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Schneider, U., & Eitelmann, M. (Eds.). (2020). *Linguistic Inquiries into Donald Trump's Language: From 'Fake News' to 'Tremendous Success'*. Bloomsbury Academic. 272 pages; ISBN: 9781350115514; £100 (hbk), £28.99 (pbk), £26.09 (e-book).

The book explores the language used by Donald Trump from various linguistic perspectives and covers different types of texts, from tweets and spontaneous speech to presidential debates. Matthias Eitelmann and Ulrike Schneider underline in the *Introduction* the interest shown in Donald Trump's speech, linking it to persuasion, which plays a major part in politics. *How* and *what* is said in political discourse is part of a politician's rhetorical style. And this politician's rhetoric is considered (by the media) non-presidential. Therefore, the aim of the book is to address several ideas about Trump's language as well as analyze it from the perspective of 21st century politics, where political norms seem to have changed.

Part I, entitled *Rhetoric and Repetition*, includes three chapters on Trump's linguistic style, repetition, and coherence. Jesse Egbert and Douglas Biber use a corpus of transcripts from every election since 1960 to compare Trump's discourse to that of other presidential candidates. The corpus thus created contains more than 400,000 words. The differences are then analyzed both for their semantic and lexico-grammatical features, concluding that his discourse is 'highly repetitive' (p. 37) even though 'he used many more distinctive words than his opponent' (ibid.). His style includes 'simplified language, a colloquial tone, impersonal stance, and an involved style' (p. 38), which is unlike that of other presidential candidates. In the next chapter, Kristina Nilsson Björkenstam and Gintarė Grigonytė analyze repetition in Trump's and Clinton's speeches, showing that he uses it more often, especially in more informal settings. The authors show that some of these repetitions are used for emphasis, and some for self-corrections. Another key finding is that

Trump's discourse makes common ground necessary for the understanding of some of the references used (for instance, the ambiguous use of pronouns: the pronoun *she* used without context in the discourse or the preceding part – but the hearers are able to infer that he refers to Hillary Clinton). Next, Patricia Ronan and Gerold Schneider analyze age factors and coherence (pronouns, lexical and syntactic features) in Trump's spontaneous speech, based on a corpus going back to 1980, using an interview by President Obama for comparison. The results show that Trump's language could be related to the aging process, but could also be explained in terms of stress, for example. Interestingly, even though speakers tend to enrich their vocabulary with age, this was not the case with Trump's discourse.

Part II, *Evaluation and Emotion*, includes three chapters on intensifiers, nicknames, and *the*-plurals used by Trump. Ulrike Stange analyzes Trump's use of intensifiers based on corpus data drawn from his tweets and remarks, as well as from the COCA corpus, Pence's remarks, and tweets from the Democrats for comparison. Trump's use of intensifiers (the top five are *very*, *so*, *really*, *too*, and *totally*) suggests that his speech is indeed 'very informal and emotionally loaded' (p. 105). The author's findings support an old-fashioned use of *totally*, but an original use of *so*, combined with non-scalar adjectives. Jukka Tyrkkö and Irina Frisk look at Trump's use of nicknames in a corpus of his tweets from 2009 to 2018. They present different categories, both semantic and pragmatic, regarding the features highlighted by these nicknames, while also discussing the differences between male and female referents: one significant finding is that despite general belief, Trump's nicknames targeted men much more frequently than women (p.126). Ulrike Schneider and Kristene K. McClure explore Trump's use of *the*-plurals using Acton's (2019) study and claims that *the* is a marker of distance and othering. The corpora analyzed include his Twitter account as well as *factba.se*, a website that provides transcripts of Trump's speeches and interviews. First, they look at the number of times *the*-plurals are used with words such as *Democrats* and *Republicans*, concluding these are used as othering devices. But this usage is different for the data concerning *Latinos* and *Hispanics*, since Trump does not use *the*-plurals (instead of bare plurals) with negative statements (p.148). However, he does so with comments regarding *Democrats* (used with both *the*-plural and bare plural).

