LINGUISTIC AND PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL SLOGANS

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Lucrarea reprezintă o analiză a 37 de slogane politice electorale britanice și a 30 americane. Sloganele sunt analizate din punct de vedere fonetic, sintactic și pragmatic. Rezultatele acestei analize sunt prezentate în comparație, pentru a evidenția particularitățile sloganelor politice americane și britanice.

Politics is a very powerful tool of ruling the world, influencing people's life and activity that it is, practically, impossible to make an individual decision. Modern politics became too problematic nowadays. A good example here is Republic of Moldova, which has a so complicated political situation already for a couple of years. However, politics is our life and nothing can be done about. It manipulates people's opinions mainly with the help of good discourses. One of the causes why these are so influential is the fact that politicians use effective and powerful slogans, which are short expressions associated with political advertising meant to express ideas, aims or the

nature of an individual or organization in ways that are simple and easy to remember or to communicate [2, p.21-22]. It sounds strange, but namely slogans make the audience change their thoughts, opinions and actions.

One of the most important elements of a good slogan is the rhyme which brings a musical sound to the slogan. According to the British linguist, Simon Kewin, there are the following types of rhyme: end rhyme, identical, slant, internal or rich rhyme [3, p.27]. In this way the memorability level is higher. In the examples used for the research were identified 9 slogans with rhyme: end rhymes in 4 examples ('If you value it, vote for it'– Tony Blair's government), internal and identical rhymes that can intermingle each other in just 3 slogans ('New Labour, New Danger'– Tony Blair' government), and one for slant rhyme both from American slogan list ('Better d/e/d than R/e/d', An anti-Communist). Only the rich rhyme and one example of eye rhyme cannot be identified in the list of slogans used here, maybe in order not to confuse people while pronouncing the words, as far as this type is similar with homonyms. Americans usually use short utterances with an interesting sound, as in the slogan 'Better dead than red'. Thus in order to attract people they do not put the accent on the powerful sounds as British do using the alliteration very frequently. Americans, being more cheerful and playful, use rhyme, while British use alliterations in order to make their listeners put an effort into understanding better what is said namely in the speech presented. It can be mentioned that alliteration is mainly characterized by the presence of the consonant /b/ (in 5 examples out of 67), consonant 'l' (4 out of 67), consonant /p/ (3 slogans out of 67) and just one example with the consonant /s/ and one with /h/. Another linguistic devise used equally in slogans from both countries is the assonance. Though in comparison with alliteration, assonance is not such an obvious type of scheme and it is not so preferred by the politicians.

Due to R. Quirk's syntactic classification of utterances the slogans were grouped in four classes. [4, p.39] The first group is that of statements, which here they constitute the most part of the slogans, 39 out of 67. The second type is linked with questions and they are subdivided into 3 smaller classes, but only 2 slogans can represent the first and the third subgroup of questions. Most of the slogans used for this research take part of the third class which represents the slogans that are characterized as command. Here one can find 23 slogans out of 67. The last group from this taxonomy is made up by exclamations which are not so frequently used in slogans, especially with their explanative mark at the end. Just one example of this kind: 'Bigger cages! Longer chains!' can be found in American list of political slogans. A common characteristic is that both countries prefer imperative type of sentences. British speakers manipulate people by making them to think that they are co-participants of a great political unity, but, in fact, they are acting

as they decided already. If British speakers like imperatives, Americans consider the declaratives as an important factor in creating effective slogans. They seem to be more democratic in a way, because they leave more space for peoples' own decisions. This cannot be said about British speakers who are not afraid of influencing people, but in an intelligent way.

In any political activity, the audience is a paramount factor. British people here seem to be much experimented and they want to be closer to their people. According to the taxonomy of Angela Goddard, the types of narrator become very important when studying slogans, especially from two different countries. [1, p.30-31] From the list of American slogans only 5 slogans out of 30 have some kind of narrator, namely 'he, I, it, we' and again 'we'. Whereas, when studying the British slogans we identify 11 out of 37 slogans what employed 'we, you', and 'it' types of narrator. The pronouns 'you' and 'we' have a very specific feature of closeness when used in speeches. The use of these types of narrator is beneficiary for the political actor as they address the audience and the last perceived the message as being address to him/her, thus the slogan can be easer internalized. The candidate or political party has only to win after this.

Pragmatic functions are also very good tools of manipulation. An interesting fact is that the only group, that of imperatives as in the example 'Don't Come to the U.K.' (Britain's new slogan), is equal in British and American list of slogans (4 and 4 slogans). The common feature is the negative construction, which has a great role in making people act on the contrary. It is a powerful tool in manipulating people and the speakers use it frequently. The classifications presented in the thesis emphasize the fact that British people are not afraid at all to influence in a more vivid way. However, the both politics, that of Great Britain as well as American one, are very well organized. It is not clear how namely, but they know how to make people to act, to be interested in what is going on in the country. The concept of patriotism is powerful there.

Clear steps and solutions that must be introduced in order to change the situation of the politics in a specific country are not written yet, but to fight with it worth being made daily. The ability of politicians to make citizens to act somehow is always important. In this thesis are specified the main principles of making a powerful discourse by using effective slogans. 67 slogans were studied and analyzed in detail with the help of inductive and deductive methodology related to the specific observations and generalizations, comparative analysis between different types of classifications and the syntactic method that characterizes the structure of the utterances used as examples for the thesis. All these help at identifying another important feature present in both American and British political slogans, and namely that the punctuation is not as common for manipulation

as the analysis can show ‘Yes We Can’ (B. Obama). This is an important element for a persuasion text. Punctuation make people observe or hear more details than it is need in a political campaign. When people hear a good, rhythmic or humouristic slogan they are more likely to believe in what they are listening to.

This research supports my idea that society is ruled by the upper class people, sometimes even if people are sure that they are making the rules or the life. This is not quite true. People are not yet able to be independent enough to live their lives to the fullest and those persons who are more capable of this are ruling the country, the rest are just surviving under someone’s control. But I hope that one day it will be different, all of us will have the opportunity to rule his or her own territory in a true and own way without hurting or subjugated the others, without crimes and low salaries, etc

References:

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