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**FOREGROUND EXPRESSIVE LINGUISTIC MEANS IN A PUBLIC ADDRESS:
RESEARCHING SPEECHES BY PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE V. ZELENSKY**

**АКТУАЛІЗАЦІЯ ЛІНГВІСТИЧНИХ ЗАСОБІВ У ПУБЛІЧНОМУ ЗВЕРНЕННІ
(НА МАТЕРІАЛІ ПРОМОВ ПРЕЗИДЕНТА УКРАЇНИ В. ЗЕЛЕНСЬКОГО)**

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The article deals with the analysis of linguistic means and their functions in a political address. The authors distinguish between the terms 'political style' and 'political discourse' by connecting the notion of 'political style' with individual speech characteristics of a politician, while understanding 'political discourse' as a complex form of human interaction that aims to shape people's mind and behavior and is constantly influenced by many external factors. The objective of the article

is to provide the description of the main expressive means fully employed in the texts under analysis, and to show how discourse influences the sentence structure. The material for research comprises political speeches by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Using methods of critical discourse analysis, morphologic and syntactic analysis, elements of the quantitative and comparative methods, as well as the descriptive method, the authors demonstrate that the choice of language means used in political discourse is far from being random but is fully determined by its goals. In the present article, we argue that a political speech has its rhetorical purpose (to establish understanding between the speaker and the audience) and is persuasive (calling for certain actions in the face of certain challenges). From a linguistic point of view, a political address is a type of the text – a complex, hierarchically built whole, consisting of levels (systems) interacting and mutually influencing each other, thus contributing to its cohesion. All language units are structurally, semantically and pragmatically interconnected. The analysis makes it possible to draw the conclusion that there is no one-to-one correspondence between information structure and sentence organization, nor between syntactic form and discourse function – all language units at all levels of language are involved in rendering the desired effect. Repetition (both lexical and syntactic types) is a frequently used expressive means in the analyzed texts.

Key words: political discourse, political style, information structure, speech acts, epistemic modality, deontic modality, discourse markers.

Стаття присвячена аналізу мовних засобів та їх функцій у політичному зверненні. Автори розмежують поняття «політичний стиль» і «політичний дискурс», пов'язуючи поняття «політичний стиль» з індивідуальними мовленнєвими характеристиками політика, а під «політичним дискурсом» розуміючи складну форму взаємодії людей, яка спрямована на формування людської самосвідомості та поведінки і постійно перебуває під впливом багатьох зовнішніх факторів. Мета статті – дати характеристику основних експресивних засобів, використаних у аналізованих текстах, і показати, як дискурс впливає на структуру речення. Матеріалом для дослідження є політичні виступи Президента Володимира Зеленського. Використовуючи методи дискурсивного аналізу, морфологічного і синтаксичного аналізу, елементи кількісного і порівняльного аналізів, а також описовий метод, автори демонструють, що вибір мовних засобів у політичному дискурсі не є випадковим, а цілком зумовлений його цілями. У статті стверджується, що мета політичної промови – встановити порозуміння між оратором і аудиторією; політична промова завжди спрямована на досягнення перлокутивного ефекту. З лінгвістичної точки зору політичне звернення як різновид тексту є складне, ієрархічно побудоване ціле, що складається з рівнів (систем), які взаємодіють і взаємовпливають один на одного, забезпечуючи текстову когезію. Усі мовні одиниці структурно, семантично й прагматично пов'язані між собою. Аналіз уможливив дійти висновку про відсутність однозначної відповідності між інформаційною структурою та граматичною організацією речення, а також між синтаксичною формою та дискурсивною функцією – всі мовні одиниці на всіх рівнях мови задіяні у створенні бажаного ефекту. Часто вживаним експресивним засобом у аналізованих текстах є повтор (як лексичного, так і синтаксичного типу).

Ключові слова: політичний дискурс, політичний стиль, інформаційна структура, мовленнєві акти, епістемічна модальність, деонтична модальність, дискурсивні маркери.

