

RESEARCH TITLE

A Pragma Stylistic Analysis of Exploiting Situations in the Attack on Trump in the American Media

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Abstract

The present paper explores some of the linguistic strategies employed by the media in constructing and manipulating narratives about Donald Trump. This study combines pragmatic with stylistic analysis in an attempt to ascertain how language functions along with stylistic features are exploited in creating situations that frame Trump negatively. By applying Searle's taxonomy of speech acts and stylistic devices such as lexis, the manner of narration, and rhetorical means, this analysis will destructure media articles to reveal specific workings of mechanisms that shape public perception. The investigation is targeted to identify how speech acts of assertions, accusations, and insinuations, in concert with specific stylistic choices, build a compelling narrative of critique and condemnation. Finally, the pragmatic analysis reaches into the realm of what the text presupposes. The pragma-stylistic approach, therefore, shows how media strategically use language in order to underline controversies, enlarge negative connotations, and subtly point the audience in a particular direction through pre-suppositions and contextualized prompts. The findings of this research study explain how the interaction of pragmatic and stylistic elements within any text plays a significant role in shaping political discourse and public opinion. While this research is underpinned by a nuanced approach to media practice, it contributes to broader areas of inquiry in the fields of media studies and political communication through its extension of ways in which language and style interplay to influence societal views and attitudes about political figures.

تحليل تداولي أسلوبى لاستغلال المواقف في الهجوم على ترامب في الإعلام الأمريكي

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المستخلص

تستكشف الورقة الحالية بعض الاستراتيجيات اللغوية التي تستخدمها وسائل الإعلام في بناء وتلاعب السرديات حول دونالد ترامب. تجمع هذه الدراسة بين التحليل البراغماتي والتحليل الأسلوبى في محاولة لتحديد كيفية عمل اللغة، بالإضافة إلى كيفية استغلال الميزات الأسلوبية في خلق مواقف توطر ترامب بشكل سلبي. من خلال تطبيق تصنيف سيرل لأفعال الكلام والأدوات الأسلوبية مثل المفردات، وطريقة السرد، والوسائل البلاغية، سيتم خلال التحليل تفكيك المقالات الإعلامية للكشف عن آليات محددة تشكل الإدراك العام. تستهدف الدراسة تحديد كيفية بناء أفعال الكلام من تأكيدات واتهامات وتلميحات، بالتزامن مع اختيارات أسلوبية محددة، سردًا مقنعًا من النقد والإدانة. أخيرًا، يصل التحليل التداولي إلى مجال ما يفترضه النص. وبالتالي، يُظهر النهج التداولي الأسلوبى وكيف تستخدم وسائل الإعلام اللغة بشكل استراتيجي لتسليط الضوء على الجدل، وتوسيع الدلالات السلبية، وإشارة الجمهور بشكل غير مباشر في اتجاه معين من خلال الافتراضات والدعوات السياقية. تفسر نتائج هذه الدراسة البحثية كيف يلعب تفاعل العناصر التداولية والأسلوبية داخل أي نص دورًا كبيرًا في تشكيل الخطاب السياسي والرأي العام. بينما تستند هذه الدراسة إلى نهج دقيق لممارسة الإعلام، فإنها تساهم في مجالات أوسع من البحث في مجالات دراسات الإعلام والاتصال السياسي من خلال توسيع الطرق التي تتفاعل بها اللغة والأسلوب للتأثير على آراء المجتمع ومواقفه تجاه الشخصيات السياسية.

1- Introduction

It is possible to consider language as an influential determinant in the way news events are molded and comprehended by audiences not least within the context of political communication (Treisman, 2023). The media, a principal source of information, habitually abuses linguistic and stylistic means in an attempt to package certain narratives that may severely affect public perceptions (Smith & Jones, 2023). The attack against former President Donald Trump saw the media go beyond just the presentation of facts of the incident to strategically using language in framing the interpretation, context, and implication of the event (Lewis, 2024). This paper aims to analyze some pragma-stylistic elements used by American media in reporting on this attack, with the aim of investigating exactly how speech acts, presuppositions, and stylistic options are manipulated to achieve particular effects.

The interdisciplinary Pragma-stylistics approach allows an effective integration of insights from both pragmatics and stylistics to attempt the dissection or teasing out of the many layers of meaning and intention embedded in such media texts (Chapman & Clark 2014). Pragmatics is the study of how context influences and shapes the interpretation of language; stylistics deals with the analysis of the use of language to achieve particular effects. This study aims to outline how the media at once reports on and interprets such a situation, often by exploiting underlying narratives and presuppositions to align within broader political discourses by applying a pragma-stylistic lens to the media coverage of the attack.

