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MULTIMODAL MEANS REPRESENTING BORIS JOHNSON ON SOCIAL MEDIA AS A CHARISMATIC LEADER

Метою започаткованого дослідження є встановлення особливостей взаємодії мультимодальних засобів, які слугують вираженню харизми політичного лідера, шляхом використання *методів* мультимодального й критичного дискурс-аналізу політичних зображень, опублікованих у соціальних мережах. За результатами виконання дослідження, у статті узагальнено характерні ознаки, притаманні харизматичній особистості, наведено авторське визначення харизми, обґрунтовано теоретико-методологічні засади дослідження комплексної взаємодії мультимодальних засобів, здатних транслювати харизму політичного лідера.

Харизма трактується як складний комунікативно-когнітивний феномен, що відображає уявлення індивіда щодо вроджених, набутих або пропагованих ЗМІ, внутрішніх і зовнішніх сугестивних якостей особистості-лідера, які виникають у свідомості реципієнта під час інтерактивної комунікації на підставі сприйняття ним мети спілкування, його стратегії, тактик, методів, а також декодування ним комплексів лінгвальних і позалінгвальних засобів, що асоціюється зі здатністю мовця як лідера задовольнити потреби або запити громади.

Матеріалом дослідження обрано візуально-графічне представлення в соціальних мережах Бориса Джонсона, політика, визнаного міжнародною аудиторією як харизматичного, який перебуває на передньому плані політичної і дипломатичної підтримки України в російсько-українській війні. Проведений аналіз засвідчив актуалізацію низки вербальних (еліптичні речення, наказовий спосіб, асонанс, алітерація, займенники першої множини *we, our, us*, тощо) та візуально-графічних мультимодальних засобів (шрифт повідомлення, символічна кольорова гама, стиль одягу, зовнішній вигляд, мова тіла, пози, міміка тощо), комплексна взаємодія яких спрямована на запуск когнітивних процесів у свідомості реципієнта при сприйнятті образу харизматичного політика. З'ясовано, що мультимодальне представлення в соціальних мережах образів політичних лідерів слугує формуванню в аудиторії стійкого сугестивного ефекту харизматичності їх особистості за рахунок взаємодії і поєднання комплексу вербальних і невербальних засобів.

Ключові слова: харизма, харизматичний лідер, мультимодальні засоби, вербальні й невербальні засоби, взаємодія, мультимодальний і критичний дискурс-аналіз, писемна комунікація.

Introduction

As is known, the phenomenon of charisma was introduced into scientific studies in the 1920s [Adair-Toteff, 2020], which happened to be about the same time when theoretical and methodological foundations of multimodality as a scientific approach were presented in

humanitarian research [Макарук, 2019, p. 84]. Such innovations provided a transformation of communication by implementing a variety of graphical non-verbal devices able to concisely convey the necessary amount of information as well as project the desired image of a public figure.

Despite both fields of research, i.e. linguistic enquiry into the realm of charisma and multimodal discourse analysis, being relatively young scientific fields albeit recognised by scholars for over a century, there has been an explicit interest in the study of the multimodal expression of charisma within recent years. The multimodal actualisation of the perceived leader's charisma has been primarily investigated within the frame of political discourse. There are papers on the analysis of populist leaders' masculinity as actualised through multimodal means on social media (posts including both verbal and graphic information) [Silvestro, Venuti, 2021]. A creative team of scholars [Poggi, D'Errico, 2016, 2022] have worked on a number of related issues, bringing light to how political leaders exploit various multimodal means to influence their audience and be perceived as a charismatic leader (although, their primary research material was audio-visual discourse). Moreover, there is a study that looks into hindsight multimodal means in political posters of a successful Irish party [Lirola, 2016], etc.

As we can see, within the sphere of multimodal studies there have been formed sufficient grounds for carrying out the analysis of multimodal means conveying a political speaker's charisma through its graphical image as presented in media. Besides, as it has been shown in the research on the subliminal potential of graphical non-verbal means [Макарук, 2019], they prove to be a powerful tool for manipulating the opinions and preferences of potential audience.

