

## Verbal Manipulation in Political Speeches

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**Abstract:** The article presents one of the most important aspects of political speeches – verbal manipulation. The main focus of the article is on the ways of realizing verbal manipulation in speeches of American politicians. The main distinguishing features of manipulation are the hidden nature of influence, desire of author to subordinate the addressee and to change his point of view. Verbal manipulation is presented in political speeches on all linguistic levels. Many examples of it are considered through speeches of one of the most famous American politicians Hilary Clinton.

**Key words:** verbal manipulation, influence, political speech, linguistic level.

In modern scientific literature the problem of speech influence on the minds has not been thoroughly studied. Despite the interest of many researchers, the issue of linguistic aspect of manipulation has been studied rather fragmentarily and needs the academic detailed research. Thus the study of the special aspect of influence in political speeches is very relevant and important today.

Manipulation is linguistic term with great creative potential that is first and foremost topical in the framework of the theory of linguistic manipulation. The wide and somewhat blurred semantic field of the term “manipulation” includes such key elements as “negative” intention of the speaker and covert (not evident for the listener) character of influence. Manipulative functions of political speeches create covert, masked layer of linguistic data that is not easily separated from purely informational content.

The aim of the paper is to study the ways of realizing verbal manipulation in political speeches. The object of research are political speeches. The subject of the study are ways of realizing verbal manipulation in political speeches on different linguistic levels. The data for the research are taken from the texts of speeches of the famous American politician Hilary Clinton [2].

The power of influence of political speeches gives a priority to pragmatic implicit component, because the intention of political speeches is an indirect persuasion, inducement and forming cognitive attitudes as the basis of decision-making. Political speeches have explicit orientation on substantive informing as one of the ways of masking the hidden manipulation through the formation of identity of the recipient and addresser. Political speeches use language manipulation in order to put pressure on the public consciousness. The purpose of these speeches is to make stronger a position of politicians, to recruit supporters and also to neutralize the negative public attitude [4].

Due to the analysis of the manipulation in political speeches we can distinguish verbal and non-verbal manipulation. In this article we analyze speeches of American politicians and how they affect the audience, so we focus on verbal manipulation. Verbal manipulation is considered as "a type of linguistic manipulation used for latent inoculation of certain goals, desires, intentions, relationships or attitudes into the recipient's mind that do not coincide with those available to the recipient in the given moment". In other words, when the hidden opportunities of the language are used by the producer to impose a certain view of reality on the addressee and create the desired attitude to it, to cause necessary emotional reaction, in this case we talk about verbal manipulation [5]. Verbal manipulation tool in a broad sense is any verbal sign which in a certain context can have an impact on the recipient. We use words to influence our communicative partner - consciously or not. In the case of conscious language application we can speak about verbal manipulation in its true meaning as this activity is principally purposeful. "Every language element is a very complex and sensitive instrument which is played on by the person who uses the language. Thus, perception and understanding, created in a receiver's mind, depend on how this fine tool is used by the sender" [3]. Verbal manipulation is realized when the listener cannot see the speaker's covered intentions behind what is actually being said. As one of the key parameters of manipulative utterance is specific intentionality, in order to discriminate manipulation, one has to analyze such parameters as aim of verbal communication, communicative intention, reason, and motive. Manipulation is pragmatic aspect that achieves its goals without evident detection of communicative intention: the speaker wittingly chooses such form of utterance that lacks direct signals of his intentional condition. By increasing the level of inadequate perception of information field, manipulation widens illusionary subjective reality. Manipulation is negative social psychological phenomenon exercising destructive effect upon an individual and the society as a whole [1].

A wide variety of verbal manipulation tools can be realized on different linguistic levels in texts of political speeches. We distinguish main levels: phonetic, lexical, grammatical and syntactic levels.

**On the phonetic level** verbal manipulation is conducted with the help of special audio designing of messages.

**Alliteration** is a fairly common method of phonetic organization of the text. It is considered as a means of additional emotional impact. It is expressed in the repetition of the initial consonants in a series of located stressed words. The speaker focuses on words related to alliteration. They gain some significance in intonation, which helps the politician to capture the listeners' attention to those phrases and ideas that he considers important. In Clinton's speech, alliteration occurs in the following phrases:

*With the bottom 20% of workers **increasing** their **incomes**.*

*...we lost **faster** than **after** a **financial** crash.*

The use of this means of influence creates a common rhythm of the politician's speech. The chosen consonant vocabulary is an emotional amplifier, and can also help the politician to form her personal positive image in the eyes of the people.

**Assonance** is the repetition of identical or similar vowels on a certain passage of speech, usually it can be observed in stressed syllables. In the speech of H. Clinton, this type of phonetic influence is often encountered.