The paper thus intends to reveal how the media exploits not only linguistic structure but also stylistic devices in constructing stories beyond that recorded as objective reporting. This will involve the language used in portraying Trump as a political figure, framing the mood of the event, and the presuppositions guiding the interpretation by the audience. Ultimately, this research will try to shed light on the sometimes-subtle but powerful ways in which language is exploited in media discourse to influence political perspectives and public perception.

2- Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of how context influences meaning in communication (Birner, 2013). Pragmatics explores the issue of how speakers use language to attain given effects in interaction beyond the literal meaning of the words themselves. It looks into phenomena such as speech acts, implicatures, deixis, and presuppositions. It is interested in the way meaning is created and comprehended depending on context, focusing on the intention of the speaker and the inference performed by the listener during the communication process (Yule, 2017). Generally speaking, pragmatic analysis deals with the very function of languages in a natural setting and often highlights the social issues of the meaning-making process (Levinson, 1983).

From this perspective, pragmatics becomes a strong tool in analyzing how language is used to influence public opinion, frame issues, and exercise power. Political discourse is replete with pragmatic phenomena; politicians and media frequently use certain language strategies to persuade, manipulate, or mobilize an audience. Pragmatic analysis can involve, for instance, the speech acts of promising, threatening, or accusing in political speeches, debates, or media coverage in view of reaching political ends (Chilton, 2004). It also looks at how presuppositions are employed to subtly convey messages that may shape public perception without overtly stating them.

In a political context, pragmatics could reveal hidden power dynamics and ideological positions inserted in the use of language. It can also critically look, for instance, at the representation of certain groups, framing of policies, or construction of narratives under a pragmatic perspective (Wodak, 2009). This kind of analysis will provide evidence of how

language the almost invisible way it has-contributes to the reproduction of the structures of power and to the building up of political realities (Benjamins, 2023).

By integrating both linguistic and political perspectives, pragmatic analysis offers a comprehensive approach to understanding the complex interplay between language, context, and power in both everyday communication and in the realm of political discourse.

3- Stylistic Analysis and Media

Media stylistic analysis, therefore, focuses on how the language shows the effects, messages, and influences that are to be brought about in the audience. This aspect, in analyzing media, probes into lexical choices, sentence structures, figurative language, and rhetorical devices that media use to shape narratives and elicit particular responses from the readers or viewers. The approach has been well documented in literature as pointed out by Tariq (2018). In the context of media, stylistic analysis is an important means through which diversity of style is related to the framing of events, the construction of identities, and the perpetuation of ideologies (Giovanelli & Mason, 2018).

3.1 Key Aspects of Stylistic Analysis in Media:

Following Mammadov & Tomaszczyk, (2022), discourse stylistics would involve the following:

1. **Lexical Choices:** The word and phrase choices of the media carry the peculiar tone or slant of the coverage. Whether a group is called "freedom fighters" or "terrorists," for example, has much to say to the audience.
2. **Figurative Language:** In news, metaphors, similes, and other figures of speech can be used to aid in describing something more vividly or even to elicit emotional responses. In analyses, it might be included in an effort to show underlying bias or manipulation of feelings regarding an issue.
3. **Sentence Structure and Syntax:** The wording and construction of sentences can also be used to modify clarity and emphasis. Short, punchy sentences could be used to convey urgency, for example, while long, complex ones would bear detailed explanation or argument.
4. **Rhetorical Devices:** Parallelism, rhetorical questions, and antithesis are examples of devices in persuading or emphasising that are to be found more often. These analyses can explain how the media try to influence the opinion of the general public or pull over and entrench certain ways of thinking.
5. **Tone and Register:** The tone that is conveyed in an article or a broadcast-common examples include formal, informal, ironic, and sarcastic-may be used to carry the meaning of the text to the audience. It also extends to the register used-for example, the levels of formality-which can determine how the information given might be perceived in terms of its credibility and relatability.
6. **Visual and Multimodal Elements:** In the case of multimedia content, style is created through combining text with images, videos, or graphics. The visual elements chosen and presented either support or contradict the verbal message, bringing different layers of meaning to it (Mammadov & Tomaszczyk, 2022).

