

The Use of Expressive Means in Political Speeches

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Abstract: Politicians all over the world embellish their language in a unique way to give extra effect and force to their message in order to achieve their objective of winning more votes. The paper is concerned with linguostylistic features in public speech. On the basis of the examples given in the paper Trumps speech is analyzed in terms of using expressive means. It is shown that the American president widely uses various linguostylistic means such as epithet, hyperbole, metaphor, anaphora, and his style of speech can be characterized as informal. As a result both his linguistic image and his speech become more understandable to the average American citizen.

Key words: political speech, expressive means, political campaign, language, public speaking.

A political speech is made in order to promote a particular political viewpoint. Political speeches aim at convincing the listener by arguments, to persuade him or her on an emotional level or even manipulate him. Often there is a mixture of these. You need to have some socio-political background knowledge, e.g. about political events or ideas like the American Dream in order to be able to analyze the speech properly. The language use in political speech has certain characteristic features that help differentiate it from other varieties of language use. The language of political campaign embodied in propaganda and rhetoric can be characterized as a persuasive language. In their attempt to present themselves as the only capable persons for the office, politicians use various stylistic devices and expressive means to bring over the electorate.

Being a paradigmatic sample of public speaking, political speeches are often recommended as the best means of practicing this skill. Speaking in public can be pretty hard for many people, no matter how smart they are. This prevents them from realizing their potential. The scientists in the field of persuasive speaking (L. Bitzer, C. Jaffe, M. McKay, P. Zielinski [1; 2; 3; 4]) give advice that the speeches of famous political leaders be studied if a person wants to form this ability.

Varied linguistic means can make political speeches persuasive and expressive. All these devices are subdivided into stylistic, lexical and grammatical ones. The aim of the present article is to discuss the expressive means as the most frequently used.

The language of political campaign as a variation of a language use is intended to bring the needed information to the electorate in order to convince it or appeal to it [5]. The electorate, in its turn, tends to fluctuate since any specific political matter can be approached from various sides. The more convincing your language is, the bigger segment of the electorate you attract. The language of politics is a “lexicon of conflict and drama, of ridicules, and reproach, pleading

and persuasion, colour and bite permeated. A language designed to valour men, destroy some and change the mind of others.”

Politics is one aspect of human activities that uses by far the greatest amount of propaganda. Propaganda can be honest or dishonest, while its purpose might be to elicit help or tarnish image. Propaganda is a fundamental instrument of the language of politics. It is used in moulding and changing opinion.

The language of political campaign differs from other forms of language use. This distinctive attribute is rhetoric. It is referred to promises, repetition, figurative expressions, etc. The politicians want to cajole the electorate. This is the reason why they embellish their words. In fact, the success of a politician depends, to a large extent, on his rhetorical style in a truly democratic situation. The language of any political campaign includes some forms of promises given to the electorate.

Public speaking is a persuasive speaking that takes a less objective view on some topic and invites the audience to take some action in support of that view. This type of public speaking requires that the selection of words and sentences be very accurate.

In the present paper we dwell upon the most frequently used (stylistic) devices in certain political speeches. Our aim is to study the effect they create. Some political speeches of Donald Trump, the president of the USA, are used for the detailed analysis.

Every speech being very specific, such stylistic devices as anaphora, quotations, repetition, enumeration, metaphor, etc. are used in all of the speeches. Any speaker has to use these expressive means to make the message persuasive and comprehensible to the listener.

In his speeches Donald Trump replaces the pronouns *I, me, mine* with *we, us, ours*. In one single text he uses the word “*we*” more than thirty times in one form or another. Trump chooses the use of “*we*” as the main element of the rhetorical reception of anaphora. He considers that it is very important to use repetition of a word or words since it helps to tie the clauses together. He uses “*we will*” to link to a number of common goals that have to be achieved. See:

“We will embark upon a project of national growth and renewal. I will harness the creative talents of our people and we will call upon the best and brightest to leverage their tremendous talent for the benefit of all. It is going to happen. We have a great economic plan. We will double our growth and have the strongest economy anywhere in the world. At the same time we will get along with all other nations willing to get along with us... We will have great relationships. We expect to have great, great relationships.”

