



## Language, Politics, and Power: Unveiling Putin's Annexation Narrative through Fairclough's Model

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**Abstract:** If used correctly, language can be a guiding force, allowing an individual to influence others and achieve the desired results. However, the power of language can be used by politicians, one of whom is President Putin, and that was evidenced during the annexation ceremony of the four Ukrainian regions by Russia. Thus, the purpose of this paper is a critical analysis of Putin's speech, and the author employed Fairclough's three-dimensional discourse analysis to investigate how language is used to control mass opinion and gain dominance. The study results show that President Putin successfully used rhetoric to encourage nationalism and patriotism among (nearly) all Russians who were not satisfied by the set of events in Ukraine. Moreover, politicians can achieve the desired results by using several linguistic features and rhetorical strategies, and since a series of geopolitical conflicts mark international relations, that issue is essential. On the other hand, a more accurate understanding of the language and its usage can be achieved through critical discourse analysis. Therefore, in this paper, the author uses Norman Fairclough's 3D Model of Critical Discourse Analysis to investigate President Putin's linguistic features and rhetoric to understand the interrelation between language, power, and political discourse in contemporary conflicts.

**Keywords:** Critical discourse analysis (CDA), Political discourse analysis (PDA), Fairclough's 3D model, Rhetorical strategies, Language and power, Sociolinguistics, Geopolitical conflicts, Putin's speech, Nationalism and patriotism, Sociopolitical dynamics

### 1. Introduction

The invasion of Ukraine conducted by the Russian military took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2022, and since then, the protracted war between Russia and Ukraine goes on. Insofar as the ongoing conflict affected the economies of both countries and the whole of the world, Small as it is, Ukraine suffered more significant losses due to the continuing war. Many Ukrainians left their motherland searching for a safe life and went to other countries. Moreover, today, Russia faces a profound financial and economic crisis. Many representatives of Western governments, particularly the United States government, strongly opposed Russia's actions and imposed sanctions. However, the war continued, and the two warring parties used all available resources to achieve victory. On the 30<sup>th</sup>

of September 2022, a ceremony was held in the St. George's Hall of the Grand Kremlin Palace to sign treaties on the inclusion of the Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics, as well as the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson territories, into Russia. During the ceremony, Mr. Vladimir Putin, Russia's President, delivered a considerably important speech. The significance of this speech lies in its ability to shed light on Putin's proactive measures and strategic objectives within the context of the ongoing geopolitical situation in the region. The analysis gives a good view of the annexation's reasons, arguments, and global significance. It is essential under the present conditions for several reasons. First, it presents an alternative assessment of the given event within the context of warfare politics. Second, it helps to understand Putin's position better. Third, it reveals the logic underpinning the annexation. Finally, the analysis provides a relatable example of how language may sway to win people over.

Political discourse analysis is a well-acknowledged area of discourse analysis that concentrates on analyzing politicians' speeches or writings in a political context. According to Van Dijk, political discourse is "doing things with words; using language in political contexts and within political activities by political actors and institutions which include speeches, debates, television programs, newspapers, magazines, radio broadcasts, meetings, conferences, private conversation, letters, the Internet and email". Political speech is the leading area of political communication. Politicians express their opinions, claim power, and create a sense of authority through their oratory. Politicians use rhetoric and style to influence, control, and dominate the public. A careful examination of these speeches is needed to reveal what the speaker attempts to conceal through various rhetorical devices. What occurs is revealed through discourse. Critical discourse analysis helps to understand the deliberate use and meaning of active and passive statements in a given social context. Van Dijk (2015) defines Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a study methodology that scrutinizes the manifestation, perpetuation, justification, and challenge of social power abuse and inequality through written and spoken language in the social and political sphere. The objective of CDA is to confront social disparity and advocate for social equity.

