

Political persuasion in a Spanish electoral debate. Intonation and affectivity in openings and closings

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Abstract

In this paper, we study the elements of political discourse where persuasion is present as communicative strategy. In particular, we focus on the analysis of intonation and affectivity in a two-candidate Spanish electoral debate (Hidalgo Downing and Nieto y Otero 2014, Ponsonnet 2014, Reber 2012). The methodology consisted in selecting the openings and closings of each turn, taking the act as analysis unit (Briz 2003); for the acoustic analysis we have examined three parameters –fundamental frequency, intensity and vowel duration-, and four strategies for the positive affective bonds: assertiveness, inclusion, specificity and naturalization, in order to pursue the initial hypothesis on whether it is possible to find relations between the two: intonation and affectivity. The analysis shows that both candidates use affective bonds and intonation to enhance persuasion, although there are interesting differences between candidates and between openings and closings. While openings show greater number and variety of strategies, both

verbal and intonational, closings show lower intonational contours and less variation, therefore openings showing higher use of positive persuasive strategies, whereas in closings, on the other hand, there are no strategies addressed to the hearer, the most frequent being assertiveness. As for intonational contours, there is a general lowering in all values.

Key words: *political debate, persuasion, intonation, affectivity, affective bonding*

1. Introduction

In this article, we present the results of a study that aims to relate intonation with affectivity in Spanish political discourse as a powerful persuasive strategy, used in an electoral debate in order to establish bonds with the audience and thus gain votes. Affectivity has been a focus of linguistic research for a long time. While the major concern of previous research has been theoretical, recent studies such as Reber (2012), Selting (2017), Hidalgo Downing and Nieto y Otero (2014), Nieto y Otero (2002, 2004, 2007, 2018) provide empirically data-driven analysis of affectivity from the perspective of interactional linguistics, which reveals how affectivity is displayed within verbal and nonverbal means, and with positive and negative values. The importance of emotions and feelings in human action is evident, as well as in the field of pragmatics and linguistic analysis. Despite this interest, there is no unique and clear definition of affectivity in its application to the intentional use in discourse, even more so in political discourse. Some studies attempt to offer a unified representation of the concept, while other tend to diversify (Ponsonnet 2014, Rovira 2017, Wierzbicka 1999). From the point of view of discourse studies, the point of departure should be to take as premise the

intentionality of discourse, the cultural configuration of affectivity, its bipolar nature, and its functions in discourse.

Following Castilla (2000), affectivity has an axiologic function, which would be the subjective organization of reality; in the emotional and affective type of bonding, the speaker or message producer creates and establishes links, bonds with the hearer, and with the message, through linguistic means. This is precisely the object of this research.

As regards intonation, there is a significant tradition of linguistic intonation studies, i.e., studies that describe the variation of intonation susceptible to expressing distinctive meanings (Hidalgo 2006, 2011) while the full potential of the relationship between intonation and pragmatics still leaves much to be explored (Lindsey 1981, Hirschberg 2008). The correlation between intonation and emotion has been addressed with a psycholinguistic approach (Pell 2000, Ward y Hirschberg 1985, Wichmann 2000). Recently, several studies have aimed to establish correspondences between intonation variation and speech acts: Rao (2006) studies melodic variation in five different types of speech acts. Álvarez et al. (2003 and 2011) study intonation and politeness, and Acuña Ferreira (2011) examines complaints, although prosodic features are not really examined in detail in the latter.

This research is framed along the same lines, as we suggest there is a relationship between intonation and pragmatics by studying the prosodic and verbal features that express the speaker's affective strategies in discourse. We selected an electoral debate, broadcast live on the Spanish public television channel TVE1 on November 11, 2011 for analysis; it was a debate prior to the general election in Spain between the two leading candidates: Mariano Rajoy and Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba.

Electoral debates have been widely studied, and have often focused on argumentative and politeness strategies. However, we were interested in focusing our attention on a new aspect: intonation variation appearing in both candidates' interventions. Electoral debates capture the attention of the audience and media because they are a dynamic interaction in which candidates use all available resources to be persuasive; therefore, reception of the speech is manifested as a verbal struggle in which one of the candidates *beats* the other. Based on this idea, we examined affective bond strategies employed by both candidates, as well as the intonation characteristics of their interventions, exploring the hypothesis of whether correlations could be found between the two types of resources.

This paper is organized as follows. Sections 2 and 3 present the theoretical concepts employed to study affective bonds in discourse (section 2) and the parameters necessary to analyze intonation (section 3), while the following sections (4 and 5) present the methodology and discuss the results. The paper ends with the conclusions and bibliographic references.

1. Affectivity in Political Discourse

As said in the introduction, the research presented in this study aims to examine the important role of affective bonds in the process of persuasion that politicians elaborate when addressing their audience. In this sense, the interest here is the pragmatic and communicative dimension of affectivity in the political sphere. Therefore, the speaker's affectivity is understood as an intentional discourse strategy in which the speaker persuades participants and builds affective bondings that may be identified linguistically (Nieto y Otero 2002, 2004, 2007, 2018).

Arndt and Janney (1985) and Janney (1996) laid the ground for the study of affectivity in language, pointing out that affectivity may be a communicative strategy and not the spontaneous expression of emotions. Although it is agreed that emotions are based in biology and cognition, some studies underline their cultural configuration (Arregui 2003, Arregui y Choza 1995) and interpretation in language (Solomon 1995, 1997; Damasio 1996, 1999; Geertz 2006, Rizo 2011). Affectivity is also understood as bipolar, in the sense that emotions and affectivity categories can be thought as opposing terms (Plunchik 1952, Ten Houten 2007), or terms which range within a continuum between extreme poles, which would correspond to acceptance and rejection (Castilla 2000), with many possible emotions along the continuum. Studies in affectivity agree in considering that the functions of affectivity are addressed at the individual's relational dimension (Castilla 2000), as well as to organize hierarchy, territoriality and identity (Plutchik 1952, TenHouten 2007).

