

Stylistic Peculiarities of Political Speeches in English and Armenian

Political discourse plays a pivotal role in shaping people's thoughts and attitudes, as some politicians make use of their rhetorical skills and experiences to change and control the people's mind and will. In order to be a successful politician, one should be an eloquent orator in order to steer and attract the receivers' emotions, attentions and minds. Besides, the speech should be very minutely organized. Stylistic devices are valuable in satisfying the discourse goals of political speeches and have their important contributions to the success of creating persuasive, inspirational and informative political speeches. This article presents the main stylistic differences between the Armenian and English political speeches analyzing inauguration addresses of Armenian and American presidents.

Key Words: political speech, stylistic devices, metaphor, parallelism, repetition, metonymy.

Since the ancient times political rhetoric was in the center of attention of many orators. Rhetoric was considered as a valuable skill of communication. Nowadays, political leaders are concerned about their use of language, too. They often pay attention to various rhetoric techniques how to enhance their ideas. Politicians participating in debates and in public speaking activities usually construct arguments that explain or persuade, proving those arguments. Moreover, speakers who truly want their words to be memorable employ a variety of stylistic devices to figuratively illustrate their ideas. A good orator's speech depends not only on the collection of statements worthy of belief, but also on logical and progressive arrangement and an effective style. Politics is supposed to be an incredibly emotional subject. It is evident that logical arguments have the strongest direct effect on the mind, emotional arguments influence feelings and aesthetic arguments stimulate imagination. Arguments more or less depend on the emotional status of the audience and the emotional content of the argument. Logical argumentation is often difficult, time consuming and has not the obvious power to push people to action. So, it is a fact, that people's emotions often carry much more force than their reason. Politicians can be identified by the identifiable habits of speech, which govern the linguistic structures and devices they use to increase the impact of their ideas. A writer is able to use a range of rhetorical techniques incorporated into the language used to persuade the reader. Rhetoric and persuasion go together. Rhetoric may fail if it is not persuasive. Actually, the

measure of a successful rhetoric is its ability to persuade. Good orators always try to identify people that at a given time are persuadable to your point of view and then try to focus the energy and attention on them. In other words a good orator understands not just how to communicate with audience, but also how to influence and persuade others. Persuading involves being able to convince others to take appropriate actions. How the writer chooses to define problems, support claims, validate premises and state conclusions is crucial to whether an audience is likely to accept an argument or not. It is popularly believed that to understand politicians' ideas people should be more accurate and to pay more attention to what is said. That is what politicians' speeches are considered as monotonous and difficult to perceive the ideas which are presented by politicians. Especially in inaugural speech, the aim of the speaker is to win support and trust, so they have to use rhetorical devices to gain desired results (Salkie R., 1995). Linguists have considered that metaphors are the most persuasive device and that it is the easiest way to reach peoples' consciousness. With reference to Mio, "metaphors allow the general public to grasp the meanings of political events and feel a part of the process (Mio J. S., 1997). Hayes claims that "politicians have also recently started to show an interest in metaphor as a mean of engaging with people. Of course political speech writers have long been aware of the power of metaphors, but what seems to be different now is the way in which metaphor laden speeches are being constructed to appeal to the emotions of the audience" (Hayes 2011, 05). With

reference to published article on presidential leadership and charisma, the author discusses what makes a leader charismatic. He claims that “the charismatic leader can use metaphors as a tool to clarify meaning, to inspire, and to motivate followers (Mio J., 2005).

It should be mentioned that the stylistic means used in political speeches vary from language to language. In my article I want to reveal the main stylistic differences in English and Armenian political speeches.

Stylistic Peculiarities of English Political Speeches

In political speeches, regardless the language, the following characteristics should be distinguished- ethics, aesthetics, sociology, psychology, logic, literature and linguistics. In more details, it means that the speech language should fulfill at least these functions: to present the sound and correct political opinion, to attract the audience and make them into serious thinking, to move and persuade them to accept the speaker’s viewpoints, to encourage the audience to do what the speaker wants them to do. The requirements for English political speaking are much more strict and solemn. The public speech has a structure of paper, truth of news item, language of a fiction, passion in a poem, material of a prose, and the humor of a comic dialogue. All these characteristic features of political speeches can be properly achieved by means of some stylistic features. First, the political viewpoint is quite firm and clear. In a speech, the speaker must tell his audience what he wants to

