

Making the ends meet: The Word and Action in the Office of Ukraine's 1994-1999 President

The research adopts a cross-disciplinary approach to the identification of election pledges (linguistic analysis) and the verification of their fulfilment (political and legal analysis), both being qualitative.

Being at the heart of the election campaign, the Election Programme sets forth Candidate's aspirations and orientations for future policymaking, goals and objectives, and, most importantly, the ways of achieving the declared ends. As such, it needs to appeal to the diverse strata of the voting population.

The thesis is composed of three principal parts, namely:

1. Linguistics: Identification of election pledges
2. Political: President's powers to honour the promised
3. Legal: Identified election pledges vs President's legislative footprint

1. I aim to develop a lexical semantic framework for distinguishing and classifying election pledges (weakest-strongest scale) contained in the winning Candidate's Election Programme. This approach is new to the studies of election promises. The previous research on the topic included the Comparative Manifesto Project method, the studies of budgets/voting history/legislative heritage, the isolated promises, the platform and political discourse, the legislative texts and ministerial reports, the budgetary expenditures and draft legislation. The entire body of research on the subject has exclusively concerned the parliamentary systems (political parties).

I rely on Tesnière's verbocentric theory (Tesnière,1959) and employ Maslov-Vendler aspectual classification of verbs – states, activities, accomplishments, achievements – with the agentivity increment from Dowty/Paducheva (Maslov, 1948; Vendler, 1967; Dowty, 1979; Paducheva, 2009). The agentive statements (those made by the Agent-Candidate from the first person) of the Election Programme as opposed to the deagentivized ones are of the primary interest. I focus on the Candidate's lexical and semantic choices in portraying the desired actions and events in his Programme. Special attention is given to reflexive verbs (–SJA verbs), modal verbs and modality. The 1994 winning candidate's election programme is written in the Ukrainian language and counts a total of 764 words (of which 64 (9.7%) are the verbs and verb constructions).

A fair judgement on the accurate content of the promised is not always possible due to the length of the Election Programme under analysis. Of solid reference is the President's Statement to the Parliament of Ukraine delivered in October 1994 and entitled "On Fundamental Principles of Economic and Social Policies".

2. The purpose of the political analysis consists in establishing the scope of the presidential powers to meet the ends declared during the 1994 presidential campaign. The basis for such analysis is the 1978 USSR Constitution, the 1991 amendments, and the 1995 Constitutional Agreement.

3. The analysis of the legislative footprint will consist in considering in detail the legislative actions of the President to honour his campaign promises. The period under review is 1994-1999.