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**SPEECH STRATEGIES AND TACTICS IN THE POLITICAL  
DISCOURSE (11/09/2016 HILLARY CLINTON SPEECH)**

E.A. Titova (a)\*

\*Corresponding author

(a) Chelyabinsk State University, Br. Kashirinykh Str., 129, Chelyabinsk, Russia, elena\_vendina@list.ru,  
+79085778685

*Abstract*

Political discourse defines the necessity to use certain speech strategies and tactics in political speeches, which altogether are aimed at creating an image of a politician and manipulating the consciousness of listeners. Implementation of such strategies and tactics in a proper way can evoke the desired emotional response and have an effect on choices people make. Every politician is unique in using their own strategies and tactics, but, in most cases, such tactics are more or less similar as their target is to create a positive image and make people follow this or that politician. In this paper, we define the key strategies in Hillary Clinton's speech. Clinton's strategies are not aimed at making people vote for her, but at persuading them that she is one of them and they need to persevere together to be successful in the future. The speech was given after Hillary lost the 2016 elections, so some strategies are not vivid in her speech, but Hillary underlines that she is the one that supports all groups of the society whereas Donald Trump does not do so.

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**Keywords:** Political discourse, speech strategies, speech tactics, values, recipient.



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## 1. Introduction

**1.1.** The research is devoted to studying the strategies and tactics in the modern political discourse. It appears important to define how certain strategies and tactics are realized in a particular speech of a politician. In our paper, we take into account not only the speech of a politician but also circumstances that underpin the situation in which the speech was given.

**1.2.** The material we base our research on is Hillary Clinton's speech that she gave on 9 November in 2016 after she had lost the US Presidential elections. It is necessary to pay attention to the strategies that she uses in her speech and to define how they correlate with the actual situation in which this speech was given.

## 2. Problem Statement

The instrumental function of the language is extensively used in the political discourse and is realized through using speech strategies (Mironova, 2015).

Political discourse is such a sphere of contemporary linguistics that seems interesting to many researchers because political speeches can be approached from different angles and examined by various methods (Fetzer, 2013). V. Demyanykov defines political discourse as something that is easy to 'digest' and can have an immediate manipulative effect on the minds of the public (Demyanykov, 2002).

**2.1.** Before we start our linguistic analysis, it is necessary to define the term 'speech strategy'. According to O. Issers, a speech strategy is a combination of speech actions aimed at achieving certain communication goals; the whole process involves certain speech production planning and depends on communication circumstances, personal features of the involved participants and the way the plan is realized (Issers, 2016).

**2.2.** In our research, we need to pay attention to one of the existing classifications of political strategies and tactics. We believe that the classification of O. N. Parshina is the most complete and applicable to our analysis. The first strategy that O. N. Parshina underlines is the self-presentation strategy (creating the image of a politician). This strategy includes the tactics of making oneself equal to others (showing that one belongs to this or that social or political group); and the tactics of opposition (dividing the society into 'friends' and 'foes').

There are two strategies of persuasion.

- 1) Argumentative strategy (persuading a recipient with the help of arguments). This sub strategy is comprised of several tactics which are as follows:
  - a) tactics of proven assessment (when a speaker tries to assess something and prove their point);
  - b) tactics of contrast analysis (comparing and contrasting facts, events, results);
  - c) tactics of showing a perspective (forecasting development of events, commenting on future goals);
  - d) illustration tactics (giving examples, facts).
- 2) Propagation strategy (the strategy of influencing people's behavior by making them do something, make a choice), which includes the tactics of promise and the tactics of appeal.

The next strategy is fighting for power and it includes the following sub strategies:

1) Strategy of discrediting and attack (undermining your opponent's authority, humiliation, spoiling the reputation, etc.);

2) Manipulative strategy (different dishonest tricks that make the recipient believe the speaker). Here such techniques as giving unfeasible promises, unproven facts, and overstatements are used as well as manipulative tactics among which there is politeness tactics, the tactics of distracting the recipient's attention from the actual problem and overestimation tactics.

One more strategy is the strategy of self-defense (persuading that different accusations do not hold true). Here we can identify such tactics as the tactics of explanation, tactics of disagreement and tactics of criticism.

Apart from all the strategies mentioned above, we can also outline the strategies of keeping the power, as well as information-interpretation strategy (informing citizens about the most important events of social, economic and political life). In this case, O. N. Parshina speaks about such tactics as acceptance of a problem; emphasizing the positive aspect of things; tactics of clarifying information; tactics of giving comments; tactics of looking at a problem from a different angle and tactics of defining a solution to the problem. It is also important to mention such a strategy as shaping the emotional state of the audience. The functional tactics here are the unification tactics (uniting all people as representatives of one nation), addressing the recipients' emotions, tactics of considering the audience's values (system of values).