Part III is on *Discourse and Metaphor* and includes four chapters on the WARLIKE COMPETITION METAPHOR, the environment, Trump's use of 'fake news', and apologies. Anthony Koth analyzes the metaphor BUSINESS/POLITICS IS WARLIKE COMPETITION, using a corpus of candidacy announcements and debates for all the candidates who ran for the 2016 election, focusing on Trump's use of the COMPETITION metaphor. The analysis shows that Trump uses this metaphor more frequently because it allows reducing complex issues to a win-loss relationship as well as an US VERSUS THEM mentality, targeting his opponents (showing contempt). Marta Degani and Alexander Onysko discuss the way the *environment* is framed in Trump's discourse. The authors used the government website 'Energy & Environment', looking at discursive strategies as well as conceptual metaphors. These strategies include avoidance, self-appraisal, denigration, the use of oxymoronic collocations (such as 'clean coal'), etc., concluding it is completely opposed to scientific

evidence regarding global warming. Christoph Schubert looks at delegitimization via Trump's construal of fakeness (by the expression 'fake news' or accusing others of lying). The corpus comprises eleven Republican primary debates in which all accusations of lies and fakeness by Trump are identified. These may concern the news media or other presidential candidates (i.e., Trump's adversaries). Schubert explains the different techniques used for delegitimizing the others while highlighting his own credibility. In the fourth chapter of this part, Jan David Hauck and Teruko Vida Mitsuhara explore apologies used by Trump as a running presidential candidate after the Access Hollywood tape. The chapter explores the apology as Christian Testimonial (p. 219) in US politics where the person apologizing publicly has to present a narrative of split self (the one that sinned in the past and the redeemed one in the present). The analysis shows that Trump does not present a split self, but rather a split from other politicians or an image of himself as a victim ('Everyman-as-victim', p. 230).

The last part, Part IV, includes the *Conclusion*, in which Ulrike Schneider and Matthias Eitelmann debate on the issue of populism in Trump's discourse based on the analyses and findings of the previous chapters. The authors conduct a linguistic analysis of populism as an ideology (based on Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser's (2012) definition of the concept) and derive twelve hypotheses from previous research on the topic, which they then discuss one by one. They suggest that Trump uses 'rhetorically populist' (p. 249) discourse, rather than populist politics.

Every chapter in this book highlights the fact that Trump's discourse is distinctive, underlining a change in political discourse in general. The book addresses Trump's discourse from different perspectives (repetitions, intensifiers, metaphor, implicature, etc.) and sources (his Twitter account, government websites, political debates, speeches, etc.). Through these, it presents a very thorough understanding of the way language is used for political purposes. The many comparisons to other politicians' use of discourse make these findings that more relevant. For example, the last chapter (*Conclusion*) makes a parallel between advertising and politics, drawing from Trump's experience as a host for the TV show *The Apprentice*, which is significant for the way political discourse has changed and the way it influences public perception: political discourse in the Trump era is closely linked to advertising — it has to be catchy and generate an emotional response from the audience.

The use of different tools (LancsBox, Varseta, for instance) for corpus linguistic analyses offers solid evidence for all the questions asked. It also makes the book relevant to students and professors of linguistics, media studies, cultural studies, etc., as well as anybody who is interested in politics or (critical) discourse analysis, for example. Some of the analyses presented here can be used in undergraduate and postgraduate classes as a basis for similar investigations. Some background knowledge is necessary for some of the discussions in this book (collocations or Multiple Correspondence Analysis, for example), but any student who is familiar with corpus analysis (COCA, for instance) will not have any trouble following the arguments presented.

The book offers a wide range of questions and answers regarding language use and manipulation of the public through different channels. That is why the book is an important step into understanding many issues today, ranging from public opinion to public responsibility, and into understanding the role that language plays in people's lives and the way that it is used by those in power.

References

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