

Critical Stylistics: Persuasive Perspectives in Presidential Speeches

Dr. Hussein Huwail Ghayadh

Dept. of English, Faculty of Basic Education ,University of Thi-Qar

huwailhussein@utq.edu.iq

Abstract:

Emotionally and intellectually, language is a central factor of our existence in this world, affecting us separately and cooperatively in all aspects. Politics is a dominant area that exists in the real world. Sometimes from the political attitudes, we stick to the options we construct. Politicians regularly make full use of language innovatively with the intention of affecting their recipients' emotions and having their faithfulness. This paper sheds new light on the representation of persuasive indicators in political speeches, interpreting them in terms of critical stylistics bearing in mind that persuasion is part of discourse power. In view of this, persuasion can be detected according to the criteria of critical stylistics. It is hypothesized that it is possible to apply critical stylistic views to examine power relations and how such relations lead to persuasive stances. To investigate the validity of this hypothesis, Bush's three selected political speeches were selected as samples.

Keywords: Critical Stylistics, Multimodal Stylistics, Rhetoric, Persuasion, Power.

الاسلوبية النقدية : وجهات نظر اقناعية في الخطابات الرئاسية

م.د. حسين حويل غياض

جامعة ذي قار / كلية التربية الاساسية / قسم اللغة الانكليزية

ملخص البحث:

تُمثّل اللغة من الناحية العاطفية أو الفكرية عاملاً أساسياً لوجودنا في هذا العالم، يُؤثر علينا هذا العامل في جميع النواحي بشكلٍ مستقلٍ أو بشكلٍ جمعي. السياسة هي المجال المهيمن الموجود في العالم الحقيقي، لذلك نتمسك بالخيارات التي نتبناها من خلال المواقف السياسية. وعلى درجة عالية من النظام، يستفيد السياسيون من اللغة استعمالاً كاملاً بشكل يغلب عليه الإبداع بهدف التأثير على عواطف المُتلقي وإخلاصهم. تُضفي هذه الدراسة اهتماماً جديداً في تمثيل المؤشرات المُقنعة في الخطب السياسية وكيفية تتبعها وتفسيرها من خلال تطبيق التحليل الأسلوبي النقدي. تفترض الدراسة أنه من الممكن تطبيق التحليل الأسلوبي النقدي لفحص علاقات القوة وكيف تؤدي هذه العلاقات إلى مواقف مُقنعة. وللتحقق من صحة هذه الفرضية، تم استعمال خطابات سياسية مختارة كبيانات للتحليل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاسلوبية النقدية ،الاسلوبية المتعددة القنوات ،البلاغة ،الاقناع ، السلطة .

1. Introduction

There are different kinds of speeches, one of them, which is related to the power of discourse, is political. Most of the time, political thinking leads to a conflict of power to achieve or secure certain interests. In a process as such, language plays a vital role in preparing, controlling, accomplishing, and practicing power. In a broader sense, politics has a varied scope of implications (loaded connotations) in daily life (Wilson, 2001, P. 411), one of them was stated by Modebadze (2010) that politics is “the study of conflict resolution, the art of government, the conduct and management of public affairs, and so on.” (P. 39). It can be said that politics is a conflict between those who look for affirming and persisting with their power and those who make an effort to challenge it. In this context, statesmen use language as a vehicle for bearing and transferring political intentions. Along with this role of language, Orwell (1968, P. 225) highlighted that language has a political potential coming up with the idea that politicians are responsible for language decline. Opposed to Orwell’s viewpoint, language indicates and reproduces different broad possibilities since it is a means of conveying our thoughts. Both language and politics work together as social stances and practices in that one is a means of communication, the other is an act (contextualized act) of conveying ideas and activities. Such ideas and activities are used for acquiring and achieving power, and paying regard to these ideas may come to be re-decoded within multifaceted ideological structures.

Political discourse has its register, genre, or style. It is sets of linguistic choices that produce communicative functions (language variety) defined according to a particular situation. Political discourse is usually given by affective politicians. Affective politicians have the superiority of linguistic layers (pragmatically encoded messages), paralinguistic layers (nonverbal communication), and extralinguistic layers (physical and physiological features of a certain politician). Political discourse, as it is part of spoken discourse, is more challenging to speakers, since it is unconstrained, and in this case of speech spontaneity, speakers should be aware of their outcomes, i.e. they should constrain and pay attention to what they say; they are obliged to be highly confident; it is essential to have passion about the idea that they are willing to present, and they should observe their audience to eliminate the causes of boredom. In this respect, Chilton (2008) pointed out that political discourse is the use of language to achieve the proceedings of politics and takes account of persuasive rhetoric, the benefit of indirect connotations, the usefulness of mild, and indirect words or expressions, the elimination of indications, comments, or remarks to unsuitable reality, the privilege of language to provoke political emotions. As a case in point, political emotions work as a process to specify and to denote the central role emotion becomes involved in politics, and more of the same (P. 226).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Language, Power, and Persuasion

Language, as a normal and regular human system, can be employed as a means for power through using conventionalized linguistic and non-linguistic signs. Language performs more than one function. Functionally speaking, the social function plays a central role in expressing mental content through co-creating and co-organizing social reality among people, acting and harmonizing social actions such as persuading, arguing, promising, threatening, inviting, and so on. Power and powerful linguistic style as a domain of critical stylistics, is associated with language taking into account that language brings power to light, preserves existing authority, and gives rise to effectiveness. In this respect, Erickson et al. (1978, P. 276) verified that in both cases, whether speech style is powerful or powerless, it does not only affect the addresser's appeal and trustworthiness, but also leads to doubtfulness in the addresser's information concerned a particular speech event. Also, they have confirmed that powerful speech style, regardless of the addressers whether they are men or women, is more trustworthy and attractive by respondents.

In agreement to show to what extent the powerful style is more persuasive and effective, O'Barr (1982, 96) examined the powerful and powerless linguistic style. He asserted that the low social status is a reflection of the addresser's powerless style by using powerless linguistic elements, while the high-status addresser cares for reducing and eliminating powerless linguistic features to the minimum. Going through with this, Sparks and Areni (2002, P. 518-20) pointed out that the powerful (high-quality linguistic style) rather than powerless (poor-quality linguistic style) linguistic choices make the speaker more persuasive. The wide-ranging effects on persuasion are the result of interaction between the content of linguistic choices and the way of presentation.

