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The discourse prosody of 'deeply'
in G.W. Bush's Presidential speeches

L'avverbio *deeply* enfatizza l'espressione di opinioni su entità o proposizioni in discussione. Il suo uso può quindi segnalare un tentativo di persuasione in atto mediante il coinvolgimento degli ascoltatori nella costruzione del discorso dal punto di vista del produttore del testo. Questo fenomeno è maggiormente riscontrabile nell'ambito dei discorsi politici, in cui la capacità dell'oratore di creare consenso sulle sue posizioni svolge un ruolo fondamentale. Attraverso lo studio delle più frequenti associazioni contestuali di *deeply* sul piano lessico-grammaticale, semantico e testuale nei discorsi di G. W. Bush (2001-2002) l'articolo dimostra come questo avverbio contribuisca alla realizzazione di unità semantiche caratterizzate da precise funzioni pragmatiche con intento persuasivo.

1. *Introduction*

Adverbs of degree participate in expressions of speakers' opinions about what they are referring to. They do so by emphasising speakers' assessments of propositions or entities (e.g. Biber *et al.* 1999: 554). Their role as markers of speaker stance may thus be exploited to study how they are repeatedly used in evaluation so as to reveal their typical associations with their co-texts and their relevant pragmatic functions. In this respect discourse prosody (e.g. Sinclair 1996, 1998; Stubbs 2001; Tognini-Bonelli 2001) is an important conceptual tool as it enables the identification of extended units of meaning, i.e. semantic schemata, with precise purposes in texts. Therefore, the identification of discourse prosodies centred around specific adverbs of degree may highlight how they are characteristically employed to communicate speaker attitude and involve hearers in the creation of discourse from their particular point of view. Since this may imply a persuasive role of these evaluative units, political speeches can be considered a critical area for their usage. Indeed, persuasion of the audience has traditionally

been regarded as the main communicative purpose of political speeches.

The question which this paper would like to address is whether the behaviour of adverbs of degree in evaluative units can be described in a systematic way and attributed a function in persuasion. This question will be tackled in the present paper by investigating the discourse prosodies of *deeply* in a corpus of G. W. Bush's Presidential speeches (2001-2002). The choice of *deeply* is justified by its considerable frequency (cf. § 5) among the various adverbs of degree in the current U.S. President's speeches and the investigation of its uses may therefore yield interesting results that can shed light on the pragmatic functions of this category of adverbs in political discourse in general.

The paper is organised as follows: Section 2 discusses the concept of discourse prosody and its relevance for the present study; in Section 3 adverbs of degree are placed within the wider framework of linguistic markers of speaker stance; Section 4 places this study within the theoretical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis and highlights the basic premises informing this approach; Section 5 describes the methodology adopted for the investigation; in Section 6 the analysis of *deeply* in its co-texts is carried out both in Bush's speeches and in the American subcorpora of the Bank of English;[1] finally, Section 7 draws conclusions and implications.

2. *Discourse prosody*

The concept of discourse prosody is a fundamental contribution to the study of pragmatic functions of words as part of their recurrent associations with their co-text in extended units of meaning (e.g. Sinclair 1996, 1998). It was first formulated by Sinclair (1991: 74) as 'semantic prosody', a phenomenon that accounts for typical semantic associations of words but can also reveal speakers' attitudes about what they are saying. In his analysis of the phrasal verb SET IN[2] Sinclair (1991: 74) shows how this is typically accompanied by subjects referring to un-

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[1] I am grateful for permission to make use of the Bank of English for this study.
[2] Following the conventions of linguistics, lemmas are presented in capital letters, word forms in italics.

pleasant states of affairs. What the analysis demonstrates is that the idiom principle (Sinclair 1991: 110) operates at the level of the syntagm by establishing specific lexico-grammatical and semantic constraints around particular words. Semantic prosody can thus be seen as the positive or negative 'aura' that a word carries with it, in addition to its conceptual meaning, by virtue of its frequent collocations with words characterised by favourable or unfavourable evaluations. The characteristic connotation of SET IN is shown to be part of the linguistic conventions of the English language and the phrasal verb may therefore carry with it its typical 'aura' even in those cases where it is not explicitly accompanied by a negatively evaluated word. Louw (1993) further demonstrates how semantic prosodies can be consciously exploited by writers for ironic effects or can reveal a speaker's attitude. In the conclusion to his study, he also points out their great value for the persuasion industry (1993: 173). His claim is followed by Partington (1998: 72-77) who, in exploring the connection between semantic prosody and persuasion in a newspaper corpus, underlines how the use of the word *dealings* either reveals something about a writer's stance or tries to modify the readers'. He further considers how the negatively loaded lemma FUNDAMENTALIST could be used for any group the writer dislikes in order to influence readers' perceptions, as shown by the collocations *green fundamentalists* and *fundamentalist greens*. He concludes by indicating some promising areas for the study of semantic prosodies, one of which is the pattern adverb-adjective where the first word is an intensifier (1998: 77). His claim, however, can be expanded to study how adverbs of degree are generally used to manipulate readers' points of view on a particular issue.

