Neurolinguistic aspects of political language.
by
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These ads work because it is based on the science of psycho-neurolinguistic programming. This is a science demonstrating how people are influenced by the use of certain words. If we take the word "mental illness", then people immediately believe that the mind (adjective "mental") is ill. Hence all the arguments surrounding "mental illness" turn out to be how we can "cure" the mind of its illness.

Seta37 has pointed out the "ad hominem" argument (attacking the author, instead of the message) in political debate, or for that matter in any debate. The attraction of negative descriptions of people comes from the fact, that if A puts down B, the listener C gets a stroke, because whatever B is, C is not in the eyes of A. Hence A gives a compliment to C, for not being as bad as B. People with a negative self-image - conscious or unconscious - feels good when a person puts down a third person, because they feel that the speaker has a good regard for the listener. Thus people with a negative approach and attitudes to life in general tend to be attracted to negative arguments that life is really bad. Depressed people are attracted to this web site because they are not alone in their depression. It feels good to know that other people feel as "lousy as I am".

People with a good innate self-image usually do not fall into the trap of being pleased how bad a third person is. This is the psychology around gossiping, where a group of people - the in-group - puts down a person outside the group. If "X is stupid", then the members of the in-group are being told "we are not stupid" (and that is good), and that binds the group together.

Neurolinguistic programming exploits emotive terms to influence people emotional reactions. An unemployed person can be called "unemployed" = neutral, a dole-bludger = negative, or victim of economic circumstances = positive, depending on what message we want to bring to what public. If we want to appeal to the conservative section of the community, we call unemployed people "dole-bludgers" or "lazy" people. Left-wingers are inclined to call them victims of capitalism. People who believe that the health system should not fall into the hands of "governments bureaucracies", have usually no objections to it falling into the hands of "free enterprise bureaucracies".

Words can also represent cultural values, where "communism", "socialism", "welfare state" have a negative impact on people living many parts of the United States and a "good" impact in Russia or China or Cuba. This is very apparent with Obama's endeavours to reform the deplorable health system in the US. Obama is portrayed as a "socialist" - a abominable adjective in the US, but acceptable in the EU. Take the word "capitalism" or "free enterprise" and see how it affects your thinking "positive" or "negative".

As an exercise as to how much neuro-linguistic programming influence our thinking students are instructed to read any article or any head-line in any newspaper - especially tabloid newspaper - and underline words that contain an emotive term. If you recognize emotive terms in an article by underlining individual

"emotive" terms, you can obtain a measurement how emotive an article is. An article with a score of two, is less emotive than another article scoring 6.

An emotive term is any word that can be further described as "and I approve" or "and I disapprove", or "and this is bad " or "and this is good". The more sensational an article is, the more it will contain emotive terms and the more underlined words.

Political adds have to contain many emotive terms to appeal to people that advertisers want to appeal to. Ads work because of their "emotive content" can trigger emotional reactions in the readers or listener. Studying neurolinguistic programming can immunise against faulty and emotive political arguments or debates in general. Studying logic can also make you aware of neuro-linguistic programming.

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