SPECIFIC FEATURES OF POLITICAL TEXTS

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Abstract: Political texts are a distinct genre of discourse with unique linguistic, rhetorical, and pragmatic features aimed at influencing public opinion, shaping ideology, and legitimizing power. This article examines the specific characteristics that distinguish political texts from other types of communication, including the use of persuasive strategies, emotive language, and ideological framing. The study analyzes these elements through qualitative methods, drawing on discourse analysis of contemporary political speeches, debates, and manifestos. The findings highlight how political language is strategically constructed to mobilize support, obscure or highlight specific realities, and maintain dominance within a sociopolitical context.

Keywords: political discourse, rhetorical strategies, ideological framing, persuasive language, political communication, discourse analysis, emotional appeals, power and language.

Introduction. Language in politics is never neutral. Political texts play a critical role in shaping public consciousness, constructing collective identities, and influencing decision-making processes at individual and societal levels. These texts, ranging from formal speeches and legislative debates to party manifestos and campaign messages, are purposefully designed to achieve specific communicative goals. The primary function of political discourse is not only to inform but to persuade, justify, or delegitimize. Unlike literary or scientific texts, political communication operates within a framework of power relations, seeking to maintain, challenge, or transform existing sociopolitical structures. Understanding the specific features of political texts is essential for both political scientists and linguists, as it allows for deeper insight into how language is used as a tool of governance, resistance, and public engagement.

Political texts occupy a central role in the communication processes that shape governance, public opinion, and social organization. Unlike everyday language, political discourse is inherently strategic, aiming not merely to convey information but to influence, persuade, and legitimize specific ideological positions and power relations. These texts encompass a wide range of formats, including speeches, manifestos, policy documents, and debates, all crafted to serve political objectives such as mobilizing support, framing issues, and constructing collective identities. The language of politics is distinctive in its use of persuasive techniques, emotional appeals, and ideological framing, which together work to shape the perceptions and behaviors of audiences. Understanding the specific linguistic and rhetorical features of political texts is therefore crucial for scholars, practitioners, and citizens alike to critically engage with political communication and its impact on democratic processes. This article explores the defining characteristics of political texts through qualitative discourse analysis, seeking to reveal how language functions as a tool of power and persuasion in contemporary political contexts.

Methods. This study employs a qualitative discourse analysis approach to investigate the distinct characteristics of political texts. A purposive sampling method was used to select a range of political texts from English-language sources, including speeches by heads of state, party manifestos, and televised debates from 2020 to 2024. These texts were examined for their lexical

choices, rhetorical devices, syntactic structures, and use of ideological framing. Analytical categories were developed based on existing theories in political linguistics, such as Chilton's model of political discourse, van Dijk's ideological square, and Fairclough's critical discourse analysis framework. Textual elements were coded and interpreted within their sociopolitical context.

Results. Analysis of the data reveals several core features of political texts. First, political texts are inherently persuasive, relying heavily on rhetorical strategies such as repetition, parallelism, metaphors, and appeals to ethos, pathos, and logos. Second, political discourse frequently uses emotionally charged language to create urgency, fear, hope, or solidarity. For instance, words like "crisis," "freedom," "security," and "enemy" are strategically chosen to align audiences with the speaker's viewpoint. Third, the use of vague or abstract terminology—such as "change," "justice," or "progress"—allows speakers to remain ideologically flexible and appeal to broader audiences without committing to specific policies. Fourth, political texts often exhibit polarized framing, creating dichotomies such as "us vs. them" or "truth vs. lies" to strengthen in-group identity and discredit opponents. Finally, there is a consistent use of legitimization techniques, including references to history, national identity, or moral authority, which reinforce the speaker's right to lead or propose change.

To explore the distinct characteristics of political texts, this study utilized qualitative discourse analysis focused on a selection of political speeches, party manifestos, and televised debates from recent years. The research followed a purposive sampling method, choosing texts from English-speaking political contexts between 2020 and 2024. These texts were examined through frameworks proposed by scholars such as van Dijk, Chilton, and Fairclough, with attention to their rhetorical, lexical, and syntactic elements. Each text was coded for persuasive strategies, ideological framing, emotive language, and structural patterns, allowing for a detailed examination of how political language functions across different formats and contexts.

