

GENERAL LEXICAL FEATURES OF POLITICAL SPEECH

Саясий тилдин жалпы лексикалык өзгөчөлүктөрү

Общие лексические особенности политической речи

Annotation: *The article discusses the general lexical features of political speech. The main topics covered in the article are a special political jargon and lexical stylistic devices. There are some examples of political terms and explanation of their meaning and etymology. The second part of the article is devoted to the analysis of the use of stylistic devices in political discourse. Famous speeches of English and American politicians and public figures are used as examples.*

Аннотация: Бул макалада саясий тилдин жалпы лексикалык өзгөчөлүктөрү каралган. Макалада негизги темалар, атап айтканда саясий жаргон жана саясий сөз мүнөздүү стилистикалык лингвистикалык ыкмалары көтөрүлгөн. Саясий терминдердин жана алардын мааниси жана этимологиясы мисал келтирилген. Макаланын экинчи бөлүгү - стилистикалык ыкмалардын саясатчылардын дискурсунда коомдук ишмерлердин жана американын саясатчылары жана коомдук ишмерлерди талдоого арналган.

Аннотация: В статье рассматриваются лексические особенности политической речи. Основными темами, затронутыми в статье, являются особый политический жаргон и лексические стилистические приемы, характерные для политической речи. Приведены примеры политических терминов и объяснен их смысл и этимология. Вторая часть статьи посвящена анализу использования стилистических приемов в политическом дискурсе на примере известных речей английских и американских политиков и общественных деятелей.

Key words: *political speech, political jargon, stylistic devices, anaphora, metaphor, metonymy, analogy*

Урунттуу сөздөр: *саясий тил, саясий жаргон, стилистикалык ыкма, анафора, метафора, метонимия, аналогия*

Ключевые слова: *политическая речь, политический жаргон, стилистические приемы, анафора, метафора, метонимия, аналогия*

Being able to build a strong persuasive speech plays a crucial role in making a good politician. Political rhetoric has been the subject of a number of studies, and all of them conclude that politicians make use of their rhetorical skills to influence peoples' opinions, steer their emotions and subsequently make them do what they want. In this article we analyze the most common features of political speech, namely the use of special political jargon and lexical stylistic devices. Political literature and speech are filled with jargon. As defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary jargon is the technical terminology or characteristic idiom of a special activity or group. Political jargon refers to the words and phrases used by politicians, lobbyists, the media, and other people to talk about political issues in a quicker, coded way. Political jargon is the shared language of catch phrases spoken by those in politics. Following are some examples of political jargon:

Throttlebottom- An innocuously inept and futile person in public office. "They see one set of friends asserting that big business is really with him and the chamber is composed of a lot of little Vice-Presidential Throttlebottoms." (Boston Herald, 9 May 1935);

Blue state - A US state that typically votes Democratic, from a map color commonly used by news organizations on election night to show which states the party carried;

Dog-whistle politics - Subtle references understood by specific audiences, like a whistle that makes a high-frequency sound only dogs can hear;

Free stuff - Republican term of disparagement for the free college education and healthcare proposals by Democratic candidates that would benefit the poor and middle class;

Silent Majority - The mass of Americans whose opinions are not loud and public, but who together have enormous power. Popularized by President Richard Nixon, who claimed that Vietnam War protesters comprised a minority, while a "silent majority" supported the war;

Fence Mending – What politicians do when they visit their electoral districts to explain an unpopular action. The term originated in 1879, when Ohio Senator John Sherman made a trip home that most people considered a political visit. Sherman insisted, however, that he was home "only to repair my fences";

Air war – The battle between candidates to get as much advertising on television and radio as possible. "From 1916 the air war became a seesaw struggle for supremacy." (Sunday Times, 2008).

Battleground state – A large state with an electorate split relatively evenly between Democrats and Republicans, so named because candidates spend a disproportionate amount of time and money campaigning there;

Stylistic devices are widely used in almost any political speech, being a means of rendering a politician's emotions, wit and outlook, making the speech more informative and persuasive. In this part of the article we review most common stylistic devices used in political rhetoric.

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness between them. Its meaning is derived from the Greek noun "metaphorá", which signifies "a transfer". A metaphor thus draws a comparison between two terms, without using the words "as" or "like". The things that are compared with one another are from "different classes of experience", which creates a new understanding through specific use of language. (Burkholder & Henry 2009).

Metaphor is used in all emotionally-colored styles of speech. However, in style of fiction the metaphor always carries original character, whereas in political literature the original metaphors used rather seldom. Nevertheless in advanced clauses of the English and American political discourse, the purpose of which is to assure, to make people believe and to impress the reader, that is to force him to agree with the point of view given in the article, one can often see rather bright and colorful metaphors. For example:

Character assassination – Spreading (usually) manufactured stories about a candidate with the intent to destroy his or her reputation in the eyes of the public;

Dark/black horse – A candidate who is largely ignored by opponents yet makes significant gains. "It may be that, not for the first time, this dark horse entered at the last moment will win the race." (From the Hansard archive). One of the greatest examples of using metaphors in speech is Winston Churchill's "Iron Curtain" Speech.

