LINGUO-PRAGMATIC DIMENSION OF PRESENT-DAY AMERICAN POLITICIANS' SPEECHES

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This paper deals with the strategy of persuasion in modern American political discourse. The linguistic analysis of political language is, in fact, the discovery of the ways how to manipulate the language signs to achieve specific political goals. Different mechanisms of influence on mass and organisation of effective communication are within the scope of this study due to the fact that language is an inexhaustible source of techniques and methods of persuasion. The aim of the paper is to identify the linguistic (grammatical, lexical-semantic, stylistic) and pragmatic characteristics of the strategy of persuasion in acceptance speeches of democrats as well as to establish common and distinctive features of the lingual component of their discourse. It examines and analyses the strategy of persuasion in the political discourse in the light of Critical Discourse Analysis and the conceptual framework proposed by T. van Dijk, namely personal persuasive strategies, i.e. positive self-presentation strategy and negative other-presentation strategy. The two candidates under analysis preferred declarative sentences to inform the electorate about their plans and ideas of reorganising the American social and political situation. The politicians used the personal pronoun "I" to state their own personal views and feelings, "we" – to get trust and support from the listeners. In their acceptance speeches, Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama preferred a personal strategy of negative other-presentation to positive self-presentation strategy. The discourse of Democrats is vivid due to the great usage of stylistic means and lexis from different lexico-semantic fields.

Keywords: persuasion, persuasive strategy; positive self-presentation; negative other-presentation; sound bite; three-part list; metaphor.

Introduction

Language, as a unique human ability, a means of communication, a reflection of objective reality, a means of the speaker's influence on a listener by changing their feelings, thoughts and actions (Krasnenko, 2011, p. 1), and therefore, implementation of the strategy of persuasion, has been under the watchful eye of scientists for decades. However, continuous development and changes in the realm of politics and language, as the tools of influence on the electorate, require more qualitative research in this direction. The revealing of the system of political influence mechanisms, the definition of its system-and-structural organisation in its current state requires a great attention of the representatives of various realms of science.

Many scholars devoted their works to the study of political discourse as a special form of communication, the discovery of mechanisms of complex interrelations between language, government and society, the research of genre-and-stylistic features of political speeches and verbal means of their effective influence on the masses' consciousness (Halliday, 1985; van Dijk, 2006; Dunmire, 2007; Duran, 2008; Charteris-Black, 2011; Guzak, 2013). At the same time, at this stage of linguistic research of language as a means of persuasiveness implementation, there is no single distinct approach to the analysis of political discourse in general, and political speeches, in particular, that would enable us to identify general and specific methods of language signs manipulation, to systematise and structure the mechanisms of influence on the mass consciousness, as well as to trace the specifics of the persuasiveness implementation in present-day political discourse.

The aim of our research is to analyse the linguistic means for implementation of the strategy of persuasion in Hillary Clinton's acceptance speech at various language levels in the pragmatic aspect, as well as to trace the dynamics of changes in the political discourse of Democrats on the basis of the results obtained and previously conducted research (analysis of Barack Obama's 2008 Acceptance Speech (Stetsyk, 2016).

The material of the study consists of the scripts of the acceptance speeches (official statements about the approval of a nomination for a presidential candidate) in the election campaign of the US Democratic Party's representative in 2008 and 2016, taken from the Internet.

The research methodology is based on the communicative-and-pragmatic paradigm of language study (Batsevych, 2009; Kirilina, 2000; Leontiev, 1993; Austin, 1986; Pocheptsov, 1999; Searle, 1986; Yanova, 2002). In our work we apply the following **research methods**: *the critical discourse analysis* proposed by T. van Dijk, 2006 (to select personal persuasive strategies within the framework of the general communicative strategy of persuasion), *syntactic analysis* (to determine the structure of sentences and syntactic links in the acceptance speeches), *lexical and grammatical analysis* (to classify lexical units in the discourse of the Democratic Party's representative, as well as to analyse the persuasive expression means at the grammatical level of language), *stylistic analysis* (to single out stylistic and rhetorical techniques applied

in the electoral discourse of American politicians), *pragmatic analysis* (to reveal the peculiarities of the persuasion strategy implementation), *comparative method* (to establish similar and distinctive features when using the strategy of persuasion and linguistic means of its expression in the accelerating speeches of H. Clinton and B. Obama).

