to take actions, which resonates with the theme of American Exceptionalism. Moreover, practical outcomes are one of the core concepts in pragmatism, which aligns with the themes of Economic Prosperity and

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

National Security. The theme of Reform is with perfect alignment with the concept of using evidence to address issues. Finally, pragmatism's idea of evaluating theories through their practical outcomes is apparent in the theme of foreign policy. These themes suggest that the speech has indeed several elements of pragmatism.

4.7 The Social Perception of Trump's 2019 State of the Union Address

A CBS News poll indicated that 76% of Americans who watched President Donald Trump's State of the Union speech on Tuesday liked it, while 24% did not. The audience for the address was the most partisan since 2001, which made the president's results look better. 43% of viewers said they were Republicans, 24% said they were Democrats, and 31% said they were independents. Republicans were significantly more likely to agree, with 97% saying yes compared to 30% of Democrats. 82% of independent voters agreed. A CNN poll found that 59% of people who watched Trump's State of the Union speech had very positive views. Last year's speech only got the same reaction from 48% of people. Approval ratings varied by group: 66% of males, 58% of women, 54% of those under 50, and 61% of persons over 50 all liked the speech. CNN's poll also showed a big party gap, with viewers being 17 points more likely to say they were Republicans and largely Trump followers. About two-thirds of viewers thought the president's ideas were in line with the Republican party, while 25% said they were too conservative. In the future, 56% of viewers think Trump's speech will bring the country together, 8% think it will tear it apart, and 36% think it won't change anything (Lardieri, 2019).

A Pew Research Center poll reveals that 58% of Americans did not want the U.S.-Mexico border wall to get bigger. Republican support is at an all-time high, while Democratic support is at an all-time low. Most Americans think Trump's judgments about immigration policy are not

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

smart, but 51% of adults think immigration should be a high priority. Most Americans want Trump and Congress to work together, but 71% think Republicans and Democrats will argue and disagree more than normal this year. People also have very different opinions about Mueller's investigation and tariffs. The economy, fighting terrorism, protecting the environment, lowering healthcare costs, and improving racial relations are some of the most important things that the American people want the president and Congress to do. Seventy percent of Americans say that the economy is their top priority. This includes 79% of Republicans and 64% of Democrats. But in recent years, economic policies have become less important. The public is split on whether to pull US soldiers out of Syria, and the government isn't doing enough to protect important environmental issues. People don't put dealing with race relations at the top of their list of things to do (Bialik, 2019).

As the case in most of Trump's discourses, the 2019 State of the Union witnessed a high partisan divide between Republicans and Democrats. It is obvious that a high percentage of Republicans liked the speech and extended their full support to Trump while there was a very low percentage of Democrats who liked the speech. Compared to the 2018 State of the Union address, the 2019 address received more positive responses, which reflects more approval ratings of Trump. Moreover, more than half of the country believed that the speech would unify the country; however, the differences between Republicans and Democrats suggested the opposite. Furthermore, Americans, doubting Trump's ways to handle several national issues, had different reactions to different national issues like economy, immigration, and other sectors. The polls show a deep polarization between the Republicans and the Democrats although most Americans showed a deep interest in uniting the country.

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

4.8 Thematic Analysis of Donald Trump’s 2025 Inaugural Speech

The following report presents and analyzes Donald Trump’s 2025 inaugural speech. The analysis explores the elements of pragmatism evident in the speech. The main question that drives this analysis is: How does Donald Trump’s 2025 inaugural speech show elements of pragmatism? The data used in this analysis is the transcribed speech available in the White House website.

This analysis utilized a deductive latent thematic analysis of Donald Trump’s 2025 inaugural speech. This analysis used the data with pre-determined themes. In this case, the concept from which the themes were derived is pragmatism, especially the pragmatism of Charles Sanders Pierce, John Dewey, William James, and Richard Rorty. First, the familiarization with the data phase was done by listening and then reading the transcribed speech with the purpose of capturing pragmatic elements within the text. Moreover, determining and generating codes from the text led to establishing themes among the codes. Segments from the text were coded to represent the principles of pragmatism outlined in the first chapter. Reviewing, refining, naming, and refining themes took place after the coding phase. This approach goes beyond merely describing data; it explains and explores the latent meanings, focusing on elements of pragmatism within Donald Trump’s 2025 inaugural speech.