Introduction. This research lies within the intersection of a few linguistic disciplines and methodological approaches, such as discourse studies (works by Teun A. van Dijk, J. Myhill, N. Norrick, D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen), political discourse (P. Chilton, S. Potapenko, M. Reisigl, C. Schäffner, J. Wilson, R. Wodak), discourse pragmatics (J. Austin, S. Blum-Kulka, P. Grice, A. I. Prikhodko), including the theory of speech acts (J. Searle), information structure (Ö. Dahl, T. Dombrovan, K. Lambrecht, R. Tomlin), stylistics and text interpretation (Yu. Galperin, V. Kuharenko), lexicology (V. Arnold), and functional grammar (L. Berk, T. Givón). Research principles elaborated within these linguistic disciplines make up the theoretical and methodological basis for the political discourse analysis presented in this article, focused on the investigation of a public address.

A public address is a genre of rhetorical (here, political) style. The word ‘style’ came into use in Middle English in early XIVth century in the form of ‘*stīle*’, meaning “writing instrument, pen, stylus; piece of written discourse, a narrative, treatise”; also “characteristic rhetorical mode of an author, manner or mode of expression”, and “way of life, manner, behavior, conduct”. It originates from Old French

stīle, estīle “style, fashion, manner; a stake, pale” and from Latin *stilus* “stake, instrument for writing, manner of writing, mode of expression”. The spelling of the word was modified by influence of Greek *stylos* “pillar” [7].

Political style is defined by J. Charteris-Black as a coherent repertoire of rhetorical conventions depending on aesthetic reactions for political effect, which implies ‘the selection of words that ensured a suitable balance between clarity and elevation for a particular oratorical setting’ [2, p. 537]. While adopting the suggested definition on the whole, we consider it necessary to extend it with the syntactic aspect, because not only the mentioned “selection of words” matters, but their arrangement in the sentence is also important for achieving a desirable effect.

In this article, we distinguish between the terms ‘political style’ and ‘political discourse’ by connecting the notion of ‘political style’ with individual speech characteristics of a political figure (e.g. a member of parliament, a vice-president, the president of a country, etc.), while understanding ‘political discourse’ as an open, dynamic and complex form of human interaction that aims to shape people’s mind and behavior and is constantly influenced by many external factors.

Interestingly enough, the noun ‘discourse’ appeared in English at the same time as the noun ‘style’, coming through Middle French *discours* from Latin *discursus* “a running about”. According to the etymological dictionary, the word had the meaning of “*conversation*” in Late Latin, that of “*reasoning*” in Medieval Latin, and from 1580s it came to be used in the meaning of “discussion or treatment of a subject in formal speech or writing” [7]. Nowadays, discourse is understood as a semiotic system integrating various signs; it is both a process and a product of social relations and practice.

Problem statement. Discourse analysis is a subject of studies within a variety of disciplines about human interaction, such as psychology, linguistics, anthropology, philosophy, psycholinguistics, pedagogy, sociology, sociolinguistics, and others, which explains the existence of theoretically and methodologically various approaches to the subject of research. Not only do the approaches differ, but also the understanding of the aim and essence of discourse analysis is far from being similar. In [5, p. 1–3], the definitions of discourse analysis are grouped into three main categories, namely: (1) anything beyond the sentence, (2) language use, and (3) a broader range of social practice that includes nonlinguistic and nonspecific instances of language. For the purpose of present research, we choose the methodological perspective of ‘language use’, shifting from any close examination of non-verbal factors to the particular instances of language use and their effectiveness, with syntactic means in mind. Our research has a practical outcome and can be of use for students, especially those majoring in English philology.

A university course of English grammar assumes that, among other skills, students will learn sentence parsing. However, textbooks on syntax are mostly concentrated on the analysis of an individual sentence, taken in isolation, thus ignoring the fact that language is a social tool and that ‘discourse can have a profound effect on the structure of a given sentence’ [1, p. 23; see also 6].

The objective of this article is to show how discourse influences the sentence structure. We look into discourse functions of various sentence members. We also provide the description of the main expressive means fully employed in the texts under analysis.

