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# Rhetorical Style and Issue Emphasis within the Conference

## Speeches of UKIP's Nigel Farage 2010-2014

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### **Abstract:**

This paper makes a distinctive contribution to the academic literature on the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) by focusing in on the political rhetoric of Nigel Farage in relation to his Conference speeches. Our first research question asks how his Conference speeches are constructed and delivered and identifies what rhetorical techniques are deployed to maximise their impact. In methodological terms we address this question through rhetorical political analysis (RPA). Our second research question examines the extent to which his Conference speeches are changing. We ask whether there is evidence that Farage is broadening the range of issue appeals within his rhetoric (as one would expect if UKIP were making the transition from an anti-establishment to a mainstream party). Our method for this involves the use of N-Vivo – a computer coding programme – which quantifies which policies and issues are being used within speeches. Overall we argue that his speeches rely on hyperbole and evoking fear via the use of opposites, and that his rhetorical appeals remain narrowly defined around issues of identity.

### **Keywords:**

United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP); Nigel Farage; Political Rhetoric; Political Oratory; Anti-Establishment parties.

## **Introduction:**

The rise of UKIP as a populist party representing ‘the people’ against the European Union has been a significant development within British politics (Gifford, 2014, pp. 512-52). Formed in 1993 by members of the Anti-Federalist League who opposed the Maastricht Treaty (Ford and Goodwin, 2014a, p. 21) they have seen their vote share increase since participating in the 1994 European Parliamentary Elections and securing only 1 percent of the popular vote. By the time of the 2014 European elections they were the leading party with 27.5 percent of the vote and 4.3 million votes, and with an 11 percent swing from 2009 they secured the most MEPs – with their 24 (up from 13), leading Labour (20 seats and 25.4 percent) and pushing the Conservatives into third (19 seats and 23.9 percent) (Curtice, 2014, pp. 78-80).

However, their support at European Elections has not been matched at General Elections. This difference reflects the distinction between the two types of supporters that UKIP have. First there are ‘strategic’ supporters who vote for UKIP in European Elections and ‘core’ supporters who back them at General Elections. This distinction is evident from the stronger performances in European Elections since 1999 (7.0 percent); 2004 (16.2 percent); 2009 (16.5 percent) and then 27.5 percent in 2014. The ‘core’ supporters back them in General Elections where their returns have been weaker: 1997 (0.3 percent) 2001 (1.5 percent); 2005 (2.2 percent); and 2010 (3.1 percent). Although their return in 2015 was significantly stronger at 12.6 percent and 3.3 million voters this was lower than the 4.3 million who backed them in the 2014 Euro-elections. (Ford *et al.*, 2012, p. 206; for a wider discussion of UKIP politics during the last Parliament and including the 2015 General Election campaign, see Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015).

Although the strategic / core distinction still applies, it cannot be denied that since 2010, when Nigel Farage was re-elected as UKIP leader, the party has experienced a remarkable surge in

popularity (Ford and Goodwin, 2014a, p. 3). This is evident from the following, over and above and beyond their European Election success in 2014. First, they have witnessed a remarkable rise in their membership (Ford and Goodwin, 2014a, p. 3). Second, their support at local elections has increased significantly. In 2010 they secured a 7.9 percent vote share and 1 seat, and when they were next contested in 2014 they secured a 17 percent vote share and 163 seats (Curtice, 2014, pp. 78-80). Third, their continued improvements in the opinion polls has resulted in a series of improved by-election results in the 2010-15 Parliament (Ford and Goodwin, 2014a, p. 245-8). This would culminate in the defections of Douglas Carswell and Mark Reckless from the Conservative Party and their by-election victories as UKIP candidates in October and November 2014 (Carswell was re-elected in 2015, but Reckless was defeated).

The Carswell and Reckless defections would appear to reaffirm the assumption that UKIP draws its support from the traditional Conservative vote base, especially middle aged, financially insecure men (Ford *et al.*, 2012, p. 206). Farage famously commented that 'David Cameron has clearly decided to abandon Conservatism' (Farage, 2006) and as a consequence he has attempted to 'position' UKIP 'to the right of the Conservative leadership on issues such as immigration and same-sex marriage' (Gifford, 2014, p. 522). However, they also can be said to possess an appeal amongst disaffected working class and traditionally Labour voters, notably working class voters over 50 and those with lower educational qualifications, whom Ford and Goodwin describe as the 'left behind' (Ford and Goodwin, 2014b, 2015).

However, the primary attitudinal driver for UKIP support, whether from the disaffected right or left, is their Europhobia and specifically their attitude towards immigration. This exploits the increasing salience of immigration as an electoral variable, and it also places UKIP in competition with the BNP, whose support is driven by concerns about Muslim integration and new wave immigration after the accession of Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia into the EU (Ford and Goodwin

2010). Although UKIP and the BNP rely on a similar national identity discourse, (Ford *et al.*, 2012, p. 205) the BNP had, until recently, stimulated considerably higher levels of academic attention than that afforded to UKIP (e.g. Cutts *et al.*, 2013, Eatwell and Goodwin, 2010; Ford and Goodwin, 2010).

