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"ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI"

FACULTY OF SLAVONIC STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF BULGARIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Linguocultural Differences in High Language Etiquette

ABSTRACT

of a Dissertation Submitted for the Degree of Doctor in the Field of Education and Science

Field of Higher Education: 2. Humanities Professional Field 2.1. Philology

Scientific Specialty: Applied Linguistics

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Sofia, 2024

The dissertation was discussed and recommended for defense by the Department of Bulgarian as a Foreign Language at the Faculty of Slavonic Studies, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" on January 26, 2024.

The study consists of 283 pages and includes: introduction, two chapters, conclusion, list of cited literature, and appendices. The bibliography covers 240 titles mainly in Bulgarian, Russian, and English.

The public defense of the dissertation will take place on [date] at [time] at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

Materials for the defense are available on the University's website – [Welcome to the pages of the Faculty of Slavonic Studies, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" \(uni-sofia.bg\)](#).

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General Description of the Dissertation

INTRODUCTION

The introductory part of the research focuses on the achievements and contributions of various linguistic sciences and is based on specific theoretical frameworks, emphasizing language as a factor shaping cultural identity and competence of individuals. Language is seen as a repository of values, ideologies, and cultural markers, carrying archetypes of the collective unconscious that bind each nation through shared historical past, mythology, literature, traditions, customs, and more.

The object of the present dissertation will be political statements, as well as the main means of expression through which they are realized - their commentary and, in general, how successful official public communication is achieved. We will trace the markedness of speech and how speech trends develop, what the trend is and whether there has been a change in recent years, how it manifests, and how Bulgarian citizens perceive this behavior of Bulgarian politicians. Gradually, we will examine the speech behavior of some of the most popular leaders of political parties from the parliamentary podium. We will also explore how important professional experience, political beliefs and ideology, and long-term presence in Bulgarian politics are when it comes to public statements and high language etiquette. Additionally, we will examine whether linguocultural differences are a reason for the unequal realization of high language etiquette and whether the goal is to bring it closer to the speech and perception of Bulgarian citizens.

The subject of our study will not randomly be public statements by one of the most popular political figures and chairpersons of political parties and parliamentary represented groups. These are Kiril Petkov, the chairman of "We Continue the Change," and Asen Vasilev, the leader of the "BSP for Bulgaria," Cornelia Ninova, the chairperson of "Yes, Bulgaria" and co-chair of "Democratic Bulgaria," Hristo Ivanov, the leader of "Revival" Kostadin Kostadinov, the chairman of DPS Mustafa Karadayi, the leader of GERB Boyko Borisov, and the chairman of "There Is Such a People" Slavi Trifonov. Furthermore, the dissertation includes a speech by a member of parliament who is not the chairman of a political party - Yavor Bozhankov, after which he was expelled from the ranks of his former party "BSP for Bulgaria." Typically, the interests and events in the National Assembly are directly related

to them, and the topics they address affect the widest range of people, so the public response is the greatest. The choice of political statements from the parliamentary podium could not be defined as random since they are linked, on the one hand, to a specific communicative situation that requires strictly defined rules, which in turn influences the general public, on the other hand. We will trace to what extent their vocabulary adheres to the observance of high language etiquette and to what extent it can be defined as expressively colored. The dissertation examines at what point politicians abandon and replace high language etiquette and demonstrate low language culture and how this affects speech. The linguistic analysis will also examine how this influences their colleagues and in what direction the speech act is realized. What is the purpose of this: to attract attention and provoke their supporters or opponents eloquently, or to gain the approval or dissatisfaction of society in the face of Bulgarian citizens.

The goals of the dissertation are to trace how speech strategies are implemented in the public speaking of some of the most active Bulgarian politicians when speaking from the parliamentary podium or loudly expressing their personal position on social media, as is the case with the chairman of "There Is Such a People" Slavi Trifonov. The aim is to make a comparison that unfolds specific features in public speech related to the use of linguistic clichés, linguistic aggression, metaphors, comparisons, etc. The study analyzes the differences related to the use of certain linguistic phenomena in public speech and the statements of politicians in particular and how this affects the realization of high language etiquette. Among the most important factors that directly influence their speech are the topic under discussion and the emotion it provokes. In most cases, this emotion cannot remain hidden and therefore plays the role of a catalyst in changing the semantic field. Additionally, the evaluative nature of the communicative act influences, which also assumes frequent resorting to high language etiquette.

The dissertation sets several tasks for research. Firstly, to excerpt material related to the set goal. Then, based on the observations, to make a scientific summary and classification on a comparative basis. And finally, the task is to summarize the most common deviations from high language etiquette.

The methodology in the dissertation is related to certain activities for execution - observation, analysis, and summarization of the theoretical and empirical material. It is

necessary to systematize the information, scientific rules to be logically arranged with the necessary consistency. It is important to emphasize that the preparation of a scientific study is unthinkable without a certain methodology, which takes the place of the theoretical basis of the study, on the one hand, and the methodology - the practical one, on the other.

