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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Social Actors in Franklin D. Roosevelt's Fireside Chat on December 9, 1941

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| ABSTRACT
This study examines President Franklin D. Roosevelt's historic fireside chat on December 9, 1941, through a three-step model for social actor analysis that incorporates the transitivity system and the social context of the time. Beyond merely identifying the social actors in the speech, the research investigates the underlying ideologies and the communicator's strategic intentions. The analysis uncovers three central social actors: Americans as a united collective, the U.S. government as a strong and responsible entity, and the Axis powers as aggressors masterminded by Nazi Germany. These representations of social actors illuminate the underlying ideologies that emphasize the government's authority and Nazi Germany's pivotal role in intensifying the conflict. The study further reveals President's intentions to challenge U.S. isolationism and direct public outrage towards Nazi Germany, thereby justifying and legitimizing U.S. entry into World War II. In doing so, this research offers a deeper insight into this time-honoured speech.

| KEYWORDS

Social actor; fireside chat; transitivity; ideology; intention.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

The fireside chats, an epoch-making series of radio broadcasts delivered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) of the United States, unfolded against the tumultuous backdrop of the Great Depression and the World War II (WWII). (Ryfe, 1999). With the intent of elucidating governmental policies to the public and fostering an effective communication channel between the President and common citizens, these conversations helped consolidate FDR's presidential image and the government's trustworthiness amidst national crisis. They can be categorized into two parts: those focused on economics and those on warfare. Among the speeches on warfare, the one on December 9, 1941 was delivered to respond to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbour and prepare Americans to fight against the Axis (an alliance formed by the fascist regimes of Germany, Italy and Japan) (Oddo, 2011). The speech began by illuminating the imminent peril posed by the Axis' expansion subsequent to Japan's attack on America, then underscoring the urgency to curb the proliferation of rumour to alleviate unwarranted fear and anxiety among the citizenry. Having portrayed the dire situation confronting the nation, FDR transitioned to report the ongoing mobilization efforts, exhorting every American to contribute their utmost towards securing victory in the war. Concluding his address, FDR reiterated the paramount importance of vanquishing their adversaries, deeming it an obligation incumbent upon all.

This seminal speech, considered among the most renowned and remarkable entries in FDR's celebrated fireside chat series, has garnered significant scholarly interest, especially in the fields of history and politics. It was not only regarded as the representation of the nation's strong determination in the face of war (Fleming, 2001), but also FDR's strategic move to overcome the domestic pressure of isolationism and justify the future resistance against Nazi Germany (Blower, 2014). Therefore, the speech reflected the major shift of America's diplomatic policy during 1930-1940s.

However, despite its historical and political importance, the speech has rarely been investigated in terms of its linguistic characteristics that contributed to the speech's persuasive power. One notable exception is Oddo's (2011) critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the speech, which sheds light on FDR's use of strategic narratives. By contentiously linking Germany to Japan's actions, FDR construed the Axis powers as a unified and coordinated threat, thereby broadening the scope of public outrage beyond Japan to include all members of the Axis alliance. Oddo's study further highlighted how FDR constructed a binary opposition between 'us' (the United States) and 'them' (the Axis powers), portraying the United States as a righteous defender of peace and justice, while the Axis powers as aggressive and corrupt adversaries. This ideological framing morally justified the declaration of war and encouraged American people to resist the assault of their enemies.

While Oddo's work provided valuable insights into the ideological constructs of the speech, its primary focus remained on how dichotomous narratives served to legitimize FDR's war agenda, simplifying the interactions among other participants within the text. This study, therefore, aims to figure out these complex interplays by using the analytical framework of social actor analysis as developed by Darics and Koller (2019). The framework will be used not only to explore how participants involved in the text are represented, but also to examine how the relationships between participants are implicated by these representations, as well as how these relationships are constructed to infer ideologies and serve the intentions of the communicator (FDR), in the hope that more insights into this speech of great significance can be provided.

Social actors refer to participants involved in the social practices. They are 'represented as doing something or having something done to them in texts' (Darics & Koller, 2019, p.220), whose representations can be divided into two main types: exclusion and inclusion (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.28). Exclusion functions to eliminate or reduce the references to specific social actors, while inclusion includes three pairs of opposites: activation and passivation, personalization and impersonalization, genericization and specification. The first pair of opposites addresses the extent to which social actors are implicated as active agents or passive recipients of 'action'. The second pair of opposites is made based on whether social actors are represented as 'humans': are they endowed with personal identities or not? Personalization can be achieved through varied choices. For example, social actors can be categorized according to their social functions (e.g., professions) through functionalization, or according to their social features (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity) through classification. Conversely, impersonalization dehumanizes social actors through abstraction or objectivation. As for the final pair, genericization can be realized by mass nouns, while specification can specify social actors either as a unique individual by individualization, or as a defined group by collectivization or aggregation (van Leeuwen, 2008). Figure 1 offers a comprehensive visualization of this framework of social actor representation.

