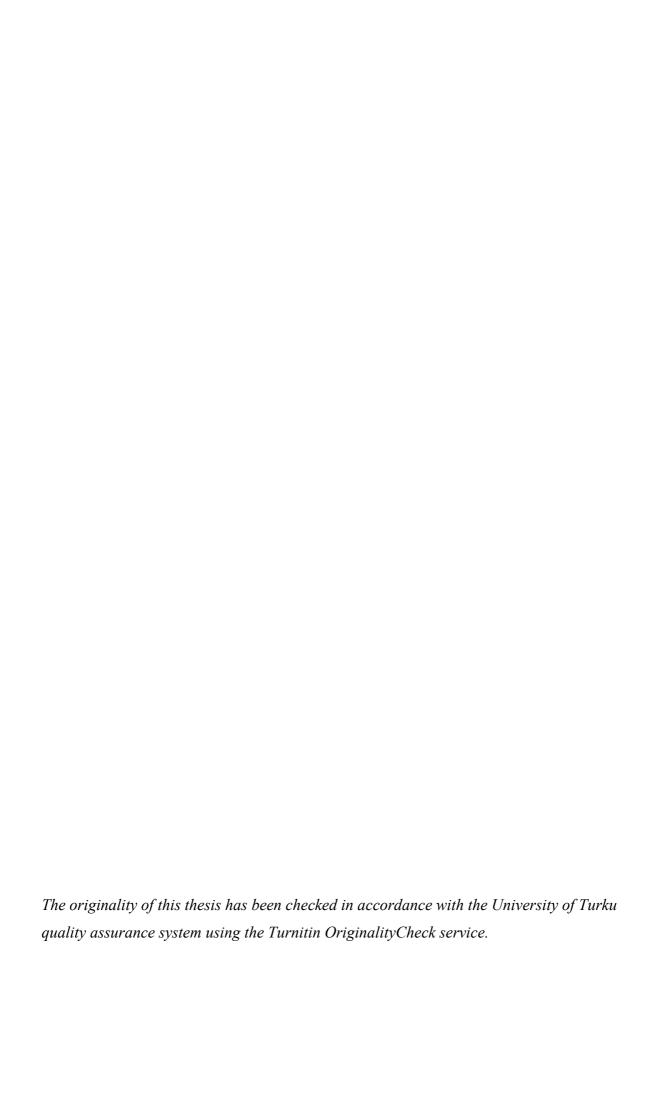Discursive Legitimation Strategies in Presidential Statements: A Case Study
of the United States and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change

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PUSA, PILVI: Discursive Legitimation Strategies in Presidential Statements: A Case Study of the United States and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change

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This thesis studies how two US presidents, Barack Obama and Donald Trump, aim to (de)legitimate their respective decisions on either to join the Paris Agreement on Climate Change or to withdraw from it. The two presidents' uses of discursive legitimation strategies are compared to see how they differ or resemble each other. In addition, the study examines how the used strategies relate to the larger socio-political context of the US and two different administrations and parties in terms of their respective climate policies.

In order to examine what strategies the presidents used, a combination typology of legitimation strategies by Van Leeuwen (2007 and 2008) and Reyes (2011) was employed. The study also aimed to test how well the legitimation framework worked with this kind of topic, since it has not been previously applied similarly. A total of five presidential statements were analysed with the method of close reading.

The analysis found that there were more differences than similarities between the presidents. Obama used mostly positive legitimation and the strategies of altruism, mythopoesis and moral evaluation, while Trump employed mostly negative delegitimation and the strategies of authorization, hypothetical future and rationalization. Noteworthy was that Obama employed all strategies, but Trump did not use altruism at all. This provides a niche for further research. It was concluded that the used strategies relate to the policies of the presidents' political parties. Future research could study more profoundly the divide in US climate policies in terms of discursive legitimation. The study proved that the legitimation framework could be applied to a topic of this kind. However, the framework could be tested and developed further, since there are still some limitations.

Key words: legitimation, political discourse, United States, climate politics

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List of abbreviations

CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
COP	Conference of Parties
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GOP	Grand Old Party
NDC	Nationally determined contribution
PA	The Paris Agreement on Climate Change
POTUS	President of the United States
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
US	United States

1 Introduction

People around the globe are already affected by the consequences of climate change, and scientific evidence for human-caused global warming is wide-ranging and growing (IPCC 2018). Effective means need to be developed and implemented to tackle climate change. However, this is a global challenge that no country alone can tackle. That is why international cooperation and common solutions are needed. After a long round of negotiations, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change was reached on 12 December 2015 at the 21st annual Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The aim of this international agreement is to tackle global warming, accelerate climate change mitigation and adaptation measures and to secure the necessary finance for this.

As a wealthy superpower in world politics and the second largest emitter country of carbon dioxide (Global carbon Atlas 2019), it was seen crucial that the United States (the US) would be part of the Paris Agreement to set an example for other countries. The participation of the US in the agreement is dependent on how the leadership of the country perceives climate change and how much importance it places on tackling global warming. There is a partisan divide on climate politics between the two main political parties in the US. The Democrats tend to believe more in human-caused climate change and are thus more willing to push policies against global warming. By contrast, the Republicans tend to be more sceptical about humans' role in climate change and object climate action related policies more than the Democrats.

The US administration at the time of the Paris Agreement procedure was headed by President Barack Obama, a Democrat, and the US signed the agreement (on 22 April 2016) and formally joined it (on 3 September 2016) under his leadership. However, on 1 June 2017 the following president Donald Trump, a Republican, informed his administration's intention to withdraw the US from the Paris Agreement. The announcement came after months of speculation whether this would actually happen, as already during his presidential campaign Trump had informed his intention of leaving the pact.

This study aims to find out how the two US presidents from two different administrations and political parties (de)legitimate their decisions relating to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. It is important to examine in detail how the leadership of the US aims to legitimate their actions and whether these ways differ between the two political parties, since these decisions could potentially have a much larger impact on the rest of the world.

The US and its role in relation to the Paris Agreement has been studied for instance by Kienast (2015), Kemp (2017a) and Pavone (2018). However, the topic has not been approached yet from the perspective of discursive legitimation, and hence this study fills that research gap.

In this thesis I conduct a case study and compare statements by the two presidents. The study will answer the following research questions:

1. What discursive (de)legitimation strategies presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump use to justify the decision to join the Paris Agreement and to withdraw from it?
2. How the presidents' uses of the strategies differ from or resemble each other?
3. How the used strategies relate to the larger socio-political context, and especially to the two different US political parties and administrations in terms of their respective climate related policies?

To answer the first research question, a typology of legitimation strategies is used. This typology, which also is the theoretical framework of this study, is adapted from the legitimation strategies identified by Van Leeuwen (2007 and 2008) and by Reyes (2011). I combine the two researchers' work to form a framework suitable for the study. The analysis section will answer the first research question. I delve into the two other questions more in the discussion section, in which I combine the results of the analysis. The strategies used by both presidents are compared to each other to see how different or similar their use of the legitimations is. I also discuss how this usage relates to the larger socio-political context of the US. Based on former research done on US climate politics and the US in relation to the Paris Agreement, my hypothesis is that the two presidents, Obama and Trump, differ in their use of the legitimation strategies, because they represent

opposing political parties with different views on human-caused climate change. Therefore, they will aim to legitimate their respective decisions based on different issues.

One objective of this thesis is also to test how well the legitimation framework works with this kind of topic and data. Even though Van Leeuwen's theory has been used for instance in relation to media discourse (Vaara 2014 and Kekki 2018) and political discourse (Pansardi and Battegazzorre 2018), it has not been explicitly applied to examine how US presidents legitimate certain decisions, especially in relation to climate change politics. This study aims to fill that gap.

This thesis begins with an overview of the United Nations climate action and specifically the Paris Agreement. After this, I discuss relevant climate change politics in the US as some background information is necessary to understand the analysis. The theoretical framework of this thesis (legitimation) is then presented. In the second half of the thesis, I move to the specifics of the study, beginning with description of the material and methods. These are followed by the analysis of both presidents' use of the legitimation strategies. In the discussion section, I will then compare the legitimation strategy uses and set the results within a wider socio-political context. The final chapter concludes the thesis by summarising the main points and setting future directions.

2 The Paris Agreement on Climate Change

In this section I will give relevant background information on the United Nations climate action and the Paris Agreement and the role of the US in relation to it. This is a complex topic and a study examining this alone could be conducted. Due to limited space, only issues that are most relevant for this study will be discussed. It is important to know the main features of the Paris Agreement, its legal procedure and the US part in all of this to understand the analysis and its results.

Before proceeding to the section, I want to briefly note that while this thesis discusses both climate change and global warming, the two are essentially different concepts. Climate change consists of a variety of different phenomena, while global warming is only one type of climate phenomenon. For the purposes of this thesis, the difference is not fundamental and the two are often used as meaning the same. However, it is important to be aware of the de facto difference.

2.1 Overview of United Nations Climate Action and the Paris Agreement

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an international treaty, which was adopted on 9 May 1992 and entered into force on 21 March 1994. The purpose was to create a framework for international climate policy and cooperation, as well as to develop a common response to tackling climate change (UNFCCC 2018a). UNFCCC recognizes humans' role in causing climate change. An excessive increase of (human-caused) greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions has resulted in warming of the planet. One type of GHGs are carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions, which are mostly created in energy and industrial production for example by burning fossil fuels (coal, gas, oil), flaring and cement production (Ritchie and Roser 2017). Reducing CO_2 emissions would limit global warming (IPCC 2018). The main objective of UNFCCC is: "stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system" (UNFCCC 1992, Article 2). UNFCCC currently has 197 Parties meaning states (and the EU) that have agreed to the treaty by ratifying it. The Parties meet yearly at the Conference of Parties (COP), which is the highest decision-making body of the Convention (UNFCCC 2018a; 2018b).

The Kyoto Protocol of 1997 was the first attempt of UNFCCC to reduce GHG emissions. However, the agreement did not prove effective. The non-ratification of the US was seen as one of the reasons for the failure of the Protocol (see Pickering et al. 2018 and Falkner 2016 for more). The next major step in international climate change politics was COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009, which, however, was also been seen as a failure in some ways (Falkner 2016, 1111). According to Falkner, COP15 still formed the beginning of negotiating a completely new approach to climate action. In addition, setting up Green Climate Fund (GCF) was first proposed during COP15 (ibid.). GCF was established at COP16 in 2010 to become part of the UNFCCC's financial mechanism. The aim of GCF is to support developing countries to reduce their GHG emissions and assist their climate change adaptation (Green Climate Fund 2018).

Two years later at COP17 in Durban, South Africa, in 2011 the Parties agreed to form a new agreement on climate change by 2015 (Rajamani 2016, 494). This fully generated a long round of negotiations on what was to become the Paris Agreement (henceforth referred to as the PA). A major push in the negotiations came on 12 November 2014, when the US and China announced a joint effort on climate change[1]. Consequently, the PA was reached at the twenty-first annual Conference of Parties (COP21) on 12 December 2015 in Paris, France. It is an international agreement adopted by the Parties to the UNFCCC to tackle climate change and to speed up actions towards a sustainable low carbon future. Article 2 of the PA (UNFCCC 2015) presents its main aims:

> "This Agreement, in enhancing the implementation of the Convention, including its objective, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, including by:
> (a) Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change;
> (b) Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production; and
> (c) Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development."

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[1] U.S.-China Joint Announcement on Climate Change (The White House 2014)

The aims of the PA could be summarized as *climate change mitigation* (a), *climate change adaptation* (b) and *climate finance* (c). Mitigation refers to actions limiting the extent of the effects of climate change, meaning the reduction of GHG emissions. According to the PA, Parties will "pursue domestic mitigation measures" (UNFCCC 2015, Article 4, Paragraph 2). These mitigation actions could be, for instance, renewable energy solutions or new kinds of transport modes in order to reduce use of fossil fuels as energy source. Adaptation, on the other hand, refers to "strengthening resilience and reducing the vulnerability to climate change" (UNFCCC 2015, Article 7, Paragraph 1). In other words, adaptation means developing solutions and action as a response to the consequences of climate change. Even though mitigation through reducing GHG emissions exponentially would be successful, irreversible climate change effects are already happening and need to be responded to. Adaptation measures can respond to already existing climate change effects or expected future consequences. An example of an adaptation action would be new infrastructure in response to changing situations, such as rising sea levels. Climate finance, then, connects with both mitigation and adaptation measures. In order to deliver these practices adequate financial resources are required. The PA assigned GCF a larger role in this regard.

The PA is based on the principle of differentiation meaning that there are different expectations for different countries according to their national circumstances. Countries submit their nationally determined contributions (NDCs), which are reassessed and presented every five years. Each Party to the agreement determines its own individual mitigation and adaptation obligations and then communicates these to the UNFCCC secretariat. Therefore, for instance, India's NDC differs from the US NDC, because the two countries have different situations as regards to emissions or development (Rajamani 2017).

The structure of the PA means that even though the agreement states common aims to all the signatories, it does not impose any specific obligations for them. Here the PA differs significantly from the Kyoto Protocol[2], which set obligatory emission targets to its signatories (Pavone 2018, 37). The PA only binds signatory countries "to prepare,

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[2] See Falkner (2016) for more discussion on the differences between the PA and the Kyoto Protocol.

communicate and maintain NDCs, not to achieve them" (Rajamani 2017). Thus, the obligations of the agreement are not very demanding and there are no repercussions for breaching them.

The PA followed the same three-stage path that most international agreements go through before entering into force (WRI 2018). First, an agreement is *adopted*. As stated above, the PA was adopted on 12 December 2015. "According to the Vienna Convention of the Law of Treaties, adoption is the formal act that establishes the form and content of an agreement" (ibid.). Second step is the *signing*. "Signing is important because it indicates a commitment by that country to refrain from act that would defeat the object and purpose of the Agreement" (ibid.). The PA was open for signing at the UN headquarters in New York from 22 April 2016 to 21 April 2017. Then lastly, Parties *formally join* the agreement by submitting "an instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval to the Secretary-General to the United Nations". This can be done at any time after signing the agreement, as there is no time limit (ibid.).

Article 21 of the PA (UNFCCC 2015) states the agreement enters into force thirty days after "at least 55 Parties to the Convention accounting in total for at least an estimated 55 per cent of the total global greenhouse gas emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession." This threshold was achieved on 5 October 2016 and hence the PA entered into force thirty days later, on 4 November 2016.

Some regard the PA as an important step forwards in international climate action (Hermville 2016). However, the PA has also received criticism. For instance, scientist James Hansen states that the agreement contains only promises, not any action (Milman 2015). Regardless of the opposing views, the PA is the first major international deal of the 21st century and the first agreement, which all Parties have agreed to (Pavone 2018, 35).

2.2 The United States and the Paris Agreement

The US, with the lead of the Obama administration, adopted the PA at the same time as the other Parties to UNFCCC, on 12 December 2015 at COP21 in Paris. Then on the first day the signing opened, on 22 April 2016, the US signed the agreement together with 174

other countries. The US formally joined the PA on 3 September 2016 at the same time with China. This was seen as a crucial step. Figure 1 below presents the top 5 countries in the world with the largest CO_2 emissions in 2017 (Global Carbon Atlas 2019).

Figure 1 Top 5 countries with the largest CO_2 emissions in 2017 (Global Carbon Atlas 2019)

As can be seen from figure 1, the US and China are the two largest emitter countries of CO_2 emissions. They represent approximately 40 % of the whole world's CO_2 emissions, which in 2017 were 36 153 $MtCO_2$ or approximately 36 gigatons of CO_2 (Global Carbon Atlas 2019). Thus, the US and China formally joining the PA was seen as an important step towards the agreement formally entering into force, as the PA was now much closer to reaching the necessary threshold for this (see section 2.1).

Another point on the significance of the US joining the climate agreement is that the CO_2 emissions per person in the country are high compared to the other top emitters, as figure 2 demonstrates.

Figure 2 Per capita CO₂ emissions of the top 5 emitter countries in 2017 (Global Carbon Atlas 2019)

Figure 2 shows the per capita CO2 emissions of the top emitter countries (Global Carbon Atlas 2019), and as can be seen from the data, the US has by far the most per capita emissions among the top five emitter countries listed in figure 1. These statistics matter when considering the NDCs of each country, as for instance China's or India's NDC will differ from the US, because the countries have different circumstances.
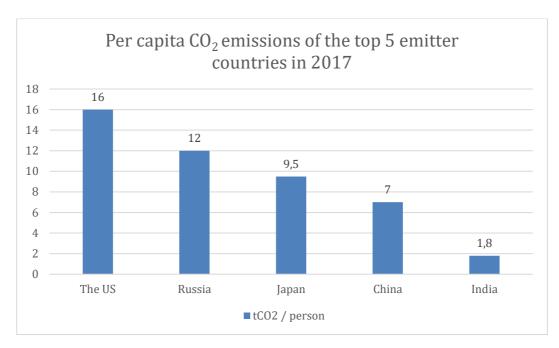
The US submitted its first NDC on 3 September 2016. The US committed: "to achieve an economy-wide target of reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 26-28% below its 2005 level in 2025 and to make best efforts to reduce its emissions by 28%." (NDC Registry 2016). According to Climate Action Tracker (2018) the US NDC commitment is insufficient: if all Parties to the PA would have the same commitment, global temperature would be over 2ºc and up to 3ºc.

Many regarded the US participation as a precondition for the success of the PA, since the US is a superpower and the second largest emitter after China (Kemp 2016, 1012). The US stance on certain international agreements, such as the PA, can send a meaningful message to other countries to also join the pact. Thus, the agreement was crafted in many parts to match US demands and the Obama administration was involved in the negotiations vigorously (Pavone 2018, 35). Domestic politics of the US influenced the

final structure of the PA and it was specifically designed so that the US would be able to adopt it (Kienast 2015, 321).

The president is probably the most visible part of US politics and the institutional position represents a high authority figure. Despite this, presidential powers are limited due to the separation of powers in the US. Therefore, it is not a straightforward process for the US president to adopt an international treaty. According to the US Constitution, the president has the power to enter the country into a treaty only with two-thirds of the Senate backing the decision (Article II, Section 2). The US Congress consists of an upper chamber, Senate, and a lower chamber, House of Representatives. During the PA negotiations the majority in the 114th Congress was Republican in both chambers, and a Democrat administration would not have managed "a strong climate treaty" to pass the Senate (Kemp 2016, 1013). Other means had to be thought in order to get the US to adopt the PA.

Hence, Obama administration leaned on the president's executive powers in order to bypass the Senate. The PA was adopted through a *presidential executive agreement* rather than regarding it as a legally binding *treaty*. Kienast (2015, 321) states that the content of the agreement and how it relates to national law affects the president's executive powers in this regard. The content of the PA needs to "reflect US law and previously ratified treaties" in order for it to be considered lawful (Kienast 2015, 324). The PA was labelled as an agreement instead of a treaty or a protocol. Moreover, the PA includes only non-binding obligations to reduce emissions so that the US could adopt it. After his examination Kienast concludes that the US is lawfully bound to the PA, as it reflects existing treaty obligations (such as earlier UNFCCC ones) and national law and regulations (2015, 327).

