



## The use of linguistic means in political discourse

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### ABSTRACT

Political discourse serves as a central communicative tool in shaping public opinion, influencing decision-making, and guiding societal behavior. This article analyzes how linguistic means such as rhetorical questions, metaphors, intertextual references, stylistic devices, and communicative strategies are utilized in political speech to persuade, motivate, and establish a strong connection with the audience. Drawing on examples from the speeches of Uzbek presidents Islam Karimov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev, as well as international leaders such as Angela Merkel and David Cameron, the article examines the cognitive and pragmatic dimensions of political language. Emphasis is placed on the strategic use of language that reveals the speaker's linguistic personality, communicative goals, and capacity for manipulating audience perception.

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## Siyosiy diskurs til vositalarini qo'llanilishi

### АННОТАЦИЯ

#### Kalit so'zlar:

siyosiy diskurs,  
til vositalari,  
 ritorik savollar,  
kognitiv lingvistika,  
pragmatika,  
lingvistik shaxs,  
kommunikatsiya  
strategiyasi.

Siyosiy diskurs jamoatchilik fikrini shakllantirish, qarorlar qabul qilish jarayoniga ta'sir ko'rsatish va ijtimoiy xatti-harakatlarni boshqarishda asosiy kommunikativ vosita sifatida xizmat qiladi. Ushbu maqolada siyosiy nutqda ishlatiladigan til vositalari, jumladan ritorik savollar, metaforalar, intertekstual murojaatlar, uslubiy vositalar va kommunikativ strategiyalarning auditoriyani ishontirish, undash hamda ular bilan kuchli aloqa o'rnatishdagi roli tahlil qilinadi. Tahlilda O'zbekiston prezidentlari Islom Karimov va Shavkat Mirziyoyev, shuningdek, xalqaro yetakchilar Angela Merkel va David Kameronning nutqlaridan misollar keltirilib, siyosiy tilning kognitiv va pragmatik o'lchovlari yoritilgan. Til vositalarining

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strategik qo'llanilishi orqali nutq egasining lingvistik shaxsi, kommunikativ maqsadlari hamda auditoriya qarashlariga ta'sir ko'rsatish qobiliyati namoyon bo'lishiga alohida e'tibor qaratilgan.

## Использование языковых средств в политическом дискурсе

### АННОТАЦИЯ

#### Ключевые слова:

политический дискурс, языковые средства, риторические вопросы, когнитивная лингвистика, прагматика, языковая личность, коммуникативная стратегия.

Политический дискурс служит основным коммуникативным инструментом в формировании общественного мнения, влиянии на процесс принятия решений и управлении общественным поведением. В данной статье анализируется использование языковых средств риторических вопросов, метафор, интертекстуальных отсылок, стилистических приёмов и коммуникативных стратегий – в политической речи с целью убеждения, мотивации и установления прочной связи с аудиторией. На основе примеров из речей президентов Узбекистана Ислама Каримова и Шавката Мирзиёева, а также международных лидеров, таких как Ангела Меркель и Дэвид Кэмерон, в статье рассматриваются когнитивные и прагматические аспекты политического языка. Особое внимание уделяется стратегическому использованию языка, раскрывающему языковую личность говорящего, его коммуникативные цели и способность влиять на восприятие аудитории.

### INTRODUCTION

Language in political discourse is not a neutral medium but a deliberate, strategic tool used to construct realities, shape ideologies, and direct public behavior. Political figures, whether elected leaders, party representatives, or government spokespersons, rely on carefully crafted speech to justify policies, critique opposition, mobilize support, and cultivate a particular public image. In this regard, political discourse becomes a performative and ideologically charged act, where every linguistic choice matters.

Unlike everyday conversation, political language is purposeful and it seeks to inform, persuade, legitimize, and manipulate. The stakes of political speech are high: words can build trust or incite conflict, unite communities or deepen divisions. Therefore, politicians must possess not only oratorical talent but also a deep understanding of how linguistic tools such as rhetorical devices, metaphorical framing, intertextual references, and emotive expressions–function in discourse to achieve communicative goals.

