

Research on the Linguistic Characteristics of Churchill's Speech from the Perspective of Rhetoric--Take "Churchill Harrow Public Speech" as an Example

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Abstract: Speech, as a special form of language output, has a unique aspect in the use of its language characteristics. Especially because of its propaganda and preaching purposes, the speaker must follow the language characteristics of speech in the use of language, in order to achieve good results. The use of rhetoric is an indispensable part of speech language characteristics. Its proper use can make the speaker's speech more convincing and appealing, and make the speech more effective with half the effort. Through the analysis of Churchill's classic speech at Harrow Public School during World War II, this paper explains the charm of Churchill's speech from the perspective of rhetoric, and provides some references for speechmakers on how to better use rhetoric methods in their speeches.

1. Introduction

Churchill made a famous speech during his visit to Harrow Public School on October 29, 1941 during World War II. Churchill first made it clear that the purpose of the speech was to inspire the British people to stand firm in the face of the rampant bombardment of Fascist Germany and to fight until the final victory. As a well-known presidential speaker in Britain, Churchill used a variety of rhetorical devices to make his speech more persuasive and inspiring according to the characteristics of the speech style.

2. Language Features of Speeches

As we all know, speech is a kind of way of propaganda that many social activists use to achieve their persuasion purpose. In this way, the "performance" is to infect the audience by using body language in the process of speech, while the "speaking" is to make the audience's hearing resonate through the use of specific language, so as to achieve the purpose of propaganda. Of course, since it is called "Speech", then "Speech" still plays a major role in speech, that is, the so-called "30% of performances, 70% of lectures". The quality of "speaking" directly determines whether the audience can accept the speaker's ideas, and thus be inspired and educated. Speech as a special way of communication has its own characteristics.

2.1. Language Should be Colloquial

In speech, the language used by the speaker is mainly used for "speaking-listening information receiving process" with the audience. In this process, the speaker is always in the state of "speaking" while the audience is mainly in the state of "listening". This determines that the speech language in the speech should meet the requirements of the listener to "listen", and use more spoken language, so that people in different identities, positions and levels can hear and understand, so as to achieve the purpose of the speech.

2.2. Language Should be as Concise as Possible

Speeches are made by the speaker speaking to a group of people on a focused stage, while the audience sits or stands beneath and listens attentively. This decides that the language used by the speaker must be short, that is, the speaking time should not be too long. Over a long period of time for both sides will produce a sense of fatigue, thus affecting the effect. At the same time, the speech language should be as "concise" as possible, that is to say, to use short and powerful sentences. Unlike reading and reading newspapers, too long sentences can also make it difficult for the audience to understand, thus creating a sense of fatigue.

2.3. Language Should be Artistic

Although the language of speech requires colloquialism and brevity, it also requires artistry. A good speech should be artistic in order to make people appreciate it and let the audience enjoy it spiritually on the premise of meeting the first two requirements. In this process, the use of different rhetorical devices has become the icing on the cake of speech language. Flexible use of various rhetorical devices will surely add great charm to language and achieve good results.

3. The Characteristics of Rhetorical Language in Churchill's Speech

As a famous orator, Churchill used his speech language appropriately according to the characteristics of speech, and through the use of various rhetoric techniques, he reminded the British people not to be confused by superficial phenomena, not to be frightened by temporary defeat, to treat war with bravery and courage, and to be optimistic about the victory of war. In his speech, Churchill mainly adopted the following rhetorical devices.

3.1. Application of Repetition

Wikipedia defines this rhetorical device as: repetition is the simple repeating of a word, within a short space of words (including in a poem), with no specific placement of the words to secure emphasis. It is a multilinguistic written or spoken device, frequently used in English and other languages, and so rarely termed a figure of speech. It can be seen from this that rhetoric is used to emphasize the content to be expressed, so as to achieve the effect of preaching.