However, it is important to note that presidential executive agreements can be revoked by a future president or by Congress (Kemp 2017a, 88). Republicans criticised the adoption process of the PA seeing it as not legally acceptable (Pavone 2018, 38). Before the 2016 presidential elections, Kemp (2017a, 87) predicted that the US withdrawing from the PA is likely, if the future president is a Republican. This is exactly what happened.

Republican Party candidate Donald Trump was elected President of the United States four days after the PA formally entered into force, on 8 November 2016. From the start of the presidency, there was ongoing speculation about the possible withdrawal, since Trump had promised already during his campaign that he would withdraw the US from the agreement if elected (BBC News 2016). In May 2017, 22 Republicans sent a letter to Trump encouraging him to withdraw from the PA (The Associated Press 2017). Moreover, the president's own advisors were divided on the issue and various groups lobbied the administration on both sides (Cooper 2018, 441). Finally, on 1 June 2017, Trump announced the intention of the US to leave the climate agreement. In addition to the withdrawal intention, Trump stated that the US would not be paying the remaining $2 billion of a promised pledge to GCF. Back in 2014, Obama had pledged that the US would contribute $3 billion to GCF (see section 2.1 for more on GCF). Of this pledge, Obama was able to commit $1 billion before the end of his presidency (Mathiesen 2017). Trump's announcement meant a great cutback on global climate finance.

Urpelainen and Van de Graaf (2018, 840) argue that the US withdrawal and non-cooperation would not have a dramatic impact on US emissions, but the decision to end climate finance, on the other hand, might affect future international climate cooperation negatively. Kemp (2017b) has studied Trump administration's overall climate actions and interestingly concludes that those actions that have received the most attention and opposition (including the PA) might actually be the least damaging. While in contrast, the actions that have gotten less attention could have much more long-term influence on the US policies. Trump administration's other climate related policies are discussed in section 3.2.

To conclude this section, it is important to note that the withdrawal announcement does not mean that the US will be able to withdraw from the agreement immediately. According to Article 28 of the PA (UNFCCC 2015), a signatory Party may withdraw from the PA after three years from the date of the agreement's entry into force by giving written notification. This withdrawal will then take effect one year after the written notification. Thus, the PA entered into force on 4 November 2016, which means the US can give its official withdrawal notification at the earliest in 2019, and fully exist the PA in November 2020 around the time of the next presidential elections. If Trump is not re-

elected the next president could re-enter the US to the PA through an executive agreement (Kemp 2017b, 3).

This section has outlined international climate action, the PA and US role in relation to it. Figure 3 below summarizes the relevant events discussed so far.
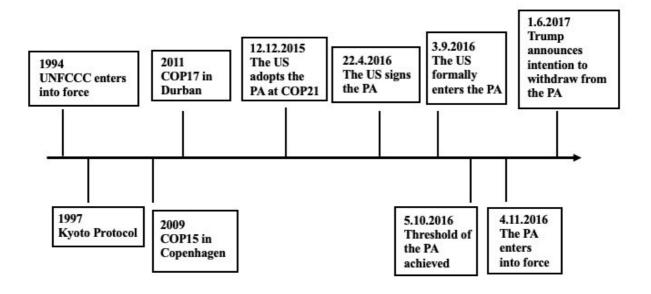

Figure 3 Timeline of relevant events

3 Climate change politics in the United States

In this section I discuss relevant US climate change politics. However, it is not in the scope of this thesis to provide a comprehensive history of climate politics in the US. I will only discuss issues most relevant to the focus of this study. I begin by outlining the general divide between Democrats and Republicans on climate change. This is followed by a description of other relevant climate policies of the Obama administration (in addition to the PA already discussed in section 2), and Republicans' response to them.

3.1 The divide between Democrats and Republicans

A partisan divide between the two main political parties in the US, Democrats and Republicans (Grand Old Party, GOP), on climate change politics began to grow significantly during Ronald Reagan's presidency (GOP) in the 1980s. His administration attempted to undermine environmental issues, because these were considered an obstacle for economic growth. The partisan divide continued to grow over the 1990s and during George W. Bush's presidency (GOP) (Dunlap and McCright 2008, 26). Republicans have tended to object proposed policies for reducing emissions, for example the Kyoto Protocol of 1997. They have also questioned the overall existence of climate change – and especially humans' role in causing it.

Democrats, on the other hand, have usually believed more in climate change and humans' part in causing it, and thus provided support for related policies (Brewer 2012, 8-9). A break in the polarisation came with the 2008 presidential elections, when both candidates, John McCain (GOP) and Barack Obama (Democrat), expressed their support for climate change policies. After the election and Obama's victory, the polarisation returned (Brewer 2012, 9-10). Obama's climate policy efforts during his time in office from 2009 to 2017 are discussed in more detail in the next section.

According to studies, there is a difference in stances towards global warming between the two major parties. A study by National Surveys on Energy and Environment (NSEE 2018) found that the divide between the two parties is high. Most of the Democrats believe in global warming and that humans have played a role in causing it, while much less Republicans hold the same view. Based on Gallup Organization's poll of 2016,

Dunlap, McCright and Yarosh (2016, 8-9) found almost matching results for corresponding questions with Republicans being more sceptical of human-caused global warming. The results of both studies are summarized in tables 1 and 2 below.

% of the self-identified	There is solid evidence of global warming.	Humans are at least partially responsible for warming on the planet.
Democrats	90%	78%
Republicans	50%	35%

Table 1 Stances of self-identified Democrats and Republicans on global warming (NSEE 2018)

% of the self-identified	The effects of global warming have already begun.	Human actions have played a role in global warming.
Democrats	75 %	84 %
Republicans	41%	43 %

Table 2 Stances of self-identified Democrats and Republicans on global warming (Dunlap, McCright and Yarosh 2016)

However, the divide may not be as black and white as it appears. Van Boven, Ehret and Sherman (2018, 494-495) note in their study that even though in general Democrats believe more in climate change, the scepticism of Republicans is often exaggerated, and the partisan divide is not as great as it may seem. According to their study, there was an overall belief in climate change among all the respondents. Even though a partisan divide was visible, most of both party identifiers, Republicans and Democrats, did believe in climate change. Results are presented in table 3. Due to space limits and because they are not considered relevant, the results do not include the categorization of those who do not identify with neither Democrats nor Republicans (Independents).

Categorical climate change belief (2014/2016)			
	Believers	Sceptics	Undecided
% of Democrats	93% / 89%	5% / 4%	2% / 7%
% of Republicans	70% / 63%	26% / 25%	4% / 12%

Table 3 Climate change belief among Democrats and Republicans (Van Boven, Ehret and Sherman 2018)

Media tends to highlight the polarisation between the parties, which could cause the exaggeration of Republican scepticism. For example, instead of reporting the percentage of *sceptics among Republicans* (27% and 25%), media might focus more on the portion of *Republicans among climate sceptics*. Based on the surveys, Van Boven, Ehret and Sherman (2018, 495) categorized 15 % of all respondents in 2014 and 14 % in 2016 as climate sceptics. Out of these, in 2016, Republicans represented 71 % while Democrats only 15 %. As can be seen, here the divide between the two parties is greater than in the first results about who believes in climate change.

Van Boven, Ehret and Sherman argue that the differences in climate change politics mostly stem from "tendency to place party over policy" (2018, 497). In other words, even though most Democrats and Republicans appear to personally believe that climate change is real, political partisanship affects the public stances they take. The two parties compete with each other and are sceptical of the opponent's proposed policies. Van Boven, Ehret and Sherman argue that Republicans oppose climate policies, because they are often thought specifically as *Democratic policies*, and not necessarily because they would genuinely think that climate change is a not real (ibid.).

This climate policy rivalry between the Democrats and Republicans is also visible in their latest party platforms. A party platform is a document, in which a party states the policies it is promoting in order to win an election. A party platform usually includes the main principles, objectives and strategies of the party. It reflects the policies the candidates of the party promote and aim to execute when in office.

In the Democratic party platform of 2016, there is a separate section for climate change with the following statement: "Democrats share a deep commitment to tackling the climate challenge….reducing greenhouse gas emissions more than 80 percent below 2005 levels by 2050; and meeting the pledge President Obama put forward in the landmark Paris Agreement…" (Democratic Party Platform 2016, 24). In the 2016 Republican platform (2016), on the other hand, climate change is mentioned only when Democratic policies are mentioned and the (then) current administration's actions, including decisions to join international agreements without the consent of the Senate, are attacked. "All international executive agreements and political arrangements entered into by the current

Administration must be deemed null and void as mere expressions of the current president's preferences" (Republican Party Platform 2016, 26).

3.2 Climate policies in the United States since 2009

In this section I provide a brief overview of climate policies in the US since 2009, the beginning of Obama's term in office. As was mentioned in the previous section, during his campaign Obama promised to push climate action forward. During the years in office (2009-2017), Obama administration did issue multiple climate change related policies. Already during the presidential campaign, a New Energy for America plan was released. The plan's aim was to reduce GHG emissions, increase clean and renewable energy use, decrease the country's need of foreign oil and create new jobs. In order to cut emissions, an emissions trading system was proposed (Obama for America 2008). Ultimately however, the bill aimed to establish the system[3] did not pass the US Congress. House of Representatives approved it in 2009, but it was never taken up by the Senate to vote (Pianin 2014). US Congress at the time had Democrat majority, however, according to Pianin (2014), opposers to the bill (including Republicans and the coal industry) "attacked Democrats who supported it, warning the legislation would raise energy prices and cost jobs".

In 2015 a major climate policy, the Clean Power Plan (CPP), was announced by Obama together with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The main aim of the CPP was to cut CO_2 emissions from (especially coal-burning) power plants by 32 % below 2005 levels by 2030. The plan set customized emissions reduction targets for each state (EPA 2018). The legality of the CPP was based on the Clean Air Act (CAA)[4]. In 2007, the case of *Massachusetts v. EPA* concluded that "EPA has the authority under the CAA to regulate GHGs as air pollutants" (Kienast 2015, 316). Since this decision, Obama administration issued many climate policies through EPA. These include for example the above mentioned CPP and different vehicle emissions standards (Kemp 2017a, 89). In addition, during his presidency Obama administration did not grant permission to Keystone XL, a planned oil pipeline between Canada and the US, and building of Dakota Access, another oil pipeline, was delayed by the administration.

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[3] H.R.2454 - American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 (US Congress 2009)
[4] Clean Air Act (CAA), 42 USC. §7401 et seq. (1970) (EPA 2017)

Trump administration, on the other hand, does not consider climate change policies a priority, but rather a hindrance burdening the US economy and domestic jobs (Pavone 2018, 35). According to Zhang et al. (2017, 221), one of the main reasons behind the withdrawal decision in June 2017 was related to Trump administration's domestic politics. The administration (and GOP) has close ties to several US fossil fuel companies, producers of CO_2 emissions, and previous climate regulations had already been revoked in favour of the industry. Only couple of days after his inaugural, in January 2017, Trump approved both Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines. Kemp (2017b, 3) estimates that the pipelines could each potentially cause additional annual emissions of over 100 $MtCO_2$. Furthermore, in March 2017 Trump issued an executive order[5] targeted to rollback many of the Obama era domestic climate policies and to uplift especially the coal industry. The order included a review and possible repeal of the CPP. A replacement to CPP, the Affordable Clean Energy Rule was issued in August 2018 (EPA 2018). The replacement rule would weaken the rules for coal-burning power plants. During 2018, EPA issued also other rollback measures, such as "weakened methane emissions standards for oil and gas facilities" and "proposed freezing emissions standards for light duty vehicles after 2020" (Climate Action Tracker 2018). It could then be said that withdrawing from the PA was just another step in this line of revoking and modifying existing climate regulations.

Based on this and the previous section, it can be concluded that the climate policies of both presidents are in line with the general stance of their respective political parties. Following the general Democratic view, Obama aimed to shift US climate policies to better tackle climate change. According to Pavone (2018, 39), Trump's climate policy is also continuing in the footsteps of previous Republicans administrations, despite the "aggressive rhetoric" used to convey the messages. The analysis and discussion section later in this thesis will demonstrate how these stances are legitimated in the presidential statements. This concludes the discussion on climate change related politics in the US.

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[5] Presidential Executive Order on Promoting Energy Independence and Economic Growth (Trump 2017b)

4 Theoretical background

This section provides an overview of the concept of legitimation and discusses specifically legitimation in political discourse. For the purpose of this thesis, political discourse here is simply defined as the language used within the domain of politics. After discussing legitimation in general, I will present Van Leeuwen's strategies of legitimation, which are used as the main framework of the study. In addition, I introduce Reyes's legitimation strategies to complement Van Leeuwen's work on discursive legitimation. Lastly, I will also address some criticism on Van Leeuwen's framework and present earlier studies employing legitimation strategies.

4.1 Overview of legitimation

Legitimation[6] has been a central concept in social sciences, from sociology to political theory (see Weber 1964; Habermas 1976 and Beetham 1991). Legitimation is usually connected with the concept of *power*, and this connection is necessary to briefly explain here, even though the present study does not focus on power as such. I follow Foucault's idea (1978, 93-95) of power being everywhere and exercised in the interaction of different relations: from one position to another. These relations are not equal, some allow the exercise of power over others, while others do not. Where there is power, there is also resistance, exercised by those subjected to the power. Legitimation, then, is about "making sense of power" (Luckmann 1987, 111). Legitimation functions to justify the exercise of power, and some legitimations can be based on positions of power.

For Berger and Luckmann ([1966] 1987), legitimation is a process by which people explain and justify different practices within the social order. This definition stems from their view of reality being socially constructed by people – especially through language. In this thesis I follow Berger and Luckmann's ([1966] 1987, 82) view of legitimation resting on language, and language being the main means of expressing legitimation.

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[6] For the sake of clarification, throughout this thesis the spellings *legitimation* and *to legitimate* are used. However, e.g. Reyes (2011) uses the spellings *legitimization* and *to legitimize* in his work.

Following in the footsteps of Berger and Luckmann, Reyes defines legitimation as the process by which social actors justify behaviour "by providing arguments that explain our social actions, ideas, thoughts, declarations etc." (2011, 782). This definition is well exemplified by Van Leeuwen (2007, 93), who states that legitimation aims to answer the following questions: *Why should we do this?* and *Why should we do this in this way?* Moreover, Reyes holds that legitimation involves reaching a goal, which often means seeking support or approval for the action in order to, for instance, gain a position of power, social acceptance or popularity (2011, 782). Hence, in legitimation social actors justify why a certain action should be made or was already made. The actors try to back these justifications with arguments in favour of the action in order to convince the audience to accept it.

As stated above, this thesis follows the view that legitimation is mainly expressed through language. However, Van Leeuwen (2007, 107) points out that even though legitimation and language are intertwined, legitimation can sometimes be realized also visually or musically (i.e. multimodal legitimation), for example through movies, photographs or visual symbols. Multimodal legitimation has been studied for instance by Mackay (2015). He formulates a six-layer framework for multimodal legitimation that he exemplifies by analysing a video by the Scottish National Party, through which it attempts to affect the Scottish referendum on independence. While in the present study multimodal legitimation is not taken into account, it is worth noting that in some occasions legitimation also occurs outside the text itself. Here the focus is only on the language of the presidential statement transcripts. There are two reasons for this choice. First one is a practical issue, since despite thorough search I was not able to find complete video recordings of all the statements. Thus, the visual aspects of all of them cannot be considered. Secondly, due to limited space I decided to focus only on the transcript. The statements were voiced in rather plain situations and I do not consider that examining multimodal legitimation would bring considerable additional value to the analysis of the transcript texts. The presidential statements are discussed more in section 5.1.

Studying the language different actors use will help to reveal what legitimation strategies are at play. Fairclough (2003, 88) argues that discourse analysis is "a significant resource for researching legitimation", because social actors continually seek legitimation for their actions in the text or talk they produce. Sometimes legitimation can be rather explicitly

conveyed, but it may also be more implicitly expressed in different discourses (Fairclough 2003, 219). Furthermore, as Van Dijk (1998, 255) explains it, legitimation is usually not clearly visible in one simple utterance, but rather it is "a complex, ongoing discursive practice involving a set of interrelated discourses." Thus, when studying discursive legitimation, it is not enough to analyse only the level of a clause, but the analysis needs to be conducted on a broader spectrum in order to unfold the strategies used by the social actors.

Is legitimation then different than or the same as justification? Fairclough and Fairclough (2012, 109) think that the two concepts have been mistakenly regarded as having somewhat the same meaning. Rather, they view legitimation only as *a form of justification*. For Fairclough and Fairclough legitimation is "an argumentative process in which an action is justified in terms of reasons which can themselves, in turn, be justified as (worthy of being) collectively accepted or recognized" (2012, 242). In other words, for them legitimation is *a public justification*, which gains its legitimating power from shared institutional beliefs, values and norms. According to Fairclough and Fairclough (2012, 109) justifications of actions that are not publicly shared or publicly justified cannot be called legitimations. They exemplify the difference with two examples:

(1) MPs shouldn't fiddle their expenses <u>because they are breaking the law</u>.
(2) MPs shouldn't fiddle their expenses <u>because they could end up in prison</u>.

Fairclough and Fairclough argue that example 1 is a legitimating justification, since it appeals to law, which can be publicly justified, while example 2 is not a legitimation, because it only refers to the personal interests of the MPs: fiddling would not be in their interests, since they might end up in prison (for breaking the law, which is left unsaid) (2012, 109). I consider both examples as justifications but concur with Fairclough and Fairclough in that for me example 1 is more a legitimation than example 2, since it refers to something shared (the law) instead of something more personal.

The above observation leads us to an important notion in this thesis: even though legitimation is mainly expressed discursively, it is context-dependent. Legitimation depends on the shared knowledge, beliefs and moral values between the social actors involved in a specific context. This notion is related to Rojo and Van Dijk's (1997)

discussion of the macro and micro dimensions of legitimation. Rojo and Van Dijk differentiate between three levels of legitimation, of which the first two, pragmatic and semantic, are discursive (micro) and the third one is socio-political (macro). The three levels of legitimation by Rojo and Van Dijk (1997) are:

1. Pragmatic: the different strategies of justification of the action that needs to be legitimated (what was done was justified in terms of these norms or laws)
2. Semantic: the subjective representation of the action and issues related to it as 'true' (our representation is the correct one and opponents' one is false)
3. Socio-political: the way the discourse is authoritative through self-legitimation while delegitimating alternative discourse (our discourse is legitimate and credible because of our power or authority position)

According to Rojo and Van Dijk, there is constant interaction between the macro and micro dimensions, and when analysing legitimation both need to be considered in order to produce respectable results. Thus, although legitimation is almost always manifested discursively, it is also a socio-political act (Rojo and Van Dijk 1997, 527-528). The third level, socio-political, also relates to the previously discussed issue of power, and how some legitimations can be based on positions of power.