In this study, we develop and apply our model of analysis, drawn from Nieto y Otero (2012) and Hidalgo Downing and Nieto y Otero (2014). Within this framework, affectivity is studied as a communicative strategy rather than the spontaneous expression of emotions in interaction, and is applied mostly to political discourse. Since here the functions of affectivity bondings are clearly related to persuasion, and not so much to the expression of feelings, as meant in everyday conversation or in other types of discourse (therapeutic discourse, for instance). Taking Arndt and Janney (1985) and Janney (1985) as point of departure, we analyze affectivity bonds as expression of Castilla's (2000) categories, where affectivity reflects the way the individual relates to themselves and others. However, such categories are applied to discourse and illustrate the ways the (public) speaker addresses their message to the audience, with the ultimate purpose of creating bonds with them.

The results of the functional-communicative analysis of affective bonding strategies that appear in the interventions were compared to the acoustic analysis, in order to examine our initial hypothesis on whether correlations could be found between intonation variation and verbal strategies, and whether one candidate uses more of these persuasive strategies in the discourse than the other, or of different type.

Categories and functions of affectivity in discourse

The most important function of affectivity is that the individual may relate to him/herself, with others and with objects (Castilla 2000). In linguistic or discourse terms, this means that the speaker or writer attempts to create links with him/herself, with the others and with the message, through discourse, and s/he can do so by creating positive links (links of proximity) or negatively (creating distance).

Table 1. Affectivity as a Psycho-Social Phenomenon (Castilla 2000)

PYSCHO-SOCIAL PHENOMENON	FUNCTIONS	AFFECTIVE BONDINGS	BIPOLARITY
AFFECTIVITY	1.Axiologic and subjective organization of reality		
	2.The emotional expresion		
	3. Affective Bondings	Cognitive	
		Affective	Positive
		Negative	

Since in this study we examine the strategies used by politicians in order to gain the audience's attention and benevolence, which may eventually translate into more votes at the election, we study and apply to discourse the main affective bond strategies which attempt at creating positive or proximity links, which are assertiveness, inclusion, specificity and naturalization.¹ Table 2 shows a summary of the positive affective bond strategies used in discourse.

Table 2. Positive Affective Bondings

DISCOURSE FOCUS	PRAGMATIC FUNCTION	AFFECTIVE BONDINGS
Speaker	Self-presentation	Assertiveness
Listener	Presentation of the other	Inclusion
Message	Presentation of the message	Specificity
		Naturalization

¹ For a full description of the model and categories of affectivity in discourse, see Nieto y Otero (2012) and Hidalgo Downing & Nieto y Otero (2014).

Each of these affective bonding strategies can be examined linguistically through a number of verbal resources that facilitate analysis in interaction.

The assertiveness strategy is that when the speaker shows confidence and conviction as uttering the message, expressing certainty about the statement. This strategy creates feelings of trust in the minds of the hearers, since they perceive that the speaker is someone confident and with authority, worth trust. Assertiveness can be identified in linguistic means such as first personal pronouns, space and time deixis, repetition, action verbs, and affirmative statements.

The inclusion strategy allows the listener to infer an invitation from the speaker to incorporate the listener into the speaker's space, into the environment of familiarity (Biber and Finegan, 1989). Inclusive discourse is used when the speaker builds affinity relations with listeners: the speaker searches for common ground, incorporates the speaker's position, shares, etc. Emotive choices include greetings, the first personal plural pronoun, proper nouns.

The specificity strategy occurs when the speaker provides detailed information that is not always necessary. The set of words, fact, figures or data descriptions contribute to make the message more concrete and increase the perception of truth, therefore creating a positive link with the hearer.

As for the naturalization strategy, Wierzbicka (1991) points out that the purpose is to make the new message as feel as familiar, normal, colloquial, therefore somehow natural and unnoticed. The most frequent linguistic marker of naturalization is repetition and paraphrasing.

3. The study of intonation and its expressive function

Intonation is an area of phonetics and phonology that may provide interesting analytical tools to better understand the role played by speakers in the

production and transmission of discourse. Although the studies that combine intonation and pragmatics are still incipient, they open new paths to support linguistic analysis with objective and measurable instruments, such as acoustic analysis. We understand intonation to be “the function of the fundamental frequency that is linguistically meaningful, socially representative, and individually expressive at the level of the sentence and one of language’s elemental communication resources” (Quilis 1993:410) 2. Intonation studies agree in assigning different functions to intonation in language, particularly the primary or distinctive function, the boundary-marking function, and the expressive function (Hidalgo Navarro 2006, 2011), although more studies have focused on the first two functions. As regards the expressive function, several authors (Lieberman & Michaels 1962, Lieberman & Prince 1977) have connected intonation variation with different factors, particularly with the expression of emotion. In this line, linguists agree that “the primary expressive function of intonation is to indicate the speaker’s attitude toward the message being formulated” (Hidalgo 2006: 28-293); however, this function has not been studied in detail.

2 “La función lingüísticamente significativa, socialmente representativa e individualmente expresiva de la frecuencia fundamental en el nivel de la oración” así como “uno de los recursos comunicativos elementales de la lengua”.

3 “La primera función expresiva de la entonación es, pues, la de señalar la actitud del hablante hacia el mensaje que enuncia”.

In order to study the possible correlation between verbal strategies and intonation, as it is the purpose of this study, we need a functional, integrated model which may capture the complex and multimodal nature of oral discourse. Following Bolinger (1989) and García (2002), we propose a combined analysis which takes into consideration the pragmatic and discourse functions of intonation, thus integrating the physical aspect of the contour with communicative and functional analysis of the interaction, pursuing to reflect “the inter and transdisciplinary focus that the complexity of the language, or better, of spoken language, requires” (García 2002:143)

4. We examine three parameters: fundamental frequency, intensity and vowel duration. The first parameter is defined as “the musical height of each sound” (Gili 1978:54)⁵, and is the most recurrent indicator used in intonation, since it has “greater importance in the intonation function as its physiological correlation is the vibration of vocal chords” (Quilis 1993:413)⁶ and is

4 “el enfoque inter y transdisciplinar que la complejidad de la lengua, o mejor, del lenguaje oral, requiere”;

5 “la altura musical de cada sonido”

6 “mayor relieve en la función entonativa puesto que su correlato fisiológico es la vibración de las cuerdas vocales”

measured in semitones for their direct relationship with the perceptibility of the human ear.