UKIP therefore remains a relatively under developed aspect of the academic literature on British party political competition. What does exist can be subdivided into three categories. First, studies which concentrate on voting patterns and the social base of their support (e.g. Borisjuk *et al.*, 2007; John and Margetts, 2009; Mellon and Evans, 2015; Evans and Mellon, 2015a; Ford and Goodwin, 2015) or election campaigns and the characteristics and attitudes of UKIP supporters (e.g. Margetts *et al.*, 2004; Hayton 2010; Whittaker and Lynch 2011; Ford *et al.*, 2012). Second, studies which consider their ideological positioning and their relationship to other parties (e.g. Lynch *et al.*, 2012; Lynch and Whittaker 2013a; Webb and Bale, 2014; Tournier-Sol, 2015). Third, studies which examine UKIP from with a party organisation perspective. These consider UKIP as a single issue and anti-establishment party (e.g. Usherwood, 2008; Abedi and Lundberg 2009).

Abedi and Lundberg argue that UKIP fulfil the three criteria for an anti-establishment party. First, they challenge the ‘status quo in terms of [a] major policy issue’; second, they see themselves as outside of, and thus *against* the political establishment; and third, they believe that there is a ‘fundamental divide’ between establishment parties and ‘the people’ (Abedi and Lundberg, 2009, p. 74). Thus UKIP defines itself by its populist opposition ‘to the mainstream parties and their elites, which are presented as undifferentiated (LibLabCon) because of their continued support, no matter how qualified, for EU membership’ (Gifford, 2014, p. 521). The anti-establishment party emphasis replicates the ‘niche’ party definition in that they focus on non-economic issues that transcend the traditional class based cleavages, but which are non-centrist and could be construed as ideologically to the margins (Adams *et al.*, 2006, p. 513; see also Meguid, 2005).

Underpinning UKIP's approach as an anti-establishment niche party is an emphasis on populist messages within their discourse (Rooduijn *et al.*, 2014). Furthermore, UKIP have in Farage, the inspirational figurehead that Mudde argues populist movements need as a precursor to success (Mudde, 2004). Ford and Goodwin acknowledge that Farage is a 'charismatic' leader (Ford and Goodwin, 2014a, p. 3), whilst Kenny notes that he has become an 'increasingly legitimate *voice* within political debate' (Kenny, 2014, p. 198). These arguments imply that Farage was central to the electoral appeal of UKIP in the period between 2010 and 2015 (see Evans and Mellon who describe him as 'an asset' and a 'major winner' and note that he had the capacity to 'boost the electoral prospects of the party he leads to a greater degree than any other party leader' (2015b, pp. 9-10). These arguments also imply that UKIP, through Farage, rely on populist arguments presented via 'straightforward language' (Tournier-Sol, 2015, p. 151). However, these claims are made in a passing way but they have not been justified in a substantive way. Subjecting Farage to a detailed rhetorical analysis would be a useful addition to the evolving academic literature on the rhetorical techniques used by British political leaders – see for example, the recent edited volumes by Hayton and Crines, 2015; and Crines and Hayton, 2015; see also Crines, 2013 on the rhetoric of George Galloway.

### **Research Questions and Methods:**

The focus of our research will be on addressing two research questions – (1). How are Farage's speeches constructed and delivered; and (2). Has the range of issues that he covers within his speeches broadened over the course of the Parliament?

To address these two research questions we will rely on the Annual Conferences speeches that Farage has delivered during the course of the last Parliament, between 2010 and 2014. The reliance on conferences speeches – which offers us a ‘rich site’ for illustrative textual evidence according to Finlayson and Martin, 2008, p. 254 - can be justified on the following grounds. First, conference speeches are key events in the political calendar for party activists. It enables them to connect with the party leadership. If executed well the leaders’ speech can inspire activists and ensure that the leadership narrative permeates through the party. Second, Annual Conferences are high profile and thus ensure that UKIP (or any other party) can receive a level of media attention disproportionate to any other time in the Parliamentary cycle, other than when electioneering. Third, because of this second factor, it acts as a key weapon through which the party can get their message across to the electorate (Pettitt, 2012). Finally, they also act as fixed points in the political calendar which allow us to analytically track changes in leadership rhetoric.

We address our first research question by the use of Rhetorical Political Analysis (RPA), an area in which there is a burgeoning body of literature. Underpinning this literature is the assumption that individual political actors *do* have the capacity to influence public attitudes (e.g. Finlayson, 2007, 2014; Toye 2011; Leith, 2012; Martin, 2013; 2014; Atkins *et al.*, 2014). RPA therefore helps political scientists to examine the methods by which political elites seek in the words of Alan Finlayson to prove, please and most importantly persuade (Finlayson, 2014). The process of rhetorical appraisal embraces three levels: construction; delivery and techniques.

