

Framing the Nation: Emotion and Authority in Slovak Political Language

Ivana Kapráliková 

Abstract

Our research examines how Slovak political leaders construct emotional authority and implicit power through language. Using Critical Discourse Analysis, it analyses statements by Robert Fico, Peter Kmec, and Tomáš Taraba, representing populist, technocratic, and far-right perspectives, focusing on metaphor, modality, repetition, and pronoun use. Fico employs nationalist metaphors and confrontational rhetoric, Kmec uses reassuring, procedural language, and Taraba draws on fear and moralistic appeals to frame national issues. These patterns show how linguistic choices shape ideology, national identity, and political legitimacy. The research also highlights the educational value of discourse analysis, demonstrating how integrating CDA into university programs can foster critical literacy, helping students recognize manipulation, bias, and power in political and professional communication.

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Introduction

In contemporary Slovak politics, language has become a central tool for shaping public opinion, building authority, and mobilizing emotional support. Political leaders no longer rely only on argument or policy, they use rhetoric that connects emotionally with their audiences, often framing political conflicts as moral or national struggles. This trend is especially visible in the coalition government formed in 2023, where populist, technocratic, and far-right narratives intersect in complex ways. The emotional tone and framing choices of politicians play a key role in defining how people perceive legitimacy, belonging, and power.

This research examines how emotional framing and implicit power dynamics are constructed through language in Slovak political discourse. Drawing on the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), it focuses on the rhetorical practices of three key figures, Robert Fico, Peter Kmec, and Tomáš Taraba, whose public statements represent distinct ideological positions within Slovakia's current governing coalition. Although limited in scope, the selected material allows for an in-depth comparison of contrasting communication styles that reflect broader tendencies in Slovak political culture.

The analysis identifies and interprets four major linguistic features: metaphorical language, modal verbs, repetition, and pronoun use. Each of these contributes to the construction of emotional authority, group identity, and ideological boundaries. The research builds on established CDA frameworks developed by Fairclough (1995) and Wodak (2009), and it connects to more recent work on emotional and populist discourse (Musolff, 2016; Charteris-Black, 2018; Wodak, 2021; Kapráliková, 2024; Schumacher, 2025). Together, these works highlight how language does not simply describe politics, it performs it, shaping how citizens feel, think, and act in relation to power.

By analysing these rhetorical patterns, this research aims to outline a typology of emotionally and hierarchically embedded strategies in Slovak political communication. It also demonstrates the practical potential of discourse analysis for education and civic literacy. Understanding how political language operates helps students, educators, and professionals become more aware of the persuasive and manipulative dimensions of communication. In this sense, the analysis contributes not only to linguistic and political research but also to the development of critical thinking and communicative competence in university and professional settings.

Literature review

Our research builds on a robust body of scholarship in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and political linguistics that explores how language constructs power, emotion, and ideology. Foundational studies by Fairclough (1995) and Wodak (2009) conceptualize discourse as a form of social practice, through which linguistic choices, such as metaphor, modality, repetition, and pronoun usage, serve to legitimize authority and shape collective identity. Extending this perspective, Chilton (2004) and van Dijk (2006) argue that political discourse both reflects and enacts power relations, framing

cognitive boundaries between “us” and “them” that sustain ideological polarization.

Metaphor and emotional framing have also been recognized as central mechanisms in the performance of political authority. Musolff (2016) demonstrates how figurative language embeds moral and affective evaluations within seemingly rational argumentation, while Charteris-Black (2018) shows that metaphors of journey, battle, and nationhood are powerful tools for constructing legitimacy and emotional identification. Wodak (2021) further highlights the “politics of fear” as a key feature of right-wing populist rhetoric, where affective narratives of threat, victimization, and protection normalize exclusionary policies. Complementing this, Ekström, Patrona and Thornborrow (2018) argue that televised populist performances, through emotional, dramatic and colloquial stylistic choices, construct a people/elite divide and reshape how audiences perceive political authority. Recent regional studies (Balčytienė, 2023; Kluknavská & Macková, 2024) indicate that in post-pandemic Central Europe, heightened emotional intensity and moral dichotomies in political communication have contributed to political polarization and pressures on democratic legitimacy.

Together, these theoretical and empirical works reveal an increasingly recognized consensus: political power today is linguistically enacted through affective discourse that legitimizes hierarchy and mobilizes collective emotion. This theoretical framework provides the foundation for examining the Slovak case, where emotional and ideological narratives are deeply entwined with questions of national sovereignty, European identity, and post-communist transformation.

