

## QUESTION AS A MEANS OF INFLUENCE ON THE ADDRESSEE IN THE SPEECH OF POLITICIANS (ON THE MATERIAL OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE)

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**Abstract:** The article is devoted to the study of the language of modern publicistic discourse, which is a complex cognitive-communicative phenomenon. Language means used by the author correlate with extralinguistic elements of publicistic discourse, allowing information to be conveyed along with its assessment and contributing to the formation of a certain world view in the public consciousness. The aim of the research is to determine the place and role of the issue in creating an impact effect on the audience in publicistic discourse on the example of speeches by politicians in English. The study is conducted with the involvement of linguistic analysis, discursive conceptual analysis, critical linguistics and cognitive analysis.

**Keywords:** political communication, language of politics, publicistic discourse, political discourse, oratorical speech, tag question, rhetorical question, question-in-the-narrative.

### 1 Introduction

The study of the language of public communication now provokes the legitimate interest of linguists within the descriptive approach connected with the study of the linguistic behaviour of political speakers. The focus is on verbal rhetoric techniques, manipulative strategies used to persuade the audience. The term "linguistic status of the language of politics" has recently been quite relevant. Terms such as "policy language", "political communication", "political discourse" are used by linguists practically at the level of interchangeable synonyms.

Publicistic discourse presupposes the presence of at least two communicants (*the author and the addressee*) and allows the transfer of information along with the assessment of its author. The dialogue of communicators, according to S. A. Chubai (2014, p. 29), conditions the choice of the best option, the most original form of expressions, feelings, attitudes. Due to their dialogue specificity, publicistic texts allow to reach a sufficiently large audience.

According to N. V. Bizyukov (2010), publicistic discourse becomes "information-manipulative" (p. 167), as the information transmitted here contributes to the formation of a political, linguistic world view in the public consciousness. The author's hypothesis about the addressee at the same time entails the choice of a certain tonality of the text in order to exert a certain influence on the reader. An important role in this case belongs to various linguistic means, in particular, to various kinds of questions (tag, rhetorical, question-in-the-narrative), which allows performing not only informative, but also expressive function. The purpose of this work is to determine the place and role of the issue in creating an impact effect on the audience in publicistic discourse.

### 2 Literature Review

Publicistic discourse has been explored by many of the scholars, in particular, N. R. Geiko (2013), T. G. Dobrosklonskaya (2014), L. T. Kasperova et al. (2016), Y. V. Klyuev et al. (2017), A. Makarychev (2013), M. I. Ptashnik (2010), T. B. Samarskaya (Samarskaya & Martirosyan, 2011). Thus, M. I. Ptashnik (2010, p. 15) defines contemporary publicistic discourse as a kind of information-oriented institutional discourse realized through

mass communication means and assuming a conscious authoritative actualizing position on the problem. N. R. Geiko (2013, p. 137) defines this phenomenon as a complex cognitive-communicative phenomenon containing, along with the message, some extralinguistic elements (personal positions of the participants, their ideological attitudes, emotional-evaluative state) that play an important role in understanding and perceiving the act of communication.

The study of the language of public communication currently attracts the linguistic interest of scientists (Dibirov et al., 2018; Mitina & Falileev, 2012; Sedina & Totskaya, 2017) within the framework of a descriptive approach related to the study of the language behavior of public speakers and politicians. The analysis of the material shows that the focus of the research of oratorical discourse most often includes speeches by leading political leaders: presidents and presidential candidates (Chernenko, 2017; Guseva, 2014; Klymenko, 2016; Polyakevich, 2017).

Scholars underline an important role played by the processes of authentication and emotionalization of the text of the speech on the lexical (Falileev & Miroshkina, 2014; Kalanzhiy, 2016; Pronkina & Sedina, 2018; Samarskaya & Martirosyan, 2011) and syntactic (Abramova, 2015; Davydova, 2009; Davydova et al., 2018; Klyuev et al., 2017; Zhuchkova & Baklanova, 2016) levels. The possibility of creating tension of the situation, increasing the emotional effect of expressing through a question is reflected in the works of linguists on the analysis of the emotional plan in literary (Abramova, 2015; Abrosimova & Trofimova, 2018; Adamchuk, 2014; Hulugurova, 2010; Vodyasova, 2015) and publicistic texts (Adamchuk & Chaldyshkina, 2017; Falileev & Miroshkina, 2014; Zhuchkova & Baklanova, 2016).

