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MANIPULATION IN GREAT BRITAIN/USA
ELECTORAL DISCOURSES (2000–2018)

The article under review deals with the Great Britain and the USA electoral manipulative discourse. The main approaches towards the manipulation notion interpretation, as well as the main typical characteristics of manipulative techniques in the electoral speeches are under analysis. The theoretical provisions are supported by the practical analysis of two speeches delivered by Tony Blair, the ex-prime-minister of Great Britain, and two speeches delivered by Barack Obama, the ex-president of the USA.

Key words: manipulation, communicative pragmatic aim, speech manipulation tool, electoral speech, Iraq war.

Стаття присвячена аналізові передвиборчого маніпулятивного дискурсу Великобританії та США. Розглядаються основні підходи до трактування поняття маніпуляції, основні критерії дослідження політичного дискурсу з позиції критичного аналізу дискурсу, характерні ознаки маніпулятивних технології в текстах політичних передвиборчих промов. Наведені теоретичні положення підкріплюються практичним аналізом двох промов екс-прем'єр-міністра Великобританії Тоні Блера та двох промов екс-президента США Барака Обами.

Ключові слова: маніпуляція, комунікативна прагматична мета, інструмент мовленнєвої маніпуляції, передвиборча промова, війна в Іраку.

Статья посвящена анализу предвыборного манипулятивного дискурса Великобритании и США. Рассматриваются основные подходы к трактовке понятия манипуляции, основные критерии исследования политического дискурса с позиции критического анализа, характерные признаки манипулятивных технологий в текстах политических предвыборных выступлений. Приведенные теоретические положения подкрепляются практическим анализом двух выступлений экс-премьер-министра Великобритании Тони Блера и двух выступлений экс-президента США Барака Обамы.

Ключевые слова: манипуляция, коммуникативная прагматическая цель, инструмент речевой манипуляции, предвыборная речь, война в Ираке.

Nowadays, politics is around us, we live in politics. It seems that O. Issers (1996) was quite right when she said that the language itself has been in use for manipulation from the moment of its origin. The use of the language to persuade the interlocutor opened the way to manipulation. It is true to say that politicians try to manipulate the cognitive sphere of the audience and affect the collective consciousness of any society. The tradition of studying manipulation goes back to works of psychologists, sociologists, political scientists. Manipulation as a cognitive phenomenon has become the subject of the interdisciplinary research long time ago. Manipulation is viewed as the «impact on the person with the purpose to induce him to make something (to give information, to make an act, to change the behavior) unconsciously or contrary to his own desire, opinion and intention» (Troshina, 1990). Such an influence within institutional communication exercises the wide

range of means like agitation, propaganda, demagogy, belief, suggestion, persuasion and «public relations» (PR). According to Teun A. Van Dijk, «as socially, manipulation is defined as illegitimate domination confirming social inequality. Cognitively, manipulation as mind control involves the interference with processes of understanding, the formation of biased mental models and social representations such as knowledge and ideologies. Discursively, manipulation generally involves the usual forms and formats of ideological discourse, such as emphasizing Our good things, and emphasizing Their bad things» (Dijk, 2006). Whereas speech manipulation (SM) is understood as «a type of language influence used for the hidden introduction of purpose, desire, intention, relations or attitudes which don't coincide with those available for the addressee into his mentality» (Veretenkina, 1999). In other words, when the hidden opportunities of language are used by the addressee of the utterance in order to impose a certain notion of reality to the addressee, to create the necessary attitude towards it, to cause emotional reaction necessary for addressee, we are talking about speech manipulation. The topicality of the matter lies in the fact that the development of technical means of communication, on the one hand, and the increase of the information exchange, on the other hand, facilitate the speech manipulation greatly. Especially when we talk of the electoral discurse. The given article deals with the manipulative effect on the audience in Great Britain and the USA.

