

SIMILE AND PERSONIFICATION OF KING ABDULLAH II'S ENGLISH SPEECHES AS RHETORICAL STYLISTIC DEVICES IN POLITICAL SPEECH

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Abstract:

Principally rhetoric is the technique of convincing speech and the technical use of vocabularies by people to induce actions or to shape attitudes in other people. Whereas, a rhetorical analysis requires critical reading skills and its goal is to articulate how the speaker gives speeches, rather than what he actually says. In this regard, this study examines how King Abdullah II tries to convince the audience using figures of speech such simile and personification. In analysis his simile and personification was examined. It is argued that figures of speech such as simile and personification is not only used for ornamentation to make the speeches appealing to the audience, but used to call the audience to action and convince them to adopt certain ideas. The results of this study found that, political speeches use rhetorical technique (i.e. simile and personification) in order to convince the listeners.

Keywords: *Rhetoric, Smile, Personification, Political Speech, King Abdullah II.*

1. Introduction

An important aspect of political speeches is the rhetorical art of persuasive argumentation- the politician's capability to convince people communicatively. Political rhetoric depends on the ability of politicians to investigate and exploit the expectations, fears, hopes and beliefs. In political speeches, persuasion is achieved by choosing a form of discourse that will appeal to both supporters and potential opponents. To linguistically manipulate an audience with a view to persuading them to support unsupportable policies and issues, politicians may play on the audience's emotions by instilling fear, or even euphoria, in them. The best way to characterize distinct registers perhaps the only way is to find out what rhetorical acts are frequently conducted in them, how they hang together to form units of composite communication, and what language instruments are used to denote them. Because use conventions connected with specific kinds of discourse usually override linguistic indicators of rhetorical acts (Widdowson, 1979). Such conventions in the text type we are addressing are undoubtedly the classical features of 'rhetoric' itself.

Rhetoric is the use of vocabularies and expression by human beings to induce actions or to form attitudes in other human beings (Charteris-Black, 2005). Lectures, prayers, commentaries on sports, presentations, interviews, and speeches with actual communicative texts or products connected with different circumstances in which there is a desire to create creative language usages (Crystal, 2002). Many rhetorical devices are used by politicians because they want to distinguish themselves from ordinary people. The principle figures as well as the most used are repetition, parallelism, metaphor, personification, and simile (Devlin, 2008).

One of the processes of linguistic change is the figurative shift. It is very versatile; a term can be used vaguely or vaguely, and since each individual can comprehend one expression in various respects, the significance is also subjective (Brinton & Arnovick, 2006). In semantic change, words can change their connotation or denotation, adding or deleting semantic characteristics (Brinton & Arnovick, 2006).

Figures of speech are the core of human thinking and creativity. Politicians tend to persuade their constituents of this claim to make a political claim. In other words, to justify their behavior, they use speech numbers. Simile and personification, if approved as such, are minor premises, it demonstrates the main assumption, and the conclusion is the course of action. Figures of speech can generate political reality. They can shape our perception and lead to logical implications if they are approved.

The present study is drawn up within this research line, as it tries to analyze the rhetorical stylistics devices (simile and personification) in the speeches of King Abdullah II. Taking this into consideration, the specific goal of the present study is to uncover some of these linguistic devices and rhetoric techniques employed by King Abdullah II. We shall argue that the usage of such tools gives his discourse with extra doses of persuasion.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Simile

Simile is the next figure of speech, consisting of the comparison between one item and another one. Speaking generally of metaphor, in the sense that it describes an example when things are contrasted figuratively, the similar is sometimes regarded as its subtype. However, phrases such as *or as* are used solely for the purposes of a simile. It is a declaration of the similarity of objects, acts or relationships in size, form, activity, colour, impact, etc. This figure of speech makes the primary object less dramatic, plainer, contrasts with it and more powerfully impresses it on the human mind (Devlin, 2008).

Simile has a particular form. Harris, (2002) presented the simile when comparing a noun with a noun generally followed by something similar, with an instance of "The soul in the body is like a bird in a cage", or when a verb or phrase is compared to a verb or phrase, followed by "as", as in the next example: "Here is your pencil and paper. I want you to compete as the greatest hero would in the race of his life" (Harris, 2002). This clearly shows the particular form for establishing simile. However, what should be remembered, says Devlin, is that "mere likeness does not constitute a simile. For instance, there is no simile, when one city is compared to another. In order that there may be a rhetorical simile, the objects compared must be of different classes." (Devlin, 2008, p. 43)

The aim of simile is in explanation, decoration, aesthetics, intensity or allusiveness (Phythian, 1970). The simile is employed by comparing them to concrete stuff to clarify abstract ideas or other inexplicable, unknown entities or alien. Simile how things can convey mood from a distinct perspective, in fresh relationships, and add feelings, for instance, to this phrase: "Bill is sly as a fox" shows the attitude of the author towards Bill, refers to his personality. Simile can increase the distinction when compared, e.g. "They were as night and day"; it stresses the variable level of objects' attributes and features.

