

## PRAGMATIC ASPECTS OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION (ON THE MATERIAL OF AMERICAN AND UKRAINIAN POLITICAL DISCOURSE)

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**Abstract:** The article deals with the problems of successful communication within American and Ukrainian political discourses. The pragmatic aspect as the most influential in social interaction is taken into consideration. The dominant models of pragmatic inquiry such as the cooperative principle, politeness strategies, principles of relevance and Leech's principle of politeness are considered to be crucial. Successful communicative activities are determined by certain parameters, namely the speakers' thesaurus, communicative competence, verbal and non-verbal behavior, communicative strategies, ethnocultural stereotypes, cultural and communicative expectations, intertextual thesaurus of a language personality. Communication according to these models is viewed as primarily interpersonal and understanding-oriented. The dominant communicative acts in American and Ukrainian political discourses are divided into mono-acts, replaced acts and integrated acts.

**Key words:** pragmatics, speech acts, successful communication, strategies, principle of politeness, cooperative principle

### Introduction

Problems of successful communication tend to be crucial for the process of ongoing globalization in the world because they create obstacles to successful professional-oriented communication in particular in a political one. The topicality of the research is determined by the necessity to investigate the process of communication in different spheres of social interaction and analyze the factors contributing to successful discourse or misunderstanding. The aim of the article is to consider pragmatic aspect of successful communication in the sphere of politics. Discourse is always embedded in a particular social context. Political realities are constructed in and through discourse (Dijk 2003). Political discourse is assigned the status of mediated and public discourse (Fetzer and Weizman 2006). The media can be said to have become the main form of publicness as more and more events are made public through the mass media rather than in face-to-face social interaction (Thompson 1995).

Speaking about the political communication, it is necessary to stress on its two-sided nature. On the one hand, politics is viewed as a struggle for power, between those who seek to assert and maintain their power and those who seek to resist it. On the other hand, politics

is viewed as cooperation, as the practices and institutions that a society has for resolving clashes of interest over money, influence, liberty, and the like. In other words at the micro level there are conflicts of interest, struggle for dominance and efforts at cooperation between individuals, social groups. At the macro level there are political institutions of the state which either try to resolve conflicts of interest or assert the power of the dominant individual or group (Chilton, 2004: 3).

Pragmatics is inevitably concerned with “meaning-making” against a set of parameters such as power, status, rights and obligations, various pragmatic theories of human communication can be readdressed to account for public discourse. Let us examine the adequacy of different pragmatic theories to account for the communication in a political discourse. Information exchange lies in the heart of the four most dominant models of pragmatic inquiry: the cooperative principle (Grice 1975), face wants and positive/negative politeness strategies (Brown and Levinson 1987), principles of relevance and message processing (Sperber and Wilson 1986), and Leech’s principle of politeness. Communication according to these models is viewed as primarily interpersonal and understanding-oriented. Individual’s search for effective forms of communication is quite understandable. Successful communicative activities are determined by certain parameters, namely the speakers’ thesaurus, communicative competence, verbal and non-verbal behavior, communicative strategies, etc.

### **1. Communicative Maxims in Political Discourse**

Grice’s influential argument is that a cooperative principle must underlie human communication looks as if it ought to be consistent with this paradigm. Sperber and Wilson (1986) say that the only purpose that a genuine communicator and a willing audience have in common is to achieve successful communication. But saying that humans communicatively cooperate does not mean that individuals cannot still be machiavellian in communication. Grice himself pointed out that collaboration in achieving exchange of information or the institution of decision may coexist with a high degree of reserve, hostility, and chicanery (Grice 1989). Language use and politics are both cooperative and uncooperative. In social and political life cooperation and exploitation go hand in hand.

The observance of communicative maxims contributes to the successful interaction in political discourse. If a politician follows H. P. Grice's maxims (maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and manner) as well as Leech's principle of politeness, the communicative act is to be successful. Pursuing different communicative strategies politicians break these maxims and the principle of politeness. Manipulation is closely connected with the violation of the above-mentioned principles.

Manipulation in politics is aimed at perseverance or change of the status role rules. The following types of manipulation are distinguished in a political discourse (Шейгал, 2004: 173 – 174): 1) referential manipulation (lie, exaggeration, referential indefiniteness); 2) argumentative manipulation (connected with the breach of the principles of communication). The analysis of American political discourse shows a wide use of referential manipulation usage within the framework of the following means, actualization of passive structures, syntactical ellipsis, using words with diffusive semantics.