3.2 Applications of Stylistic Analysis:

By focusing on the stylistic aspects, analysts may indicate the biases of media reporting, such as on which side in a conflict is cast in a more positive light. Moreover, with an advanced understanding of how certain stylistic choices can create framing, the ways in which the media construct the storyline of an issue become clearer (Leech & Short, 2007).

Analysis of style may show how media create content that targets specific demographics or ideological persuasions.

Political discourse makes heavy use of stylistic strategies in an attempt to convince or deceive public opinion. Stylistic analysis can reveal the ways in which politicians exploit the rhetoric of emotive appeal, credibility, or the denigration of opponents. Speeches, slogans, and campaign advertisements are the most common objects of analysis (Chilton & Schäffner, 2002).

In summary, stylistic analysis in media constitutes a necessary tool of critical investigation into the manner in which language and style determine public discourses. It is through the deconstruction of stylistic elements used in the media content that researchers are able to appreciate subtle ways in which media shape perception, reinforce ideologies, and guide public opinion.

4- Methodology

4.1- Research Design

The present study will take up a pragma-stylistic approach to analyze how American media exploits situations for attacks against Donald Trump. This approach will include the pragmatic analysis, focusing on how language functions in context and examines what the text presupposes, with stylistic analyses that examine the linguistic choices and rhetorical devices used to convey meaning and influence the audience.

4.2- Data Collection

The study will therefore collect data from a selection of major American media: newspapers and online news sites. Their selection will focus on major news outlets, the ones that have a considerable reach and influence, such as The New York Times, CNN, and Fox News. Only articles and segments specifically addressing controversies or criticisms in relation to Trump will be chosen to ensure relevance to the objectives of this study.

4.3- Sampling

A purposive sampling method will be used in selecting the articles and media segments over variable periods, especially at the times when key events occurred within Trump's presidency, such as the impeachment proceedings and major speeches. This would make a comparative analysis possible in terms of language use and style over time in diverse contexts.

4.4- Analytical Framework

4.4.1 Pragmatic Analysis

This analysis will utilize Searle's taxonomy of speech acts in the identification and categorization of various speech acts-assertions, accusations, insinuations used within the media to frame Trump's speech. It will focus on how different acts perform their specific functions in the context of media discourse either to criticize, accuse, or question Trump's actions and statements.

The presuppositions in the media texts will also be examined in this study to disclose some underlying assumption or implied meaning that contributes in the portrayal of Trump. This part of the analysis will research whether the media's implicit messages steer the viewer's interpretation in any certain way.

4.4.2- Stylistic Analysis:

The research will look into the word choices made in the media texts, looking into the use of connotations, emotive language, and any loaded terms used in describing Trump and his actions. This will provide insight into how individual language choices build on the overall tone and framing of the narrative.

The analysis will also trace and discuss those rhetorical devices, such as metaphors, hyperbole, irony, and parallelism employed in the text with the intention of emphasizing or exaggerating certain aspects of Trump's character or his policies. This does clearly spell out how the stylistic elements function in enhancing the critique or building a particular narrative. Moreover, it will look at the syntactical features that have to do with sentence length, complexity, and structure in the study, to ascertain how each of these characteristics contributes to readability, emphasis, and persuasive power in media texts.

4.5 Limitations

The study realizes the limitation that comes with qualitative research; for example, personal subjectivity during data interpretation by the researcher. In this light, the study will adopt transparency and systematization while analyzing the data. The other limitation will be the inability of the study to analyze more than four articles from various newspapers.

5- Data analysis

4.1 *"A man fired multiple shots toward the stage during former President Donald J. Trump's rally in Butler, Pa., on the evening of July 13, killing one spectator, critically injuring two others and wounding Mr. Trump.*

Mr. Trump was rushed off the stage with a bullet wound in his right ear and was pronounced fine. The Secret Service said its agents had killed the shooter, whom federal law enforcement officials identified as Thomas Matthew Crooks, a 20-year-old from Bethel Park, Pa.

The attorney general's office and the F.B.I. are investigating the shooting as an assassination attempt and possible domestic terrorism attack".

By Michael Levenson

Fox News, July 30, 2024

Speech acts analysis:

1. Assertives

These are speech acts in which the speaker commits to the truth of a proposition, asserting information as factual. In this passage, there are several assertive acts as the speaker presents facts about the shooting incident:

- **“A man fired multiple shots toward the stage during former President Donald J. Trump's rally in Butler, Pa., on the evening of July 13, killing one spectator, critically injuring two others and wounding Mr. Trump.”**

This is an assertive because it commits to conveying the truth of an event that occurred.