The general research methods used in the dissertation work are related to both theoretical and empirical methods. Observation is a common method in empirical research. It is based on the direct perception of certain objects or phenomena with human senses, without the researcher directly influencing what is happening. Analysis is the main and defining method accompanying this scientific research. It represents a thought process in which the whole is fragmented and divided into constituent parts, with each of its aspects being examined and analyzed in order to convincingly reach its essence. Therefore, it is necessary to gather empirical material, which in this particular case consists of public statements made by the leaders of political parties and parliamentary groups. The requirements are for the information to be reliable and consistent and to be subject to both quantitative and qualitative analysis in order to allow for comparison. Observation, study of sources, and materials are necessary for its collection. In the process of theoretical research, the whole is dissected based on a specific feature or phenomenon that must be significant, comparable, and usable. The description begins with presenting the essence of the element, the connections of the phenomenon with the whole, and its developmental trends. It ends with argumentation and examples, sometimes with a conclusion or inference about its use. Explanation is a continuation of the description and aims to support the assertions addressed in the description of the essence, as well as the development of the part in the system of the whole. When making comparisons, the main goal is to reveal signs of similarity or difference between the analyzed statements of different politicians. Sometimes, a kind of comparison between the objects is even made to trace the degree of realization of the communicative act and the frequency of certain expressive means, whether stylistically marked or not. This allows for explaining different aspects of the phenomena, and the results are used as a premise for generalizations and conclusions. The role of generalization is to establish similarity between the analyzed phenomena and objects and to generate conclusions based on what has been stated. When similarity between two different objects is established, a logical conclusion is formed, and an assessment of the match between certain signs, phenomena, etc., is made. Generating conclusions and contributions is the concluding act that generalization can reach, aiming to formulate conclusions arising from the overall research.

The speech portraits of politicians do not follow a unified structural model of presentation, and this is due to the fact that their speech sets different parameters for analysis. It was considered that at the beginning of each portrait, a brief biographical overview could be presented, but this burdened the research significantly. Another option considered was to analyze their speech at the language levels. Thus, the work would have appeared much more organized, but also much less convincing. Because the idea of a scientific study, such as the dissertation, is not to fill in the paradigm of the levels but to describe and analyze the speech manifestations of public speakers. Hence, the approach applied in the text follows the logic of analyzing objectively registered units in the excerpted material.

Chapter I.

In the first chapter, a comprehensive overview of selected theoretical frameworks is provided, which are unfolded to create a scientific basis for the study. At the beginning of the 21st century, more and more cultural and sociological scholars examine the issue of cultural crisis and explain it through technological progress, globalization, the vast flow of information, geopolitics, and economic crises. This simultaneously provokes a sort of return to the ethnospecific with the idea that cultural identity could uphold ideological and valuable contemporary society and thus experience a kind of Renaissance.

Linguaculturology emerged as an independent scientific discipline only in the 1990s, studying cultural manifestations of a people, fixed in language. It steps on fundamental postulates from linguistics and cultural studies, and although the term arises only a few decades ago, the ideas have roots back in the time of Wilhelm Humboldt. Until the 21st century, the relationships language - culture - ethnicity can be found in the scientific research of the Brothers Grimm and others, but Humboldt's postulate of the "national spirit" preserved in language is particularly popular. According to it, culture is primarily the language that describes a circle around the nation that speaks it. Language is the living energy of the nation; therefore, language is not an object but action. According to Humboldt, language is not just a reflection of the world but the result of human interpretation.

These dimensions of theory are suitable for unfolding observations in the dissertation research regarding stylistic variables in the speech of public speakers.

In world linguistics, a similar thesis has been known since the 1930s as the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis of linguistic relativity, which is further discussed in the text. Sapir, who studied the language of American Indians, believes that speech is purely a historical heritage of the collective, a product of long social use. American ethnologists believe that every nation perceives the world through the prism of its native language. Hence arises the idea of the different worldviews that cannot be thought of as unified and equally known to people because of the diversity of languages.

From the studies of Franz Boas, Edward Sapir, and Benjamin Whorf, it becomes clear that there are no primitive languages because every language, regardless of its type, is capable of meeting the needs of the people who use it. The different levels in the development of culture or the influences between cultures mainly affect the vocabulary. For this reason, precisely the lexical layer shows the time and character of cultural influences.

Language is not only connected with culture but also exists through it and expresses it. Language is simultaneously a tool for creating, developing, and preserving culture. This postulate becomes generally accepted on the map of world linguistics at the end of the 20th century. Thus, according to Maslova and based on this idea, linguaculturology emerges as a science. The goal of this new science is to create an idea of the worldview for the speakers of a given language, realized in various discourses - literary, philosophical, religious, folklore, etc. Thus, the cultural connotation encoded in language units is made explicit.

Of particular importance is to emphasize the relationship between linguaculturology and cultural studies, as it is just as significant as the language-culture relationship. According to some cultural scholars like Gorodetska, linguaculturology should not be seen as part of linguistics that studies language through the prism of culture. For linguaculturology, language is rather a "mirror," a "carrier" of culture, and an instrument through which it happens. According to her, linguaculturology is a specific branch of cultural studies that studies the reflection of culture in language. Supporters of this approach firmly stand behind the claim that the empirical material in linguaculturology is not only linguistic but also other

forms of social interaction, important for a given culture, such as differences in communicative behavior.

The most generally valid and specific regularities of the origin, functioning, and development of culture as a characteristic manifestation of human activity constitute the subject of cultural studies. According to classical contemporary sources, the subject of cultural studies can be unified around several specific centers and includes the study of 1) processes of building and embracing the world of absolute values; 2) society, and more precisely its potential and abilities to create conditions for spiritual creativity; 3) the essence, forms, and phenomena of culture, as well as their spatial-temporal connections; 4) culture considered as one of the systems for self-organizing society; 5) the cultural context of various historical events and phenomena.

In the first chapter, a detailed exposition of the theory of the worldview is unfolded.

