THE FINANCIAL CRISIS AND THE DISCOURSES OF LATVIA'S POLITICAL PARTIES

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Abstract

At the end of 2008, Latvia's population found out about the financial problems of one of Latvia's largest banks. At first, politicians stated that there were no grounds for concern and that there was no crisis, but just a couple of weeks later the opposite turned out to be true. Accordingly, the Saeima made a number of decisions that met with mixed reactions in society, also including amendments to tax laws. At the same time, the Cabinet also made decisions about public expenditure cuts and redundancies, and entered negotiations with the International Monetary Fund about a loan for the Republic of Latvia. Nationally, unemployment grew as did socio-economic tension. At the start of 2009, together with 25 public organisations and trade unions, the political organisation Sabiedrība citai politikai (*the Society for Political Change*) (Diena, 13 January 2009) came forth with a proclamation - "An invitation to the Latvian people", asking State President Valdis Zatlers to dissolve the 9th Saeima, as well as demanding the election of a new Saeima and establishment of fair, honest, democratic and competent executive government. At the end of the announcement, an invitation was made to everybody to attend a meeting of the people on 13 January in Dome Square.

The study analyses the rhetoric of political values in the six biggest national newspapers in an attempt to clarify the information that Latvian society received from politicians. Using one word or another, people create a certain social reality. Concepts and metaphors reflect belief systems and the thoughts, on the basis of which the speaker acts. Within the framework of the study, the authors try to answer the question of what society discovered about the aims and actions of politicians during the resolution of the economic crisis, which generated a lack of confidence, which prompted people to unite and demand the dissolution of the Saeima.

People observe the political rhetoric within the public discourse and the study data show that that which society gleaned from political discourses was: a failure to search for a definition of a single concept; emotional saturation within the rhetoric of politicians containing mutual offence, irony and metaphors; over-definition of the essence of the subject; self-presentation redefining one's beliefs depending on the position in the current situation; use of negative statements which reduce the potential discussion space; use of prior assumption relating this to the practice of intimidation; frequent use of meta-discourse; naming of the agenda of the day by the position. Observing the structure of such a discourse, the general public felt a sense of disappointment and sensed that finding welfare-based solutions to the problems caused by the financial crisis was not the basis for the battles between politicians. Accordingly, people found themselves unable to trust the information provided by political forces within the public space and experienced a double loss of freedom. (Raz.J., 2001) The situation subjected to an analysis of the rhetorical values of politicians shows that politicians engage in constant manipulation by redefining the nature of the subject, disclosing facts about others and presenting themselves by reformulating their beliefs depending on the environment and the situation. Such conduct reduces people's abilities to make decisions. Latvian society is experiencing a double loss of freedom, firstly through the manipulation of politicians who restrict available information and reduce opportunities for action, and secondly, due to the economic crisis which reduces people's autonomy, compelling people to focus every thought and action on the goal of self-preservation.

Keywords: Financial crisis, political party discourses, knowledge.

Introduction

The social problem which prompted the study to be conducted in the low level of public trust in representatives of state authorities (in political parties, parliament and the government). The Eurobarometer 74 study for autumn 2010 shows that 6% of the population trust political parties, while 15% trust their National Parliament, and 20% trust the government. (European Commission: National Report. Latvia. Eurobarometer 74) Like other European countries, Latvia has experienced the economic crisis and is still on the road to recovery.

On 8 November 2008, the Latvian government decided to take over a 51% majority shareholding in one of Latvia's largest banks: "Parex Banka". Prior to the takeover of the bank, the public space was dominated by questions such as the annual pre-budget preparations, a responsible budget for the coming year, and the demands of teachers and medics; information about the bank's financial problems was not published. On 13 January 2009 a meeting of the Latvian population took place, which was organised by a party then in opposition together with public organisations. It ended with a riot - a public reaction untypical of Latvia. The meeting itself, albeit conventional and authorised by the local council was untypical of the timid Latvian public.