Recent scholarship has extended these global insights to the Slovak context. Kapráliková (2024) examines the digital media responses of Slovak coalition politicians following the assassination attempt on Prime Minister Robert Fico, revealing how emotionally charged and power-laden language reinforces legitimacy and polarizes public sentiment. Her study combines CDA with Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Stylistics to uncover rhetorical strategies that mobilize support and justify political actions.

In a comparative analysis of Czech and Slovak governmental discourse on the European Union, Brusenbauch Meislová and Hloušek (2025) show that Slovak political language often emphasizes ideational legitimization, invoking shared values and emotional appeals to reinforce narratives of European belonging. Their use of Discourse Historical Analysis (DHA) underscores the influence of historical and geopolitical memory in shaping post-communist political communication.

Batková (2023) investigates populist framing of the war in Ukraine, identifying anti-Western and pro-Russian narratives strategically mobilized

to achieve domestic political ends. Her findings highlight how moral binaries and emotional appeals underpin populist discourses of national protection and sovereignty. At the European level, the POLEMIC project led by Schumacher (2025) explores the persuasive role of emotion in cross-national political communication, demonstrating that positive emotional tones, such as reassurance and solidarity, often exert stronger influence than fear-based rhetoric, complicating assumptions about the dominance of negativity in populist discourse.

Finally, Shamim, Bushra, and Dwivedi (2025) provide a comprehensive CDA-based model for analysing political speeches, illustrating how metaphorical constructions, modality, and pronoun shifts encode implicit power relations and ideological positioning. Their methodological contribution reinforces the analytical approach adopted in this study, affirming that emotional framing and linguistic patterning are central to understanding authority and persuasion in Slovak political rhetoric.

Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative methodology grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to investigate how emotional framing and implicit power dynamics are encoded in Slovak political language. The dataset consists of public speeches and official statements delivered in 2025 by three representatives of Slovakia's current governing coalition: Robert Fico, Peter Kmeč and Tomáš Taraba. Although limited to 13 quotes, the selection captures variation within coalition communication styles, enabling an initial yet concentrated inquiry into governmental rhetoric.

Quotes were selected for their relevance to politically salient themes, particularly national identity, European integration, environmental policy and social welfare. The analysis focuses on four linguistic features: metaphoric expressions, modal constructions, repetition and pronoun usage to assess how these devices shape public perception and reinforce authority. Interpretation follows CDA frameworks developed by Fairclough and Wodak, situating linguistic strategies within Slovakia's broader socio-political context.

Open coding was employed to identify recurring patterns, which were subsequently grouped into themes reflecting emotional and hierarchical discursive structures. Although the sample is small, it allows for detailed examination and careful interpretation of rhetorical strategies used within coalition communication.

Research findings

Robert Fico: strategic emotional authority

Robert Fico, the long-serving Prime Minister of Slovakia and leader of the Direction – Social Democracy (SMER-SD) party, currently heads a fragile coalition government composed of leftist-populist and nationalist forces. Since returning to power in October 2023, his rhetoric frequently echoes Kremlin narratives, particularly regarding the war in Ukraine, and he has openly opposed Ukraine's NATO membership (Jochecová, 2025a). Fico's leadership style is confrontational and emotionally charged, often relying on dehumanizing language, enemy construction, and populist symbolism to mobilize support (Gabrižová, 2025). Following a dramatic assassination attempt in May 2024, his public discourse has become even more aggressive, reinforcing his image as a resilient figure in Slovak politics. Despite internal coalition tensions and widespread public protests, Fico remains a dominant and polarizing actor, steering Slovakia toward a more illiberal and Eurosceptic trajectory (Jochecová, 2025b).

(1) „Slovenské zákony musia mať prednosť pred bruselskými nezmyslami.“ [Slovak laws must take precedence over Brussels nonsense.] (Euractiv, 26 September 2025)

The use of **modal verbs** (musia – “must”) to assert legal and moral necessity is exemplified by this quote from Fico, in which Slovak law is positioned as superior. The phrase *bruselské nezmysly* (“Brussels nonsense”) employs **metaphorical language** to delegitimize EU regulations, casting them as irrational and foreign. A binary opposition between national sovereignty and external interference is constructed through this metaphor, which serves to reinforce a populist narrative. The absence of personal pronouns implies a collective national subject, invoking solidarity among Slovak citizens against a constructed external threat. According to CDA principles, such language enacts ideological positioning and consolidates authority by emotionally framing institutional conflict.