Similes play a considerable role in political speeches. They are used to portray the situation vividly and to characterize events and characters to create an atmosphere which allows the recipients to live through the experience of the speaker. Politicians use simile to show the nature of the discussion that exists among them (Obeng& Hartford, 2008). Moreover, similes can be used to influence thoughts as well as actions of readers/ listeners (Kuypers, 2009).

2.2 Personification

Another figure of speech is personification in which objects are given human qualities. Perrine (1974) defines personification as "the ascription of characteristics of a human being to an animal, an object, or an idea. It is actually a kind of metaphor that implies comparison, and the figurative word of comparison is always a human being." Personification is commonly used in political speeches and other genres in both English and Arabic. "Personification is a figure of speech in which human traits (i.e., honesty, emotion, etc.) are ascribed to pets or items that are inanimate. The function of personification to animate the abstraction of the spoken terms, because these terms are deviations from the usual manner organized in the world" (Al-Hamad & Al-Shunnaq, 2011). In political discourse, these expressions are

employed to offer a livable picture and an expressive and emotional significance.

Personification is mostly described as a speech figure that connects inanimate items or abstract ideas with human characteristics. Lakeoff and Turner (1989) clarify, personification allows humans to make maximum use of the understanding of ourselves, to use insight into ourselves to assist us to understand things like natural forces, prevalent events, abstract ideas, and inanimate items. Kress & Fowler (1979) states that personification allows us to use an understanding of ourselves to understand other world elements such as moment, natural forces, inanimate items, death, etc. And personification promotes humans to take a new look at our surroundings (Nordquist, 2012).

3. Data Collection, Methodology and Procedure

The data for the present study consists of political speeches that are written and delivered by his majesty King Abdullah II. The speeches that will be collected were delivered in the time between 2006 and 2014. In this time, the Arab countries witnessed the Arab Spring. The researcher collected the speeches from the King's Abdullah official website (www.kingabdullah.jo). Analysis of speech, style is very essential as leaders can have their own style, or on the contrary, they can copy another politician's style to demonstrate who they identify with. As Cook points out, it may be impeded by an inappropriate style when the role is to transmit data. In other words, communication breaks down when the style is unsuitable (Cook, 1989). The methods which were used are both quantitative and qualitative. In qualitative study, a detailed description will be given, the phenomena of figures of speech will be named and the individual examples found in the speeches will be analyzed. The research examples from the sources will be analyzed from a semantic point of view.

4. Influence of Simile

Simile is a figure of speech involving an explicit comparison between two things using connective words 'like' or 'as'. Larson (1998) defines simile as "an explicit comparison between things that are essentially different yet have something in common in a way as to clarify and enhance an image" (Cuddon, 1999). Abdul-Raof (2006) states that "simile refers to someone or something sharing a feature of someone or something else where a common signification is established through one of the simile particles or the relevant context". Like other figures of speech, simile has a number of functions; Corbet (1990) mentions that a simile "clarifies the analogy by calling out exactly what is being compared as in *He had a posture like a question mark*". Further, the use of simile shows meaning by calling to attention the comparison process. Simile in political speeches is a skilful and aesthetic mode of discourse whose main goals are to clarify a feeling or a point of view, to bring two significations close to one another, and to compare a given entity with another in dispraise, praise, repugnance, or ornamentation. Therefore, simile, as an aesthetic and linguistic skill, differs from one text-producer to another one in effectiveness, quality, and most importantly, the impact on text-receiver. To clarify what we mean and corroborate and diversify our argument, let us consider the following illustrative example drawn the speech of His Majesty King Abdullah the Second on 23 may 2013 in the Opening of the World Economic Forum on North Africa and the Middle East. (It should be noted that this is the only example that the researcher found in the data).

Example Ten - "Independence stands for the sacrifices made by our forefathers to liberate the national will, and build a better future. Our independence embodies sacrifice, belonging, and a sense of responsibility to build our homeland and preserve its security, stability, and achievements. I congratulate you all on this occasion, and on behalf of the generous Jordanian people, I welcome you all to Jordan."