The material for our research comprises political speeches by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. The speeches are available via the official website of the presidential office. For the sake of space economy and convenience, this article contains examples from two

speeches only, listed in the “Sources of illustrative material” under the numbers (9) and (10) respectively, namely: (9) “*Combat aircrafts – for Ukraine, wings – for freedom*: The address by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to both Houses of Parliament of the United Kingdom. 8 February 2023”, and (10) “*We stand, we fight and we will win. Because we are united. Ukraine, America and the entire free world*: The address by Volodymyr Zelenskyy in a joint meeting of the US Congress. 22 December 2022”. The two selected speeches are practically equal in length – 1889 and 1815 words, respectively, making up the total volume of 3704 words.

In the present research, we use **methods** of critical discourse analysis, of morphologic and syntactic analysis, elements of the quantitative and comparative methods, as well as the descriptive method.

Discussion. The study of political discourse has a long history, starting from the times of ancient philosophers. Descartes is known to have defined humans as essentially linguistic animals, while Aristotle spoke of humans as of political animals. In this respect, P. Chilton notes that both definitions contain a germ of the truth and they necessarily complete each other: “It is surely the case that politics cannot be conducted without language, and it is probably the case that the use of language in the constitution of social groups leads to what we call ‘politics’ in a broad sense” [3, p. 206].

The choice of language means used in political discourse is far from being random but is fully determined by its goals. In the present article, we argue that a political speech has its rhetorical purpose (to establish understanding between the speaker and the audience) and is persuasive (calling for certain actions in the face of certain challenges). From a linguistic point of view, a political address is a type of the text – a complex, hierarchically built whole, consisting of levels (systems) interacting and mutually influencing each other, thus contributing to its cohesion. All language units and stylistic devices are structurally, semantically and pragmatically interconnected; any local change within the system can have impact on other components and on the whole system [see also: 4].

From a pragmatic perspective, language use is seen as an action, through the notion of speech acts. Following Searle’s classification, researchers distinguish the speech acts that are directly relevant to political discourse, namely: *representatives* (truth claims), *directives* (commands, requests), *commissives* (promises, threats), *expressives* (praising, blaming), and *declaratives* (proclaiming

a constitution, announcing an election, etc.) [more details in 3, p. 216]. These types of speech acts can be found in the material of our analysis; however, in this article, we choose to focus on their linguistic aspect. The effectiveness of speech acts depends upon a variety of factors, including, among others, the speaker's political and/or social status and the choice of language expressive means.

The speaker of our sample texts is President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy, whose political status empowers significant influence on his direct audience – Members of British Parliament [9] and US Congressmen and Senators [10], as well as all the people in these countries (this is stated in the opening address). We should also bear in mind a third group of audience – the rest of the countries of the world (including the aggressor state), that are not directly involved in the dialogue/meeting, but are rather observers of the process.

With the help of grammatical means, in the first place – by using pronouns (mostly, in the subject position), the speaker establishes the trusting relationship with his audience ('we'), at the same time setting the borders against the third, opposing party ('it', 'they'). Our research, thus, confirms the conclusion by Charteris-Black [2, p. 538] in that linguistically politicians not only communicate their legitimacy ("being right") through describing their values and their visions, but they also establish narrative frames for 'us' and 'them' roles that the audience will recognize on the basis of shared views. In V. Zelenskyy's addresses to the US Congress and to the Houses of British Parliament, the first person pronouns ('we', 'us', 'our') stand both for the Ukrainian people and the peoples in the countries addressed. Examples:

When the full-scale invasion began, we, together with you and the US and other allies, formed a true coalition of friends. This is very important [9].

Our two nations are Allies in this battle [10].

The first person plural pronoun 'we' (also accompanied with the second person pronoun 'you' or with the phrase 'together with you') is used in sentences expressing the idea of high morality and justice of actions in the fight against the external aggressor, as in the following speech acts of representatives and commissives:

We know freedom will win. We know Russia will lose. We know the Victory will change the world! [9].

You and we have already fought together against such evil. (9)

We stand, we fight and we will win. Because we are united. Ukraine, America and the entire free world. [10].

We develop strong security guarantees for our country and for entire Europe and the world. Together with you! [10].

And also – together with you! – we 'll put in place everyone who will defy freedom [10].

By contrast, the 3rd person pronoun 'they' demarcates the aggressor:

The Russian tactic is primitive. They burn down and destroy everything they see. They sent thugs to the frontlines. They sent convicts to the war ... [10].

