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SYNTACTIC AND STYLISTIC MEANS OF INFLUENCE IN MODERN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE POLITICAL INTERVIEW

The article is devoted to a comprehensive analysis of the syntactico-stylistic means of influence that shape the communicative dynamics of modern English-language political interviews. The relevance of the topic is conditioned by the importance of studying the linguistic mechanisms that politicians use to manipulate public opinion and shape their own image in the mass media. Based on the research results, it was established that at the syntactic level, declarative sentences dominate (over 96%), which demonstrates the speaker's firm position and their desire to present their own judgments as objective facts. The share of interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory constructions is insignificant – less than 4% of the total usage. Regarding structural features, complex sentences are the most frequent (40%), indicating the complexity of argumentation, and simple sentences (36%), which ensure clarity of presentation. Fragments (11%), used for expressiveness and the imitation of live speech, are less common. Compound-complex and compound sentences constitute a smaller share (8% and 5%, respectively). At the stylistic level, it was found that epithets (20.2%) are the undisputed leader among the means of influence, whose high frequency testifies to the politicians' desire to give information an emotional coloring and impose a specific evaluative attitude toward events or opponents on the audience. Metaphors (11.2%) and parenthetical constructions (10.9%) occupy the second and third places in frequency of use. Syntactic figures play a significant role in structuring the discourse: syntactic parallelism (8.8%) and antithesis (6.1%), as well as anaphora and lexical repetition (5.6% and 5.4%, respectively). These devices enhance the persuasiveness of arguments and help focus attention on key messages. Other stylistic devices, such as idioms, asyndeton, and hyperbole, are used situationally. Thus, based on the conducted research, it is established that the syntactico-stylistic organization of modern English-language political interviews is characterized by a clear hierarchy of linguistic means of influence. The dominance of declarative sentences in combination with complex syntactic constructions creates an effect of objectivity and authoritativeness in politicians' statements. At the same time, the high-frequency use of epithets, metaphors, and syntactic figures provides the discourse with an emotional charge and shapes evaluative judgments in the audience's mind.

Keywords: political interview; linguistic influence; syntactic structures; stylistic devices.

1 INTRODUCTION

Problem statement. Modern political interviews are characterized by a high intensity of communicative strategies purposefully aimed at shaping public opinion, constructing a political image, and directly influencing the audience's emotional and evaluative attitudes. Unlike traditional political speeches, where monological strategies dominate, the interview format requires dialogicity,

spontaneity, and improvisation, which significantly increases the role of hidden or overt linguistic means of influence. It is the unprepared nature and dynamic interaction of speakers that necessitate the active use of syntactic and stylistic devices, which help politicians not only to maintain the persuasiveness of messages but also to manipulate the focus of the conversation and create the necessary emotional effect. This actualizes the need for a comprehensive and systematic study of the syntactico-stylistic dominants of political interviews to identify the key mechanisms of linguistic influence and their potential in contemporary media communication.

Analysis of recent studies and publications. The issues of political discourse, particularly the interview genre are at the center of attention for many contemporary scholars. The theoretical and methodological foundations for studying the interview as a special speech genre were established in the works of both Ukrainian and foreign researchers such as J. Heritage and S. Clayman (Heritage & Clayman, 2002, p. 3), O. Hlazova (Hlazova, 2013, p. 1), and O. Holub (Holub, n.d., p. 10). They regard the interview as a specific form of institutional interaction that has a clear structure and conventional rules.

A significant body of research is dedicated to linguistic mechanisms of influence. The syntactic organization of speech and its pragmatic potential have been studied by R. Huddleston and G. K. Pullum (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 4), B. Aarts (Aarts, 2001, p. 58–61), D. Biber (Biber et al., 2002, p. 249–255), and others. The role of stylistic figures in political communication has been highlighted in the works of P. Chilton (Chilton, 2004), J. Charteris-Black (Charteris-Black, 2011), and others. Researchers agree that syntax in political speech acts not only as a framework for words but also as a powerful tool of influence.