The scientific problem is - what prompted people to gather? What could prompt society to think that Latvia's governing elite could not cope with the task entrusted to it and was not acting as the situation demanded? What was the public content and form of Latvia's governing discourse in the period between the emergence of the first information about the problems in the financial system and the gathering in Dome Square where 10,000 members of the Latvian people

gathered at a peaceful meeting.

The research novelty is related to the fact that before now, public behaviour during the period under consideration has not been considered using the perspective of moral values in the rhetoric of politicians. Even though, due to the fact that it is not involved in the direct decision making process, the public relies on information in the public space; its assessment is largely based on observations of the behaviour of politicians and its appraisal of this using its own internal scale of values. An impression exists about values which must be represented in the conduct of politicians, in order to prove that they can be entrusted with the power to make decisions that influence society.

The aim of paper is to analyse the content of political party representative value discourse received by a public representative interested in political events.

The research object is the rhetoric of politicians during the period from 8 November 2008 to 13 January 2009. In the aftermath of the events of 13 January, discussions acquired a new form in which the discussion of public dissatisfaction with the economic situation and a crisis of political trust were transformed into a discussion about who was responsible for planning and implementing the riot.

In Latvia, public space is divided into two information environments – newspapers such as Diena, Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze, Latvijas avīze focusing on the Latvian-speaking audience and newspapers including Telegraf, Chas, Vestji Segodnja focusing on the Russian-speaking audience. Depending on the affinity of the relevant information space, the agenda of newspapers differs: into priority sequence of the issues under consideration, form of interpretation, content of information, published opinions of experts and politicians, etc. Therefore, to obtain information about the discourse of politicians, it is necessary to study both environments and separate them by explaining the results obtained.

The methode to study the public discourses of representatives of political parties. Units of content taken directly from speeches of representatives of political representatives made during the time period under consideration were firstly selected and then subjected to content analysis. Content analysis with the structure of categories and structures makes it possible to analyse and examine broader units of content, at the same time without restricting the study within the framework of keyword searches. (Flick U., 2007) Categorisation elements were developed on the system of values devised by S.H. Schwarz and M. Rokeach. As Rokeach points out, a system of vales enables a person to resolve situations and make decisions. (Rokeach M , 1973). In turn, Schwarz states that in attempting to attain a goal, people and groups express their values linguistically through communication. (Schwarz S.H, 2009). Accordingly, analysing the rhetoric of politicians using values, one can clarify the basis on which politicians make decisions, how they choose alternatives, how their motivation is formed, and what governs their conduct.

Collating the theories of Schwarz (Schwarz S.H, 1992) and Rokeach (Rokeach M , 1973), one can compile a list of the following values: Social values: democracy, equality, development of a civil society, security and openness. Moral and professional values in the political environment: just division of power, rule of law, transparency and respect for society. Moral and professional values of politicians:

responsibility, integrity, competence, and trustworthiness. Values of conformism: traditions, norms, and stability. Values of liberalism or universalism: autonomy; self-determination, human rights and tolerance.

Naturally, these concepts are not self-explanatory, but are part of discourse. Any statement is part of a broader system; thus, the critical discourse analysis approach will be used to reveal the social structures within rhetoric and content units will be analysed using the intertextuality of N. Fairclough. Analysis of discourse is possible using intertextuality, which consists of the concept of power and does not solely concentrate on analysis of linguistic content units. This approach will make the study relevant and practically useful, because it is possible to establish a link between rhetoric and social structure. (Fairclough N., 1993).

Morality and politics

What are ethics and morality in politics? According to Roger Scruton's political dictionary, in politics ethics are moral standards that govern this profession; this is a system of moral values. (Scruton R, 2007). In turn, Joseph Raz believes that political morality incorporates principles that lay the foundation for political conduct. The principles of political morality shape beliefs about the suitability of one institution or another and the future operating goals of this institution are determined within its framework. (Raz J , 2001). Therefore, political morality incorporates beliefs about the co-existence of good people within the framework of complication public structures, which can be provided by a government in shaping impressions about institutions and their goals.