Among this range of tactics, there are those that refer to many strategies, such tactics are highlighting (emphasizing some particular moment in a speaker's speech) and the tactics of distancing 'friends' – our people – from 'foes' – all the other people (Parshina, 2012).

**2.3.** The material for our research is Hillary Clinton's speech, which we are going to study in terms of the above-mentioned strategies and tactics.

Hillary Rodham Clinton – is one of the most influential woman politicians in the world. She has been a member of the Democratic party of the USA since 1968. In the period of 1993-2001 Hillary was the first lady of the USA; Bill Clinton – her husband- was the 42nd US President then. In the period of 2009-2013 Hillary was a State Secretary in the White House. She was the main opponent of Donald Trump in the Presidential Elections of 2016.

### **3. Research Questions**

The main questions of the present paper are as follows:

- Identifying the strategies and tactics that Hillary Clinton uses in her speech which was given 9 November 2016;
- Analysing the language means that help the speaker realize strategies and tactics;
- Predicting the effect that the actual strategies and tactics might have on the audience.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the research is to analyse the speech of an American politician Hillary Clinton from the point of view of speech strategies and tactics. The research is important because it is necessary to study the strategies and 434

tactics of political discourse taking into account the background, circumstances and features of this very particular speaker.

## 5. Research Methods

In our research, we use the main aspects of linguistic analysis: choosing the language material for analysis, comparing, defining and describing the data present. At the same time, we examine the text taking into account lexical units, contextual meaning and syntactical organisations.

## 6. Findings

After Hillary Clinton lost the elections in November 2016, she pronounced a speech in which she thanked all her supporters and followers and encouraged them to believe in future victories and ‘not to lose heart’.

**6.1.** Throughout the whole speech, we can underline the use of the strategy ‘shaping the recipients’ emotional state’ which involves the tactics of unification: *..But I feel pride and gratitude for this wonderful campaign that we built together...But I want you to remember this: Our campaign was never about one person or even one election. It was about the country we love and about building an America that’s hopeful, inclusive and bighearted... I count my blessings every single day that I am an American, and I still believe as deeply as I ever have that if we stand together and work together with respect for our differences, strength in our convictions, and love for this nation, our best days are still ahead of us...* In these abstracts we see that Hillary addresses all American people using the pronoun ‘we’. She means that she is one of them. She believes that they should work together for the future of the country notwithstanding all those setbacks and misfortunes that they come across together. Clinton highlights that they are all different (*differences, strength in our convictions*), but being together is actually their strong point (and I still believe as deeply as I ever have that if we stand together and work together). We can pay attention to the repetition of the word ‘together’, which once again emphasises the importance of unification.

**6.2.** In the speech in question, the strategy of considering the audience’s system of values is widely used: *Our constitutional democracy enshrines the peaceful transfer of power, and we don’t just respect that, we cherish it. It also enshrines other things — the rule of law, the principle that we are all equal in rights and dignity, freedom of worship and expression. We respect and cherish these values, too, and we must defend them.* Clinton speaks about such traditional American values as democracy, law, equality, freedom of self-expression and religion. Here we can notice the discrediting strategy as Donald Trump expressed negative attitude towards Muslims and immigrants. So, by using such phrases as *...the rule of law, the principle that we are all equal in rights and dignity, freedom of worship and expression. We respect and cherish these values, too, and we must defend them...* Hillary Clinton emphasises the fact that she shares the main values of the Americans and cherishes them, whereas her opponent does not do so, which discredits him and makes him a ‘foe’ (strategy of dividing the society into ‘friends’ and ‘foes’ and opposing them at the same time).

**6.3.** The strategy of self-presentation is also viewed through the tactics of opposing ‘friends’-‘foes’. In her speech Hillary Clinton underlines the boundary between ‘our people’ and ‘those people’: *I know how disappointed*

***you feel, because I feel it, too. And so do tens of millions of Americans who invested their hopes and dreams in this effort. This is painful, and it will be for a long time... I am so grateful to stand with all of you... We have seen that our nation is more deeply divided than we thought, but I still believe in America, and I always will.*** Hillary equals herself with her supporters using emotionally-coloured words: *disappointed, painful, deeply divided*.

**6.4.** It is worth noting that Hillary does not vividly use the propagation strategy in her speech as she lost the elections, but some elements of such a strategy are still present in her speech: ...*And let me add, our constitutional democracy demands our participation, not just every four years, but all the time. So, let's do all we can to keep advancing the causes and values we all hold dear: Making our economy work for everyone, not just those at the top, protecting our country and protecting our planet, and breaking down all the barriers that hold any American back from achieving their dreams.* The tactics of appeal is used in combination with the strategy of considering the audience's values that is Clinton encourages her followers to persevere and support all those American values that are so dear to the nation. Those techniques are used together with the strategy of opposing the 'other people' as WE are 'FRIENDS', WE are together and WE cherish American values, whereas THOSE OTHER PEOPLE want to ruin everything and WE need to stand together to oppose THEM. There is no obvious aggression here, but there is this appeal to be together and secretly fight for OUR values.