Separate attention has been given to stylistic devices as dominants of political discourse. Ukrainian scholars, such as Yu. Kuriata and O. Kasatkina-Kubyshkina, emphasize the role of metaphor and other stylistic figures in political discourse in their works (Kuriata & Kasatkina-Kubyshkina, 2023), stressing their central role in constructing social and political reality. I. Biletska and I. Hurskyi (Biletska & Hurskyi, 2021) investigated the functioning of stylistic devices in the political speeches of American presidents, particularly Barack Obama, revealing the specifics of their use to enhance persuasiveness and emotional impact. International studies, including the work of H. Ali et al. (Ali et al., 2025), are dedicated to the stylistic features and rhetorical devices in British political television interviews, which broadens the understanding of the genre-national specificity of political communication.

However, despite the existing achievements, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that systematically combine the analysis of syntactic and stylistic means of influence specifically within the genre of a political interview. Most works focus either on speeches (monological discourse) or separately on syntax or stylistics, while an integrated approach to studying the syntactico-stylistic dominants in the dialogical format of interviews remains insufficiently developed. Furthermore, there is a lack of quantitative analysis regarding the frequency of specific means of influence in contemporary English-language political interviews, which prevents the identification of a clear hierarchy of their communicative significance. This justifies the relevance of the current research, which aims at a comprehensive syntactico-stylistic analysis of English-language political interviews to identify dominant means of influence and their functional specificity.

The purpose of the article is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the syntactico-stylistic means of influence functioning in modern English-language political interviews, with the purpose of establishing their quantitative dominants and their role in the implementation of manipulation strategies.

2 METHODS

The study employed a complex set of interrelated methods aimed at a comprehensive analysis of the syntactico-stylistic means of influence in contemporary English-language political interviews. The research material consisted of texts of political interviews with leading political leaders of the USA and Great Britain. The choice of American and British political discourse was motivated by

their significance in international communication and the high level of development of the media culture of political interviewing. In the first stage of the research, the method of linguistic analysis of theoretical sources was applied, which allowed for the systematization of scientific approaches to the study of political discourse, the interview genre, and mechanisms of speech influence, and also helped form the theoretical and methodological basis of the study. In the second stage, a structural and syntactic analysis of the selected text corpus was carried out. All sentences were classified according to two parameters: by the purpose of utterance and by grammatical structure. In the third stage, a stylistic analysis of the same text corpus was conducted to identify and classify the means of stylistic influence. A total of 411 cases of stylistic devices usage were identified. The quantitative analysis method was applied to establish the frequency of use of the identified syntactic structures and stylistic devices, with subsequent visualization of the results in the form of diagrams. The comparative analysis method was used to compare the frequency of different types of constructions, which made it possible to identify the most productive models of influence in English-language political discourse. The descriptive method was applied in the final stage to interpret the obtained results and formulate conclusions regarding the functional load of syntactico-stylistic means in the implementation of persuasion and manipulation strategies.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The political interview is one of the key genres of modern political discourse. Unlike a pre-prepared speech or official statement, the interview is a dynamic and strategic communicative act that unfolds in real time. This demands from the politician not only command of facts but also the masterful, often spontaneous, use of linguistic means to achieve pragmatic goals: persuading the audience, constructing a positive image, neutralizing criticism, and influencing public opinion (E. Pieniazek-Niemczuk, 2016, p. 69). In this complex communicative interaction, syntactico-stylistic means play a central role.

The analysis of syntactico-stylistic means of influence in English-language political interviews shows that the rhetorical structure of utterances forms a holistic communicative effect, which is inextricably linked to the speaker's pragmatic intentions. The study of such means is necessary for understanding the mechanisms of speech influence. Furthermore, their analysis allows for an understanding of the specifics of cross-linguistic translation of political interviews.

