

LINGUISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF POLITICAL
DISCOURSE

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Annotation. *This article is devoted to the identification and analysis of the linguistic features of political discourse, in which the linguistic foundations of the mechanisms of influence on social consciousness through political discourse are revealed. The relevance of the study is explained by the need to deeply study the activation of political communication in the context of globalization and the role of language as an ideological, pragmatic and manipulative tool. The analysis revealed the role of lexical, morphological, syntactic, and pragmatic units characteristic of political discourse—particularly metaphors, modality, presupposition, implicature, and deictic expressions—in achieving communicative effectiveness.*

Key words: *metaphor, political discourse, linguistic characteristics, ideology, pragmatics, manipulation, lexical features, syntactic features, modality, presupposition, implicature, deixis, communicative effectiveness, social influence.*

Introduction. In today's globalized and information flow accelerated society, political discourse is manifested as one of the most active and influential communicative forms of social communication. Political discourse is widely used in public administration, electoral processes, media, and the international arena, and plays an important role in shaping the political views

and attitudes of society members. Therefore, the study of political discourse from the point of view of linguistics is relevant not only in theory, but also in practical terms.

Language is the most fundamental instrument of politics, through which power conveys its ideas and views to the public, reinforcing certain social positions or, conversely, restricting alternative thought. Words and phrases used in political speech are chosen purposefully, rather than randomly, and serve to influence the audience's consciousness. Metaphors, evaluative lexicon, modal units, as well as pragmatic devices expressing implicit meanings are important in revealing the relationships of political power and influence.

This article aims to identify the linguistic features of political discourse and to analyze them consistently. Within the scope of our study, lexical and syntactic devices characteristic of political speech are considered, as well as pragmalinguistic units, and their communicative tasks are covered. Contemporary political discourse is chosen as the object of research, while the subject includes linguistic units used in political discourse and their characteristics related to affectivity.

Discussion. Political discourse is the most important means of shaping power, ideology and communication through language among citizens in society. Today, political discourse is widely spread through public administration, legislative activities, election campaigns, mass information channels and media sphere, which has become one of the primary tools in defining the social consciousness, emotions and political positions of society. Therefore, the study of political discourse from the point of view of linguistics, pragmatics and cognitive analysis — not only theoretical, but also practical, is of great importance. Language as a tool of political power and influence, not

only a means of communication, but also an ideological and ideological construction. Through political discourse, leaders convey their ideas and goals to audiences, attempting to shape reactions in society such as support or rejection. In this process, language units — words, metaphors, modal constructions, evaluative phrases, pragmatic strategies — are consciously selected and used in accordance with the goal.

One of the most important layers of political discourse is its lexical system, and it is through word choice that political ideas, ideological positions and power relations are expressed at the language level. The lexical units used in political speech are characterized by a neutral nature, in most cases ideological, evaluative and emotional connotations. The lexical analysis of political discourse therefore allows uncover its hidden layers of meaning. (Fairclough, 1995).

First of all, ideologically loaded words and terms are of particular importance in political discourse. Such units serve to strengthen certain political views and ideological concepts. For example, words such as democracy, reform, freedom, security, stability are interpreted differently in different political contexts with the aim of evoking positive associations in the audience. **As van Dijk notes**, ideological lexicon shape political identity by creating a “we” versus “they” opposition (van Dijk, 2006). In political speech, evaluative and emotional lexicon also serve an important communicative function. Evaluative adjectives and verbs (successful, dangerous, unfair, threatening) influence the feelings of the listener or reader, forming a positive or negative attitude towards a particular political phenomenon or person. This type of vocabulary reinforces the persuasive nature of political discourse and indirectly influences the decision-making process (Chilton, 2004). In addition,

metaphor and metonymy are widely used in political discourse, serving to express complex political processes through simple and understandable images. According to Lakoff and Johnson, metaphors are not only a stylistic device, but also an important mechanism of human cognition, and play a crucial role in the perception of political realism (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). For example, metaphors such as politics — struggle, State — family, economic crisis — disease strengthen the content of political phenomena emotionally and cognitively. Metonymy, on the other hand (the White House decided, Parliament declared), allows for a concise expression of the relationship between institutions and individuals.

Similarly, euphemisms and dysphemisms are actively used in political discourse. When euphemisms are used to mitigate negative or unfavorable situations (military operation instead of war, economic slowdown instead of crisis), dysphemisms, on the contrary, serve to express the activity of the opposing side in a negative and drastic way. These lexical tools play an important role in the purposeful reinterpretation of political reality and the management of public opinion (Allan & Burridge, 2006). In general, the lexical features of political discourse suggest that language is not a neutral tool, but a means of social influence and ideological manipulation. The conscious selection of lexical units ensures the effectiveness of political communication, forming certain visions and assessment criteria in the minds of the audience.

The impact of political discourse is not limited to lexical choice, but also emerges through the conscious and strategic application of morphological and syntactic devices. Grammatical units play an important role in how to present information in political speech, to whom responsibility is assigned or to hide it, as well as in the formation of a sense of trust and commitment in the audience.

In this regard, analyzing political discourse at the morphological and syntactic levels allows for a deeper understanding of its pragmatic nature (Fairclough, 2003).