In parallel with this, Turner (2005, P. 6) classifies 'power' according to two standards: power as an influence (voluntary) and power as control (involuntary), i.e. people are persuaded and interested or they are unpersuaded and uninterested (not willing). What is related to this paper is 'power as influence' because of its connection with political speeches and persuasion; the power that makes individuals behave in harmony with the addresser's wishes by "persuading them that the desired judgement, decision, belief or action is correct, right, moral, appropriate". Power as influence makes the addressees behave as so minded and pleased agents. In this sense, Van Dijk (2006, P. 359-61) also made a distinction between two aspects, 'manipulation' and 'persuasion'. Manipulation, as it is a communicative and reciprocal linguistic convention, is illegitimate control authorizing social deviation in which a manipulator holds power and control over individuals, commonly in contradiction with their will or opposition to their favourable interests, attaching more uninterested role (a negative consequence of manipulation). Due to this action, it encompasses 'abuse of power'

rather than merely power, whereas in persuasion the addressers and addressees are not restricted to accept arguments as true or to act as they like.

Persuasion is not simply a style of art, it is progressively a science, and scholars, who think of it over, have revealed a range of concealed procedures for affecting people on a certain track. Persuasion, as defined by O'Keefe (2016, P. 27) is "a successful intentional effort at influencing another's mental state through communication in a circumstance in which the persuadee has some measure of freedom." Here 'successful' indicates that there is a persuader's attempt, and such an attempt is successful in influencing others, i.e. the idea of 'success' is following the rules of the theory of persuasion. Also, according to the definition, there is an intention, 'successful intention', by the persuader. To achieve 'intention', there should be a mental state that gives an impression of responsibility and engagement to accomplish an action. Such a mental state involves cognitive aspects (processes of acquiring and understanding) such as intelligence, consciousness (awareness of what is existed), perception, memory, and so on; and non-cognitive ones such as emotions. The successful intention makes the persuadee infer the intent and has satisfied with the purposefulness of the target idea. In addition to what O'Keefe has mentioned, 'persuadee's freedom' involves to what extent the addressee has free will, choice, voluntary and intended actions.

3. Critical Stylistics

'Critical' studies, as it is a practice of critical appearance and representation on society, emerged as philosophical viewpoints adopted by Hegel, Rousseau, and then by Marks (Haugaard and Cooke, 2010, P. 1). Such studies delve critically into social structures and social organizations from the perspective of their controlling impacts on people, i.e. both influential organizations and people use language as a procedure to create their power and as a mechanism to preserve it. Language accordingly comes to be essential for the preservation of power, then the power and impact of language, in turn, depend on the power of people and organizations themselves. Along with this, it is necessary to realize that in 'critical' studies, the word critical, as verified by Malmkjær (2002, P. 102), does not principally convey the undesirable implications of disapproval and objection that look to occupy their popular conventional usage. 'Critical' perspective is a field of linguistics that aims to realize the associations between ideas and their social circumstances of potential existence. From this viewpoint, Halliday (2013) directed attention to the relationship between meaning, particularly meaning that conveys power, and linguistic choices that the addressers make stating that 'choosing' works as a virtual process (P. 36).

In this paper, what is the justification for adopting 'Critical Stylistics' rather than 'Critical Discourse'? Answering this question, the underlying rationale behind using critical stylistics belongs to more than one reason. First, 'Discourse' does not have a fixed meaning. This idea was examined and investigated by Baker and Ellece (2011), arguing that the term 'Discourse' is related to loose meanings (P. 30-3). Second, in any text analysis, the focus will be on 'style' rather than the 'discourse' taking into account that discourse is a product of interactions and a product of stylistic choices rather than

process, the process that gives rise to product (discourse) depends on linguistic choices (stylistic choices). Along with this, Figure 1 clarifies the idea of stylistics as a 'process' and discourse as a 'product':

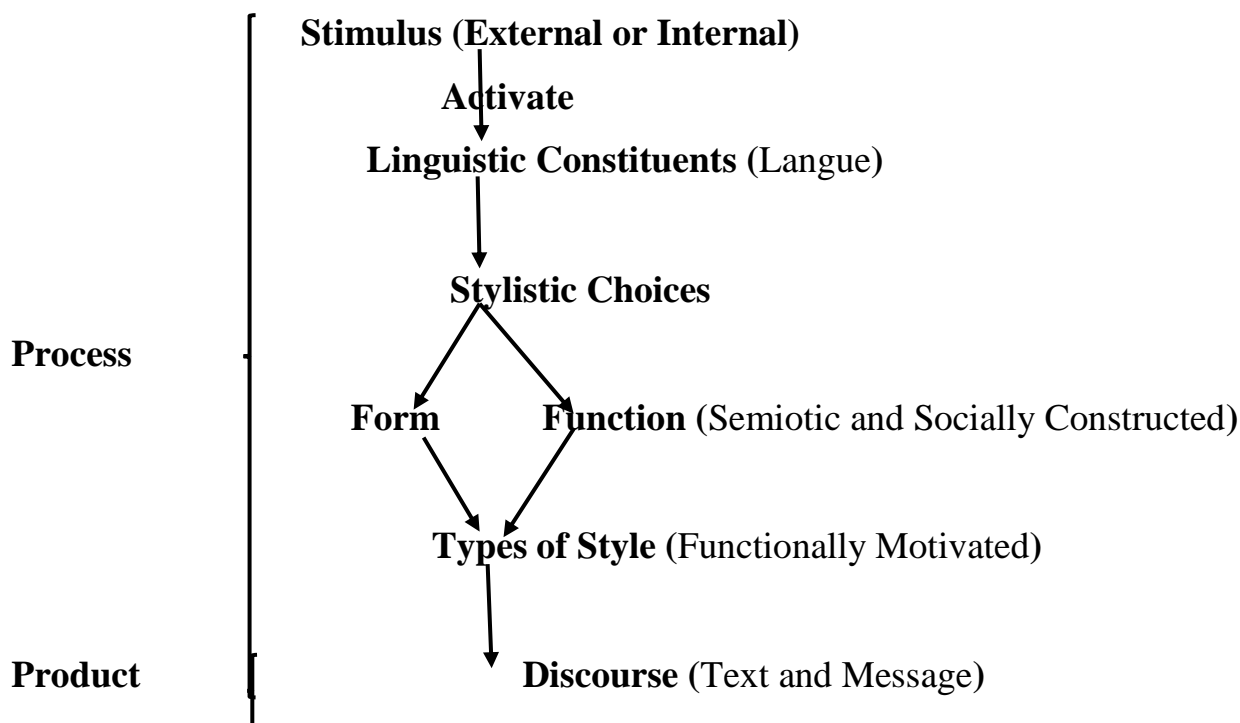


Fig. 1 Stylistics (as a Process) and Discourse (as a Product)