In linguistics today, as we understand it under the concept of the worldview, the comprehensive image of the world constructed as a result of the comprehensive spiritual life of a person is meant, involving all aspects of his mental activity (Borshev 1995). This postulate is not equally valid for everyone, although most people perceive the world in an identical way from a biological point of view. However, beyond that, not everyone experiences reality in the same way.

In Bulgarian linguistics, there are two monographs by the prominent Bulgarian linguist Dimitar Popov, who summarizes his observations in "Linguistic Personology" (2016) and in "Introduction to Speech Science" (2022). Both monographs serve as a fundamental basis for the current dissertation research, as they unfold the peculiarities of the so-called individual style and trace, both theoretically and practically, the elements of communication in public speech. In his last book, Popov thoroughly analyzes the characteristics of the voice as a personal parameter; enriches the definitions of discourse as a model of communicative behavior; deeply analyzes the physiological and acoustic features of speech processes, linking practical observations with valuable generalizations in the field of anthropophonetics as a science of the human voice. Professor Popov also presents his observations in detail regarding the specificity of speech traits with a view to profiling the speaker; with a view to the paradigm of phonostylistic variability, the semiosis of speech, and the stereotypes of the voice.

It should be noted here that two books, authored by V. Milanov and N. Stalyanova, were published in 2012 and 2016, respectively, with linguistic portraits of Bulgarian politicians and Bulgarian journalists. These books, which have gained wide popularity both among academic circles and among the non-specialized audience, examine specific speech characteristics of various Bulgarian politicians and journalists.

At the end of the first chapter, overview presentations on discourse, mentality, national character, communicative behavior, and speech etiquette are presented, with the summaries presupposing the practical analysis of the material from the second chapter. Special attention is paid to speech etiquette. The connection between speech etiquette and culture is indisputable. Speech etiquette is an integral part of the culture of speech communication, and the culture of speech is an essential part of culture in general. Speech etiquette has long been an object of interest and attention from scholars, but its scientific study began only in the second half of the last century. Emil Benveniste also allocates a special place to speech etiquette units and considers them as secondary formations based on already existing language. Paraphrasing the French linguist, we can note that forms of politeness, as well as symbolic rituals, are not independent systems. Forms of politeness are semiotically connected only through speech and the "protocol" that regulate the forms of politeness (Benveniste, 1974).

Speech etiquette is one of the fundamental aspects of culture, and its observance usually characterizes its bearer with certain characteristics such as politeness, courtesy, adequate behavior, knowledge, and sociability. Anyone who knows how to observe speech etiquette is aware of what behavior to demonstrate in society, easily interacts with others, and can lead and maintain a conversation.

Typically, the speech of a cultured person is distinguished by semantic accuracy, grammatical coherence, expressiveness, a rich vocabulary, flexibility, and logical consistency. Such speech in oral form corresponds to established and accepted standards of pronunciation, and in written form – to punctuation and spelling rules. In this way, the connection between language and culture is clearly evident. Anyone who lacks moral and ethical standards within themselves will not adhere to speech etiquette for several reasons:

- lack of basic knowledge of the norms of literary Bulgarian language

- lack of communicative skills
- lack of tolerance towards the expressions of others
- use of template words and phrases in speech
- use of cynicism and vulgarity
- even physical self-assertion in a non-verbal aspect

Regarding the term speech etiquette, Natalia Ivanovna Formanovska emphasizes that essentially it is "a microsystem of situational nominations realized in speech actions, accepted by society as a behavior label, as rules for speech behavior". According to her, speech etiquette is also "a system of nationally specific stereotypical, stable formulas of communication, accepted and prescribed by society for establishing contact with the interlocutor, for maintaining and interrupting contact in the selected tone" (Formanovska 1998: 240).

Based on these definitions, for the purposes of this work, we will adopt the following working definition: Speech etiquette encompasses the rules of speech behavior. It represents a broad field of linguistic and speech units that express behavior etiquettes through words. Furthermore, it demonstrates and reveals the linguistic richness accumulated in every society for the expression of communication skills and a tolerant attitude towards others. On the other hand, speech etiquette strictly regulates the complex choice of correct and appropriate linguistic means for a specific addressee within a particular communicative situation.

During the implementation of speech etiquette, at least two people are involved, and among the key conditions for its successful implementation and effectiveness in communication is the consideration not only of the speaker's own interests but also the constant attention to the interlocutor or partners in the act of communication. In other words, communicants are "co-active". This co-activity is associated with interpersonal feedback - verbal communication of the other person about how their behavior is perceived or the consequences of their behavior. Therefore, compared to other functional-semantic microsystems in speech etiquette, the human factor is most prominently manifested, and interpersonal communication appears as a kind of "role-playing game".

From here, we can conclude that speech etiquette is considered as an integral element of language culture and is an important tool that helps for successful interaction with others and

socialization. In the analysis of speech etiquette, the correlation between linguistic facts and sociolinguistic aspects must be constantly taken into account; verbal behavior must be investigated, taking into account the social determinism in the use of different lexical elements and syntactic constructions in their quality as speech etiquette units.

Speech etiquette units are defined as stereotypical communicative etiquette formulas that play an important role in speech organization and in managing situational discourse-oriented speech activity. The situation of speech communication represents "a set of elements of objective reality present in the consciousness of the speaker at the moment of utterance and conditioning to some extent the selection of linguistic elements in forming the utterance" (Gak 1973: 359). The main components of the speech situation, each of which influences the choice of etiquette formula, are: the topic and idea of the speech message (What is being talked about?), the purpose and tasks it fulfills, the place of communication (Where is it being talked about?), and the type of communication (How is it being talked about?). An overview of Jakobson's model of the communicative situation and the essence of the basic concepts therein, which are essential for the pragmatic-linguistic description of language, is presented.

