

# Nicolas Sarkozy – a French celebrity macho man who fell from favour a long time ago?

In speaking or in writing, the President of France multiplies mistakes.  
On purpose? Does he want to get closer to the people?

Fusion of shifted (inverted) rhetorical concepts:

ETHOS



LOGOS + PREPON ≥ PATHOS + KAIROS

- I Principal phases of mediatisation
  - Major image alterations made by means of a language: a verbal fusion of inverted rhetorical concepts
  - How is his political ethos designed and re-designed, and then put on display?
- II Mechanisms of communication
  - Staging devices used in the contemporary political discourse
  - How, through the language, his speeches are designed and delivered in public?
- III Evolution of rhetorical effectiveness
  - Orator est vir bonus, dicendi peritus
  - Shall we ‘pardon his French’? Is (his) French really in tatters now?

**CONCLUSION:** To what extent has he changed a discursive landscape in the realm of politics, and yet not only in this one?



ORIGINAL VERSION	TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH	COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE
‘J’écoute, mais je tiens pas compte.’	‘I listen but I don’t take notice / I listen but don’t take account.’	Omission of one part of negation (ne), typical of informal register; slightly disapproving tone.
‘Casse-toi, pov’ con!’ ( <i>en parlant à un agriculteur</i> )	‘P*ss off, poor sod!’ ( <i>speaking to a farmer</i> )	Slang expressions and extremely contemptuous tone.
‘Si y en a que ça les démange d’augmenter les impôts.’ ( <i>en s’adressant aux ouvriers</i> )	If there’s any what’s itching to raise taxes. / If there is this to the itching to raise taxes. [=If the only thing they do fancy doing is raise taxes.] ( <i>talking to factory workers</i> )	Informal register: incomplete expressions (double ellipsis) and convoluted style.
‘A tout le monde qui est important ici, bonjour!’	‘To everyone who’s important here, good morning!’	Prepon is broken in the opening formula (salutation): inappropriate register and slightly contemptuous tone.
‘Ch’ais pa.’	‘I dunno.’	Inappropriate register: sloppy pronunciation, incomplete negation.
‘Ch’uis (J’suis) quelqu’un qui dit ce qui pense.’	‘I’m someone who says what thinks.’	Inappropriate register and syntax: sloppy pronunciation, incomplete negation, no subject present.
‘Ce que j’ai découvert, c’est que, alors que nous sommes dans l’Otan, car nous y sommes, y a bien peu de personnes qui le savent.’	‘What I discovered is that while we are in NATO, because we’re at it, are very few people that know this.’	Inappropriate register: incomplete expression and circumlocutory style.
‘On se demande c’est à quoi ça leur a servi.’ ( <i>à propos des études des élites</i> ).	You wonder this is what has served them./You wonder wot good it did ‘em. ( <i>talking about studies of the elite</i> ).	Informal register ( <i>ça</i> instead of <i>cela</i> ); syntactic error: incomplete emphatic structure.
‘Qu’est-ce que je m’aperçois?’	‘What am I becoming aware?’	Grammatical mistakes (semantic and morphosyntactic at the same time): he mistook verbs: apercevoir (≡to see) for s’apercevoir de (≡to be aware of); the latter is not only a reflexive verb (needs a reflexive pronoun), but also follows a special verb pattern (takes an indirect object, and therefore needs a preposition).
‘On a choisi stratégie économique.’	‘Was chosen economic strategy.’	Grammatical clanger: no indefinite article and inappropriate register: a wrong form of a subject.
‘Faut changer le système de jeu.’	‘Must change the system of play.’	Subject omission, colloquial expression: no clarity and accuracy.
‘Il y a des trucs difficiles, mais ça, c’est vraiment difficile.’ ( <i>à propos de la réforme hospitalière</i> )	‘There are things difficult, but it is really difficult.’ ( <i>about the health sector reform</i> )	Informal vocabulary, simplistic syntax.
‘Ç’a pas été de m’en occuper de ça.’	‘It hasn’t been me take care of that.’	Incomplete negation, wrong verb pattern, inappropriate ellipsis: no precision
‘L’écologie, c’est pas qu’il y a que des jardins.’	‘Ecology doesn’t mean there are only gardens.’	Incomplete negation, incomplete expression, simplistic syntax.
‘On commence par les infirmières (...) parce qu’ils sont les plus nombreux.’	‘Let’s start with the nurses (...) because they are in a majority.’	Wrong personal pronoun (no gender concord with the anaphoric reference) and no noun-adjective agreement (in gender).
‘Je me souviens, moi, ce qu’il disait, le Président Mitterrand. J’avais du respect pour lui.’	‘I do remember what he said, President Mitterrand. I had respect for him.’	Informal word order (strong form of a personal pronoun), wrong verb pattern, simplistic syntax.
‘Non, mais faut parler simple, mais parler juste.’	‘No, but must speak simple, but say what is true.	No subject, no logic, a sentence pretending to be a kind of a slogan or words of wisdom.
‘Ah ben oui, ils étaient colère, les gens. C’est normal.	‘Oh yeah, they were anger, people. This is normal.’	Informal exclamation, omission of a preposition: grammatical error, informal word order, simplistic syntax.
‘J’ai rien contre, m’enfin, m’enfin, c’est parce que j’avais beaucoup souffert sur elle.’ ( <i>elle = La Princesse de Clèves</i> )	‘I’ve got nothing against, but still, still... Because I had a really hard time on her.’ ( <i>NS is willing to lift a ban on the Princess of Cleves, the first novel in modern French literature, written by a woman</i> )	Simplistic syntax, colloquial expressions, incomplete negation; regarded by some as a frenzied act of disdain for the French cultural heritage, teachers of literature, etc.
‘Vous savez, les symboles, ça compte.’ ( <i>en vantant le travail des bénévoles</i> )	‘You know, the symbols, it matters.’ ( <i>praising the work of volunteers</i> )	Simplistic syntax, informal register.
‘Vous adhérer à cette stratégie offensive.’	‘You are stick to this offensive strategy.’	Grammatical mistake: no S-V concord (infinitive used instead of a conjugated verb, both of which sound the same, but their spelling is different).
‘Je me rappelle de quelque chose.’	‘I recall of something’.	No preposition should be used with the verb se rappeler.
‘J’aurais aimé qu’il restât.’	‘I would have liked him to have stayed.’	<b>Formal register: literary style (two grammatical moods: past conditional and imperfect subjunctive).</b>