UDC 811.11

PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES IN PUBLIC SPEAKING

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The article focuses on persuasive strategies employed in public speaking to influence the audience's beliefs, attitudes, and values. Persuasive strategies are viewed as features of rhetoric used for expressing ethos – presenting the credibility of the speaker, logos – pertaining to logical reasoning, and pathos – involving the emotional component. The article also provides a description of persuasive strategies based on human psychology. Awareness of persuasive strategies improves the speaker's performance.

Traditionally, public speaking was considered to be a part of the art of persuasion. Contemporary linguists have introduced variant definitions for the notion "persuasion". According to W. Fotheringham, persuasion is the process which aims to create certain effects in the addressee's mind in order to fulfill the speaker's purposes [1, p. 48]. R. Perloff defines persuasion as a type of social interaction that attempts to influence and change attitudes in an atmosphere of free choice [2]. His definition emphasises that persuasion is in sharp contrast to manipulation or propaganda as it is ethically neutral, overt and can be withdrawn. V.E. Cherniavskaja states that persuasion is the speaker's impact upon the addressee in order to inspire conviction and provoke action [3]. Thus, taking into account the above-mentioned definitions, persuasion refers to a targeted impact which seeks to achieve the goals of a person using it. Persuasion is used as an influential instrument in the political, social, religious and economic speeches. Persuasive speaking intends to influence or reinforce the beliefs, attitudes, values, or actions of the audience.

Research into the notion of persuasion as an effective tool to inform, persuade, and motivate the audience goes back to ancient times when rhetoric gained popularity as the art of speaking. According to Aristotle [4], rhetoric observes the available means of persuasive argumentation based on three main principles: ethos, or moral argumentation; logos pertaining to the rational appeal; pathos, or emotional argumentation, used to involve the audience.

Ethos is the credibility of the speaker, namely their ability to manifest a good moral character, common sense, and concern for the audience's well-being. K. Campbell and S. Huxman explain that ethos is not about conveying that you, as an individual, are a good person. It is about mirroring the characteristics idealized by the culture or group (ethnic), and demonstrating that you make good moral choices with regard to your relationship within the group (ethics) [5]. J. Stiff and P. Mongeau introduce three dimensions of credibility: 1) competence, or the perception of the speaker's expertise in relation to the topic being discussed; 2) trustworthiness, or the degree that the audience perceive the speaker to be presenting accurate, credible information in a non-manipulative way; 3) dynamism, or the degree to which the audience perceive the speaker to be outgoing and charismatic [6, p. 105].

Logos refers to the logical means of proving an argument or bringing in and refuting counterarguments. Speakers appeal to logos by, for instance, presenting factual, objective information that serves as reasons to support the argument; by giving relevant examples to support a proposition; by deriving logical conclusions; and by using credible supporting material like expert testimony, definitions, statistics, and literal or historical analogies [6, p. 142].

Pathos relates to emotion appeal, for example, using vivid language, including personal stories; using figurative language such as metaphor, similes, personification; and using vocal variety, cadence, and repetition [6, p. 146]. Although the division seems clear on the surface, it might prove difficult to establish the boundaries between logos, ethos and pathos as in the course of persuasive interaction they overlap and co-exist. This means that the speaker could share their views in support of rational argumentation and build the atmosphere of emotional engagement at the same time.

Thus, persuasive strategies, often referred to as rhetorical appeals, are devices in rhetoric that classify the speaker's appeal to the audience.

A. Wallwork states that audiences tend to like persuasive public speeches, i. e. speeches that:
− are professional and are delivered by someone who is credible and confident;
− look like they were prepared specifically for the audience so that the audience feel valued and respected, their position acknowledged and their preferences taken into consideration;
− tell the audience interesting, curious, and counterintuitive things;
− are delivered in a friendly, enthusiastic, and relatively informal way;
− entertain the audience and interact with audience [7, p. 6].

A persuasive technique is a complex set of linguistic tools employed to change attitudes and get responses without openly imposing any ideas on the recipient [8, p. 56]. I. D. Romanova and I. V. Smirnova have worked out the classification of persuasive techniques on the basis of the above-mentioned rhetorical principles. According to their classification, the logos-based persuasive strategy corresponds to the use of rational argumentation as a way of reasoning that the receiver might accept and is represented by *appeal to rationality* technique. The ethos - based persuasive strategy includes persuasive techniques of *self-representation* and *appeal to authority.* The pathos-based persuasive strategy comprises 6 techniques each targeting a particular emotional component: 1) seeking common ground; 2) personal involvement; 3) appeal to desires/preferences; 4) appeal to state awareness; 5) appeal to time awareness; and 6) appeal to benefit [8, p. 57].

Recently, a number of persuasive strategies have been identified based on theories and evidence related to psychology, namely on the theory of cognitive dissonance and on the theories of motivation, including A. Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Cognitive dissonance in psychology is defined as the mental discomfort that results when new information clashes with or contradicts currently held beliefs, attitudes, or values. Using cognitive dissonance as a persuasive strategy relies on three assumptions: 1) people have a need for consistency in their thinking; 2) people experience psychological discomfort when inconsistency exists; and 3) this discomfort motivates people to address the inconsistency to restore balance [6, p. 80]. In short, when new information clashes with previously held information, there is an unpleasantness that results, as we have to try to reconcile the difference. Thus, this persuasive strategy is also referred to as the reconciliation strategy.

Positive and negative motivation are common persuasive strategies used by public speakers. When using positive motivation, speakers implicitly or explicitly convey to the audience that listening to their message or following their advice will lead to positive results. Conversely, negative motivation implies or states that failure to follow the speaker's advice will result in negative consequences [6].

According to A. Maslow, there are several layers of needs that human beings pursue: physiological, safety, social, self-esteem, and self-actualization needs. Speakers are more likely to be successful at focusing on safety, social, and self-esteem needs, which they can combine with positive and negative motivation [6]. Appeals to safety needs evoke the audience's concern for their safety and the safety of their loved ones. When speakers combine appeals to safety with positive motivation, they present information that will result in increased safety and security. Combining safety needs and negative motivation, speakers use some degree of fear as a motivator and may convey that the audience's safety and security will be put at risk if the speaker's message isn't followed. Appeals to social needs evoke the audience's need for belonging and inclusion. Positive motivation is present in messages that promise the receiver "in-group" status or belonging, and negative motivation can be seen in messages that persuade by saying, "Don't be left out", thus drawing out insecurities people have about being in the "out-group." Finally, appeals to self-esteem needs evoke the audience's need to think well of themselves and have others think well of them, too.

Thus, to achieve the desirable effect in public speaking it is necessary to employ the combination of persuasive strategies to maintain a balance between the ethos, logos or pathos components of argumentation. Persuasive strategies presenting a positive image of the speaker (ethos) include *self-representation* and *appeal to authority* techniques; those pertaining to logical reasoning (logos) comprise *appeal to rationality* technique, and those involving the emotional component (pathos) comprise persuasive techniques of seeking common ground, personal involvement, appeal to desires/preferences, appeal to state awareness, appeal to time awareness, and appeal to benefit. It is also essential to be aware of persuasive strategies based on human psychology, such as the reconciliation strategy, and strategies combining positive and negative motivation with appeals to safety, social, or self-esteem needs in order to persuade.

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