(2) „Na Slovensku budú uznané len dve pohlavia – muž a žena.“ [Only two genders – male and female – will be recognized in Slovakia.] (Pravda, 29 January 2025)

This statement uses **modal construction** (*budú uznané* – “will be recognized”) to signal institutional enforcement of binary gender norms. The **repetition** of *muž a žena* (“male and female”) reinforces traditionalist ideology, while the restrictive adverb *len* (“only”) functions as a linguistic

boundary marker. The phrase *Na Slovensku* (“In Slovakia”) anchors the statement in national space, invoking territorialized identity politics. From a CDA perspective, this quote exemplifies how language is used to regulate social legitimacy and exclude non-conforming identities.

It reflects Fico’s populist strategy of aligning cultural policy with conservative values to mobilize emotional support and assert implicit power over societal norms.

(3) „*Ked' som v Ríme, správam sa ako Riman.*“

[When in Rome, I act like a Roman.] (Youtube, 2025)

This metaphorical idiom is used to justify strategic flexibility while maintaining nationalist credibility. The **metaphorical language** (*v Ríme... ako Riman* – “in Rome... like a Roman”) suggests pragmatic adaptation to external contexts, likely in reference to EU negotiations. The **pronoun usage** (*som, sa správam* – “I am”, “I act”) centers the speaker as rational and self-aware, distancing him from ideological rigidity. CDA interprets this as a rhetorical manoeuvre that allows Fico to navigate conflicting expectations without undermining his populist image. The metaphor masks compromise while preserving emotional resonance and leadership legitimacy.

(4) „*Nebudeme kolenáčky prosiť nikoho v Bruseli.*“

[We will not go begging on our knees to anyone in Brussels.] (TA3, 2 January 2024)

This statement combines **metaphorical language** and **pronoun-based polarization** to reinforce a narrative of national dignity versus foreign subordination. The metaphor „*kolenáčky prosiť*“ (“begging on our knees”) evokes humiliation and subservience, positioning the EU as a domineering force and Slovakia as a proud actor refusing submission. The modal negation „*nebudeme*“ (“we will not”) conveys collective resistance framed as moral duty. Pronoun usage (*my* – “we”, implicit *oni* – “they”) constructs a binary opposition between sovereign Slovaks and distant Eurocrats. From a CDA perspective, the quote legitimizes confrontational diplomacy as an act of patriotic defiance while masking strategic negotiation under emotional performance. The language dramatizes institutional disagreement as an existential struggle for dignity, reinforcing Fico’s populist self-image as protector of national sovereignty.

Next quote is a controversial public statement delivered during his speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Washington DC in February 2025, which has drawn significant criticism for its emotional framing and manipulation of language:

(5) „Rusko malo vážne bezpečnostné dôvody na túto vojnu.“

[Russia had serious security reasons for this war.] (Euractiv, February 2025)

The quote uses careful wording to reinterpret the Ukraine conflict as a defensive reaction rather than an offensive act. By stating that there were “*serious security reasons*,” Fico presents the war as a response to external pressure or perceived threats. This wording softens the perception of military action and suggests that it may have been necessary.

No pronouns are used, which allows the speaker to express understanding of this position without openly supporting it. This ambiguity leaves room for different interpretations and helps the statement appeal to multiple audiences.

From a CDA perspective, this type of language reshapes how international events are understood. Instead of stating who is right or wrong, it encourages listeners to reconsider the causes of the conflict. It shows how political language can shift public perception not through direct claims, but by changing how actions are framed.

Peter Kmec: pragmatic diplomatic moderation

Peter Kmec serves as Slovakia’s Deputy Prime Minister for the Recovery and Resilience Plan and EU Funds, representing the Voice – Social Democracy (Hlas-SD) party. A former diplomat and ambassador to the United States, Kmec brings a technocratic and pro-European orientation to the coalition government led by Robert Fico. His political stance emphasizes institutional stability and strategic EU engagement, often positioning him as a moderating voice within a coalition marked by nationalist and populist rhetoric.

Kmec plays a key role in negotiations over Slovakia’s fiscal policy and EU funding, particularly in the context of internal disputes over appointments and corruption allegations within the financial sector (Boffa, 2025). His diplomatic background and pragmatic communication style contrast with the more confrontational rhetoric of his coalition partners, making him a pivotal figure in maintaining Slovakia’s credibility within European institutions (Boffa, 2025).

