

Pragmatic aspects of American politicians' public speeches

Oksana Vladymyrovna KHAPINA¹

The present work is dedicated to the prosodic analysis of American politicians' speeches and to the description of changing voice characteristics according to the speech topic and its importance for the politician and the audience. The voice is the key part of a politician's image, because with its help he or she can influence the electors. That's why a politician and his or her team have to think not only about what to say but also about what intonation the speech must be pronounced with. In this paper Barack Obama, Condoleezza Rice and George Bush's speeches have been analysed. The main criteria of the voice analysis are melody, pitch of tone, strength of tone, fluency, tempo and emphasis. The present work is a contribution to the modern branch of linguistics concerning the study of prosodic organisation of successful oratorical speech in politics and its influence on a politician's image. The importance of this work is explained by the growing influence of politics spread with the help of mass media. This work can be useful for those who are interested in politics or want to understand how to create their own image with the help of the tone of voice.

Keywords: *oratorical speech, politician's image, prosodic organisation*

1. Auditory analysis results

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¹ Odessa I. I. Mechnikov National University, Ukraine, lana-san.07@mail.ru

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In sounding speech according to Henrik Bang (2003), its clarity, impact, and the presence of empathies are directly related to its sound coloration, which is determined by the individual characteristics of the speaker's voice. The main role here is carried out by the intonation, and only then by the order of words, by the types of sentences, by the relationships in which grammatical factors are among themselves. Such parameters of the sounding speech as: voice, its height, timbre, musicality, smoothness, rhythm, stresses placing are the most important components by means of which the speaker makes an impression on people around him or her.

While studying oratorical speech features, the intonational speech structure variability can be considered in two ways:

- oratorical variability, i.e. different speakers' variation of the intonational structure of the same type utterances;
- individual variability, i.e. the same speaker's variability of the intonational structure of the same type utterance.

Let us consider narrative utterances oratorical variability which shows the difference of possibilities of different speakers' speech expression already at the intonational structure average data level.

Thus, intonational contours of speakers' statements, whose speech judging by the results of the auditory analysis, was of excellent quality, differed from the statements intonational contours, the speech of which was assessed as weak.

Speech intonograms recognized as the best were distinguished by the greater irregularity of the intonational contour, by the higher speed of the drops in Fundamental Frequency (FF), by the utterance beginning, first stressed syllable, the nucleus higher value, and greater frequency of the tonal circuit allophonic variants. The speech intonogram recognized as weak in quality indicators, was characterized by FF smooth movement, by the presence of fewer number of drops within the speech units, by the lower phrase frequency range, and by the monotonous set of tonal contour allophonic variants.

The utterance duration characteristic feature has set the following regularity: the nuclear syllable increased duration and all nuclear syllables average duration of expressive speech exceed all speakers' non-expressive speech syllables duration.

A speech perceived qualitative features comparative analysis, obtained as a result of an auditory experiment and speech objective physical features, obtained as a result of electroacoustic analysis, allow us to conclude that there are regular relationships between subjective and objective characteristics of the utterance.

The main conclusions obtained as a result of comparison of the auditory analysis indicators by the opposite semantic pairs method and the corresponding electroacoustic analysis indicators at the text level:

1. Wide frequency interval between the preceding phrase absolute end and the next one absolute beginning;
2. Alternating of large and small frequency intervals within the text;
3. The intonational models complexity in utterance semantic centre and text key phrases designing; alternation of FF contrast envelope curves of the first stressed and nuclear syllables;
4. Different length phrases alternation – short, long, medium, very short, with a large number of pauses between sense groups and their long duration;
5. Neighboring sentences first stressed and nuclear syllables frequency levels alternation – FF smaller values are replaced by large, medium, small, and again large ones, etc.

The speakers' speech best examples differ in energy structure features, the elements of which are interrelated: the final syntagmas and phrases that complete the microtopical unity or text as a whole are characterized by large intensity indicators. The maximum intensity and duration on the key phrases is observed.

2. Leaders' speeches analysis

Best of all the analysis of a person's coherent speech can tell about the inner psychoemotional state: how the logical stresses are placed in it, how quickly the words are pronounced, how the phrases are phrased, what deviations from the norm are available (uncertain or incorrect selection of words, cutting phrases short, changing the words, the appearance of filler words, the disappearance of pauses) as Alan Finlayson has also said (2007). Wherein:

- fluent speech – obvious emotion or concern about something, a passionate desire to convince or persuade someone, conversation about personal difficulties;
- slow speech – arrogance, fatigue, depression, grief;
- discrete speech – uncertainty;
- the appearance of special 'smoothness' of speech – excitement;
- laconism and resoluteness of speech – obvious confidence;