**6.5.** Apart from this appeal to secretly fight 'foes', Hillary Clinton uses the discrediting strategy. She does this subtly, as fight for power is not actual at the moment, but the phrases: *Last night I congratulated Donald Trump and offered to work with him on behalf of our country. I hope that he will be a successful president for all Americans. This is not the outcome we wanted or we worked so hard for, and I am sorry that we did not win this election for the values we share and the vision we hold for our country...* again show us that Donald Trump does not support the American values and does not deserve to be an American leader. Hillary expresses hope that Trump will be a successful president, but we can read between the lines that she believes he will never succeed.

**6.6.** Overstatement tactics:...*We've spent a year and a half bringing together millions of people from every corner of our country to say with one voice that we believe that the American dream is big enough for everyone, for people of all races and religions, for men and women, for immigrants, for LGBT people and people with disabilities, for everyone...* again underlines the wrong policy that Donald Trump has and the fact that he belongs to the wrong team, opposing all true Americans. In his election campaign, Trump claimed that he would deport all Muslim immigrants, which, in Hillary's view, does not coincide with the values shared by true Democratic Americans. The repetition of such words as *every, everyone, all* underlines that Clinton speaks about the whole country, all the people in the USA, whereas Donald Trump does not care about all people in the USA, just some groups.

**6.7.** While analyzing this very speech of Hillary Clinton, we cannot help noticing how she reflects all those values she mentions and that all American people share in her personal life. She thanks all her supporters, but special thanks go to her family:...*And to Bill and Chelsea, Mark, Charlotte, Aiden, our brothers, and our entire family, my love for you means more than I can ever express. You criss-crossed this country on our behalf and lifted me up when I needed it most, even four-month-old Aiden, who traveled with his mum...* In this case, we see that this

appeal to American values (which is a family in this case) is vivid, present and emphasised. What is more she makes herself equal with every American woman, who has a family and kids. She subtly says: I am like you, I am the same, we are in the same boat. The fact that Aiden is four months old attracts our attention. This kind of technique makes the audience dislike Donald Trump as, because of him, a four-month-old girl got disappointed .Thus we can see that through a combination of different strategies, Hillary again presents herself as a loving and caring woman that is willing to pay attention to every person in the USA.

**6.8.** The strategies of shaping the emotional state of the audience and making herself equal to all the people in the country are also reflected in the following part of Hillary's speech:*...And to the young people in particular, I hope you will hear this. I have, as Tim said, spent my entire adult life fighting for what I believe in. I've had successes and I've had setbacks, sometimes really painful ones. Many of you are at the beginning of your professional, public, and political careers. You will have successes and setbacks, too. This loss hurts, but please, never stop believing that fighting for what's right is worth it. Nothing has made me prouder than to be your champion. Now, I know we have still not shattered that highest and hardest glass ceiling, but someday, someone will, and hopefully sooner than we might think right now. And to all the little girls who are watching this, never doubt that you are valuable and powerful and deserving of every chance and opportunity in the world to pursue and achieve your own dreams.* Here Clinton speaks about the young as if she were among them. She comments on setbacks and successes that she has experienced, she makes them believe that their setbacks and successes are her own as well as hers are theirs. By doing so, she ensures their future support and backup.

**6.9.** At the end of her speech, Hillary cites the Bible: *You know, Scripture tells us, "Let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart."*, but she pronounces these words as if they were her own and that makes people believe her, trust her and follow her. At the same time, this kind of quotations portrays Hillary as a very religious person, which, in its turn, makes American people respect and honour her. One tactic that is not typical in this speech appears at the end of the talk. Hillary suggests a problem solution in the future (as, obviously, the problem exists at present): *...So, my friends, let us have faith in each other. Let us not grow weary. Let us not lose heart. For, there are more seasons to come, and there is more work to do. I am incredibly honored and grateful to have had this chance to represent all of you in this consequential election. May God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.* Parallel imperative structures used at the beginning of sentences look like a real appeal to take action and work together to solve the existing problem of the elections lost. At the same time, Hillary ensures that she is together with all the people of the USA, she will never betray them and God supports her.

**6.10.** Throughout the whole speech we notice the strategies of unification, opposition 'friends' - 'foes', some points of discreditation techniques and self-presentation as a woman, loving her family and all the people in her country.

## 7. Conclusion

Making a conclusion, it can be stated that the key strategies in the speech of Hillary Clinton that she gave 9 November 2016 are self-presentation, unification, opposition, emotional addresses, considering the system of values of the nation and encouraging to work for the future. Political discourse is aimed at creating positive images and

making the audience believe the speaker. When analyzing certain speeches, the actual circumstances in which the speech is given should be taken into account, as such circumstances may define the strategies and tactics that a speaker implements.

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