

TYPES OF AGGRESSIVE SPEECH ACTS IN POLITICAL DEBATES

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ABSTRACT. Presidential Debates between D. Trump and H. Clinton in 2016 have been chosen as the data for the analyses of speech acts. Types of aggressive speech acts are analyzed according to J.L. Austin and J.R. Searle classification. Quantitative analyses has indicated that both candidates used 589 locutionary acts in political debates. 132 acts are marked by aggression and 17 of them are analysed in the theses.

KEY WORDS: political debate, speech act, aggression.

I. Theoretical base

Verbal aggression is presented by specific speech acts. «In linguistics, a speech act is an utterance defined in terms of a speaker's intention and the effect it has on a listener» (Nordquist, 2019). «Highlighting speech acts of aggression, it should be noted that all of them are demonstration of political force and directed to downgrade the status of the addressee» (Kenzhkanova, 2015). The theory of speech acts goes back to the previous centuries and has its long history. It is closely connected with semantics and pragmatics. The definitions of these two linguistic branches are provided for a better understanding of their interrelation and connection to the theory of speech acts. «Semantics is the study of the meaning of linguistic expressions, which deals with the conventional meaning conveyed by the use of words, phrases and sentences of a language» (Thomason, 2012). «Contrary to semantics, pragmatics is defined as the study of the use of linguistic signs, words and sentences, in actual situations» (All about linguistics).

The term 'speech act' was coined by the philosopher John Austin and later extended by John Searle.

J. Austin isolates three basic senses in which in saying something one is doing something, and hence three kinds of acts are simultaneously performed:

- 1) locutionary act: the utterance of a sentence with determinate sense of reference;
- 2) illocutionary act: the making of a statement, offer, promise, etc. in uttering a sentence, by virtue of the conventional force associated with it;
- 3) perlocutionary act: the bringing about of the effects on the audience by means of uttering the sentence, such effects being special to the circumstances of utterance;

In fact, J. Austin made a three-fold distinction:

«Locution – the actual words uttered. Illocution – the force or intention behind the words. Perlocution – the effect of the illocution on the hearer» (Poluzhyn, Vrabel, 2005).

J. Searle (Searle, 1969) categorizes the illocutionary acts into five classes:

«(1) Assertives: commit speakers to the truth of the expressed proposition, e.g., stating, claiming, reporting, announcing, etc.

(2) Directives: these are statements that compel or make another person's action fit the propositional element. It is usually used to give order thereby causing the hearer to take a particular action, request, command or advice.

(3) Commissives: commit speakers to some future actions, e.g., promising, offering, swearing, etc. to do something.

(4) Expressives: count as the expression of some psychological state, e.g., thinking, apologizing, congratulating, etc.

(5) Declaratives: these statements are used to say something and make it so, such as pronouncing someone guilty, resigning, dismissing, accepting, declaring a war, etc».

II. Analysis data and examples

Classification provided by J. Austin is considered to be the basic for the analysis of the political debates in 2016 as it can explain the exact meaning of the speech uttered. An analysis of political

debates requires concentration on the meaning, the understanding of which is largely a function of reaching the illocutionary force of a speaker's utterances. The examples provided in the work describe the opponents' attitude towards each other. According to quantitative analyses both candidates used 589 locutionary acts, among them there are 132 acts marked by aggression. It has been decided to use 17 examples from political debate between D. Trump and H. Clinton for further analysis. The following examples represent the main types of locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts employed by the republican and democratic nominees during the election in 2016.

Locutionary act: «*Trump: If you become president, this country is going to be in some mess*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Assertive (stating).

Perlocutionary effect: bad future consequences.

Locutionary act: «*Trump: Believe me*». (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: directives (request).

Perlocutionary effect: truthfulness of his words.

Locutionary act: «*TRUMP: No, you are the one that's unfit. You know, WikiLeaks just actually came out – John Podesta said some horrible things about you, and, boy, was he right. He said some beauties. And you know, Bernie Sanders, he said you have bad judgment. You do*» (Fortune Staff 2016).

Illocutionary act: Assertive (reporting).

Perlocutionary effect: Criticism of Clinton's personal qualities.

Locutionary act: «*TRUMP: You should have changed the law. But you won't change the law, because you take in so much money... I sat there watching ad after ad after ad, false ad. All paid for by your friends on Wall Street that gave so much money because they know you're going to protect them. And, frankly, you should have changed the laws*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Directive (advice).

Perlocutionary effect: Accusations of businessmen patronage.

Locutionary act: «*TRUMP: So sad when she talks about violence at my rallies, and she caused the violence. It's on tape*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Assertive (stating).