This study meticulously examines Putin's speech, administered during the annexation ceremony. Norman Fairclough's renowned CDA model, also known as Fairclough's 3D model, is the foundation for this study. Fairclough posits that all forms of communication can be understood as textual expressions resulting from production and social engagement. Three levels of analysis correspond to these three dimensions: description, interpretation, and social explanation. This study aims to get insight into the linguistic strategies employed by politicians. Therefore, we limit this work to only describing linguistic characteristics. This study investigates the linguistic characteristics employed in Putin's speech using the Fairclough 3D Model. The focus will be on how politicians employ language to accomplish their objectives. The primary focus of this study pertains to Putin's use of language to cultivate confidence and drive within his populace. This study additionally examines President Putin's rhetorical and stylistic techniques in his speech. This study focuses on the textual analysis of Mr. Putin's speech from the annexation ceremony of four Ukrainian areas into the Russian Federation on the 30th of September 2022.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) examines how language reflects and perpetuates social orders of power. Critical discourse analysis analyses how language upholds and perpetuates societal orders of power and its ability to contest and resist them. It mainly addresses how language is used to create and sustain social inequalities of power or other social phenomena. According to Gee and James Paul (2014), CDA is frequently employed by sociologists, linguists, and political scientists. According to Van Dijk (1995), one of the primary objectives of critical discourse analysis (CDA) is to explore and elucidate the implicit, concealed, or otherwise less apparent aspects of discursively enacted dominance and its underlying ideologies. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) explicitly examines the use of manipulation, legitimation, the fabrication of consent, and other forms of communication to influence individuals' thoughts (and consequently their behaviors) to benefit those in positions of power.

### **2.2. Analytical Model of Fairclough**

Fairclough (1989) posits that language is a social practice. Firstly, it is an integral component of the framework within which we reside. Furthermore, language exists as a social phenomenon. "Discourse encompasses the entirety of social interaction, with text merely a component" (p. 24). Finally, social conditioning influences language. Thus, dialogue encompasses social circumstances, specifically those of creation and understanding (p. 25).

Fairclough (1989, 1992) formulated a three-dimensional model for the analysis of discourse based on the assumptions mentioned above. According to Fairclough (1989), each communication event consists of three components: Firstly, it is a kind of communication that encompasses speech, writing, audio, and pictures. Secondly, it is a practice that involves the exchange of ideas and information through creation, dissemination, and understanding. Lastly, society exerts an influence on this practice. Discourse can be examined in three stages: description, interpretation, and explanation, which correspond to these three dimensions of communication. (p. 26).

According to Fairclough (1992), the field of textual analysis can be categorized into four primary domains: vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and textual structure. Furthermore, he asserts that a communication developer employs each structure based on three distinct categories of values. Experiential value refers to the ability of a discourse maker to effectively communicate their personal experiences to others through words or structures. Furthermore, a speaker or writer might employ language to establish a connection. These words possess relationship significance. Ultimately, individuals can employ eloquent language to convey their expertise to others with significant expressiveness. In conclusion, examining how the speaker has employed a term or structure is imperative. The textual analysis involves the examination of three distinct values of the words and structures used by Putin in the speech, as mentioned earlier.

### 2.3. Political Speeches

Bayram (2010) examined ideology and political discourse by critically analyzing Erdogan's political speech. This study investigated the influence of identity and linguistic background on Prime Minister Erdogan's political rhetoric and the ideological aspect of his speech. The CDA methodology was employed as a research instrument to analyze Erdogan's speech. We concluded the study based on three key findings. First and foremost, Erdogan's informal pronoun (you) indicates the influence of his linguistic heritage on his speech. Furthermore, his use of religious passages aligned with the rhetoric of right-wing public speakers. In the realm of Turkish politics, it is imperative to possess a comprehensive understanding of religious texts. Finally, individuals regarded him as an authentic leader due to his forthrightness and genuine communication. This study posits that an individual's linguistic background substantially influences speech and subsequently shapes their perceptions. Sanna Asghar (2021) has analyzed Khadim Hussain Rizvi's speeches against France. Fairclough's CDA paradigm made the foundation of this research. This study aimed to detect how leaders used language to manipulate human beings and gain and show power. The research has revealed that language could be used to manipulate people. *Khadim Hussain Rizvi* used specific emotive language to reach the compassion of the public.

