

صيغ المبالغة في الخطابات السياسية

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مستخلص البحث:

تتعلق هذه الدراسة باستخدام الوسائل البلاغية من كناية ومبالغة من قبل السياسيين خصوصاً في خطبهم السياسية والحربية حيث المبالغة في تجاوز الحقائق لتحقيق أهداف معينة.

يحاول الباحث هنا أن يبين بأن السياسيين عموماً يحاولون أن يقنعوا مستمعيهم بأن ما يرد في خطبهم هو عين الحقيقة متناسين بأن معلوماتهم المبالغ بها قد تشكل املاءً على الجمهور وبطريقة وقحة وغير مؤدبة.

تبدأ هذه الدراسة باستعراض العناصر التي تشكل المعنى والنظرية التداولية لكرايس. كما وتم الإشارة الى قواعد التخاطب الخاصة بتلك النظرية وكيف ان تجاوز تلك المبادئ والقواعد قد ينتج عنه المبالغة في الكلام. كما وبينت الدراسة بأن أسلوب المبالغة المستخدم من قبل أولئك السياسيين ربما يؤثر على درجة الادب والمصادقية المتوقع إظهارها للجمهور. ولغرض التحليل تم اختيار خطابين سياسيين مختلفين.

الكلمات المفتاحية: كناية، أسلوب المبالغة، المبالغة، خرق.

Metonymy and Hyperbole as Exaggeration Elements in Selected War Speeches

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Abstract

This study deals with the rhetorical device, metonymy and Hyperbole, that are specially used in the political or War speeches as elements of exaggeration usually exploited by politicians to achieve certain interests. The researcher tries to show that politicians in general almost try to persuade their audience that what they (the politicians) say is the whole truth forgetting that the information they introduce may be imposed on their audience in a rude impolite way.

The study begins with introducing the elements of meaning and pragmatics. Grice conversational maxims are also mentioned and how the violation and breaking of each would result in showing certain figures of speech as hyperbole. Also, it is shown that the exaggerated style used by politicians would certainly affect the degree of the expected politeness shown to audience.

Two political speeches are chosen to be analyzed.

Key words: Metonymy, Hyperbole, Exaggeration, Violation, Figures of speech

Introduction

The final aim behind any speech or conversation is the process of making communication, i.e., transmitting meaning. This meaning may be direct or literal, and this is the concern of semantics: one of the theories of meaning. But the process of conveying meaning may be rather complicated, far and needs knowing the intention of the speaker. Here it is the very concern of pragmatics. Levinson (1983:6-9) and Crystal (1985:240) agree that pragmatics has come to be applied to the study of language from the point of view of users and it is concerned solely with performance principles of language used and covers both context- dependent aspects of language structure and

principles of language usage and understanding.

The process of passing the intended meaning to the receiver, is a style that is specially used by politicians in war or political speeches in order to achieve different aims which are going to be covered later on. This use of rhetorical devices or playing with words may affect what is called the cooperation that is required to exist between people when conversing. Dealing with the cooperation principal needs knowing first the interpersonal rhetoric since the first is considered as a component of the last.

1- The Interpersonal Rhetoric

Wales (1989: 405) states that rhetoric is from Greek Origin. It is used in speech as a way of affecting people or audience through playing with words. This led to the appearance of what is called stylistics as a way of affecting and directing the addressees through well-chosen and designed words. Leech (1983) cited in Wales (ibid: 704), has approached Rhetoric from a boarder pragmatic perspective regarding it as a way of persuading the addressees through an effective use of language.

Leech (1983: 131) regards the cooperative principle (CP) as a component of the interpersonal rhetoric and verifies its relation with the politeness principle (henceforth PP). Thus, the interpersonal rhetoric according to Leech (ibid), embodies: the cooperative principle, the politeness principle, the interest principle, the irony principle and some other minor ones. What matters to this study is the (cp) then the (pp) and the interrelation between them.

2.1. Grice's cooperative principle

Levinson (1983:101) mentions Grices' cooperative principle which embodies four assumption (maxims) that are supposed to guide an efficient and effective use of language: the maxim of quality (to say what is adequate and true only), to make our contribution as

informative as required, to be relevant all the time and to avoid ambiguity and obscurity.