Semantic prosody can therefore explain aspects of connotation as expressed by a word as a consequence of its typical collocates. Associations among words also operate in a similar way beyond the textual environment in which collocations of a word are usually studied, that is, the span of five words to the left and right of the node word. In her analysis of English verbs of attribution, Hunston (1995) demonstrates how the verbs CLAIM and ARGUE imply disagreement between the writer who is making the attribution and the writer whose words are reported only when certain discourse conditions are met. In particular, ARGUE + *that*-clause is typically used in conflicts but its negative or positive evaluation

on the part of the attributor is shown to be associated with its position as, respectively, the first or the second move in the conflict (1995: 155). Her conclusion is that the sense of 'disagreement' these verbs implicitly carry with them, though not exactly explicable in the same terms as, for example, SET IN, is still the result of their recurrent associations with typical discourse aspects to be found in their wider co-texts.

The two phenomena, indeed, are the result of the idiom principle at work in language use: co-selection operates at lexico-grammatical, semantic and discourse levels. Sinclair's definition of semantic prosody as "the functional choice which links meaning to purpose" (1996: 88) accommodates pragmatic associations among words within the concept and establishes it as a fundamental component of functionally complete extended units of meaning. Tognini-Bonelli (2001: 106-110) further demonstrates how this can be described in functional terms which go beyond the general negative-positive dichotomy. She shows how the adjective *proper* in attributive position is typically co-selected with words belonging to the semantic area of 'entitlements' or things that we all think worth having, while its left co-text is always associated with the notion of absence, which provides it with a functional role in the text. "The function of *proper*, therefore, finds its place in an extended unit of meaning which is a 'complaint for the absence of something that we all think should be present or available'" (Tognini-Bonelli 2001: 110). The re-definition of the phenomenon prompted Stubbs (2001: 65) to rename it as 'discourse prosody' in order to highlight its role in creating and maintaining an interaction between discourse producer(s) and discourse recipients. Indeed, he maintains that discourse prosodies express speaker attitude, characterise units of meaning with an identifiable pragmatic function (2001: 65) and contribute extensively to text cohesion (2001: 100).

3. *Speaker stance and adverbs of degree*

The expression of speakers' attitudes to what they are discussing is particularly relevant for two sets of reasons: first of all, it reflects both their personally held values and the systems of values of the subgroup or the society which they belong to; secondly, it is a device through which the hearers can be engaged in the construction of discourse from

the perspective of the speakers and thus led to share at least part of their arguments. This second aspect has been pointed out by several scholars (e.g. Hoey 1983, 2000; Carter and Nash 1990) and is all the more important in political speeches, since these may be considered as the prototypical type of discourse with a persuasive aim: to win the support of the audience by convincing them that they ought to share the orator's point of view.

In their study of speakers' and writers' attitudes in text, Thompson and Hunston (2000: 21) group the linguistic features signalling stance into three conceptual categories: markers of comparison/contrast, subjectivity and value. Though their list is not conclusive, it is a classification that includes most of what can be considered signals of speaker's attitude. This is particularly true of the grammar of modality, fully investigated by, for example, Halliday (1994) and Bybee and Fleischman (1995). Aspects of what Thompson and Hunston (2000: 20) call 'the grammar of affective evaluation', that is, linguistic features signalling evaluation of entities in terms of desirability, have been less investigated, a remarkable exception being the studies on adverbials of stance (Conrad and Biber 2000) and evaluative adjectives (Hunston and Sinclair 2000). Adverbs of degree fit into Thompson and Hunston's category of markers of comparison and play a role in 'affective evaluation' by indicating a speaker's or writer's opinion about "the extent to which a category holds" (Biber *et al*. 1999: 554). Furthermore, this characteristic may be used in corpus studies as a diagnostic way of identifying crucial points that the speaker or writer considers necessary to highlight through evaluation. In political discourse, therefore, adverbs of degree may signal that an attempt to win the consensus of the audience is being made. The analysis of the contexts in which they most frequently recur may thus shed light on some of the typical persuasive techniques adopted in political speeches.

4. *Presidential Rhetoric and Critical Discourse Analysis*

This study is a contribution to the extensive literature on political discourse which has analysed both American (e.g. Miller and Vasta 1997; Vasta 1998; Miller 2002a, 2004) and British political speeches,

especially parliamentary debates (e.g. Miller 1999, 2002b; Bayley 2004; Vasta 2004). In particular, by considering as its first-order data G. W. Bush's Presidential speeches, this analysis follows the tradition of Presidential Rhetoric (e.g. Windt 1992a, 1992b) and participates in the basic assumption that "Presidential power is the power to persuade" (Windt 1992a: xxiii). Studies in this discipline have investigated the persuasive potential and rhetorical efficacy of specific Presidential speeches (e.g. Goodnight 1992; Sigelman and Whissel 2002a, 2002b). They have also proposed a significant transformation of the presidency during the twentieth century, a phenomenon generally known as the 'modern rhetorical Presidency' (Ceaser *et al.* 1981; Tulis 1987, 1998), according to which Presidential power resides in the President's ability to build consensus around his policy by speaking directly to the public. The analysis is generally text-based, but may also be semiotically-oriented or follow a quantitative approach, especially when a large number of texts in a diachronic dimension is considered (Whissel and Sigelman 2001; Lim 2002). Indeed, the discipline is identified by its object of study rather than by a specific methodology. Therefore, a corpus-driven approach can provide a new analytical perspective to this field of enquiry.