Sipra and Rashid (2013) critically examined the "I Have a Dream" speech by Martin Luther King. Their study aimed to determine stylistic elements and their social and political implications. The researchers applied the Fairclough 3D model of critical discourse analysis, which consists of textual analysis, conversation interpretation, and social explanation. We have analyzed the speech in the first 648 words or 31 sentences. King used specific textual and stylistic elements in his speech to explain his ideas that would have a particular impact. Such persuasive discourse elements include repetition, parallelism, metaphors, and intertextuality. Awais, Alia, and Mehwish (2021) conducted a critical discourse analysis of Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan's speech, delivered on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2019. That study aimed to find Imran Khan's hidden agenda using the Fairclough 3D model. Politicians utilize a lot of ideologies in their speeches. Critical discourse analysis helps understand secret messages quickly and accurately. Islamophobia, climate change, money laundering, and the Kashmir issue were the primary focuses of Imran's speech that researchers cum analyzed.

Dian, Heriyanto, and Ypsi Soeria (2018) used Fairclough 3D turn to analyze Donald Trump's historic speech. The speaker has employed vocabulary, voice, tone, and transitivity in his speech, meaning that the speech managed to achieve several meanings, including persuasion, criticism, contrastive participation, power, authority, allusion, and claim, and are implicitly encrypted in the speech. In the research by Maryam and Nadia (2018), the Fairclough 3D

model of critical discourse analysis was taken as a research methodology to study the poem "Fire and Ice" by Robert Frost. The Fairclough 3D model assumes that a text can be analyzed in three stages: description, interpretation, and social explanation. This study aimed to uncover the poet's hidden agenda or underlying ideology. In my view, the ultimate meaning of the poem is that people should remain moderate in all areas of their lives. To convey this idea, the poet used such a literary tool as symbolism.

In their study, Puspita, Al Farauqy, and Sunarti (2019) examined Vladimir Putin's 2018 speech on the United States' armaments race. The objective of this study was to ascertain the linguistic choices, ideology, and power employed by Putin in the delivery of his speech. The present study addresses a research gap by focusing on the textual analysis of President Putin's recent statement about annexing the Ukrainian area to the Russian Federation. There is a lack of prior research on applying Fairclough's approach to this speech. Therefore, this study represents the initial endeavor to employ the Fairclough model for this speech. This study contributes to our comprehension of politicians' proficient use of language. Additionally, it will aid social science students in comprehending Russia's position regarding the ongoing conflict.

### 3. Methodology

This study provides a qualitative and descriptive analysis of Mr. Putin's speech during the annexation ceremony of four Ukrainian territories into the Russian Federation. This research has utilized the Fairclough 3D model of CDA as an analysis tool. The underlying justification for this study is to examine President Putin's linguistic characteristics and rhetorical techniques in his speech. The selection of qualitative methods is appropriate for conducting a thorough examination of speech. We have selected a sample of Russian President Vladimir Putin's speech. The speaker delivered a speech while signing treaties about the accession of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics and the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson areas to Russia. You can access the speech on YouTube with subtitles and on the official Kremlin website for an English translation. A comprehensive examination of the speech was conducted to ascertain the speaker's rhetorical characteristics and strategies. You can access this speech at the following URL: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/69465>. Additionally, readers can access it on YouTube at this URL: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIuN6v\\_cmNM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIuN6v_cmNM).

### 4. Data Analysis and Discussion

#### 4.1. Analysis of Linguistic Features in the Speech

Fairclough posits that linguistic features possess three distinct forms of value or meaning: experiential, relational, and expressive. These values determine the goal of the language the speaker employs. For example, the speaker uses the term 'know' within the expression 'as you know', highlighting its relational connotation. Putin has strategically selected specific vocabulary in his address to establish rapport with the audience, assert his authority, and inspire individuals to support the ongoing conflict with Ukraine.

