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SELECTED PECULIARITIES OF ENGLISH AND GEORGIAN POLITICAL TALK SHOWS

1. INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century appears rather complicated in many respects, including the sphere of political activity. Consequently, the role of political TV talk shows has grown immensely over the decades. Such programmes not only influence the viewers' opinions, but can even make them change their mind completely. That is why the topics of political TV talk shows tend to be fairly varied. In the modern day, the potential influence of the media affects politicians' behaviour, resulting in a "mediatisation" of their discourse. In many cases, it can be observed that it is inclined to fluctuate from constructive communication to destructive utterances. That is the reason I decided to focus on political television shows.

The research materials are several American, British and Georgian political talk aired in 2020 and 2022. The study is construed as qualitative research. To find the differences and similarities I have used comparative-contrastive analysis.

2. THE TELEVISION TALK SHOW AS A GENRE

The television talk show, as a mediatized genre, has become a major arena for the expression of the lay public's opinion on a range of issues,

which include personal dilemmas and sociopolitical problems (Thornborrow 2007). Talk shows are characterised by a peculiar use of language which represents the ideas, intentions, feelings, and experiences of the participants (hosts and panel members) (Yan 2008). Globally, the scholarship on ediatized genres has, generally, focused on news, political interviews and talk show interviews.

The talk show occupies a significant place in modern media discourse. It's importance is immense. A talk show influences the formation and shaping of public opinion. It is viewed as analogous with terms such as: *discussion*, *interview* or *conversation*. The term *talk show* has a variety of definitions, due to the fact that the boundaries intended in this term are not precisely determined.

The talk show is very close to everyday conversation, since proximity to reality is very important for this format. The action in talk shows takes place in the studio where the programme is being recorded. In modern talk shows, however, the location may be the house of the guest or natural surroundings, i.e. an outdoor location.

In order for a talk show to be considered as a genre, it is necessary to identify the characteristic and constantly recurring elements. The talk show genre is defined according to the following main criteria:

1. Serialised nature of the show: The systematic repetition of the show gives the viewer the feeling that all this is well known to him or her and the talk show settles in his or her consciousness as a solid formation.
2. Central figure of the host: The moderator is a prerequisite for the success or failure of the show and, therefore, its title often contains the host's name (*The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, *All in with Chris Hayes*, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *The Late Night with Seth Meyers*, *Primtime with Jonh Dickerson*, *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, *Tucker Carlson Tonight*, *The situation room with Wolf Blizer*, *Inga Grigolia's reaction*, *Sanaya*, *George Targamadze's Formula)*. A sociable, successful presenter with his or her own style is characterized by interaction with studio guests and viewers.
3. Personality-oriented: A talk show is not a business conversation, as it depends on the people. The main purpose of a talk show is to characterize individuals and not to discuss any topic. It should be noted, however, that this principle does not always apply to political talk shows. In some political talk shows, the purpose of the show is to address a topic

and guests are selected according to the topic. Consequently, the issue of personality orientation is one of the criteria characteristic of an entertainment talk show (Leladze 2017).

A talk show is a conversation that takes place on television. It is very similar to everyday conversations because it is characterized by spontaneity. The participants are free to discuss various topics in front of a wide audience. According to the thematic concept, the programmes are divided into guest- or community-oriented forms. The theme can be topical or timeless. The current topic covers mostly political, economic or general social issues. The conversation also focuses on media events. Timeless topics are mostly discussed in afternoon talk shows.

All talk shows have a host (one or more) who discusses current topics relevant to the format of the program (politics, entertainment, comedy). The host invites the guests and discuss the topic with them and the audience. The guest is considered to be anyone who participates in the talk show and is named by the presenter. These comprise two kinds of talk show participants: the main guests and the non-main ones.

There are different types of talk shows, classified in different ways. Bernard Timberg distinguishes three main sub-genres during the development of the talk show (from the 1940s to the 1990s). The classification is mainly based on when the show airs or the time aspect. These are the three subgenres:

- A Late Night Entertainment Talk Show,
- A Day Show Created With the Participation of the Audience,
- Morning News Magazine Format Show (Timberg 2002).