Given the focus of this investigation on potentially persuasive stretches of language, this paper shares the theoretical premises of Critical Discourse Analysis. This discipline (e.g. Fairclough 1989, 1995, 2000) is characterised by the assumption that our ways of talking about the physical and social phenomena we experience play an active role in constructing, maintaining and changing them. The approach participates in some of the philosophical tenets informing social constructionism (e.g. Burr 1995: 2-5). Indeed, pride of place is given to the idea that our knowledge of the world is the product of discourse; that is, meaningful, historically-situated exchanges among people have consequences in the social world by activating concrete actions and creating shared systems of values and beliefs. Hence, by ascribing meaning to what is around (and within) us, language and discourse have a bearing on the constitution of culture and society.

However, this relationship can also be reversed in order to highlight how social structures are reflected in the language. In this sense, the changing patterns of discourse over time may reveal the dynamic interplay between social forces. Therefore, concrete language use contributes

both to the creation and the reproduction of power relations between social groups. Critical Discourse Analysis proposes to demonstrate how discursive practices participate in maintaining or changing the social world. Its objects of investigation are authentic examples of language use in social contexts and, consequently, its method of analysis is empirical.

As far as methodology is concerned, a corpus-driven approach (Tognini-Bonelli 2001: 1-5) is certainly in line with the empirical study of discourse advocated by Critical Discourse Analysis. Furthermore, corpus linguistics considers language as a social phenomenon, inextricably linked to its fundamental purpose of communication. Therefore, the neo-Firthian objective of making "explicit connections between the occurrence and distribution of language items in text and the meaning created by the text" (Tognini-Bonelli 2001: 177) provides a powerful conceptual tool for systematically exploring concrete ways in which language encodes systems of values and contributes to their diffusion.

5. *Methodology*

A computation of adverbs of degree in G. W. Bush's Presidential speeches shows that *deeply* is among the most frequent, though not as much as *very* (501 occurrences) and *really* (265). With its 54 occurrences, *deeply* is more frequent than *truly* (33), *almost* (31), *absolutely* (20), *significantly* (15), *completely* (10), *fairly* (10), *greatly* (6), *entirely* (5), *awfully* (4), *extremely* (3), *profoundly* (3), *totally* (3), *considerably* (1), and *largely* (1). These data substantiate the relevance of studying the behaviour of *deeply* in this collection of texts.

The discourse prosodies of *deeply* are studied on the basis of a series of concordance lines retrieved from a 423,361-word corpus comprising all of Bush's Presidential speeches delivered from 21st January 2001 to 30th November 2002. All Presidential speeches are available on-line at the White House website (http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases). The texts have been downloaded and run through the concordance facility of Wordsmith, a suite of computer programmes through which corpora can be manipulated to extract analysable information (Scott 1996). The results have also been checked against the American subcorpora in the Bank of English.

6. *An analysis of the discourse prosodies of 'deeply'*

The analysis starts from the following statement by G.W. Bush during a press conference at the White House on 7th November 2002 (my emphasis):

> 1. I have a deep desire for peace. That's what I have a desire for. And freedom for the Iraqi people. See, I don't like a system where people are repressed through torture and murder in order to keep a dictator in place. *It troubles me deeply.* And so the Iraqi people must hear this loud and clear, that this country never has any intention to conquer anybody. That's not the intention of the American people or our government. We believe in freedom and we believe in peace. And we believe the Iraqi dictator is a threat to peace. And so that's why I made the decisions I made, in terms of Iraq.

In this stretch of discourse Bush rapidly sketches a representation of the crisis between the U.S. and Iraq (peace and freedom versus torture and murder; democracy versus dictatorship), gives it his personal, emotionally-loaded assessment in the sentence in italics and by doing so sets the authoritative yardstick against which people in the audience must compare their reactions. Furthermore, his evaluation establishes the grounds on which his announcement of a governmental initiative in the following stretch is to be judged. It is evident that *deeply* calls attention to a relevant issue for the executive and is worth exploring whether it systematically participates in evaluative structures that play a role in the construction of consensus through discourse.

The investigation of the concordance lines for *deeply* takes into consideration its most significant collocates and examines its most frequent semantic and pragmatic associations so as to uncover typical discourse functions in Bush's speeches. The data from Bush's corpus are then compared with those from the Bank of English in order to highlight similarities and differences between the uses of *deeply* in the current U.S. President's discourse and general American English.

