Means used to express incentive in agitation-political discourse

S. B. Shylo
Cherkasy Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National University (Cherkasy, Ukraine)
Corresponding author. E-mail: sylosvitlana@ukr.net

https://doi.org/10.31174/SEND-Ph2020-226VII68-11

Abstract. The functional-semantic field of incentive is one of the most important functional-semantic language fields. It is referred to as a collection of multiteried means that express the will of the subject. The basic feature of this field is the commonality of incentive as a semantic function that characterizes different language means at different levels. The agitation and political discourse is characterized by the use of means that express incentive interacting at the functional-semantic level. In our sample of incentive statements, the nucleus is expressed by the imperative verbs in the second person of plural and the second person in the singular. The closest periphery of the incentive field in agitation-political texts is represented by infinitive constructions, future perfect tense forms in the singular and plural, words of the category of state that have modal sense from pragmatic point of view, as well as analytical forms of the imperative mood, atypical compounds of future tense verbs with «let me» (даймай), «let us» (даймайтире). Abstract lexems with positive or negative semantics, various political metaphors, idiomatic phrases, spoken and stylistically reduced vocabulary have a significant incentive potential. Syntactic means are the peripheral tiers represented by conditional, incomplete, interrogative, verbal and nominative simple sentences.

Keywords: functional-semantic field of incentive, nucleus, periphery, agitation-political discourse, means used to express incentive.

Introduction. Any text of political discourse must be relevant and actual. These are the criteria that must be taken into account by politicians when stating their position.

However, it is necessary to bear in mind that political discourse is unlikely to be ever neutral and impartial. Apart from factual information about phenomena and processes, political texts can always convey subjective evaluation, expressed both explicitly and implicitly by various means.

The political discourse is characterized by the use of various means applied to express incentive. Linguists have differing views on the means used to express incentive in language. We take a broad approach, considering that incentive can be expressed by a complex system of linguistic means at different levels: grammatical, lexical, syntactic, as well as intonational. The choice of specific means to express incentive depends on the language structure and discourse specifics that mark incentive in the agitation-political discourse.

Incentive modality is expressed by different multiteried linguistic means: verb forms in the Active Voice, modal verbs, verbal phrases, modal words, phrases, sentences, and intonation. These intentional meanings are formally expressed by different groups of predicative vocabulary.

The choice of certain means to convey personal attitude to the content depends on the addressee’s communicative intention. It can also be the transmission of another person’s opinion, or personal partial approval. The speaker chooses among the available set of linguistic means those that are considered the most appropriate for a certain situation. Consequently, there are no strict rules imposed to follow when choosing a means to express incentive. To express different senses of incentive, different language means are used, namely: lexical, grammatical and syntactic.

The problem of multiteried ways used to represent the modal meaning has been reflected in the works of both domestic and foreign linguists. However, the lack of a unified approach to tackle the semantic nature and semantic volume of modality and its constituents, as well as differences in the interpretation of the status of grammatical forms used to express modality, and the incompleteness of some descriptions used to illustrate the means to express modality are becoming especially apparent when investigating this linguistic phenomenon.

The literature review. In linguistics, there are many works on the means used to express incentive modality. The first scholars who paid attention to the incentive as a «letting» function of speech are O. O. Potebnia, O. O. Shakhatrov, L. A. Bulakhovsky, V. V. Vynogradov. Over recent decades, many detailed analyses on this issue have appeared in the publications of Ukrainian scholars, including, I. R. Vykhovenets, K. G. Gorodnyska, A. P. Gryshchenko, A. P. Zagnitko, M. U. Karanska, M. F. Kobylianska, M. Ya. Karanska, V. V. Vynogradov. Over recent decades, many detailed analyses on this issue have appeared in the publications of Ukrainian scholars, including, I. R. Vykhovenets, K. G. Gorodnyska, A. P. Gryshchenko, A. P. Zagnitko, M. U. Karanska, M. F. Kobylianska, M. Ya. Plushch, V. M. Rusanivsky, I. I. Slynko, O. S. Shevchuk, etc. In their works different features of the main types of incentive are defined, the communicative situations where they are used (order, proposal, advice, prohibition) are characterized. Various ways of expressing different types of incentive are explored.

