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VERBAL AND PARAVERBAL FEATURES OF THE US POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Political discourse is an important tool for influencing the public, and its verbal and paraverbal characteristics can significantly differ depending on the gender of the politician. In the United States, political leaders often employ specific linguistic strategies to attract voters' attention, emphasize their ideas, and influence public opinion. The gender aspect in political discourse is becoming increasingly noticeable, as female and male politicians may have different communication styles that affect their effectiveness in a political context.

The verbal features of women's political speeches are often characterized by a more emotional and inclusive style, which may include the use of the first person, metaphors, and storytelling. Female politicians may more frequently draw on personal experiences and social issues, making their speeches more sensitive to voters' needs. In contrast, male politicians typically use a more formal language style, focusing on rational arguments and facts, which can highlight their authority and competence.

Paraverbal features, such as tone of voice, intonation, pace, and pauses, can also vary significantly between men and women. Research shows that women tend to use a softer tone and vary their intonation more, which can create an atmosphere of trust and empathy. Men, on the other hand, often speak in a lower tone with less variation in intonation, which can convey a sense of confidence and strength.

Thus, the verbal and paraverbal features of political speeches in the U.S. have a significant gender aspect that influences the perception of politicians and their rhetoric. Understanding these differences can help in studying the effectiveness of communication in the political arena, as well as in further developing strategies for more successful engagement with voters.

Moreover, the intersection of verbal and paraverbal features with cultural expectations further complicates the gender dynamics in political discourse. Societal norms often dictate how male and female politicians are perceived based on their communication styles. For instance, assertive language used by women may be interpreted negatively as aggression, while similar assertiveness in men is frequently viewed as confidence. This double standard can influence the reception of political messages and the overall effectiveness of a politician's speech. As women increasingly occupy leadership roles, it is essential to analyze how these dynamics play out in real-time political contexts, as well as the potential for reshaping societal perceptions of gender in political communication. Recognizing these complexities can enhance our understanding of the broader implications of gender on political engagement and representation.

Key words: *political discourse, verbal features, paraverbal features, political communication, gender representation.*

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ВЕРБАЛЬНІ ТА ПАРАВЕРБАЛЬНІ ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ПОЛІТИЧНОГО ДИСКУРСУ США

Політичний дискурс є важливим інструментом для впливу на суспільство, і його вербальні та паравербальні характеристики можуть значно відрізнятися залежно від гендеру політика. У Сполучених Штатах політичні лідери часто використовують конкретні лінгвістичні стратегії, щоб привернути увагу виборців, підкреслити свої ідеї та вплинути на громадську думку. Гендерний аспект у політичному дискурсі стає дедалі помітнішим, оскільки політики-жінки та чоловіки можуть мати різні стилі спілкування, що впливає на їхню ефективність у політичному контексті.

Вербальні особливості політичних виступів жінок часто характеризуються більш емоційним та інклюзивним стилем, який може включати використання першої особи, метафор і розповідей. Жінки-політики частіше звертаються до особистого досвіду та соціальних питань, що робить їхні виступи більш чутливими до потреб виборців. Навпаки, чоловіки-політики зазвичай використовують більш формальний мовний стиль, зосереджуючись на раціональних аргументах і фактах, що може підкреслювати їхній авторитет і компетентність.

Паравербальні особливості, такі як тон голосу, інтонація, темп і паузи, також можуть значно відрізнятися між чоловіками та жінками. Дослідження показують, що жінки зазвичай використовують м'якший тон і частіше змінюють інтонацію, що може створювати атмосферу довіри та емпатії. Чоловіки, з іншого боку, часто говорять на нижчому тоні з меншою варіацією інтонації, що може передавати відчуття впевненості та сили.

Таким чином, вербальні та паравербальні особливості політичних виступів у США мають суттєвий гендерний аспект, який впливає на сприйняття політиків і їхньої риторики. Розуміння цих відмінностей може допомогти у вивченні ефективності комунікації в політичній сфері, а також у подальшому розвитку стратегій для більш успішного залучення виборців.

Крім того, перетин вербальних і паравербальних особливостей з культурними очікуваннями ще більше ускладнює гендерну динаміку в політичному дискурсі. Суспільні норми часто диктують, як сприймаються політики-чоловіки та жінки на основі їхніх стилів спілкування. Наприклад, наполеглива мова, яку використовують жінки, може сприйматися негативно як агресія, тоді як подібна наполегливість у чоловіків часто розглядається як впевненість. Цей подвійний стандарт може впливати на сприйняття політичних повідомлень та загальну ефективність виступу політика. Зі зростанням кількості жінок на керівних посадах важливо аналізувати, як ці динаміки проявляються в реальному політичному контексті, а також потенціал для зміни суспільних уявлень про гендер у політичній комунікації. Визнання цих складнощів може покращити наше розуміння ширших наслідків гендеру для політичної участі та представництва.

