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**Analysis of President Trump's Character Color Based on  
Interpersonal Function Theory and Corpus Driven Methods**

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**Abstract**

*Halliday points out: The interpersonal function of language plays an important role in people's daily interactions. People use their interpersonal functions to express their opinions, attitudes, identities, roles and intentions to establish and maintain specific ones. In this paper, by collecting Trump's speeches, interviews and tweets, the author built a Trump's corpus of more than 110,000 words and combined with the theory of interpersonal function to try to analyze the colour of Trump's characters. The analysis shows that Trump's use of medium and low modal words is significantly higher than that of high modal words, indicating that Trump's behaviours are very strong, arrogant, and does not follow the rules, but Trump still knows how to use the modal words and low modal words take care of the feelings of the people and grasp the hearts of the people. Therefore, the author believes that Trump is a very powerful and flexible president.*

**Keywords:** *Interpersonal Function Theory, Corpus Driven, Trump Character Color*

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## 1. Introduction

As a systemic functional linguist, Halliday divides the pure function of language into conceptual, interpersonal and textual functions. Among them, interpersonal function refers to the establishment and maintenance of interpersonal relationships in the language, and express his attitudes and inferences to others, trying to influence the attitudes and behaviours of others. System linguists emphasize the communicative function of language and see language as a tool for social communication. With the continuous development of China's system function theory in recent years, the theory of interpersonal function has attracted the attention of scholars.

US President Trump appears to be a "crazy man" in the eyes of many people. After he became president, he remained as unscrupulous as ever, without any intention to change or converge. Rather than being a president, it is better to say that he is still a real star. He uses Twitter, and his mouth is unobtrusive. He is keen to give people a nickname and humiliate others, and dismisses all reports that are not good for him as "fake media". Obviously, Trump is still in the "in the wild" state, busying in defending and fighting, not building and uniting. Internally, he often unrelentingly disclosed the number of slogans and confidants, exposing each other's differences to the front of the people; for example, he criticizes the White House chief of staff Kelly's speech on the Mexican border wall is nonsense, insisting that he was in charge. Even the members of the government team have been intolerant of Trump's ignorance and arrogance, and Tillerson and Kelly have almost publicly accused Trump of being an idiot. This is evident from the scattered sand of the White House control team. But despite this, Trump is still able to control power. Both the Democrats and the Republican Party have not found an effective way to restrict him. Those supporters who push him into the White House are still alive. This is the biggest mystery that Trump brings to American politics. Is Trump the "maniac" that everyone thinks? What is the colour of Trump's characters? This article collects Trump's nearly 110,000 words of remarks, establishes a Trump speech corpus, and explores Trump's character colour with Halliday's interpersonal meta-function theory.

## 2. Interpersonal meta-function of language

The interpersonal meta-function of language is one of the three major functions of language proposed by Halliday. Halliday proposes that the three major functions of the language are: concept meta-function, interpersonal meta-function, and discourse meta-function. Conceptual meta-function refers to the reaction of objects in the real world, which is realized by the transit system. Interpersonal meta-function refers to the potential meaning of participants, which consists of mood and modality. The discourse meta-function means that the language itself can be organized into discourses, which consist of the theme and coherence. It can be seen that in addition to the functions of expressing the speaker's personal experience and inner activity, the language also has the functions of expressing the speaker's identity, status, attitude, motivation and his inference, judgment and evaluation of other things.

In this paper, the corpus is mainly used to explore the functions of Trump's speech, so as to analyze the colour of the characters. The modality is the choice of the various degrees between the two poles. The choice of polarity is not affirmative or negative, and the choice of modality is diverse, such as "usual", "frequent" and so on. Halliday divides modality into two types, one is the modality in the proposition, including the probability and the usuality, expressed by "might, may, usually, always", etc.; the other is the proposed modality, including obligation and inclination, can be expressed by the modal auxiliary verbs "will, would, shall, should", etc. The modal words have three levels: high, medium and low.

## 3. Research Methods

### 3.1 Research questions

What kind of character does the US President Trump have?

### 3.2 Research objects

US President Trump’s speeches, interviews, and comments on Twitter

### 3.3 Research methods

(1) Corpus-driven method

The author collected a total of more than 110,000 words from President Trump's speeches, interviews, and tweets, formed a raw text, and tagged the corpus text, and then used AntCont software for corpus analysis, trying to analyze the colour of Trump's characters.

(2) Literature method

This paper collects relevant works of corpus analysis and human and functional theory at home and abroad through the literature method. The author tries to understand and grasp the current status of relevant research on corpus analysis and human and functional theory, form a preliminary understanding of research issues, and laying the foundation for further research.