#### 4.2. Pronoun

According to Wahyuningsih (2018), using personal pronouns by a speaker within a specific context can effectively create the intended impression on the audience. The study conducted by Kaewrungruang and Yaoharee (2018) demonstrates that a little language element, such as a personal pronoun, significantly influences the decision-making process of both the speaker and the listener. Putin has employed the pronouns 'I, We, You, and They' excessively in this address. In addition, this speech has also employed objective and possessive cases, such as our, us, yours, their, and them. Putin has strategically employed these pronouns to accomplish particular objectives:

- I. Putin has used the 'I' pronoun to set him aside from the audience and to express his power. He says, "*I want the Kyiv authorities and their true handlers in the West to hear me now*". He also uses 'I' to express what he considers crucial; *I repeat, it is an inherent right of the people*.
- II. The pronoun 'we' has been used in an inclusive sense to demonstrate Putin's implicit authority as he speaks on behalf of the Russian people. An example from the excerpt: "*Today, we will sign treaties.*" The pronoun

'we' has also been implied to invoke a sense of collectivism and patriotism among the Russians and the people of the newly annexed region. He says, "*We will defend our land with all the forces and resources we have, and we will do everything we can to ensure the safety of our people. This is the great liberating mission of our nation*".

The possessive case 'our' is also used to emphasize further the sense of collectivism among the newly annexed people and Russia's people.

- III. A scarce appearance of the pronoun 'you' has been observed in this speech. Putin has implied the pronoun 'you' to address Western countries. For example, *You can't feed them with dollars*. Here, 'you' indicates Putin's aggression and bluntness toward the West.
- IV. Apart from 'we' and 'you', the personal pronoun 'they' has also been used in this speech. Putin has used 'they' for Western countries, including the USA, to build a negative image of them among the Russian audience. He says: "*They do not want us to be free; they want us to be a colony. They do not want equal cooperation; they want to loot. They do not want to see us as a free society but a mass of soulless enslaved people.*"

### 4.3. Modality

Fairclough (1989, p. 126) posits that modality pertains to the authority of the speaker or writer, and it encompasses two dimensions contingent upon the orientation of authority. First and foremost, while considering the issue of one participant's authority over another, we encounter a relational modality. Furthermore, let us consider the speaker or writer's credibility concerning the integrity or likelihood of a depiction of actuality. In this scenario, we encounter expressive modality, which refers to the modality through which the speaker or writer assesses truth.

This speech has utilized both sorts of modality. Putin commands the audience's authority and garners their support in this address. Putin frequently employs modal verbs in Russian to convey his aims, talents, and strength, assuming the role of their representative. In this speech, he has used nearly all categories of modal verbs.

- i. Putin has implied 'will' to motivate the war-trodden people about a bright future, as he said: "*We will rebuild the destroyed cities. We will certainly work to improve the level of security.*" The use of will, along with *definitely* and *certainly*, expresses the commitment of the Russian president toward a bright future. Putin has tried to arouse the hope of prosperity among the war-trodden masses. Putin has also used 'will' to express the determination of the Russian people to defend their country. Examples include: *We will protect our land with all the forces and resources we have, and we will do everything.*
- ii. Putin has used 'can' in its relational meaning. He says, "We can ensure that we have strong defenses." Here, "can" depicts the capacity of the Russians to ensure strong defenses. In another example, he says, "We can achieve success only by working together." Here, 'can' implies the possibility of achieving success, which is contingent on working together.
- iii. The modal verb 'must' have also been used to emphasize the roles and responsibilities of Russians in response to the crisis. "We must protect our national interests," in this context, Putin's use of "must" implies obligation and the need to protect national threats. "We must work together to address global challenges." In this sentence, Putin emphasizes the importance and commitment of collaboration in addressing global challenges. In the speech, "must" implies the need to take specific actions or responsibilities.
- iv. 'May' has not been used often in this speech, although it appears in a few examples. For instance, "They may destroy the West – they are destroying the West's economy – but the degree depends on us." Putin used "May" in this example to imply that there is a threat possibility that the West could destroy Western countries or states' threats. He emphasized that the danger is not freely defined, indicating uncertainty to allow the listener to make probable decisions. I will also comment tomorrow morning. Putin has also used: want -to express his wishes; he has used 'we' with 'remember' to incite sympathy among the

masses at the same time 'we' with 'remember' to encourage patriotism; 'I' with 'believe' together with 'I' and 'think' to express opinions and wishes.

