

## ABSTRACT

**of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the specialty «8D02302 - Foreign Philology (English Language)» by Anipa Adilkhanovna Nurmaganbetova on the topic: «Communicative strategies of censure in political interview discourse»**

**Relevance of the topic.** Modern political discourse represents a multidimensional phenomenon characterized by a tendency toward the expansion of its fields of application. The political interview, as one of the key genres of political discourse, becomes a site where the struggle for public opinion unfolds. Under these communicative conditions, the phenomenon of censure transforms from an individual speech act into a strategic complex aimed at the delegitimization of a political opponent.

Studies of political discourse and its corresponding genre structures (R. Wodak, T. A. van Dijk, V. I. Karasik, N. Fairclough, A. P. Chudinov, E. I. Sheygal) reveal the multifunctionality of utterances produced in the course of political communication. In turn, research devoted to the political interview (N. I. Lavrinova, G. Lauerbach, A. K. Mikhalskaya, M. A. Strelnikova, A. Fetzer) interprets this format as a dialogic, asymmetrical, and mediatized event that shapes public opinion. The theory of communicative strategies and tactics (O. S. Issers, E. V. Klyuev, O. N. Parshina) makes it possible to classify a politician's speech behavior as a goal-oriented and hierarchically organized activity. However, within the framework of these approaches, the phenomenon of censure is predominantly studied as a partial speech act included in the strategy of discreditation (I. V. Bessonova, I. G. Dyachkova, N. A. Trofimova).

A number of researchers (M. Powell, B. Dignen, N. M. Edwards) emphasize the conflictual and competitive nature of American communicative culture. In parallel, cognitive linguistics has developed theories referring political views to deep mental structures and metaphorical models (G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, A. N. Baranov, E. S. Kubryakova, A. P. Chudinov). Despite the claims regarding the interdependence of ideology and linguistic means in political discourse, no systematic analysis has been conducted on how sociocultural attitudes predictively determine the choice of communicative strategies of censure in American political interviews. The problem of functional transformation of speech acts under the influence of genre and institutional conditions of communication also remains insufficiently elaborated, since in political communication references to violations of moral norms or incompetence are often aimed at depriving the addressee of the status of a political actor. The specificity of the political interview structure requires further scholarly investigation: most studies focus on the journalist–politician dyad (E. A. Belyaeva, L. G. Vinichenko, N. N. Koshkarova, E. I. Petrova, O. A. Romanenko), leaving on the periphery of scholarly attention the active participation of the audience at the post-communicative stage in social networks and online comments.

Thus, the relevance of the topic is determined by the need to conceptualize censure as a complex communicative phenomenon which, within institutional discourse,

extends beyond the boundaries of interpersonal ethics. From a means of ethical regulation and emotional evaluation, censure transforms into an instrument of ideological struggle, which strategic potential remains insufficiently explored. Of particular importance is the analysis of the political interview, which in contemporary media reality constitutes a space of ideological competition. The interactive nature of this genre contributes to the expansion of the tactical repertoire of censure, enabling political actors to effectively construct a negative image of the opponent and influence a mass audience. In this regard, special relevance is attached to the development of a research algorithm that allows for the analysis of the mechanisms of functional transposition of neutral utterances into censuring inflectives.

**The aim of this study is** to identify and systematize the communicative strategies and tactics of censure employed in American political interviews, as well as to reveal the cognitive and linguopragmatic mechanisms of their implementation in the context of media interaction.

**The object of the study** is the discourse of the American political interview.

**The subject of the study** is the specificity and regularities of the implementation of communicative strategies and tactics of censure by participants in American political interviews.

The purpose of the study allowed us to formulate the following **research objectives**:

- to identify the constitutive features of political discourse and the genre specifics of the American political interview as a product of national linguistic culture;

- to substantiate the phenomenon of censure as a pragmatic category and to systematize the communicative strategies and tactics of its implementation in agonistic discourse, distinguishing the legal-factual and moral-ethical vectors;

- to develop an integrative methodology of analysis linking the basic cognitive models (“Strict Father” / “Nurturant Parent”) with the tactical repertoire of censure;

- to identify the linguo-pragmatic mechanisms of the functioning of censure in the speech of contemporary American political leaders, substantiating the role of the influential in the American political interview;

- to conduct a comparative analysis of the idiostyles of J. Biden and D. Trump, identifying the individual stylistic features of the implementation of censure strategies in the communicative conditions of the political interview;

- to reveal the specifics of the implementation of censure strategies in the verbal behavior of journalists, as well as the mechanisms of discursive diffusion of negative evaluation in internet comments by an active audience.