The speaker's position is outlined with the help of the first person singular pronoun 'I', used in the subject position, which is the strongest slot in a sentence. 'I' is used in expressions of:

– actions, e.g. "Yesterday – before coming here to Washington DC – I was at the frontline, in our Bakhmut" [10];

– gratitude, e.g. "I thank you for your efforts in helping Ukraine!" [10];

– hope, e.g. "I hope my words of respect and gratitude resonate in each American heart!" [10],

– pride, e.g. "I am proud of our air force" [9],

– appeal to action, e.g. "I appeal to you and the world with simple and yet most important words: Combat aircrafts – for Ukraine! Wings – for freedom!" [9], etc.

This subject-pronoun together with the predicate express epistemic (examples A) and deontic (examples B) modality, with the former type prevailing in the texts under analysis:

(A): *I know that everything depends on us. On Ukrainian Armed Forces! Yet, so much depends on the world!* [10]

I believe there should be no taboos between us in our alliance. Ukraine never asked the American soldiers to fight on our land instead of us. I assure you that Ukrainian soldiers can perfectly operate American tanks and planes themselves [10].

Congressmen and Senators – from both parties – who will visit Ukraine, I'm sure, in the future! [10]

I hope my words of respect and gratitude resonate in each American heart! [10]

(B) <...> *because I will convey to him from all the Ukrainians the words of gratitude for the support His Majesty showed to them when he was still the Prince of Wales. I also intend to tell him something that is very important not only for the future of Ukraine but also for the future of Europe* [9].

Epistemic and deontic are two general types of modality. As seen from the example above, lexical means of the first type are more emphatic; they are associated with self-confidence and are used to preface assertions and/or reveal the speaker's personal opinion, while those of the other type tend to

imply a potential action. On the whole, the described means contribute to the image of the speaker as an authoritative politician and statesman.

Praising shared values and common actions in the past and present (the speech acts of expressive), the speaker then appeals to the audience's reasonability and feeling of justice and calls for the action to restore justice, as in:

It is in your power to help us bring to justice everyone, who started this unprovoked and criminal war. Let's do it! [10]

The call for urgent action (the speech act of directive) is intensified through the anaphoric repetition of the imperative 'Let...' which – according to the combinatorial features of the verb 'let' – draws the similar syntactic structure of the following part of the sentences:

Let the terrorist state be held responsible for its terror and aggression, and compensate all losses done by this war. Let the world see that the United States is here! [10]

Without going deeper into modality and the linguistic means of its expression, we still have to mention the verb 'will'. It originates from the Old English *wille* 'want' and is used in Modern English as a future tense auxiliary and as a modal auxiliary. Accordingly, it enters two different types of the predicate, namely the simple verbal predicate and the compound verbal modal predicate. Sometimes it is not at all easy to distinguish between them, especially outside the context.

In the paragraph that follows, 'will' expresses a wide variety of meanings – from a future action (1) to prediction (2 – 4) to promises (5) and strong volition (6 – 9). Such an increase of emotional tension contributes to the expressiveness of the speaker's message:

In two days, we (1) will celebrate Christmas. Maybe, candlelit. Not because it is more romantic. But because there (2) will be no electricity. Millions (3) won't have either heating or running water. All of this (4) will be the result of Russian missile and drone attacks on our energy infrastructure. But we do not complain. <...> We, Ukrainians, (5) will also go through our war of independence and freedom with dignity and success.

(6) We'll celebrate Christmas – and even if there is no electricity, the light of our faith in ourselves (7) will not be put out. If Russian missiles attack us – (8) we'll do our best to protect ourselves. If they attack us with Iranian drones, and our people have to go to bomb shelters on Christmas Eve – Ukrainians (9) will still sit down at a holiday table and cheer up each other [10].

This semantic (and, accordingly, pragmatic) 'switching' of *will* from a tense auxiliary to a modal (epistemic and then deontic) meaning serves to indicate the speaker's confidence in the Ukrainian people's unbreakable spirit and in the imminent victory over evil.