Though the question is regarded to be one of the means of emotionalization and persuasion used in publicistic texts, linguistic investigations devoted to complex analysis of different types of questions in the speech of politicians are not considerable in number (Adamchuk & Chaldyshkina, 2017).

### 3 Methods

In the present work, the following methods of studying publicistic discourse are used, pointed out as the most effective by contemporary researchers (Dobrosklonskaya, 2014; Syrina, 2014; Tarev, 2014):

1. linguistic analysis – the identification of the basic properties and characteristics of the text on the communicative-pragmatic and stylistic (using the question as a syntactic stylistic means) levels;
2. discursive conceptual analysis of discourse – the analysis of the relationship between the linguistic and extralinguistic levels of the text;
3. critical linguistics (rhetorical criticism) – revealing the hidden political and ideological component of the publicistic text;
4. cognitive analysis – the study of the conceptual level of the texts of the publicistic discourse, the identification of the correlation between reality and its media presentations.

### 4 Results and Discussion

The present study was aimed at determining the role and place of the question in political discourse.

It has been established that the function of the publicistic style, which distinguishes it markedly from other speech styles, is formulated as the effect of the message on the reader/listener, in order to convince the latter of the correctness of the statements put forward by the author of the message or to cause the desired

reaction to what was said. In this case, it is not so much a logical reasoning that is used, but rather the strength of the emotional tension of a statement, a demonstration of those features of the phenomenon that can be most effectively used to achieve the goal set by the publicist/speaker (Galperin, 2016, p. 217).

Oral variety of publicistic style, according to I. R. Galperin (2016, p. 218), in the literary language is oratorical speech, the purpose of which is to convince the audience of the correctness of the propositions put forward, to form an appropriate attitude to the stated facts and, perhaps, even to prompt for actions.

Face to face communication with the audience, that is, "live communication", has a number of advantages, as it creates favourable conditions for the combination of phonetic, lexical and syntactic features of written and spoken language. As a form of written literary speech, the oratorical speech preserves the characteristics of written speech: detailed syntactic structures, complex word combination and phrases, syntactic parallelism, lexical repetitions, enumerations, etc. The language of public speech is endowed with features typical for oral speech: short and elliptical sentences (constructions), all kinds of attachments, colloquial words, conversational phrases, a large number of questions of various types, etc. The dual nature of public speech is observed: on the one hand, the oral speech of the speaker does not differ from the characteristic features of the written type of speech; on the other hand, the oral form modifies the written speech of the speaker to a certain degree.

Publicistic speech has its own classification. Thus, the speeches of socio-political subjects are divided into parliamentary speeches (issues of foreign and domestic policy), speeches of defence and accusations in court, speeches delivered at rallies, meetings, conferences devoted to the discussion of vital issues of society. The speeches delivered from the pulpit are most often concerned with moral, ethical, and rarely socio-political issues. Linguistic and communicative-pragmatic analyzes of public speech show that the speaker has to resort to a number of techniques in order to attract the attention of the public to the content of the speech, to direct the thoughts and, possibly, the actions of the public to the course that is necessary for the speaker.

Because of the peculiarities of the speaker's communication with the audience, they have to emotionalize the speech with means typical for this style of speech and productive for achieving the goal. At the same time, the speaker should keep themselves under control, as supersaturation of speech with stylistic devices may turn out to be completely unexpected, up to the opposite effect.

In analyzing the speech of the speaker, not only extralinguistic factors were taken into account, but also pragmatic characteristics of linguistic means, their most effective combination in the framework of a separate speech by a specific speaker.

The choice turns to the study of the language behavior of public speakers and politicians. This type of behavior is created through the use of certain linguistic means, tropes, rhetorical techniques, manipulative strategies in speech in order to influence the audience and its beliefs (Dibirov et al., 2018; Mitina & Faliliev, 2012; Sedina & Totskaya, 2017). The analysis of political speech, as studies show (Quam & Ryshina-Pankova, 2016, p. 41), differs significantly from the analysis of the literary text.