However, many issues related to the category of the stimulus and the linguistic means of expression have not yet been fully investigated. In the modern Ukrainian language, some important issues are insufficiently covered, for example, there is no consensus on the notion of central (nuclear) and peripheral means of expressing semantics of incentive, regarding the specifics of the formation and functioning of the incentive constructs in the agitation and political discourse.

Political activity depends on how professionally politicians use the language, because language is also a means of exercising power, its tool. Politicians must know what words and expressions to choose in order to convey their thoughts and imply political position to voters. O. J. Sheygal points out that language of politics could be called «the professional sublanguage, a variant of the national language» [11, p. 189].

The agitation-political discourse is characterized by the use of various means used to express incentive, interacting on a functionally-semantic level. Those are the means that constitute the functional-semantic field of incentive. Incentive modality is an important structural and semantic component of the functional-semantic category of modality, which establishes a living relation between the statement and extra-linguistic reality, addressing the pragmatic aspect of a sentence. It is directly involved in shaping
its communicative perspective.

O. V. Bondarko defines the notion of functional-semantic categories: «Functional-semantic categories are referred to as categories where the content forms concepts similar to the concepts expressed by the grammatical categories and the expression is represented by linguistic means belonging to different linguistic levels...» [2, p. 143]. For the category to become functional-semantic, it is necessary that the means share a general meaning. According to the above mentioned definition, the functional-semantic category of incentive could be interpreted as a system of multiform means that share common semantic feature of incentive to perform an action.

Functional-semantic category of incentive has a complex, multitiered structure; encompasses means of expression that belong to different levels of the language system including lexical, morphological and syntactic. The heterogeneity of the linguistic means that express incentive is related to the specifics of the sense of letting.

The choice of the means to convey the content of the utterance depends on a speaker’s communicative intent. From among the available set of linguistic means the addressee chooses those he considers most appropriate for the situation. Therefore, there are no strict rules of thumb for choosing a means of expression.

It is accepted that the main components that constitute the structure of any functional-semantic field are the nucleus and its periphery. Outlining the functional-semantic field of incentive modality in the texts, O. S. Shatilova, distinguishes and describes some kinds of constructions including nuclear constructions where predicate is expressed by the verb in the imperative mood, semi-peripheral constructions where predicate is represented by analytic morphological forms, and peripheral constructions where predicate is represented by nonspecific morphological forms [10, p. 254].

The purpose of the article. The main purpose of the article is to analyze the nuclear and peripheral means used to express incentive in the agitation and political discourse at different levels of the language system including lexical, morphological and syntactic. Sampling of the agitation-political discourse was used to investigate the issue.

Results and Discussion. The article continues a series of publications where the author covers the issue of means used to express incentive in agitation and political discourse. Previous studies explored nuclear and peripheral means of incentive in agitation and political discourse at the grammatical level. It is concluded that the verbs in the imperative mood in the second person of singular and plural forms are stated as nuclear. Other linguistic means could be referred to as peripheral where the most commonly used constructions include infinitives, the singular and plural forms of the perfect verbs, the words of the category of state, and the analytical forms of the imperative mood, represented by the combination of a verb in the 3rd person of singular or plural, present or future tense with particles «хай», «нехай» (have). There are atypical compounds of the future verbs with incentive particles «давай», «давайте» (let). [12, p. 429].

We are going to consider means used to express incentive at other language levels including lexical and syntactic.

Lexical means used to express incentive. Lexical means are considered to be the most common and productive means used to express incentive. They can include verbs «назавати» (command) «просити» (ask), «пропонувати» (offer), «радити» (advise), «хотити» (want), «молити» (beg), «вимагати» (demand) and others in different communicative situations. For instance: Прошу вас не піддаватися на жодні підбурювання... Прошу вас, шановані українці, які проживають на тихчасово окупованих територіях, утриматися від отримання російських паспортів (I. Shmes’ko’s post on the Facebook social networking site); Я хочу, щоби кожна дитина мала необхідні умови для всебічного розвитку (G. V. Starostenko, district 213); Я закликаю всю Україну молитися, щоб це звернення було задоволено (by Yulia Tymoshenko on bestowal of the ecclesiastical status of autocephaly to the Orthodox church in Ukraine).