In Bulgarian linguistics, attention has also been paid to high speech etiquette through the research and monographs of Hristina Panteleeva "Grammar of Polite Speech", Kiril Tsankov "Speech Etiquette", "Sociolinguistics and Speech Etiquette", as well as "Do We Know Bulgarian Speech Etiquette" by Mariana Stefanova. The topic of speech etiquette is also addressed by linguists from the Institute for Bulgarian Language. A number of studies by Nikolay Pascalev in recent years have been devoted precisely to politeness and the grammatical means through which it is expressed. It is difficult to provide a sufficiently adequate definition for the terminological combination "speech etiquette" that is applicable to different spheres of communication. With regard to the dissertation, we accept the following definition: a system of rules and norms of behavior applied both at the speech and non-verbal level in various spheres of human activity and human communication. Metaphorically, this can be summarized as the art of being able to speak and express oneself, which in society is a mark of high identification associated with the social and intellectual superiority of the speaker. In other words, speech etiquette is a measure of the erudition of civilized society.

CHAPTER II.

Linguocultural Characteristics of the Leaders of Political Parties and Parliamentary Represented Groups

In Chapter II, a comprehensive linguo-stylistic analysis of leading political figures in Bulgarian reality is conducted. Their selection is not random. In recent years, they have played a leading role in the Bulgarian public space. Speeches of the leaders of political parties in the 47th and 48th National Assembly, as well as the more prominent representatives of parliamentarily represented groups, have been examined. We will trace several aspects in the speeches of Bulgarian politicians related to literary norms, whether they are listened to, what the tempo is, what expressive means they use, what they want to say, or if their speeches border on so-called "empty talk". A conversational term that is difficult for linguists to accept but precisely explains the essence of processes in public discourse.

Chapter II characterizes the speech features of the following Bulgarian politicians: Kiril Petkov, Asen Vasilev, Boyko Borisov, Mustafa Karadayi, Korneliya Ninova, Slavi Trifonov, Toshko Yordanov, Hristo Ivanov, Kostadin Kostadinov.

Analysis of Kiril Petkov's speech. In his statements, Kiril Petkov repeatedly declares himself against the language of hatred. This he says to journalists after the ceremonial speech on March 3rd and in several other statements: "Despite the many provocateurs and hatred, I want to demonstrate that we are not afraid of hatred because I believe in unity and precisely on this day we must be united and a small group, a handful of people trying to introduce hatred and division into the Bulgarian people, they have no right to set the agenda for this day." However, whether the language of hatred is absent in the political speech of the former prime minister, we will see in the next speech we will examine. It is from June 17, 2022, at the demonstration in support of the President of the National Assembly, Nikola Minchev, whose resignation was voted on the same day, and in support of the cabinet, where this time Kiril Petkov speaks to his supporters.

"Friends, I just want to say that Bulgaria has every chance to be a European, normal, civilized country. While we are all together and we all expect that this change will happen based on all of us. It won't just be us, it won't just be you, only together can we do it, but we will do it. (...) Friends, the other thing I call you to. Now there will be a vote of no confidence.

Don't be disappointed by this vote of no confidence. This is just one of the steps we will take and we will take it. If you remember, at one time we came out simply as acting ministers, we saw how much our country was captured by some backstage players who used it to enrich themselves. But we managed to win the elections, but these same people put us in the backstage, which continued to go with us. Now, at the next step, what will happen is that this backstage will be cut off. And for the first time, Bulgaria will have a real chance to take control of this country so that this country works for all of us. So - "Victory", together we are, don't give up, we will succeed! Friends, I promise you one thing, that as long as we are here, alive and still have a pulse, we will not give Bulgaria to these mafiosi, we will fight until the end".

Speech of Asen Vasilev. The phonetic and morphological characteristics in his speech are examined in detail. The metaphors in his statements are characterized. In most of his speeches, Asen Vasilev adheres to the norms characteristic of the journalistic style and political discourse. Communication is official, direct, spontaneous, monological, and oral. Public statements enter precisely into the oratorical style and since they manifest in oral form, we often find language features typical of the conversational style. Such an example is the following statement by Asen Vasilev. However, it becomes clear in it that the former finance minister is moving away from official communication and from the rules of journalistic style. Moreover, he goes to the other extreme, including in his speech one of the most vivid cynicisms expressed from the parliamentary platform, with which the 47th National Assembly will be remembered. We include a larger part of the speech:

*"What I hear from you is not a proposal on how to better manage the crisis, not a suggestion on how to protect the people who are most affected by inflation. What I hear are populist slogans and an economic philosophy which, if I can summarize in one sentence... is: **'Let the poor go to hell'**. That's your economic philosophy. I apologize for the crude language, but that's the economic philosophy you preach. Not to raise pensions, because it would increase*

¹ This remark refers to the content of a popular film, a fact that has been noted in the oral statements of Prof. N. Stalyanova and Assoc. A. Atanasov. I would like to express objection regarding the cinematic association of this remark and refrain from strictly linking it to the film product. In the context of political speech, this is not of such great importance, as the semantic charge of the phrase is saturated with offensive elements. Whether it has entered the spoken language as cynicism from the film and is now being multiplied again in it is the subject of another analysis. However, its use here is inappropriate. In films, the context allows for the use of such constructions, and therefore there are restrictions imposed, especially concerning underage viewers. In official public speech, protocol does not allow for this.

