VILNIUS TECH
Vilnius Gediminas
Technical University

CREATIVITY STUDIES

THE CONTEXT OF THE CREATIVE SOCIETY IN LEADERS' POLITICAL SPEECHES

Karolina MARKAUSKAITĖ[✉]

Independent researcher, Vilnius, Lithuania

Abstract. This paper explores the context of the creative society in the political speeches of leaders. The study uses qualitative content analysis to analyse the speeches of political leaders and citizen leaders, how they recur and reflect themes relevant to the creative society. Citizen leaders in the context of this study are well-known and active public figures, public figures, leaders of various non-governmental organizations who speak out on issues of public interest. Political leaders are politicians who carry out political communication, which is focused on attracting voters, and their speeches are part of their image-building. The study showed that political leaders are more likely to give speeches, but citizen leaders are more likely to give speeches on topics of creative public interest, their speeches tend to focus on themes such as exceptionalism, they seek to touch the audience's feelings, they talk about how everyone wants to feel important, to make a contribution to solving a problem, and they emphasise how we can each contribute to the destruction of hierarchy. Political leaders usually talk about economic growth – North Atlantic Treaty Organization, European Union – but also about human freedoms, how they were fought for in the past and how important it is now. The results of this research can help citizens and political leaders to improve their political communication, namely their languages, to understand what kind of communication is relevant for a creative society.

1. Introduction

The creative society is strongly linked to politics. Although one of the first scholars of the creative society, Florida (2014), does not classify politicians as part of the creative class, the creative class and politics have many points of contact and are in some cases interdependent. According to Florida (2014), the creative class includes lawyers, businessmen, artists, educators, *etc.*, and nowadays, many politicians belong to the creative class or at least have a background in the creative class before they are actively involved in politics. There is also a very strong leadership phenomenon in politics, with each government and party having its own leaders. However, nowadays political leaders are not only politicians, but also various public figures, activists and leaders of various non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Their political communication is not focused on attracting voters, they communicate on a range of issues of public interest, raising issues that politicians dare not raise (Torfing et al., 2022). As political issues are increasingly addressed by leaders who are not politicians, it is important to understand how the content, themes and reasoning of speeches by political leaders and citizen leaders differ, or do not differ.

Aim of the paper: to investigate how themes of relevance to the creative society are reflected in the speeches of political leaders and citizen leaders.

The object of the paper: political speeches by political leaders and citizen leaders in the context of a creative society.

The research question: how is the context of the creative society reflected in the political speeches of political and citizen leaders?

The paper consists of these chapters: introduction; first part – analysis of research literature, where political communication and speeches, creative society and political leaders are analysed; second part – justification of the research methodology – analysis of the content of the text of the speeches; third part – results of the empirical research, where political speeches of leaders are analysed; conclusions; limitations of the research; list of references.

2. Literature review

2.1. The context of political communication in speeches

Political communication raises critical questions about power dynamics and influence in democracies. McNair (2003) argues that it aims to shape the political environment through strategic messaging, which sparks debates about its role in manipulating public opinion versus fostering democratic discourse. Gonçalves (2018) notes that political communication is no longer a linear process; citizens are now active participants through activism and digital platforms. However, political communication also involves what politicians convey to their party members, opponents, and other political actors complicating the dynamics of influence and interaction in the political arena (Gonçalves, 2018).

Nowadays, political communication is playing an increasingly important role in citizens' relationship with politics, *i.e.* in shaping the political culture of how citizens perceive and evaluate politics. This is a phenomenon that touches all democratic societies and which contributes to the formation of political culture (Barandiarán et al., 2020).

It is crucial that politicians know how to present themselves as leaders, to show their ability to lead not only their party but also the country. But at the same time, it is important that politicians are able to apply popular culture to their own speeches, using what is close and understandable to people. Politicians often seek to monopolise the attention of voters and use various forms of entertainment such as radio, television, talk shows, the internet, and magazines in order to shape their image (Cwalina & Falkowski, 2016; Durántez-Stolle & Martínez-Sanz, 2019).

Oratory has always been a very important part of political communication. Its roots go back to ancient Rome and ancient Greece. Nowadays, the orator's communication with the audience is analysed, with a strong focus on the rhetorical techniques used by the politician to gain the audience's support (Bull, 2016). Politicians usually start their speeches with a greeting and an introduction, after which they ask for support from the audience. This is followed by thanking the audience. The speaker often asks for the audience's support with questions such as *Don't you think so?*, *Do you agree with me?*. Politicians also often try to insert jokes/humorous expressions – witty and amusing remarks to make the audience laugh. When talking about a political campaign, the speaker often talks about the details of the campaign, such as travels, people they met, conversations with voters, *etc.* (Bull & Miskinis, 2014).

In times of crisis, politicians choose their communication strategies, which reveal their true behavior and intentions. This can either be proactive or reactive communication. Proactive communication is aimed at addressing issues before they arise, functioning as preventive communication, where action is taken instead of waiting for a crisis to occur. Reactive communication, on the other hand, responds to events that have already happened. Its goal is to end the ongoing crisis and mitigate its consequences. Political speeches often occur only after the situation has already unfolded, highlighting a tendency towards reactive communication strategies (Unikaitė-Jakuntavičienė & Matulkaitė, 2017).