#### Construction:

On the first level is the way in which the argument has been constructed so as to persuade. Here RPA draws inspiration from the Aristotelian triptych of *ethos* (the person), *pathos* (use of emotion) and *logos* (use of logic) as outlined in *The Art of Rhetoric* (Aristotle, 2004).

Persuasive rhetoric may flow from constructing the argument around the *ethos* of the speaker – i.e. their arguments gain traction because they have an established political reputation. *Pathos* refers to the ability of the speaker to establish an emotional connection between themselves and their audience. This can be achieved via aspirational arguments – i.e. by relying on the positive imaginations of the audience. However, *pathos* driven speech can also draw upon negative emotions such as anger and fear. Such use of emotive rhetoric strives to compel an audience to listen to an argument because of the perceived ‘threat’ of a specific outcome. *Logos* refers to the use of logical or empirical arguments which can appeal to the sense of rationality in an audience. These enable the speaker to demonstrate how their argument has an empirical foundation by drawing attention to statistical evidence that can support their broader case.

#### Delivery:

On the second level the ability of a speaker to generate a reaction is dependent upon their style of delivery. Does the speaker use a *deliberative* style (i.e. considered); a *judicial* style (i.e. forensic) or an *epideictic* style (i.e. one based on drama and performance) (Olmstead, 2006, p. 16). *Deliberative* and *judicial* approaches rely more upon empirical evidence and tend to be used in concert with *logos*-driven rhetoric when a speaker is seeking engagement with an informed audience. The *deliberative* approach is forward looking and can be employed to outline how policy proposals will make an impact. The *judicial* approach tends to be more backward looking, reflecting upon the success or otherwise of particular courses of action. The *epideictic* style tends to be used mostly in concert with *pathos*-constructed rhetoric because both strive to instil a sense of emotive satisfaction in a given cause. For this reason it also tends to be the most common form of oratory used by those representing small parties, such as George Galloway (Crines, 2013).



### Techniques:

How an argument is constructed and delivered matters in terms of its capacity to persuade. Running alongside this are a myriad of rhetorical techniques that can be employed to make a speech generate attention and thereby increase its persuasive potential. Many are self-explanatory, such as irony, humour, metaphors, analogies, anecdotes, parodies, quotations, rebuttals or the use of amplification or hyperbole. Other are more specialised, such as *erotema* (the rhetorical questions) or *utilitas* (identifying shared objectives within their audience), or *antithesis* based rhetorical techniques involving reasoning via opposites and the establishing of fallacies (see Lanham, 1991).

We can use RPA to assess the political rhetoric of Farage and evaluate how he constructs his arguments (around himself, emotion or rational thought); how he delivers his argument (via a considered, a judicial or dramatic method); and the extent to which he uses established rhetorical techniques to enhance the impact of his arguments.

Our second research question is important to our understanding of UKIP as we seek to assess the breadth of their issue appeals and how this might relate to party development. Debates on the salience that voters attach to particular public policy issues are a central determinant of party competition (Green and Hobolt, 2008). This is because issue competition drives the rhetorical battle between parties and their leaders over what are the most pressing public policy concerns. Here a distinction is said to exist between mainstream and niche and anti-establishment parties. Mainstream parties traditionally prioritise the issues where they are dominant to reinforce the salience of *their* issues thus reinforcing their credibility and their claims to governing competence (Riker, 1996). However, mainstream parties also go beyond a narrow range of issues as they are

responsive to changes within the political agenda – ‘the issues that get political actors’ attention’ are ‘the things people care about’ (Walgrave and Nuytelmans, 2009, p. 190).

Part of that change may be in response to an electoral threat to them from niche and anti-establishment parties (Meguid, 2005; 2008). As niche and anti-establishment parties have rejected the class based way of defining political competition they have the capacity to prioritise different issues. On this Meguid makes two key points: first, these issues ‘often do not coincide with the existing lines of political division’; and, second, these niche parties ‘differentiate themselves by *limiting* their issues appeals’ (Meguid, 2005 p. 347-8). Consider this second claim by Meguid – can we confirm that the rhetoric that Farage utilises remains static – i.e. does he continue by prioritising a *limited* range of issues and or do his issue appeals change (and widen) over time?

