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PRAGMATIC IDENTITY AND ALTERITY IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Abstract: *The article analyzes a sample of political discourse, namely the speech entitled “We Want Our Country Back”, delivered by the British nationalist MEP, Ashley Mote. In the communication situation, the audience is made up of conservative, right-wing politicians or supporters, mainly readers of the nationalist Right Now magazine. The politician as an utterer interacts both with the interlocutors present, considered to share the speaker’s national and religious identity, and with potential interlocutors that may embody a rejected alterity.*

The article quotes Mote’s words in order to demonstrate how the politician’s identity is negotiated in discourse through the interplay of hypostases of identity and alterity. Their linguistic manifestations are occurrences of personal deixis and the pragmatic roles that the utterer attributes to himself and to his interlocutors.

In political discourse, there is a deep-going opposition between “I”/“We” and “They”. In fact, the relationship is more complex, but it can be reduced to the politician’s acceptance of his allies’ alterity and rejection of his opponents’ alterity.

As to the pragmatic roles assigned by the utterer, they make up a “drama” in discourse and the latter becomes the battlefield for power: the persuasive power that relies on the illocutionary forces released by the macro-speech act which a political speech stands for.