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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE METASTRATEGY MINUS IN VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY'S SPEECH AT THE MEETING OF THE UKRAINE DEFENSE CONTACT GROUP IN THE RAMSTEIN FORMAT

Summary: The present study is devoted to the linguopragmatic aspect of the modern Ukrainian political discourse, investigation of the main communicative strategies and tactics based on the speech of current President of Ukraine V. Zelensky at the meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group in the Ramstein format. In the institutional political discourse communicative strategies and tactics might be qualified as very powerful manipulative categories. Its identification can only be made by deep analysis of vocabulary, grammar, sentence formation and context of the speaker. The use of strategies and tactics in the institutional political discourse demonstrates how strong the addressee can operate his knowledge, will, and emotions. Manipulative metastrategies and tactics are called to implement and realize the communicative goals and intentions of the speaker. We offer our own classification of manipulative metastrategies and tactics through the framework of cognitive scenarios. All our metastrategies and tactics are implemented to create a positive image of the subject of the speech and a

negative representation of the opponent at the same time. The cognitive scenario represents the communicative situation. The analysed speech of V. Zelensky demonstrates the manipulative metastrategy of minus through combined scenarios. It means that the President tries to show his figure both in a positive self-presentation, a negative representation of the object and a theatrical action. A scenario of the theatrical action is represented by tactics of dramatization. The positive self-presentation is combined with a negative representation of the object. The tactics of irony and sarcasm, offending and warning belong there. In general, Ukrainian presidential style of the speech at the meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group in the Ramstein format is rather emotional than neutral. That is because of the beginning of the war between Israel and Sector Gaza and the future threat of the illusion of World War III.

Keywords: institutional political discourse, presidential discourse, interaction, manipulation, the war in Ukraine and Israel

1. Introduction

Within the frames of the article types of communicative strategies and tactics of the main Ukrainian politician, the President, in the institutional political discourse as dynamic markers of “influence” and “manipulation” have been deeply studied.

The relevance of the research is determined 1) by the need in the investigation of the complicated nature of political discourse, especially presidential one, its impact on other politicians; 2) by lack of the comprehensive studies of the Ukrainian institutional political discourse in cognitive and linguopragmatic aspects.

The purpose of the study is to establish the features of the implementation of communicative strategies and tactics of the President of Ukraine.

Achieving the purpose involves solving **the following tasks**:

- 1) to substantiate the methodology of the institutional political discourse;
- 2) to find out the essential characteristics of presidential discourse, communicative strategies and tactics in the institutional political discourse;
- 3) to develop the author’s model of manipulation based on the classification of communicative strategies and tactics and to show their realization in the political speech of the current President of Ukraine V. Zelensky;
- 4) on the basis of the conducted analysis to make an attempt to characterize communicative strategies and tactics of the current President of Ukraine V. Zelensky.

The material of the paper consists of political speech by the President V. Zelensky at the meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group in the Ramstein format that took place October 11, 2023. This format of the meeting is known as the meeting of Ukraine Defense Contact Group with defence ministers from Western-aligned nations aimed at developing new strategies and initiatives, accelerating the provision of military weapons to Ukraine initiated because of the Russian aggression started in 2021 (Hlushchenko, 2022).

2. Political discourse vs Presidential discourse

Institutional political discourse is a sphere where everything is under the influence and value categories.

«In most cases, an author of an institutional political text is not one person: it is a corporate author because there is an institution of speechwriting. A corporate author possesses psychological and linguistic skills and abilities required for the implementation of linguistic manipulation and is well acquainted with other political process participants, thereby allowing them to influence the target audience». (Golubovska, p. 31).

We understand the institutional political discourse as the discourse of the political institution. This discourse is based on certain standards of the behaviour of politicians (their speech behaviour and communication models), on the one hand. But on the other hand, it expresses the individual characteristics of the politicians, for instance the President or the Deputy President (Golubovska, p. 31).

A. Wiczorek distinguishes the figure of the President as open public speakers who is seen «as individuals wielding a great amount of power to affect reality with their ‘authoritative speech’, which makes him ‘more persuasive, more convincing and more attended to’ in their attempt to convince various audiences – local, national and international alike» (Wiczorek, p. 147).

Presidential speeches can be identified as those materials that manifest public values, cultural and economic orientations and, what is more, the dynamics of the public opinion (Kryvenko, p. 110).

As far as we concerned, the modern presidential discourse is and must be metaphorical and emotional to a certain extent. The world is all under the big changes, so for the Presidents as representatives of their countries it is impossible to claim the neutral position by using neutral vocabulary, structures and forms. It is they who the audience must recall through the times. This point of view we are deeply analysing in the following part.

3. Communicative strategies and tactics

In modern linguistics, communicative strategy is considered as a cognitive process that is transformed at the global level of situational awareness: the speaker must correlate his own communicative goal with specific means of linguistic expression that realize its achievement (Semenyuk, p. 172).

Each strategy involves its own set of tactics, which are defined as speech techniques used to achieve a certain communicative goal (Batsevych, p 120).

We offer our own classification of manipulative metastrategies and tactics through the framework of cognitive scenarios.

All our metastrategies and tactics are implemented either to create a positive image of the subject of the speech, or a negative representation of the opponent, which are often closely interrelated. The cognitive scenario represents the communicative situation.

The initial criterion of such classification (Table 1.) is the mode of application of the manipulative strategy: if it is achieved by logical, rational means of argumentation – such strategy qualifies as a plus. Manipulative metastrategy minus is realized by those tactics which are opposed to the rational proof (Kharytonova, 2018).

Table 1.