In view of this, the *aim* of the present paper is to analyse multimodal means' interplay that assists in conveying a political speaker's charisma creation through its graphical image, namely political posters, and social media posts. To achieve the research aim we employed both linguistic and general scientific *methods*, among others in particular analysis, synthesis, deduction, induction, online survey, linguistic description and interpretation as well as the method of multimodal discourse analysis.

As a study material, we chose the images of a politician, who is already commonly perceived as charismatic by international audiences, namely Boris Johnson, who has been a prominent political figure for almost a decade and has recently come to the forefront of political and diplomatic support of Ukraine in the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war [Langfitt, 2019; Sauer 2019].

Theoretical and methodological background of the research

To trace the multimodal means of portraying a charismatic leader, we are, in the first place, to define a comprehensive set of personal traits that distinguish an individual as a charismatic speaker. It should be mentioned that this phenomenon has already been within the scope of inter-disciplinary research in the sphere of humanities, namely sociology [House, Howell, 1992], psychology [van Vugt, Ronay, 2014], and linguistics [Reh, Giessner, Quaquebeke, 2016]. Pursuing the results of these studies we have come up with the following conclusion: to present a comprehensive scientific description of the results of multidisciplinary research into multiple phenomena of a public speakers' charismatic personality's non-verbal behaviour, it is reasonable to use among other non-verbal characteristics (e.g., eye-contact, posture, gestures, voice, and intonation, etc.), such notions as intelligence, self-confidence, persistence, ability to inspire, sociability, dominance, narcissism, and vision. These characteristics are viewed as relevant to the charismatic traits of a speakers' personality since they have been historically conventionalised [Бойченко, 2021b, p. 145].

In terms of defining the methodological background for the study of multimodal means' interplay that help create a political speaker's charisma we are to consider that some of the most influential directions of multimodal theorising are those studied within the framework of social semiotic multimodal theory by such scholars as Baldry and Thibault [2006], Bateman [2008], Kress and van Leeuwen [1996, 2001], O'Halloran [2004], O'Toole [1994] and van Leeuwen [2005], the foundation for which was provided by Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics [Jewitt, 2011].

Scholars state that multimodality, being rooted in different spheres which study human communication, now can benefit from previous findings in various areas of research, including anthropology, history, philosophy, psychology, sociology, visual media and cultural studies, fine

art, new media studies, linguistics and semiotics [Djonov, Zhao, 2013, p. 1; Jewitt, 2011, p. 2]. As it has been pointed out [Ledin, Machin, 2019, p. 1; Jewitt, 2011, p. 1], in recent years multimodality has become a more common aspect of research and interest in critical discourse analysis, sociolinguistics and pragmatics etc., with scholars analysing images, videos, textbooks, spaces, etc. In Ukrainian linguistics over the last decade multimodality, and its preceding and succeeding approaches, have been studied by various scholars, notably by L. Makaruk [2015, 2018, 2019], I. Shevchenko [2022], O. Vorobyova [2018, 2022], S. Zhabotynska [2020, Zhabotynska, Ryzhova, 2022].

From the standpoint of research methodology, it should be noted that in the present paper, we follow methodological assumptions as well as employ the methods put forward by Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) developed from the Discourse and Critical Discourse Analysis, which has come to be the leading methodological tool [Suphaborwornrat, Punkasirikul, 2022, p. 631] in multimodal studies. MCDA shifts from analysing just verbal means of communication in a context to taking into account multiple semiotic resources (gestures, posture, gaze, clothes, pictures, colours, etc.) whose interplay creates a specific communicative meaning [Ledin, Machin, 2018, p. 64; 2019, p. 1]. According to this approach, language (whether written or oral) is the only one of the meaning-making tools among multiple available semiotic systems. Kress states that the aim of MCDA is to develop an instrumentarium that can provide an understanding of the relation between the meaning of a discourse and its semiotic manifestations [Kress, 2013, p. 37].

Since within the multimodal approach, verbal means are not considered to be semantically superior to other modes of communication, Barthes offers three possible visual-verbal relations: (1) anchorage, or the verbal content that supports the visual content; (2) illustration, or the visual content that supports the verbal one; (3) relay, or visual and verbal content having equal status [Barthes, 1977, pp. 32–51].

