



ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИЙ И МЕДИАДИСКУРС POLITICAL AND MEDIA DISCOURSE

DOI: 10.22363/2312-9182-2018-22-2-278-291

PERSUASION IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE: BARAK OBAMA'S PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHES AGAINST ISIS

MINOO ALEMI¹, ASHKAN LATIFI², ARASH NEMATZADEH²

¹Islamic Azad University
West Tehran Branch
Shariati St., 1949663311, Tehran, Iran

²Sharif University of Technology
Azadi Ave., 11365-11155, Tehran, Iran

Abstract

The current study was concerned with the use of persuasion by President Obama, the former US president, as a discursive strategy in his two speeches delivered on 7/Aug/2014 and 10/Sep/2014 regarding ISIS. Analysis of these speeches was done by the application of Searle's typology theory (1978), and pronoun analysis. That is, assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative speech acts, first person singular and plural pronouns (inclusiveness and exclusiveness), and agency. The findings of the study revealed that assertives were the most frequent speech act utilized in both speeches. Considering the function of assertives, this study showed that President Obama's major intention was to justify the air-strikes launched by the US army on ISIS's zones in Iraq. Besides, first person plural pronoun analysis in terms of inclusiveness/exclusiveness showed that President Obama's stance was a conservative one according to which American people's justification of his assertions concerning ISIS could be the cornerstone of any further military action that would be undertaken by the US army against ISIS. These analyses held the same result regarding the importance of persuasion as a pivotal axis in his aforementioned speeches. As to the issue of agency, the results held that President Obama took a conservative stance relying upon the will of American civilians and submitting his agency to Americans' ideals and power as shown by his total 34 commissives undertaken in these two speeches.

Keywords: *Barak Obama, ISIS, Searle's speech act theory, pronoun analysis, persuasion strategy, political discourse*

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Cook (2011), discourse analysis was first in ultimate service to structuralism and descriptive linguistics during the 1950s and 1960s. At the time, discourse analysis was for the investigation of the interrelationships within a text beyond sentence level in terms of cohesion. However, as he further maintains, under the influence of Systemic-Functional-Linguistics and Hymes' theory of communicative competence during the 1970s, a great deal of change took place, and discourse analysis moved beyond the limits of self-contained linguistic structures into the social realms of language use and text.

Discourse is composed of two levels: a) Microstructural discourse level which is concerned with issues of cohesion; that is, the integration of discourse elements into a unified text; b) Macrostructural discourse level which deals with the knowledge of organizational features that are characteristic of genres which are conventionalized categories and types of discourse and interactional strategies; and, both of these levels are sensitive to the relationship between the linguistic elements and the communicative situations' specifications in terms of context, culture, and content (Saville-Troike 2006). These linguistic elements can be used for a number of different functions such as those suggested by Hymes (1962): a) Expressive (Emotive), b) Directive (Conative, Pragmatic, Persuasive, Rhetorical), c) Poetic, d) Contact, e) Metalinguistic, f) Referential, and g) Contextual (Situational).

As Wodak (2005: 369) concisely argues "...in-depth [linguistic] studies are essential to be able to understand the specific cultural, national or regional context in which politicians very consciously operate." As such, our study tried to reveal the persuasive strategies that were used by President Obama in convincing Americans of the US' foreign policy regarding air-attacks on ISIS. This study can be replicated in analyzing other political rhetorical texts in order to reveal the persuasive strategies which are drawn upon or devised by political systems as either a justified persuasive rhetoric action against a threat or an opportunistic political act trained upon manipulative and narcissistic ends by, for example, totalitarian regimes.

2. THE REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Discourse is involved both at global and local levels within any suprasentential text. Cook (2011: 431) defines discourse as "... a stretch of language in use, of any length and in any mode, which achieves meaning and coherence for those involved", he then proposes discourse analysis as the development and the use of theories which can help the analyst to make clear how meaning is created and coherence is fulfilled by those involved in communicative action. It is worthwhile to note that such an analysis is not limited to language but any processes and elements which contribute to communication. Furthermore, he maintains that discourse analysis has drawn upon a number of theories from other disciplines (e.g., social theories by Foucault and Bourdieu) as a compliment to linguistics and has, as well, developed a number of theories in this regard.

