



# **POLITICAL RHETORIC AND THE CHALLENGES TO DIVERSITY IN RUSSIA**

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# POLITICAL RHETORIC AND THE CHALLENGES TO DIVERSITY IN RUSSIA

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*The author of this publication argues that negative societal trends - namely, raising the levels of inter-ethnic tensions, intolerance to diversity and hostility to the 'others' – can be predicted through the analysis of political rhetoric. The method of reconstruction of society through the analysis of rhetoric can serve as an early-warning system detecting the approach of an ethnic crisis.*

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

In January 2014 the state news agency RIA Novosti published statistics, according to which Moscow and Saint Petersburg occupied leading positions in number of attacks committed on ethnic grounds in 2013.<sup>1</sup> As a result of the attacks that took place in 32 regions of Russia,<sup>2</sup> 20 people were killed and 173 injured. In Moscow eight people were killed and 53 injured, and in Saint Petersburg three people were killed and 32 injured.<sup>3</sup> The research showed that the main victims were immigrants from Central Asia (13 dead, 39 injured) and Caucasus (three dead, 26 injured).<sup>4</sup> Regardless of the dramatic statistics, the

head of the Federal Migration Office, Konstantin Romodanovskiy, claimed that in most of the cases the 'foreigners' were themselves guilty due to their misbehavior.<sup>5</sup> He stated that they should have learned how to adapt to the Russian realities and not to annoy the local population.<sup>6</sup> The rhetoric used by the official justified the actions of nationalists and reversed the situation, representing the Russian majority as the real victims, which led to the new wave of attacks in January 2014. By the end of January 2014, nationalists had injured 11 people and killed one Uzbek immigrant in Moscow<sup>7</sup> and thereafter (in March 2014) started organizing train-checks.<sup>8</sup> "The white car"<sup>9</sup> initiative involved groups of 30-40

masked people searching for non-Russian looking persons in order to initiate fights. The government and the mass media did not address this issue.

Would it be possible to forecast and possibly prevent such negative societal developments? Certainly, a key factor for the prevention of violence and inter-ethnic tension is the political will and environment, which in the case of Russia is not in favour of promoting diversity. But exactly due to this fact, the case presents rather clearly the parameters on the basis of which an early warning system could be developed and used by researchers, analysts, policy, and decision makers.

## II. BUILDING A THEORETICAL MODEL FOR ANALYSIS

The political rhetoric is a communicative process that bears political features such as demonstration of power or its reverse and is conducted in frames of the political communicative event<sup>10</sup>. Political rhetoric can be accessed through a thorough and multi-layered discourse analysis,<sup>11</sup> the basic element of which is *the context*<sup>12</sup> (“surrounding conditions and consequences”<sup>13</sup> that embrace not only the event, but various categories of communicative events (perception of participants, processes of adaptation of discourse, etc.)”<sup>14</sup> The basis of context itself is social, because it presupposes shared

cognition of a discourse community that possesses common knowledge, attitudes, ideologies, grammar, rules, norms and values.<sup>15</sup> At the same time context is constructed on the unique experience and is formed through the cognitive interpretation of an event; thus, the contexts are in fact also mental models that are subjective. Therefore, in order to understand each other the addresser and the receiver should possess similar mental models of the specific event. Another important characteristic of context is in its dynamic – each person constructs a mental model based on his/her knowledge, ongoing situation and background information, which means that each model is subjective and is temporarily changing.<sup>16</sup>

The participant of a communication event chooses the relevant identity in order to create a feeling of commonality with the receivers of his/her message. The identity presupposes shared knowledge or community knowledge that allows an addresser interacting with the receivers. The expressions used in communicative events reflect elements of person’s mental model along with the ideology that forms certain perceptions of the situation and can affect the ways of representation. For example, the presence of hidden discourse can be tied to the ideology of the speaker or targeted community and therefore can help to determine one of the identities that the speaker possesses (e.g. as a nationalist,

representing interests of the nationalists party). The way to determine the hidden and visible racist rhetoric is to apply the model of “the ideological square”<sup>17</sup> designed by Teun Van Dijk with the aim of analysing the syntactic units of text and talk.<sup>18</sup> R. Wodak and M. Reisigl elaborated on this idea and proposed several questions helping to determine the ideological square:

- “1) Referential strategies: How are people named and referred to semiotically?; 2) Predicational Strategies: How are these people described? What qualities or characteristics are attributed to them?;
- 3) Argumentation: What arguments (explicit and/or implicit) are used to support these characterizations, and/or justify exploiting and discriminating against others?;
- 4) Perspectivization: From whose perspective are such namings, descriptions and arguments expressed?
- 5) And are there utterances stated explicitly or implicitly? Are they intensified or mitigated?”<sup>19</sup>

The most frequent usage of the racist discourse nowadays can be coded in the text and talk devoted to minority issues and immigrants.<sup>20</sup>

Political rhetoric, which is represented as text or talk, can implement the functions not only as a constituent of the context (reflecting agenda), but also as a constitutive (agenda-setting or defining the

policy). The notion of agenda itself is devoted to “a set of issues hierarchically arranged according to their importance”.<sup>21</sup> According to Van Dijk, the constituent of the context (reflecting agenda) is produced during the communicative event through the presupposed discussion of a specific issue; the agenda is constitutive (agenda-setting or defining the policy) when a speaker introduces new topics during the discussion in a communicative event, and thus can promote real actions e.g. in the field of foreign politics of the country. According to the work of the scientist of the Institute for Health Research James W. Dearing and the American communication scholar and sociologist Everett M. Rogers, in order to determine the position of issues in the subsystems of the agenda-setting theory (media, public and policy) and define it as agenda setting, the frequency of mentioning the problem in media should be estimated.<sup>22</sup> Following the approach of Joseph P. Overton, who defined the levels of public acceptance of ideas as: unthinkable, radical, acceptable, sensible, popular, policy,<sup>23</sup> we understand that the introduced project can be unthinkable first, but when the actor keeps promoting it, the idea will proceed through all levels from unthinkable to popular and will become a policy in the end. Thus, the agenda can project vertically from bottom to the top. According to the theory of Van Dijk, an agenda is a part of context, which means that it is constructed and correlated

with the other elements of context such as knowledge, ideology, experience etc. of the speaker (media, political representative, people etc.) and cannot be analyzed separately as an independent phenomenon, which is why the notion of agenda in current research is included in the analysis of the context model.

