

Woodrow Wilson's War to End All Wars
Textual Features of the Presidential Address to Congress
Delivered on April 2, 1917

We make war that we may live in peace.
Aristotle "Nichomachean Ethics"

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Abstract. Only five presidential messages led to formally declared wars in the history of the USA. While attempting to shed some light on the role of discourse in the origins of armed conflicts, the contribution explores a selection of textual aspects of war discourse on the basis of President Woodrow Wilson's Address to Congress Requesting a Declaration of War Against Germany. The address is analysed in the context of the remaining four presidential messages delivered before the formally declared wars by J. Madison, J. Polk, W. McKinley and F. D. Roosevelt. The first section of the paper¹ gives a short description of the relevant theoretical foundations of the analysis. In the second section the methodological underpinnings of the analysis are established (Fairclough, 1992; Chruszczewski, 2002). The problematic of readability of texts is introduced and it is followed by the introduction of the typology of arguments devised by Chruszczewski (2003). In the third section the analysis of the presidential speech is preceded by a brief overview of Wilson's presidency. Following the presentation of the results of the readability test, the structure of a general model of argument development is presented and the results of the analysis are discussed with focus on the semantic content of Wilson's Address as well as on the reasons for the continual increase in the readability of the five consecutive presidential war messages.

Keywords: political discourse, discourse analysis, readability of text, typology of arguments.

1. Introduction

Analyzing the history of mankind appears to be the study of an endless chain of wars events. Regarded as uninevitable, wars are feared by nations but decisions are made by individuals. Approaching the thematic of war conflicts from political and historical perspective gives an impression that war is regarded as a citizen's duty and the ruler's privilege. Linguistic research, while giving an insight into diverse aspects of war discourse, reveals the secrets of the language used by the social actors of war scenes. Focusing attention on communicational and rhetorical tools used in the discourse of war as well as social and cultural aspects of language allows to understand how language is

¹ The article is an altered version of fragments of the MA thesis by Leszek Wojteczek (University of Wrocław, 2018).

used and in whose interest it is used. It helps to embrace the problematic of war by shedding light on the role of discourse in the origins of armed conflicts.

2. Related Work on Woodrow Wilson's Discourse

With many researchers paying attention to the analysis of Woodrow Wilson's political activities, it is the president's oratory skills and his power to use language as an instrument to achieve his political goals that have continuously attracted scholars and enhanced research (Blakey, 1970; Schulte Nordholt, 1991; Rudanko, 2012). Agreeably regarded as an outstanding orator, Wilson employed his rhetorical talent to become a triumphant politician. Kraig (2004) gives an insightful overview of Wilson's presidency bringing to life less known aspects of the political discourse of the Progressive Era, providing a detailed account of Wilson's career path from being a lecturer at Princeton to becoming the leader of the nation. As the Chief Executive of the country, Wilson reshaped the role of America in the modern world (Ambrosius, 2002; 2017). However, this came with his enormous effort as the ultimate decisions regarding participation in war conflicts rested in the hands of the Congress (cf. Treanor, 1997), not the President. Relating to the emergence of mass communication, Kraig (2004) addresses the issue of its role in Wilson's political activities, highlighting the importance of the media. The press, in particular, played a vital role in convincing the Congress and the public to accept his war message of April 2, 1917. Wilson skillfully used the modern media as a powerful tool in his relations with the Congress. Persuading unwilling politicians and the equally reluctant public into entering the war in 1917 became the victory of the president's oratory skills. Kraig (2004, p. 164) highlights the fact that one of the president's outstanding qualities was the use of *kairos*: "the most influential rhetoric, [...], is often that which says the right thing in the right way and somehow strikes an idea at the precise historical moment when it is ripe to be accepted."

In opposition to numerous critics of Wilson and Wilsonianism (cf. Ambrosius, 2002; Striner, 2014), Hogan (2006, p. 142) regards the President as a perfect "orator-statesman," perceiving him as the politician whose idea was to discuss crucial policy issues not only with the political elite but first and foremost with the American people. Tucker (2007) confirms the prevalent view that Wilson's presidency was a turning point in American history while Manela (2005, p. 1116) observes that "the foreign policies of nearly every American president since Franklin Delano Roosevelt can be understood, in one way or another, as owing a debt to Woodrow Wilson." The end of isolationism and Woodrow Wilson's attempt to set a new order in the pursuit of the world "safe for democracy" led to establishing America's primary role in global politics for many decades to come.

3. Theoretical Assumptions

The subject matter of the paper falls into the area of discourse studies whose beginnings can be traced back to the 1950s. This was then that Zellig Harris ([1952] 1970), in his article *Discourse Analysis*, introduced an approach to analyzing texts, which had a tremendous impact on linguistic research shifting the interest of researchers towards the functional view of language (van Dijk, [1977] 1980; Fairclough, 1989; Wierzbicka, 1985; Duszak & Fairclough, 2008). The study of discourse includes rhetoric, style, meaning, vocabulary, syntax, sounds, gestures, speech acts, strategies, and other aspects of human interaction. It has been expanding with the advent of technology incorporating online texts and video. In effect, non-verbal aspects of discourse have gained more importance and discourse itself has become even more difficult to define. According to Gee ([1999] 2001, p. 19) “discourses are not ‘units’ with clear boundaries.” Jorgensen and Phillips (2002, p. 2) see discourse as “a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world).” Schiffrin (1994, p. 39) regards discourse as language in use: “Discourse is ‘above’ (larger than) other units of language... [it] arises not as a collection of decontextualized units of language structure, but as a collection of inherently contextualized units of language use.” Fowler (1986, p. 86) perceives discourse as a “complicated process of linguistic interaction between people uttering and comprehending texts.” Other linguists approach the problematic of discourse situating it in the context of communication. In Labocha’s view, discourse is:

[...] a social and cultural norm mediating the creation of texts and utterances, interacting with other components of communicative act. It is dynamic and changeable as it shapes the utterance and the text [...]. Discourse is the norm and the strategy at the same time. (Labocha, 2008, pp. 60–61, trans. – L.W.)

Grabias ([1994] 2003, p. 264) and Laskowska (2004, p. 14), consider discourse as stretches of language closely related to style, genre and communicative context. Grabias in particular, highlights the social aspect of discourse perceiving it as social interaction in which language plays a crucial role. Van Dijk (1997a, p. 2) points out the fact that the term discourse is commonly understood as language in use. For theorists discourse is the manner in which language is used which, as van Dijk states, is still a very broad definition, and adds that in order to specify the meaning of discourse it is important to answer a number of issues, such as: who uses a given language form, how, why and when. Nijakowski (2006, p. 17) shares van Dijk’s view on the definition of discourse, highlighting its three aspects: the circumstances of production, the distribution of discourse and the circumstances in which it is received. The importance of non-linguistic aspects of communicative act when attempting to define discourse is expressed by Duszak (1998, p. 19). In her view, discourse embraces text and context, where context refers as much to the situation in which language is used as to the participants. Therefore, discourse becomes a dynamic and evolving process. The dynamic character of discourse is also highlighted by Chruszczewski (2006, p. 50), who considers discourse as “a

dynamically changing phenomenon of linguistic core – *i.e.* texts – that is engulfed by its situational, social and cultural embeddings which together form the nonlinguistic context of any textual message.” In his study of political discourse, Chruszczewski (2002, p. 17) proposes a model of discourse which he calls “the model of the communicational grammar of discourses.” The model highlights the structure of discourse locating texts in the centre of situational, social and cultural embeddings. Texts are situationally and socially dependent as they come into being within a particular speech community in a specific situational context and they are embedded by a particular culture of a given speech community.