In practical application, social actor analysis emerges as a valuable tool in the study of different genres of discourse. Notably, media discourse has been a fertile ground for researchers to explore the representations of social actors, with contributions from scholars such as Marrugo (2013), Hunt and Koteyko (2015), Abioye (2019), and Gong alongside Firdaus (2023). Furthermore, this analytical lens can be combined with corpus-based methods to study forensic discourse, as are in the case of Khan (2017) and Chaemsaithong (2019). However, Darics and Koller (2019) proposed a more comprehensive framework that encapsulates social actor analysis into a three-tiered process: (1) identify the social actors and see how they are represented (e.g., active or passive; more or less agentive; personal or impersonal; relationships between those engaged in communication); (2) infer underlying ideologies; and (3) recognize the communicator's possible intentions (p.222). This three-step model, as illustrated in Figure 2, offers a robust approach to understanding the complexities of social actor representation within discourse.

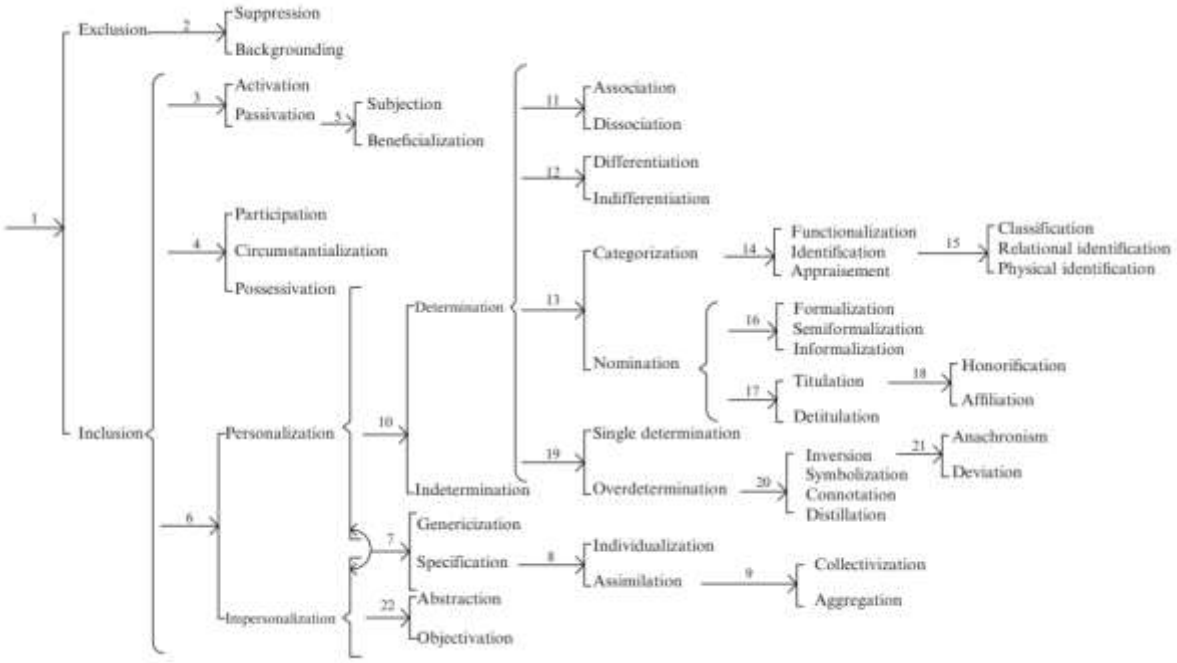

Figure 1. Social Actor Network (van Leeuwen, 2008, p.52)