In short, Levinson (ibid:102) and Leech (1983:131) rather agree that the mentioned rules show the best way for people to interact with each other. These rules (maxims) if followed when speaking may provide the best information needed by the two sides i.e, the speaker and the listener. But they (ibid) add that the above conversational maxims can be flouted and broken. Flouting each maxim may result in certain stylistic devices or figures of speech. Such flouting may be intentional by speakers/writers or just casual and not intended.

But anyhow such processes should inevitably result in changing the style and affecting the degree of politeness. Brown and Levinson (ibid) introduce the whole process as follows:

1- Flouting the maxim of Quantity results in:

a- Understatement (meiosis).

b-Overstatement (hyperbole). This element would be of special concern to this work for hyperbole is frequently noticed in war or political speeches.

c- Tautology.

2- Flouting the maxim of Quality produces:

- a- Irony
- b- Metaphor
- c- Rhetorical questions

3-Flouting relevance maxim would result in no figure of speech but sometimes the relevant situations may lead to comic scenes.

4- While flouting the maxim of manner produces:

- a- ambiguity
- b- vagueness
- c- ellipsis

Gleason (2009:23) mentions the same above process saying that people sometimes violate these principles in order to achieve certain very human ends to be ironic, for instance, or to make a joke, perhaps to be deceptive insulting or even showing a kind of hyperbole. All the former types of violation can be considered as a disregard to the feeling of other participants, i.e., rather impolite. Concerning language and context, Gleason (ibid) adds that language, however, must be used in a social setting to accomplish various ends. Speakers who know how to use language appropriately have more than linguistic competence; they have communicative competence which is the ability to express oneself suitably and politely in different social occasions - Thus, violating the above-mentioned rules may reflect a shortage in understanding, the

aims behind noticing them. So, being polite when addressing others can be considered as part of Competent Communication.

2-2 The politeness principle

Yule (1996:134) states that there are several ways to think of politeness. The general social meaning of the term involves ideas like being tactful, modest and nice to other people. In the study of linguistic politeness, the most relevant concept is (face). Your (face), in pragmatics, is your public self-image. Politeness is showing awareness of another persons' face, so if you say something that represents a threat to another persons' self-image, it is called a face threatening act. If we use a direct speech act to order someone to do something (Give me that paper!) you are acting as if you have more social power, an act that is considered as a face-threatening when you exchange your speech indirectly through using a question form like (would you mind, or could you) may softens things and abolish what is considered as social power. In other words, whenever we are indirect in our speech, we are more polite.

Brown et al., (2005: 82-83) mention also the concept of face and consider it as an important part of interaction. They (ibid) introduce an example saying that when we ask

someone a favour and we are tuned down, it means that we have lost face. The hearer here should lose face also owing to being selfish or ungenerous. Thus, to avoid the embarrassing if not disastrous situation, we should ask for the favour in a polite way, (Brown et al). (ibid). In other words, we should allow the hearer a chance to refuse the favour without having to lose face.

On the other hand, politeness to Herk (2012:120-6) can be related to sociolinguistic behavior. Herk believes that practicing politeness shows a kind of sociolinguistic behavior that it can be learnt over time. Politeness to Herk (ibid) is far from just noticing certain etiquettes, it is how to behave suitably in certain occasions. Herk repeats here the same ideas about the concept of face mentioned above.

The two linguists, Thomas (1995:149-151) and Herk (2012: ibid), return to discuss another aspect of politeness. They relate the matter to culture and almost agree that culture interferes here with the concept of politeness. Thomas exemplifies that Chinese place more emphasis on the needs of the group rather than those of individual while the Japanese are highly interested in Deference (a phenomenon that is connected with politeness but opposite to familiarity and which refers to the respect we show to other people by

virtue of their higher status, great age, etc)

Yule (1996:134) confirms the above ideas and say that the appropriate language to mark politeness differ substantially from one culture to the next. So, if we have grown up in a culture that has directness as a valued way of showing solidarity, and use direct speech acts to people whose culture is more oriented to indirectness and avoiding direct imposition, then you will be considered impolite. In turn those people may seem to us vague and unsure of what they want. Herk (2012:120-6) sees the matter as a kind of cross-cultural misunderstanding that results from different ideas of what counts as polite and appropriate. Herk introduces an example about the differences between Korean American shopkeepers and their African American customers. The Korean focus on negative face to keep the interaction within minimum limits, while their African American customers focus on positive face and look upon such kind of interaction as a chance to be friendly. This mismatch leads to customers interpreting shopkeepers deliberately antagonistic or impolite.

