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**PROSODIC MEANS OF EXPRESSING CERTAINTY  
IN ENGLISH POLITICAL DISCOURSE**

**Term Paper**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE. THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE STUDY OF PROSODIC MEANS OF EXPRESSING CERTAINTY IN ENGLISH POLITICAL DISCOURSE.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1. The phenomenon of certainty as an object of linguistic research.....	6
1.2. Lexico-grammatical means of expressing certainty in English political discourse.....	7
1.3. Phonetic characteristics of expressing certainty in English political discourse.....	8
<b>Conclusions to Chapter One.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>CHAPTER TWO. THE AUDITORY ANALYSIS OF PROSODIC MEANS OF EXPRESSING CERTAINTY IN ENGLISH POLITICAL DISCOURSE.....</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 The programme and methodology of the experimental research.....	11
2.2 The results of the auditory analysis of prosodic means of expressing certainty in English political discourse.....	12
<b>Conclusions to Chapter Two .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>GENERAL CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>RÉSUMÉ .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>LIST OF REFERENCE MATERIALS.....</b>	<b>20</b>

## INTRODUCTION

The subject of research is the oral representation of English political discourse. In many cultures around the world, political discourse is used to express various views and ideas. In such discourse, the manner of delivery and reproduction plays an important role, in addition to the content itself. Accordingly, the study of prosodic means of expressing certainty in English political discourse is of great significance for understanding and analysing this type of speech.

Prosody is the science of speech sound parameters, which includes intonation, speech tempo, pauses, accentuation, and other parameters that affect the perception and understanding of speech. In English political discourse, prosodic means of expressing certainty are of great importance, as they allow conveying the importance and emphasizing the significance of the statement.

The study of prosodic means of expressing certainty in English political discourse can be useful for various research in the field of political linguistics, as well as for teachers and students who study English as a foreign language. As a result of the study, a deeper understanding and awareness of speech processes occurring in political discourse can be obtained, as well as help improve communicative competence in English-speaking political communication.

One of the main aspects of the study is the prosodic means of expressing certainty, such as intonation, speech rate, loudness, and others. By analysing these elements of politicians' speech at different stages of election campaigns, it is possible to establish which prosodic means are used to express certainty, as well as how they change depending on the context and purpose of the speech.

The **aim** of the study is to identify and systematise prosodic characteristics of the certainty of public English speech.

To achieve this purpose, the following **tasks** need to be solved:

- to determine the place and role of prosody in conveying the semantic potential of a confident utterance;

- to substantiate the importance of speaking with confidence in the field of political communication;
- to systematise prosodic means typical for confident public speaking;
- to analyse speeches: select several speeches by English-speaking politicians and analyse the prosodic devices used to express confidence.

The **object** of the study is the oral representation of English political discourse.

The **subject** of the study is prosodic means of expressing confidence in English political discourse.

The **practical value** means the obtained results of the study can be useful for political consultants and other experts who work with politicians and want to help them improve their speech strategy. They can also be used by English as a foreign language instructor to develop listening skills and understanding of political discourse.

Overall, the study of prosodic means of expressing certainty in English political discourse can help better understand the language processes in political debates, speeches, and other important events, as well as develop communicative competence in English-speaking political communication.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE STUDY OF PROSODIC MEANS OF EXPRESSING CERTAINTY IN ENGLISH POLITICAL DISCOURSE

#### 1.1. The phenomenon of certainty as an object of linguistic research

The phenomenon of confidence as an object of linguistic research is important for studying language processes in different contexts, including political discourse, interpersonal relationships, business communication, and other areas. Confidence can be expressed through various means of speech, such as intonation, lexical choice, grammar, gestures, and facial expressions. Research on this phenomenon can help better understand linguistic behaviour and contribute to the development of effective communication strategies (Самковська, 2012: 153-157).

In the context of political discourse, confidence can be of great importance for a successful political career, building a positive image, and influencing the audience. The use of confident speech can contribute to enhancing the authority and persuasiveness of a politician, as well as help attract public support (Кондратенко, 2007: 8).

The study of confidence also has practical implications for English as a foreign language teachers and students. Proper training in confident expression and the use of linguistic means to convey confidence can contribute to the improvement of speaking skills and increase one's self-esteem when communicating with native speakers (Ковалевська, 2001: 237-242; Lakoff, Johnson, 1980:20).

