Linguistic Qualities of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Public Addresses: A Primary Source Based Study

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Abstract

Presidents who are elected during crises have a difficult task of fixing the situation and convincing the people not to panic. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had an especially challenging task, as the people's expectations for him were to lead the nation out of the Great Depression. As he was trying to create jobs however he could, he gave frequent speeches to reassure the people of their futures and try to offer them hope before revolutionary ideas became too threatening. This study aims to linguistically examine what specific rhetorical devices President Roosevelt utilized when attempting to calm the people, taking into account that he had a speechwriter, which makes his speeches more linguistically interesting. Using archival primary source documents, I analyzed the formal speeches of President Franklin D. Roosevelt during the Great Depression and compared them to his speeches prior to the Great Depression before he was a president and checked if linguistic changes he made were general changes in English or personal changes by looking for them in Corpus of Historical American English (Davies, 2010). By evaluating the effectiveness of the rhetorical devices that FDR and his speechwriters chose, I will determine which general strategies may be useful to apply in other times of crisis to maintain peace.

Introduction

Crisis management is a very important skill for leaders, but it is difficult to empirically study the best ways to manage a crisis. Researchers cannot ethically create a crisis and assign different groups different treatments to see which treatment prevents panic. They can, however, study well-documented crises that already happened. The Great Depression is a very good example of a crisis to study because it was very straightforward, it affected the majority of the population, and in the U.S. it was very well documented. The Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum has many helpful achieves from the time of the Great Depression that are available to the public. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, commonly referred to as FDR, made it very clear in his inauguration that he was attempting to make the listeners more hopeful and less likely to panic in his famous line, "...the only thing we have to fear is fear itself..." (Inaugural Address), which makes his speeches a good source to see what rhetorical strategies were effective in keeping people from panicking during the crisis of the Great Depression. The primary focus of this study is to examine what linguistic strategies FDR used in his public addresses during the Great Depression and evaluating how successful his strategies were in calming people enough to maintain safety by examining primary source documents. The goal is to find general calming strategies that can be applied in other crises. Though what was affective for FDR may or may not be applicable in another time period or cultural context, his general strategies may be able to be adapted in similar crisis situations. To determine how FDR modified his speech during the Great Depression to calm the listeners, I compared his speeches during the Great Depression to

his speeches before the Great Depression. I looked at primary source documents from his time to determine how successful these modifications were.

FDR

Prior to his presidency, Roosevelt was a New York State Senator from 1910 to 1913, Assistant Secretary of the Navy from 1913 to 1920, and governor of the state of New York from 1928 to 1932 (Roosevelt Facts, 2013; Biographies, 2013). He was a vice presidential candidate in the 1920 election, but he was not elected at that time (Roosevelt Facts, 2013). He was first inaugurated president in 1933, after the Great Depression had started, and he served four consecutive terms as president (Biographies, 2013). During his first term, he created many programs that created jobs attempted to bring relief to people suffering from the Great Depression, but what ended the Great Depression was WWII. FDR was the first president to be able to communicate to a very large segment of the population via radio, especially after the Rural Electrification Bill. Speaking to an un-present audience was a fairly new concept at the time, but he had had experience with radio speech before presidency (Radio Address, 1927). Another layer of complexity is that he had speechwriters, but it is not known who helped him with each speech. It is known, however, by looking at achieves of his drafts, that many of the words in his speeches were his own and he changed a lot of what the speechwriters wrote (FDR Library). Regardless of who wrote the speeches he gave, they could be useful for getting information about crisis management.

Crisis Speech

Cherwitz and Zagacki 1986 found that some US presidents tend to use "consummatory" discourse, displaying anger towards enemies to make listeners feel like their frustration is shared, and justificatory discourse, justifying military intervention during crises involving other nations. While these may be the strategies that are used, they may make listeners more upset during a crisis rather than keeping them calm. The "consummatory" strategy can perpetuate hatred toward perceived enemies and justifying military action can make people more eager to fight (Cherwitz & Zagacki, 1986). FDR seemed to have the opposite goals during the Great Depression, which is why he is a good subject to study to learn how to calm listeners rather than making them angrier. Donato (2009) examined Bush and Obama's rhetoric in the 2008 Recession. Bush started by avoiding admitting that there was a major problem, but it was not successful (Donato, 2009). Obama initially used blaming rhetoric (Ibid.). While he was very popular at the beginning of his presidency because of his policies, his crisis rhetoric was not very successful (Ibid.). FDR could not have possibly been successful trying to make the Great Depression sound less drastic with the Bush approach, and there was not a clear group to blame as in the Obama approach, though many were already blaming Hoover. FDR was forced to use a different kind of rhetoric.