The research conducted by Timberg is important, although the time aspect is irrelevant for classification. Particular sub-genre talk shows differ in the frequency and format of their broadcasts. Timberg's observation revealed that the talk show genre consists of three parts: introduction, interview and conclusion (Timberg 2002). Each sub-genre has developed its own format and due to the specifics of the culture, each of them is presented differently in different cultures. Despite the genre differences, talk shows have general characteristics and widely applied principles of construction that are present in all types of talk shows and thus distinguish them from other shows. All talk shows have a pre-defined airtime that includes one- to two-hour intervals. However, there are still some differences in talk

shows from different cultures and countries. As it turned out, they have the longest introduction for day and late night talk shows. Different time is devoted to the interview as the presenters may talk about other topics besides asking questions.

Political talk shows differ from entertaining talk shows. Most political talk shows have the same structure. Invited guests talk about serious topics. A journalist usually first writes the introductory text for his talk show, reviews the current political events, then begins to ask pre-prepared questions, and then engages in dialogue with the guests; Often these dialogues grow into discussions and arguments between the participants. This conversation goes against ethical norms. Talk shows of this type have great influence on the audience. In the presented article, I am going to analyse examples of conversations that grew into a heated discussion.

3. SPEECH BEHAVIOUR AS AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF THE POLITICAL TALK SHOW

Speech behaviour develops throughout the whole lifetime of an individual. It depends on the position of a person in society, on his/her profession. A journalist or a presenter will skilfully use their speech features, ask the right questions and competently regulate communication to achieve success. The study of speech strategies and tactics is quite relevant at present, since they allow us to recognize the speech behaviour of a person in a given situation. The choice of strategy is determined by the situation in which communication takes place and by the purpose or motivation of an individual (Chunakhova et al. 2021).

Speech behaviour is directly related to the term speech activity. Speech activities include the conscious choice of language and speech units necessary for achieving the goal and motivation of the speaker. This activity is carried out by a person consciously. The result of speech activity is the thought that the speaker wants to convey and the text, while the result of speech behaviour is direct interaction between people and emotions that will be caused by one or another interlocutor's speech behaviour.

Analysis of politicians' public speeches is an interesting and useful process in many ways – on the one hand, it makes it possible to predict their future actions and on the other hand, to outline the most effective ways to impress the listeners.

In a talk show a politician should not follow the offered discourse and should not repeat the opponent's opinion. He or she should manage and create an alternative discourse to the opponent. It is speech behaviour that allows us to analyze the hidden goals of the politician while speaking in a talk show.

Historically, discourse analysis can be traced to classical rhetoric. More than 2,000 years ago, rhetoricians like Aristotle specified the various strictures of discourse and indicated their effectiveness in the process of persuasion in public contexts.

In the modern world, politicians have little direct contact with the population. They connect with the people through the media. Therefore, political discourse is mainly represented and transmitted by mass media. Politicians actively use mass media in their speeches either directly or indirectly.

The political discourse of the mass media is a complex communicative event, the purpose of which is the struggle for power over the formation of public opinion (Chokhonelidze 2014).

According to Hatch, there are special markers that indicate that communication should start. It is well known that transmission signals play an important role in any discourse. In different types of discourse (TV talk, interview, dialogue, letter, etc.) these signs differ according to the channel, the environment, and different factors (Hatch 1992: 8).

According to Fairclough, power in discourse is manifested in the fact that communicators with power control and limit those communicators who do not have power. He presents these limitations in three types:

- restriction on the content of communication;
- restriction on the types of social relations in which the participants of the communication process engage;
- limiting communication subject positions (Fairclough 1989).

4. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF GEORGIAN AND AMERICAN POLITICAL TALK SHOWS

There is growing interest in the talk show genre in Georgia. More and more new programmes are showing up on TV. However, it should be noted that, unlike American talk shows, this type of programme in Georgia has reached certain stages of development.