6.1 *The use of 'deeply' in praising formulae*

An analysis of the 54 concordance lines retrieved from the corpus of G. W. Bush's speeches (Appendix) shows that *deeply* collocates 25

times with the lemma CARE (*care* has a t-score of 3.64 and *cares* of 3.30) and 12 times with the lemma CONCERN (*concerned* has a t-score of 3.27).[3] The word-forms *care*, *cares* and *concerned* are the only lexical items that collocate significantly with *deeply* and cover about 70% of all entries. The collocations with the two lemmas show considerable overlapping in the semantic area of 'care'. For example,

> 2. I just had the honor of meeting with a panel of experts from not only the state of Pennsylvania, but from around the country: teachers, soon to be teachers, people who *deeply* care about the education of every single person. And I want to thank them for their input. I want to thank them so very much for their idealism.

> 3. I want to thank our speakers for doing a fantastic job today. I am so very grateful for our fellow citizens who are *deeply* concerned about the direction of our country.

In both examples the core elements *deeply care* and *deeply concerned* show a positive semantic prosody, as they praise people for being committed to important causes. An analysis of the instances where *deeply* collocates with *concerned* or the lemma CARE shows that these are often part of a relative clause which post-modifies a noun group introducing someone, just as in examples 2-3 above; therefore one notable colligate is the relative pronoun *who*. This recurring pattern enables the identification of its discourse function as a praising formula: the people who are praised are mentioned in the noun group in the left co-text of the core part, while the reasons why they are praised follow in the right co-text. In addition, by further enlarging the co-text a thanking performative is often shown in association with the praise, either before or after it. This complex discourse function is exemplified in Table 1, in which the thanking performative has been positioned first only because it appears to be more frequently located before the praise.

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[3] T-score is a statistical algorithm that measures the strength of the association between a collocate and its node word. A t-score greater than 2 is considered a significant collocation (Barnbrook 1996: 97).

Thanking performative	Praised people		Core element	Object of care
Previous (or following) sentence/clause	Noun group	*who*	*deeply* + CARE/*concerned*	Prepositional phrase (*about* + complement)
I appreciate so very much I want to thank Doug, thank you for I am so very grateful	Fellow People the folks Men Fellow citizens Man	*who*	care(s) deeply are deeply concerned	about our children. about the future of about the direction of about people and about the health

Table 1.   An illustration of the components of the unit centred on *deeply* + CARE/*concerned*.

Interestingly, in the thanking performative, people are preferably identified as members of a general social group or category (e.g. *teachers*, *speakers*, etc.), while in the noun group preceding the praise the same people are presented in even more abstract terms through a superordinate word (e.g. *folks*, *people*, *man*, *men*, etc.). The impression that this is a standardised formula with a precise discourse function is reinforced by two factors. First of all, the praising formula is very often part of the 'thanking ceremony' that takes place at the beginning of every Presidential speech. The audience, usually consisting of representatives of certain social groups or categories, is thanked in general terms, very often by mentioning those whose contribution to the community makes them eligible for association with Presidential propaganda. Furthermore, this pragmatic structure centred on the combination *deeply* + verbs belonging to the semantic area of 'care' highlights the ideology on which the praising strategy is founded, that is, 'conservative compassion' which has been a key political principle of Bush's administration. This is made explicit in the following examples:

> 4.   My call to America, and Americans, is, use the example of this fine lady, that if you care *deeply* about the future of your country, support your schools, support your teachers. But also, when you find somebody who hurts, somebody who is in need, somebody who needs food or shelter, or just somebody who needs love, be that person who is willing to give that love.

> 5.   The great strength is the American people because not only are we

tough, like I said, we're also a compassionate people. We care *deeply* about neighbors in need. You see, out of the evil will not only come peace, but out of the evil, I believe that we have a chance to address hopelessness and despair, which exists in some neighborhoods in this great country. […] We've got to do it with better education systems; we've got to welcome faith-based pro-grams into the compassionate delivery of welfare and help. Be-cause, after all, faith-based programs exist because of a universal call to love your neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself.

The examples above show that some variation of the pragmatic schemata on the basis of contextual circumstances is to be expected, though the semantic load and discourse functions remain unchanged. The groups of people in 4-5 are defined in a broad, 'all-inclusive' sense, since it is the 'category' of Americans that is evaluated. In the praising schema, Bush establishes a definition of 'American-ness' in ethical terms that calls for consensus on the part of the audience. The President unfolds his vi-sion of fraternal love also by making use of easily identifiable and heavily connoted religious expressions. His definition of the ethical nature of Americans is realised as a recommendation in 4 and an assessment in 5, both impossible to counter on a truth-value basis. Indeed, verification of the correctness of his position would be perceived as out of place, since the tone of this piece of discourse is totally emotional and its aim is to es-tablish the grounds on which the principle of conservative compassion un-derlying his government is to be understood. Therefore, the audience is positioned so as to share his perspective and his directives, in particular when immediate political objectives (as in 5) are at stake. As far as other examples of this pragmatic schema are concerned, the values which Presi-dential propaganda likes to be associated with are always stated in broad terms which make a direct appeal to shared consensus: the direction/fu-ture of the country/region, the care for children or the elderly, etc. Further-more, people who are identified as sharing his vision are thus shown as persuasive examples that others are exhorted to follow.