Methods

A corpus-based approach was used to analyze FDR's public addresses. Transcripts of FDR's speeches during the Great Depression were put into one folder to create a small corpus. Using version 1.3 of MAT (Nini, 2015), Multidimensional Analysis Tagger

software, the parts of speech in the addresses were tagged and I examined Biber's (1988) eight dimensions. I also tagged a small corpus of FDR's speeches before he was a president during the twenties prior to the Great Depression when the economy was booming to compare FDR's formal public addresses during the Great Depression and before the Great Depression to get an idea of how his rhetoric changed. I identified the major changes between FDR's addresses before and during the Great Depression. Major changes were determined using the formula for normal values: if the average frequencies of linguistic variables in the speeches during the Great Depression were more than two standard deviations away from the average frequencies of those variables before the Great Depression, I considered the change in the usage of those variables drastic enough to be considered because they were outside of the FDR's normal range prior to the Great Depression. I also looked for these differences using a free online searching tool for the Corpus of Historical American English (Davies, 2010) during the 1920-1928 and 1933-1938 to be sure that the differences that FDR employed were not due to general changes in American English over time. AntConc (Anthony, 2014) was used to further examine the linguistic variables that change in FDR's speeches after the onset of the Great Depression.

The Multidimensional Analysis Tagger

Version 1.3 of the MAT, Multidimensional Analysis Tagger (Nini, 2015), is modeled after the Biber Tagger (Biber, 1988) and the Standford tags (Toutanova, Manning, & Singer, 2003). The MAT software also scores the texts based on Biber's (1988) dimensions and provides the texts' levels Intimate Interpersonal Interaction,

Informational Interaction, Scientific Exposition, Learned Exposition, Imaginative

Narrative, General Narrative Exposition, Situated Reportage, and Involved Persuasion

based on the scores on Biber's (1988) dimensions.

Parts of Speech that MAT Labels (MAT Manual, 2015):

Amplifiers, independent clause coordination, average word length, *be* as a main verb, *by* passives, causative adverbial subordinators, concessive adverbial subordinators, conjuncts, contractions, demonstratives, demonstrative pronouns, discourse particles, down-toners, emphatics, existential *there*, first person pronouns, gerunds, hedges, indefinite pronouns, attributive adjectives, nouns that are not gerunds or nominalizations, nominalizations, other adverbial subordinators, agentless passives, past participle clauses, perfect aspect, phrasal coordination, prepositional phrases, pied-piping relative clauses, pronoun *it*, place adverbials, possibility modals, predicative adjectives, present participial clauses, private verbs, predictive modals, pro-verb *do*, public verbs, adverbs that were not already tagged in a specific category of adverbs, sentence relatives, *seam/appear,* split auxiliaries, split infinitives, second person pronouns, stranded prepositions, suasive verbs, synthetic negation, *that* adjective complements, subordinator *that* deletion, *that* verb complements, time adverbials, infinitives, *that* relative clauses on object position, third person pronouns, *that* relative clauses on subject position, type-token ratio, past tense, present tense, WH- clauses, WH relative clauses on object position, direct WH questions, WH relative clauses on subject position, past participle WHIZ deletion relatives, present participle WHIZ deletion relatives, Analytic negation, and Stanford Tags not included in this list (Toutanova, Manning, & Singer, 2003).

FDR Speeches Used

Before the Great Depression- 13,457 words (FDR Library, 2013):

Omaha Campaign Speech (August 29, 1920)

Berkshire Banker's Association Speech (June 20, 1921)

Speech Nominating Smith (June 26, 1924)

Democratic Convention Keynote Speech (September 27, 1926)

Radio Address- Humphrey Lynch Campaign Committee (October 28, 1927)

Boston City Club (October 11, 1928)

During the Great Depression- 51,584 words (Mill Center):

First Inaugural Address (March 4, 1933)

Fireside Chat 1: On the Banking Crisis (March 12, 1933)

Fireside Chat 2: On Progress During the First Two Months (May 7, 1933)

Fireside Chat 3: On the National Recovery Administration (July 24, 1933)

Fireside Chat 4: On Economic Progress (October 22, 1933)

Fireside Chat 5: On Addressing the Critics (June 28, 1934)

Fireside Chat 6: On Government and Capitalism (September 30, 1934)