The present paper logically falls into three sections. The first section presents the theoretical background and the literature review of the problem of manipulation in political discourse. It reveals the current understanding of manipulation in Linguistics, the interrelation of Critical Discourse Analysis with ideology. Second section deals with the practical analysis of electoral discourse in Great Britain and the USA from the point of view of CDA. The last section puts forward discussion issues and conclusions for future investigation.

Any verbal sign acquiring a special meaning in a specific context capable of altering the mental state of the addressee may be treated as a speech manipulation tool (hereinafter referred to as SMT — A.S.). Speech manipulation is viewed as the purposeful impact on the addressee in order to achieve the communicative pragmatic aim of the speaker. As P. Blakar (1987) states, any element of the language presented on different level of the language can be used as the SMT. And it is true to say that SMT is a complex unity of phonological, lexical, stylistic, morghological and syntactic means which interact and enforce each other. The complex nature of different language levels' means will be analyzed a bit later, but the specific feature of such an interaction is that the mentioned above elements compensate each other. It is the Critical Discourse Analysis (hereinafter referred to as CDA — *A.S.*) which provides the researcher with the possibility of the profound analysis of discourse, and political one in particular. We have also analyzed manipulation and manipulative effect in our previous publication (Sotnykov, 2017a; Sotnykov, 2017b).

The analysis of literary sources gives all the grounds to state that political discourse can be viewed within the following aspects:

- From the political point of view on the basis of the discourse's aim and its effect on the audience;

- From the point of view of Linguistics due to which the text of the political discourse is meant as a verbal representation of the social cultural and political context;

- From the point of view of Psychology with the aim of establishing the speaker's strategies employed by the speaker both in a hidden way (covertly) and overtly in order to manipulate the audience's mental state;

- From the individual hermeneutic point of view which reveals the speaker's personal attitudes towards the political situation (Wodak, 1989; Wodak & Chilton 2005;Chilton & Schäffner, 2002).

Critical review of special researches dedicated to the study of political discourse has revealed that it can be analyzed from at least four viewpoints:

a) From the political point of view on the basis of which conclusions of politological nature are made;

b) From the linguistic viewpoint proper, when the researcher analyses the textual aspect of political discourse considering it as a verbal macrosign in its socio-cultural and political context;

c) from the psychological point of view the aim of which is to reveal and define those strategies that are employed by a politician covertly or overtly in his/her speech to gain political influence upon the addressee;

d) from the individual-hermeneutic viewpoint during which the speaker's personal attitudes towards the target political situation are revealed.

The critical discourse analysis of political, in our case electoral speeches, takes into accounts all the mentioned above levels and involves the some special techniques of the text's analysis.

By the nature of the main intention of political discourse, E. I. Sheigal (2000) offers the following classification of ritual discourse: 1) ritual genres (inaugural speeches, traditional radio and teleconversion); 2) orientation genres (texts informationally prescriptive, ie, party speeches, constitutions, reports, decree); agonal genres (slogans, promotional speeches, election and parliamentary debates). All these genres provide an opportunity to manipulate the consciousness of the audience.

Manipulative influence is characterized by the wide use of myths and mythologemes. In general, most researchers define a myth in political discourse as certain collective consciousness stereotypes recipients believe in (Sheigal, 2000). There are the mythologemes which constitute the myth. E. Sheigal analyzing the political mythologemes structure states that the reference nature, axiological direction, temporal component, basic semiotic function and the language/speech status are the essential elements. It goes without saying that it is the language/speech status which dominates as any myth exists in a speech form. According to her concept, the myth's speech/language representation possesses the precedent phenomena status. She point out three types of mythologemes (Sheigal, 2000): mythologeme-text, mythologeme-utterance and mythologeme-anthrophonym.

Mythologeme-text is the precedent text representing the political leader legend or the political movement historiography. It is possible to assume that such a mythologeme is not limited by the constituents mentioned above; it can also be the official version of the recent or past events. If to speak of manipulation discourse, any sacral (nation forming) text or book can serve this purpose.