On the other hand, some linguists underscore the importance of acoustic indicators: “in addition to fundamental frequency, vowel duration and intensity also play an important role in production and perception of intonation” (Quilis 1993:416)⁷. Other scholars follow Quilis in admitting the interest of incorporating vowel duration and intensity in acoustic analysis (Cantero Serena 2002: 15). Vowel duration or length may reflect certain vocalic extensions for expressive purposes and is measured in seconds. Intensity is based on the energy – or force with which it began vibrating – and on its vibratory frequency, and these factors depend, in the case of articulated sounds, on the force of articulation, infraglottal activity – which introduces a certain pressure and speed into phonation activity, modified by resistance from the vocal tract (Cantero 2002, 403-404), and is measured in decibels. Intensity varies according to the importance given by the speaker to certain words or phrases that brings to emphasize them and pronounce them more strongly than the rest (Gili, 1978:30).

The idea of including other parameters such as vowel duration and intensity in acoustic analysis reflects an evolution of the configurational models of

⁷ “Además del fundamental, la duración y la intensidad también intervienen en la producción y en la percepción de la entonación”.

intonation analysis (Hidalgo 2006, 2011), since it provides a richer and more complete insight into intonation variation. While many studies have focused on the important role played by fundamental frequency in the expression of the speaker's emotions in certain speech acts (Rao 2006), other interesting studies have incorporated other acoustic parameters, such as Álvarez and Blondet (2003) and Álvarez, Blondet, and Rojas (2011). They studied polite and non-polite questions and found correlations between politeness strategies and vowel duration. Namely, polite questions showed longer vowel duration than neutral or non-polite questions: "The analysis determined that the intonation contour of polite questions was not merely a transposition of the intonation contour of the question, as the codification of polite questions is carried out with greater melodic variability, greater pitch, and greater syllabic duration in comparison with non-polite questions" (Álvarez, Blondet y Rojas 2011:440).

In this line, our research aims at examining the verbal affective bonds used by politicians to persuade their audiences together with the three acoustic parameters, fundamental frequency, intensity and duration, in order to explore the possible correlations between the two, our preliminary hypothesis being that politicians use the verbal strategies with a persuasive function and therefore when speaking, peaks in frequency, intensity or longer duration may help to enhance verbal strategies and contribute to make persuasion stronger and more effective.

4. Data, methodology, and context

This work follows an empirical and qualitative methodology based on the analysis of a televised electoral debate, the interaction that took place on November 7, 2011 and broadcast live by Spanish public television (TVE). The participants were the two candidates for election for President, Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba (Ru), leader of the Spanish Socialist Party, and Mariano Rajoy (Ra), leader of the Conservative Party (Ra).⁸

The interaction was segmented into each of the candidates' interventions, obtaining 28 interventions. The opening and closing of each intervention was then identified and examined in a two-fold analysis: on the one hand, applying the categories of affective bonding strategies, and on the other, the acoustic analysis (fundamental frequency, intensity and vowel duration). Following Briz (2003), we considered openings and closings as conversational acts, i.e. structural units smaller than the intervention or turn, clearly and functionally identified:

“El acto es la unidad estructural monológica, jerárquicamente inferior a la intervención, de la que es su constituyente inmediato, que posee las propiedades de aislabilidad e identificabilidad en un contexto dado” (Briz 2003: 31).

⁸ These are the main parties in the Spanish Parliament: the Socialist Party (PSOE) and the Conservative Party (PP).

For the linguistic analysis of affective bonds, openings and closings have been examined applying the classification and categories described in Section 2, namely the positive affective bonds described in Table 1 and Table 2: assertiveness, inclusion, specificity and naturalization.

For the acoustic analysis, a sample consisting of the openings and closings from each of the two candidates' interventions in the debate was selected and an experimental analysis was performed on the three parameters (fundamental frequency, vowel duration, and intensity), using the software PRAAT⁹. The sample is comprised of 56 utterances corresponding to the openings and closings of each candidate's interventions in the debate. Acoustic analysis requires delimiting the utterances that are subject to analysis; both intervention openings and closings possess particularly significant characteristics in political discourse (Cortés Rodríguez 2012, 2014a, 2014b); we selected intervention openings and closings in order to build the sample due to their brevity and their main purpose to capture attention and create a positive image with the audience. The results of the acoustic analysis were compared to the functional-communicative analysis of affective bonding strategies that also appear in the interventions, in order to examine our initial hypothesis on whether correlations could be found

⁹ Praat is a well-known free-access computer software tool to perform phonetic analysis, accessible at the web page <http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/>.

between intonation variation and verbal strategies, and whether one candidate uses more of these persuasive strategies in the discourse than the other, or of different type.

Acoustic analysis requires through, highly time-consuming examination and constitutes a highly demanding task, which could be the focus of analysis by itself. In most studies on intonation, data are created in the laboratory and are composed of few short utterances, designed by the analyst. In this study, on the contrary, data are large, real and relatively spontaneous, therefore the difficulty and complexity in the analysis is also considerably higher. Since the whole interaction, that is the whole debate, would have been impossible to analyze using PRAAT software, we segmented the speakers' interventions in discourse units and identified the openings and closings, considering the importance and impact of openings and closings in this type of interaction. Although the restriction of acoustic analysis can be seen as a limitation of this study, the fact that spontaneous and not previously designed data and the size of the sample, make the acoustic analysis in this study already richer and more complex than many studies on intonation. Also, it forwards new methodology into the analysis of spoken discourse, since we follow a functional framework of analysis, where prosodic features are analyzed in combination with verbal strategies.

5. Results and discussion

In this section we present and discuss the results of the analysis, first describing the strategies of affective bonding identified in the openings and closings of the candidates' interventions (5.1) and, then discussing the correlations with intonation peaks, following the results of the acoustic analysis performed in the same utterances (5.2), and finally establishing the functions of such strategies in persuasion, as well as the speaker's intentionality in the use of such strategies.