Manipulation

Metastrategy plus

- tactics of presenting objective information
- tactics of logical argumentation
- tactics of uniting with the opponent

Metastretagy minus

- tactics of calling for honesty
- tactics of absolution
- tactics of accusation
- tactics of confirmation of one's position
- tactics of offending
- tactics of giving advice
- tactics of warning
- tactics of positive self-presentation
- tactics of dramatization
- tactics of irony and sarcasm
- tactics of distortion of information
- combined tactics

Scenarios:

- positive self-presentation
- theatrical action
- negative representation
- combined scenario

4. Presidential tactics

The analysing speech of V. Zelensky demonstrates the manipulative metastrategy of minus through combined scenarios.

First of all, it is represented by **tactics of dramatization**. The President uses the syntactic anaphora *I know*, which gradually forms the mask of the so-called hero-expert. Only he and only he sees the future ways of ending the war: «*I know that NATO is ready and capable of protecting its members from external aggression. May we never have to experience this in reality. I know what steps can protect Europe and the world from the spread of Russian aggression. And I know what is needed to speed up the just end of this war – let me emphasize: a just end*» (Zelensky 2023).

The use of the intimation technique with the personal pronouns *you, we* in combination with *all* forms a syntactic anaphora, which, in turn, contributes to the implicit illusion of association with the addressee, shaping the tactics of joint reasoning and encouraging decisive actions: «*You all know that Moscow's ambitions have never been limited to Ukraine. And we all want these ambitions to be defeated in Ukraine – as soon as possible, this is the best opportunity – so that we don't have to look for shells and supply tanks to other countries in Europe, Asia or Africa that the Russian dictator may try to turn into ruins or seize into his crazy empire or zone of influence*» (Zelensky 2023). The politician successfully plays with semantic images of negative connotation, going from the micro *Moscow's ambitions, the Russian dictator* to the macro *his crazy empire*, thus predicting the logical consequence of inaction (failure to provide Ukraine with the necessary weapons: tanks, shells) in the context of the countries of Europe, Asia or Africa can be ruins.

V. Zelensky also implements **the tactics of warning** through the accumulation of such a syntactic device as parcellation. In this regard, N. Kondratenko notes that parcellation is «presentation of the statement dismembered, in the form of actualized components of one structural unit aimed at isolating the most important information from the content side» (Kondratenko, p. 320). In the case of the President, parcellation is structurally expressed in the form of one word (sometimes with a rhetorical exclamation aimed at strengthening the effect of emotional affirmation) or a simple sentence connected by a subor-

inating conjunction: «*Terrorists like Putin or Hamas seek to hold free and democratic nations as hostages. And they want power over those who seek freedom. The terrorists will not change. They just must lose. And that means we must win. We do! It requires patience. It requires steady and continuous support. We need to take the right steps. Steps that save lives. For real. Vital steps. And strengthen the defense. Significantly*» (Zelensky 2023). For the speaker, as someone who has been living in the war for almost two years, Putin and Hamas are terrorists. Knowing what can happen, V. Zelensky warns the world about it, focusing on methods of support, steps that can lead to the victory. In this fragment of the speech, the politician resorts to the formation of an antonymous pair “free, democratic nations – hostages”.

The tactic of offending, according to L. Zavalska, is a tactic of discrediting, which is marked by negatively colored vocabulary, words with a negative evaluation, the use of lexemes in a figurative sense with a negative connotation (Zavalska, p. 35). V. Zelensky uses the following tactics with the aim of not simply humiliating the object, but to fully show all its shortcomings and mistakes in actions: «*Russia has lost the initiative for today. We are putting pressure on it. We are! It is Ukrainian courage and your support that determine what is happening on the battlefield and, most importantly, what will happen on the battlefield. And although the occupiers are still trying to storm our positions, although our defense and counteroffensive actions are very difficult – it is still Ukraine, it is our soldiers who determine the course of events. Russia cannot handle this war on its own. You can see it. It needs Iran – Russia cannot succeed without the Shaheds and other help. It needs North Korea. Just imagine – for the first time in its history, Moscow has gone to Pyongyang to bow down. The Russian Black Sea Fleet is escaping our naval drones and missiles*» (Zelensky 2023). The intertwining of two tenses that is a combination of the present and the past forms with a modal verb *can*, a negative participle *cannot* and positive forms – Present Perfect *has lost, has gone* and Present Continuous *are still trying, cannot handle, cannot succeed, is escaping* – demonstrates a peculiar path of degradation of Russia. The rhetorical exclamation *We are!*, repetition *It is*, and moreover, the imperative mode *Just imagine*, the personification *Moscow has gone, The Russian*

Black Sea Fleet is escaping underline the illusion of the state as world-powerful one.

The tactic of irony and sarcasm acquired an expressive connotation, as evidenced by the rhetorical questions, rhetorical answers, and rhetorical exclamations used. Along with the implicit appeal to be honest, the politician uses the communicative technique of mockery, portraying Russia as 'a terrorist country that has violated the international order and is degrading': «*What is Russia's strength? Let's be honest. Only the fact that they can destroy lives. Russia is not capable of doing anything else. Is it a security donor? No. A supporter of development? No. A political pole? No. A source of economic growth? No. A terrorist? Yes. That is the only thing! That threatens Ukraine and many other nations. We need to get this instrument out of Russia's hands – the instrument of terror*» (Zelensky 2023).

5. Conclusions

The results show that V. Zelensky uses the manipulative metastrategy of minus with the combined scenarios. It means that the President tries to show his figure both in a positive self-presentation, a negative representation of the object and a theatrical action. A scenario of the theatrical action is represented by tactics of dramatization. The positive self-presentation is combined with a negative representation of the object. The tactics of irony and sarcasm, offending and warning belong there. In general, Ukrainian presidential style of the speech at the meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group in the Ramstein format is rather emotional than neutral. That is because of the beginning of the war between Israel and Sector Gaza and the future threat of the illusion of World War III.

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