Ключові слова: політичний дискурс, вербальні особливості, паравербальні особливості, політична комунікація, гендерна репрезентація.

Introduction. Studying political rhetoric in the United States through the lens of gender is critically important for understanding social dynamics and progress. Analyzing how language is used in political discourse can help reveal gender biases, stereotypes, and power dynamics. It uncovers patterns that perpetuate inequality and can influence public perception and political decisions. By examining language, we gain insights into the changing roles of men and women in politics, contributing to more inclusive and conscious democratic processes.

Furthermore, the exploration of gender aspects in political speeches can shed light on the representation of women in leadership positions and their impact on policy formation. This allows for a detailed analysis of the rhetoric used and the identification of hidden biases and barriers that women face in politics. Such analysis raises awareness and catalyzes efforts to promote gender equality, thereby contributing to the creation of a more just and representative political landscape in the United States. In an era of androcentric orientation in modern linguistics, political discourse is actively studied by both Ukrainian and foreign linguists who strive to define the concept of political discourse, examine its main features and functions, and establish its characteristic traits in linguistics.

Additionally, researching gender aspects of political speeches can highlight the representation of women in leadership roles and their influence on policy-making. This enables a thorough analysis of the rhetoric employed, revealing hidden biases and barriers encountered by women in politics. Such analysis enhances awareness and supports efforts aimed at promoting gender equality, thereby contributing to the establishment of a more equitable and representative political landscape in the United States.

There is no single definition of the term “political discourse.” In the linguistic literature, this term is understood in both narrow and broad senses. A rather narrow definition is provided by the Dutch linguist T.A. van Dijk, who views political discourse as a genre limited to a specific social field, namely politics. According to him, political discourse encompasses the words of politicians. The genres falling under this category include political speeches, parliamentary debates, party programs, and government discussions.

Although T.A. van Dijk restricts political discourse to professional frameworks, he notes that it is also a form of institutional discourse, meaning discourse that occurs in institutional settings such as government meetings, parliamentary sessions, and political parties (Dijk, 2004). The conventions are considered political, and the statement must be made by the actor playing the professional role of a politician in an institutional environment. Discourse is political if it accompanies political action in a political context. A narrow approach to defining the term “political discourse” is also proposed in the work of R. Wodak. Researchers refer to political discourse only in terms of institutional communication forms, primarily associating them with genres of public-political speech.

The primary function of political discourse is to serve as a tool of political power, encompassing the struggle for power, maintaining power, preserving power, implementing, stabilizing, or redistributing it. In this context, language plays a role in social control, legitimizing power by explaining and justifying the redistribution of power and social resources, reproducing power by reinforcing loyalty to institutions, and shaping perceptions of political realities in the public consciousness (Корнійчук, 2009). Additionally, political discourse enhances

social integration within society or among groups of individuals. However, specific functions of political discourse are often regarded as global, with many researchers identifying a range of functions that manifest its fundamental instrumental roles.

Doris Graber outlines three functions of political discourse. The first is the function of disseminating information, which creates a virtual reality for recipients, where their own experiential practices are supplanted by the proposed cognitive framework. The recipients' knowledge base is not primarily rooted in a political world formed through their own participation, but rather in the information provided regarding the state of affairs, which may carry implicit connotations in addition to explicit information (Chilton, 1997). The second function involves setting the agenda, bringing specific issues to the forefront of public attention, thereby controlling the dissemination of information, as the concerns that capture public interest define the focus of public attention and actions taken by the public. The third function pertains to projecting into the past and future, where the discourse reproduces the past and predicts the future (Davis, 1994). Politicians use appeals to positive and negative exemplars as argumentative techniques; memories of a favorable political past contribute to creating a sense of reliability for a particular candidate or party, while predictions of the consequences of choosing one alternative over another are framed in light of visions of a bright future or the challenges awaiting voters.

Paul Chilton and Christine Schäffner identify four functions of political discourse. The first function is coercion, which pertains to speech acts supported by any sanctions, such as orders or laws. Closely related to this is the function of legitimization, which implements the mechanism of subordination, establishing legitimacy through arguments based on the will of voters, overarching ideological principles, projecting a charismatic leader, and positive self-presentation (Ільницька, 2010). The function of delegitimization manifests in opposition, where the representation of others – such as institutional or unofficial opposition – carries negative connotations, often employing ideas of alienation or depopulation. In contrast to the coercive function, there exists the function of resistance, which is aimed at challenging power relations through samizdat, graffiti, petitions, requests, slogans, and other forms of protest. The modeling capabilities associated with this discourse are tied to information control, involving either euphemistic or direct handling of undesirable data (Чічановський, 2003).

