

A Rhetorical Analysis of Selected Czech and American Business Presentations

Kamila Trojáková

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Mgr. Libor Marek, Ph.D.
děkan



doc. Mgr. Roman Trušník, Ph.D.
ředitel ústavu

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá rétorickou analýzou vybraných českých amerických obchodních prezentací a skládá se ze dvou částí. V teoretické části je vysvětleno, co je to rétorická analýza, a jak by měla vypadat obchodní prezentace a její typy. Dále tato část popisuje přípravu a přednes obchodní prezentace, neverbální komunikaci a vybrané přesvědčovací techniky. Závěr teoretické části je věnován rozdílům v řečnické kultuře České republiky a Spojených států amerických. Praktická část je založena na analýze vybraných českých a amerických obchodních prezentací. Analýza vybraných projevů byla provedena formou rétorické analýzy a observace a zkoumala aspekty těchto obchodních prezentací, jako například přesvědčovací techniky a neverbální komunikaci, a rozdílnosti a podobnosti mluvčích z obou zemí. Cílem této bakalářské práce je zjistit, jaké rétorické a kulturní aspekty české a americké obchodní prezentace sdílí a v jakých se od sebe liší.

Klíčová slova: obchodní prezentace, prezentační dovednosti, rétorická analýza, rétorika, řečnický prostředek, veřejný mluvený projev

ABSTRACT

This bachelor's thesis deals with the rhetorical analysis of selected Czech and American business presentations, and it consists of two parts. The theoretical part explains rhetorical analysis and discusses a view of a proper business presentation and its types. Then, this thesis describes the preparation of the business presentation, its delivery, and most importantly, the persuasion techniques and non-verbal communication. The theoretical part concludes by describing the differences between the rhetorical cultures of the Czech Republic and the United States, such as the features of a proper presentation and the key characteristics of both nations. The practical part of this thesis is based on an analysis of selected Czech and American business presentations. The analysis of the selected presentations was based on rhetorical analysis and observation, and it studied the rhetorical aspects of these business presentations and the differences and similarities between the speakers of both nations. This thesis aims to detect the differences between Czech and American speech in business presentations and to determine what the presentations have in common despite the cultural differences of the speakers.

Keywords: business presentation, presentation skills, rhetorical analysis, rhetoric, rhetorical device, public speech

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I hereby declare that the print version of my Bachelor's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	9
I THEORY	10
1 INTRODUCTION TO RHETORIC AND RHETORICAL ANALYSIS.....	11
1.1 RHETORIC.....	11
1.1.1 Culture in Rhetoric	12
1.1.2 Style in Rhetoric.....	12
1.2 RHETORICAL ANALYSIS.....	13
2 BUSINESS PRESENTATION	15
2.1 PRODUCT PRESENTATION	15
2.2 COMPANY PRESENTATION	16
2.3 VIRTUAL BUSINESS PRESENTATION.....	16
3 PREPARATION AND DELIVERY OF A BUSINESS PRESENTATION.....	18
3.1 ESSENTIAL STAGES OF PREPARATION FOR A BUSINESS PRESENTATION.....	18
3.1.1 Research and Collection of Data.....	18
3.1.2 Speech Organization	18
3.1.3 Knowing the Audience.....	19
3.2 ESSENTIAL OF DELIVERING A BUSINESS PRESENTATION	19
3.2.1 Persuasive Speech	19
3.2.2 Non-Verbal Communication.....	20
4 RHETORICAL DEVICES IN BUSINESS PRESENTATIONS.....	22
4.1 COLLOQUIAL LANGUAGE	22
4.2 USAGE OF PERSONAL PRONOUNS	22
4.3 HUMOR.....	23
4.4 METAPHOR	23
4.5 REPETITION	23
4.6 RHETORICAL QUESTION	24
5 CULTURE AND PUBLIC SPEAKING IDEAL IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND UNITED STATES.....	25
5.1 CHARACTER TRAITS AND PERCEPTION OF NATIONALITY	25
5.2 PUBLIC SPEAKING IDEAL	26
II ANALYSIS	28
6 RESEARCH METHOD	29
7 ANALYSES OF SELECTED BUSINESS PRESENTATIONS	30
7.1 THALAC COSMETICS AND MORE BY MARIE MANDELÍKOVÁ	30
7.1.1 Type of Presentation and Speech Organization	30
7.1.2 Speaker and Audience.....	30
7.1.3 Non-verbal Communication and Persuasion.....	31
7.1.4 Rhetorical Devices	31
7.1.4.1 Colloquial Language.....	31
7.1.4.2 Usage of Personal Pronouns	32
7.1.4.3 Metaphor.....	32
7.1.4.4 Repetition.....	32

7.1.5	Czech Culture and Public Speaking Ideal	32
7.2	INSPIRATION FROM YOU TO YOU BY JAN SLOŽIL	33
7.2.1	Type of Presentation and Speech Organization	33
7.2.2	Speaker and Audience	33
7.2.3	Non-verbal Communication and Persuasion.....	34
7.2.4	Rhetorical Devices	35
7.2.4.1	Colloquial Language.....	35
7.2.4.2	Usage of Personal Pronouns	35
7.2.4.3	Humor	35
7.2.4.4	Metaphor.....	36
7.2.4.5	Repetition.....	36
7.2.5	Czech Culture and Public Speaking Ideal	36
7.3	WELCOME TO THE NEW WORLD BY HASSANE EL-KHOURY	36
7.3.1	Type of Presentation and Speech Organization	37
7.3.2	Speaker and Audience	37
7.3.3	Non-verbal Communication and Persuasion.....	38
7.3.4	Rhetorical Devices	38
7.3.4.1	Colloquial Language.....	38
7.3.4.2	Usage of Personal Pronouns	38
7.3.4.3	Metaphor.....	39
7.3.4.4	Repetition.....	39
7.3.4.5	Rhetorical Question	39
7.3.5	American Culture and Public Speaking Ideal	40
7.4	THE LAUNCH OF APPLE TV+ BY TIM COOK	40
7.4.1	Type of Presentation and Speech Organization	40
7.4.2	Speaker and Audience	41
7.4.3	Non-verbal Communication and Persuasion.....	41
7.4.4	Rhetorical Devices	42
7.4.4.1	Colloquial Language.....	42
7.4.4.2	Usage of Personal Pronouns	42
7.4.4.3	Repetition.....	42
7.4.4.4	Rhetorical Questions.....	43
7.4.5	American Culture and Public Speaking Ideal	43
8	DISCUSSION AND COMPARISON OF THE SELECTED BUSINESS	
	PRESENTATIONS	44
	CONCLUSION	48
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	50
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	54
	LIST OF TABLES	55

INTRODUCTION

This bachelor's thesis aims to analyze the rhetorical aspects of Czech and American business presentations, and it consists of two parts: theoretical and analytical.

The theoretical part is based on secondary sources for the discussed topics. Chapter 1 deals with the concept and characteristics of rhetoric and the relationship between rhetoric, style, and culture. Chapter 2 explains the ideal of a business presentation and three main types of business presentations: product, company, and virtual presentations. Chapter 3 discusses the preparation processes and delivery of business presentations and the usage of persuasion in speech and non-verbal communication. Chapter 4 deals with selected rhetorical devices that appear in the selected business presentations for the analytical part. The last chapter of the theoretical part of this thesis, Chapter 5, works with the cultural factors and characteristics of Czech and American business presentations.

The analytical part of this thesis begins with explaining the research method for the analysis itself in Chapter 6, as well as the criteria for selecting the Czech and American business presentations. Then, in Chapter 7, I analyze video recordings of four business presentations, two of which were given in the Czech Republic. At the same time, the other two speeches were held in the United States of America. In analyzing the presentations, I consider the type of each presentation and organizational patterns. Furthermore, I analyze the speaker's preparation for the presentation and the usage of persuasion, non-verbal communication, and selected rhetorical devices, such as colloquial language, metaphors, repetition, or rhetorical questions. I conclude each presentation analysis with the cultural impact and determine whether such business presentation and character traits of the speaker agree with the secondary sources describing either Czech or American public speaking ideals, as well as characteristics. In Chapter 8, I discuss and compare the analyzed presentations.

I. THEORY

1 INTRODUCTION TO RHETORIC AND RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

In the first chapter of my bachelor's thesis, I define rhetoric and briefly explain how it is linked to language, grammar, and culture. Then, I present the influence of culture in rhetoric and draw a picture of the importance of style in rhetoric. The second half of this chapter is dedicated to rhetorical analysis, distinctive analytical methods, and approaches to rhetorical criticism.

1.1 Rhetoric

“Never ask if there is rhetoric; where there is culture and language, there is rhetoric.” This quote taken from Campbell (2006, 360) suitably summarizes what rhetoric is about. Rhetoric is about communication; it involves people communicating within specific settings. These settings are based on location, time, situation, and audience members; thus, cultural factors will differ among different countries, communities, and groups. Communication is language, which becomes a tool once we learn how to use it to make judgments efficiently, influence others, reform, or deliberate (McKinnon 2014, 4). According to Bergman (2013, 738), rhetoric is also contingent on grammar. He explains that rhetoric cannot be further developed without properly establishing grammar. Another explanation of the term “rhetoric” provided by Foss (2018, 3) is that rhetoric becomes “the human use of symbols to communicate.” Moreover, she defines three principles of rhetoric: firstly, the creators of rhetoric (humans), the medium for rhetoric (symbols), and the purpose of rhetoric (communication). Seemingly, Foss's definition of rhetoric holds the same principles, i.e., people are in the center of communication, which is the purpose of rhetoric, and symbols are the medium of rhetoric drawn from culture and language (Foss 2018, 3).