5.1. Linguistic affective bonds used in persuasion

5.1.1. Openings

As indicated above, the sample is comprised of 56 utterances, 28 of which are the openings of the turns in the interaction, therefore 14 utterances being performed by each candidate. The distribution of affective bonding strategies used by the two candidates in openings can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Affective bonding strategies used in openings

Discourse Focus	Affective bonding	Rajoy		Rubalcaba		Total	
		Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Speaker	Assertiveness	7	20%	6	17.5%	13	37%
Listener	Inclusion	5	15%	5	15%	10	30%
Message	Specificity	0	0%	6	17.5%	6	18%
	Naturalization	5	15%	0	0%	5	15%

Total Affective bondings	17	50%	17	50%	34	100
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The most frequent strategies are assertiveness and inclusion in both candidates. Differences can be noted between the two candidates in specificity and naturalization. Specificity is used by Rubalcaba, while naturalization is used by Rajoy. This would suggest a style feature unique to each candidate, either consciously brought into the discourse or a personal feature.

From the very beginning of the debate, candidate Rubalcaba (Ru) deliberately attempts to show power and authority by employing one of the basic strategies, that of assertiveness, which aims at creating a (persuasive) *affective bonding with the audience*, building discourse from his point of view (1) and creating trust in the addressee's mind. He chooses the verb "querer" (want, would like) and uses the possessive to address his first words (mis primeras palabras:

(1) Quiero que mis primeras palabras sean para la familia de don Joaquín

Moya] [Ru 1,1]

[I would like my first words to be for the family of Joaquín Moya]

The second intervention, produced by other candidate, Rajoy (Ra), in (2) is also assertive, perhaps even more so, as he uses the personal pronoun explicitly, transmitting self-confidence and trust (Bolívar 2007).

(2) Antes de comenzar el debate, yo quiero rendir homenaje al sargento primero Joaquín Moya Espejo.

[Before beginning the debate, I would like to pay tribute to First Sargent Joaquín Moya Espejo] [Ra 1, 1]

The inclusion strategy is also notable in both utterances (1) and (2); both candidates appeal to the feeling of solidarity and take advantage of the context. Sargent Joaquín Moya died in combat and they bring him up as a way to come closer to the audience and to build a relationship of proximity. As defined before, the inclusion strategy invites the listener to enter the speaker's familiarity environment. Both candidates use this strategy to connect with their audience through the mention of the Sergeant's death and family.

In addition to assertiveness and inclusion, one of the most recurrent affective bond is that of specificity, used by Rubalcaba only. Specificity brings the quantity dimension in discourse, thus seeking the audience's approval through the mention of concrete, specific facts or data. This strategy is useful in the debate, since it allows to contrast facts and provide discussion into the discourse. In turns (3) and (4), the candidate Rubalcaba, who uses this

strategy frequently, attempts to gain the audience's attention and favorable impression through implicit negative evaluation of his opponent:

(3) Señor Rajoy, ustedes llevan tres años diciendo lo que usted acaba de decir.

[Mr. Rajoy, you have been saying what you just said for three years].

[Ru I,2]

(4) Señor Rajoy, me gustaría que me aclarara el párrafo de la página 116 de su programa electoral, si lo tiene a bien.

[Mr. Rajoy, I would like you to clarify the paragraph on page 116 of your campaign platform, if that is all right with you]. [Ru I, 9]

In these turns, Rubalcaba uses specific data that are not necessary in the discourse (“llevan tres años diciendo”) and by increasing knowledge about the issue at hand (“me gustaría que me aclarara el párrafo de la página 116”), he brings himself closer to the listener and makes him/her see the facts from his point of view. In this debate, Rubalcaba uses this strategy more frequently, suggesting a more dialectic and dynamic style in the debate, since providing specific data to the debate challenges his opponent to present counter-arguments, further or alternative data.

As regards naturalization, the strategy consists in using expressions or strategies, which bring into the hearer's mind the everyday, natural ways of

language, therefore creating the perception of the unnoticed and familiar. The most frequent expression for naturalization is repletion, and paraphrasing. In this debate, candidate Rajoy uses hesitation (eh, eh) as a naturalization strategy. By using this strategy, Rajoy gains time before speaking in order to react to his opponent's interventions and attacks, but he does so through repeated hesitations, making his discourse close to natural conversation.

(5)

Eh, bueno, eh, parece que al señor Pérez Rubalcaba, eh, no le gustan las respuestas que yo le doy.

[Eh, well, eh, it seems that Mr. Rubalcaba, eh, doesn't like the answers I give him]. [Ra 1,3]

(6)

Bien, eh, los españoles, eh, no quieren que nadie quede en el camino

[Well, eh, Spaniards, eh, we don't want anybody to]. [Ra 1,7]

5.1.2. Closings

Closings are the final utterance or discourse act for each turn through the debate. At the end of the intervention, the candidate produces a final ending utterance. Closings are important because they may resume the contents of the intervention or the candidate's point of view, or even, closings may actually address the audience and seek their vote. In closings, then, affective strategies may be used to create a stronger bond with the audience.

The general results in Table 3 show that, again, the two candidates use affective bonds frequently, assertiveness (43%) being the preferred strategy, followed by specificity (41%) and inclusion (12%). Assertiveness indicates that the candidate's presence is marked, and that he postulates himself as the best candidate for presidency.

Table 4. Affective bondings in closings

Discourse Focus	Affective bondings	Rajoy		Rubalcaba		Total	
Speaker	Assertiveness	9	23%	8	20.6%	17	43.6%
Listener	Inclusion	2	5%	3	7.7%	5	12.7%
Message	Specificity	5	13%	11	28.2%	16	41.2%
	Naturalization	1	2.5%	0	0%	1	2.5%
Total Strategies		17	43.5%	22	56.5%	39	100%

In (7) and (8), the two candidates use assertiveness to show authority and firmness through the personal pronoun and expressions such as “de ninguna manera” or “yo me he quejado”:

(7) Pero ya le digo que mejores que las mías no son, de ninguna manera

[But I'm telling you that they are by no means better than mine.]

