**Voyant Observations from Roosevelt -H.W. Bush Texts**

These texts are the State of the Union Addresses’ for every year from 1934 to 1993, which encompasses every President from Roosevelt through H.W. Bush. The texts are the word usage of every President and we use this to learn what would be considered ‘normative’ speech patterns; The words, phrases, and styles most representative of the office as it shifted into the modern era. In using these texts as the baseline, we can then compare the most recent four Presidencies and create an understanding of how they differ or remain similar to their political lineage.

**Summary**

From the results we can observe that most instances of distinctive word usage obvious revolves around events happening within the decade or year being examined. At the height World War 2 we see instances of words such as “autocracy”, “democracy”, “dictatorships”, ideas which are most widely spread during the war against Nazism and Fascism. Moving into the Korean and early Cold War era, the usage changes to ideas indicative of that time like “mobilization”, “missiles”, and “Soviets”. During the Cold War’s hottest decade in the midst of the 60s, words like “Alliance”, “Vietnam”, and “Oil” become most distinctive. Interestingly, mentions of “libraries”, “beauty”, and “abundance” also are present of the same decade. Ford and Carter were defined by terms of “Oil”, “Afghanistan”, and “Soviet”. Finally Reagan and H.W. Bush used words such as “Space”, “idea”, and “drugs”. Overall, the State of the Unions most often speak of terms like “World”, “Congress”, “People” and “Government”, which can give us an understanding of who the President was speaking to in his pronouncements.

These word usages are not declarative of the time in which they were spoken, but they do lend intrigue towards study. The words were carefully specified by each President, and but may include input from other writers. They result in a subject area which can be used to understand the times in which the President served, and not necessarily the men themselves. With programs like Voyant, we can use large instances of text to view the subjects change overtime, and then take this forward to further study of why those subjects change.

**Phrases**

Similar to the summary’s use of distinctive terms, we can use Voyant to look at phrases which appear most often throughout the 20th Century. Phrases addressing the congress to make changes or referring to the health of the nation appear up top. “The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan” is a repeated phrase, indicating that it was fresh on Reagan’s mind when he was presenting his speech in ’81. The phrases of the baseline don’t have a concentration in any area, which is to be expected when comparing the usage of 60 years of Addresses. This is still something which can be used to analyze the most recent administrations so it is useful as a datapoint.

**Scatter Plot**

In using the Scatter Plot graph we selected the ‘Principle Component Analysis’ which groups each text by its most referenced idea. Again ideas like World, People, and Congress stand out among the usage, along with Freedom, Nation, New, Peace, and Economic. This stands strong as a baseline of State Addresses, and shows what subject comprises the majority of word usage in the text. We should expect these types of subjects from the head Statesmen of our country speaking about the health and prospects of the state.

**Terms Berry**

In this last example we include the Terms Berry, which “provides a way of exploring high frequency terms and their collocates”[[1]](#footnote-1). This means that it analyzes terms by its usage with reference to neighboring terms, and highlights terms which most often appear together. In the center is the word ‘great’, immediately surrounded by freedom, America, nations, economic, and program. These signal high usage of diplomatic and civil liberty concerns. This is something which is to be expected in a decade following the end of World War 2, and the rise in Civil Rights movements.

1. https://voyant-tools.org/docs/#!/guide/termsberry [↑](#footnote-ref-1)