A discourse analyst carries out a systematic objectification of what people mostly unconsciously and symbolically do in their everyday life. That is, discourse analysis is concerned with patterns of language use and the circumstances with which such patterning is associated in any instance of communication.

Persuasive strategies as discursive practices are mostly dealt with through Critical Discourse Analysis where their persuasive and manipulative functions carried out by language in media, political arena, etc. are probed into and revealed (Fairclough 1989). Activities are by and large rearranged so as to suit the persuasive purposes that they serve in social practice. Such a transformation is performed through a process of recontextualization which is exerted through discourse (van Leeuwen 2008). For example, political discourse lays the lines along which the rhetoric is recontextualized in such

a way that serves the purposes for which the text is produced, manipulated, and hoped to be interpreted. Wodak (2006) discussing some studies related to this topic shows how, for example, the use of passive constructions let political orators keep distance from what their regimes do on their behalf. Such linguistic tools let political leaders desubjectivize themselves to the level of a by-stander who solely reports on the objective truth as the requisite condition for an unconditional and inarguable embrace of the text on part of the audience. The very logic underpinning persuasion aims at appealing to the receivers' mental models in such a way that their interpretations of the text are homogeneously similar to the one intended by the political discourse as much as possible. However, as van Dijk (2002) insists, it is not that the mental models of all text-receivers are the same per se to necessarily result in a certain devised interpretation.

2.1. Searle's Speech Act Theory

Searle (1978) classified speech acts into five categories as the core of the typology that he proposed which consists of *assertives*, *directives*, *commissives*, *expressives*, and *declarations*. *Assertives* are the assertions made by the addresser to the truth. *Directives* are those which are utilized to direct the addressee's action. *Commissives* commit the addresser to what they have produced. *Expressives* are the expressions which the addresser has expressed, and finally, *declarations* are those declared on part of the addresser. Speech acts are of canonical and imponderable importance to the current study. The following provides some examples regarding these five speech acts:

1. Assertive: for example, 'I believe there's been foul play'.
2. Directive: for example, 'Plainly tell me what is it that you want?'
3. Commissive: for example, 'I promise that I won't tell you any lies anymore'.
4. Expressive: for example, 'I am cold'.
5. Declaration: for example, 'Judge: I sentence you to life imprisonment'.

Some utterances may fulfill more than only one speech act which can be either intentional or unintentional. What decides which speech act is more prominent in such cases is the very context within which that speech act occurs as well as the mental model of the receiver of the message. That is, what is perceived by the receiver of the message is not solely the result of the context but the very schematic knowledge of the addressee which is presupposed by the addresser to be shared with his as Widdowson (2007) argues.

2.2. Pronoun

Another aspect which can be taken into account in discourse studies is the use of *exclusive* versus *inclusive pronouns*. As Scheibman (2004: 378) puts it:

Many languages lexically or morphologically distinguish inclusive uses of the first person plural pronoun — those that refer to the speaker and the addressee agency(s), from exclusive uses—those that refer to the speaker and another individual or group who are not addressees. In English, first person plural pronouns function both inclusively and exclusively without a change in form.

Of course, the borderline between the two is fuzzy and sometimes difficult to be established, yet they are powerful devices for political speech when it is necessary to

persuade performing an action, include or exclude a certain part of the society or any institutions, and in general as an instrument for employing negative or positive politeness strategies in favor of negative or positive face (Harwood 2005). Harwood drawing upon this notion makes a comparison between the personal pronouns ‘I’ and inclusive and exclusive ‘we’ in academic writings. Among the findings of Harwood’s study, the employment of inclusive ‘we’ can act as a politeness device, specifically, when a deficiency is to be discussed and shared with others.