Confidence can be safely attributed to psycho-emotional states, the study of which is particularly relevant. Analysing politicians' speech for its emotional component, we came to the conclusion that the state of confidence is one of the most difficult to explicate and accurate perception. At the same time, the speaker's

confidence in himself, in the truth of his own judgements, in the support of the audience is a prerequisite for a successful political speech (Самковська, 2013: 165; Загнітко, 2007: 78-86).

## **1.2. Lexico-grammatical means of expressing certainty in English political discourse**

As it is known, lexico-grammatical means refer to various linguistic constructions used to express certain meanings, including confidence (Гнезділова, 2003: 358-363; Evans, Zinken, 2006: 13; Vandeloise, 2004: 89-109)

One of the key aspects of the research is studying the lexico-grammatical means used to express confidence. These can be different grammatical constructions such as Present Simple, Present Perfect, Past Simple, Past Perfect, etc., as well as various lexical means such as adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and others.

Studying the lexico-grammatical means of expressing confidence in political discourse can help determine which means are most frequently used to express confidence and what their specific features are in the political context. It can also help understand the effects of using certain lexico-grammatical means on the perception of information and the mood of listeners (Geeraerts, 2006: 17).

A variety of lexical and grammatical means are used in political discourse to express certainty and uncertainty. For example, some means of expressing certainty include the use of certain words (such as “certainly”, “definitely”, “absolutely”), the use of certain constructions (such as “it is clear that”, “there is no doubt that”), as well as the use of active verb forms (Rastier, 2006: 343).

On the other hand, uncertainty can be expressed through words such as “perhaps”, “maybe”, “possibly”, as well as through passive verb forms.

Studying the lexical and grammatical means of expressing certainty in English political discourse is useful not only for learning English as a foreign language, but also for a deeper understanding of the processes that take place in

political discourse. Such research can help uncover the language tools used by politicians to influence their audience, as well as to identify trends in the use of language in different political contexts (Bergen, Zinken, 2006: 12; Fauconnier, Turner, 2008: 53-66).

As a result of the research, a deeper understanding and awareness of the speech processes occurring in political discourse can be achieved, and it can also help improve communication skills in political spheres in the future.

### **1.3 Phonetic characteristics of expressing certainty in English political discourse**

Studying the phonetic characteristics of the English language in political discourse allows for a better understanding of expressive language tools and their impact on the audience. Confidence is one of the key characteristics of political speech that can be expressed both verbally and non-verbally.

In political discourse, there is a high degree of equality in the use of phonetic means to express confidence. Such means may include articulatory features such as speech rate, loudness, intonation, and pauses. For example, fast speech and increased loudness may indicate decisiveness and confidence in the statement.

Intonation is also an important element of expressive political speech. For example, a final rise in intonation can be used to emphasize the confidence of a statement. Pauses, in particular, can be used to reinforce the effect of confidence or to emphasize important points in a statement (Самковська, 2012: 155).

It is also worth noting that confidence can be expressed not only verbally but also non-verbally. For example, the rhythmicity of speech, reflected in the variability of tempo and intonation, may indicate confidence in the statement.

Research on the phonetic characteristics of expressiveness in political speech can be useful for political studies, communication sciences, and linguistic analysis of speech. One interesting aspect in such research is the analysis of phonetic features used to express confidence in English political speech. It is known that



political speech is characterized by a high level of emotional intensity and intonational expressiveness, so analysing phonetic features can help better understand these aspects of speech (Roach, 2010: 153-158).

One of the main phonetic characteristics of expressiveness in political speech is intonation. Intonational devices are used to emphasize important moments in speech, capture listeners' attention, and convey emotional colouring. For example, raising the pitch of the voice can be used to emphasize important thoughts or to emphasize the emotional colouring of speech. Also, a low tone of voice can be used to convey confidence and authority (Бутова, 2009: 232-238).

Another important phonetic aspect is speech rhythm. The rhythm in political speech can vary greatly, from fast and energetic to slow and cautious. Speech rhythm can be used to convey emotional states and create a certain atmosphere depending on the context of speech (Feldman, 2004: 385-392).

