Original Research Article

Rhetoric in political debate: the case study of the 2014 LBC leaders' debate clash

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Abstract: This paper investigates the intricate role that language and rhetoric play in political discourse. It intends to investigate the merits and advantages of political discourse,with a focus on the significance of language skills and rhythm in the process.(Tileagă, 2014a)The ultimate goal of political debate is to gain public support;therefore,it is essential to comprehend how language can be modified to capture the audience's attention and persuade them to adopt the speaker's line of reasoning.

Keywords: Discourse; Political communication; Rhetoric; Persuasion

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to investigate the relationship between political discourse and rhetoric,focusing on strategies that can effectively attract people's attention,stimulate their thought processes,and strategically organise one's language in the context of political debate.The purpose of political debate is to facilitate the exchange of ideas,the discussion of policies,and the display of diverse perspectives.(Demasi, 2019) It fosters an atmosphere in which individuals can have meaningful conversations,allowing for the exploration of various points of view. Metaphors,analogies,and vivid imagery can be used to make complex concepts more understandable and relatable to the audience.In addition,the rhythm and cadence of speech can enhance the delivery of a politician's message,capturing listeners' attention and making it more memorable.(Drake & Higgins, 2012)A well-timed pause or a phrase with careful emphasis can emphasise key points and leave a lasting impression on the audience.Modification of language is a crucial aspect of political discourse.In conclusion,the function of rhetorical language and interaction in political debate is crucial for gaining public support.(Wiggins et al., 2017)

2. Methods

Case provided by the YouTube video of the key moments from the 2014 LBC Leaders ' Debate clash between the leaders of the Liberal Democrats (Nick Clegg) and UKIP (Nigel Farage) as they debate over membership of the European Union.Different playback devices and headphones are substituted to determine if any details are missing.After confirming the video selection,the total duration is under one minute.I used Excel tables for listening and typing then I translated and added the symbols from beginning to end according to the transcription symbols' coding instructions,and then checked them against the entire transcript file. Finally,I may also discover that there are areas that are unclear to readers,such as certain professional terms or theories,necessitating a second search for theoretical support in the relevant literature.

3. Analysis

Nick Clegg's outstanding performance in the past televised debates was decisive in the Liberal National Party's cooperative ruling opportunity.As a right-wing party,Nigel Farage's British Independence Party is renowned for its radical style.(Balch & Balabanova, 2016) You know,the debate itself is described as a form of

fighting.According to the characteristics,concerns and positions of the political parties they represent,their debate style can be well reflected in this debate.(Harmer et al., 2017)

1	Expert 1	
2		
3	Far	<You didn't answer the question.
4		>You try to do triggering 29 million(so around) 21.you know why cause 2 million(0.8) ·hhave left already<
5		·hand they've gone and they've gone to Italy and the spain.
6		[clapping]
7		Nic you didn't answer the basic question
8		< I'm not claiming 29 million people have the rights to come to britain.>
9	Nic	[yes you did]=
10	Far	=I'm claiming 485 million people have the total unconditional right to come to this country if they want to
11		And I think you're quite right, You're quite right. you're q=
12	Nic	([lets us more fact,lets us more fact])
13	Far	=↑ The fact is if we're members of the european union we have the complete free flow of people=
14	Nic	([let me have a-])
15	Far	=Are you denying that.
16	Nic	·hYes, it's not unqualified
17	Far	[yo you're denying that].
18	Nic	it is it is not th the case that anyone can move to this country and simply came benefit simply
19	Far	[h]
20	Nic	(liv) let me let me let me le le let let me=
21	Far	[Did you mention benefits]
22	Nic	=(no) let me
23	Far	(t) doing benefits we're talking about the free movement of people
24		

Figure 1.

This paper analyses how the languages of both sides organise rhetoric,so that readers can clearly understand how propaganda language can persuade others to establish the logic of thinking in the way they desire in a specific environment,as indicated by the transcription.

