Translating Topoi in Zelensky's Political Speeches during Russia-Ukraine war into Arabic

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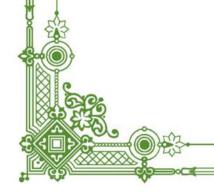
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Abstract

Topoi, the plural of which is topoi, is a vital tool used in the development of argumentation in political discourse. It is a fundamental component of any political speech, utilized to either persuade individuals, showcase a politician's dominance, or produce successful speeches. The current paper aims to discuss the concept of topoi as an integral part of political discourse. Furthermore, it seeks to investigate the employment of topoi in the political speeches of President Zelensky of Ukraine during Russia's war against Ukraine in various European conferences. Additionally, the paper reveals how Zelensky leverages topoi in his speeches to address this situation. The methodology of analysis utilized in this study is Ruth Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach (2009), which is designed to systematically integrate all the available background information in the analysis and interpretation of the multiple layers of written or spoken texts. Data for this research have been rendered by M.A. students in the department of translation at the College of Arts, University of Tikrit. The translational model proposed by Newmark (1988) is also employed. **Keywords: Topoi, Strategies, Argumentation**

الملخص

توبوي ، والجمع هو توبوي ، هي أداة حيوية تستخدم في تطوير الجدل في الخطاب السياسي. وهي تعتبر عنصر أساسي في أي خطاب سياسي ، يستخدم إما لإقناع الأفراد ، أو إظهار هيمنة السياسي ، أو إنتاج خطب ناجحة. وتهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى مناقشة مفهوم توبوي كجزء لا يتجزأ من الخطاب السياسي. بالإضافة الى ذلك، تهدف الدراسة إلى التحقيق في توظيف توبوي في الخطب السياسية للرئيس الاوكرانس زيلينسكي من خلال حرب روسيا ضد أوكرانيا في مختلف خطاباته في المؤتمرات الأوروبية. ايضاً، يتطرق البحث الى كيفية يستفيد زيلينسكي من توبوي في خطاباته لمعالجة هذا الوضع. منهجية التحليل المستخدمة في هذه الدراسة هي نهج الخطاب التاريخي لروث وداك (٢٠٠٩) ، والذي تم تصميمه لدمج جميع المعلومات الأساسية المتاحة بشكل منهجي في تحليل وتفسير الطبقات المتعددة للنصوص المكتوبة أو المنطوقة. تم أخذ بيانات هذا البحث من قبل طلاب الماجستير في قسم الترجمة في كلية الآداب بجامعة تكريت. كما تم استخدام نموذج الترجمة الذي اقترحه نيومارك (١٩٨٨). الكلمات المفتاحية: **توبوي ، استراتيجيات ، جدل.**

What is a Critical Discourse Analysis

Since the late 1970s, subfields of discourse analysis have developed, especially speech act theory. In the humanities and social sciences, ethnography and CDA are regarded the most important. CDA researchers are able to generate appropriate and important findings regarding how speech reproduces and resists social and political change, inequality, power abuse, and dominance. Social practice is a sort of discourse (Fairclough, 1989:66).

Fairclough (ibid.) claims that linguistic usage encodes and propagates ideological practices. CDA's primary objective is to uncover concealed ideology in text and speech because lexis is the way of transferring power and ideology from one group or nation to another.

Critical Speech Analysis (CSA) is a key tendency of DA, primarily basing its foundations on the Marxist notion that "certain groups in the society have more power than others, and oppression is transmitted via discourse" (Wiggins, 2009:3). Its importance results from the focus of CDA studies on using language to shed light on power imbalance, abuse, and ideological conflict in social context.

The approach of analysis known as CDA focuses on power and ideology (Fairclough, 2012:19). It is a technique that looks at all facets of language usage in social or a political context. According to Unvar and Rahimi (2013:90), CDA has provided techniques for the empirical investigation of the connections between discourse, social and cultural advancements in a variety of social domains.

van Dijk (1998:33) describes CDA as a type of research that analyzes discourse and text within the societal and political context to uncover, reinforce, and enact power abuse, power imbalances, and discrimination. This implies that CDA emphasizes on decoding text's latent meaning and on how the speaker or writer, often of dominant groups, utilizes their authoritative stance to influence the perspectives and actions of others into adopting their opinion. In his book, Fairclough (1989:68) develops a framework that comprises three dimensions: description, interpretation, and explanation, to scrutinize the ideology in political debates. His approach draws from Halliday's Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL) method to elucidate the relationships that exist among language, discourse, and society in the linguistic theory and analytical method (Halliday, 1979:91).

