ABSTRACT

Meleshchenko O. O. Discursive strategies of Donald Trump's English political twitting: cognitive multimodal analysis. — Qualification scholarly paper: a manuscript.

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This thesis focuses on the study of discursive strategies of Donald Trump's political twitting from the cognitive multimodal perspective.

This thesis puts forward a hypothesis that Donald Trump's political twitting is organized by a hierarchy of discursive strategies, which are objectified by a range of mono- and multimodal rhetorical techniques of communicative influence. These techniques are differentiated according to the sphere of the recipient's psyche they are aimed at: the sphere of rational reasoning, emotions, volition, and subconsciousness. Further, they are characterized by the specificity of their verbal/graphic and visual/nonverbal implementation or their interface.

The data sample comprises 2000 tweets from Trump's Twitter account @realdonaldtrump, collected during the period of Trump's holding the office of the President of the United States in 2017 – 2021.

Methodologically the analysis of discursive strategies of Trump's political twitting rests on the cognitive-communicative approach to the study of language/speech. This approach employs investigation tools of pragmalinguistics, discourse theory, linguistic semiotics, linguistic synergetics, humor and intertextuality theory, linguistic personology, cognitive linguistics, conceptual (multimodal) metaphor and metonymy theory, multimodal argumentation theory, public image theory, (virtual) genre studies, Internet linguistics, and speech influence theory.

The research rests on the method of inferential analysis of Trump's political tweeting. It allows to reveal Trump's presuppositions, which motivate certain strategic goals, embodied in his mono- and multimodal communicative actions on Twitter.

Besides that, inferential analysis makes it possible to predict the inferences made by the addressee of Trump's political twitting while interpreting these communicative actions.

This study is pioneering a systemic approach to cognitive multimodal analyses of discursive strategies of Trump's political twitting, characterizing political twitting as a genre of the political internet discourse as well as a multimodal (hyper)text. It provides new investigation tools to construct the hierarchical structure of the discursive strategies and substrategies of Trump's political twitting realized by the rhetorical techniques of rational, emotive, volitional, and suggestive communicative influence. It also allows to reveal mono- (verbal) and multimodal (verbo-visual) means of realization of rhetorical techniques and elucidate the interface between multimodal semiotic resources of multimodal rhetorical techniques of Trump's political tweeting.

This thesis consists of Introduction, four chapters, General Conclusions, References, and Appendices.

The first chapter "Theoretical foundations for the study of discursive strategies of Donald Trump's English political twitting" provides the theoretical basis of the study. It discusses linguistic definitions of the discourse (internet discourse, political discourse), text and genre, and considers cognitive, social-interactive, and semiotic characteristics of political twitting treating it as a genre of political internet discourse as well as a multimodal (hyper)text. Then, it constructs the hierarchy of discursive strategies of Trump's political twitting, and reveals and describes rhetorical techniques of communicative influence as means of realization of the president's goals motivating the discursive strategies.

The second chapter "Methodology of the study of discursive strategies of Donald Trump's English political twitting" focuses on the description of the methodological basis of the study. It reveals the methods of the study of discursive strategies of Trump's political twitting, introduces mono-(verbal) and multimodal units of analysis, elucidates the notions which are necessary for their understanding, and describes the algorithm of the research.

The third chapter "Monomodal (verbal) discursive strategies of Donald Trump's English political twitting" is concerned with the analysis of monomodal (verbal) means of implementation of the rhetorical techniques of rational, emotive, volitional, and suggestive influence, which realize monomodal (verbal) discursive strategies of Trump's political twitting.

The fourth chapter "Multimodal (verbo-visual) discursive strategies of Donald Trump's English political twitting" analyzes multimodal (verbo-visual) means of implementation of the rhetorical techniques of rational, emotive, volitional, and suggestive influence, which realize multimodal (verbo-visual) discursive strategies of Trump's political twitting. It also investigates multimodal tropes and the interface between various semiotic modes in the realization of these discursive strategies.

The results of the research are summarized in the following conclusions, which corroborate the hypothesis of the paper.

Trump's English political twitting is understood as a mental process that results in his mono- and multimodal communicative actions. These actions, objectified by multimodal tweet-texts restricted to 280 characters on the Twitter internet service, are aimed at controlling the behaviour of the general public. Trump's English political twitting reveals the characteristics of a genre of the English political internet discourse. These characteristics result from social and communicative context of the USA political sphere as well as technological affordances of the Twitter internet service. Trump's English political twitting also reveals hypertextuality and multimodality – the features, which are characteristic of the internet text.

Trump's English political twitting has a strategic nature because it is employed to realize the president's global strategic communicative goal – to exert influence on the audience in order to seize / retain political power. The realization of this goal is achieved through the local discursive strategies of promoting Trump's positive image and tarnishing the image of a political opponent, and also through subordinate sub-strategies and tactics, objectified by mono- and multimodal rhetorical techniques.

The mono-/multimodal local discursive strategy of promoting Trump's positive image is brought about by a range of mono-/multimodal local discursive sub-strategies.

Each substrategy corresponds to a certain socio-communicative role and is rooted in a certain type of values: demonstration of patriotism (the role of the PATRIOT), demonstration of economic efficiency (the role of the EFFICIENT ECONOMIC MANAGER), demonstration of power (the role of the TOUGH POLITICAL LEADER), familiarization with the electorate (the role of the BUDDY), demonstration of popularity (the role of the POPULAR POLITICAL LEADER), and demonstration of faith (the role of the BELIEVER).

The mono-/multimodal local discursive strategy of tarnishing the image of a political opponent is realized by mono-/multimodal sub-strategies of disqualification and discrediting. These sub-strategies are based on the negative assessment of various aspects of the opponent's image.

Mono- and multimodal rhetorical techniques, which implement discursive strategies of Trump's political twitting, are focused on exerting influence on various spheres of the recipient's consciousness: the sphere of rational reasoning (verbal and verbo-visual argumentation (joint and parallel) and informing, as well as verbal explanation, narration, description); emotions (verbal and verbo-visual declaration and emotive contagion based on verbal and visual metaphors and metonymies/metonymic chains, verbo-visual-non-verbal metaphors/metaphoric chains and metonymies, visual and verbo-visual metaphoric allusions and verbo-visual humoristic contrast); volition (verbal and verbo-visual instruction); subconsciousness (verbal/graphic suggestion).

Prospects for further research include adaptation of the developed methodology of cognitive multimodal analysis for the study of various genres of internet discourse, a deep study of the interface of verbal, visual, and nonverbal modes in exerting communicative influence, as well as the study of multimodal trope construal.

The results of this thesis can find application in the courses on English Lexicology (section "Semasiology", "Phraseology"), English Stylistics (sections "Stylistic Semasiology", "Stylistic Syntax"), Theoretical Grammar of the English language (sections "Phrase", "Sentence"), General Linguistics (sections "Language and Thinking", "Semantics"). The research results can also be employed in special courses on cognitive discourse theory, political linguistics, communication theory,

speech influence theory, conceptual (multimodal) metaphor and metonymy theory, (multimodal) argumentation theory, suggestive linguistics. The interdisciplinary perspective of the research allows to use its results in public image studies, PR, social psychology, sociology, journalism.

Key words: communicative influence, discursive strategy, Donald Trump, genre, hypertextuality, interface, internet discourse, mode, multimodality, political twitting, rhetorical technique.