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THE CONCEPT OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE IN MODERN LINGUISTICS

Abstract: This article explores the evolving concept of political discourse within the framework of modern linguistics. It also traces the theoretical development of political linguistics, investigates how political discourse is defined and analyzed, and examines its interdisciplinary nature. The article emphasizes the importance of political discourse as both a linguistic and socio-political phenomenon, and its relevance for understanding language's role in shaping ideology and power structures.

Keywords: political speech, discourse, political linguistics, cognitive linguistics, semiotics, critical discourse analysis

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ZAMONAVIY TILSHUNOSLIKDA SIYOSIY DISKURS TUSHUNCHASI

Annotatsiya: Mazkur maqolada zamonaviy tilshunoslikda shakllanib borayotgan siyosiy diskurs tushunchasi yoritiladi. Shuningdek, siyosiy lingvistikaning nazariy asoslari, siyosiy diskursning ta'rifi va tahlili hamda ushbu fenomenning tarmoqlararo xususiyatlari tahlil etiladi. Maqolada siyosiy diskursning nafaqat tilshunoslik, balki ijtimoiy-siyosiy hodisa sifatidagi ahamiyati hamda tilning g'oya va mafkura munosabatlarini shakllantirishdagi o'rni ochib beriladi.

Kalit so'zlar: siyosiy nutq, diskurs, siyosiy lingvistika, kognitiv tilshunoslik, semiotika, tanqidiy diskurs tahlili

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ПОНЯТИЕ ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОГО ДИСКУРСА В СОВРЕМЕННОМ ЯЗЫКОЗНАНИИ

Аннотация: В данной статье рассматривается формирующееся в современном языкознании понятие политического дискурса. Освещаются теоретические основы политической лингвистики, дается определение политического дискурса и анализируются его особенности, а также междисциплинарный характер данного феномена. Особое внимание уделяется значению политического дискурса не только как

лингвистического, но и как социально-политического явления, а также роли языка в формировании идеологических и концептуальных отношений.

Ключевые слова: политическая речь, дискурс, политическая лингвистика, когнитивная лингвистика, семиотика, критический анализ дискурса

Introduction

The intersection of language and politics has long been an area of intellectual interest, but it has only recently crystallized into the defined field of political linguistics. As societies become increasingly politicized and mediated, the role of language in the construction and dissemination of political ideologies has grown central to both linguistic inquiry and political analysis. Political discourse, as a subset of discourse analysis, captures the language through which political actors negotiate power, authority, and public opinion. This article explores the theoretical underpinnings of political discourse in modern linguistics, analyzes its definitions, and highlights its methodological and interdisciplinary implications. It draws upon foundational texts by scholars such as A. Chudinov, E. Sheygal, and T. van Dijk, and reflects on how the concept of political discourse has evolved over time.

Literature Review

The study of political discourse has evolved significantly since the mid-20th century, influenced by various disciplines including linguistics, sociology, philosophy, and communication studies. The present literature review synthesizes key theoretical contributions from both Russian and international scholars, focusing on the emergence and conceptual development of political discourse within linguistics.

The foundational work of Zellig Harris introduced *discourse analysis* as a linguistic method that goes beyond sentence-level grammar, considering extended units of language in context [1]. His analysis laid the groundwork for the development of modern discourse theory, later expanded by figures such as Michel Foucault, who examined the relationship between discourse, power, and social institutions [2]. Foucault's conceptualization of discourse as a system of

representation and knowledge production significantly influenced later developments in critical discourse analysis.

In the post-Soviet academic landscape, A.P. Chudinov played a pioneering role in establishing political linguistics as a distinct field in Russia. His textbook *Political Linguistics* outlines the theoretical basis for understanding political language, emphasizing metaphor theory, cognitive framing, and the stylistic features of political texts. Chudinov situates political discourse at the intersection of linguistics, rhetoric, and cognitive science, arguing that metaphorical language is central to the construction of political ideology [3]. His work is particularly influential in Russian linguistics and has been followed by other scholars such as E.V. Budaev and M.B. Voroshilova, who examined metaphorical models in political texts [4].

In parallel, E.I. Sheygal advanced the semiotic perspective in her doctoral dissertation *The Semiotics of Political Discourse*, where she conceptualized political discourse as operating across two dimensions: the real, referring to observable communicative acts, and the virtual, involving symbolic and semiotic codes beyond direct verbal communication [5]. Her work integrates both linguistic and extralinguistic factors, highlighting the complexity of political communication in media-saturated societies.

Teun A. van Dijk is another central figure in the global development of political discourse analysis. His work focuses on the ideological structures embedded in political texts and the role of discourse in the reproduction of social power and inequality [6]. He introduced analytical frameworks that integrate cognitive models with social analysis, making discourse studies an interdisciplinary tool for critical inquiry. Scholars have proposed several analytical approaches for studying political discourse. These include:

- Critical discourse analysis examines how discourse shapes and is shaped by power [6];

- Rhetorical analysis focuses on classical modes of persuasion such as ethos, pathos, and logos [7];

Cognitive linguistics, especially metaphor theory [8], which analyzes how abstract political ideas are framed through metaphorical structures.