Table 4.4: Thematic Analysis of Trump’s 2025 Inaugural Speech

Text Segment	Code(s) Applied	Theme(s) Linked To
"First, I will declare a national emergency at our southern border." "All illegal entry will immediately be halted, and we will begin the process of returning millions and millions of criminal aliens back to the places from which they	Energy Independence, Immediate Actions, Efficiency,	Theme 1: Practicality in Solutions

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

came. We will reinstate my Remain in Mexico policy."

"I will end the practice of catch and release."

"And I will send troops to the southern border to repel the disastrous invasion of our country."

"Under the orders I sign today, we will also be designating the cartels as foreign terrorist organizations."

"And by invoking the Alien Enemies Act of 1798, I will direct our government to use the full and immense power of federal and state law enforcement to eliminate the presence of all foreign gangs and criminal networks bringing devastating crime to U.S. soil, including our cities and inner cities."

"Next, I will direct all members of my cabinet to marshal the vast powers at their disposal to defeat what was record inflation and rapidly bring down costs and prices."

"The inflation crisis was caused by massive overspending and escalating energy prices, and that is why today I will also declare a national energy emergency. We will drill, baby, drill."

"We will bring prices down, fill our strategic reserves up again right to the top, and export American energy all over the world."

"With my actions today, we will end the Green New Deal, and we will revoke the electric vehicle mandate, saving our auto industry and keeping my sacred pledge to our great American autoworkers."

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

"In other words, you'll be able to buy the car of your choice."

"I will immediately begin the overhaul of our trade system to protect American workers and families. Instead of taxing our citizens to enrich other countries, we will tariff and tax foreign countries to enrich our citizens."

"For this purpose, we are establishing the External Revenue Service to collect all tariffs, duties, and revenues."

"To restore competence and effectiveness to our federal government, my administration will establish the brand-new Department of Government Efficiency."

"I also will sign an executive order to immediately stop all government censorship and bring back free speech to America."

"This week, I will also end the government policy of trying to socially engineer race and gender into every aspect of public and private life."

"As of today, it will henceforth be the official policy of the United States government that there are only two genders: male and female."

"This week, I will reinstate any service members who were unjustly expelled from our military for objecting to the COVID vaccine mandate with full back pay."

"And I will sign an order to stop our warriors from being subjected to radical political theories and social experiments"

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>while on duty. It’s going to end immediately."</p> <p>"And we’re taking it back." (In reference to the Panama Canal)</p>		
<p>"From this day forward, our country will flourish and be respected again all over the world."</p> <p>"During every single day of the Trump administration, I will, very simply, put America first."</p> <p>"Our sovereignty will be reclaimed. Our safety will be restored. The scales of justice will be rebalanced. The vicious, violent, and unfair weaponization of the Justice Department and our government will end."</p> <p>"All of this will change starting today, and it will change very quickly."</p> <p>"My recent election is a mandate to completely and totally reverse a horrible betrayal and all of these many betrayals that have taken place and to give the people back their faith, their wealth, their democracy, and, indeed, their freedom."</p> <p>"And we will immediately restore the integrity, competency, and loyalty of America’s government."</p> <p>"That is why each day under our administration of American patriots, we will be working to meet every crisis with dignity and power and strength. We will move with purpose and speed to bring back hope, prosperity, safety, and peace for citizens of every race, religion, color, and creed."</p>	<p>Decisive Actions, Confident Rhetoric, Leadership, National Security</p>	<p>Theme 2: Action-Oriented Thinking</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

"Today, I will sign a series of historic executive orders. With these actions, we will begin the complete restoration of America and the revolution of common sense."

"All illegal entry will immediately be halted, and we will begin the process of returning millions and millions of criminal aliens back to the places from which they came."

"With these actions, we will begin the complete restoration of America and the revolution of common sense. It's all about common sense."

"With my actions today, we will end the Green New Deal, and we will revoke the electric vehicle mandate, saving our auto industry and keeping my sacred pledge to our great American autoworkers."

"I will immediately begin the overhaul of our trade system to protect American workers and families."

"I also will sign an executive order to immediately stop all government censorship and bring back free speech to America."

"Under my leadership, we will restore fair, equal, and impartial justice under the constitutional rule of law."

"And we are going to bring law and order back to our cities."

"As commander in chief, I have no higher responsibility than to defend our country from threats and invasions, and that is exactly what I am going to do. We will do it at a level that nobody has ever seen before."