Nevertheless, according to Foss (2018, 3), in many common uses of rhetoric, the word itself holds negative connotations. In other words, rhetoric is considered to have a strong undertone of empty, pompous language without any essence. Furthermore, based on Foss, rhetoric can be described as “flowery, ornamental speech laden with metaphors and other figures of speech.” However, this explanation is somewhat generalized because rhetoric evolves as language, cultures, and people, and each speaking occasion requires its style of rhetoric to be used accordingly and to persuade people. Moreover, according to Rives and Wynhoff Olsen (2015, 162), rhetoric is a theory that focuses on human communication. Above all, culture is one of the main factors that shapes and influences rhetoric.

1.1.1 Culture in Rhetoric

At the beginning of Chapter 1.1, I present a quote by Campbell (2006, 360): “Never ask if there is rhetoric; where there is culture and language, there is rhetoric.” She proposes this quote as one of her fundamental principles of how rhetoric is connected to culture. It means that rhetoric surrounds us everywhere, no matter what part of the world we are in. However, rhetoric differs in each country with distinguished language, customs, history, values, community, etc.; therefore, culture. The second principle says rhetoric is directly connected to culture and all its forms mentioned above. Thus, searching for information about cultures and discovering their forms and functions in the rhetorical world is crucial if a speaker wants to pierce the right rhetorical style (Campbell 2006, 360). Similarly, Mokrzan and Sogin-Mokrzan (2015, 259) refer to Carrithers (2009), who says that rhetoric is a skill that can be developed and involved by using culture as a tool. Most importantly, it is helpful to adapt to a particular culture and its style of rhetoric rather than try to apply some other rhetorical approach that will not be successful in different cultures. The last principle draws the study of rhetoric primarily as the study of language. Accordingly, rhetoric is directly linked to not only culture but also language. As languages shape their interpretation, perception, and recognition, rhetoric shapes in response (Campbell 2006, 360). Consequently, language and culture are indispensable parts of rhetoric.

1.1.2 Style in Rhetoric

In rhetoric, style is mainly connected to how a language is used but is also tightly related to culture (Lund 2017, 9). Retrospectively, “the rhetorical canon of style” expanded, especially in the 16th century, and decreased during the early 20th century. During the so-called rhetorical revival in the 15th - 16th centuries, the style became the topic of new modern texts, which focused on figures of speech and significant rhetorical sources dealing with the study of style. Furthermore, it was found that rhetorical stylistics assists with guidance in understanding arguments (written and spoken) or persuasion (Fahnestock 2011, 8). Fahnestock (2011, 6 - 7) also points out that style is arguably implacable because language is initially the main lead to theories and rules in rhetoric. In addition, according to Ballard and Koskela (2013, 2), style is essentially one of the main factors for rhetorical involvement.

In business presentations, style is an element that deserves more attention due to finding more effective ways to determine the goals of business rhetoric. With better knowledge of style in business rhetoric, we could better understand the community’s qualities of mental life or beliefs through their stylistic inclinations (Cyphert 2010, 356).

1.2 Rhetorical Analysis

Rhetorical analysis is an analysis of communicative events or a selection of events, and such analysis is based on an inquiry into the features of such events. In its sense, rhetorical analysis shares some attributes of narrative and content analyses; however, it is tightly set to theories and a long, complex history of the rhetorical tradition (Zachry 2009, 69). A rhetorical analysis can also be exchanged with another term, “rhetorical criticism,” a qualitative research method that examines and elucidates symbolic acts and artifacts to comprehend rhetorical processes (Foss 2018, 6; Zachry 2009, 69).

The ideal procedure in rhetorical analysis is to use systematic analysis and criticism to find symbolic acts and artifacts (the main objects that we turn to analyze and criticize) and, lastly, to understand the intentions of rhetorical criticism and processes (Foss 2018, 6). Moreover, rhetorical criticism can use its tools to analyze the purpose of language and what it is capable of, not only in our everyday lives but also in rhetoric. Furthermore, besides discourse, rhetorical criticism is responsible for providing the means for an analysis of what kind of effect the encrypted messages in speech have on the voice, body, images, or objects (McKinnon 2014, 4).

When establishing a rhetorical analysis, it might be challenging to figure out the most suitable method based on our critic’s objective and the rhetorical object. Not only has rhetoric observed the so-called “globalization of the object,” but distinctive approaches and methods have been used in rhetorical analysis. (McKinnon 2014, 5). Zachry (2009, 70) suggests a procedure for establishing a rhetorical analysis. Firstly, the text(s) for analysis must be identified. Secondly, they are categorized according to their purpose and type. Thirdly, identifying the elementary parts of the text and the interpretation and discussion of the arrangement(s) of such text(s) in connection with theory are emphasized. Critics can use various methods to analyze speech. However, some might argue that no such methods of rhetorical criticism as described in this chapter are necessary to approach a critique of a specific speech. Moreover, “the critic himself or herself is a method” (McKinnon 2014, 5). Furthermore, it depends on the character of speech we analyze. Therefore, distinctive speech genres like business speech will be approached differently. According to Cyphert (2010, 348), the main object of rhetorical analysis of business speech is merely the understanding of the influence of such speech in primary human conditions, but most importantly, contemporary economic, social, and political processes.

One of the methods of approaching rhetorical criticism, especially of business speech,

is close textual analysis (CTA). CTA is an explanatory practice. Its main target is to explain the meaning of a text or speech and how much the persuasion effect plays a role in it. CTA thoroughly examines text and speech's ideas, images, and arguments (Browne 2016, 91). This method is also ideal for analyzing short texts since it is approached by close reading and looking for a revelation of “the precise, often hidden, mechanism that gives a particular text the rhetorical effect” (Burghardt 2015, 563).

2 BUSINESS PRESENTATION

Generally, rhetoric is represented as a means of public communication. However, when it comes to business, from the framework of free-market capitalism, it is considered a relatively private matter of fact. Therefore, we could say that public speaking and business are contradictory elements, yet they work together (Cyphert 2010, 349). In this chapter, I elucidate the purpose of business presentations and their position in rhetoric.

When delivering a business presentation, the speaker becomes the company's voice. Consequently, studying such speech might be more challenging because the speaker is suddenly not there as an individual author. Similarly, the speaker becomes a part of complex collaborative processes. However, at the given moment, he or she is still the subject of the rules, psychology, and social influences of his or her business speech. Thus, business presentation results from various collaborative processes (Cyphert 2010, 351 - 359). According to Kapterev (2011, 4), the ultimate essence of business presentations is storytelling, i.e., “putting facts in a sequence and making connections.” On the other hand, Cyphert (2010, 349) claims that the purpose of a business speech itself is framed as “organizations and collectives speaking.” Warriner (2022, 20) even presents a professional presentation framework suitable for business presentations. This framework consists of four levels. The first level draws the foundation of a business presentation framework, including audience analysis or purpose determination. The second level focuses on the design and contents of the presentation. Level three is dedicated to the presentation delivery and rehearsal, concentrating on body language and vocal projection. Lastly, level four is dedicated to polishing the presentation, preparing for question responses, and dealing with anxiety (Warriner 2022, 20).

Stylistically, the language of business speech presumes to be clear, concise, and direct. Above all, business public speaking serves as a question concerning distinctive methods of business rhetoric (Cyphert 2010, 355 - 356). Besides following such steps when creating and developing a business presentation, it is also crucial for the speaker to determine what kind of business speech he or she is delivering.

2.1 Product Presentation

According to Valeiras-Jurado and Ruiz-Madrid (2015, 1), “product presentations are one of the most important genres in business.” As in any other type of business presentation, persuasion is the key to developing a successful product presentation, and speakers are fond of using some persuasive strategies. When delivering a product or service presentation, Černý (2011, 111) suggests mentioning these essentials: “the main goal, customer’s

requirements, characteristics of the product or service, competitive advantages, and key benefits.” Moreover, formulating a visual side of the presentation is the key to successfully delivering a product presentation. It is also vital to deliver a high-quality product presentation, either personally or online, so it finds its target audience and catches the eye of the potential customer. How the product is presented depends on the customer's decision-making process, and it impacts his or her attitude toward the product (Boardman and McCormick 2019, 367).

2.2 Company Presentation

Company presentation includes concealing a sales pitch or speaking about the organization's credentials and overall information about the company to promote it and share awareness about it. This type of presentation is common, for instance, at job fair conferences or any other kind of conference held by the company (Theobald 2019, 15). According to Handler (2017, 65), a company presentation is a company's self-representation. Such a presentation focuses on essential information about the company's current business situation. Like a product presentation, a company's presentation needs to be high-quality since the speaker is a representative of a given company, and his or her goal is to share concrete and transparent information about the company to engage the audience.