Another crucial condition for the understanding of discourse is knowledge, which plays an important role in communication processes. Most knowledge is learnt by vision or experience, but in case of absence of the possibility of direct interaction with the source of knowledge it can be acquired from discourse (text/talk).<sup>24</sup> Moreover, in order to be able to produce discourse (to send communicative messages) the addresser should possess knowledge about the knowledge of the receiver, because otherwise the mental models will not coincide and the message will not be received by a recipient. In the case of when the addresser does not have information about knowledge of the receiver, he/she may repeat the same information during the communication process or make other mistakes, which can be determined by the K-device model worked out by Van Dijk.<sup>25</sup>

In a nutshell, any political event can be considered as a communicative event held in a certain environment,<sup>26</sup> between the multiple receivers possessing certain cognitive models that are supposed to intersect with the cognitive models of the

addressers and are based on common presupposed knowledge.<sup>27</sup> The type of political communication itself can be coded, so that in order to decode the message, it is recommended to apply the “ideological square”.

The model developed for the analysis of political rhetoric in Moscow is built on the above-mentioned concepts and involves a triad of semiotics as a model of communication between the candidates and the electorate. Such elements as the ideological square and K-device are innovative and have never been applied for the analysis of Russian discourse and political rhetoric. The model of analysis of the political rhetoric can be structured in the following way:

#### *A. Determination of the type of rhetoric and the act of utterance:*

- 1) Determination of the type of rhetoric. This step involves determination of the strategic functions of rhetoric for a hearer: coercion and resistance; legitimization and deligitimization; representation and misrepresentation. (this step was introduced as initial by Paul Chilton and Christina Schäffner<sup>28</sup>);
- 2) Determination of the acts of utterance (locutionary/ illocutionary): locutionary is the formulation of the sentence with the specific referent (“Dr.”, “Professor”, “Teacher” etc.) and sense (“got promotion”, “was fired” etc.),<sup>29</sup> and illocutionary: 1)

representatives (talk shows specific state of affairs or relations in between the participants); 2) directives (ordering, commanding, begging etc.); 3) commissives (obligations), which include vows, pledges, claims and promote a participant to do something actively; 4) expressiveness (illustrate the psychological state of speaker, may involve thanking or apologising, condoling or congratulating); 5) declarations (talk that proclaims change of a certain state – make peace or fire a worker).<sup>30</sup>

*B. Analysis of the structural functions on three levels: pragmatics, semiotics, and syntax (all the three dimensions are considered):*

- 1) Syntax: agent/topic; usage of linguistic units in political speeches (by Borbotko<sup>31</sup>); hidden rhetoric (determination of the ideological square, racist rhetoric) and determination of disclaimers;
- 2) Semantics: application of the semantic model; semantic variables (generalized by Van Dijk); ideology (ideology is detached due to its functioning both as a pragmatic variable and as a semantic variable, thus from the perspective of semantics the ideological influence and meaning are examined. In order to determine the presence of ideology, syntax is researched through the application of the ideological square);
- 3) In frames of pragmatics the following areas are examined: type of speech act,

context model schema (detailed model), agenda-setting estimation (topics in four Russian periodicals), and K-device model. The examination of pragmatics variables are based on the Teun Van Dijk's approach;

The described model is based on the areas of pragmatics, semantics and syntax that were combined and analyzed in the works of Teun Van Dijk, Paul Chilton and Christina Schäffner. Apart from generalization of modern concepts made by these authors, some elements such as the ideological square<sup>32</sup> and K-device<sup>33</sup> are innovative and have never been applied for the analysis of Russian discourse. Some elements such as the determination of acts of utterance are described in detail by Searle whereas Van Dijk, Chilton and Schäffner don't give due consideration to these elements, which is why the approach of Searle was also included in the scheme as important for the initial description of the text and talk. The Russian linguist Borbotko analyses the linguistic units in political speeches during election campaigns, which makes his studies relevant for current research due to the peculiarities of Russian culture and Russian language that he is acquainted with.

Thus, the model is combined from multiple variables that were introduced in the areas of pragmatics, semantics and syntax. It is believed that in order to assess the political rhetoric and to understand the societal trends, it is important to consider the



text and talk from the different angles that the approaches propose. The combination of different approaches to the assessment of the political rhetoric helps to determine specific features of the political event in Russia and to avoid its misinterpretation.

### III. APPLYING THE THEORETICAL MODEL

The mayoral elections in 2013 in Moscow has been chosen as an object for the analysis and application of the above mentioned model for several reasons. First, the Moscow elections were the first direct mayoral elections since 2004 and aimed to demonstrate that freedom of choice has been granted to the population. Moreover, for this reason the government promoted participation of the radical opposition to the ruling power (led by Aleksey Navalny<sup>34</sup>) along with four pro-governmental parties (the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia<sup>35</sup>, Spravedlivaya Rossia (Fair Russia)<sup>36</sup>, the Communist party<sup>37</sup> and Yabloko<sup>38</sup>) and its own representative from the party Edinaya Rossia (United Russia), self-nominated candidate Sergey Sobyenin.<sup>39</sup> The negative consequences of the intensive anti-immigrant rhetoric used during the campaign by the six candidates (negative representation of “others” versus positive representation of “us”) outlined the case as a close to ideal model for analysing the causality and the interplay between context – rhetoric – action.