While legitimating one's own actions and representations, these three levels also contribute to the *delegitimation* of the opposition. What then is delegitimation? Following Chilton's (2004, 47) definition, I consider legitimation and delegitimation as being on the opposite ends of a line. While the former involves representing the (own) action that needs to be legitimated as positive and beneficial, the latter, on the other hand, involves depicting the opposition as negative and unacceptable in order to highlight the own actions.

Rojo and Van Dijk (1997) examine Spanish parliamentary speech to see how the speaker legitimates the expulsion of immigrants, which was criticised as a violation of human rights by the opposition. They demonstrate how discursive legitimation is crucial in gaining support for policies that are seen as illegitimate by the opposing group and also in suppressing the voices of the critics (i.e. delegitimating). In this process of legitimation, all three levels (pragmatic, semantic and socio-political) are at play.

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According to Chilton (2004, 47) legitimation can be expressed as "self-praise, self-apology, self-explanation, self-justification, self-identification as a source of authority, reason, vision and sanity". The self can refer to the social actor doing the legitimation or the group the actor identifies with. Instead of *the self*, delegitimation targets *the other*, which refer to those outside the self-group. Delegitimation can be manifested as "negative other-presentation, acts of blaming, scape-goating, marginalising, excluding, attacking the moral character of some individual or group, attacking the communicative cooperation of the other, attacking the rationality and sanity of the other" (ibid.). This positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation often results in an Us/Them polarization, in which our group's actions are highlighted as good and the other group's actions as bad (see Van Dijk 1998 for more discussion). Oddo has studied presidential speeches justifying war. He found that the US/Them polarization was one of the key legitimation strategies and it was used in connection with other strategies (2011, 289). I will present different strategies of legitimation after first discussing legitimation in political discourse.

4.2 Legitimation in political discourse

According to Chilton (2004, 8), (de)legitimating is an essential function in political discourse. Political actors, such as presidents, constantly have to give justifications and reasons for the specific actions and decisions they take in order to convince the audience (Chilton 2004, 23). In other words, political actors aim to gain the support of their audience (be it the public or the parliament) by providing justifications for the actions they take. However, if we follow the line of thought of Fairclough and Fairclough (see previous section), these justifications also need to include some kind of publicly shared or justified belief, value or norm in order to serve as legitimations.

Rojo and Van Dijk (1997, 528) also see political legitimation as being tied to the shared norms and beliefs. The dominant group or institution (which in this study is the president and his administration) attempts to gain normative approval for its actions by applying strategies that try to demonstrate how these actions are in line with "the moral order of society, that is, within the system of laws, norms, agreements or aims agreed upon by (the majority of) the citizens" (ibid.). Thus, for Rojo and Van Dijk, legitimation is highly connected to the moral, social and political dimensions of the actions that are being

justified. Rojo and Van Dijk continue to argue that those institutional actions for which legitimation is wanted are usually depicted as beneficial for all, while opposing actions may be disregarded or concealed (i.e. delegitimation, see previous section) (ibid.).

The act of legitimation is especially relevant when political actions and decisions are considered controversial. This often includes opponents' critique and accusations which then need to be answered (Rojo and Van Dijk (1997, 528). Republicans, the main opponent party to Democrats, criticised the PA on many occasions before and after the COP21 (Cama 2015 and 2016). This meant that Obama had to defend and justify his actions, to legitimate his administration's decision to adopt and sign the treaty. Trump, on the other hand, also had to legitimate his administration's decision to leave the agreement, because it too faced a lot of criticism before the official withdrawal announcement (Henry 2017a and 2017b).

Rojo and Van Dijk (1997, 528) also point out that legitimation has a top-down and a bottom-up function. Top-down means that the dominant political actor, which, in the case of this thesis is the US president and his administration, seeks legitimation from the dominated, in this case either the international community or the nation. The audiences of the statements are discussed later in section 5.1. Bottom-up aspect, on the other hand, means that the audience (the dominated) legitimates the dominant actor by giving and showing its acceptance or compliance somehow. Due to limited space, in this study I only focus on the top-down direction of legitimation analysing how the two presidents use different legitimation strategies to justify their decisions. Thus, I will not study whether the audience legitimates the presidents by agreement or acceptance.

In these two sections I have discussed legitimation (and delegitimation), and specifically legitimation in political discourse. Next, Van Leeuwen's strategies of legitimation are presented, since they provide the main theoretical basis of the present study. After these, I will also introduce legitimation strategies identified by Reyes (2011) in order to get a more comprehensive framework of discursive legitimation. When presenting the strategies, I use examples from Van Leeuwen and Reyes to exemplify how the legitimation functions. As one of the aims of this thesis is also to test how well my data works with the typology of legitimation strategies, the results will be more transparent and easier to see when comparing my examples to Van Leeuwen's and Reyes's.

4.3 Van Leeuwen's strategies of legitimation

Van Leeuwen provides a framework for analysing the discursive construction of legitimation for social practices (2007 and 2008). *Social practice* Van Leeuwen defines as "socially regulated ways of doing things" (2008, 6). A social practice could be for example a lecture at university, the act of baking cookies or the act of adopting an international agreement or withdrawing from such. For Van Leeuwen, text and talk then produce the *representations* of social practices. He emphasizes the difference between "doing it" (the social practice) and "talking about it" (representations of the social practices) (ibid.). Through these representations it is possible to evaluate, discuss and importantly for this thesis, legitimate, the social practices. For further discussion on social practice see Van Leeuwen (2008).

Van Leeuwen applies legitimation theory to a corpus of various texts that all relate to the social practice of *the first day at school* (2007 and 2008). Based on this corpus, Van Leeuwen (2007, 92) identifies four different strategies of legitimation, which are presented in table 4.

Authorization Legitimation rests on some kind of authority (institutional or a person).	Moral Evaluation Legitimation by reference to some kind of moral values.
Rationalization Legitimation by reference to reason and knowledge; goals, effects and use worthiness.	Mythopoesis Legitimation is built through narratives in which legitimate actions are rewarded and non-legitimate ones are punished.

Table 4 Van Leeuwen's (2007 and 2008) strategies of legitimation

Each strategy has additional subcategories. Multiple strategies can be in place at the same time or they can appear independently (Van Leeuwen 2007, 92). Next, I will introduce the categories and their subcategories one by one.

4.3.1 Authorization

In *authorization*, legitimation (or delegitimation) is accomplished by referring to some kind of authority (e.g. tradition, custom or law) or to someone in whom authority is vested (Van Leeuwen 2007, 92). Van Leeuwen differentiates six subcategories of authorization: personal, expert, role model and impersonal authority as well as authority of tradition and authority of conformity.

Personal authority means that a legitimate person has authority because of "their status or role in a particular institution". Due to their status, it is enough for these authorities to justify their decisions or actions by a mere "because I say so" (Van Leeuwen 2007, 94). An example of personal authority in the case of Van Leeuwen's corpus would be parents and teachers. In the case of this thesis, then, an appropriate example would be the president of a country. This relates to the connection between power and legitimation (see section 4.1): a president is in a position of power and has the necessary authority to exercise power over others. Thus, analysing presidential statements is especially important. Though, authority is only one aspect of the legitimation and that's why I examine other aspects as well.

According to Van Leeuwen (ibid.), personal authority is usually realized by *a verbal process* (following the terminology in Halliday 1985) and some kind of *obligation modality* in the authority's utterance. Van Leeuwen's example (2007, 94):

   (3) Magnus sat down. Because <u>the teacher said</u> they <u>had to</u>.

Closely related to personal authority is the category of *expert authority*. Here, instead of status or role, legitimacy comes from expertise. This type of authority can be explicitly stated or taken for granted in the case of well-known experts (Van Leeuwen 2007, 94-95). Linguistically, expert authority can also be realized by verbal processes but also by *mental processes* with the expert in subject position. An example (Van Leeuwen 2007, 95):

   (4) <u>Dr Juan</u> <u>believes</u> it may be a good idea to spend some time with the child in class.

A third category of authority vested in a person is *role model authority*, in which people follow the actions and beliefs of, for example, media personalities or peer group members who serve as role models. The behaviours and attitudes these role models adopt are enough to legitimate their followers' actions. In Van Leeuwen's example the authority stems from a peer group member *the wise teacher* (Van Leeuwen 2007, 95):

(5) <u>The wise teacher</u> finds out the correct way to pronounce the child's name.

According to Van Leeuwen (2007, 95-96), role model authority is also very important in advertising and lifestyle media. Nowadays this is prominent for example in social media platforms such as Instagram, where media celebrities advertise different products or services. Their followers then may look up to these when making consumer choices. This kind of authority may also be accomplished visually making it multimodal legitimation (see section 4.1).

In addition to authority relating to persons, Van Leeuwen (2007, 96) identifies *impersonal authority*. Here legitimation is accomplished by reference to laws, rules, policies and regulations. These impersonal forms can, as personal ones, be manifested in discourse as verbal processes as in "because the law says so" or "the rules state that". However, Van Leeuwen (ibid.) points out that it is essential that nouns like *policy*, *regulation*, *rule* and *law* or their cognate adjectives and adverbs like *compulsory* and *mandatory* are present in the clauses. An example from Van Leeuwen's corpus (ibid.):

(6) It is the <u>policy</u> in her area to admit children termly after their fifth birthday.

In *authority of tradition*, as the name implies, authority relates to tradition and customs. Answers to the why-question would be "because this is what we always do" or "because this is what we have always done" and key nouns are *tradition*, *practice*, *custom* and *habit* (Van Leeuwen 2007 96). The supposition then is that these references in themselves are enough to justify the claim. Van Leeuwen's example (ibid.):

(7) It was the practice for children in infant schools to be given free milk daily.

Authority of conformity, then, means that if everyone else is doing something, you should also do it: "because that's what everybody else does" or "because that's what most people do". Linguistically, authority of conformity can be realized for example through *an explicit comparison* or *high frequency modality* (Van Leeuwen 2007, 96-97). In example 8 (Van Leeuwen 2007, 97), the authority is realized with frequency modality:

(8) <u>Many schools</u> now adopt this practice.

4.3.2 Moral evaluation

The second strategy of legitimation is *moral evaluation*, in which (de)legitimation stems from various moral values. Moral evaluations may not be as explicitly identified in a given discourse as authorization. Van Leeuwen explains how sometimes moral values are realized by simple words such as *good* or *bad*, but mostly moral evaluations cannot be identified so easily. Usually moral evaluations are part of a larger "specific discourse of moral value", which is culturally dependent. This means that mere linguistic methods are not enough to analyse moral evaluation (Van Leeuwen 2007, 97). For example, what is considered *normal* or *healthy* in one culture may not be the same in another. These moral values are usually only hinted at in the discourse and thus the researcher needs to take also the social, cultural and political context into consideration (Van Leeuwen 2007, 98).

Van Leeuwen lists three subcategories of moral evaluation: evaluation, abstraction and analogies. *Evaluation* involves *evaluative adjectives*, which can both describe concrete qualities and refer to moral or cultural aspects of the action or object in question. In the latter case, the moral evaluation is implicit and more difficult to identify (Van Leeuwen 2007, 98). For example, the adjective *green* can denote both the concrete colour of green or green (ecological) values. *Naturalization*, a form of evaluation, means that an action or object is represented as *normal* or *natural* in order to legitimate it. In addition to concrete adjectives (example 9), naturalization can be realized "by reference to time or to the concept of change" (example 10) (Van Leeuwen 2007, 98-99). Naturalization can be difficult to identify, because it blurs the lines between the real natural order and the moral and cultural one in a disguise. In example 10 naturalization works without an explicit reference to something being natural or normal, and thus it is not possible to pin it down to a specific word or phrase. Van Leeuwen (2007, 99) suggests that if human intervention

can alter something, then it usually is of moral or cultural character, and if not, then we are dealing with real natural order.

(9) It is only <u>natural</u> that the first days of school are upsetting.
(10) Soon autumn would be here and Mark and Mandy would have to start school.

The second subcategory of moral evaluation is *abstraction*. Here, instead of describing the phenomenon under legitimation straight as it is, it is expressed in an abstract and moralized way. The examples 11 and 12 (Van Leeuwen 2007, 99) clarify this. Example 11 contains an explicit statement, while example 12 expresses the same thing more abstractly.

(11) The child goes to school for the first time.
(12) The child takes up independence.

The final way to realize moral evaluation is through *analogies* (comparisons). One practice is compared to another in order to legitimate it – either positively or negatively. This means that something is legitimate, because it is similar to another practice, or it is legitimate, because it is different than the other practice. The previously discussed Us/Them polarization applies also here. Comparisons can be explicit (through similarity conjunction or circumstances of comparisons), implicit or narrativized, and they can be placed within one clause or a longer piece of discourse (Van Leeuwen 2007, 99-100). Example of an explicit analogy (Van Leeuwen 2007, 100):

(13) It will become <u>as</u> automatic <u>as</u> cleaning your teeth.

4.3.3 Rationalization

While moral evaluation refers more to emotions, the third legitimation strategy, *rationalization*, refers to reason. Van Leeuwen (2007, 101) separates two types of rationalization: instrumental and theoretical rationality.

In the first one, *instrumental rationality*, (de)legitimation is accomplished by reference to the goals, uses and effects of the social action in question. Here it is important to clarify the difference between legitimation and *purpose*. According to Van Leeuwen, instead of

answering the question *why* like legitimation, purpose provides an answer to *what for* (2008, 20). For a purpose to become an instance of legitimation, it has to have some kind of a moral component: an action is legitimation if it is a *moralized* action and not only a *generalized* one. Van Leeuwen (2007, 102) uses the following examples to mark the difference:

(14) His mother joins the queue <u>to pay his dinner money to the teacher</u>.
(15) The following strategies were employed <u>to make the introduction to PE more smooth</u>.

Example 14 is purpose, since it does not include any morality. In example 15, on the other hand, the word *smooth* gives a moral evaluation of the *introduction to PE* making it legitimation. In conclusion, rationalization does not act as legitimation without any moral component albeit morality being implicit (Van Leeuwen 2007, 100).

Instrumental rationality can be further divided into three subtypes: goal-orientation, means-orientation and effect orientation. In *goal-orientation* an action is legitimated by referring to the motives, aims or goals that are wanted to acquire through the action. Thus, goal-orientation is often expressed with a *to-phrase*. However, it can also be implicit, without the to-phrase (Van Leeuwen (2007, 102). While goal-orientation is about the motive or goal of the action, *means-orientation* focuses more on how this target is accomplished. Expressions such as *by*, *by means of* and *through* often denote means-oriented rationality. Though, as the previous subtype, also means-orientation can be realized more implicitly (Van Leeuwen 2007, 102-103). The third subtype of instrumental rationality is *effect orientation*, which is about the effect and outcome of the action often expressed with *so that* and *that way* -phrases. According the Van Leeuwen (2007, 103) this differs from the similar goal-orientation in that "the purpose is outcome of an action" not the goal in itself.

Van Leeuwen (2007, 103) clarifies the difference between the three subtypes with examples describing a similar issue. Example 16 is goal-orientation, example 17 is means-orientation and example 18 is effect-orientation.

(16) Your child has to learn to control aggressiveness, so as <u>to be accepted</u> by others.
(17) Your child will be accepted by others <u>by learning to control</u> aggressiveness.

(18) Your child has to learn to control aggressiveness, <u>so others accept him</u>.

In addition to instrumental rationality, Van Leeuwen identifies a second type of rationalization: *theoretical rationality*. Here, practices are (de)legitimated by appealing to the natural order of things (Van Leeuwen 2007, 101), not by appealing to their usefulness or effectiveness as in instrumental rationality. Theoretical rationality appears similar to naturalization, but it is done more explicitly, by giving descriptions on "the way things are" (Van Leeuwen 2007, 104). Again, Van Leeuwen differentiates between three subtypes, which are definition, explanation and prediction.

The first, *definition,* means that an action is defined by linking it to another action, which is presented as good or bad (i.e. moralized) in order to legitimate it. This connection is established either with *an attributive* (e.g. is, constitutes) or *a significative* (e.g. means, signals) as in example 19 (Van Leeuwen 2007, 104). Here the act of *going to school* is defined in relation to the process of *growing up*.

(19) <u>School</u> <u>signals</u> that her children are <u>growing up</u>.

Explanation, on the other hand, does not describe the action, but instead the actors involved in that action. According to Van Leeuwen, "explanations describe general attributes or habitual activities of the categories of actors in question" and answer the why question with "because doing things this way is appropriate to the nature of these actors" (Van Leeuwen 2007, 104). Van Leeuwen found from his corpus that "parents use the same way to school each day because small children thrive on routine" (ibid.). Here the *children* are the actors who are being described and the action under legitimation is *using the same way to school each day*.

The final subtype of theoretical rationality is *prediction*, which are based on some kind of expertise and prior knowledge, but not in the same way as expert authority. Van Leeuwen's example (ibid.) is based on a mother's experience on children crying:

(20) Don't worry if you or your child cries. It won't last long.

4.3.4 Mythopoesis

Van Leeuwen's final strategy of legitimation is *mythopoesis* (making of myths). Legitimation is accomplished through storytelling and narratives. Van Leeuwen (2007, 105-106) differentiates two types of mythopoesis. *Moral tales* are narratives in which legitimate actions and efforts to restore the legitimate order are rewarded. They have a happy ending. On contrary to this, *cautionary tales* describe what happens if the norms of social practices are not followed. Illegitimate actions are punished, and the narratives have unhappy endings. They include a warning: "this is what happens if…" Some narratives might present their moral lesson quite explicitly, while others include *inversion* (e.g. of semantic features) or *symbolic actions*, which represent more than one social practice (Van Leeuwen 2007, 106). Legitimation by storytelling can also be accomplished visually through movies, games or comics (Van Leeuwen 2007, 107).

I have now presented Van Leeuwen's four strategies of legitimation: authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization and mythopoesis. In order to complete Van Leeuwen's typology, in the following section I will present strategies identified by Reyes (2011).

4.4 Reyes's strategies of legitimation

In his study on legitimation in political discourse, Reyes (2011) examines US presidential speeches in which armed conflicts and war are justified. He develops Van Leeuwen's typology further and formulates five different legitimation strategies used in the speeches. I will shortly describe each strategy identified by Reyes to provide an overview of his work.

