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Political Discourse and the Turbulence of Times We Go Through

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Politics is penetrating into more and more spheres of human interaction, and political communication has become a most quick means of reflecting and responding to the developments going on in the society. In the recent decades when democratic governance and free market relations have expanded their boundaries to more countries, when mass media and high technologies enjoy such high levels of development, and unprecedented volumes, variety and speed of delivery of information are recorded man rediscovers the power of word and regains the pleasure and fruits of using word – and this is in the time of the smartest machines and robots ever existing.

But we all know that political consciousness still formed in the ancient times. “There is no change of techniques of art without changes in the most important state acts”, said Plato, and Aristotle added: “Man is a political animal” (http://yanko.lib.ru/books/lit/dushenkoaphorizm.htm#_Точ44520506). Still Aristotle spoke about ethos, logos and style, and pathos [6]. In modern terms these are transferred into identity of the speaker, argumentative and emotional-expressive structuring of the message, and influence on the audience.

Political discourse becomes the limelight of the society at decisive moments for the nation such as starting and ending a war, orienting in situations of crisis, or electing a new president. The verbal activity of the political leader gains utmost importance in particular. And if issues of war and crisis are realized in a context of exclusive presidential elections the power and influence of word become more than decisive in controlling and forming the minds of others.

In this respect the victory speech by the US President Barack Obama is of considerable interest as a case study [7]. We would like to introduce several guidelines traced in the speech and some observations concerning it.

The speaker uses a bunch of verbal-communicative strategies which together serve the general intention of establishing and affirming his leadership of the nation and the US as a state of world power. They are also aimed at refreshing and activating the common American ideals and values which entail the revival or formation of certain mental representations. Through the reference, either explicit or implicit, to the basic concepts and constructs of national consciousness and their skilful operation the speaker addresses issues of identity [3, 4] – both his political identity and the national identity, as a result merging these into a whole. Obama refers the presidential campaign and the victory to the American people. In this connection the speaker uses the strategy of continuity of power – positioning himself as the rightful successor of the great builders of the US history – and also the strategy of continuity of the nation. The strategies of oneness and I am one of you are exercised through the values “tying” the leader and the people. The values mentioned by the speaker are among the ones which make the American Frontier Spirit – not only a crucial concept but also a mode of existence for the American people. Another strategy that can be traced in the speech is establishing his leadership over all the parts of the nation and even expanding it beyond

the shores, defining friends and rivals at the same time. An efficient technique of persuasion is the example. The speaker gives an example refreshing the national memory and implicitly drawing necessary parallels between the past event and the present situation. The strategy of continuity of the nation can be traced again. The reference to the Great Depression, more exactly to the New Deal, and implicitly also to the legendary president Franklin Delano Roosevelt, is of critical importance in the context of the Financial Crisis 2008 to raise the spirit of the nation and encourage people to action.

These strategies are realized via various tactics or techniques among which most recurrent and efficient ones are repetition, gradation and parallelism, and also a most important one is the exploitation of implicit meaning. On the compositional level a highly valuable technique is the combination of different arguments, including example. These techniques enable the two ontologically inherent functions of political discourse – transmitting information and performing impact. So the logical and emotional components are indispensable to persuasive communication which result is decisively conditioned by the response of the target audience. Thus it is absolutely necessary to provide the involvement of the audience in the process of persuasive communication.

Political discourse having persuasion in its core and serving certain intentions and goals does not simply express or reflect the reality but rather constructs and creates it first in our minds, then in the sphere of human interaction where that reality is most objectified. Certain language realizations make it possible to express such emotional and mental experiences, perceptions of events and create such mental representations in people's minds, which are normally acquired through real experience [1]. The whole thing is intended to affect the cognition of human masses [9, 2]. So, language should fulfil its political function.

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