As Wilson (1990) indicates, using exclusive and inclusive pronouns in political discourse serves persuasive goals as a means to achieving certain ends. “We” and “our” often play different roles in political context. Being inclusive or exclusive makes real difference in the audience’s or reader’s interpretation. Of course, the situational and contextual specificity of the event and the audience’s psychological reality, background knowledge, the influence of media, etc. should not be neglected at the price of idealizing the text as an end in-itself.

2.3. Agency

The other aspect of discourse that is worth mentioning is ‘agency’ which proves no less fuzzy than ‘inclusive/exclusive pronouns’. To provide a definition of agency is not an easy task (Bleiker 2003). As Bleiker (2003) maintains, traditionally, it was equaled with a duality of intention and result but it no more holds as poststructuralist and postmodern scholars believe that such a duality is but an artificial and idealized one. Bleiker further argues that discourse not only does not exclude agency but also provides opportunities for its emergence through discursive dissent where the postmodern and poststructuralist notion of ‘identity fluidity’ lies at the heart of social transformation and change, hence, agency. Nevertheless, Ahearn (2001) proposes that agency cannot be equaled with free will as it is constrained to some extent by the society, nor can it be equaled with resistance as oppositional agency is just one type of agency. Ahearn further cites Ortner’s proposal that agency is both socioculturally enabled and constrained; that is, it is not something absolute but the result of the conflict inherent within the social structures and that of the interaction between opportunity for practice and sociocultural predispositions. According to Mannheim and Tedlock (cited in Ahearn 2001), agency is not within people but between them. In fact, it is a social construct which emerges in the context within which it is born. It is not a commodity which already exists out there; it is co-constructed in dialogue even if the dialogue superficially seems to be a one-way speech delivery. That is, at deeper levels of analysis no linguistic production is a monologue as Bakhtin (1981) points out.

There have been a myriad number of studies in political discourse analysis within the past decade such as, to name but a few, Khany and Hamzelou (2014) concerned with a systemic functional analysis of dictators’ political speech, Wang’s (2010) analysis of Obama’s speeches, Al-Faki (2014) and the analysis of some African Leaders’ speeches, Pu’s (2007) study analyzing Bush’s speech at Tsinghua University, Abdel-Moety’s (2015) analysis of Hillary Clinton’s interviews, Bayram’s (2010) concerned with Erdogan’s political speech, Al-Majali (2015) analyzing ousted Arab presidents’ political speeches during the Arab Spring Revolution, Abdullahi-Idiagbon

(2010) and the analysis of Nigeria's presidential election campaign speeches, Sarfo and Krampa (2013) analyzing Obama's and Bush's speeches on terrorism, Shayegh and Nabifar (2012) and the issue of power in Obama's political discourse, etc. that all bear witness to the significance of language as an influential tool by means of which political ends are persuaded and pursued by political leaders in terms of rationalization, legitimation, euphemization, manipulation, justification, etc. However, there seems to be an urgent need for new studies to analyze the speech acts aforementioned in the recent speeches delivered by political figures and statesmen over the crisis of ISIS in the Middle East. These types of analysis can assist us in obtaining a better understanding of their policies in this regard.

There is a lack of any comprehensive interviews or speech deliveries by the presidents of the governments in the region concerning the crises of ISIS. To the contrary, President Obama has treated this issue in a different manner with a number of lectures and interviews exclusively devoted to these crises in the Middle East. Accordingly, the current study will be focused upon two of his speeches delivered on 7/Aug/2014 and 10/Sep/2014.

In this study, *Searle's Speech Act Typology Theory* (1978), pronoun, and agency analyses were utilized so as to investigate the linguistic persuasive strategies that President Obama put to use in his speeches about ISIS.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Corpus

The corpus of this study included two speeches delivered by Barak Obama, the former President of the United States, on 7/Aug/2014 and 10/Sep/2014 each lasting 8:36 and 15:16 minutes respectively. The footages of these two speeches are available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zuaO5EJzLAE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spIWGoNZnaU>

