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VERBAL REPRESENTATION OF THE CATEGORY OF AGONALITY IN THE POLITICAL DISCOURSE OF THE CONFRONTATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE OF LINGUISTIC PERSONALITY

ВЕРБАЛЬНА РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦІЯ КАТЕГОРІЇ АГОНАЛЬНОСТІ У ПОЛІТИЧНОМУ ДИСКУРСІ КОНФЛІКТНОГО ПСИХОЛОГІЧНОГО ТИПУ МОВНОЇ ОСОБИСТОСТІ

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The article dwells on verbal representation particularities of the category of agonality in the political discourse of the confrontational psychological type of linguistic personality. The relevance of the study of agonality of the political discourse from the psycholinguistic perspective is substantiated by its relation to a psychotype of a politician's linguistic personality. Research into the category of agonality allowed us to view it as one of the key categories of the political discourse which represents itself as an intrinsic competitiveness, antagonism between people in politics whose ultimate objective is power. Having set the purpose of establishing lexico-syntactical and pragmatic features of agonality verbalization in the political discourse we selected texts of electioneering speeches and presidential debates of Donald Trump as an exponent of a confrontational psychotype of a politician's linguistic personality. This psychotype is characterized by egocentric narcissistic scope, low agreeableness, callousness and self-assertive and / or aggressive speech behavior. It exhibits inward-focused thinking, evinces signs of a noticeable drive for the role of the communicative leader, displays limited span of topics due to a politician's rigidity of mentality. It was revealed that lexical peculiarities of verbal representation of agonality of the confrontational psychological type of linguistic personality in the political discourse constitute nouns, adjectives and verbs with negative connotation and the usage of abstract nouns as a means of enhancement of terseness and actionality of speech. On the syntactical level agonality of the psychotype in question becomes obvious via short simple sentences, numerous anaphoric and epiphoric repetitions and anadiplosis. Special emphasis was given to outlining pragmatic specificity of agonality verbalization means in the political discourse of the confrontational psychotype. It is implemented by means of the communicative strategies of self-assertion and vilification of opponents. Each of the strategies was analysed in terms of its specifics and tactics based on the examples provided.

Key words: the category of agonality, political discourse, linguistic personality, confrontational psychological type, lexical means, syntactic means, communicative strategies.

У статті досліджуються особливості вербальної репрезентації категорії агональності в політичному дискурсі конфліктного психологічного типу мовної особистості. Актуальність розвідки з вивчення агональності політичного дискурсу у психолінгвістичному аспекті обґрунтовується її залежністю від психолінгвістичного типу мовної особистості політика. Вивчення наукових підходів до категорії агональності дозволяє розглядати її як одну з ключових категорій політичного дискурсу, що є сутнісною змагальністю, протистоянням людей, які займаються політикою, задля досягнення основної цілі – отримання влади. Поставивши за мету статті з'ясувати лексичні, синтаксичні та прагматичні особливості вербалізації агональності в політичному дискурсі, ми відібрали тексти передвиборчих промов та президентських дебатів Дональда Трампа як представника конфліктного психологічного типу мовної особистості політика. Такий психотип характеризується егоцентричним нарцисичним світоглядом, низьким ступенем конформізму, жорсткістю і самостверджувальною та / чи агресивною мовленнєвою поведінкою. Він демонструє замкнене на собі мислення, виявляє ознаки значного прагнення до ролі комунікативного лідера поряд з обмеженим набором тем для дискусій з огляду на негнучкий стиль мислення. Визначено, що лексичні особливості вербальної репрезентації агональності конфліктного психологічного типу мовної особистості в політичному дискурсі представлені іменниками, прикметниками та дієсловами з негативною конотацією і абстрактними іменниками як ефек-

тивними засобами підвищення стислості та дієвості мовлення політика. На синтаксичному рівні агональність цього психотипу проявляється у коротких простих реченнях, численних анафоричних та епіфоричних повторях і анадиплосисі. Особливу увагу приділено описові прагматичної специфіки засобів вербалізації агональності в політичному дискурсі конфліктного психотипу. Вона складається із застосування комунікативних стратегій самоутвердження та очорнення опонентів. Кожну зі стратегій проаналізовано щодо особливостей її реалізації та тактик на матеріалі наданих прикладів.

Ключові слова: категорія агональності, політичний дискурс, мовна особистість, конфліктний психологічний тип, лексичні засоби, синтаксичні засоби, комунікативні стратегії.