Fireside Chat 7: On the Works Relief Program and Social Security Act (April 28, 1935)

Democratic National Convention (June 27, 1936)

Fireside Chat 8: On Farmers and Laborers (September 6, 1936)

Speech at Madison Square Garden (October 31, 1936)

Second Inaugural Address (January 20, 1937)

Fireside Chat 9: On "Court-Packing" (March 9, 1937)

Quarantine Speech (October 5, 1937)

Fireside Chat 10: On New Legislation (October 12, 1937)

Fireside Chat 11: On the Unemployment Census (November 14, 1937)

Fireside Chat 12: On the Recession (April 14, 1938)

Fireside Chat 13: On Purging the Democratic Party (June 24, 1938)

Dedication of a Memorial to the Northwest Territory (July 8, 1938)

Text versions of FDR's public addresses as president are available to the public (Miller Center), but his speeches prior to presidency are only available in the form of scans on the FDR Presidential Library and Museum archival website. In order to make them readable for the Multidimensional Analysis Tagger (Nini, 2015), I had to convert them to .txt files. I used conversion tools (Online OCR, 2009-2016; Convert Image to Text), but because the scans are from documents made on typewriters in the 1920's, the conversion tools were not able to perfectly recognize every letter, so I had to manually check every letter to make sure that the .txt files matched the scans of the typewritten transcriptions exactly, which takes time. Due to time limitations, I was not able to convert all of FDR's pre-presidential speeches to .txt files to include in the corpus of pre-Great Depression FDR speeches. I selected six speeches between 1920 an 1928 based on topic variety to create a control base for comparison. An imbalance of topics could make certain linguistic variables appear stronger or weaker in FDR's general formal speech than they actually are, so out of the publically available speeches, I tried to choose the most varied speeches I could.

Results and Discussion

The hypothesis was incorrect. The variables in the Great Depression speeches whose mean frequencies were more than two standard deviations form the mean frequencies of those variables before the Great Depression were the following:

1. FDR's usage of "to" as an infinitive increased during the Great Depression.

2. FDR's usage of conjuncts increased.

3. FDR's usage of "that" in the subject position of relative clauses increased

4. FDR's average word length increased during the Great Depression.

Averages of the frequency of occurrence of other variables that the Multidimensional Analysis Tagger (Nini, 2015) tagged in the Great Depression speech files were not more than two standard deviations above or below the averages of the frequencies of occurrences of those variables in the speeches before the Great Depression. The placement in the Biber dimensions (Biber, 1988) was similar before and during the Great Depression.

Dimension 1: Both before and during the Great Depression, FDR's speeches were informational.

Dimension 2: Both before and during the Great Depression, FDR's speeches were in the middle between being narrative-like and non narrative-like.

Dimension 3: Both before and during the Great Depression, FDR's speeches were context-independent, meaning he explained what he was saying enough that listeners who did not know the context could understand.

Dimension 4: Both before and during the Great Depression, FDR's speeches were mildly

persuasive, but a little more so during the Great Depression

Dimension 5: Both before and during the Great Depression, FDR's speeches had a

balance between abstract and concrete information

Dimension 6: Both before and during the Great Depression, FDR's speeches were created

under time constraints

"To" as an infinitive

Increasing the use of the infinitive alone is not a sensible way to help people calm down

in a crisis. To my knowledge, there is not a wide literature on the calming effects of the

infinitive. However, looking at what verbs were clustered with the infinitive "to" can lead

to an answer for why FDR increased his usage of the infinitive. Using AntConc

(Anthony, 2014), I was able to find the most common verbs used with the infinitive "to"

in FDR's speeches before and during the Great Depression.

Most Common Infinitive "to" Clusters in FDR's Speeches Before the Great Depression	Most Common Infinitive "to" Clusters in FDR's Speeches During the Great Depression
1. to be	1. to be
2. to make	2. to make
3. to go	3. to work
4. to meet	4. to do
5. to think	5. to meet

6. to put	6. <mark>to have</mark>
7. to work	7. to give
8. to come	8. <mark>to help</mark>
9. to find	9. <mark>to get</mark>
10. to give	10. <mark>to prevent</mark>

