GENDER ASPECT IN THE SELF-PRESENTATION COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION IN THE MODERN POLITICAL DISCOURSE (ON THE EXAMPLE OF D. TRUMP'S AND K. HARRIS'S SPEECHES)

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the analysis of gender aspect in the implementation of the self-presentation communicative strategy in the modern political discourse. The relevance of the research is determined by the increased interest in the political discourse, especially in terms of its communicative and pragmatic potential. On the example of D. Trump's and D. K. Harris's speeches the author managed to compare the way they demonstrate their self-image via different speech tactics and such language means as lexical and syntactic repetitions, parallelism, negative connotation vocabulary, parcelling, antithesis and deixis of the personal pronouns "we" and "I".

Keywords: communicative strategy, self-presentation strategy, political discourse, male / female speech behavior, gender aspect.

In recent years, the number of studies of language features of the political discourse has significantly increased, which is quite understandable due to the active modern political processes and events – negotiations, elections, conflicts, dialogues and manipulations, which increasingly occupy all media landscape. At the same time, we can definitely observe hidden or sometimes quite explicit communicative aggression in the speeches of political speakers [1]. As the main task of modern political discourse is to consider the distribution and legitimization of power through manipulation of public opinion, interiorization of political values, representation of social objects as mental and immanent, subjective meanings as objective categories, it explains the complexity and ambiguity of its language – the use of emotionally elevated vocabulary, semantic uncertainty, ideological polysemy, etc. [2].

In our opinion, the most productive way to study political communication not only from the point of view of its lexical specifics, but with the consideration of the communicative-pragmatic approach principles, as a strategic process that allows the addressee to implement specific communicative goals through the choice of particular language means. And from the

numerous communicative strategies of modern English we find the strategy of self-presentation to be of sufficient scientific interest for political discourse studies. The main reason why political speakers often turn to this strategy is the necessity to create a positive image in the public eye through certain emotional personal presentation which could help to influence the listener.

We decided to distinguish specific pragmatic, lexical, syntactic and stylistic means that modern political speakers use to achieve the maximum effect and impress the audience. With this in mind, we sorted out different speeches of the most prominent representatives of modern English-speaking political establishment, both male and female, and chose two, in our opinion, the most prominent representatives - the former 45th US President Donald Trump and the new US Vice President Kamala Devi Harris. Thus, we set a goal – to consider gender aspect in the self-presentation communicative strategy in the modern political discourse.

As for Kamala Harris, we chose her first speech as the new Vice President of the United States. We can say that in general her speech behavior is often harsh and categorical, and during the election campaign she repeatedly showed clearly expressed communicative aggression towards D. Trump and his administration, not mincing her words. The Washington Post, which published her speech, accompanied it with such comments as "Kamala Harris, daughter of Jamaican and Indian immigrants, elected nation's first female vice president", "Americans react to Kamala Harris's historic victory: Look baby, she looks like us" etc., manipulating their readers' opinion beforehand through emphasizing the exclusiveness of the new Vice President [3].

The analysis of the pragmatic tools of the verbal level allowed us to identify the following components of the holistic public image that she cultivates through her self-presentation as the new Vice President: a democracy fighter, a devoted assistant, a defender of family values, a fighter for women's rights, a groundbreaker and a hard worker.

Projecting the image of a "democracy fighter", K. Harris uses the speech tactic of referring to an authoritative opinion. She cites the Congressman John Lewis: "*Democracy is not a state. It is an act*", and goes on to say that protecting it "*takes struggle*", which in turn "*takes sacrifice*", but "*there is joy in it*". If we consider the vocabulary she uses, we should mention a great number of words and combinations related to the topic of struggle, e.g. *fight for, struggle, sacrifice, victory, challenging, courage, resilience, equality, liberty, justice, break barriers, combat, commander in chief, troops*, etc.

The image of a "devoted assistant" is presented by K. Harris through the use of the tactics of positive presentation of J. Biden and his family. She is generous with compliments to the new president, putting his name next to such concepts like "hope", "unity", "decency" and "truth" (*You chose hope and unity, decency, science and, yes, truth. You chose Joe Biden as the next*

president of the United States of America), calling him a "healer", a "uniter", a "tested and steady hand", a "person whose own experience of loss gives him a sense of purpose", a "man with a big heart". She does not forget to mention Biden's affection to his family - his wife Jill, who, in her words, will be an "incredible first lady", son Hunter, daughter Ashley, grandchildren and his deceased son (*Beau, my dear friend, who we remember here today*).

Presenting herself as a "defender of family values", a wife, a mother, a sister and a daughter, K. Harris tries not just to demonstrate her gender identity once again, but also to show that family is no less important to her than to Joe Biden, and that she, like most ordinary Americans, values the institution of the family: "*And to my husband, Doug; our children, Cole and Ella; my sister, Maya; and our whole family - I love you all more than I can ever express*". She still devotes special attention to her mother, deliberately emphasizing her non-white origin, which didn't make any obstacles to her American dream: "... *my mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, who is always in our hearts. When she came here from India at the age of 19, she maybe didn't quite imagine this moment. But she believed so deeply in an America where a moment like this is possible*".