I have watched several American, British and Georgian political talk shows and compared their structure, name, opening markers, timekeeping, air time, introduction of guests by the host, etc. Comparative-contrastive analysis and synthesis showed that talk shows are related to each other by studio, name and structure.

Several examples of the names of the American talk shows are: *The Factor*, *Tucker Carlson Tonight*, *Inside Politics*, *The Situation Room with Wolf Blizer*. Similarly, in Georgia, the following talk shows are shown: *Reaction*, *Main accents with Nika Gvaramia*, *Position*, *George Targamadze's Formula*.

Unfortunately, unlike in the American shows, there are many face threatening facts in Georgian TV programmes. In the beginning, the conversation can be neutral, quietand constructive, but suddenly political leaders may begin to shout and swear and the discourse gains face threatening image.

Such radical comments and behaviours of Georgian politicians are motivated by various reasons. Opposition members aim to regain the power, while members of the government want to stay in power as well as the most population of Georgia. A factor to be taken into account when engaged in discourse is human psychology and temperament. Unlike an American or British, you can not frame a Georgian, even if he is a politician. It's hard for hot-tempered people and Georgia is full of people who cannot control their emotions. Especially when it comes to oral communication. Georgians are less restrained at this. The reason for this is their temperament and rigid character.

An example of such behaviour can be observed when Nona Mamulashvili, a member of the United National Movement, verbally and physically assaulted her opponent, Davit Loria. The incident took place in the *Timely Questions* program of the Georgian Times. Mamulashvili was irritated when asked by David Loria why the Ukrainian government was sacrificing its soldiers and civilians when, he said, shortly before the start of the war, NATO officials warned them that they could not help. The excerpt below illustrates the specifics of the conversation:

Loria:	NATO and world leaders told Zelensky: 'Do not rely on NATO'. Why was Zelensky told this in public statements? I ask a question and you give me the answer.
Other opponent:	What should we do if they invade Georgia tomorrow?
Loria:	If they invade, then we have to defend ourselves. You should not give them the chance to invade.

Mamulashvili:	What are you talking about? Are you mad? Do not force me to come there. My brother is fighting there, you are insane. What are you talking about?
Loria:	You should not make them invade.
Mamulashvili:	You, son of a bitch.
Loria:	How can you not be ashamed.
Mamulashvili:	I am not ashamed, do not force me to come there.
Loria:	Are you a woman? You should not make people fight. You should not put them in that position.
Mamulashvili:	How you dare to say this.
Loria:	You are a shameless woman. You are a whore.
Mamulashvili:	Am I a whore? You, son of a bitch

Mamulashvili then throws a glass at her opponent and physically attacks him.

Another example of physical confrontation between Georgian politicians is the fight between the representatives of two opposition parties, Giorgi Gugava and Paata Manjgaladze, broadcast by TV First in "The stories of the day". At the end of the program, Manjgaladze tells Guigava: *'I will tear your head off.'* Then he runs at him and physically assaults him.

Political discussion is characterized by this harsh and sometimes very direct and sometimes very uncensored confrontation. During the dialogue in the talk show, Americans also criticize each other, but in a dignified manner. Undeniably, there are examples of using swear words and phrases as well as destructive conversation techniques in English talk shows, too, but they are not as frequent as in Georgian programmes.

In the debate between U.S. Senate candidates on *WMUR-TV in 'Granite states Debate'* one of the candidate's accuses another candidate:

> First of all, that's a lie and another lie, along with all the lies that she has been telling to Granite staters since she started campaign. That is an absolute lie.

Later he also comments his opponent's statements with these words:

> Everything she's just said causes problems… That means that Granite staters and Americans are paying 100 000 dollars more than they had to pay, under her ideas… everything she talks about wastes money, costs money, and puts and takes money out of everyone's pocket. You want a solution to this? Do what I suggest.