We can also place this second research question within the context of the life cycle approach to party development advanced by Harmel and Svâsand (1993). The life cycle approach identified the following three stages. Stage one, in which the objective for a new political party is addressing its internal organisation and the construction of its policy platform – i.e. the policy development stage. Stage two evolves from stage one and involves the party developing how it presents its agenda to the electorate and gain an electoral foothold – i.e. the vote seeking stage. For anti-establishment parties stage two involves exploiting their protest vote potential and playing on their anti-politics rhetoric. Stage three would involve an anti-establishment party seeking to move beyond the notion of themselves as a protest vote. This is the stage when the anti-establishment party seeks to institutionalise themselves within the traditional parties competing for office, and thus the shift between stage two and three involves a shift from vote seeking alone to office seeking (Tournier-Sol, 2015, p. 146-7). Our findings will enable us to contribute to the debate about whether UKIP are engaging in a transition – this is an especially interesting question to ask as Tournier-Sol (2015)

has implied that UKIP are entering that 'transitional phrase' and that a shift from anti-establishment status to mainstream status is underway.

To address our second research question we have generated quantitative data from the five conference speeches. For this, N-Vivo was employed. This research tool works by drawing out repeated themes and ideas within a speech by assigning a numerical value to specific phrases, words, and themes (Bazeley, 2007, p. 66). Farage's conference speeches each use repeated themes and narratives which suggest underlying arguments specifically designed to appeal to the party faithful. This enables us to conduct a systematic analysis of the speeches to explore the conceptual nature of each speech (data sources) and model the means by which they are interrelated. N-Vivo reduces the data (speeches) to codes in order to represent overarching themes which enables us to identify specific patterns in Farage's rhetorical style. Each data source/speech was then used to identify and track an underlying structure or purpose within the speeches. Put simply it enables us to track changing themes and concepts across a collection of speeches as a way of identifying a changing rhetorical strategy.

In this tracking process we were particularly keen to chart the emphasis on the following themes – identity politics, economic issues, public services and Tory modernisation. First, the emphasis on the politics of identity reflects the primary appeal for UKIP and embraces references to the European Union and immigration. This constitutes the core vote for UKIP and if they are perceived to be still an anti-establishment niche party we would hypothesise that references to these themes would remain dominant. If so this confirms the Meguid claim that niche parties limit their issue appeals. Second, in the age of austerity economic concerns – unemployment and inflation, but also taxation - would be expected to be predominant in terms of electorates' most salient issues. Can we detect evidence that Farage is increasing his emphasis on economic appeals? Third, the age of austerity has also raised concerns about the 'impact' of the coalition's attempts

to rebalance the economy. Can we detect evidence to suggest Farage is switching his rhetorical emphasis onto issues relating to public service delivery – notably the NHS and education? Finally, Conservative modernisation has revolved around attempts to detoxify their image as nasty and intolerant. This led to the pursuit of social liberalism and the emblematic legislation on gay marriage. Can we detect any evidence of Farage increasing his prioritisation on moral and traditional issues – covering gender issues and law and order?

### **Research Question One: Construction; Delivery and Technique**

Our examination of his conference speeches, and other high profile interventions, suggests that Farage mostly employs *pathos* driven rhetoric and a *performative* style of delivery. Specifically, he uses humour (usually driven by his persona of a ‘likable character’), and anger (referring to the ‘injustices’ that the United Kingdom ‘endures’ by being a member of the European Union). His *performative* style of delivery is often *epidictic*, inasmuch as he puts on a display for his immediate audience, which helps construct his broader likable character as the speech travels beyond the conference. Also, built into his rhetoric is a narrative of success under his leadership and the limitations of the establishment parties. For example, by 2014 he claimed that ‘they’re voting for us for the establishment has failed them, failed their families and failed their lives’ (Farage, 2014a).

He predicates this demonstration of success upon his *ethos*, however he also draws upon *pathos* to create a sense of personal pride, personifying those successes around him. To attack the establishment he relies upon *pathos* to create a sense of distained irritation. For example, he notes ‘their broken promises and failure to deal with real issues has led to an almost total breakdown in faith and trust in politics in this country. We are being led - we are being led by a group of college kids with no experience of the real world, and who always put their careers first’ (Farage, 2011).

Farage thus has a clear approach to rhetorical persuasion. He first reminds his audience of the 'broken promises' in order to undermine the credibility of the mainstream before referring to the mainstream as college kids without real world experience who lack the business acumen and credentials to govern. By doing so he is striving to demonstrate that a lack of experience is a deficiency that cannot easily be resolved. Here all of the parties are condemned in equal measure and portrayed as interchangeable. This is most evident in his 2014 speech:

The Labour, Liberal Democrat and Conservative parties. Parties that look the same. Parties that sound the same. Parties between whom, frankly, are major issues of substance, there is now very little difference, and parties that have all been committed to signing Britain up to the European project. Parties that have been wholly uncritical of open door immigration. Parties that have contributed directly to a downward shift in living standards in this country over the course of the last decade and more (Farage, 2014a).