The defining feature of political discourse, as observed by scholars like A. Chudinov, lies in its persuasive intent. It is designed to influence the audience by appealing to logic, emotion, identity, or social values [2]. Political speech does not exist in isolation; it is inherently relational, structured around the interaction between speaker (addresser) and audience (addressee). As Chudinov asserts, the content of political

discourse must engage all the cognitive, ideological, and emotional components present in the minds of both parties [1]. In other words, effective political discourse is not only about what is said, but how and to whom it is said.

In the field of linguistic studies, political discourse has gained increasing attention for its role in shaping public consciousness. In particular, scholars like T.B. Sokolovskaya highlight three major approaches to analyzing political language: descriptive, cognitive, and critical [3]. The descriptive approach focuses on the linguistic features and stylistic preferences of political speakers. The cognitive approach examines how language reflects mental models, conceptual metaphors, and ideological schemas. The critical approach, on the other hand, aims to uncover the power relations and social inequalities embedded in political communication.

Ultimately, the aim is to demonstrate that political discourse is not only a reflection of ideology but also a dynamic process of negotiation, where language becomes the principal instrument of influence and control. Understanding the linguistic architecture of political discourse is thus essential for critically engaging with political texts and recognizing the communicative strategies that underpin power in society.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

In modern linguistics, the political speaker is considered a **linguistic personality**, whose discourse reflects a unique worldview, cognitive schema, and strategic mindset. The use of language in political contexts involves both **cognitive depth** and **pragmatic function**, enabling the speaker to manipulate perceptions and achieve specific goals.

Rhetorical questions are frequently used in political discourse to prompt reflection, express emotional resonance, and establish a dialogic relationship with the audience. For example, the former President of Uzbekistan, **Islam Karimov** used such constructions in his speeches:

*“So what about us? Did we know who we truly were? Would we have realized that we are the children of a sacred land nourished by the immortal heritage of great ancestors?”* (“Xo’sh, o’zimiz-chi? O’zimiz o’zligimizni bilarmidik?” )

These rhetorical insertions serve to provoke thought and emphasize shared values, drawing the listener into the speaker’s emotional and ideological space.

Similarly, **President Shavkat Mirziyoyev** uses rhetorical devices to express urgency and highlight accountability:

*“Who will convince society? Who will explain that the law is supreme, and punishment is inevitable? Who, if not you?”* (“Kim ishontiradi jamiyatni, kim aytadi jamiyatga, kim qonun – ustuvor, jazo – muqarrar – deb ayta oladi?”)

Such language not only emphasizes responsibility but also strategically aligns the audience with the speaker’s agenda.

Political leaders often refer to authoritative figures or well-known cultural artifacts to enhance the legitimacy and intellectual depth of their speech. This practice creates **intertextuality**, which both deepens meaning and reflects the speaker’s erudition. For instance: *“As Lev Tolstoy said, who can be more miserable than a man alien to his own nation?”*

*“Margaret Thatcher, when asked why she wished to become Prime Minister, responded: ‘Because I realized I could not be at peace when people around me were not living well.’”*

Such examples do more than provide evidence and they position the speaker within a broader intellectual and moral tradition, enhancing credibility and emotional resonance.

The fusion of **literary, official, and journalistic styles** is another hallmark of political speech. As S. Barlibayeva notes, political texts sometimes incorporate non-political stylistic elements to increase their persuasive power [4]. The inclusion of **metaphors, aphorisms, and emotive language** transforms political communication from dry instruction into motivational oratory.

These stylistic choices reflect not only the speaker's communicative intent but also their **cognitive awareness** of language and its semantic possibilities.

Political discourse is fundamentally **goal-oriented**. Cognitive linguistics reveals how metaphors and conceptual models structure political reality in the minds of listeners. Pragmatics, on the other hand, examines how speech acts, presuppositions, and implicatures contribute to persuasion. For example, **Angela Merkel's** discourse has been described by A.M. Nekhorosheva as cognitively rich and pragmatically precise, grounded in humanistic and communal values [5]. Likewise, British Prime Minister **David Cameron's** speeches reflect a deep understanding of how language shapes perception.