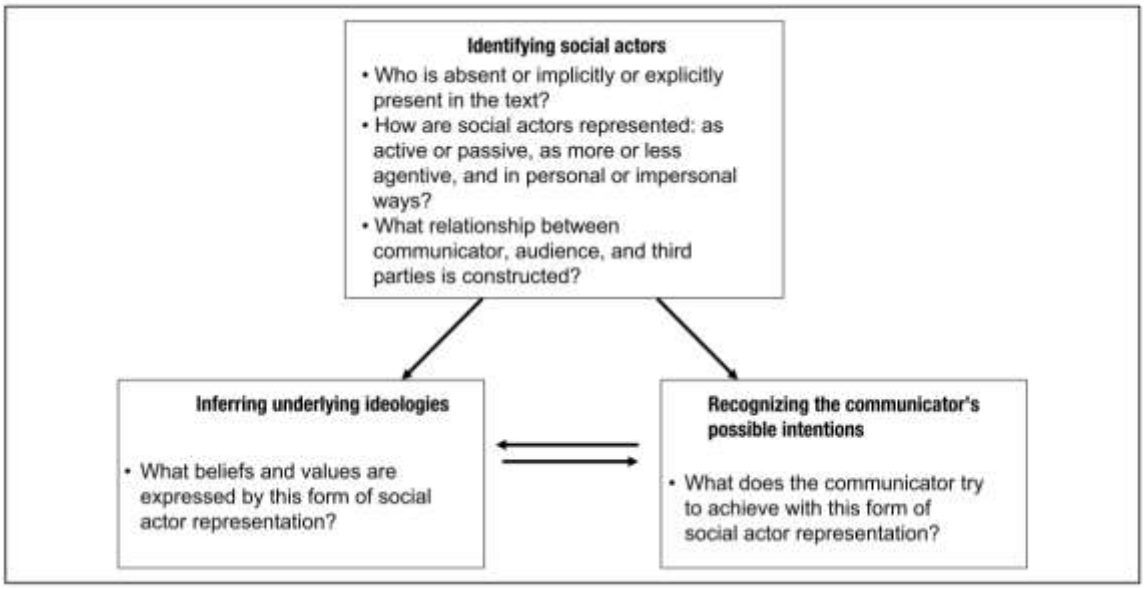

Figure 2. A three-step model for social actor analysis (Darics & Koller, 2019, p.222)

While the framework under consideration is indeed comprehensive and its reliability has been rigorously verified by the two authors, there remains opportunity for its enhancement. Specifically, it can be extended through the inclusion of a more focused examination of transitivity in stage 1, as well as the integration of social context analysis in stage 3.

In terms of transitivity, as Li (2010) suggested, by systematically classifying human experiences into different grammatical categories, transitivity can provide useful insights to see how linguistic choices within texts reflect a communicator's knowledge of the world, especially where the influence of ideologies is concerned. Therefore, it can be integrated into social actor analysis to explore the distribution of participant roles across various social actors, so as to learn more about their representations in the text. This integrated approach has already been harnessed in numerous studies, especially those about biased representations in media (Li, 2010; Machin & Mayr, 2013; Soa, 2013; Liu, 2020; Sunday & Fagunleka, 2023). However, these investigations predominantly concentrated on the manifestation of representations, leaving underlying ideologies and the communicator's possible intentions unexplored.

With regard to social context analysis, incorporating it can provide a more holistic understanding of the communicator's intentions by considering the broader societal factors that may have influenced the speech. More specifically, social context analysis can clarify the intentions by highlighting how the historical events, political climate, international relations and public sentiment may have shaped the language choices and strategies used by the communicator. This is particularly relevant when examining a speech delivered in response to the Pearl Harbour attack.

From the above we can know that there exists an opportunity to delve deeper in the realm of social actor analysis. Therefore, this study adopts Darics and Koller (2019)'s three-step model to investigate different social actors constructed in the speech. To enhance the accuracy and objectivity of the analysis, the model is extended by incorporating the transitivity system in step 1 and social context analysis in step 3. Guided by this framework, the study addresses the following research questions:

(1) How are social actors represented and constructed in the text?
(2) What do these representations suggest about specific ideologies?
(3) What intentions of FDR can be recognized through these representations?

2. Methods

Having proposed the research questions, this section details the methods employed in the study, including data collection, analytical procedures, and the rationale for their selection. The methodological framework, as illustrated in Figure 3, provides a systematic guide to conducting the study.

2.1 Data Collection

The text under investigation is collected from a complete collection of FDR's fireside chats published by BiblioLife in 2008, with 3012 tokens in total covering the whole speech made by FDR on December 9, 1941, and the complete text is attached to the Appendix (see Appendix).

2.2 Social Actor Identification

As soon as the text had been collected and ready for examination, the social actors involved in the text, along with their references, were determined by a careful reading, and the excerpts that involve these social actors were extracted from the text and allocated to separate files, each file corresponding to one social actor. These files were then uploaded to the same project in UAM Corpus Tool separately for automatic transitivity annotation with manual correction, and segments regarding processes and roles related to social actors within the text were identified. The statistics regarding the distribution of participant roles were generated by the software's calculation.

In terms of how social actors are represented in FDR's speech, types of reference, the degree of agency and the relationships between those involved in communication are included to investigate (Darics & Koller, 2019). The types of reference reveal how social actors are referred to by the speaker, reflecting their roles and functions in the text. Degree of agency explores the active or passive roles assigned to these social actors, which is closely related to the transitivity processes they are involved in. The relationships between participants focus on how social actors relate to one another, reflected through language choices, with personal pronouns playing a central role in constructing these dynamics (Darics & Koller, 2019). To analyze these aspects, van Leeuwen's (2008) framework of social actor representations is applied to categorize references, while Fairclough's (2013) grammatical description is used to interpret pronoun usage that elucidate the relationships among those engaged in communication. The agency exhibited by social actors were also uncovered through the distribution of participant roles in transitivity processes.