The image of a "fighter for women's rights" is now extremely popular in the United States, so it is not surprising that the new Vice President positions herself this way. She uses the speech tactics of gratitude and addresses all the women, especially non-white, thanking them for paving her way: "*Black women, Asian, White, Latina, Native American women who throughout our nation's history have paved the way for this moment tonight*". She also expresses her appreciation of all the sacrifice they made and their struggle "*for equality, freedom and justice*", of being the "*backbone of our democracy*", winning the right to vote in a difficult long-term struggle and supporting her: "*And I stand on their shoulders*".

It goes without saying that having become the first non-white woman to hold the post of Vice-President, K. Harris could not but present oneself as a "groundbreaker": "*I may be the first woman in this office*". She tries to demonstrate that her own achievements open up new opportunities for all US citizens: "... *every little girl watching tonight sees that this is a country of possibilities*".

An important message to the audience was the idea that the new administration will have to work very hard to correct all the mistakes of the previous president and his team. Thus, using the tactics of setting tasks which she and the entire Biden administration need to fulfill, K. Harris cultivates her image of a "hard worker" who will do her best: "*I will strive to be a vice president ... the real work begins. The hard work. The necessary work. The good work*". At the same time, setting such ambitious goals like "to save lives and beat this pandemic", "to rebuild our economy so it works for working people", "to root out systemic racism in our justice system and society",

"to fight the climate crisis" and "to unite our country and heal the soul of our nation", she deliberately emphasizes that there is such an extensive scope of work for the new administration exists only due to the fact that the previous one was unable to solve very important problems.

To analyze the speech behavior of Donald Trump we chose his public address at the final debate with Joe Biden. In the close of that vivid political duel the host of the NBC News channel invited the candidates within one minute to say what they, in case of the victory, would say to the Americans who voted against them on the inauguration day [4]. It is quite obvious that under such circumstances the candidates would turn to the strategy of self-presentation.

As a result of the analysis of D. Trump's speech, we were able to find some specific language means of implementing the communicative strategy under study.

As one of the most obvious verbal tools of self-presentation, Trump uses lexical repetition to create and consolidate the image of a "successful candidate" by means of such words and word combinations like "success", "successful", "the best numbers", etc.: *"We have to make our country totally successful"; "Success is going to bring us together"; "We are on the road to success"; "We had the best Black unemployment numbers in the history of our country, Hispanic, women, Asian, people with diplomas, with no diplomas, MIT graduates, number one in the class - everybody had the best numbers".*

Donald Trump implements the strategy of self-presentation using vocabulary with negative emotional connotation which helps him not just to praise his own advantages and merits, but at the same time contrast them to the "sins" and shortcomings of his opponent: *"And he wants to put new regulations on everything. He will kill it. If he gets in, you will have a depression, the likes of which you've never seen. Your 401K's will go to hell and it'll be a very, very sad day for this country".*

Using antithesis for contrasting his achievements with the actions of Joe Biden is one of D. Trump's favorite techniques, which he could not do without in the election debates: *"But I'm cutting taxes and he wants to raise everybody's taxes. And he wants to put new regulations on everything".*

One more specific feature we managed to find is the personal deixis of the pronouns "we" and "I" in D. Trump's final speech. He tends to use the personal pronoun "we" as "we-inclusive", which includes both the listener and the speaker. By saying "we", D. Trump implies: himself and his team: *"Now we're rebuilding it and we're doing record numbers …";* himself and his fellow party members: *"We have to make our country totally successful, as it was prior to the plague coming in from China";* himself and all US citizens: *"We are on the road to success".* But he does not forget from time to time to demonstrate his own status and importance

in solving problems of national importance, using the personal pronoun "I" as the subject: "*But, I will tell you, go back before the plague came in, just before, I was getting calls from people that were not normally people that would call me*".

Thus, we considered the use of the strategy of self-presentation in the speech of K. Harris and identified the following communicative and pragmatic tools typical for female speech behavior in the modern English-language political discourse: gender identity, representing own political image as a combination of popular social concepts (such as a democracy fighter, a devoted assistant, a defender of family values, a fighter for women's rights, a groundbreaker and a hard worker); use of speech tactics of referring to an authoritative opinion, of positive presentation (of the boss), of gratitude and of setting tasks; harsh categorical statements and active use of vocabulary related to the topic of struggle. However, male speech behavior in the self-presentation strategy implementation in the political discourse can include such pragmatic means like lexical repetition, vocabulary with negative emotional connotation to make the opponent's image negative, antithesis and personal deixis of pronouns "we" and "I".

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