Results

The speech, delivered on July 28th at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia on the occasion of Hilary Clinton official nomination for the presidential election campaign in 2016, was the representation of her campaign's main slogans (Clinton, 2016).

Grammatical features of the acceptance speech

The speech analysis showed that Hillary Clinton is trying to convey as much information as possible to her electorate about her political beliefs and plans regarding the country's future, not forgetting to constantly remind the electorate about her long-term political service in the government, primarily using narrative sentences (86%). Presentation of future changes for the country under her leadership is mainly conveyed by the future tense marker *will* (45 times), which confirms the speech commitment to the present and the future. This is also confirmed by the fact that the tense forms of the verb *to be* occur in the present (72) and the future (15) forms more often than in the past – only 18 times. Considering modal operators (Halliday, 1985, p. 75), we conclude that Hillary Clinton uses medium-value operators (*can* – 31) to appeal to the average citizen's deepest expectation – the achievement of a stable and secure future for themselves and their families, high value (*have / had to* – 12) – to induce the Americans to decisive actions. After analysing the frequency of the use of personal pronouns, we notice that the senator primarily uses the personal pronoun *we* (116 out of the total 419), striving to reach the unity with the audience, and *you* (86) – applying to her elective body. We should note that the target audience of the candidate is the American middle class: *I believe America thrives when the middle class thrives; I will work together to make college tuition free for the middle class; a country where the economy works for everyone, not just those at the top; to help working people in our country; we are the party of working people.* Owing to the personal pronoun *he*, Hillary Clinton reminds the electorate about the "worthy candidacy" of her opponent from the Republican Party – Donald Trump. The obtained data are consistent with the results of the studies of the grammatical aspect of presidential speeches (Guzak, 2013, pp. 56-60).

Lexical filling of the acceptance speech

Having classified (by the sample proposed by Duran (2008) the lexical units of Hillary Clinton's speech by 16 criteria, we observe a great attention to the internal problems of America: *new private sector jobs; 20 million more Americans with health insurance; Supreme Court justices; expand voting rights; millions of hardworking immigrants; Jobs in manufacturing, clean energy, technology and innovation, small business and infrastructure; college tuition free for the middle class.* She doesn't overpass external threats for the country as well: *I believe climate change is real; the threats and turbulence we face, from Baghdad to Kabul to Nice and Paris and Brussels, from San Bernardino to Orlando; Israel's security; a lid on Iran's nuclear program without firing a single shot.* The senator repeatedly resorts to numerical data (part, percentage, or quantitative definition of people, other units) to intensify the meaning of the arguments: *500 people applied in just 12 days; 15 million new private sector jobs, 20 million more Americans with health insurance; more than 90 percent of the gains have gone to the top 1 percent.*

Hillary Clinton's attitude towards her competitor is clearly traced. She resorts to direct criticism and gives the Americans a clear idea of Donald Trump's ability to be the next president of America: *He spoke for 70-odd minutes—and I do mean odd—and he offered zero solutions; Donald Trump's not offering real change, he's offering empty promises.* The senator brings the audience to the logical conclusion that Donald Trump's candidacy is unacceptable because: *Donald Trump doesn't get: America is great because America is good!* Moreover, Hillary Clinton opposes her opponent to the country, its Founders, quoting his speech in Cleveland: *I alone can fix it*, immediately referring to the foundations of the American society: *Americans don't say "I alone can fix it." We say "we'll fix it together!"*.

Stylistics and pragmatics in the acceptance speech

In our work, we are guided by the dichotomy proposed by T. van Dijk (through which the general strategy of persuasion is implemented) where two personality strategies take place, namely, *the positive self-presentation strategy* and *the negative other-presentation strategy*. van Dijk (2006) represents these two main strategies in the form of the "*ideological square*":

Emphasise *Our* positive sides

Emphasise *Other* negative sides
De-emphasise *Our* negative sides
De-emphasise *Other* positive sides (p. 734).