Examples 4 and 5 above reveal some of the ideological assumptions that are at work in Bush's discourse, the critical one being that Ameri-can citizens are expected to help fellow countrymen in need on a volun-tary basis. This assumption reflects a conviction based on a specific ide-ological conception of the State, that is, one in which assistance through

State initiatives is to be kept to a minimum. While the role of the State is thus weakened in the area of welfare, in Bush's vision the ethical burden of protecting fellow countrymen from unpleasant events in life and assuring them some basic entitlements is thus transferred to the philanthropic good-will of private citizens.

In summary, the analysis has uncovered a pragmatic schema with identifiable lexico-grammatical and semantic components centring around the combination *deeply* + CARE/*concerned*. Following Sinclair (1998: 14) and Tognini-Bonelli (2001: 110), this can be termed an extended unit of meaning which is characterised by the discourse function of praising (part of) the audience for their care towards the community. This further leads to promoting the encoder's policy, as this is assumed to be in line with general, widely shared values and can thus obtain the consensus of the electorate. In general, this pragmatic unit is one way through which Bush's strategy of *captatio benevolentiae*, i.e. the strategy of obtaining the interlocutors' good-will and approval, can be unfolded.

6.2 '*Deeply*' in the American subcorpora of the Bank of English

The analysis carried out in section 6.1 indicates that *deeply* is mostly used in contexts aimed at providing positive evaluation about people. An analysis of 1000 randomly selected concordance lines for *deeply* out of the 3332 from the American subcorpora of the Bank of English shows a slight tendency towards a preferred association with words characterised by a positive evaluation of a person or situation. Table 2 shows the top ten most significant lexical collocates (those in italics are characterised by a prevailingly negative prosody) covering about 13% of the total concordance lines:

	word	t-score		word	t-score
1	involved	11.547860	6	*ingrained*	7.271978
2	felt	9.666109	7	committed	7.225787
3	rooted	9.300833	8	*troubled*	7.190945
4	*concerned*	7.785183	9	embedded	6.529292
5	*divided*	7.675147	10	breathed	6.458226

Table 2. Top ten most significant lexical collocates of *deeply* in the Bank of English.

Word-forms of the lemma CARE are less important collocates (*cared* has a t-score of 5.13 and *care* of 4.79). An analysis of the combination *deeply* + CARE shows that this is typically used to provide positive evaluation of people, as for example in the ten randomly collected concordance lines shown in Table 3.

1	down to one thing — Joe cared	deeply	about the future of the United States
2	of feeling among those who cared	deeply	about people with AIDS (by no means
3	the country he cared about as	deeply	as he cared about his family and
4	the two individuals involved care	deeply	about each other as separate, loving
5	He's a reflective man, one who cares	deeply	about the institution –
6	and who, at the same time, care	deeply	about consumer protection, which
7	that the black community cared	deeply	about affirmative action and that
8	youngsters in Harlem and who care	deeply	about discrimination.
9	early Americans, however, cared	deeply	about both the utility and beauty of
10	articulate woman who cared very	deeply	for her daughter but who also felt

Table 3. Ten random concordance lines for *deeply* + CARE from the Bank of English

None of the expanded co-texts of these lines showed any thanking performatives, but in general the examples confirm that the typical pragmatic function of praising someone which characterises this unit of meaning is not confined to Bush's Presidential discourse style.

An exploration of the lines centred on the combination *deeply concerned* revealed that this is rarely used in praising structures, whereas it is frequently associated with negatively evaluated situations as in the following ten randomly selected concordance lines from the American subcorpora of the Bank of English (Table 4).

1	Edelman (Author): Oh, I'm so	deeply	concerned that they will lose faith
2	<p> Unidentified Man #1: Japan is	deeply	concerned about the deteriorating
3	Aristide has told me that he is also	deeply	concerned about the dangers of
4	the work of American notables	deeply	concerned about the instability and
5	For such reasons, many people are	deeply	concerned about drug abuse. They

6	then I think we should be very	deeply	concerned about a replay of the Beirut
7	de Klerk said today that he's	deeply	concerned about reports that the violence
8	in October of 1991. They are	deeply	concerned that the Clinton administration
9	-oriented policies intact, they are	deeply	concerned about becoming enmeshed in
10	of officers, Raeder included, were	deeply	concerned about the possible adverse

Table 4. Ten random concordance lines for *deeply concerned* from the Bank of English.

The complementation patterns of *deeply concerned* in Table 4 above show a series of negatively connoted words. The enlarged co-texts of lines 8 and 9 further confirm that a negatively evaluated situation is to be expected:

> 6. Palestinians seem more frustrated now than at any time since this peace process began in October of 1991. They are *deeply* concerned that the Clinton administration legitimized Israel's practice of sending people into exile, […]

> 7. Although many businessmen insist their presence here helps to keep China's more liberal, Western-oriented policies intact, they are *deeply* concerned about becoming enmeshed in damaging political controversy.