To sum up, the use of pronouns (particularly, in the subject position) and alternating types of modality contribute to the expressiveness of the author's speech. Noteworthy is also the shifting of speech acts, but that can be subject for still further research.

Information structure and sentence form are interconnected. This means that the organization of a sentence within particular discourse is not chaotic, but is determined by the speaker's communicative (pragmatic) intentions. The relationship 'information structure VS sentence structure' is also analyzed with the help of the notions of 'topic' and 'comment'. Let us consider the following part from a passage in [10]:

And it gives me good reason to share with you our first joint victory – we defeated Russia in the battle for minds of the world. We have no fear. Nor should anyone in the world have it.

Ukrainians gained this victory – and it gives us courage, which inspires the entire world.

Americans gained this victory – and that's why you have succeeded in uniting the global community to protect freedom and international law.

Europeans gained this victory – and that's why Europe is now stronger and more independent than ever [10].

Here, the first sentence introduces the topic 'our first joint victory'. The topic can be defined as 'the thing which the proposition expressed by the sentence is about' or 'a scene-setting expression' [6, p. 118]. The main principle connected with the notion of the topic is that of relevance: 'If a topic is seen as a matter of standing interest or concern, a statement about topic can count informative only if it conveys information which is relevant with respect to this topic' [6, p. 119]. English does not belong to formal topic marking languages, which complicates the process of the outlining of the topic based on the syntactic structure of the given sentence. In such cases, the role of the context becomes significant to define the topic-comment relations. In the above-given example, the components of the topic are further elaborated and commented on in the subsequent sentences: the attributive 'our joint' is explicated as 'Ukrainians', 'Americans' and 'Europeans'; the meaning of 'victory' is disclosed in each case, too. The use of the syntactic parallelism accentuates the importance of the message.

Catch repetition and anaphoric repetition combined with the syntactic parallelism of the following sentence parts serve to foreground the rhematic part of the utterance, as in:

*I have come here and stand before you **on behalf of the Brave. On behalf of** our warriors who are now in the trenches under enemy artillery fire. **On behalf of** our air gunners and every defender of the sky who protects Ukraine against enemy aircrafts and missiles. **On behalf of** our tank-men who fight to restore our Ukrainian border. **On behalf of** our conscripts who are being trained now, including here in Britain. <...> **On behalf of** every father and every mother who are waiting for their brave sons and brave daughters back home from the war' [9].*

Foregrounded are those people who are referred to by the speaker as 'the Brave' (notice the capitalization of the initial letter in order to express deep respect towards those people) – 'our warriors', 'our air gunners', 'our tank-men', 'our conscripts', and finally 'every father and every mother'. The repetition of the adjective 'brave' in the final sentence of the first passage frames the message and contributes to its unity.

Repetition (both lexical and syntactic types) is a frequently used expressive means in Volodymyr Zelensky's speeches, and by right so. Repeated lexemes help to carry out the author's message and serve as clutches to hold several paragraphs together. In what follows, the synonymic nouns 'battle' and 'struggle', used in the syntactic function of the subject, constitute the topic of the utterance, while the predicates comment on the topic:

Yet, the battle continues! And we have to defeat the Kremlin on the battlefield.

This battle is not only for the territory – for this or another part of Europe. This battle is not only for life, freedom and security of Ukrainians or any other nation, which Russia attempts to conquer. This struggle will define – in what world our children and grandchildren will live and then – their children and grandchildren. It will define whether it will be a democracy – for Ukrainians and for Americans – for all.

This battle cannot be frozen or postponed. It cannot be ignored hoping that the ocean or something else will provide a protection.

From the United States to China, from Europe to Latin America, and from Africa to Australia – the world is too interconnected and interdependent to allow someone to stay aside – and at the same time – to feel safe when such a battle continues [10].

The predicates here are partially characterized by lexical and structural similarity. They also form

consecutive pairs, while the first and the last subject-predicate structure ('*the battle continues*') frames the paragraph, thus adding integrity to the whole part.

One of the functions of lexical repetition is to focus on a key note of a message. Thus, for example, in the address to the Houses of Parliament (9) the adjective 'brave' is repeated five times, and its cognate noun 'bravery' is mentioned three times in describing Ukrainian warriors and civilians, as well as the British people.