Hume points out that people can get involved both as interested actors and as observers. People observe one another, because it is necessary how other people will behave. (Hume. D, 2010). Everybody has an impression of how a person must fulfil a certain role in the given situation and feel disappointed if their motives don't prompt them to achieve and fulfil the expectations felt by the observer. Hume perceives the main duty of government to be maintaining conditions in which the economic system serves the public good (Hume. D, 2010)**.** Accordingly, if people notice politicians failing to fulfil this main duty, they are bound to feel disappointed about the way in which politicians fulfil their role.

Sutor states that suspicions always exist that those "at the top" are using their power position to our detriment, because they are just like "us" (the rest of society). (Sutor B , 2001) The difference between "them" and "us" is in the fact that they have more power. Politicians make decisions, are involved in the distribution of state funds, implementation of projects, and formation of sector policies, etc. Their rejection of moral principles instantaneously affects society and therefore society is entitled to know how these decisions are made, and what the motivation for decisions is based on. A European Union study of the norms and standards of professional ethics concluded that the integrity and trustworthiness of those holding political office is that which matters to the general public. (European Commission bureau study, 2007). Public trust is highly fragile and sensitive. Very high requirements are placed on persons holding high public office, because they have more power, influence and decision making opportunities than anybody else. If these requirements are not satisfied, people feel disappointed; as is the case in Latvia,

where public trust in political parties has been low for years.

The newspaper discourse

In the volatile situation of today, theories that deal with an assessment of the consequences of moral action are finding increasing favour and popularity, because the main problem is not beliefs themselves, but rather their actual consequences. (Scruton R.A., 2007). Within the framework of this study, the public discourse of representatives of political parties will be analysed, which points to the moral value system of politicians. Also in the context of the study; discourse is understood to mean "wide social practices that incorporate both linguistic and non-linguistic factors" (Schiffrin D, Tannen D & Hamilton H, 2003). The task of the analysis of the discourse is to clarify the dual relationship between discourse and the social system and to throw light on how language and concepts are used to exert the dominance of power. Critical analysis of the discourse expands the discourse theory, incorporating analysis of political texts and addresses, as well as focusing attention on the context in which they are created. (Howart D, 2000)

Description of discourses using the mass media is important, because as Foucault states, the mass media are one of the means by which decress and instructions are given, as well as through which indirect manipulation occurs. (Bruhman, H, 1996)

During the period under consideration, the total number of articles I found containing keywords like: financial crisis, Parex takeover and IMF loan was 612:

- in newspapers geared towards the Latvian-speaking audience - 261 articles
- in newspapers geared towards the Russian-speaking audience – 351 articles

The majority of articles published in newspapers about the subject under consideration represent the opinion of the newspapers' own journalists and experts. In percentage terms, a much small percentage of articles represent the opinions of party representatives. In total, 83% of articles written in Latvian contain the opinions of journalists and experts, whereas 17% contain the opinions of representatives of political parties. It is a similar situation when it comes to Russian language newspapers in which the majority of articles contain the opinions of experts. 74% of articles contain expert opinions, whereas 26% contain the viewpoints of those involved or political representatives.

There are two possible explanations in this situation. The first is related to the crisis as a closed issue, involving a narrow circle of those in the know, whose representative face was the then Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis. At first, the issue was not even discussed in the public space by political representative, because of the dominance exerted by the statements of the Prime Minister, but there was still very little information. As a result, we come to the second related explanation, whereby newspapers tried to cover this area of missing information using their own journalists, and, in particular, due to the large number of recruited experts which is a characteristic feature of a crisis situation. Experts make forecasts, explain concepts and possible solutions.

In Russian language newspapers, representatives of political parties often publish their opinions using pseudonyms when commenting on important public issues. It is interesting that during the period in which the economic crisis was brought to public attention, representatives of political parties did not use pseudonyms.

Analysing the way in which persons involved are represented in newspapers, one notes a common trend whereby the opinions of the parties in government are represented more in Latvian language newspapers, whereas the opinion of opposition parties are featured more in Russian language newspapers. In turn, when analysing individual Latvian language newspapers, one can observe that the opinions of opposition parties which are geared to the Latvian speaking section of society are published more frequently. In contrast, in Russian language newspapers, there is a trend whereby the opinions of all opposition parties are represented with the same intensity. There is no indication that Russian language newspapers would only represent that section of the opposition representing the interests of Russian speakers.

