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WINNING AND FAILING CAMPAIGN DISCOURSE STRATEGIES

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the urgent problem of modern linguistics, namely, the study of the arsenal of communicative strategies implemented in the discourse of political parties of the Republic of South Ossetia during the 2019 election campaign. Pre-election discourse is considered as a particular type of activity in the process of which speech works are generated that actualize the sociocultural context of communication along with extra-linguistic factors. The purpose of the article is to identify victoriously and failed political strategies implemented in the 2019 election campaign based on a comparison with the results of previous parliamentary elections. The authors use speech fragments of speeches, television debates, and statements of leaders and the leading core of the parties that participated in the election race as material. The methodological basis of the study is a pragmatic-cognitive approach that promotes cognitive-discursive analysis, rhetorical analysis, structural-semantic analysis. A pragmatic-cognitive approach reveals successful and unsuccessful strategies for influencing the addressee in the political media discourse, especially during the election campaign. It was established that the main political strategies during the campaign are based on ideologies and party slogans, varying around the central concepts of South Ossetian political communication – "people," "unity," and "power struggle. This analysis allows identifying the valid indicator of both the activities of the party represented by the candidate for parliament and the political authority weight of each particular politician. Tactical techniques of pre-election discourse have the most significant impact on the electorate, including and in linguistic and cultural aspects.

1. Introduction

The pre-election political discourse of South Ossetia combines the signs of institutional and semi-institutional communication. In South Ossetia, the pre-election political discourse shows universal and ethnospecific signs of influence on the electorate. The article presents the study of political linguistics, which allows moving from the description of units and structures to modeling the structures of consciousness of communicants.

2. Problem Statement

The main system-forming goal of political discourse is the struggle for power. It is the struggle for power that is the determining factor in choosing the strategic arsenal of the politician's communicative actions. The choice of strategy based on the desire to influence, influence the intellectual, volitional, and emotional sphere of the addressee. The pragmatism of this article is to identify speech strategies, tactics that show effectiveness, and inefficiency in election communication.

3. Research Questions

The article presents the result of studying the arsenal of speech means during the election campaign in South Ossetia in 2019. The presented analysis allows identifying an indicator of the effectiveness of the party, represented by a candidate for parliament. The authoritativeness of the political image of politicians is revealed.

4. Purpose of the Study

The article analyzes the South Ossetian election communication according to the current year. We selected speeches, television debates, and meetings with leaders of South Ossetian political parties that preceded the parliamentary elections of the country of the VII convocation as the material for the study. The study of communicative tactics is because voters assess the politician's verbal or non-verbal behavior as his election policy.

5. Research Methods

In the framework of the pragmatic-cognitive approach, the analysis of selected fragments of the South Ossetian election discourse is carried out. We consider speech works as a means of exerting influence on voters and opponents. The pragmatism of successful and unsuccessful strategies is revealed. Political linguistics has formed its theory and specific methodological tools that are relevant for the analysis of political discourse, taking into account linguistic-semiotic, cognitive, cognitive-discursive rhetorical, structural-semantic, psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic trends in the analysis of political communication (Chudinov, 2007; Bekoeva et al. 2018; Tameryan et al., 2019a; Tameryan et al., 2019b)

6. Findings

According to the results of the voting in South Ossetia in 2014, four parties went to parliament. They received the following number of votes and, accordingly, seats in parliament: the Republican political party "United Ossetia" (20 seats), the political party "People's Party" of the Republic of South Ossetia (4 seats), the socialist party "Unity of the People" (6 seats) and the Nykhas Political Party (4 seats).

In the 2019 elections, the votes were distributed among political parties as follows: "United Ossetia" received from the number of voters who participated in the vote (7 mandates); "People's Party" (4 mandates); Nykhas (3 mandates); "Unity of the people" (2 mandates). The "Communist Party of the Republic of South Ossetia" with the result (1 mandate) of the vote entered the parliament after the failure of 2014.

For the first time in a decade and a half, elections were held according to a majority-proportional system. In this regard, half of the parliamentarians were elected by party lists, and the other half (which did not include representatives of parties registered by the electoral commission) was elected in single-mandate constituencies. The above facts allow carrying out a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of the election strategies applied by parties during the 2014 and 2019 election campaigns, excluding single-mandate candidates.

The texts of speeches by party leaders vary in modality. The modality of political discourse reflects the ideological aspect of election campaigning. The arsenal of tools used by party leaders is diverse. Rhetorical and linguistic techniques are the lever of targeted agitation.

Fair democratic elections and an open, constructive policy pursued by the people elected are essential foundations of a rule of law state. Parliamentary elections are the culmination of a political process. In this regard, it is crucial to identify leading political technologies. The analysis reveals both victorious and failed technologies that have influenced the will of the people in the voting process. 2019 is a period of "distribution of roles" in the newly created theater, the country's political theater. The 2019 elections showed that one of the dominant strategies was the "attitude to win," which led to the use of suggestive and manipulative techniques.