Perlocutionary effect: Accusation and evidence of her illegal actions.

Locutionary act: «*TRUMP: It's a criminal enterprise. Saudi Arabia giving \$25 million, Qatar, all of these countries. You talk about women and women's rights? So these are people that push gays off business – off buildings. These are people that kill women and treat women horribly. And yet you take their money*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Assertive (reporting).

Perlocutionary effect: Disrespect to H. Clinton's action.

Locutionary act: «*Trump: So let me just give you one other thing*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Directive (request).

Perlocutionary effect: truthfulness of his words.

Locutionary act: «*Trump: So I talk about the corrupt media. I talk about the millions of people – tell you one other thing*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Assertive (reporting).

Perlocutionary effect: Disrespect to H. Clinton's action.

Locutionary act: «*Trump: She shouldn't be allowed to run. It's crooked – she's – she's guilty of a very, very serious crime. She should not be allowed to run*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Directive (advice).

Perlocutionary effect: Reduce Clinton's authority.

Locutionary act: «*Clinton: He insulted a former Miss Universe, Alicia Machado, called her an eating machine*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Assertive (reporting).

Perlocutionary effect: Disgust to the inequality of sex.

Locutionary act: «CLINTON: ... *as he (Bernie Sanders) has campaigned for me around the country, you are the most dangerous person to run for president in the modern history of America. I think he's right*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Assertive (reporting).

Perlocutionary effect: Confront herself with D. Trump.

Locutionary act: «Clinton: *Donald thinks belittling women makes him bigger. He goes after their dignity, their self-worth, and I don't think there is a woman anywhere who doesn't know what that feels like. So we now know what Donald thinks and what he says and how he acts toward women. That's who Donald is*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Assertive (stating)

Perlocutionary effect: Disregard to D. Trump.

Locutionary act: «CLINTON: ... *it just shows you're not up to doing the job. He is denigrating -- he's talking down our democracy*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Assertive (stating)

Perlocutionary effect: Disregard to D. Trump.

Locutionary act: «CLINTON: *And I, for one, am appalled that somebody who is the nominee of one of our two major parties would take that kind of position*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Commissives (promising).

Perlocutionary effect: Increase her authority.

Locutionary act: «CLINTON: *I'm just amazed that he seems to think that the Iraqi government and our allies and everybody else launched the attack on Mosul to help me in this election, but that's how Donald thinks. You know, he always is looking for some conspiracy*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Assertive (stating).

Perlocutionary effect: Narrow-mindedness of Trump's views.

Locutionary act: «CLINTON: *Well, first, when I hear Donald talk like that and know that his slogan is "Make America Great Again", I wonder when he thought America was great. And before he rushes and says, "You know, before you and President Obama were there, "I think it's important to recognize that he has been criticizing our government for decades*» (Fortune Staff, 2016).

Illocutionary act: Assertive (stating).

Perlocutionary effect: D. Trump's disrespect to the government.

Table 1 shows the frequency of locutionary and illocutionary acts, which are used to perform: promise, request, advice, reporting and stating. The meaning that both speakers include in their utterance and its effect upon the speaker are illustrated in perlocutionary acts. Mainly, they show good self-representation and criticism of the opponent.

Table 1

Types of speech acts verbalizing aggression and their frequency

	D. Trump	H. Clinton
Locutionary acts	10	7
Illocutionary acts	Assertive (reporting) – 4	Assertive (reporting) - 2
	Directive (advice) – 2	Assertive (stating) - 4
	Assertive (stating) – 2	Commissives (promising)-1
	Directives (request)- 2	
	Perlocutionary acts	Uncertainty
	Criticism	Confrontation
	Accusation	Increased authority
	Reduction authority	Narrow-mindedness of views
	Inappropriate decisions	Disrespect

As table 1 shows both candidates use assertives for expressing their negative attitude towards each other. D. Trump, for example, also employs directives in his speech, whereas H. Clinton utilizes commissives.

III. Conclusion

The theses attempts to investigate and describe the phenomena of speech acts used by D. Trump and H. Clinton in 2016. J. Austin's and J. Searse's classification has been chosen as the basic for further analysis. The results emerged were as follows D. Trump utilizes 10 types of locutionary acts. They are assertive (reporting), assertive (stating), directives (advice) and directives (request). H. Clinton uses 7 types of locutionary acts. They are assertive (reporting), assertive (stating) and commissives (promising). Some of perlocutionary effects are employed by both candidates, such as disrespect. D. Trump criticizes H. Clinton and wants to reduce her authority, whereas H. Clinton tries to protect herself from his accusations and confirm her political image.

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