The use of lexical repetition is frequent in (9), by means of which the text cements into a single whole. Accompanied by gradually extended attributive modifiers, the repeated lexemes add to the emotional gradation of the paragraph, as in:

There is an armchair in the war room. – Here, the noun 'armchair' has no modifier.

The famous Churchill's armchair. – Churchill's is a prepositive attributive modifier, expressed by a single noun in the possessive case.

A guide smiled and offered me to sit down on the armchair from which war orders had been given. – The noun 'chair' is followed by an extended attributive modifier, expressed by a (subordinate) clause.

And further on in the paragraph, the same model is employed with the verb 'feel' and the derived noun 'feeling':

He asked me – how did I feel? And I said that I certainly felt something.

But it is only now that I know what the feeling was. And all Ukrainians know it perfectly well, too. It is the feeling of how bravery takes-you-through the most unimaginable hardships – to finally reward you with Victory [9].

Lexical repetition is intertwined with syntactic parallelism thus increasing the tension of the text, as in:

We created a coalition of NLAW and Javelin <...>.

We built a coalition of artillery rounds and a coalition of air defense, <...>

We put together a powerful sanctions coalition. <...>

Most importantly, together with the G7 we brought about a coalition of values.

A coalition that protects the rule-based world order and human rights.

A coalition that will work in such a way, that over time there will simply be no gray areas in the world in which human life does not matter [9].

It is noteworthy that the length of each next sentence in a chain of syntactically parallel-structured sentences increases considerably. Two more examples from [9]:

Anyone who invests in terror must be held accountable (9 words). *Anyone who invests in violence must compensate those who have suffered from terror, aggression or other forms of state violence* (20 words).

You didn't compromise Ukraine. (4 words) *And hence you didn't compromise your ideals* (7 words). *And thus you didn't compromise the spirit of these great Islands* (11 words). *Thank you very much!*

An effective means of expressive syntax is to separate attributive modifiers of the clause structure from their antecedent in the main clause and to use them independently. A vivid illustration is the following paragraph with the noun 'world' as the Head:

A history of a world that knows how to be quick in help. Who knows how to be effective in defense. Who knows how to remain principled in dark hours. Who implements its treaties and arrangements in good faith. Who does not allow perpetrators to enjoy impunity. Who knows how to overcome veto when it is abused? Who knows no fear. And who knows how to win [9].

In order to lay additional emphasis to certain parts of the utterance, the author uses parceling: a sentence is divided into two or more sentences by a full stop, and each opens with a coordinate conjunction, as in:

They have been attacking it day and night. But Bakhmut stands [10].

They have much more missiles and planes than we ever had. But our Defense Forces stand. And we all are proud of them [10].

In the above given sentences, the conjunction 'but' expresses contrast, while 'and' is used in a resulting sense. However, a more typical meaning of the copulative conjunction 'and' is that of addition of information and cohesion, as in:

Ten points, which should and must be implemented for our joint security – guaranteed for decades ahead. And the Summit, which can be held [10].

Let the terrorist state be held responsible for its terror and aggression, and compensate all losses done by this war [10].

Not only does 'and' perform a purely grammatical function as a copulative conjunction, but it also is a discourse marker, i.e. 'a linguistic item that functions in cognitive, expressive, social, and textual domain' [8, p. 54], whose multiplicity of functions adds to the text cohesion.

Conclusion. A public address, which belongs to political discourse, always operates within a certain historical framework and, thus, is important in influencing the minds and behavior of its recipients. As a type of text, a political speech contains a set of linguistic means of the speaker's self-expression, i.e. his/her rhetorical style.

Our analysis clearly demonstrates that there is no one-to-one correspondence between information structure and sentence organization, nor between syntactic form and discourse function – all language units at all levels of language are involved in rendering the desired effect. The most productive of the means of expressive syntax in the texts under consideration is repetition.

Future research can be directed in the comprehensive study of Volodymyr Zelenskyy's rhetorical style during his presidency, especially what concerns its semantic and grammatical fluctuations caused by external forces. On a broader scale, there remain some issues calling for continuation of further investigation, interrelationships between various discourses and linguistic means being one of them.

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