3.2. Analysis Method

The current study aimed to investigate how persuasion strategies were used in the two speeches delivered by President Obama, on 7/Aug/2014 and 10/Sep/2014 concerning the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. To this end, discourse analysis was done by means of the application of *Searle's typology theory* (1978), *agency*, and *pronoun* analysis in terms of speech acts and inclusiveness/exclusiveness. The instances of each speech act (in terms of phrase and sentence) were counted in number so as to see into their hierarchy in the speeches delivered and then the counts underwent interpretation. The same was carried out in the analysis of agency and pronoun inclusiveness/exclusiveness in the texts.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study with regard to the frequency counts of the mentioned speech acts and tools revealed that *assertives* were the most frequently used in both speeches delivered by President Obama. Considering the function that *assertives* serve, this study showed that President Obama's major intention of using such discursive

tools was aimed at justifying the airstrikes launched by the US army on ISIS’s zones in Iraq persuading Americans and reminding them that ISIS is a real threat to the country and the whole world, and, as a result, substantial measures should be adopted to put an end to their inhumane acts.

4.1. Speech Acts

As to the first speech, it is evident (as the results in Table 1 show) that the prominent speech act was *assertive* that according to Searle (1978) is related to asserting the truth of something. In line with his persuasion strategy, Barak Obama signaled certain facts about ISIS group. This speech act as his main tool throughout his first speech let President Obama convince his audience that ISIS was a brutal terrorist group and real threat to the US and the world. According to our analysis, the results indicated that there were 73 cases of *assertives*, 3 *directives*, 15 *commissives*, 7 *expressives*, and 2 *declarations* out of the total 100 instances of speech acts in his first speech. Investigating these numbers in terms of frequency, it is conspicuous that President Obama did not issue direct orders to his audience or force them into doing anything. He, on the contrary, made assertions about the truth that ISIS was a threat and the US government and army had to take action against them. Fifteen instances of commissive speech acts mirror Obama and his team’s psychological attempts at helping Americans make certain that appropriate measures would be taken and responsibility would be shouldered. As it regards declarations and directives, it is vivid that he tried his best in a conservative way not to issue any direct orders; in addition, only seven expressives show that he wished to convey very little personal emotional engagement with the crisis implicating the adoption of a rational approach in line with his overall logic of convincement.

Although the second speech was bulkier than the first one, the speech acts used in both speeches followed a similar pattern. With regard to Searle’s typology of speech acts, there were 101 instances of *assertives*, 6 *directives*, 19 *commissives*, 8 expressives, and 0 *declarations* out of the total number of 134 speech acts utilized in this speech. Similarly, assertive speech acts outnumbered the other types. That is, again, President Obama made assertions about facts regarding ISIS as a threatening terrorist group. Commissives were also the second most frequently used speech acts. Regarding declarations and directives, anew, President Obama’s stance was conservative although there was a minor increase in the number of the former. Regarding expressives, he, again, similar to his first speech, added as little emotional hue as possible to his second speech. This same pattern clearly showed that the underlying structure of these two texts was formulated in such a way that the same ends were pursued resorting to the overall logic of convincement.

Table 1

The Frequency of Speech Acts in Two Speeches

	The frequency of speech acts in the first speech	The frequency of speech acts in the second speech
Assertive	73	101
Directive	3	6
Commissive	15	19
Expressive	7	8
Declaration	2	0

4.2. Pronoun Analysis

4.2.1. First Person Singular Pronoun

Executing pronoun analysis on the first speech, the results held that out of the total number of 19 instances of *first person singular pronoun*, 11 were *assertive*, 4 were *commissive*, 2 were *declaration*, and 2 were *expressive*. Again, eleven assertives as the most frequent within the total number of the *first person singular pronouns* used showed that the overall goal of President Obama in this speech was to convince Americans that ISIS was a real threat to their country. The other class of *first person singular pronoun* used (the second most frequent by four instances) was *commissive* which bore witness to the similarity of the patterns discerned through pronoun analysis and those obtained by means of Searle’s typology in section 4.1. This implicates that President Obama through emphasizing assertives commits himself to taking proper actions against ISIS if his assertions to truth are accepted by Americans simply because the main logic of his speech is convincement. Besides, pronoun analysis revealed that the pronouns utilized in the overall two uses of *declaration* speech acts were *first person singular* suggesting that President Obama explicitly represented himself as the main authority in the United States who can issue directions and honor his pledge. As to expressive speech acts, only in two instances of them was *first person singular pronoun* drawn upon which is, on our part, believed to mirror ‘emotional detachment and rational thinking’ as the underlying logic of President Obama’s speech at a social psychological level to the effect of convincement.