As can be seen, the meaning of discourse is multiple and it becomes the researcher’s choice which theoretical and methodological perspective is adopted for a specific study. For the purpose of this paper I follow Norman Fairclough’s interpretation of discourse in which textual level of discourse is embedded in “discursive” practices of production, distribution and consumption as well as social practices being undetachable parts of any discourse as it always exists in a specific time, place and within a particular speech community engaged in their social relationships. As Fairclough’s definition of discourse focuses on social relations, I also take into consideration and relate to Chruszczewski’s notion of discourse, particularly to the view in which the importance of not only situational and social embeddings but also cultural embeddings of discourse is highlighted.

4. Methodological Considerations

The end of the 1970s brought Critical discourse Analysis (CDA), a new perspective in discourse research. Having evolved from the Critical Linguistics and associated with Fowler, Kress, Hodge and Trew (1979), CDA was significantly influenced by Halliday (1978; 1985) who proposed his functional view of language. Proponents of critical approach to discourse claim that language, as Fiske (1994) observes, “is never neutral.” It always involves the use of power and ideology expressing the dominance of those in power and those who are dependent. For van Dijk, CDA has become an “umbrella” term for all those approaches which see discourse as a social activity and attempt to analyze language without deriving it from its situational and socio-cultural embeddings.

Putting emphasis on political aspects of discourse, Fairclough’s socio-cultural method, along with his systemic-functional linguistics, forms one of the main approaches in CDA. Similarly to Foucault’s somehow vague interpretation of discourse, Fairclough sees it as a constant struggle between those in power and those that are oppressed. In effect, his analysis focuses on the problematic of dominance and resistance. Researchers (see: Hidalgo Tenorio 2011, p. 190) appreciate the consistency of Fairclough’s method of analysis, however, doubts are expressed as it allows the use of various methodological tools and may result in not as critical analysis as it is expected in accordance with the main tenets of the approach.

4.1. Socio-Political Aspects of Discourse

The analysis of the presidential address requires reference to the definition of political discourse. Chruszczewski (1999, p. 208) observes that “speech delivered by a politician in an inherently political environment and concerning politics is a realization of political discourse.” In van Dijk’s view (1997b, p. 13), political discourse should be defined in terms of its actors, primarily politicians. However, as he rightly points out, they are not the only participants of discourse. While performing their political activities, politicians have to relate to voters, citizens, members of political parties, the public, etc. Van Dijk calls them “all participants in the political process.” He highlights the need to establish limitations in understanding the term “political discourse” in order to avoid creating a very blurred idea of discourse that, in effect, would lead to the analysis of a very broad public discourse.

For proponents of CDA language is not only “socially shaped, but it is also socially shaping” (Fairclough, 1993, p. 134). As van Leeuwen (2008, p. 6) declares, “social practices are socially regulated ways of doing things.” Politics is a heavily regulated social practice. Politicians’ roles, usually understood as activities that are meant to lead to solving various social issues, are inserted into social and cultural contexts. Presidential speeches are strictly political but they are also social events.

4.2. Fairclough’s Approach to Discourse

In order to embrace Fairclough’s view of discourse and its analysis, it is vital to present the way he interprets some of the key concepts of his theory. In his interpretation of CDA, Fairclough (1992) states that relations between those in power and those inferior are discursive. He draws heavily on Foucault’s idea of discourse as the means of mediating power relations between the oppressors and the oppressed. In his view, studying discourse means investigating the relationship between language, ideology and power and the main task for researchers is to address social issues. Discourse is ideologically shaped and undergoes a constant mediation between text and society where texts are understood not only as written documents but as “the written or spoken language produced in a discursive event.” Fairclough (1993, p. 138) differentiates the meaning of discourse regarding it as an abstract noun, which he interprets as “language use conceived as social practice,” or a countable noun, which he understands as a “way of signifying experience from a particular perspective.” This way, he distinguishes various political discourses related to issues such as inequality, poverty, racism, or other forms of oppression.

As CDA does not offer a consistent methodology, researchers rely on various methodological tools which are borrowed from adjacent fields of science. Fairclough, in his attempt to provide a comprehensive method (1989; 1992; 1993; 1995; 2003; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012), proposes a three-dimensional framework for the analysis of discourse, to which he refers as Textually Oriented Discourse Analysis (TODA). Since

he sees discourse as social practice, this attitude is reflected in his model. He distinguishes three separate areas of study: the first dimension – an analysis of texts, in either form: written or spoken. Studying at micro-level, researchers investigate a variety of aspects of textual linguistic nature; the second dimension – the analysis of discourse practice. It embraces the problematic of production, distribution and consumption of texts. Research at this level involves attempts to answer questions such as who produced a text, who is the target recipient, why was a given text produced; the third dimension – the analysis of discursive events as an example of sociocultural practice. Research is concentrated on intertextual and interdiscursive aspects and considers wider social contexts of production, distribution and consumption of a text.

4.3. Readability of Texts

Readability is defined as the effort that has to be put into reading a written text in order to understand it. Being directly related to the content of a text, readability is assessed mostly by the analysis of a text structure, syntax, and lexis. There are also other parameters researchers use to assess how difficult a given text may be for readers. The size and type of font used to print a text may play a significant role in creating text that would be regarded as easy or difficult to read. It becomes an important aspect when focusing on communicative goals for which a given text is designed. It was in the late 19th century when researchers studying the problematic of readability came to conclusions that there was a direct connection between the level of complexity of vocabulary and syntax and a success or failure in fulfilling a communicative aim. Particularly the use of unusual multi-syllable words, frequently of foreign origin as well as lengthy phrases or sentences contributes to a very low level of readability of a text. In linguistics the Gunning Fog Index is one of a number of readability tests available for analyzing English writing. Devised by Robert Gunning (1952), Fog Index is a relatively simply applicable formula. To perform such test, a set of guidelines requires to be followed. First, a passage of around 100 words is selected. It may comprise one or more paragraphs. None of the sentences may be omitted. Then, by dividing the number of words in the investigated piece of text by the number of sentences the average sentence length is established. Next, three or more syllable words are counted. Compound words and proper nouns are omitted. Common suffixes are not counted as syllables. Finally, the average sentence length and the percentage of complex vocabulary are added and the result of the calculation is multiplied by a factor of 0.4. The result is a number which applied to the Fog Index gives information about the level of readability of an investigated text. The number according to the Fog Index presupposes that the given text can be understood by a reader who left education system at a later age than the index. Nowadays texts can be tested with the use of an application available online ². *Table 1* presents the index in relation to the consecutive levels of education³.