"To work" became more important than clusters that were more frequent before the Great Depression. The president needed to talk about the verb "working" because an unprecedented number of Americans did not have jobs, and he was trying to create jobs with the New Deal Program. The leader mentioning plans for people to get jobs is important during an economic crisis. "To have" was not one of the ten most frequent infinitive clusters in FDR's speeches prior to the Great Depression, but during the Great Depression, listeners may have felt the value of the possessions they did have more strongly. While some of the occurrences of "to have" were occurrences of "have" as an auxiliary verb, not as a lexical verb indicating possession, if the occurrences of "to have" where "have" is an auxiliary verb are subtracted, "to have" indicating possession would still be a top ten most common infinitive cluster in FDR's speeches during the Great Depression. During this kind of economic crisis, the leader needs to admit what the people do not have and help them to be thankful for what they do have. Possession becomes important during an economic depression. "To help" became a frequent infinitive cluster in FDR's speeches during the Great Depression. This makes sense because FDR needed to convince the listeners that he was going to help them and that they should help each other. Assurance of help is a very logical strategy for preventing

panic during a crisis. "To get" is a very interesting cluster in the context of FDR Great

Depression speeches, because many of his New Deal programs were designed to help

people get something, whether it be money, electricity, jobs, or medical care. He needed

to explain what he was going to help them get. Explaining concrete ways that he was

helping is also a logical strategy for keeping listeners calm. It is likely that many people

were afraid of their futures during this time period, so FDR frequently mentioning what

he was striving "to prevent" was important. People probably wanted assurance that he

was going to prevent further disaster. A leader talking about steps to prevent the crisis

from getting worse may be a good way to keep listeners calm. To be sure that FDR's

drastic increase in usage of the infinitive was not a general change in English, I checked

the infinitive in the Corpus of Historical American English (Davies, 2010) and confirmed

that the usage of the infinitive did not increase in American English from the 20's to the

30's, so FDR's increased usage of the infinitive had some sort of importance, and I think

the importance can best be explained by the verbs that came with the infinitive "to." The

verbs that increased frequency in FDR's speeches during the Great Depression were all

related to things that the people would have wanted, given the context of economic

depression.

Conjuncts

Conjuncts give a sense of organization and help listeners understand the relation between

sentences. Using AntConc (Anthony, 2014), I found that the conjuncts he used during the

Great Depression most frequently. I checked the frequencies of these words in the Corpus

of Historical American English (Davies, 2010) to see if it was a general change in

English or an FDR-specific change, and I found that the frequency of FDR's most common conjuncts did not increase from 1920-1928 to 1933-1938. FDR probably had a reason for his increase of conjuncts, and given the function of conjuncts, he probably wanted to be sure the listeners understood the connections and relations between his utterances. His increased attempt to communicate very clearly with the listeners through his use of conjuncts could be due to the graveness of the situation during the Great Depression. Since he used much fewer conjuncts before the Great Depression, it is likely that the crisis made him more intentional about using words to connect his ideas clearly. Clarity in his communication might have been one of his strategies to try to keep the listeners from being afraid.

Most Frequent Conjuncts in FDR's Speeches During the Great Depression	Frequency of Occurrence (per 100 words) in FDR's Speech Sample During the Great Depression	Frequency of Occurrence (per 100 words) in FDR's Speech Sample Before the Great Depression
Therefore	.037	0
However	.035	0
Thus	.027	0
Instead of	.019	0

Relative Pronoun "That" in Subject Position

The large increase in FDR's usage of "that" in subject position had to be further examined to be understood. At first glance it seems strange that the Great Depression would correlate with using "that" as a relative pronoun in subject position, but in looking at each

instance of FDR's usage of "that" as a relative pronoun in subject position, the motivation becomes clearer. Using AntConc (Anthony, 2014) to find all the occurrences of "that" and manually isolating the subject position of relative clause cases, it was clear that many of the occurrences of "that" as a relative pronoun in subject position in FDR's speeches during the Great Depression were in sentences justifying his actions and programs or other strategies that would convince people not to revolt. His style of speech needed "that" as a relative pronoun in subject position to convey his justifications. Prior to the Great Depression, he was not in a position of making decisions that would affect the economy of a whole nation that was already suffering. He was under considerable pressure to make wise economic decisions for the country during the Great Depression, especially since Hoover was criticized so much for his economic inaction that the clusters of makeshift shelters that people who lost their homes were living in were called "Hoovervilles." Publicly justifying his plans for the whole nation to here would definitely be a reasonable idea of a way to prevent riot or revolutions and help people stay calm.