[RaFi,9]

(8) Y yo me he quejado personalmente a la vicepresidenta económica,

señora Salgado

[And I have personally complained to the Economic Vice President, Ms. Salgado.] [RaFi, 13]

Whereas assertiveness is a shared strategy in both candidates, specificity is a more frequent strategy in Rubalcaba, which suggests that he attempts to show a higher dialectic capacity, presenting concrete facts and figures which may corner his opponent.

(9) Señor Rajoy, me gustaría que nos lo explicase esta tarde aquí o esta noche aquí.

[Mr. Rajoy, I would like for you to explain this to us here this evening or here tonight.]

In (9) for instance, Rubalcaba demands Rajoy to explain his programme right away, “esta tarde aquí o esta noche aquí”, underlying the urgency and concreteness of the demand.

5.2. Acoustic analysis of openings and closings and correlations with affective bondings

5.2.1. Acoustic analysis of openings

As discussed in the sections above, the acoustic analysis of the 56 utterances measured three parameters: fundamental frequency, intensity, and vowel duration.

In the behavior of fundamental frequency a certain progression can be seen throughout the openings of the debate. In the openings of the first interventions there is greater regularity in intonation contours; this is noted above all in the first intervention, which does not hold large irregularities and is more stable. This is due to it being the beginning, but also to the content of the discourse because it is a message of condolence. The stability of fundamental frequency does not fully depend on the type of sentence, but there are undoubtedly certain general trends: in declarative sentences, such as the first, a peak is created at the beginning of the utterance and the rest of it is uttered with down stepping (Cantero Serena 2002, Gili Gaya 1978, Hidalgo Navarro 2006). In longer, more elaborate utterances there may be two and even three frequency peaks with greater irregularities and rises and falls in melody (Cantero Serena 2002).

Both candidates show that variation in fundamental frequency is related to longer and more elaborate utterances in which there may be different sentence modes or in utterances that combine them; therefore, these have a higher degree of interactivity. In the case of a debate, these changes in pitch indicate greater dialectic involvement, and also the use of *affective bonding*.

Intensity is related to trajectories in intonation contours and in the data there is a direct correlation with fundamental frequency, intensity variation

movements coinciding in many cases with stable or unstable movements in frequency (Cantero Serena 2002).

Vowel duration, meanwhile, does not follow a clear pattern and does not particularly coincide with either of the two parameters above. As we will see, vowel duration only coincides – actually quite clearly – with the marking of the speaker's hesitation (naturalization strategy), but it behaves like an independent feature that does not support or compliment others.

Therefore, we have identified the most significant movements in intonation in each utterance: the highest peaks or jumps in fundamental frequency, as well as the highest values of intensity and vowel duration; then we have examined in which cases these correspond to one of the words or linguistic expressions identified as *affective bonding* or indicators. The results are shown in Table 5, which shows the number of correlations between verbal affective strategies and the highest peak in the intonational parameters, fundamental frequency, intensity and vowel duration. After showing the results, we will discuss some interesting examples of how such correlations are found in the debate.

Table 5. Number of co-occurrences between verbal affective strategies and the three intonational parameters F0, intensity and vowel length in turn openings.

Fundamental Frequency (F0)		Intensity (db)		Vowel length (s)		TOTAL number of co-occurrences	
N°	%	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
19	55.89	13	38.24	6	18.75	34	100

In the 56 turns analysed, we have found 34 correlations between the use of a verbal strategy and the highest value in F0, intensity or vowel length. Of the 34 correlations, 19 of them are coincidences in the use of a verbal strategy and the highest peak in F0; 13 cases show correlation with intensity, and 6 cases with vowel length. In percentages, F0 accounts for 55.89% of correlation, intensity for 38.24% and vowel length for 18.75%. In functional terms, the results indicate that the speakers prefer to use highest values in pitch (F0) to sustain or reinforce their use of a verbal strategy, followed by highest values in intensity and finally vowel length.

Therefore, the results support the initial hypothesis, i.e., that the speaker marks the use of certain communicative strategies with linguistic and intonational means, in order to make the speaker's affective bonding with the audience more effective and stronger.

In terms of the three parameters analyzed – F0, intensity, and vowel duration – the results show very interesting phenomena. According to the general

results of this study, F0 is the most significant indicator of the three to measure variations in speaker's affective bonding. This is so because it corresponds to the highest number of co-occurrences, but also because it corresponds to the idea that pitch – the vibration of vocal chords – is the physical indicator par excellence to modulate intonation and transmit the speaker's changes in attitude and to achieve certain expressive effects. This idea coincides with other studies, which have linked intonation and pragmatic marking, for instance Rao (2006), who examined the relationship between intonation and speech acts, and pointed out that changes in pitch characterized variations in the speaker's attitude. Our results and previous studies such as Rao (2006) seem to suggest that changes in pitch with pragmatic function are natural in speech and therefore the reflex of psychological attitudes, although in public discourse one would assume that the orators are at least partly aware of the effect of such means.

Thus, the correlations we have found between expressions of specificity and intonation rise accompanied by intensity are notable, as in utterance (13):

(13) Señor Rajoy, ustedes llevan tres años diciendo lo que usted acaba de decir.

[Mr. Rajoy, you have been saying what you just said for three years].

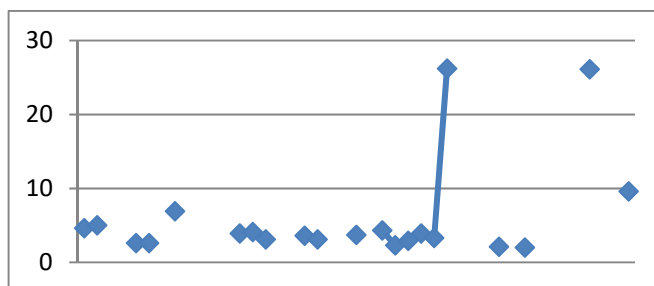
[Ru 1,2]

Acoustic analysis reveals an intonation rise in the expression “tres años” with the highest peak in F0 on “tres” (26.6) along with the near maximum intensity 77.73, with the maximum value at 78.25 on the final syllable of “señor” (-ñor). This co-occurrence is repeated on several occasions such as (14) and (15):

- (14) Señor Rajoy, me gustaría que me aclarara el párrafo de la página 116 de su programa electoral, si lo tiene a bien. [Mr. Rajoy, I would like you to clarify the paragraph on page 116 of your campaign platform, if that is all right with you.] [Ru 1,9].