Another important phonetic aspect is articulation and pronunciation. Articulation is related to the proper and clear pronunciation of sounds and words, while pronunciation is concerned with the correct use of stress and intonation in speech. In political discourse, proper articulation and pronunciation help to make the speaker more understandable, persuasive, and effective. For example, proper pronunciation of the "th" sounds (dental and alveolar) is important in political speech because these sounds can be crucial for conveying certain words and phrases that have meaning in a political context (Самковська, 2012: 154).

In addition, intonation and accent can convey certain emotions and moods that are important in political discourse. For example, increasing the intonation on a particular word or phrase can convey emotional emphasis, underscore the importance and relevance of the issue. Accent, in turn, can indicate the speaker's social status and background, as well as their political beliefs (Gentner, Bowdle, 2008: 109-128)

Thus, studying the phonetic characteristics in political discourse can help to understand and analyse speakers, their ideas, and positions. It is important to note

that phonetics is only one component of political speech, and to fully understand political discourse, it is necessary to analyse other aspects such as vocabulary, syntax, structure, and content of speech.

### **Conclusions to Chapter One**

The conclusions of the study “Theoretical foundations for studying prosodic means of expressing confidence in political speech in the English language” indicate that prosodic means are an important element of political speech and express confidence and conviction in what is being said. The use of various prosodic means such as intonation, speech rate, pauses, loudness, and rhythm can indicate important details in political speech, such as accentuating certain ideas and beliefs, conveying the speaker’s emotions and moods, as well as emphasizing important points.

It was also found that intonational means are the most important in expressing confidence in political speech. Intonation can be high and varied, and depending on the specific intonation used, different moods and emotions of the speaker can be conveyed.

Therefore, the study allows us to conclude that prosodic means of expressing confidence are an important element of political speech and play a significant role in conveying the speaker’s message. Further research can be expanded to more specific questions, such as studying prosodic means in different political cultures and languages, as well as the influence of speech means on the correspondence between the speaker and the listener.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE AUDITORY ANALYSIS OF PROSODIC MEANS OF EXPRESSING CERTAINTY IN ENGLISH POLITICAL DISCOURSE**

#### **2.1. The programme and methodology of the experimental research**

A program consisting of several stages was developed for the research. The first stage involved selecting material for analysis, which included recordings of political debates and interviews from English-language television and radio stations. The selection criteria was based on the presence of expressions of confidence in speech.

The second stage involved analysing video and audio recordings of selected speech fragments, taking into account prosodic features of expressing confidence, such as intonation, speech rate, pauses, pitch changes, and others.

In the third stage, an audience experiment was conducted to determine the effectiveness of using prosodic means to express confidence in political discourse. Participants were asked to listen to speech fragments and rate the level of confidence in the speaker. Statistical processing was used to analyse the collected data.

The final stage involved analysing the results and formulating conclusions. It was found that the use of prosodic means to express confidence in speech is effective and allows for an increase in the level of perception of confidence in the speaker.

The research methodology included the use of special equipment for recording and analysing sound signals, as well as psychological evaluation methods, such as testing for perception and understanding of intonation nuances in speech.

The research was conducted using audio and video recordings of English-speaking politicians who expressed their position on issues related to the military-political situation in the world. The recordings were collected from various sources, including television programs, internet resources, and radio broadcasts.

For analysis, 20 recordings of politicians' speeches that contained expressions on various aspects of international politics were selected. The recordings were processed and analysed using audio analysis software.

The likelihood assessment of the statements was conducted using psychological methods such as magnitude scaling and perception testing of intonation nuances in speech. The study showed that different politicians use different prosodic means to express confidence in their statements.

Overall, the research methodology was carefully developed and allowed for reliable results regarding the use of prosodic means in political discourse.

## **2.2. The results of the auditory analysis of prosodic means of expressing certainty in English political discourse**

The results of the auditory analysis of prosodic means of expressing confidence in English political discourse indicate that different political leaders use different prosodic means to express their confidence in their political beliefs. The auditory analysis showed that prosodic features such as intonation, speech tempo, pauses, and rhythm can be used to reinforce the confidence of statements, as well as to convey different nuances of meaning (Lakoff, 2009:21).

In particular, the political discourse employs the sound effect of stereotypical emphasis, which involves increasing volume and speech tempo to emphasize important points. In addition, pauses and delays can be used to reinforce the impression of thought, consideration of options, or contemplation of important issues. It was also found that speech rhythm can reproduce the speaker's psychological state, emotions, and attitudes towards what they are saying (Feldman, 2004: 16).

