RESEARCH NOTES

Manipulative Speech Techniques in Political Discourse

Técnicas manipuladoras del habla en el discurso político

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Summary

The article is devoted to the analysis of manipulative strategies and tactics in political discourse. The analysis is based on Donald Trump's speech, which was delivered at the UN General Assembly in 2018. The paper studies the manipulative speech strategies and tactics used by the politician, their characteristic features, linguistic peculiarities of their implementation and the aims of their use. Political discourse defines the necessity to use certain speech strategies and tactics in political speeches, which altogether are aimed at creating an image of a politician and manipulating the consciousness of listeners. Implementation of such strategies and tactics in a proper way can evoke the desired emotional response and have an effect on choices people make. Every politician is unique in using their own strategies and tactics, but, in most cases, such tactics are more or less similar as their target is to create a positive image and make people follow or believe this or that politician.

Keywords: linguistics, communication, political discourse, speech manipulation, speech strategies, speech tactics.

Resumen

El artículo está dedicado al análisis de estrategias y tácticas manipuladoras en el discurso político. El análisis se basa en el discurso de Donald Trump, que fue pronunciado en la Asamblea General de la ONU en 2018. El documento estudia las estrategias y tácticas manipuladoras del discurso utilizadas por el político, sus rasgos característicos, las peculiaridades lingüísticas de su implementación y los objetivos de su uso. El discurso político define la necesidad de utilizar ciertas estrategias y tácticas de discurso en los discursos políticos, que en conjunto tienen como objetivo crear una imagen de un político y manipular la conciencia de los oyentes. La implementación de tales estrategias y tácticas de manera adecuada puede evocar la respuesta emocional deseada y tener un efecto en las decisiones que toman las personas. Cada político es único en el uso de sus propias estrategias y tácticas, pero, en la mayoría de los casos, tales tácticas son más o menos similares, ya que su objetivo es crear una imagen positiva y hacer que la gente siga o crea a este o aquel político.

Palabras clave: lingüística, comunicación, discurso político, manipulación del habla, estrategias del habla, tácticas del habla.

Introduction

Political discourse is being paid much attention to by present day linguistics. It is connected with the growing importance of political relationships in the world. In many cases the way a political speech is organized can determine the outcomes of elections, negotiations and solutions of some conflicts. Political speeches contain certain speech tactics and techniques whose aim is to manipulate those who perceive this or that speech. Such manipulative techniques are extensively used in every political speech so that the politician delivering the speech can achieve their aims: either to win elections or to persuade their listeners to follow them, etc. We believe it is of great importance to analyze and classify such techniques.

Our paper is devoted to the speech delivered by Donald Trump at the UN General Assembly in 2018. We define the term 'political discourse/ and describe the manipulative techniques used by Donald Trump in this particular speech.

Methods

A combination of all speech acts that are used in political situations, speeches of politicians and political discussions can be defined as political discourse (Baranov & Kazakevich, 1991).

The main aim of political communication is the attempt to get the power. In general, political discourse manipulates the public consciousness by making people believe that politically 'correct' actions are necessary in a certain situation (Gimadeeva et al., 2019).

According to O.L. Mikhaleva, communication strategy is the plan of realization of communicative intentions that take into account objective and subjective factors and conditions of the communication act and which, in their turn, predetermine not only the text structure but also the usage of certain language means (Mihaleva, 2009).

As S. G. Mamaiko sees it, to be able to define the strategy of speech manipulation, it is important to take into account not only the aim of communication, but also the set of tactics that are used as means of its realization (Parshina, 2005).

So, a tactic is a particular stage of a communicative strategy realization which is defied by the intention of the speaker and is expressed with the whole set of techniques and language means (Mihaleva, 2009).

Results and Discussion

In our research we analyze the speech of Donald Trump which was delivered 25 September 2018 at the UN General Assembly (https://www.vox.com).

Donald John Trump is an American businessman, a member of the Republican Party. In November 2016 Trump was elected the 45th president of the USA.

At present, there are several speech strategy classifications that help a speaker manipulate their listeners. In our paper we take into account the classifications suggested by O.L. Mikhaleva and O.N. Parshina. According to O.L. Mikhaleva's classification, there is a descending strategy, an ascending strategy and theatrical strategy (Mamayko, 2019).

Together with O.N. Parshina, we outline the following manipulative strategies and tactics. The first one is the self-presentation strategy (creating the image of a politician). This strategy includes the tactics of making oneself equal to others (showing that one belongs to this or that social or political group); and the tactics of opposition (dividing the society into 'friends' and 'foes').
1.   There are two strategies of persuasion.
1)   Argumentative strategy (persuading a recipient with the help of arguments). This sub strategy is comprised of several tactics which are as follows:
a)   tactics of proven assessment (when a speaker tries to assess something and prove their point);
b)   tactics of contrast analysis (comparing and contrasting facts, events, results);
c)   tactics of showing a perspective (forecasting development of events, commenting on future goals);
d)   illustration tactics (giving examples, facts).
2)   Propagation strategy (the strategy of influencing people's behavior by making them do something, make a choice), which includes the tactics of promise and the tactics of appeal.
2.   The next strategy is fighting for power and it includes the following sub strategies:
1)   Strategy of discrediting and attack (undermining your opponent's authority, humiliation, spoiling the reputation, etc.);
2)   Manipulative strategy (different dishonest tricks that make the recipient believe the speaker). Here such techniques as giving unfeasible promises, unproven facts, and overstatements are used as well as manipulative tactics among which there is politeness tactics, the tactics of distracting the recipient's attention from the actual problem and overestimation tactics.
3.   One more strategy is the strategy of self-defense (persuading that different accusations do not hold true). Here we can identify such tactics as the tactics of explanation, tactics

of disagreement and tactics of criticism.