In order to assess the political rhetoric the following *methods* were used:

- 1) analysis and evaluation (the four Russian periodicals in a period of one year (content analysis), election programmes and final speeches of the two main candidates (analysis of political rhetoric); three public polls (analysis of statistics);
- 2) theoretical modeling (development of a model based on the semantics, syntax and pragmatics approaches of discourse analysis aimed at the assessment of political rhetoric);
- 3) analysis of primary and secondary sources of information.

The context of the mayoral elections was marked by the rise of nationalism. The factors that contributed to it were the following:

- 1) the historical peculiarities;
- 2) the social attitudes;
- 3) the speeches and programmes of the candidates that represented the immigrants as threat and criminals.

The events that took place during the period of the election campaign can be accepted as the objective context, while the individual interpretation of the events and rhetoric formed by the individual mental models attribute to the subjective context.

Thus, the objective context that led to the rise of nationalism and intolerance to diversity was, on the one hand, marked by the elimination of censorship, which allowed the appearance and functioning of multi-

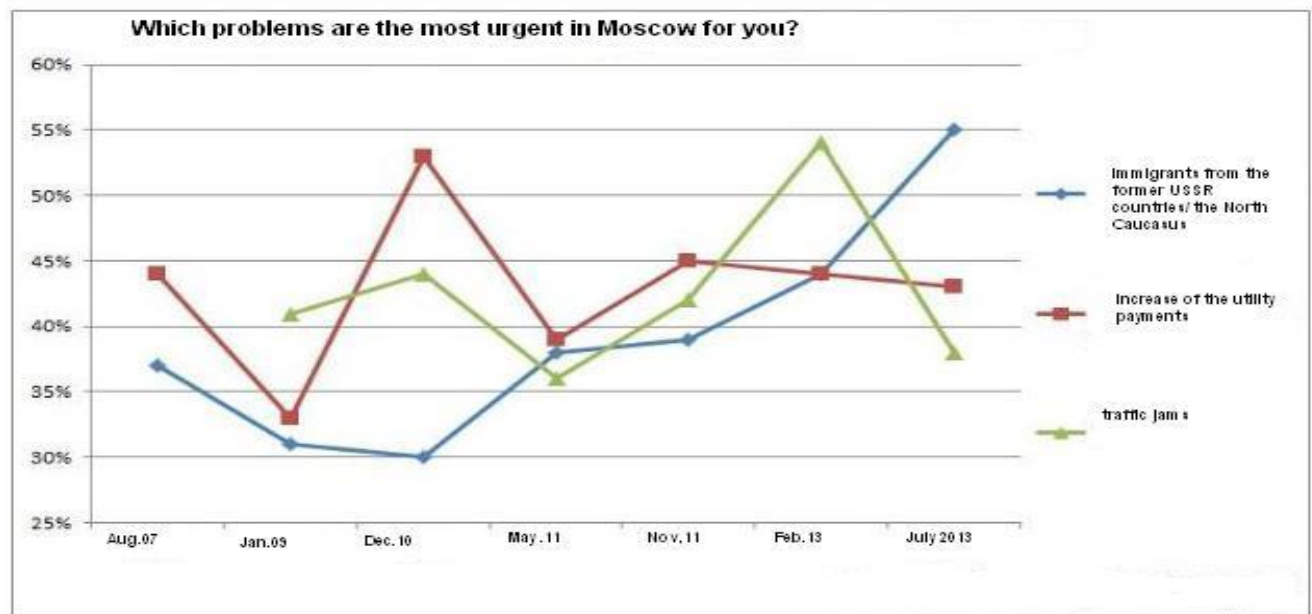


party system. On the other hand, absence of any regulations for electoral races made it possible for the politicians to use any means to win the elections, including hate speech and usage of populist rhetoric. At the same time, the uniqueness of Russian history promoted at the University and school levels of education<sup>40</sup> led to the ethnic negativism, especially among educated people.<sup>41</sup> Formed in 90s, the intolerance to diversity and nationalism continued to flourish, which was determined by researching subjective context with public polls.

Before the mayoral elections in 2013, 55 per cent of respondents identified the problem of immigrants from the former USSR countries/North Caucasus as the most urgent one. The nations that during the socialist period were called “brother nations” became a burden for the group of “us”, “native Russians”.

Remarkably, by 2013 the majority of the respondents (53 per cent) supported spontaneous anti-migration raids and regular checks of the dormitories where the immigrants lived.<sup>42</sup> Only every forth citizen

**Figure 1: The most urgent problems of Moscow<sup>43</sup>**

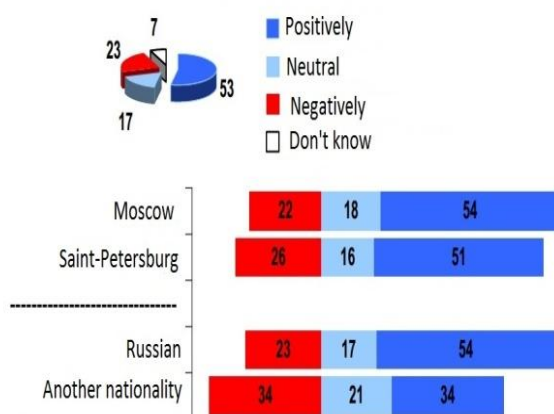


Source: Levada Centre, “Moscow on the eve of the mayoral election: a total study” [Москва накануне выборов мэра: полное исследование] (17 July 2013), at <<http://www.levada.ru/17-07-2013/moskva-nakanune-vyborov-mera-polnoe-issledovanie>>

of Moscow was against these drastic measures (23 per cent of the respondents).<sup>44</sup>

**Figure 2: The assessment of the public organizations' activities**

How do you assess the actions of the public organizations fighting against the illegal immigration?