In the study, one can observe that the representatives of political parties express opinions that are neutral in their moral position. This trend in the content of articles under analysis could be explained by the specific nature of the issue. Statements by representatives of political parties contain numerical information that cannot be explained with the assistance of values. Compared with the total number of articles, at 16% the proportion of such statements within the articles is not large, but at the same time this is a new trend in the analysis of the discourse of values.

The discourse of values among political parties

In analysing the representation of values in newspapers, one can observe that most frequently statements by representatives of political parties are dominated by stability of values followed by responsibility, competence, transparency and integrity. Values such as democracy, respect for society, autonomy and human rights are not represented within the discourses.

Stability as a value dominates, because it is used in two ways by government and opposition parties. Governing parties use it to explain their actions which are carried out to preserve the status quo. In contrast, the opposition questions the activity of governing parties; because this activity is not open and public, it is explained that it threatens stability.

Analysing governing and opposition parties separately, one can observe that the main dominant value of representatives of governing parties is stability. In this case, the value "stability" ensures status. As a result, we can conclude that the value of stability is used as justification for the true goal - preservation of their status. Within this debate, since governing parties do not use other values that would accompany the value of "stability" as an ethical argument that would cement this value, we can conclude that the value of stability is an ethical argument that ensures the preservation of the system. Thus, the value system is used in reverse for the purposes of their presentation and stability serves as argumentation. The value of stability becomes the norm, whose relevance depends on the question posed and which is used to ensure the moral face of politicians. In turn, values that ensure moral face change depending on the situation. Such changes mean that the governing parties have subordinated the values system for their own presentational purposes. Respectively, actions are not carried out within the framework of the value system,

but rather applied for the justification of actions. One's own position must always appear in a good light and reference to moral values supports this.

- *The electoral alliance "Latvijas pirmā partija"'/"Latvijas ceļš" (Latvian First Party/Latvia's Way), Ivars Godmanis, Prime-Minister of Latvia: "In voting for the amendment to the 2009 budget, the Saeima has proved that it is one of the most powerful Parliaments in Europe, so there is absolutely no reason to talk about its early dissolution "(They have begun to save us (13 December 2008) Chas).*

The value of "stability" is also used within the rhetoric of governing parties to explain the instability that could arise through doubting the governing coalition.

- *Tautas partija (People's Party), Aigars Kalvītis: "...To take even one step in the direction of political instability, one must be very brave, and in this case, one must also accept responsibility... "(All possibilities also mean dissolution of the Saeima (28 November 2008) Diena).*

The discourse of representatives of opposition parties is based on a number of values: stability, responsibility, transparency, followed by integrity, competence and trustworthiness. The opposition uses the system of values as justification for its goal - changes. It justifies changes with the need for governing politicians to accept responsibility for the situation nationally and resign. Therefore, responsibility is the norm that dominates the discourse of opposition parties. A trend can be observed, whereby the value of stability is used in the opinions of representatives of opposition parties as a demand to ensure stability nationally.

- *The Party "Par Cilvēku tiesībām vienotā Latvijā" (For Human Rights in a United Latvia), Nikolajs Kabanovs: " In Russia, the state is purchasing large areas from private owners, while our VIPs continue to rely on the invisible hand of the market. The result is hundreds of dark windows in new high-rise and office buildings (Built near here (9 January 2009) Vesti segodnja.)*

Opposition parties have an interesting way of using the value of "stability", in viewing the unity of two communities existing within Latvian society as a positive factor in the crisis.

- *The Party "Saskaņas Centrs" (Harmony Centre), Nils Ušakovs: "Moreover, the crisis has reduced division and national tension within the country, because Latvians, Russians and representatives of other nationalities are all suffering equally from economic problems." (Harmony Centrists aiming for positions in government (1 December 2008) Latvijas Avīze)*

At the same time, one has to say that not only the opposition considers the crisis as a means of stabilizing the country; governing parties also see the possibility of public representatives setting their differences aside in difficult economic circumstances. Based on the economic crisis, both the government and opposition hope that the problems of the co-existence of the two communities, which they had not succeeded in resolving before the crisis could now be resolved.

