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# COGNITIVE CONTEXTUAL MODEL IN AMERICAN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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## ABSTRACT

This article explores the cognitive contextual model within American political discourse, focusing on its role in shaping public perceptions, constructing societal ideologies, and facilitating effective communication between political figures and the public. Employing cognitive-discursive analysis, the study investigates how linguistic strategies, such as framing, metaphorical constructs, emotional appeals, and repetition, are utilized in political speeches to influence public opinion and advance political agendas. The research is grounded in an interdisciplinary approach, integrating insights from cognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, and political science. The analysis of public speeches by U.S. presidents highlights the interplay between language, cognition, and context, emphasizing the importance of shared knowledge and cognitive structures in understanding political messaging. By developing a cognitive contextual model, the study identifies key elements such as macro-level goals, micro-level linguistic features, and the implicit and explicit mechanisms that underpin political discourse. This research contributes to the fields of discourse studies and political communication, providing a comprehensive framework for analyzing the cognitive and contextual dimensions of political language and offering practical applications for enhancing communication strategies in political contexts.

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## KEYWORDS

Cognitive Contextual Model, Political Discourse, Cognition, Framing, Metaphor, Communication Strategies

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## Introduction.

Political discourse serves as a critical domain for the exchange of ideas, the shaping of public opinion, and the dissemination of ideological narratives. It operates as a strategic medium for influencing societal perceptions through the interplay of linguistic and cognitive mechanisms. The study of cognitive contextual models within political discourse provides researchers with a unique opportunity to uncover the underlying mental frameworks and communicative processes that govern the interpretation, production, and reception of political language.

This article focuses on the cognitive contextual model in American political discourse, highlighting its role in shaping perceptions, constructing societal ideologies, and facilitating communication between political figures and the public. Through the application of cognitive-discursive analysis, this research examines the intricate relationship between language, cognition, and context. By analyzing public speeches delivered by U.S. presidents, the study identifies how political figures utilize linguistic tools to frame issues, influence audiences, and advance their agendas. The analysis emphasizes both explicit discursive strategies and the implicit cognitive mechanisms that underpin political communication.

The significance of this research lies in its interdisciplinary approach, integrating insights from cognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, and political science. It underscores the importance of shared knowledge, framing techniques, and emotional appeals in political discourse. By constructing a cognitive model, this study contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the structural and strategic elements that define American

political language, offering valuable applications for understanding political behavior and enhancing communication strategies.

The aim of this study is to explore and define the cognitive contextual model within American political discourse, elucidating its importance in the interpretation and production of political language. Through an analysis of U.S. presidential speeches, the research aims to identify the cognitive strategies, linguistic structures, and contextual factors that shape political communication. The study seeks to uncover how political figures frame their messages to resonate with societal ideologies, leveraging cognitive mechanisms to effectively shape public opinion and advance their agendas.

The actuality of this research is underscored by the growing importance of understanding cognitive and linguistic underpinnings of political communication in the context of increasing political polarization, media influence, and digital communication. In a rapidly evolving sociopolitical environment, political discourse remains a powerful tool for shaping perceptions, ideologies, and actions. This study addresses the need for a comprehensive framework that combines cognitive and contextual models to analyze the strategic use of language in political discourse. It provides insights into the dynamics of political messaging, contributing to the fields of cognitive linguistics, discourse studies, and political science.

The novelty of this research lies in its innovative approach to developing a cognitive contextual model of American political discourse. Unlike traditional studies that focus solely on linguistic analysis, this research integrates cognitive-discursive perspectives to reveal the implicit mental strategies and social contexts embedded in political communication. By emphasizing the interrelation between macro-level political objectives and micro-level linguistic features, this study advances the theoretical and practical understanding of political discourse. Furthermore, it introduces a methodological framework for analyzing the cognitive aspects of political language, offering new avenues for interdisciplinary research and practical applications in political communication.

### **Methods and Materials.**

This study employs a cognitive-discursive approach to analyze the structural and strategic elements of American political discourse. The research incorporates discourse analysis techniques, with a focus on Van Dijk's framework for context models and strategies of discourse comprehension. Additionally, the MIP (Metaphor Identification Procedure) method is utilized to identify and interpret the use of metaphors in political speeches. By examining both explicit linguistic structures and implicit cognitive strategies, the study aims to uncover the mechanisms by which political figures shape public opinion and communicate their ideologies. The analysis integrates micro-level linguistic features, such as syntax, semantics, and rhetorical devices, with macro-level discourse strategies that reflect broader sociopolitical contexts.