2.3 Virtual Business Presentation

By tradition, public speaking resembles a public social event, where a speaker presents his or her ideas and points to the audience. However, virtual presentations became more popular due to the expansion of new technologies, online media, and platforms where users can easily share and broadcast content (Douglas et al. 2022, 373). Online presentations are a trend in the public speaking sphere nowadays. At this time, organizations often choose or are pushed into making such speeches online since “distance speaking is fast becoming part of the public speaking landscape” (Coopman and Lull 2018, 15). This persuasion of organizations to make online presentations comes from the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced companies to transport their business presentations to the online environment, whether these presentations were suitable for that or not (Douglas et al. 2022, 373). The interaction between a speaker and the audience differs when delivering a presentation online. It is harder to read the audience's reactions, and the audience can be distracted easily by browsing the Internet, etc. (Schwabish 2017, 164). To avoid this, Schwabish (2017, 164) suggests adding more text to the slides so that the audience is slightly forced to read through it, which should lead to

paying more attention. Despite virtual presentations being less natural than classic “face-to-face” public presentations, they have some advantages. For example, greater intimacy and connection between the speaker and the audience members.

3 PREPARATION AND DELIVERY OF A BUSINESS PRESENTATION

In the third chapter, I discuss the most crucial factors of preparation for a business presentation, i.e., research and collecting data, speech organization, and audience knowledge. Then, I present the essentials of delivering a business presentation: persuasive speech and non-verbal communication.

3.1 Essential Stages of Preparation for a Business Presentation

Preparation for any presentation is the key to a successful delivery. For business presentations, among many factors, I focus on the most important parts of preparation, which are discussed in the following chapters.

3.1.1 Research and Collection of Data

Gathering all the data and materials to select the relevant information a speaker will use in his or her presentations is one of the first steps in preparing for a business presentation. Before diving into the research itself, it can be helpful to determine the needs for a presentation. the speaker could ask himself or herself questions such as “*What do I know about my topic?*”, “*Do I need to conduct primary research for my speech?*” or “*Do I need research related to facts, theories, or applications?*” (Douglas et al. 2022, 141). Kopecký (2010, 35) proposes a few research categories when making a business presentation, such as descriptive, predictive, qualitative, or quantitative research. Descriptive research helps provide information about the target audience, diagnostic research analyzes the effectiveness of our communication, qualitative research suggests a deeper understanding of a marketing situation, and lastly, quantitative research provides representative samples of individuals that are examined in the form of a questionnaire (Kopecký 2010, 35).

3.1.2 Speech Organization

Organization of speech should not be underestimated because sharing the information with our audience in the correct order is fundamental. Some of the most used organizational patterns suitable for business presentations are topical and cause-and-effect (Templeton 2010, 48). The topical pattern is the one that is used most extensively. The of-speech main points are developed based on different subtopics, aspects, etc. The speech pattern itself takes the audience through time. The cause-and-effect pattern demonstrates a relationship between two actions, where the cause directly forms an effect or reflects on a condition or

an event. This pattern is beneficial for business presentations because it is suitable for persuasive speech (Templeton 2010, 48 - 52; Douglas et al. 2022, 194 - 197).

3.1.3 Knowing the Audience

According to Coopman and Lull (2023, 4), “Public speaking is audience-centered.” In other words, the audience is essential in developing a business presentation. Thus, a necessary aspect of preparing to speak in front of an audience is gathering as much information about the audience as possible so the speaker can develop strategies for connecting with and adapting to them. Especially for business presentations, this step is important because the audience is usually gathered from potential customers, suppliers, potential funders, etc. (Schwabish 2017, 16).

When analyzing the audience, Žantovská (2015, 232) suggests using two main ranges of questions: sociological and psychological questions. Sociological questions include age, sex, occupation, income, or religion. On the other hand, psychological questions are, for example: “What will be the mood of my audience?” or “Theoretically speaking, how much will my audience be prepared for the presentation?” To compare, Templeton (2010, 15 - 26) divides audience characteristics into demographics and psychographics based on the situation the audience appears in. Demographics, in other words, “hard data,” includes essential characteristics like age (generation), gender, culture, occupation, or geographic location. On the other hand, attitudes, language, concerns, and interests are examples of psychographics.

3.2 Essential of Delivering a Business Presentation

Business presentations are highly professional. The audience for such a speech is more specific and directly impacted by the means of the presentation. The focus of the presentation is the outcome, i.e., seeing the results of the presentation in real life afterward. For instance, updates, investments, or sales (Warriner 2022, 27). That is why persuasion and non-verbal communication are crucial for business presentations.

3.2.1 Persuasive Speech

Rhetoric is the art of persuasion. Therefore, it is essential to understand what persuasion is about. When using persuasion in speech, the speaker creates an argument that he or she tries to push onto the audience and convince them about what he or she states in this argument. The persuasive speech suggests using methods to help persuaders create the correct argument and succeed at convincing the audience (Jaffe 2016, 214 - 215). The critical

perception of classical rhetoric is that “the speaking person and the addressed person, the inevitable communicative users of language, can be represented *in* language” (Fahnestock 2011, 278). I discuss persuasive tools in more detail in Chapter 4, where I present explanations of several rhetorical devices.

3.2.2 Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication accompanies the spoken word. Moreover, Žantovská (2015, 39) shares three essential functions of non-verbal communication: non-verbal communication validates and reinforces verbal information, substitutes and supplements, and lastly, non-verbal communication brings new information. Therefore, non-verbal communication is used to self-represent and express emotions, attitudes, and relationships. Theobald (2019, 77 - 78) shares a study by Mehrabian (1967), which looks at the factors influencing the audience's engagement. According to this study, non-verbal communication takes up to 55 % of the impact on performance. Non-verbal communication factors that sufficiently help to deliver a good presentation are confidence, appearance, demeanor, and posture. Based on that, we can observe that non-verbal communication is very influential on the final impression of us as speakers. This is a crucial feature of business presentations when speakers must impress the audience to persuade them (Coopman and Lull 2023, 262).

Žantovská (2015, 42) refers to Krivohlavý (1988), who claims that non-verbal communication can be shown in various ways. For instance, through physical appearance and clothes, tone of voice, gaze, facial expressions, gestures, body posture, etc. This classification of non-verbal communication agrees with Templeton (2010, 156 - 160), who claims that the main elements of non-verbal communication are proxemics, paralanguage, posture, dress, facial expression, eye contact, gestures, and body movement.

Proxemics determines the usage of space. In other words, the speaker must be careful with the distance between him or her and the audience. The larger the distance is, the more formal the situation is, and since business presentations are relatively formal, the speaker should be 12 feet or more away from his or her listeners (Žantovská 2015, 42; Templeton 2010, 156). Paralanguage governs the tone, volume, and rate of the speech. To work with these features of paralanguage, it is essential to understand our voice, and then it can be extended. Thus, it is not easy to widen our range, but we can control the volume, i.e., loudness, and speak louder or quieter. Regarding posture, it should be straight but natural to seem more self-assured. Templeton (2010, 158) suggests using the “ready position.” It requires the speaker to rest his or her arms on the sides, disperse the weight onto his or her

feed accordingly, and stand still. Appropriate choice of dress is another critical factor in non-verbal communication. A rule of thumb is to dress slightly better than the audience so that the audience will positively perceive our choice of dress. Concerning facial expressions, “true emotions are found in small expressions,” meaning they are quickly identified as a difference between a smile and a scowl. Nevertheless, facial expressions might be problematic, especially if the speaker is nervous. He or she can give the wrong signals, such as smiling or frowning. Thus, the speaker should try to control his or her facial expressions and adjust them based on the content of the speech. Regarding training our eye contact, the speaker can try to control it. For instance, in the United States, direct eye contact indicates trustworthiness. In contrast, avoiding eye contact is making other people rather uncomfortable. Ultimately, the audience is sure the speaker is talking to them if they maintain eye contact. Scanning the room from side to side, looking at different corners of the room and rows in the back can also be helpful to keep the audience alert that the speaker is talking to everybody (Templeton 2010, 154, 157 - 162; Coopman and Lull 2023, 262).

In terms of gestures, the speaker should use natural ones and control them when he or she wants to emphasize a point. Moreover, it is helpful to use a two-handed and open-palm movement. If a speaker wants to indicate a direction, one-handed gestures are suitable. Most importantly, the speaker should keep his or her hand gestures in the area between his or her waist and shoulders. Lastly, we pay attention to our body movement and use it purposefully. For illustration, standing perfectly still is not very helpful. Instead, the rule of thumb is again to be natural (Templeton 2010, 157 - 162).

4 RHETORICAL DEVICES IN BUSINESS PRESENTATIONS

The term rhetorical device serves as a linguistic and persuasive tool speakers use to communicate their thoughts and ideas to an audience effectively. Therefore, it is a widely used expression in business communication and public speaking (Butyrkina and Temkina 2020, 304). This chapter draws definitions of selected rhetorical devices in business presentations. The rhetorical devices were selected based on the frequency of the selected business presentations, which I will analyze in the analytical part of this thesis.

4.1 Colloquial Language

Colloquialism is “an informal word or expression more suitable for speech than writing.” Colloquial language can be slang, regional expressions, or informal vocabulary (Cambridge Dictionary 2024). Clackson (2010, 8) shares a diagram by Murray (1888), which depicts the varieties of English that form colloquialism. This diagram shows common attributes of colloquialism, such as “foreign, dialectal, slang, technical, and scientific.” When it comes to slang, it is described as a unique code understood only by some group or subculture. Once a larger group or a whole culture understands slang, it is considered informal or colloquial (Douglas et al. 2022, 255). Moreover, colloquialisms naturally appear in speech, especially informal. Although business presentations are considered rather formal events, colloquialisms might also appear.