Source: The Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, "The National Question and The Alternative Legal Order"[Национальный Вопрос и Альтернативный Правопорядок], 23-24, at <http://www.sova-center.ru/files/xeno/politeh-13-alternative-order.pdf> (Accessed: March 14, 2014).

Fifty-four per cent of the respondents in Moscow and 51 per cent in Saint-Petersburg supported the violent actions, and only every ninth citizen of Moscow and Saint-Petersburg did not support the civic activist organizations.<sup>45</sup>

Speaking about the rise of nationalism, 79 per cent of the Russian youth (from 18 to 29 years old), 63 per cent of adults aged 30-44, 49 per cent of adults

aged 45-59 and 46 per cent of the respondents older than 60 years supported the participation of nationalists in the anti-immigrant demonstration, which took place in one of the Moscow districts "Birylovo" in October 2013.<sup>46</sup> The statistics reflected the latest trend – nationalism had become an acceptable ideology for the Russian youth.<sup>47</sup>

The results of the public opinion polls represent the subjective context of the population and coincide with the period of election campaigning, when the usage of aggressive in-text- and active rhetoric aimed at ethnic groups<sup>48</sup> increased significantly.

This conclusion has been reached after the assessment of the rhetoric, namely the election programmes of the mayoral candidates (paying special attention to the diversity-related issues), the application of the elaborated model to the latest interviews given by the two main candidates for the position of mayor, Aleksey Navalniy and Sergey Sobyanin,<sup>49</sup> and the content analysis of the periodicals, assuming that newspapers are the sources of the "hidden" governmental rhetoric that influence the formation of the subjective mental model.<sup>50</sup>

### *In-text rhetoric. Election programmes*

The election programmes were rather identical in the "texts" describing the same problems and the same means of their solution. The significant difference appears when it comes to the issue of diversity. The candidates presented crime rate data and illegal migration data that significantly

differ from programme to programme:

1) the representative of the Liberal Democratic Party, Mikhail Degtyarev claimed that there were “3.5 million illegal immigrants who committed half of the crimes against humanity”.<sup>51</sup> The candidate suggested that more power should have been given to the police and characterized immigrants as “illegal” and “dangerous for the society”.<sup>52</sup> Newcomers of different ethnicity were presented to be the reason for losses in the Russian budget and that is why they should be restricted or banned from entering the country.<sup>53</sup>

2) Aleksey Navalny claimed that 50 per cent of crimes are committed by non-residents and 20 per cent of them are illegal immigrants;<sup>54</sup>

3) Nikolai Levichev, the chair of the political party “Spravedlivaya Rossia” stated that 30 per cent of crimes were committed by foreigners and 20 per cent by illegal immigrants.<sup>55</sup>

4) Sergey Sobyenin (the pro-governmental candidate) underlined that immigrants should be the subjects of control and monitoring, and that they must understand the necessity of following Russian traditions.<sup>56</sup> He also called for closing down the markets where they work and emphasized that the employers who hired the immigrants should have been levied with taxes.<sup>57</sup> This basically means the expulsion of the immigrants from society,

marginalization and the inability for them to find work.

The content analysis and the analysis of the rhetoric used in the election programmes show the presence of the ideological square and the usage of visual racist rhetoric<sup>58</sup> targeting “others” (new-comers of different ethnicity).

*In-text rhetoric. Analysis of weekly periodicals (1st November 2012 and 1st November 2013)*

Most of the political newspapers in Russia are governmental (in the current research: 3 of 4 are officially supported by the authorities and one is considered to be an opposition newspaper), which means that they can be considered as sources of “hidden” governmental messages. The results of the poll “Moscow on the eve of the mayoral election” showed that the Russian population and Moscow citizens tended to seek for information either on the Federal TV Channels or in the newspapers and magazines.<sup>59</sup> Thus, the rhetoric used in the mass media also influences the mental models of the readers.

Regardless that the newspapers did not cover the problem of diversity systematically (2 articles devoted to the immigration issue in “The Kommersant Vlast” per year; 15 articles with negative representation of the new-comers (112 negative expressions used) per year – in “The New Times”; 4 articles – in “The Expert”; 0 articles (however, in “Itogi there

were negative expressions of immigrants (48) used in the articles justifying the politics of Sobyenin), all of them represent the issue negatively and support the governmental politics of the exclusion of immigrants. Thus, the word “hate” was used 47 times in combination with the words “immigrants”, “illegal immigrants”, “to breed hatred”. One of the examples of the negative representation that was used in the *Kommersant Vlast*: “In our newspaper we address to the work immigrants all the time claiming that it is better for them to leave the country and the best way is not to come here at all.”<sup>60</sup> The notification of the immigration issue started to appear in the beginning of the research period (November 2012) and intensified by the start of the election campaigns (July-August 2013). Consequently, the rhetoric positioning immigrants as an out-group was not only agenda-setting by the candidates, but by the media as well.

*Active rhetoric. The latest interviews given by the two main candidates*

In his final interview Aleksey Navalny emphasized the deligitimization of the government underlying the failure of the democratic reforms in the country. At the same time, Navalny underlined the special role of Russians and the Russian welfare that must be returned to the population from the government. However, comparing to Sobyenin, he didn't specify any particular

methods he would like to propose. Sobyenin, in turn, represented the position of power and demonstrated readiness of the government to respond to the needs of society. In his last pre-elections interview he mentioned the actual problem of migration, underling that there will be changes if he is elected as a new mayor. He promoted stricter policies on immigration control and started manipulating the issue of diversity, seeing it as an ability to attract more voters

The well-structured election programme and constant manipulation of the public fears and wishes guaranteed the self-nominated candidate Sergey Sobyenin success in the mayoral elections in Moscow in September 2013.