The materials for this research include a selection of public speeches delivered by U.S. presidents, chosen for their thematic relevance and strategic significance in political communication. These speeches serve as a corpus for examining cognitive frames, argumentation patterns, emotional appeals, and other discursive features. Supplementary materials include scholarly works on cognitive models of discourse, linguistic analysis, and political communication, providing a theoretical foundation for the study. This combination of empirical data and theoretical insights ensures a comprehensive and multidisciplinary exploration of the cognitive contextual model in American political discourse.

### **Results and Discussion.**

The analysis and description of political discourse in contemporary scientific literature often exhibit a degree of subjectivity, individuality, and conditionality. The approach to studying political discourse largely depends on the perspective and methodological framework adopted by the researcher. However, it is essential to establish a systematic discussion regarding the appropriate research methods that can effectively represent the content of political discourse and elucidate its core cognitive dimensions.

In this regard, the application of cognitive-discursive analysis, as developed by T.A. van Dijk, appears to be one of the most promising approaches [4]. This method enables an in-depth exploration and analysis of the cognitive contextual model within American political discourse, particularly through the examination of public speeches by U.S. presidents. Cognitive-discursive analysis is a comprehensive method that addresses both verbal and nonverbal statements aimed at facilitating communication between individuals. Such statements inherently link the speaker to a specific social group, as the linguistic expression of their thoughts reflects the use of language within a defined social context. Within the framework of this research, such "social" statements are classified as political statements, or more broadly, as political discourse.

The political context of discourse encompasses critical elements such as the goals, knowledge, and beliefs of communication participants. Of particular importance is the “knowledge” component, which Norman Fairclough identifies as “common sense.” This component serves as the foundation for many semantic and pragmatic features of discourse, including implications and presuppositions. The speaker must possess an awareness of the recipient's prior knowledge to determine which mental representations or social constructs are necessary for effective communication. This reciprocal knowledge framework enables participants to interpret implicit meanings, indirect references, irony, and other non-explicit forms of communication, thereby shaping the strategies employed within political discourse.

in the book "Language and Power", i.e. "Language and power" [5]) is the basis of many semantic and pragmatic features of discourse, for example, implications and presuppositions: the speaker must know what the recipient already knows in order to decide which propositions of mental morality or social representation are necessary for the recipients.

Recipients, in turn, also need to have knowledge in order to understand what is implicit in speech, indirect, ironic and other non-explicit forms of communication. In other words, people have shared knowledge models of each other's knowledge, and these models control many of the participants' discursive strategies [2].

At the same time, it can be said that participants are also involved in a global action, such as, for example, legislation. At the same time, local actions implement current global actions (for example, criticism of the government, improvement of security in the country, talk about the economy, migration policy etc.). Thus, based on the theory of structure and the strategy of discourse processing, we need a global (macro) and local (micro) levels in the cognitive analysis of political public statements. In order to analyze political discourse, it is necessary to touch on all of the above categories in order to correctly identify the topic, goals, objectives and means of expression. This procedure is necessary to understand not only the general premise of the discourse, but also what is implicit in it. Macro level, area, a global action, goal. Micro level, deixis, place, time. Knowledge. It includes what the participants must know in order to correctly construct a model of the necessary knowledge to understand the implicit in speech. Participants: communicative role, interactive role, social role. A local promotion, tasks, recipients.

Thus, we have identified approaches by which it is possible to identify and describe cognitive aspects that are directly contained in political discourse. But in order to fully clarify the course of identifying these cognitive aspects of political discourse and their integral representation, it is necessary to build its cognitive model, determine the status of a linguistic personality in political discourse, as well as a detailed description of the categories of explicitness and implicitness in language. It is widely known that political discourse has a speech effect, which can be described as "a set of procedures on the models of the world of participants in a communication situation, leading to the transfer of knowledge from one participant to another" [1].

Consequently, the world model represents a certain way of organized knowledge about the world, peculiar to the cognitive system or its model. According to O. S. Issers: "... on the one hand, the model of the world includes general knowledge about the world, which can be considered "objective". We are talking about simple propositions like “it often rains in autumn”, special facts like “Volga flows in in the Caspian Sea” or the rules of products (“If it's raining, then you need to take an umbrella”). On the other hand, there is another type of knowledge in the model of the world, which can be conditionally to call them “subjective”. These are values and their hierarchies, <...> and other cognitive structures that summarize the experience of the individual and society" [6].