Having analyzed the syntactic organization of speech in political interviews based on a sample of 219 sentences, we reflected the obtained results in the form of pie charts. During the analysis, we relied on the classification of sentences by the purpose of utterance proposed by S. Brehe and B. Aarts (S. Brehe, 2019, p. 117–120; Aarts, 2001, p. 58–61). The analysis of sentence types by the purpose of utterance (see Fig. 1) testified that the vast majority of utterances are declarative (211 units or 96.35%), which serve for informing and argumentation (e.g., *“President Trump usually strikes back”*). Meanwhile, imperative (“*We must continue the fight*”), interrogative (“*Are you kidding me?*”), and exclamatory (“*Thank God he had the militaries that were thinking differently!*”) sentences collectively constitute less than 4% and are used for creating emotional contact, emphasizing attention, or expressing a strong reaction.

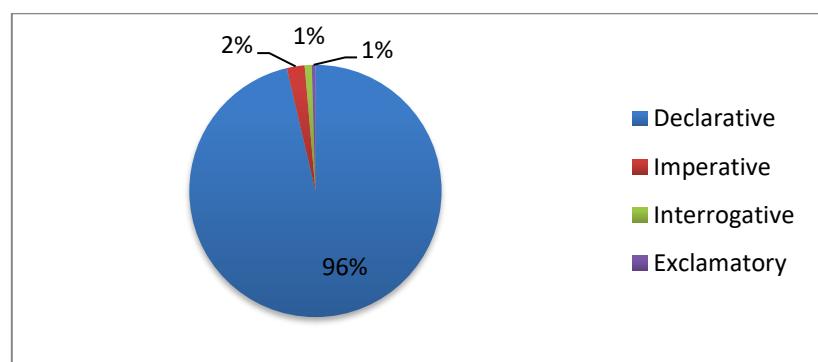


Fig. 1 Frequency of use of sentence types according to the purpose of the utterance

Regarding the structural features (see Fig. 2), the most frequent are complex sentences (40%), which indicate the complexity of argumentation and cause-and-effect relationships (e.g., “*I don't think Putin would do something dumb like that*” or “*If we sign a deal, he gets all the cards*”), and simple sentences (36%), which ensure the clarity and categorical nature of the statements (e.g., “*He wants to fight. We want peace*”). Fragmentary or incomplete sentences are somewhat less common (11%), their use being driven by the speaker's desire for expressiveness and the imitation of live speech: “*Very weak leaders in United States, very weak leaders in Europe*.” More elaborate syntactic structures are represented to a lesser extent: the share of compound-complex sentences is 8% (e.g., “*And then, you know, under Trump, he kind of didn't move because Trump told him, “Not under my watch,” and he started advancing.*”), and the least frequent were compound sentences – only 5% of the total (e.g., “*We're not win every battle, but we're going to win the war.*”).

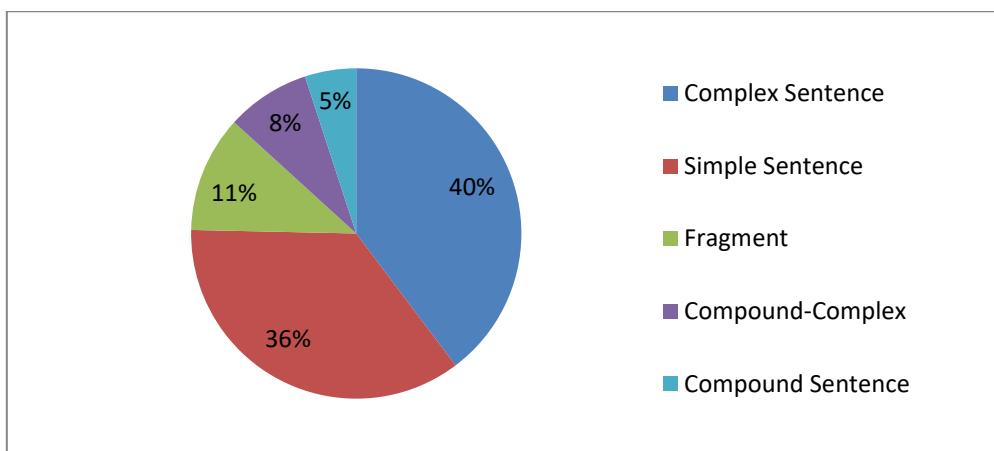


Fig. 2 Frequency of use of sentence types according to grammatical structure

In addition to the grammatical structure of sentences, the work examined stylistic devices in detail. In total, 411 instances of various stylistic devices were identified in the material studied, which we have reflected in a bar chart (see Fig. 3).