All this is reflected in Hillary Clinton's speech: the senator reminds the Americans about the crippled economy and threats to the national security, brings to the choice between an experienced politician, who worked for the good of the country for years *(the positive self-presentation strategy)* and a businessman, who is far from understanding the urgent problems of the working class, unable to give America anything but empty promises *(the negative other-presentation strategy)*. The central element of Hillary Clinton's speech is appealing to the Americans from the point of view of a mother, a daughter, the first woman, whose candidacy was supported by one of two main US parties: *Like so much else in my life, I got this from **my mother**, too; I am so proud to be **your mother**; **mothers** who lost children to violence and are building a movement to keep other kids safe; Let's keep going until every one of **the 161 million women and girls across America** has the opportunity she deserves to have!; The first time that a major **party has nominated a woman for president!**; Standing here as **my mother's daughter and my daughter's mother**.* In the last example, we can see the manifestation of one of the rhetorical figures – *the chiasm*.

One of Hillary Clinton's key points of reference is also a "flashback" into the past. Reminding the electorate about the fundamental principles and traditions of America, which takes the lead in the world community due to its cohesion: *The Revolution hung in the balance, and somehow **they began listening to each other, compromising, finding common purpose***, the senator is openly opposed to his opponent: *our Founders fought a Revolution and wrote a Constitution so America would never be a nation where **one person had all the power***.

The *national self-respect* plays an important role in the senator's speech: ***We have** the most dynamic and diverse people in the world. **We have** the most tolerant and generous young people we've ever had. **We have** the most powerful military, the most innovative entrepreneurs, the most enduring values, freedom and equality, justice and opportunity, we should be so proud that those words are associated with us.* Using the parallel structures in conjunction with the anaphora, the senator manages to shake the electorate, to remind them who Americans are, bringing to a climax– *So **don't let anyone tell you** that our country is weak. **We're not. Don't let anyone tell you** we don't have what it takes. **We do.*** Hillary Clinton not only exalts America, she "humiliates" Donald Trump's personality traits, representing him as an alien to all of the above-mentioned values *(implication)*. National self-glorification is realised in the rhetor's speech through a significant number of epithets with a positive connotation: *most dynamic and diverse people in the world, the most tolerant and generous young people, the most powerful military, the most innovative entrepreneurs, the most enduring values, brave police officers, the courageous decision, hardworking immigrants*.

There are a large number of quotes in Hillary Clinton's speech: 1) Donald Trump's words: *I know more about ISIS than the generals do; I alone can fix it*, through which she criticises him: *He thinks he knows more than our military because he claimed our armed forces are a disaster; No, Donald, you don't*. The senator's special emphasis is on the word *alone*, that intonationally transforms her opponent's quote into a rhetorical question (*Really? I alone can fix it?*), adding: *Americans don't say "I alone can fix it." We say "we'll fix it together!"*. We do not overpass one more quote – *America first*, when Hillary Clinton sarcastically ridicules D. Trump's statement, asking: *what part of "America first" leads him to make Trump ties in China, not Colorado, Trump suits in Mexico, not Michigan, Trump furniture in Turkey, not Ohio, Trump picture frames in India, not Wisconsin?*, and as a summary – *Donald Trump says he wants to make America great again. Well, he could start by actually making things in America again*. If a person speaks one thing, and does the opposite, is this person worth the voters' trust *(negative other-presentation)*; 2) Jacqueline Kennedy's memory about her husband – *what worried President Kennedy during that very dangerous time was that a war might be started not by big men with self-control and restraint, but by little men, the ones moved by fear and pride*, hinting on his opponent *(implication)*, warning the nation against the wrong decision in the elections, because America has already suffered enough from "alien" wars; 3) mentioning the national motto – *Our country's motto is E Pluribus Unum, out of many we are one!*, which again emphasises that only in the unity is the power of America; 4) A fragment of a song to the musical "Hamilton" – *we may not live to see the glory,* as the appeal to the Americans to trust her – *let us gladly join the fight, let our legacy be about planting seeds in a garden you never get to see*; 5) Franklin Roosevelt's words: *The only thing we have to fear is fear itself!* as the response to constant negative representation of the situation in the country, the emotional overloading of the situation by Donald Trump himself, who skilfully appeals to one of the basic human emotions – the fear. Although, as Dunmire (2007) points out, it is better to appeal to fear in order to cause the audience to have negative feelings towards the "enemy" (pp. 19-44).

