STATEMENT OF OPINION

regarding the doctoral dissertation of Henrique Carlos Dores "Conceptual Metaphors and Pragmatic Context in Political Speeches (in Spanish and Portuguese)" for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in professional field 2.1. Philology, General and Comparative Linguistics (Pragmatics of Discourse).

written by Prof. Maxim Stamenov, DSc, from the Institute for Bulgarian Language, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, member of the scientific jury appointed by Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski's Rector's order № РД 38-87/12.02.2024.

1.   Information about the dissertation

The dissertation under review "Conceptual Metaphors and Pragmatic Context in Political Speeches (in Spanish and Portuguese)" consists of two volumes. The first volume consists of the text of the dissertation itself of 318 pp. There we find a bibliography of 160 publications in English, Spanish and Portuguese. The second volume includes a voluminous set of 23 Appendices (13 + 10 speeches) of 368 pp. that were used for the purposes of the dissertation as research materials.

As accompanying documentation on his scientific works, Henrique Dores has presented evidence on 5 research publications with topics related to the theme of his dissertation – one in a journal, three in Proceedings from scientific conferences with anonymous reviewing for acceptance and one in a collective volume.

2.   Evaluation of the thesis

The dissertation aims at imparting a heightened awareness regarding the strategic deployment of conceptual metaphors, recognised as persuasive and manipulative instruments within political discourse while considering the significance of contextual factors and their role in shaping these linguistic strategies. The significance of this endeavour resides in the meticulous cartography of conceptual metaphors within Spanish and Portuguese political discourse, while hoping to illuminate the motivations underpinning their utilisation and making apparent the indispensable role played by pragmatic context in moulding linguistic choices.

The work presents a comprehensive analysis of thirteen Spain's successful investiture speeches since the establishment of the rule of law in the country, and ten of the inauguration

speeches by Portugal's Prime Ministers since the first constitutional government. The findings encapsulate multifaceted aspects of political communication, such as historical context, conceptual metaphor usage, and different pragmatic considerations. The conclusions reached from the analysis of each leader s speeches contribute to a thorough understanding of the evolving political landscape and the strategic communications employed during critical junctures in Spanish and Portuguese history.

Foundational to this investigation is George Lakoff s Conceptual Metaphor Theory, which accentuates the key role of conceptual metaphors in shaping our comprehension of the world, and van Dijk s theoretical proposals regarding context, which consider how contextual factors influence the application and interpretation of these metaphors.

The main objectives of this doctoral investigation are shaped by a set of focal research questions that find their answers in the dissertation. The first inquiry addresses the presence of conceptual metaphors embedded within the speeches delivered by Spanish Presidents of the Government and Portuguese Prime Ministers. The second inquiry delves into the substantiation of these conceptual metaphors that form the basis of metaphorical expressions within the aforementioned speeches. The third question probes into the rationales and elucidations that can shed light on the identified conceptual metaphors within the corpus of speeches. The fourth question scrutinises the strategic intentions behind the employment of these conceptual metaphors, if indeed they are detected. The investigation widens its scope to discern disparities and affinities between the metaphors employed in the speeches of Portuguese Prime Ministers and Spanish Presidents of the Government. In addition, tracking the evolution of discourse, the author's intention is to find out whether there has been a discernible change in the selection of metaphors by Portuguese Prime Ministers and Spanish Presidents of the Government over the periods under analysis. The influence of context emerges as a critical aspect in the seventh research question, which queries whether there is any impact of context on the selection of the conceptual metaphors identified. Finally, the examination extends to whether context aids in explaining these conceptual metaphors and the purpose behind their utilisation.

Chapter 1 "Theoretical Framework" provides an overview of the theoretical basis that sustains this investigation, The structure of this theoretical framework serves as a scaffold for the subsequent chapters, aiming to provide a n encompassing and holistic understanding of the intricate connections between metaphor, context, cognitive linguistics, pragmatics, and the different junctures that they encounter. The orientation and presentation provided in this chapter are detailed and competent. Especially pertinent in this respect to the topic of the dissertation is the section dealing with "Conceptual Metaphor and Political Discourse", as political metaphors

are very useful in the communication and explanation of policy, for they frame arguments and suggest mental paths that lead to certain conclusions.

