

METAPHOR AS A POTENT MEANS IN REALIZATION OF TACTIC OF INSULT

(on the basis of English political discourse)

Ємельянова О.В., Філоненко А.С. «Метафора як вагомий засіб реалізації тактики образи (на основі англomовного політичного дискурсу)»

У статті розглядається метафора як функціональна одиниця політичного дискурсу, за допомогою якої вдало реалізується тактика образи. З'ясовано, що когнітивна метафора, виступаючи в ролі інструмента усвідомлення, моделювання та оцінки політичних процесів, активно використовується політичними діячами і, безпосередньо, президентом США Бараком Обамою задля впливу на асоціативне мислення реципієнта та актуалізації тактики вербальної образи. Тактика вербальної образи націлена на завдання шкоди репутації політика і вирішальним чином впливає на ставлення суспільства до нього.

Ключові слова: *політичний дискурс, когнітивна метафора, мовленнєва поведінка, стратегія конфронтації, вербальна агресія, тактика образи.*

Ємельянова Е.В., Филоненко А.С. «Метафора как весомое средство реализации тактики оскорбления (на основе англоязычного политического дискурса)».

В статье рассматривается метафора как функциональная единица политического дискурса, с помощью которой успешно реализуется тактика оскорбления. Выяснено, что когнитивная метафора, выступая в роли инструмента для понимания, моделирования и оценки политических процессов, активно используется политическими деятелями и, непосредственно, президентом США Бараком Обамой с целью влияния на ассоциативное мышление реципиентов и актуализации тактики

вербального оскорбления. Тактика вербального оскорбления нацелена на причинение вреда репутации политика и решающим образом влияет на отношение общества к нему.

Ключевые слова: *политический дискурс, когнитивная метафора, языковое поведение, стратегия конфронтации, вербальная агрессия, тактика оскорбления.*

Yemelyanova O.V., Filonenko A.S. "Metaphor as a potent means in realization of tactic of insult (on the basis of English political discourse)".

The article deals with the study of a metaphor – a functional element of a political discourse, which is helpful in successful implementation of tactic of insult. It was found out that a cognitive metaphor as an instrument of understanding, modelling and estimating of any political event is widely used by politicians and by Barack Obama in particular, to influence a recipient's associative thinking. Tactic of insult is aimed at destroying a politician's image and it plays a crucial role in forming public attitude to that person.

Key words: *political discourse, cognitive metaphor, linguistic behaviour, confrontational strategy, verbal aggression, tactic of insult.*

The language of political discourse has some peculiarities: mundane lexis is used in political discourse in a different way and it has a specific structure. Political discourse performs such functions as informational, instrumental, prognostic, normative, persuasive and political propaganda. Language of political discourse is enriched with different stylistic devices in order to influence a recipient and to form his or her attitude to any political events. In turn, it makes a recipient (very often unbeknown) take a corresponding decision and actions.

One of the most wide spread figure of speech in this type of discourse is a metaphor, that acts not as a language adornment but as an instrument for understanding, modelling and estimating of political events. It especially concerns cognitive metaphor, which can explain one concept basing on another. These

concepts are called standards and they help us to see one object through another – positively or negatively.

Ancient Greeks began to study the role of metaphor in linguistic activity and the studies in this sphere are still in progress. Such scientists as J. Lakoff, M. Johnson, A. Burkhardt, A. Baranov, Ju. Karaulov, P. Newmark and others are engaged in studying such phenomenon.

Nowadays Barack Obama's public speaking provokes much interest in public. Especially interesting for studying and analysis are metaphors, used by Obama as an effective mean of influence, especially as political insult. The relevance of the topic is stipulated by high interest in language functioning through the prism of human relationship. In such a case metaphor is studied not enough. The objective of the research is analysis metaphors as a means in realization of tactic of insult in Barack Obama's speeches.

The subject area is a metaphor in English political discourse as a political insult. Research materials are metaphors used in Barack Obama's speeches.

A metaphor is defined as a figure of speech which makes an implicit, implied or hidden comparison between two things or objects that are poles apart from each other but have some characteristics common between them [9]. The qualities may be colour, shape, character, move etc. In the process of metaphoric displacement, a subject is changed not an idea. Any quality of an original subject is attached inalterably. "Political" metaphor is any metaphor used in political discourse.

A. Baranov and Ju. Karaulov consider political metaphor as an efficient instrument of verbal influence for the purpose of forming recipient's standpoint (either positive or negative) [1, c. 283].

In modern cognitive linguistics, metaphor is considered to not as a stylistic device, that enriches language and eases the understanding of reality, but as a way of thinking. During communication process metaphor acts as the main mean of influence on a recipient's perceptions, emotions and actions.

Scientists J. Lakoff and M. Johnson consider metaphorical notions closely to human mundane conceptual system. Conceptual system takes the central place in

reality perception process that is why metaphors formed in this system are both evident and latent [5, c. 8].

Cognitive metaphor allows to understand the concept, that has a superficial meaning maximally removed from the original one. In political discourse this type of metaphors makes possible to conceal the real content of political message.

In political discourse a metaphor plays a significant role: it refreshes the official text, “allows to see, to imagine any phenomenon, it throws the light on the very essence of given phenomenon, allows to understand it better, to estimate, to define it” [4, c. 20].

Therefore, metaphor calls and holds attention, enriches text with expressive images, that are remembered for a long time. A metaphor expresses not literal but figurative meaning of a word that is why in political sphere it is used for underlining some peculiarities of an object or conditions, and therefore for concealing other unwished peculiarities. It should be mentioned that the pragmatic function (the function of persuasion) is of great interest for linguists, too.