4.2 Usage of Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns are suitable for speech because they create more immediacy (Douglas et al. 2022, 261). The speaker uses first-person personal pronouns *I* or *we*. When the speaker refers to the audience, he or she uses the second-person pronoun *you*. The pronoun *I* suits if the speaker wants to claim something, or he or she can use this pronoun to show his or her position of authority. A speaker also uses *I* when the position and status are transparent to the audience, and using *I* underwrites every statement (Fahnestock 2011, 279 - 280). On the other hand, the plural pronoun *we* can be used to refer to multiple speakers. At the same time, it can become a powerful persuasive tool. *We* can unite the speaker with the listeners, i.e., the audience, and it can also refer to some group that the speaker is part of, for instance, a company (Fahnestock 2011, 284 – 285). Finally, the pronoun *you* can be used to directly address the audience and persuade, e.g., in direct marketing (Fahnestock 2011, 281).

4.3 Humor

Another rhetorical device used in the selected business presentations is humor. According to Mullholand (1994, 126 - 128), humor is used to lighten an interaction of the mood or improve social connections. Nevertheless, humor might not be the most suitable tactic for persuasion because it is challenging to handle it well. If humor is dealt with incorrectly, the speaker might suffer the consequences of having an unfavorable impact on the interaction. This is why humor is problematic in intercultural and cross-gender environments., “not every humorous story is appropriate for every audience” (Douglas et al. 2022, 237). On the other hand, through humor, the audience can see the personality of the speaker. The speaker (persuader) can also use humor to laugh *with* the audience but also to laugh *at* someone. When humor results in the audience laughing and sharing amusement, it is a sign of using the power of humor successfully to persuade the audience. Humor can be used in various ways: it can divide the audience into two groups: the one that laughs and the one that does not. Thus, humor can set the common ground for each other in these groups. Another tactic for using humor could be to distract the audience from some details that the speaker might want to hide. Sometimes, humor is better if spontaneous and improvised (Mullholand 1994, 126 - 128).

4.4 Metaphor

According to Douglas et al. (2022, 253), metaphor is a direct comparison. For example, “love is a *battlefield*.” Metaphor has received large claims, such as being the engine of language growth. Also, metaphors hold tremendous persuasive power in rhetoric (Fahnestock 2011, 104 – 105). Metaphors make speeches relatively more robust, and they can assist in achieving a more articulate speech (Douglas 2022, 253). According to Cockcroft (2018, 216), when using metaphor in persuasion, “not only must the persuader seek aptness, but s/he must also carefully control the *orientation* of metaphor during the persuasive process.” If a speaker carefully selects and successfully uses a metaphor in his or her speech, it can elucidate stance and referential content without anticipating the audience’s response (Cockcroft 2018, 216).

4.5 Repetition

Repetition can be used to highlight or delay a difficult communication task. A speaker can use repetition to show that he or she is actively listening to the other speaker. Thus, if one speaker finishes his or her speech with a sentence, the second speaker might use the exact

words to connect the two speeches. However, someone would find this rather upsetting because it might seem like the speaker takes the words from somebody else's mouth. Repetition can also soften a negative expression by repeating, for instance, the word *no*. Most importantly, repetition is a vigorous persuading tool, as it is said that "if something is just repeated often, it becomes [the] truth" (Mullholand 1994, 312 - 314). If one would like to specify repetition as a rhetorical device more, some figures of speech serve as repetition, such as parallelism or anaphora. Parallelism, for illustration, is a repetition of sentence structures, syllables, stress patterns, or different grammatical structures. For example: "*That's the kind of soldiers they are. That's the kind of people we are*" (Fahnestock 2011, 224 - 225). On the other hand, anaphora, the initial repetition, describes a sentence that starts with the same word or a group of words. For instance: "*To those...to those old aliens*" (Douglas et al. 2022, 256 - 257).

4.6 Rhetorical Question

The rhetorical question stands for asking a question but does not require the answer because the answer is based on the implications of the question (Cockcroft 2018, 289). The pitch range is much more comprehensive in separating a rhetorical question from a regular question, and the rhetorical question might even be a cliché or a familiar expression. Rhetorical questions suggest a feeling the speaker wants to share without naming it (Mullholand 1994, 295). According to Douglas et al. (2022, 236), rhetorical questions connect the audience and the topic of the presentation. If they interact by raising their hands to agree with the speaker, the topic is essential to them. If not, they do not connect with the topic as such. Overall, using rhetorical questions in business increases strong attitudes towards a topic even though the personal relevance between the topic and the speaker might be lower (Blankenship and Craig 2006, 112).

5 CULTURE AND PUBLIC SPEAKING IDEAL IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND UNITED STATES

The purpose of this last chapter of the theoretical part of my thesis is to give cultural context to business public speaking in the Czech Republic and the United States. Thus, I provide information about common Czech and American character traits, nationality perception, and each country's public speaking ideals.

5.1 Character Traits and Perception of Nationality

Vlachová and Řeháková (2009, 256) provide that Czech nationality is mainly tied to Czech territory, meaning that to be considered a Czech person, one must live in the Czech Republic and speak the Czech language. If one lives abroad and speaks Czech, he or she might not be a genuine Czech person. Above all, some scholars believe that Czech identity can be described based on a person's character traits. To understand the Czech audience, we should know the nature of Czech people, i.e., their character traits (Vlachová a Řeháková 2009, 256).

Průcha (2004, 137) refers to Mahen (1924), who provides several beneficial and harmful characteristics of the Czech people. He claims they can get excited about something quickly; they are active, nimble, balanced, and slow. Mahen highlights religious indifference, exaggeration, and lack of courage or endurance regarding the Czech people's bad habits and harmful characteristics. Průcha (2004, 136) also quotes Chalupný (1907), who, on the other hand, argues that Czech people are courageous but peaceful. According to him, one thing is sure: Czech people perceive their nation and country as relatively small and weak (Průcha 2004, 138). By contrast, Kalvodová (2011, 17) quotes Brodský (2001) and Holý (2001), who claim that Czech national identity is defined based on its culture and language, and the leading role in determining Czech national identity is based on the spatial delineation of the state; it is based on the mix of cultures in the state, as much as the determination of borders or uniting nations.

On the other hand, American identity is a complex phenomenon since the size of the United States spans a continent, and the ethnic and religious diversity makes it difficult to state clearly the American perception of national identity (Hall and Reed, 1990, 139). Gunnar Myrdal famously wrote in 1944 that American identity is based on ideals such as individualism, a promise of hard work, equality, or freedom. According to Shildkraut (2014, 442), this is far from reality. So, what makes the American people American? It is not easy to find a consensus on this question. Some scholars focus on using the term “Americans” for

those who are white, English-speaking American people whose ancestors came to the United States from Europe, so African Americans or Hispanic people would not fit this categorization. Another factor that plays a role in determining national identity is demographics. Californians, for example, believe that a true American can write and speak in English, treat everyone equally regardless of race or background, and defend the country if necessary. When it comes to other ethnic groups in the United States, such as Blacks or Latinos, they are more likely to define an American as a person who blends into the diverse society and assimilates to American traditions and customs (Shildkraut 2014, 457 - 458). Eventually, being an American is defined differently by various ethnical and regional groups in the United States. According to Hall and Reed (1990, 140, 147). “Americans can be picked out [from] any place in the world because of their behavior.” That is mainly due to their friendliness and loudness. Besides these character traits, Americans are open, informal, optimistic, and creative. Nevertheless, some negative characteristics include concerns with appearance, dealing too much with what others think or say about them, and being eager to be loved and accepted. Americans are patriots who are proud of their country and firmly believe in democracy and freedom (Hall and Reed 1990, 140, 147).

5.2 Public Speaking Ideal

According to Hrkal 2018 (194 – 195), when a speaker delivers a presentation to the Czech audience, he or she should leave an excellent first impression. Hrkal further emphasizes how important the speaker's clothing choice is and the importance of focusing on the first sentence he or she says. Furthermore, it is inappropriate to start with an apology for not preparing enough or being vocally indisposed. However, Hrkal mentions that Czechs have a soft spot for outsiders, so if a speaker shows weaknesses or mistakes, the Czech audience might be more forgiving and appreciate the speaker for being more natural. Žantovská (2015, 246) states that the speaker's image and the overall impression of the speaker and his or her presentation are significant factors in impressing the audience.

Regarding public speaking in the United States, Americans tend to emphasize speaking much more than listening, considering speech an essential part of their culture. Thus, we must carefully choose the correct vocabulary in our speech for the American audience. The United States is culturally diverse, so linguistic phenomena such as jargon, idioms, or slang appear naturally in American speech. Other ways of connecting to an American audience are focusing on the language, i.e., putting it in context for our audience, personalizing the language we use, or using it inclusively, meaning that we choose words that do not show

privilege over somebody else (Coopman and Lull 2023, 212 - 219).

Boromisza-Habashi et al. (2016, 22 - 23) present an analysis of the evolution of the public speaking ideal by Sproule (2012). He claims that the Anglo-American public speaking format is based on two types of participants: the speaker and the audience. Therefore, the speech in American public speaking is audience-centered, and the audience is the agent of response to the speaker. Above all, we must be careful when choosing the words for our speech for an American audience due to its cultural, ethnic, and regional diversity.