While the authors suggest that it is clear how politicians carry out their political communication and what they are trying to achieve with their speeches, the aspect of political communication and speeches of citizen leaders is still not entirely clear how their speeches are different from and what they are trying to achieve with them.

2.2. The concept of a creative society and the politics of creativity

Creative societies emerged from the evolution of information and knowledge societies. The term *creative society* can be used in two ways. In the first case, it refers directly to a society that is creative, while in the second case, the creative society should be understood as a phenomenon (Reimeris, 2016). Different scholars tend to look at different aspects of the creative society, such as the characteristics of the creative society and the creative class, the creative economy and the creative industries, creativity, the creative city, and the creative bureaucracy. A characteristic feature of contemporary society is the increasing number of people working in creative professions (Venckūnas, 2022a). Creative lifestyles are important in a creative society. The nature of modern work confirms this: the possibility to choose work schedules, long vacations, which are mostly used for creative work. Therefore, creative workers have to navigate between the desire for informal work and the need to remain in the formal labour market in order to secure certain social guarantees (Kacerauskas, 2020).

Kačerauskas (2017), referring to Florida (2014), refers to the following societal creativity indices: the bohemian index, the high technology index, the innovation index, the gay index, the talent index, the cauldron index, as well as the total creativity indexes. However, the same author argues that it is questionable whether this list is exhaustive, whether these are the only ones that exist, and whether they do not change as society and trends change. Kačerauskas therefore identifies alternative indices of creativity: the emigration index, the sexual minorities index, the suicide rate, the economic growth index, the sociality index, and the urban index.

According to Kačerauskas (2017), based on Florida (2014), politicians do not belong to the creative class, and one of the reasons for this is that politics is not a profession, and the creative class is defined by professions. However, politics are very important for the creative society; politicians themselves being creative can achieve various goals. Kačerauskas himself argues that although Florida, one of the most important scholars of the creative class, does not include politicians in the list of creatives, in his view "politics is a creative activity". In Florida's (2014) list, politicians are absent from the list altogether, they have disappeared, even though it would be possible to create another class – the ruling class. In the strict sense, politicians are creators, making laws and social provisions for the population. The media also

help to create politicians by creating society according to the wishes of politicians, but nowadays it is often the case that the media create politicians themselves (Kačerauskas, 2017).

There is also a creativity policy. The key to creativity policy is not budgets, but the orientation of society towards creativity. It is not about economic gain, but about a happy society. Politicians themselves may risk their political careers in order to move society in a creative direction (Kačerauskas, 2017). Based on Venckūnas' (2022b) research, creative policy is a strategic approach focused on enhancing societal creativity by promoting the creative class as a key driver of economic and cultural growth. It integrates public policy measures in education, culture, and innovation to create an environment where creativity can thrive, contributing to long-term national development. Based on other authors, Edgell and Lee (2023), social creativity is essential for addressing the complex challenges faced by contemporary society. To promote social creativity, policymakers should focus on interdisciplinary collaboration, the integration of design thinking into educational programs, and the reimagining of university structures. Such initiatives would not only foster creative and entrepreneurial skills but also enable students and communities to work together in developing innovative solutions. By leveraging these ideas, policymakers can create creative policy strategies that meet modern needs and challenges.

Based on Kačerauskas' idea that politics is a creative activity and that there is a creativity policy, it can be assumed that political leaders influence the creative society. And the communication of political leaders should reflect the creative society aspect, because not only do they influence the creative society, but the creative society can also influence them directly through their choices.

2.3. Political leadership and classification of leaders

Political leadership has many definitions. Tömmel (2020) describes political leadership as the relationship between leaders and their followers. She also argues that political leadership is when politicians, with specific goals and motives, use political, psychological and other means to satisfy and engage their followers. Bennister (2016) argues that political leadership describes various political systems and public decision-making. Other authors (Steyvers et al., 2008), describe political leadership as the power to make decisions that influence society. However, nowadays political leadership is often institutionalised and attributed to the executive branch. Leadership in the executive is organizational, shaped by a collective political mechanism, but the executive also has its own leaders who play a role (Steyvers et al., 2008).

Political leadership was first developed to serve the benefits and needs of politicians, but over time, politics has moved from the elite to the public sphere (Medveschi, 2020). Political leadership is crucial to ensure certain social orders and guarantees. Political systems with ineffective political leaders often lead to chaos, anxiety, and strife (Ofosu-Anim & Back, 2021). Successful political leadership is when the leader is honest and charismatic, and pursues economic development and sustainability (Ali et al., 2017).

Most political leadership scholars identify three main functions of political leaders: setting the political agenda, making decisions and providing help and support. Political programming is the process of interpreting the political situation, identifying problems and proposing

solutions. Decision-making is about separating needs from wants, setting goals and creative problem solving. The third function is providing support, which is providing assistance in implementing new solutions (Torfing et al., 2022).

The three functions mentioned above – setting the political agenda, making decisions, and providing assistance and support – suggest that political leaders are not only those who have been democratically elected in political elections (Torfing et al., 2022). Political leaders can also be other public figures and activists: community leaders, NGOs representatives, leaders of social and political movements, *etc.* They also often have important decision-making and implementation functions. However, it is understandable that elected politicians play a key leadership role. But there is no guarantee that democratically elected politicians will perform the basic functions required of a political leader (Torfing et al., 2022).