Third, in the field of stylistics particularly 'multimodal stylistics', one of its dimension discusses power representation and realization, how the theory of semiotics played a vital role in deciding what the meaning is, how the meaning is represented, how the relationship between signs is, how the referent and the meaning in addresser or addressee's mind is. Relevant to signs as stylistic choices, signs can be verbal (words) or nonverbal entities; can be meaningful (signs use); can be thought and meaning, aesthetics and meaning, or emotion and meaning. Signs work as a vehicle to give a clear idea about the whole situation or context then it helps in comprehending the whole message through the negotiation between signs and recipients (Schema Theory). In this regard, it is possible to say that the semiotic representation of language acts as a 'gateway' to meaning (sign function). Hjelmslev (1969, P. 47) argued that sign function, positioned between two units, an expression (phonology) and a content (semantics or grammar in its general perspective). In agreement with this, Halliday (1978, P. 21-22) made evident that language, in addition to its social construction, has semiotic features. In using language, language users are appropriating and implementing a sociolinguistic viewpoint. Language is being determined and believed to be as the "encoding of a 'behaviour potential' into a 'meaning potential'".

Fourth, the current study is a critical stylistic one since the ground of any text is style. We are examining how the writer or speaker says things. We are looking for stylistic choices that have purposeful significance for the understanding of the text, looking for aesthetic values that the style carries, looking for 'cyclic motion' through which linguistic representation stimulates literary or non-literary awareness, appreciation, and perception keeping in mind with the help of literary or non-literary insights in its turn arouses further linguistic representation. Stylistic consideration paves the way to understand that different types of linguistic choices are different types of stylistic variations. Such types of stylistic variations do not of themselves create a text's meaning, but function as an 'access' to its interpretation. What is more in this regard, the meaning is not only embodied or associated with stylistic choices, but also meaning stands in need of creating by the addressee using the stylistic choices in negotiation with his relevant prior knowledge. These two crucial processes of comprehension and understanding, which are harmonized and reliable at each other, are identified and termed as stimulus-driven processes. This can be realized when certain stimuli catch and draw our attention consistently and spontaneously (bottom-up), and or conceptually-driven processing where any perceptual process is constrained by higher-level processing (top-down). The stimulus-driven processes stimulate and encourage the addressee to build a distinctive personal mental world formulated on the addresser's stylistic choices, while the conceptual-driven processes activate the addressee's mental stored information that is necessary to understand a certain encoded message (Schema Theory). In this regard, as it has been mentioned earlier, language is highly connected with semiotics. Semiotics is the science of meaning, is the science of linguistic choices (stylistic choices) that work as social choices which have semiotic implications, one of them is the power implications. In keeping with the social perspective of language, as it is the domain of critical studies, the relationship between language and power is perceived as a social mutual relationship. Language configuration, as a semiotic social practice, makes power relations fixed and constant. This enhances Fairclough's observation (2001, P. 10) that power is not merely constructed and extended by the use of coercive systems (by force), but it is also built and broaden by the use of indirect procedures (language use).

Fifth, what has been mentioned earlier (section 2) approved that there is a certain relationship between language, power, and persuasion. With such a relationship in mind, it is possible to say there is a connection between persuasion and rhetoric. Persuasion, as presented by Campbell (1963, P. xlii) encompasses an amalgamation of two aspects: passions and rational argument. It is a way of creating feeling, and motivation by conveying "lively and glowing ideas of the object". Lotman (2006, P. 582) verified that rhetoric, whether it is a verbal text or a universal text (all types of texts), "operates with signs and therefore fits completely into the framework of semiotics . . . we could regard rhetorics simply as part of semiotics and semiotics as the ground for rhetorics," Lotman's viewpoint implies that rhetoric is how the speaker or writer organizes and communicates experience using language, or as marked by Ilie (2008, P. 4264-4265), by using persuasive, stylistic features, bearing in mind two aspects, one is that rhetoric is the effective use of language to persuade, and the other,

rhetoric can be considered as the study of the elements of style in written or in oral language. In its extent or range of view, political discourse is identified by a series of preconceived ideas regarding rhetoric and stylistics (Salvador, 2008, P. 532). In agreement with this, Hamilton (2014, P. 63) confirmed, from a historical viewpoint that "stylistics comes from rhetoric", and both terms are closely related. Not only Hamilton but also Burke (2014, P. 1-2) argued that the origins of stylistics turn back to rhetoric. To conclude, having considered political discourse, power, persuasion, rhetoric, and stylistics, it is also possible and reasonable to look at the relationship between these concepts as a cyclic process as in figure 2:

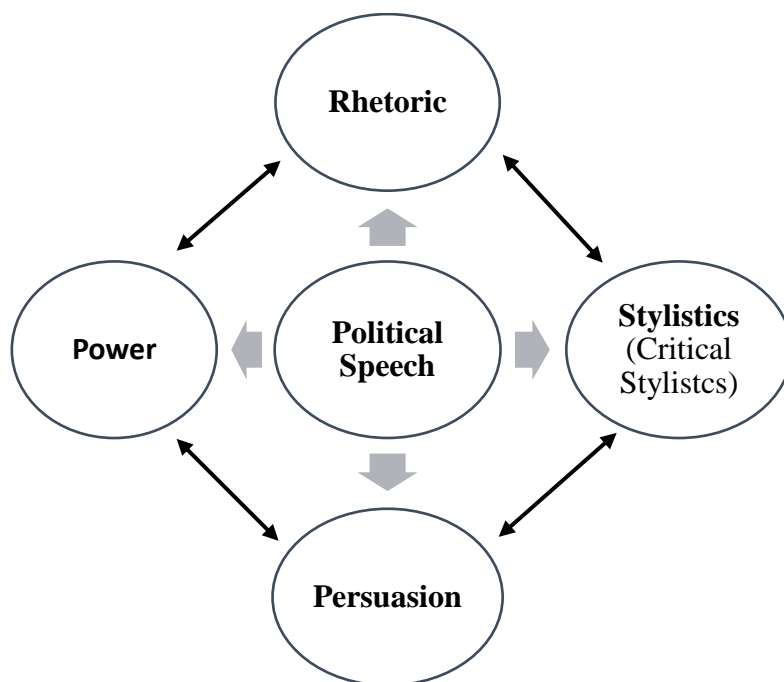


Figure. 2 Rhetoric, Stylistics, Persuasion, and Power Cyclic Process

4. Methodology

4. 1 Material

The analysis is attributed to three speeches, all of them are from Bush's, namely *State of the Union Address*, *Address on the Start of the Iraq War*, and *Address to the Nation on Iraq*, all speeches were delivered in 2003. The motive for selecting these speeches belongs to their decisive and critical time. The data of the three speeches are transcribed and accessible in written form on the Internet. The selected sentences are numbered with the aim of analysis.