We cannot but agree that a charismatic leader can be perceived as such by their audience only through the cumulative effect of plethora of multimodal means: from their speech to their body language and even clothes [De Vries, Bakker-Pieper, Ostenveld, 2010].

The study of the multimodal means representing a person's charisma inevitably requires looking at it from the recipient's perspective, we have to take into account the fact that while communicating, a person processes, structures, and accumulates information that comes from various external sources differing in their origin and nature. Perception of the external signals that inform the person about changes in the surrounding reality is carried out by certain groups of receptors, namely: visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory. The incoming signals are transmitted to the brain for their further processing. However, it should be mentioned that information potentials, as well as transmitting capacities of the channels through which a person receives external information, differ.

It is a well-known fact [Kosmyna, Lindgren, Lécuyer, 2018] that the visual channel has the maximum information potential since with its help the individual receives up to 90% of the information, mainly via reading. At the same time, there is no argument against the statement that all the information, literally pouring upon the individual in the process of communication, is perceived by the sensory organs simultaneously and in parallel mode so that information reaches consciousness, which ensures its immediate assessment and subsequent processing.

Recent studies also highlight the high informational capacity of various pictographic means and their ability to graphically present the dynamics of visual images. It follows that other phenomena, which undoubtedly play a significant role in speech generation and its decoding, account for only 10% of the total amount of informational potential in the course communication. All this undoubtedly proves the highly informative as well as subliminal potential of multimodal visual pictographic means aimed at creating a charismatic image of a public person.

In view of the outlined ideas, we have performed the following sequence of methodological steps necessary to define a set of multimodal means that serve to convey a public personality's charisma. It was rational within the first step to come up with typical traits or features of a public speaker's personality that are traditionally perceived by the audience as those that serve to create their charisma. The second step presupposed conducting a survey among British and Ukrainian citizens based on a questionnaire about Boris Jonson's charisma perception. Before

answering the questions, the informants were offered to look at posters and watch video recordings of speeches of various public personalities so that they could define prevailing characteristics as well as verbal and/or non-verbal means that assist in conveying the person's charisma. The questionnaire helped us collect views from Ukrainian and British respondents as to whether they recognise the personality under study as a charismatic one. Within the third step, having analysed Boris Johnson's public messages and his followers' comments on them collected from the ex-Prime Minister's accounts on various social media, we described the interplay of verbal and non-verbal graphical means that influence the recipient's perception of a depicted person as a charismatic public leader.

Results and discussions

In our previous works [Бойченко, 2021a], we found out that, according to numerous scholars' opinions, charismatic communication differs from other types of communication between leaders and their followers by a deeper emotional connection, established and supported by a leader. One of the most important features of a charismatic public speaker is emotionality (actualised in the ability to evoke emotional excitement, varying the degree of emotional arousal, the ability to appeal to the audience, etc.), thus in the mechanism of charisma perception, charismatic speakers primarily appeal to the emotional thinking of the recipients. To create such connection charismatic leaders are aimed at convincing followers that they are members of a special social collective, particularly the one that has admirable values; creating a sense of collective identity as a member of a group with a noble cause; expressing confidence in followers and their abilities to achieve outcomes, which enhances their individual and collective self-esteem, senses of self-worth and self-efficacy, articulation of vision [Riggio R., Riggio H. 2008]. Furthermore, as a result of a comprehensive analysis of specific characteristics of a charismatic speaker, it was summarised that they usually convey such features as intelligence, self-confidence, persistence, ability to inspire, sociability, dominance, narcissism, and vision. These findings allowed us to coin our own definition of charisma, which reflects the complex communicative and cognitive nature of the phenomena. We view charisma as existential beliefs of a person about certain exclusively innate, obtained or promoted by media, internal or external suggestive / subliminal qualities of a leader which occur in the recipient's consciousness during interactive communication on the basis of the leader's perception of the goal of communication, its strategy, techniques and methods, as well as their decoding of complexes of linguistic and extralinguistic means or signs of other semiotic systems, which show that the speaker belongs to certain institutions of spiritual or political power and which are associated with the speaker's ability to satisfy certain needs of the community as a leader.