When closing the speech Farage is at pains to emphasise how 'this party is not about left and right...it is about right and wrong' (Farage 2014a). This ties into his evolving message about how the Labour Party's professionalization process has alienated them from the working class. Using anger-driven *pathos*, he argued 'perhaps worse than that, has been the betrayal of working class people in this country, by Labour, by pursuing an open-door immigration policy, depriving British workers of jobs' (Farage, 2011). This appeal to an emotive sense of betrayal is an attempt to grow his *ethos* by presenting himself to the disaffected working class as a possible solution to Labour's professional image. Indeed, 'there are huge numbers of good, ordinary, decent people in this country that want to work, that want to obey the law. They've been denied from doing it. And I would say that now, UKIP is the champion for those people, and not the Labour Party' (Farage, 2011).

This emphasis upon hard working decent people is linked to his own *ethos*. Because the persona Farage is striving to construct revolves around his own character as a hard worker he is able to then use his *ethos* (credibility) to appeal to the aspirational working class. He also criticised the record of the Conservatives, saying ‘If you voted Conservative, believing that he would cut immigration from hundreds of thousands a year to tens of thousands a year, you can see that in year one, the figures were up by 21%. You've been let down’ (Farage, 2011). This is a rare combination of *pathos* with *logos*, however the intended outcome is designed to produce a dominant emotional reaction.

This use of *pathos* is designed to create a sense of anger, although it must be remembered that Farage’s persona is also built around appeals to humour. For example, ‘I have a feeling that the days of my good old friend, Herman Van Rompuy, may be numbered. Do you know, he didn't send me a Christmas card? Extraordinary, isn't it? At least we know who he is now, though, don't we?’ (Farage, 2011). This use of humour in relation to Van Rompuy was a response to his own speech to the European Parliament (in February 2010) when Van Rompuy was being considered for the post of President of the European Council. Farage generated attention with the severity of his attack. He bemoaned the character of Van Rompuy (who has the ‘charisma of a damp rag and the appearance of a low grade bank clerk’), but more importantly for his domestic audience he attacked Van Rompuy’s legitimacy. He asked: ‘who voted for you? I know democracy is not popular with you lot...[but] what mechanism do the peoples of Europe have to remove you? Is this European democracy?’ (Farage, 2010a). This reliance on *hyperbole* generates attention. It enables Farage to construct an *ethos*-driven persona of a competent, credible individual who uses his *pathos* to drive his arguments. It is interesting to note that his rhetorical style changed slightly in 2012. Indeed, he began using more *logos*-driven arguments to give his speech a greater sense of credibility or *ethos*. The *pathos*-driven narrative of growing success was maintained, as Farage argued that:

In the past, we've done very well in European elections. Indeed, in 2009, with nearly 17% of the vote, we came second across the entire United Kingdom. But what used to happen was that in general elections or in local elections, that vote share would plummet, and we got a - nearly a million people voting for us in 2010, but it was just 3% of the vote. But something really rather radical has changed, because the opinion polls, now, have us on 9%. Some of them have us on 10%. One, the other day, had us on 12% (Farage, 2012).

Here, Farage is employing *logos* to give credibility to his *pathos*-driven arguments, which revolve around the common theme of British exploitation by 'outsiders'. Meanwhile, Farage's use of *pathos* in reminding his audience of previous issues faced by UKIP's opponents was designed to enhance his own *ethos* whilst also amusing the audience. However, his most significant *pathos*-driven attack was directed towards the EU, for which he also drew upon his *ethos* to argue:

I was in Strasbourg last week, where Mr Barroso fired the opening shot. They're not hiding anymore. They're not pretending anymore. They've used the Eurocrisis to try and take yet more power for themselves. Mr Barroso, for the first time ever, in all my years in the parliament, used the F word. It's out of the bag. It is going to be a federal Europe (Farage, 2012).

Using his presence in Strasbourg, he used a forensic style to argue those within the EU were pursuing a unilateral agenda towards federalism, whilst simultaneously implying this has previously been kept a secret. This strong use of *pathos* is designed to create a sense of fear and anger, whilst giving *ethos* to the case that those leading the EU were untrustworthy. It also aims to grow his *ethos* with his audience, given the position in Europe Farage holds. Indeed, he continued using *pathos* to argue:

We've been right on this question. We said, from day one, that the Eurozone could not and would not work. We've said, since the party first came into existence, that the European Union would turn itself into a militarised, undemocratic danger to global peace. We've predicted these things, and I think the British public, and indeed, the public now over much of Europe, are beginning to see that we were right (Farage, 2012).