inflation. Not to raise pensions, because it would increase inflation. No, it's not just that we would disrupt the principles of Bulgarian financial discipline if we raise pensions - that's what you've said. Not to help the businesses in need. To reduce the budget deficit, so there are no funds neither for businesses, nor for teachers, nor for doctors, nor for the investments that need to be completed, nor for the social programs and the poorest in the country. Such an economic policy this government will not pursue, you have been leading it for the last 12 years and as a result, we have achieved the greatest division between rich and poor in Europe. The greatest! The inequality coefficient has risen from 30% to 40% - the Gini index. This is what we find in this country. And this is the reason why 400,000 people leave the country and seek their future outside Bulgaria. Because the policy you have been pursuing for the last 12 years has been aimed at making the rich richer, while the poor remain poor. The policy that this government is currently pursuing is to support the poor so that they are not below the poverty line, to invest in education, healthcare, and infrastructure, so that all people in Bulgaria can benefit from both the European funds and the taxes, instead of the money 'leaking' into pockets, packets, and drawers."

Asen Vasilev usually strives to be measured and restrained and to avoid displays of excessive emotions in his political statements. However, in rare cases, especially in the plenary hall (unlike his statements from the corridors of the National Assembly or such in media appearances), the co-chairman of "We Continue the Change" demonstrates strongly expressive statements.

Cynicisms are highly offensive or rude words, mainly affecting things from the intimate sphere and used mainly to express offensive, rude attitude towards the person and their feelings. Unfortunately, cynicisms are tendentiously used in political speech, where their use is extremely inappropriate and is usually a sign of unprofessionalism, low linguistic culture, and lack of upbringing. More and more often, in non-professional conversation, no distinction is made between jargon, vulgar, or cynical lexicon and they are equalized in meaning. But what's more interesting is that this phenomenon tendentiously penetrates into professional conversations, which become carriers of markers of colloquialism. Cynicisms are not limited to use only in one linguistic system, on the contrary - they are present in all systems and subsystems of the Bulgarian language (excluding the literary one). The use of cynicisms and offense as a speech act is seriously addressed in their studies by Neda Pavlova, Vladislav Milanov, Nadezhda Stalyanova, and others.

Cynicisms and vulgarities belong to the so-called colloquial lexicon and their use is always a sign of low linguistic and general culture. Another important clarification according to T. Boyadjiev is that: "the expressive-stylistic features of some jargonisms are analogous to vulgarities, the use of such jargon words is an external sign of primitivism in thinking, of tastelessness" (Boyadjiev, 2002). Exactly for this reason, such speech is absolutely unacceptable and completely contrary to the expectations for high speech etiquette from political figures, especially in the plenary hall. Not accidentally, this statement by Asen Vasilev met widespread disapproval among his colleagues and the public. It's about the part: "What I hear are populist slogans and an economic philosophy which, if I can summarize in one sentence... is: 'Let the poor go to hell'." In such moments, the correctness of what was said even goes to the background and the focus remains mainly on the inappropriate use of cynicism. Similar remarks, used by educated, intelligent, erudite political figures, reveal high emotionalism, lack of self-control, sometimes even despair and hopelessness in the current situation. Probably Vasilev's goal is for his speech to sound more social, accessible to all representatives in society, to bridge the gap with the people who watch him, with the nation. Adding excessive emotionalism, the ultimate result is: ***"Let the poor go to hell"***.

Speech by Yavor Bozhankov. Bozhankov opposes Bulgaria's attitude and support for Russia to the fact that Moscow declared our country as "hostile", shortly after in April 2022 it refused to pay for the supplies of Russian natural gas in rubles: "Recently, Russia declared us as a "hostile country" even when we were too friendly. We were not sending weapons, as some say, nor were we involved in the conflict, but still, Russia declared us as a "hostile country".

The Member of Parliament strives to demonstrate an objective attitude towards the Russian state. On the one hand, he touches on the topic of historical gratitude in connection with the Russo-Turkish Liberation War and respect for Russian culture, and on the other hand – the face of Russia as an aggressor: "There is no connection between historical gratitude, our respect for Russian culture with today's reality and the fact that Russia is an aggressor, and the fact that Russia attacked Ukraine, and with the fact that the whole civilized world has taken this position."

Analysis of the speech by Korneliya Ninova. Ninova is the only female politician present in the study.

The topic of the history of women and genders is a relatively new and serious direction in universal history. It results from the understanding that the experience, the past, and the representations of the second gender are equivalent to those of the male gender and that the restrictive existence of women needs to be presented historically, similar to political and diplomatic history. In Bulgaria, the history of women is taking its first steps towards development. Social history, as an aspect of the general science of history, is almost undeveloped, and Bulgarian historical science is largely traditional, mainly based on political elites. But what happens when these political figures are of the female gender? What methods and techniques of communication do they use and how does their speech differ from that of men?

The history of women itself includes various problem areas. It examines "relationships, communities, institutions and events, in which only women are represented (women's organizations); others, where women are a minority (charitable activities and "witch hunts" in the Middle Ages); those where women and men are equal (families, sexual relations, classes, ethnic and religious minorities); and those where women have been a minority compared to men (professional activity throughout much of the historical development of humanity) and finally those from which they were totally excluded (voting rights in the XIX and part of the XX century). Of the examples listed, the place of women in the political reality of the country is still defined as "a minority compared to men". The main idea is for gender to be considered as a fundamental category and to explore the role of gender and gender symbolism in different historical events and societies. Numerous studies on women testify that despite their participation in historical past, they are often excluded from official historical records. The reason can be explained by the fact that history has until recently been narrated, recorded, and written mainly by men. This naturally leads to the identification of humanity primarily solely from the experience of the "first gender".