On March 5, 1946, at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, Winston Churchill delivered one of his most famous speeches. Though he was not the first to use the phrase "iron curtain", this speech brought the phrase into common usage and is thought by some to mark the beginning of the Cold War. "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe."

His use of the term "iron curtain" stuck and since then has taken on a profound symbolic meaning. We should understand one thing: the term itself had been used throughout history in various contexts. But, it was Winston Churchill who coined the term in reference to the Soviet Union and its allies. So what does this metaphor connote? Iron suggests brute strength, and in this context, repression. Churchill wanted to express that people living in Eastern Europe were oppressed and lacked freedom. He regarded "iron curtain" as horrific and a tragedy because he thought it denied people of Eastern Europe basic human liberties.

Another great example of using stylistic devices in political speech is Martin Luther King Jr's "I Have a Dream" speech, the speech delivered during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on August 28, 1963, in which he called for civil and economic rights and an end to racism in the United States. In his speech Martin Luther King used a type of repetition - anaphora.

Anaphora (repeating words at the beginning of neighboring clauses) is a commonly used rhetorical device. Repeating the words twice sets the pattern, and further repetitions emphasize the pattern and increase the rhetorical effect.

"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal. I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today. I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification; one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today. I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the

Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.”

“I have a dream” is repeated in eight successive sentences, and is one of the most often cited examples of anaphora in modern rhetoric. Anaphora appeals to the feelings of an audience. By repeating a word or phrase, readers or listeners start to anticipate the next line. They are drawn into the orator’s words through a sense of participation. Because they know what is coming next, they are more receptive to the emotional resonance the orator is trying to deliver.

Metonymy refers to the use of the name of one thing to represent something related to it (e.g. The White House or The Oval Office - the President or White House staff, Crown - a royal person, America – American Government, American people).

As an example we can take Barack Obama’s speech at the Democratic National Convention on July 27, 2004. “We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the stars and stripes, all of us defending the United States of America. In the end, that’s what this election is about.”

Stars and stripes is a name for the American flag because the fifty stars and thirteen stripes are what distinguishes it from other flags. It is a reference to the Pledge of Allegiance, which is an oath of loyalty to the United States of America that is frequently recited.

As another example we can analyze the following sentence from Barack Obama’s Address to Veterans on August 17, 2009. “But as we protect America, our men and women in uniform must always be treated as what they are: America’s most precious resource... But we know that the sacred trust cannot expire when the uniform comes off.” In the first sentence military people are referred to as “man and women in uniform”. This was a vivid metonymy, since the uniform is a symbol of their identity. “When the uniform comes off refers to when the soldiers return to civilian life.

As was mentioned in the beginning political speech must be persuasive as the speaker wants the audience to understand what is being communicated. When it comes to understanding the power of analogy is hard to overestimate. Analogy is a comparison of two otherwise unlike things based on resemblance of a particular aspect; resemblance in some particulars between things otherwise unlike. There is a plethora of examples of analogy, mostly found in political media.

“Quebec’s path to sovereignty is like a hockey game. The referendum is the end of the third period. Separation is like a major surgery. It's important that the patient is informed by the surgeon and that the surgeon is impartial. The referendum is a way to inform the population. But in this case the surgeons are not impartial and they really want their operation. It's like parents getting a divorce, and maybe the parent you don't like getting custody.”

This analogy was taken from a newspaper article concerning the referendum in 1995 to decide whether Quebec should secede from Canada, and form a separate nation. By the means of these analogies the authors coded their emotional content (positive, negative, or neutral), their position (pro-separation or anti-separation), and the goal of the analogy (whether it was used to support the author's position, or to attack the alternative position). Most of these analogies are to non-political domains, indicating that people construct analogies based on structural, rather than superficial similarities (the most common domains are religion, sports, and family relationships).

Political rhetoric is a vast area of research. Based on our analysis it can be concluded that political rhetoric has a number of peculiar features. In this article we gave a brief overview of the unique political jargon and stylistic devices used in political speech. Both of these features serve to present ideas in vigorous and persuasive discourse, and to communicate speakers’ thoughts and ideas effectively.

Bibliography

1. Adrian Beard, “The Language of Politics”, London:Routledge, 2000.
2. George Orwell, “Politics and the English Language”, journal Horizon, 1946.
3. James C. McCroskey, “An Introduction to Rhetorical Communication; A Western Rhetorical Perspective”, Essex:Pearson Education, Inc., 2006.
4. Jonathan Charteris-Black, “Politicians and Rhetoric: The Persuasive Power of Metaphor”, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
<https://www.merriam-webster.com/>
<https://www.copyblogger.com/persuasive-analogies/>
https://lib.ugent.be/fulltxt/RUG01/002/162/198/RUG01-002162198_2014_0001_AC.pdf
<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/vocabulary-political-words/>

Reviewer: Karaeva Z. K. PhD, professor of International University of Kyrgyzstan.