Problem statement and relevance substantiation. Interdisciplinary approach to grasping the way language and speech phenomena function, enabling a speaker to achieve their communicative goals effectively, proves to be particularly essential in the political domain where various social, cultural and psychological factors of people in politics come to the very forefront. Political communication per se is fueled by its utmost, intrinsic and permanent quality and objective alike – power struggle, which presupposes competition and confrontation and is manifested in the category of agonality. Currently the study of this category of the political discourse which can broadly be defined as a socially and culturally marked longing of an individual to publicly put their competing potential to test provides an exciting opportunity to advance our knowledge of socio-psychological peculiarities of a linguistic personality, in particular the verbalization of agonality by different linguistic personality psychotypes of English-speaking politicians.

A psychotype is treated as “a recognized set of character traits, external features of an individual which indicate their recurrent behavior patterns in any communicative situation” [7, p. 21]. As a result of a psychological approach to the research of linguistic personality plentiful typologies ensued starting with the theory of accentuated personalities by Karl Leonhard to a more elaborate classification of personality types of accentuation offered by Hans Schmishek to the psychological classification of communication styles by Virginia Satir. All of them draw on the concept of agonality as one of the basic roots feeding and prompting a combination of multitudinous communicative and cognitive features of individuals against the backdrop of a certain social setting.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Awareness of agonality in the public discourse is not recent, having possibly first been described in the times of the ancient Greek culture as a core feature of polis democracy. Agonality, or competitiveness, postulates a competing principle as a cultural prerequisite for human beings. Initially viewed as a philosophical and later – a cultural phenomenon, the category of agonality finally attracted linguists’ attention with regard to its communicative potential [5], discursive functioning [2], manifestation through the prism of the theory of speech acts [4]. Up to now, however, far too little attention has been paid to this category verbalization in the political discourse in relation to the psychotype of the linguistic personality. Thus, a focused scrutiny of verbal means of agonality realization in the communicative behavior of political leaders of a certain psychotype will contribute to a deeper understanding of this category role in human interaction.

The purpose of this research lies in determining lexical, syntactic and pragmatic peculiarities of verbal representation of agonality of the confrontational psychological type of linguistic personality in the political discourse.

Presenting the main material. Agonality used to be metaphorically measured by “agons” – stages in sports, intellectual, musical, poetic, drama competitions. It comes across as a kind of an immanent sociocultural universal, the modus of social reality with mandatory opposing forces implementing strategies and tactics of outdoing their opponents in terms of different parameters [1]. Political discourse, an institutional discourse type, being a specific interaction between subjects of politics (politicians, presidents, government and /or parliament members) and political objects (voters, citizens, general public, electorate) offers ample ground for agonality manifestation, in particular during electioneering and presidential election campaigns [6] when political parties put forward charismatic people of authority and influence to put forward and disseminate their platforms. Thus, it is a linguis-

tic personality of a politician / president/ member of parliament that shows off agonality through the prism of their own psychological, cognitive and linguistic characteristics while rigorously sticking to the rules of their own linguoculture [10, p. 215]. A linguistic personality lends itself to exploration through a set of fragments and textual units that characterize a politician's speech style expressed by a number of individual verbal (lexical, grammatical, semantic and stylistic), communicative-cognitive and pragmatic characteristics [3].

A linguistic personality of Donald Trump was chosen for study due to its unmatched idiosyncrasy and easy access to sufficient linguistic data representing it. An American politician, statesman, entrepreneur, media personality, he served as the 45th president of the United States from the Republican Party from 2017 to 2021. During the presidential campaign, his political stances were recognized as isolationist, nationalist, populist, protectionist, racially charged and misogynistic. He became notorious for his strict policy of migrants' flow limitation. He weakened environmental protection abolishing a number of relevant regulations, initiated a trade war with China, ignored or contradicted many recommendations from health officials during the COVID-19 pandemic, proved to be the only American president to have been impeached twice for abuse of power and incitement of insurrection, the latter – immediately on leaving office. Profound research carried out into a psychotype of Donald Trump [9] underscores the politician's low agreeableness, callousness, rudeness, arrogance and lack of empathy along with his inclinations toward social ambition and aggressiveness. It is ascertained in the study [8] that throughout his entire life and career Trump has been keeping up the narrative of a warrior, a ferocious combatant who fights to win, yet the broader purpose of winning the battle seems to remain vague and obscure to himself. As a corollary of the aforementioned premises, the psychotype of such a personality can be defined as narcissistic confrontational.