Effective usage of metaphors helps to modify the addressee's political worldview, to form the corresponding emotional background and attitude to some phenomenon, event or political leader. Metaphorical argumentation is constantly used in speeches of political figures in order to change the political views of the audience.

The analysis of political speeches shows that politicians use a great number of strategies and tactics aimed to persuade the audience. Due to studying of political speech we can on one hand predict the further actions and intentions of a politician and on the other hand determine the most effective means of influence on a recipient.

Speech is the key instrument in Barack Obama's politics. The only answer given by researchers who studied public speaking is that the crucial goal of a speaker is to persuade. Barack Obama makes his political speech more professional.

Verbal activity is the most important aspect in politics and one of the main constituents of success for those who pursue a career of a politician. In a speech addressed to mainstream audience statesmen usually use common literary language in order to attract more supporters. Democracy gives politicians, journalists, and other members of sociopolitical communication freedom in language behaviour. But very often they use various language expressions. So the linguistic behaviour of a public figure can demonstrate the elements of verbal aggression (harassment), namely, insult. Tactics of verbal insult is realized by lexical means with negative connotation and stylistic means such as metaphor, wordplay etc. The usage of stylistic means allows a speaker to keep an image, to demonstrate a ready wit and oratory and enhance the audience's attention.

The main function of verbal insult in political discourse is to destroy the image of a politician or of the whole party, as the image is a connective link between a politician and mass consciousness. It plays crucial role in forming an attitude to any politician. This tactics helps a politician to create a positive image against negative one of an opponent.

The strategy of destroying a politician's image is implemented in a number of tactics, which realize communicative intent. It is closely connected with communicative intent of global confrontation strategy. The most effective mean for reaching such goals is a tactics of political insult, which includes communicative intent of discrimination, i. e. mortifying a politician's pride, causing moral damages; disqualification, i. e. blaming for absence of necessary business and moral skills; discredit, i. e. destroying an image [2].

The tactics of political insult is considered to be one of linguistic elements in confrontational discursive strategy. A discursive strategy is understood to be a communicative intent of a speaker, who uses social experience for own needs and wants. Communicative and social nature of the discursive strategy shows as an ability of embodied communicative intent to organize a social activity of subjects of communication via its correlation with common ideas of people who belong to the same linguistic culture [3, c. 85].

Realization of the confrontational discursive strategy is based on common knowledge and beliefs of the communicants who treat communication in a hostile way. The main idea is a proclamation “We are enemies”, which obviously has negative connotation [3, c. 188].

One of the most effective linguistic means of implementation the tactics of political insult is considered to be a cognitive or it is also called a conceptual metaphor. The president of the USA uses this stylistic device in his speeches very successfully, which makes his speeches bright and figurative. For example, in speech, which played a crucial role in Barack Obama's career as a politician, he said the following:

Now even as we speak there are those who preparing to divide us – the spin masters, the negative ad peddlers who embrace the politics of “anything goes” [7].

We know that he does not accept the idea of division states into red and blue, and in this case, Obama names “*spin masters*” and “*negative ad peddlers*” those people who prepare the situation of confrontation between two political parties. Such metaphorical insult does not damage the image of other politicians, as there is no concrete addressee, but just theoretically existent one, who plays a negative role for the whole country. At the same time, it positively affects the image of the president.

In his speech of October, 2002 pointed against the war in Iraq Barack Obama says:

But I also know that Saddam poses no imminent and direct threat to the United States, or to his neighbors...and that in concept with the international community he can be contained until, in the way of all petty dictators, he falls away into the dustbin of history [8].

Obama names Saddam Hussein *petty dictator* and says that his place is *in the dustbin of the history*. The president of the USA expresses personal attitude to this politician. At the same time the expressed idea is supported by world public so political insult confirms Obama's categorical viewpoint on any aggressive activity.

Another example of negative estimate is Barack Obama's words about the president of Russia Vladimir Putin at the conference of August, 9, 2013:

I don't have a bad personal relationship with Putin. When we have conversations, they're candid, they're blunt; oftentimes, they're constructive. I know the press likes to focus on body language and he's got that kind of slouch, looking like the bored kid in the back of the classroom. But the truth is, is that when we're in conversations together, oftentimes it's very productive [7].

Obama describes Putin as *bored kid in the back of the classroom*, who treats these word as a serious insult not taking into consideration phrase said latter. American mass media described Putin's reaction as “infuriated”. However, Russian newspapers informed that Russia would not respond in the same way, as it would affect cooperation.

Let's return to the latest events in the world, to the speech at the session of the General Assembly on September, 24, 2014 Barack Obama states his position toward the president of Russia very clearly:

Russia poured arms into Eastern Ukraine, fueling violent separatists and a conflict that has killed thousands [6].

He metaphorically affirms that separatists fight a conflict with the approval of Russia – *fueling violent separatists*, and supply them with weapon – *poured arms*. Barack Obama accuses Putin of participating in killing thousands of Ukrainians – *that has killed thousands*. Such words as in case with Saddam Hussein work for positive image of the US president as of a “good” politician and express the main idea “We are enemies”.

Tactics of political insult is not just aimed at destroying an image of a political leader but also improving one's own image in comparison with negative image of another politician. The analysis of Barack Obama's speeches shows that he uses this tactics in his speeches very successfully by means of metaphorical phrases.

Potential future directions of research we see in thorough study of a metaphor as an effective means of foregrounding of both cooperative and confrontational strategies in different types of discourse.

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