D.V. Shapochkin's comparative study of British, American, and German political speech highlights key features such as goal-orientation, emotional appeal, and communicative precision [7].

Successful political leaders use **communicative strategies** that include manipulation, argumentation, self-presentation, and discrediting opponents. These strategies rely on specific **tactics**, each characterized by particular lexical, syntactic, and semantic choices.

L.A. Kaufova's study of **Theresa May** illustrates how her rhetorical style helped her gain support during a difficult historical moment. Her speech contained emotionally charged vocabulary pointed contrastive statements and direct appeals to national unity [6]. This suggests that the power of political language lies not only in its grammatical correctness or lexical richness but also in the **strategic alignment of form and function** to achieve desired outcomes.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of political discourse demonstrates that the use of linguistic means is central to how political figures establish authority, construct collective identity, and manage public perception. Political language functions not only as a medium of communication but also as a mechanism of power, allowing the speaker to shape ideological frameworks, influence decision-making, and guide collective action.

The frequent use of rhetorical questions, inserted interrogatives, and dialogic constructions in speeches by figures such as Islam Karimov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev illustrates how language can be employed to simulate dialogue, engage listeners emotionally, and provoke reflective thinking. These devices bridge the gap between formal, top-down communication and an imagined conversation with the people, thereby enhancing the speaker's credibility and relatability. This is especially effective in contexts where political trust is fragile and legitimacy must be continuously constructed through language.

Moreover, the strategic use of intertextual elements such as quotations from writers, historical figures, or other political leaders not only reinforces the speaker's authority but also establishes a sense of intellectual continuity and cultural alignment.

Referencing Lev Tolstoy or Margaret Thatcher, for instance, connects the speaker's message to broader moral or philosophical traditions, imbuing the discourse with a layer of universal meaning. These references are not incidental; they serve to position the speaker within a global discourse community, suggesting shared values and ideological coherence.

Stylistic plurality in political discourse through the blending of official, journalistic, and even literary styles expands the expressive capacity of the speaker. Politicians selectively incorporate metaphors, emotive lexis, and aphorisms to intensify the emotional impact of their speech and to simplify complex political issues into accessible narratives. As S. Barlibayeva and others have noted, this stylistic hybridity is not a deviation from the norm but rather a calculated strategy aimed at maximizing rhetorical effect.

The cognitive dimension of political discourse becomes particularly salient in the use of metaphors, stereotypes, and conceptual frames. These elements help structure how the audience interprets reality. For example, portraying the nation as a family, or the economy as a living organism, activates specific schemas that guide public opinion and behavior. This aligns with the cognitive approach to discourse analysis, which focuses on how language reflects and shapes mental representations. At the same time, political discourse is deeply pragmatic. It is context-sensitive and outcome-driven, oriented toward achieving specific communicative goals—whether to persuade, justify, deflect criticism, or assert dominance. The speaker's pragmatic competence shows their ability to select and use language forms appropriate to the sociopolitical context and intended audience is essential to the success of political communication. The study of figures such as Angela Merkel, David Cameron, and Theresa May reveals how such competence manifests in different national and cultural contexts. Despite differing rhetorical traditions, successful political leaders share a common ability to align form, function, and audience expectations.

Finally, political communication does not occur in a vacuum. It is shaped by media platforms, cultural codes, and audience reception. In the digital age, where political speeches are instantly disseminated, the rhetorical precision and emotional resonance of linguistic choices become even more critical. Missteps can rapidly spiral into public backlash, while powerful phrasing can become rallying cries. In conclusion, linguistic means in political discourse are not superficial ornaments but core instruments of political action. Understanding their structure, function, and effect is essential for both political practitioners and critical citizens.

### **CONCLUSION**

Linguistic means are central to the effectiveness of political discourse. The strategic use of rhetorical questions, metaphors, quotations, and emotive language not only enhances the persuasive power of political speech but also reflects the speaker's linguistic personality and cognitive sophistication.

Future studies might expand this analysis to include multimodal political discourse (e.g., visual elements, gestures, media framing) or examine the impact of digital platforms on political speech strategies. Understanding how language operates in political contexts is essential to developing both political literacy and critical media awareness in contemporary society.

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