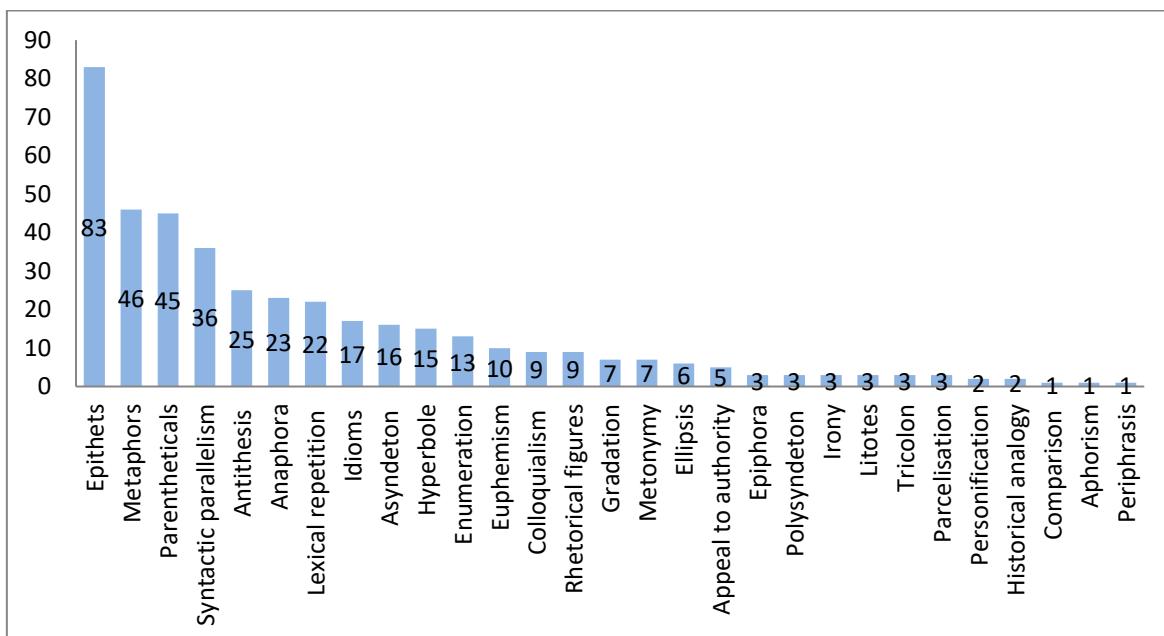


Fig. 3 Frequency of use of stylistic devices

As the diagram data shows, epithets (evaluative and descriptive) are the undisputed leader among the means of influence, their share constituting 20.2% (83 cases). This high frequency indicates that the primary task of politicians is the emotional coloring of information and imposing a certain evaluative attitude towards events or opponents on the audience. For instance, positive evaluative epithets (“*a strong sense of cultural identity*”, “*best chance Ukraine is ever going to have*”) are used to create a positive image, emphasizing desired characteristics, along with descriptive

epithets (“*democratic European future*”). Negative evaluative epithets are applied to discredit opponents: “*this unprovoked, unjustified attack*”, “*very weak leaders in United States*”.

Metaphors (11.2% or 46 cases) and parenthetical constructions (10.9% or 45 cases) occupy the second and third positions in terms of frequency of use. Metaphors allow speakers to visualize abstract political concepts and make them more understandable for the general public: “*This will be essentially a bridge to membership*”, “*Russia understands the language of weapons and power*”, “*He suddenly became a big player*”. Conversely, parenthetical constructions serve as a means of thought authorization, clarification, or establishing contact with the audience, and are often realized through conversational markers: “*I think they've been really passing the buck too much on the United States*”, “*I think that reflects, first of all, you know, just how compelling this country's story is*”.