2.3 Underlying Ideology Inference

Based on the portrayals of social actors, the underlying ideologies implicated by these portrayals were inferred.

2.4 Possible Intention Recognition

Grounded on the analysis of social actor representations and the ideologies as implicated by these representations, the intentions of the communicator (FDR)'s were recognized. To better justify the interpretation of FDR's intentions, the evidence of social contexts was examined, which was gathered from the historical records of that era. This step of justification is a supplement to Darics and Koller (2019)'s original framework.

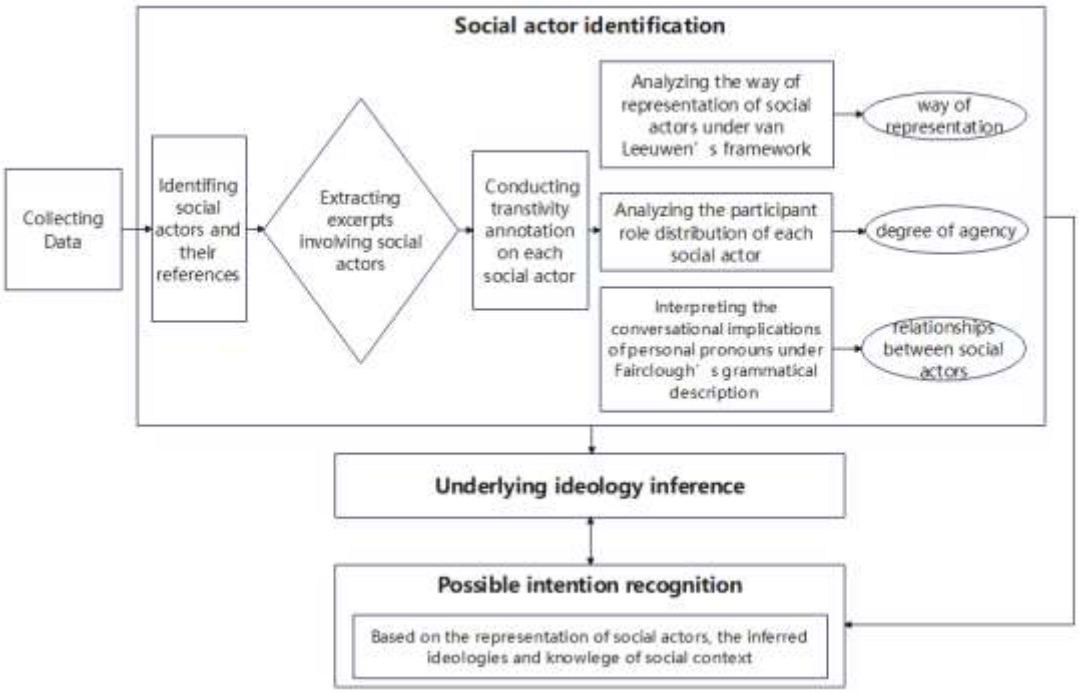

Figure 3. Research Framework

3. Results and Discussion

Adhering to the methodology, the section is divided into three parts. Primarily, the representations of social actors within the text are to be investigated, then the ideologies unveiled by these representations are scrutinized. Lastly, drawing upon the insights gained from the previous two parts, coupled with the evidence of social context, the intentions of the communicator are to be recognized.

3.1 The Representations of Social Actors

This part aims to explore how social actors are represented in the text. Table 1 lists the social actors that are identified in FDR's speech --- the U.S. government, Americans and the Axis, along with their references, and Table 2 displays the distribution of participant roles assumed by each of these identified social actors. Based on the information shown in the two tables, the representations of three social actors are to be analysed.

Table 1. Social Actor References in the text

Social Actors	The U.S. Government N=26	Americans N=98	The Axis N=48
References	-I (20)	-We/Us (53/19)	-Japan (14)
	-me (1)	-You (7)	-Japanese (1)
	-government (5)	-the people of the United States (2)	-Germany (6)
		-the United States (3)	-Italy (3)
		-American People (3)	-Hitler (8)
		-Americans (3)	-Mussolini (2)
		-citizens (1)	-Nazis (2)
		-man, woman and child (1)	-gangsters (1)
		-American soldiers and sailors (1)	-the Axis Powers (3)
		-industrialist (1)	-the Axis nations (1)
		-wage earner (1)	-enemy (7)
		-shop keeper (1)	
		-trainman (1)	
		-doctor (1)	

Note: N represents total occurrences of each social actor, and the numbers in brackets are the occurrences of each social actor reference.