Reyes's material (presidential discourse) is similar to this study, and I consider some of his strategies as useful additions to the ones by Van Leeuwen. However, I will not include all five strategies by Reyes to my typology of legitimation strategies, as some of these are not useful for my analysis. They fall within other categories by Van Leeuwen, and hence it is not necessary to employ them separately in the analysis. The strategies identified by Reyes (2011) are:

1. Legitimation through emotions
2. Legitimation through a hypothetical future
3. Legitimation through rationality
4. Voices of expertise
5. Altruism

In the first strategy, *legitimation through emotions*, the political actor aims to generate different emotions, such as fear, sadness or insecurity, in the audience in order to gain support for certain proposals and actions. Appealing to emotions (through e.g. collective memory or shared belief) may help the political actor to influence and change the audience's perception of these actions (Reyes 2011, 789). In Reyes's words: "emotions skew the audience towards accepting and supporting the proposal of the social actor, who has triggered the emotions in the first place" (2011, 790). This strategy often includes Us/Them polarization, in which the speaker (and possibly the audience) belong to the we-group that is represented positively while others, part of the they-group, are represented negatively (Reyes 2011, 785). In his study, Reyes (2011, 790-791) focuses especially on *fear*, which is often realized in political discourse by "demonization of the enemy" (i.e. the they-group) for example through the negative representation of social actors (e.g. by negative moral attributes, nouns and verbs). In example 21 (Reyes 2011, 791), the negative connotation noun *killers* is used to create fear in the audience:

(21) They're tired of foreigners and <u>killers</u> in their midst.

In the analysis of this study, I will not specifically try to examine legitimation through emotions, since I consider it embedded with the other legitimation strategies. When relevant, I will point to a case of legitimation through emotions in the examples provided from the data.

According to Reyes (2011, 793), legitimation often involves a sort of timeline that links the past, the present and the future together. His second strategy is *legitimation through a hypothetical future*, which often involves describing a threat in the future as requiring imminent action in the present. By focusing on the possible future, the political actor can turn the attention and pressure away from the present moment, which may include

controversial issues (Reyes 2011, 794). There are two alternatives that can be represented by the social actor. The first one describes, what will happen in the future, "if we do not do what the speaker proposes in the present". The second alternative is to describe the contrary scenario: what will happen "if we do act according to the speaker's suggestion" (Reyes 2011, 793). The following two examples demonstrate how the strategy can be linguistically realized (Reyes 2011, 794):

(22) <u>If</u> we were to fail in Iraq, the enemy <u>would</u> follow us here to America.
(23) It is from here that we were attacked on 9/11, and it is from here that new attacks are being plotted as I speak.

Epistemic modality, which denotes the degree of certainty of the statement in question (Chilton 2004, 59), is an essential part of this strategy. Example 22 includes a clear *conditional structure* (*if* and the modal verb *would*), while example 23 does not include any modal verbs, which increases the degree of certainty and makes the statement seem more like a fact than a condition and hence (Reyes 2011, 795-796). In order to work well, legitimation through a hypothetical future too is reliant on the collective memory and shared beliefs of the group. The two examples above would not be efficient legitimations if the audience did not share the memory of 9/11 and the Iraq war.

(24) <u>We did not ask for this fight</u>. On September 11, 2001, 19 men hijacked four airplanes and used them to murder nearly 3,000 people.

For Reyes (2011, 786), his third strategy, *legitimation through rationality*, corresponds somewhat to Van Leeuwen's theoretical rationalization; legitimation by reference to the natural order of things. Example 24 (Reyes 2011, 798) demonstrates a rational construct, in which the US war on terror is justified because "a party is allowed to respond to and maintain or perpetuate a violent act if the party did not start the fight" (ibid.). The first sentence of example 24 depicts this and builds the legitimation. Reyes (2011, 797) views legitimation through rationality as accomplished by representing decision-making as a careful and evaluative assessment process with the end product (decision) being the rational choice. He continues to emphasize that rationality is culturally bound, something is considered rational and the right way or thing to do in a given society. Reyes also mentions, like Van Leeuwen, that rationality is often based on some morality (2011, 798). In the present study, I place this category by Reyes under Van Leeuwen's rationalization, since the two are not so different that it would be necessary to analyse them separate.

(25) Our new commander in Afghanistan – <u>General McChrystal</u> – <u>has reported</u> that the security situation is more serious than he anticipated. In short: the status quo is not sustainable.

The fourth strategy identified by Reyes, *voices of expertise*, clearly relates to Van Leeuwen's category of authorization. According to Reyes (2011, 786), "voices of expertise are displayed in discourse to show the audience that experts in a specific field are backing the politician's proposal with their knowledgeable statements." Legitimation can be realized for example by referring to believable sources, numbers or personal experiences (Reyes 2011, 787). The speakers refer to experts or authoritative voices in the speech in order to justify the action in question. Example 25 (Reyes 2011, 801) demonstrates this. The authority backing up the claim may also stem from the speaker's own institutional position. In relation to this study, a president of a country is also an authority. Even though a president is not an expert in the traditional sense of the term, the audience may consider that a figure with such an institutional position is well informed and can function as "an expert". Of course, it is an entirely different matter, whether this actually is true or not. In the analysis, I employ Van Leeuwen's strategy of authorization, since voices of expertise falls under that category.

Reyes's last legitimation strategy is *altruism*. In order not to base their actions only on personal interests, political actors try to legitimate the actions by presenting them as beneficial for others. The practices are made to look like a service or help to improve the wellbeing of others (Reyes 2011, 801-802). An example from Reyes (2011, 802; shortened by me from the original):

(26) …And now is the time to act. It's time to act not only for our sake, <u>it's time to act for the sake of people in Iraq</u>.

In this section I have introduced the strategies of legitimation identified by Reyes in his study of legitimation in political discourse. These complement Van Leeuwen's categorisation of legitimation strategies presented in the previous section. Next, I discuss some criticism on Van Leeuwen's work.

4.5 Criticism and Previous Research

As with most theoretical frameworks, legitimation frameworks have also been criticised. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) perceive political discourse as practical argumentation and this premise serves as the guiding principle in their approach to political discourse analysis. For Fairclough and Fairclough, the greatest problem of Van Leeuwen's framework is the fact that, in their view, Van Leeuwen does not connect the legitimation typology well enough to argumentation making them come across as two separate things (2012, 110). Fairclough and Fairclough (2012), though, do not see these two as separate, but consider legitimation as part of argumentation, as a specific type of justification among others.

According to Fairclough and Fairclough, Van Leeuwen does not relate legitimation clearly enough to the background, to the issues that can be publicly justified and to shared beliefs, norms and values (2012, 110). For something to be legitimated, there must be something legit to refer to (norms, values, beliefs). For instance, if something is referred to as useful or good, it is necessary first to define what is considered useful or good – and it is people who define that, since things are not inherently good (or bad). Fairclough and Fairclough see that this aspect is not addressed enough in Van Leeuwen's work.

Fairclough and Fairclough's views were briefly discussed in section 4.1, in which I stated that I consider as legitimations those cases that refer to something shared (such as the law) rather than something more personal. I follow this view also in the analysis. As regards to referring to the background, I partly agree with Fairclough and Fairclough in that I think Van Leeuwen could have addressed the issue more in his work. However, for the purposes of this study, I do not see this as an insurmountable issue. In fact, one of the aims of this study is to examine how well the legitimation framework overall works with this type of topic. Hence, Van Leeuwen's work functions as a foundation; I do not require it to be perfect.

In addition, Fairclough and Fairclough think that Van Leeuwen does not differentiate legitimation clearly from explanation. According to them, most of Van Leeuwen's examples (in his 2007 article) do not answer the question "why should we do this" as they should, but rather answer questions "why did this happen" or "why did someone do this".

The latter ones provide explanations, not justifications, in Fairclough and Fairclough's view (2012, 250). However, in fact, Van Leeuwen (2007, 91-92) does address *explanation* when quoting Berger and Luckmann: legitimation is a justification that seeks to appear as an explanation. Hence, even though Van Leeuwen could have expressed this issue more clearly, the criticism of Fairclough and Fairclough is out of place.

In the end Fairclough and Fairclough conclude that despite its drawbacks, Van Leeuwen's work provides a valuable basis for exploring legitimation (2012, 110). For the purpose of the current study, this notion is significant. As stated previously, the aim is to use Van Leeuwen's strategies as basis and combine them with Reyes to find out how well this typology of legitimation strategies works with the type of topic and data of this study.

While it is evident that legitimation is not without its limitations (see Fairclough and Fairclough 2012), Van Leeuwen's work has been applied multiple times in previous research in different ways. His work has often been combined with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and the study of power. I briefly discussed the connection between power and legitimation in section 4.1. In addition, in section 4.3.1, in connection with the strategy of authorization, I mentioned how a president is in a position of power. Just being the US president, which is a highly prestigious position, is enough to give some legitimacy and authority to the figure holding the position. In this study, I will not focus on power, because it relates to the speaker (the two US presidents) and not the speech itself. However, I will include those aspects to the analysis that have a clear appeal to the power position of the president (self-referring authorization). Authorization is only one strategy of the legitimation typology, and I will explore other aspects as well.

Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999) have studied legitimation strategies employed to deny immigrants' rights in Austria. They use systemic functional discourse methods to conduct a detailed analysis of notices rejecting family reunion applications. This is then linked through discourse-historical approach to other genres of discourse and to a wider historical context. In relation to legitimation, Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999, 111) found that the documents analysed contained a "disturbing mixture" of *authorization* and *moral abstraction* legitimation strategies. These two strategies were followed by rationalization. According to Van Leeuwen and Wodak, the result "supports Habermas' thesis (1992) that legal systems must ultimately always be grounded in moral systems" (ibid.). This is

consistent with other claims presented previously about legitimation being grounded in some shared sense of morality.

In their recent study, Pansardi and Battegazzorre (2018) apply Van Leeuwen's strategies of legitimation. They compare how two European Commission Presidents, José Manuel Barroso and Jean-Claude Juncker reclaim legitimacy for the European Union in their State of the Union Addresses. Pansardi and Battegazzorre discovered that in order to legitimate the EU, Barroso used mainly rationalization based on economic goals and economic expertise authority. Juncker, on the other hand, relied more on "authorization in terms of democratic procedures and popular sovereignty" as well as moral evaluation and mythopoesis (Pansardi and Battegazzorre 2018, 15).

Rationalization based on economic reasons has been found as a common legitimation strategy in other studies as well. Of course, the topic and its closeness to economic issues affects this. For instance, Kekki (2018) has examined legitimation in news media in relation to Chinese foreign direct investments in Africa and found that rationalizations based on the economic effects were very common. She also found that authorization by referring to economic expertise was often used to justify the actions. Vaara's study on the media discussion of the Eurozone crisis in Finland (2014) generated similar results: economic expertise and economic rationales were common. The topics of both studies are economical, and thus these findings are not very surprising.

In her CDA-oriented study, Bogain (2017) examines discursive legitimation strategies used by French president Francois Hollande to justify France's security-based response to the two terrorist attacks in 2015, which had been criticized for being illiberal. Bogain found that in his attempt to legitimate the response actions, Hollande especially referred to human rights through rationalization and moral evaluation and to the rule of law through authorization, and that he was able to discursively reconstruct reality in order to justify France's response to the attacks. Bogain (2017) found that Hollande aimed to depict the actions as a moral duty to save France and rest of the world from terrorism. In order to do this, Hollande employed moralized mythopoetic past and future temporalisation by referring to past and future events that would justify the action taken in the present. Bogain argues that "due to the heavily moralised account of temporalisation in Hollande's speeches" the strategy of mythopoesis (storytelling) works

best, at least in her study, if it is considered under the strategy of moral evaluation (2017, 490). The temporalisation relates to Reyes's strategy of hypothetical future. Bogain's study suggests that the lines between the different strategies are not always as clear cut as they might seem, and that there is a possibility of overlap.

Oddo (2011) employs legitimation in a different way. He studies how two US presidents legitimate war actions by especially focusing on the representations of Us and Them. Oddo (2011, 289) found that the Us/Them polarization is a key strategy used to justify war, but it is used in connection with others. One is legitimation by reference to values, in which Oddo examines how Us and Them are formed through moral evaluations. Second is legitimation by reference to temporality, which appears to relate to Reyes's hypothetical future. The third is legitimation by reference to group membership demarcation: who are defined as being part of Us and Them (Oddo 2011, 289-290). Oddo's study shows how it is possible to use only parts of one framework and combine those with others to form an applicable framework for the specific topic and data.

Van Leeuwen's work has been also tested. For instance, in her thesis Saarinen (2013) has tested Van Leeuwen's legitimation theory in connection with metal music lyrics and criticism or justification of war. She found that the material of her study did not work as well with the typology as Van Leeuwen's original, but also that a larger corpus would be necessary in order to provide more general results. Saarinen used only Van Leeuwen's strategies, while in the current study, also strategies identified by Reyes are included in the typology. Hence, my focus is not only on testing Van Leeuwen's work, but the combined typology of legitimation strategies.

5 Material and Methods

After presenting the necessary background and theoretical framework, I move on to describing the data and methodology of the present study before moving on to the analysis part on this thesis. I begin by explaining criteria for data collection after which I present the actual data, the presidential statements, in a chronological order. After describing the material, I move on to the methods of the study.

5.1 Material

The presidential statements chosen for analysis needed to focus on the PA, in order to examine how the actions regarding the agreement were legitimated. Both presidents refer to the PA in various occasions (such as debates, and interviews) but these are often very short passing mentions within a larger text or speech. In order to examine the (de)legitimation of the PA in detail and how it is constructed in the discourse, this study includes only statements that specifically addressed the PA in some way.

The criteria resulted in five presidential statements altogether, four from Obama and one from Trump meaning that the composition of the data is not balanced. This is due to the fact that despite thorough search, only one relevant statement from Trump was found. Trump addresses the PA shortly in multiple rallies, debates and speeches, but none of these focuses fully on the agreements, while all the statements chosen from Obama focus solely on the PA. Thus, in order to apply the criteria as equally as possible and keep the discourse as comparable as possible, the short mentions by Trump were excluded from the study. Obama's statements represent 61,3 % of the total amount of data, while Trump's represents 38,7 %. It is important to keep this limitation in mind when comparing the results. The difference between the number of relevant statements between the two president most likely results from two factors. Firstly, Obama's administration was involved with the PA process longer than Trump's administration. Secondly, at the time of writing this thesis, Trump has been the president for two years compared to Obama's eight years in office.

In addition to the limitation of imbalance, another limitation needs to be mentioned. The amount of material included in this study is small: in the five statements analysed there

are 7475 words in total with 4581 from Obama and 2894 words from Trump. I considered including a presidential proclamation by Obama to the data in order to increase the amount. However, this would have resulted in an even larger corpus from Obama and thus amplified the uneven balance. Furthermore, a presidential proclamation differs from the other statements slightly in its nature and so it would have not been as comparable as the others. Hence, all possible material that fits the criteria is included in this study. Thus, this will be a more in-depth case study. This provides possibilities for examining the data in close detail.

Research ethics were considered during the data collection. There was no issue in this regard, because the two presidents are central public figures, and the transcripts of the statements were retrieved either from Obama's official White House Archives website (Obama 2015a; 2015b; 2016a and 2016b) or the current official White House website (Trump 2017a). Both of these websites and their contents are public. When collecting the data, mentions of *applause* in the transcripts were ignored and not calculated into the word count. Video recordings of the statements 1, 2, 4 and 5 were found online (YouTube) and these were compared to the transcripts to ensure uniformity. The transcripts corresponded to the video recordings. Despite thorough search, no full recording of the statement 3 was found. Only parts of the statement were found as video recording. These corresponded to the transcript. Based on this, I consider the transcripts reliable material for the study. The presidential statements analysed in this thesis are presented in table 5.

Statement number	Title	Date	Number of words
1	Remarks by President Obama at the First Session of COP21	30.11.2015	1742
2	Statement by the President on the Paris Climate Agreement	12.12.2015	1026
3	Remarks by President Obama on the United States Formally Entering into the Paris Agreement	3.9.2016	1017
4	Remarks by the President on the Paris Agreement	5.10.2016	796
5	Statement by President Trump on the Paris Climate Accord	1.6.2017	2894

Table 5 The presidential statements analysed in the present study

It can be seen that these are all referred to either as *remarks* or as *statements*. These two are slightly different in their meaning. A statement is a more formal declaration of a fact, event or opinion, while a remark is more of a comment or brief expression of an opinion or criticism. For the purpose of this thesis, this difference is not fundamental, however for the sake of clarity, these are referred to in this thesis collectively as statements.

Obama gave a statement at the opening ceremony of the Paris climate change conference on 30 November 2015 (statement number 1). In addition to Obama, heads of state or government from almost 150 countries addressed the representative in the opening ceremony. The event was cast live on the internet. While statement number 1 was uttered before the PA was officially adopted, statement number 2 was voiced just when the agreement was reached, on 12 December 2015. The statement was given at the White House in Washington D.C. As mentioned in section 2.2, the US and China formally joined the PA on 3 September 2016 during the Group of Twenty (G20) summit in Hangzhou, China. Obama gave a statement of this occasion (statement number 3). Finally, on 5 October 2016, when the threshold for the entry into force of the PA was achieved, Obama gave a statement at the White House (statement number 4). The material by president Donald Trump analysed in this thesis is the withdrawal announcement (statement 5) he made at the White House in Washington D.C. on 1 June 2017. The withdrawal was discussed previously in section 2.2.

Due to the video recordings and transcripts of the statements, the actual audience is larger than the immediate audience in that speech situation. Since this study focuses on the transcripts and legitimation there, also this larger audience and wider context than just the one in the specific speech situation is taken into account. Thus, even though in statements 2, 4 and 5 the primary audience was rather narrow due to the White House location, the actual audience also includes people elsewhere is the US and all over the world. Likewise, the immediate audience of statements 1 and 3 is confined to the specific speech situation in Hangzhou and Paris, but the actual audience larger than that. Both statements 1 and 3 were targeted especially at the international community. As statement 1 was given at COP21, the main target were the participants of the PA present at the event.

Final issue to note about the material is that even though the presidents alone voice the statements, they are usually carefully drafted together with a team of speechwriters. Thus, the presidential statements are not spontaneous, but rather premeditated and intentional. As Reyes confirms, intentionality is an essential part of political discourse and legitimation: "politicians generally think of the main ideas they want to convey, if not word by word, *grosso modo*, during scheduled public speeches and appearances. There is premeditation and often an advisory team to revise and edit politicians' speeches" (Reyes 2011, 783). Thus, we can assume that also both presidents, Obama and Trump, and their teams have prepared the statements with a clear intention in mind.

5.2 Methods

This section outlines the methodology of the study. First, the data collection was conducted according to the criteria described in section 5.1. I began by reading through all the presidential statements to get an overall picture of them and to determine what kind of method would best suit the analysis. Close reading of the material was chosen as the most appropriate method of analysis, since the small amount of data makes it possible to examine the material in close detail.