Wodak's (2009) Discourse Historical Approach

The Discourse Historical Approach (DHA), as explicated by Reisigl (2017:48-59), is a form of interdisciplinary approach that has deep foundations in linguistics. Contrary to popular belief, discourse analysis is not considered to be merely a method of language analysis, but instead, it is viewed as a multifaceted enterprise that encompasses methodology, theory, and research practice. On occasion, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) can serve as a valuable linguistic resource. DHA is concerned with a broad array of discourse-related topics, such as discourse and discrimination, language barriers across various social institutions, discourse and politics, discourse and identity, discourse and history, discourse in media, and discourse and ecology. It should be noted that the approach does not concentrate solely on the historical dimension of discourses.

Reisigl and Wodak (2009:97) confirm that the focus of linguists is on the intertextual and interdiscursive connections that exist between discourses, genres, and texts, and how these connections evolve in response to sociopolitical change. Intertextuality, which pertains to the relationship between texts of different temporal periods, plays a crucial role in this regard. These linkages are established through various means, including explicit references to a particular topic or principal actor, allusions or evocations, and the transfer of key ideas from one text to another (ibid. 33).

According to Engstrom (2013:10), discourse "never exist in isolation but are entangled in intricate networks, known as interdiscursivity". Discourses are connected to one another in a variety of ways. There are open and hybrid discourses. A discourse subject is connected to and may relate to a topic of another discourse; additional subtopics may be added at any moment. according to Reisigl and Wodak (2009:90) state that "A discussion about a certain subject may begin in one area of activity and move via another. Then, discourses "spread" to various fields and interact with or overlap with one another".

The Notion of Topoi in English

Topoi assists the speaker in developing an argument based on the problem at hand. They also aid in both positive and negative self-presentation (Wodak et al., 2009:143). The functions of topoi in speeches can help to clarify the concept of topoi. In the reasoning process, topos is defined as "a point of view or a concept." Another definition emphasizes topoi as argumentation methods in literature. However, things become harder when we try to figure out what the(se) strategies are. Topoi, on the other hand, are "means for obtaining the upper hand and creating positive speeches" (Rubinelli, 2009:32).

According to Wodak (2015:5-7), the concept of Topoi may be comprehended as seeking formulas that explicate how and where to locate arguments. Conversely, Topoi function as warrants that ensure the progression from argument to conclusion. It may be perplexing for some individuals to comprehend how Topoi can serve as both warrants and thoughts. However, as Zagar (2009:48) asserts, warrants transcend the realm of mere ideas and necessitate more than a mere conceptualization to facilitate the transition from an argument to a conclusion. While ideas lack a mechanism, warrants possess one that permits the connection of the argument and the conclusion.

Due to Krzyzanowski (2010:85), topoi are certain argument headers that provide a summary of the argument and also furnish it with the necessary 'skeleton', which is further developed by related discourse components. The investigation aims to identify the relationships between the degree of mapping of the contents (i.e., themes) and the argument schemes (i.e., topoi) utilized, as well as their relationship to language features. Consequently, many scholars concur that topoi are argument methods utilized to convince individuals with the best conclusions or promises they offer.

The Role of Topoi in Discourse-Historical Approach

DHA approach is explicated due to its ability to furnish a sturdy assemblage of discourse constructions and a heuristic framework that facilitates an empirical and systematic analysis of significant themes in political debates (Wodak, 2015:198). One of the most prominent theories in the field of CDA/PDA is the DHA. Wodak (ibid) and other researchers develop this theory to incorporate systematically all relevant background information in the analysis and explanation of multiple levels of a written or spoken text.

DHA is created to characterize circumstances where language is used by persons in authority, as well as to trace prejudiced discourses. As a result, one of the DHA's most notable defining characteristics is its attempt to work interdisciplinarily, multi-methodologically, and on the source of a number of different empirical data as well as background knowledge (Tenerio, 2011:191). DHA was chosen as the analytical tool in this work because it is meant to systematically integrate all available background information in the analysis and

interpretation of the numerous levels of written or spoken texts. Topoi can be summarized as follows by Wodak's DHA (2015:42):

1. Topoi are essential components of any political speech because of their persuasive role.

2. They use logic to defend positive and negative attribution.

3. They are argumentation components that pertain to an argument's obligatory premises, whether the argumentation is explicit or implicit.