- **“Mr. Trump was rushed off the stage with a bullet wound in his right ear and was pronounced fine.”**

Again, this is an assertive act since it conveys factual information about Trump's condition after the attack.

- **“The Secret Service said its agents had killed the shooter, whom federal law enforcement officials identified as Thomas Matthew Crooks, a 20-year-old from Bethel Park, Pa.”**

This statement also falls under assertives, as it shares information about the shooter and his identification.

Assertives are meant to describe states of affairs, providing the listener with what the speaker believes to be true. In this case, these are used to report on a significant incident, with a factual tone.

2. Directives

Directives are speech acts in which the speaker tries to get the hearer to do something, such as requests, commands, or advice. There are no clear directives in this passage, as it is more focused on conveying information rather than urging the reader or any other party to take action.

3. Commissives

Commissives are speech acts in which the speaker commits themselves to a future action. These include promises, vows, or pledges. Similar to directives, this passage does not include commissive speech acts, as it is mainly a news report rather than a speaker making commitments.

4. Expressives

Expressives convey the speaker's attitudes or emotions toward a particular state of affairs, such as apologizing, congratulating, or lamenting. The passage is largely neutral in tone and does not explicitly include expressives. However, a slight expressive act could be interpreted in the sentence:

- **“Mr. Trump was rushed off the stage with a bullet wound in his right ear and was pronounced fine.”**

The phrase "was pronounced fine" implies a level of relief regarding Trump's condition. While the expression is neutral, it may suggest the implicit satisfaction of his survival, though this is very minimal and not clearly marked as an expressive.

5. Declarations

Declarations are speech acts that change the world through the speaker's words. This happens in legal or institutional settings, like declaring someone married, fired, or sentenced. The closest to a declarative act in this passage is the mention of ongoing investigations:

- **“The attorney general's office and the F.B.I. are investigating the shooting as an assassination attempt and possible domestic terrorism attack.”**

By announcing the nature of the investigation, this act could be considered a declaration, as it defines the legal categorization of the event, framing it as an “assassination attempt” and “domestic terrorism.”

presupposition

This passage contains several presuppositions, which are implicit assumptions embedded in the language that the reader is expected to accept as true.

1. A man fired multiple shots toward the stage during former President Donald J. Trump's rally in Butler, Pa.

- **Presupposition:** There was a rally held by former President Donald J. Trump in Butler, Pennsylvania.
- **Presupposition:** A man fired shots at this rally, suggesting that the event was targeted.
- **Presupposition:** The man's actions were significant enough to disrupt the rally.

2. Killing one spectator, critically injuring two others and wounding Mr. Trump.

- **Presupposition:** One spectator was killed during this shooting.
- **Presupposition:** Two others were critically injured, suggesting the severity of the attack.
- **Presupposition:** Mr. Trump was wounded, which indicates that the attack directly involved him as a target.

3. Mr. Trump was rushed off the stage with a bullet wound in his right ear and was pronounced fine.

- **Presupposition:** Mr. Trump sustained an injury in the attack, specifically to his right ear.
- **Presupposition:** Despite the injury, Mr. Trump was declared to be "fine," which implies that his wound was not life-threatening.

4. The Secret Service said its agents had killed the shooter, whom federal law enforcement officials identified as Thomas Matthew Crooks, a 20-year-old from Bethel Park, Pa.

- **Presupposition:** The Secret Service was involved in protecting Mr. Trump at this rally.
- **Presupposition:** The Secret Service took lethal action against the shooter.
- **Presupposition:** The shooter has been identified as Thomas Matthew Crooks, and this identification is presented as a fact.
- **Presupposition:** Crooks is from Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, and this detail presupposes a specific, known background about him.

5. The attorney general's office and the F.B.I. are investigating the shooting as an assassination attempt and possible domestic terrorism attack.

- **Presupposition:** The event is being treated as a serious incident, specifically an assassination attempt.
- **Presupposition:** It is also being investigated as a possible act of domestic terrorism, implying the shooter's actions may have been politically or ideologically motivated.
- **Presupposition:** Federal authorities (the attorney general's office and the FBI) are involved, which suggests the gravity of the crime.

Stylistic Analysis

In terms of stylistic choices, the text uses formal, journalistic language typical of news reporting, characterized by neutrality, clarity, and a sense of urgency. Several features stand out:

- **Use of Passive Voice:** The phrase "Mr. Trump was rushed off the stage" uses passive voice to emphasize the action (Trump being taken to safety) rather than who performed

the action. This places focus on Trump as the primary figure of concern, aligning with the public's interest.