² Gunning Fog Index. Retrieved October 20, 2016, from <http://gunning-fog-index.com/>

³ Indeks czytelności FOG. Retrieved October 20, 2016, from Polish Wikipedia website., Trans. –

Fog Index	Reading level
1-6	easy language, understood by primary school pupils
7-9	easy language, understood by junior high school students
10-12	rather simple language, understood by high school students
13-15	rather difficult language, understood by undergraduate students
16-17	difficult language, understood by postgraduate students
18 and higher	very difficult language, understood by university graduates and higher

Table 1. Readability of texts - Gunning Fog Index

The index calculates how many years a reader needs to spend in a school education system in order to be able to understand a given text after only one reading. The Fog Index of 18 shows that a text is too difficult to be understood by most people. It has to be observed that the tool is somehow limited. Long words which according to the Fog Index formula should be regarded as difficult do not need to be such. However, despite limitations, the formula may be regarded as an efficient tool for testing the readability of texts as it proved to be reliable over the many years of use⁴.

4.4. Typology of Arguments in American Political Discourse

The analysis of the semantic content of Woodrow Wilson's war address is based on a method devised by Piotr P. Chruszczewski (2003) and follows the method of analysis that was used by the author in his *American Presidential Discourse Analysis*. In his work, Chruszczewski analyzed inaugural speeches of the American presidents starting from 1945 until 1997. Having devised eight argument markers and applied them to the presidential inaugurals, the researcher came to conclusions that American presidents avoided building complex arguments that would comprise many elements. One-element or two-element arguments were prevalent. Only one five-element argument was identified within the material under investigation. The presidential speeches were classified into categories: America oriented, strategy oriented and spirit oriented inaugurals. Additionally, the America oriented speeches were then divided into two groups, positive and negative. The author concluded that American presidents made uncomplicated speeches and were very careful with the speeches so as not to overload them with an excess of information (Chruszczewski, 2003, p. 76). In the researcher's view, to analyze texts according to his method, we have to follow a procedure which comprises five stages. First, a speech has to be analyzed. The analysed text has to be divided into arguments. A single argument relates to a single idea or thought. The arguments are numbered (see: Appendix) and a set of markers is established and applied to the

L.W.

⁴ Gunning, R. (1969). The Fog Index After Twenty Years. *New Media and Society*, 6/2, 3–13. Retrieved December 30, 2016, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/002194366900600202>

arguments. Then, a quantitative model has to be established. The third stage involves juxtaposing all the investigated texts. Having done the first three stages, the general quantitative model can be worked out. The final stage involves drawing conclusions based on the research.

The following Chruszczewski's markers are applied in the analysis of Woodrow Wilson's address (see: Chruszczewski, 2003, pp. 17–19):

- S** a marker relating to **situationality**. The marker identifies the context in which the address was delivered. The speaker makes reference to the time, place and social actors of the scene.
- E_m** a marker relating to **emotions**. It refers to those sections of the speech that play on the receivers' emotions. Their use is intended not only to convey the speaker's emotional state but also to rise emotional states of the listeners and carry them in the desired direction.
- R₁** a marker referring to **recent history**. Indications to very recent events, usually related to political affairs, are made by the speaker.
- R₂** a marker relating to **remote history**. The speaker refers to distant past, frequently important historical events, milestones in the country's history.
- K** a marker relating to **general knowledge**. The marker is used when reference to the areas of knowledge regarded as common and shared by the speaker and the receivers is made.
- I** a marker referring to **intertextuality**. The marker identifies the speaker's reference to intertextual elements within the address.
- J** a marker referring to **juxtaposition**. The speaker uses opposing elements within one argument to contrast different ideas in order to make an impact on the recipients.
- P** a marker referring to the **speaker's policy**. It is related to the speaker's view on the development of forthcoming events. The speaker voices his plans regarding future actions.

Because of the specific pre-war context of the document under investigation, there is a need to apply additional argument markers. They are as follows:

- C** a marker referring to the speaker's **conciliation efforts**. It is used to investigate to what lengths the speaker attempts to present himself as unwilling to declare war and attempting to resolve the forthcoming conflict in a peaceful manner. If the speaker decides to proceed towards war, it happens only after all possible means of maintaining peace have been exhausted and all efforts made or initiated by the speaker are regarded as futile.
- E_v** a marker used to investigate the speaker's references to **enemy as evil**. To justify war, the enemy is pictured as driven by evil forces and, consequently, has to be fought against.
- T** a marker referring to the **speaker's threats**. The speaker speaks to threaten the enemy and to show strength, determination and power.
- T_c** a marker relating to **technicality**. The marker identifies the speaker's references

- to pre-war preparation of troops, their organization and localization.
- U** a marker relating to the speaker's utterances in which various aspects of **universal values** are elaborated on⁵. These are freedom, human rights, justice. The marker also indicates remarks to democracy made by the speaker.
- G** a marker relating to **guidelines**, objectives, plans, instructions expressed by the speaker.

4.5. An Overview of Woodrow Wilson's Presidency

A successful President of Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson joined the Democratic Party and soon became the Governor of New Jersey which gave him solid foundations for entering national politics. With his visionary and progressive political and economic views, he was run for presidency by Democrats in 1912 and took the office in 1913. He confirmed his opinion of being a reformist politician by implementing his ideas: lowering tariffs, introducing new federal income tax and antitrust law. In order to control banks, he established the Federal Reserve System. By being firm and consistent while governing the country, Wilson kept strengthening his position within the Democratic Party. As the President of the US, he became the real leader of his party and the real leader of the complicated Washington politics. With the outbreak of World War I, Wilson persisted on a policy of neutrality of the US in relations with the Allied Powers and the Central Powers, which was not difficult to maintain as, at that time, it was preferred by all Americans. Keeping away from European conflicts was one of the principles to which American governments consorted. The attitude of neutrality was strengthened by the fact that at least a third of the American society were immigrants or the children of immigrants with the largest group of German-Americans. This led American politicians to sustained efforts to keep the US neutral. In the presidential election of 1916, Democrats supported Wilson with a slogan "He kept us out of war," which allowed him to defeat his opponent and keep the post for the second term. Starting with 1915, relations with both fighting parties became more complicated and American neutrality entangled Wilson in an uneasy relationship with Germany on one side, and Britain on the other. Introducing the use of submarines in warfare by the Germans and their treatment of neutral and belligerent vessels at open international waters led to outbursts of American anger. Throughout this period, Wilson worked hard to maintain neutral stability and keep America distant from war. However, warfare activities of both the Allied Powers and the Central Powers, the atrocities of war and the number of deaths, led to the evolution of Wilson's approach to the problematic of maintaining American neutrality. In the president's view, the only way to secure long lasting peace was to achieve "peace without victory" (Jones, 1983, pp. 412–414, 420). Such peace would be maintained through an

⁵ For more on American values in presidential speeches see: Włodarek, Ł. (2010). George W. Bush's War on Terror from a Political Discourse Perspective. *Styles of Communication*, 2, 140–175.

international organization. This would lead Wilson to his efforts to create such an independent body. He succeeded in 1920 when, as a result of peace talks, the League of Nations was established. However, before that could materialize, it was April 2, 1917 when President Woodrow Wilson decided that the war activities became too obtrusive to American citizens and that American neutrality was no longer respected. This led him to decide that the USA neglect American policy of neutrality and enter the war.

5. The Analysis of Woodrow Wilson's Address

Only five American presidential messages led to formally declared wars. President Woodrow Wilson's request for war was one of the aforementioned addresses⁶. It is analysed in the context of the other four presidential messages delivered before the remaining four formally declared wars. These are in chronological order: James Madison's⁷, James K. Polk's⁸, William McKinley's⁹ and Franklin D. Roosevelt's¹⁰ messages issued before the war with Great Britain in 1812, the war with Mexico in 1846, the war with Spain in 1898 and World War II respectively.