The presence of characteristic features of oratory allows us to place a public speech in a special place within the framework of political discourse, which is facilitated by the possibility of the public speaking to combine the information and agitation and propaganda functions of influencing the masses in order to form a specific public consciousness. At the same time, according to the observations of researchers (Yu. V. Vardanyan, L. V. Vardanyan, 2014; et al.), emotions and beliefs evoke various patterns of audience behavior.

Situational conditionality is another feature of oral public speech as an independent functional and stylistic unit, in the texts of which verbal communication takes place in conditions of group communication. At the same time, oral public speaking texts are more likely to be pronounced, but not read, which is why the final version is created in the process of pronouncing the latter, allowing one to single out another property of public speaking – spontaneity (Rusetskaya & Yamov, 2010).

The analysis shows that, compared to written speech, oral publicistic speech reduces the volume of syntactic constructions. Complicated sentences with introductory and semi-predicative constructions (participial and adverbial participial constructions) are not characteristic for oral speech, which complicate, make the speaker's speech heavier and difficult for listeners to perceive the speech.

Public speech, as a rule, is filled with expression and dynamics, working on the implementation of the speaker's information function on the audience. One of the means of emotionalization and impact of a politician's speech on the audience is the question in all its diversity.

Questions that differ in form and structure (rhetorical, tag and questions-in-the-narrative) fit into the pragmatic dialogical context of the oratorical discourse. The question is used by speakers to create expressiveness, eloquence, and achieve accuracy. It is the question that increases the emotional tone of the performance, helps to increase the attention of the audience to the information presented. Direct appeal to the public through the question contributes to establishing closer contact with the speaker, "revives" the intonation, changes the speech pattern of the speech.

The arrangement of the oratorical discourse with interrogative sentences is stimulated by the speaker's desire to lead the audience to the only possible (correct) solution, a concrete conclusion, from the point of view of the speaker. To enhance and consolidate this effect, questions can follow one after the other, forming a kind of unity, a synonymous questionnaire series, reduced to a single answer to the questions posed: "And what about the Russian state? What about Russia? It humbly accepted the situation. This country was going through such hard times then that realistically it was incapable of protecting its interests" (Address by President of the Russian Federation Meeting, 2014).

The above fragment of the President's speech vividly illustrates the expressive power of recurring question influencing the audience (And what about the Russian state? What about Russia?), emphasizing the similarly indifferent Putin's attitude to the problem of Russia's relations with world powers.

The possibility of using interrogative sentences in atypical for them denotative meanings with additional connotations is noted by many linguists, in particular, I.V. Arnold (2012, p. 167) stresses the possibility of using the rhetorical question as an emphatic statement. Let us prove this with the following example: "But in Trump's America, when they step up to the counter, the immigration officer would ask every single person, "What is your religion?" And then what? What if someone says, "I'm a Christian," but the agent doesn't believe him. *Do they have to prove it? How would they do that?* Really, ever since the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock, America has distinguished itself as a haven for people fleeing religious persecution, believing in religious freedom and religious liberty" (Hillary Clinton links Trump to 'alt-right' in Reno Clinton, 2016).

In the example, the rhetorical question reinforces the emotional effect of the statement and creates a feeling of tension in the situation, demonstrating the excessive concern of the speaker, H. Clinton, with the problem of not wanting to see D. Trump as the president of the United States. Linguistic and communicative-pragmatic analyzes of the texts of politicians' speeches show that, along with the rhetorical question, the use of other types of questions is characteristic for oratorical discourse – tag,

questions-in-the-narrative – contributing to the realization of the influential function of the publicist text on the audience. The role of the question here is the emotionalization of speech, the realization of the effect of influence on the audience.

We should not forget about the main function of the interrogative sentence – a request for information from the communication partner about something unknown. In this case, the means of expressing interrogativeness are: special interrogative intonation, interrogative words, particles (interrogative pronouns), word order. In written form, the criterion of interrogation is indicated by a question mark. With the help of the question, the speaker seeks to obtain new information about something, to confirm or reject any suggestion.