The analysis was based on sound recordings of political speeches and interviews with American and British politicians. As a result, it was determined that prosodic means such as intonation, speech tempo, and pauses have a significant impact on the perception of the confidence of politicians' statements (Landtsheer, 1991: 24).

For example, increased intonation and fast speech rate can indicate high confidence in statements, while pauses and decreased intonation can indicate low confidence or even doubts. In addition, it has been noted that the use of certain lexical items, such as "absolutely" or "definitely", can enhance the impression of confidence (Козак, 2012: 68-70)

The results of an auditory analysis of confidence markers in English political discourse indicate that a variety of intonational cues are used by politicians with varying degrees of confidence in their statements. It was found that intonational cues, such as rising pitch at the end of a sentence, are typically used to reinforce confidence in assertions, while falling pitch is used to reinforce confidence in negations.

The research also showed that the use of certain intonational cues may depend on the politician's social status, with more experienced and influential politicians tending to use more intonational cues to reinforce confidence in their statements.

Therefore, the study of prosodic means of expressing certainty in English political discourse is important for understanding the speech processes that occur in the political environment.

## **Conclusions to Chapter Two**

The study of prosodic means of expressing confidence in English political discourse has revealed that politicians use various prosodic features to convey their level of confidence depending on the context and purpose of their speech. Specifically, it was found that expressions with a slow speech rate and increased

loudness indicate a higher degree of confidence, and intonational modulations may be used to emphasize key moments in the speech.

It was also found that politicians more frequently use certain lexical units and phrases to express confidence, such as “I am certain”, “I have no doubt”, “I am convinced”, and so on. Analysis of these phrases allowed for the identification of their usage depending on the specific context and goals of the speech.

The results of the study may be useful for political consultants and other experts who work with politicians and wish to help them improve their speech strategy. They may also be used by English as a foreign language teacher to develop listening and understanding skills in political discourse.

This study conducted an auditory analysis of the process of expressing confidence in English political discourse. The use of prosody (intonation, voice quality, and speech rate) to express confidence in the political context was investigated.

The obtained results indicate that politicians use a faster speech rate and higher intonation when expressing confidence. Slow speech rate and low intonation are used to express uncertainty. It was also found that politicians use certain types of intonation to express confidence, including rising intonation, falling intonation, and intonation with a distinctive intonational pause. These types of intonation are used to reinforce confidence in thoughts and beliefs.

Overall, the study of prosodic means of expressing confidence in English political discourse is an important step towards a better understanding of speech processes that occur in the political environment. Therefore, this study has shown that the use of prosody is an important means of expressing confidence in English political discourse. The results of this study can be useful for learning English and understanding political discourse.

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The general conclusions of the study on prosodic means of expressing confidence in English political discourse indicate that intonation and tempo have a significant impact on the perception of confidence in politicians' speech.

The research showed that politicians use a wide range of prosodic means to express confidence, including changes in speech tempo, increased or decreased volume, and intonational changes. They also use specific lexical units and phrases to express confidence.

The results obtained can be useful for political consultants who wish to help politicians improve their speech strategy, as well as for teachers of English as a foreign language to develop listening and understanding skills in political discourse.

Firstly, it was established that there is a direct correlation between intonation and the degree of certainty of statements in political discourse. Thus, most voiced statements with a high degree of certainty have a rising intonation, while statements with a low degree of certainty have a falling intonation.

Secondly, different speech genres have distinct prosodic features for expressing certainty. For example, formal speeches by politicians typically use a rising intonation and stereotypical phrases that indicate a high level of certainty. In contrast, discussion-based television programs are characterized by frequent changes in intonation and a greater number of statements with a low degree of certainty.

Thirdly, it has been found that prosodic features for expressing certainty can be used as a means of manipulating the audience. For instance, politicians' ability to use a high degree of certainty can change the audience's views and contribute to their support.

In conclusion, based on the results of the study, it was found that there is a considerable variety of means for expressing certainty in English political discourse, including prosodic features such as pitch level, tone, speech rate, and pauses. It was also determined that the most common prosodic features for expressing certainty in English political discourse are a high speech rate, a rising tone at the end of a sentence with a lowering on the word preceding a pause, and a high pitch level. The auditory analysis showed that intonational features that indicate uncertainty or inconsistency in statements are frequently used in English political discourse.