Table 2. The Distribution of Participant Roles Among Social Actors in the text

	The U.S. Government	Americans	The Axis
Actor	20.8%	32.7%	56.3%
Sayer	29.2%	0.0%	4.2%
Senser	20.8%	23.8%	6.3%
Carrier	20.8%	13.9%	4.2%
Possessor	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%
Goal	4.2%	12.9%	16.7%
Receiver	0.0%	1.0%	2.1%
Beneficiary	0.0%	10.9%	6.3%
Initiator	4.2%	1.0%	0.0%
Phenomenon	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%

3.1.1 Americans: A Collective Shouldering a Common Cause

Upon examination of Table 1, it becomes evident that Americans is the most frequently encountered social actor within the text, appearing a total of 98 times. As participants, they are mainly the actors in material processes, and the sensers in mental processes. Therefore, they are in general represented as active participants regarding the degree of their agency. Nevertheless, the degree is contextually contingent, as exemplified in instances (1) and (2), where their level of activity varies accordingly.

> (1) … [*Actor*]we are going to [*Process: material*] win [*Goal*] the war… (Roosevelt, 1941, p.94)
> (2) [*Senser*]We may [*Process: mental*] acknowledge that [*Phenomenon*] our enemies have performed a brilliant feat of deception… (p.93)

In both cases, the pronoun 'we' assumes a role in the active position. However, its agency is discernibly fortified within the material process, exemplified by the verb 'win', where it portrays a sense of resilience and unity. Conversely, in the mental process framed by 'acknowledge', the semantic agency diminishes, conveying a more introspective or receptive stance. Americans may therefore be represented as a robust and united group, yet confronted with substantial pressures and challenges.

Regarding ways of referencing, they offer nuanced perspectives that enrich our understanding of representations. Americans are most often referred to through collectivization, especially with plural pronouns 'we', 'us' and 'you', with a cumulative frequency of 79 occurrences. Drawing upon Fairclough's (2013) proposition, the employment of pronouns in English serves as a linguistic tool to signify the intricate relationships among communicative parties. In this context, 'we' and 'us' function inclusively, embracing both the speaker, namely FDR, and the audience, the American citizens who are attentive to his discourse. This inclusive usage is exemplified in the following illustrations:

> (3) **We** are now in this war. (p.89)
> (4) …that is what these eighteen months have given **us.** (p.94)

In case (3) and (4), the utilization of the inclusive pronouns 'we' and 'us' serves to unite the president and common citizens within a typical, shared identity (Brewer & Gardner, 1996) as Americans, which fosters a heightened sense of collectivity and unity among individuals.

As for the plural 'you', though fostering a sense of detachment between the speaker and the audience, it 'implies a relationship of solidarity' (Fairclough, 2013, p.107) among listeners:

(5) **You** have a most grave responsibility to the nation… (p.91)
(6) …**you** can be reasonably sure from now on that… (p.90)

In these two cases, despite the use of the plural 'you' segregating FDR from other Americans, it denotes Americans apart from FDR as a cohesive entity, mirroring the collective connotations conveyed by 'we' and 'us', thereby maintaining congruence in the construction of united Americans.

Another way of reference is classification. By using 'people of the United States', 'Americans', 'citizen', 'the United States' and 'man, woman, and child', Americans are classified according to their ethnicity, provenance, age and gender. It should be noted that, despite constituting three distinct categories, 'man', 'woman', and 'child' encapsulate the entirety of American society, as indicated in case (7):

(7) Every single **man, woman and child** is a partner in the most tremendous undertaking of our American history. (p.89)

In addition, the relationship forged through classification is similar to that expressed by 'we' or 'us' in way of collectivization, underscoring a shared national identity and the imperative of carrying on the common cause, as is suggested by the following case:

(8) We **Americans** are not destroyers—we are builders. (p.94)

Such a similarity is particularly evident in case (8) where the juxtaposition of 'we' and 'Americans' constructs a noun phrase, effectively manifesting a collective identity of Americans, as well as the need for a commitment to a shared cause.

Functionalization serves as another way of referencing. More specifically, Americans are functionalized by their professions: 'American soldiers and sailors', 'industrialist', 'wage earner', 'farmer', 'shop keeper', 'trainman' and 'doctor', as this case shows:

(9) It is not a sacrifice for **the industrialist or the wage earner, the farmer or the shopkeeper, the trainman or the doctor**… (p.92)

Different from the use of collectivization and classification, which represents American people as a unity, functionalization by professions separates Americans and represents them as belonging to different sections. But the purpose of functionalization, as can be specified in case (9), remains focused on emphasizing sacrifice and commitment, and the imperative for Americans to unite under a shared cause. Therefore, despite this division by functionalization, Americans are still represented as a united people in their pursuit of a common goal.