(6) „Slovensko by malo aktívnejšie podporovať spoločné európske riešenia.“

[“Slovakia should more actively support common European solutions.”] (Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, Európska konferencia 2025)

Kmec uses the **modal verb** *malo by* (“should”) to express normative obligation rather than necessity, reflecting Kmec’s diplomatic tone. The

phrase *spoločné európske riešenia* (“common European solutions”) employs **metaphorical framing** that signals cooperation and unity. The **pronoun usage** is impersonal, emphasizing institutional responsibility over personal authority. CDA reveals that Kmec’s discourse balances emotional appeal with rational authority, positioning Slovakia as a constructive EU partner while subtly critiquing domestic obstructionism.

(7) „*Rešpekt sa nezískava šírením strachu a nátlaku.*“

[Respect is not earned by spreading fear and pressure.] (TA3, 21 May 2025)

The quote exemplifies Kmec’s rejection of populist tactics through **metaphorical language**. *Šírením strachu a nátlaku* (“spreading fear and pressure”) metaphorically represents manipulative political strategies. The **passive construction** (*sa nezískava*) shifts focus from individual actors to systemic norms, reinforcing institutional ethics. CDA interprets this as a discursive strategy to delegitimize emotional manipulation and promote democratic values. Kmec’s rhetoric appeals to reason and moderation, contrasting sharply with the confrontational style of his coalition partners.

(8) „*Tieto prostriedky nám pomôžu realizovať ďalšie dôležité reformy a investície, ktoré zlepšia život ľudí na Slovensku.*“

[These funds will help us carry out further important reforms and investments that will improve people’s lives in Slovakia.]

(Pravda, 10 July 2025)

Kmec uses the modal verb *pomôžu* (“will help”) to express procedural optimism and institutional reliability. The pronouns *nám* and *ľudí na Slovensku* build solidarity, framing EU funding as a collective benefit. CDA reveals how technocratic language and inclusive framing reinforce legitimacy and emotional appeal without populist dramatization.

(9) „*Naša ambícia je vybudovať silný, sebavedomý štát, ktorý ochráni svojich ľudí.*“

[Our ambition is to build a strong, confident state that protects its people.] (The Business Soirée, 12 September 2023)

This quote combines **emotional appeal** with **institutional metaphor**. The phrase *silný, sebavedomý štát* (“strong, confident state”) metaphorically frames the government as a protective entity. The **pronoun usage** (*naša ambícia, svojich ľudí* – “our ambition”, “its people”) constructs solidarity and shared purpose. CDA reveals how Kmec uses emotionally resonant language to legitimize state-building goals while maintaining a rational and inclusive tone. His discourse positions the state as a guardian, aligning with social democratic values.

Tomáš Taraba: populist environmental narratives

Tomáš Taraba, Slovakia's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Environment, is one of the most prominent far-right figures in the current coalition government. His political rise is closely tied to populist campaigns against EU environmental regulations, particularly surrounding bear attacks in rural Slovakia. Taraba uses emotionally charged and anti-Brussels rhetoric to frame environmental policy as a threat to national safety and sovereignty (Mathiesen & Guillot, 2024a). Since taking office, he has initiated a sweeping purge of environmental institutions, replacing experts with hunters and party loyalists, and promoting legislation that allows emergency bear culling near human settlements (Mathiesen & Guillot, 2024a; 2024b).

His confrontational style extends beyond environmental issues, as seen in his public boycott of the 2024 Paris Olympics closing ceremony, which he condemned as a display of “*deviant decadence*” and “*progressive political theater*” (Nicholson, 2024). Taraba’s rhetoric and actions reflect broader European far-right trends, where cultural and ecological grievances are mobilized to reshape governance and consolidate power.

(10) „*Tieto ideologické návrhy sú dôkazom, že bruselskí byrokrati stratili kontakt s realitou.*“

[These ideological proposals are proof that Brussels bureaucrats have lost touch with reality.] (*The Slovak Spectator*, 8 July 2025)

The quote exemplifies Taraba’s use of **metaphorical language** and **emotional framing** to delegitimize EU climate policy. The phrase *ideologické návrhy* (“ideological proposals”) frames environmental regulation as dogmatic rather than evidence-based, while *stratili kontakt s realitou* (“lost touch with reality”) metaphorically portrays EU officials as disconnected elites. The **repetition** of anti-Brussels rhetoric reinforces a populist narrative of national victimhood. CDA reveals how Taraba constructs opposition through emotionally resonant metaphors, positioning himself as a defender of Slovak industry against foreign technocracy.