4. They are full of generic significant ideas from which specific claims or arguments might be derived.

Topoi are tools used in argumentation because DHA is interested in assessing the substance of argumentation schemes and emphasizes the need of mapping out sound or fallacious argumentation (Okulska and Cap, 2011:251). Furthermore, activating various topoi produces specific arguments potency and argumentative directions.

Argumentation Strategy

Wodak (2009:42) elaborates that this strategy is delineated as a deliberate and precise array of measures, comprising of discursive practices, that are established with the intention of accomplishing a particular linguistic, social, political, or psychological goal. Reisigl and Wodak (2009:104) suggest that argumentation techniques and a fund of topoi are used to justify and ascribe good and negative qualities, discrimination, inclusion, exclusion, and suppression to interstate relations (Wodak, 2009:42). Topoi refer to reasoning components that pertain to the necessary premises, whether they are explicitly stated or can be inferred. These components serve to validate the change from the argument or arguments to the deduction (Kienpointner and Kindt, 1997:562).

Wodak (2009:202) believes that argumentation strategy and topoi can be used to discuss various forms of prejudice and polarization. These topoi are related to the content and are required for the conclusion rules. They link the arguments to the conclusion (ibid.).

Sorts of Topoi

The concept of topos advantage is defined as an action that is positive and beneficial, prompting the individual to act accordingly. Conversely, the topos of disadvantage is based on the opposite premise. In the event that an action, name, individual, or object is labeled or assigned a certain trait, quality, or attribute, the topos of definition is fulfilled (Wodak, 2009:208).

The topos of danger or threat: whether an individual takes action against a particular risk or threat. Humanitarianism's topos might be expressed as a conditional: if a political activity conforms or does not conform to human rights, it should or should not be carried out (ibid.:211).

The concept of justice topos is founded on the principle of equal rights for all, while responsibility can be characterized by the conditional statement that if a state or group is accountable for certain problems, it is imperative for them to take action in finding solutions. In cases where specific problems burden an individual, it is advisable to take necessary steps to alleviate such obligations. The financial aspect, on the other hand, dictates that if an item costs too much or results in a loss of revenue, efforts should be made to reduce expenses or avoid such losses (Wodak, 2009:211).

The concept of reality's topos is considered tautological., in that the nature of reality necessitates a specific course of action. When there is a correlation between numerical data and a specific topos, appropriate action must be taken. The topos of law and right commands respect to legal prescriptions and proscriptions. The topos of history posits that different cultural groups encounter specific challenges in particular contexts. Although the topos of culture evinces a degree of cultural relativism, it is justified by the argumentative scheme that posits cultural invariance. Lastly, the topos of abuse is encapsulated by the conclusion rule that dictates that any misapplication of rights or aid warrants a change in course or outright revocation of said aid (Wodak 2015:124).

Wodak (2015:44) lists nine topoi that the speaker can use to deal with problems during an argument. All of those topoi take part in both positive and negative self-presentation. This means that the speaker can show himself/herself positively while portraying the opponent poorly. The topoi are as follows:

1. Topos of burdening: the speaker attempts to reduce and minimize the problems that his government or institution faces.

2. Reality topos: Politicians rarely discuss reality. Despite this, the speaker frequently attempts to discuss reality in political activity.

3. Topos of numbers: numbers are employed in justification during an argument to support the evidence presented.

4. Topos of history: history provides insight into the cause and effect relationship between specific actions and their respective consequences. Consequently, the speaker can employ this rhetorical strategy, known as topos, to effectively present themselves in a favorable light.

5. Topos of authority: This topos validates the proposed action or decision.

6. Threat topos: The speaker may use this topos to justify taking the required steps to reduce any form of danger.

7. Definition topos: a person or object denoted by the label X ought to possess the characteristics, behaviors, and attributes that align with the signification of X.

8. Topos of justice: if persons/actions/situations are equal in some sense, they should be treated/dealt with similarly.

9. Topos of urgency: decisions and exercises should be made/found/finished extremely quick because of an outer, critical, and unchangeable occasion unchangeable as far as one might be concerned and obligation (Wodak,2015:145).

Methodology & Data Analysis

Based on Wodak's (2009) DHA, the data will be analyzed specifically with a focus on Zelensky's speeches' topoi strategies, which reflect his political speech concerns regarding Russia's war against Ukraine in many conferences' speeches. The discourse conveyed by Zelensky in many events before numerous European parliaments. The sample consists of 15 M.A students in the department of translation/ College of Arts/ University of Tikrit.