**The methodological and theoretical basis of the study is the work of Russian and foreign scholars:**

- in the field of discourse theory and political linguistics (A.Zh. Amanbayeva, N.D. Arutyunova, B.A. Akhatova, M.M. Bakhtin, T.A. van Dijk, A.A. Imanbayeva, A. Islam, V.I. Karasik, M.L. Makarov, Sh. Mouffe, Z. Harris, A.P. Chudinov, E.I. Sheigal, and others);

– critical discourse analysis (R. Wodak, V.S. Li, M.Sh. Musataeva, M. Foucault, N. Fairclough, P. Chilton);

– cognitive linguistics, frame theory, and metaphorical modeling (G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, A.N. Baranov, E.S. Kubryakova, A.P. Chudinov, G.G. Gizdatov, Ch.O. Baygunakova);

– pragmalinguistics and speech act theory (T.A. van Dijk, O.S. Issers, K.E. Kalinin, V.I. Karasik, V.B. Kashkin, E.V. Klyuev, C. Larson, O.L. Mikhaleva, V.O. Mulkeeva, J. Austin, O.N. Parshina, K.F. Sedov, J. Searle, Z.K. Temirgazina, N.A. Trofimova, E.I. Sheigal);

– mediallynguistics and the theory of political interview (T.G. Dobrosklonskaya, S. Lauerbach, A. Fetzer, V.E. Chernyavskaya);

– theories of communication strategies and tactics (Zh.B. Akhmetova, A.K. Zhukenova, O.S. Issers, E.V. Klyuev, O.L. Mikhaleva, E.Sh. Nikiforova, Zh. Ospanova, O.N. Parshina, K.F. Sedov);

– theories of communicative personality, national communicative behavior, and cultural models (Yu.O. Gafiatulina, B. Dignen, G. Lakoff, M. Powell, I.A. Sternin, A.D. Sutbaeva, E. Hall, G. Hofstede).

To achieve the objectives and provide evidence for the proposed hypothesis, the following **research methods** were used in this work: general scientific methods (analysis, synthesis, generalization, and comparison); discourse analysis; contextual analysis; lingua-pragmatic analysis; conceptual and frame analysis; lingua-stylistic analysis; computer-mediated text data analysis using Voyant Tools; quantitative systematization in Microsoft Excel and visualization of results using AI tools.

### **The propositions submitted for defense:**

1. The American political interview functions as a hybrid institutional-media genre. Its genre specificity is determined by agonistic theatricality and the values of American linguistic culture – a focus on governmental accountability, low-context communication, and pragmatism. Under these conditions, censure undergoes a functional transformation: interpersonal ethical disapproval acquires the status of a rationally planned macro-strategy aimed simultaneously at legitimizing the speaker's position and delegitimizing the opponent in front of a mass audience.

2. The category of censure represents a hierarchically organized system of strategies that functions as a statement of facts (constative) and serves as a form for hidden imperative influence (influentive). Censure strategies are differentiated based on the vector of delegitimization: the legal-factual vector (blaming and downplaying strategies) aims to prove the opponent's guilt and legal responsibility, while the moral-ethical vector (condemnation and discrediting strategies) focuses on demonstrating value inconsistency and image destruction. Auxiliary strategies of self-presentation and evasion act as catalysts in this system, reinforcing censure through the creation of an axiological contrast.

3. The linguistic toolkit for implementing censure strategies and tactics in American political discourse is predictably determined by the sociocultural opposition of

two cognitive models. The "Strict Father" model, characteristic of conservative ideology, predetermines the choice of blame and downplaying strategies, a vocabulary oriented toward pragmatism and individual responsibility, and tactics of explicit dominance. The "Nurturant Parent" model, characteristic of liberal ideology, determines the choice of condemnation strategies, the vocabulary of empathy, collective responsibility, and moral dominance tactics.

4. The transformation of the American journalist's institutional role from neutral mediator to active political actor is realized through the dichotomy of confrontation and alliance strategies. Against an ideological opponent, the journalist employs a confrontation strategy with dominant tactics of denunciation, pressure, and the creation of a negative image. Against an ideological ally, the alliance strategy is activated, where censure is redirected to a third force (external enemies or political opponents), turning the interview into a tool for ideological mobilization of the audience.

5. The censure strategies of political leaders and journalists diffuse into the audience's communicative space (social media, blogs), where dominant tactics (accusations, discreditation) and specific linguistic means are replicated. A dichotomy of reactive strategies has been identified: the "analysts" group reproduces the tactics of pseudo-rational argumentation, imitating expert discourse, while the "shamers" group implements a strategy of direct accusation, using invective and direct insults, which enhances the agonistic potential of American political communication.