This argument strongly enhances his own *ethos* and that of the party, whilst also giving the opposition to the EU a stronger sense of *pathos*. However, during his 2013 conference speech Farage strove to demonstrate the growing importance of the controversies surrounding Britain's relationship with the European Union by drawing upon statistical data. He argued that 'when we launched our party just 17 per cent of British people agreed we should withdraw from the European Union. Today, that figure is 67 per cent' (Farage, 2013). This appeal to *logos* strives to highlight how the broader message of the party is becoming increasingly salient. Similarly, in the same speech he argued Britain would be in a better position financially because it would 'get back' £55 million per day (Farage, 2013). Moreover, because 'financial services make up 10 per cent of the economy' the City of London would remain in a strong position (Farage, 2013). He continued by drawing attention to the *logos* for restrictions upon immigration, saying Britain has 'Ten thousand a week. Half a million a year. Five million economic migrants in ten years coming to this country' (Farage, 2013). Farage's use of *logos* concluded by drawing attention to statistics concerning crime rates, saying 'There have been an astounding 27,500 arrests in the Metropolitan Police area in the last five years. 92 per cent of ATM crime is committed by Romanians' (Farage, 2013).



Thus, in terms of how Farage communicates, there is a strong preference for emotive rhetoric and dramatic delivery. However, we can locate Farage within a wider list of rhetorical analysis than simply *ethos*, *pathos* or *logos* (in terms of argumentation) or *deliberative*, *judicial* or *epideitic* (in terms of delivery). In an overarching sense we can argue that Farage uses *antithesis* as a core method of rhetorical communication – i.e. he defines himself and his party by what they are against, be that the European Union, immigration or the mainstream political class. This is to be expected of an anti-establishment party. In addition to *antithesis* we can also argue that Farage relies on the rhetorical technique of *utilitas* – which is the identification of shared objectives or concerns within a community which feel bound together and thus to him as the speaker. This combined use of *antithesis* and *utilitas* is evident when Farage notes in his 2011 conference speech that:

Our political class are now so hidebound by the European Union and political correctness that they simply refuse to stand up for the nation. Their broken promises and failure to deal with real issues has led to an almost total breakdown in faith and trust in politics in this country (Farage, 2011).

It is also evident in his 2013 speech when he claims that UKIP will ensure that Britain is ‘Not hemmed in by the European Union – but open to the Commonwealth. Not headed by my old pal Herman Achille van Rompuy but by the Queen’ (Farage, 2013). It is also within this context that Farage attempts to address accusations made against him and his party by the mainstream: ‘We oppose racism. We oppose extremism. We oppose sectarianism of the left or right’ (Farage, 2013). Farage repeatedly attempts to bind particular groups to his cause and against their traditional political allegiances. *Antithesis* and *utilitas* are evident when speaking to the disaffected working class, when he says:

What makes me really angry is that, since 2004, as an excuse for opening the doors to the whole of eastern Europe, the Labour Party began the myth that all British workers are useless, lazy, can't be bothered, and are not worth employing. Fancy saying that about your own population, to open up the door to somebody else. I think it's a disgrace (Farage, 2011).

The rhetoric question is again used to appeal to traditional working class Labour voters in the 2014 conference speech, when Farage switches the analysis to the minimum wage:

How can it be right that for so many people the minimum wage has actually become the maximum wage because of the massive oversupply of labour coming into this country and it also cannot be right that our political class in Westminster simply seem to be unable to comprehend and understand what the effects of wage compression have been on peoples lives (Farage, 2014a).

The same approach is adopted towards the Conservatives:

If you voted Conservative, believing that he would keep his promise; his cast iron guarantee to give you a referendum on our relationship with the European Union, well, you've been let down, haven't you? If you voted Conservative, believing that he would cut immigration from hundreds of thousands a year to tens of thousands a year, you can see that in year one, the figures were up by 21 percent, you've been let down. If you voted for David Cameron, believing that he was gonna get rid of European human rights legislation, that somehow, as it made him feel sick to the bottom of his stomach that prisoners should

get the vote, that he was gonna do something about it, well, you've been let down (Farage, 2011).

The latter quote also demonstrates that Farage is adept at utilising classic rhetorical techniques to demonise political opponents, in order to set UKIP up as the solution to the problems that the demonised mainstream political classes have failed to address. Here, Farage uses the rhetorical techniques of *erotema* and *anthyphona*. The first (*erotema*) involves asking the rhetorical question (to the conference audience in front of him, but also beyond to the electorate), and the second (*anthyphona*) is the presentation of themselves as an individual, and their party as an institution, as the answer to the rhetorical question.

Thus, Farage can be said to be exploiting the classical speechwriter's technique of the motivated sequence – (1) to win attention; (2) to demonstrate need by identifying the problems that vex the electorate; (3) to offer themselves as the agents to satisfy that need by a clear solution; (4) to visualise success and a call to action to mobilise support (Lehrman, 2009, pp. 55-61). In doing so, Farage opportunistically seeks electoral gains by provoking collective anxiety – or what might be best described as by persuasion via fear (for a wider discussion on fear as a rhetorical technique see, Glassner, 2004). Farage utilises the rhetorical technique of *hypophora* to address (1) and (2). *Hypophora* involves generating attention by asking a series of questions. Farage uses this to highlight electoral concerns that require action:

And you can't blame them – is it fair? Is it fair for the people who are already here in this country. Who've paid in to the system? That migrants can come and immediately start drawing benefits? When we, the host country, is strapped for cash, when youth

unemployment is at a million, when the NHS is groaning and the deficit is a burden on every family? (Farage, 2013).