3.1.2 A Strong and Responsible Government Centered on People

In terms of references, the U.S. government is only represented through individualization and functionalization, manifested by the pronouns 'I' 'me' and 'government' respectively. The reason why 'I' or 'me' is the individualization of the U.S. government is that the pronouns stand for FDR, who is head of the government of the United States. When engaging with the public through radio broadcasts, his words transcend the bounds of personal discourse; they function as the voice and embodiment of the U.S. government. Therefore, 'I' or 'me' should be interpreted as references to the government, rather than an independent social actor. With regard to functionalization, it is crucial to observe that the term 'government' often collocates with possessive pronouns:

(10) **Our government** will not be caught in this obvious trap. (p.90)
(11) If you feel that **your government** is not disclosing enough of the truth, you have every right to say so. (p.90)
(12) **Your government** has decided on two broad policies. (p.91)

In case (10), the employment of 'our' fosters a profound sense of ownership and identification among the people, conveying that the government is not just an institution apart but rather a shared entity belonging to 'us' all – the president and the citizens alike. This reinforces the bond between the government and the people., fostering people's attachment to the government. Furthermore, FDR sent a signal to the public that the government is 'our' government, and we will face challenges and successfully avoid traps together. This way of expression strengthens the public's trust and support for the government, and indicates government's powerfulness and its responsibility for Americans.

It's interesting to note that the pronoun of 'your' in case (11) and (12) is also employed to establish the intimate relationship between the government and Americans. The adoption of 'your' here represent the government as something that belongs to Americans, which echoes the famous saying uttered by Lincoln that the U.S. government is of the people, by the people, for the people, signifying a democratic relationship between these two social actors, with the government being responsible for the interests of Americans.

In terms of the degree of its agency, the U.S. government is represented as a more active social actor compared to Americans, where its active roles constitute a substantial 95.8% of its overall participation roles (29.2% as sayer, 20.8% each for actor, senser and carrier, and 4.2% as initiator). Conversely, Americans' active roles are limited to 70.4%, distributed among the roles as actor (32.7%), carrier (23.8%), and senser (13.9%). It is crucial to highlight that the U.S. government assumes a more vocal role within societal discourse, dominating as sayers in verbal processes at a frequency of 29.2%, whereas Americans are notably absent. Therefore, the U.S. government is put in a position of authority, where it wields comprehensive control over the narrative that is conveyed. To be more specific, the 'voices' of the U.S. government are manifested by FDR himself:

> (13) [*Sayer*]**I** can [*Process: verbal*] say [*Circumstance*] with utmost confidence that [*Projection*] no Americans…need feel anything but pride in our patience and in our efforts… (p.89)
> (14) …[*Sayer*] **I** can [*Process: verbal*] tell [*Receiver*] you [*Circumstance*] frankly that [*Projection*] until further surveys are made, I have not sufficient information to state the exact damage… (p.90)

In examining these two cases, it becomes evident that the verbal process embodies a high level of agency emanating directly from FDR, as exemplified by the employment of the modal verb 'can', the prepositional phrase 'with utmost confidence' and the adverb 'frankly'. These linguistic elements serve to modify the act of speaking, not only showing FDR's confidence, but also revealing his right of speech. Consequently, a strong and robust image of the government which FDR represents is vividly conveyed.

3.1.3 The Axis: An Invasive Aggressor Masterminded by Nazis

As illustrated in Table 2, the Axis mostly manifests as actors in material processes, accounting for a substantial 56.3% of occurrences. This signifies that the Axis is represented as an active social actor, assuming accountability for the actions it undertakes, as exemplified by cases (15) and (16):

> (15) …[*Actor*] the Axis Powers [*Process: material*] attacked [*Goal*] Yugoslavia and Greece… (p.89)
> (16) [*Circumstance*]In 1941, also, [*Actor*] Hitler [*Process: material*] invaded [*Goal*] Russia… (p.89)

In these two cases, the verbs 'attack' and 'invade' serve to endow the Axis with a high degree of agency in the material processes. It is therefore represented as an aggressive invader who poses security risks to various nations.

Labelled as an 'invader', some representations to the Axis are frequently imbued with negative connotations. For instance, 'gangsters', a use of functionalization, is deployed metaphorically to associate the Axis with the nefarious image of street gangs:

> (17) Powerful and resourceful **gangsters** have banded together to make war upon the whole human race. (p.88)

This usage underscores FDR's disdain for the Axis's depravity and accentuates their representation as a menacing social actor. Additionally, another instance conveys negative implication through classification:

> (18) …the release of the information… will not prove valuable to the **enemy** directly or indirectly. (p.90)

Being classified as 'enemy', the Axis is not merely represented as a negative social actor but also as an antagonistic force that directly threatens America, thereby justifying countermeasures against them.