express today and what his political opinion is about this matter. Second, the political speaking must be endowed with overwhelming power of logic that is eloquent and with no chink in the armor. And third, the political speaking should burst forth the intense inspiring force. To set out the specific stylistic features typical of English political speeches let's analyze J. Kennedy's inauguration address. President Kennedy emphasized the significance of personal and national freedom as the core tenets of democracy. Kennedy's speech no doubt possessed the literary style and elegance of a great inaugural address. It rehearsed the communal values of the typical inaugural addresses, and it aimed to unite the public in common cause. In terms of its generic qualities, it clearly ranked among the best inaugural speeches in U.S. history. His inaugural address is characterized with the use of different stylistic devices, which fulfill this remarkable speech. Alliteration is the most frequently used stylistic device, which occurs in the speech twenty one times.

- same solemn oath
- man holds in his mortal hands
- for which our forebears fought
- high standards of strength and sacrifice

Alliteration is one of the powerful speechmaking techniques, which guaranties the success of the speech. It helps to make the speech more influential and affective.

The next stylistic feature found in the speech and typical of English political speeches is euphemistic constructions. Political euphemism is created in political life and serves political purposes. Generally speaking, it is a tool for political participants to hide scandals, disguise the truth, and guide public thoughts when discussing social issues or events.

- To this old allies (capitalistic countries of Europe)
- to friend and foe alike (the communistic countries)

Euphemistic constructions reflect political leaders' motivation to hide the truth and shift public attention off it. By using such expression, they attempt to control people's learning about the world as well as information transmission. Actually a skillful political leader will use euphemistic constructions while referring his/her political opponent: aggression cannot be welcomed by the majority and it may risk the success of the speech.

Parallelism combined with other stylistic devices, like repetition, antithesis, is the next most frequently used stylistic device in English political speeches. Kennedy's inauguration address is filled with them:

- We observe today not a victory of party, but a celebration of freedom- symbolizing an end as well as a beginning-signifying renewal as well as change. (Parallelism combined with antithesis)

- When our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt. (Parallelism combined with repetition)

Due to the flexibility and great capacity of English language we can come across such cases, when the different combinations of stylistic devices appear in one sentence even in one phrase.

English political speeches are also characterized and distinguished by the frequent use of metaphors. Metaphors are the essential core of human thought and creativity. To take a metaphor means to take a political claim. Actually this is the very aim of politics. Kennedy is among those politicians who truly understand the importance of metaphor in their speeches:

- chains of poverty
- If a beachhead of cooperation may push back the jungle of suspicion
- Bonds of mass misery

As we can judge from the examples offered, metaphorical language thinly masks a particular political situation, ideology or mindset. The more metaphors we use in political speeches, the more the followers are inspired. According to a study by Mio on American presidents' charisma, presidents that used twice as many metaphors in their inaugural speech were perceived as more charismatic. Passages containing a lot of metaphors were experienced as more inspirational, from which can be deduced that metaphor serves as an inspirational figure

of speech. Expressing emotion through body language, however, is also of great importance and can invigorate a political figure's credibility.

The gradual increase in utterance, which creates the next very often used stylistic device- the climax, is inseparable part of English political speeches. It should be mentioned that this stylistic device can have different influence on people and different outcome. One should take into consideration the national characteristics, the history of the nation. English political speeches are characterized with the flexible use of climax, which makes their speeches more emotional:

- ... at home and around the world
- ... the citizens of America and the citizens of the world.

Another feature of political language is the use of Biblical references to God, especially in inauguration addresses it is used to gain support:

- God's work must truly be our own.
- ... the trumpet summons us.

The Biblical citations or references to God are used by political leaders to give spiritual credence and authority to their speech. But one must be careful with these references as well, especially delivering speeches for the multinational audience with different religious viewpoints. If the majority is Christian and the political leader wants to cite from the Bible, he/she

should choose the parts, which are relatively neutral, otherwise the speech will fail.

The success of political speeches is directly connected with the well-known and frequently used device- repetition. The repetition or restatement of an idea at intervals not only promotes clarity, but encourages the acceptance of an idea. When you repeat and emphasize one idea, competing ideas are subordinated and sometimes are driven completely out of the audience's mind. Repetition is a classic technique in presentation and speech making. It can help you tie the theme together and it creates clarity for the listener. Kennedy's inauguration address is not so much filled with repetitions, as e.g. M. Luther King's "I Have A Dream" speech. If you count the frequency of words used in King's "I Have a Dream", very interesting patterns emerge. The most commonly used noun is freedom, which is used twenty times in the speech. Even if small in number, but anyway without repetition the inauguration address of J. Kennedy would lack something:

- human poverty and all forms of human life
- rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today
- free men and free governments
- nations under the absolute control of all nations.

