

THE ROLE OF AD HOMINEM ATTACKS IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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Abstract: This article analyzes problems of political discourse, one of the field of modern linguistics, especially ad hominem, and their drawbacks and types, and studies the ideas expressed in English and world linguistics.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada zamonaviy tilshunoslikning yo‘nalishlaridan biri hisoblangan siyosiy diskurs sohasidagi muammolar, ayniqsa shaxsiyatga tajovuz, va ularning kelib chiqishi va turlar tahlilga tortilgan bo‘lib bu borada ingliz va jahon tilshunosligida bayon qilingan fikrlar tadqiqot obyekti sifatida o‘rganilgan.

Keywords: political discourse, Ad Hominem, types of Ad Hominem, fallacy, personal attack,.

Kalit so‘zlar: siyosiy diskurs, shaxsiyatga tajovuz, shaxsiyatga tajovuz turlari,xato fikr, shaxsga hujm,

Introduction

In political discourse, the exchange of ideas, policies, and opinions often involves heated arguments and sharp criticisms. However, among these rhetorical strategies, the ad hominem fallacy is one of the most frequently used yet misleading tactics. The term ad hominem, Latin for “to the person,” refers to a logical fallacy where one attacks the character, motive, or other personal attributes of an individual instead of addressing the substance of their argument. In political debates, the ad hominem attack is commonly employed to undermine opponents, distract from substantive issues, and rally public sentiment. This article explores how ad hominem arguments manifest in political discourse, why they are problematic, and their impact on political discussions.

Understanding Ad Hominem Attacks

An ad hominem attack occurs when an individual or group ignores the argument presented and instead targets the person making it. This could involve questioning someone's integrity, character, or past actions, with the goal of discrediting their argument by discrediting them. Rather than engaging with the logic or evidence behind a claim, the ad hominem attack sidesteps critical thinking by focusing on personal insults or irrelevant attributes

Types of Ad Hominem

Direct attack: Personal insults.

Circumstantial: Suggesting a person's argument is biased because of their background.

Tu quoque: Accusing an opponent of hypocrisy instead of refuting their argument.

Philosophical and logical perspective: Why ad hominem is considered a logical fallacy.

Ad Hominem in Political Discourse

An argument ad hominem can go wrong in many different ways. We shall now identify seven kinds of error. We talk about these errors as ad hominem fallacies, and we refer to them by the following names.

1. the fallacy of false attribution
2. the fallacy of irrelevant attribute
3. the fallacy of overrated effect
4. the fallacy of reliability irrelevance
5. the fallacy of irrelevant person
6. the fallacy of insufficient degree
7. the fallacy of irrelevant function

Each fallacy results from the presence of a false premise in the ad hominem argument. An argument that commits the fallacy of false attribution is unsound because the attribution premise is false. In arguments committing the fallacy of irrelevant attribute or overrated effect the effect premise is false. Arguments that commit the fallacy of reliability irrelevance, irrelevant person, insufficient degree or irrelevant function have a false rebuttal premise. In its basic form ad hominem argumentation can commit only the first three fallacies. Since the last four fallacies consist in a false rebuttal premise, they cannot be committed by arguments in the basic form. Ad hominem arguments in the extended form, on the other hand, can commit any of the seven fallacies. The fallacy of false attribution is committed when the argument claims that one has an attribute another in fact lacks. Here is an example.

“Barack Obama shouldn’t be trusted as Commander in Chief. He is a Muslim, you know.”

The fallacy of irrelevant attribute is committed in cases when has no effect on one’s reliability in the performance of. Here is an obvious example.

“You cannot take him seriously as an expert on foreign policy. He looks like an awkward.”

This kind of error in ad hominem arguments is also identified by Woods. As the example shows, sometimes a negative ad hominem argument that commits the fallacy of irrelevant attribute is not only a bad argument, but a downright insult. And indeed arguments of this kind are classified as “abusive” ad hominem arguments by Copi and Cohen. However, the fallacy of irrelevant attribute is not always abusive. It is not abusive in positive ad hominem arguments, of course, and there are cases where a negative ad hominem argument commits the fallacy of irrelevant attribute without being abusive.

The Effect of Ad Hominem Attacks on Public Opinion

Ad hominem may cause people’s opinion both positive and negative. It is because of types of social layers and point of view of people. We have people still who cannot think critically and accept everything as it is seen.

This may also lead people to mix both personal and work life of future politicians or candidates who are debating. So, it may bring short time victory for who is attacking of his opponents’ personality. However, after some time, people will understand that personality is not connected with work, but it may be too late to avoid the circumstances of actions in political sphere.

Addressing Ad Hominem Attacks in Political Discourse

Raising awareness: We should educate the public about the logical fallacy of ad hominem attacks and encouraging critical thinking. Suggestions for promoting civility in political discourse, such as focusing on issues rather than personal characteristics.

Role of the media and social platforms: We must examine the role of media, social media, and fact-checking organizations in combating ad hominem attacks and ensuring more constructive conversations.

Political responsibility: Call to action for political leaders to refrain from using ad hominem attacks and to encourage healthy debate.

Conclusion

Arguments ad hominem are often used as counter-arguments, but they need not be counter-arguments. In its basic form, an ad hominem argument merely makes a claim about someone’s reliability. It need not stand in opposition to some other claim. When an ad hominem argument says that some other claim about the person’s reliability is false it becomes an ad hominem argument in the extended form. By including all kinds of function that a person can be relied upon to fulfill, this framework arguments about reliability. It is not limited to the subcategory of arguments about credibility.

As we have seen, our understanding of ad hominem arguments covers positive as well as negative variants. An argument where the attribute pointed out is said to

increase reliability is a positive ad hominem, and an argument where the attribute is said to decrease reliability is a negative ad hominem.

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