Moreover, the Axis constitutes an institution comprising distinct members. Consequently, an alternative approach to referring to the Axis involves nomination, where 'Japan', 'Germany' and 'Italy' serve as representations for different forces within it. Notably, among these representations, Germany is referred to 10 times through personalization, with 'Hitler' at 8 occurrences and 'Nazis' at 2 occurrences. This utilization of metonymy, where Germany is personalized through its leader and governing party, effectively attributes the actions of a political entity to an individual or a faction.

> (19) In 1940, **Hitler** invaded Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg—without warning. (p. 89)
> (20) This is an old trick of propaganda which has been used innumerable times by the **Nazis**. (p.90)

The representation of Germany is thus narrowed down to Hitler and Nazis, who are the primary perpetrators of aggression. It is also noteworthy that, despite the speech serve a response to Japan's aggression, Nazi Germany emerges as a more frequent occurrences, with combined mentions of 'Germany', 'Hitler' and 'Nazis' totaling16 occurrences, exceeding the 15 occurrences of 'Japan' and 'Japanese'. This representation highlights the Nazis of Germany as the dominant and frequently sole antagonist within the Axis alliance.

3.2 Ideologies Underlying Social Actors

Ideology can be defined as 'a (metaphorical) network of beliefs that gives rise to expectations, norms and values about events, ideas and people' (Koller, 2014, p.239-240). In the context of the present study, ideology is examined in light of its relevance with social identities (Darics & Koller, 2019). Drawing upon the insights garnered from the previous part, the ideologies informed by social actors can be generalized as two beliefs, which are to be elaborated upon in the ensuing parts.

3.2.1 The Government as an Authority for People

As previously elucidated, the government is represented as a strong entity, charged with the responsibility of safeguarding and serving its people. However, implicit within the representation of Americans lies a belief that the government serve as the ultimate authority for its people.

When Americans are represented as the inclusive 'we', though a sense of unity is foregrounded for the sake of collective welfare (Brewer & Gardner, 1996), the leadership of the U.S. government is still highlighted since 'we' is used by FDR, the head of government. In other words, what Americans should do as a collective self is guided by the directives of the U.S. government. To illustrate, consider the following instances:

(21) …**we** are now fighting to maintain our right to live among our world neighbors in freedom… (p.89)
(22) …Yes, **we** shall have to give up many things entirely. (p.93)

In the two cases, the inclusive 'we' embodies an appeal to altruism, where individual interests are tempered to achieve a communal benefit, thereby preparing Americans to confront a common challenge (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Therefore, Americans' actions are guided by FDR, which indicates they are in a place where individual decision is curtailed. More specifically, in case (21), Americans are portrayed as actively engaged in warfare, whereas in case (22), they are exhorted to sacrifice their individual interests. This governmental authority is further underscored when Americans are represented collectively as 'you', emphasizing their unity under its guidance:

(23) …**you** have no right in the ethics of patriotism to deal out unconfirmed reports… (p.91)

Case (23) exemplifies the speech act of giving an order (Fairclough, 2013). Specifically, the political alignment of Americans with the U.S. government is taken for granted (Breeze, 2015, p.42) and thereby presupposing their compliance with the directives issued by FDR. This underscores an unequal relationship between Americans and their government, where the U.S. government serves as the authority, while Americans are positioned as those who have to adhere to its guidance.

3.2.2 Nazis as the Source of Conflict

As van Dijk (2000) suggests, identity is inherently ideological as it can be personally and socially constructed. The construction of the Axis' identity in the text, as characterized by Nazis' leadership, may therefore embodies an ideological assumption, that is, the U.S. government views the Nazis as the primary catalyst for the tensions arising between America and Japan. This assumption can emerge from the following statement:

(24) … for weeks Germany has been telling Japan that if Japan did not attack the United States, Japan would not share in dividing the spoils with Germany when peace came. She was promised by Germany that if she came in she would receive the complete and perpetual control of the whole of the Pacific area… (p.93)

In this case, FDR highlights the pivotal role played by Nazi Germany in precipitating Japan's attack. While Japan bears direct accountability for initiating the assault, it is not the root cause of the conflict. Rather, Nazi Germany, as the mastermind of the Axis alliance, orchestrates the attack against the United States. In another excerpt of the speech, the Nazi influence on the war is conveyed implicitly, yet its effectiveness in conveying its involvement remains undiminished:

(25) For instance, today the Japanese are claiming that as a result of their one action against Hawaii they have gained naval supremacy in the Pacific. This is an old trick of propaganda which has been used innumerable times by the Nazis. (p.90)

In case (25), the direct description of the Japan-Nazi Germany relationship is absent, marking a difference from case (24). Nevertheless, Japan's assertion of naval dominance in the Pacific Ocean is characterized as 'an old trick of propaganda' that is frequently employed by the Nazis. Consequently, Japan's actions against the United States are considered as incited by the Nazis, suggesting that the Nazis are the primary catalyst for the attack. Irrespective of the veracity of this assumption, the representation of the Axis in the text appears to convey, from the American government's standpoint, that the Nazis are the source of the conflict.