(11) „*Nemôžeme žiť v krajinе, kde sa ľudia boja íst do lesa.*“

[We can't live in a country where people are afraid to go into the forest.] (*Deutsche Welle*, 2 April 2025)

This statement uses the **modal verb** *nemôžeme* (“we can't”) to assert existential urgency. The **pronoun usage** (*my, ľudia* – “we”, “people”) constructs collective fear and solidarity, emotionally framing bear attacks as a national crisis. The forest becomes a metaphor for endangered Slovak life, and the quote dramatizes environmental policy as a matter of survival. CDA

highlights how Taraba mobilizes fear to justify controversial bear culling policies, reinforcing his populist stance through emotionally charged appeals to safety and sovereignty.

(12) „Olympiáda sa zmenila na progresívne politické divadlo.“

[The Olympics turned into progressive political theater.]

(Anadolu Agency, 31 July 2024)

Taraba's use of **metaphor**, in this quote, is to frame cultural events as ideological threats. *Progresívne politické divadlo* (“progressive political theater”) metaphorically reduces the Olympics to propaganda, aligning cultural critique with broader anti-liberal sentiment. The repetition of terms like *deviant decadence* and *insult to Christianity* in related posts reinforces moral panic. CDA reveals how Taraba weaponizes cultural grievances to consolidate far-right identity politics, using emotionally loaded metaphors to polarize public discourse.

(13) „Brusel a slovenská opozícia stojí na opačnej strane, chcú predražovať energiu a oslabovať priemysel.“

[Brussels and the Slovak opposition stand on the opposite side – they want to raise energy prices and weaken industry.]

(Aktuality.sk, 7 July 2025)

The quote uses **pronoun contrast** (*Brusel a opozícia* vs. implicit *my*) to construct a binary of betrayal and defense. The **modal verb** *chcú* (“they want”) attributes harmful intent, while the repetition of economic threats (*predražovať energiu, oslabovať priemysel*) amplifies urgency. CDA interprets this as a populist strategy that links environmental regulation to economic decline, emotionally framing policy opposition as patriotic resistance. Taraba positions himself as the protector of Slovak livelihoods against both foreign and domestic enemies.

Summary of discursive patterns in Slovak political rhetoric (2025)

The comparative analysis of Robert Fico, Peter Kmec, and Tomáš Taraba reveals a complex combination of emotional framing and implicit power dynamics in Slovak political discourse. While each politician demonstrates distinct rhetorical tendencies aligned with their ideological positions, several shared strategies emerge across this small spectrum.

Modal verbs are consistently employed to express necessity, obligation, or resistance, serving as a linguistic mechanism for asserting institutional or moral authority. Pronoun usage is also frequent, often building solidarity

through inclusive forms such as “*we*” and “*our*,” or showing opposition through references to external actors like “*Brussels*” or “*they*.” These features contribute to the construction of ideological boundaries and reinforce group identity.

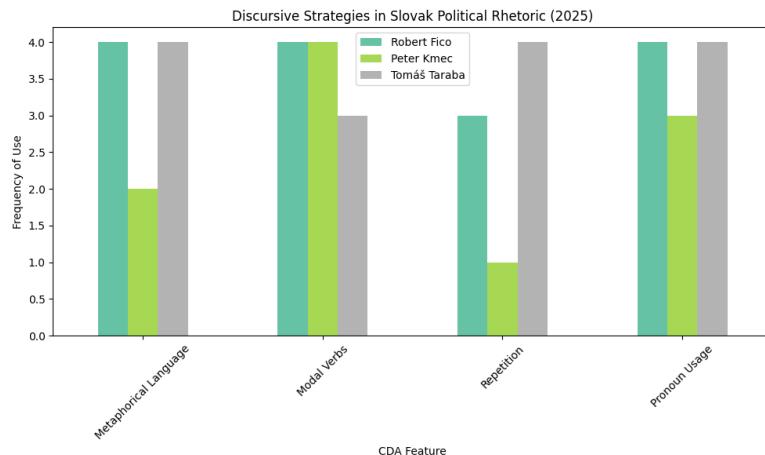
Robert Fico’s discourse is marked by high emotional intensity and strategic confrontation. His frequent use of metaphorical language and pronoun contrast dramatizes institutional conflict and positions him as a defender of national sovereignty. Fico’s rhetoric often polarizes, appealing to moral binaries and exclusionary norms to mobilize support. In contrast, Peter Kmec adopts a technocratic and diplomatic style, characterized by procedural clarity and institutional metaphors. His use of modal verbs reflects normative expectations rather than dominant authority, and his pronoun choices emphasize institutional responsibility over personal power. Kmec’s discourse balances emotional appeal with rational engagement, positioning Slovakia as a constructive EU partner.

