

Assignment 1:

Content Coding Joe Biden's Inaugural Speech

The Excel file contains all of the text of Joe Biden's inauguration speech, divided into short pieces.

For each piece, you must complete three coding tasks.

TASK 1:

What is the TOPIC of this line?

Choose the label that best fits the primary topic of this piece of text. You can only choose one label. If the topic is unclear, you can look at the surrounding lines of the speech for context; for example, if this part of the speech overall is about Civil Rights, you can select that topic even if this specific line doesn't mention Civil Rights directly.

The available topics are:

Foreign Affairs	Anything related to foreign issues - allegiances, geopolitics, international threats, overseas conflicts, etc.
Economy	All topics related to the economy - economic growth or decline, employment, inflation, taxation, fiscal policy, etc.
COVID-19 / Pandemic	All topics related to COVID-19, including vaccination and health policy, deaths and other impacts, or the progress of the pandemic.
National Unity	Any discussion of divisions within the country - referring to the need to heal such divisions, blaming one party for the divisions, etc.
History	Direct discussion of historical issues. When the speaker is just using a historical reference to support a point about a different topic, use the "American History" option under APPEAL instead.
Civil Rights	Discussions about civil rights include any reference - positive or negative - to women's rights, racial tensions, LGBT+ rights, and the rights of any other minority group.
Environment	Any positive or negative references to environmental policy, global warming / climate change, pollution, or environmental regulations such as emissions caps.
Domestic Security	Any mention of threats to domestic security, including terrorism (international and domestic), violent crime, etc.
Fake News	Discussions of claimed lies and untruths being spread either in the media or by political figures.
Other	Topics which do not fit into the above categories.

TASK 2:

What does this line base its APPEAL on?

Separate from the topic being addressed, what kind of argument does this line use as the basis for its APPEAL to the listener? For example, does the speaker try to appeal to the listener's sense of national values or history, or perhaps to their religious beliefs?

The available APPEALS are:

American Values	Appeals that are based on the idea that American citizens have core shared values. This also encompasses ideas of American Exceptionalism - claims that America and its citizens are different to the rest of the world.
American History	Appeals based on history and tradition, for example referencing sacrifices made by previous generations on behalf of the nation, or arguing that the speaker's views are shared by great historical figures.
Religion	Appeals based on religion and faith - either suggesting that the speaker should be trusted due to their religious faith, or asserting that listeners should agree with the speaker's positions because religious faith demands so.
Community	Appeals based on community and interpersonal connections. Emphasising the strength of bonds within the nation, or within certain community groups; or mourning the loss or weakening of those bonds.
Personal Strengths	Appeals based on personal characteristics of the speaker. This may include the speaker's personal history, stories from their earlier life, or claims about their personality or character.
External Threats	Appeals based on talking about threats - real or perceived - to the nation, to specific communities, or to individuals. These appeals may focus either on provoking fear, or on claims that the speaker is able to effectively defend from this threat, or both.
Other	Appeals or arguments that do not fit into the other categories.

TASK 3:

Is this line PESSIMISTIC or OPTIMISTIC?

Generally speaking, is this line of the speech OPTIMISTIC (about the nation, about the future, etc.), PESSIMISTIC, or simply NEUTRAL?

For example, when discussing COVID-19, the speaker might focus on the recovery from the pandemic and the effectiveness of vaccines (OPTIMISTIC), or they might focus on the number of deaths and the mistakes made in public health policy (PESSIMISTIC).

Complete the categorisation of each line of the speech, and submit the finished Excel file through Moodle.

If you encounter a TOPIC or APPEAL which is not included in the content categories, but which you think should have been included, you can add a comment about it to your assignment submission.

This assignment is due by midnight on MONDAY, MAY 8th.