To some extent, it is possible to say that the electoral political discourse always deals with mythologemes of this or that kind. The combination of the latter with the widespread manipulative techniques (distortion of information, fabrication of facts, hiding information, urgency of information and sensationalism, manipulative semantics application, simplification and stereotyping) gives the politician the great variety of ways of the audience consciousness' modification and manipulation.

Political discourse, and electoral one in particular, is based on the language and cultural universals which gives all the grounds to say that there are the features common for the global democratic society. These are the Great Britain and the USA electoral political speeches which serve the illustrations to the mentioned above theoretical points. We have taken two speeches delivered by Tony Blair, the ex-prime-minister of Great Britain, and Barack Obama, the ex-president.

The first speech by Tony Blair was delivered in 2005, when he addressed the nation after his political party had won the elections. The main pragmatic aim of his speech is to express his gratitude for the trust on the part of the nation and set the tasks of his government for the future. In order to convince the audience of his sincerity, the speaker uses the following SMT as repetition «we — I — the government» two times in the introductory block of his speech (12). It is done with aim of showing the unity of society, on the one hand, and implementing the idea that the government represents the society. Judging from the reaction of the audience, this technique works, as the following message deals with the traditional Labour programme rhetoric: public service sphere's reform, stable economy, tolerance. The last sentence of the speech performs two important communicative functions: it brings the audience back to the basic idea of the speech and enforces the manipulative effect: «…And one final thing, which is that I've also learnt something about the British people, that, whatever their difficulties and disagreements with us and whatever issues and challenges that confront them, their values of fairness and decency and opportunity for all and a belief that people should be able to get on, on hard work and merit, not class or background — *those values are the values I believe in, the values our government will believe in*.». The second speech was delivered on March 18, 2003 at times which were especially difficult for the Labour Party with the British troops sent to Iraq. He was expected to explain the reasons for taking such a decision to the audience. That is why he starts his speech from pointing out the Labour's successes referring to the fact that their arrival had been expected (13): «…An *abundance of expectation* surrounded our arrival. A *sense of hope* beyond ordinary imagining. The *people felt it*. We felt it…». Then the speaker referrers to the Labour's successes. Manipulation here is in the fact that the speaker uses such a SMT as statistic data the audience is not able to check: «I could recite you the statistics: The **lowest inflation**, **mortgage rates**, and **unemployment for**

decades. The ***best ever school results***, with over ***60,000 more 11 year olds*** every year now reaching required standards in English and Maths. Cardiac deaths down ***19 per cent since 1997***, cancer deaths ***9 per cent***. Burglaries down **39 per cent**…». At the same time, in order to disprove the possible reproach for manipulation, the speaker turns to people he had met, which again cannot be proved or disproved by the audience, and manipulation is hidden by the «unity» technique: «…That's what this Labour government has done for Britain…». Having proved the importance of the Labour government to the country, the speaker raises the issue of Iraq. It is known that the Iraq War started on March 20, 2003m while the given speech was delivered on March 18, 2003. A complex of manipulation techniques is being used: ». It has divided the party, the country, families, friends. I know many people are disappointed, hurt, angry. I know many profoundly believe the action we took was wrong. I do not at all disrespect anyone who disagrees with me. I ask just one thing: attack my decision but at least understand why I took it and why I would take the same decision again…». First of all, the Prime-Minister acknowledges the fact that the given decision was difficult and controversial, and then he assures the audience that he was aware of those who didn't support him. It seems to be quite logical to assume, that the introduction of the speech containing the government's success should soften the first reaction of the audience. Moreover, he brilliantly makes the audience believe him when he uses the opposition *the Prime-Minister-the intelligence — the country — terrorism*. Thus, he escapes the out-of-season questions about the Iraq campaign. The next points of his speech are quite typical: the 21st century challenges, the comparison of the 1960s — 2000s, lack of trust, fair policy towards living standards. In our humble opinion, these two speeches give the grounds to state that a typical manipulation in electoral political discourse in Great Britain involves the well-known manipulative techniques which are quite balanced and the false information is mixed with the real one in case the audience is not expected to check the facts.