5.1. The Readability of Wilson's Address

Assessing readability of the recipient is an important aspect to consider when preparing a political speech. To deliver an effective speech the speaker has to write it up in such a manner that it is understood by the hearer. For the sake of precision the whole text of the address was tested. The other four presidential messages issued by J. Madison, J. K. Polk, W. McKinley and F. D. Roosevelt were also tested for comparison. *Table 2* presents the results of the tests. To put the presidential speeches in a wider context, readability test results of congressional declarations of war¹¹ and presidential

⁶ Woodrow Wilson, Address to Congress Requesting a Declaration of War Against Germany (April 2, 1917). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <http://millercenter.org/president/wilson/speeches/speech-4722>

⁷ James Madison, Special Message to Congress on the Foreign Policy Crisis—War Message (June 1, 1812). Retrieved October 12, 2016, from <http://millercenter.org/president/madison/speeches/speech-3614>

⁸ James K. Polk, War Message to Congress (May 11, 1846). Retrieved October 12, 2016, from <http://millercenter.org/president/polk/speeches/war-message-to-congress>

⁹ William McKinley, Message Regarding Cuban Civil War (April 11, 1898). Retrieved October 12, 2016, from <http://millercenter.org/president/mckinley/speeches/message-regarding-cuban-civil-war>

¹⁰ Franklin D. Roosevelt, Address to Congress Requesting a Declaration of War (December 8, 1941). Retrieved October 12, 2016, from <http://millercenter.org/president/fdroosevelt/speeches/speech-3324>

¹¹ United States Congress. An Act Declaring War Between the United Kingdom of Great Britain

proclamations¹² that followed are also included.

Conflict	Presidential messages/requests for war	Congressional declarations of war	Presidential proclamations
War of 1812	23.99	60.49	20.91
Mexican War	18.86	17.05	16.00
Spanish-American War	18.04	11.46	19.04
World War I	17.42	19.62	21.27
World War II	14.03	19.97	11.56

Table 2. Readability of the selected presidential addresses and messages

and Ireland and the Dependencies Thereof and the United States of America and Their Territories (June 18, 1812). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/1812-01.asp

United States Congress. An Act providing for the Prosecution of the existing War between the United States and the Republic of Mexico (May 13, 1846). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/29th-congress/session-1/c29s1ch16.pdf>

United States Congress. Declaration of War with Spain (April 25, 1898). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/image/HR10086_Spanish-American-War.htm

United States Congress. The Declaration of War against Germany (April 6, 1917). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <https://nationalcenter.org/DeclarationofWWI.html>

United States Congress. Joint Resolution Declaring that a state of war exists between the Imperial Government of Japan and the Government and the people of the United States and making provisions to prosecute the same. (December 8, 1941). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/77th-congress/session-1/c77s1ch561.pdf>

¹² James Madison, Proclamation of a State of War with Great Britain (June 19, 1812). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/june-19-1812-proclamation-state-war-great-britain>

James K. Polk, Announcement of War with Mexico (May 13, 1846). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/may-13-1846-announcement-war-mexico>

William McKinley, Proclamation Calling for Military Volunteers (April 23, 1898). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/april-23-1898-proclamation-calling-military-volunteers>

Woodrow Wilson, Proclamation 1364 (April 6, 1917). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/april-6-1917-proclamation-1364>

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Fireside Chat 19: On the War with Japan (December 9, 1941). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/december-9-1941-fireside-chat-19-war-japan>

As it can be seen, Madison's message exceeded the 23 factor of the index and can be regarded as very difficult to understand. Both, Polk's and McKinley's messages received value around the 18 factor, which recognizes language as very difficult to understand. The speech delivered by Wilson is placed little below the 18 factor, but still requires university education in order to be understood by the receiver. Only Roosevelt's message is positioned at the lower end of scale. Factor 14.03 suggests that it was still a rather difficult language, although as the table clearly shows, this message was the easiest to understand. It is observable that over the century the Gunning Fog Index factor of the presidential messages moved steadily down the scale. Quite evidently, the readability of the texts increased. One of the reasons for the increase in understandability of the texts might have been the fact that the oldest messages were addressed to a very narrow group of recipients – members of the Congress, a rather educated strata of American society, with a very little possibility of reaching wider audience due to very limited means of communication at the time, as Carey observes (1983, pp. 303–325)¹³. The first telegram in the United States was sent by Morse in 1838, and it took six years before the first message was sent from the Capital in Washington in 1844. Although commercial telegraphy spread fairly quickly, it took another decade to build connections with the major metropolitan centres on the east coast. To reach the west coast the telegraph required another 17 years. Carey (1989, p. 210) remarks in his *Communication as Culture* that before the invention of the telegraph, information was limited to a human travelling on a horse. As the telegraph allowed communication to become separated from transportation, it revolutionized economy and society and, it may be concluded, affected readability of the scrutinized texts.

5.2. The Typology of Arguments in Wilson's Address

In order to identify the semantic content the whole presidential message was divided into 71 arguments. They do not match the original paragraphs of the text. Instead, they relate to a single and logical thought of the speaker. Each argument was matched with an appropriate marker or a number of markers. As a result, the following model of the development of arguments unfolded:

1. E_m/S (emotional attitude/situationality) 2. S/R_1 (situationality/recent history) 3. $E_m/S/R_1$ (emotional attitude/situationality/recent history) 4. E_m/R_1 (emotional attitude/recent history) 5. $E_m/E_v/S$ (emotional attitude/enemy as evil/situationality) 6. E_v/S (enemy as evil/ situationality) 7. $E_v/E_m/R_1/U$ (enemy as evil/emotional attitude/recent history/universal values) 8. E_m/R_1 (emotional attitude/recent history) 9. $E_m/E_v/U$ (emotional attitude/enemy as evil/universal values) 10. $E_m/S/R_1$ (emotional attitude /situationality/recent history) 11. E_m/J (emotional attitude/juxtaposed elements) 12. E_m

¹³ Carey, J. W. ([1983] Published online: July 1, 2009). *Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph*. *Prospects*, 8, 303–325. Retrieved December 28, 2016, from DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0361233300003793>