What we can highlight from Korneliya Ninova's political speeches is that as a political leader, her linguistic expressions are more expressive and emotionally colored than those of male political figures. Examples of this are rhetorical questions, hyperboles, more frequent appeals, and markers of the high register. Together with this, similar to the speeches of Kiril Petkov and Asen Vasilev, words like "mafia", "backstage" are constantly used here. In addition, Ninova also uses quite a few epithets, making her speech even more emotionally charged, along with a series of forms of negative and generalizing pronouns and anaphoras and epiphoras, as well as metaphors.

It is important to note how in her speeches Korneliya Ninova addresses the "Bulgarian people", "Bulgarian citizens" or "sovereign". This may initially seem like a not particularly important detail, but it actually shows the conceptual attitude of politicians. Interestingly, in certain cases Korneliya Ninova seeks to win the sympathy and approval of all members of society and uses the more general form "Bulgarian citizens", while in others - she uses the form "people", which aims to specify the Bulgarian people and to emphasize them in particular. Usually, the choice of how the audience will be called depends on what topic the political speech addresses, whether it is related to the needs of the people.

Speech by Hristo Ivanov. Not coincidentally, the subject of analysis in this part is the speech of Hristo Ivanov. It is characterized by a certain degree of restraint regarding speech and emotions. In his political speeches, the chairman of "Democratic Bulgaria" often uses marked vocabulary, but it is not a sign of emotionality and low linguistic culture, on the contrary - it is used in his capacity as a certain type of rhetorical figure. Speech portrayal itself is successfully carried out and from the point of view of contemporary scientific directions such as linguopersonology. Verbal expression actually outlines a certain language model and is indicative of specific, concrete personal qualities, oratorical potential, language capabilities, and communicative characteristics. This is particularly evident in the language portrait of Hristo Ivanov. For its successful construction, we will base the analysis on the criteria outlined by Karaulov (Karaulov 2010) - interactive perspective (attitude towards others, or communicative image) and reflexive perspective (attitude towards oneself, or auto-image).

In the interactive perspective, the initiative communicative role that the political figure "plays" is traced to attract attention, maintain interest in themselves, obtain the desired, and achieve their goals. Communicative image can be detected in the tendency towards joining, supporting, or opposing, distinguishing in relation to a certain individual or parliamentary represented group, in adaptability, in demonstrating cooperativeness-hostility, solidarity-arrogance, politeness, manner of participation in the conversation, and so on.

In the reflexive perspective, the constructed or desired self-image in the consciousness of the individual is considered, marked by self-description in discourse, for example - formulation of qualities and abilities ("I am or am not"), qualification of personal aspects (whether strengths or weaknesses), awareness (self-idealization or self-criticism), assessment of internal states, preferences, tolerance, identification of personal space (based on the "I").

The vocabulary, word formation, and use of stylistic and rhetorical figures and techniques clearly demonstrate high education and intelligence. In the presented empirical material (and not only), there is a lot of vocabulary related to Hristo Ivanov's professional field (judicial reform). However, we cannot determine this as particularly relevant, as it corresponds to the communicative situation. The expressive means used are in line with the gender, age, social status, and parliamentary position of Hristo Ivanov. It often gives the impression that in their endeavor to be closer "to the people," many politicians use simpler predicative constructions and more common, even everyday vocabulary. They allow for a bright intonation and spontaneous exclamations, with their statements often leaving the official political register and their speech transitioning into the informal one. However, this cannot be attributed to the linguistic portrait of the co-chair of "Democratic Bulgaria." Hristo Ivanov strives to appear as a professional, maximally competent, adhering to more complex syntactic structures, in which hypotaxis usually predominates over parataxis, with a more selected and refined vocabulary and rich terminology. In addition, he impresses with moderate intonation, with minor changes.

From the linguistic constructions used by Hristo Ivanov, it is clear that he often distances himself and maintains the idea and representation of professionalism. He also attempts to impose his views and understandings on a particular topic. The communicative image that the co-chair of "Democratic Bulgaria" seeks to build is that of a strict, restrained, even reserved, but competent specialist. He does not speak about his personal life and often makes a distinction between "we" and "they," seeking to distance himself from his opponent both professionally and personally.

Speech by Mustafa Karadayı. Already upon first listening to a political speech by Mustafa Karadayı, some specific features immediately stand out, and often it is precisely with them that he distinguishes himself from his other colleagues in the National Assembly. This by no means indicates that the specific features are not encountered in other politicians we are examining and analyzing, but in the case of the chairman of the DPS, they occur with a much higher frequency and are particularly pronounced. Sometimes Mustafa Karadayı's speech sounds as if it is spontaneous, but regardless of whether it is a speech from the parliamentary podium and regardless of the procedure - in the essence of the debate, personal explanation, procedure on the conduct, etc., or an interview, his speech is often fragmented, with many pauses.

Regarding hesitation pauses, there is hardly a politician in the National Assembly who resorts to them so often, even almost constantly. Most generally, hesitation pauses represent

ungrammatical pauses, also called hesitation pauses. One of the most accurate definitions of the essence of hesitation pauses is given by M. Tsvetanova in her study: "interruption of speech flow, during which the speaker chooses the necessary word to fill a certain position in the already formed syntactic scheme of his utterance. They can be true, pure pauses (or lack of acoustic signal) or pauses filled with indefinite sounds (uh, um, hm, uh), with parasite words (so, as if to say, you know, there, etc.) or with automated repetitions of words or parts of words" (Tsvetanova, 1996).