In the Uzbek academic context, Sh.N. Polatov has contributed to discussions on discourse through educational and cultural studies, highlighting how discourse functions in the shaping of national identity and pedagogical development. His articles explore political and pedagogical narratives in South Asian and Central Asian contexts, emphasizing the cultural specificity of political discourse [9]. The convergence of these diverse perspectives underscores the complexity of political discourse as a linguistic, ideological, and cultural phenomenon. Modern political discourse theory thus draws from a rich tapestry of linguistic traditions—formal, functional, cognitive, and critical—to interrogate how language constructs and legitimizes political realities.

Political linguistics, also known as *linguopolitology*, emerged at the intersection of political science and linguistics. It is concerned with how political realities are constructed, expressed, and maintained through language. A.P. Chudinov identifies political linguistics as closely related to sociolinguistics, functional stylistics, rhetoric, cognitive linguistics, and text linguistics, all of which provide tools to understand political language as both form and function [3].

The term *discourse*, derived from the Latin *discursus*, means “movement,” “conversation,” or “dialogue.” Although introduced into linguistics by Z. Harris in the mid-20th century, the concept has since permeated many fields—sociology, anthropology, law, pedagogy, and cultural studies. Its emergence as a core analytical category in linguistics reflects a shift from sentence-level analysis to the study of extended texts and communicative events.

By the 1990s, political discourse analysis had become a well-established subfield. Researchers such as Teun van Dijk, Elena Sheygal, and Alexander Chudinov advanced the field by examining how discourse constructs ideological meaning and reinforces political power. Notably, Sheygal introduced the idea of dual dimensions of discourse: real and virtual. Real discourse refers to actual

speech events embedded in social contexts. Virtual discourse encompasses the broader semiotic environment, including both verbal and non-verbal signs [5].

Results and Discussions

Political discourse is not monolithic. Scholars have identified several analytical directions within this field:

Critical discourse analysis views discourse as a form of social practice, emphasizing how language reflects and reproduces power dynamics. This approach investigates the ideological underpinnings of political texts and speeches, focusing on hidden assumptions, framing techniques, and manipulative strategies.

Structural and content analysis examines the composition, structure, and linguistic features of political texts. It looks at how syntactic, lexical, and rhetorical devices are employed to create persuasive or authoritative speech.

Rhetorical analysis rooted in classical rhetoric, this approach analyzes how persuasion is achieved through ethos (credibility), pathos (emotion), and logos (logic). It is especially relevant in the study of campaign speeches, debates, and political advertisements.

Cognitive analysis interprets political discourse through conceptual metaphors, mental models, and framing. A.P. Chudinov has been instrumental in applying cognitive models to Russian political language, showing how metaphoric language shapes political worldviews and constructs national identities [3].

Political discourse can be defined in both broad and narrow terms: In a broad sense, it refers to all communicative acts that occur within the political sphere, including informal conversations, media narratives, and public debates. In a narrow sense, it denotes a specialized genre aimed at acquiring, exercising, or maintaining political power. This includes campaign speeches, parliamentary debates, policy documents, and diplomatic communications [10].

While the distinction between *text* and *discourse* remains contested, it is generally accepted that discourse implies contextualized language use, where meaning arises from the interplay of linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

Political discourse studies have practical applications in:

Media and journalism: analyzing bias, framing, and propaganda;

Education: fostering critical language awareness and media literacy;

Political science: understanding narrative strategies and public opinion formation;

Sociolinguistics: exploring language variation and identity in political contexts;

By integrating theories and methods from diverse disciplines, political discourse analysis offers a comprehensive lens for interpreting political life and discourse as co-constitutive.

Conclusion

Political discourse is a vital area of study within modern linguistics. It enables scholars to uncover the deep structures and ideological functions of political language. As language continues to be a principal tool for shaping public consciousness, managing perception, and exercising power, understanding political discourse becomes essential for both scholars and engaged citizens. Political discourse is more than the language of politicians, it is a dynamic communicative process involving multiple participants, including political actors, media representatives, the public, and various audiences. These diverse participants contribute to the production, interpretation, and dissemination of political meaning in society.

A comprehensive analysis of political discourse requires a multidimensional approach that includes critical discourse analysis, rhetorical and cognitive frameworks, and semiotic analysis. Such tools allow scholars to uncover implicit meanings, ideological structures, and manipulative strategies embedded in language. Political discourse, therefore, serves as a medium through which cultural values are modeled, social order is reinforced or contested, and collective worldviews are shaped.

Ultimately, understanding political discourse involves examining not only what is said, but also how, why, and in what socio-historical context it is communicated. For this reason, the study of political discourse remains a vital area

of research across linguistics, political science, media studies, and sociology, offering key insights into the mechanisms of influence, power, and identity construction in contemporary society.

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