Trump's political discourse generated during his electioneering campaign in 2015–2016 (be it along his pre-election trail or in a heated presidential debate with his main opponent Hillary Clinton) is imbued with language means of agonality realization. It has been found out that on the lexical level they are presented by lexemes (nouns, adjectives and verbs) with distinct negative connotation employed with a view to criticizing or/and denigrating the opponent's policy: *“Her comments displayed the same sense of arrogance and entitlement that let her deviate federal laws”; “...she has never taken accountability for the disaster she created in Lybia, Syria, Iraq [...] her policies have created [...] poverty at home” “They [average citizens] want better lives, not more petty attacks from failed and totally discredited politicians like crooked Hillary Clinton”; “She [Hillary Clinton] slanders and smears with her statements last week working people who just want a fraction of the security enjoyed by her” [12]; “...we're going to make sure that trouble never comes” [13]; “Hillary has experience, but it's bad experience [...] whether it's the Iran deal that you're so in love with, where we gave them \$150 billion back. [...] I agree, she's got experience, but it's bad experience. And this country can't afford to have another four years of that kind of bad experience [16].*

A plethora of abstract nouns in Trump's speeches facilitates succinctness of his descriptions of political events, phenomena and circumstances while contributing to actionality and expressiveness of the language used to enhance the robust force of the politician's appeal to the public: *aspiration, history, depression, integration, hope, possibility, future, strength, justice, leadership, knowledge, price, trouble, surprise, unpredictability, problem, imagination, stamina, chance, migration, influence, business* [13]. Lexemes denoting competition, antagonism, defense, military potential, force etc abound in Trump's electioneering discourse, clearly reflecting his confrontational psychotype and focus on the aggressive offensive standpoint: *“I will fight for every neglected part of this nation. And I will fight to bring us all together as one people”; “We have to have a strong military, we have to take care of our yets”; “You need to have a lot of energy”; Immediately after taking office, I will ask my generals to present to me a plan within 30 days to defeat and destroy ISIS. We will defeat Radical Islamic Terrorism, just as we have defeated every threat we have faced in every age before”; “Half a million jobs each year, they are being destroyed and we are unable to compete with other nations” [12].*

Agonal potential of Trump's addresses to his electorate on the syntactic level gets unleashed via the use of short simple sentences. An extravert Trump, being aware of how to win over an audience, meticulously avoids long sentences with sophisticated imagery. Instead, various repetitions are in place to reinforce the messages the politician is getting across in a dry matter-of-fact manner: anaphoric – "Our country's in trouble. A lot of people do not know it. But our country's in trouble" [13]; "They will never make America great again. They don't even have a chance. They're controlled fully by the lobbyists, by the donors.. And by the special interests, fully" [16]; epiphoric – "We need a leader that can bring back our jobs, can bring back our manufacturing, can bring back our military, can take care of our vets... We have to take care of our vets" [ibid]; "Politicians are all talk, no action. They are all talk and no action" [11]; syntactic – "To the African American people within the community: what do you have to lose? It can't get any worse. It can't get any worse. It can't get any worse" [12]. Anadiplosis, or reduplication (repetition of a final single word (or a group of words) of the preceding sequence at the beginning of the following one) is effectively resorted to by the politician to create a special rhythm of speech, to set greater store by certain phrases, to ease listeners' comprehension: "And after four or five years in Brooklyn, I ventured into Manhattan and did a lot of great deals. I did a lot of great deals, and I did them early and young That's right"; "A lot of people up there can't get jobs. Can't get jobs, because there are no jobs, because China has our jobs and Mexico has our jobs" [13].

Apart from repetitions of diverse kinds Trump utilizes rhetorical questions as an efficient means of attracting attention of the audience, thus forging a problem situation: "Very dishonest people. I mean how dishonest? How about when a major anchor who hosted a debate started crying? When she realised we won?" [17]; "How stupid are our leaders? How stupid are these politicians to allow this to happen? How stupid are they?" [13]; "How are these people gonna lead us? How are we gonna go back and make it great again?" [16]. Rhetorical questions of D. Trump's are frequently followed by a psychological pause during which listeners are urged to speculate upon the issues raised. As a result, such questions functioning as a tool of exerting manipulative influence within a political discourse can conjure a bogus dialogue with electorate, hook and entice potential voters cajoling them into Trump's agenda.