In addition, as stated in section 4.1, it is not enough to look at word or clause level when studying legitimation. Thus, in order to find the legitimation strategies used to justify the decision regarding the PA, I needed to examine a higher level and close reading fits this well. Furthermore, as mentioned previously in this thesis, legitimation relies on shared knowledge, belief and values. Hence, the statements need to be examined by also taking into account the socio-political context. For all this, the method of close reading works the best.

I went through the presidential statements one by one. With Obama's statements the aim was to identify those parts of the text that would provide answers to questions such as *Why the Paris Agreement is necessary?, Why is it important to be part of the Paris Agreement?* and *Why it would be a mistake to not be part of the Paris Agreement?* With Trump's statements the aim was to identify those parts that answer to questions such as *Why are we withdrawing from the Paris Agreement?* and *Why it would be a mistake to stay in the Paris Agreement?* It is worth noting that I did not expect to find direct answers

to these exact questions. Rather the questions functioned as facilitators in finding the legitimations, since often these were not expressed explicitly in the data.

After identifying a legitimation, I then classified it according to the strategies presented in sections 4.3 and 4.4. The aim was first to identify the main legitimation strategy and if possible, a subcategory. After going through the data of each president, I compared the results to see what possible differences and similarities there were.

It is necessary to note, that the results of the analysis will be applicable to this specific data only. As this is a case study with a small amount of data, no broad generalizations on how US presidents use legitimation strategies in their statements can be made, or even how Obama and Trump use these legitimation strategies. Increasing the amount of data might generate more comprehensive results, but this was not possible for the reasons explained in section 5.1. A possibility would have been to include data from other speakers (such as Congress or Cabinet members) in addition to the two presidents. However, this would arguably have changed the overall direction and focus of the study.

6 Analysis

This section presents the legitimation strategy analysis of the presidential statements. It is important to note that identifying the strategies is not always straightforward. In some cases, there can be more than one legitimation strategy at play at the same time. This overlap makes identification difficult. It also complicates the presentation of the results. For this reason, the analysis is structured according to the speaker (president) and not according to different strategies. Thus, I begin by presenting the legitimation strategies used by Obama after which Trump's strategies are presented. I will compare the results of the two presidents in the discussion section in order to present the comparison more explicitly.

Examples in this analysis were chosen based on their descriptiveness of the legitimation strategy in question. Relevant words and phrases have been underlined in some examples. However, as has been mentioned multiple times in this thesis, legitimation cannot always be identified from specific words. Sometimes it is embedded in a longer stretch of text or talk. Hence, in these cases no individual words or phrases can point to the legitimation.

Table 6 presents a recap of the strategies based on which the data will be analysed.

Authorization	Legitimation rests on some kind of authority (institutional or a person)
Moral evaluation	Legitimation by reference to some kind of moral values
Rationalization	Legitimation by reference to reason and knowledge; goals, effects and use worthiness
Mythopoesis	Legitimation is built through narratives in which legitimate actions are rewarded and non-legitimate ones are punished
Hypothetical future	Legitimation by reference to a threat in the future requiring action in the present
Altruism	Legitimation is built on the idea that the action is beneficial for others.
+ Emotions	Legitimation by reference to different emotions

Table 6 The typology of legitimation strategies

6.1 Legitimation strategies used by Obama

In this section I present the results of the analysis of Obama's statements. Examples from all the main legitimation strategies presented in the typology above can be found in Obama's statements. However, some of the strategies occur more often than others.

The least frequent strategy Obama uses is *authorization*. In the few cases Obama uses authorization, the authority is stemmed from persons; there are no cases of *impersonal authority*. There are couple of cases in which Obama uses his own institutional position and authority as the President of the United States (POTUS) to convince the audience that the PA is necessary. This is a form of *personal authority*.

> (27) Now, just as <u>I believe</u> the Paris Agreement will ultimately prove to be a turning point for our planet, <u>I believe</u> that history will judge today's efforts as pivotal.

Example 27 (Obama 2016a) shows how the mental process verb *believe* (to follow the terminology in Halliday 1985) realizes Obama's authority. Here, legitimation for the PA stems from the shared belief that what the POTUS believes, says and does can have a significant influence on other players within the international arena, and within the US.

> (28) <u>As one of America's governors has said</u>, "We are the first generation to feel the impact of climate change, and the last generation that can do something about it."

Obama does not only use his own authority as a legitimation. Example 28 (Obama 2015a) is also *personal authority*, but in this Obama directly quotes Jay Inslee, the Democratic governor of Washington, who is known to emphasize actions against climate change. The example is from the statement Obama had at COP21. The primary audience was international, which is probably the reason Obama did not name the governor, as most would not have recognized him. Nevertheless, the quote brings a certain kind of verification to Obama's words. A fellow American politician has the same concern about climate change and like Obama, urges people to do something about it. This signals that Obama is not the only American politician who beliefs now is the time to act.

In addition, in example 29 (Obama 2015a) Obama also employs *role model authority* by referring to Martin Luther King and his quote *there is such a thing as being too late*.

(29) For I believe, <u>in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.</u>, that <u>there is such a thing as being too late</u>. And when it comes to climate change, that hour is almost upon us. But <u>if we act here, if we act now, if we place</u> our own short-term interests behind the air that <u>our young people will breathe</u>, and the food that <u>they will eat</u>, and the water that <u>they will drink</u>, and the hopes and dreams that sustain their lives, <u>then we won't be too late for them</u>.

King was talking about the urgency of ending the Vietnam War in his 1967 speech. Obama mirrors this to the threat of climate change. With the reference, Obama is assuming the international audience (from COP21) is aware who King was and what made him significant enough to be quoted in this situation. Using King's words would not bring any significant legitimation to the statement if the audience did not know of him.

Later in example 29 also *hypothetical future* and *altruism* are employed to legitimate why the PA is necessary and why it is important people act now. As mentioned in section 4.4, hypothetical future usually involves describing a threat in the future needing imminent action now. Here, that threat is (naturally) climate change. In example 29, Obama is describing a positive future that will happen, if action is taken now and the PA is accomplished. This future will also be beneficial for the next generation. Thus here, Obama uses a combination of altruism and hypothetical future. He urges people to place the interest of future generations ahead of their own interest in order to justify why the PA and being part of it is crucial.

There are also other cases of *hypothetical future* in Obama's statements; the strategy is employed both explicitly through a conditional structure and more abstractly without any conditionality. Obama uses hypothetical future mostly to legitimate the PA and its importance.

(30) <u>That future is</u> not one of strong economies, nor is it one where fragile states can find their footing. <u>That future is</u> one that we have the power to change. Right here. Right now. But <u>only if we rise to this moment</u>.
(31) And <u>if we follow</u> on the commitments that this agreement embodies, history <u>may well judge it as a turning point for our planet</u>.
(32) This is the single-best chance that we have to deal with <u>a problem that could end up transforming this planet in a way that makes it very difficult for us to deal with all the other challenges that we may face</u>.

There are cases in which hypothetical future is used to describe what would happen if the PA is successful. In example 30 (Obama 2015a), the reference to the future is established by *that future* and without a clear conditional structure. The future Obama is describing thus appears more certain. However, *only if we rise to this moment* slightly weakens this effect. The clause reminds the audience that this future scenario will not happen if the PA is not accomplished. In example 31 (Obama 2016b), then, the future scenario is constructed through a more explicit conditional structure *if we follow + may judge*. In contrast, example 32 (Obama 2016a) shows what could happen, if the PA is not accomplished. Here the modal verb *could* is used, meaning that the statement has a lower degree of certainty (opposed to the first two sentences of example 30). Hence, for delegitimating the scenario in which the PA is not accomplished, Obama does not employ as much certainty as for legitimating the importance of the PA.

Obama uses storytelling in multiple occasions. Not all are explicit narratives, but cases which include story-like elements, and are thus referred here as narratives and placed under the legitimation strategy of *mythopoesis*. Both of Van Leeuwen's subcategories are present in Obama's statements: *moral tales* functioning as legitimation and *a cautionary tale* as delegitimation.

(33) Of course, it took a long time to reach this day. One of the reasons I ran for this office was to make America a leader in this mission. And over the past eight years, we've done just that. In 2009, we salvaged a chaotic climate summit in Copenhagen, establishing the principle that all nations have a role to play in combating climate change. And at home, we led by example, with historic investments in growing industries like wind and solar that created a steady stream of new jobs. We set the first-ever nationwide standards to limit the amount of carbon pollution that power plants can dump into the air our children breathe. From the cars and trucks we drive to the homes and businesses in which we live and work, we've changed fundamentally the way we consume energy. Now, keep in mind, the skeptics said these actions would kill jobs. And instead, we saw -- even as we were bringing down these carbon levels -- the longest streak of job creation in American history. We drove economic output to new highs. And we drove our carbon pollution to its lowest levels in two decades. We continued to lead by example with our historic joint announcement with China two years ago, where we put forward even more ambitious climate targets. And that achievement encouraged dozens of other countries to set more ambitious climate targets of their own. And that, in turn, paved the way for our success in Paris…

(34) I imagine taking my grandkids, if I'm lucky enough to have some, to the park someday, and holding their hands, and hearing their laughter, and watching a quiet sunset, all the while knowing that our work today prevented an alternate future that could have been grim; that our work, here and now, gave future generations

cleaner air, and cleaner water, and a more sustainable planet. And what could be more important than that?

The lengthy example 33 (Obama 2016b) demonstrates how Obama uses a moral tale to describe what steps have already been taken towards a better future. These past actions are presented as positive examples of what could also be accomplished with the PA, thus aiming to legitimate its importance. These moral tales also include cases in which Obama describes the climate leadership of the US and China and how the two countries are showing an example for the rest of the world with their action. A different kind of moral tale, example 34 (Obama 2015b), depicts a positive and happy situation which will be the reward for acting now, for joining the PA. Thus, here the tale does not refer to the past, but to the future. In contrast, cautionary tales are more based on delegitimating the alternative scenario: not accomplishing the PA.

(35) This summer, I saw the effects of climate change firsthand in our northernmost state, Alaska, where the sea is already swallowing villages and eroding shorelines; where permafrost thaws and the tundra burns; where glaciers are melting at a pace unprecedented in modern times. And it was a preview of <u>one possible future</u> – <u>a glimpse of our children's fate if the climate keeps changing faster than our efforts to address it</u>. Submerged countries. Abandoned cities. Fields that no longer grow. Political disruptions that trigger new conflict, and even more floods of desperate peoples seeking the sanctuary of nations not their own.

Example 35 (Obama 2015a) first describes what is already happening in Alaska because of climate change. The tale ends with a warning: what will happen, if nothing is done. Within the narrative is another combination of hypothetical future and altruism, which was discussed above. In example 33 there is a short mentioning of a possible threatening future that is not favorable to the next generation. This then functions as delegitimation, as it is describing what could happen, if the PA is not accomplished.

The reference of the next generation leads us to the strategy of *altruism*, which is very common throughout Obama's statements. With altruism, Obama aims to generate emotions among the audience; most often the feeling of hope that others, the next generation, will be better off due to the PA.

(36) …an agreement that helps us lift people from poverty without condemning <u>the next generation</u> to a planet that's beyond its capacity to repair.

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(37) But the knowledge that <u>the next generation will be better off for what we do here</u> – can we imagine a more worthy reward that that? Passing that on to <u>our children and our grandchildren</u>, so that when they look back and they see what we did here in Paris, they can take pride in our achievement.

(38) What matters is that today we can be more confident that this planet is going to be in better shape for <u>the next generation</u>.

(39) Today is a historic day in the fight <u>to protect our planet for future generations</u>.

(40) That's our most important mission, <u>to make sure our kids and our grandkids have at least as beautiful a planet, and hopefully more beautiful, than the one that we have.</u>

Altruism is usually employed as legitimation rather than delegitimation. However, example 36 (Obama 2015a) shows how Obama aims to delegitimate the opposite scenario in which the PA is not accomplished by stating how *the next generation* could be worse off without the agreement. By contrast, in order to legitimate the PA, Obama describes how the wellbeing of *our children* or *our grandkids, future generations* or *the next generation* will be better with the new agreement. Examples 37 (Obama 2015a), 38 (Obama 2015b) as well as examples 39 and 40 (both Obama 2016b) all depicts this strategy.

In addition to altruism, the strategy of *moral evaluation* is common in Obama's statements. As was explained in section 4.3.2, moral evaluation is often implicitly used and thus difficult to identify. It is often more on emotions and certain values denoting whether something is good or bad. As altruism, also with moral evaluation Obama often aims to inflict some kind of emotions in the audience in order to legitimate the PA.

(41) And we salute the people of Paris for insisting <u>this crucial conference</u> go on – an act of defiance that proves nothing will deter us from building the future we want for <u>our children</u>.

(42) Today, thanks to strong, principled, American leadership, that's the world that we'll leave to <u>our children</u> -- <u>a world that is safer and more secure, more prosperous, and more free</u>. And that is our <u>most important mission</u> in our short time here on this Earth.

There are some cases of *evaluation* in Obama's statements. Sometimes these may be in connection with another legitimation strategy. In example 41 (Obama 2015a), Obama highlights the significance of COP21 with an evaluative adjective *crucial*. The example also includes another case of altruism, as Obama refers to the conference and the PA being good and important especially to *our children*. Example 42 (Obama 2015b) also

contains evaluative adjectives. These are aimed to legitimate the PA and its possible consequences. Obama's message here is that a better world for the sake of *our children* should be the *most important mission* right now, and the PA will help accomplish this. This idea of the PA helping to achieve a better future for the next generation is very apparent throughout Obama's statements, as was discussed above. It is noteworthy that all four of Obama's statements end with a similar sentence as the second-to-last sentence of example 42. Each case describes a world that will be *safer*, *more prosperous*, *more secure* and *more free* than the current one, if action is taken and the PA is accomplished, thus evaluating the PA as good instead of bad.

In another theme of evaluation, Obama aims to legitimate the PA by associating it with a certain feeling of togetherness and a common purpose that the world, which for him is the self-group in this case, needs.

(43) …we can show the world what is <u>possible</u> when we come <u>together</u>, united in <u>common effort</u> and by a <u>common purpose</u>.
(44) <u>Together, we've shown what's possible when the world stands as one</u>.
(45) Because no nation, not even one as powerful as ours, can solve this challenge alone. And no country, no matter how small, can sit on the sidelines. All of us had to solve it <u>together</u>.
(46) Yes, diplomacy can be <u>difficult</u>, and progress on the world stage can be <u>slow</u>. But <u>together</u>, we're proving that it is <u>possible</u>.

Examples 43 (Obama 2015a), 44 and 45 (Obama 2015b) as well as 46 (Obama 2016a) include evaluative words such as *together*, *possible* or *common purpose* that are used depict how the PA can be accomplished together as a united world and how it is possible to change the world for better. All these evaluative words aim to describe the PA and issues related to it as good.

(47) Let that be the common purpose here in Paris. A world that is worthy of our children. <u>A world that is marked not by conflict, but by cooperation</u>; and <u>not by human suffering, but by human progress</u>.

Example 47 (Obama 2015a) presents an *analogy*, another subcategory of moral evaluation. Obama legitimates the PA by depicting it as a way to form a better world. He compares this better world to the present one, which is associated with negative connotation words *conflict* and *human suffering*. These are opposite to those associated

with the future world: *cooperation* and *human progress*. Thus, here the negative other-representation and positive self-representation is at place. This comparison continues in the next sentence, in which the better world that will be accomplished through the PA is compared to *the one that we inherited*.

> (48) What greater rejection of those who would tear down our world than marshaling our best efforts to save it?

In example 48 (Obama 2015a), Obama refers to the Paris terrorist attacks that occurred in November 2015, just before COP21. This is another example of an analogy. Obama is comparing the positive effort to save the world (through the PA) to the negative violent attacks in order to highlight how the PA is good and while the violence is bad.

> (49) What should give us <u>hope</u> that <u>this is a turning point</u>, that <u>this is the moment we finally determined we would save our planet</u>, is the fact that our nations share a sense of urgency about this challenge and a growing realization that it is within our power to do something about it.

The third subcategory of moral evaluation, *abstraction*, is also present in Obama's statements. The strategy is employed to legitimate the PA; to explain why it is good. Example 49 (Obama 2015b) demonstrates a recurrent phrase in the data: Obama describes the PA in a moralized way as *a turning point*. If the PA is accomplished, it could make a lasting change in the world. The example includes the recurring element in Obama's statements: inflicting the feeling of *hope*. This is related to the strategy of *legitimation through emotions* that is often expressed within other strategies, especially with moral evaluation. Throughout his statements, Obama aims to create the feelings of *hope* and *pride*. He states how the PA will change the future, provide a better world for the next generation and how this should give us hope (see examples 30, 34, 38, 40, 44 and 49).

> (50) Today, <u>the American people can be proud</u> – because this historic agreement is a tribute to American leadership.

Obama also remarks in the statements he voiced within the US (Obama 2015b and 2016b) how the Americans should be proud of their leadership in the matter. Example 50 (2015b) demonstrates this. In addition to the more positive emotions of hope and pride, Obama aims to inflict fear; fear of the growing threat of climate change (see examples 28 and 32) and fear for the future of the following generations (see examples 29, 35 and 36). As

Reyes (2011, 790) states, "fear is perhaps the most effective emotion to trigger a response from the interlocutors", and thus it can work as a powerful way of legitimation.

Legitimations based on *rationalization* (more reason than emotions) occur quite often in Obama's statements. As with moral evaluation, rationalizations were not always easy to identify, as these were not often very explicitly expressed in the data. There are cases of *instrumental rationality*, in which the PA is legitimated by referring to its positive goals, uses and effects. When analysing instrumental rationality, it is easy to mix legitimations to purposes. The difference between these two was discussed in section 4.3.3. I have included examples of both to demonstrate the difference.

> (51) … an agreement <u>to roll back the pollution we put into our skies</u>.
> (52) …a strong global agreement <u>to reduce carbon pollution and to set the world on a low-carbon course</u>.

Example 52 (Obama 2016b) is classified as a purpose, since there is no moral component; it only states that the purpose of the PA is to reduce pollution without no additional evaluating or moralizing it further. In contrast, example 51 (Obama 2015a) is classified as instrumental rationality, since *we put into our skies* attaches a moral evaluation to *the pollution*: it specifies who is to blame for it. Example 51 is *goals-orientation*: it states the goal of the PA with the *to roll back* -phrase.

> (53) So our task here in Paris is to turn these achievements into <u>an enduring framework for human progress</u> -- not a stopgap solution, but a long-term strategy that <u>gives the world confidence</u> in a low-carbon future.
> (54) But make no mistake, <u>this agreement will help delay or avoid some of the worst consequences of climate change</u>. It <u>will help other nations ratchet down their dangerous carbon emissions</u> over time…

In addition to goal-orientation, also the two other subcategories are present in Obama's statements. Examples 53 (Obama 2015a) and 54 (Obama 2016b) demonstrate *effect-orientation*: the positive effects and the outcomes of the PA are described. In example 53, the effect is *an enduring framework for human progress* and giving the world *confidence* in a better future. Here, words such as *enduring, progress and confidence* function as the moralized elements. In example 54, the effect is reducing the consequences of climate change and helping countries to decrease their emissions. Moralization stems from the evaluative adjectives *worst* and *dangerous*.