Thomas (1995:149-161) concludes that there has been a great deal of interest in politeness and considers it as a central interest of pragmatics to the degree that politeness and deference can be manifested through general social

behaviour. Related to pragmatics, politeness should have a concern with the conversational maxims above which verify the idea that one should be clear, faithful, cooperative and understandable in his speech in order not to be regarded as rude or impolite.

Finally, Leech (1983:131-132) organizes politeness into maxims and mentions the concept of cost/benefit and other / self. Simply, he believes that in conversations we should minimize cost to others, i.e., we should try to lessen the harm to them. At the same time, we try to lessen the benefit to (self), i.e., to ourselves. It is a kind of generosity and self-respect that should prevail between the interactions. Yet, such nice elements are not noticed in the Political Speeches.

3. Politeness and Rhetorical Language

One of the oldest observations about Rhetorical and literary theory is that effective orators keep their audiences in mind. This is what Johnstone (2008:144-8) believes in and adds that Rhetorical and literary theory has suggested various ways of conceptualizing audience and the role of audience in discourse. Johnston (ibid), claims also that since public conversations, political or war speeches, are types of social interaction, people need rules to ensure the smooth proceeding of that social interaction.

This idea seems to have been developed later on into conversational maxims referred to earlier. In all cases, speech and behavior should remain balanced and not conducted haphazardly, otherwise it should be perceived as inappropriate, odd, less polite or even rude.

Sherwani (2011:32-35) states that nowadays politicians especially the Western, use or manipulate classical rhetoric in their speeches to achieve certain aims. He (ibid) refers to Chomsky (1992) and says that most politicians not only use rhetorical devices in their speeches but they abuse, torture and distort language impolitely. Thus, terms like (free world), (national security) are far from being really true, but intended to confuse and distract the audience's thought and their full realization of what is going on.

For Sherwani (ibid), the skillful use of rhetoric and figurative language by the politicians plays an important role in getting their success. Thus, the elegant language used may persuade the audience of the validity of the certain views that are wanted to be conveyed.

The figures of speech (trope) that are usually used in political discourse are:

3-1 Metonymy

Wales (1989:297) states that the terms is of Greek origin (name change). It is the name that is related to its object in a semantic way as it is a rhetorical figure. Thus, phrases like (the theatre), (the processes), (the crown) are used to stand for the office or the activity associated with that place or symbol.

3-2 Hyperbole

Leech (1983:145-147) states that Hyperbole refers to a case where the speaker's description is stronger than is warranted. A hyperbole such as "It made my blood boil" constitute a violation in some degree to the maxim of Quality. Sometimes hyperbole or overstatement is used to deceive the addressee through hiding the truth or simply telling lies to clearly break the politeness element, (Leech: ibid). Hyperbole is a common figure or trope in speech as well as literature popularly of great emotion or passion especially in drama as when Hamlet tells Laertes of his love for philia Forty thousand brothers could not, with all their quantity of love make up my sum.

In pragmatics, the term Hyperbole breaks the quantity and quality maxims by distorting the truth through exaggeration. Wales (1989: 222) argues that the use of hyperbole may result in deceiving others. Thus, it is clear that especially headlines may show differences and contrasts in reporting

number of accidents, e-g " thousands feared dead after nuclear leak". The former figures of speech or rhetorical devices (metonymy and Hyperbole) are going to be checked through the coming analysis of political War speeches.

4. The Analysis

The speeches that are going to be checked here are Bush's speech in September (2001) and Tony Blair's on September 2001. The model that is going to be followed here is an eclectic one which relates between Brown and Levinson's model (1978) which specially deals with maxim flouting and Van Dijk's (2004) which treats different categories, of them is the use of some exaggeration rhetorical devices as metaphors and metonymies.