#### IV. FINDINGS

If representing the political rhetoric in-text as an element of the deconstructed discourse is reflecting the reality, then the ethnic tensions can be assumed as one of the core problematic issues for Russian society.

The speeches of the candidates reconstructed the reality through the following issues: promotion of the special Russian path and the national idea by the candidates (thus, presupposed raise of nationalism), uncontrolled immigration, and household problems.

The mass media described the problem of immigration as an existent one and used racist rhetoric targeting immigrants, which also proved the issue to

be urgent.

The usage of the racist rhetoric by the mass media, the government and the opposition influenced the mental models of the addressees. The information flow filled with anti-migration rhetoric stimulated feelings of insecurity, fear and need for protection. Promotion of the idea “Russia for Russians” in the mass media by all candidates and on the governmental level caused further development of nationalism in the country.

Since the summer of 2013, the government has started the anti-immigration campaign aimed mostly at the big cities such as Moscow and Saint Petersburg.<sup>61</sup> The main activities were “hunting for the immigrants” (in Sobyenin’s terms<sup>62</sup>) and mass checks of the dormitories where they lived. The Levada Center poll data determined social support of these radical actions. This trend has also been reflected in the results of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation in the beginning of the election campaign (17 July 2013), in the end of election campaign (1 September 2013) and after the elections (November 2013). Thus, it can be said that the statements of the pro-governmental candidate Sergey Sobyenin and other politicians speculating on the issue of diversity were the crucial element for the justification of the action of the nationalist groupings.

In September 2013, immediately after being elected, Sergey Sobyenin assured

the citizens that from 18<sup>th</sup> October 2013 there would be official anti-immigrant raids every week.<sup>63</sup> The Mayor designated the responsibility for the actions to the head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Moscow, Anatiliy Yakunin.<sup>64</sup> This claim marked the introduction of the radical anti-immigrant policy at the governmental level and officially finalised justification of raids against “others”.

The analysis of the situation in Moscow and the results of polls<sup>65</sup> determined the context and the following trends:

The objective historical context is marked by:

- 1) Skepticism to the Western ways of development;
- 2) Nostalgia about the Soviet past;
- 3) Promotion of the “national idea”;
- 4) Ethnic negativism;
- 5) Absence of any law against the hate speech or the anti-discrimination law;
- 6) Adherence to Soviet past.<sup>66</sup>

The subjective context during the election campaign included the following features:

- 1) Rise in public concern about the diversity related issues when it comes to the newcomers from the former Republics of the USSR and the North Caucasus;
- 2) Support of the government and its representative on the mayoral elections;

3) Public trust in the Federal TV Channels, newspapers and magazines.

The political rhetoric of the candidates contained the following features:

- 1) In-text-rhetoric: radical solution to ethnic tensions (ban from the entering the country, visa regime, police strengthening; regular checks, prevention of ghettos, closure of the markets where the immigrants work etc.);
- 2) In-speech-rhetoric: deligitimization of the government (Navalnyi), promotion of the national idea (Navalnyi and Sobyenin), solution to the immigration issue (Sobyenin);
- 3) “Hidden” governmental messages in the mass media (newspapers): representation of immigrants as criminals; racist rhetoric, justification of the lynch law, necessity of protection from the immigrants, necessity of strengthening the police, “adaptation of immigrants is not welcomed”, “Russia for Russians”, justification of the anti-immigrant raids.

Thus, the analysis of context and political rhetoric constructs the following image of societal trends in Moscow:

- 1) Ethnic negativism;
- 2) Racism (perception of the immigrants as an out-group (“threat”, “danger”, “illegal”, “criminals”));
- 3) Hatred aimed at the immigrants (justification of the violent acts aimed

against the immigrants, justification of the lynch law and support of anti-immigrant raids);

- 4) Lack of value placed on mental progress (adherence to the Soviet past).

The model elaborated and applied in the current research helped to determine the type of rhetoric used by the candidates and the context and the influence of the rhetoric on the mental model of the targeted audience. The results of the poll of the “Levada Centre” illustrated the reaction of the population to the information flow produced by the candidates and the mass media. The aggressive anti-migration rhetoric caused the rise of nationalism and determined future social instability and tensions in Moscow.

The dramatic events that happen in Moscow demonstrated the outcomes of the manipulation of the public consciousness by governmental structures and mass media during and after the elections, and their unreasonable and aggressive policy against the newcomers of different ethnic origin. The usage of negative rhetoric aiming to attract voters resulted in the unprecedented wave of violence in Russia, which was supported by different layers of the population.

This alarming trend shows a significant lack of information, and consequently understanding of the phenomena of xenophobia, racism and discrimination and their possible



consequences. “The topic of discrimination is invisible and unheard. Russians are used to the aggression and the hate speech that can be found in political rhetoric and in the mass media”.<sup>67</sup> The mental models of the receivers, formed under the influence of the negative rhetoric, led to the perception of the immigrants as criminals whose social characteristics are tied to their ethnicity.

The actions of the Mayor who tried to position himself as a governor that was responsive to the requirements of society caused the strengthening of police control over the immigrants, and the sudden raids and cruel treatment of them. The violent checks promoted more isolationism and distrust between the immigrants and the police. This radical policy deprived the newcomers of the basic rights for life and personal security.