(55) And <u>by sending</u> a signal that this is going to be our future -- a clean energy future -- it opens up the floodgates for businesses, and scientists, and engineers to unleash high-tech, low-carbon investment and innovation <u>at a scale that we've never seen before</u>.

(56) And <u>by empowering</u> businesses, scientists, engineers, workers, and the private sector -- investors -- to work together, <u>this agreement represents the best chance we've had to save the one planet that we've got</u>.

The two examples above are cases of *means-orientation*; they describe the uses of the PA. In example 55 (Obama 2016b) the PA is legitimated by referring to its usefulness in sending a signal to the world. The moral element making this a legitimation instead of a purpose, is at the end of the sentence: *at a scale that we've never seen before*. In example 56 (Obama 2015b), the PA is useful since it empowers different social actors and hence is *the best chance to save the one planet that we've got* (moral element).

Theoretical rationality, in which legitimation stems more from the natural order of things, is less apparent in Obama's statements.

(57) Our understanding of the ways human beings disrupt the climate advances by the day. Fourteen of the fifteen warmest years on record have occurred since the year 2000 -- and 2015 is on pace to be the warmest year of all. No nation -- large or small, wealthy or poor -- is immune to what this means.

Example 57 (Obama 2015a) demonstrates a case of theoretical rationality. The excerpt cannot be easily placed in any of Van Leeuwen's subcategories. However, I place it under rationalization, since it functions as a legitimation for the PA by referring to "the way things are" (Van Leeuwen 2007, 103): global warming is a fact and this means that action is needed.

I have now presented the analysis of Obama's statements based on the typology of legitimation strategies. All in all, Obama used mostly altruism, mythopoesis and moral evaluation. Also rationalization was common, but not as much as these three strategies. Examples of all main legitimation strategies were found. Overall, the tone in Obama's statements is more positive than negative. Obama is highlighting what good will come of the PA thus legitimating its importance and necessity. He does not really concentrate on describing what bad will happen if the PA is not accomplished. Most of the examples introduced in this section are legitimations, not delegitimations.

As has become apparent already, not all examples of legitimation are easy to classify only to one specific category, such as the combination of hypothetical future and altruism in example 29. Cases of mythopoesis can be tricky, because they are often longer than other legitimation cases and may thus include multiple other, smaller, legitimations. It is up to the researcher whether they decide to analyse and categorize only the higher level legitimation or also the smaller one. When discussing example 35, I chose to point out also the legitimation strategy within the cautionary tale.

In addition, there are some more ambiguous cases which appear to be legitimations, but do not fall clearly within one category of subcategory in the typology.

(58) As the world's two largest economies and two largest emitters, our entrance into this agreement continues the momentum of Paris, and should give the rest of the world confidence –- whether developed or developing countries -– that a low-carbon future is where the world is heading.
(59) So this gives us the best possible shot to save the one planet we've got.

I consider example 58 (Obama 2016a) as a legitimation, since Obama aims to justify why it is important for the US to be part of the PA. He describes how the US and China, the largest economies and emitters, set an example by joining the PA, and other countries will hopefully follow in their footsteps. However, I cannot clearly classify this into any of the legitimation strategies. It could be a rationalization, instrumental rationality, but the reference to the goals, uses and effects is not explicit enough. Also example 59 (Obama 2016b) appears to be a legitimation, but it cannot be placed straightforwardly into any of the categories. It could be a case of theoretical rationality as *a prediction*. However, predictions are based on expertise not authority, and therefore in principle, they could be revoked by conflicting expertise (Van Leeuwen 2007, 104). Hence, I did not consider there to be enough expertise or prior knowledge[7] to classify the example clearly in this category.

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[7] Not in a similar way as in Van Leeuwen's example based on a mother's experience on children crying (2007, 104).

6.2 Legitimation strategies used by Trump

This section presents the analysis of Trump's statement on the PA withdrawal. All examples in this section are from Trump (2017a). In order to save space, I will not mark this reference in connection with each example. Examples for almost every main legitimation strategy in the typology could be found in the data, however, there were no cases of altruism.

The strategy of *authorization* is very predominant in Trump's statements. There are examples of both *personal* and *impersonal authority*. Even though they stem the authority from different sources, the authorization cases all work together to form a strong looking legitimation for Trump administration's withdrawal decision.

> (60) <u>As President, I can put</u> no other consideration before <u>the wellbeing of American citizens</u>.
> (61) <u>I was elected</u> to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris. <u>I promised I would exit or renegotiate</u> any deal which fails to serve <u>America's interests</u>.
> (62) <u>Believe me</u>, we have massive <u>legal liability</u> if we stay in.
> (63) <u>As President</u>, <u>I have one obligation</u>, and that obligation is to <u>the American people</u>.

Like Obama, Trump uses *personal authority* and his own position as the POTUS to legitimate the withdrawal. Examples 60-63 depict this legitimation strategy. The mere fact that Trump is the POTUS is thought to give more weight to his words. In addition, he refers to the promises he has made and to the obligations he has as president. It appears that for Trump, the we-group (self-group, Us) is clearly defined as the US and its people. In the examples above, it can be seen how Trump aims to legitimate his decision by showing the decision (withdrawing from the PA) as his presidential duty to protect Americans. To strengthen this impact further, Trump employs the phrase *believe me* on multiple occasions (see example 62) throughout the statement. The phrase is used in order to form a closer connection and trust between the speaker and the audience. Trump aims to convince the audience that he is right, that this is the solution, because he (as the POTUS) is saying so. See also examples 64 and 75 below for other cases of *believe me*.

> (64) Compliance with the terms of the Paris Accord and the onerous energy restrictions it has placed on the United States <u>could cost</u> America as much as <u>2.7 million lost jobs</u> by 2025 <u>according to the National Economic Research Associates</u>. This includes <u>440,000 fewer manufacturing jobs</u> – not what we need – <u>believe me</u>, this

is not what we need… <u>According to this same study</u>, by 2040, compliance with the commitments put into place by the previous administration <u>would cut</u> production for the following sectors: paper down 12 percent; cement down <u>23 percent</u>; iron and steel down <u>38 percent</u>; coal – and I happen to love the coal miners – down <u>86 percent</u>; natural gas down <u>31 percent</u>. The cost to the economy at this time <u>would be</u> close to <u>$3 trillion</u> in lost GDP and <u>6.5 million</u> industrial jobs, while households <u>would have $7,000</u> less income and; in many cases, much worse than that.

Trump uses *expert authority* in multiple occasions, especially to delegitimate the decision to join the PA. Example 64 demonstrates how he appeals to a study by National Economic Research Associates (NERA), which is a private economic consulting firm, to list what could happen to the US economy, if the country stays in the PA. This theme of national economic interest is visible throughout Trump's statements and expressed by different legitimation strategies. Here, by referring to a study that is supposed to be objective, Trump aims to convey to the audience that also these experts think that the PA would be harmful to the US. Thus, Trump does not rely only on his own authority to explain why the PA is bad but backs up this with expert opinion. The above-mentioned phrase *believe me* is present in example 60 in between the expert authority.

Example 64 is a complex one, since it appears to include multiple legitimation strategies at once. In addition to the already discussed expert authority, there is *hypothetical future* in the form of modal verbs describing what would happen in the future, if the US stays in the PA. I will discuss hypothetical future in Trump's statements later. Thirdly, the example also includes rationalization in the form of the national economic interest.

Last note on example 64: alluding to numbers also plays a significant part in the authorization. According to Van Dijk numbers "indicate precision and exactness" (1988, 84) and thus can make the information appear more factual. It is of an entirely different matter whether these numbers actually are true or false. The NERA report is debatable according to multiple sources due to its sponsors, who are known to include for instance coal companies and a pro-business think-tank. It is not within the scope of this thesis to delve deeper into this issue[8].

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[8] See Holden et. al (2017) for more discussion on misleading information in Trump's statement.

(65) As the Wall Street Journal wrote this morning: "The reality is that withdrawing is in America's economic interest and won't matter much to the climate."

Example 65 is classified as *role model authority*. Van Leeuwen does not specify whether role model authority needs to include *actual humans*. In this study I chose to place under this strategy also those cases where the authorization stems from well-known or well-respected sources that cannot be linked with specific individuals (such as popular newspapers). In example 65, Trump directly quotes the Wall Street Journal, which in 2017 was the leading US newspaper by a circulation of over 1,18 million (Statista 2019). Thus, it can be said that the newspaper has a certain status and recognition among many people and this fact is thought to give additional support to Trump's words. The choice of quoting specifically the Wall Street Journal is noteworthy, since the newspaper is often reluctant to address the impacts of climate change, but by contrast tends to emphasize the negative economic consequences of climate change action (see Feldman, Hart and Milosevic 2017 for further discussion). Here the above-mentioned theme of national economic interest is again present.

(66) There are serious legal and constitutional issues as well. Foreign leaders in Europe, Asia, and across the world should not have more to say with respect to the U.S. economy than our own citizens and their elected representatives. Thus, our withdrawal from the agreement represents a reassertion of America's sovereignty. Our Constitution is unique among all the nations of the world, and it is my highest obligation and greatest honor to protect it.

In addition to personal authority, *impersonal authority* is used in Trump's statements. Example 66 includes a reference to the law and the constitution of the US. The *serious legal and constitutional issues* Trump refers to mean the decision of Obama administration to bypass the Senate in order to adopt the PA (see section 2.2). Trump aims to portray the PA as illegal, meaning it would be only right to withdraw from it. Example 62 above includes another case of legitimation by reference to law (*legal liability*). Also the personal authority in example 66 (*my highest obligation and greatest honor*) is similar to the cases of personal authority as POTUS presented in the beginning of this section.

In addition to authorization, another common legitimation strategy for Trump is *rationalization*, which refers to reason and common sense (as opposed to moral

evaluation referring more to emotions). Here the theme of national economic interest is again visible.

> (67) …the draconian financial and economic burdens the agreement imposes on our country…
> (68) Not only does this deal subject our citizens to harsh economic restrictions…

Trump delegitimates the PA in multiple occasions by describing its negative impacts to the US economy and thus explaining why it would not be reasonable for the US to stay in the agreement. This is often done with *instrumental rationality* and especially *effect-orientation*. Examples 67 and 68 demonstrate this. The economic effect or outcome of the PA that Trump describes is underlined in both examples. These outcomes are stated as though they are strict facts, without any room for uncertainty. As was explained in the previous section, when analysing instrumental rationality, it is important to note the difference between a legitimation and a purpose. In examples 67 and 68 the moral elements are evaluative words *draconian*, *burdens* and *harsh*.

> (69) …should dispel any doubt as to the real reason why foreign lobbyists wish to keep our magnificent country tied up and bound down by this agreement: It's to give their country an economic edge over the United States.
> (70) The Paris Agreement handicaps the United States economy in order to win praise from the very foreign capitals and global activists that have long sought to gain wealth at our country's expense.

In addition to effect-orientation, the economic rationale is expressed with *goal-orientation*. Examples 69 and 70 show how Trump aims to delegitimate the PA by describing that the motive of the agreement is to provide foreigners an economic advantage over the US. The moral component in these two examples cannot be placed in a specific word, rather the moralization is a larger element in both. In example 69, *to keep our magnificent country tied up and bound down* could be said to be the moral component. In example 70, the moralization comes explicit through words and phrases such as *handicaps, to win praise* and *to gain wealth at our country's expense*.

> (71) This agreement is less about the climate and more about other countries gaining a financial advantage over the United States.

Besides instrumental rationality, Trump also employs *theoretical rationality*. Example 71 is a case of *definition,* in which the PA is defined in a moralized way as a disadvantage

to the US (see the underlined part). This definition then works as the legitimation by justifying why it is not rational to stay in the agreement. There are other similar cases of definition in Trump's statement.

Clear narratives (examples of *mythopoesis*) were not very easy to find in Trump's statement. There are couple excerpts that could be identified as having story-like characteristics.

(72) We have among the most abundant energy reserves on the planet, sufficient to lift millions of America's poorest workers out of poverty. Yet, under this agreement, we are effectively putting these reserves under lock and key, taking away the great wealth of our nation — it's great wealth, it's phenomenal wealth; not so long ago, we had no idea we had such wealth — and leaving millions and millions of families trapped in poverty and joblessness.

(73) One by one, <u>we are keeping the promises I made to the American people during my campaign for President</u> –- whether it's cutting job-killing regulations; appointing and confirming a tremendous Supreme Court justice; putting in place tough new ethics rules; achieving a record reduction in illegal immigration on our southern border; or bringing jobs, plants, and factories back into the United States at numbers which no one until this point thought even possible. And <u>believe me,</u> we've just begun. The fruits of our labor will be seen very shortly even more so.

Example 72 is a *cautionary tale* describing what happens, if the US stays in the PA: a lot of people would suffer from poverty and joblessness. Example 73 on the contrary is a *moral tale* showing what good has already been done and how withdrawing from the PA would be another step in fulfilling the line of *promises made*. Personal authority as explained in the beginning of this analysis section is also present in example 73: *believe me*.

There are multiple cases of *hypothetical future* in Trump's statement. These are sometimes within other strategies, as was the case in example 64 above. Trump employs hypothetical future to delegitimate the PA, as can be seen in examples 74-76.

(74) <u>Staying in the agreement could also pose serious obstacles for the United States</u> as we begin the process of unlocking the restrictions on America's abundant energy reserves, which we have started very strongly. It would once have been unthinkable that an international agreement could prevent the United States from conducting its own domestic economic affairs, but <u>this is the new reality we face if we do not leave the agreement or if we do not negotiate a far better deal</u>.

(75) The risks grow as historically these agreements only tend to become more and more ambitious over time. In other words, the Paris framework is <u>a starting point</u> — as bad as it is — not an end point. And exiting the agreement protects the United States from <u>future</u> intrusions on the United States' sovereignty and massive <u>future</u> legal liability.

(76) At 1 percent growth, renewable sources of energy can meet some of our domestic demand, but at 3 or 4 percent growth, which I expect, <u>we need all forms of available American energy</u>, <u>or our country will be at grave risk</u> of brownouts and blackouts, our businesses <u>will come</u> to a halt in many cases, and the American family <u>will suffer</u> the consequences in the form of lost jobs and a very diminished quality of life.

Example 74 has a clear conditional structure including *could* and *if*, while in example 75 there is no conditional structure, but the possible *future* is still present. Example 76 then has a higher degree of certainty than in example 76, since the modal verb *will* is used and there is no *if*.

When it comes to the strategy of *moral evaluation*, a clear theme of (un)fairness can be seen in Trump's statement. In multiple occasions Trump depicts the PA as unfair to the US and placing the US at a disadvantage, especially economically, compared to other countries. There are multiple cases, in which Trump explicitly uses *evaluative words*, which examples below demonstrate.

(77) But the bottom line is that the Paris Accord is <u>very unfair</u>, at the highest level, to the United States.

(78) …to either negotiate our way back into Paris, under the terms that are <u>fair</u> to the United States and its workers, or to negotiate a new deal that <u>protects</u> our country and its taxpayers.

(79) I will work to ensure that America remains the world's leader on environmental issues, but under a framework that is <u>fair</u> and where the <u>burdens</u> and <u>responsibilities</u> are equally shared among the many nations all around the world.

(80) No <u>responsible</u> leader can put the workers – and the people – of their country at this <u>debilitating and tremendous disadvantage</u>.

Here I have also included some nouns and verbs in addition to adjectives, since these appear to contribute to the moral evaluation. In example 77, the adjective *unfair* is used to moralize the PA negatively and hence to delegitimate the decision to join it. In examples 78 and 79 then, the adjective *fair* denotes possible new terms or a new agreement that could replace the PA. *Protects*, *burdens* and *responsibilities* all build up the moralized image of an unfair situation that needs to be changed. In example 80 Trump

refers to himself as a *responsible* leader who has to protect his people from a *disadvantage*, which is evaluated with strong adjectives *debilitating* and *tremendous.*

(81) China will be allowed to build hundreds of additional coal plants. So we can't build the plants, but they can, according to this agreement. India will be allowed to double its coal production by 2020. Think of it: India can double their coal production. We're supposed to get rid of ours. Even Europe is allowed to continue construction of coal plants.

(82) The fact that the Paris deal hamstrings the United States, while empowering some of the world's top polluting countries…

(83) As someone who cares deeply about the environment, which I do, I cannot in good conscience support a deal that punishes the United States — which is what it does -– the world's leader in environmental protection, while imposing no meaningful obligations on the world's leading polluters.

The theme of unfairness is also expressed more implicitly through *analogies*, in which the unfair situation of the US in compared to others in order to delegitimate the PA. In example 81 the others are China and India, while in examples 82 and 83 the others are more widely world's leading polluters. Interestingly, Trump seem to avoid portraying the US among those leading polluting countries, which it is (see section 2.2 for data). Instead of mentioning this, Trump only describes the US *the world's leader in environmental protection*.

(84) At what point does America get demeaned? At what point do they start laughing at us as a country? We want fair treatment for its citizens, and we want fair treatment for our taxpayers. We don't want other leaders and other countries laughing at us anymore. And they won't be. They won't be.

(85) It is time to put Youngstown, Ohio, Detroit, Michigan, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania – along with many, many other locations within our great country – before Paris, France.

The third subcategory of moral evaluation, *abstraction*, is also present in Trump's statement. In example 84 the PA is described in a very abstract way as an action causing the world to laugh at the US. If the US withdraws from the agreement, the laugher stops. Example 85 then the withdrawal action is expressed as putting the countries own cities in front Paris, the symbolic centre of the agreement.

Overall, Trump mostly uses authorization, hypothetical future and rationalization followed closely by moral evaluation. No single strategy stands out as a dominating one. Interestingly, no cases of altruism could be found in Trump's statement. This means that

it is the only main strategy of legitimation not present. The tone of Trump's statement is more negative than positive. Out of the 27 examples in this section most are delegitimations explaining why the PA is bad and what negative consequences there are. The legitimation examples justify why the US is leaving the agreement in a more positive tone. These are cases of personal authority (as in presidential duty or obligation), mythopoesis (moral tale) and moral evaluation.

As was the case with Obama, some of the examples from Trump's statement are not straightforward. For instance, as we saw with example 64, more than one strategy can be identified in a case of legitimation. In addition, it is also necessary to mention some ambiguous cases from Trump's statement. These were not easy to classify into a specific category.

> (86) We will be environmentally friendly, but we're not going to put our businesses out of work and we're not going to lose our jobs. We're going to grow; we're going to grow rapidly.