The authors Ofosu-Anim and Back (2021) define the difference between a political leader and a politician. While they may occupy the same position, they have different goals and ways of achieving them. A leader is characterised by responsibility and passion, while a politician can pursue his or her goals without thinking about the consequences (Ofosu-Anim & Back, 2021). A leader who does not make optimal use of the tools at his disposal can do a lot of damage, *i.e.* work on only one job, but publicise it very widely so as to give the public the impression that the leader is working very hard. In this case, other important aspects of the state are not touched and it suffers (Efianda & Iswahyuni, 2021). The same author categorises political leaders on the basis of 4 traits – statesman, demagogue, rank and file politician, and citizen leader.

These theories suggest that not only politicians, but also citizen leaders can be active political leaders. Both categories of leaders can influence various political issues. However, not every politician is truly a leader, and therefore active public figures can be more genuine leaders and sometimes even more influential in society.

2.4. Summary of the literature review

Political communication plays an important role in shaping power dynamics and influencing public opinion in democracies, which raises important questions about how political leaders craft their messages in the context of creative societies. Given the importance of creativity in contemporary governance, it is necessary to explore the extent to which politicians incorporate themes relevant to creative societies into their speeches. How often do political leaders address issues that resonate with the principles of creative societies, and what implications does this have for public engagement and the perception of political discourse?

The emergence of the creative society brings additional challenges to the role of political leaders in promoting creativity and innovation in their discourse. This raises questions about how leaders can effectively integrate themes of creativity into their political communication in order to foster public engagement and increase citizens' understanding of the importance of a creative society. These questions highlight the need for a deeper understanding of the interaction between political leadership, communication and creativity in contemporary governance.

3. Empirical research

3.1. Justification of the empirical research methodology

The study selects political speeches by political and citizen leaders and analyses their content. Qualitative content analysis has been used in the social sciences for quite a long time and helps to objectively and systematically describe the apparent content of communication (Schreier et al., 2019). Cavanagh (1997) argues that the qualitative content analysis approach allows theoretical issues to be tested in practice. Classification and interpretation of information are important for the validity of content analysis. Therefore, the categories of the analysis were built on the basis of theory based on characteristics and values typical to creative society (Florida, 2014; Kačerauskas, 2017; Reimeris, 2016) and recurrent statements in the languages, and the interpretation of the languages is straightforward by assigning quotes to categories. This research approach helps to draw valid conclusions, provide new insights into the content analysed and provide a roadmap for practical action (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Qualitative content analysis is a very convenient method for analysing linguistic and visual content (Serafini & Reid, 2019). Therefore, this study will analyse textual, visual and audio documents (video and audio recordings) – speeches of political leaders.

According to the authors, the first step in qualitative content analysis is to collect and process the data, and then to choose the method of analysis, such as creating categories, *etc.* (Elo et al., 2014). Therefore, the study first started collecting speeches and the formation of precise categories continued until the end of the study.

The choice of specific political leaders and citizen leaders for interview analysis is driven by their distinct contributions to contemporary political discourse and their accessibility in public contexts. While there are numerous prominent figures within the political arena, the selected leaders have demonstrated a unique ability to articulate their visions and engage with the public on critical issues, making their speeches particularly relevant for analysis. Their visibility on online platforms further facilitates the examination of their communication strategies and the impact of their messages on public opinion.

The video and audio recordings used in the study, which are available on social networks, were used for learning purposes only and were not downloaded or used for commercial purposes, and therefore did not violate copyright and related rights law. The study included speeches and interviews made since the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, when political communication between politicians and citizen leaders has increased. Speeches by well-known leaders in Lithuania and abroad were analyzed for their content and relevance to the topic. The speeches were analysed and collected between October, 2023 and February, 2024.

3.2. Research results

The study assessed speeches and interviews with political leaders and citizen leaders. The leaders' speeches or interviews are available online and are listed in the reference list (see Table 1).

Table 1. Speeches by political and citizen leaders (source: created by author)

No.	Leader	Speech
1.	Ingrida Šimonytė (b. 1974), 17th Prime Minister of Lithuania	Speech at the presentation of the Knight of Freedom Award to the people of Ukraine (Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, 2023)
2.	Joe Biden (b. 1942), 46th President of the United States (US)	Speech at the 2023 Vilnius summit (Vilnius University, 2023)
3.	Volodymyr Zelenskyy (b. 1978), President of Ukraine	Speech to the US Congress (The New York Times, 2022)
4.	Andrius Tapinas (b. 1977), Lithuanian journalist, writer	Restoration of Independence Day Greetings (Tapinas, 2022)
5.	Sean Penn (b. 1960), American actor, film director	Interview on news in *Cable News Network* (CNN, 2022)
6.	Mila Kunis (b. 1983), American actress	Conan O'Brien's podcast (Team Coco, 2023)
7.	Gabrielius Landsbergis (b. 1982), Lithuanian politician and diplomat	Speech at the social dinner of the 2023 Vilnius summit (Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, 2023)
8.	Edmundas Jakilaitis (b. 1977), Lithuanian television journalist, public figure, political presenter, producer.	Interview on *Žinių radijas* (2023)

Based on authors researching the creative society and the creative class, such as Florida (2014), Kačerauskas (2017), Reimeris (2016), categories and sub-categories were created, according to which corroborating statements were searched for in the leaders' speeches and interviews (see Table 2).