Concerning a pragmatic level of verbal markers of agonality in Trump's political discourse it is constituted by communicative strategies of self-assertion and opponents' vilification. The strategy of self-assertion is executed by wielding an array of typical value-based concepts of the American linguoculture. Being a narcissistic confrontational psychotype though, Trump is used to straying away from the deep-rooted tradition, employed by American political discourse setters, of dwelling on such a core national value-based concept as democracy. Instead, he puts in the limelight the mutually related concepts of economic prosperity, security and hard work, making a particular emphasis on the exceptional role (real or, more often, perceived) of his persona in turning the USA into a prosperous country with a highly competitive vibrant economy: "I've employed -- I've employed tens of thousands of people over my lifetime. That means medical. That means education. That means everything" [14]; "Now, we have to build a fence. And it's got to be a beauty. Who can build better than Trump? I build; it's what I do. I build; I build nice fences, but I build great buildings"; "I run a big business. You know I've always said it's very, very hard for a person who is very successful. I have done so many deals. Almost all of them have been tremendously successful"; "We have a presidential election coming up. And we have some good people. Nobody like Trump of course"; "I know what needs to be done to make America great again. ...The potential is enormous. And I am serious thinking of running for president because I can do the job" [11]. Trump resorts to the concept of American dream restoring its initial meaning for Americans in the modern context: "Sadly, the American dream is dead. But if I get elected president I will bring it back bigger and better and stronger than ever before, and we will make America great again" [13]. Adjectives with positive connotation in the comparative degree "bigger, better, stronger" enhance the general expressive-emotional appeal of the quoted

above promise while the phrase “*Make America great again*” has acquired the status of the official slogan of Trump’s campaign having been used practically in his every speech and address.

The strategy of opponents’ vilification being pivotal in any discourse of aggressive speech behavior takes on the focal role in D. Trump’s electioneering rhetoric as it serves for him as a springboard for undermining adversaries’ credibility and diminishing their worth on the political scene. Running for presidency as a Republican candidate, Trump embarked on a campaign of disparagement directed at Democrats and their policy, namely at Barack Obama’s social welfare initiatives and an aspiring for presidency Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton. The realization of the communicative strategy of vilification rests on the tactics of mockery, offence, accusations, criticism and taunt. Trump consistently reviled his competitor: “*Hillary Clinton has perfected the politics of personal profit and theft*”, “*Hillary Clinton who, as most people know, is a world class liar*” [15], questioned her ability to occupy the high office: “*She lacks the temperament, the judgment and the competence to lead*” [ibid] hinting at her fraudulent inclinations: “*To cover-up her corrupt dealings, Hillary Clinton illegally stashed her State Department emails on a private server*” [ibid] and alleging her deficiency as the leader Americans long for: “*They want better lives, not more petty attacks from failed and totally discredited politicians like crooked Hillary Clinton*” [12]. It should be observed that the expression “*crooked Hillary*” firmly settled in Trump’s vocabulary as a poignant characteristics of his rival along with the neologism “*Killary*” – a contaminated lexical blend of “*kill*” and “*Hillary*”, unequivocally suggesting his disdainful attitude to H. Clinton’s tendency to negatively affect American society. The tactics of criticism and accusations was carried out in numerous citations of failures of the health care reform launched by B. Obama (infamously known as “*Obamacare*”) and upheld by H. Clinton: “*Now everything about Obamacare was a lie. It was a filthy lie. And when you think about it, lies, I mean are they prosecuted? Does anyone do anything? He lied about the doctor, he lied about every aspect*” [11]. Clinton was steadily accused by Trump of her plans to abolish the right of Americans to keep and bear arms: “*She’s very much against the second amendment, she wants to destroy your second amendment*” [12]. Using a possessive determiner “*your*” in the context of law-making, the politician deviously plucks at electorate’s heartstrings by treading on their toes. Craftily developing the topic further, Trump takes on the tactics of mockery and taunt, reversing the suggested by H. Clinton changes in law on her: “*Guns, guns, guns... I think what we should do is... she goes around with armed bodyguards like you’ve never seen before. I think that her bodyguards should drop all weapons, they should disarm, right? Immediately, yes? Yes*” [ibid].

Conclusions. Agonality as a fundamental culturally conditioned category is deeply ingrained in the political discourse and serves an indispensable prerequisite for competitive “*tug-of-war*” within its framework. Its actualization reflects a psychological type of politicians involved as a set of invariant personality traits. Confrontational psychological type of linguistic personality is characterized by egocentric narcissistic outlook and self-assertive and / or aggressive speech behavior. Donald Trump, being an embodiment of such a psychotype, evinces such verbalization markers of agonality on the lexical level as copious use of nouns, adjectives and verbs with negative connotation, abstract nouns. Short simple sentences, anaphoric, epiphoric, anadipodic repetitions, rhetorical questions are indicators of agonality verbalization on the syntactical level of Trump’s speech. Pragmatics of agonality of a confrontational psychological type is manifested in a person’s adherence to communicative strategies of self-assertion and opponents’ vilification.

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