- *State President Valdis Zatlers "The economic situation compels us to be more united, because the crisis affects people of all nationalities and confessions" (The situation is forcing people to be more united (7 January 2009) Latvijas Avīze)*

Dealing with the crisis under the leadership of Ivars

Godmanis was a narrow issue for representatives from coalition parties and the discourse of opposition parties demanded their involvement in this process. Opposition parties doubted the knowledge of the narrow grouping of the governing coalition and demanded openness of information, action and transparency of decisions.

The use of moral values declined and was replaced by rhetoric full of numerical information. Initially, the value of "responsibility" was a value used in the discourse of representatives of opposition parties, but in time its use was also adopted by governing parties, as a result of which the value of "responsibility" is value referred to most often in total.

The opposition uses the value of "responsibility" not only in relatoin to the responsibility of the government towards the population, but also as a motivational factor referring to the opposition's responsibility to act and justify the hopes placed on it.

- *The Party "Saskaņas centrs" (Harmony Centre), Jānis Urbanovičs: "All of us within Harmony Centre bear great responsibility - we can see that lots and lots of ordinary Latvians trust us. We have no right to betray their trust"(Congress with a view of the future (1 December 2008) Chas).*

Responsibility as a value is also used by governing parties despite the fact that this value does not dominate the discourse of governing parties. Responsibility is used by governing parties to make it clear that those who criticise the work of the government must take action and to challenge such critics to accept responsibility for their words.

- *"Tēvzemei and brīvībai" (For the Fatherland and Freedom) and "Latvijas Nacionālās neatkarības kustība" (Latvian National Independence Movement) alliance politician, Māris Grīnblats, "Nobody is devoid of errors, and no decision is ideal," therefore undoubtedly others are entitled to take up the place of the politicians of the moment, "If they can do this, if they can offer something better and if more votes are cast for them" (The more tickling, the better (13 January 2009) Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze)*

Similarly, governing parties use the value of "responsibility" to justify their hold on positions of power, arguing that the crisis does not mean that there is justification for dissolving the government, but that it is a reason for the government to continue working and for this work to continue with painful decision making:

- *The Party "Tautas Partija" (People's Party), Saeima fraction chair, Māris Kučinskis "I think that any crisis - even a crisis in ratings - means that one has to work and not sit still" (Party ratings compel action (4 November 2009) Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze).*

Critical discourse analysis

In interpreting the use of values within rhetoric, it is necessary to ascertain the context in which the discourse was formed. Discourses of political parties are part of a complicated structure, in which the discourses are not independent and free. Any statement is part of a broader system; thus, the critical discourse analysis approach will be used to reveal the social structures within rhetoric and content units will be analysed using the intertextuality of N. Fairclough. Critical

discourse analysis has not been widely used in the analysis of political events, thus sacrificing a social explanation for such discourse. In 1997, a definition for critical discourse analysis was coined, "language as social practice". (Wodak R., 2001). The explanation for a socially-orientated discourse is an issue of critical discourse analysis, creating a new approach in which social and linguistic aspects are combined.

The intertextuality approach contains analysis units that can explain discourses as a system, in which there are, using the division created by Michel Foucault, dominant power trends and opposing power trends. (Foucault M., 2003). Using intertextuality, an analysis of discourse is possible which contains the concept of power and does not solely focus on analysis of linguistic content units. Deeper language structures make it possible to determine the information that people pass to one another and it describes discursive structures. (Fairclough N., 1993)

To analyse public discourses, Fairclough established a method that the principles of analysis. Discourses are subjected to analysis using the following criteria: the intertextuality manifesto; discourse representation, prior assumption; denial; irony; interdiscursivity; intertextuality and changes and intertextuality, unity and the subject. (Fairclough N., 1993).