Table 2. Categories and subcategories of qualitative content analysis (source: created by author)

Categories	Subcategories
The uniqueness of the creative society	Artists
	No hierarchy
	Human liberties
	Exclusivity
Societal economic indicators	High technology
	Innovations
	Higher education
	Migration
	Economic growth
	Urban planning

In the Table 2 it can be seen that two categories and ten sub-categories have been created, derived from the theoretical justification and the languages analysed. Each category with its subcategories will be analysed separately in the following (see Table 3).

Table 3. The uniqueness of the creative society in leaders speeches' (source: created by author)

Categories	Subcategories	Confirmatory statements
The uniqueness of the creative society	Artists	"<…> our talents are applauded around the world <…>" (No. 4); "<…> there are those who sometimes say that politics is for another place and entertainment is for another. I think that every viewer or film practitioner who understands what expression is thinks that to not allow it in films or to say that it cannot be on television, on stage, to not allow politics in one of these places, is to say that it cannot be embodied in a human being" (No. 5).
	No hierarchy	"Anyone with eyes should have seen it in the Revolution of Dignity, when the Ukrainian people chose independence and a future in Europe instead of returning to the embrace of their unloving stepmother Russia. Neither the winter blizzard nor the bullets fired by their own government have diminished the determination of the Ukrainian people to fight for the right to decide the fate of their own country" (No. 1); "<…> how precious the right to determine your own future is <…>" (No. 2); "The Russian tyranny has lost control over us. And it will never influence our minds again" (No. 3); "<…> the Russians will stand a chance to be free only when they defeat the Kremlin in their minds" (No. 3); "We have had all the fun of democracy. We have argued, we have been angry, we have shouted and even at one point we were dragged to the gallows as a symbol of young democracy" (No. 4); "<…> more importantly, it was their moment to shine, to protest and to boycott the Oscars" (No. 5); "<…> but don't forget that this is the tipping point on which democracy will live or die, and where it will fall globally" (No. 6); "<…> and when Ukraine stands up to Russian terror, when Belarusians refuse to bow down to a despicable dictator, when a sea of roses or umbrellas calls on us to fight for democracy, we hear an echo of history and remember the lesson we have learned best: that in the struggle for freedom, no one can be left alone" (No. 7).
	Human liberties	"Ukraine has shown the world how the world's 'second most powerful army' chokes when confronted with the courage and valour of freedom-loving people" (No. 1); "<…> that the Ukrainian people will defend every inch of their territory and the right of every Ukrainian child to grow up in a free and independent homeland" (No. 1); "The courage of Ukrainians has lit up cities all over the world in blue and yellow, reminding us that only thanks to Ukrainians can our people still enjoy justice, security, human rights and freedoms" (No. 1); "<…> the transformational power of freedom" (No. 2); "<…> standing as one to protect the TV Tower, to shield the Supreme Council, and to defend freedom" (No. 2); "<…> had done nothing to dim the flame of liberty in this country" (No. 2);

Categories	Subcategories	Confirmatory statements
		"We will stand for liberty and freedom today, tomorrow, and for as long as it takes" (No. 2); "The defence of freedom is not the work of a day or a year" (No. 2); "<…> in all the places around the world where people continue to fight to make their voices heard" (No. 2); "I know it, the point when Ukrainian courage and American resolve must guarantee the future of our common freedom, the freedom of people who stand for their values" (No. 3); "This is a century that many who have defended our freedom have not lived to see" (No. 4); "<…> it is their freedom, their right, their hobby" (No. 4); "We have freedom" (No. 4); "<…> but very quickly expanded from my children to all those who believe in dreams around the world" (No. 5); "<…> this could be the end of our children's dreams <…>" (No. 5); "<…> this war must be seen as a defining moment for the West" (No. 6); "We started this evening with the partisans – brothers and sisters of the forest who fought against the Soviets for the freedom of Lithuania 1940–1950s, songs. Thousands of them were tortured and killed, and hundreds of thousands more Lithuanian were exiled to Siberia or Gulag camps. But despite the oppression, which is hard to comprehend, these people kept the cause of freedom alive through fifty years of Soviet occupation and helped us all to rebuild the Lithuania that you see before your eyes today – proud, free, independent and peaceful" (No. 7); "This fire of freedom continues to burn in the heart of every Lithuanian" (No. 7); "And when Ukraine stands up to Russian terror, when Belarusians refuse to bow down to a despicable dictator, when a sea of roses or umbrellas calls on us to fight for democracy, we hear the echoes of history and we remember the lesson we have learnt best – that in the struggle for freedom, no-one can be left alone" (No. 7); "Our security, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, from the Atlantic to the Indian and Pacific Oceans, depends on a rules-based world order that we must all defend" (No. 7); "We know what happens when Russian boots trample on your homeland, and how it can all end" (No. 8); "But people who understand and are aware of European history, who are interested, know that things can happen again and again, and that they are extremely painful, that they can end very painfully for many nations" (No. 8).
	Exclusivity	"When the old Western countries take a step forward, we go 3, not because our legs are short, but because we have more energy and enthusiasm" (No. 4); "<…> the extraordinary sincerity shown by the Polish people and government <…> is exceptional" (No. 5); "<…> a brave, extraordinary man, with an extraordinary country and people <…>" (No. 5);