(emotional attitude) 13. E_m/S (emotional attitude/situationality) 14. G (speaker's guidelines) 15. $G/E_m/U$ (speaker's guidelines /emotional attitude/universal values) 16. $R_1/E_m/U$ (recent history/emotional attitude/universal values) 17. $E_v/S/T_c/G$ (enemy as evil/situationality/technicality/speaker's guidelines) 18. $K/G/T$ (general knowledge /speaker's guidelines/speaker's threats) 19. $E_m/S/K$ (emotional attitude /situationality /general knowledge) 20. E_m/S (emotional attitude/situationality) 21. G/S (speaker's guidelines/situationality) 22. $P/E_m/G$ (speaker's policy/emotional attitude /speaker's guidelines) 23. E_m (emotional attitude) 24. $E_m/P/S/R_1/G$ (emotional attitude/ speaker's policy/situationality/recent history/speaker's guidelines) 25. K/G (general knowledge /speaker's guidelines) 26. G (speaker's guidelines) 27. G (speaker's guidelines) 28. T_c/G (technicality/speaker's guidelines) 29. T_c/G (technicality/speaker's guidelines) 30. E_m/G (emotional attitude/speaker's guidelines) 31. G/T_c (speaker's guidelines /technicality) 32. P (speaker's policy) 33. E_m (emotional attitude) 34. E_m (emotional attitude) 35. E_m/S (emotional attitude/situationality) 36. R_1/P (recent history/speaker's policy) 37. P/U (speaker's policy/universal values) 38. E_m/U (emotional attitude/universal values) 39. G (speaker's guidelines) 40. $E_m/S/R_1$ (emotional attitude/situationality/recent history) 41. $E_m/R_1/R_2$ (emotional attitude/recent history /remote history) 42. E_v/E_m (enemy as evil/emotional attitude) 43. E_v/J (enemy as evil/juxtaposed elements) 44. E_m (emotional attitude) 45. $E_m/J/G$ (emotional attitude/juxtaposed elements/speaker's guidelines) 46. E_m/J (emotional attitude/ juxtaposed elements) 47. E_m/S (emotional attitude/situationality) 48. E_m (emotional attitude) 49. S/J (situationality/juxtaposed elements) 50. $E_v/E_m/S$ (enemy as evil/ emotional attitude/situationality) 51. $E_v/K/S$ (enemy as evil/general knowledge/situationality) 52. E_v/J (enemy as evil/juxtaposed elements) 53. $K/S/R_1$ (general knowledge/situationality /recent history) 54. E_m (emotional attitude) 55. E_m/G (emotional attitude/speaker's guidelines) 56. $K/E_m/U$ (general knowledge/emotional attitude/universal values) 57. E_m/U (emotional attitude/universal values) 58. E_m/U (emotional attitude/universal values) 59. $E_m/U/G$ (emotional attitude/universal values/speaker's guidelines) 60. E_m/P (emotional attitude/ speaker's policy) 61. S (situationality) 62. $S/T_c/P$ (situationality/technicality/speaker's policy) 63. S/U (situationality/universal values) 64. $E_m/E_v/J/G$ (emotional attitude/enemy as evil/ juxtaposed elements/speaker's guidelines) 65. E_m/G (emotional attitude/speaker's guidelines) 66. G/J (speaker's guidelines/juxtaposed elements) 67. E_m/G (emotional attitude/speaker's guidelines) 68. P (speaker's policy) 69. $E_m/P/G$ (emotional attitude /speaker's policy/ speaker's guidelines) 70. $E_m/P/G$ (emotional attitude/speaker's policy /speaker's guidelines) 71. E_m/U (emotional attitude/universal values)

The data obtained from the model of the development of arguments allows to establish a clear layout of arguments in relation to the number of elements (*Table 3.*).

Type of argument	Number of arguments applied in the address
One-element argument	14
Two-element argument	33
Three-element argument	20
Four-element argument	3
Five-element argument	1

Table 3. The number of arguments applied in the presidential address

As can be observed, two-element arguments are most frequently applied in the speech and form a significant part of the body of the text. There are 33 of those out of the total number of 71 arguments in the presidential address. The second most frequently used is a three-element argument. Being more complex than two-element argument, it is however not as complicated as arguments with higher number of elements which, as can be seen, were clearly avoided by the President. One-element argument was applied fourteen times, which resulted in the text being not too difficult to understand for an educated member of Congress. Four-element argument was applied only three times while only one five-element argument was used throughout the speech. *Figure 1.* offers a visual presentation of the structure of the presidential address in relation to the number of elements within individual arguments.

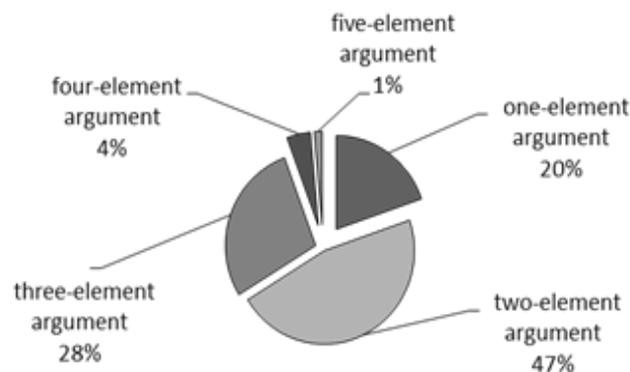


Figure 1. Visual presentation of the structure of the presidential address

A large section of the presidential address, written using two-element arguments, allowed the speech to be clear and, as the results of the Gunning Fog Index suggest, appropriately understood by the educated congressmen. The marginal use of four-element

arguments and the single use of a five-element argument clearly indicates the speaker's will to avoid complex utterances which could be regarded as complicated and could lead the recipients to misunderstanding and improper interpretation of the speaker's message. The issue, which was a matter whether the country would go to war or not, was too serious to allow any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the address. Having based his war message on two-element argument, three-element argument and one-element argument structure, the President produced a speech that was adequately received by the Congress. Wilson's choice of arguments and their structure allowed him to present the issue in such a manner that it was clear to the listeners and allowed the president to achieve his goal.

5.3. The Quantitative Structure of Arguments

The numbers of applied markers have been calculated and presented in *Figure 2*. The emotional attitude marker outnumbers all the other markers. Its number of 45 equalizes with the sum of the second and the third most frequently used markers which are the speaker's guidelines marker and situationality marker respectively. These three arguments constitute the main body of the text comprising 91 elements out of the total number of 157 elements. The 91 elements constitute 58% of the total number of arguments. Universal values (U), remote history (R₁) and enemy as evil (Ev) markers provide 23% of the arguments in the speech.

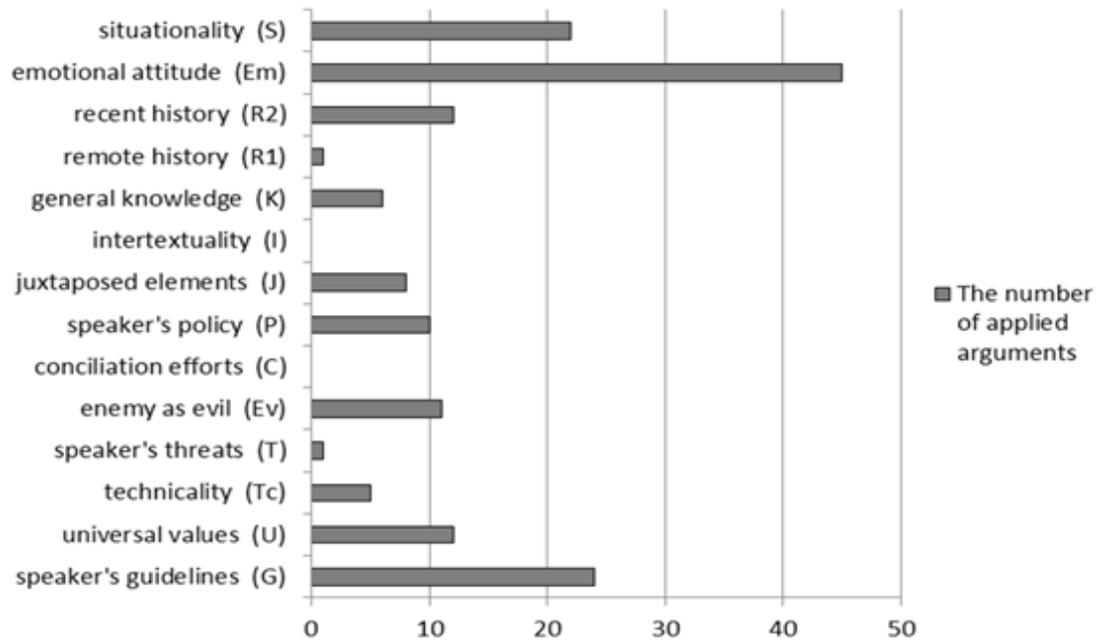


Figure 2. The numbers of applied markers

Surprisingly, the intertextuality marker and the conciliation efforts marker are non-existent in the presidential address. In contrast with Wilson's war message, Roosevelt expressed American conciliation efforts very explicitly in his Address to Congress Requesting a Declaration of War, which he delivered on December 8, 1941:

The United States was at peace with that Nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. [...] the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

President Wilson chose a different approach. Although he had highlighted the American will to remain neutral in what had been regarded as mainly an overseas European conflict, he did not build his speech on conciliation efforts arguments. No efforts of the American government to prevent the participation in the conflict are mentioned. The exact numbers of individual elements establishing the model of argument development are shown in *Table 4*.

Marker	Number of elements
emotional attitude (Em)	45
speaker's guidelines (G)	24
situationality (S)	22
universal values (U)	12
recent history (R1)	12
enemy as evil (Ev)	11
speaker's policy (P)	10
juxtaposed elements (J)	8
general knowledge (K)	6
technicality (Tc)	5
speaker's threats (T)	1
remote history (R2)	1
conciliation efforts (C)	0
intertextuality (I)	0

Table 4. The model of argument development

The layout of the number of individual markers clearly illustrates the structure of the presidential war message. As can be seen, the text is based on the following model of the development of arguments: $E_m/G/S/U/R_1/E_v/P/J/K/T_c/T/R_2$ (emotional attitude /guidelines /situationality/universal values/recent history/enemy as evil/speaker's policy/juxtaposed elements/general knowledge/technicality/speaker's threats/remote history). *Figure 3.* provides a visual presentation of the model of argument development of Woodrow Wilson's address:

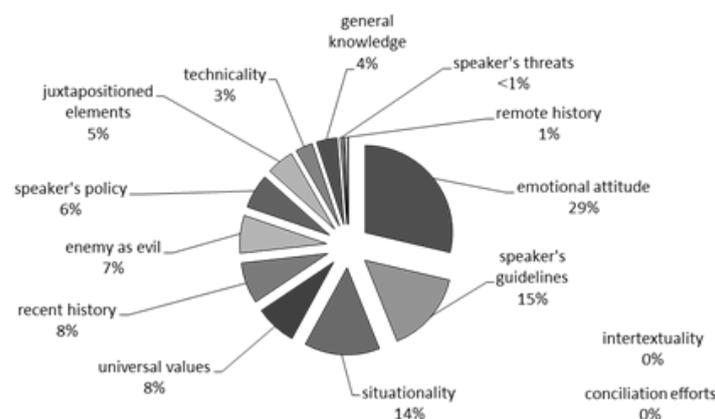


Figure 3. Visual presentation of the model of argument development
As can be noticed, the emotional attitude marker (E_m) is the dominant one – it

shows that almost 30% of all the arguments used in the presidential speech related to emotions. President Wilson chose arguments according to the situation. Aristotle's persuasive audience appeals which are *logos*, *pathos*, *ethos* and *kairos*, were appropriately employed throughout the speech. *Logos*, which represents an appeal to the emotions of the recipients of the message, and elicits feelings of the recipients served as the base for the argument structure. The speaker's appeal to the feelings of the listeners was meant to be effective. Without doubt the President did not allow himself to rely on emotions exclusively. Building the desired emotional attitude of the audience was strengthened by the use of two other relevant types of arguments. The speaker's guidelines marker (G) illustrates the frequency with which President Wilson gave advice or expressed his stance as president, regarding the development of the forthcoming war events. The arguments made up 15% of the whole number of arguments in the speech. The situationality marker (S) illustrates the number of references to geopolitical situation – in particular the activities of the German marine forces, which in Wilson's view, inevitably led the US towards the war. The argument makes up 14% of the total number of arguments and is one of the three main components of the speech. Wilson's reliance on emotions allowed the President to build the atmosphere that would lead the recipients of the message to the expected decisions. References to the situation, which in Wilson's view drew America into war, whether willingly or unwillingly, and his strong statements related to the predicted development of events allowed him to build the picture of a strong politician and leader knowing what political measures to undertake in order to secure the victory over the enemy.

5.4. Discursive and Sociocultural Aspects of the Address

When delivering a speech the speaker establishes his identity and relation towards the recipients. It is performed with the use of a number of tools such as wording, metaphors or grammar structures. The use of emphasis allows the speaker to highlight some aspects of the speech, and to hide some other, unwanted elements. At the discursive level, or dimension as Fairclough names it, researchers look at discourse as discursive practice. At this stage of analysis power relations are taken under scrutiny. At the sociocultural level, discourse is seen as social practice. This is where ideology and hegemony are established. Using the power of his post, Wilson, as one of the great actors on the scene of pre-war events, could shape and did shape social relations. The arguments that he used in his address were strong and would not leave room for hesitation:

There is one choice we cannot make, we are incapable of making: we will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored or violated. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life.

What Wilson required was arguments that showed the head of state as a strong,

confident and determined politician. Using appropriate rhetorical devices Wilson pictured himself as a firm leader, the one who was in control of the situation, the one whom the American people could and should trust, and the one who was bound to lead the country to victory once the US entered the warfare:

It will be all the easier for us to conduct ourselves as belligerents in a high spirit of right and fairness because we act without animus, not in enmity toward a people or with the desire to bring any injury or disadvantage upon them, but only in armed opposition to an irresponsible government which has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and of right and is running amuck.

The manner in which the President outlined the forthcoming events did not leave room for speculating or expressing any doubts. The recipients received a very clear message of what was to be expected and how it would be dealt with:

What this will involve is clear. It will involve the utmost practicable cooperation in counsel and action [...]. It will involve the organization and mobilization of all the material resources of the country to supply the materials of war [...]. It will involve the immediate full equipment of the Navy in all respects but particularly in supplying it with the best means of dealing with the enemy's submarines. It will involve the immediate addition to the armed forces of the United States already provided for by law in case of war at least 500,000 men, [...], and also the authorization of subsequent additional increments of equal force so soon as they may be needed [...]. It will involve also, of course, the granting of adequate credits to the government [...].

By the use of anaphora, Wilson achieved the desired result, establishing his hegemony over the recipients of the message. Having repeated the “It will involve” phrase, the President created an impression of being a firm, decisive politician in control of the situation. He understood the problem he was addressing, and the American people could trust him entirely. He also knew what would happen as a result of the acceptance of the Presidential address by the Congress. He had coined a plan and, above all, as the head of state, he had already made decisions that required only formal acceptance.