At the same time, the popularity of the Mayor increased due to his radical fight against the so-called criminals.<sup>68</sup> It can be explained by the unwillingness of the majority of the population to have anything in common with the criminals and to transfer the responsibility to a strong leader who can protect them. Thus, the political rhetoric became an agenda-setting tool that led to the rise of nationalism in Moscow.

The combination of an aggressive anti-migrant policy promoted during the election campaigns and societal trends had a powerful impact on society. The creation of the perception of immigrants as a “threat”

and “criminals” led to the justification of the anti-immigrant raids, “white cars” and street fights and demonstrations against the newcomers. The actions of the nationalist grouping received public support. Thus, the political rhetoric used by the candidates motivated society to undertake radical anti-immigrant actions, which proves its agenda-setting function.

In the mid-term prospective, the further worsening of the situation due to the unregulated radical anti-immigrant policy of the government is presupposed: the newly introduced hotline for the citizens of Moscow and Saint Petersburg<sup>69</sup> allows for getting rid of immigrants, if they are found to be living in an attic, basement or registered in a “rubber apartment”.<sup>70</sup> The government continues to use anti-diversity rhetoric, which supports anti-immigrant attitudes and actions in the cities.

Hence, it can be seen that the analysis of political rhetoric could provide clear understanding of the societal trends and possible negative or positive developments. It also could help to reconstruct the societal trends in Moscow and become a precautionary tool for the detection of an upcoming ethnic crisis.

It is believed that the proposed model allows for reconstructing any reality regardless the type of state structure, or the openness or closeness (level of isolation) of a state. Consequently, the reconstruction gives an opportunity of better understanding



of the societal trends, problems and ways of establishing dialogue with a given country. It allows for improvement in interstate communication and collaboration opportunities. With the application of the developed model, the analyst is able to determine the type of crisis (through the examination of agenda), the long-term and short-term prospects, and the level of impact of the political rhetoric on a society. Uncovering the negative developments offers a possibility of stabilization of the situation at its initial stages.

## V. CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, the elaborated model for the analysis of the political rhetoric combined the semantics, syntax and pragmatic elements and includes the analysis of in-text rhetoric in media (content analysis of the syntax and semantic elements, e.g. words used to refer to the candidates and immigrants, metaphors, topicality, etc.), analysis of the in-text rhetoric in election programmes (content analysis (syntax) and the semantic analysis (hidden meanings in the texts, slogans or any other messages referring to presupposed knowledge), and analysis of the active rhetoric (semantic and

syntax analysis of the two latest interviews with the leading candidates). The main elements analysed in frames of pragmatics were the objective and subjective contexts of the researched event.

The application of the model allowed for determining the key features of the Russian society. One of the most visible aspects that all candidates tried to play on was the aspect of preservation of the Russian nation from "The Other" and its unique place in the world. The inter-ethnic tensions and willingness to expel "undesirable others" were present before and during the electoral campaigning and intensified after it was over especially due to the intersection of the political rhetoric and the societal xenophobic attitudes.

The political rhetoric became a trigger for the ethnic clashes due to the justification of violence against "others" on the governmental level.<sup>71</sup> As a result, trying to address the most urgent issues in the country, the politicians opened the Pandora's Box and in fact legalized nationalist groupings and their aggressive actions against the non-Russian population. Nevertheless, these negative developments could be foreseen and possibly prevented through the analysis of the political rhetoric and its context.

## Notes and References

<sup>1</sup> Evgeniy Biyatov, "There were 20 murders caused by xenophobia in Russia last year" [В России за год совершили 20 убийств на почве ксенофобии], RIA Novosti, at <<http://www.interfax.ru/russia/350312>> (Accessed: February 10, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> The Sova Centre, "Racism and xenophobia", Results of January 2014, at <[www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2014/01/d28925/](http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2014/01/d28925/)> (Accessed: February 10, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> The Sova Centre, "Another "white car" in the Moscow suburb train", at <[www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2014/03/d29075/](http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2014/03/d29075/)> (Accessed: March 11, 2014).

<sup>9</sup> "The white car" is one of the aggressive actions performed by Russian neo-nazi groups aimed to attack the non-Russian looking people in the subways. The white cars were first initiated by the neo-nazi group "Format18" led by Maxim Marzinkevich. Read more at: <<http://www.anticompromat.org/skiny/fl8.html>> (Accessed: October 15, 2015).

<sup>10</sup> Paul Chilton, and Christina Schäffner, "Discourse and Politics. Discourse Studies", in Teun A. Van Dijk (ed.), *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction* (London: SAGE Publications LTD, 2009), 303-330, at 311.

<sup>11</sup> Teun Van Dijk, "Introduction. The Study of Discourse" in Teun A. Van Dijk (ed.), *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, (London: SAGE Publications LTD, 2009), 17.

<sup>12</sup> From the point of view of the pragmatic approach to the discourse analysis.

<sup>13</sup> A. Teun Dijk Van, *Discourse and Context. A sociocognitive approach*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008), 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> According to Teun Van Dijk, there is a conceptual tool called 'the ideological square' that is always presented when the racist rhetoric takes place. The ideological square is determined by the positive representation of Self and negative representation of Others. (Teun Van Dijk, *Communicating Racism: Ethnic Prejudice in Thought and Talk*, (SAGE, Newbury Park, CA, 1987), 250; Teun Van Dijk, "Discourse and denial of racism", 3(1) *Discourse and Society* (1992), 87-118).

<sup>18</sup> Teun Van Dijk, 1987, *ibid*, 250; Teun Van Dijk, 1992, *ibid*, 87-118.

<sup>19</sup> Martin Reisigl, and Ruth Wodak, *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetoric of Racism and Anti-Semitism*. (Routledge, London, 2001), 143.

<sup>20</sup> Teun Van Dijk, 1987, *ibid*, 250; Teun Van Dijk, 1992, *ibid*, 87-118.