#### **4.4. Emotive Language**

The discourse exhibits a profusion of expressive language. In this address, Putin has strategically employed vocabulary like heroes, soldiers, martyrs, memorialize, remember, and phrases like "in memory" to evoke sentiments of patriotism and convey his compassion towards the relatives of the victims. Emotive language primarily elicits sympathy and evokes patriotic feelings among the audience. Putin's objective is to secure the backing of the Russian populace throughout the present turmoil.

#### **4.5. Contrasting Language**

In this address, Putin has consistently employed contrasting language. He employed the pronoun 'we' to establish a robust rapport with the audience. On the other hand, he used the pronoun 'they' to label the Western population as outsiders. Additionally, he employed the terms "Russia/Russian" and "West/Western" to distinguish Russia's acts and goals from those of the Western countries, namely the United States. Putin has attempted to portray the West as arrogant and driven by a desire for dominance, whereas Russia is a nation that upholds the principles of liberty and self-governance. The author has juxtaposed Russia's endeavors as "just and legitimate" with the purported objective of the West to achieve "unilateral domination."

#### **4.6. Abusive Language**

In his remarks, Putin employed derogatory words directed at Western nations. The individual in question has employed terminology such as genocide, shelling, blockades, criminal policy, and hatred towards Western nations. The selection of vocabulary used by Putin indicates his primary objective, which is to cultivate an unfavourable perception of Western nations among the Russian people.

#### **4.7. Reference**

Pronouns such as "we," "they," and "it" frequently refer to previously addressed issues to maintain coherence in the speech. *We* have been used for the Russian people, and *they* have been used for the West.

#### **4.8. Transition Words**

In the speech, transitional words and phrases like "today," "moreover," "in effect," and "hence" are employed to establish linkages between concepts and indicate relationships between statements. President Putin has employed transitional terms in his address to develop a sense of continuity and coherence.

#### **4.9. Synonyms and Paraphrase**

The use of alternative language, synonyms, and paraphrase techniques aids the audience in comprehending the conveyed content and sustaining their engagement. Putin has employed expressions such as "our shared fate, our collective future" to uphold the unity of the narrative.

#### **4.10. Connective Language**

Putin has used words like "*as a matter of fact*," "*but also*," and "*so that*" to link ideas and make sentences flow.

#### **4.11. Anaphora**

A word or phrase is repeated at the start of succeeding sentences or clauses for rhetorical effect and coherence. Putin has repeatedly used the words "*Friends and Colleagues*" to create rhetorical effects in the speech.

#### **4.12. Sentence Structure**

Putin has employed a wide range of phrase forms and emotions. The majority of sentences are in active mode, emphasizing the speaking agency. In the address, Putin employed declarative words to establish himself as the authoritative entity responsible for providing information. Putin employs declarative statements to cultivate a pessimistic perception of the Western world among the Russian population. The author employs interrogative sentences to create a rhetorical impact and highlight the incorrect practices of Western nations. The use of imperative words serves the purpose of eliciting particular behaviours from both the audience and the Western audience. Putin has employed intricate phrases to articulate subtle ideas regarding Russia's global role, the significance of traditional values, and the challenges of globalization. The intricacy of the message has enhanced its persuasiveness and authoritativeness.

#### **4.13. Interpretation of the Context**

According to Norman Fairclough (1992), linguistic features like speech acts, intertextuality, and coherence in the text will help us understand the real intentions of the speakers. He adds situational context and discourse types to interpret the discourse quickly and correctly. After examining Putin's linguistic characteristics, scholars analyzed the situation in which the speech was delivered in this segment. In doing so, their objective was to address the inquiry of the rationale behind Putin's use of such characteristics in his speech. Fairclough (1989) proposed a set of four inquiries for examining the situational context of communication, which scholars subsequently addressed sequentially. *What is going on?* The activity here is an event of signing treaties of four regions of Ukraine into the Russian Federation. Russian President Mr Vladimir Putin has addressed the people of Russia and the people of the annexed region. The topic of the speech is annexation, the representation of Russia as a protector of liberal values, and that of the West as a power-hunger and neo-colonist. The speaker aims to motivate people and boost their confidence in the war by representing Russia as a great country that stands tall forever.