The analysis of the second speech based upon the premises set by Searle’s typology and pronoun analysis yielded the same pattern as those elaborated upon thus far. Out of the instances that contained *first person singular pronoun*, eighteen contained *assertive*, five *commissives*, three *directive*, and two *expressive* speech acts with no declarations at all. These results, again, clearly indicated that the underlying logic of the second text was the same as the first one with minor differences that had not changed the overall weight of assertives at all. However, in the second speech, as Table 2 shows, President Obama was clearly more persuasive (with 7 more assertives) and, to a lesser degree, more directive, more commissive, and less declarative which together implied that he was more serious than his first speech and had wished to do so through assertive rather than declaration speech acts as a strategy again informed by his logic of convincement.

Table 2

First Person Singular Pronoun and Speech Acts

	Assertive	Commissive	Directive	Declaration	Expressive
Speech on 07/08/2014	11	4	0	0	2
Speech on 10/09/2014	18	5	3	2	2

4.2.2. First Person Plural (inclusive/exclusive) Pronoun

In line with the main aim of this study, the instances of *first person plural pronoun* underwent analysis so as to discern the underlying pattern of President Obama’s abovementioned speeches in terms of inclusive and exclusive pronouns regarding their political implication and significance. Analyzing these two speeches, it became evident that different modes of “we” (inclusive/exclusive) were utilized pursuing certain political ends.

The results of the analysis of the speech given on 7/8/2014 revealed that there were 38 instances of inclusive and 22 instances of exclusive first person plural pronouns in President Obama's statements. Inclusive pronoun was drawn upon when President Obama intended to refer to himself along with other Americans, for example:

(6) “**We** can also lead with the power of our diplomacy, our economy, and our ideals.”

Here, President Obama declared his policies as the will of a nation wherein every American was included and taken to be in agreement with the assertions issued by him. “We” and “our” imply the following implicit propositions; namely, “I as your president”; “you as my countrymen”; “our experts in political issues and economy”; and “the United States’ diplomatic and economic power as a shared commodity” plus “ideals which are advocated and espoused by all Americans”. As it is already clear, the overall tone of this statement was based upon a persuasive strategy materially supported by reminding Americans of the potentials and capabilities of the US plus the abstract ideals for which such strengths should be utilized and exploited. At a social psychological level, this works in two different ways which in fact reinforce one another. The first one goes to the collective psychological security that is promoted by reminding Americans of the potentials and power of their country which is able to take necessary measures if need should arise and the second one is concerned with the legitimization of these necessary measures through ascertaining people that their ideals are to be pursued.

As an example of the use of exclusive “we”, the following excerpt is the most conspicuous:

(7) “**We** can act, carefully and responsibly, to prevent a potential act of genocide.”

Where in the previous extract all American people were addressed by issuing an inclusive “we”, it is used for a different objective here. Based upon the context, it is vivid that President Obama exclusively referred to the US army and himself (the US government) but not American civilians. It was intended to clarify that “I as your president” and “US army” were included wherein “you as civilians” were excluded outright. The researchers of this study believe the reason for the use of an exclusive “we” may be that by drawing a line between the civilians and US army, the political discourse allows space for the legitimization of the latter’s military expedition as a justified act of specialized forces on behalf of ordinary civilians’ security who may, as a result, enjoy some psychological safety distance from the ugliness of war. This blurs the borders which differentiate justified actions from unjustified ends such as developing worldwide markets of weapons and missiles, hegemonic interference, oil quest, etc. that may be aimed at by certain states in the name of human rights, civilians’ civil rights, democracy, religion, liberalism, and the list can still go on and on.