The repeated use of “*we will*” contributes to the achieving of two goals. The first goal is to depart from the usual language of the election campaign, with its focus on the “*I*” – “*I*” and an attempt to expand it to an inclusive “*we*” – “*we*”, the American nation. Secondly, Trump

focuses on the work that requires common efforts. He aims to say that he is able to offer the nation some hope for positive changes in the future. Here anaphora helps him to turn his speech into a more powerful and impressive one, making his idea sound more effective and memorable.

The aim of using metaphors in political speeches is to bring out emotions and to affect and persuade the audience [6]. Being an instrument of propaganda in political rhetorical language, it is widely used in modern media.

Here you can see an example of the use of metaphor in one of Donald Trump's declarations. See: *"It's time to break through the television noise the entrenched interests"*. In this declaration Donald Trump refers to the fact that it's time to get down to action, and not just gab the people's interests on the TV screens. According to the English Oxford Living Dictionary, *"to break through"* means "to make or force a way through (a barrier); to achieve success in a particular area". The lexeme *"entrenched"*, according to the Cambridge English Online Dictionary, has the meaning "established firmly so that it can not be changed", i.e. something that can not be changed. Most likely, we are talking about the fact that the interests of citizens have become so pronounced that they can not be changed, no matter what they say in the media space. In this context *"television noise"* means something insignificant, monotonous and intrusive. This statement is used in its figurative meaning. In the case under consideration we can observe the transfer of the value from concrete to abstract (the noise of television broadcasts → the imposition of information).

One of the Trump's favorite epithets in American English is an adjective *"smart"*. Donald Trump ubiquitously uses this adjective to describe the political actions of other countries, which, in his opinion, are more effective than the US policy. See:

"China is smart, America is ruined."

"Their leaders are much smarter than our leaders."

"We have been disrespected, mocked, and ripped off for many, many years by people who were smarter, shrewder, tougher."

"Our leaders are stupid, our politicians are stupid, and the Mexican government is much smarter, much sharper, much more cunning."

The adjective "smart" has synonyms of other epithets *shrewd, sharp, tough, cunning*, forming in the last two sentences a special stylistic device – synonymous condensation (*"smarter, shrewder, tougher, much smarter, fly sharper, much more cunning"*). Possessing positive connotations in this context, these epithets are contrasted with the adjective *"stupid"*, which creates a sort of opposition "we are against them". The current US politicians and their actions are considered "stupid" and lead to the collapse of the country (*"America is ruined"*). From Trump's statements it follows that America has a number of ill-wishers who *"disrespect"*,

“mock”, “rip off” and “ruin” the country. All these verbs have a pronounced negative connotation, drawing a grim picture of the current state of affairs in the United States. Against this background, Trump is a “good politician” who will be able to adjust the situation in the country, withdraw it from the economic crisis and defend the rights of Americans.

Another favorite form of expressive means of the incumbent US president is hyperbole. He himself admits this in his book “The Art of the Deal” (1987): “...a little hyperbole never hurts. People want to believe that something is the biggest and the greatest and the most spectacular. I call it truthful hyperbole. It’s an innocent form of exaggeration – and a very effective form of promotion” [7]. Trump refers to the exaggeration as a “truthful hyperbole”, however, according to some critics, an obvious oxymoron is hidden here, because by definition hyperbole is “an untruthful exaggeration”. For example, Trump actively uses the hyperbole when it comes to building a wall between the US and Mexico, global warming or the eradication of radical Islamic terrorism.

“The dishonest media does not report that any money spent on building the Great Wall (for sake of speed), will be paid back by Mexico later!”

“The concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive.”

“We will reinforce old alliances and form new ones, and unite the civilized world against radical Islamic terrorism, which we will eradicate completely from the face of the Earth.”

It is worth noting that the wall is hyperbolically called “the Great Wall” by analogy with the Great Wall of China, “global warming was created by and for the Chinese”, and Islamic terrorism must be “eradicated completely from the face of the Earth”.

In conclusion it is necessary to note that a lot of stylistic devices and expressive means (gradation, metaphor, metonymy, anaphora, hyperbole, etc.) are used in political public speaking, for the main purpose of any political speech is to persuade the audience. Using expressive means in public political speaking is a very interesting and important topic today. This skill must be trained and developed. Expressive means contribute greatly to the speech, making it more vivid and clear. If the audience is not emotionally involved, a speech will be tedious and unexciting. That is why it is important to know the expressive means of the language and to use them properly to create the effect of sincerity and frankness, which is so important for the self-image of a politician.

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