Statements in the form of a question in a dialogue bring the participants of communication closer together, rather than an exchange of opinions at the level of statements-judgments, since the dialogical context has a communicative orientation and is emotionally saturated.

So, an interrogative sentence is a syntactic category, a special structure characterized by a specific syntax, the main (but not the only) function of which is the request for information. The main function of interrogative sentences is realized, on the one hand, due to the presence in them of some uncertainty or a gap in knowledge of the problem, and, on the other hand, through prompting to remove this uncertainty, to fill the information gap. Often, interrogative sentences are used to convey shades of different meanings (irony, disapproval, threat), call to action (support action, protest), etc.

In addition to this function, it is necessary to highlight the presence of a number of secondary or indirect functions performed by the interrogative sentence in the communicative act.

Functionally, interrogative sentences are quite varied. On the one hand, they perform functions characteristic of dialogical speech (dialogue), because they have a pragmatic focus on the addressee and, like dialogic speech, require the addressee to “respond”: a verbal response (replenishment of information unknown to the addressee) or a specific action, deed. On the other hand, there are interrogative sentences addressed by the speaker to themselves, not requiring a response from the addressee which in functional terms brings them closer to a rhetorical question.

Despite the fact that the dialogue (dialogic speech) is the primary sphere of the use of interrogative constructions, in a monologue speech the question is also widely used. In this case, the question structure of the statement can be used to express the communicative intentions of the speaker: to attract the attention of participants in verbal communication rather than to get an answer (Dobrosklonskaya, 2014, p. 109). Let us turn to the publicistic text: “And in the same way, people should not be judged by their last name, or their religious faith, but by their content of their character and how they behave. Are they good citizens? Are they good people? In the United States, we embrace the motto: E Pluribus Unum. In Latin, that means, “out of many, one.” In Kenya, Harambee – “we are in this together” (Obama, 2015).

In this example, B. Obama addresses the problem of dividing people according to any grounds: religious, social, etc. Using rhetorical questions (Are they good citizens? Are they good people?) allows the politician to attract the attention of listeners and indirectly bring them to the right answer. Considering that the communicative goal is the main one, the request for unknown information, its refinement, are not the only function of interrogative sentences used in non-typical for them denotative function with additional connotations (Adamchuk & Chaldyshkina, 2017, p. 49).

Another typical question for English communication is *the tag question*, the situation with which, at first glance, seems rather simple.

According to O. V. Boguslavskaya (2006, p. 7), the tag question is a special type of interrogative dividing structure consisting of a non-interrogative non-imperative framework and a morphologically dependent interrogative tag, or a non-system interrogative tag. The presence of this kind of tag determines its communicative type of statement-impulse, for example: “I don’t know why you find this so funny, friends. “He was dressed casually, but he had style”. Sounds quite me, doesn’t it? Now I was pretty pleased with this, as you can tell, until something dawned on me: Ella was concussed” (Miliband, 2013).

The example shows that the speaker with the help of the tag question persuades the audience, this question (Sounds quite me, doesn’t it?) also states the existing fact that the subject of speech possesses a certain style. Evidence sounds in the tag *doesn’t it = True? Isn’t that right? Do you agree?*

In fact, the tag question is a very extraordinary and specific phenomenon.

First, the English tag question has a special syntactic structure and lexical content. Secondly, these units have a peculiar intonation design, in which it is much more difficult than in other forms to trace the similarities with the melodies of similar types of questions in the Russian language. However, the main difficulty in mastering this type of questions lies much deeper, since the pattern of using this type of questions by native speakers of the English language is not always clear. These facts may explain the reasons for the Russians to avoid using the tag question in the process of communication in English.

Due to its functional diversity, tag questions become the most important tool in achieving strategic goals in verbal communication. Since the tag question is one of the main lexical and grammatical units that realize maximum tact and various implicative meanings that convey the speaker’s attitude to the topic of the speech, this type of question is widely used in oratory.

A special type of tag questions, the tag of which has undergone the influence of the so-called principle of economy, are interrogative disjunctive structures, which include morphologically independent tags, such as *don’t you think?, isn’t it?, right?, eh?* When a morphosyntactically independent tag is used coordination of its basis with the subject and predicate disappears, for example: “Music, poetry, representations of life as it is and how it should be – those are the things that inspire people. Life is a combination of very practical things, right?” (Obama, 2016).

