



# Rhythmical Patterns of Joe Biden's Political Speeches: An Analytic Study

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## Abstract

In general, rhythm is defined as a movement in a regular sequence with strong or weak vocal tones. One of the most significant components of a political speaker's delivery is the employment of rhythmical and musical patterns in order to capture the audience's compassion and sympathy on the one hand, while also persuading them of the content of his speeches on the other. The purpose of this work is to identify the rhythmical patterns and types of stress–unstressed arrangements in three Joe Biden's speeches. Biden's speeches are found to follow no set pattern or iambic style, but he tries to give each theme its own pattern. In each theme, the quantity of meters or feet is basic. Roach's Model (2002) is followed in the analysis of Biden's speeches. One of the main conclusions of this paper is that for each theme a number of feet is used by Biden as a strategy in all his speeches.

*keywords : connected speech, Joe Biden, political speech rhythm, stress*

## Introduction

Crystal (2019:417) claims that rhythm embodies the apparent consistency of significant components in speech phonologically. These rhythmical symmetries can be expressed as patterns of stressed vs. unstressed syllables, syllable length (long vs. short), pitch (high to low), or a combination of these variables.. "Stressed time rhythm or syllable time rhythm are two types of rhythmical patterns. The major focus of this investigation is a stressed time rhythm. It refers to the relative power or emphasis placed on a particular syllable or phrase in a speech to make it stand out from other syllables or words (like in Joe Biden's speeches).. These types are used to confirm the substance of the speech. When Joe Biden became President of the United States in 2021, this research was applied to his speeches.

## Rhythm and political Discourse

Humans speak rhythmically, according to Roach, 2002 and many other linguists such as Carr (2013). They use regular beats in the speech signal to engage in the act of speaking. Those rhythms can be heard in English phrases like "Biden stated a year ago, the country was "struck by a virus that was treated with quiet and denial." The music is playing. People do not necessarily put a beat on every syllable in most variants of English. There is no beat on the preposition(with) or the two instances of "a and the" in this phrase. Because English is stress-timed, unlike several other languages, the rhythmic beats only fall on stressed syllables. In the above example, only ( Biden, said, year, ago, country, hit, virus, met, silence and denial) are stressed, so the beats fall only on those. English, is unlike many other languages like Arabic in this respect.The rhythm of a language, according to Skandera (2005:87), is the recurrence of major parts of speech at what are considered to be regular intervals of time. The type of rhythm is a characteristic of supra-segmental qualities, or prosodic features, of any given language's pronunciation,." ( Kreidler, 2013:140)

The second theory, namely syllable –time rhythm in languages like (e.g. French, Telugu, Yoruba). All syllables, whether stressed or unstressed, tend to occur at regular time intervals and the time between stressed syllables will be shorter or longer in proportion to the number of unstressed syllables . (Roach, 2002:118). In the absence of any cognitive awareness of what's'tress' could be, English speakers can discern which syllable in a word receives the most stress. While the native speaker may not be aware of the concept of stress. However, we emphasize the importance of mastering these abilities. The preacher is the people's language and tongue. He must be the most eloquent and powerful among them in eloquence, as well as the most precise in discourse. Voice intonation involves a preacher raising his or her voice to break out of the monotony that many preachers



fall into. This will capture the inattentive attention and awaken the same. Speaking with a cadence and tempo is proportional to the psychological mood of the sermon first, and the ability of the audience to follow the rhetorical parts. Second, in terms of the sermon's psychological atmosphere, the issues of the sermon, for example, do not suit a quick pace, but rather require a slower rhythm and a slower pace than educational, political, or intellectual matters. This is an issue to which people should pay close attention. ( Al-Ghababshi ,2014, Issue 324).