Hassan answers the question and Bolduc says:

> I think it's a non-answer. I think it's just a bunch of career politician political talk… She can't sit up here and talk. Get away with it. It's double talk. She lies. You can't trust a word she says and she thinks she can hide behind her title.

Hassan:

> I have voted repeatedly to provide more funding for physical barriers at the border and, with respect, Don Bolduk knows that.

An argument aimed at neutralizing the opponent is also widely used in political discourse. In this case, the politician must be able to invalidate the views of the opponent in order to prove the weakness of his or her reasoning. In such situations, politicians do not even criticize the idea, but aim to discredit the opponent himself or herself. As a rule, the American political discourse has a neutral approach in this regard, while in Georgia, there is a sharp confrontation with the opponent as attested in the excerpt from Nika Melia's speech, where she mentions her political opponent Gia Volski in the talk show *Choice*:

> I am not surprised by Mr. Volski, because these people are shameless and one of them is especially Mr. Volski. A person who ten days ago said that the GEL exchange rate is depreciating because Grigol Vashadze is making unacceptable statements. This man is sitting in front of me now.

Political discussion is characterized by this harsh and sometimes very direct and sometimes very uncensored confrontation. British politicians may be really upset about their opponents' actions, but they will maintain civility and continue the debate within the framework of a constructive dialogue.

This is how Colum Eastwood, a representative of the Labour Party in the BBC talk show 'Vote 22 NI', addresses Jeffrey Donaldson:

> Jeffrey again today is refusing to say whether he will form the government, because he wants a deal between the British government and the European commission. Well, that's up to them.

Jeffry Donaldson's answer is:

> We may not want to be part of the debate about our future in terms of this protocol and the way in which we have laws imposed upon us in Northen Ireland over which we have no say. I want to be elected by the people of Northen Ireland to make their laws. So let's change that, let's get lawmaking back at

> Stormont, where it really belongs. That's what I want to achieve, that's what the DUP (The Democratic Unionist Party) is out to achieve.

During dialogue in a talk show, Americans also criticize each other, but in a dignified manner, they tend to use more neutral phrases and are not as sharp as Georgian politicians:

Barney Sunders in NBC News programme MSNBC Democratic Debate In Las Vegas says:

> In order to beat Donald Trump, we're going to need the largest voter turnout in the history of the United States. Mr. Bloomberg had policies in New York City of stop-and-frisk which went after African American and Latino people in an outrageous way. hat is not a way you're going to grow voter turnout. When our movement is about bringing working class people together: black and white and Latino, Native American, Asian American around an agenda that works for all of us and not just the billionaire class and that agenda says that, maybe, just maybe, we should join the rest of the industrialized world, guarantee health care to all people as a human right, raise that minimum wage to a living wage of 15 bucks an hour and have the guts to take on the fossil fuel industry because their short-term profits are not more important than the future of this planet and the need to combat climate change. Those are some of the reasons we have the strongest campaign to defeat Donald Trump.

This is an example of constructive discourse. Different from their American colleagues, the Georgians shout, slander and insult their opponents. In Georgia, instead of talking about their programme, they concentrate on fights, humiliation, attacks and focus on the past, what happened then and what is happening now. They are constantly looking back.

Melia and Sanikidze criticized each other in the program "Main Accents":

Melia:	Now you're playing Bidzina's game, you idiot. You are an adult and you don't know where and what he said.
Sanikidze:	You have been doing the same thing for eight years.
Melia:	Sometimes you praise Bidzina, sometimes Misha. Go home, son, eat.
Sanikidze:	Pay attention to your words.
Melia:	What you have done now is immoral.
Fox:	Are you normal?

Another example of unconstructive dialogue is from "Timely Questions" where politicians provoke and assault each other:

Topuria: You are trying to provoke me, because you are a professional provocateur.
Mamulashvili: This is 30 silver.

She throws coins at the opponent and he throws a glass at her.