## **2. Speech Acts in Political Discourse Analysis**

The cooperative principle appears to interact with other principles of human social behaviour (Leech 1983). The notion of speech acts is also important to political discourse analysis. Speech acts distinguished by Searle have direct relevance to political discourse: representatives (truth claims), directives (commands, requests), commissives (promises, threats), expressives (praising, blaming), declaratives (proclaiming a constitution, announcing an election, declaring war) (Dijk 2003). For instance, the speech act set of apology consists of an expression of regret, admission of the offence, assumption of the responsibility, account, minimizing the offence/responsibility, and offers of compensation (Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper 1989). The strategies composing specific speech acts sets, and global modificatory dimensions such as indirectness, minimization, and maximization of pragmatic force (House and Kasper 1981, Held 1989) have been demonstrated to be valid across languages and communities studied so far. Yet the choice a participant makes vary between speech and ethnic communities, and they are sure to reflect different cultural orientations. For instance in interaction with familiars but not intimates, direct strategies (like imperatives, statement of hearer's future action) seem more acceptable in the Slavic languages and German than in any of the standard varieties of English. It has been suggested that directness to speakers of these

languages connotes sincerity, straightforwardness and cordiality (Katriel 1988, Wierzbicka 1985) rather than imposition on their freedom of action. However, in these languages direct strategies are often interweaved with modal particles, diminutives and other linguistic means which do not alter the direct expression of pragmatic intent but soften imposing force.

The dominant communicative acts of American and Ukrainian political discourses include mono-acts, replaced acts and integrated acts. The area of coincidence in mono-acts of American and Ukrainian political discourses includes representatives, constatives, directives, expressives, promises, questions (primarily in dialogical forms of communication), the area of discrepancy in Ukrainian political discourse includes menace speech act. The area of coincidence in replaced acts includes constatives in the function of directives; the area of discrepancy in Ukrainian political discourse includes constatives in the function of directives. Integrated acts in American political discourse are referred to the area of discrepancies.

### **3. Politeness Strategy in Political Discourse**

Speech acts may be perceived to be impolite or polite depending on the situation of utterance and the roles, including the social roles of the participants. In terms of Goffman's (1967) idea of positive and negative face and face-threatening acts the politician has to achieve the balance between the positive face strategies and negative face strategies. On the one hand, it is necessary to address positive face – appealing to patriotism, pulling together, and civilized values. The most common language means of this strategy realization is the inclusive personal pronoun *we*. On the other hand a politician will have to address negative face – to tell his electorate about taxes increase, unemployment figures, these face-threatening acts are verbalized through the strategy aimed at lessening the affront.

Positive politeness strategies emphasize closeness between speaker and hearer by confirming or establishing common ground, or by referring to desirable attributes in the hearer (solidarity strategy (Scollon 1983)); negative politeness strategies suggest distance by accentuating the hearer's right to freedom from imposition (deference strategy (Scollon 1983)). Polite conduct implies acting in accordance with the requirements of the conversational contract at the given moment of the encounter. Acting politely is the same as using language appropriately. Whereas Leech [1983] had proposed a tact maxim as one of the implementation of his politeness principle, Janney and Arndt (1992) distinguish two

coordinate types of politeness, “social politeness” and “tact”. Social politeness refers to participants’ ability to organize interaction smoothly by coordinating their activities, observing the social-communicative game, while tact refers to regulating relationships by providing support, empathy and avoiding offense.

Speech etiquette as a combination cultural (national, ethnic and social) conditioned rules of speech behaviour (Яшенкова 2010: 109) is reflected in stereotypes, set expressions, that are represented on the phraseological level (*thank you, доброго ранку*); on the morphological level (the use of the forms of conditional mood in requests, suggestions and pieces of advice (*хотів би, would*); on the syntactic level (the use of interrogative sentences implying request or permission (*можна, may I*)). Implementation of speech etiquette becomes possible if there are at least two interlocutors and if the interaction takes place in one of the following communicative situation (addressing, e.g., *Дорогий Український народе! Good morning, ladies and gentlemen!*), congratulations (*Вітаю Тебе, I'm here to congratulate*), saying good-bye (*May God bless you all, and my God bless the United States of America, З любов'ю, вірою і найкращими побажаннями*), saying thanks (*я хочу подякувати, Thank you for that wonderful warm welcome*), agreement or disagreement (*не можу погодитися з вами, You agree*).

## Conclusion

The pragmatic aspect of successful communication in important social spheres like a political one occupies a crucial position in the general theory of successful communication. Ideal communication is possible only when participants follow all the rules of speech etiquette, behaviour, follow Grice’s maxims, Leech’s principle of politeness and other pragmatically important factors. But in reality in most cases everything is different, especially in the sphere of political discourse. To achieve the main aim of political struggle – power, politicians often break communication maxims, principles and rules. Implementation of speech etiquette becomes possible if there are at least two interlocutors and if the interaction takes place in one of the following communicative situation within political discourse like addressing, congratulations, saying good-bye, saying thanks, agreement or disagreement. Speech etiquette as a combination nationally, ethnically and socially conditioned rules of speech

behaviour is reflected in stereotypes, set expressions, that are represented on the phraseological level; on the morphological level and on the syntactic level.

The empirical material showed that the dominant communicative acts of American and Ukrainian political discourses include mono-acts, replaced acts and integrated acts. The area of coincidence in mono-acts of American and Ukrainian political discourses includes representatives, constatives, directives, expressives, promises, questions (primarily in dialogical forms of communication), the area of discrepancy in Ukrainian political discourse includes menace speech act. The area of coincidence in replaced acts includes constatives in the function of directives; the area of discrepancy in Ukrainian political discourse includes constatives in the function of directives. Integrated acts in American political discourse are referred to the area of discrepancies.

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