End of Table 3

Categories	Subcategories	Confirmatory statements
		"<...> people in general want to feel part of something. They want to feel part of the solution. They want to feel good. They want to feel like they have done it" (No. 6); "Like if I press it, it means I'm in favour, it means I've changed something" (No. 6); "It's good to not only raise money, but to make people feel happy, like they're part of something bigger, grander. So when we started the process, all we had to do was put a sticking plaster on the problem and let people feel that they were making a difference right away" (No. 6); "Imagination is not the Kremlin's strongest point – the regime only believes in the things it sees" (No. 7); "We are different from other Europeans after all" (No. 8); "And there are no such things as *Bayraktar*, as *Radarom!*, as *Blue/Yellow*, as forty thousand Ukrainian war refugees living in people's homes, in other countries" (No. 8).

As we can see in Table 3, various aspects of the uniqueness of the creative society can be observed in the political speeches or interviews of the leaders, but artists are only mentioned in 2 of the analysed citizens' speeches – no. 4 and no. 5. Andrius Tapinas (No. 4) in his speech stated that Lithuania is such a wonderful country that our artists are recognised all over the world. Sean Penn (No. 5) expressed his opinion that artists, in this case actors and filmmakers, can also contribute to publicising the importance of the war – they understand that not letting films and television talk about problems and politics is the same as saying it is not happening. All the leaders analysed – politicians and citizen leaders – talk about the lack of hierarchy. In Ingrida Šimonytė's speech (No. 1), the absence of hierarchy in speeches is characterised by the fact that the 17th Prime Minister of Lithuania refers to the revolutions in Ukraine, during which the people showed that only they will decide on the future of their country. Joe Biden (No. 2) referred to the importance of the absence of hierarchy in his speech by stating that it is very important to be able to decide your own future. Volodymyr Zelenskyy (No. 3) refers to the absence of hierarchy in his speech on Russia, when he says that Russia can no longer control Ukraine, and that Russians will only be free when they themselves have defeated the Kremlin, Moscow, Russia. Tapinas (No. 4) recalled that we have experienced all forms of democracy – we have protested many times. Penn (No. 5) argues that artists have the opportunity to show that there is no hierarchy and that they have a voice – they can boycott the Oscars. Mila Kunis (No. 6) speaks about hierarchy when she says that this war is a turning point for the fate of democracies around the world, which means that if democracy collapses, hierarchy may return. She also goes on to say that the war is a defining moment for the West, that if it is lost, freedom can be lost. Gabrielius Landsbergis (No. 7) talks about how Ukraine is resisting Russia and the Belarusians are trying to defy their dictator. Freedom was probably the most popular topic in the speeches of both political and citizen leaders. In the speech of Šimonytė (No. 1), freedom was the most frequently mentioned topic – the struggle of ordinary people to preserve their independence, the right of children to grow up in a free state. Also that people in other European countries can only enjoy human rights and freedoms because of Ukraine. Biden (No. 2) talked a lot about freedom – its power, how

Lithuanians defended their freedom, how it is defended in the world today, *etc.* Zelenskyy (No. 3) on freedom said that the courage of Ukrainians and the determination of Americans must ensure the future of freedom. Tapinas (No. 4) repeatedly mentioned freedom – that we have it. Penn (No. 5) makes a subtle reference to freedom when he says that this war could shatter everyone's dreams, it could be the end of children's dreams. Landsbergis (No. 7) also spoke a lot about freedom, from the deportation of the Lithuanians to Siberia, how the fire of freedom is still burning in our hearts, to how Ukraine is now fighting for its freedom. Edmundas Jakilaitis (No. 8) talked about freedom without mentioning it directly – he said that we know what it is like when Russian soldiers trample on the homeland, that we know the history of Europe and how it can end. Only citizen leaders talk about exceptionalism. Tapinas (No. 4) says that Lithuania is an exceptional country because it has a lot of energy and enthusiasm. Penn (No. 5) speaks of exceptionalism when he says that the Polish people and government are extraordinarily sincere and that Zelenskyy is an extraordinary man with an extraordinary country. Kunis (No. 6) repeatedly referred in her speech to the uniqueness of the people that they want to be part of the solution, part of something bigger, to know they are making a difference. Landsbergis (No. 7) talked about the opposite, about how Russia is not exceptional, that imagination is not the Kremlin's strong point. Jakilaitis (No. 8) talked about how exceptional we are, how different we are from other Europeans, how there are no such initiatives in other countries.