As it has been already mentioned above, Hillary Clinton reaches the unity with the audience by using

the personal pronoun *we*. For this goal, she also gives *short stories* from her own life and the lives of ordinary like-minded citizens: *"My family were builders of a different kind, builders in the way most American families are. They used whatever tools they had, whatever God gave them and whatever life in America provided and built better lives and better futures for their kids. **The family I'm from, well, no one had their name on big buildings** (a hint at Donald Trump, his social status, which does not allow him to understand the needs of ordinary people); My mother, Dorothy, was abandoned by her parents as a young girl. She ended up on her own at 14 working as a housemaid. She was saved by the kindness of others. Her first-grade teacher saw she had nothing to eat at lunch, and brought extra food to share the entire year. The lessons she passed on to me years later stuck with me. **No one gets through life alone. We have to look out for each other and lift each other up.*** To conclude the story about her mother, the senator once again attracts the electorate's attention to contrasting Trump's "*alone"* with her "*together"*.

Hillary Clinton tells the story of her own life, creating the image of an average citizen of her country, to whom the difficulties of life are familiar, who was able to succeed through the sacrifice of parents and grandparents. These examples are more likely aimed at the sympathy awakening rather than the condolence of the audience. In the end, the rhetor adds: *My family were ... in the way most American families are.* It must finally convince the Americans that she belongs with them.

Positive self-presentation is realised by the speaker through the repeated references to her political experience – *I've been your first lady, served eight years as a senator from the great state of New York; look at my record. I've worked across the aisle to pass laws and treaties and to launch new programs that help millions of people,* and those steps, that will be taken when she will hold the office as the President: *But **we are not afraid. We will rise to the challenge** just as we always have. We **will not build a wall**; instead, **we will build an economy** where everyone who wants a good job can get one. And we'll build a path to citizenship for millions of immigrants who are already contributing to our economy. We **will not ban a religion. We will work with all Americans and our allies** to fight and defeat terrorism* (*parallel constructions combined with opposing*). It should be mentioned that Hillary Clinton still doesn't announce her distinct steps that is rather a negative moment in her speech.

Speaking about the republican representative in the elections, the politician resorts to *attaching labels*, for example: *in the end, it comes down to what **Donald Trump doesn't get**: America is great because America is good!* Another method Hillary Clinton often uses in order to put her opponent in a bad light is rhetorical questions: *I alone can fix it? ...do you really think Donald Trump has the temperament to be commander in chief?* The senator mentions her opponent in her speech 48 times, ridiculing and, sometimes, sharply criticising his candidacy (*the negative other-presentation strategy*) with well-chosen epithets: *little men, the ones moved by fear and pride; the **horrible** things he says; he's offering **empty** promises; He spoke for 70-**odd** minutes*. The senator does not overpass Trump-businessman, criticising his skills not only in politics but also in the economy: *he's a businessman; he must know something about the economy.* With this statement the candidate seems to speak positively of her opponent, however, she immediately adds: *In Atlantic City, 60 miles from here, you will find contractors and small businesses who lost everything because Donald Trump refused to pay his bills* (*negation*). Moreover, Hillary Clinton appeals to all those who wish to elect Donald Trump as the next president of America and tells them to think carefully before assuming the managerial position to the person, who does not fulfil his obligations (*implication*).

Among the stylistic techniques, used by Hillary Clinton, it is worthwhile to mention metaphors, oppositions, parallel constructions in conjunction with lexical anaphora, three-part lists (Charteris-Black, 2011, p.6). In particular, in the senator's speech one can find many examples of metaphors, among which we distinguish the following: *Tonight we've reached a milestone in our **nation's march** toward a more perfect union* – Hillary Clinton speaks about the election as a journey that has its destination, way, leads to the ultimate goal – a better future with her as the new president of the United States of America; *we'll **build a path** to citizenship for millions of immigrants who are already contributing to our economy* – thanks to this metaphor, the rhetor tries to illustrate that every immigrant (even the most frustrated) will be able to achieve the American Dream: *no matter what **ZIP code you live in***; *He's taken the Republican Party **a long way**, from **morning in America** to **midnight in America*** – here we find two metaphors, when the senator openly states that Donald Trump will dilapidate his party or the whole of America, if he is granted the powers; *So don't let anyone tell you that our **country is weak**. We're not* – by quoting Donald Trump and giving the country a human quality, Hillary Clinton achieves several goals: she hints that her opponent does not believe in the country he is going to lead and appeals to the innate pride of the Americans for their nation (*national self-glorification*), *I alone can fix it... Donald Trump's words... should **set off alarm bells** for all of us* –warns the electorate against false decisions; *when more than 90 percent of the gains have gone to the top 1 percent, that's where the money is. And we are going **to follow the money*** – the speaker expresses her clear