Considering the dynamics of Wilson’s speech and the relation between the language used and social aspects of life, it may be observed that the presidential address confirms the position of the President as the strongest player on the arena of American politics. However, he needed to bear in mind American society’s resentment towards war that prevailed in the country in the early years of the European conflict. By the appropriate use of linguistic devices, the use of emotions, Wilson confirmed his hegemony addressing the problem of possible quandaries of American citizens of German descent and their reluctant attitude towards the possible involvement of the US in the European conflict. In the speech the President demonstrates his power: “If there should be

disloyalty, it will be dealt with a firm hand of stern repression; but, if it lifts its head at all, it will lift it only here and there and without countenance except from a lawless and malignant few.” The choice of lexis establishes the President’s position as the most powerful person in the country. Disloyalty, opposing view, criticism are not expected by Wilson. The warning clearly specifies what opponents of the Presidential undertaking must expect. Introducing the country to war required a strong leadership. The linguistic content of the speech delivers the picture of a strong, determined Chief Executive of the state. The speech does not allow for a dispute and confirms the power and hegemony of the President, leaving the citizens of the country with very little to comment on.

6. Conclusions

The results of the research demonstrate that Wilson’s speech was very emotional with many situational and instructional references. The president used appropriate rhetorical tools to deliver what the audience required: the description of the geopolitical situation which, as pictured by Wilson, made war unavoidable; the rise of emotions, which was necessary for convincing the recipients to make the history changing decision of declaring war; the very clear reference to Wilson’s future actions, which allowed the audience to remain confident that the Presidential undertakings would lead America to victory. President Wilson’s discourse aimed at creating a picture of a strong, determined and visionary leader of the nation. The speech itself once again proved the importance of rhetoric in political discourse as President Woodrow Wilson is regarded by historians as one of the presidents who left a significant imprint in American history. Being criticized by many for drawing America into the distant European conflict (Jones, 1983, pp. 429–431), by others he is seen as a Peacemaker with his concept and, finally, realization of the League of Nations:

America is the only nation since the Crusades to fight other peoples' battles at her own gigantic loss. We may be proud of that Crusade even if it did fail to bring peace to mankind. Woodrow Wilson, however, did spread lasting ideals over the world. (Hoover, 1958, pp. viii–ix)

The analyzed speech clearly demonstrates that President Woodrow Wilson was a powerful speaker possessing adequate rhetorical skills. He was undeniably one of those politicians who shaped the modern “rhetorical” presidency in the USA.

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Appendix: Woodrow Wilson's address divided into arguments

Gentlemen of the Congress:

1. I have called the Congress into extraordinary session because there are serious, very serious, choices of policy to be made, and made immediately, which it was neither right nor constitutionally permissible that I should assume the responsibility of making.
2. On the 3rd of February last, I officially laid before you the extraordinary announcement of the Imperial German government that on and after the 1st day of February it was its purpose to put aside all restraints of law or of humanity and use its submarines to sink every vessel that sought to approach either the ports of Great Britain and Ireland or the western coasts of Europe or any of the ports controlled by the enemies of Germany within the Mediterranean.
3. That had seemed to be the object of the German submarine warfare earlier in the war, but since April of last year the Imperial government had somewhat restrained the commanders of its undersea craft in conformity with its promise then given to us that passenger boats should not be sunk and that due warning would be given to all other vessels which its submarines might seek to destroy, when no resistance was offered or escape attempted, and care taken that their crews were given at least a fair chance to save their lives in their open boats.
4. The precautions taken were meager and haphazard enough, as was proved in distressing instance after instance in the progress of the cruel and unmanly business, but a certain degree of restraint was observed.
5. The new policy has swept every restriction aside. Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom without warning and without thought of help or mercy for those on board, the vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents.
6. Even hospital ships and ships carrying relief to the sorely bereaved and stricken people of Belgium, though the latter were provided with safe conduct through the proscribed areas by the German government itself and were distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, have been sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion or of principle.
7. I was for a little while unable to believe that such things would in fact be done by any government that had hitherto subscribed to the humane practices of civilized nations. International law had its origin in the attempt to set up some law which would be respected and observed upon the seas, where no nation had right of dominion and where lay the free highways of the world.
8. By painful stage after stage has that law been built up, with meager enough results, indeed, after all was accomplished that could be accomplished, but always with a clear view, at least, of what the heart and conscience of mankind demanded.
9. This minimum of right the German government has swept aside under the plea of retaliation and necessity and because it had no weapons which it could use at sea except these which it is impossible to employ as it is employing them without throwing to the winds all scruples of humanity or of respect for the understandings that were supposed to underlie the intercourse of the world.
10. I am not now thinking of the loss of property involved, immense and serious as that is, but only of the wanton and wholesale destruction of the lives of noncombatants, men, women, and children, engaged in pursuits which have always, even in the darkest periods of modern history, been deemed innocent and legitimate.
11. Property can be paid for; the lives of peaceful and innocent people cannot be.
12. The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind. It is a war against all nations.

13. American ships have been sunk, American lives taken in ways which it has stirred us very deeply to learn of; but the ships and people of other neutral and friendly nations have been sunk and overwhelmed in the waters in the same way. There has been no discrimination. The challenge is to all mankind.

14. Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it. The choice we make for ourselves must be made with a moderation of counsel and a temperateness of judgment befitting our character and our motives as a nation.

15. We must put excited feeling away. Our motive will not be revenge or the victorious assertion of the physical might of the nation, but only the vindication of right, of human right, of which we are only a single champion.

16. When I addressed the Congress on the 26th of February last, I thought that it would suffice to assert our neutral rights with arms, our right to use the seas against unlawful interference, our right to keep our people safe against unlawful violence.

17. But armed neutrality, it now appears, is impracticable. Because submarines are in effect outlaws when used as the German submarines have been used against merchant shipping, it is impossible to defend ships against their attacks as the law of nations has assumed that merchantmen would defend themselves against privateers or cruisers, visible craft giving chase upon the open sea.

18. It is common prudence in such circumstances, grim necessity indeed, to endeavor to destroy them before they have shown their own intention. They must be dealt with upon sight, if dealt with at all.

19. The German government denies the right of neutrals to use arms at all within the areas of the sea which it has proscribed, even in the defense of rights which no modern publicist has ever before questioned their right to defend.

20. The intimation is conveyed that the armed guards which we have placed on our merchant ships will be treated as beyond the pale of law and subject to be dealt with as pirates would be.

21. Armed neutrality is ineffectual enough at best; in such circumstances and in the face of such pretensions it is worse than ineffectual: it is likely only to produce what it was meant to prevent; it is practically certain to draw us into the war without either the rights or the effectiveness of belligerents.

22. There is one choice we cannot make, we are incapable of making: we will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored or violated.

23. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life.

24. With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German government to be in fact nothing less than war against the government and people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it; and that it take immediate steps, not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.

25. What this will involve is clear. It will involve the utmost practicable cooperation in counsel and action with the governments now at war with Germany and, as incident to that, the extension to those governments of the most liberal financial credits, in order that our resources may so far as

possible be added to theirs.

26. It will involve the organization and mobilization of all the material resources of the country to supply the materials of war and serve the incidental needs of the nation in the most abundant and yet the most economical and efficient way possible.

27. It will involve the immediate full equipment of the Navy in all respects but particularly in supplying it with the best means of dealing with the enemy's submarines.

28. It will involve the immediate addition to the armed forces of the United States already provided for by law in case of war at least 500,000 men, who should, in my opinion, be chosen upon the principle of universal liability to service, and also the authorization of subsequent additional increments of equal force so soon as they may be needed and can be handled in training.