Table 4. Societal economic indicators in leaders' speeches (source: created by author)

Categories	Subcategories	Confirmatory statements
Societal economic indicators	High technology	"Every inch of Ukraine will be rebuilt anew" (No. 1); "<…> so that artificial intelligence, engineering, biology, and other engineering emerging technologies are not made into weapons of oppression but rather are used as tools of opportunity" (No. 2); "Will we harness the new technologies to advance freedom or will we diminish it?" (No. 2); "In such a technologically advanced country, the electric chair would have been better" (No. 4); "We must use all means – weapons, ammunition, training, intelligence, diplomacy – to achieve final victory for Ukraine" (No. 7).
	Innovations	"<…> and as we continue to explore this age of new possibilities, an age enabled by rapid advances in innovation <…>" (No. 2); "We all benefit when more entrepreneurs and innovators are able to pursue their dreams for a better tomorrow" (No. 2).
	Higher education	"<…> to teach children to fall under Russian rockets" (No. 1); "<…> we defeated Russia in the battle for minds of the world" (No. 3).
	Migration	"To give up a safe life abroad and return home by the millions to join your brothers and sisters in arms is to be fully and knowingly prepared to sacrifice your life for your country" (No. 1); "It takes courage to leave your home to take your children and the elderly to a safe place. To travel thousands of kilometres, often under fire, and start a new life, albeit temporary, in a strange country, at the mercy of the kindness of complete strangers" (No. 1);

End of Table 4

Categories	Subcategories	Confirmatory statements
		"<…> many aboard that plane had fled Lithuania during the early years of Soviet oppression and marveled – marveled at their return to this independent state" (No. 2); "I thank your cities and your citizens who supported Ukraine this year, who hosted our Ukrainians, our people <…>" (No. 3); "<…> there are two urgent crises, one is the refugee crisis <…>" (No. 5); "It's not that you should care about people or refugees. If you don't have time for that, I respect that" (No. 6); "<…> then refugee accommodation with *airbnb.org*, which already exists" (No. 6).
	Economic growth	"We need the courage to maintain a functioning state and to continue and even accelerate reforms so that Ukraine can become a member of the EU and NATO as soon as possible" (No. 1); "Ukraine's courage makes our continent safer by giving impetus to political decisions that have been long delayed due to a lack of political will or ambition, such as ending energy dependence on Russia, increasing defence spending, or pursuing the EU's enlargement" (No. 1); "<…> that underwrite the flow of ideas and commerce and which have enabled decades of global growth" (No. 2); "We have to come together to protect the rights and freedoms that underwrite the flow of ideas and commerce and which have enabled decades of global growth" (No. 2); "That's why the United States is leading an effort to transform the multilateral development banks, like the World Bank, to help them better address the global challenges while enhancing their core mission of reducing poverty and boost shared prosperity" (No. 2); "We are a prosperous country <…>" (No. 4); "A new European security architecture is taking shape before our eyes. Underpinned by a stronger-than-ever NATO and transatlantic partnership. With Finland, with Sweden and with Ukraine as an equal and integral part of our security" (No. 7); "Only our strength can also deter adversaries on other continents who expect us to cower every time we face economic pressure or blackmail" (No. 7).
	Urban planning	"Every inch of Ukraine will be rebuilt anew" (No. 1); "<…> to demine and repair destroyed bridges, roads and houses" (No. 1); "We're all working together with our partners in the G7 to address the enormous needs for high-standard infrastructure around the world <…>" (No. 2); "They have been attacking it day and night, but Bakhmut stands. Last year — last year, 70 000 people lived here in Bakhmut, in this city, and now only few civilians stay" (No. 3); "Iranian deadly drones sent to Russia in hundreds – in hundreds became a threat to our critical infrastructure" (No. 3); "<…> our cities are on the top lists <…>" (No. 4).

As can be seen in Table 4, the leaders' speeches are based on a wide range of economic indicators of society. Political leaders talk more about high technology. Although Šimonytė (No. 1) did not directly mention the importance of high technology, she said that every centimetre of Ukraine will be rebuilt, and that the whole of Europe will contribute to it. One can understand that this will not be done without the help of high technology. Biden (No. 2) emphasised in his speech the importance of using high technology such as artificial intelligence, engineering, *etc.* for good and not for evil. Following on from this, the 46th President of the United States asked rhetorically how we will use technology to increase or decrease freedom. Tapinas (No. 4) jokingly referred to gallows, but argued that in such a technologically advanced country, instead of a gallows there should be an electric chair. Landsbergis (No. 7), referring to technology, said that all means, all weapons should be used to achieve victory in Ukraine. Only Biden spoke about innovation. He said that this age of new opportunities is made possible by innovation. Higher education was also only mentioned by political leaders. The speech by Šimonytė (No. 1) implied that Ukrainians do not lack courage to continue to provide education, even in wartime. It is being provided not only to schoolchildren, but also to students. In his speech, Zelenskyy (No. 3) said that Ukraine and its allies had already defeated Russia in the battle for the world's minds. Almost all leaders spoke about migration. Šimonytė's (No. 1) speech made several references to migration, both the return of emigrants to their home country to defend it and the ongoing emigration of Ukrainians to other countries in search of safe haven. On migration, Biden (No. 2) shared his recollection that many Lithuanians who had left returned to their homeland after Lithuania regained its independence. Zelenskyy (No. 3) thanked all those who took in Ukrainians. Penn (No. 5) referred to the migration problem – the refugee crisis. Kunis (No. 6) stressed that the most important thing is to take an interest in the war in Ukraine, and she understands if people do not have time to take care of refugees. She also mentioned how she herself organises refugee accommodation. Political leaders spoke more about economic growth. Šimonytė (No. 1) spoke about Ukraine's economic growth, even in wartime, and its desire to join the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). She also noted that the war had given a boost to the economic growth of other European countries – the desire to be energy independent and other EU developments. Biden (No. 2) also repeatedly referred to economic growth and creation and the global economy. On economic growth, Tapinas (No. 4) referred to economic growth, saying that we are a prosperous country. Landsbergis (No. 7) referred to economic growth by saying that Europe is now underpinned by a stronger-than-ever NATO, and that only our strength can withstand economic pressure and blackmail. More than half of the leaders talked about urban development. Šimonytė (No. 1) spoke about rebuilding Ukraine's infrastructure. Biden (No. 2) also said that the partners are working to meet the world's infrastructure needs. Zelenskyy (No. 3) highlighted the urban problems Ukraine is currently facing, such as a reduced population in cities under attack and threats to infrastructure. Tapinas (No. 4) noted that our cities are among the best.