It is evident that political discourse is a complex form of communication that has not been fully

represented in the literature due to its multifaceted nature. Currently, there is no widely accepted definition of this concept. In linguistic literature, this phenomenon is understood in both narrow (“the discourse of politicians”) and broad (“language in the public sphere”) senses. The diversity of approaches to studying political discourse is linked to the increasing role of mass media, the development of new communication technologies, and the expansion of globalization and the commercialization of political communication.

Materials and methods. The development of methods for analyzing political texts, particularly video-discursive political texts, relies heavily on important properties such as “non-linearity,” which refers to the presence of complex multi-level structures in the text's development across various dimensions of discourse: language, media, and hypertext – achieved through the creation of intertextual links. The sense of the “volume” of political text is intensified by its specificity at different levels, while the variety of linguistic and media components combines to add complexity and depth.

All these characteristics of political texts necessitate the use of an integrated approach, developed within the framework of political linguistics and based on a broad combination of various disciplinary perspectives (Шульц, 2007). Integrated methods encompass several significant and wide-ranging “groups of methods”:

1. A set of linguistic analysis methods that reveal the fundamental properties and characteristics of texts at various linguistic levels, including lexicon, syntax (combination), stylistics (utilization of metaphors, comparisons, and other stylistic devices), and sociolinguistics.

2. Content analysis methods, or content analysis based on the statistical counting of specially selected textual units.

3. Discourse analysis methods, grounded in the concept of discourse, which enable the analysis of the relationships between linguistic and extralinguistic aspects of the text.

4. Political linguistics methods, which help identify hidden political ideological components in political texts, focusing on evaluative components that reflect specific ideological views and attitudes.

5. Cognitive analysis methods, based on the study of the conceptual aspects of political texts, comparing different interpretations of events to uncover the relationship between actual reality and its political representation.

6. Linguocultural analysis methods, aimed at identifying culturally significant components in political

texts, such as realities, borrowings, and non-equivalent lexical units, which help shape an understanding of the cultural aspects of the ethnic and cultural identity represented in specific political speeches.

7. Linguistic methods that involve analyzing the text in terms of a stable system of parameters described by the political text, including its modes of creation and reproduction, channels of dissemination, functional types, topic dominance, and more.

The significant methodological potential of content analysis lies in the fact that virtually any component of a political text can serve as a unit of measurement—whether verbal (words, phrases, names of politicians, etc.) or content related to media series (repeated images, audio, and video clips) (Козак, 2012). This approach enables political discourse to fully reproduce the social reality represented by politicians, as political discourse is considered an objective and mediated reflection of the social interests and political views of all parties involved in the political communication process.

The method of political linguistics is a relatively new linguistic direction that emerged in the late twentieth century. When linguists formulate the basic principles for defining directions, they proceed from the understanding that linguistic signs and the ways in which they are realized are not neutral. There is a particular emphasis on the need to identify and describe ideological means of influence, which inevitably manifest in every political speech. Therefore, the aim of the political linguistics approach is to uncover and investigate ideologically charged components of texts, with special attention given to the analysis of highly ideologized mass information texts (Деренчук, 2014).

Research on political texts has also received considerable attention within the framework of cognitive linguistics, which focuses on the relationship between various linguistic processes and cognitive methods of perception and information processing. By considering language as a cognitive tool for representing and encoding reality, cognitive linguists study political texts “in connection with general issues of classification and conceptualization, as well as the problem of linguistic worldviews”.

Results and discussion. The main features of political speeches by U.S. politicians include:

- leadership rhetoric: politicians often use language to emphasize their leadership role and encourage collective action;
- emotional appeal: the use of emotional elements, such as appeals to the audience’s feelings, to enhance impact and understanding;

- appeals to the common good: attempts to gain support based on shared goals and values to unite the audience;

- argumentation and evidence: the use of logical arguments, facts, and statistics to support their positions and persuade the audience;

- appeals to patriotism: incorporating patriotic themes to stimulate national unity and support;

- media attention: crafting speeches that attract media coverage to ensure widespread reach;

- communication of external threats: political leaders often use speeches to respond to external threats and stabilize society;

- flexibility in language: the ability to adapt speech to the audience, situation, and changing circumstances.

These elements may vary depending on the politician and the specific context, but they reflect the general characteristics of political rhetoric in the United States.

In the political speeches of American male politicians, several verbal characteristics can be identified:

1. Leadership Tone: men often use language that emphasizes their leadership role. This may include strong assertions, a focus on decisiveness, and clarity of purpose.