However, some instances of *deeply concerned* from the Bank of English need to be carefully considered as they seem particularly relevant in constructing consensus around specific initiatives, therefore establishing a pattern which may unfold its persuasive potential in political texts. Thirty-five out of the sixty-six entries of this collocation show the pattern BE *deeply concerned about* + noun group. When examined in their larger co-texts, some of these patterns show a figure of authority in their left co-text and a commitment to provide a solution to the problem expressed in their right. For example,

> 8. Obviously, the President's *deeply* concerned about the humanitarian crisis in Rwanda. And I'm not going to get too deeply in this because I will let Director Atwood, but let me go through what we have done up to this point.

9. We are *deeply* concerned about the more competitive market facing us in the third and fourth quarters," Mr. Miller said. This concern prompted the $1 billion cost-cutting program, […].

The people who are concerned about a problem are in the position to provide a solution, so that the meaning of the unit centred on *deeply concerned* indicates a strong emotional involvement resulting in a declaration of commitment to solve the problem. Other examples from the Bank of English are parsed in Table 5 to show their functional components.

Authority	Core element	Problem	Commitment to solution
US President	BE *deeply concerned about*	the needs of the unemployed and their families	responsible legislation to extend unemployment benefits
The United States	BE *deeply concerned about*	the situation there	has been providing food and medicine and other aid
St. Patrick's Cathedral	BE *deeply concerned about*	the plight of our elderly neighbors.	The 'Our Neighbors' program is a way to reach out

Table 5. An illustration of the components of the unit centred on *deeply concerned*

The pragmatic unit highlighted above has therefore all the potential for being used in political speeches to win the consensus of the audience. Its three key semantic components are: a figure of authority, the negative evaluation of a situation and a statement of commitment to improve it. The similarity of this schema with the co-text of the sentence *It troubles me deeply* in example 1 above is remarkable and worth detailed exploration in G. W. Bush's speeches.

6.3 *The use of 'deeply' in assessing a situation and prospecting commitment*

Some of the concordance lines centred on *deeply* in G. W. Bush's speeches have so far been left unaccounted for. The following examples could not be explained on the basis of the 'praising' schema identified in section 6.1 above.

> 10. And we're going to defeat the recession, too. (Applause.) I'm *deeply* concerned about those who lost their jobs as a result of September the 11th. […] And our government must respond.

> 11. People are losing their jobs. And I'm *deeply* concerned about that, and I know you are, as well. […] And it's time for our government to act in a positive and constructive way. The Congress needs to pass a stimulus package and get it to my desk before the end of November.

The potential sense of helplessness which might be conveyed by the presentation of a problem would be in sharp contrast with the general communicative purpose of Presidential speeches. Indeed, these are aimed at showing how the executive power is actively committed to the welfare of citizens and ready to provide solutions to problems. In 10 and 11, the potentially negative prosody of *concerned* is effaced by the following pledge. Therefore, the core element *deeply concerned* is part of a unit that frames a problem between a declaration of emotional involvement and one of active commitment to its solution. Table 6 below analyses some instances of this pragmatic unit taken from G. W. Bush's speeches in its component parts.

Authority	Core element	Problem	Commitment to solution
US President	BE *deeply concerned about*	the citizens of Houston who worked for Enron who lost life savings.	The government will be looking into this.
US President	BE *deeply concerned about*	the impact of blackouts on the […] people of the state of California.	And my administration is committed to helping California.

America	BE *deeply concerned about*	the difficulties facing our ally and our friend;	The United States is prepared to help Argentina weather this storm.
America	BE *deeply concerned about*	the effects of the economy on Argentina's great people.	I will support assistance for Argentina

Table 6. An analysis of the unit centred on *deeply concerned* from G.W. Bush's speeches.

The same framework is shown with growing variation at the level of lexico-grammatical associations in the following examples:

> 12. One of the statistics that concerns me *deeply* and concerns those in my administration is this: too many minorities do not own a home in America. […] You see, owning a home is part of the American experience. And so I'm promoting policies that will encourage home ownership.

> 13. In record time as well, Congress passed, I signed, and the mailman is now delivering the largest tax cut in a generation. […] And I'm *deeply* worried about the working families all across the country. […] But with the tax reduction already in place, Americans will have more of their own money to spend, to save and invest, the very things that make our economy grow.

The core element of the unit is characterised by the semantic association *deeply* + a verb belonging to the semantic area of 'worry'. Therefore, the adverb is critical in an extended unit of meaning which is a 'claim of emotional involvement and active commitment towards the solution of a problem on the part of the President.' This schema may also be used to interpret the following example:

> 14. As we wage the war on terrorism abroad, we will also comfort families *deeply* hurt by terrorism here at home. The members of the United States Congress who came together to pass this bill I'll sign today had one goal in mind, to help ease your financial burdens as you struggle to cope with the loss of your loved ones.

In 14 *deeply* emphasises the level of pain suffered by the families but also points to the emotional involvement of the President and his active commitment to provide some relief.