Examples of FDR's Usage of "that" in Subject Position in Relative Clauses

(focusing on just the bolded *that*'s, as there are occurrences of the word *that* with different functions in some of the same sentences)

Speech	Example	Logical Inference of his reason for the sentences that required usage of "that" as a relative pronoun in subject position based on the context	General Communication Tactic
First Inaugural Address	We face the arduous days **that** lie before us in the warm courage of national unity; with the	Showing listeners that he understands the situation	Identifying with the listeners' needs

	clear consciousness of seeking old and precious moral values; with the clean satisfaction **that** comes from the stern performance of duty by old and young alike.		
Fireside Chat 1	The new law allows the twelve Federal Reserve banks to issue additional currency on good assets and thus the banks **that** reopen will be able to meet every legitimate call.	Justifying his solution to the banking crisis	Justifying action steps toward bettering the situation
Fireside Chat 1	A bank **that** opens on one of the subsequent days is in exactly the same status as the bank **that** opens tomorrow.	Reassuring people's confidence in their banks, preventing another panic	Making listeners trust him
Fireside Chat 1	I do not promise you that every bank will be reopened or that individual losses will not be suffered, but there will be no losses **that** possibly could be avoided; and there would have been more and greater losses had we continued to drift.	Justifying his solution to the banking crisis	Justifying action steps toward bettering the situation
Fireside Chat 2	Next, the Congress is about to pass legislation **that** will greatly ease the mortgage distress among the farmers and the home owners of the nation, by providing for the easing of the burden of	Justifying a coming change	Justifying action steps toward bettering the situation

	debt now bearing so heavily upon millions of our people.		
Fireside Chat 3	Thus far I have spoken primarily of the foundation stones -- the measures **that** were necessary to re-establish credit and to head people in the opposite direction by preventing distress and providing as much work as possible through governmental agencies.	Justifying coming changes	Justifying action steps toward bettering the situation
Fireside Chat 4	Then we come to the relief **that** is being given to those who are in danger of losing their farms or their homes. New machinery had to be set up for farm credit and for home credit in every one of the thirty-one hundred counties of the United States, and every day **that** passes is saving homes and farms to hundreds of families.	Justification of new policy	Justifying action steps toward bettering the situation
Fireside Chat 5	A few timid people, who fear progress, will try to give you new and strange names for what we are doing. Sometimes they will call it " Fascism", sometimes "Communism", sometimes "Regimentation", sometimes "Socialism". But, in so	Speaking against opponents' criticisms of the New Deal	Justifying action steps toward bettering the situation

	doing, they are trying to make very complex and theoretical something **that** is really very simple and very practical.		
Fireside Chat 6	It is perhaps not strange that the conservative British press has told us with pardonable irony that much of our New Deal program is only an attempt to catch up with English reforms **that** go back ten years or more.	Mentioning foreign supporters of the New Deal in a way that makes the New Deal seem like an unquestionable necessity	Justifying action steps toward bettering the situation
Democratic National Convention	And as a result the average man once more confronts the problem **that** faced the Minute Man.	Relating present to historical cultural memories	Promoting unity to avoid internal conflict
Fireside Chat 8	In the same way it is the purchasing power of the workers in these factories in the cities **that** enables them and their wives and children to eat more beef, more pork, more wheat, more corn, more fruit and more dairy products, and to buy more clothing made from cotton, wool and leather.	Explaining his view of the economic situation	Justifying action steps toward bettering the situation
Speech at Madison Square Gardens	They carefully conceal from him the fact that under the federal law, he receives another insurance policy to help him if he loses his job, and that the premium of that policy is paid 100 percent by	Dismantling opponents arguments against him	Justifying action steps toward bettering the situation

	the employer and not one cent by the worker. They do not tell him that the insurance policy **that** is bought for him is far more favorable to him than any policy that any private insurance company could afford to issue.		
Second Inaugural Address	We are beginning to wipe out the line **that** divides the practical from the ideal; and in so doing we are fashioning an instrument of unimagined power for the establishment of a morally better world.	Emphasizing the progress that has been made	Making listeners trust him
Fireside Chat 9	What do they mean by the words "packing the Court"? Let me answer this question with a bluntness **that** will end all honest misunderstanding of my purposes.	Introducing his excuses for court packing	Justifying action steps
Quarantine Speech	Most important of all, the will for peace on the part of peace-loving nations must express itself to the end that nations **that** may be tempted to violate their agreements and the rights of others will desist from such a course.	Justifying staying out of the war	Justifying inaction
Fireside Chat 10	I have just visited much of the work that the National Government is doing	Showing the progress that new policies are bringing, portraying	Justifying action steps toward bettering the

	to stop soil erosion, to save our forests, to prevent floods, to produce electric power for more general use, and to give people a chance to move from poor land (on) to better land by irrigating thousands of acres **that** need only water to provide an opportunity to make a good living.	the irrigation as an obvious simple solution	situation
Fireside Chat 11	Unemployment is one of the bitter and galling problems **that** now afflicts man-kind.	Admitting that the problem has not yet been solved	Identifying with the listeners' needs
Fireside Chat 12	Therefore, I am determined to do all in my power to help you attain that security and because I know that the people themselves have a deep conviction **that** secure prosperity of that kind cannot be a lasting one except on a basis of (business) fair business dealing and a basis where all from the top to the bottom share in the prosperity.	Assuring listeners that he will help them	Making the listeners trust him