II. ANALYSIS

6 RESEARCH METHOD

This thesis analyzes selected business presentations held by Czech and American speakers. Furthermore, it aims to demonstrate and discover the differences and similarities between Czech and American speakers, as well as their practices, cultures, rhetorical devices, stylistic and rhetorical approaches, and strategies. I will conduct this rhetorical analysis on qualitative research, concentrating on “understanding what those interpretations are at a particular point in time and a particular context” (Merriam 2002, 4). Moreover, I will apply rhetorical criticism, which is, in essence, a qualitative research method that examines and clarifies symbols and artifacts to understand rhetorical processes (Foss 2018, 6; Zachry 2009, 69). I will also use close textual analysis, which is suggestibly suitable for business presentations (Browne 2016, 91). Lastly, I will analyze the rhetorical devices in each presentation and focus on the cultural impact of the presentations.

For this analysis, several video recordings of business presentations held by Czech and American speakers were chosen and observed. One of the most significant criteria used to select specific video recordings is occasion, i.e., selecting both Czech and American business presentations with the same purpose, such as promoting and presenting a new product to the business market or presenting a brand or a company. Creating a selection based on these criteria should result in the most accurate analysis since it is assumed that all selected business presentations are held in as similar conditions as possible.

7 ANALYSES OF SELECTED BUSINESS PRESENTATIONS

7.1 Thalac Cosmetics and More by Marie Mandelíková

The first Czech business presentation I will analyze was held at a beauty fair in Prague in 2019, and the video recording of this presentation is available on YouTube. The speaker, Marie Mandelíková, promotes and presents three cosmetic brands: Thalac, Placentor Vegetal, and MM Beauty. Not to mention that the last brand, MM Beauty, is her own, which she recently launched at that time. Her presentation is approximately fifteen minutes long (Mandelíková 2019).

7.1.1 Type of Presentation and Speech Organization

As for the format of this business presentation, it is a product presentation since Mandelíková (2019) presents the characteristics and benefits of the products. Nevertheless, the presentation is available online, and it is a virtual presentation as well. Mandelíková divides her speech into three parts. As mentioned, she presents three different brands, each with a segment in the presentation. Therefore, the speech is organized in a topical pattern, as mentioned by Templeton and Douglas (see Chapter 3.1.2).

7.1.2 Speaker and Audience

Next, I analyze Mandelíková (2019) and how she connects with the audience. She talks at a comfortable pace in formal Czech. For illustration, see (1) and (2):

- (1) *Pokud některé z vás jste kosmetičkami, tak určitě víte, že tedy je to tak...*
- (2) *Ty produkty jsou opravdu velice oblíbené a účinnost byla skutečně prokázána.*

She remains confident and calm. She refers to her audience as potential cosmeticians, customers, or new employees in the beauty field. She also refers to her audience as female, which shows she is well-prepared for this presentation because she knows her audience well, as it consists of women.

Some technical difficulties occur as she approaches a part of a presentation where she wants to share an illustrative video with her audience. Although the video is not played immediately and the audience has to wait, Mandelíková handles this unpleasant situation well, as she remains calm and confidently informs the audience that the video will be played shortly. Ultimately, she manages to play the video to the audience in about half a minute.

7.1.3 Non-verbal Communication and Persuasion

Regarding non-verbal communication in Mandelíková's (2019) presentation, she mainly gestures with her right hand. She stands in one place and maintains a "ready position." She also smiles and speaks steadily, yet another sign of certainty. According to Coopman and Lull (see Chapter 3.2.2), knowing what to do with your body while delivering a speech helps release anxiety, and Mandelíková is a good example. She is dressed appropriately for the occasion, wearing a semi-formal black dress to her knees, black tights and black leather boots. Since this event is formal, but the audience consists of approximately 20 – 30 members, she can afford to dress less formally. Moreover, she keeps eye contact with her audience throughout her presentation, making her appear even more confident. One negative note to her presentation would be that she makes hesitation sounds throughout the presentation, which is distracting. For illustration, see (3):

- (3) *V tomto katalogu přineseme již v měsíci prosinci v letošním roce ehh... vlastně obličejovou péči v šesti krocích, ehh... tak, aby každá zákaznice...*

Concerning persuasion, in her speech, she presents three beauty brands and talks about the evolution of the brands and the features they share. Then, she moves on to talk about the products. As she speaks about them, she refers directly to the audience, more precisely to the cosmeticians who are potential customers. She talks about how much the cosmeticians could influence their customers to benefit from using these products. Thus, she explains that by persuading the customers and selling the products, the cosmeticians can benefit afterward. She even advises what cosmeticians should say to their customers about these products. This suggests confidence, knowledge, and experience.

7.1.4 Rhetorical Devices

7.1.4.1 Colloquial Language

Mandelíková (2019) rarely uses colloquial expressions in her speech. However, she frequently uses filling words, such as "vlastně," or starting a sentence with "No a....". When she is waiting for the video to load, she says, to lighten up the waiting, "Tak, chvílka napětí." She uses some anglicisms in her speech, such as "skin-booster," although she always explains their meaning to the audience, who might not be familiar with such terms. Otherwise, she speaks in standard Czech for most of her speech, using only formal and grammatically correct expressions. Therefore, her speech remains dialect or accent-less.

7.1.4.2 Usage of Personal Pronouns

When presenting the brands and their products, Mandelíková (2019) refers to the companies owning these brands as *ours*, implying she is directly involved in managing them, which is another factor that makes the presentation trustworthy. She uses the personal pronoun *we* often; in fact, it is the most used pronoun in her speech, as she used this pronoun fifty-two times. For example, see (4) and (5):

- (4) *Od roku 2017 jsme ještě lepší.*
 (5) *Inovujme a nabízíme nové produkty...*

Then, she also refers to her audience with the plural form of the personal noun *you*:

- (6) *Pokud jste samy kosmetičkami...*

7.1.4.3 Metaphor

Concerning the usage of metaphors in this presentation, Mandelíková (2019) uses metaphors only twice. She uses both metaphors as she is again waiting for the video to load to light up the mood. For illustration, see (7) and (8):

- (7) *Video se nám lehce zatoulalo.*
 (8) *Zdárně jsme se prokousali videem.*

7.1.4.4 Repetition

Mandelíková (2019) uses both types of repetition described in Chapter 4.5, anaphora and parallelism. Regarding anaphora, see (9) and (10):

- (9) *Inovujeme také obaly, inovujeme receptury...*
 (10) *Nové logo, nové vizuály, nové uspořádání a také nový katalog.*

For illustration, see parallelism in (11) and (12):

- (11) *Kosmetika Thalac tedy pečuje jak o kůži obličeje, tak o tělo.*
 (12) *V salonu máme jak pleťové, tak tělové produkty.*

7.1.5 Czech Culture and Public Speaking Ideal

Lastly, I would like to comment on the cultural side of the audience and the speaker in this business presentation and how much it aligns with the Czech public speaking ideal. As mentioned in Chapter 5.1, Czech people are reserved and calm. As seen in the video, all audience members listen quietly and ask no questions during the presentation. The same applies to Mandelíková (2019), who is calm and reserved. According to Hrkal (see Chapter 5.2), a good introduction is essential for an ideal Czech business presentation. This means that the first impression is crucial. During Mandelíková's introduction to her presentation, the audience is quiet, as well as throughout the entire presentation, and listens carefully to Mandelíková. We can see that she smiles, is well-dressed, and is confident.

To summarize, Mandelíková's presentation was well-organized, neat, and

straightforward. Although she had to deal with technical difficulties, she handled them well. However, she should have eliminated the hesitation sounds and kept more eye contact with her audience instead of looking at the slides the majority of the time.

7.2 Inspiration From You to You by Jan Složil

The second business presentation I turn to analyze was held in Prague, at a showcase event called Learn & Tech 2021 where companies present how digital technologies can improve education in corporations. One of these presentations was held by Jan Složil, who presents a company called SantiaX. The recording of this presentation is available on the MotivP website (Složil 2021).

7.2.1 Type of Presentation and Speech Organization

Složil (2021) opens the presentation by explaining that SantiaX provides courses and an e-learning system for corporations. Therefore, his presentation is a product presentation. As suggested by Černý in Chapter 2.1, one of the essential features of a good product presentation is including the customer's requirements. Consequently, Složil starts by saying that in this presentation, he will focus on four essential problems that SantiaX deals with the most with their customers, and he also provides examples of the services of the company. Since the video recording of this business presentation is available online, it is a virtual presentation as well. This means that a broader audience can access this recording on the internet and through TV broadcasts because he starts his presentation by welcoming the audience into the room and the audience at the TV screen. Regarding research, Složil is well-prepared for the presentation as he shares sufficient information about the company's offerings. However, he does not thoroughly examine the company's business processes; instead, he explains and shows the outcomes. Based on the division of speech organizational patterns presented by Templeton and Douglas (see Chapter 3.1.2), this presentation uses the topical pattern, as the essential points of the presentation are based on the four subtopics.