- **Precise Diction:** The choice of words like “assassination attempt” and “domestic terrorism attack” carries heavy emotional and political weight, heightening the seriousness of the situation. The term "killing" is used for the spectator, whereas "critically injuring" and "wounding" are used for others, each escalating the reader's emotional response.
- **Formal Tone:** The formal tone, reinforced by factual reporting and references to official sources like “the Secret Service” and “the attorney general’s office,” establishes credibility and authority, presenting the information as reliable and significant.
- **Balanced Sentence Structure:** The passage alternates between complex sentences loaded with details and shorter, more direct sentences for critical information (e.g., “Mr. Trump was rushed off the stage with a bullet wound in his right ear and was pronounced fine”). This variation in sentence structure helps to maintain reader engagement and control the flow of information.
- **Chronological Organization:** The passage is arranged chronologically, guiding the reader through the events in a logical sequence first describing the shooting, then the actions taken by law enforcement, and finally, the ongoing investigation. This progression mirrors how such events typically unfold in the media.

4.2 *"Mr. Trump ducked quickly after the shots began and as members of the crowd began to scream. Secret Service agents then rushed Mr. Trump off the stage. As he was escorted to his motorcade, Mr. Trump, whose face and right ear were bloodied, pumped his fist in a defiant gesture to the crowd. At the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee, in his first public speech after the assassination attempt, Mr. Trump described his personal experience of the shooting. "As you already know, the assassin's bullet came within a quarter of an inch of taking my life," Mr. Trump said".*

By Kristen Holmes, John Miller, Kate Sullivan, Evan Perez and Jeremy Herb, CNN, Mon September 16, 2024

Speech Acts:

Speech acts refer to the functions performed by language, such as asserting, questioning, commanding, or promising. This passage contains a mix of different acts

1- Assertives

"Mr. Trump ducked quickly after the shots began".

"Secret Service agents then rushed Mr. Trump off the stage".

"Mr. Trump, whose face and right ear were bloodied, pumped his fist in a defiant gesture to the crowd".

2- Expressive

"Mr. Trump described his personal experience of the shooting".

Here, Mr. Trump is sharing his subjective experience, presenting himself as a victim of an assassination attempt.

3-Declarative

" - As you already know, the assassin's bullet came within a quarter of an inch of taking my life".

This sentence does more than convey information it seeks to reinforce the audience's perception of Trump's narrow escape from death, asserting the drama and magnitude of the situation.

Presupposition:

Presupposition refers to implicit assumptions that must be accepted as true for the statement to make sense. In this passage, several presuppositions can be identified:

" -Mr. Trump ducked quickly after the shots began:"

Presupposes that shots were fired.

" -As members of the crowd began to scream:"

Presupposes that the crowd was present and witnessed the event.

" -Secret Service agents then rushed Mr. Trump off the stage:"

Presupposes that Mr. Trump was on stage and that the Secret Service is responsible for his security.

" -Mr. Trump, whose face and right ear were bloodied:"

Presupposes that Mr. Trump was injured during the incident.

" -In his first public speech after the assassination attempt:"

Presupposes that there was an assassination attempt on Mr. Trump's life.

" -As you already know, the assassin's bullet came within a quarter of an inch of taking my life:"

Presupposes the audience already has some awareness of the assassination attempt and the details surrounding it.

Presupposes that an assassin specifically targeted Mr. Trump with a bullet that almost killed him.

Stylistic Analysis:

Stylistic analysis focuses on the choice of language, sentence structure, and tone. In this passage, several notable stylistic features are present:

-Tone and Formality:

- The text alternates between a factual, objective tone when narrating events and a dramatic, subjective tone when quoting Mr. Trump. The narrator sticks to neutral, clear reporting, while Mr. Trump's quoted speech introduces a more emotional and heightened tone.

-Dramatic and Defiant Imagery:

" - Mr. Trump, whose face and right ear were bloodied, pumped his fist in a defiant gesture to the crowd".

- The description emphasizes physical injury, then shifts to a defiant gesture, creating an image of resilience and strength in the face of danger.

-Suspense and Emotional Impact:

" - The assassin's bullet came within a quarter of an inch of taking my life" introduces suspense and near-tragedy. The phrase "within a quarter of an inch" magnifies the close call, while "taking my life" adds a personal and dramatic flair.