In the second speech, again, the same pattern can be seen. As our analysis of *first person plural pronoun* revealed, there were 30 exclusive and 42 inclusive instances in which “we” was used. As an example of the former the following excerpt is very illuminating:

(8) “In the fight against ISIS, **we** cannot rely on an Assad regime that terrorizes its people; a regime that will never regain the legitimacy it has lost.”

“We” in this sentence represents only President Obama and the US army not American civilians. President Obama trying to clarify his political stance (according to which there will be no reliance upon Assad’s regime) adds a military hue to the overall picture of the US’ foreign policy toward religious fundamentalism in Syria by means of excluding American civilians and emphasizing the US government and US army.

The second example shows an instance of the use of inclusive “we”:

(9) “That is the difference **we** make in the world.”

This last example contains an inclusive use of pronoun ‘we’. Here, what is implicitly aimed at are ‘Obama and all American civilians’ by means of which, again, as it is clear, President Obama resorted to legitimation and capability economies as the guarantee for making a change into the world. The former goes to American ideals which puts claim to democracy, human rights, liberalism, etc. and the latter to political and economic power of the US as a superpower. At the social level, these two play a crucial role in fulfilling what President Obama’s foreign policy regarding ISIS is trained upon. They both reinforce one another in a mechanism according to which the legitimacy of the US government and army is based upon their pursuing Americans’ ideals where these ideals are in return secured by the government and army.

The investigation of these exclusive and inclusive pronouns indicated that when president Obama intended to mention any political military action, he excluded American civilians but when talking about an overall goal for the world, inclusive pronoun is utilized. In Table 3, the frequency of both *inclusive* and *exclusive pronouns* in the two aforementioned speeches are compared together. It is evident that there is also a specific pattern that bears witness to the abovementioned overall goal that President Obama followed in his two speeches about ISIS.

Table 3

Inclusive/Exclusive Deictic Pronouns Comparison

	Inclusive ‘we’	Exclusive ‘we’
Speech on 07/08/2014	38	22
Speech on 10/09/2014	42	30

4.3. Agency

As it regards agency, based upon our arguments and the frequencies of the speech acts and first person plural (inclusive/exclusive) pronouns in the two speeches analyzed, the results revealed that 174 assertives in comparison to only 2 declarations and 9 directives and the overall 80 inclusive versus 52 exclusive first person plural pronouns bear witness to President Obama’s conservative stance in his attempts at resorting to the collective consciousness of Americans. In addition, his agency was submitted to Americans’ ideals and power as displayed in the total 34 commissives that he undertook in his two speeches. Of course, this has to be interpreted with due caution in that the ideals which are drawn upon by governments may well be in part the result of their top-down policies imposed upon the society by means of the media, policing and the institutions exploited by the ideological state apparatus such as the educational system, family, religious institutions, etc.

5. CONCLUSION

As already discussed, there is an inclination in political discourse to develop, manipulate, and use different discursive practices and tools toward certain goals. Of course, discursive practices and texts are not confined to language but any semiotic system that can be drawn upon for the benefits of a certain discourse through its materialization in genres and specific styles within a specific context. One of such contexts contains political oration. In our current study, two of President Obama's speeches about the crisis of ISIS in the Middle East underwent analysis in terms of *speech acts typology* (Searle 1978) and quantitative analyses of *first person singular pronoun* and *first person (inclusiveness/exclusiveness) plural pronoun*. Resorting to the findings, the researchers also analyzed the agency exercised by President Obama in these speeches.

As the total frequencies of the speech acts in the two speeches indicate (174 assertives, 24 commissives, 15 expressives, 9 directives, and 2 declarations) the overall pattern of the two texts is mainly founded upon the logic of convincement which is conservative in the political sense of the term. These results plus those concerning the inclusiveness/exclusiveness of first person plural pronoun "we" suggest that different discursive practices were utilized by President Obama so as to transfer his message to his audience regarding the US' foreign policy, American ideals, American civilians, religious fundamentalism (Islamism), the leaders of the Middle East states, etc. Our analysis made it clear that President Obama's stance was a conservative one in which his agency was submitted to the will of his nation in service of American ideals, a clear distinction between the US army and American civilians when it came to military action, reliance upon American people's approval of his policies, and prosperity for the world based upon the economic strength and military power of the US. Whether or not these are authentically pursued by the US does not concern our current study in that our main objective was to analyze these speeches in terms of their linguistic structure and underlying patterns rather than political ends.