Intertextuality of the public discourse of political parties

Intertextuality is used when a statement previously made by oneself or another person is explained, augmenting it or disputing it. Representatives of political parties augment or dispute statements in order to present their position in regard to the issue under consideration more successfully and to present the opinions of the opposing position in a more negative light. Discourse representations take place using certain words that depict an idea more powerfully; for example, by declining to comment on assumptions and emotions. The use of such statements draws a line in the sand in relation to the previous statement, pointing to one's non-engagement.

Intertextuality is used to clarify some problem. For example, in describing how current events will also make problems that were not previously resolved more serious. Thus, discourses in rhetoric can highlight previously unresolved problem, linking them to current issues on the agenda at the given moment.

Prior assumptions:
- *The Party "Jaunais laiks" (New Era), Linda Mūrniece, "The deputy of the chairman of the service is the long-standing member of "Latvijas ceļš" (Latvia's Way), Andrejs Panteļējevs. It is possible that he is not the only member of the Prime Minister's party working for this body, and thus there will be no desire to liquidate it. Moreover, at the same time, Panteļējevs is also the advisor to Saeima Chairman, Gundars Daudze on security matters. Doubts arise as to whether Panteļējevs is sufficiently burdened by this current job if he can combine two such important positions," (Usefulness of Information Analysis Service to be assessed, 29 November 2008) Latvijas Avīze).*

Prior assumptions are formed based on the assumed knowledge and experience of the speaker. Fairclough points out that knowledge is not always individual; there is also knowledge based on general views and assumptions. General assumptions can be explained as generally accepted knowledge; for example, the sun rises in the morning. Prior assumptions are a way of including another text so that it can provide the basis on which to form one's opinion.

Assumptions are sometimes used to intimidate and thus change the opinion of people with a different viewpoint. Given that the rhetoric of intimidation is often used in discourses under analysis; based on Michel Foucault's theory power in which one of the characteristic elements of discourses is intimidation, Fairclough's list of factors will be augmented with intimidation.

Intimidation:
- *The Party "Latvijas pirmā partija" (Latvia's First Party), Ainārs Šlesers, "The State President is well aware of what is happening globally, where there is an economic recession. If anybody tries to speculate with the dissolution of the Saeima in this situation, then the country can expect extremely difficult times" (All possibilities also mean dissolution of the Saeima (28 November 2008) Diena).*

In Foucault's theory of power, intimidation is understood to be a concept that links presentation and domination. Intimidation is a form of self-presentation: presentation, with the assistance of which both sides want to show the other that they are ready to fight and will not back down; in which both sides show that they are ready to achieve or retain the dominant position. (Hobbes T., 1991). During the course of intimidation, the balance of power can change, but domination does not occur, because, if the intimidation strategy is used, this points to the fact that both sides are strong enough to changes the existing situation. The rhetoric of intimidation is used to justify one's position and preserve the status quo or to change it. Pointing out that if the course set at the given moment is not maintained and stability will be threatened if it is not supported, is a way of justifying one's role and place in the specific situation.

Irony:
- *The Party "Jaunais Laiks" (New Era), Dzintars Zakis: "The Government of Godmanis once again showed that their understanding of the rule of law state is very different from the normal understanding of these words" (Why have Godmanis and Slakteris escaped from journalists? (26 November 2008) Telegraf).*

Irony as a factor that collates statement, which to a certain degree articulate a negative attitude towards some other statement, express anger, convey sarcasm, etc. Irony is used by representatives of political parties to characterise statements by representatives of opposing parties in an emotional light, thus pointing to their absurdity. Irony is like an echo of opinions expressed by others. Words are used which reduce the importance of other statements and question the compatibility of other opinions with the perception of normality prevalent within society. In this instance, irony is interwoven with a prior assumption, because some concept of normality is assumed within the statement.