To repeat a word or expression serves to highlight the thing and lend it importance. A very important thing should

be in the center of attention: the over repetition may risk the speech becoming redundancy.

Metonymy in political discourse is closely connected with the speaker's public image: it's a unique stylistic device which increases or reduces the speaker's responsibility. Metonymy as a rhetorical device facilitates the perception of the political images and expresses their meaning in a more concentrated manner. The underlying idea of an image is understood by readers/listeners as it is brought to their minds by the context itself. This device is mainly typical of inauguration addresses as the president is responsible for the whole nation and country. There are numerous instances in political discourse when the place of some institution is used not only for the institution itself or for its staff but also for referring to its policy, e.g. The Pentagon, Wall Street, Downing Street, Saeima (the Parliament of Latvia), the Kremlin. All in all, metonymy is considered to be a widely used rhetorical device in political discourse, which explains its constant application in politically related texts.

Stylistic Peculiarities of Armenian Political Speeches

Armenian political speeches are not distinguished by their wide use of different rhetoric devices. Here the structure of sentences expresses the desired outcome. As it is mentioned above the audience should first be taken into account, and based on the type of the audience make one's speech according to their beliefs and national viewpoints. The stylistic devices like

climax, chiasmus, hyperbole, litotes, and allusion can hardly be found in the Armenian political speeches. The Armenian people are hot blooded nation and even a small proportion of “aggression” will lead the speech to failure. Let’s bring examples from Serzh Sargsyan’s inauguration address.

Repetition is a universal stylistic device used in political speeches all over the world. The frequent use of this devices is conditioned by the fact that repetition helps the politicians achieve their goals: Used in speech, repetition not only makes it easy for the audience to follow what the speaker is saying, but also gives a strong rhythmic quality to the speech and makes it more memorable. The repetition helps to achieve the function of coherence in discourse and the function of reinforcement in mood and emotion.

- Այս պատմական օրը մենք բոլորս ենք երդվում, ես երդվում եմ բարձրաձայն. Խնդրում
- Կառուցելու ենք այն Հայաստանը, որը կմիավորի համայն հայությանը, այնպիսի Հայաստան, որը կլինի բոլոր հայերի հայրենիքը: Կառուցելու ենք այն Հայաստանը, որտեղ կտիրի փոխադարձ հարգանքի, սիրո եւ հանդուրժողականության մթնոլորտ:

Armenian political leaders are fond of metaphorical language. Unlike English political speeches, Armenian ones are based on high-flown language; they do not have any contact with people, and somehow are artificial.

- ...թող Աստված մեզ բոլորիս տա ուժ հաղթահարելու դժվարությունները, գտնելու այն մարդկանց հուզող հարցերի դեղատոմսը, ովքեր հիասթափված են կամ հուսալքված,
- Եթե անգամ մեր միջև չհասկացվածության պատկա, կո՛չ եմ անում, եկեք քանդենք այդ պատը:

The next universal device is parallelism, which is so much typical of the Armenian language. Parallel constructions can be found in the Armenian political speeches, inauguration addresses:

- Պատրաստ եմ ներդնել իմ ողջ ուժերը, որպեսզի մեր հասարակության մեջ տիրի փոխըմբռնման մթնոլորտը, որպեսզի մենք ձերբագատվենք ամեն տեսակ բնեռացումներից, բիրտ առճակատումներից ու վարկաբեկումից:
- Ես համոզված եմ, որ սերունդներն ըստ արժանվույն կգնահատեն նրա վաստակն ու ներդրումը մեր պետականության զարգացման ու ամրապնդման գործում:

If we pay attention to the word choice and sentence structure of Armenian political speeches, we'll immediately notice that they are not so much emotional, but rather realistic and to the point. Sentences are long filled with parallel constructions. Other stylistic devices can also be found in the Armenian political speeches, but politicians give preference to the above-mentioned ones.