The main body of the dissertation is organised into three chapters. Chapter 2 is titled "Methodology" and includes the description of the methods, research questions, and the corpus of this inquiry. It lays down the different features of the methodological approach used in the investigation under discussion. The first part of this chapter consists of a description of the research corpus, which includes two custom built collections of speeches: ten inauguration speeches by Portuguese Prime Ministers and thirteen investiture speeches by Spanish Presidents of the Government, spanning from the establishment of constitutional governments in Portugal and Spain. The second part entails the description of the research questions and methods that orient this qualitative analysis, stressing the influence of Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) and the use of elements from pragmatics and rhetoric, to assist in the identification, explanation, and understanding of the purpose behind the use of any conceptual metaphors found, while exploring its differences and contextual influences. The final part of this chapter presents the definitions of the main concepts related to CMT (Conceptual Metaphor Theory), CMA (Critical Metaphor Analysis) and Pragmatics that were used in the dissertation.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to "Empirical Analysis : The Spanish Investiture Speeches". is dedicated to the practical analysis of the Spanish corpus and the contextual periods in which they were grouped. The main conclusions of this chapter are that the type of rhetoric used in the Spanish corpus is mostly the deliberative type due to the need to request parliamentary support and the higher speech act of persuasion that this entails. Although the Spanish investiture speeches also ponder the wider audience that it is not part of the parliament, i.e. the Spanish population, the knowledge management strategies must consider the fact that the primordial objective is to seek support from the chamber. Hence, the rhetoric must be mostly of a deliberative type, while a proficient knowledge management strategy should consider that there is a shared set of institutional and group beliefs between the speaker and the addressees, in this case, the elected members of *Congreso de los Diputados*.

The empirical analysis continues in Chapter 4 "Empirical Analysis: The Portuguese Inauguration Speeches". It uses the same structure of organisation as the previous chapter, grouping the speeches according to the contextual periods in which they occurred. Here, unlike the Spanish case, the speeches in the Portuguese corpus mostly employ an epideictic rhetoric, a fact that is justified by the celebrative formal nature of the act, which in this case does not entail the request for parliamentary and can afford to be directed at a much wider audience, to the entire country. The management of cultural and national knowledge is another prominent

feature that is influenced by the formal and contextual characteristics, as in the case of the Portuguese speeches, the main goal is to address a much wider audience, consisting of the Portuguese people, thus promoting the utilisation of these kinds of knowledge. This is illustrated by the higher prominence of cultural and national references that aim at tapping into nationalist and patriotic feelings.

The last chapter is dedicated to the Conclusions following from the research carried out in the dissertation. The most prominent among them come to establish two main metaphorical gestalts as rhetorical stances in terms of the ideological membership of the speaker and the alignment with the family based morality models. The parties more to the left of the political spectrum favouring the Nurturant Parent model, and the parties on the right opting for more often by the Strict Father morality tenets. This is a common feature in both the Portuguese and the Spanish corpus.

The main contributions of this dissertation in our judgement are as follows:

- The developed operational analytical model put in place from Charteris-Black's CMA, proved successful in supplementing Lakoff's theoretical framework and appropriately combined it with van Dijk's context models;
- The work carried out in the dissertation confirmed Jäkel's hypothesis of ubiquity, domain, focus and diachrony in Portuguese and Spanish political speeches;
- The influence of the different dimensions of context in the choice of metaphors, knowledge management strategies, type of rhetoric and framing is displayed and analysed during the exploration;
- The use of Critical Keyword Analysis and the incorporation of quantitative tools for use with the two custom-built corpora for the purposes of this dissertation became instrumental in its overall success;
- The investigation provides evidence that persuasion acts as a higher-order strategy that guides the selection of contextual dimensions constitutive of the intentional stance of the speaker.

3.   Conclusion

We can conclude that this comprehensive study contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of language in political communication, offering valuable insights into the strategies employed by leaders to navigate complex historical landscapes. The patterns identified in both Spanish and Portuguese speeches provide a foundation for future research on the intersection

of language, ideology, and political discourse in diverse cultural and historical settings. Based on all the above data and conclusions, I strongly recommend that Henrique Carlos Dores be awarded the educational and scientific degree of 'Doctor' in the professional field of 2.1. Philology, General and Comparative Linguistics (Pragmatics of Discourse).

15.04.2024   Signed:

Sofia

/M. Stamenov/