(Tileagă, 2014b) The relationship between information and audience can be thought of as a rhetorical and argumentative dialogue,whereas debate is a form of internal thought process.Participants establish defence by independently developing arguments to find rebuttals.Nick emphasized the benefits of free movement to the British economy,and Farage's direct rebuttal was tantamount to launching the first attack in this debate.Then in the point that Farage's found in nick's statement that just came to an end,and used such words,cause you knew,so you tried to go,but in fact（line 4,5）.In the end,"you didn't answer the basic question"(line 7). It seems that Farage took a step back and didn't entangle the purpose of Nick's statement and the"imprecise" case used,but in fact he further denied Nick's statement idea.And this interactive strategy is extremely lethal,especially when combined with Farage's rapid speech,strong tone,and emphasis on numbers and country names,which makes the audience easily drawn to the highlighted content.Newspaper coverage of the debate demonstrates unequivocally that an effective and qualified candidate for prime minister must exhibit a strong personality and be willing and able to present powerful arguments and decisive judgements.(Harmer et al., 2017)Then,on the third floor,he slowed down his speech,shifted his focus from Nick to the audience,and expressed his position and perspective. According to the voters,high-intensity language also makes them unhappy and sounds inappropriate in this setting,which will eventually lead to distrust of politicians.(Clementson et al., 2023)Similar to watching a 4D movie from a very close distance,the audience is aware that the argument on stage is between two people.When Farage slowly pronounced this sentence（line 8）,he faced the audience,and the audience could sense that they were being observed.This is a very effective method for attracting the audience's attention and gaining their

favour.This rhetorical choice reflects audience recognition.The audience with a favourable impression will reinforce it,while the audience with a negative impression will mitigate the resentment.(Wiggins et al.,2017) Here,there are additional performance dimensions:political performances include not only words,but also physical performances-dynamics and gestures;Visual in addition to oral and aural.(Drake & Higgins, 2012) Reading the entirety of my transcription reveals that Nick's rhythm in this section was disrupted by Nigel Farage.In the subsequent section,he sought to regain the lost advantage,refocus everyone's attention on the key facts he had emphasised,and view political conversation as evidence related to the facts that support the values.(Demasi, 2019) However,his opponent will not allow him to explain why what he wishes to assert is a sufficient fact.Thus,his words were again interrupted by Farage.In addition,Nick's gentle debate style gives the impression that he wants to be courteous and cordial during the debate with the opposing party.When he is nervous and subconsciously paying close attention to the content of his opponent's words,he follows the other party's ideas because he is waiting for an opportunity to fight back.This is especially true when the other party takes the initiative in the discussion.Farage inquired whether he admitted it (line 16),and he subconsciously responded affirmatively.On one hand,Farage's statement was accurate,but it exacerbated the other side's advantage in the debate.In a special scene,you can never admit that what he said is correct,even if it is.Once you admit it,the audience believes the situation has been slanted in favour of Farage (line 23). In the end,the sentence that Farage uttered,which is "the topic of our conversation",places the initiative squarely in our very own hands.

4. Conclusions

The examination of this report offers insights into the wide-ranging applicability of language rhetoric within the realm of political activities. It highlights the intricate skill involved in effectively utilizing language rhetoric and emphasizes the significant disadvantage that politicians lacking rhetorical comprehension may face in political performances. Politicians must adapt their language and delivery based on the medium they are utilizing. When

expressing personal viewpoints during a political debate, clarity and conciseness are crucial.

On the other hand, the use of rhetoric is more effective when exposing opponents' weaknesses and dismantling their arguments. Recognizing this dichotomy allows politicians to strategically employ language to their advantage, enhancing their persuasive abilities in political contexts. The combination of verbal and non-verbal communication in a televised debate enhances the overall impact on viewers, influencing their perceptions and shaping their opinions. Rhetoric not only shapes public opinion but also establishes a connection between politicians and the electorate, fostering trust and support.

About the author

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