*Who is involved?* We have to specify who is involved and in what position. The subject positions are multi-dimensional. In the case of this speech, as it is a political discourse, the subject positions are as follows: Putin is addressing the nation. The second position comes from institution ascribing. In this case, Putin is a political leader delivering a speech while the audience is in the position of ordinary people. Thirdly, different situations require different speaking and listening positions. There is no interaction between the speaker and the addressee while delivering a political speech. Hence, this is a monologue in which Mr Putin is the speaker while the audience is a passive recipient of the speech. Political leaders can be the only speakers to determine the discourse type, how the information will be given, and what points will be emphasized. Thus, political leaders can portray a positive image, exercise their power, and convince the people with their ideology. In this speech, Putin included himself with the audience to share the power and to create a connection with the audience. He has also set himself aside where he felt it necessary.

*In what Relation?* As stated, Putin is in a higher position; thus, he has more power while the audience is passive recipients. This power relation and social distance have been realized, set up, and enacted in this discourse. Putin has demonstrated his authoritative power and used language to convince people about the wrongdoing of the West and to motivate and build confidence among the audience for the war.

*What is the role of language?* Language has been used instrumentally in this speech. Putin has presented the facts about the wrongdoings of Western elites. However, he also uses language to persuade people, to appeal to their moral values, and to motivate them for the war. In this speech, he used persuasive, commissive, emotive, contrastive, representative, and expressive language.

#### **4.14. Rhetorical Strategies**

Specific rhetorical tools have been used in this speech to persuade and motivate the Russian people. These are as follows:

#### **4.15. Words Repetition**

Repetition is a technique used to create rhetorical effect in the speech. Repetition can be used to emphasize specific

themes or to draw attention to particular ideas. It also contributes to the cohesion and coherence of the text. Mr. Putin has repeatedly used certain words in his speech. In three instances, he used the phrase repeat to emphasize the idea. *I repeat, it is an inherent right of the people.* Firstly, Putin has used the word repeat to emphasize the votes cast by the people of annexed regions in favour of Russia. *But I repeat that its real masters will cling to it to the end.* Putin used the word repeat for the second time to emphasize the interventionist role of Western countries. *And I repeat: things will never be the same.* Putin used the word repeat for the last to emphasize the importance of the war. He says that the hegemony of Western elites will end with the war.

The words Russia/Russian have been used 71 times in this speech. Through the over-repetition of these words, Putin wants to accomplish some goals. Firstly, he has repeatedly used these words to incite a feeling of oneness among the people of Russia and the people of newly annexed regions. Secondly, Putin has used Russia/Russia as an antonym of the West. He has used these words to represent a country/people that values sovereignty, justice, freedom, and self-determination. On the other hand, Putin has used the West/Western as an antonym of Russia/Russia. Putin's repetition of these words reflects his anger toward the West. By repeating these words, he has also tried to present the West as the neo-colonists who intervene and loot those countries that are rich and resourceful. He has used these to build a negative image of Western countries among the audience. Sovereignty, Choice, and Freedom have also been used fourteen times (each) in this speech. Putin has used these words to build a positive image of Russia among the audience. He has presented Russia as a defender of democratic norms and values. Putin's strategy of creating a positive image of Russia and a negative image of the West continues here.

The word history also appears 12 times in this speech. The use of history reflects the intention of Putin that he wants to consolidate the people of the newly emerged region into Russia. He has tried to invoke the feeling of patriotism and collectivism among the audience using these words. By repeatedly using these words, Putin also highlights the historical greatness of Russia and its continuum. The words unipolar and hegemony are also used 11 times in this speech. Putin has used these words with their negative connotations. He has used these words specifically for the USA. The strategy of negating the West continues here.

#### 4.16. Rhetorical Questions

A rhetorical question is a figure of speech in which a question is addressed to make a point, highlight a claim, or catch the audience's attention rather than to elicit a response. Instead of evoking a specific response, rhetorical questions are often used to persuade, stimulate thought, or evoke an emotional response. Putin used this strategy in his speech to emphasize particular values and engage his audience. He has asked this question to highlight the Western monopoly and hegemony over the world.