In Churchill's speech, he knew how to use language to inspire his people to fight against the enemy. In order to make this brief speech unique and inspiring, he repeatedly used the rhetoric of repetition. Churchill began his speech by repeating "this afternoon, this October afternoon", followed by "we were quite alone, desperately alone", the fourth paragraph of "Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy." and the eighth paragraph of "these are great days----the greatest days our country has ever lived ", for the above, Churchill used repetition to make the tone of speech stronger and stronger. In particular, the sentence "We were

poorly armed. We are not so poorly armed today; but then we were very poorly armed", Churchill used three consecutive "poorly armed" to strengthen the language effect, but also flexibly used different tenses to compare the weapons and equipment in the past and now, in order to show that the situation of Britain has come out of the haze, so that everyone is confident. Believe that the dawn of victory is at hand. The most classic sentence is the sentence "never give in, never give in, never give in, never never, never, never - - in nothing, great or small, big or petty - - never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense." In this sentence, Churchill used seven nevers to let the audience appreciate the Minister's strong leadership of the people against Fascist aggression. The determination and the courageous spirit of struggle embodied the strong linguistic appeal of the speech language and became the classic sentence of Churchill's speech, which made people have high aspirations and united until the final victory.

3.2. The Use of Anonym

Another prominent linguistic feature of Churchill's speech is the repeated use of antonyms in pairs. Wikipedia's use of antonym is interpreted as "In lexical semantics, opposites are words lying in an inherently incompatible binary relationship, like the opposite pairs big: small, long: short, and precede: follow. The notion of incompatibility here refers to the fact that one word in an opposite pair of ails is not the other member. For example It is referred to as a 'binary' relationship because there are two members in a set of opposites. The relationship between opposites is known as opposition." Comparing with the same situation, such as "The ten months that have passed through have seen very terrible catastrophic events in the world - - ups and downs, misfortunes", "But we must learn to be equally good at what is short and sharp and what is long and tough", "meet with triumph and disaster", " never give in, never give in, never ,never, never, never----in nothing, great or small, large or petty----never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense." "These are not dark days; they are great days." In the above sentences, Churchill skillfully used a couple of antonyms to compare the past with the present, the good and the bad, such as ups - - downs, short - - long, triumph - - disaster, great - - small, large - - petty, dark days - - great days, etc. to express the British people's final victory. The determination and courage were shown by Churchill. Churchill also aims to show the people that darkness is about to become the past, to dispel pessimism, and not to lose confidence in the face of difficulties. Victory is in the near future. The use of positive and negative words makes speeches more expressive and effective.

3.3. The Use of Metaphors

Wikipedia defines metaphor as "A metaphor is a figure of speech that, for rhetorical effect, directly refers to one thing by mentioning another. It may provide clarity or identify hidden similarities between two ideas. Antithesis, hyperbole, metonymy and simile are all types of metaphor." Metaphor is not in fact a narrow sense to compare A to B of not using the words like "as, like, if, etc." and of course in Churchill's speeches, it belongs to this kind, which is the metaphorical meaning of English words in a broad sense. In other words, it is a connotation other than denotation. Peter Newmark divides English metaphors into four categories in *A Textbook of Translations*. It is refreshing to "have suggested elsewhere that there are four types of metaphor: fossilized, stock, recently created and original."

Churchill's speech contained the following two sentences: "Britain, other nations thought, had drawn a sponge across her slate. But instead of our country stood in the gap." There is an expression in the sentence "draw a sponge across her slate", which is interpreted as "complete wipe out", in which sponge and slate, literally meaning "erase her name on the slate with a sponge", and here it is extended to mean "completely destroy". The word "gap" implies that the vacancy of soldiers killed

by enemy bullets in battle is filled by brave people. It also refers to the courage of Britain to advance and fight bravely.

4. Summary

As a rhetorical device to enhance the effect of speech or writing, rhetoric plays an important role in the use of speech style. Churchill, as a great statesman and orator, played a leading role in the classic speeches of famous people in history, especially the presidents of British and American countries. His speech to Harrow Public School during World War II had a good effect because of the unique rhetoric of his speech language. Through its flexible use of repetition, antonym and metaphor, it made its speeches deeply popular, strongly attacked fascist imperialism, and encouraged the British people not to be intimidated by temporary defeat, to treat the war with no surprise, and to be optimistic about the victory of the war.

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