To maximise his impact when offering priorities and solution (3) and (4) Farage tends to rely on the rhetorical technique of *anaphora*, in which he uses a litany of short complete sentences. Farage emphasises how *he* and UKIP recognise the fears and insecurities that some have about losing identity in a fast changing world (thus adhering to the outside narratives that emphasise British historical traditions, see Wellings, 2010 and Daddow, 2015). Farage opens up with the outside narrative:

*Our* geography puts us apart. *Our* history puts us apart. *Our* institutions produced by that history put us apart. *We* think differently. *We* behave differently.

This justifies a clear and unambiguous demand that reflects the *raison d'être* of UKIP:

*We* get our money back. *We* get our borders back. *We* get our Parliament back.... *We* get our own seat in on the bodies that actually run the world (Farage, 2013).

## **Research Question Two: Evidence of Change in Terms of Issue Appeals?**

Our second research question recognises the importance of circumstances to the rhetoric selected by political elites, and also recognises that circumstances are not static, rather they are evolving (Martin, 2013). Thus, we recognise that UKIP have benefitted from a conducive environment. A series of events dating back to 2008 have helped to develop that conducive environment. Put

succinctly, the post-2008 period has been characterised by multiple crises (Richards, Smith and Hay, 2014). Two crises occurred in the tail end of the New Labour era that would endure and shape the contours of the Cameron-Clegg coalition post-2010. The seismic economic collapse of 2008 and then subsequent expenses scandal of 2009 undermined public faith in the competence and trustworthiness of politicians (Allen and Birch, 2014).

The consequences of the remedial economic action taken by the Brown administration to support the banking sector would contribute to a massive fiscal deficit. This would in turn contribute to the Coalition government's decision to impose austerity measures, and their drive to re-balance the economy would have an effect upon the dynamics of electoral competition (Borges *et al.*, 2013, Whiteley *et al.*, 2013). An environment of economic insecurity and elite impropriety was fertile territory for UKIP. The expenses scandal (2009-10) helped them as it played into their 'anti-elitist narrative' in which they framed the economic crisis and the price to be paid by ordinary voters for a 'self-serving political establishment' (Hayton, 2010, p. 30). Over the longer term the binding of the Liberal Democrats to the Conservatives in office, and the Liberal Democrats credibility and trustworthiness being seriously undermined by their stance on tuition fees, increased the political space for UKIP to grow as the party of protest (Dommett, 2013).

Furthermore, their agenda was aided by the circumstances that evolved in the age of coalition politics. The ongoing Euro-zone crisis ran parallel to three other developments. First, the intervention by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) delaying the deportation of the radical Muslim cleric, Abu Qatada, (in January 2013), created an image of an impotent British Government. Second, stoked up by negative media portrayals was an increasing electoral concern about immigration and most significantly the influx of migrants from Bulgaria and Romania (from 2014), which again the British Government was powerless to prevent given European Union rules

(Ford and Goodwin, 2014a, p. 92). Third and finally, there was increasing unrest on the Conservative backbenchers about the two issues identified above. This contributed to increasing internal disagreements about the need for and the timing of a referendum on continued European Union membership (and the debates on renegotiation). Many Conservative parliamentarians on the 'hard' Eurosceptic wing of the party, also shared doubts about the socially liberal agenda of Cameron, most notably his prioritising of gay marriage (Heppell, 2013).

The fluidity of the political environment creates opportunities for the skilled rhetorician. That fluidity could mean that the range of issues that Farage could emphasis within his speeches had increased. If the arguments advanced by Meguid are to be validated than one would expect Farage to deliver speeches dominated by identity based appeals at the expense of issues such as the economy; public services or moral issues. Our findings are presented in Table One.

#### **Table One about here**

The impact of the financial crash and the resultant austerity measures did not result in Farage directly increasing his appeals on unemployment or wages, for example. His conference speeches are characterised by a virtual neglect of direct economic appeals, and the same applies in terms of public services based appeals, be that on the National Health Service or education. The slight increase in economic and public services based appeals in the 2013 conference speeches, mirrored by a slight increase in appeals around law and order, have to be viewed within the context of the increasing emphasis on identity based appeals. Economic appeals, when they are made, such as on the minimum wage or unemployment, are placed within the context of immigration or the European Union being the cause of economic ills, and withdrawal as the solution. Specific appeals around the damaging consequences of immigration increase significantly in the 2013 speech,

running parallel to this being identifiable as the electorate's most pressing public policy concern (MORI, 2013).