6. A comparative analysis of the speech behavior of J. Biden and D. Trump revealed an individual stylistic specificity in the implementation of censure strategies. In Trump's agonistic-pragmatic idiolect, censure is focused on personal discrediting, implemented through tactics of pressure, status downplaying, direct invectives, hyperbolization, and conditional constructions, forming the "Strict Father" model. In Biden's idiolect, censure is aimed at value-based delegitimization of the opponent and is realized through tactics of indirect condemnation, appeals to family experience, as well as the use of evaluative and emotive vocabulary and temporal subordinate constructions, defining his normative-ethical style within the "Nurturant Parent" model.

**The scientific novelty** of the study lies in the theoretical reinterpretation of the phenomenon of censure. Within the framework of systematizing strategies, a dependence has been substantiated between the choice of the tactical toolkit of censure and the politician's basic cognitive matrices, "Strict Father" and "Nurturant Parent". A linguo-pragmatic mechanism has been revealed whereby formally neutral factual statements acquire the illocutionary force of verbal sanction in the context of agonistic dialogue. The specific agonistic-pragmatic (D. Trump) and normative-ethical (J. Biden) idiolects of politicians have been analyzed. The analysis of media interaction has shown that censure strategies set by political leaders and journalists are replicated and radicalized in internet comments.

**The theoretical significance** of the study is determined by its contribution to the theory of political discourse, pragmatolinguistics, and media linguistics. The results of the research expand the theoretical and methodological framework of discourse analysis by

integrating cognitive, pragmalinguistic, and linguocultural approaches to the study of speech behavior strategies in American political polemics.

**The practical significance** of the dissertation lies in the fact that the obtained results can be used in higher education institutions in the development of courses on discourse theory and practice, theories of speech influence, cognitive linguistics, political linguistics, as well as specialized courses in media linguistics, communicative strategies, and technologies.

**The material for this study** was based on the texts of political interviews. The corpus includes 110 interview transcripts selected for the period 2020–2025. When compiling the empirical corpus, interviews broadcast on leading national and international media platforms (CNN, Fox News, ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, MSNBC, TIME, as well as podcast and radio formats) were included. The selection of empirical material was based on the following criteria: the status of the media channel and the availability of a full text version. The list of analyzed interviews, including dates and sources, is presented in the appendix to the dissertation.

**Dissemination of Research Results.** Six articles have been published on the topic of the research: one in an international peer-reviewed journal indexed in the Scopus database, three articles are in publications recommended by Committee for Control in the Sphere of Education and Science of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and two in the proceedings of international scientific conferences:

– Провокационные вопросы и реакции на них в политическом интервью (Provocative questions and reactions to them in a political interview) (Article). Tiltanym. Journal of the A. Baitursynuly Institute of Linguistics, 2023, No. 2, pp. 118–126 (0.6 printed sheets). ISSN 2411-6076 (Print), ISSN 2709-135X (Online).

– Communication strategies in political interviews (based on an interview with Joe Biden) (Article). Bulletin of Ablai Khan Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages. Series “Philological Sciences”. Almaty: Polilingua, 2023, No. 3 (70), pp. 200–213 (0.8 printed sheets). ISSN 2411-8745 (Print), ISSN 2709-9245 (Online).

– Metaphorical models in modern English-language political discourse (Article). In: Language and Culture: Proceedings of the 32nd International Scientific Conference (October 25–27, 2022). Tomsk: Tomsk State University Press, 2022, pp. 73–78 (0.4 printed sheets). ISBN 978-5-907572-47-8.

– Анализ коммуникативных стратегий порицания в дискурсе политического интервью (Analysis of communicative strategies of censure in the discourse of a political interview) (Article). Eurasia 2022: The Social and Humanitarian Space in the Era of Globalization and Digitalization. Vol. IV: Current Issues of Modern Humanities. Proceedings of the International Scientific, Cultural and Educational Forum (Chelyabinsk, April 6–8, 2022), 2022, pp. 513–516 (0.3 printed sheets). ISBN 978-5-696-05285-4 (Vol. IV), ISBN 978-5-696-05281-6.

– Особенности использования коммуникативной стратегии порицания в политическом интервью (Features of using the communicative strategy of censure in a political interview) (Article). Bulletin of Ablai Khan Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages. Series “Philological Sciences”. Almaty: Polilingua, 2025, No. 4, pp. 187–199 (0.8 printed sheets). ISSN 2709-9245.

– Praise Strategies and Tactics in US Political Interviews with Donald Trump (Статья) // International Journal for the Semiotics of Law – Revue internationale de Sémiotique juridique. – Netherlands: Springer Nature, 2025. – Vol. 38, Iss. 7. – P. 2319–2340 (1,5 п.л.). ISSN 0952-8059, eISSN 1572-8722. (Scopus, Q3).

**Structure of the research.** The dissertation consists of an introduction, three sections, a conclusion, a list of references, and appendices.