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>"So, as we liberate our nation, we will lead it to new heights of victory and success. We will not be deterred."</p>		
<p>"But first, we must be honest about the challenges we face. While they are plentiful, they will be annihilated by this great momentum that the world is now witnessing in the United States of America."</p> <p>"As we gather today, our government confronts a crisis of trust. For many years, a radical and corrupt establishment has extracted power and wealth from our citizens while the pillars of our society lay broken and seemingly in complete disrepair."</p> <p>"We now have a government that cannot manage even a simple crisis at home while, at the same time, stumbling into a continuing catalogue of catastrophic events abroad."</p> <p>"It fails to protect our magnificent, law-abiding American citizens but provides sanctuary and protection for dangerous criminals, many from prisons and mental institutions, that have illegally entered our country from all over the world."</p> <p>"We have a government that has given unlimited funding to the defense of foreign borders but refuses to defend American borders or, more importantly, its own people."</p> <p>"Our country can no longer deliver basic services in times of emergency, as recently shown by the wonderful people of North Carolina — who have been treated so badly — (applause) — and other states who are still suffering from a hurricane</p>	<p>Doubts about the Government, Concerns, Failure in many Sectors, Obstacles, Threats</p>	<p>Theme 3: Challenges Acknowledgment</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>that took place many months ago or, more recently, Los Angeles, where we are watching fires still tragically burn from weeks ago without even a token of defense."</p> <p>"We have a public health system that does not deliver in times of disaster, yet more money is spent on it than any country anywhere in the world."</p> <p>"And we have an education system that teaches our children to be ashamed of themselves — in many cases, to hate our country despite the love that we try so desperately to provide to them."</p> <p>"The inflation crisis was caused by massive overspending and escalating energy prices..."</p> <p>"In recent years, our nation has suffered greatly. But we are going to bring it back and make it great again, greater than ever before."</p>		
<p>"We will move with purpose and speed to bring back hope, prosperity, safety, and peace for citizens of every race, religion, color, and creed."</p> <p>"As our victory showed, the entire nation is rapidly unifying behind our agenda with dramatic increases in support from virtually every element of our society: young and old, men and women, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, urban, suburban, rural."</p> <p>"To the Black and Hispanic communities, I want to thank you for the tremendous outpouring of love and trust that you have shown me with your vote. We set records,</p>	<p>National Unity, Restoring Institutions, Purpose, Inclusivity</p>	<p>Theme 4: National Security</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

<p>and I will not forget it. I've heard your voices in the campaign, and I look forward to working with you in the years to come."</p> <p>"Today is Martin Luther King Day. And his honor — this will be a great honor. But in his honor, we will strive together to make his dream a reality. We will make his dream come true."</p> <p>"National unity is now returning to America, and confidence and pride is soaring like never before."</p> <p>"We will forge a society that is colorblind and merit-based."</p> <p>"My proudest legacy will be that of a peacemaker and unifier. That's what I want to be: a peacemaker and a unifier."</p> <p>"We are one people, one family, and one glorious nation under God."</p>		
<p>"And our top priority will be to create a nation that is proud, prosperous, and free."</p> <p>"For many years, a radical and corrupt establishment has extracted power and wealth from our citizens while the pillars of our society lay broken and seemingly in complete disrepair."</p> <p>"Our country can no longer deliver basic services in times of emergency..."</p> <p>"President McKinley made our country very rich through tariffs and through talent — he was a natural businessman — and gave Teddy Roosevelt the money for many of the great things he did, including the Panama Canal..."</p>	<p>Inflation, Trade Reform, Economic Failure</p>	<p>Theme 5: Economic Challenges</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

<p>"The United States will once again consider itself a growing nation — one that increases our wealth..."</p> <p>"America will be a manufacturing nation once again, and we have something that no other manufacturing nation will ever have — the largest amount of oil and gas of any country on earth — and we are going to use it. We’ll use it."</p>		
<p>"We will measure our success not only by the battles we win but also by the wars that we end — and perhaps most importantly, the wars we never get into."</p> <p>"Many people thought it was impossible for me to stage such a historic political comeback. But as you see today, here I am. The American people have spoken."</p> <p>"I stand before you now as proof that you should never believe that something is impossible to do. In America, the impossible is what we do best."</p> <p>"If we work together, there is nothing we cannot do and no dream we cannot achieve."</p> <p>"So, to every parent who dreams for their child and every child who dreams for their future, I am with you, I will fight for you, and I will win for you. We’re going to win like never before."</p> <p>"Our power will stop all wars and bring a new spirit of unity to a world that has been angry, violent, and totally unpredictable."</p> <p>"America will be respected again and admired again, including by people of religion, faith, and goodwill. We will be</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Tangible Results, the Impossible to the achievable, Rhetoric of Unity</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theme 6: Appeal to Results</p>

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

prosperous, we will be proud, we will be strong, and we will win like never before."		
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4.8.1 Practicality in Results

This theme emphasizes the approach of governance and policy-making that mainly focuses on tangible influence rather than prioritizing ideological discussions. In the speech, Trump's commitment to tackle problems through pragmatic decisions. This desire to reach practical results shows a will to move beyond abstract rhetoric. This theme, by definition, aligns with what pragmatism advocated. There is a clear emphasis on problem identification, concrete impact, feasibility, and evidence-based approach throughout the speech.