### **Phonological Patterns in Political Speech**

Political discourse is characterized by a set of features. Among these are the following: It contains many details about the main topic of the discourse. Maintains reference to general topics, which are related to public affairs. It helps in defending the decisions issued by an entity, which may face criticism from the individuals targeted by these decisions. It is also based on praising and praising a particular policy that is followed in society or the opposition and protesting and criticizing this policy. Defending programs and tests of a political nature that are developed by a certain party, or finding alternative programs and methods for the existing and followed programs. Its goal may be to spread optimism and hope for the future, or it may work to find a different political vision by seeing the discourse by the majority

### **The Case Study: Rhythmic Patterns in Joe Biden's Speeches**

In Biden's speeches, one can identify the notion of rhythm which involves some noticeable event happening at regular intervals of time; one can detect the rhythm of a heartbeat, of a flashing light or of a piece of music through listening to Biden's various speeches. The researcher follows certain procedures to study Biden's rhythmical patterns. Three Speeches have been chosen: [President Biden at the National Veterans Day Observance](#), Joe Biden's DNC speech and his speech after 100 days of his entrance to the white house. Phonemic transcription has been done to discover the rhythmical patterns. This analysis has depended on the themes that were included in his speeches.

### **Results of the study**

Identifying rhythmical patterns depends mainly on the theme that the president wants to convey to his public. The results report a variant number of feet to express a theme. It has shown that Biden used this procedure successfully to reveal that a theme can be simple in sense but may be represented differently. For example, the theme of 'trust' is represented by three, four or five feet. But this is not obligatory; it means that if we analyze other speeches, a bigger number of feet can reveal this theme. The same is true for other themes. Also, the other point here is the number of feet coincides with the type and importance of themes. For example, Biden used a small number of feet (two or three for expressing happiness) and a large number for more complex themes (like 19-28 for adhering to the previous instruction of virus). The phonetic analysis states that there is no consistency in the pitch of voice of the speaker through depending on the distribution of more muscular energy on certain syllables and less than that on others. The phonetic analysis is based on the sentence level rather than on the line level in poetry since the aim is thematic. Whenever the President wants to convey an important thing or a specific message to the public, he tries to raise his voice by stressing the required utterances. Having a look at these speeches of Biden, and through expected out-of-the research data, one can recognize easily how the American President depended on the sound engineering and its relevance to his emotions in conveying several messages to the audience. One can notice the President did not raise the voice for non-necessary, and do not lower it so that he becomes bored by the hearing. Because those who address them are not on the same level in terms of being affected, some of them are sufficient for the slightest sign, and some of them do not preach except by raising their voice and warning by word, and an explanation of that will come. Besides, it is also evident that Biden did not use one sequence of rhythmic patterns; instead, different sequences were used, regardless of the theme under emphasis. But what is interesting is that the influence of age and his way of delivering a speech, of course coloured by smiling and turning around to his crew, the domain of weak or unstressed syllables is very clear. This is represented by using slow way of delivering, accompanied by changing some short and long vowels into shwa /ə/. This pattern is not the actual pattern of using English by American presidents, if Biden compared with Trump or Obama, where the two are known by their loud delivery of speech.



## Conclusion

It seems that Biden succeeds in achieving the effect in the public's opinion through using rhythmical patterns. This effect has been achieved in two ways .one is related the process of hearing which is a way to calm one's self through using pronunciation , style and the method one presents his speech through sound and stress. Here, Biden has the ability to affect the addressee's opinions. Moreover, through this phonological analysis, we noticed that Biden through using rhythm take the task of convincing by stirring people's thoughts and feeling together . In Biden's speeches, the rhythm was the outcome of repetition, sound harmony, and parallelism between sentences as in /It iz roŋ. it iz ʌn əmerikən and it mʌst stɒp/. In short we can conclude those sentences contain emphasis only in words that are important in speech . Thus, the stress rhythm is Perhaps a characteristic of a single style of speech, not speaking in English as a whole; One always talks at smart a certain degree of rhythm. We expect to have shown the importance rhythm in determining the realization of segments in Biden's speeches , indicating the morphemic and syntactic function of elements, and structuring information in the sentence. It follows from this that stress and rhythm are basic for intelligibility, adequacy and fluency in speech and that they should be consistently practiced by foreign learners if possible in the early stages.

We have concentrated on the production side of English stress and rhythm, which will contribute to more intelligible speech and how the practice of stress and rhythm helps to understand running speech. Since stress highlights the most important words in the message, a rhythmical approach to English pronunciation will help the foreign listener to concentrate on the meaningful utterances in the message and to strengthen the links between pronunciation on the one hand and grammatical structure and meaning on the other one.

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