<sup>21</sup> František Kalvas, Jan Váně, Martina Štípková, *Framing and Agenda-Setting: Two Parallel Processes in Interaction*. (University of Masaryk, Brno, 2010), 3.

<sup>22</sup> James W. Dearing, and Everett Rogers, "Agenda-setting" (Sage, London, England, 1996).

<sup>23</sup> Józef Piątek, *Reality of Politics. Estimates-Comments-Forecast*, (Uniwersytet Szczeciński and Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2013), 237 at <[http://rodm-szczecin.pl/static/media/uploads/rop\\_4\\_2013.pdf#page=237](http://rodm-szczecin.pl/static/media/uploads/rop_4_2013.pdf#page=237)> (Accessed: May 1, 2014).

<sup>24</sup> In a sense of knowledge about social interaction and practical experience of living in a community.

<sup>25</sup> Read more on K-model: A. Teun Dijk Van, 2008, *ibid*, 85.

<sup>26</sup> Chilton and Schäffner, *ibid*, 315.

<sup>27</sup> Teun Dijk Van, 2008, *ibid*, 56.

<sup>28</sup> Chilton and Schäffner, *ibid*, 303-330.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 311.

<sup>30</sup> John Searle, *Indirect Speech Act. Syntax and Semantics 3: Speech Acts*, in P. Cole and J. Morgan (eds.) (Academic Press, New York, 1975), 59-82.

<sup>31</sup> Vladimir G. Borbotko, *The principles of discourse formation: from psycholinguistics to lingvosynergetic*. [Принципы формирования дискурса: От психолингвистики к лингвосинергетике] (Librocom, Moscow, 2006).

<sup>32</sup> According to Teun Van Dijk, there is a conceptual tool called ‘the ideological square’ that is always presented when racist rhetoric takes place. The ideological square is determined by the positive representation of Self and negative representation of Others. (Teun Van Dijk, 1987, *ibid*, 250; Teun Van Dijk, 1992, *ibid*, 87-118).

<sup>33</sup> The K-device model is aimed at the description of a strategy that an addresser uses in case the personal knowledge of receiver is unknown. It presupposes analysis of the shared knowledge (the Common Ground) that the recipient of the communication event may have. The strategy of choice of the device highly depends on the context (e.g. the variable of time – if the addresser had time to prepare the speech and knew the potential group of recipients or he/she realized the nonoccurrence of the mental models during his/her speech, etc.) and is random in most cases due to the necessity of the addresser to respond quickly to the ongoing communicative situation/event. Read more at: A. Teun Dijk Van, *ibid*, 2008), 3.

<sup>34</sup> A candidate from the Russian Republican Party, the oldest Russian party, which was registered in 1990. The candidate started his career as a blogger who revealed cases of corruption in governmental structures and was one of the initiators of the anti-governmental demonstrations in 2011-2013. From 2012 Navalniy promoted his own political party “People’s Alliance”, but the government refused to register it officially, that is why the oppositionist represented the Republicans. He earned 27.24 per cent of votes and gained second place in the fight for the position of mayor.

<sup>35</sup> Represented by Mikhail Degtyarev. The party itself existed from 1992, but in fact does not bear either liberal or democratic features. Its politics have changed with the changes of the governmental leaders and is marked by the radical attitudes towards immigrants and other vital problems in the country. It is remarkable that from 2003 to 2005 Degtyarev was a member of the governmental party Edinaya Rossiya, “the United Russia”.

<sup>36</sup> Represented by Nikolai Levichev, the chair of the political party. The party is not popular in Russia due to the unclear goals and lack of functionality, which was proven by the outcome of the mayoral elections when Levichev earned the least number of votes (2.79 per cent).

<sup>37</sup> Represented by Ivan Melnikov, Soviet and Russian politician, Vice-Chairman of the Communist Party. The candidate earned 10.69 per cent of votes. According to the latest statistics represented by the official governmental data centre “Levada” the Communist Party showed stability in occupation of the 3rd place in popularity rates in Russia in 2009 and 2010.<sup>37</sup> This trend was also reflected in the outcome of the mayoral elections in Moscow.

<sup>38</sup> Represented by Sergey Mitrohin, the leader of the Russian United Democratic Party “Yabloko”. From the moment of its foundation in 1993, the party criticized the politics of the president (Yeltsin and later Vladimir Putin) and proposed the ideas of possible democratic reforms in Russia. Sergey Mitrohin earned 3.51 per cent of votes.

<sup>39</sup> Sergey Sobyenin had occupied the position of mayor of Moscow from 2010 on a de facto basis when he was nominated for this position by the Moscow City Duma and the President until he expressed willingness to step down from the office and participate in the direct mayoral elections. He earned 51.37 per cent of votes and won the election.

<sup>40</sup> Elena M. Portnova, “The National Idea of Russia” [Национальная Идея России], at <<http://nsportal.ru/shkola/obshchepedagogicheskie-tehnologii/library/statya-natsionalnaya-ideya-rossii>> (Accessed: June 21, 2014).

<sup>41</sup> Lev Gudkov, “The Russian neotraditionalism and resistance to changes” [Русский неотрадиционализм и сопротивление переменам], 3(4) *The notes of the Motherland* (2002), at <<http://www.strana-oz.ru/2002/3/russkiy-neotradicionalizm-i-soprotivlenie-peremenam>> (Accessed: June 6, 2014).

<sup>42</sup> The Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, “The National Question and The Alternative Legal Order” [Национальный Вопрос и Альтернативный Правопорядок], 23-24, at <<http://www.sova-center.ru/files/xeno/politeh-13-alternative-order.pdf>> (Accessed: March 14, 2014).