In a speech by President of the Republic Anatoly Bibilov, a member of United Ossetia, a bet is made on authority and past achievements. Moreover, in a statement by Anatoly Bibilov, a personalized approach is taken into account: "During its existence, the party won two convincing victories – in the presidential and parliamentary elections. This is the result of the formation of a clear and clear political platform, an honest attitude towards the electorate, never a day stopping work to solve social problems, attention to every citizen of the republic" (Bibilov, 2019, para. 5).

The political party "Nykhas" (from Ossetian, "the place where men decided public affairs, spent leisure time, word, speech, conversation") went into an alliance with the public organization "Alanian Union" and the party "New Ossetia".

The new leader David Sanakoev expressed confidence that they will succeed: "We have analyzed all the mistakes made earlier and intend to act with a clear program." The persuasive potential of his performances was quite convincing. The strategy of recognizing past mistakes and accumulating the

experience of new associates served as an optimizing factor in the orientation of voters. As a result, the party received twice as many votes as in 2014 (Sanakoev, 2019).

The Unity of the People's party went to the polls under the slogan "Parliament is for the people," demonstrating a strategy of Unity with all residents of the republic. Its leader, Vladimir Kelekhsaev, assured that they simply, really do everything for the people of South Ossetia, because "those people promise who does nothing". Kelekhsaev (2019) noted that the party does not declare the theses and does not give empty promises to the people. The everyday tone of the program statements evokes the psychological effect of accepting the fact of reliability of the representatives of the Unity of the People party as a political. The power, however, political technology breakthrough has not occurred, and the party rating resists approximately at the 2014 level.

The central concepts of South Ossetian political communication – "people," "unity" (Bekoeva et al., 2018), and "power struggle" simultaneously represent the name and slogan of "People's Party": "Parliament is for the people." Its representatives, positioning themselves as part of the people, defending their interests. The impeccable past of the party members is recorded: "none of us are dirty with anything, we were all here in the most difficult times." They participate "in political life to facilitate and improve the life of the people." The party has a clear program, "against which it will be difficult to object." Thus, powerful masks create the image of a locomotive party that is confidently implementing widespread reforms.

Associate professors, security officials, the unemployed – this is the vanguard of the "Communist Party", the oldest political party in South Ossetia. This party did not receive a mandate in 2014. The political party's platform has the long-term goal of "protecting the world from capitalism." The strategic task, which allowed obtaining one mandate in the new parliament, is the reunification of Ossetia as part of Russia. Politicians exaggerate this speculative slogan from time to time. However, this slogan belongs to the category of phantom goals that excite the nostalgic feelings of South Ossetians.

Political scientists assess the 2019 parliamentary elections. Political scientists note that the complexity of these parliamentary elections is due to the "transitional age" of the political culture of South Ossetia.

The linguistic embodiment of pre-discourse, carried out in personal and collective forms, acts as an instrument of social power. The personal form is the speeches of the leader and members of the party core. The collective form is the program, charter, and statements of the party. The language tools of the pre-election discourse are an indicator of the performance of a particular party. Weak persuasive technologies do not actualize the primary function of political communication – impact on the electorate.

In this regard, the speeches of candidates for parliamentary mandates in television debates demonstrated the lack of experience and the unpreparedness of many candidates for political activity. First of all, all dialogue and agonal strategies of the losing parties turned out to be failures. Communicative strategies of all parties included a different contact-establishing communicative strategy aimed at optimizing interaction with the electorate and political opponents, image-based self-presentation strategies implemented on a visual and ideological level, a strategy for building the perspective laid down in the party's program, and its argumentative advancement.

The leader of the Unity party Kokoev (2019) addressed the voters with the following words: "I am almost sure that our party will be represented in parliament." He informed about what laws the party intends to promote in the "case of success in the elections" (Kokoev, 2019, para. 7).

The incomplete confidence pragmatism, voiced on behalf of the party leader as a subject of the speech, hurt the addressee. This strategy led to the defeat of this election. The party "Fydybast" (Russian: "Freedom Square," from Ossetian "fyd" "father" and "basta" – "krai, locality") received 3, 20% of the vote. The strategy of this party, in fact, has made anti-advertising for itself. The self-presentation strategy that they implemented using the tactics of openness was not applied correctly. Party representatives made a statement that the tasks of the previous election programs were never implemented. Ultimately, this statement led to self-discrediting the potential of this party. This is what manifested itself in a low indicator of the voting results. The leader of this party, Gobozov (2019), admitted: "This is not the first time we are participating in the elections, and each time we have made concrete proposals. Unfortunately, most of them are still not implemented" (para. 3).

Examples of failed communication strategies have demonstrated the lack of formality of many human resources coming to power at the level of subjects of the South Ossetian party movement.

7. Conclusion

Thus, it has been established that the primary strategy of the pre-election political media discourse is the policy of the self-presentation of the politician. The policy's self-presentation strategy is presented in successful and unsuccessful tactics that politicians use to achieve their goals when influencing the electorate. Strategies are implemented in the election genres of South Ossetian political communication. Features of the communicative actions of politicians are correlated with the programs of political parties, reflecting the willingness of their members to address the challenges of developing a new country effectively. The issue of integrating the state system into the political model of the world was one of the most important for the recipients of the 2019 election campaign.

Acknowledgments

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