-Third-Person Reporting:

- The narrative parts are in the third person, focusing on Mr. Trump as the subject of the action, creating a detached but factual tone for recounting the event.

-Choice of Words:

- Words like "ducked," "rushed," "bloodied," and "defiant" contribute to the dramatic tension of the event and Mr. Trump's response .

-Mr. Trump's phrase "assassin's bullet" makes the event seem particularly targeted and life-threatening, further heightening the gravity of the situation.

4.3 *"The shooter fired from the roof of a warehouse less than 500 feet from Mr. Trump before being killed by counter snipers. An analysis by The New York Times suggested that the gunman fired eight shots. The F.B.I. has identified the gunman as Thomas Matthew Crooks. He graduated from the Community College of Allegheny County in May and was employed at a nursing home. High school classmates described Mr. Crooks as intelligent but solitary. Law enforcement officials recovered an AR-15-type semiautomatic rifle from Mr. Crooks's body that had been legally purchased by the shooter's father. Mr. Crooks bought the rifle from his father in October. Federal law enforcement officials discovered three explosive devices connected to Mr. Crooks. One of the devices was found in his home, and two others were found in his car parked near the rally. Former President Donald J. Trump delivering his nomination acceptance speech Thursday night. Credit...Jamie Kelter Davis for The New York Times".*

By Sarah Rumpf-Whitten , Brooke Singman , Lucas Y. Tomlinson The New York Times.

July 13, 2024

Speech Acts

Speech acts focus on what the speaker intends to accomplish through their statements. The passage uses several types of speech acts:

- **Assertives:** The passage presents a series of factual statements, such as "The shooter fired from the roof of a warehouse less than 500 feet from Mr. Trump before being killed by counter snipers." These assert the details of the shooting incident, the identity of the shooter, and law enforcement discoveries.

Other assertives include the identification of the gunman and background details on him: "The F.B.I. has identified the gunman as Thomas Matthew Crooks."

Descriptives: The New York Times analysis on the number of shots fired is an example of a descriptive act: "An analysis by The New York Times suggested that the gunman fired eight shots." This qualifies the factual data with a suggestion or estimate rather than an assertion of absolute truth.

Reportatives: The phrase "An analysis by The New York Times" functions as a reportative, referencing an external source to give weight to the number of shots fired, shifting the responsibility of this claim to the Times' analysis.

Presupposition

Presuppositions are underlying assumptions that the reader takes for granted when interpreting the sentence. The passage has several key presuppositions:

- **The event has already occurred:** The reader is expected to know that this shooting incident and Mr. Trump's rally took place. The details are presented as part of an unfolding narrative of events that have transpired.
- **Thomas Matthew Crooks is the shooter:** "The F.B.I. has identified the gunman as Thomas Matthew Crooks." This presupposes that there was a need to identify the shooter, and that Crooks is definitively the one responsible.
- **The nature of the crime:** Phrases like "law enforcement officials recovered an AR-15-type semiautomatic rifle" and "explosive devices connected to Mr. Crooks" presuppose that the reader is aware of the general association of mass shootings and the use of semi-automatic weapons, making it clear that this is part of a larger narrative of gun violence.
- **The relationship between Crooks and his father:** "Mr. Crooks bought the rifle from his father" presupposes that the reader will understand the father legally possessed the gun, and there is an implicit presupposition of the familial relationship influencing the means by which Crooks obtained the weapon.

Stylistic Analysis

The stylistic choices in this passage are reflective of journalistic reporting, emphasizing objectivity and clarity while also presenting an undertone of tension and gravity due to the subject matter.

- **Tone and Register:** The tone is neutral and formal, typical of news reporting, aimed at conveying facts in a detached manner. However, the weight of the information – a shooting close to a former president – carries an implicit sense of urgency and seriousness.
- **Use of Specificity:** Details like "less than 500 feet from Mr. Trump" and the identification of the weapon as an "AR-15-type semiautomatic rifle" show a careful, precise choice of words. These lend credibility and specificity to the report, avoiding generalization.
- **Passive Voice and Objectivity:** Phrases like "The shooter fired from the roof of a warehouse" and "Law enforcement officials recovered" use passive constructions to maintain an objective stance. The reporter is not injecting personal opinion but allowing the facts to speak for themselves.
- **Reported Speech/Quotative Structures:** By attributing information to official sources (e.g., "The F.B.I. has identified the gunman," "An analysis by The New York Times suggested"), the article avoids conjecture or speculation and maintains the objectivity expected in news reporting.