As can be seen from the example, the speaker in the person of B. Obama uses the separation question, imposing his principles, his life position. For example, using the question “Life is a combination of very practical things, right?” as if the speaker asks a question, but at the same time asserts that this is precisely so and nothing else. Tag questions in dialogic speech (in colloquial and business stylistic varieties) perform interrogative, phatic, emotive functions, the expression of the speaker’s intellectual attitudes.

Among the stylistic techniques based on non-standard use of the features of the oral type of speech, there is the use of interrogative sentences in a narrative text, or a question-in-the-narrative – an expressive means of self-inquiry. The question-in-the-narrative, unlike the dialogical question, is monologous and semi-eminently – it is set and answered directly by the author. Such questions should not be confused with rhetorical questions, although in some cases they are closely intertwined by basic characteristics and in most cases they are not easily distinguished.

The question posed tends to be answered, and the answer is expected from the person to whom the question is addressed. Therefore, the most favourable environment for the functioning of the question is the dialogue – live or conditionally live communication. The question implies the desire to ask it (the question) to get an answer. A question-in-the-narrative essentially changes the nature of the classic interrogative sentence, transforming in a monologue speech into a means of attracting the attention of the reader or listener to the statement that follows the question. The speaker asks a question, and immediately gives an answer to it. Textual analysis shows that such sentences become a means of giving an emphatic hue to the utterance: *“I cannot help asking those who have caused the situation; do you realize now what you’ve done? But I am afraid no one is going to answer that. Indeed, policies based on self-conceit and belief in one’s exceptionality and impunity have never been abandoned”. “First, they continue their policy of expanding NATO. What for? If the Warsaw Bloc stopped its existence, the Soviet Union has collapsed and, nevertheless, the NATO continues expanding as its military infrastructure”* (Read Putin’s U.N. General Assembly speech, 2015).

As one can see, the speaker uses the method of the question-in-the-narrative, trying to show that he is interested in the opinion of the audience. At the same time, he himself answers the question posed, summing up the listeners very unobtrusively to his opinion *“Do you realize now what did you do?”*. It is quite obvious that a mistake was made. In oratorical speech, such questions sometimes remain unanswered. Nevertheless, they do not go to the rank of rhetorical questions, the essence of which lies in the fact that they are not questions, but statements, only syntactically shaped according to the rules for constructing an interrogative sentence. If such questions sometimes remain unanswered, it is only because the speaker forces his audience to answer the question posed.

As you can observe in the example, the speaker leaves the question open: *“First, they continue their policy of expanding NATO. What for?”* By not answering the question asked, the president of Russia allows the audience to choose the answer options themselves.

Textual studies (Adamchuk & Erochkina, 2017; Davydova, 2009; Karnyushina & Makhina, 2017) show a close interrelation of all types of questions with other syntactic stylistic means (repetition, parallel constructions). The latter are working on the creation of rhythmization – an enhancer of the growth of the communicative-pragmatic potential of the utterance, a component of the text expressiveness (Galperin, 2013, p. 210). Thus, questions-in-the-narrative, along with rhetorical and tag questions, are also often used by speakers in their speeches to achieve goals and induce the audience to their side.

Based on the study, the following conclusions were made. Publicistic discourse exists in the joint interaction of text and subtext (context, hypertext), restoring the connection in the communicative chain “addresser – addressee”, realizing the dynamics of the text (speech). At the same time, discourse is a special feature of a publicistic text, which, according to T. B. Samarskaya (Samarskaya & Martirosyan, 2011), has the following features:

1. situational (strong relationship with the time and place of expression);
2. social orientation (initiation of a social action assumed in a given situation);
3. enhancing the relationship between the author and the audience;
4. enhancing the perception of the message by the audience (setting on the initiative response of the audience);
5. generalization (the presence of a specific installation of the author) (p. 146).