Speech by Kostadin Kostadinov. Most prominently represented in his speech seems to be speech aggression.

Vulgarisms are words or phrases used usually in address, expressing rude, offensive, contemptuous attitude towards the person, people, party, institution, etc. Cynicisms, on the other hand, are highly offensive or rude words, mainly affecting things from the intimate sphere and used mainly to express offensive, rude attitude towards the person and their feelings. The absurd thing is that increasingly often the latter two terms are used from the parliamentary podium, where their use is highly inappropriate and is a sign of unprofessionalism, low linguistic culture, and lack of upbringing.

An interesting phenomenon is the presence of cynicisms and vulgarisms, and they are not limited to use only in one linguistic system; on the contrary, they exist in all systems and subsystems of the Bulgarian language (of course, excluding the literary one). They belong to the layer of the so-called colloquial lexicon, and their use is always a symbol of low linguistic and general culture and lack of upbringing. That is why their use from the plenary hall of the National Assembly is absolutely unthinkable and unacceptable.

Speech aggression is one of the most dangerous phenomena in any society. It is a hallmark not only of deficiencies in education and low culture but also a clear indicator of language identification of a person who does not respect their interlocutor and expresses their thoughts using linguistic means characteristic of non-prestigious registers and informal situations. In recent years, in a number of Balkan and Slavic countries, manifestations of both speech aggression and physical aggressiveness have been increasing. News broadcasts continuously report cases of violence, and in recent months in Bulgaria, the latest reason for society to protest and for the National Assembly to quickly revise the Penal Code, reconsidering the sanctions for violence, was precisely a severe case of physical violence, in which the victim - a young girl, was sewn with 400 stitches.

Kostadin Kostadinov's speech goes through several extreme moods. Initially, the Bulgarian people are presented as a threatened victim, and then the idea of rebellion is inserted. The speech only hints at "guests," "foreign representatives," "foreign flags," referring to Ukraine, but without mentioning its name. In addition, Kostadinov skillfully uses words and through manipulation aims to instill in the audience and listeners the idea that Bulgaria is "occupied" by a state where a war is being fought, portraying it as the attacked-aggressor. But above all, the governing government (then the cabinet of Kiril Petkov) is referred to several times as an "extremist group known as the government." Initially "softening" the statement by using "something that more resembles," but then each subsequent mention is directly through "known as," "called," etc.

Speech by Boyko Borisov. The speech of the leader of the political party GERB, Boyko Borisov, is highly recognizable, as he is present in political life with many emblematic statements, which, however, evoke contradictory feelings and attitudes towards himself. The former prime minister's public speaking is characterized by some specific features such as markers of colloquialism. Borisov often uses elements of colloquialism, familiarity, the use of everyday phraseology, numerous Turkisms, as well as sometimes ambiguous comparisons that provoke strong reactions. Because of this type of political speech, citizens' attitudes towards Boyko Borisov's personality are rather bipolar. On the one hand, some people sympathize with him because through his speech he gets closer to them, they perceive him as part of the people, and thus feel him as one of them. On the other hand, however, according to some, this type of public speaking is a clever way to disguise political verbiage through conversational structures and domestic, vernacular imagery in his speech. In recent years, Borisov has almost no participation in the National Assembly, as after parliamentary elections, he always waived his parliamentary seat. However, this changed in the last elections with the formation of the cabinet of PP-DB and GERB. Nevertheless, the former prime minister has no statements from the parliamentary podium, as in the National Assembly, he only speaks in the corridors to journalists.

Speech by Slavi Trifonov. The statuses of Trifonov on Facebook have been mainly analyzed. Political statements outside this network have not been registered, and this in itself is important for the communication strategy. As Slavi Trifonov himself notes, he carefully chooses the media with which to communicate. Examples of speech aggression in his statements have been analyzed in detail. Key words in his texts relating to other political figures in Bulgarian public life have also been analyzed. The expression "national betrayal" is commented on, and the generalizations are underpinned by parts of the Penal Code.

The presidential debates between Rumen Radev and Anastas Gerdzhikov. The main topics focus on the major events in the country and the main problems in society, including healthcare, politics, economics, electricity prices, the army, international relations (USA and Russia), geopolitical strategies, demographic crisis, refugee wave, national security and defense, etc. The nature of the debate is such that citizens would find it difficult to feel excluded or even more indifferent to the events. Elections are indeed a dynamically social phenomenon, and from there, the debate itself also presupposes a dynamic and diverse implementation of oral speech in order to win the approval of voters. This is the way both politics and journalism convey viewpoints and positions and attract viewers of all kinds, regardless of gender, age, education, social status, etc., in front of the screen.

The main features of the speech technique in public debates are discussed in the dissertation text. The tempo, intonation, logical stresses, diction, as well as a number of paralinguistic behavior patterns are analyzed.

For example, in the debate between the presidential candidates, around the tenth minute of the conversation, the first peculiar situation arises between the two. During one of Anastas Gerdzhikov's statements, a audible and disapproving exhale is heard, revealing irritation towards what was heard. Here, perhaps Rumen Radev's microphone was not muted, and his unfiltered reaction is evident. However, the current president has long professional experience and high competence in such type of communication, as well as in maintaining self-control and defensive behavior. For this reason, it is important to emphasize that in the subsequent response to his opponent, Rumen Radev maintains the same tempo. Against this background, Anastas Gerdzhikov's statements sound much more influenced by his emotional state. It is precisely for this reason that at times the debate between the two presidential candidates seems to deviate from this framework and creates the impression that Rumen Radev is lecturing and explaining, while Anastas Gerdzhikov peacefully agrees and nods in understanding.