The development of a cognitive model of discourse is highly relevant for communication researchers. It often contains a certain orientation set by one or another scientist. In this regard, it will be appropriate talk about its complex and multilevel nature. For instance, the cognitive model itself is outlined from a number of its components, parameters, and scientific theories. In this case, the representation of the cognitive model proposed by N. N. Belozerova and L. E. Chufistova looks valuable. By the cognitive model they understand: based on the idea of a phenomenon of the universe, a multi-level, multicomponent and multifunctional mental structure characterized by paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations and the mechanism of which is the interaction of the right and left hemispheres brain processing and generation of information and which is based on the operational associative method of presenting and extracting information [2]. At the same time, they differ in the following types of models: 1. apperceptive — models of the sign structure of C. S. Pierce and his followers, including the parameter "interpretation", constructions of J. Vico and J. Lakoff [7] on the essence of a conceptual metaphor, a mythopoeic worldview that includes archetypes, a scientific worldview that includes concepts, and a linguistic world view based on the first two; 2. communicative — R.O. Jakobson's communicative model and M. Foucault's constructions; 3. deconstructive — J. Derrida's deconstructive

constructions based on the semiotic principle difference (simultaneous similarity and difference); 4. synthetic — V.I.Vernadsky's noosphere, Yu. M. Lotman's semi sphere, Dijk,T.A.van frames and macrostructures, B. Mandelbrot's fractal constructions and the intertext functioning model proposed by the authors of the work [3].

The authors consider the unifying properties of these models to be their dynamism and tendency to interpenetration, which is due to the dynamic nature of language as a whole as a special natural semiotic system for processing, accumulation and transmission of information and dynamic speech activity of individual native speakers aimed at information exchange. At the same time, speaking about one possibility of classifying cognitive models of discourse, the authors note their following parameters:

- 1) Descriptive potential (all models).
- 2) Explanatory potential (frames, scripts, macro structures, cognitive metaphor).
- 3) Generative potential (macrostructures, scripts, R. O. Jacobson's communicative model, fractal, narrative).
- 4) Measuring potential (fractal)

Therefore, it is fair enough to say that the most modern model seems to be one that has all the above-mentioned potentials, i.e. it is, in fact, integrated. Focusing mainly on the object of research, i.e. political discourse, we will try to develop its cognitive model. Of course, this model will be individual and limited, but it will allow us to lift the veil over the cognitive aspects of the speaker in political discourse. The very concept of "model" is used by Dijk,T.A.Van to denote a specific type of structural organization of knowledge in memory. Exploring the internal structure of the speaker, Dijk, T.A.van emphasizes that when building a real cognitive model of a person, not only abstract mental knowledge of a person should be taken into account, but also real opinions, needs, desires, preferences, attitudes, measurements, feelings, emotions [3]. In general, speaking about cognitive models, it is necessary to highlight their four features, which, in fact, are postulates:1) Since we cannot and cannot know all the facts related to the world, fragility and incompleteness are typical for cognitive models. That is, we cannot say with certainty about the completeness of a particular model.

Models can represent real situations at different levels of generalization. So, for example, we present in the most general form in the model the complex action "The President went on a trip to the USA ", whereas in reality this action contains an extremely complex and continuous sequence of events, actions, objects and people, only a small subset of which appears in the model. 3) The concepts included in the model are not arbitrary, they reflect a socially significant interpretation of situations. For example, the transfer of an object from one person to another in a certain social situation can be considered either as a "gift" or as a "bribe". 4) Despite the social conditionality of the conceptual representation of situations, cognitive models are, of course, personal, i.e. subjective. The same situation it can be interpreted in different ways, from different personal points of view, for different purposes, if different people do it.

Therefore, we have to take into account these features of cognitive models when developing a cognitive model of political discourse.

Therefore, by the cognitive model of political discourse, we understand an abstract construct of mental knowledge, which is limited to the social (political) sphere of communication and in which an unlimited number of implicit and explicit intentions of communicants are traced and implemented. It seems to us that the cognitive model of political discourse should include the following components:

- 1) the characterization of a politician as a linguistic personality (tolerance) // the characterization of the speaker's cognitive speech strategies;
- 2) characteristics of the communicative-pragmatic space or context. In this case, we are talking about a contextual analysis of political discourse, to which refer to [4]

The speaker himself;

— its addressee (participants);

— statement, event/action;

— he subject of the statement;

— the time of the communication act;

— the place of the communication act;

— the environment in which the communication act is performed

- 3) a characteristic of the language space or text. Here we are talking directly about the textual analysis of political discourse, consisting of consideration of: phonetic, graphic, morphological levels, sentence syntax, sentence semantics, macrostructure level and rhetorical aspect.

The development and implementation of this cognitive model play an important role, as we see it, in the processing of the political discourse. That is, a cognitive model is required as the basis for interpreting political



discourse. When people pronounce, listen to, or read a discourse, they not only construct its meaning as a text base, but also create or extract a model from memory that they think about the situation to which the discourse is devoted.