2. Economic Language: male politicians may employ economically-oriented vocabulary and arguments to highlight their competence in financial matters and management.

3. Military Rhetoric: in discussions of foreign policy, male politicians may use military rhetoric, emphasizing security and a strong defense posture.

4. Emotional Restraint: men may refrain from expressing strong emotions or use them sparingly, placing emphasis on rationality.

5. Active Language: they may utilize active vocabulary and verbs, underscoring their willingness to take action and influence events.

These are general trends, and each politician may use language in a unique way. It’s important to consider the context and individual characteristics of each speech for a complete understanding (Davis, 1994).

Paraverbal characteristics, which include non-verbal elements of speech, can also be identified in the political speeches of male politicians in the United States:

1. Body Language and Gestures: men often use strong, decisive gestures and postures that emphasize confidence and leadership.

2. Facial Expressions: they may employ serious or confident facial expressions to reinforce the gravity and determination of their statements.

3. Voice and Intonation: male politicians may lower their voices to give them an authoritative tone, underscoring their strength and power.

4. Pauses and Speech Tempo: the use of shorter pauses and a faster speech tempo can highlight the energy and dynamism of the male politician.

5. Attire and Appearance: a specific style of clothing and a composed appearance can help create the image of a decisive and competent leader.

These paraverbal elements, combined with verbal aspects, form a complete picture of the speech style of male politicians in their political discourse.

The verbal characteristics of political speeches by women politicians in the U.S. can vary, but some common features include:

- emotional expression: women politicians may express emotions more in their speeches, which can create a connection with the audience;

- emphasis on empathy: they may incorporate aspects of empathy and personal experience to support their arguments and positions;

- use of rhetorical devices to unfold messages: considering stereotypes, women in politics may be more attentive to linguistic aspects, unfolding events, and argumentation;

- highlighting collaboration and tolerance skills: their speeches may emphasize collaboration, consensus, and tolerance to highlight their leadership qualities;

- use of collective language: women politicians may use words and phrases that emphasize their inclusiveness and identity, such as “we” and “together”;

- greater attention to detail: they tend to use specific examples and details to substantiate their positions.

The verbal characteristics of male and female politicians in the U.S. may share similarities, but they also reveal differences in linguistic expression. Male politicians primarily use leadership rhetoric and express expressiveness in their arguments, focusing on economic and foreign policy issues. For example, in Joe Biden’s speeches, there is a strong emphasis on leadership in addressing global challenges.

On the other hand, female politicians, such as Kamala Harris, highlight their empathy by sharing personal stories and focusing on social and justice issues. For instance, her speeches often recognize the role of women in society and advocate for equality. Another example is Elizabeth Warren, who actively criticizes economic inequalities and proposes policies aimed at social justice.

Thus, while the general linguistic tools are common to both groups, specific traits reflect the individuality of each politician depending on their style and communication strategy.

Conclusion. Taking gender characteristics into account in political discourse helps to reveal potential stereotypes or inequalities in the speech of politicians. It is important to examine how men and women use linguistic strategies to express their ideas, as well as how this can influence public perception.

Gender analysis of political discourse also helps to identify the evolution of women’s roles in politics and understand the barriers or challenges that may arise for women in this context. This contributes to the creation of a more informed society and promotes changes in the perception of gender equality.

Thus, considering gender aspects in political discourse is essential for improving equality, fostering cultural sensitivity, and shaping an informed understanding of the roles of men and women in political life.

When comparing the verbal and paraverbal characteristics of political speeches by men and women in the U.S., it is evident that the structure and style of speech may differ. For example, women politicians may emphasize empathy and use emotionally rich vocabulary to enhance their connection with the audience.

While male politicians tend to use a formal and authoritative speaking style that emphasizes strength and decisiveness, paraverbal elements such as gestures and facial expressions can complement these differences. For example, women may exhibit greater emotionality in their expressions, which is reflected in their delivery style and gesturing.

Considering these differences, it is important to avoid generalizations and to take into account the individual characteristics of each politician. Comparisons help to identify common trends, but attention should also be paid to the uniqueness of each speech and the context in which it occurs.

In addition to the differences in verbal and paraverbal characteristics of political speeches by men and women in the U.S., it is important to consider the dynamics of change in these aspects over time. The increased interest in the role of women in politics may influence their communication strategies, leading to changes in both speech and delivery styles.

It should also be noted that modern trends in political communication increasingly recognize the importance of authenticity and emotional connection with the audience. This can affect the perception of both female and male politicians, encouraging them to express personal views and use personal stories in their speeches.

Thus, understanding the evolution of speech and behavioral traits of politicians, regardless of gender, is crucial for a comprehensive analysis of political discourse and reflecting contemporary trends in leader communication.

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