In this intervention, Rubalcaba presses his opponent to specify the content of his programme, using the general strategy of specificity: the speaker expresses greater *affective bonding strategy* with the discourse by specifically mentioning a relevant fact or figure in the discourse. The acoustic analysis reveals a rise in F0 of up to 25 semitones on the syllable “de” página 116 de su programa electoral,” (see Figure 1).

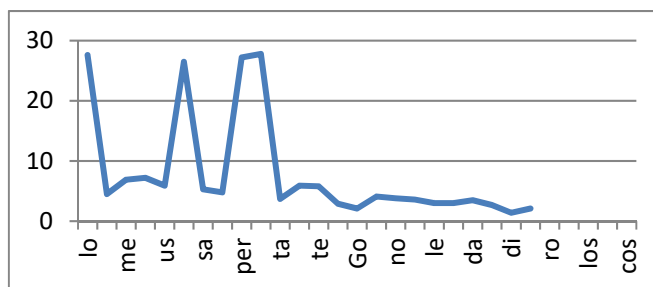
Figure 1. Behavior of F0 in semitones [Ru I, 9]



In (15) however, Rubalcaba again uses the assertiveness strategy, this time as emphasis, which is demonstrated in the word “perfectamente” [perfectly], containing the highest peak in the first two syllables per-fect (27.2 and 27.8), representing an increase of 23 semitones compared to the words immediately preceding them:

(15) Lo primero, usted sabe perfectamente que el Gobierno no ha dado dinero a los bancos. [First, you know perfectly well that the government did not give money to the banks.] [Ru I, 3]

Figure 2. Behavior of F0 in semitones [Ru I, 3]



Moreover, in this case, a high intensity peak supports the relation on per- (74.93 dB).

Intensity behaves in a parallel fashion to F0 to which it is tied more or less regularly. From our data, intensity is a parameter that complements and is added to pitch variation, and with this it contributes to the expression of affectivity.

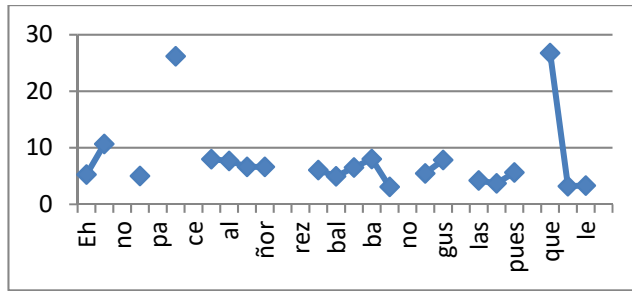
Finally, vowel duration proves to be an extremely interesting value, since it is less common, it is independent from other values, and is produced only by one of the candidates, Rajoy, who uses it with the naturalization strategy.

In utterances (16) and (17), Rajoy uses on repeated occasions “eh” [um] as a strategy to gain time and think about his reaction to his opponent, to whom he responds vaguely. In all cases, the particle “eh” acoustically holds a much longer duration than the rest of the words in the utterance: eh1 with a duration of 0.70 s, eh2 with a duration of 0.71 s, and eh3 with a duration of 0.71 s. These values clearly differ from normal durations of other words, which range between 0.02-0.09 seconds. Also, these values in vowel duration do not correlate with high values in pitch or intensity, which suggests a different pragmatic function for this parameter.

(16) Eh, bueno, eh, parece que al señor Rubalcaba, eh, no le gustan las respuestas que yo le doy.

[Um, well, um it would seem that Mr. Rubalcaba does not like the answers I give him.] [Ra 1,3]

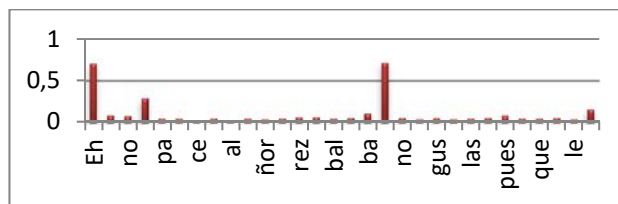
Figure 3. Behavior of F0 in semitones [Ra 1, 3]



(17) Eh, se lo repito, espero que ya sea por última vez, que yo no haré lo que ustedes han hecho.

[Um, I'll say it again, I hope for the last time; I will not do what you have done]. [Ra 1,5]

Figure 4. Vowel duration behavior in seconds [Ra 1, 5]



Therefore, with this data it becomes evident that vowel duration is a mechanism associated with hesitation and the strategy of naturalization and it is also related to the need to gain time in spontaneous discourse in order to react to the other party's interventions. This phenomenon supports other studies, such as Álvarez, Blondet, and Rojas's (2011), who found that vowel duration was a relevant parameter when comparing polite and impolite acts,

with polite acts showing longer vowel duration. Accordingly, in this case vowel duration can be considered to correspond with the strategy of vagueness. As in this case the speakers are opponents in a political debate, the use of this strategy may be perceived as a lack of quick response to the opponent (hesitation, strategy to gain time), but also of calmness and politeness (tact), when the candidate does not counter-attack the opponent and therefore avoids confrontation.

Furthermore, vowel duration was not a relevant parameter in the use of other strategies. Conversely, electoral debates are a type of discourse in which the candidates' ability to react is rewarded, and therefore vowel duration is not associated with the parameters of pitch and intensity, as found for the expression of strategies such as assertiveness, naturalization, and inclusion. To summarize, F0 and intensity correlate with assertiveness and specificity, and vowel length with naturalization (vagueness), whereas inclusiveness has no clear correlate.

5.2.2. Closings

Intonation behavior is somewhat different in turn closings than in openings, as intonation force and variety is lower and occurrence of expressive functions of prosody is less rich. Particularly, the most affected value is F0, which proves to be the main feature in openings, while in closings F0 values are lower and less varied, although the use of questions is notable as a strategy

at the end of an intervention. The abundance of low and very low values on the spectrogram as well as ending the turn on values that do not appear on the spectrogram merits special mention.