7.2.2 Speaker and Audience

In what follows, I focus on how Složil (2021) presents the information to potential clients and analyze how he connects with the audience. He speaks at a fast pace using the informal language. For the illustration, see examples (13) and (14):

(13) *Z jednoho videa, po domáčku natočenýho, jsme udělali něco jinýho...*

(14) *...svoje slabý a silný stránky...*

Therefore, it can be difficult for the audience to keep up with his speech. During the whole presentation, it is evident that he is in a rush. Time plays an essential role because one of the organizers of this event gives a signal to the speaker by a ring when there are five minutes left of the allotted time. Consequently, Složil speaks fast because he wants to include as much information as possible in his presentation. When it comes to his relationship with the audience, he speaks directly to his audience, referring to them as potential or existing customers of the company. For illustration, see (15):

- (15) *Pomáháme vám zažít si v tom online světě ty situace, které vás čekají v tom reálném světě [...] takže jsem se rozhodl, že dneska to pro vás udělám jako takovou inspiraci. Udělám...ukážu vám čtyři konkrétní příklady, které vlastně řešíme s váma.*

Since this event is a fair focused on companies involved in education for corporations, the audience likely consists of people who work in this field and representatives of various companies.

7.2.3 Non-verbal Communication and Persuasion

Let me now analyze non-verbal communication in Složil's (2021) presentation. He gesticulates with his right hand, and for 85 % of the allotted time, he faces the audience. However, he quickly turns to the screen behind him or the slides shared on a small TV in front of him fifty-three times during his presentation. This affects his presentation negatively because he should keep more eye contact with the audience. On the other hand, he speaks confidently and enthusiastically, loud enough for everybody in the audience to hear him because they pay attention to his speech and the videos in the presentation. Nevertheless, as I already mentioned, he speaks at a fast pace. Sometimes, he gets lost in his words and becomes nervous, which does not add to a confident speech. As Templeton, Coopman, and Lull mentioned in Chapter 3.2.2, a rule of thumb for a business presentation is that the speaker should dress up slightly better than the audience. Složil is wearing black jeans and a beige shirt. However, one of the event organizers sits next to the presenter, wearing a dark blue suit. On the Other hand, Složil is still dressed more formally than the audience, who is dressed casually.

Concerning persuasion, based on Složil's speech, he tries to convince and influence the audience by saying that the audience, as customers, and the company can all together find solutions to the problems that the customers may have. For illustration, see (15). Then, he presents how the company can help find solutions by showing the four examples SantiaX

deals with, which are mentioned in Chapter 7.2.1. This benefits the audience because they can directly see their order's approximate result.

7.2.4 Rhetorical Devices

7.2.4.1 Colloquial Language

Složil (2021) speaks in informal Czech. For illustration, see examples (13), (14) in Chapter 7.2.2, and (16):

(16) *Ted' jsou ceny docela jako dobrý...*

He uses non-grammatical expressions. For example, “*dobrý*” except for the grammatically correct “*dobré*.” These non-grammatical expressions are typical for Czech people living in Bohemia, the western part of the Czech Republic. Therefore, he was probably born in that area or has lived there. Furthermore, he uses colloquial expressions such as “*vlastně*” or “*takže*”. Additionally, he uses anglicisms as “*e-learning*” or “*self-assessment*,” but he does not explain their meaning, assuming the audience probably knows.

7.2.4.2 Usage of Personal Pronouns

In this business presentation, Složil (2021) uses predominantly the personal pronoun *you*. According to Fahnestock (see Chapter 4.2), *you* is a powerful pronoun used in persuasion. Složil is aware of this and uses personal pronouns throughout his entire presentation. For illustration, see (13) a (14):

(17) *Kdy vy se potkáte s mladými novomanžely...*

(18) *Pomáháme Vám zažít si v tom on-line světě...*

7.2.4.3 Humor

As for humor, Složil (2021) attempts to be amusing several times throughout his presentation, especially toward the end. His presentation contained visuals, mainly videos, which were problematic because of their sound. As Složil tried to speak, the sound of the video scattered his speech and the audience's attention. To present the services of the company, he created a 360° video of how to get from the presentation room to the company's stand. In the video, he included a cut-out picture of himself trying to strike a funny pose while joking and giving directions. For example, see (19):

(19) *Zde proražte zed'... stěna už je proražena.*

As a result, the audience members laugh lightly, some of them even nervously. At the end of his presentation, he includes another joke by saying, “*Do you have any questions? If not, then...*” and plays a video of a man saying, “*You cannot ask, for I am disappearing right*

now” [my own translation]. Unfortunately, the joke does not land well, as he formulates his last sentence incorrectly. If he wanted the pun of the joke to work well, he should have formulated the question differently.

7.2.4.4 *Metaphor*

Složil (2021) does not use metaphors, except for once, when he uses a quote to start off his presentation. See in (20):

(20) *Půjčil jsem si takovou myšlenku že: „vize bez exekuce je vlastně jenom halucinace.“*

7.2.4.5 *Repetition*

Regarding repetition, Složil (2021) does not use repetition intentionally as a persuasive tool. Instead, one can hear him repeat words and phrases as he struggles to reach his point, gets distracted, or gets lost. For illustration, see (21):

(21) *Velmi jednoduché řešení, které každému... každému tomu účastníkovi...*

However, Složil uses anaphora once, although probably not intentionally. See (22):

(22) *Velmi často se setkáváme s tím, že vlastně máte... že máte materiály, který chcete nějakým způsobem upravit. Že máte spoustu procesů, který potřebujete vyřešit.*

7.2.5 **Czech Culture and Public Speaking Ideal**

As mentioned by Chalupný (see Chapter 5.1), Czech people are, according to him, courageous but peaceful. In my opinion, this can be applied to Složil as well. Although this presentation was given at a semi-formal event, he took the risk and used humor to create a more relaxed and friendly atmosphere for his audience. Concerning the Czech public speaking ideal, according to Hrkal (see Chapter 5.2), Czech people have a weak spot for outsiders. Therefore, if a speaker makes a mistake or shows some weaknesses, they are more likely to forgive him or her, just like Složil’s audience did when his attempt at a joke failed.

To conclude this business presentation, Složil developed a satisfactory yet slightly problematic presentation. His attempt to be humorous resulted in seeming unserious at some points, as the audience laughed nervously or remained silent. Regarding his speech, he remained optimistic and confident, although he was stressed because he was rushing.

7.3 **Welcome to the New World by Hassane El-Khoury**

The first American business presentation was set in New York’s The Times Center, held by Onsemi. Their technologies are mainly used in the automotive and industrial markets. At this Financial Analyst Day event, multiple company leadership speakers presented. Moreover, they discussed the company’s strategies and financial and technology prospects.

One of the speakers I will analyze is Hassane El-Khoury, president and CEO of Onsemi, who opened this series of presentations with his fifteen-minute-long speech (El-Khoury 2023; Onsemi 2024).

7.3.1 Type of Presentation and Speech Organization

Unlike the first two Czech product presentations, this business presentation is a company presentation. According to Theobald (see Chapter 2.2), a company presentation represents a type of conference the company holds. This is also a virtual presentation because it is available online to reach a broader audience. Research-based, El-Khoury (2023) is a perfect speaker for such occasions and topics. Since he is the president and CEO of Onsemi, he knows the best about its financial credentials and accomplishments. He is highly aware of the management of the company, as well as how much it influences the industrial markets in the world.

Stylistically, El-Khoury starts off his presentation by sharing a slide from a presentation he held in 2021. The slide shows the “winning formula to success” and explains how Onsemi will execute to get better at sales and using its technologies. Then, El-Khoury describes each part of a diagram shared on his slide and explains how to achieve a sustainable ecosystem in Onsemi. He concludes his presentation by getting back to the “winning formula.” In summary, El-Khoury goes from one subtopic to another, which makes it easier for the audience to keep up with the presentation and be more engaged. Therefore, the speech organization pattern of this presentation is the cause-effect pattern. As mentioned by Templeton and Douglas (see Chapter 3.2.1), this type of speech organization is specifically suitable for a business presentation because it is a persuasive tool.

7.3.2 Speaker and Audience

El-Khoury (2023) is a skilled speaker because he is calm and relaxed. He articulates well and talks at a comfortable pace. He pauses accordingly and speaks in formal, Standard American English. For example, see (23):

- (23) *The machine vision that's going to improve the throughput of our factory automation. And it's going to improve the safety of automobiles. That is the core of the sustainable ecosystem...*

El-Khoury does not rush anywhere, which is beneficial for him; as a result, he barely misses. He explains his ideas thoroughly, supporting them with examples on his slides, and he proves his claims by sharing evidence and quotes. For instance, he describes how Onsemi has executed successfully in the past year, and he supports this statement by sharing multiple

headlines from newspapers and magazines that talk about Onsemi's success. Regarding El-Khoury's relationship with his audience, he looks at all the auditorium's corners. He walks from one side of the stage to another, making close contact with the audience members.

7.3.3 Non-verbal Communication and Persuasion

El-Khoury's (2023) facial expressions are relatively still, as he maintains being concentrated. He gesticulates minimally. As he walks around the stage, he maintains a straight posture. He maintains eye contact with the audience throughout 90 % of his presentation. He also does not look at the presentation slides. Regarding the choice of El-Khoury's clothing, he is wearing a black polo t-shirt with an Onsemi logo, dark blue jeans, and black sneakers. Therefore, he is dressed rather informally for such an occasion. The other speakers of this event are dressed more formally than him. It differentiates him from the rest of the speakers. Since he is the highest representative of the company, he can eventually afford to wear an outfit as such.

As for persuasion, El-Khoury's strategy is to convince the audience about what Onsemi is capable of and that it can maintain success. To prove that, he shows evidence on his slides: the success of Onsemi during the past two-year-long period, followed by article headlines saying the same as him, which makes him gain trustworthiness. Moreover, El-Khoury talks about Onsemi's customers who made this success possible, such as Hyundai or Volkswagen.