*And all we hear is the West is insisting on a rules-based order. Where did that come from anyway? Who has ever seen these rules? Who agreed or approved them?*

Putin emphasized traditional values against Western modernist values. He says that we will never accept the Western values and norms as they don't fit into the traditions

*we want to have here, in our country, in Russia, "parent number one, parent number two and parent number three" (they have completely lost it!) instead of mother and father? Do we want our schools to impose on our children, from their earliest days in school, perversions that lead to degradation and extinction?*

#### 4.17. Positive Self and Negative Others

According to (Manni, Hadla, Alqaryouti, & Alruzzi, 2022), the positive-self and negative-other method is a means of framing people as social groups and portraying them as "Us vs. Them." This tactic stresses the negative aspects of other groups (out-groups) while downplaying the good aspects of one's group (in-groups). It is a skewed presentation of the facts that serve the speaker's or writer's interests while blaming unfortunate circumstances and events on rivals or other people. This tactic can be used at all discourse levels and impacts how different discourse levels are structured.

Putin used positive self-talk and negative strategies in this speech. He has used patriotic language to build a positive

image of Russia, i.e. *we will defend our land with all the forces and resources we have, and we will do everything we can to ensure the safety of our people*. Excessive use of *we* and *our* also serves this purpose. The terms *land, homeland, motherland, great Russia, and historical Russia* indicate Putin's cunning use of this strategy. Throughout the speech, he presented Russia as a country that values freedom, sovereignty, and justice.

On the other hand, Putin has represented the West as neo-colonists who are always in search of rich territory and to colonize them, i.e. *The West is ready to cross every line to preserve the neo-colonial system*.

#### **4.18. Allusion**

An allusion is a rhetorical device in which a writer or speaker briefly and indirectly references a historical, cultural, literary, or political figure, place, event, or idea. Allusions frequently improve audience comprehension by referencing shared experiences and knowledge. Allusions in this speech connect the current geopolitical situation with historical events and convey that those lessons from the past should inform present-day decision-making. Putin has frequently implied this device to emphasize the mistakes of the past and to portray the West as the all-time enemy of Russia. This speech is replete with phrases and sentences that directly refer to history. Examples include: *In 1991, in Belovezhskaya Pushcha, representatives of the party elite decided to terminate the Soviet Union. Recall that during WWII, the United States and Britain reduced Dresden, Hamburg, Cologne, and many other German cities to rubble without the slightest military necessity*.

#### **5. Conclusion**

It is beyond doubt that the speech Vladimir Putin delivered was a well-orchestrated message that aimed at multiple goals. Employing different linguistic features, rhetorical devices, and emotional language enables the politician to frame his discourse in a way that coincides with his political intentions and encourages the public to support Russia's actions in Ukraine. Regarding linguistics, using modality is critical to Putin's speech, as he intends to express certainty, desire, and obligation about the action that his country assumes. Overall, his employment of the modality of authority and truth evaluation also enables his public to see Russia as a good force in defending its national sovereignty and to see Russia's actions in Ukraine as legitimate. The exciting aspect of the politician's speech can be observed in his skillful manipulation of modal verbs, as he ends the speech by expressing hope regarding the final establishment of peace in Ukraine. In this case, the cadence is also relatively slow and is used by Putin to let his public contemplate the possible manifestation of world peace in Ukraine.

Pronouns such as "I", "we", "you", and "they" are skillfully employed by Putin to frame the message of his discourse. The intensive use of possessive pronouns "our" and "we" enables the speaker to highlight that the Russian people have one common objective: all are responsible for the course of action their state assumes and are one nation. Employing "they" when referring to the Western states portrays Russia and other states as two dichotomous forces.

Finally, employing emotive language is also crucial to Putin's speech, as such "hot" words are designed to make the public feel patriotic and passionate for its state while simultaneously feeling bitterness toward the West, portrayed as the evil force. The use of contrasting language while referring to historical events and using abusive language to refer to Westerners is also inherent to Putin's delivery. In general, due to the employment of different linguistic and rhetorical devices, the Russian president manages to make his delivery resonate with the public and make it more likely for them to think that the politician's plans coincide with Russia's geopolitical interests.

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