Finally, example 1 can be explained with reference to this functional unit (Table 7):

Authority	Core element	Problem	Commitment to solution
US President	TROUBLE *deeply*	people are repressed [...] in order to keep a dictator in place	I made the decisions I made

Table 7. An analysis of example 1 in terms of the unit centred on *deeply* + WORRY

In example 1 Bush's reply to a journalist's question about the possible military involvement of the U.S. in Iraq uses this unit with the objective of reassuring and persuading his listeners. Indeed, it highlights what they should consider as the only reason behind a possible military attack against Iraq: on the one hand it emphasises the President's emotional involvement for the oppressive conditions in which the Iraqi people are living as a result of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship, on the other it reassuringly prospects the President's commitment to the solution of the problem. The unit centred on *deeply* + TROUBLE therefore establishes Bush as a world leader devoted to the cause of freedom and the defence of human rights.

By emphasising Bush's emotional involvement, the unit reduces the distance between the orator and his audience. Moreover, it establishes empathy as the criterion on the basis of which the audience should evaluate his government's proposals. Empathy is assumed to work both ways: on the one hand, the President feels emotionally involved in a problem that is affecting many people; on the other hand, the audience is invited to share the same feelings and hence approve of his initiatives. These emotional assessments, therefore, set the grounds on which the following proposals are to be evaluated. The audience is positioned so as to see an explicit contrast between what is represented as the current problematic situation and the assumed future solution. This binary perspective presents no alternative choices to the audience, therefore giving

greater credence to Presidential proposals. The evaluation of governmental initiatives is at the same time contrastive along the time axis, as it depicts a negative picture of the present situation and assumes a positive one in the near future, and goal-oriented, since a positive value is attributed to Bush's proposals on the basis of their assumed effectiveness to solve the given problems. What the unit highlights, however, is the interpersonally-oriented combination 'President's strong emotional involvement + his commitment to provide a solution', which realises its persuasive function by virtue of its empathetic appeal.

In summary, the extended unit of meaning centred on the combination of *deeply* + verb belonging to the semantic area of 'worry' performs a critical role in promoting the Presidential agenda for government. It does so by presenting a self-attributed claim of emotional involvement that provides an assessment of a situation by qualifying it as a problem. It then constructs consensus around a governmental initiative by presenting it as the President's pledge for the only possible solution.

7. Conclusion

This paper has started from the assumption that the use of adverbs of degree in political speeches may signal that an attempt to obtain the consensus of the audience on some issues may be taking place. The point has been explored with an analysis of the uses of *deeply* in G. W. Bush's speeches. The study has shown how this adverb typically recurs in evaluative structures which can be described in systematic ways by virtue of their frequent occurrence both in the U.S. President's monologues and in the American subcorpora of the Bank of English. The theoretical background for the description of these structures is based on Sinclair's (e.g. 1998) concept of extended units of meaning identified by means of their discourse prosodies. Indeed, it has been shown how the strict correlation between *deeply* and its co-text realises specific pragmatic functions that connect these extended units of meaning to the wider context of situation with its particular, genre-bound communicative purpose.

The analysis has highlighted the use of *deeply* in two evaluative structures: one aimed at praising people and another at signalling the

emotional involvement and the commitment to provide a solution for a problem on the part of someone in authority. The first extended unit of meaning has a core part characterised by the association of the adverb of degree with a verb belonging to the semantic area of 'care'. This pattern typically provides a positive evaluation of people on the basis of their social behaviour. The structure is used by Bush to win the consensus of the audience on central aspects of his ideology of 'conservative compassion' by linking this to a shared system of values which traditionally foregrounds co-operation and mutual assistance among members of a community. The use of this structure seems to be a feature of Bush's oratorical style. This is confirmed by an analysis of other political corpora: a 267,502-word corpus of Blair's speeches (2001-2003) contains 18 occurrences of *deeply* but no instances of *deeply* + CARE; a 751,559-word corpus of Clinton's Presidential speeches (1993) shows 53 occurrences of *deeply* without a single example of *deeply* + CARE; finally, a 1,903,370-word corpus of Presidential State of the Union and Inaugural addresses (1789-2001) has 133 occurrences of *deeply* but the combination *deeply* + CARE is not attested. In addition, these three corpora only yielded 10 occurrences of the pattern *deeply* + CONCERN, always with the meaning of 'worry'. In Firthian terms, the unit centred on *deeply* + CARE realises the connection between the lexico-grammatical level and the wider situational and cultural contexts by engaging the audience in one of Bush's main ideological points. The fact that the unit is often placed in the 'thanking ceremony' at the beginning of the President's political speeches further substantiates its key role as part of a general strategy for obtaining the audience's good-will and approval for what he is about to say.