4.8.2 Action-Oriented Thinking

This theme showcases the action-oriented thinking of Trump in the speech. He committed to making immediate action to tackle some issues and challenges. He also promised to implement a number of policies as well as achieving some objectives through tangible steps. So, this suggests that Trump has a willingness to act rather than only talk. This theme is mainly characterized by Trump's decisiveness and strong rhetoric. Pragmatically, this theme resonates with the ideas of experimentation, actionable steps, and reaching practical results.

4.8.3 Challenges Acknowledgement

This theme tackles Trump's acknowledgment of the several challenges that await the country. Trump did not hesitate to criticize the previous government, which was an explicit and

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

clear gesture to blame the previous government for the challenges that his administration will face. Moreover, in the speech, Trump, while recognizing challenges, committed to address and successfully overcome them by practical policies. The idea of identifying and attempting to address challenges resonates with the idea of pragmatism's rejection of utopian discussions and views.

4.8.4 National Security

This theme showcases Trump's use of unity rhetoric to ignite a sense of national security among the population. Throughout the speech, Trump attempted to emphasize inclusivity and collaboration to tackle supposedly shared concerns between the government and the citizens. This theme has some characteristics of pragmatism's instrumentalism. It utilizes practical policies to tackle and address social and political needs.

4.8.5 Economic Solutions

This theme tackles Trump's emphasis on economic challenges and his will to restore economic prosperity. In the speech, Trump addressed several crucial economic challenges like inflation, job creation, and energy-related policies. Then, he committed that his administration will restore the United States' economic growth. Tackling this issue, Trump stated policies that are considered practical, which aligns with pragmatism's focus on practical thinking.

4.8.6 Appeal to Results

This theme shows Trump's governance approach. In the speech, Trump focused on governance through achieving practical and measurable outcomes. He prioritized results over

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

ideology. It is quite apparent from this theme that it focuses on measurable and concrete outcomes, which reflects a results-based governance. Therefore, it is fair to deduce that this theme reflects one of pragmatism's core ideas.

4.8.7 Discussion

The analysis of Trump's 2025 inaugural speech shows that the speech contains many pragmatic principles. These principles are apparent in Trump's emphasis on practicality in results, action-oriented thinking, acknowledging challenges, national security rhetoric, economic solutions, and appeal to results. The focus on practical results reflects the fundamental idea of pragmatism. Moreover, the theme of action-oriented thinking shows a pragmatic approach in experimenting and using practical steps to reach practical results. Trump's acknowledgment of challenges shows the recognition of complexities rather than embracing abstractions, which is one of pragmatism's values. Furthermore, using policies as a way to achieve tangible solutions as well as proposing economic solutions, which Trump alluded to in the speech, falls under the umbrella of pragmatism's instrumentalism. Finally, Trump's appeal to results shows pragmatism's focus on measurable and practical outcomes. From these themes, one can deduce that the speech is filled with pragmatic elements like tangible actions and outcomes.

4.9 The Social Perception of Trump's 2025 Inaugural Speech

Donald Trump's first job approval rating for his second term is 47%, which is close to the 45% rating he had for his first term. This is the only elected president who had less than 50% approval ratings at first. His most recent disapproval rating (48%) is three percentage points higher than it was in 2017, which is a new high for inaugural ratings. Gallup's poll from January 21 to 27

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

shows that Trump's current job approval rating is not very different from the 51% ratings that George H.W. Bush and Ronald Reagan got. However, Americans are more likely to disapprove of Trump's performance than to approve of it. Trump's most recent rating is one of the greatest he's ever had as president. His highest rating during his first term was 49%. During his first term, he received an average of 41% approval. When he left office in January 2021, he had the lowest rating of 34% (Brenan, 2025).