Syntactic figures of repetition and contrast play a significant role in structuring political discourse. Specifically, syntactic parallelism covers 8.8% of the sample (36 cases) and is used to create rhythm and reinforce key messages, often expressing the speaker's main intent: “*President Trump will always act in the interests of United States. The same President Zelenskyy, who should fight for interests of his country. Putin will fight for his own interests.*” Closely related to this is antithesis (6.1% or 25 cases), which ensures a clear and dramatic opposition of positions, highlighting a conflict of interest: “*He wants to fight. We want peace.*” or “*Ukraine has said all along they're ready for talks. It's been the Russian side that has not been ready for talks.*”.

Among the figures of repetition, anaphora (5.6%) is also frequent, serving for emotional accentuation by focusing attention on the beginning of utterances: “*I could hear the church bells ringing. I could hear the bells of Saint Sophia and Saint Michael's being rung.*” In contrast, lexical repetition (5.4%) enhances the intensity of the statement, such as in the form of triple repetition: “*He wants to fight fight fight.*”.

Other stylistic devices, such as phraseologisms (4.1%), asyndeton (3.9%), hyperbole (3.6%), and enumeration (3.2%), although represented to a lesser extent, create the necessary variety of expressive nuances. Phraseologisms give speech a natural and idiomatic quality, including political idioms: “*But we are where we are.*” Asyndeton contributes to dynamism by emphasizing objects without conjunctions: “*I can't think of any meaningful, logical, useful negotiating tactic...*”. Hyperbole is used for dramatization and exaggeration of event scales, enhancing the emotional reaction: “*He is currently losing hundreds of thousands of soldiers.*” Enumeration adds concrete detail, reinforcing the weight of the argument through sequential listing: “*Like Kharkiv, like Odessa, like Dnipro and like other cities in Ukraine.*”

Euphemisms, colloquialisms, rhetorical figures, gradation, and metonymy have a minor distribution in the sample and are used situationally. For example, a euphemism (2.4%) is used to soften or conceal negative content: “*He had failed to discharge his responsibilities as president.*” or “*That's when Putin moved into Crimea.*” Colloquialism (2.2%) adds informality and conversational tone to the speech: “*I don't think Putin would do something dumb like that.*” Rhetorical figures (2.2%), particularly the rhetorical question, are used to establish contact and strengthen arguments by appealing to obviousness: “*I'm like, “Are you kidding me?”*” Gradation (1.7%) provides a sequential build-up of emotional or semantic weight, promoting persuasiveness: “*A lot of it focused on Russia rather than American values, American interests, national security...*” Metonymy (1.7%) substitutes a subject or phenomenon with an associated one: “*Yanukovych and Bankova chose first to send the Berkut...*”

The rest of the stylistic devices, which constitute less than 2% of the total sample, are used the least, but provide speech with special expressive shades. Specifically, ellipsis (1.5%) creates dynamism through the omission of an obviously necessary word or phrase, most often the linking verb: “*Very weak leaders in United States, very weak leaders in Europe.*” Appeal to authority (1.2%) is used to support one's position with the opinion of a significant figure: “*I can't put it any better than President Obama did in his UN General Assembly speech...*”. Even less frequent are figures like epiphora, polysyndeton, irony, litotes, tricolon, and parcelation (0.7% each), as well as personification and historical allusion/analogy (0.5% each), comparison, aphorism, and periphrasis (0.2% each), which add contextual depth, stylistic vividness, and cultural references. For example, epiphora