3.3 Intentions of Social Actor Construction

The possible intentions of a communicator can be recognized through their linguistic choices according to Darics and Koller (2019, p.231). Moreover, as demonstrated by van Dijk (2000, p.218), intentions are inherently ideological, suggesting that they can also be inferred from the ideologies embedded within the text. Furthermore, beyond linguistic choices and ideologies, relevant social context plays a pivotal role as well, securing the clarity and accuracy of intention recognition. Grounded on previous research on social actor representations and ideologies, combined with evidence from the social context, this part delves into FDR's intentions of social actor construction, examining why he chose to represent them in a particular manner.

3.2.1 Challenging American Isolationism

In the context of the United States, isolationism can be characterized as a reluctance 'to enter into formal alliances with European powers' (Blower, 2014, p.345), essentially embodying a desire to abstain from European conflicts. This diplomatic stance, once dominated American foreign policy, notably gaining prominence during the 1930s, a period when the Great Depression diminished the nation's willingness for external engagements. Coupled with the intensifying turmoil in Europe, these two crises 'compromised the American version of internationalism of the 1920s and drove the United States into the shell of isolationism' (Tyrrell, as cited in Blower, 2014, p.347). Even as World War II erupted, the prevailing mood of isolationism lingered, inhibiting the United States from direct involvement in international strife. Nevertheless, FDR, cognizant of the Nazi Germany's threat, had resolved to contain this trend, culminating in his decision to lend military support to Britain on August 9, 1941 (Fleming, 2001). The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor subsequently finally provided him with the pivotal moment to formally bring the country into the war against the Axis powers (Oddo, 2011). Consequently, in his speech delivered on December 9, 1941, FDR represents the government as a strong and authoritative entity, so as to challenge the entrenched isolationism in America. It is further underscored in case (26), wherein FDR vouched for the government's capability to triumph in the war:

> (26) I do not think any American has any doubt of our ability to administer proper punishment to the perpetrators of these crimes. (p.93)

By presenting a government that is both strong and authoritative to the public, FDR may intend to alleviate Americans' apprehensions, and ultimately dismantle the entrenched mindset of isolationism that had long pervaded the nation.

3.3.2 Inciting Public Indignation towards Nazi Germany

Beyond challenging American isolationism, a more specific intention can be recognized in the ideological assumption (Nazis as the source of conflict) inferred by the Axis' social identity, which is to channel public ire towards Nazi Germany. While FDR asserted that Nazi Germany orchestrated Japan's assault on the United States, empirical facts contradict this narrative. In reality, there exists no credible evidence suggesting that Nazi Germany instigated Japan to strike the U.S., even Hitler himself expressing surprise at Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor (Hill, 2003, p. 46). Consequently, the accusation implicating Nazi Germany's culpability for Japan's aggression stands unsubstantiated.

However, by establishing a link between Nazi Germany and Japan's attack, FDR successfully achieved his intention to direct public indignation towards Nazi Germany, which was reflected in the national polls conducted on 10 December, revealing an overwhelming 90% support among Americans for declaring war against both Germany and Japan (Hill, 2013, p.214).

Moreover, pressured by FDR's speech on 9 December, Hitler officially declared war on America two days later (Fleming, 2001, p.34), thereby propelling America into direct confrontation and realizing FDR's intention to dismantle American isolationism.

4. Conclusion

Deploying social actor analysis, the study finds that three social actors are constructed in FDR's fireside chat on December 9, 1941, specifically, Americans as a collective shouldering a common cause, the U.S. government as a strong and responsible government centered on people, and the Axis as an invasive aggressor masterminded by Nazis. Through these representations, the belief of the government as an authority is highlighted, and Nazis are framed as the source of conflict. Based on these findings, and assisted with evidence from social context, FDR's intentions of constructing social actor representations are recognized, which involve two facets: the first is to challenge and break American isolationism, thereby fostering domestic

support for intervention in global conflicts, and the second is to channel public outrage towards Nazi Germany, thus legitimizing the declaration of war against Hitler.

By integrating the analysis of social context, the study not only extends the reach of social actor analysis but also enhances its comprehensiveness. Furthermore, by focusing on this seminal and historically significant speech, the study can also provide some useful insights into the relevant historical events. However, the current study still leaves room for further discussion, particularly regarding the roles diverse transitivity sub-types may play in social actor examination, as our analysis primarily focused on the dominant participant roles. As for the future studies, researchers can delve into how alternative discursive facets, transcending transitivity, can contribute to the construction of social actor representations, thereby enriching the methodology of this field of study.

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