Temporal Progression: The passage follows a chronological progression, leading from the shooting itself, to the identification of the shooter, to the details about the weapon and explosive devices, creating a narrative flow that helps the reader understand how events unfolded.

4.4 "As you already know, the assassin's bullet came within a quarter of an inch of taking my life. So many people have asked me what happened. "Tell us what happened, please." And therefore, I will tell you exactly what happened, and you'll never hear it from me a second time, because it's actually too painful to tell. It was a warm, beautiful day in the early evening in Butler Township in the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Music was loudly playing, and the campaign was doing really well. I went to the stage and the crowd was cheering

wildly. Everybody was happy. I began speaking very strongly, powerfully and happily. Because I was discussing the great job my administration did on immigration at the southern border. We were very proud of it. Behind me, and to the right, was a large screen that was displaying a chart of border crossings under my leadership. The numbers were absolutely amazing. In order to see the chart, I started to, like this, turn to my right, and was ready to begin a little bit further turn, which I'm very lucky I didn't do, when I heard a loud whizzing sound and felt something hit me really, really hard. On my right ear. I said to myself, "Wow, what was that? It can only be a bullet."

By The New York Times

July 19, 2024

Speech Acts

The speaker, likely a political figure based on the context, uses various types of speech acts to recount their experience. These acts help shape the speaker's narrative style:

1. **Assertives:** The speaker makes several factual assertions about what happened during the assassination attempt:

"The assassin's bullet came within a quarter of an inch of taking my life."

"It was a warm, beautiful day in the early evening in Butler Township."

"I heard a loud whizzing sound and felt something hit me really, really hard." These assertive acts provide the core narrative, asserting facts about the incident from the speaker's perspective.

2. **Directives:** The speaker refers to the questions people have asked:

"So many people have asked me what happened. 'Tell us what happened, please.'" This indirect report of others' speech acts serves as a way to justify the recounting of the story.

3. **Expressives:** The speaker expresses their emotional response to the event:

"It's actually too painful to tell."

"I'm very lucky I didn't do [the turn]." These expressives convey a sense of vulnerability and relief, emphasizing the emotional impact the event had on the speaker.

4. **Commissives:** The speaker commits to not repeating the story:

"You'll never hear it from me a second time." This commitment emphasizes the emotional weight and personal cost of retelling the story.

Presupposition

Presuppositions in the passage reveal underlying assumptions that the speaker expects the audience to accept or already know:

- **The audience is familiar with the assassination attempt:** The opening phrase, "As you already know, the assassin's bullet came within a quarter of an inch of taking my life," presupposes that the audience is already aware of the assassination attempt and its near-fatal nature.
- **The speaker is a political figure:** References to the campaign, the crowd cheering, and discussing the administration's success at the southern border presuppose that the speaker holds a public office or is a candidate.
- **The speaker's administration succeeded on immigration:** The sentence, "We were very proud of it," presupposes that the speaker and their audience agree that the

administration did a good job on immigration policy, particularly at the southern border.

- **The event is emotionally difficult for the speaker:** The statement, "It's actually too painful to tell," presupposes that the speaker has strong emotional reactions to this memory, implying that the event had a significant personal toll.

Stylistic Analysis

The passage is stylistically rich, employing various narrative techniques that enhance its emotional and rhetorical impact:

- **Tone and Register:** The tone is personal and direct, engaging the audience in an intimate manner. The informal nature of the recounting, combined with phrases like "Wow, what was that?" creates a conversational tone that contrasts with the gravity of the assassination attempt.
- **Use of Direct Speech:** The speaker uses reported speech to create a dialogue with the audience, mimicking the questions people have asked:

"Tell us what happened, please."

"Wow, what was that? It can only be a bullet." This makes the recounting feel more immediate and personal, drawing the audience into the speaker's internal monologue.

- **Narrative Detail:** The speaker provides vivid, sensory details that create a clear picture of the event. Descriptions like "It was a warm, beautiful day" and "I heard a loud whizzing sound" appeal to both visual and auditory senses, while the phrase "felt something hit me really, really hard" conveys physical sensation.
- **Temporal Structuring:** The passage is organized chronologically, beginning with the setup of the event (a campaign rally), the rising action (the turn toward the screen), and the climax (the bullet hitting the speaker). This structure mirrors a dramatic arc, increasing tension until the moment of impact.
- **Rhetorical Devices:**

Repetition: The phrase "really, really hard" intensifies the speaker's description of the impact of the bullet, emphasizing the force of the hit.