The political metaphor is another important lexical means used to convey the sense of agitation. It allows to draw an addressee’s attention to the message, to make the presentation more appealing. It also reveals certain social and political processes and helps to unveil some hidden ideas, emotions and goals of politicians. A. P. Chudinov notes that «metaphorical argumentation is constantly used in politicians’ speech as a way of manipulating voters and changing their political preferences» [9, p. 128]. For instance, Тоді, коли київські були донором сировини, талантів та робочих рук для розвинутих країн! (from the election program of O. Liashko); Заманяти зраду! (from V. M. Dukhno’s leaflet); Друзі, хіба ми не досягли неймовірного проголом і зять передніх років, коли ми з вами ратували країну від розчленування, економіку від колапсу, тоді, коли здявилися, що він невідворотний, від війни? (from P. Poroshenko’s speech at the «From Kruty to Brussels» forum); На вибори та вибори! (from D. V. Kukharchuk’s newsletter).

In agitation-political discourse, the metaphor manipulatively influences the recipient. This is confirmed by most scholars. A. M. Baranov and O. G. Kazakevych point out that the metaphor can «prompt, influence, suggest a certain decision and model of behavior» [1, p. 17]. Researchers note that the presence of metaphors in agitation and political texts appeal to the imagery of the addressees, affect their emotions and force people to respond actively to such constructions because of their originality and uniqueness. For instance, Це прямі кроки до тотальної капіталізації перед ворогом, яку нам намагається подати під союз підприємців! (Radicalna Partia Olega Liashka’s newsletter, June, 2019). Щоправда корупційного спрута підняти з Ізраїлю – це аксіома (from V. Dukhno’s leaflet); Багато цьо відбився, що лише зісювач з російської газової голки (from P. Poroshenko’s speech at the «From Kruty to Brussels» forum).

Since the language in agitation and political texts has some limitations, the addressee needs to make up for these limitations by using vivid images that add expressiveness. Therefore, idioms are of great importance in shaping agitation and political discourse. Politicians use vivid and ex-
pressive idioms to become closer to people and gain loyalty, for example: Досить Україні настави завжди. Наша мета – наступити на п'яті лідерам Європи! (from A. S. Gritsenko’s election program); Держава має допомагати людям нести світі хрест (from O. V. Liashko’s newsletter): А навіщо, власне, Україні Євросоюз? Адже шоб до вступу в нього не такий уже й легкий, потрібує великих зусиль. Тож чи ви готові шукати виницьки, чи треба нам аж так напружуватися, щоб стати в перспективні члени СЄ? (from the newsletter of the European Solidarity political party). The use of such idiomatic constructions may be related to the common national cultural forms of etiquette.

However, there are cases when idioms are translated word-by-word from Russian into Ukrainian, although there is a Ukrainian equivalent, for example: Ми можли б гадати весь світ, а самі ходимо з простоглятою рукою за кредитами (from O. V. Liashko’s election program). In the Ukrainian language, this idiom sounds like «так викало в згадку».

Stylistically reduced vocabulary offered for an average addressee is a productive means of incentive. Under the influence of various factors, stylistically reduced vocabulary penetrated into all spheres of communication, including political discourse. Stylistically reduced vocabulary performs several functions that allow first to save linguistic effort by using shorter and more meaningful lexical units, for example: Ніхто не буде «кришувати» більше (O. V. Liashko’s newsletter). Secondly, stylistically reduced vocabulary makes the language more emotional and expressive, for example: Президент має бути жорстким, але справедливим, а якщо «замереться» – народ повинен мати механізми усунення його з посади (from O. V. Liashko’s newsletter). Thirdly, it establishes contacts with a diverse audience, for instance: Силові структури більше не будуть «кривити» рідерство, побори, контрбанку та тінкові оборудження, бо будуть постав- лені Новимо Конституцією під реальним імперативним контроль громадянського суспільства (from Yulia Tymoshenko’s action plan). Fourthly, it manipulates the audience, their thoughts and choices, for instance, Ми проти війні! землі (from Y. B. Derevianko’s election program).

The use of colloquial, reduced vocabulary that violates the formality of the statement helps the politician to convince voters that the politician is available and their political party is made up of common people, that a politician is ready to advocate people’s rights.

Vocabulary includes abstract words, used without specific explanation and can have different meanings. They could be emotionally positive or emotionally negative and appeal to human values. Such vocabulary is perceived by the audience in a specific way, for example: Безпеки, безпечного довкілля, бо будуть постійно, будуть захищати права українців на життя, свободу і честь та боронуватимуть со- борності і незалежність Держави. (by the «Power and Honor» political party).