ST:

"I am almost 45 years old. Today my life stopped when the hearts of more than 100 children stopped beating. <u>I don't see any sense in life if it can't stop death. This is my mission as the leader of my people. and as the leader of my nation.</u>"(www.kyivpost.com)

TT:

1- لا أرى أي معنى للحياة إذا لم يتوقف الموت. هذه مهمتي كزعيم لشعبي وأمتي.

2- لا ارى اي طعم للحياة إذا لم أستطع ايقاف القتل فهذه مهمتي كقائد لشعبي وأمتي.

3- لا معنى للحياة إذا لم يتم إيقاف الموت. هذه هي مهمتي كزعيم لشعبي.

4- لا أرى أي معنى في الحياة إذا هي لم تستطع إيقاف الموت. هذه هي مهمتي كزعيم لشعبي.

5- لا أرى اي مغزى من الحياة إذا كانت لا توقف القتل. هذه مهمتي كقائد لشعبي ولأمتي.

6- لا أجد أي سبباً منطقياً لنحيا إذا يتوقف الموت. هذه هي مهمتي كقائد لشعبي.

7- لا يوجد حياة إذا لم يكن بإمكانها إيقاف الموت. هذه هي مهمتي كقائد لشعبي وكقائد أمتي.

8- انا لا ارى اي معنى في الحياة إذا انها لم توقف هذا الموت. هذه مهمتي كقائد لشعبي ولامتي.

9- لم اعد اشعر بالحياة إذا لم يكن بإمكانها إيقاف الموت. هذه هي مهمتي كقائد لشعبي.

10- لا أرى أنها معقولة في الحياة انها لا تستطيع إيقاف الموت، هذه مهمتي كقائد لشعبي وقائد لأمتي.

11- لا أرى أي معنى للحياة إذا لم يتوقف الموت. هذه مهمتي كزعيم لشعبي وأمتي.

12- لا أرى أي معنى لهذه الحياة ما لم يتوقف الموت. هذه هي مهمتي كزعيم لشعبي وأمتي.

13- لا معنى للحياة إذا لم تتوقف الحرب.

14- وهل هنالك طعم للحياة وهنالك الموت الروسي.

15- كقائد لشعبي سوف أوقف الموت والا فلا معنى لحياتنا.

Category	Subcategory	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Appropriateness		+										+	+			
Problems of Translation	Cult.															+
	Gram.			+				+	+		+					
	Str.						+			+				+		
	Lex.		+		+	+	+		+					+	+	
Methods of Translation	Communicative												+			
	Semantic	+														
Types of Translation	Free Translation		+		+	+				+				+	+	+
	Idiomatic Translation															
	Adaption Translation															
	Faithful Translation						+					+				
	Literal Translation			+				+			+					
	Word-for-word Translation								+							
Subjects		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Discursive Strategies		argumentation	nomination													
ST2		" I don't	see any	sense in	life if it	can't	stop	death.	This is	my	mission	as the	leader of	my	people.	and as the leader of my nation."

Disc

A- Linguistically analysis:

Zelensky, in turn, works to present the image of the Ukrainian people as "citizens, freedom-loving, defending each other, paying the price, living a tragedy, and sacrificing their best men and women" (www.kyivpost.com). He does not forget to identify himself as "the leader of the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian nation", as he states during his speech to the US Congress on 16-3-2022. In this speech, Zelensky uses the topos of burden, one of the categories of argumentation strategy, which he wants to make clear to

the American Congress and the Ukrainian people that the danger to which his people, women and children, are exposed, he takes responsibility to rid them of it with the help of friends and allies. Also, he uses the deixis pronoun "I" which refers to where and when the expression happened and this strategy is nomination.

B- Translationally:

Subject (1) encounters difficulties in conveying the intended message due to lexical and grammatical trouble, particularly with the word "great," resulting in mistranslation when utilizing the free translation procedure. On the other hand, Subject (2) effectively renders the source text and preserves its meaning by employing the communicative translation method. Subject (3) fails to convey the intended meaning due to structural and lexical problems, with the addition of unnecessary words that have a negative impact on the translation while using a free translation procedure. Similarly, subject (4) does not produce an appropriate translation, encountering lexical problems while using a literal translation procedure and omitting certain words. Subject (5) encounters grammatical trouble while translating the sentence inaccurately and using word-for-word translation procedure. Similarly, Subject (6) fails to convey the intended meaning as they also struggled with handling the grammatical aspects of the source text, resulting in the use of free translation procedure. The accurate translation of the text is provided by Subject (7) who uses the semantic translation method. However, Subject (8) loses the intended meaning due to structural problems resulting in mistranslation. He uses the free translation procedure. Subject (9) fails to convey the intended message of the speaker due to lexical difficulties, resulting in a literal translation procedure. Also, Subject (10) faces a lexical error and cannot effectively convey the implied message, resorting to a free procedure of translation. In translating the intended meaning, Subject (11) emerges as the winner by using communicative translation method while Subject (12) mistranslates the meaning due to grammatical problem and using the adaption translation procedure. Subject (13) provides the intended message of the ST speaker, implying a semantic translation method. However, Subject (14) fails to convey the intended message due to a structural trouble (which is significant) that adversely affects the translation. He depends on free translation procedure. The correct translation is not rendered by Subject (15) due to a grammatical mistake and he uses of a free translation procedure.

The proposed translation is :

"**اذكركم** بكلمات امرأة عظيمة من كييف، التي تعرفوها جيدًا، **كلمات جولدا مائير**"

Table (1) presents an illustration of the proportion of successful and unsuccessful attempts in translating the chosen data. The subjects who were able to successfully render the texts accounted for a percentage of (20%), whereas those who failed to do so constituted a percentage of (80%). This finding indicates that the task of rendering the discursive strategies that involve topoi in political discourse is not a simple one, due to the numerous factors included, such as the differing levels of background knowledge between politicians and subjects, as well as the complex political repertoire utilized by the speaker, which may be unfamiliar to the subjects. (see Table 1).

Table (1): Percentage of appropriate translation of the speech

Total Subjects	Appropriate translations	Percentage
15	3	20%
	Inappropriate translation	Percentage
	12	80%
Total		100%

The translation methods used by the respondents differ in percentage terms. However, it seems that participants who are addicted to free translation methods (with a percentage of 7%) shows that translating discourse strategies in the source texts is very difficult and therefore respondents find it difficult to add or omit a word what to a translation leads to errors, so they try to change ST's point of view. Respondents didn't use idiomatic and adaption translation methods (0%). This is because the language of these texts, which heavily loaded with discursive topoi, is generally developed in a simple and easy understood language. Other methods are used, with percentages given before each method as follows: percentage of literal translations (20%), semantic (7%), communicative (7 %), faithful (13%),and word for word (7%). (see Table 2).

Table (2): The used methods of Translation

Methods	Used	Percentage
Word-for word Translation	1	7 %
Literal Translation	3	20 %
Faithful Translation	2	13 %
Semantic Translation	1	7 %
Adaption Translation	0	0 %
Idiomatic Translation	0	0%
Free Translation	7	47%
Communicative Translation	1	7%
	5	100%

It appears that the subjects are confronted with both structural (34%) and grammatical (31%) problems, with lexical (28%) and cultural (7%) issues following suit. As previously mentioned, texts that are laden with discursive strategies are characterized as being linguistically simplistic on the surface yet difficult to interpret due to their underlying intended meanings. It is evident that comprehending such texts requires a critical mind. The linguistic model employed to analyze the chosen text, discourse practice, and discourse historical practice, poses challenges for subjects in identifying both structural and grammatical issues related to the discursive strategies of the text. This demonstrates that despite the simplicity of the language used, the discursive strategies that underpin it are challenging to discern and comprehend. (see Table 3).

Table (3): The Subjects' spotted problems in translation speech

Problems of Translation	Used	Percentage
Structural	3	20 %
Grammatical	4	26 %
Lexical	7	47 %
Cultural	1	7 %
Total	15	100%

Based on the results that shown in tables 1,2, and 3) above, it can be concluded that M.A. students face challenges in translating topoi in Zelensky's political speeches. The difficulties consist of electing a suitable translation method, lack of cultural knowledge, and grammatical and structural problems.

Conclusions

The present research arrives to the following deductions:

1. Because it focuses on various variables in the discourses, the Discourse-Historical Approach is difficult to follow. Prior to beginning chipping away at this paper.

2. I accepted that Zelensky will zero in on horrifying act of Russian military which is viewed as a terrible memory to the Ukraine nation overall and attempts to keep away from the misrepresentations occurred previously yet he used the topos of weight just a single time. He only criticizes Russia and portrays himself positively as a leader who is tolerant.

3. In both his positive self-presentation and his negative other-presentation speeches, statistics and numbers were abundantly clear. Then again, topoi of troubling was used to European culture is liable for what befall his country.

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