The second extended unit of meaning is centred on the combination of *deeply* and a verb belonging to the semantic area of 'worry'. This pattern negatively evaluates a situation by presenting it as a problem that emotionally involves the President. This initial declaration prompts the commitment for a governmental initiative that is presented as the solution to improve the present negative state of affairs. The pragmatic function of the unit is that of highlighting the desirability of a specific policy with respect to certain matters and thus of winning the consensus of the audience. It does so by appealing to people's empathy and their emotional involvement. It is a choice that shuns other ways of dealing

with an issue, for example by showing evidence that supports governmental decisions. This persuasive strategy calls for shared emotive participation in order to establish the grounds on which policies are to be evaluated and deliberately avoids rational analyses of complex phenomena. Furthermore, the limited use of the combination *deeply* + CONCERN (found only once as a self-attributed assessment in Clinton's collection of speeches) in the political corpora mentioned above shows how this unit may be a stylistic feature of Bush's speeches with a definite rhetorical function.

In conclusion, this study has demonstrated how a particular adverb of degree participates in evaluative structures with clearly identifiable interpersonal goals in political speeches. This is unlikely to be a specific property of *deeply*, but may be a general feature shared by other adverbs of degree. Further studies that analyse the frequent lexico-grammatical, semantic and pragmatic associations of more adverbs of degree in other registers and genres are therefore needed to validate the conclusive claim of this research.

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Appendix – List of concordance lines for *deeply* from the corpus of Bush's speeches.

1	And they love America	deeply,	because they know the cost of freedom,
2	They hate us because we hold dear and	deeply	love the idea that anybody can worship
3	grateful for our fellow citizens who are	deeply	concerned about the direction of our
4	communities, love their profession, are	deeply	concerned about the future of medicine
5	They're men who are	deeply	concerned about the health and welfare
6	Mr. President, the people of America are	deeply	grateful for your support and the
7	in those South Dakota values which are	deeply	ingrained in his heart. I know
8	both Poland and the United States are	deeply	involved will be favorable to —
9	plans in our nation's history. They care	deeply	about our country. I'm honored that
10	are also a compassionate people. We care	deeply	about neighbors in need.
11	on the front lines of reform. They care	deeply	about our country. I'm honored to be
12	each other. And for those who care	deeply	about our environment and our
13	judgment, convince the voters they care	deeply	about their circumstances. I believe if
14	leaders who are here, people who care	deeply	about the future of this region. I
15	certain period of time, we no longer care	deeply	about our freedoms and, therefore,
16	are good, honorable people; they care	deeply	about their shareholders and their
17	example of this fine lady, that if you care	deeply	about the future of your country,
18	shareholders with respect. They care	deeply	about the plight of their employees.
19	vast majority of our fellow citizens care	deeply	about employees and shareholders.
20	and Mr. Vice President, and I care	deeply.	And so I look forward to this
21	that love their communities, and care	deeply	for their patients. But they are
22	She's a common-sense person who cares	deeply	about our national park system, and
23	a straightforward fellow who cares	deeply	about our children. When we say no
24	He is a fine, fine man, who cares	deeply	about people and who loves his countr
25	Matt is a citizen who cares	deeply	about the community in which he lives.
26	that's the children — somebody who cares	deeply	about the children of the state, and
27	trong congressman. (Applause.) He cares	deeply	about the people of this state. He
28	She's calm, she's steady, she cares	deeply	about our children. She loves education
29	He cares	deeply	about national issues and issues that
30	she's got a great smile. She cares	deeply	about our children. The people of the
31	the fact that Doug McCarron cares	deeply,	deeply about the members of his
32	fact that Doug McCarron cares deeply,	deeply	about the members of his union.
33	China have confronted strong emotions,	deeply	held and often conflicting convictions
34	abroad, we will also comfort families	deeply	hurt by terrorism here at home.

35	He's	deeply	concerned about the protection of the
36	friendship and the ties of nations. And I	deeply	appreciate your work.
37	you have a right to security; and I	deeply	believe that you need a reformed,
38	is high praise, and you have earned it. I	deeply	respect your service. I appreciate your
39	light does not come on, at any price. I'm	deeply	concerned about the impact of blackout
40	I'm	deeply	concerned about those who lost their jo
41	People are losing their jobs. And I'm	deeply	concerned about that, and I know you
42	into Enron and what took place there. I'm	deeply	concerned about the citizens of
43	immediate economic challenges. I'm	deeply	grateful to Speaker Hastert and
44	last year, and that's bad news. And I'm	deeply	worried about the working families all
45	nothing to change this reality. America is	deeply	concerned about the difficulties
46	to keep a dictator in place. It troubles me	deeply.	And so the Iraqi people must hear this
47	One of the statistics that concerns me	deeply	and concerns those in my administratio
48	country that has — going to be, obviously,	deeply	affected by actions we may or may
49	came to see me, as well. And they're	deeply	concerned about the situation spreadin
50	Pat, for letting me come. I was	deeply	honored. Today I'm pleased to
51	ally and our friend; and we're	deeply	concerned about the effects of the econ
52	but an example to America, and we're	deeply	grateful. Finally, as you go about
53	one such center today. Laura and I were	deeply	impressed by the Margaret Cone
54	teachers, soon to be teachers, people who	deeply	care about the education of every