Due to the installation on the author’s goal-setting, active appeal to the context, appeal to other texts, publicistic discourse helps to maintain a dialogue between the speaker and the addressee,

correlating discursiveness with the specific properties of the publicistic text. One of the leading characteristics is anthropocentrism as the dominant principle of modern linguistics, which marks the striving of researchers to put man at the forefront (Boyarkina & Kashtanova, 2016; Davydova et al., 2018). As a unit of publicistic discourse, a publicistic text is a sphere of actualization of political, economic, environmental, national problems of society. Publicistic discourse is primarily an influencing type of discourse that realizes the intention of persuasion on its potential addressee, including through the linguistic-stylistic syntactic content of the publicistic text (rhetorical, tag types of the question, questions-in-the-narrative). A characteristic feature of the speeches of political leaders, we recall, is the wide range of lexical and syntactic tools used by speakers who work on realizing the impact of information on listeners, since the emotional impact is of great importance to the audience (Mitina & Faliliev, 2012, p. 100; Kasperova et al., 2016).

After analyzing the structural and stylistic features of the tag, rhetorical questions and question-in-the-narrative in oratory, it can be concluded that with their help, the most important communicative goals in verbal communication are achieved most effectively. Using these questions helps the speaker to find contact with the public, to achieve its location and often remove the atmosphere of tension. In turn, the public feels that the speaker wants to conduct a dialogue with them, given their own opinion. Often, however, the realization of the effect of deceived expectation occurs: the listener begins to believe the speaker, not noticing how he becomes involved in a political game-intrigue. This is also one of the forms of realization of the communicatively-pragmatic function of the question, one of the means of implementing the influential function of the speaker through an interrogative narrative context. The latter, as can be seen, quite accurately fits into the structural and informative format of the text of a political speech.

## 5 Conclusion

In the process of writing the work, 60 fragments of publicistic texts were selected, during the study of which it was found that to achieve the effect of expressiveness, accuracy and eloquence of speech in publicism, the following questions are used: rhetorical, tag and questions-in-the-narrative.

The linguistic-stylistic and communicative-pragmatic analyzes confirmed that the use of questions in the speaker’s speech is a rather effective means of achieving the communicative tasks set by him, a powerful tool for persuading and instilling the audience ideas and views of the speaker. A well-trained speaker is able to lead people to protest rallies, organize support actions, disrupt or support political or social events. The word is information, the word correctly presented and conveyed to the audience is a weapon.

The material under study proved that the use of a rhetorical question in the speech of a speaker who is confident and knows the problems and interests of the public from the inside reinforces the emotional impact on the audience. In this case, the speaker seeks to lead the audience to the only possible solution, one specific answer to the question being asked. It is noticed that for the greatest attraction of the attention of the audience, it is practiced at the same time to use a number of rhetorical questions, allowing to achieve the perlocutionary effect as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Along with rhetorical questions, in order to achieve communicative and pragmatic goals, declining the audience to the speaker’s side, a question-in-the-narrative is often used: the public doesn’t even have to make mental efforts to think about the situation – the answer is immediately heard from the speaker. This type of question is quite productive for the implementation of the so-called “brain washing” function.

The purpose of hiding the expression of personal interests of a politician without external imposing of their opinion on the

interlocutor and preserving tactics in the dialogue is traced in the use of the tag question in the oratorical English speech. A small frequency of using a tag question in its pure form in speech by politicians has been found. Interrogative constructions that use morphologically independent tags, such as “don’t you think?, don’t it? right?, eh?” are used more often.

It should be noted that in most classifications, publicistic discourse is distinguished at the level of an independent type, which is caused by the social significance of the communicative sphere representing this type of discourse: informing the mass recipient about socially significant problems and events, forming their social assessment; management of public opinion.

Publicistic discourse is the most important tool for conveying information on topical issues of our time to a large number of recipients. At the same time, the message can carry both a positive and a negative assessment of the reality taking place, even being in some conflict with the audience (Aleshina, 2017; Mala, 2016). One should not forget about the possibility of the psychological impact of information on a person’s world view with the aim of subjecting the listener to the specific interests of the speaker. Thus, publicistic discourse is an instrument by which speakers influence the minds of the audience, imposing certain ideological attitudes.

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**Primary Paper Section: A**

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