4. Apart from all the strategies mentioned above, we can also outline the strategies of keeping the power, as well as information-interpretation strategy (informing citizens about the most important events of social, economic and political life). In this case, O. N. Parshina speaks about such tactics as acceptance of a problem; emphasizing the positive aspect of things; tactics of clarifying information; tactics of giving comments; tactics of looking at a problem from a different angle and tactics of defining a solution to the problem.

5. It is also important to mention such a strategy as shaping the emotional state of the audience. The functional tactics here are the unification tactics (uniting all people as representatives of one nation), addressing the recipients' emotions, tactics of considering the audience's values (system of values).

Among this range of tactics, there are those that refer to many strategies, such tactics are highlighting (emphasizing some particular moment in a speaker's speech) and the tactics of distancing 'friends' – our people – from 'foes' – all the other people (Parshina, 2005).

The speech delivered by Donald Trump at the UN General assembly is devoted to the USA's successes during the period of Trump's presidency. Trump underlines economy growth, the decreased level of unemployment, effective security measures and so on. Donald Trump compares the period of his presidency with his predecessors' and insists that he has managed to achieve much more during the same period. A lot of attention is paid to the relationship between the USA and such countries as North Korea, Iran, Israel, Mexico, China and the countries of the European Union. Donald Trump also mentions the situation in the world trade market insisting that it should be 'fairer', which means that he wants it to be changed.

Donald Trump uses the strategy of self-representation by saying, "In less than two years, my administration has accomplished more than almost any administration in the history of our country". Trump overstates the real situation to make a positive image of himself as a successful president: "…the United States is stronger, safer, and a richer country than it was when I assumed office less than two years ago".

A positive image of the USA is also crated thanks to the appearance of the following words: *stronger, safer, richer, the world's largest giver,* "The United States is the world's largest giver in the world, by far, of foreign aid".

Donald Trump assures the listeners that the country has become richer and stronger only thanks to him in the period of just two years. This way Donald Trump uses the tactics of proven assessment: he refers to some facts (that are difficult to check whether they are true or not).

At the same time, Donald Trump all the time underlines that he is one of citizens of his country. This self-representation tactic is realized many times throughout the whole speech, "We are standing up for America and for the American people"; "As for Americans, we know what kind of future we want for ourselves. We know what kind of a nation America must always be". Trump uses the pronoun 'we' making everyone feel that he belongs with the country and its people, he is part of all that and that all Americans govern the country, not only he alone does, "America is governed by Americans".

Trump very often uses the descending strategy by implementing the threatening tactic. When referring to North Korea, the politician thanks Kim Chen Yin for being brave enough and having a dialogue with the USA, but he still pronounces the phrase, "The sanctions will stay in place until denuclearization occurs". This threat is supposed to make North Korea move forward to denuclearization (Gimadeeva et al., 2019).

One more case of threat is realized in the phrase directed at Human Rights Council. Trump accuses them of not paying attention to human rights violation and threatens not to be part of the council unless they behave the way he expects, "…we withdrew from the Human Rights Council,

and we will not return until real reform is enacted". By using this ultimatum, Trump wants the Council's policy changed and his reform to be accepted.

The accusation tactic is also extensively used throughout the whole speech. Trump described his attitude to Iran leaders in the following way: "Iran's leaders sow chaos, death, and destruction. They do not respect their neighbors or borders, or the sovereign rights of nations. Instead, Iran's leaders plunder the nation's resources to enrich themselves and to spread mayhem across the Middle East and far beyond". Trump does not hesitate to use negative vocabulary for implementing this tactic (chaos, deaths, destructions, etc.).

Apart from this directed accusation, Trump uses the tactic of impersonal accusation (when nobody responsible is mentioned). Speaking about political agreements between Iran and a group of other countries, Trump says, "The dictatorship used the funds to build nuclear-capable missiles, increase internal repression, finance terrorism, and fund havoc and slaughter in Syria and Yemen". In this case US president does not name any exact country; he uses the word 'dictatorship'.

Trump also uses the theatrical strategy when he urges other nations to support the people of Iran, "We ask all nations to isolate Iran's regime as long as its aggression continues. And we ask all nations to support Iran's people as they struggle to reclaim their religious and righteous destiny". The same strategy is implemented when Trump speaks about the situation in Venezuela, "… we ask the nations gathered here to join us in calling for the restoration of democracy in Venezuela". This urging strategy is mostly realised by using the clichéd phrase *we ask*: *we ask to isolate, to support, to join* (Garaeva et al., 2018).

Summary

Donald Trump finishes his speech by implementing the tactic of cooperation (a way of addressing the listener by creating an image that has certain ideas and values), "In America, we believe in the majesty of freedom and the dignity of the individual. We believe in self-government and the rule of law. And we prize the culture that sustains our liberty…"

Donald Trump uses a lot of positively-coloured words while speaking about America and American people and associates himself with being American. While speaking about other countries, Donald Trump underlines their lower status compared to that of the USA and their wrong decisions and actions.

Conclusion

Overall, having analyzed the speech delivered by Donald Trump at UN General Assembly in 2018, we can make a conclusion that Trump uses the manipulative techniques: self-representation, accusation, threatening, cooperation, propagation, urging, etc. Trump associates himself with all Americans and makes listeners believe that he is a very successful president by giving so-called proofs which are actually difficult to verify. By delivering such a speech, Trump creates the image of his country and himself and contrasts it with other countries that, in his view, do wrong things. The vocabulary that Trump uses to describe the USA is positive, whereas the vocabulary for other countries is mostly negative and derogatory.

Acknowledgements

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