Metadiscourse:
- *The Party "Saskaņas centrs" (Harmony Centre), Jānis Urbanovičs: "On Thursday, we proposed convening an extraordinary session of Parliament and talking about the situation within the financial system. Unfortunately, the government followed the course of illegal problem solving. On Saturday night, behind closed doors, they*

were making decisions, which in my opinion go beyond the competence of the government, and now they will ask Parliament to decide on their legitimacy. Nobody informed us; moreover, I think that the ruling parties are also not aware of anything. The question of budget approval in such a situation is simply ridiculous - how can this be done without having a complete picture of the financial situation in the country." (The deputies are unaware of "The Lord's Supper" (10 November 2008) Telegraf).

Metadiscourse is used to set oneself apart from the statements made by oneself and others on various levels, adopting an attitude towards this division as if it were something strange and external. For example, metadiscourse can be used in instances when one must describe one's level of participation in the making of a certain decision, particularly if this has occurred within the framework of the group to which the author of the statement belongs. Thus, the course of events is mentioned in order to highlight the denial or absence of one's participation, and intertextuality is used in referring to historical events that have influenced the current situation.

Modality:

- *The Party "Saskaņas centrs" (Harmony Centre) Nils Ušakovs: "If it were not for the crisis, nobody would pay attention to the fact that the officials here receive up to 14 annual bonuses! If it were not for the crisis, all these political commissars in the councils and boards would continue to receive fantastic salaries. The crisis should help us – there is nobody else! - to unite society. The crisis does not divide people by nationality, and we must use this "special moment" ("Harmony Centre": a step away from power... (1 December 2008) Vesti segodnja).*

According to Fairclough's theory, modality is a factor that designates that something is being assumed as a fact, even though it actually only serves as an interpretation of various facts. Modality characterises statements that form the interpretation for events by assuming that this is how things would have occurred if some additional circumstances had not developed. Statements of this nature allow all parties involved in the situation to carry out their own presentation or to present the negligence of their opponent.

The agenda:

- *The alliance "Zaļo and zemnieku savienība" (Union of Greens and Farmers), Gundars Daudze, "But the question is whether the debaters want to arrive at the truth or simply want to raise their political rating, by noisily announcing – look how bad things are for us and it's going to get worse straight away. I have justified suspicions that the initiators of the demand will only cause a commotion, instead of proposing solutions." (Daudze: the ball is in the government's court (4 December 2008) Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze)*

Naming the agenda points to the holder of power, because naming the agenda is one of the means of control characteristic of authority. Control also entails assessment and comparison of other statements with the general position of authority on the issue concerned. Assessment of statements is used by holders of power to reduce the chances of the discourse of ruling parties being assessed as unsuitable for the given situation, by augmenting a viewpoint with one's statements as to what would be the best course of action, thus aligning statements in a position closer to those held by representatives of those in positions of authority.

Metaphors:

- *The Party "Sabiedrība citai politikai" (the Society for Political Change), Aigars Štokenbergs: "The leader of our government uses exactly the same rhetoric as a leader of a gang of racketeers" (A expensive price for the government's indiscretion (12 December 2008) Latvijas Avīze)*

Metaphors can be found in various texts and by selecting certain metaphors, a person highlights a specific social environment and creates the social reality in which he finds himself. Metaphors characterise knowledge systems and are used by people day-to-day. Metaphors are used by political representatives to assess the viewpoints of their opponents emotionally by describing such viewpoints using phrases that are easily understood by society and provide a wealth of information about a viewpoint using just a few words.

Kindness:

- *LR President, Valdis Zatlers: "We always need unity so that we can work together for Latvia. This year highlights serious challenges for us which we must overcome together." (The situation demands greater unity (7 January 2009) Latvijas Avīze)*

Kindness is used to acknowledge and maintain certain relationships. Using kindness can be used to describe statements which attempt to create a pleasant environment, thus achieving a certain result. In examples, it is noticeable that the use of the idea of unity denotes attempts to achieve pleasant feelings within society pointing to a feeling held by the whole community which could resolve current problems. In this case, the goal is stability, but the means of achieving it is through a sense of unity within society nd would not encourage opposition, which could be caused by complicated economic conditions and decisions that have to be made in relation to them.