We have also taken two American speeches delivered by Barack Obama. It is important to point out that the first speech belonged to the US Senator, while the second one — to the US President. The first speech under analysis is dedicated to the results of the Iraq war (14). We have all the grounds to say that Obama delivers the speech with manipulation in mind. To begin with, he starts the speech with the description of a soldier who had been to war and come home injured which turns out to be a powerful SMT. The speaker uses the opposition «one year in Iraq — one year home in coma and in a rehabilitation clinic». He also refers to the all-American value — the family, comparing his own family to the one of the soldier. And then the first manipulative technique is used: the speaker refers to his previous speech opposing this war. At the same time, it is a well-known fact that the US Army had been involved at least in 4 wide scale military conflicts within the term of Obama's presidency. Nevertheless, the speaker manipulated the consciousness of the audience trying to represent himself as a peacemaker. Then, he uses the repetition «The sacrifices of war are immeasurable», each time adding some new points to the general theme of the speech: he was against the war, a lot of soldiers came back to the USA being wounded and handicapped, there was no military solution of the war

issue. At the end of his speech, Obama tackles the issue of democracy. The CDA approach lets us construct the logical idea: the country enters the fifth year of the war, the war the majority of people did not support, the country faces the problem of handicapped servicemen who lost their health in the name of freedom in a remote country, the perspectives of war are not clear. It is possible to treat this speech as the electoral one, as one of the point of Obama's program was the withdrawal of the US Army from Iraq. The second speech (15) is dedicated to his taking the office. He starts it with the traditional repetition «the answer is» followed by the nation founders mentioned (the nation founders is a universal American mythologeme), the American dream, and the nation itself. As for the nation, the speaker used the «unity» manipulative technique as his support in the election campaign was not total: «the answer spoken by young and old, rich and poor, Democrat and Republican, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, disabled and not disabled — Americans who sent a message to the world that we have never been just a collection of individuals or a collection of Red States and Blue States: we are, and always will be, the United States of America!». Thus, the speaker tries to thank those who supported him and encourage those who voted against. Manipulative effect is being enforced by the family topic, as family is one of the greatest values of the USA. At the same time, he tries to justify probable failures of his presidency and addresses Lincoln: «There will be setbacks and false starts. There are many who won't agree with every decision or policy I make as President. And we know the government can't solve every problem… As Lincoln said to a nation far more divided than ours: «We are not enemies but friends....» «Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection.» The following manipulative technique used by him is the use of the division on the «Americans — other world» basis: «And to those Americans who -- whose support I have yet to earn, I may not have won your vote tonight, but I hear your voices. I need your help. And I will be your President, too… To those — To those who would tear the world down: We will defeat you. To those who seek peace and security: We support you. And to all those who have wondered if America's beacon still burns as bright: Tonight we've proved once more that the true strength of our nation comes not from the might of our arms or the scale of our wealth, but from the enduring power of our ideals: democracy, liberty, opportunity, and unyielding hope.» So, he calls the nation to unity to make a better country for the sake of the country. On the other hand, he sends the clear message to the world — America will stand for its ideals, that is, for *democracy*, *liberty*, *opportunity*, and *unyielding hope*.

Summing up, it is possible to say, that both British and American electoral speeches have a lot in common, they deal with the nations' values, democracy, hope for a better future. As for the manipulative techniques, we have all the grounds to say, that, at least on the basis of these four speeches, the speakers try to distance from failures, address to the nations' ideals in order to justify their actions. Of course, the brief analysis of four speeches is not sufficient for establishing the variant and invariant typical features of the given brunch of political discourse, but the future researches are to focus these aspects.

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