position on the issue of taxation; *He also **talks a big game** about putting America first* – thanks to this metaphor, Hillary Clinton gives a negative impact to Donald Trump's election promises.

The senator's use of oppositions, the examples of which were given above, also plays a significant role in convincing the audience on whose side they should be: *expand voting rights, not restrict them; share profits, not pad executive bonuses; make sure this economy works for everyone, not just those at the top*. Such oppositions serve one purpose: to expose the opponent in a disadvantageous light (*the negative other-presentation strategy*).

An important aspect of the speech is the use of parallel constructions that enhance the speech, highlighting the key points. In this case, the senator uses syntactic parallelisms, combining them with an anaphora – repetitions of certain words, usually at the beginning of sentences, or sound bites (short simple sentences or phrases, that are easy to memorise (Merriam Webster Dictionary, 1828) at the end. Repeating certain words can ensure the coherence of a text during long speeches, as well as help the rhetor to focus on key points such as, for example, moral values of the society. In addition, multiple uses of certain phrases contribute to the fact that the ideas presented by the speaker acquire meaningfulness, a kind of common sense (Beard, 1999, p. 39): ***I believe*** *American corporations that have gotten so much from our country should be just as patriotic in return.* ***And I believe*** *Wall Street can never, ever be allowed to wreck Main Street again.* ***And I believe*** *in science!;* ***We will help*** *more people learn a skill or practice a trade and make a good living doing it.* ***We will give*** *small businesses, like my dad's, a boost, make it easier to get credit...* ***And we will help*** *you balance family and work;* ***If you believe*** *that companies should share profits, not pad executive bonuses,* ***join us!*** ***If you believe*** *the minimum wage should be a living wage and no one working full time should have to raise their children in poverty,* ***join us!*** ***If you believe*** *that every man, woman and child in America has the right to affordable health care,* ***join us!*** ***If you believe*** *that we should say no to unfair trade deals, that we should stand up to China, that we should support our steelworkers and autoworkers and home-grown manufacturers,* ***then join us!*** ***If you believe*** *we should expand Social Security and protect a woman's right to make her own health care decisions,* ***then join us****! **And yes, yes, if you believe*** *that your working mother, wife, sister or daughter deserves equal pay,* ***join us****!* The last example contains the appeal to all voters to join the Democrats in this decisive for the country moment.

Examples of three-part lists that enrich Hillary Clinton's speech are: *Our country needs **your ideas, energy and passion***; *America needs every one of us to lend **our energy, our talents, our ambition** to making our nation better and stronger; Every generation of Americans has come together to make our country **freer, fairer and stronger**; There's **too much inequality, too little social mobility, too much paralysis** in Washington; The Revolution hung in the balance, and somehow they began **listening to each other, compromising, finding common purpose***. The senator uses this stylistic tool to enhance the emotional colour of what she said.

To sum up the above mentioned, we can conclude that the general communicative strategy of persuasion is implemented in Hillary Clinton's speech mainly because of the negative presentation of the opponent, Donald Trump, and is saturated with vivid examples of stylistic techniques that are integrated in the text and are an integral component of the senator's pre-election discourse. We should tribute to Hillary Clinton's charisma as well, her manner to be in public and the ability to deliver speeches.