7.3.4 Rhetorical Devices

7.3.4.1 Colloquial Language

Although El-Khoury (2023) speaks in formal Standard American English, his speech contains some colloquialisms nevertheless. For illustration, see the usage of contractions in (21) – (23) and the usage of idiom in (24):

- (21) *What we're gonna do?*
- (22) *If you've read a lot of the news...*
- (23) *So saying, claiming that we've done all of 'em.*
- (24) *Playing to win...*

7.3.4.2 Usage of Personal Pronouns

El-Khoury (2023) uses the personal pronoun *you* only nine times and the pronoun *I* only twelve times in his presentation. On the other hand, he uses the pronoun *we* fifty-two times. He refers to the company trying to encourage group effort and collegiality with the pronoun *we*. For illustration, see (25) – (27):

- (25) *We, today, if those two do not happen.*
 (26) *If we don't have a solid infrastructure.*
 (27) *That's what we are, that's how we operate.*

7.3.4.3 Metaphor

El-Khoury (2023) uses metaphor only twice. See (28) and (29):

- (28) *And that is creating this opportunity that is about intelligent power and intelligent sensing, and that is the new world we live in [...] That is the new world we're going to deliver to.*
 (29) *Get the data, spit it in Excel, and spit it out.*

The expression “*the new world*” is used frequently in his speech as he explains how Onsemi will continue to succeed in the future. In (29), he uses this metaphor to simplify and slander the graphs and tables created in Microsoft Excel. Later, he shows a more sophisticated graph that explains Onsemi's operations.

7.3.4.4 Repetition

In El-Khoury's (2023) speech, repetition is the most widely used rhetorical device. As I have already mentioned, he uses the expression “*the new world*” in his presentation. For illustration, see the usage of anaphora in (30) – (32):

- (30) *Because this new world is not about the “four percent”, this new world is about tremendous growth and tremendous opportunity.*
 (31) *It's about going broad, it's about leading with digital.*
 (32) *It's about executing, it's about building.*

In (30) – (32), he uses anaphora to emphasize the point of his speech. (33) contains repetition as well, and it is another phrase that El-Khoury uses extensively in his presentation:

- (33) *Good enough is just not good enough for us.*

Furthermore, El-Khoury uses repetition to emphasize his emotions. See (34) and (35). Example (35) is also the opposite of anaphora; therefore, *epiphora*, repetition of words at the end of clauses:

- (34) *I am very very proud to say that.*
 (35) *We have to create value, and capture that value, and reflect that value.*

7.3.4.5 Rhetorical Question

Unlike the Czech speakers, El-Khoury (2023) uses rhetorical questions in his presentation. As El-Khoury uses rhetorical questions throughout his speech, he creates tension between what he is about to say and the audience. For illustration, see (36) – (38):

- (36) *What we're gonna do? What is the formula?*
 (37) *Why change something that's working very well?... So why change it?*
 (38) *[...] nothing but execute against all odds and all uncertainties. But what is it?*

7.3.5 American Culture and Public Speaking Ideal

Based on Hall and Reed in Chapter 5.1, Americans are relatively informal and optimistic. Regarding El-Khoury (2023), he is informal regarding clothing and speaks positively. According to Coopman and Lull (see Chapter 5.2), the trend of public speaking is much more significant in the United States than in the Czech Republic. Therefore, American speakers are advanced and used to public speaking, which also applies to El-Khoury. He held this type of presentation multiple times. Moreover, he is skilled and has experience with public speaking.

In conclusion, El-Khoury delivered a successful business presentation. His speech was consistent, and he barely got lost in his words. He chose a cause-effect speech organizational pattern, which is the most suitable for a business presentation. Therefore, he succeeded in persuading the audience about the company's plans and proving how successful the company has been.

7.4 The Launch of Apple TV+ by Tim Cook

The last American business presentation was taken at an Apple Event. It was held in September 2019 at The Steve Jobs Theater in California. Apple is one of the largest companies globally, and it is mainly famous for creating new electronic devices, such as the iPhone, iPad, and Macintosh computers. Apple Events are highly anticipated because new products are launched at this event. Among many speakers, I decided to analyze Tim Cook, the CEO of Apple. I focused on the part of his speech where he launched a new product, Apple TV+, and a lineup of so-called Apple TV+ Originals (Cook 2019; Wright 2024).

7.4.1 Type of Presentation and Speech Organization

Cook's (2019) business presentation is categorized as a product presentation because he launched a new Apple product called Apple TV+. He also launched a lineup of Originals, new movies, and series available only on this streaming platform. In Chapter 2.1, Černý suggests that to deliver a successful product presentation, the visual side of the presentation is essential. Cook fulfilled this by showing a trailer for *See*, one of the upcoming series. He also presented the audience with posters for some of the upcoming series. As mentioned, this Apple Event is globally anticipated. Therefore, this event was shared through YouTube as a worldwide and virtual presentation.

Stylistically, Cook presents three upcoming series on Apple TV+, especially *See*. Then, he shares the worldwide premiere of the *See* trailer with the audience, concluding by

talking about Apple TV+. Essentially, he shares the date of when the new streaming service will be available, as well as the monthly cost of it. Thus, for this presentation, Cook uses the topical pattern, which is, as described by Templeton, Coopman, and Lull (see Chapter 3.2.1), a pattern used for speaking about a topic that is taken from different subtopics.

7.4.2 Speaker and Audience

Cook (2019) speaks with much excitement, with good articulation, at a comfortable pace, and in formal Standard American English. For illustration, see (39):

(39) *This morning. I want to share with you one of the most imaginative, thrilling, and thought-provoking drama ever.*

He is relaxed and visibly excited because he smiles throughout his presentation. Because this is a product launch, the audience is full of expectations. Therefore, Cook's presentation takes up much responsibility since the audience is not only the people in the auditorium but also individuals watching the live stream on their devices all around the globe. Although Cook walks around the stage during his speech, he keeps eye contact with the audience despite moving. He also stops to look at the audience directly. This is an example of his connection with the audience through eye contact. His relationship with the audience is excellent because the audience members react well to his speech, for example, by cheering or clapping. It is noticeable that the audience is excited about this presentation.

7.4.3 Non-verbal Communication and Persuasion

Cook (2019) presents on a large stage; therefore, as mentioned in Chapter 7.4.2, he walks throughout his whole presentation but keeps eye contact with the audience for 95 % of the allotted time despite walking. He gestures with his hands while he tries to explain something. As mentioned in Chapter 4.2 by Templeton, Coopman, and Lull, dress is essential to non-verbal communication. Cook is dressed simply for his presentation. He is wearing a black sweater, black jeans, and black sneakers. This outfit choice could reference the founder of Apple, Steve Jobs, who was famous for wearing a simple black turtleneck to this Apple Event.

Concerning persuasion, Cook keeps the audience excited and engaged throughout his presentation since the audience shows support by reacting to his speech. As he presents the Originals that have already been teased to the public, he mentions how successful and phenomenal the response has been. Therefore, he indicates in his presentation the importance and significance of this event by appealing to the emotions of the audience members. In

other words, he persuades the audience by showing the success of this streaming service, which is thus far unavailable.

7.4.4 Rhetorical Devices

7.4.4.1 Colloquial Language

In this presentation, Cook (2019) talks in formal Standard American English, although he uses contractions. For illustration, see (40) – (42):

(40) *This morning, I wanna share with you...*

(41) *Let's talk about Apple TV+.*

(42) *With Apple TV+ you'll get access to...*

Furthermore, he uses emotive language and colloquialisms to express his excitement. He also says, “*This is crazy!*” The audience reacts by laughing. Moreover, he repeats the words “*excited*” or “*incredible*.” See (43) – (45) for illustration:

(43) *All of these incredible shows...*

(44) *This is incredible.*

(45) *Today, I am so excited to share with you the worldwide premiere...*

7.4.4.2 Usage of Personal Pronouns

Cook (2019) does not use personal pronouns that often. Instead, he describes the features of Apple TV+. However, he uses the pronoun *you* most often, more specifically twelve times. This pronoun is used the most in his presentation because he mainly refers to the audience. Thus, the pronoun *you* is a great persuasive tool in this presentation. For illustration, see (46):

(46) *And it is just \$4,99 a month for your whole family.*

7.4.4.3 Repetition

As mentioned in Chapter 4.5, the speaker who starts another presentation after the initial speaker can use the exact words that the previous speaker used to connect both presentations. At the beginning of Cook’s (2019) presentation, he thanks the previous speaker for her contribution and repeats the main idea of her presentation for a better connection between both speeches. See in (47):

(47) *Thank you, Anne. Apple Arcade is a gaming service unlike any other out there. We can’t wait to start playing when it launches later this month.*

Furthermore, Cook uses anaphora to explain and emphasize the idea behind Apple TV+. For illustration, see (48):

- (48) *Apple TV+ is to bring you the best original stories from the most creative minds in television and film. Stories that help you find inspiration that are grounded in emotion. Truly stories to believe in. Stories with purpose.*

7.4.4.4 Rhetorical Questions

The last rhetorical device, the rhetorical question, is used only once. Cook (2019) asks the following rhetorical question in (49):

- (49) *Some of you have been wondering when will Apple TV+ be available, and how much will it cost?*

Then, he answers both parts of this question. Cook uses this rhetorical question to inform the audience that he will give them information about the launch and cost of Apple TV.