Taking into consideration the mentioned characteristics of a charismatic individual, we conducted a survey to find out whether British and Ukrainian respondents view Boris Jonson as a charismatic personality. The questions asked were both open- and close-ended ones allowing the informants to rate the politician on the scale of charisma from 1 to 10, name the features that project his charisma onto the audience, ponder over the factors that help the speaker be perceived as charismatic as well as to explain their attitudes and personal views that influenced their perception of the speaker as more or less charismatic one.

The analysis of the data received enables us to undoubtedly qualify Boris Jonson as a charismatic public personality. Thus, 100% of respondents view him as a charismatic leader (the degree of charisma varying from 6 (12,5%) to 10 (50%) points). He is described as the one who can stay in tune with the public while conveying his message, can easily make people feel comfortable and even valued in his presence. According to the opinions expressed, people find his charisma appealing due to his wit and intelligence (50% of respondents), self-confidence (75% of survey participants), ability to establish an emotional connection with the audience (37,5%), his inspirational manner of both verbal and non-verbal communication (25%) and eye-catching appearance (25%). No matter whether it is Boris Jonson's photo image or video of his speech, all Ukrainian respondents without any exception view him as a charismatic leader primarily due to his ability to engage the audience into active listening, make people feel heard, and convey the message with conviction. The majority of British respondents, unlike the Ukrainian ones, have a rather negative or neutral attitude toward Boris Jonson, chiefly on the basis of his internal affairs

and policies. Despite this, they describe him as a charismatic individual with a unique appeal, who created his own recognisable brand of his image and can easily captivate people around him.

Both groups of survey participants unanimously agree (62,5%) that the most important factor for Boris Jonson to be perceived as a charismatic person is, on the one hand, non-verbal cues conveyed both in oral speech and in the graphical presentation of his images, which serves to make him rather likeable and approachable. On the other hand, it is his eye-catching appearance and often unorthodox approach to politics that helps him win the attention of the audience and increase the number of followers (50%).

Taking into account the mentioned above, we can conclude that Boris Johnson possesses all the necessary qualities to be characterised as a charismatic leader. He came to the PM chair in the circumstances which some of the scholars [Петлюченко, 2012, p. 396] connect to the appearance of charismatic leaders within a group (i.e. a crisis which calls for a leader to guide a group through it): "*a supposed outsider promising change, coming to power amid a politics in deep flux, and sitting atop an unwieldy coalition and polarised country*" [Bennister, Worthy, 2011]. Boris Johnson emerged as a possible leader of the government in quite an unsettling time for the nation, i.e. Brexit dilemma, and took responsibility to actively advocate for the idea and guide people through the painful process of leaving the EU.

Since the ex-Prime Minister did not have to make an electoral campaign to win the position, there is no abundance of posters of that time. However, his social media presence is quite abundant, that is why we are going to analyse posts from Johnson's personal Facebook and Instagram accounts. It is important to analyse both linguistic and visual elements so that we can decode their meanings and their effects on the audience's ideology [Lirola, 2016, p. 247]. Besides, while analysing multimodal means conveying the message, it is of utmost importance to take into account the context of the situation. It is also essential not to leave behind such graphic elements as colour, typography, iconography, etc. when analysing images, or the cohesive devices between clauses or sentences, as they create a whole in the form of a multimodal system [Ledin, Machin, 2019]. Thus, Lirola Martinez [Lirola, 2016, p. 251] argues that all elements of the multimodal text (font, place in which the image appears on the page, vocabulary and syntactic structures used, etc.) may play a part in creating the sense of the text and consequently have some impact on the recpient (in this case, a reader). Since social media communication presupposes interaction among its participants due to the possibility to comment on posted messages, we believe that all sorts of commentaries and remarks left by Boris Johnson's followers can be viewed as important guidelines for qualifying him as a charismatic leader. Therefore, we consider such comments to be an essential constituent that forms multimodal texts of social media messages and thus they should undergo a detailed analysis. In view of this, the multimodal texts studied in the article are defined as the integral cohesive phenomena consisting of the addresser's (Boris Johnson) and addressee's (his followers) communicative acts and include the texts of Boris Johnson's posts (verbal aspect), his graphic images and inscriptions (visual aspect), texts of comments (verbal aspect), and subscribers' emoticons, or emojis (semiotic aspect).