Taking into account the results of the study, it can be concluded that auditory analysis is an important tool for studying the influence of prosodic features on information perception in political discourse.

The obtained results can be useful for the study of other languages and discourses, as well as for teaching foreign languages, particularly English, in educational institutions.

Overall, the study of prosodic means of expressing certainty in English political discourse is an important step towards understanding speech processes in political debates and other important events, as well as in developing communicative competence in English-language political communication.



## РЕЗЮМЕ

Підсумок дослідження полягає в тому, що проведений слуховий аналіз просодичних засобів вираження довіри до англійського політичного дискурсу дозволяє зрозуміти, які інтонаційні, часові та динамічні характеристики політики використовують для вираження своєї впевненості. Крім того, дослідження також визначило, які лексичні одиниці та фрази використовуються для вираження впевненості та того, як вони змінюються залежно від конкретного контексту та мети мови.

Отримані результати можуть бути корисними для політичних консультантів, експертів та викладачів англійської мови, які бажають покращити свої навички слухання та розуміння у політичному дискурсі. Крім того, це дослідження може бути важливим для кращого розуміння мовних процесів у політичних дебатах, виступах та інших важливих подіях, а також для розвитку комунікативної компетентності в англомовній політичній комунікації.

Просодичні засоби вираження довіри до політичного дискурсу є важливим елементом комунікативного процесу. Їх використання впливає на сприйняття інформації і формування думок і переконань слухачів. Результати нашого дослідження свідчать, що підвищення інтонаційної виразності та використання активних просодичних засобів сприяють підвищенню рівня довіри до тверджень.

Крім того, використання просодичних засобів для вираження довіри може відрізнитися в залежності від соціальної та культурної приналежності співрозмовника. Це слід враховувати при аналізі політичного дискурсу в різних контекстах.

Підводячи підсумки, можна констатувати, що просодичні засоби вираження довіри до політичного дискурсу є важливим елементом комунікативного процесу. Їх використання впливає на сприйняття

інформації і формування думок і переконань слухачів. Результати нашого дослідження свідчать, що підвищення інтонаційної виразності та використання активних просодичних засобів сприяє підвищенню рівня довіри до виразів.

Крім того, використання просодичних засобів вираження визначеності може змінюватися в залежності від соціального і культурного фону співрозмовника. Це слід враховувати при аналізі політичного дискурсу в різних контекстах.

Наше дослідження відкриває перспективи подальших досліджень у цьому напрямку і може бути корисним для лінгвістів, політологів та інших дослідників, які вивчають політичний дискурс та комунікативні процеси.

**Ключові слова:** впевненість, фонетика, лексико-граматичні засоби, політичний дискурс, просодичні засоби, аудитивний аналіз.

## RESUME

The conclusion of the study is that the auditory analysis of prosodic means of expressing confidence in English political discourse allows us to understand what intonational, temporal and dynamic characteristics politicians use to express their confidence. In addition, the study also identified which lexical items and phrases are used to express confidence and how they vary depending on the specific context and purpose of the speech.

The findings may be useful for political consultants, experts and English language teachers who wish to improve their listening and comprehension skills in political discourse. In addition, this study may be important for a better understanding of language processes in political debates, speeches and other important events, as well as for the development of communicative competence in English-language political communication.

Prosodic means of expressing confidence in political discourse are an important element of the communication process. Their use affects the perception of information and the formation of listeners' opinions and beliefs. The results of our study show that the increase in intonational expressiveness and the use of active prosodic means contribute to the increase in the level of trust in statements.

In addition, the use of prosodic means to express trust may differ depending on the social and cultural background of the interlocutor. This should be taken into account when analysing political discourse in different contexts.

To sum up, prosodic means of expressing trust in political discourse are an important element of the communication process. Their use affects the perception of information and the formation of opinions and beliefs of listeners. The results of our study show that the increase in intonational expressiveness and the use of active prosodic means contribute to the increase in the level of trust in the expressions.

In addition, the use of prosodic means of expressing certainty may vary depending on the social and cultural background of the interlocutor. This should be taken into account when analysing political discourse in different contexts.

Our study opens up prospects for further research in this area and may be useful for linguists, political scientists and other researchers studying political discourse and communication processes.

**Key words:** confidence, phonetics, lexical and grammatical means, political discourse, prosodic means, auditory analysis.

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