Therefore, notwithstanding the slight change in 2014 we can broadly endorse the Meguid theory. There is no compelling evidence that Farage has attempted to use conference speeches to engage in appeals beyond a narrowly defined set of issues. He usually attempts to conflate non-identity issues with immigration and European Union where feasible. This is possible (albeit via considerable manipulation) on issues relating to the economy, but is harder to achieve when addressing the public services. Furthermore, although UKIP may have an appeal to disaffected social conservatives, Farage does not explicitly offer appeals to them on this issue, assuming that the same constituency will be persuaded by anti-immigration, anti-European Union appeals.

Built into this rhetoric is an appeal that taps into those who are fed up with the whole political class, a process intensified by the dual impact of the financial crash and the expenses scandal. This explains the rhetorical references to the interchangeability of Cameron, Miliband and Clegg and the accusation that they have ideologically converged upon each other and have established a centrist socially democratic, socially liberal consensus. The rhetorical construction of the monolithic establishment, which has 'systematically' created a consensus around an issue and thus neutralising and marginalising that issue, has been an important facet for UKIP. This allows Farage to portray himself an anti-establishment figure who is voicing electoral grievances that other parties eschew. Thus Farage connects with *specific* sections of the electorate because it is he who is the *true* democrat (for a wider discussion on this, see Canovan, 1999).

This self-portrayal of himself as the true democrat ensures that Farage has the capacity to persuade beyond the disaffected ranks of the traditional Conservative voter. His ability to rhetorically connect with the traditional working class Labour core vote stems from a variety of factors. First,

it flows from the impact of the financial crash. The working classes feel greater economic insecurity. As austerity bites and unemployment hits Farage makes a rhetorical connection between their economic insecurity and the influx of immigrants from the European Union. Second, having rhetorically established and reinforced that connection, Farage explains why. The traditional working class Labour voter has been betrayed by New Labour, and their liberalisation on immigration when in office (Consterdine and Hampshire, 2014). Thus, Farage implies that the working class anger at the failure of Labour to ‘either listen to, or respond to their concerns’, is justified (Ford and Goodwin, 2014a, p. 91).

Furthermore, not only is the range of issues that Farage prioritises narrow but the language is different from that of conventional, mainstream politicians. Farage emphasises this as a central theme of his rhetorical approach, noting that: ‘I think I'm able to deliver good, simple, straightforward, understandable, deliverable messages the people pick up’ (Farage, 2010b). That emphasis on ‘common sense’ solutions presented through ‘straightforward language’ is deliberately presented as a contrast to the ‘obscure and elusive discourse’ of mainstream elites (Tournier-Sol, 2015, p. 151).

### **Conclusion:**

Whereas mainstream party leaders can expect their voices to be heard due to the credibility of their parties and their powerbases (both representative and historical), Farage has to demonstrate that his views warrant consideration (Finlayson, 2014, p. 434). Farage has been particularly effective at voicing the concerns of parts of an anxious electorate threatened by and fearful of change. His influence upon political debate is apparent by his indirect impact upon the political positioning of the two main parties and the concessions that are being considered to negate the appeal of UKIP (Bale, 2014; Tournier-Sol, 2015).



With regard to our first research question we can conclude that his rhetoric is delivered as political theatre and based on emotion as opposed to evidence based reasoning. Moreover, it is characterised by hyperbole and relies on evoking fear to generate attention around loss of identity. Farage relies heavily on binary opposites and establishing the necessity of continued EU membership as a fallacy. With regard to our second research question we can conclude that Farage (1) continues to base his rhetoric and his issue appeals around the politics of identity; (2) when he does refer to non-identity related appeals – such as on the economy or public services – he attempts to conflate them with identity, and (3) recognises immigration is the best rhetorical weapon through which to demonise the European Union.

With regard to our second research question we were seeking to produce evidence of rhetorical change that would allow us to assess UKIP within the context of the life cycle approach to party development. In a recent *Journal of Common Market Studies* paper, Tournier-Sol (2015) argues that UKIP is now entering a ‘transitional phase’ between stages two and three in terms of life cycle of party and its development from anti-establishment to mainstream. She argues that the transitional stage is underway because UKIP are broadening out their policy platform and offering positions on deregulation, lower taxation, law and order, defence spending, health and education vouchers, grammar schools, climate change, wind farms and same sex marriage. As this transitional stage is entered into she also implies that one would expect them to adopt ‘less radical’ language (Tournier-Sol, 2015, p. 146-7).

Our quantitative examination of five conference speeches given since 2010 provides limited evidence of Farage utilising ‘less radical’ language. He continues to rely on identity based appeals that are based around provoking and exploiting fears. The growth of UKIP is not driven by the development of a wider policy platform and broader appeals around the economy or public

services for example. Identity politics remains predominant in terms of their weapons of rhetorical persuasion. Thus talk of transitions within the life cycle of their development remains somewhat premature.

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