Tomáš Taraba’s rhetoric exemplifies populist environmental narratives, combining repetition, metaphor, and emotionally charged language to frame ecological and cultural issues as existential threats. His statements often link environmental regulation to economic decline and national insecurity, constructing a binary of betrayal and defense. Taraba’s use of fear-based appeals and cultural grievance aligns with broader far-right trends in Europe, yet his focus on environmental populism adds a distinctive dimension to Slovak political communication.

Overall, based on our small sample, we can state that Slovak political discourse in 2025 uses emotionally charged language and strategic pronoun choices to build group identity and assert authority. These techniques simplify complex issues and create clear ideological boundaries, making political messages more persuasive and accessible to the general public. As a result, such rhetoric effectively influences citizens by appealing to shared values and emotions.

The following graph illustrates the frequency of metaphorical language, modal verbs, repetition, and pronoun usage across the three politicians. Fico and Taraba show high emotional intensity, while Kmec maintains a more balanced and procedural tone.

Graph 1 Comparative use of CDA features in Slovak political rhetoric (2025)



Source: Compiled and visualized by the author (2025)

Conclusion

Our analysis shows that Slovak political language in 2025 represents a mix of emotional populism and pragmatic moderation. The way political leaders use language is not accidental, it's a deliberate strategy to build authority, appeal to shared emotions, and shape how people understand political reality. Across the three politicians studied, Robert Fico, Peter Kmec, and Tomáš Taraba, language functions as both a persuasive and symbolic tool. Through metaphors, modal verbs, repetition, and pronouns, each politician constructs a distinct style of emotional authority that reflects their ideological position and vision of leadership.

The research identifies several clear tendencies. Fico's discourse is built on emotional confrontation: his metaphors and word choices create strong divisions between "us" and "them," presenting politics as a struggle for national survival. Kmec, in contrast, relies on calm and procedural language that blends emotional reassurance with institutional rationality, positioning himself as a stabilizing voice in an often polarized environment. Taraba's rhetoric draws on fear and resentment, transforming environmental and cultural topics into emotionally charged narratives about sovereignty and iden-

ity. Together, these examples show how emotional framing in Slovak politics shapes public understanding and legitimizes authority, often by simplifying complex issues into moral or national conflicts.

Methodologically, this research demonstrates the value of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) for uncovering how language expresses hidden power relations and emotional control. By looking at how emotions are embedded in grammar, metaphor, and pronoun choice, CDA helps reveal the underlying structures of persuasion in political communication. The findings also point to the emergence of a specific Slovak pattern, a blend of populist emotional appeal and technocratic authority that could serve as a model for comparative studies in Central and Eastern Europe.

Beyond its research contribution, the research also has important practical applications, especially in education. In university contexts, CDA can be a powerful teaching tool in linguistics, communication, political science, or business programs. Analysing real political speeches helps students develop critical literacy, the ability to recognize manipulation, emotional framing, and ideological bias in everyday discourse. These skills are not only vital for understanding politics but also for functioning as informed citizens and ethical professionals.

In business and management education, such analysis can deepen students' understanding of how organizations use language to project trust, leadership, or moral authority. By exploring rhetorical strategies in corporate or public communication, learners become more aware of how words influence decision-making, perception, and power dynamics in professional settings.

Finally, this kind of discourse awareness has a broader democratic value. In a time when emotional and polarized communication dominates media spaces, learning how to "read between the lines" becomes a crucial civic skill. Universities have a unique opportunity to promote this kind of critical engagement by integrating CDA and discourse-based analysis into their teaching practices. Doing so not only enhances students' academic competence but also strengthens their ability to engage responsibly with public and political communication.

Future research could build on this work by including a wider range of political actors or by examining visual and digital forms of rhetoric. A cross-national comparison across Central Europe could also provide deeper insight into how emotion and authority are linguistically constructed in different political cultures. By connecting linguistic analysis with education and civic engagement, this research shows that studying political language is not just an academic exercise, it's a way of understanding how emotion and power continue to shape the public sphere.

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Contact:

Mgr. Ivana Kapráliková, PhD.

Department of English Language and Intercultural Communication

Faculty of Applied Languages

Bratislava University of Economics and Business

Email Address: ivana.kapralikova@euba.sk

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2994-5046>