These observations generally agree with the functional principles of speech, according to which speakers use greater force at the beginning of the turn and mark the end by lowering intonation (Bolinger 1989, Cantero Serena 2002, Hidalgo Navarro 2006). Therefore, these data corroborate this principle and the loss of F0 and therefore intonation energy is a mark of closing. It should also be noted that maximum values were always found at the beginning or in the first part of the intervention, coinciding again with the general and functional principles that indicate that there is an initial rise in F0 at the opening of an intervention or utterance and down stepping until the end of the utterance.

Regarding relations between intonation and affective bonds strategies, correspondence remains similar to the openings, but with less force and clarity. Of the three parameters, the one that remains the most stable is intensity which shows similar values during openings and whose peaks usually coincide with F0 peaks, complimenting it. However, F0 undergoes greater variations compared to intervention openings.

The number and percentage of correlations is slightly lower than in openings, suggesting that the turn openings (or body) are more “informative” from the

prosodic standpoint in order to perform the speaker's desired discourse or expressive functions.

In closings, we see a single example of vowel duration in the same affective strategy used by Rajoy (vagueness) in openings. There is one case of longer vowel duration, but it did not have such high values nor was it associated with such a clear strategy. Results are shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Number of co-occurrences between verbal affective strategies and the three intonational parameters F0, intensity and vowel length in turn closings.

Fundamental Frequency (F0)		Intensity (db)		Vowel length (s)		TOTAL number of co-occurrences	
Nº	%	Nº	%	Nº	%	Nº	%
16	53,5	13	43,4	1	3,1	30	100

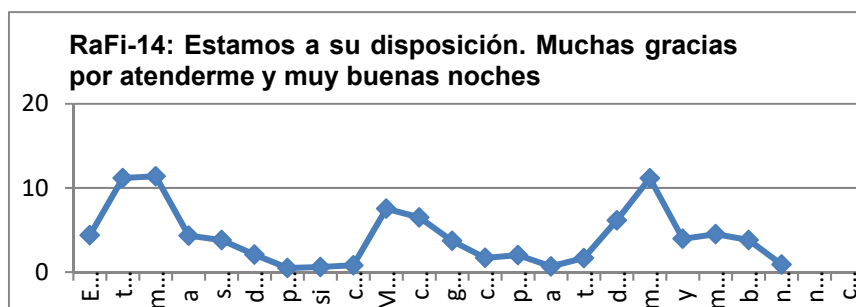
In the 56 turns analysed, we have found 30 correlations between the use of a verbal strategy and the highest value in F0, intensity or vowel length. Of the 30 correlations, 16 of them are coincidences in the use of a verbal strategy and the highest peak in F0; 13 cases show correlation with intensity, and 1 case with vowel length. In percentages, F0 accounts for 53.5% of correlation, intensity for 43.4% and vowel length for 3.1%. In functional terms, the results indicate a similar pattern to openings, where the speakers prefer to use highest

values in pitch (F0) to sustain or reinforce their use of a verbal strategy, followed by highest values in intensity and finally vowel length, although in lower numbers.

Compared to openings, closings had similar correlation figures between *affective bonds* and intonation strategies, which again support the general hypothesis of this research. However, the maximum and high values of F0 and intensity are comparatively lower than in openings, and these values always arise at the beginning of the act, while downstepping is used subsequently until the end of the intervention.

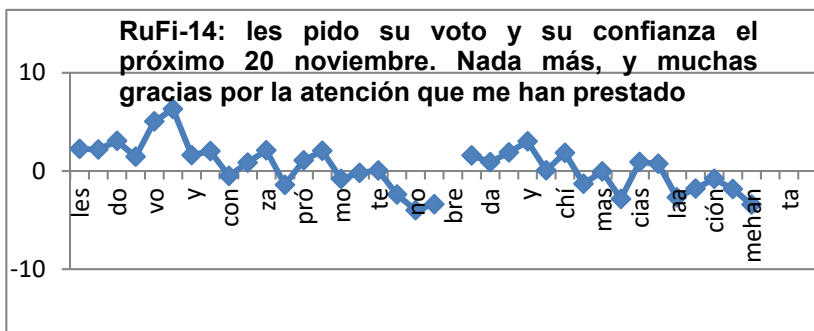
If we compare the two final closings from the candidates, that is to say their last turn at the end of the debate, we observe that Rajoy uses the assertiveness strategy (“estamos a su disposición”), making it coincide with a notable and perceptible rise in intonation on these syllables, which acquire prosodic prominence. He rises intonation in “muchas gracias” and there is a second peak in “atenderme”, again coinciding with the assertiveness strategy (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. F0 behavior in semitones RaFi-14



In Rubalcaba’s intervention (RuFi-14), conversely, intonation variation of the entire utterance is lower than usual (negative values in a large part of the utterance) and is therefore less perceptible. There is a peak in “voto”, which corresponds to the only truly emphasized rise in his turn (this is still an F0 of 6 compared to 12 from Rajoy). Therefore, the correlation between the *affective bond strategy* (les pido su voto) [I ask for your vote] and prosodic variation is not clearly perceptible, and we can say that here the speaker is not using the expressive function of prosody and therefore the utterance goes more unnoticed (see Figure 6)

Figure 6. F0 behavior in semitones RuFi-14



5.3. Correlation between affective bonds strategies and intonation in both candidates

Practically all utterances show *affective bonds strategies* and in a single utterance more than one strategy may be present, thus both candidates use

verbal and intonation strategies to provide their discourse with greater force and expressiveness, and in order to be more persuasive. The results of the acoustic analysis combined with the analysis of affective bonds strategies supports the idea that the use of such strategies is functional. This means that use does not depend on the candidate, but rather both use them at certain times during the debate, in order to attempt to connect with their audience and make their messages more effective and persuasive¹⁰.

The data analysis show that very interesting correlations arise between acoustic parameters and discourse affective strategies. For instance, the rise of F0 is associated to the assertiveness strategy, where the speaker attempts at transmitting confidence, authority and firmness in opinion and against the opponent. Intensity closely complements pitch, therefore strengthening assertiveness attributes, mainly through volume. This also allows the speaker to attack and show aggression against opponent.