Example 86 is a challenging one. In the first sentence, Trump aims to delegitimate the PA, describing how staying in it would put businesses and jobs in danger. In the second sentence he then legitimates the withdrawal with the prospect of growth that would follow. Example 86 is similar to example 59, an ambiguous case from Obama, in that this could also be theoretical rationality as a prediction, but I do not consider there to be enough expertise (over authority) to clearly place the case in this category. Example 86 might also be classified as moral evaluation as an analogy, in which the delegitimation of the first sentence contrasts with the legitimation of the second sentence. In addition, example 86 includes elements of hypothetical future in that Trump is referring to what would or would not happen in different situations.

> (87) The Paris Accord would undermine our economy, hamstring our workers, weaken our sovereignty, impose unacceptable legal risks, and put us at a permanent disadvantage to the other countries of the world.

Another ambiguous case, example 87 contains elements of multiple legitimation strategies. The modal verb *would* indicates some hypothetical future. References to economy and jobs relate to rationalization and the economic rationale, while references to sovereignty and legal risks relate to impersonal authority. Lastly, the theme of

unfairness is also present. Hence, it is not possible to categorize the example into one specific strategy. I would need to go to a deeper level and analyse the case almost word-to-word, but since I have not done that with other examples, I decided not to do it with this one.

I have now analysed the data from both presidents, Barack Obama and Donald Trump. I presented the presidents' uses of the legitimation strategies and provided some ambiguous cases for both. The comparison of the two will follow in the next section. I will also relate the results within the larger socio-political context and discuss how well the legitimation strategy typology worked in the current study.

7 Discussion

The present study aimed to find out how two US presidents from two different administrations and parties justified their decisions to either join or withdraw from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The US is a superpower in the world politics, a great emitter of CO_2 and as a wealthy country potentially a major financial contributor. Therefore, the perspectives of the US leadership on climate change could have a larger influence for the rest of the world. That's why it was important to study the presidents' use of legitimation strategies. Furthermore, no previous studies on this topic were found, hence the current study filled a research gap.

The following research questions were laid out in the beginning of this thesis:
1. What discursive (de)legitimation strategies presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump use to justify the decision to join the Paris Agreement and to withdraw from it?
2. How the presidents' uses of the strategies differ from or resemble each other?
3. How the used strategies relate to the larger socio-political context, and especially to the two different US political parties and administrations in terms of their respective climate related policies?

In addition to the set research questions, this study aimed to test how well the legitimation strategies framework fits with a study of this kind. The framework of legitimation strategies has not been previously applied in the way that this study has. No prior research on legitimation with this data could be found, and therefore this study filled an interesting research gap in here as well. In order to better examine how the framework fitted with the topic and data of this study, I provided examples from Van Leeuwen and Reyes in the theoretical part. This made it easier to compare my examples to those. I will return to this issue after first discussing the research questions.

To answer the first research question, I analysed presidential statements from both Obama and Trump as discussed in the previous section. The section presented both presidents' use of the legitimation strategies according to the typology of this study. Examples of all main legitimation strategies were found in Obama's statements, and for Trump, examples of all other categories except for altruism were found. Obama mostly used legitimations

for the PA, while Trump employed mostly delegitimations against the PA. This result is not very surprising, since Obama's aim is to convince the audience why the PA is necessary, and hence providing reasons for the decision made more sense. Obama aims to legitimate why the PA is good and why it is necessary to be part of it. The opposite choice would be to highlight more the negative implications of not joining the agreement, but Obama chooses to focus on the positive side. On the contrary, Trump aims to justify why the US should leave the agreement and providing reasons *against* instead of *for* the PA fits better with this objective. Trump focuses mostly on the negative impacts of the US staying in the agreement instead of describing what good will happen if the US leaves the PA. In order to answer the two other questions in detail, I will now compare the legitimation use of both presidents.

Firstly, there is a difference of amount with the use of *authorization*. For Obama, the strategy is not very common and he uses only personal authority, whereas Trump employs the strategy often, as both personal and impersonal authority. With personal authority, both presidents use self-reference (their own institutional position as the POTUS) to legitimate the decision (examples 27 and 60-63). Interestingly, Obama and Trump use the verb *believe* very differently: for Obama it is he who does the action (*I believe*), while Trump is urging the audience to do the action (*believe me*). In addition, both presidents refer to other persons (or entities mirrored as persons) to gain authorization. With impersonal authority, Trump refers to the legal challenges of the US adopting the PA (example 66), while Obama does not mention the bypassing of the Senate at all (see section 2.2). As was mentioned in section 2.2, Republicans criticised the adoption procedure of the PA, and this might be the reason why Obama does not want to draw attention to the issue.

What was surprising is that Trump did not use the legal aspect (bypassing the Senate) as legitimation as much as I initially thought. This could be due to the fact that most of the audience, both Americans and the international audience, were not aware of the specifics of adopting the PA and hence did not know about the legal aspects. By not focusing on this, Trump is able to turn the attention to other issues that would generate more emotions and the wanted response in the audience, such as economic matters or a threat in the future. Related to authorization and economic issues, Trump also uses numbers to make the information he conveys seem more truthful. However, as was mentioned in section

6.2, the expert information Trump is quoting is debatable. On contrary, Obama does not refer to numbers in his statements.

With the use of *mythopoesis*, storytelling, there is also a clear difference between the two presidents. Obama employs narratives multiple times, but in Trump's statement these, especially explicit ones, are not common. However, both presidents use the strategy in a similar way, albeit with different motives. Both have a cautionary tale describing what will happen if the action the president is aiming to justify is not accomplished (examples 33 and 69). In addition, both use a moral tale to tell what positive actions have already been done and how the current action would continue in this line. For both presidents, the decisions to either join the PA or withdraw from it are a continuum of past policies. For Obama, joining the PA would continue in the path of other previous acts done to tackle climate change and decrease emissions (example 33). Throughout his statements, Obama describes how climate action has been a key priority for his administration from the beginning of the presidency; hence, the PA is the natural next step for him. As came clear in section 3.2, the Obama administration did issue multiple climate change related policies. For Trump, withdrawing from the PA would mark another action promised during his presidential campaign (example 73). Since the beginning of the presidency in January 2017 Trump administration has aimed to rollback Obama era climate policies in favour of the fossil fuel industry[9], and the PA represents one of these actions.

A notable difference concerns the strategy of *altruism*. While Obama uses this very often, the strategy is completely absent from Trump's statement. As with the other strategies, Obama employs altruism mainly to legitimate, to describe the positive impacts of the PA for the next generations as opposed to focusing on what bad will happen if the PA is not successful. In his statements, Obama builds an image of the PA being the hope for the future generations (examples 36-40). For Trump, altruism is not present. He describes how the PA would be harmful for the US, his self-group, but does not mention how the action of withdrawing might be beneficial for others (outside the US). Trump only focuses on describing what good his action will bring to *us* (Americans). This line of thought

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[9] For example to replace the CPP with the Affordable Clean Energy Rule (see section 3.2)

follows other policies the Trump administration is driving[10] and especially the viewpoint of climate change policies being a hindrance to the domestic economy.

As for *hypothetical future*, this strategy is more common for Trump than for Obama. Both presidents employ the strategy, but Trump's use is more frequent. All the examples of this strategy from Trump are delegitimations portraying a threatening future that would happen if the US stays in the agreement. In contrast, Obama uses hypothetical future mostly to legitimate the PA by describing what would happen if it were accomplished. Only one of the hypothetical future examples from Obama is a delegitimation (example 32). This adds to the overall positive tone of Obama's statements, since the negative future implications of not doing the action (joining and accomplishing the PA) are not highlighted but rather the beneficial impacts of doing it.

Both presidents use *rationalization* quite often, but for Trump the use is more evident. For both, instrumental rationality is more common than theoretical rationality, of which not many cases could be identified and therefore the subcategory is not fundamental to this discussion. With instrumental rationality, the presidents refer to very different goals, uses and effects of the action in question. Trump aims to rationalize the withdrawal with economic reasons (examples 67 and 68), while Obama's goals, uses and effects have more to do with climate and environmental related reasons (examples 51 and 54). As was explained in section 4.5, previous studies have found that economic rationale as a legitimation is often used to justify certain decisions and actions. For instance, Kekki (2018) examined legitimation in news media in relation to Chinese foreign direct investments in Africa and found that rationalizations based on the economic effects were very common. There are no clear examples from Obama with economic rationale, but, in example 33 (a case of mythopoesis) he mentions how climate actions issued by his administration have contributed to the creation of new jobs. With this he does not refer directly to the PA, and for this reason I have not classified it as a rationalization. Nevertheless, I wanted to note that there are some more implicit hints from Obama that relate to economic reasons.

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[10] For instance trade and foreign policies (Seligman 2018)

The strategy of *moral evaluation* is also quite common in both president's use. Cases of all three subcategories can be found in the statements: both use evaluative words, analogies and abstraction to (de)legitimate the respective action. However, the moral values or emotions Obama and Trump use differ from each other. Obama aims to inflict the feelings of common purpose, pride and hope, whereas Trump aims to employ the value of (un)fairness to create a certain response from the audience. Also Vaara (2014, 511-512) found delegitimations by (un)fairness frequent in his study on the Eurozone crisis in Finland. These often related to the Us/Them polarization, which is also apparent in the cases of (un)fairness in Trump's statement.

Interesting here is that Trump mostly bases his claims of (un)fairness to arguments that are untrue or at least very unlikely to happen. In example 81, Trump compares the US to China and India, two countries, which according to Trump are more advantaged due to the PA. The countries have different NDCs due to their different national situations (see section 2.1). Therefore, it is not justified for Trump to claim that the US is at a disadvantage when the nation is responsible for more per capita emissions than India or China, or since the US is a more developed nation according to Human Development Index ranking (Rajamani 2017). This twisting of information happens with rationalization as well. For instance, Trump's use of the word *restrictions* (example 68) does not hold true, since the PA does not inflict any kind of restrictions for the signatories. The PA is based on NDCs and there is no obligation for the countries to actually achieve these (see section 2.1).

All in all, the differences between the two presidents' use of the legitimation strategies are more evident than the similarities. Obama relies more on legitimation and portraying the PA and its importance positively instead of using delegitimation and highlighting what bad consequences there would be, if the US does not join the agreement. Obama mostly uses altruism, mythopoesis and moral evaluation with rationalization closely behind to legitimate the PA and its importance. In contrast, Trump relies more on delegitimation describing what bad consequences there would be, if the US stays in the PA. Thus, instead of using legitimation and highlighting what good would come out of the withdrawal, Trump mainly focuses on the negative aspects of staying. He employs mostly the strategies of authorization, hypothetical future and rationalization as well as moral evaluation. The absence of altruism in Trump's statement is not surprising

considering how Trump is favouring unilateralism and placing the US interests first ("America First") in many other policy areas such as trade and foreign policy (Seligman 2018).

The findings indicate a correlation with the overall viewpoints of the main political parties. Obama's key message throughout the statements is in line with the Democratic Party's commitment to fight against climate change. Also Trump's stance is in line with GOP in seeing climate change related policies a hindrance to the US economy (see section 3). This aligns with Pavone's conclusion that Trump's decision to withdraw from the PA is a continuum of other Republican policies (2018, 39). If a different Republican candidate would have been elected as President, the results might have been the same. For instance, Kemp predicted this by declaring how "any future Republican president is likely to repeal such an agreement" (2017, 88). However, as the survey results in section 3.1 indicate, not all Republicans view climate change and humans' role in causing it the same way. This reflects Van Boven, Ehret and Sherman's (2018, 497; see section 3.1) conclusion that there is a "tendency to place party over policy" in the US climate politics.

I will now come back to the other aim of the present study, testing how this kind of topic and data fits with the typology of legitimation strategies. The framework proved useful, however, it was occasionally challenging to place a case of legitimation to one specific category, and this then resulted in an overlap in the analysis. Especially recognizing and interpreting examples of moral evaluation and rationalization proved to be difficult at times. These two strategies cannot always be pinpointed to a specific word or phrase, which made the identification challenges. In addition, Van Leeuwen's examples of the strategies (see section 4.3) did not provide great assistance, since they centre around a completely different topic, and thus I could not use them as reference as such. In some cases of moral evaluation and rationalization, I was able to categorize a legitimation into a main strategy, but not clearly into any subcategory. By contrast, especially cases of authorization, altruism and hypothetical future were easier to identify.

As was mentioned in section 4.5, Saarinen (2013) has also tested Van Leeuwen's legitimation theory in her thesis and found that it did not work as well with her material as with the original. Saarinen (2013, 64) notes on the success of her study:

> "Because there were so many songs which could not be categorized in a meaningful way into any of the four main strategies or their subcategories, the conclusion is either that a new category or subcategory ought to be developed, or that the strategies of the de/legitimation function best with a different thematic or corpus."

This is similar to what I might have concluded, had I also employed only Van Leeuwen's strategies. In that case, there would have been more ambiguous cases, which I could not have been able to place clearly in one category. However, I ended up using a combined typology of legitimation strategies by Van Leeuwen and Reyes, which provided more comprehensive findings. I initially tried applying only Van Leeuwen's strategies (just like Saarinen), but this turned out unsatisfactory. Therefore, I opted for additional categories from Reyes. This combination proved successful and generated better results than applying strategies from only one researcher. By using only Van Leeuwen's work, there would have been a danger of trying to place a case of legitimation to any of the four categories, even though it might not have fit well. By contrast, with additional categories from Reyes, cases of altruism and hypothetical future were easier to identify. Though, I have to note that hypothetical future could be placed under mythopoesis as "alternative future projections" (terminology used by Vaara 2014, 512) or as mythopoetic past or future temporalization (used by Bogain 2017, 493). However, this might exclude some cases of hypothetical future since not all have story-like features.

Based on my experience with this study, I must conclude that the most fruitful results might have resulted had I approached the data without any prior legitimation strategy typology and examined what legitimation patterns emerged from it, and then formed my own classification. I see some of Van Leeuwen's subcategories too rigid and narrow, and in the end would have preferred to classify the strategies on a higher level or in combination with others. As was mentioned above, especially cases of moral evaluation and rationalization were at times difficult to classify to specific subcategory. Hence, there is room for further development on and application of discursive legitimation. Some research has already been conducted. For instance, in their study on discursive legitimation strategies used by the Portuguese government, Fonseca and Ferreira (2015) did not use any ready-made classifications but formed their own. Bogain (2017) also used Van Leeuwen's categories in her study, however, she did not employ them rigorously but rather applied them to her own data. For instance, she analysed mythopoesis as part of

moral evaluation, since she considered this to work better in her study (Bogain 2017, 490).

As with many classifications, there is a danger with too narrow categories that something is missed or misinterpreted in the analysis. I aimed to overcome this with the combination of categories from two different researchers. I have also presented ambiguous cases (see examples 58, 59, 86 and 87) to indicate that not all legitimations are easy to classify into one category. However, in order to examine what kind of legitimation strategies the presidents use, a classification of some sort is needed, and for this I consider the typology of the present study a suitable one albeit with certain limitations.

In addition, one must be careful not to over-simplify and over-interpret the results. The amount of data was not extensive. However, all possible data was included in the study (see section 5.1). Also, there was an imbalance of data from Obama (61,3 %) and Trump (38,7 %), which is important to keep in mind. However, I aimed to overcome this by not focusing on the total amount of each strategy in the statements of each president. Rather, I have focused on comparing what were the overall patterns of each president's use of the legitimation strategies.

The results of the study apply for this data and should not be used to generalize how Obama and Trump legitimate their other actions. It is possible that they employ the strategies similarly in other presidential statements, and future research could delve into this. Even though I have been rigorous in the analysis, there is a possibility to interpret the data in another way. For instance, as a non-American, my interpretation may differ from a one conducted by an American.

8 Conclusion

This thesis set out to examine how two US presidents (Barack Obama and Donald Trump) from two different political parties aimed to (de)legitimate their respective decisions regarding the Paris Agreement on Climate Change – either to join the agreement or to withdraw from it. The US under Obama administration first adopted the climate agreement at COP21 in 2015. However, Trump administration announced its intention to withdraw from the agreement in 2017.

In the study, the two presidents' uses of different legitimation strategies were compared to see how they differed from or resembled each other. The study also aimed to examine how the used strategies related to a broader context. In addition, this thesis set out to test how well the typology of legitimation strategies would work with the data and topic of this study. The legitimation strategy framework had not been applied with a similar topic in any prior research, and hence this provided an interesting research gap.

In order to do all this, I combined legitimation strategies identified by two researchers, Van Leeuwen (2007 and 2008) and Reyes (2011) to form a typology of strategies. This theoretical framework was then used to analyse the data, five presidential statements, through a method of close reading. The method enabled a detailed analysis of the data as regards to the legitimation strategies and their comparison.

The study found that in order to legitimate the PA and its importance, Obama employed mostly altruism, mythopoesis and moral evaluation followed by the strategy of rationalization. According to the analysis, Trump, on the other hand, employed mostly authorization, hypothetical future and rationalization as well as moral evaluation. Examples of all the legitimation strategies were found in Obama's statements, and all except cases of altruism were found in Trump's statement. This was an interesting difference between the two presidents.

The comparison revealed that while there were both differences and similarities in the use of the legitimation strategies between the two presidents, the differences were more noteworthy than the similarities. Obama used mostly legitimation and aimed to convey a positive image of the climate agreement and the possible future it would guarantee, while

Trump employed more delegitimation by describing the negative aspects of staying in the agreement. Obama highlighted the environmental benefits and the better prospects of the next generations, whereas Trump focused on the domestic economy implications of the PA. These viewpoints appeared to reflect the positions of the respective political parties, the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. The Democrats mostly consider climate change policy a key priority, and president Obama's actions are in line with this. From the beginning of his time in office, Obama administration aimed to make the US a leader in climate change politics and many of the climate actions it issued, the PA included, reflect this. Similarly, Trump administration's decision to withdraw from the PA follows the general view among Republicans that climate policies are a burden to the economy and should not be a priority.

As for testing the framework, it was concluded that the combination of strategies from Van Leeuwen and Reyes was more successful than applying strategies from only one researcher. This made sure that the classification was not too narrow, and that the cases of legitimation were not forced into a specific category with too weak connections. Using only Van Leeuwen's strategies, which was the first idea, most likely would have made the classification of the strategies more difficult. Therefore, Reyes's contributions were also taken into the typology.

This study has limited amount of data. Further research could examine a larger corpus to see for instance how other politicians of the Democratic and Republicans parties aim to legitimate the decisions related to the PA or broaden the focus to other climate and energy related policies. This kind of research could open up possibilities for more generalizable results and for valuable insights into whether similar legitimation strategies are employed. The topic of the PA is still very current, and time will tell whether the US eventually withdraws from the agreement. These further developments provide room for more research.