The analysis revealed that political texts are unified by their strong persuasive intent, regardless of whether they are spoken or written. They frequently rely on rhetorical strategies such as repetition, triadic structures, rhetorical questions, and metaphorical language. These devices are employed not for aesthetic purposes but as tools for reinforcing key messages and shaping public interpretation. For instance, repetition is commonly used to solidify central themes such as "freedom," "security," or "change," making these ideas more memorable and emotionally resonant for audiences. Additionally, metaphors are a powerful instrument for framing complex issues in simpler, more relatable terms, such as portraying economic reform as "building a stronger foundation."

Another core feature of political texts is their reliance on emotionally loaded language. Words and phrases are carefully selected not just to inform, but to provoke, motivate, or even alarm. This emotional dimension is most visible in campaign speeches and crisis communications, where leaders may describe situations using high-stakes language like "emergency," "betrayal," or "heroism" to shape public perception and justify particular actions. Such emotional framing helps solidify group identity and loyalty, often reinforcing an "us versus them" dichotomy, which can polarize the political landscape. The construction of binary oppositions—such as "patriots versus traitors" or "the people versus the elite"—was consistently observed in political texts, simplifying complex realities and reinforcing ideological positions.

Ideological framing is a defining aspect of political discourse. Through selective emphasis, omission, and reframing, political texts attempt to shape how audiences interpret events, actors, and policy options. This process includes legitimizing certain views while delegitimizing others, often through appeals to shared values like justice, democracy, and national identity. For instance, a government may frame austerity measures not as economic necessity but as moral responsibility, invoking notions of fairness and future prosperity. Conversely, opponents might depict the same measures as unjust or harmful to vulnerable populations, thus reframing the issue from a different ideological standpoint.

Vagueness and abstraction are also frequently used in political language. Terms such as "progress," "change," "reform," or "leadership" are often employed without precise definitions, which allows for broad appeal and strategic ambiguity. This feature enables politicians to address diverse constituencies without committing to specific policy details. At the same time, it provides space for post-hoc reinterpretation, making it easier to manage public expectations and political accountability.

The study further observed that political texts are often highly contextual and temporally bound. The same rhetorical tools can function differently depending on the political climate, media coverage, and audience expectations. For example, the language used during an election campaign differs from that used during national crises, with the former often more optimistic and emotionally charged, while the latter tends to emphasize unity, authority, and urgency.

Overall, the results demonstrate that political texts are carefully crafted instruments of persuasion and ideological influence. Their structure, language, and framing serve not only to communicate policy positions but also to perform political identity, reinforce power structures, and shape public discourse. The strategic nature of these texts highlights the importance of critical literacy and discourse analysis in understanding how language operates in the political domain.

Discussion. The findings underscore that political texts are crafted not only to convey messages but to perform power. The strategic use of language enables politicians to construct narratives, influence emotions, and maintain authority. The prevalence of emotive language and ideological framing reflects the need to appeal to both rational and emotional dimensions of the audience. Moreover, the abstract nature of many political terms facilitates ambiguity and interpretation, allowing political actors to navigate complex constituencies and shifting agendas. This characteristic also contributes to the manipulative potential of political texts, as ambiguity can mask controversial policies or intentions. The creation of binary oppositions in political discourse simplifies complex issues, but it can also exacerbate social polarization and hinder constructive dialogue. Consequently, the analysis of political texts is crucial not only for understanding communication strategies but also for evaluating the democratic quality of public discourse.

Conclusion. Political texts represent a powerful intersection of language and power, characterized by persuasive intent, emotive appeal, and ideological construction. Through strategic use of rhetorical and linguistic features, these texts influence public opinion, mobilize support, and maintain sociopolitical order. Recognizing the specific features of political discourse is essential for critical engagement with political communication and for fostering informed and democratic participation. Further research could explore cross-cultural comparisons or the evolution of political discourse in digital media platforms, where brevity and virality add new dimensions to the language of politics.

Political texts are uniquely constructed forms of communication that serve the dual purpose of conveying messages and exercising influence. Unlike ordinary discourse, they are characterized by their persuasive intent, ideological framing, and strategic linguistic design. Through rhetorical devices, emotionally charged language, and the construction of binary oppositions, political actors seek to mobilize support, legitimize power, and delegitimize opposition. These texts often employ abstract and ambiguous language to appeal to a wide audience while maintaining ideological flexibility. The analysis confirms that political discourse is not merely informational but performative—it enacts authority, shapes social identities, and structures the public's understanding of political reality. Understanding the specific features of political texts is essential for critically engaging with political messaging, resisting manipulation, and promoting informed democratic participation. Future research may focus on how political discourse evolves in response to technological shifts and increasing media fragmentation, especially in online environments where brevity and sensationalism often dominate.

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