29. It will involve also, of course, the granting of adequate credits to the government, sustained, I hope, so far as they can equitably be sustained by the present generation, by well-conceived taxation. I say sustained so far as may be equitable by taxation because it seems to me that it would be most unwise to base the credits which will now be necessary entirely on money borrowed.

30. It is our duty, I most respectfully urge, to protect our people so far as we may against the very serious hardships and evils which would be likely to arise out of the inflation which would be produced by vast loans.

31. In carrying out the measures by which these things are to be accomplished, we should keep constantly in mind the wisdom of interfering as little as possible in our own preparation and in the equipment of our own military forces with the duty-for it will be a very practical duty-of supplying the nations already at war with Germany with the materials which they can obtain only from us or by our assistance. They are in the field and we should help them in every way to be effective there.

32. I shall take the liberty of suggesting, through the several executive departments of the government, for the consideration of your committees, measures for the accomplishment of the several objects I have mentioned.

33. I hope that it will be your pleasure to deal with them as having been framed after very careful thought by the branch of the government upon which the responsibility of conducting the war and safeguarding the nation will most directly fall.

34. While we do these things, these deeply momentous things, let us be very clear, and make very clear to all the world, what our motives and our objects are.

35. My own thought has not been driven from its habitual and normal course by the unhappy events of the last two months, and I do not believe that the thought of the nation has been altered or clouded by them.

36. I have exactly the same things in mind now that I had in mind when I addressed the Senate on the 22nd of January last; the same that I had in mind when I addressed the Congress on the 3rd of February and on the 26th of February.

37. Our object now, as then, is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and autocratic power and to set up among the really free and self-governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth ensure the observance of those principles.

38. Neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable where the peace of the world is involved and the freedom of its peoples, and the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people.

39. We have seen the last of neutrality in such circumstances. We are at the beginning of an age in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and of responsibility for wrong done

shall be observed among nations and their governments that are observed among the individual citizens of civilized states.

40. We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling toward them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval.

41. It was a war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old, unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties or of little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellowmen as pawns and tools.

42. Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbor states with spies or set the course of intrigue to bring about some critical posture of affairs which will give them an opportunity to strike and make conquest. Such designs can be successfully worked out only under cover and where no one has the right to ask questions.

43. Cunningly contrived plans of deception or aggression, carried, it may be, from generation to generation, can be worked out and kept from the light only within the privacy of courts or behind the carefully guarded confidences of a narrow and privileged class. They are happily impossible where public opinion commands and insists upon full information concerning all the nation's affairs.

44. A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations.

45. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants. It must be a league of honor, a partnership of opinion. Intrigue would eat its vitals away; the plottings of inner circles who could plan what they would and render account to no one would be a corruption seated at its very heart.

46. Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honor steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own.

47. Does not every American feel that assurance has been added to our hope for the future peace of the world by the wonderful and heartening things that have been happening within the last few weeks in Russia?

48. Russia was known by those who knew it best to have been always in fact democratic at heart, in all the vital habits of her thought, in all the intimate relationships of her people that spoke their natural instinct, their habitual attitude toward life.

49. The autocracy that crowned the summit of her political structure, long as it had stood and terrible as was the reality of its power, was not in fact Russian in origin, character, or purpose; and now it has been shaken off and the great, generous Russian people have been added in all their naive majesty and might to the forces that are fighting for freedom in the world, for justice, and for peace. Here is a fit partner for a League of Honor.

50. One of the things that has served to convince us that the Prussian autocracy was not and could never be our friend is that from the very outset of the present war it has filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of government with spies and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot against our national unity of counsel, our peace within and without, our industries and our commerce.

51. Indeed, it is now evident that its spies were here even before the war began; and it is unhappily not a matter of conjecture but a fact proved in our courts of justice that the intrigues which have more than once come perilously near to disturbing the peace and dislocating the industries of the country have been carried on at the instigation, with the support, and even under

the personal direction of official agents of the Imperial government accredited to the government of the United States.

52. Even in checking these things and trying to extirpate them, we have sought to put the most generous interpretation possible upon them because we knew that their source lay, not in any hostile feeling or purpose of the German people toward us (who were no doubt as ignorant of them as we ourselves were) but only in the selfish designs of a government that did what it pleased and told its people nothing.

53. But they have played their part in serving to convince us at last that that government entertains no real friendship for us and means to act against our peace and security at its convenience. That it means to stir up enemies against us at our very doors the intercepted note to the German minister at Mexico City is eloquent evidence.

54. We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose because we know that in such a government, following such methods, we can never have a friend; and that in the presence of its organized power, always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, there can be no assured security for the democratic governments of the world.

55. We are now about to accept gauge of battle with this natural foe to liberty and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power.

56. We are glad, now that we see the facts with no veil of false pretense about them, to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included: for the rights of nations great and small and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience.

57. The world must be made safe for democracy.

58. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty.

59. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.

60. Just because we fight without rancor and without selfish object, seeking nothing for ourselves but what we shall wish to share with all free peoples, we shall, I feel confident, conduct our operations as belligerents without passion and ourselves observe with proud punctilio the principles of right and of fair play we profess to be fighting for.

61. I have said nothing of the governments allied with the Imperial government of Germany because they have not made war upon us or challenged us to defend our right and our honor.

62. The Austro-Hungarian government has, indeed, avowed its unqualified endorsement and acceptance of the reckless and lawless submarine warfare adopted now without disguise by the Imperial German government, and it has therefore not been possible for this government to receive Count Tarnowski, the ambassador recently accredited to this government by the Imperial and Royal government of Austria-Hungary; but that government has not actually engaged in warfare against citizens of the United States on the seas, and I take the liberty, for the present at least, of postponing a discussion of our relations with the authorities at Vienna.

63. We enter this war only where we are clearly forced into it because there are no other means of defending our rights.

64. It will be all the easier for us to conduct ourselves as belligerents in a high spirit of right and fairness because we act without animus, not in enmity toward a people or with the desire to bring any injury or disadvantage upon them, but only in armed opposition to an irresponsible government which has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and of right and is running amuck.

65. We are, let me say again, the sincere friends of the German people, and shall desire nothing so much as the early reestablishment of intimate relations of mutual advantage between us-however hard it may be for them, for the time being, to believe that this is spoken from our hearts.

66. We have borne with their present government through all these bitter months because of that friendship-exercising a patience and forbearance which would otherwise have been impossible. We shall, happily, still have an opportunity to prove that friendship in our daily attitude and actions toward the millions of men and women of German birth and native sympathy who live among us and share our life, and we shall be proud to prove it toward all who are in fact loyal to their neighbors and to the government in the hour of test.

67. They are, most of them, as true and loyal Americans as if they had never known any other fealty or allegiance. They will be prompt to stand with us in rebuking and restraining the few who may be of a different mind and purpose.

68. If there should be disloyalty, it will be dealt with a firm hand of stern repression; but, if it lifts its head at all, it will lift it only here and there and without countenance except from a lawless and malignant few.

69. It is a distressing and oppressive duty, gentlemen of the Congress, which I have performed in thus addressing you. There are, it may be, many months of fiery trial and sacrifice ahead of us.

70. It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts-for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.

71. To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.