The absence of the strategy of altruism from Trump's use could also provide an interesting viewpoint in further research. In addition, future research could test and develop the legitimation strategy framework further, since it clearly provides many fascinating research possibilities. There is a possibility of creating one's own legitimation framework based on earlier work.

The study proved that the typology of legitimation strategies can be applied successfully to a data and topic of this kind, albeit some of the limitations it entails. Further research is still needed to better examine how the framework could work with other topics and data.

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Finnish summary

Ilmastonmuutoksen vaikutukset ovat jo osa ihmisten elämää ympäri maailmaa ja tieteellinen näyttö ihmisten aiheuttamasta ilmaston lämpenemisestä lisääntyy koko ajan (IPCC 2018). Ilmastonmuutos on globaali ongelma, johon vastaamiseksi tarvitaan kansainvälistä yhteistyötä. Tätä varten luotiin ilmastonmuutosta koskeva YK:n puitesopimus (UNFCCC) 1990-luvun alussa. Puitesopimuksen tarkoituksena oli kehittää globaali vastaus ilmastonmuutosta vastaan. UNFCCC aloitti pitkän taipaleen kohti yhteistä kansainvälistä ilmastopolitiikkaa. Lukuisten neuvottelujen jälkeen Pariisin ilmastosopimus saavutettiin joulukuussa 2015 UNFCCC:n osapuolten Pariisin ilmastonmuutoskokouksessa (COP21). Sopimuksen tavoitteena on puuttua ilmaston lämpenemiseen, vauhdittaa ilmastonmuutoksen hillitsemistä ja siihen sopeutumista sekä varmistaa riittävä rahoitus näiden toimien toteuttamiseksi.

Pariisin sopimus ei aseta kaikille yhteisiä sitovia päästövähennystavoitteita, vaan jokainen sopimuksen osapuoli määrittää omat kansalliset velvoitteensa. Näitä on määrä tarkastella viiden vuoden välein. Sopimus velvoittaa mukana olevat valtiot asettamaan ja ylläpitämään tavoitteensa, mutta ei aseta selkeää vaatimusta näiden tavoitteiden lopullisesta vaatimuksesta.

Yhdysvallat on maailmanpolitiikan supervalta sekä maailman toiseksi suurin hiilidioksidipäästöjen aiheuttaja. Yhdysvaltojen mukanaolo Pariisin sopimuksessa nähtiin oleellisena sen onnistumiselle, sillä maan kanta toimisi esimerkkinä muille valtioille. Yhdysvalloissa on vallinnut jo pitkään selkeä jako kahden valtapuolueen välillä siinä, miten puolueet suhtautuvat ilmastonmuutokseen ja erityisesti ihmisten rooliin sen aiheuttajana. Tutkimusten mukaan demokraatit uskovat enemmän ihmisten aiheuttamaan ilmaston lämpenemiseen kuin republikaanit, joilla on tapana priorisoida taloutta ilmaston kustannuksella. Demokraatit ovatkin olleet halukkaampia ajamaan ilmastonmuutokseen liittyvää politiikkaa.

Vuonna 2015 demokraattisen puolueen Barack Obama oli Yhdysvaltojen presidenttinä ja johdatti maan mukaan ilmastosopimukseen. Obaman hallinto oli aktiivisesti mukana Pariisin sopimuksen laatimisessa, sillä sopimus piti muotoilla Yhdysvaltoja varten tietynlaiseksi.

Maan hallintorakenteesta johtuen, kansainvälisten sitovien sopimusten hyväksyntä on usein hankalaa, sillä kaksi kolmasosaa senaatista tulee tukea tätä päätöstä. Pariisin sopimuksen laadinnan aikaan senaatin enemmistö oli vastapuolue republikaanien hallinnassa. Obama ei olisi saanut ehdotustaan läpi, joten hallinto päätti käyttää presidentin toimeenpanovaltaa ohittamalla senaatin. Pariisin sopimus muotoiltiin vähemmän sitovaksi kuin kansainväliset sopimukset yleensä. Näin Obaman hallinnon oli mahdollista hyväksyä se "presidentin sopimuksena" (presidential executive agreement). Yhdysvaltojen hallinto kuitenkin vaihtui, ja vuonna 2017 seuraava presidentti, republikaani Donald Trump, ilmoitti aikeistaan vetää Yhdysvallat pois Pariisin sopimuksesta. Päätöstä oli edeltänyt kiivas spekulointi uuden hallinnon mahdollisista toimista ilmastosopimuksen suhteen.

Tämä Pro Gradu -tutkielma selvitti, kuinka nämä kaksi Yhdysvaltojen presidenttiä kahdesta eri puolueesta yrittävät legitimoida Pariisin ilmastosopimukseen liittyvät päätöksensä. On tärkeää tutkia, kuinka Yhdysvaltojen johto oikeuttaa päätöksiään, sillä maan aseman takia näillä päätöksillä voi olla kauaskantoisia vaikutuksia. Tutkielma pyrki vastaamaan seuraaviin kolmeen tutkimuskysymykseen:

1. Mitä diskursiivisia legitimaatiostrategioita presidentit Barack Obama ja Donald Trump käyttävät oikeuttaakseen päätöksensä joko liittää Yhdysvallat sopimukseen tai vetää maa pois siitä?
2. Kuinka presidenttien strategioiden käyttö eroaa tai muistuttaa toisiaan?
3. Kuinka nämä käytetyt strategiat liittyvät laajempaan sosiopoliittiseen kontekstiin, erityisesti Yhdysvaltojen eri hallintojen ja kahden eri valtapuolueen ilmastopolitiikkaan?

Vastatakseni kahteen ensimmäiseen tutkimuskysymykseen muodostin teoreettisen viitekehyksen kahden eri tutkijan kehittelemistä legitimaatiostrategioista. Van Leeuwenin (2007 ja 2008) mukaan *legitimaatio* vastaa kysymyksiin "miksi meidän pitäisi tehdä tämä" ja "miksi meidän pitäisi tehdä tämä tällä tavoin". Legitimaatiossa ihmiset siis yrittävät oikeuttaa käytöstään argumenteilla, jotka selittävät heidän toimiaan, ideoitaan ja ajatuksiaan. Legitimaation päämääränä on jokin tavoite, joka yleensä tarkoittaa tuen tai hyväksynnän saamista jollekin toimelle tai päätökselle.

Erityisesti poliittisessa diskurssissa legitimaatio on oleellinen ja vahvasti läsnä. Varsinkin tilanteissa, joissa jokin poliittinen päätös tai toimi on ristiriitainen, legitimaatio on tarpeellinen. Esimerkiksi tämän tutkielman aihe, Pariisin ilmastosopimus, oli ristiriitainen Yhdysvalloissa. Republikaanit kritisoivat sopimusta Obaman hallinnon aikana, ja myös Trump kohtasi kritiikkiä sekä ennen vetäytymispäätöstä että sen jälkeen.

Legitimaatio tapahtuu lähinnä diskursiivisesti, joko puheessa tai tekstissä, mutta se on kuitenkin myös riippuvainen kontekstista. Useimmat tutkijat painottavatkin, että legitimaatio liittyy vahvasti yhteiskunnassa vallitseviin yhteisiin normeihin ja arvoihin sekä siihen yhteiseen tietoon, joka yhteiskunnan jäsenillä on. Onkin hyvä pitää mielessä, että kaikki syyt tai perustelut eivät välttämättä aina ole legitimaatioita.

Legitimaatiossa yritetään puolustaa, oikeuttaa ja selittää omia tekoja, jotka pyritään esittämään mahdollisimman positiivisesti. *Delegitimaatio* sen sijaan tarkoittaa vastapuolen tekojen murtamista omien toimien korostamiseksi. Vastapuoli esitetään negatiivisesti ja toimet tai päätökset mahdottomiksi hyväksyä.

Käytän tutkielmassa ensisijaisesti Van Leeuwenin legitimaatiostrategioita. Hän erottelee neljä pääkategoriaa ja näille alakategorioita. Ensimmäinen strategia on *auktoriteettiin vetoaminen*, missä nimenmukaisesti legitimaatio pyritään saamaan vetoamalla johonkin tiettyyn auktoriteettiin. Tämä auktoriteetti voi perustua henkilöön, esimerkiksi hänen statukseensa tai asiantuntijuuteensa. Auktoriteetti voi kuitenkin perustua muuhun kuin henkilöön, esimerkiksi perinteeseen tai lakiin. *Moraalinen arviointi* tai *moraalillistaminen* on toinen Van Leeuwenin strategioista. Moraalinen arviointi perustuu tunteisiin ja arvoihin. Van Leeuwenin alakategorioita ovat arviointi (esimerkiksi adjektiivien tai substantiivien avulla), abstraktio ja analogia eli vertailu. Tätä strategiaa voi olla paikoin vaikeampi tunnistaa kuin auktoriteettia, sillä moraalinen arviointi saattaa sisältyä pitempään diskurssinkatkelmaan yksittäisten sanojen lisäksi.

Van Leeuwenin kolmas strategia on *järkeistäminen*, joka moraalillistamista vastoin perustuu järkeen, ei tunteisiin. Legitimaatio kumpuaa siitä, kuinka hyödyllinen jokin asia on. Järkeistämistä on Van Leeuwenin mielestä kahta erityyppistä: välineellinen ja teoreettinen. Näistä ensimmäinen perustuu legitimaation alaisena olevan asian tavoitteisiin, käyttötarkoituksiin ja vaikutuksiin. Jälkimmäinen taas liittyy asioiden luonnonjärjestykseen.

Näillä kahdella kategorialla on vielä omat alakategoriansa. Viimeinen strategia, jonka Van Leeuwen erittelee, on *mythopoeesi* eli *tarinankerronta*. Tässä legitimaatio pohjaa tarinallisiin elementteihin. Moraalisessa tarinassa hyvät teot palkitaan ja varoittavassa tarinassa yleensä esitetään, mitä tapahtuu, jos legitimoinnin alla olevaa toimintaa ei toteuteta.

Näiden neljän strategian lisäksi otin typologiaani mukaan Reyesin (2011) viisi legitimaatiostrategiaa, jotta kategorisointi ei olisi liian kapea. Ensimmäisessä strategiassa legitimaatio pyritään saamaan *vetoamalla erilaisiin tunteisiin*, esimerkiksi pelkoon. Reyesin toinen strategia on *altruismi*, jossa legitimaation alaisena oleva teko yritetään esittää mahdollisimman hyödyllisenä muille, eikä vain itselle. Kolmas strategia, *hypoteettinen tulevaisuus*, pohjaa siihen, että jokin asia (yleensä uhka) tulevaisuudessa esitetään vaativan välittömiä tekoja tässä hetkessä ja siksi nämä teot ovat oikeutettuja. Reyesin kaksi viimeisintä strategiaa liittyvät vahvasti Van Leeuwenin kategorioihin: *järkeistäminen* ja *vetoaminen asiantuntemukseen tai asiantuntijuuteen*. Nämä ovat lähes samanlaisia kuin aiemmin mainitut Van Leeuwenin järkeistäminen ja auktoriteettiin vetoaminen.

Aiempana mainittujen kolmen tutkimuskysymyksen lisäksi, tutkielman yksi tavoitteista oli myös testata, kuinka hyvin legitimaatiotypologia toimii tutkielman aiheen ja materiaalin kanssa. Van Leeuwenin strategioita on käytetty aiemmin esimerkiksi uutismediadiskurssin tutkimuksessa, mutta aiempia tutkimuksia legitimaatiosta Yhdysvaltojen presidenttien retoriikassa ei juuri löytynyt. Tämä tarjosi siis mielenkiintoisen tutkimusraon.

Tutkielman aineistona oli yhteensä viisi puhetta, joista neljä Obamalta ja yksi Trumpilta. Tämä epätasapaino johtuu siitä, että tutkittavien puheiden tuli liittyä selkeästi ja ainoastaan Pariisin ilmastosopimukseen, jotta presidenttien siihen liittyviä päätöksiä oli mahdollista tutkia kunnolla. Obama oli mukana sopimuksen neuvotteluissa pidemmän aikaa kuin Trump, joten luonnollisesti häneltä löytyi useampi puhe aiheesta. Trumpin ainoa lausunto on kuitenkin huomattavasti pidempi kuin Obaman keskimääräisesti, joten lopulta Obaman puheet edustivat 61,3 prosenttia tutkielman koko materiaalista Trumpin osuuden ollessa 38,7 prosenttia. Analyysin metodina tässä Pro Gradu -tutkielmassa käytettiin lähilukua, sillä pieni määrä materiaali mahdollisti aineiston yksityiskohtaisen tarkastelun.

Analysoin ensin molempien presidenttien legitimaatiostrategioiden käyttöä erikseen. Obaman puheista löytyi esimerkkejä kaikista kategorioista. Analyysin mukaan Obaman

eniten käytetyimmät strategiat olivat erityisesti altruismi, tarinankerronta sekä moraalinen arviointi. Myös järkeistämistä esiintyi suhteellisen usein. Trumpin puheesta taas löytyi esimerkkejä kaikista muista legitimaatiostrategioista paitsi altruismista. Trump käytti analyysin perusteella eniten auktoriteettiin vetoamista, hypoteettista tulevaisuutta sekä järkeistämistä. Seuraavaksi yleisin näiden kolmen strategian jälkeen oli moraalinen arviointi.

Presidenttien vertailu osoitti, että strategioiden käytössä oli joitakin samankaltaisuuksia, esimerkiksi molemmat käyttivät tarinankerrontaa kertomalla varoittavan tarinan siitä, miten käy, jos ehdotettu päätös ei toteudu. Eroavaisuuksia oli kuitenkin enemmän kuin samankaltaisuuksia. Suurin ero oli legitimaation yleisluonteessa. Obama käytti lähinnä positiivista legitimaatiota puolustaakseen ja oikeuttaakseen, miksi Yhdysvaltojen ja muiden valtioiden tulee olla osana Pariisin ilmastosopimusta. Vaihtoehtona Obama olisi voinut keskittyä selittämään mitä kaikkia huonoja puolia olisi, jos Yhdysvallat ei olisi mukana sopimuksessa. Trump sitä vastoin käytti lähinnä delegitimaatiota selittääkseen juuri miksi Yhdysvaltojen ei tulisi olla mukana sopimuksessa. Vaihtoehtona Trump olisi voinut keskittyä esittämään, mitä hyviä puolia Yhdysvaltojen sopimuksesta vetäytymisessä olisi.

Silmiinpistävä ero oli altruismin käytössä. Kuten ylempänä mainittiin, Trumpin puheesta ei löytynyt yhtään esimerkkiä altruismin strategiasta, kun taas Obama vetosi tähän hyvin paljon legitimaatiossaan. Obama yritti esittää Pariisin sopimuksen eräänlaisena tulevien sukupolvien toivona. Myös esimerkiksi auktoriteettiin vetoamisen strategian käytössä oli ero: Trump vetosi eri auktoriteetteihin huomattavasti useammin kuin Obama. Molemmat kuitenkin käyttivät omaa presidentillistä auktoriteettiasemaansa legitimaation pohjana. Yllättävää oli, että Trump vetosi oikeudellisiin perusteluihin odotettua vähemmän. Obama joutui ohittamaan Yhdysvaltojen senaatin saadakseen maan liittymään Pariisin sopimukseen. Oletin tämän perusteella, että Trump olisi käyttänyt tätä korttia enemmän legitimaation perustana.

Toinen strategia, jota Trump käytti useammin kuin Obama, oli hypoteettinen tulevaisuus. Trumpin käytössä tämä strategia esiintyi delegitimaationa uhkaavan tulevaisuuden muodossa, kun taas Obama kuvasi lähinnä, millaisen paremman tulevaisuuden sopimuksen ilmastotavoitteiden onnistuminen toisi.

Molemmat presidentit käyttivät järkeistämistä, erityisesti välineellistä. Obama ja Trump vetosivat kuitenkin hyvin erilaisiin tavoitteisiin, käyttötapoihin ja vaikutuksiin. Obaman puheissa nämä olivat ilmastoon ja ympäristöön liittyviä, kun taas Trumpin puheessa järkeistäminen pohjasi taloudellisiin syihin. Myös moraalisen arvioinnin käyttö oli presidenttien puheissa määrällisesti suhteellisen samanlaista, mutta luonteeltaan erilaista. Obama pyrki vetoamaan ylpeyteen, toivoon ja sopimuksen yhteiseen tarkoitukseen. Trump sen sijaan vetosi epäoikeudenmukaisuuteen: Pariisin sopimus asettaisi Yhdysvallat epäreiluun asemaan muihin valtioihin nähden.

Kaiken kaikkiaan molempien presidenttien legitimaatiot vaikuttavat analyysin perusteella heijastelevan heidän puolueidensa kantoja, mikä ei ollut yllättävä tulos. Trumpin kanta on yhteneväinen republikaanisen puolueen linjan kanssa siinä, että ilmastopolitiikan ei tule mennä kotimaan talouden ja kasvun edelle. Trumpin legitimaatiostrategioiden käyttö näyttää liittyvän vahvasti hänen hallintonsa yleiseen "Yhdysvallat ensin" -politiikkaan. Myös Obaman pääviesti on linjassa demokraattisen puolueen ilmastopolitiikan kanssa.

Tutkielman tavoitteena oli myös selvittää, kuinka hyvin legitimaatiotypologia sopi tämänkaltaisen aiheen ja aineiston tutkimiseen. Viitekehys osoittautui suhteellisen onnistuneeksi, vaikkakin ajoittain haasteelliseksi soveltaa. Aineistosta löytyi esimerkkejä kaikista kategorioista, mutta välillä joitakin legitimaatiotapauksia oli vaikea luokitella selkeästi tiettyyn kategoriaan. Kahden tutkijan strategioiden yhdistäminen kuitenkin vähensi epäselvien tapausten määrää, sillä kategorioita oli neljän sijaan kuusi (ja lisäksi tunteisiin vetoaminen yleiskattavana strategiana). Erityisen hankalaksi osoittautui moraalisen arvioinnin ja järkeistäminen luokittelu alakategorioihin. Haasteista ja rajoituksista huolimatta tämä tutkimus osoitti, että legitimaatioteoriaa on mahdollista soveltaa hyvin erilaiseen aiheeseen.

Legitimaatioteoria ja tutkielman aihe tarjoavat mielenkiintoisia mahdollisuuksia lisätutkimukselle. Aiheen piiristä olisi mahdollista esimerkiksi laajentaa aineiston määrää ja tutkia, kuinka muut Yhdysvaltojen valtapuolueiden jäsenet legitimoivat Pariisin ilmastosopimukseen tai muuhun ilmastopolitiikkaan liittyviä päätöksiä. Legitimaatioteoriaa ja sen tarjoamia mahdollisuuksia tulee tarkastella lisää. Yksi mahdollisuus voisi olla oman legitimaatiokehyksen luominen valmiiden kategorioiden käytön sijaan.