The use of the pronouns also gives very important stylistic coloring. It should be mentioned that Armenian political leaders employ in their speeches the pronoun “we”. First, it reduces their responsibility, second increases peoples’ feeling of being integrated into the political affairs. But at the same time the use of the pronoun “we” also makes some kind of boundary between people and politician.

Conclusion

The study of rhetoric is very important in political speech making. Rhetoric teaches politicians how to speak well; it teaches politicians how to present ideas in vigorous and persuasive discourse, and to communicate their thoughts and impressions effectively. Based on our analysis it can be concluded that metonymy, parallelism, metaphor, repetition, are the most widely used stylistic devices in all types of political speeches. They all help underline the politicians’ vision and message to their peoples. Metonymy as a rhetorical device, used in political discourse, facilitates the perception of the political images and expresses their meaning in a more concentrated manner. The underlying idea of an image is understood by readers/listeners as it is brought to their minds by the context itself. For this reason the speakers were interested in various forms of figurative or symbolic language which can be effective persuasive device in order to catch the audiences’ attentions. Linguists have considered that metaphors are the most persuasive device and that it is the easiest way to reach peoples’

consciousness. It's the main reason that this device is so much used in the Armenian and English political speeches.

Repetition belongs to the stylistic device of syntactic over-regularity. Used in speech, repetition not only makes it easy for the audience to follow what the speaker is saying, but also gives a strong rhythmic quality to the speech and makes it more memorable. The repetition helps to achieve the function of coherence in discourse and the function of reinforcement in mood and emotion.

The differences between Armenian and English political speeches are mainly conditioned by the use of some specific stylistic devices which wholly change the stylistic coloring of the speech. Biblical references are among these devices. The use of Biblical citations or references to God has one aim- to give spiritual credence and authority to their speech. It has also been noted that American politicians more often refer to certain reliable sources to support their arguments. The use of language is another differentiating feature for the political speeches. Taking into account what has already been stated, we can conclude that the speeches of American politicians are more convincing than the speeches of Armenian politicians. Armenians make use of only high-flown words, while the American politicians try to be as close to the people as possible. So the frequent and wide use of stylistic devices is an important characteristic of political speeches which is an effective way to make these speeches more attractive, lively and more persuasive.

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**Քաղաքական ելույթների ոճական
առանձնահատկությունները անգլերենում և հայերենում**

Քաղաքական խոսույթը առանցքային դեր է խաղում մարդկանց մտքերի և քաղաքական ուղղվածության ձևավորման վրա, քանի որ որոշ քաղաքական գործիչներ օգտագործում են իրենց հռետորական հմտությունները և փորձը ժողովրդի միտքն ու կամքը փոխելու և վերահսկելու նպատակով: Հաջողության հասնելու համար քաղաքական գործիչը պետք է լինի պերճախոս հռետոր, որպեսզի գրավի ունկնդրին, ինչպես նաև շեղի ուշադրությունը և միտքը: Բացի այդ, ելույթը պետք է ճշգրտորեն կազմված լինի: Ոճական հնարքների շնորհիվ քաղաքական ելույթները դառնում են համոզիչ, ոգեշնչող: Այս հոդվածը ներկայացնում է հայերեն և անգլերեն քաղաքական ելույթների հիմնական ոճական տարբերությունները՝ հիմնվելով հայ և ամերիկյան նախագահների երդմնակալության ճառերի վերլուծության վրա:

Բանալի բառեր. քաղաքական ելույթ, պատկերավորման-արտահայտչական միջոցներ, փոխաբերություն, շարահյուսական գուգահեռություն, կրկնություն, փոխանունություն

**Стилистические особенности политической речи
в английском и армянском**

Политический дискурс играет ключевую роль в формировании мыслей и политической ориентаций людей, так как некоторые политики используют свои риторические навыки и опыт, чтобы изменять и контролировать разум и мысли людей. Для того, чтобы быть успешным политиком, нужно быть красноречивым оратором, чтобы контролировать мысли, эмоции, и внимание людей. Кроме того, речь должна быть очень детально организована. Стилистика играет огромную роль в удовлетворении целей политических речей и имеет свой важный вклад в создание убедительных, вдохновляющих и информативных политических речей. В данной статье, где анализируются инаугурационные речи армянских и американских лидеров, представлены основные стилистические различия между армянскими и английскими политическими речами.

Ключевые слова: политическая речь, стилистические приемы, метафора, параллелизм, повторение, метонимия.