4.2 Data Analysis

According to human nature, people try to assign causes to their behaviors whether behaviors are intentional or unintentional. If they are intentional, what are their specific intentions? What are the motives behind such behaviors? Why are they acted in this way rather than other ways?

Concerning social- psychological viewpoints, Kasin et al (2011: 113) pointed out that '*Attribution*' is the process by which people can explain the causes of behaviors. In this regard, to present critical steps, the president must take social settings into account bearing in mind that behavior is a principally considerable factor. Keeping in the president's mind that behavior is a significant factor, he follows certain strategies related to *attribution* represented by dispositional (internal) attribution, situational (external) attribution, or both to make his speech more persuasive. In a dispositional attribution, people focus on the speaker more than the situation. They give particular attention to the president's abilities or motives (individual characteristics) as a cause for their reactions toward the subject that he is talking about, as shown by the following example:

1. **The United States of America has the sovereign authority to use force in assuring its own national security. That duty falls to me, as Commander-in-Chief, by the oath I have sworn, by the oath I will keep.** (Bush, March 17, 2003)

Security speech, consistent with Buzan et al. (1998, P. 26), is dramatized and put forward as a subject of a highest main concern; as a result, by identifying and marking it as *security*, a presenter asserts a necessity for and legality to handle it by out of the ordinary means. In this context, the process of persuasion and its progression is a cooperative one in which the addressee anticipates particularly the achievement of a public wish in case that the persuasive purpose is implemented. Not only the addressee, but also the politician stands to have his desires achieved. People's attribution, and then this will lead later to persuasion, is based on their inferring that the president's qualifications made him 'commander-in-chief'; their inferring grasp that the president's behavior directly correlates to his qualifications.

Sometimes people pay certain consideration to intentional behavior rather than to an accidental one when the president's behavior is due to certain situational factors:

2. **U.S. intelligence indicates that Saddam Hussein had upwards of 30,000 weaponries capable of delivering chemical agents. Inspectors recently turned up 16 of them, despite Iraq's recent declaration denying their existence.** (Bush, January 28, 2003)

Agencies, such as 'U.S. intelligence', people mostly trust in simply because they have the knowledge, gained through study (or research), communication, or received regarding a certain fact or circumstance from numerous observations, at different times and situations. The fixed number '30,000 weaponries' is a stylistic choice to convince people because it appeals to people's approval and emotions. To make the speech more

convincing, the speaker makes an integration between international matters of Iraq and domestic affairs marked by state security.

In a further step, the speaker mixes two factors (dispositional and situational) to be more persuasive:

3. ***We have passed more than a dozen resolutions in the United Nations Security Council. We have sent hundreds of weapons inspectors to oversee the disarmament of Iraq.*** [emphasis added] (Bush, March 17, 2003).

English pronoun 'We' refers to America, United Nations, and coalition countries, familiarized with the well-intentioned qualities of the addresser and others (collective identity.) He aims to participate in the responsibility, and similarly to construct a connection with the public. 'We' refers to people who represent a specific group in a particular spatio-temporal sense for a particular purpose. Muhlhausler and Harre (1990) (as cited in Goddard 1995, p. 107) argue that the pronoun 'We' is not just of and for speaker, but also for others. It seems that 'We' means that they have the same goal. Admirable evaluations of 'our side' implicate alliance in comparing 'We' positively with 'them'. If 'We' are honorable, determined, did our best, and alive with good intentions, then most probably 'they' must be evil, a source of insecurity (constitute a threat), a source of instability, and high spirited with bad intentions. When the speaker focuses on 'agreement' between alliance as a symbol of good intentions, condemnation, and hostility, aggressively directed at opponents, also have a certain level for appealing to a satisfactory and advantageous response, and as such creating another essential kind of commendable message.

Along with this, Fairclough (2001, P. 106) classified the representation of the English pronoun 'We', as a persuasive factor, into two types: 'linguistically inclusive We' and 'linguistically exclusive we'. Linguistically exclusive 'We' takes into account the speaker and others but not the audience as in 3 above, while in 4, 'We' is different; it is linguistically inclusive 'We' that covers the speaker and the audience:

4. ***"We have the terrorists on the run. We're keeping them on the run. One by one, the terrorists are learning the meaning of American justice."*** [emphasis added] ((Bush, January 28, 2003).

Attributed to Fairclough's viewpoint, the choice of the pronoun 'We', whether it is 'linguistically inclusive' or 'linguistically exclusive', is correlated with associations of power (all institutions) and solidarity (ties in society: social interaction or social relation). Using 'I think', the speaker (personal angle) increases his credibility when he is referring to what others intend to do.

Reciprocity is another technique used by the president. Parsons (1991, P. 82) argued that "it is inherent in the nature of social interaction that the gratification of ego's need-dispositions is contingent on alter's action and vice versa", 'gratification' must be contingent on each other (stable relationship). In politics, the power of the reciprocity rule shows itself (Cialdini, 2009, P. 26). Fehr and Gächter (2000, P. 159) highlighted that reciprocity is a social norm of reacting to an encouraging and inspiring action with

another positive one, "Reciprocity means that in response to friendly actions, people are frequently much nicer and much more cooperative". Here, it seems that reciprocity is more conceivable and works on building continuing relationships and interactions, for instance:

5. **Recognizing the threat to our country, the United States Congress voted overwhelmingly last year to support the use of force against Iraq** (Bush, 2003, 17).

In 5, persuasion works as a reciprocal process, Both the Congress and the public are interdependent. There is a real danger as the president confirms. The institutions of democracy, represented by Congress, work properly. Such democratic institutions, based on Fukuyama's viewpoint (1996, P. 11), must harmonize within certain pre-modern cultural habits that ensure their proper functioning.

Reciprocity is necessary between the president and his nation. Sometimes the mission requires to make positive reciprocity with the nation that he is going to attack explaining to them positively his intention, and targeting to be cooperative and supportive, for case in point:

6. **As our coalition takes away their power, we will deliver the food and medicine you need. We will tear down the apparatus of terror and we will help you to build a new Iraq that is prosperous and free. In a free Iraq, there will be no more wars of aggression against your neighbors, no more poison factories, no more executions of dissidents, no more torture chambers and rape rooms. The tyrant will soon be gone. The day of your liberation is near.** (Bush, March 17, 2003).