*To be right across the **water** from the **headquarters** of the United Nations...*

*They **shame** and **blame** women.*

Verbal manipulation tools on the phonetic level are used rather often in the speech of politicians. They promote a speech rhythmization, help to make the speech of the politician more clear and pleasant.

**Lexical means** of verbal manipulation are the widest and most often used tools of verbal manipulation. The following lexical-stylistic means are used in Clinton's speech quite often.

**Metaphor and metonymy** are widely used in political speeches, that's why we can find a lot of such means in Clinton's speeches. The aim of using metaphors is to appeal to emotions and to include and affect the audience. Politicians use language to persuade people that their thoughts, aims and ideas are equitable and to make their point clear and vivid to the people [6].

The use of metaphor is one of the most prominent tools for persuasion and an instrument for propaganda in political rhetorical language that is why it is widely-used nowadays.

*A proud mother. A proud Democrat. A proud American. And a proud supporter of Barack Obama.*

*... legacy **lifted** up a nation and inspired presidents.*

*... many children **climb out** of poverty.*

The use of metaphor is one of the ways to attract attention and emotional influence on the electorate. Metaphoricity is one of the most important signs of agitation and political speech. Concerning H. Clinton, she often resorts to the use of this tool in her speech.

**Epithets** are figurative definitions, usually expressed by an adjective or adverb, which give an additional characteristic of an object or phenomenon. This tool is often used in the speech of H. Clinton, making her thoughts more clear and understandable to the public. They also decorate her speech on a lexical level.

*long-term investments; a **wider and constantly rising** standard of living; **the toughest** problems; **brave** firefighters; **broader** horizons.*

**Reiteration.** In political speeches reiterations are one of the most common use means. They are used to implement the function of highlighting the main idea or idea in speech. Repeating the main concepts, the addressee pay attention to the most important things in political speeches. We can meet a lot of reiterations in speeches of Hilary Clinton.

*it is wonderful **to be here**... **To be here** in New York;*

***with** my family, **with** so many friends;*

**Comparisons** make political speeches more expressive. They help drawing attention of electorate to certain facts or thoughts of the speaker.

***I may not be the youngest candidate in this race. But I will be the youngest woman President in the history of the United States!***

***Like any family, our American family...***

On a **grammatical level** the verbal manipulation tools use the features of morphology and syntax: the choice of grammatical forms, elliptic language, figures of speech, peculiarities of communicative types of sentences, etc.

As far as morphological means are concerned, the first feature is the use of passive voice rather than active one. Its principle is similar to lexical nominalization as a verbal manipulation tool – to leave the responsible person "behind the scenes" [3].

One more syntactic peculiarity of the political discourse is usage of the Passive Voice:

*We, the citizens of America, **are now joined** in a great national effort to rebuild our country and restore its promise for all of our people.*

***We are protected and we will always be protected.***

Thus, the politician strengthens the idea that all these actions are happening without him, without percipients, they are happening by themselves due to some power beyond.

Different **syntactic means** are another resource of manipulative potentiality of political speeches.

**Parallelism** is a connection of two or more written sentences (or their parts) by strict correspondence of their structure both grammatical and semantic. Parallel constructions are also used in political texts. Their function is to emphasize the most significant parts of text.

*All this we can do. All this we will do.*

**Anaphor.** This device of speech influence is considered as the most traditional way to make the audience draw attention on the most important facts. It happens because of the repetition of components in a strong position – at the beginning of syntagmas. Clinton influences on electorate with the help of repetition of the main and key component of a statement which includes her main ideas.

*I believe you should have the right to earn paid sick days. I believe you should receive your work schedule with... I believe you should look forward to retirement with confidence, not anxiety...*

**Epiphora.** This concept includes repetition of several words at the end of phrases. H. Clinton used this way of influence quite often in her speeches.

« ...*must be built by all and shared by all*».

« ...*built by every American, for every American*».

**Polysyndeton.** Use of this way of influence provides speech influence due to repetition of a part of a statement which unites the text as a syntactic element, and shows a complex of the ideas and integrity of all author's speech.

*...but we are at our best when we pick each other up, when we have each other's back. Like any family, our American family is strongest when we cherish what we have in common...*

These grammatical, lexical and stylistic devices have impact on the language, making it more vivid and clear. Unless the audience can be emotionally involved, messages will seem inert and devoid of feeling, and will usually go unheard or unheeded. That is why it is important to know and use properly all these devices to create the effect of sincerity and frankness, which is so important for a politician. There are a lot of scientific researches concerning this problem. But the conclusion is that the skills of using special linguistic devices in public political speaking is of immediate interest today because every day a lot of politicians deliver speeches and the main purpose of them is to persuade the audience.

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