During his second term as president, Trump signed a lot of executive actions that dealt with a wide range of policy issues, such as immigration, defense, foreign policy, the environment, and making the government work better. Before the Trump administration stopped giving government financial help, a poll showed that Americans were split on how quickly Trump was dealing with significant issues. Forty percent said it was "about right," thirty-seven percent thought it was "too fast," and fourteen percent thought it was "not fast enough." Eighty-three percent of Republicans said his pace was about right, while sixty-one percent of Democrats thought it was too fast. Independents' opinions were almost the same as the national average. Trump has issued more executive orders this year than he did in the first 100 days of his first term, but in 2017, more Americans (47%) thought he was moving too fast. Republicans are now seven percent more inclined to agree that Trump's actions are right than they were in 2017. Democrats are now less likely to believe Trump is going too fast (-12 points) and more likely to say he is not going fast enough (+11 points) (Brenan, 2025).

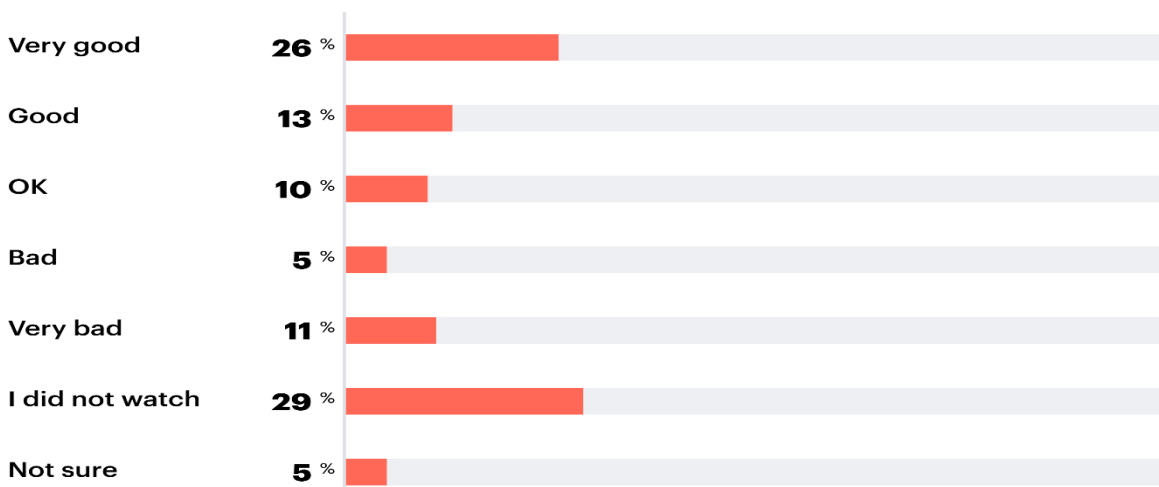
During Trump's first term, there was no "honeymoon period" like there usually is. His job approval ratings were high in the first few months of his presidency. His first approval rating was 41%, which is lower than the 61% average for all elected presidents since Eisenhower. As he begins his second term, Americans are split on how well he has done his job. Trump's approval

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump’s Spoken Discourse

rating right now is 47%, which is worse than that of any other recent president. Most of his fellow Republicans say he's doing a good job and that he's been quick to deal with big issues. His support from Republicans and independents is a little higher than it was in 2017, but Democrats' support is even lower. In the next few months, Trump's approval numbers will be put to the test. If they stay low for a long time, his initial ratings will look higher by comparison (Brenan, 2025).

On another poll that was conducted, there was a positive review of Trump’s inaugural speech.

Figure 4.1: Do you think that Donald Trump’s inaugural speech on Monday was good or bad?



Source: (YouGov, 2025)

Trump’s initial approval ratings and responses from his inaugural speech are quite mixed. They show continuous support from his fellow Republicans and opposition from Democrats. His approval ratings are considered historically low compared to other presidents, which seems to reflect the political polarization that the United States is witnessing. Moreover, his executive orders during his second term have also been met with very mixed responses; some Americans believe

Chapter Four: Exploring Donald Trump's Spoken Discourse

that Trump is rushing through the process of signing executive orders, and others think he following a good pace in dealing with national issues. Even though his executive orders target national issues, some, especially Democrats, are still skeptical of Trump's approach. This may be the consequences of Trump's past actions and rhetoric. Trump still has the full support of Republicans, but the Democrats are being even more critical than before. This situation will likely lead to more division and polarization politically and ultimately socially.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter attempted to analyze four spoken discourse of Donald Trump as a president. The whole chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of Donald Trump discourses. Using a deductive latent thematic analysis, this chapter tried to identify patterns of using elements of pragmatism in the political spoken discourse of Trump. from the analysis, it was concluded that there were elements of pragmatism existent in all the four selected discourses.