Another strategy of persuasion is used when the president tries to show his 'commitment' and 'consistence' as he declares that he will do similar things to what they have done in Afghanistan:

7. **And as we and our coalition partners are doing in Afghanistan, we will bring to the Iraqi people food and medicines and supplies and freedom.** (Bush, January 28, 2003).

As it works in the *commitment* dimension, undoubtedly, reciprocity is a ritual (a unique social moral norm aspect of human culture), a vital principle, and a powerful method to trigger feelings of gratefulness and obligation. When there is a social context, people depart from purely self-interested behavior (Fehr and Gächter 2000, P. 159). Figure 3. illustrates the give-and-take relationship between the addresser and the addressees.

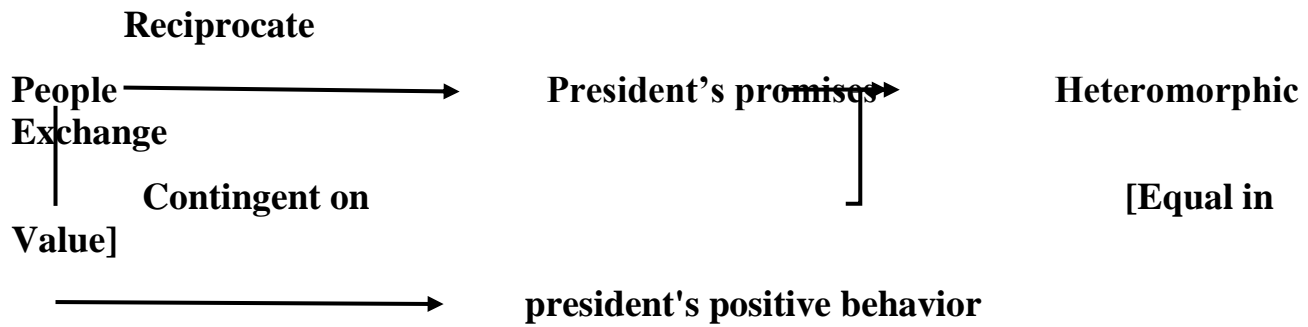


Figure. 3 People – President Reciprocal Relationship

Cialdini (2007, P. 44) one of the psychologists who believed that ‘consistency’ has the power to direct people’s actions, while others, as Cialdini mentioned them, regard the desire for consistency as a fundamental motivator of our behavior. Above, in (7), on the individual level, as soon as the president has made his commitment, he will feel obliged to keep with it, the responsibility to preserve a promise made to oneself. On the social level, people believe that they should be more committed to their determination and highly possible to go after. In most circumstances, consistency gives the impression that it is highly associated with intellectual thinking, and for this reason, it is highly appreciated and adaptive in all cultures (universal). From the opposing point of view, inconsistency is regarded as an unacceptable feature and is attributed to unreasonableness, deceitfulness; it causes reactions of displeasure, annoyance, and misunderstanding.

Another effective factor of influence is the principle of *Social Proof* (Cialdini 2007, P. 88). It states, founded on Cialdini’s viewpoint, that one process we use to decide what is appropriate and accurate is to realize what other people regard as suitable, viewing action as more proper in a certain situation to the extent that we realize people acting it. To demonstrate:

8. **Many nations, however, do have the resolve and fortitude to act against this threat to peace,** [emphasis added] (Bush, March 17, 2003).

The president is influenced by ‘many nations’ around him like other people who establish their beliefs and actions on what others around them believe (nations’ effective power). Following ‘many nations’ seems sufficient evidence that made him believe that war decisions should be taken and it is correct behavior in a given situation. Similarity in attitudes, desires, wants, and thinking, he and ‘many nations’ can be considered as a real motive to take serious and critical decisions. Due to this agreement, social proof, as a persuasive linguistic style, is the act of matching actions and beliefs to many nations’ norms.

What is more and unquestionably, the general public’s belief becomes more persuasive when they realize that the speaker’s decisions are coming from *well-informed* and *expert people*:

9. ***Intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised,*** [emphasis added] (Bush, March 17, 2003).

On those grounds, the effect of people and agencies gives the impression that the broader the number of people or agencies in adopting a certain attitude is, the more critical decisions would be taken. In line with this, more than one study (see Cialdini, 2007) proved the effect of social proof in taking urgent decisions, and presidents are responsive to the public in choosing challenges to focus on. Vaughn (2007, P. 56) confirmed that the president is more responsive when he engages in making executive order policy bearing in mind that presidential positive reaction to public attitude does vary through different scenes. Also, Canes-Wrone (2001, P. 315) affirmed that various studies have proved the effectiveness of public appeals on presidential decisions taking into account that the president is a rational political actor who has policy goals.

In keeping with different strategies proposed by Cialdini (2007, 170), he argued that ‘*Authority*’ is another issue of concern, for instance:

10. ***“On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war”*** (Bush, March 20, 2003). [emphasis added]

Based on the perceptual processes, the audience construct perceptual products broadly reflecting their authentic behavior. One aspect touching the sensitivity of messages is the presence of previous messages. Conventionally, whether they are political or religious conventions, people carry a certain belief that *authority* is legalized by identified and acceptable rules. Weber (1978, P. 215) emphasized that there are three types of authority: rational, traditional, and charismatic authority. Traditional authority arises from the tradition, customs, beliefs, and practices of people. What makes authority more persuasive, particularly the traditional one, is that it carries to some extent religious sense. If the traditional authority is rooted in long-standing beliefs, from the other side, rational one is rooted in law. The social legitimacy of legal authority comes from people and is given to the president through voting. Rules for applying authority are adapted from the legal constitution, while the third type, charismatic authority, arises from individual qualities. Such charismatic attributes put authority into practice over a whole or merely a particular group within a larger community. Everything considered, authority gives the impression that persuasion is owed to tradition, law, and followers’ admiration following their president’s actions (charisma).

In consonance with persuasive strategies, Cialdini (2007, 178) asserted that ‘*Scarcity*’ (the rule of the few) plays a large role in the process of persuasion. To get people accept it as true that some natural resources are scarcer, the president realizes that civilians want more of what they cannot have. For additional clarification:

11. **And all Iraqi military and civilian personnel should listen carefully to this warning. In any conflict, your fate will depend on your action. Do not destroy oil wells, a source of wealth that belongs to the Iraqi people** (Bush, March 17, 2003).