The abstract lexemes of agitation are also quite often found in agitation-political texts. They usually perform an identification function, that is, help voters to decide their political preferences. For instance, Податковий режим потрібно ліквідувати. «Самопоміч» № 9 у бюлетені (by the «Samopomich» political party). Непевно, безпеки з нас вже зросли, що війна іде не лише на Донбасі. Війна іде і тут, у тилу, і найліхоманкій вгору у цей війни – бідність. Бідність, розбиті дороги і вмираюча інфраструктура, безпритульні діти і голодуючі люди похалого віку в селах. Людей тут вбивають не кулі і снаряди, а цифрі: це закхарі грабунки і жебрівська зарплата, це міжнародний пенсії і стипендії, не південної та вартість продуктів (from V. M. Sautkonov, «Oppozytssina platforma za zhyttia); Нам немає на кого звертатися в цій ситуації – окрім самих себе. Лише про- тиставляючи імітації – справжність, аморальність, цінності та ідеї, брехні – правду, ми зможемо пере- сувати державу в інтересах Людини. (from R. Bezsmertnyi’s election program).

Thus, the lexical inventory of agitation and political discourse is quite diverse. Powerful incentive is realized by abstract positive or negative lexemes, various metaphors, idioms, spoken and stylistically reduced vocabulary.

Syntactic means of expression. Being on the periphery, syntax-level means are more distant from the nucleus, compared with the morphological means. They have their own specific lexical and grammatical structure. One of the most common means of expressing incentive in our sampling is the way to construct a phrase as a conditional sentence. These statements help the addressee to inform the listener that a positive result to be achieved a specific task must be performed. The addresser expects the result to be important to the listener. That is why the listener will fulfill the declared conditions in order to achieve this result. The desired result is contained in the main part, and the necessary action for its implementation can be found in a subordinate clause of condition, for example: Якщо ви за безпеки довкілля, голосуйте за № 13 у виборчому бюлетені (from «Sotsialna Spravedlyvist»); Кожна українська родина знову зможе жити комфортно, якщо Наша Рада знову зможе змусити знову жити знову, якщо новий уряд після виборів очолить Юлія Тимошенко. (from «Vechirniy Novyny», special Project № 7, July, 2019); Та якщо ви підтримаєте мою Програму і довіряте мені високий пост Президента України, візит буде силь- но засмучена (from A. Kornatsky’s election program). In these examples, the addresser expresses the view that pro-
gess will be made when voters ensure that the necessary conditions are met: they will be favorable to the candidate and ensure that enough votes are received.

Incentive in conditional sentences may not be obvious, but the general message of such sentences is enough to qualify them as incentive sentences from the pragmatic point. Conditional clauses convey a speaker’s intention to inform the listener of the specific condition that must be fulfilled in order to achieve or avoid the result, thereby forcing the listener to execute it. At a formal-syntactic level, such statements may be referred to as subordinate clauses of purpose. For instance: Вам, шановні виборці, залишилося лише проголошувати за цю політичну силу, щоб Юлія Тимошенко не просто пройшлася у парламент, а створила більшості, змогла об’єднати навколишнє середовище патріотів задля процвітання нашої держави. (from the special issue of the «Cherkashchyna pro golove» newspaper in Cherkasy Region, July 2019 (#2).

The verb in the conditional mood adds polite quality to the statement, thus hiding the urge. It should be noted that the verbs in the conditional mood soften categorical message even when used to express advice, request, and order. Such sentences can be syntactically represented by elucidative subordinate clauses. However, the power of performativeness in utterances such as Я хочу, щоб ми з вами просто поговорили (Yulia Tymoshenko) is so great that in this case the conditional form does not transform the utterance into an irrational modality; it illustrates subjective modality, an addresser’s attitude to the addressee, the degree of politeness. It accentuates the desirability of action while the modal meaning of the urge remains. Particle б (би) expresses a non-categorical incentive in the declarative or interrogative sentences.