General Conclusion

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Politics and philosophy have always been interesting and complex for most people. This thesis has not only dived into the philosophy of pragmatism in isolation; it has also discussed the implicit and explicit connection between pragmatism and political discourse. It is true that pragmatism has been recognized only by the concept of “practicality”. One of the study’s attempts was to shed light on this matter in order to expand on this view of pragmatism.

The first chapter delved into the main concepts and ideas of the main philosophers of pragmatism. It, briefly but precisely, discussed the history of pragmatism and the ideas of Charles Sanders Pierce, William James, John Dewey, and Richard Rorty. It also provided the similarities and differences between classical pragmatism and neopragmatism. In addition, it offered an insight about the connection between philosophy and politics in general. This chapter served as the backbone and theoretical framework of this research, as the analysis was juxtaposed with the concepts mentioned in this chapter.

The second chapter aimed to explore the deep connection between the philosophy of pragmatism and political discourse. It delves into the definition of political discourse by one of the main figures of discourse analysis, Teun Van Dijk. This chapter also discussed some of the historical events in the United States history with the purpose of identifying elements of pragmatism. To make it diverse, this chapter discussed events and periods from different timeframes throughout the United States history.

The third chapter offers a brief introduction to Donald Trump as a president and analyzes his written discourse. The chapter delves into the analysis of Donald Trump’s selected written discourses. The analysis was mainly directed to identify elements of pragmatism in Trump’s

General Conclusion

written discourses. The fourth chapter had the same aim with the third chapter. The only difference is that the fourth chapter dealt with Trump's spoken discourse.

Examining to what extent the philosophy of pragmatism is used in American political discourse and its social perception, focusing on Donald Trump was the main aim of this study. This was not possible without reflecting on pragmatism's history as a philosophy. The study also aimed at analyzing Trump's discourses searching for elements of pragmatism and their perception by the American society. The study was guided by a deductive latent thematic analysis, which was rather effective in identifying significant elements of pragmatism in Trump's discourses. The interpretation of the social perception was mainly based on pieces of information extracted from different media outlets.

The study revealed that the philosophy of pragmatism is related and used in politics, especially political discourse. Diving into some historical events in the United States history revealed that pragmatism was indeed used in American politics extensively. Its usage can be even traced back to the writing of the constitution; however, the term itself was not coined at that time. So, one might wonder whether politicians used the philosophy knowingly or unknowingly.

The methods used to answer the research questions and to analyze the data were chosen carefully. Both spoken and written discourse of Donald Trump were selected randomly in order to be analyzed following a deductive latent thematic analysis. First, the discourses were read and listened to several times in order to be familiar with the data. Then, segments from the discourses were extracted, gathered, categorized, and coded accordingly. The predetermined themes were already named, so the segments from the data were assigned to the different themes. Then, the themes were defined and the reports were written.

General Conclusion

The evidence shows that Trump, in his discourses, often employs pragmatic appeals. These include Trump's inclusion of appeals to practical thinking, result-oriented thinking, empiricism, and experimenting. The established themes were not found only in one specific discourse; they were common in all the selected discourses. The study has also shown that Trump uses a language that reflects practical actions rather than ideological discourse. Based on all the discourses, there are several elements of pragmatism existent in Trump's discourses. Moreover, the defined themes were all juxtaposed with the one or more concepts of Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, John Dewey, and Richard Rorty that were discussed in the first chapter.

The social perception of Trump's pragmatic language was mixed. Supporters, as expected, perceived Trump's discourses very positively, claiming that Trump wants what is best for The United States and Americans. Those who dislike Trump disapproved of his discourses. They mostly believe that Trump divides the United States more than he unites it. This situation has created a deep polarization both politically and socially. Trump's supporters interpret his discourses quite differently from his critics. Media outlets might be the responsible for this; sometimes media outlets frame and interpret Trump's discourses to create certain narratives in order to direct public opinions easily. This, in no way, suggests that Trump should be praised or supported. It is merely a fact that has existed a long time.

The findings of this research have some significant implications. It showed that pragmatism is not mainly concerned with practicality. It is true that a big part of this philosophy is concerned with the practical aspects of matters. Yet, it is definitely not the only aspect that should be taken into consideration when delving into this philosophy. A whole process comes before reaching the concept of practicality. As a matter of fact, practicality cannot be taken in isolation; it necessitates

General Conclusion

other concepts to fulfil the bigger picture. It is also worth noting that it was apparent that pragmatism as a philosophy is to be differentiated from its application in political discourse.