Here there is a focus on economic factors through the emphasis upon 'oil' as a 'scarce' (limited) natural source. Approaching the Iraqi people effectively, the president attempts to show that 'oil' has insufficient and limited availability. What could be more, the president focuses on a truism that addressees seem to be highly driven by the view of losing something than by the notion of obtaining something of the same value. On these grounds, people should assign 'oil' more value, and should be aware of economic problems. That does not only mean that 'scarcity' can always be considered an effective persuasive weapon, but it also may be more effective at one time than the other, and here comes the politician's skill to find out when scarcity works best on the audience.

In agreement with the effective role of scarcity as a persuasive factor, *commodity theory* proposed by Brock (1968), assumed that "any commodity will be valued to the extent that it is unavailable . . . Unavailability refers to scarcity and to the degree of effort seemingly needed to obtain the commodity" (p. 246). 'Oil wells' were used by the speaker as an effective stimulus. The degree of effectiveness as a stimulus factor relies on power for affecting the audience's attitudes and behavior, i.e. the more the stimulus is valuable and effective, the more it is effective in changing the audience's attitudes and behavior. Brock indicated that the more "scarce" and desirable a communication is, the more persuasive it would be. Verhallen and Robben (1994, P. 318) found that the limited availability or scarcity and the perceived reasons for limited availability work as unique motives owing to high demand and limited source, and this will lead to the audience's strong evaluation and preference. Scarcity, as a persuasive factor, can be seen as follows:

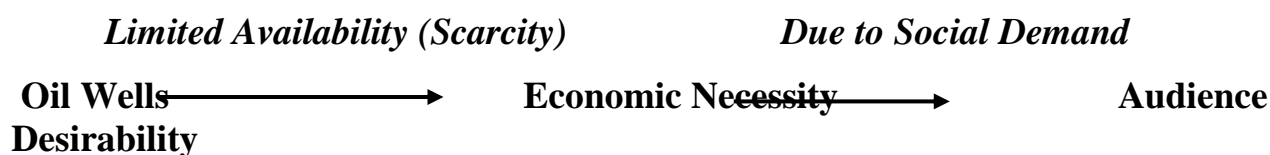


Figure 4. Scarcity and Social Demand

Focusing on 'oil wells' because they signify everything to Iraqi society, they stand for, as stated by Black (2012, p. 41-47), the standard of living.

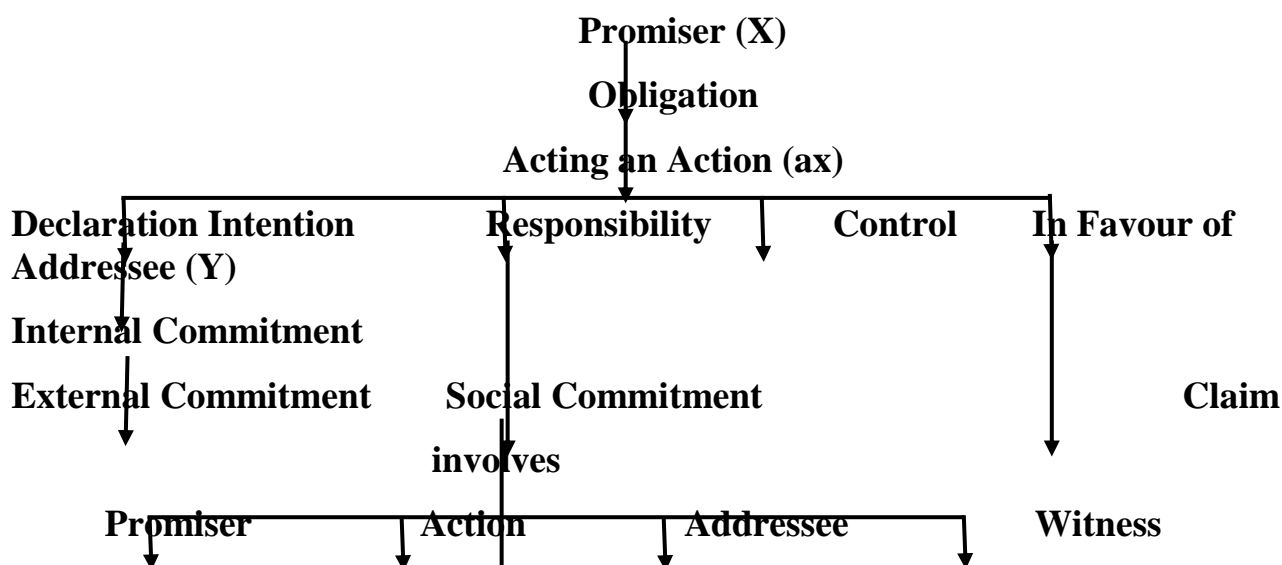
One step further, persuasive communication is a definite style of politics in which the presenter has the aim of making the addressee agree to take his or her perspective. The presenter's stylistic choices are prepared and organized in a manner as to positively provoke the addressees to admit all or part of the conveyed attitude. A '*promise*', as a commitment, according to Reinach (1913) (as cited in Gardies, 1987: 111)) is an obligation and a claim, an obligation in favour of the promiser and a claim in the interest of the individual to whom it is directed, for instance:

12. “we will bring to the Iraqi people food and medicines and supplies and freedom.” [Bush, January 28, 2003].

On the part of the speaker, obligation sometimes occurs when there is a preference to perform what is morally good and acceptable. In this context, a person who is holding a high political rank has more obligations than citizens. That is, obligations are different from one person to another in view of increasing in one's obligations that connote an increasing in an individual's power. On the part of the claim, with different types of claims, the presidential one sometimes is concerned with solutions and policies. For this reason, the words “we will bring to the Iraqi . . .” function as social actions and the context leave no doubt in the addressee's mind that the social action is a promise and in the meantime, it is a type of solutions and policies. Correlation between *claim* and *obligation* leads to a relation between promiser and the addressee, a relation in which (X) is obliged towards (Y) to do (P). Promise, as an achievement, can be realized in a particular relationship:

Achievement: X (President) promises Y (Iraqi people) to bring to them the food and medicines and supplies and freedom.

Figure 5 shows the minds of the two subjects:



The words mentioned earlier, as persuasive ones (beneficiary), “we will bring to the Iraqi people . . .” function as social actions and the context leave no doubt in the addressee's mind that the social action is a promise. The domain of persuasion can be realized by the power that the promiser has, and his ability to help the addressee (beneficiary) through achieving certain valuable goals that the addressee cannot achieve such as ‘food’, ‘medicines’, ‘supplies’, and ‘freedom’.