¹⁰ In a previous article (Hidalgo Downing & Nieto y Otero 2014), we analysed the effect of this debate on the audience through the study of media follow-up. The day after the debate, it is now common to analyse how the candidates performed in the debate. According to the media, Rubalcaba was perceived as a more aggressive candidate who would tried to corner Rajoy with data and arguments. This perception coincides with our analysis, where Rubalcaba often used specificity. However, in terms of psychological traits, the media interpreted that Rubalcaba was presenting himself as “the opposition party”, therefore not seeing himself as (future) President. Rajoy, on the other hand, was perceived as calmer and more tactful, which also coincides with our analysis, where Rajoy used naturalization to avoid direct answers and confrontation. Strangely, the media perceived this feature as positive, an indicator of the politician’s capacity to avoid confrontation and psychologically more “presidential”. Finally, a few weeks later. Rajoy was elected President and Rubalcaba ended his political career (Hidalgo Downing & Nieto y Otero 2014: 229-231).

Another very interesting correlation arises between vowel duration and naturalization (vagueness). From our analysis, vowel duration is an independent acoustic feature and does not go along with pitch or intensity. Although it is not a feature used frequently, its occurrence is in all cases associated to the naturalization strategy, showing hesitation and vagueness. This strategy allows the speaker to gain time in rapid, spoken discourse and prepare the next intervention, producing an effect of slowness or lack of firmness in response, but also of tact and politeness.

As for the strategy described as inclusion, the data show that its behavior is parallel to the assertiveness strategy, showing rises in pitch and intensity, although not in such a systematic, clear, or frequent way as in assertiveness, which seems the main strategy used in the debate. This result is not surprising if we consider that, the interaction is an electoral debate, where the communicative purpose is to show greater (political) competence than the opponent.

However, there are some interesting differences between both candidates (see Table 7 below).

When we compare the two candidates, Rubalcaba shows a higher number of strategies and co-occurrences between linguistic strategies and intonation, which would indicate that he is more expressive, linguistically and in prosody, than Rajoy. However, perhaps the most important difference is the preferred use of certain strategies over others: the use of the specificity

strategy by Rubalcaba, compared to naturalization due to vagueness by Rajoy, to name the most evident and striking examples. More data should be analyzed from both of them to determine whether these are indeed features of their communicative or argumentative style or whether they are confined to this specific debate.

If we limit ourselves to analyzing this debate, as was the objective of this study, the data lead us to believe that Rubalcaba used more affective bond strategies than Rajoy. An interesting issue is what kind of training politicians receive, and how candidates actually prepare for these debates. Beyond this calculation, the types of strategies preferred by Rajoy are striking: hesitation and vagueness in intervention openings, understood as a strategy to gain time and vagueness, which to the listener translates as insecurity or lack of quick response in the form of arguments against his opponent's interventions. In a positive reading of this feature, the vagueness strategy may be also interpreted as a form of politeness, in the sense that the speaker reacts with tact rather than with aggression or combatively: this result also supports the conclusion drawn by Álvarez, Blondet, and Rojas, who found correlation between vowel duration and politeness. On the other hand, the strategies selected by Rubalcaba, such as specificity and assertiveness (emphasis) show a style with greater capacity for reasoning and aggression toward his opponent.

The quantitative results of these differences can be summarized in the Table below.

Table 7. Verbal strategies and intonation parameters of F0, intensity, and vowel duration by candidate in openings and closings.

Verbal involvement strategies	Relations with F0 st		Relations with intensity dB		Relations with vowel duration s	
	Ru	Ra	Ru	Ra	Ru	Ra
Assertiveness	9	11	9	9		7
Inclusion	4	1	5	1	-	-
Specificity	9	2	13	1	-	-
Naturalization	-	-	-	-	-	6
Total	22	5	27	11	-	13
RA TOTAL	-	43	-	-	-	-
RU TOTAL	49	-	-	-	-	-

6. Conclusions

In this study we have analyzed the affective bonding and intonational strategies used by two candidates in an electoral debate in order to express the speaker's affectivity in discourse. We have analyzed affective bonding and intonational strategies first separately, then attempting to find relations between the two. The results of the study show that there are indeed strong

relations between verbal strategies –assertiveness, inclusion, specificity, naturalization- and intonational peaks. Of the three parameters studied (frequency, intensity, vowel duration), fundamental frequency has proven to be the most important and dominant, followed by vowel duration. Intensity, on the other hand, co-occurs and complements frequency but does not appear as an independent feature.

The study also shows strong correlations between verbal strategies and acoustic parameters. The assertiveness and inclusion strategies are typically realized through rise in F0 and, complementarily, with higher intensity values. This correlation reflects a functional principle whereby assertiveness and inclusion signal the speaker's presence and commitment with their own discourse. Therefore, the expressive use of prosody in this case strengthens the speaker's performative force. On the other hand, a clear correlation was also found between vowel length and naturalization, where higher vowel duration was associated to vagueness and hesitation strategies. The use of vowel duration together with vagueness translates into a lower capacity of response in a dialectic debate, but also in a sense of tact and politeness, non-confrontational discourse style.

The study also shows that the use of verbal strategies and intonation is general and cannot be identified with one speaker, which means that both candidates use them as persuasive strategies; however, speakers may have preferences

or style features. In our data, there are interesting differences between candidates in more frequent or preferred strategies, suggesting different styles or roles in the debate (more tactful vs more confrontational or dialectic). There are also important differences between intervention openings and closings, which suggests that these have different functions in discourse.

Openings show higher intonational variety: in the speaker's reaction to previous intervention, the speaker makes use of more persuasive strategies, in addition to hesitation, used by one of the candidates as a strategy to gain time and appear more tactful. In closings, on the other hand, there are no strategies addressed to the hearer, the most frequent being assertiveness (I ask...). As for intonational contours, there is a general lowering in all values; lower energy, values that are below average or not appearing on the spectrograms, especially in one of the candidates. These features are coherent with the conclusive value of closings, functionally a resumptive repetition of what was said throughout the intervention.

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