Bush's speech which consists of (42) paragraphs embodies about (4) main examples of general metonymy stated as follows:

1. America will never forget the sounds of the national anthem at Buckingham Palace (par.6).
2. The Taliban must act and act immediately. (par. 16.)
3. They hope that America grows fearful. (par. 20)
4. America will act. (par. 28).

Concerning the missing quantifier metonymies, the speech embodies many examples. Here are also (4) of them.

1. I thank the world for its out pouring of support. (par.6).
2. Americans have known Wars. (par. 9).
3. Americans are asking "who attacked our country?" (par.9).
4. Afghanistan's people have been brutalized. (par.9).

In (I) above, the general metonymy, there are two metonymies: America and Buckingham palace. The former refers to the Americans while the latter refers to the British. In (2), The Taliban refers to the regime of Afghanistan at that time. The word (America) in (3) and (4) refers to the American government.

We notice that the above generalizations used by Bush involve a kind of exaggeration and hiding of truth or at least mentioning half the truth. It is an attempt to reduce his personal responsibility.

In the missing quantifier metonymies, Bush could make wide generalization through omitting the quantifier in order to persuade his audience and the people over the world to agree with his views. Thus, without specifying number or percentage, the

information given remains not strict or at least not enough. Vague facts may distort, scatter the mind or the thinking of the audience intentionally or unintentionally. Thus, linguistically, making things general and not specified through metonymy may affect the quality or quantity conversational maxims and as a result creates a kind of exaggeration which affects the politeness principle. On the other hand, hyperbole has been nearly used for (11) times in the above speech. The main of them are chosen here:

1. Tonight, no such support is intended, it has already been delivered.
2. Would you please help me, Welcome his wife Liza Beamer tonight (part).
3. We have seen the state of the union in the endurance of resources working past exhaustion. (par.2)
4. I'm so honoured to see the British prime minister had crossed an ocean to show his unity with America.
5. This is the World's fight. This is the Civilization fight (par. 28).
6. The Civilized world is rallying to America's side.
7. Tonight, we welcome two leaders who embody the extraordinary Spirit of all New Yorkers. (par.37).

Checking the above examples (1-7), one can notice that Bush tries to raise

the low spirits of the Americans after the attack in an exaggerated way. The attempt to show that the America's reaction towards the attack has been high and convincing has affected much the discourse of the speech. This is clear in example (1), for instance. In example (2), Bush exaggerates in introducing an American Citizen. The use of (help me) seems too much here and intended to direct the passions of the audiences towards a certain point. In (3), the use of (working past exhaustion) does not really reflect man's natural abilities, for physical facts show that human beings ability remains limited whatever he is.

In highly praising the American people Bush overgeneralizes things and exaggerates too much. The Special and distinguished qualities of the American society, the man talks about, the picturing of America as the final and the only shelter for those who are unhappy and bereaved is not far from being untrue or simply too much exaggeration.

The discourse of the speech continues to show more hyperbole points. In (4) Bush, could simply say that the British prime minister has arrived and there is no need for (How). Limiting civilization in (5), within the borders of the USA or within the Western World in general is far from being true and a big deny to the role of other peoples in this respect. In (6) the (rallying) here, I think, is a kind of looking down towards the rest of the world by picturing it hurrying

towards quickly announcing its support to the USA without any courage to negotiate things. At this point, the speech becomes more hyperbolic and harming. to the feelings of the audiences, the last example (7) embodies also a kind of clear exaggeration.

The other speech is by Tony Blair, the British ex-prime minister. The speech which consists of (16) paragraphs has been delivered on Friday, September 14-2001 on " International Terrorism and Attack in the USA", The following general metonymy examples can be checked.

1. Parliament makes its democratic voice heard. (par. 1)
2. The enemies of the Civilized World. (par-9).
3. The USA Security Council on Wednesday passed a resolution.