"My Friends,

Today, we celebrate our beloved country. We honour our citizens, past and present. And we look to the future. I am delighted that you are here to join us. This Forum recognizes the partnership of all our countries. From the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, our countries stretch in one sweep, like a strong spine across the world. And as a spine is central to a human being, so our region is central to this globe."

In the above example, His Majesty's sincerity and willingness to cooperate with his audience (investors from different countries) are presented by statements like: 'Our independence embodies.....'

His Majesty's words work to establish his good will. A listener to the English text will undoubtedly be struck by the representation of his virtue. We have simile "*From the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, our countries stretch in one sweep, like a strong spine across the world*". In this example, it is possible to analyze the simile using three components:

- Topic: our countries.
- Image: strong spine.
- Point of similarity: stretch in one sweep across the world.

Here, the simile's components are explicit. Thus, the readers/listeners will understand the picture painted by his Majesty. It evoked the emotiveness of the audience. My point is a text is considered effective if it is successful in reaching its goals which is to persuade the audience of the specific opinions' validity. In many other ways, the political speeches language is a poetic language.

5. Influence of Personification

Personification is an ontological metaphor, which is realized by giving inanimate objects and non-humans humanistic attributes and characteristics as if they were people. According to Lakoff and Johnson "personification is a distinct linguistic phenomenon, even though it belongs to the group of ontological metaphors. To be more precise, in personification something non-human is spoken about as if being human."

Personification makes it easier for the speaker but also for the listener to localize and refer to these non-human objects. The study of personification is important for a critical analysis of political rhetoric as it displays how certain topics are thought about. Furthermore, personification makes new measures and complex matters more comprehensible as they receive human qualities. For example, life has cheated me (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In this example, life is personified; it is understood as a person who deceives others and leaves them desperate. This type of metaphor is necessary in order to understand abstract ideas, and by viewing them in terms of human characteristics, they can be easily grasped by mind. To illustrate this idea, let us study the following examples:

Example - "The Arab States have spoken with a united voice on behalf of a just peace: two states, with a sovereign, viable and independent Palestine, on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with UN resolutions, resolving all final status issues, with security and acceptance for Israel. Tonight I ask for your partnership in the work of peace as well as prosperity, to get the parties to the negotiation tables and a final agreement."

Example - "As the 41st descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), I have sought to uphold the true spirit of Islam, the Islam of peace. My Hashemite duty extends to protecting the Holy Sites of Christians and Muslims in Jordan and in Jerusalem. As Custodian, I am committed to safeguarding the Holy City, as a place of worship for all and, God willing, a safe home for all communities for all generations."

In the above examples, King Abdullah uses personification in order to make live pictures in words. He gives anthropomorphic qualities to inanimate objects to make them dynamic. This is a kind of hyperbole he uses in order to highlight the point he wants to address by using the personification the Arab States have spoken and the word spirit. Personification is also used to arouse the audience's emotions and call them to action. For example, he uses personification to stir the people's emotions and convince them of the importance of having two states.

Charteris-Black (2005) had a similar observation about the role of personification in political language; he maintained that personification is used in political speeches in order to move the audience. He analyzed both Presidents Bush's, Churchill's, Thatcher's and Blair's speeches, and found that they had a

strong inclination towards using personification in order to evoke the audience's emotions. For example, George Bush Junior frequently used the personification "History Is a Person" in his speeches in order to stir the audience's emotions and call them to action.

6. Conclusion and Direction for Future Research

The discussion of simile and personification reveals that they are necessary tools that can be used to understand abstract ideas. The analysis shows how abstract ideas such as emotions are portrayed as tangible entities that can be contained and physically been touched, by using emblematic expressions. This supports the observation that the use of simile and personification are indispensable for conceptualizing and understanding abstract ideas. As argued earlier that the audience is taken into consideration when King Abdullah selects the appropriate type of argument, similarly, the analysis of simile and personification asserts that the audience is a vital factor when speakers use the simile and personification. King Abdullah's choice of simile and personification take into consideration the nature of the audience. This is in line with the nineteenth-century's perspective of rhetoric as an adaptation process in which communicators adjust their language according to the nature of the audience and the event. The analysis has also shown that King Abdullah uses other rhetorical strategies such as simile and personification which are used to highlight the main points and attract people's attention to them. This study does not cover the whole topic but should rather be considered as an impulse of thought-provoking for more researches.

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