The next characteristic that we will focus on in the study is also on a phonetic level, and that is intonation. The term "intonation" comes from the Latin word "intono" - 'to pronounce loudly' and is one of the main signs of the sentence, which turns it into a complete message and gives it syntactic integrity. Intonation can be defined as the movement of tones, changes in voice pitch, strength, and timbre, melody, tempo, and speech pauses, logical, emphatic, and phrasal stress. Intonation depends on the content of the sentence and the purpose of the

utterance. Through it, the speaker can change the semantic content of one and the same sentence and thus form different types of sentences. In its entirety, intonation is devoid of substantive meaning and cannot independently express thought. It is expressive but not substantive, and in many cases, it has a subjective character. It has several basic grammatical functions: shaping the sentence as a complete syntactic unit, expressing evaluative attitude towards reality, expressing emotional aspect, as one and the same sentence can be presented as declarative, interrogative or exclamatory, it expresses logical stress and the communicative load of words in a sentence.

Both Rumen Radev and Anastas Gerdzhikov adhere to one of the most important features of the "new political language," namely, it should be simple and understandable for the general public, the so-called Berlusconiism. The speech and behavior of Silvio Berlusconi are liked because they differ from the old "wooden" language, which is characterized as diplomatic, semantically overloaded, lacking in specificity and deep meaning. The rhetoric in Berlusconiism is equally applicable both to the image of a prime minister and that of an opposition leader. The most commonly used words are: solidarity, dialogue, proposal, question, which indicates a flexible policy, diplomacy, skills to conduct a discussion, as well as readiness to seek compromise. Key words are also: freedom, citizens, power, taxes, and laws.

Comments on hyperboles, metaphors, comparisons, self-speaking, repetition as a means of persuasion, the use of phraseologies, and others are unfolded in the analysis.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation began with one idea, but over time, it was changed. It became necessary to assert the thesis that it is very important for both society and science to create a study in which the main object is the speech of contemporary public speakers, but refracted through the prism of various sciences, in order to create a complete picture of the current state of this speech. It was the comprehensive approach that necessitated the theoretical framework of the dissertation to be a review of so many different scientific fields, through which the speech behavior of Bulgarian politicians was to be understood.

The speeches of leading figures from Bulgarian political life have been analyzed. An equal approach was not applied in the analysis, as the excerpted material required a more fragmented form of research and followed the logic in the analysis of examples, rather than seeking models to fill the theoretical basis. All this leads to the following conclusions:

1. Bulgarian political speech still cannot reach the linguistic ideal of high speech etiquette, as conceived in the studies of Bulgarian and foreign linguists.
2. At all levels, various "deviations" related to the complex political situation in Bulgaria and the specifics of the ideologies of political parties and movements manifest themselves.
3. The predominantly problematic aspects continue to be the strongly expressed speech aggression, the mixing of linguistic registers, the overuse of clichés, which distances Bulgarian political speech from the idea of the high pronunciation register to which this type of speech has been related since ancient rhetoric.
4. Linguo-cultural differences determine speech behavior in a very complex way, and therefore, each speech portrait has its own specificity and individual style.

This study is a step towards expanding analytical observations, aiming to create a complete scientific picture describing political speech. The dissertation is in dialogue with other studies devoted to political speech but attempts to seek a more complex analysis of the dynamic world of public speaking. That is why observations often include phonetic, pronunciation, morphological, lexical, and syntactic problems. The specificity of the examples determined such a form.

In Bulgaria and in neighboring countries, there are lasting trends in political speech and in the description of political speech. There is something that unites them, and that is the understanding that through their speech, politicians not only convey messages but also set models of speech communication. And every civilized society strives for civilized linguo-cultural characteristics in communication processes: good manners, listening to the interlocutor, respect for the ideas of others, and adherence to literary language norms. In this sense, this dissertation will be continued and will include an analysis of the next generations of politicians.

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Research Contribution in the Dissertation:

1. The dissertation introduces the topic of linguocultural differences in high speech etiquette for the first time.
2. Unlike most scientific studies, which examine speech etiquette based on a broad foundation in various stylistic realizations, the present work focuses solely on the manifestations and non-manifestations of high linguistic culture as a hallmark of speech etiquette, but only in public speech.
3. Observations on the speech of Bulgarian political leaders have been modernized and expanded, applying a wide range of diverse methods in its analysis.
4. The interdisciplinary approach in the dissertation also contributes, as the theoretical framework utilizes the tools of several sciences.
5. The theoretical framework set in the studies of speech acts has been expanded with specific examples, emphasizing the individual style of contemporary politicians.
6. The empirical material, totaling 18 hours, which can be analyzed repeatedly and from various aspects, will be used for the needs of a national scientific project, funded by the Research Fund of the Ministry of Education and Science under No. KP-06-N80/11 dated December 15, 2024.

Publications on the Dissertation Topic:

- The Football Commentator and His Speech. In: Contemporary Linguistics, vol. 2, 2019, pp. 91-108.
- Offensive Lexicon in Official Public Communication. In: Contemporary Linguistics, vol. 1, 2021, pp. 86-99.
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- In Search of High Language Etiquette: Linguistic Portraits of Bulgarian Politicians (the political speech of Yavor Bozhankov leading to his exclusion from the parliamentary group of "BSP for Bulgaria"). In:
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