Foreshadowing: The speaker's comment about being "very lucky I didn't do [the turn]" foreshadows the near-fatal nature of the bullet's trajectory, creating suspense.

- **Emotional Appeal:** By sharing the pain of recounting the incident ("too painful to tell"), the speaker evokes empathy from the audience. The decision to tell the story only once suggests both the importance and difficulty of reliving the experience, building a connection with the audience on an emotional level.
- **Casual and Personal Language:** The use of colloquial expressions like "Wow" and "really, really hard" contrasts with the serious content, which can serve to humanize the speaker and make the story more relatable to the audience. It also conveys a sense of the speaker processing the events in real-time, adding to the drama.

6- Findings and discussion

Speech Acts:

The assertive speech acts represent a stark in the first article, solely factual relation of the incident. Reportatives give credibility to information by sourcing it from official sources. Declarative speech acts classify the incident as an assassination attempt and possible

terrorism, thereby framing the event within a larger political and legal context. The text is represented by speech acts, giving an account of the facts that took place during the shooting at Trump's rally; and reportatives maintained by placing the given information under the scrutiny of official sources.

While the speech acts in the second article are assertive relate the details of Trump's immediate actions and the development of the event, the expressive acts like the fist pumping action emphasize Trump's emotional defiance. The quote also contains direct speech that gives a personal and dramatic dimension, portraying him as one who stared at death but walked out defiant.

The text uses assertive speech acts that ensure the reader gets concrete facts about the event in question, as reportatives attribute main pieces of information to reliable sources. This therefore ensures that a reliable and factual rendition is put across to the reader. In other words, this report is based on assertive speech acts to state the fact about a shooting incident in which Donald Trump was involved.

The final text is a first-person account by the speaker, presumably Donald Trump, who describes his personal experience of surviving an assassination attempt.

It is a mixture of illocutionary speech acts that are both assertive and expressive in recounting the event of the assassination attempt. It performs direct reportatives, emotive introspection, and even uses reported speech as an attempt to attribute curiosity to the audience to justify the retelling of the event.

In other words, the narrative speech act is telling a personal and dramatic moment of his life, while at the same time making direct contact with the audience by applying reportatives and emotive introspection

Presuppositions:

Presuppositions are there to expect the readers' awareness of Trump's political role and the seriousness of political violence

The presuppositions are made that the audience is aware of the assassination attempt, has taken Trump's actions in support, and knows of the basic context of political violence to which public figures are exposed. This fits within a presupposition that Trump's audience sees Trump as a resistant leader.

The first article presupposes that the readers are conversant with the position held by Donald Trump, the seriousness of political violence, and the validity of law enforcement institutions such as the F.B.I. The article also presupposes that the reader understands the legal context about purchases of firearms, making the report more accurate.

The presuppositions show that the reader is already informed of Trump's political importance and the consequences of political violence and is ready to trust news items from police and media sources. It presupposes that the audience already knows about this assassination attempt and his public role. The story is written as if the readers know what the speaker has proposed in regard to policies, especially immigration, and how grave that moment was. Presuppositions establish the story as an important, known incident.

Stylistic Choices:

stylistically, vivid descriptions, dramatic build-up, and a tone of conversation came into being, which gave an account in an entertaining yet engaging manner of a near-fatal incident, discussing its emotional and political implications. The stylistic tone is neutral; it uses structure concisely, the formal register typical in news, to inform the reader without

emotional bias. Passive voice and structured chronology keep it on events, not people.

The second article graphically describes Donald Trump's reaction during and immediately after an assassination attempt and follows with a quote of his speech relating to the event. Trump amplifies the emotional appeal of such a story through dramatic tone, vivid imagery, and symbolism. Entailing from such a gesture of fist pumping with a bloodied state in which Trump describes himself speaks volumes to the more underlying narration of strength through adversity, making this text both engaging and politically charged.

In the third article, there is no emotive tone; passive voice has been used—the focus is on the event, not on the performer—and the key information is attributed to credible institutions. Of course, these stylistic choices are for clarity, conciseness, and credibility, appealing to journalistic reporting standards.

The last article is subjective, dramatic, and descriptive. Rich language, repetition, and a conversational tone enjoin the audience; temporal and spatial details help to place the action. The text treads an even line between reflective emotionalism and dispassionate narrative as the speaker approaches the climax of his attempted assassination. The result is dynamic storytelling.

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