1. Cognitive Frames: These are mental structures that shape how individuals perceive and interpret political events and issues. Frames help to organize and make sense of complex information.

2. Narrative Structures: Political discourse often relies on storytelling to convey messages and persuade audiences. Narratives can simplify complex issues and make them more relatable.

3. Argumentation Patterns: This includes the use of logical reasoning, evidence, and rhetorical strategies to support political claims and counter opposing viewpoints.

4. Metaphors and Analogies: These are used to make abstract political concepts more concrete and understandable.

5. Emotional Appeals: Politicians often use emotional language to connect with their audience and elicit a desired response.

Analyzing Donald Trump's speech about migrants from a cognitive perspective of discourse analysis involves examining how language shapes and reflects thought processes, ideologies, and social structures. Here are some key points to consider:

1. Framing and Metaphors: Trump's speeches often use specific frames and metaphors to shape public perception of migrants. For example, he frequently referred to migrants as "invaders" or "criminals," which creates a negative cognitive frame and associates migrants with danger and illegality.

2. Polarization and Us vs. Them: Trump's discourse often employs a polarized context model, creating a clear distinction between "us" (American citizens) and "them" (migrants). This WE/THEY schema is used to persuade the audience, stigmatize migrants, and manage opinion formation.

3. Emotional Appeals: Trump's speeches are designed to evoke strong emotional responses from his audience. By using emotionally charged language and vivid imagery, he aims to influence the public's emotions and attitudes towards migrants.

4. Repetition and Emphasis: Repetition is a common rhetorical strategy in Trump's speeches. By repeatedly emphasizing certain points, he reinforces his message and makes it more memorable for the audience.

5. Cognitive Frames and Ideology: Trump's speeches reflect his ideological stance on immigration. By framing migrants as a threat to national security and economic stability, he aligns his discourse with a broader political agenda that prioritizes strict immigration policies.

These cognitive strategies help to shape public perception and influence attitudes towards migrants. While discussing these points, we can gain a deeper comprehension of how political discourse operates at a cognitive level.

Here are some more examples of cognitive discourse analysis applied to political speeches, including president Donald Trump's speeches about migrants:

**Metaphor Analysis — "Build the wall":** This phrase is a metaphor that frames the issue of immigration as a physical barrier that needs to be constructed to protect the nation. It simplifies the complex issue of immigration and creates a vivid image in the minds of the audience.

**Emotional Appeals — "American Carnage":** Trump used this phrase in his inaugural address to describe the state of the nation. It's an emotionally charged phrase that evokes fear and anger, framing the country as being in a dire situation that only he could resolve.

**Polarization — "Drain the swamp":** This phrase creates a clear distinction between the corrupt political elite (the swamp) and the ordinary American citizens (us vs. them). It positions Trump as the outsider who will clean up the corruption in Washington.

**Repetition — "Make America Great Again":** This slogan is a classic example of repetition used to reinforce a central message. By repeatedly using this phrase, Trump reinforces his vision of returning to a perceived past greatness.

**Cognitive Frames — "Law and Order":** This frame presents Trump as the candidate who will restore law and order, appealing to voters' fears of crime and disorder. It taps into a cognitive frame that values stability and security.

**Inversion — "The system is rigged":** This inverted sentence structure emphasizes "the system" as the main focus, framing it as the primary issue needing reform. It places blame on a vague, overarching entity, creating a rallying point for his supporters.

Above mentioned cognitive strategies illustrate how president Trump used language to shape thought, influence public opinion, and advance his political agenda. By analyzing these elements, we gain a deeper understanding of the impact of political discourse.

### **Conclusion.**

The study of cognitive contextual models in American political discourse provides significant insights into the intricate interplay between language, cognition, and social context. By employing cognitive-discursive analysis, this research has demonstrated how political language operates on multiple levels—explicit and implicit—to shape public perceptions, construct societal ideologies, and influence collective actions. The analysis of U.S. presidential speeches revealed a range of cognitive strategies, such as framing, metaphorical constructs, and emotional appeals, which are instrumental in achieving political goals and managing public opinion.

This research underscores the importance of integrating cognitive and contextual frameworks to understand political discourse comprehensively. It highlights the role of shared knowledge, cultural models, and cognitive structures in interpreting and producing political communication. The development of a cognitive contextual model not only advances the theoretical understanding of political linguistics but also has practical implications for improving communication strategies, enhancing discourse analysis, and fostering critical awareness of political messaging. Ultimately, this work contributes to the broader field of discourse studies by offering a systematic approach to analyzing the cognitive and contextual dimensions of political language.

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