In example (1), Blair talks about the foundations of the Parliament and the House of Commons in Britain. Linguistically, he refers to these entities through the style of using metonymy. While the far intention remains as a way of spreading and dividing responsibility. Blair tries here to show that the agreement to the British people in supporting and siding with the USA has been taken for granted. It is a kind of generalization referred to earlier, and not the whole truth. In example (2) in special, the civilized world used by Blair

refers to the USA and UK with the other Western Communities. This hint reflects the same imperialistic look towards other societies that has been prevailing in the past century. What matters linguistically and rhetorically here is that such kind of exaggeration embodies a touch of insult and impoliteness to the other people.

Concerning the other type of metonymy, i.e., the missing quantifier, the following examples can be mentioned:

- 1- Business is proceeding as far as possible, as normal. (par.5).
- 2- We are democratic. (par.12)

Blair also, intentionally and consciously misses the quantifiers in order to leave things limitless. This overgeneralization and vagueness is a try, as hinted earlier with Bush, to reduce one's responsibility on the one hand and as a kind of imposing one's ideas and beliefs on others on the other hand. In all cases, such kind of metonymic use can be considered as a disrespect to the possible contradictory views of the audiences or other people.

The element of hyperbole in Blair speech seems limited. The following examples can be noticed:

- 1- These were attacks on the basic democratic values ...(par.1)

- 2- Wear the ultimate badge of fanatic. (par.16)

In example (1), Blair denies the other democracies and high values in the other part of the world as his partner Bush does in his speech. This is an obvious face threatening act to the listeners and as a result it may be a clear breaking of the politeness principle. The (selfless bravery) in the second example shows high exaggeration. Blair pictures the matter as if it were not done or even cannot be repeated in any other part of the world. It is a clear violation of the quantity and quality conversational maxims. In the hyperbolic sense is quite clear also. Thus, a phrase (Wear the ultimate badge of fanatic) involves an obvious exaggeration or at least a type of overstated use of words and highly forced information.

In making a rapid comparison between the above two speeches it can be noticed that the two politicians have used the elements of metonymy and exaggeration (Hyperbole). On certain levels, the discourse of Blair's speech matches that in Bush's speech. In their hyperbolic way of addressing people both politicians try deceivingly to reflect that the western leaders are the defenders of the whole world. But simply and pitifully this is not the cause as the events have proved. Linguistically, Bush's rhetoric has been clearly nationalistic, enthusiastic and talks

proudly about an idealized America while Mr. Blair has used rhetorically utilized reasonable arguments, which focus on "International community". Blair's ideology and personal style are clearly reflected in his speech. But what marks the two speeches is the difference in the use of the exaggerated terms or the element of Hyperbole. This element seems limited within Blair's speech while quite clear in Bush's. The reason for that, as I think, is the critical state that Bush has been in and the need for the passionate and enthusiastic use of language in order to meet the emotional state of his listeners. As a consequence, the high use of this emotional language have resulted in clear exaggeration. Concerning Blair, the man seems not obliged to insist on such discourse, for the matter of the attack is not of a direct concern to him.

5. Conclusions

Regarding what has been mentioned earlier, the following points can be concluded:

1. Politicians tend to use rhetorical language in their speeches when they address their audience in order to get the intended effect.
2. politicians usually exploit language to serve their political and social purposes.
3. Most politicians try to affect their addressees to achieve Certain interests.

4. In The English-speaking countries, the correlation between language, communication and politics is quite clear.

5. What consolidate the politician's speech despite their being different and diverged is their contextuality, i.e., depending on aims and function.

6. The style of imposing beliefs, ideas or information on others through remolding words remains as a type of looking down at them or simply a kind of impoliteness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the elegant teaching staff and friends at Al-yarmok University College in Iraq- Diyala Governorate for their help, support and guidance in coming up with this critical literary research paper. I am also thankful for Al-yarmok Journal Staff for their help and support in publishing my researches and supporting me via their academic encouragements and advices.

Also, my gratitude is also extended for my teachers and professors during my whole life of learning career whom they taught me and guided me with wisdom and kindness, I am sure their persons are ever present within myself and within all those whom they taught hence they were and still be as our symbols of science and mercy that will ever shine our life.

Affected Parties:

There are no affected parties in this research paper.

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