These are just some of the examples of "that" in subject position of relative clauses in

FDR's speeches. I confirmed that there was not an increase in the usage of "that" in

subject position of relative clauses in general American English from the 20's to the 30's

by checking in the Corpus of Historical American English (Davies, 2010) using the same

searching strategy that the MAT (Nini, 2015) uses. MAT identifies "that" in subject

position of relative clauses by finding all the occurrences of "that" proceeded by a noun and followed by a verb (Manual, 2015). I searched for the same sequence in the Corpus of Historical American English (Davies, 2010) to find the occurrences of "that" in subject position of relative clauses.

Average Word Length

FDR's increase in average word length could have been an attempt to sound more educated and informed. He would want people to believe that he was competent to make decisions about what to change in the economic system. If the people believed that he was knowledgeable, they would be more likely to have confidence in him as a leader.

Summary and Evaluation of Rhetorical Strategies FDR Employed During the Great Depression

The results suggest that FDR used verbs related to the people's wishes in the crisis context, tired to clearly communicate in an organized way, justified his actions, and attempted to convey a sense of knowledge. All of these seem strategies are very logical, but before assuming that they are effective it is important to see how they worked for FDR. In March and April 1934, Literary Digest took a public opinion poll confirming that 69.03% of the population was in favor of the New Deal and 30.97% of the population was opposed to the New Deal, but that number decreased to 61.15% in favor of and 38.85 % against the New Deal in May and June 1934, and 50.97% in favor of and 49.03% against the New Deal in August-September, 1934 (Public Opinion Poll, 1935-1941). The topics speeches prior to the March-April poll were explaining and justifying

the New programs, but the next Fireside Chats were Fireside Chat 5: On Addressing the

Critics and Fireside Chat 6: On Government and Capitalism, which could indicate that

the listeners supported FDR more when his speeches were focused on explaining his

plans than criticizing opponents or saying good things about the governmental system. It

is reasonable that the people preferred when the programs were being explained because

they wanted knowledge about the situation when they had reason to worry about an

unknown future. When FDR applied the strategies of relating to the people's wishes in the

crisis context, trying to clearly communicate in an organized way, justifying his actions,

and attempting to convey a sense of knowledge in a way that directly applied to the crisis,

the polls showed more support of his programs. FDR still maintained more supporters

than non-supporters though. In 1937 and 1938, public opinion polls showed that he still

had support from over 50% of the population (Berinsky, Powell, Shickler, & Yohai,

2011). Though there were people who opposed FDR, he did successfully prevent violent

protests and riots. None of the sources I found in the archival library indicated that

violence occurred because of panic from the Great Depression. There was considerable

violence against African Americans in the south in this time period, but this was due to

racism, not economic panic, and was happening before the Great Depression.

Conclusion

Based on FDR's popularity and the considerable lack of riots or violent protests during

the Great Depression, his strategies of relating to the people's wishes in the crisis context,

trying to clearly communicate in an organized way, justifying his actions, and attempting

to convey a sense of knowledge in a way that directly applied to the crisis appear to have

been successful. Following his model could be helpful for any other leaders trying to

keep peace during a crisis. It is important to study this topic to avoid unnecessary riots in similar future situations.

One of the biggest limitations in this study was lack of time to transcribe more of FDR's pre-presidency speeches, but with the speeches used, there were still clear trends. In the future, more of FDR's speeches could be transcribed for the pre-Great Depression FDR speech corpus to make the results stronger. An area of further research that is related would be to see how well the strategies that FDR used work in other cultures and if they could be adjusted to fit other cultures. Though they worked in America in the 1930's, there is no guarantee that they could work in every culture. Leaders in other cultures who successfully maintained peace during a crisis could be studied and compared to FDR. A comparative analysis of effective crisis management in various cultures would be very interesting. Studying past crises can help leaders prepare for potential crises in the future.

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