- stuttering – tension or deception;
- indecisiveness in choice of the words – not being sure in oneself or the intention to surprise with something suddenly;
- occurrence of speech defects (repetition or distortion of words, cutting phrases short) – undoubted excitement, but sometimes a desire to deceive;
- avoiding of speech pauses – tension;
- very long pauses – disinterest or disagreement;
- the occurrence of pauses in speech, filled with filler words such as ‘well’, ‘so to speak ...’, ‘er ...’ – indecisiveness and difficulty in expressing thoughts, finding a way out;
- wedging of affectionate diminutive suffixes in the word being spoken (‘clearish’) – emotional or physical tension;
- an increase in the number of trivial sets of words pronounced faster than usual – emotional excitement, tension;
- getting silent or stinginess in words – resentment;
- constant interruption of others – tension;
- transition of inner speech to the outer one (‘thoughts aloud’) – excessive excitement.

So together with Adrian Beard (1999) we think that, for example, comparing Barack Obama’s speeches during his inauguration speech, speaking on Easter celebration and the interview for the journalists after Osama bin Laden’s death (see Table 1), it can be noted that, despite the formed US President’s image, his speech is rather predictable from the subject point of view, but it is also unpredictable from one politician stable image point of view.

After his victory, Obama, who is still quite young politically, thanks many times, listens to the ovation patiently, repeats the same thing slowly, stretches out his words, clearly pronounces every word and makes meaningful stresses. He often uses YOU pronoun, thereby sharing his victory with the whole American people, he pronounces his speech at a very high tone, he almost screams, but he screams joyfully. He makes pauses after the completion of his thought.

In the middle of the speech he begins to express his thoughts faster, thereby, glowing the emotional atmosphere of the audience. He stresses every word, even where there is a simple enumeration. Obama’s speech during Easter celebration is also very emotionally coloured by jokes, and smiles of the speaker. He often pauses, maybe because his speech hasn’t been fully prepared, he emphasizes intonationally important words, and the feeling of relaxation is being felt. The interview for the mass media after Osama bin Laden’s death is distinguished by neutrality, speed of utterance, the average range of tone, brevity of thoughts, the placing of semantic stresses on more important words, and falling intonation.

Speaker; Type of Speaking	Loudness	Tempo	Melody	Stress Placing	Pitch of the Tone	Fluency
Barack Obama						
Inauguration Speech	Very loud, almost screaming	Slow, with pauses	Emotionally filled	On every word	Upper range	Discrete, but confident speech
Summit Speech	Quiet	Fast	Neutral, official	On words connected with the topic, i.e. nuclear energy problems and risks	Range below average one	Confident; not very interested, that's why thoughts inconsistency
At Easter celebration	Quiet	Slow, inconsistent (from the sheet of paper)	With jokes, smiling, laughing	Stresses on the words connected with the feast	Low range	Discrete, unconfident
Speaking after Osama bin Laden's death	Average loudness	Fast	Nearly without emotions in the voice, not using emotional words	Stresses on notional words	Average range	Prepared, clear, confident
Condoleezza Rice						
Speech after Barack Obama's victory	Loud	Average, with pauses	Emotionally	With semantic stress pauses	Upper range	Smooth, clear, confident
Condoleezza Rice's speech at the meeting with students	Low loudness	Slow	Open, good natured	Without special stresses	Low range	Discrete, thoughtful
Interview for television (after the publication of her book)	Average loudness	Confident, fast	Reasonable	On the same level, without separate stresses	Low range	Smooth, beautiful
George W. Bush						
Inauguration speech	Average loudness	Confident, slow	Quiet	With semantic stresses	Average range	Discrete

Table 1. Prosodic characteristics of American politicians' public speaking

He talks about terrorist's death calmly and confidently, thereby emphasizing the rightness of the deed, the speech is prepared, every word is polished, and there are no extra gestures and emotions. There is sorrow in his voice, as a person has died, but at the same time a thread of victory over terror can be traced, and the arguments of the justice of the conducted operation are given.

As for Condoleezza Rice's speeches, they are characterized by a variety of tempo, volume, and contrast range of voice indicators, as well as by a smooth, clear and confident speech. At the same time, George W. Bush's speech is distinguished by a slow tempo, average loudness and range indicators, and also by a confident, calm, although sometimes discrete speech.

3. Conclusions

Thus, the data obtained in the course of the research, based on the material of the sounding American political discourse, prove the close relationship between extralinguistic factors (the politician's personality, his or her political image, the historical and political context of the speech, and the type of speech) with the linguistic characteristics of the speech texts (the use of appraisal statements, key words-labels, I / we pronouns, intensifying adverbs, etc.) following Polly Toynbee (2006). The text of the speech is created in accordance with the social order dictated by the time and political forces in the country.

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