In company with promise, '*threat*' is another persuasive factor used by the threatener to send a message. This message is the threatener's intention to do something which would typically be measured to damage or to be desirable for the threatened (addressee), for example:

13. "If Saddam Hussein does not fully disarm, for the safety of our people and for the peace of the world, we will lead a coalition to disarm him." [Bush, January 28, 2003].

What makes a certain stylistic choice a threat, some of them do exist that make threat unambiguous taking into consideration that threat "is not the illocutionary force of the utterance (which is given by 'I will' or 'I intend' or even, 'I state that I intend') but the content of the act. Threats are made to put those threatened into a state of fear and alarm" (Peetz, 1977, P. 580), i.e. threat is directed at creating in addressee (Y) a negative expectation. Verbal threatening in 13 can be analyzed as in Figure 6:

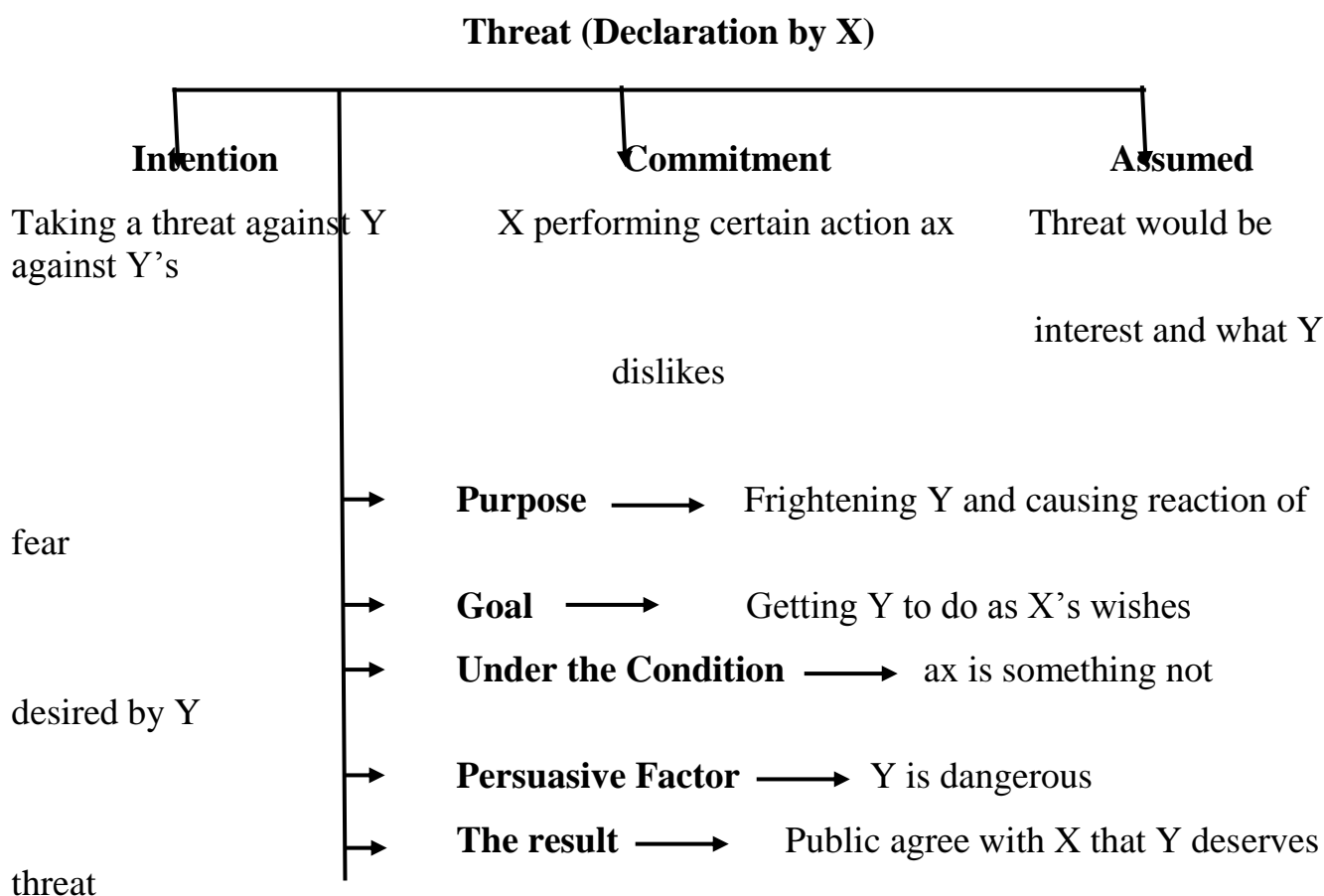


Figure 6. Threat Representation and Realization

Based on Helman's perspectives (1974), the Public-president relationship relies on the President's commitment. It is widely understood that if the president keeps his word, whether it is a promise or a threat, and keeps on his commitment to achieve them in one situation, the public will have confidence in him to do as he says in one situation or other situations. When promises and threats are accomplished, the image of (X) (the agent) will be encouraged and supported, while nonfulfillment will make people have a different stance towards the promiser or threatener (P, 310-311).

Also, in this respect, it is necessary to say that a true threat or a true promise is a threatening or promising communication that can be more and more effective under the law. Threatening and promising communication processes carry a strong relation between promise, threat, and persuasion realizing that both, promise and threat, are frequently functioned as persuasive means. What is more, there is a persuasive goal to influence the addressee. This goal, in which promiser and threatener work as a persuader, requires a cognitive approach. The cognitive approach takes into consideration different factors that influence the process of persuasion such as the context of interaction and the condition of the audience in virtue of the audience's emotions, social status, beliefs, and desires. These factors have been confirmed by Castelfranchi (1996, P. 236) when he argued that "the only way to make someone doing something is to change his beliefs." The persuader presupposes that the audience has some barriers against (ax), the persuader's role is to find procedures to handle and control these barriers by communicating the convenient beliefs to (Y).