4. Conclusions

Political leaders often give speeches at celebrations and public events, so their speeches are comprehensive and easily accessible online. In contrast, citizen leaders are less likely to have

their speeches available through public platforms. When invited to speak, their speeches tend to be brief, limiting their ability to elaborate on their points. Instead, citizen leaders often participate in talk shows and interviews, which were chosen for analysis in this context.

Various authors analysing the creative society, such as Kačerauskas (2017), Reimeris (2016), agree that the creative society is based on technology, education, various human freedoms, self-expression, exclusivity, *etc.* While the qualitative research showed that human freedoms and technology are certainly relevant topics that are often found in leaders' political communication, education, self-expression, *etc.* are not such popular topics. Technology is also lacking in the communication of citizen leaders. Leaders often talk about traditional topics that were relevant in previous societies or are relevant to the older generation. Similarly, self-expression or uniqueness are rather abstract topics, which may be why they are not so common.

In various articles, some authors (Bull, 2016; Bull & Miskinis, 2014) argue that speeches by political leaders should evoke a range of feelings in the audience, and that leaders should encourage expressions of approval and ovations, but this was not often observed in the speeches analysed. Leaders should also include jokes, humorous expressions in their speeches, but this was not observed in most of the analysed leaders' speeches, most of them were serious. Therefore, the author's theories are probably not globally applicable, and it is likely that the content of political speeches depends on the country and audience context, or that leaders need to learn how to use their speeches to encourage audience engagement.

The empirical study shows that while both political and citizen leaders speak about similar societal issues, their approaches to audience engagement are quite different. Political leaders focus on high technology, economic growth, and human freedom, presenting these topics in a structured, policy-oriented discourse that is consistent with long-term strategies and global concerns. Meanwhile, citizen leaders speak on similar themes but focus on emotional connection, individuality and collective action to inspire through personal stories and calls for social change. Although they are talking about the same issues, the speeches reflect different methods of communication: political leaders emphasise rationality and politics, while citizen leaders tend towards emotional resonance and empowerment.

5. Limitations

The study revealed that citizen leaders rarely deliver speeches, and when they do, these addresses are often brief and lack substantial content. Consequently, the analysis primarily focused on political leaders' speeches and citizen leaders' interviews. This limitation highlights the need for a broader examination of citizen leaders' communication across different contexts and channels, such as social media, community forums, and alternative media platforms, where they may express their views more fully. Additionally, the study did not assess how these speeches and communications influence the creative society, particularly regarding the emotions they evoke and the relevance of specific themes to their audiences.

Future research should explore the impact of both citizen and political leaders' speeches on the creative society, investigating how these communications resonate emotionally with the public and identifying which themes are most pertinent to their experiences. Analyzing audience reactions, engagement levels, and the broader social implications of these speeches

will provide valuable insights into how political discourse shapes societal attitudes toward creativity and innovation. This expanded scope will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of political communication in the context of creative societies.

References

Ali, M., Tao, L., Shaikh, A. A., & Sajid, M. (2017). The political leadership and corporate governance: An analysis of leadership theories and its influence. *International Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, *6*(3), 45–50. https://doi.org/10.14419/ijbas.v6i3.7706

Barandiarán, X., Unceta, A., & Peña, S. (2020). Political communication in times of a new political culture. *Icono 14*, *18*(1), 256–281.

Bennister, M. (2016). Editorial: New approaches to political leadership. *Politics and Governance*, *4*(2), 1–4. https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v4i2.683

Bull, P. (2016). Claps and claptrap: The analysis of speaker–audience interaction in political speeches. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, *4*(1), 473–492. https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v4i1.436

Bull, P., & Miskinis, K. (2014). Whipping it up! An analysis of audience responses to political rhetoric in speeches from the 2012 American Presidential Elections. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, *34*(5), 521–538. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X14564466

Cavanagh, S. (1997). Content analysis: Concepts, methods and applications. *Nurse Researcher*, *4*(3), 5–16. https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.4.3.5.s2

CNN. (2022). Sean Penn vows to destroy academy award if Zelensky isn't invited to speak at Oscars [Video]. *YouTube.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqa08P0Dsm4&t=4s

Cwalina, W., & Falkowski, A. (2016). Morality and competence in shaping the images of political leaders. *Journal of Political Marketing*, *15*(2–3), 220–239. https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2016.1151121

Durántez-Stolle, P., & Martínez-Sanz, R. (2019). Politainment in the transmedia construction of the image of politicians. *Communication and Society*, *32*(2), 111–126. https://doi.org/10.15581/003.32.2.111-126

Edgell, R. A., & Lee, D. (2023). Theorizing creative challenges: Why are social creativity and reimagined universities necessary for tackling society's problems? *Journal of Creativity*, *33*(2). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.yjoc.2023.100051