The results of our study showed that these two speeches were structured in such a way that the underlying patterns of their rhetorical and linguistic specificity proved to be in service of the goals pursued by the political system and authorities of the US. This is one of the instances in which a political text is consciously made so as to appeal to the people's either subconscious or unconscious mind. Take social conventional ideals, religious beliefs, nationalism, etc. as some other examples of taken-for-granted values in the society which are mostly unconscious and drawn upon by the authorities as a legitimizing foundation for a certain discourse and its exertion. Although a comparison between this study and other studies carried out in this line of research proved difficult due to the fact that different political contexts and orators were concerned, it is justified to conclude that our findings confirm those of Pu (2007), Wang (2010), Abdullahi-Idiagbon (2010), Sarfo and Krampa (2013), and Al-Faki (2014) according to which political discourses exerted by political leaders are aimed at fulfilling certain conscious political goals through discursive practices (for example, rhetorical ones) which allow them to formulate their underlying patterns in such a way that their purposes are addressed with regard to their society and its attributed conscious and/or taken-for-granted values. However, as Foucault (1980) aptly argues, power is omnipresent and is born and

enacted within other and every social relation and its intertwinement with knowledge can advantage one discourse over the other. That is, putting claim to truth (e.g. through assertives) exists only within relations of power wherein the dominant discourse reinforces and is reinforced by the truth that has legitimized it and in return essentialized and neutralized by it.

Admittedly, our study suffers from some limitations and delimitations which can be recompensed in further research. For example, it would be best if president Obama's speeches were matched against other political leaders' regarding the crisis of ISIS in the Middle East. Besides, political texts can also be analyzed with resort to other theoretical frameworks such as psychoanalysis, critical social theory, Marxist theory, etc. This lets us look at the same subject from different perspectives so that we can arrive at a better overall understanding of the phenomenon under study. The findings of this study can be used in the field of social psychology in that they provide an understanding of the discursive practices by means of which political leaders and statesmen, along with other strategies, influence people's minds and their worldviews concerning us/Other, right/wrong, and other similar dichotomies. In addition, the methodology presented in our study can be drawn upon within the fields of political studies, political sociology, sociology of (mass) media, etc. that are also in a large part concerned with discursive practices and the subtleties of language use and manipulation by conscious (political) agents. Last but not least, although our research was totally a descriptive study based upon the positivistic principles of quantitative text analysis, this by no means mean that further research cannot approach these findings from a political and evaluative perspective following the premises of, let us say, critical theory.

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Article history:

Received: 10 August 2017

Revised: 28 December 2017

Accepted: 24 January 2018

For citation:

Alemi, Minoo, Ashkan Latifi, and Arash Nematzadeh (2018). Persuasion in Political Discourse: Barak Obama's Presidential Speeches against ISIS. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*, 22 (2), 278—291. doi: 10.22363/2312-9182-2018-22-2-278-291.

Bionote:

MINOO ALEMI is Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics at Islamic Azad University, West Tehran Branch, and a post-doctoral associate at Sharif University of Technology (SUT), Iran. She is the associate editor of *Applied Pragmatics* (John Benjamins) and sits on the editorial/review boards of many journals, including *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *BRAIN*, *LIBRI*, and *Scientia Iranica*. Her areas of interest include discourse analysis, interlanguage pragmatics, materials development, and robot-assisted language education. *Contact information*: e-mail: Minooalemi2000@yahoo.com

ASHKAN LATIFI holds an MA in Applied Linguistics from Sharif University of Technology and is currently an MA student of Sociology at Bu-Ali Sina University. His areas of interest are neuropsychology, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, and sociolinguistics. *Contact information*: e-mail: ashkan.latify@gmail.com

ARASH NEMATZADEH holds an MA in Applied Linguistics from Sharif University of Technology. His areas of interest are sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, interlanguage pragmatics, and materials development. *Contact information*: e-mail: arash67nematzadeh@gmail.com