focuses attention on repetition at the end of phrases: “*Ukraine has said all along they're ready for talks. It's been the Russian side that has not been ready for talks.*”, and historical allusion relies on the audience's shared knowledge: “*Soviet Union was not taken down by weapons. Russia is the same way.*” Tricolon (the rule of three) gives statements completion and weight: “*I can't think of any meaningful, logical, useful negotiating tactic...*”. Thus, these devices, although used the least, are important tools for creating expression and modulating the perception of the message.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The syntactico-stylistic organization of modern English-language political interviews is characterized by a clear hierarchy of linguistic means of influence, which are purposefully used to implement persuasion and manipulation strategies. The syntactic analysis established the dominance of declarative sentence types (over 96%), which is a conscious strategy of politicians aimed at presenting their own judgments as objective facts. Among the structural features, complex sentences are the most frequently used (40%) and simple sentences (36%), both of which underscore the complexity and logical substantiation of the argumentation. At the stylistic level, epithets (20.2%) are the undisputed leader among all means of influence. Their high frequency indicates the politicians' desire to impart emotional coloring to information and impose a specific evaluation of events or opponents on the audience. Metaphors (11.2%) and parenthetical constructions (10.9%) occupy the second and third places in frequency. Metaphors serve to visualize abstract political concepts and simplify them for the general public, while parenthetical constructions are used for thought authorization and adding an element of improvisation. Figures of syntactic repetition and contrast play a significant role in structuring the discourse, particularly syntactic parallelism (8.8%) and antithesis (6.1%), as well as anaphora and lexical repetition (over 5% each). These devices ensure the rhythm of speech, enhance the persuasiveness of arguments, and help focus attention on key messages. Thus, the dominance of declarative sentences combined with complex syntactic constructions creates an effect of objectivity and authoritativeness in utterances, while the high-frequency use of epithets, metaphors, and syntactic figures provides an emotional charge and shapes evaluative judgments in the audience's mind.

Promising directions for further deepening the research problem include a comparative analysis of the means of linguistic influence in English and Ukrainian political interviews. Such a comparison will allow for the identification of the national and cultural specifics of implementing persuasive strategies. Additionally, significant scholarly interest lies in researching the peculiarities of reproducing the idiolect of individual political leaders, which opens the way to studying the influence of individual manner of speech on cross-linguistic communication and image formation.

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Юлія Каракун, Олішевська Вікторія. Синтактико-стилістичні засоби впливу в сучасних англомовних політичних інтерв'ю. Статтю присвячено комплексному аналізу синтактико-стилістичних засобів впливу, що формують комунікативну динаміку сучасних англомовних політичних інтерв'ю. Актуальність теми зумовлено важливістю вивчення мовних механізмів, які політики використовують для маніпуляції громадською думкою та формування власного іміджу в мас-медіа. За результатами дослідження встановлено, що на синтаксичному рівні домінують розповідні речення (понад 96%), що демонструє тверду позицію мовця та його бажання видати власні судження як об'єктивні факти. Частка питальних, спонукальних та вигукових конструкцій є незначною – менше 4% від загального вжитку. Щодо структурних особливостей, найбільш частотними є складні речення (40%), що вказує на комплексність аргументації, та прості речення (36%), які забезпечують чіткість викладу. Менш поширеними є фрагменти (11%), які використовуються для експресивності та імітації живого мовлення. Складнопідрядні та складносуординні речення становлять меншу частку (8% та 5% відповідно). На стилістичному рівні виявлено, що беззаперечним лідером серед засобів впливу є епітети (20,2%), висока частотність яких свідчить про прагнення політиків надати інформації емоційного забарвлення та нав'язати аудиторії певну оцінку подій чи опонентів. Друге та третє місця за вживаністю посідають метафори (11,2%) і вставні конструкції (10,9%). Значну роль у структуруванні дискурсу відіграють синтаксичні фігури: синтаксичний паралелізм (8,8%) та антитеза (6,1%), а також анафора і лексичний повтор (5,6% та 5,4% відповідно). Ці засоби посилюють переконливість аргументів та допомагають зосередити увагу на ключових повідомленнях. Інші стилістичні засоби, як-от ідіоми, асиндегон та гіпербола, використовуються ситуативно. Отже, на основі проведеного дослідження встановлено, що синтактико-стилістична організація сучасних англомовних політичних інтерв'ю характеризується чіткою ієархією мовних засобів впливу. Домінування розповідних речень у поєднанні зі складними синтаксичними конструкціями створює ефект об'єктивності та авторитетності висловлювань політиків. Водночас високочастотне використання епітетів, метафор та синтаксичних фігур забезпечує емоційне навантаження дискурсу та формує оцінні судження в свідомості аудиторії.

Ключові слова: політичне інтерв'ю; мовленнєвий вплив; синтаксичні структури; стилістичні прийоми.

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