Efianda, A., & Iswahyuni, I. (2021). Political leadership and transactional leadership. *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, *8*(9), 238–243. https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v8i9.3020

Elo, S., Kääriäinen, M., Kanste, O., Pölkki, T., Utriainen, K., & Kyngäs, H. (2014). Qualitative content analysis: a focus on trustworthiness. *SAGE Open*, *4*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244014522633

Elo, S., & Kyngäs, H. (2008). The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing: Leading Global Nursing Research*, *62*(1), 107–115. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04569.x

Florida, R. (2014). *The rise of the creative class: Revisited*. Basic Books. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118739044.ch15

Gonçalves, G. (2018). Political communication. In R. L. Heath & W. Johansen (Eds.), *The International encyclopedia of strategic communication* (pp. 1–9). John Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119010722.iesc0129

Kacerauskas, T. (2020). Creative economy and the idea of the creative society. *Transformations in Business and Economics*, *19*(1), 43–52.

Kačerauskas, T. (2017). *Kūrybos visuomenė*. „Technika". https://doi.org/10.20334/2017-014-M

Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija. (2023). *Užsienio reikalų ministro G. Landsbergio kalba socialinėje vakarienėje NATO viršūnių susitikimo Vilniuje proga*. https://www.urm.lt/naujienos/141/uzsienio-reikalu-ministro-g.-landsbergio-kalba-socialineje-vakarieneje-nato-virsuniu-susitikimo-vilniuje-proga:26238

Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė. (2023). Premjerės kalba „Laisvės riterio" apdovanojimo teikime Ukrainos žmonėms [Video]. *YouTube.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urpj5l3jb9o

McNair, B. (2003). *An introduction to political communication*. Routledge.
https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203699683

Medveschi, I. (2020). Political leadership, language politics, and the "Hybridization" of political communication. In D. C. Balaban, I. Hosu, & A. Voina (Eds.), *Communication. It's about platforms. PR Trend International Conference* (pp. 332–340). Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Accent.

Ofosu-Anim, D. O., & Back, S.-H. (2021). Towards a conceptual framework for political leadership theory and practice: A thematic analysis of the literature. *Open Journal of Leadership*, *10*(3), 193–213. https://doi.org/10.4236/ojl.2021.103013

Reimeris, R. (2016). Theoretical features of the creative society. *Creativity Studies*, *9*(1), 15–24. https://doi.org/10.3846/23450479.2015.1088902

Schreier, M., Stamann, Ch., Janssen, M., Dahl, Th., & Whittal, A. (2019). Qualitative content analysis: Conceptualizations and challenges in research practice – introduction to the FQS special issue "Qualitative Content Analysis I". *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *20*(3).
https://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/3393/4506

Serafini, F., & Reid, S. F. (2019). Multimodal content analysis: Expanding analytical approaches to content analysis. *Visual Communication*, *22*(4), 623–649. https://doi.org/10.1177/1470357219864133

Steyvers, K., Bergström, T., Bäck, H., Boogers, M., Ruano de la Fuente, J. M., & Schaap, L. (2008). From princeps to president? Comparing local political leadership transformation. *Local Government Studies*, *34*(2), 131–146. https://doi.org/10.1080/03003930701852179

Tapinas, A. (2022). *Su švente, Lietuva! Su švente, visi laisvos Valstybės žmonės* [Video]! Facebook.
https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2242818579191148

Team Coco. (2023). Mila Kunis on supporting ukraine | Conan O'Brien needs a friend [Video]. *YouTube*.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-GEEIOOQTDs

The New York Times. (2022). *Full transcript of Zelensky's speech before congress*.
https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/21/us/politics/zelensky-speech-transcript.html

Torfing, J., Øllgaard Bentzen, T., & Slagsvold Winsvold, M. (2022). How institutional designs condition perceived local political leadership. *Local Government Studies*, *48*(3), 341–366.
https://doi.org/10.1080/03003930.2020.1821664

Tömmel, I. (2020). Political leadership in times of crisis: the commission presidency of Jean-Claude Juncker. *West European Politics*, *43*(5), 1141–1162. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2019.1646507

Unikaitė-Jakuntavičienė, I., & Matulkaitė, R. (2017). The Ukraine crisis reflections in the speeches of USA and Russian political leaders. *Slovak Journal of Political Sciences*, *17*(3–4), 299–342.
https://doi.org/10.1515/sjps-2017-0013

Venckūnas, A. (2022a). Kūrybos visuomenės politinė komunikacija Lietuvoje: sociologiniai aspektai. *Filosofija. Sociologija*, *33*(2), 107–114.

Venckūnas, A. (2022b). Political communication of creative society: The aspects of public policy. *Creativity Studies*, *15*(1), 217–232. https://doi.org/10.3846/cs.2022.15923

Vilnius University. (2023). *Historic speech of US president Joe Biden at Vilnius University*. https://www.vu.lt/en/news-events/news/historic-speech-of-us-president-joe-biden-at-vilnius-university

Žinių radijas. (2023). „Gyvenu Europoje": Ką sakytumėt prancūzui, kuris nebeaukoja Ukrainai, nes pavargo? [Video]. *YouTube*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OffY7KCaP1Q