<sup>43</sup> Source: Levada Centre, “Moscow on the eve of the mayoral election: a total study” [Москва накануне выборов мэра: полное исследование] (17 July 2013), at <<http://www.levada.ru/17-07-2013/moskva-nakanune-vyborov-mera-polnoe-issledovanie>>

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>48</sup> Mostly from Caucasus regions and former USSR countries such as Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

<sup>49</sup> The choice of candidates is determined by their political affiliation: Navalniy is considered to be the only real representative from the opposition to the government; Sobyenin is the governmental representative, who was assigned to the position of mayor by the President Vladimir Putin, but decided to step down from office and to be publicly elected in order to legitimise his position.

<sup>50</sup> The New Times, The Expert, Kommersant Vlast and Itogi are examined from the perspective of the negative and positive representation of the candidates, elections and the immigration issue in Moscow.

<sup>51</sup> News of Political Parties from Russia and CIS, “The Election Programme of the candidate on the position of Mayor of Moscow Mikhail Degtyarev: Order, comfort and prosperity” [Предвыборная программа кандидата на пост Мэра Москвы Михаила Дегтярева: Порядок, комфорт, достаток], at <<http://www.qwas.ru/russia/ldpr/Predvybornaja-programma-kandidata-na-post-Mehra-Moskvy-Mihaila-Degtjareva-Portjadok-komfort-dostatok/>> (Accessed: May 23; 2014).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Generalization (generalizing predication) is “a personal experience of relation with one person is generalized for the whole group”. (Reisigl AND Wodak, *ibid*, 57. The Election Programme of Aleksei Navalniy, at <[http://navalny.ru/platform/Navalny\\_Program.pdf](http://navalny.ru/platform/Navalny_Program.pdf)> (Accessed: May 24, 2014).

<sup>55</sup> “The Election Programme of Nikolai Levichev”, at <<http://89.108.121.143/datadepot/pf55/049852.pdf>> (Accessed: May 24, 2014).

<sup>56</sup> “The Election Programme of Sergey Sobyenin”, at <[http://magru.net/pubs/4562/Predvybornaya\\_programma\\_Sergeya\\_Sobyenina#1](http://magru.net/pubs/4562/Predvybornaya_programma_Sergeya_Sobyenina#1)> (Accessed: May 24, 2014)

<sup>57</sup> Typically these are food and clothes markets, which sell cheap goods from China and former USSR countries. A customer there can also find pirated goods or other illegal products.

<sup>58</sup> According to Wodak and Reisigl typical racist/anti-Semitic discourse may include: 1) generalizing predication (personal experience of relation with one person is generalized for the whole group); 2) essentialization (stereotypization, distribution of certain features for the whole group). (Reisigl and Wodak, *ibid*, 57).

<sup>59</sup> Levada Centre, *ibid*.

<sup>60</sup> Olga Allenova and Sergei Rasulov, “The illegal immigrant is nobody, that is why he can be used as one wishes” [Нелегал – никто, поэтому его можно использовать как угодно], №27 *Kommersant Vlast* (15 July 2013), 30-34.

<sup>61</sup> The Human Rights in Russia, “The anti-immigration campaign in the cities of Russia. The manifest of the human rights centre”, Memorial, at <<http://www.hro.org/print/17980>> (Accessed: January 31, 2014).

<sup>62</sup> In his speech Sobyenin claimed that it is more comfortable to deport the immigrants or to prevent them entering the country than to run and look for them at the streets. (Interview - Sergei Sobyenin, Acting Mayor of Moscow. <http://www.vedomosti.ru/library/news/14969351/intervyu-sergej-sobyenin-vrio-mera-moskvy> (Accessed: July 4, 2014)

<sup>63</sup> The Human Rights in Russia, “New raids against the immigrants in Moscow”, at <<http://www.hpo.org/print/18121>> (Accessed: March 14, 2014).

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> The polls “Moscow on the Eve of Mayoral Elections: a Total Study” 17 July 2013, The Election Opinion Research in Moscow. 1 September 2013 conducted by the “Levada” Centre. “The National Question and The Alternative Legal Order” conducted by The Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation.

<sup>66</sup> The ethnic negativism and nostalgia about the Soviet past are related both to the objective context (due to its historical development and formation) and to the subjective context (as a perception of certain event by the person or society).

<sup>67</sup> Alexander Osipov, *What is ethnic discrimination and what can be done with it?* [Что такое этническая дискриминация и что с ней можно делать?] (Sova Centre, Moscow, 2012), 136.

<sup>68</sup> The citizens of Moscow about their mood, life and S. Sobyenin. Levada Centre. <http://www.levada.ru/22-10-2013/moskvichi-o-svoem-nastroenii-zhizni-i-s-sobyenine> (accessed: 16 June 2014).

<sup>69</sup> In order to stay and work in Russia legally, any person must be registered in the respective Foreign Migration Office (for this purpose there is a need to provide the proof of legal arrival to the country and the document of registration (rental contract) in the region of application). More information can be found at: <<http://www.fmsmoscow.ru/docs/permit/memo.html>> (Accessed: October 15, 2015).

<sup>70</sup> The term “rubber apartment” means an apartment, where the owner registers a large number of people (usually immigrants), who in practice don’t live there. “The neighbouring apartment is “rubber”. What to do and where to



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complain about the “dormitory”? [Соседняя квартира — «резиновая. Что делать, и куда жаловаться на «общежитие»?]Moscow online, at <[http://www.molnet.ru/mos/ru/immigrants/o\\_107755#Куда пожаловаться?](http://www.molnet.ru/mos/ru/immigrants/o_107755#Куда пожаловаться?)> (Accessed: July 6, 2014).

<sup>71</sup> Agenda-setting function of the rhetoric.



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