Complex syntactic constructions are also frequent in political discourse. Long, multi- clause sentences serve to demonstrate the complexity of political issues, to create the image of formality and competence. Such syntactic structures sometimes allow information to be conveyed indirectly, obscuring the underlying content with secondary details. As a result, the audience tends to accept the text on a ready-made basis, rather than critically analyzing it (Wodak, 2011).

The morphological and syntactic features of political discourse suggest that grammatical forms are not a simple structural tool, but a powerful pragmatic and ideological mechanism. Through Modal units, pronouns, complex syntax, and passive constructions, political discourse influences social consciousness and shapes specific political perceptions in the audience.

To fully understand political discourse, it is necessary to take into account not only its linguistic structure, but also its communicative purpose, that is, what is being done through speech. Pragmalinguistics reveals the connection of political speech with hidden meanings, mechanisms of influence and social context. In political discourse, the speaker does not merely does not provide information, but assures, commands, justifies, or shifts responsibility on other subjects (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). In political speech, illocution and perlocution acts are of particular importance. The illocutionary act refers to the speaker's oratory intention (to promise, to call, to warn), and the perlocutionary act refers to the realistic effect of that speech on the audience (to inspire confidence, to create fear, to foster support). For example, a political

leader's statement such as "we will solve this problem" may be a promise in appearance, but perlocutionarily, it is intended to create a sense of confidence and hope in the audience. Thus, political discourse gains the power that motivates social action (Chilton, 2004).

Also in political discourse, presupposition and implicature are important pragmatic devices. Through presupposition, some information is presented as unquestionable facts. For example, in the sentence "the welfare of the people has increased as a result of our reforms", the existence and positivity of reforms are indicated as a pre-accepted fact. Implicature, on the other hand, forms meanings that are not said directly but are understood through context. These pragmatic mechanisms function effectively in political discourse to limit critical thinking and to guide the audience toward a predetermined conclusion (Levinson, 1983).

Deixis is also one of the important tools that ensure that political discourse depends on context. The Deixis of personality (us, they), the Deixis of space and time (here, now, today) Connect political speech with a concrete social situation, evoking a sense of closeness and relevance in the audience. In particular, the frequent use of the "we" form creates symbolic solidarity between the political leader and the people, while "they" allow responsibility to be imposed on external forces (van Dijk, 2006).

In general, the pragmalinguistic and discursive characteristics of political discourse point to speech as a complex communicative phenomenon focused on social influence rather than just the sum of linguistic units. This approach allows us to unravel hidden meanings in political speech and understand its real impact on the consciousness of society.

The effectiveness of political discourse is often increased through its stylistic and rhetorical means. Language means play an important role in influencing the audience's consciousness, evoking emotion, and shaping social attitudes. Rhetorical strategies manifest political discourse not only as a means of information, but also as a weapon of persuasion and manipulation (Chilton, 2004). First of all, stylistic devices such as repetition, parallelism and antithesis serve to emphasize the main points in political discourse and make a lasting impression on the audience. For example, through repetition, the political leader strengthens the main idea: "We are together, we are strong, we will prevail". Antithesis "We defend freedom, and they promote oppression" acts as a counterweight and self, evoking positive and negative associations in the audience (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Irony, hyperbole, and evaluative metaphors are used in political discourse to create a critical and emotional effect. Irony softens criticism through humor in the audience or dismisses the opponent, while hyperbole exacerbates the emotional reaction in the audience by escalating the event. For example, the phrase "their policies have undermined the entire economic system" evokes a sense of anxiety and warning in the audience (Allan & Burridge, 2006).

The use of rhetorical and stylistic devices in political language is indispensable for a communicatively successful speech, for persuading the audience, for forming political positions. When phonetic, lexical and grammatical elements create rhetorical and stylistic unity, political language has a strong social and emotional meaning.

As to the practical use of theoretical political discourse, linguistic, morphological, syntactic, practical and stylistic means of linguistic expression in political discourse are demonstrated in their functionality. Modern political

texts, such as parliamentary speeches, political speeches as part of political campaigns, political protocols and official statements are considered the basis of practical linguistic discourse. For example, modal verbs are often used in announcements (e.g., "We must ...", "We will consider the possibility ...") to signal to the listener the degree of obligation or probability, and to prepare the listener for the decision (Chilton, 2004). Conversely, passive forms of verbs help distance the enactor from actions (e.g., "The law was adopted" gives no indication of who adopted it), as demonstrated by Fairclough (1995).

Analyses of language-in-use reveal that in political discourse the linguistic and pragmalinguistic means of doing politics are used as an integrated whole. More specifically, besides lexical variation and morphological and syntactic variation, stylistic and pragmalinguistic strategies are applied in discourse to influence the audience, to construct a leader and group identity, and to shape political opinion. Thus, theoretical analysis, as well as practical examples, ease achieving a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of political communication.

This study was aimed at a systematic investigation of the linguistic, morphological, syntactic, pragmalinguistic, and stylistic features of political discourse. The findings demonstrate that political speech functions not only as a means of transmitting information, but also as an instrument for persuading the audience, shaping group identity, and managing political views.

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