Discussion

When considering the acceptance speeches of the Democratic Party's representatives in 2008 (Obama, 2008) and 2016 (Clinton, 2016), we arrive at the following conclusions: 1) the senators begin their speeches with gratitude to all Americans for the honour to be elected to contest the highest place in the country. Further they express gratitude and respect to US Presidents; 2) the slogan of Barack Obama's speech is the American Promise and its Rebirth, Hillary Clinton's slogan – the National unity and National self-glorification, as a response to critical remarks of Donald Trump as to the "weakness" of America; 3) each politician firmly declares his plans (by expressing *new ideas*) for improvement of America's position (the examples of such steps implementation are predominant in Barack Obama's speech): Barack Obama: *I will set a clear goal as President: in ten years, we will finally end our dependence on oil from the Middle East*; Hillary Clinton: *We will give small businesses, like my dad's, a boost, make it easier to get credit*.

Comparing the texts of the politicians' speeches at the syntactic level, it is noticeable that Barack Obama's performance contains considerably fewer sentences than the performance of Hillary Clinton (225 and 344 respectively), but in both speeches, most of them are narrative (91% and 86%), so that the speakers can fully present their own intentions and the party's ideological position. However, if the first one uses mostly short sentences and simple grammatical constructions, the latter leans toward long complex and compound sentences with a great number of enumerations.

In addition, in their speeches the politicians' purpose to draw the attention of the audience and encourage it to take decisive actions, convincing of their reliability and ability to change the situation in the country for the better. At the same time, Hillary Clinton emphasises on her long-term experience: *Well, look at my record. I've worked across the aisle to pass laws and treaties and to launch new programs that help millions of people.* Barack Obama, realising that his political career is not so rich, by all means, is trying to distance himself from the Washington's policy with its old-timers – *I don't fit the typical pedigree, and I haven't spent my career in the halls of Washington,* and to show that long service in the halls of the Parliament and the White House is not the guarantee of making right decisions and actions (about his that time opponent John McCain) – *Washington's been talking about our oil addiction for the last thirty years, and John McCain has been there for twenty-six of them. In that time, he's said no to higher fuel-efficiency standards for cars... no to renewable fuels.* These examples are the manifestations of the positive self-presentation strategy and the negative other-presentation strategy.

The considered speeches differ in the number of the used personal pronouns. If Barack Obama more often uses the singular personal pronoun *I* (81 out of the total of 293) to present his ideas, then Hillary Clinton − *we* (116 out of the total of 419) for the same purpose, trying to support the general idea of the national unity: ***We** will strike their sanctuaries from the air and support local forces taking them out on the ground. **We** will surge our intelligence so we detect and prevent attacks before they happen. **We** will disrupt their efforts online to reach and radicalize young people in our country.*

As for the modal operators, the most frequently used ones in both speeches are *will* and *can*. Barack Obama adds to this list *need* and *must*, Hillary Clinton − *have/had to*. In Barack Obama's speech, there are a greater number of modal operators of high value, which can serve as an indicator of his more insistent appeal to take decisive actions.

When addressing their speeches to a large number of people, politicians, however, differ in the manners of their appeals to the electorate. Yes, Barack Obama tries to highlight his appeal as often as possible, especially with the word America: "*America, we are better than these last eight years*", "*America, now is not the time for small plans*". This form of appeal can be interpreted much broader than the one that takes into account the huge number of nationalities in the United States. His style of appeal puts a simple citizen in the centre, regardless of their origin and roots, since America's cornerstone is its population. Hillary Clinton, when appealing to her voters, in the first place uses the personal pronoun *you*, and in some way limits her target audience to the middle class, repeatedly appealing to this particular stratum.

At the lexical level, both speakers operate with words and terms from a great number of semantic fields, which is not surprising, since they try to touch on every problem aspect of the Americans' lives. It is important that politicians promise rather than offer real ideas to solve problems, such as when it comes to tax cuts for 95% for the entire working class or the crediting system simplification: *I will cut taxes – cut taxes – for 95% of all working families. Because in an economy like this, the last thing we should do is raise taxes on the middle-class* (Obama, 2008); *We will give small businesses, like my dad's, a boost, make it easier to get credit. Way too many dreams die in the parking lots of banks. In America, if you can dream it you should be able to build it* (Clinton, 2016). From the standpoint of the simple logic, such tax cuts or changes in the banking system, at least in a short-term perspective, are almost unreal.

Regarding the stylistics and pragmatics of the speeches, we come to the conclusion about their similarity and differences.