Negative statements:

- *The Party "Tautas partija" (People's Party), Jānis Lagzdiņš: "The generation of politicians currently in power has lost the trust of society; I don't hold out any hope that it will be able to significantly increase it; accordingly, it will be hard for current politicians to persuade society about the usefulness of the actions required." (Which trends will dominate politics this year?(2 January 2009) Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze).*

Negative statements are prior assumptions that dispute and deny other texts.

Formulation:

- *The Party "Latvijas pirmā partija" (Latvia's First Party) Ivars Godmanis: "Crisis? There is no crisis for the time being. This is a hasty assessment of the situation by politicians and journalists", "A crisis only exists when everybody – everybody! – feels it" (Godmanis: there is no crisis in the crisis (27 December 2008) Vesti segodnja).*

One of the forms of representation of discourses is formulation of concepts. Formulation is a means of creating a certain truth. Formulation provides the basis for discussion, because if the parties can agree on a common definition of an issue, it then becomes possible to form a dialogue within the framework of a certain discussion. Use of a certain formation strengthens one of the positions involved in the debate and is related to power. Formulating a certain understanding of

an issue leads to the formation of the truth. In turn, if the listener considers it to be convincing, naming the truth can help its proponent to win supporters. Naming definitions as an explanation for concepts and understanding of such is also one of the forms of formulation, e.g. understanding of the concept of democracy in the context of a specific issue.

Considering results of content unit analysis separately, based on the factors devised by Fairclough, it is noticeable that for the most part discourse positions form around two basic belief systems. The first system of belief entails retention of existing positions, whereas the second belief system entails a change in the current situation. Formulation, which would make it possible to arrive at a common solution, is formed around presentation of one's positions and clarification one's truth, but not on creating a dialogue that is based on a common understanding of concepts. The representatives of Latvia's political parties use all the form of rhetorical structure to engage in the battle for power.

A trend has been observed, whereby irony is used, which points to emotionally saturated relationships. Irony is manifested not only through sarcastic statements, but also through personal insults. The response of the other party to this is to avoid commenting on such emotions.

Conclusions

Rawls points out that politicians must try to obtain a united political concept which will be perceived by all, regardless of differing and competing beliefs about what is good. (Rawls J, 2005). Analysing Latvia's political situation, one aspect of the rhetoric of politicians that can be observed is their reluctance to engage in a dialogue, within the framework of which they would review their own position and seek consensus. Studying the rhetoric of politicians, one can observe behaviour that is reminiscent of the model of egoistical behaviours in ethics, because in studying the structure of the discourse, one can observe the structure of rhetoric in which one's interests and interpretation of events are emphasised, as well as one's own way of acting, rarely associating oneself with other social groups. Statements related to the problems of the financial crisis are formulated within the paradigm "my opinion" which is relevant and important. T.Tännsjö describes egoism as 'collective idiocy', because worse decisions are made by adhering to the postulation of ethical egoism than would be made if another moral theory were to be implemented. (Tännsjö T., 2002). According to the beliefs of Habermas, mutual understanding motivated by rationality is required to obtain a solution to conflicts and all those involved must participate in obtaining a better solution. (Habermas J., 1991). However, intertextual analysis of Latvia's politicians shows that mutual cooperation is hindered by the imposition of subjective formulations, dominant trends, irony and metaphors. Accordingly, there is no basis on which to form a dialogue. A dialogue can ensure that the beliefs of politicians are not shaped by social injustice and, if nevertheless, politicians are unable to survive the discipline of liberal negotiation, this can be considered to be political prejudice and must be forsaken (Ackerman B.A., 1980). Misak also points outs that in the desire to obtain truth, one should try to subject the viewpoints regarding truth to experience and arguments to discover more quickly whether they still hold true. (Misak C., 2000).

Latvian society experienced a double loss of autonomy, because it could no longer trust the information provided by politicians. Political players continued electoral battle strategies in resolving the problems caused by the economic crisis and the general public detected this in the public rhetoric of politicians. Society felt the financial problems caused by the crisis, and observed how politicians each represent their own opinion to continue the battle for power, but do not unite behind a policy that serves state welfare and do not fulfil the roles and duties entrusted to them. As a result, society demanded the dissolution of the Saeima.

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