5. Conclusion

Language is a communication channel for redirecting speech power into influence. The high connection between stylistic choices and semiotics makes such choices have semiotic implications, one of them, is power implications. The degree of linguistic affective choices as a stimulus factor relies on power for affecting the audience's attitudes and behavior figuring out that language configuration, as a semiotic social practice, makes power relations fixed and constant. This paper sheds new light on the representation of persuasive indicators in political speeches and how they are revealed through critical stylistic analysis. The critical stylistic analysis showed that the relationship between language and power is perceived as a social mutual relationship. The results of this study indicated that these three speeches were organized in such a manner that the underlying forms of their rhetorical and linguistic specificity verified to be helpful and useful to accomplish and achieve the aims followed by the political system and authorities. In the domain of powerful and powerless style, the study affirmed that the high-status addresser cares for reducing and eliminating powerless linguistic features to the minimum.

References

- Baker, P. & Ellece, S. (2011). *Key terms in discourse analysis*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Black, Brian C. (2012). Oil for living: Petroleum and American conspicuous consumption. *The Journal of American History*, 99 (1), 40–50.
- Brock, T. (1968). Implication of commodity theory for value exchange. In Anthony. G. Greenwald, Timothy C. Brock, and Thomas. M. Ostrom (Eds.), *Psychological Foundations of Attitudes*. New York & London: Academic Press.
- Burke, M. (2014). Stylistics: From classical rhetoric to cognitive neuroscience. In Michael Burke (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Stylistics*, (pp. 1-8). New York: Routledge.
- Bush, George W. (2003). *State of the union address* [Transcript]. Retrieved from <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/january-28-2003-state-union-address>.
- (2003). *Address to the nation on Iraq* [Transcript]. Retrieved from <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/march-17-2003-address-nation-iraq>.
- (2003). *Address on the Start of the Iraq War* [Transcript]. Retrieved from <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/march-20-2003-address-start-iraq-war>.
- Buzan, B., Waever, O. & De Wilde, J. (1998) *Security. A new framework for analysis*. London: Rienner.
- Campbell, G. (1963). *The philosophy of rhetoric* (Lloyd F. Bitzer, Ed.). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice. (2001). The president's legislative influence from public appeals. *American Journal of Political Science*, 45(2), 313-329.
- Castelfranchi C. (1996). Reasons: Beliefs structure and goal dynamics. *Mathew & Soft Computing*, 3(2), 233--247.
- Chilton, Paul (2008). Political terminology. In Karlfried Knapp and Gerd Antos (eds.). *Handbook of Communication in the Public Sphere*, Vol. 4, (pp. 226-42). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co.
- Cialdini, Robert B (2007). *Influence: The psychology of persuasion*. New York: Collins Business.
- (2009). *Influence: Science and practice* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Erickson, B., Lind, E. A., Johnson, B. C., & O'Barr, W. M. (1978). Speech style and impression formation in a court setting: The effects of "powerful" and "powerless" speech. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 14, 266–279.

- Fairclough, N., (2001) *Language and power* (2nd ed.). Harlow, Pearson Education Limited.
- Fehr, E. & Gächter, G. (2000). Fairness and retaliation: The economics of reciprocity. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 14(3), 159–181.
- Fukuyama, F (1996). *Trust: The Social virtues and creation of prosperity*. London: Free Press.
- Gardies, Jean-Louis (1987). Adolf Reinach and the analytic foundations of social acts. In Kevin Mulligan, *Speech Act and Sachverhalt: Reinach and the Foundations of Realist Phenomenology*, (pp. 107-117). Dordrecht: Nijhoff.
- Goddard, C. (1995). Who are we? The natural semantics of pronouns. *Language Sciences*, 17(1), 99 – 121.
- Halliday, M.A. K. (1978). *Language as a social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning*. London: Edward Arnold
- (2013). Meaning as choice. In L. Fontaine, T. Bartlett, & G. O’Grady (Eds.), *Systemic Functional Linguistics: Exploring Choice* (pp. 15-36). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hamilton, C. (2014). Stylistics as rhetoric. In Peter Stockwell & Sara Whiteley (eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Stylistics*, (pp. 63-76). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Haugaard, M. & Cooke, M. (2010). Power and critical theory. *Journal of Power*, 3(1), 1-5.
- Helman, Madeline E. (1974). Threats and promises: Reputational consequences and transfer of credibility. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 10, 310-324.
- Hjelmslev, L. (1969). *Prolegomena to a theory of language*, trans. Whitfield, F. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Ilie, C. (2008). Rhetoric and Language. In Wolfgang Donsbach (ed.), *The International Encyclopedia of Communication*, (pp. 4256-4267). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Kassin, S.; Fein, S.; & H. Rose Markus (2011). *Social psychology* (8th edition). Wadsworth: Cengage Learning.
- Lotman, M. (2006). Rhetoric: Semiotic approaches. In K. Brown (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Language & Linguistics* (Second Edition), (pp. 582-589). Oxford: Elsevier.
- Malmkjær, K.L. (ed.) (2002). *The linguistics encyclopedia*. London: Routledge.
- Modebadze, V. (2010). The term politics reconsidered in the light of recent theoretical developments. *IBSU Scientific Journal*, 1(4), 39-44.
- O’Barr, W. M. (1982). *Linguistic evidence: Language, power, and strategy in the courtroom*. New York: Academic Press.

- O'Keefe, Daniel J. (2016). *Persuasion: Theory and research*. (3rd ed.) London: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Orwell, G. (1968). Politics and the English Language. In Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus (eds.), *the collected essays, journalism and letters of George Orwell*, Vol. 1. New York : Harcourt.
- Parsons, T. (1991). *The social system*. London: Routledge
- Peetz, V. (1977). Promises and threats. *Mind*, 86(344), 578-581.
- Salvador, V. (2008). Applied rhetoric and stylistics in Spain and Portugal in the 20th and 21st Centuries. In Ulla Fix, Andreas Gardt & Joachim Knappe (eds), *Rhetoric and Stylistics: An international Handbook of Historical and Systematic Research*, Vol. 1, (pp. 532-549). Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter.
- Sparks, J. R., & Areni, C. S. (2002). The effects of sales presentation quality and initial perceptions on persuasion: A multiple role perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 55, 517–528.
- Turner, J. C. (2005). Explaining the nature of power: A three-process theory. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 35, 1-22.
- Van Dijk, T.A. (2006). Discourse and manipulation. *Discourse & Society* 17(3), 359–83.
- Vaughn, Justin S. (2007). *Presidential responsiveness to public opinion*. Unpublished Dissertation, Texas A&M University
- Verhallen, T. M. & Robben, H. (1994). Scarcity and preference: an experiment on unavailability and product evaluation. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 15, 315-331.
- Weber, Max (1978). *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Wilson, J. (2001). Political Discourse. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen, and H. Hamilton (Eds.), *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, (pp. 398-415). Oxford: Blackwell.