Hillary Clinton often uses *three-part lists*, which greatly enrich her performance. There are practically no examples of this stylistic device in Barack Obama's speech. The appeal to parallel constructions in conjunction with anaphora is peculiar to both politicians. In addition, each of the speeches is distinguished by the presence of certain words and word combinations that are engraved in the mind − *sound-bites*: in Barack Obama's speech, it is "*the American promise* [alive]", in Hillary Clinton's speech − the national association: *join us!*. Metaphors as a component of the system of stylistic devices are often found in speeches of rhetors, however, Hillary Clinton's speech still seems more versatile in this aspect. In addition, her speech is enriched with proverbs and folk wisdoms, such as: *Do all the good you can for all the people you can in all the ways you can as long as ever you can; when there are no ceilings, the sky's the limit!*

Dwelling in detail on the tactics and steps of implementing personal strategies of persuasion, which are used by both candidates, we observe that:

1. Hillary Clinton, as well as Barack Obama, uses *simple short stories* to remind the voters about her merits to the country (*the positive self-presentation strategy*). Moreover, both politicians do this in the manner that makes people sympathise with them through creating the *"friend among friends"* image. "*Because in the faces of those young veterans who come back from Iraq and Afghanistan, I see my grandfather, who signed up after Pearl Harbor, marched in Patton's Army... In the face of that young student*

who sleeps just three hours before working the night shift, I think about my mom, who raised my sister and me on her own…" (Obama, 2008); *My family were builders of a different kind, builders in the way most American families are. They used whatever tools they had, whatever God gave them and whatever life in America provided and built better lives and better futures for their kids* (Clinton, 2016).

2. *The negative presentation* of an opponent in both speeches is implemented mainly through criticism of the competitor's personality and his political plans and ideas, facilitated by such steps as *name calling*, *polarization* between correct decisions of their own and false decisions of the opponents, *implication*, *appeal to authority* in order to strengthen the voter's trust, etc. However, the manner in which Barack Obama criticises his opponent, John McCain, is different from that of Hillary Clinton, who is frankly scornful about Donald Trump. Both rhetors often use rhetorical questions in order to enhance the effect of what they said and to show the illogicality of their opponent's actions or words: *I just think he doesn't know… How else could he offer a health care plan that would actually tax people's benefits…?* (Obama, 2008); *Really? I alone can fix it?* (Clinton, 2016).

3. Politicians often resort to the tactics of activating the addressee to act by expressing *new ideas*, presenting in this way the changes that they plan to bring into the country's life. But, as it was mentioned above, in Barack Obama's speech as in Hillary Clinton's speech they sound somewhat uncertain.

4. Barack Obama often *appeals to human fear*, urging the voters on to specific actions. By recalling the decline in the income of an average American family during George W. Bush's presidency, Barack Obama encourages the listeners to think well before voting for John McCain, who, in his speech, is associated with a failed president's policy: *We measure progress in the 23 million new jobs that were created when Bill Clinton was President – when the average American family saw its income go up $7,500 instead of down $2,000 like it has under George Bush*. Hillary Clinton plays the opposite, by urging the electorate not to succumb to the fear cast by Donald Trump: *He wants us to fear the future and fear each other… The only thing we have to fear is fear itself!*, which is the manifestation of national self-glorification of the Americans as a courageous and brave nation, capable of overcoming any difficulties. Barack Obama's speech is also permeated with *national self-glorification,* but not to the extent of his party colleague.

Conclusions

The process of the political discourse understanding begins with decoding and comprehension of words and sentences, since discourse is, above all, a text immersed in a communication situation or vice versa − communication through the text. There is a wide variation of tactics and linguistic means for implementation of the strategy of persuasion in political discourse. Their choice depends on many non-linguistic factors, such as target audience, situational, socio-cultural and pragmatic context. We have established that during election campaigns the most important personal strategies are the positive self-presentation strategy and the negative other-presentation strategy. In the light of the conceptual structure of T. van Dijk, the acceptance speeches of contemporary American politicians were analysed, namely of the Democrats, which allowed us to determine the common and distinctive features of their discourse, the manners of personal persuasive strategies implementation, the use of tactics, steps and linguistic means to obtain the votes of electors.

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