To sum up Gergian politicians' discourse in talk shows, we can say that Georgian politicians speak over each other. It is not easy to distinguish their future plans. They do not conduct interviews or conversations, but fight verbally and sometimes even physically.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the paper was to discuss selected peculiarities of English and Georgian political talk shows using the example of *BBC | Vote 22 NI*, *WMUR-TV 'Granite states Debate'*, *NBC News-MSNBC Democratic Debate*, *Choice*, *The stories of the day* and *Timely Questions*. The research material were several American, British and Georgian political talk shows of 2020 and 2022. The study was conducted using qualitative research.

The comparative analysis of the collected Georgian and English material allows for the drawing of certain conclusions concerning the specificity of political talk shows in the compared languages: Beginning and closing phrases are similar, but more swear words are used in Georgian political talk shows than in their American counterparts; The comparison of English and Georgian talk shows reveals differences in non-verbal language. The guests of the American shows are delighted to participate in the programme, which is also physically expressed with a smile. On the contrary, the guests of the Georgian talk shows create a negative mood in the viewers or listeners from the very beginning. Their speeches tend to be characterized by tension and aggression. In most cases, the Georgian talk show's guests are physically and verbally abused. In this respect, the participants of English-language programmes are restrained; As a rule, English-language political discourse has a neutral approach in this regard, while in Georgian, there tends to be a sharp confrontation with the opponent; The methods and ways of manipulation are similar in both languages, but it should be noted that the guests of the English talk show try to criticize the opponent's speech, his or her ideas, while in the Georgian discourse the opponent is directly insulted.

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Abstract

The present paper aims to discuss selected peculiarities of English and Georgian political talk shows using the example *of BBC | Vote 22 NI*, *WMUR-TV 'Granite*

states Debate', *NBC News-MSNBC Democratic Debate*, *Choice*, *The stories of the day* and *Timely Questions*. The analysis is conducted with a view to determining the similarities between the methods and techniques of manipulation in English and Georgian political speeches. It is undertaken to answer the following question: Are the politicians mostly criticizing the opponent's speech and their ideas or are they simply insulting them? What kind of mood do the guests and the host create in the beginning and during the programme? What kind of similarities and differences can be seen in the structure of English and Georgian political talk shows? In English-language talk shows, political discourse is not as open and obvious as in Georgian ones. The host and the guests do not intend to abuse someone verbally or physically. As a rule, the English-language political discourse has a neutral approach in this regard, while in Georgian, there tends to be a sharp confrontation with the opponent.

Keywords: political discourse, dialogue, political talk show

WYBRANE CECHY POLITYCZNYCH TALK SHOW W JĘZYKU ANGIELSKIM I GRUZIŃSKIM

Streszczenie

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest omówienie podstawowych cech angielskiego i gruzińskiego politycznego talk show na przykładzie następujących programów: *BBC | Vote 22 NI*, *WMUR-TV 'Granite states Debate'*, *NBC News-MSNBC Democratic Debate*, *Choice*, *The stories of the day* and *Timely Questions*. Analiza zebranego materiału pozwala określić podobieństwa w metodach i technikach manipulacji w angielskich i gruzińskich mowach. Podjęto próbę udzielenia odpowiedzi na następujące pytania: Czy politycy krytykują przemówienia przeciwników, czy ich obrażają? Jaki nastrój tworzą goście i gospodarz programu? Jakie podobieństwa i różnice są widoczne w strukturze angielskich i gruzińskich politycznych realizacji gatunku talk show? W anglojęzycznych programach tego typu dyskurs polityczny nie jest tak bezpośredni i otwarty jak w ich gruzińskich odpowiednikach. Gospodarz i goście nie przejawiają intencji werbalnego lub fizycznego atakowania uczestników. W dyskursie anglojęzycznym widoczne jest neutralne podejście, podczas gdy w gruzińskim obserwuje się ostrą konfrontację z przeciwnikiem.

Słowa kluczowe: dyskurs polityczny, dialog, talk show polityczny