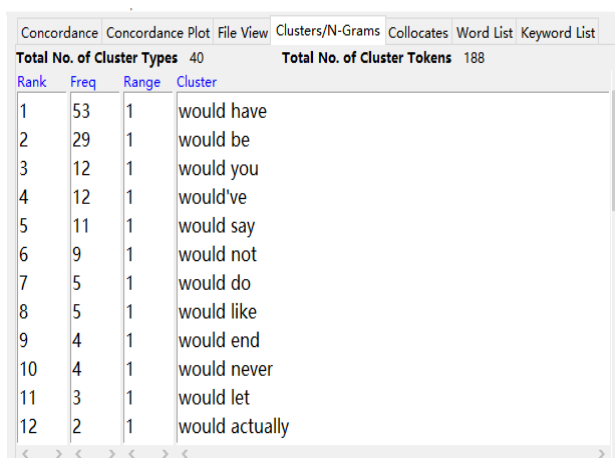
## 4. Character colour analysis based on Trump corpus-driven

Halliday believes that modality is an area of uncertainty between affirmation and negation. Modality can be thought of liking the speaker’s perception of his state of will, emotions, and attitudes, revealing the speaker's uncertainty about knowing things. The speaker can express his attitude and evaluation through different levels of possibilities. Use the modal verbs "will, would, shall, should", etc. to express the willingness and inclination in the proposal. The modal words have three levels of high, medium and low as shown in the following table:

**Table 4-1: Level of modal words**

High	Must, ought to , need, has to, is to
Medium	Will , would, shall, should
Low	May,might, can could

As shown in the figure below, Figure 4-1 “would” word frequency, Figure 4-2 “will” word frequency, the author passed the AntConc software performs word frequency statistics for high, medium, and low modal words for more than 110,000 words, including Trump corpus for Trump speeches, interviews, and tweets.



**Figure 4-1: “would” word frequency**

Rank	Freq	Range	Cluster
1	60	1	will be
2	28	1	will never
3	27	1	will make
4	21	1	will say
5	13	1	will always
6	13	1	will not
7	11	1	will do
8	11	1	will get
9	10	1	will tell
10	8	1	will bring
11	8	1	will take
12	7	1	will have

**Figure 4-2: “will” word frequency**

**Table 4-2: High modal word frequency**

Category	Frequency	Total
must	39	133
ought to	0	
is to	0	
need	92	
has to	2	

As can be seen from Table 4-2, in the collected corpus, Trump used a total of 133 high-speed words in speech, and "need" has a frequency of up to 92 times, "ought to" and "The frequency of is to" is the lowest, 0 times. The author thinks that the reason why words "ought to" and "is to" are not used by Trump is that the tone is too heavy and there is a sense of mandatory order, which will make the people feel uncomfortable.

**Table 4-3: modal word frequency**

Category	Frequency	Total
will	403	653
would	188	
shall	0	
should	62	

As can be seen from Table 4-3, in the collected corpus, Trump used the total number of modal words in the speech to be 653 times, the frequency of “will” was 403 times, and the frequency of "shall" was the lowest, for 0 times. The author believes that “will” means a general prediction of what will happen in the future, or a commitment to an upcoming event based on the speaker's predictions, intentions, and beliefs. Trump's use of the word “will” is intended to give the American people a blueprint for the future and hope for the people.

**Table 4-4: Low modal word frequency**

Category	Frequency	Total
may	17	444
might	7	
can	323	
could	97	

As can be seen from Table 4-4, in the collected corpus, Trump used a total of 133 low-speech words in the speech, “can” has a maximum frequency of 323, and “might” has the lowest frequency, for 0 times. The author believes that “can” appears most frequently because “can” mainly expresses an ability or an objective possibility. Trump wants to use “can” more and more to make the American people realize the possibility of Trump’s idea of "making the United States strong again" in a subtle way.

**Table 4-5: Frequency comparison of high, medium and low modal words**

Category	Frequency
High modality	133
Middle modality	653
Low modality	444

From Table 4-5, we can see that the frequency of high, medium and low modal words is 133, 653 and 444 respectively. From high modal words to low modal words, the degree of toughness is decreasing; the degree of euphemism in tone is increasing. Therefore, from the perspective of interpersonal function, Trump is not as crazy and arrogant as the outside world rumors. In other words, Trump’s appearance is crazy and arrogant, but he actually knows how to use modal words and low modality words to grasp the hearts of the people.

## 5. Conclusion

This article collects Trump’s speeches, interviews, and tweets, builds a more than 110,000-word Trump corpus with AntConc software, conducts a corpus-driven research through the Trump corpus, and attempts to use Trump in conjunction with interpersonal functional theory. The character color is analyzed. The analysis shows that Trump’s use of medium and low modal words is significantly higher than that of high modal words, indicating that Trump knows how to care for the people. Therefore, the author believes that Trump is a very powerful and flexible president. His hard side was that he was very strong and arrogant when he was in front of people, especially his opponents. He did not follow the rules and let the people see a powerful and powerful president, so that give the people who gradually became desperate because of the economic recession confidence. On the soft side, Trump knows how to use the modal words such as modal words and low modal words to take care of people's feelings and grasp the hearts of the people.

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