7.4.5 American Culture and Public Speaking Ideal

Regarding the American characteristics of the speaker, based on Hall and Reed in Chapter 5.1, Americans are relatively open, informal, optimistic, and creative. When it comes to Cook (2019), he is optimistic because he launches a new, anticipated product. Creativity is also noticeable in his presentations, most notably in the visuals. Thus far, he is formal, although he breaks this rule by calling his colleagues by their first names, which, on the other hand, is common in American culture. Moreover, according to Sproule (see Chapter 5.2), the American public speaking ideal is “audience-centered.” Therefore, the two significant parts of a presentation are the speaker and the audience. Regarding Cook, he has a great relationship with his audience, as they respond to him with cheering and clapping.

In conclusion, Cook’s business presentation was brief but well-structured and engaging. He managed to get the attention of his audience during his entire presentation. The launch of Apple TV+ has attracted much attention. Nevertheless, Cook remained confident, calm, and, most importantly, excited. Excitement was one of the primary emotions the audience shared.

8 DISCUSSION AND COMPARISON OF THE SELECTED BUSINESS PRESENTATIONS

To conclude this analysis, I compare the most significant features of selected business presentations analyzed in Chapter 7. More specifically, I focus on the type of presentation, speech organization, the speaker and relationship with the audience, usage of non-verbal communication, rhetorical devices, cultural factors, and Czech or American public speaking ideals.

All four business presentations were posted online. Therefore, they can be considered virtual presentations because they reach a broader audience on the Internet. Besides El-Khoury's (2023) presentation, they are also product presentations, the only company presentation used for the analysis. Mandelíková (2019), Složil (2021), and Cook (2019) all use the topical pattern in their presentations. El-Khoury, however, organized his speech and the presentation in the cause-and-effect pattern. Naturally, the product presentations describe a service or a product, while the company presentation describes the company's goals and accomplishments and shows the audience how the company is managed.

The American audiences include company representatives, employees, suppliers, and esteemed customers. Moreover, they are invite-only events. In contrast, in the Czech Republic, both events are public fairs, meaning that anyone can attend the presentations. Therefore, speakers' relationships with their audience are the opposite: American speakers can learn more about their audience before their presentations than Czech speakers, who have less information about the potential listeners they will reach out to. Despite the differences, both Czech speakers, Mandelíková and Složil, show that they have done their research and know about who are the members of their audiences: potential customers foremost.

As for non-verbal communication, the Czech speakers rarely walk on the stage but rather gesticulate. The American speakers walk on stage significantly more than the Czech speakers. Considering maintaining eye contact, Složil maintains the most minor eye contact between himself and his audience from all four speakers. On the other hand, El-Khoury remains close to his audience the most. Regarding the choice of dress, Mandelíková dresses appropriately. Složil chose a less formal outfit than the other participants in the presentation room, but it was better than the audience members' clothing. On the other hand, El-Khoury and Cook are dressed rather informally, wearing sneakers, jeans, a black shirt, or a sweater. As for the fact that both El-Khoury and Cook are CEOs, and both of their presentations are

highly formal, one would expect them to dress in a suit, for instance. On the other hand, they can afford to take this risk from their position in the company.

The usage of rhetorical devices in the selected business presentations differs to a certain extent. The following tables present the frequency of usage of each rhetorical device. For Table 1, I compare Složil and Cook, whose presentations took approximately five minutes. For Table 2, I compare Mandelíková and El-Khoury, whose presentations took about 15 minutes. Czech speakers' usage of colloquialisms slightly differs. Although Mandelíková's speech is more extended than Složil's, he uses colloquial language more, as his speech is relatively informal. Složil is also the only speaker using humor in his presentation. Czech speakers do not use rhetorical questions at all. American speakers, however, use rhetorical questions seven times in total. Regarding metaphors, Cook uses this rhetorical device twice, while Složil only once. Mandelíková uses metaphor twice, while El-Khoury four times. El-Khoury uses repetition and colloquial language most extensively in his speech, as repetition was used twenty times and colloquial language twenty-eight times. Mandelíková uses these rhetorical devices about 50 % less than El-Khoury to compare. For illustration, see Table 1 and Table 2:

	Složil (SantiaX)	Cook (Apple)
Colloquial language	14	8
Humor	3	0
Metaphor	1	2
Repetition	4	2
Rhetorical question	0	2

Table 1 Usage of Rhetorical Devices in the 5-minute presentations

	Mandelíková (Thalac and more)	El-Khoury (Onsemi)
Colloquial language	10	28
Humor	0	0
Metaphor	2	4
Repetition	8	20
Rhetorical question	0	5

Table 2 Usage of Rhetorical Devices in the 15-minute presentations

The last rhetorical device I turn to analyze is the usage of personal pronouns, comparing Mandelíková with El-Khoury and Složil with Cook. Overall, the most extensively used pronoun in all selected presentations is *we*. Both Mandelíková and El-Khoury used this pronoun fifty-two times in their speeches. They also used the pronoun *I* for the same amount (twelve times). Mandelíková also used the pronoun *you* forty-one times, compared to El-Khoury, who only used this pronoun nine times. On the other hand, Složil used *you* twenty-three times in his presentation. Therefore, this personal pronoun is used the most in his presentation because he mostly referred to the audience. Cook uses the pronoun *you* twelve times, which is less than Složil. Cook uses fewer personal pronouns than Složil, besides *I*, which both speakers use for almost the same amount, as Složil nine times and Cook seven times. For illustration, see Table 3 and Table 4:

	Složil	Cook
Usage of <i>I</i>	9	7
Usage of <i>you</i>	23	12
Usage of <i>we</i>	18	8

Table 3 Usage of Personal Pronouns in the 5-minute presentations

	Mandelíková	El-Khoury
Usage of <i>I</i>	12	12
Usage of <i>you</i>	41	9
Usage of <i>we</i>	52	52

Table 4 Usage of Personal Pronouns in the 15-minute presentations

Lastly, I summarize the cultural behavior of Czech and American speakers and describe whether the public speaking ideals were fulfilled. Czech speakers are more reserved than Americans compared to the Czech and American cultures and public speaking ideals. American speakers show much more emotion and try to engage the audience more. Although Složil used humor to engage the audience, whether he accomplished this goal is debatable. More certainty is noticeable in the American presentations, where the speakers seem more skilled in using humor. Therefore, the differences between Czech and American presentations are apparent.

CONCLUSION

The theoretical part started with Chapter 1, which is focused on rhetoric, and rhetorical analysis methods. I explained that rhetoric is connected to style, language, and culture. Furthermore, rhetorical analysis relates to the methods of analyzing speech. Chapter 2 dealt with an explanation of business presentations, which typically include persuasion. They are divided into product, company, and virtual presentations. Because of the pandemic four years ago, the trend in rhetoric is to move presentations online. That is why virtual presentations are more common even in the business environment. Next, in Chapter 3, I presented the essentials of preparing and delivering a business presentation. Concerning the preparation process, it is crucial to organize the speech. For business occasions, topical and cause-effect patterns are the most suitable. Furthermore, researching the topic is essential, as it helps the speaker to use the most suitable persuasive tools. The delivery of a business presentation is built on non-verbal communication and persuasive speech. Speakers should dress appropriately and keep eye contact with the audience to persuade them. Chapter 4 dealt with selected rhetorical devices: colloquialisms, personal pronoun usage, humor, metaphor, repetition, and rhetorical questions. Chapter 5, the last chapter of the theoretical part, explained the character traits of Czechs and Americans and their public speaking ideal.

The analytical part focused on analyzing four selected Czech and American business presentations. Chapter 6 explained the methods of research for the analytical part. In Chapter 7, I focused on the features of business presentations: type of presentation, speech organization, speaker and audience, non-verbal communication and persuasion, selected rhetorical devices, culture, and public speaking ideals. Therefore, I analyzed each feature of all four presentations. Chapter 8 discussed the results of those presentations and compared the mentioned features. Audience dynamics vary because Czech presentations are public fairs, and Americans are invite-only. Regarding non-verbal communication, the American speakers opt for informal clothing despite their CEO status. Relatively informal clothing is also a choice of Czech speakers. Rhetorical device usage varies as well. It depends on the duration of the speech, as two speeches are longer than the remaining two, meaning that rhetorical devices were used in longer presentations. Overall, Americans use more rhetorical questions than Czech speakers, and metaphors are used occasionally by both American and Czech speakers. The most extensively used rhetorical device was colloquialism.

In conclusion, the contrast between Czech and American business presentation styles is evident. American speakers display more confidence and audience engagement, whereas

Czech speakers are relatively restrained. It also depends on the allotted time for the speakers to present. Thus, shorter Czech and American presentations will contain fewer errors, rhetorical devices, and less persuasion because the amount of time for the audience to process the presentation is much shorter. On the other hand, if a business presentation is longer, it will contain more errors and rhetorical devices, and the speaker has more time to persuade the audience successfully.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CTA	Close Textual Analysis
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
E.g.	Exempli Gratia
Etc.	Et Cetera
I.e.	That Is

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Usage of Rhetorical Devices in the 5-minute presentations.....	45
Table 2 Usage of Rhetorical Devices in the 15-minute presentations.....	46
Table 3 Usage of Personal Pronouns in the 5-minute presentations.....	46
Table 4 Usage of Personal Pronouns in the 15-minute presentations.....	46