This study also contributes to the Trump studies. Much research has been conducted concerning Donald Trump and his discourse. This study systematically analyzed Trump's discourses to identify his appeals to pragmatism and their perception by the American society. It could be said that Trump displays a very controversial discourse, which made it rather interesting to delve into this research. Some might describe Donald Trump as reckless and unprepared; however, the data and the analysis, guided by the deductive latent thematic analysis that uncovered meanings in Trump's discourses, have shown that Trump does appeal to pragmatism in his discourses. The study has also showcased the perception of the different portions of society. It proved that Trump's appeals to pragmatism resonate with some segments of society.

One might deduce from this study that the American society has a challenge to face the social and the political polarization that is taking place. Media outlets are of course a part in causing these divisions whether politically or socially. Very few media outlets are unbiased and objective, so it is crucial for the society to critically review and evaluate every message and discourse without depending on media outlets.

While political affiliation and loyalty to one's political party are generally positive, it sometimes blinds people from accepting different views, even if they are logical and true. This is, to a large extent, evident in the context of the United States politics. It is fair to state that every president of any country throughout history has positive and negative impacts on the country. Sometimes they enact laws that are helpful, and sometime they do not. With Trump, he is largely hated by Democrats, because he is a Republican. So, it is logical for them to disapprove of every decision and discussion he has. On the other hand, Republicans support and favor Trump, because

General Conclusion

he is a Republican. The problem is that it makes it hard and challenging to measure whether the social perceptions of the different segments of society are based on objective review and evaluation or not. Another point that is worth noting is that it is nearly impossible to know the social perception of all Americans, which would still pose the dilemma of accuracy. Most surveys conducted by media outlets do not exceed 3000 participants.

Although offering a significant contribution, this thesis has some limitations that must be addressed. It is true that the analysis tackles some discourses of Donald Trump as a president to identify elements of pragmatism. Yet, the study could not include every discourse Trump uttered. Moreover, the single case study that focused on Donald Trump is not quite enough to make generalizations. In other words, one cannot surely state that all presidents or all politicians of the United States utilize elements of pragmatism in their discourses. Furthermore, the social perception of the discourses was mainly extracted from media outlets and commentators. This is not to suggest that they were not accurate, but surveys and interviews would have been more accurate.

Future research can build on this study. There is a possibility of conducting comparative studies in order to explore the differences and similarities in using the philosophy of pragmatism in political discourse. Further research could also focus on the impact of pragmatic discourse after stating it. For example, whether or not a president applies the pragmatic discourse in reality, because it is possible that a president utters a pragmatic discourse full of willingness to apply practical actions, but not actually demonstrating it in reality. In addition, further research could conduct surveys or interviews on different segments of the society during a long period of time in order to gather a significant amount of data.

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Abstract

Initially, political discourse is supposedly used to address the public about current situations and issues and the solutions for these issues. However, it has become a tool to persuade and convince the public using different strategies. This study aims at exploring pragmatism usage in American political discourse and its social perception, with a special focus on President Donald Trump. To achieve that, the history of pragmatism and its concepts must be discussed. Donald Trump is currently considered the most controversial president not only in the United States but also globally. His discourses, often described as unconventional and untraditional, are widely studied by academics. However, very little research has been conducted concerning Trump's use of pragmatism and its impact on the American society. This study uses a deductive latent thematic analysis to explore Donald Trump's pragmatism usage in his discourses. Both written and spoken discourses were selected randomly and put to analysis. Thus, this research follows a qualitative approach for Trump's discourse analysis. As for the social perception side, data from different media outlets highlighting the social perception of the selected discourses are extracted and interpreted. The findings suggest that Donald Trump's discourses often include appeals to pragmatism. Through the analysis, patterns of using concepts of pragmatism by Donald Trump are identified. In terms of the social perception of Trump's discourses, segments of the American society who are Republicans approve of Trump's discourses, and those who identify as Democrats strongly disapprove. The study concludes that Trump indeed appeals to pragmatism in his speeches, which seems to cause both political and social polarization in the United States. However, the objectivity of the social perception is still unclear and somewhat inaccurate. Therefore, more research with more participants involved can be conducted to unveil the true reasons of approving or disapproving discourses.

Keywords: Pragmatism, Politics, Political discourse, Social perception, Donald Trump.