Incentive may also be expressed by incomplete sentences that illustrate the law of lease effort in language in action. It excludes elements that do not affect the semantics of expression, since they are already available in the speakers’ memory. In this case, only new information is emphasized. The campaign leaflets contain numerous incomplete sentences where predicate components rendering incentive are lacking. For instance: Українцям – роботу, за роботу і гідне життя! (from O. Liashko’s election program); Народи, виборці! (by I. Kyna); Земля – українцям. 2. Фермери – ваші гроші. (from P. Poroshenko’s leaflets); Украл, кого вам непристойно здалося? («Svoboda»); Наступ (by A. Sadovy); Мир та розвиток (by «Oppozitsiyni Blok» political party).

There are different views on nominative incentive sentences. According to O. I. Smyrnitsky, being one-part is the norm for these sentences, since the lack of the verb does not indicate its omission; it makes a sentences of command [8]. For instance, Давайте – народний Президент! (from O. Liashko’s election program); Енергетична незалежність України (by «Народний Фронт» political party).

In his work V. V. Buzarov notes that from the standpoint of the logic and grammatical theory, such incentive constructions are two-part constructions, where the subject-predicate relationship is specifically expressed through the main part of the sentence. Although such sentences are one-part sentences, their internal structure is two-part, since they convey the idea about the subject and the predicate through one main part that expresses incentive [3]. For instance, Буденсьте Roman Petrovych. Відповідальність, порядок, результативність (from the «Sluga narodu» party newspaper).

Incentive can also be expressed by interrogative sentences. «By its semantic nature, the question inherently contains the motive seme» [7, p. 29], since the speaker urges the interlocutor to produce some appropriate communicative response. In agitation and political discourse, the interrogative sentences are used mostly as rhetorical questions that do not need to be answered. Otherwise, a politician may answer the question immediately, hinting at the similarity of opinions with the addressee. For instance, А ви будете громадянами? (O. Liashko); Хто посадить топ-корупціонерів? («Rukh novykh syl Mikheila Saakashvili»).

Let us consider another example: Хочете покарати тих, хто вас обкрадав? Хочете змусити їх повернути вкраїне вам і державі? Справедливого суду для Порошенка, його банди та всіх інших? («Rukh novykh syl Mikheila Saakashvili»). In the example, the question can be qualified as rhetorical since the addressee expresses dissatisfaction with the work of the political apparatus. Therefore, the question of whether voters want to punish, force them (political opponents) to return the looted, does not appear in its direct function. By asking a question the addressee tries to consolidate and encourage voters to change the situation together. In this case, it is quite possible to transform the interrogative sentence into a sentence with incentive semantics: «Покараю вам тих, хто вас обкрадав! Змусимо їх повернутися вкраїне вам і державі! Вамажимо справедливого суду для Порошенка, його банди та всіх інших!»

I. A. Demydova characterizes question-and-incentive constructions as «a two-sided initiative language act: it marks the beginning of linguistic interaction in a dialogic unity, which requires an appropriate reaction from the addressee, that is, the addressee has to perform a certain
action or facilitate its execution to become successful» [4, p. 71]. In addition, the question, expressed in a non-categorical form, does not cause a negative reaction in the addressee, which is especially important for improving the effectiveness of agitation and political discourse.

Conclusions. The functional-semantic field of the category of incentive encompasses various semantic shades, which in turn are represented by various means of expression. Mastering these means is the most important factor for a successful communication.

Using the means of expressing incentive, the addressee wants to influence the way how the addressee forms a certain model of the world, which may be different from the real world picture. Morphological, lexical and syntactic means are used not only to inform or regulate, but also to manage the process of interaction and its final result, forming the required perception of the political information by the recipients.

The means of expressing incentive belong to different language levels that interacting form a functional-semantic field. The dominant aspect of the incentive field is the morphological means that is the verb in the imperative mood. The closest periphery of the incentive field in agitation-political texts is represented by infinitive constructions, verbs in the future perfect forms in the singular and plural form, words of the category of state that have modal evaluation when it is needed, anormative compounds of the verbs in the future tense with the letting particles давай, давайте.

A lot of incentive is realized by abstract lexemes of positive or negative semantics, various metaphors, idioms, spoken and stylistically reduced vocabulary. At the syntactic level, the most common means of expressing incentive is constructing a conditional sentence. The interrogative form used to express incentive is considered the most polite, since the question formally gives the addressee the right to refuse to perform the action. Incentive sentences lacking verbs are widely used in agitation and political texts and are characterized by conciseness, brightness and emotionality.

ЛІТЕРАТУРА


REFERENCES