DOI: 10.22363/2312-9182-2018-22-2-278-291

СТРАТЕГИЯ УБЕЖДЕНИЯ В ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОМ ДИСКУРСЕ: ВЫСТУПЛЕНИЯ ПРЕЗИДЕНТА БАРАКА ОБАМЫ ПРОТИВ ИГИЛ

МИНУ АЛЕМИ¹, АШКАН ЛАТИФИ², АРАШ НЕМАТЗАДЕХ²

¹Islamic Azad University
West Tehran Branch
Shariati St., 1949663311, Tehran, Iran

²Sharif University of Technology
Azadi Ave., 11365-11155, Tehran, Iran

В статье рассмотрены стратегии убеждения, использованные экс-президентом США Обамой в качестве дискурсивной стратегии в двух его официальных выступлениях против Исламского государства от 7 августа и 10 сентября 2014 г. Анализ этих выступлений проведен с применением типологической теории Серла (1978) и анализа местоимений, т.е. ассертивов, директивов, комиссивов, эмотивов и декларативов, местоимений первого лица единственного и множественного числа (инклюзивность и эксклюзивность), а также агентность. Исследование выявило, что ассертивы были наиболее употребительными типами речевых актов в обоих выступлениях. Рассматривая функцию ассертивов, мы обнаружили, что главным намерением президента Обамы было оправдать воздушные удары армии США по зонам Исламского государства в Ираке. Кроме того, анализ местоимений первого лица множественного числа в терминах инклюзивности/эксклюзивности показал, что позиция президента Обамы являлась консервативной (в сравнении с другими последними президентами США), в связи с чем оправдание американским народом его утверждений в отношении Исламского государства могло послужить краеугольным камнем в проведении любых дальнейших военных действий, которые будут предприниматься армией США против Исламского государства.

Эти исследования показали одинаковый результат в отношении важности использования убеждения в качестве основного принципа в его вышеупомянутых выступлениях. Что касается агентности, исследование показало, что президент Обама занял консервативную позицию, полагаясь на волю американских граждан и подчиняя свою агентность американским идеалам и власти, что подтверждается общим числом 34 комиссивов в обоих его выступлениях.

Ключевые слова: Барак Обама, типологическая теория Серла, анализ личных местоимений, стратегии убеждения, политический дискурс

История статьи:

Дата поступления в редакцию: 10 августа 2017

Дата принятия к печати: 24 января 2018

Для цитирования:

Alemi, Minoo, Ashkan Latifi, and Arash Nematzadeh (2018). Persuasion in Political Discourse: Barak Obama's Presidential Speeches against ISIS. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*, 22 (2), 278—291. doi: 10.22363/2312-9182-2018-22-2-278-291.

Сведения об авторах:

МИНУ АЛЕМИ — доцент кафедры прикладной лингвистики, Azad University, West Tehran Branch, научный сотрудник Технологического университета Шариф, заместитель главного редактора журнала *Applied Pragmatics* (John Benjamins), член редколлегий нескольких международных научных периодических изданий: *Journal of Educational Technology*, *BRAIN*, *LIBRI*, *Scientia Iranica*. *Сфера научных интересов:* дискурс-анализ, межкультурная прагматика, разработка учебных материалов и обучение машинному языку. *Контактная информация:* e-mail: Minooalemi2000@yahoo.com

АШКАН ЛАТИФИ — магистр прикладной лингвистики, Технологический университет Шариф (Иран), студент магистратуры университета Bu-Ali Sina. *Сфера научных интересов:* нейропсихология, психолингвистика, нейролингвистика, социолингвистика. *Контактная информация:* e-mail: ashkan.latify@gmail.com

АРАШ НЕМАТЗАДЕХ — магистр прикладной лингвистики, Технологический университет Шариф (Иран). *Сфера научных интересов:* социолингвистика, дискурс-анализ, межкультурная прагматика, разработка учебных материалов. *Контактная информация:* e-mail: arash67nematzadeh@gmail.com