Resumé

Initialement, le discours politique est censé informer le public sur les situations et les problèmes actuels, ainsi que sur les solutions à ces problèmes. Cependant, il est devenu un outil de persuasion et de conviction, utilisant diverses stratégies. Cette étude vise à explorer l'usage du pragmatisme dans le discours politique américain et sa perception sociale, en se concentrant particulièrement sur le président Donald Trump. Pour ce faire, il est nécessaire d'examiner l'histoire du pragmatisme et ses concepts. Donald Trump est actuellement considéré comme le président le plus controversé, non seulement aux États-Unis, mais aussi dans le monde. Ses discours, souvent qualifiés d'atypiques et d'inhabituels, sont largement étudiés par les universitaires. Toutefois, très peu de recherches ont été menées sur l'usage du pragmatisme par Trump et son impact sur la société américaine. Cette étude utilise une analyse thématique latente déductive pour explorer l'usage du pragmatisme par Donald Trump dans ses discours. Des discours écrits et oraux ont été sélectionnés aléatoirement et analysés. Ainsi, cette recherche adopte une approche qualitative pour l'analyse du discours de Trump. Du point de vue de la perception sociale, les données issues de différents médias, mettant en lumière la perception des discours sélectionnés, ont été extraites et interprétées. Les résultats suggèrent que les discours de Donald Trump font souvent appel au pragmatisme. L'analyse a permis d'identifier des schémas d'utilisation du concept de pragmatisme par Donald Trump. Concernant la perception sociale de ces discours, une partie de la population américaine se déclarant républicaine les approuve, tandis que les démocrates les désapprouvent fortement. L'étude conclut que Trump recourt effectivement au pragmatisme dans ses discours, ce qui semble engendrer une polarisation politique et sociale aux États-Unis. Toutefois, l'objectivité de cette perception sociale demeure incertaine et quelque peu imprécise. Par conséquent, des recherches complémentaires, impliquant un plus grand nombre de participants, pourraient être menées afin de mieux comprendre les raisons de l'approbation ou de la désapprobation des discours.

Mots-clés : Pragmatisme, Politique, Discours politique, Perception sociale, Donald Trump.

ملخص

في البداية، يُفترض أن الخطاب السياسي يُستخدم لمخاطبة الجمهور بشأن الأوضاع والقضايا الراهنة والحلول المقترحة لها. إلا أنه تحوّل إلى أداة لإقناع الجمهور باستخدام استراتيجيات متنوعة. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف استخدام البراغماتية في الخطاب السياسي الأمريكي ونظرة المجتمع إليها، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على الرئيس دونالد ترامب. ولتحقيق ذلك، لا بد من مناقشة تاريخ البراغماتية ومفاهيمها. يُعتبر دونالد ترامب حاليًا الرئيس الأكثر إثارة للجدل، ليس فقط في الولايات المتحدة، بل على مستوى العالم. وتُدرس خطابه، التي غالبًا ما تُوصف بأنها غير تقليدية، على نطاق واسع من قِبل الأكاديميين. ومع ذلك، لم تُجر سوى أبحاث قليلة جدًا حول استخدام ترامب للبراغماتية وتأثيرها على المجتمع الأمريكي. تستخدم هذه الدراسة تحليلًا موضوعيًا كامنًا استنتاجيًا لاستكشاف استخدام دونالد ترامب للبراغماتية في خطابه. وقد تم اختيار خطابات مكتوبة وشفوية عشوائيًا وتحليلها. وبالتالي، يتبع هذا البحث منهجًا نوعيًا لتحليل خطاب ترامب. أما فيما يتعلق بالتصور الاجتماعي، فقد تم استخلاص وتحليل بيانات من وسائل إعلامية مختلفة تُبرز التصور الاجتماعي للخطابات المختارة. تشير النتائج إلى أن خطابات دونالد ترامب غالبًا ما تتضمن مناشدات للبراغماتية. ومن خلال التحليل، تم تحديد أنماط استخدام ترامب لمفاهيم البراغماتية. وفيما يخص التصور الاجتماعي لخطابات ترامب، فإن شرائح من المجتمع الأمريكي من الجمهوريين تُؤيد خطابه، بينما يُعارضها بشدة من يُعرفون أنفسهم كديمقراطيين. وتُخلص الدراسة إلى أن ترامب بالفعل يُناشد البراغماتية في خطابه، وهو ما يبدو أنه يُسبب استقطابًا سياسيًا واجتماعيًا في الولايات المتحدة. ومع ذلك، لا تزال موضوعية التصور الاجتماعي غير واضحة وغير دقيقة إلى حد ما. لذلك، يُمكن إجراء المزيد من البحوث بمشاركة عدد أكبر من الأشخاص للكشف عن الأسباب الحقيقية لتأييد أو رفض الخطابات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: البراغماتية، السياسة، الخطاب السياسي، التصور الاجتماعي، دونالد ترامب.