Bearing in mind the abovementioned, we have undertaken the multimodal analysis of a number of posts made at crucial times in the PM's career: before Brexit, during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, and the introduction of the new economy recovery plan. All the posts were analysed in terms of the verbal means used to convey their message, the correlation of the registered verbal means with visual non-verbal graphical means (colour, font, way of presenting, etc.).

The first post (Fig. 1) dates back to January 29th, 2020, two days before the UK were to leave the EU. As Boris Johnson was the main person representing Britain's Brexit choice, this post was one of many counting down the days until the historical moment.

The image offers a complex interplay of the following multimodal means:

a) verbal, which can, in their turn, be divided into three parts: the inscription in the photo itself, the comments below the post, and the PM's signature.

Figure 1. Boris Johnson's post on January 29th, 2020

The inscription on the post is a short affirmative phrase, having the structure of an elliptical sentence "*Two days to go*", which does not overtly say what the date states for and what action is meant by "*go*", but due to the social and historical concept, the implicit meaning is clear to the target audience. This ellipsis stresses the verbal part of the statement and the importance of the action which is to leave the EU. Furthermore, the slogan employs assonance of the high-back /u:/ to create a rhythm for a short text. Simple, rather assertive tone of the inscription shows that Johnson is waiting for this to happen, as well as any of his supporters.

The second verbal element is the text under the photo reads "*We're leaving the EU this Friday*". First of all, despite this account being an official representation of the then Prime Minister, the contraction element "*We're*" indicates an unofficial tone of Johnson's communication with his followers, aimed at establishing the idea that he is one of them. The first-person plural pronoun "*We*" is also used to stress that the charismatic leader and his supporters are the one and have the same goals. Next, the verb "*to leave*" in the present continuous tense may show an unwavering belief and desire of the PM for this event to happen, implying that Britain is ready, has done everything they could and is waiting for the deed itself;

b) visual: the post itself is a photo of Johnson with three workers. Johnson is dressed in his signature two-piece suit and a tie, the look he seldom changes, which represents both his status and him being a member of the Conservative party. Despite him being perceived as easy-going, light-hearted, and even goofy sometimes, which makes him appear approachable, the official attire stresses his position in power and seriousness as a politician. Nevertheless, he puts on the same jacket the workers are wearing, once again, stressing that he is relatable.

The PM is shaking hands with one of the workers, hi is leaning forward toward this person, shortening the distance between them and looking straight at this man. This is supposed to show that Johnson is genuine and open during this act of communication. It is worth mentioning, that one of the workers is taking the photo of the PM at the same time and the politician does not seem to mind it and is not disconcerted with it.

c) colour: the main colour theme is presented through the photo inscription, which is designed in the slightly modified Union Jack colours: blue, white and red. The palette once again foregrounds the idea of Britain and its independence from the EU that Brexit, which Johnson managed to persuade citizens of the UK to vote for, is for the sake of the country first and

foremost. It is notable, that the phrase "*to go*" is presented against the red background, making the action more prominent and urgent;

d) font: the main idea of the message "*Two days to go*" is written in bold thick white letters, which adds to the weight of the message. At the same time, there is Boris Jonson's signature under the main text, it is small and thin, not attracting attention, but is done like his actual hand-written signature and this may add to the authenticity of the main statement;

e) perception (comments on the post): Boris Johnson's message evoked a strong response from his followers with more than 2,000 comments and 14,000 likes. The comments clearly illustrate that this Prime Minister's post triggered great enthusiasm and excitement as well as earned tremendous support from the people of Great Britain:

Abdirahman Osman
Great leader !
You almost freed the UK from the Europeans! 👍😂❤ 19

Danielle McCreadie
I have never been more proud to call myself British than I do right now.... All thanks to you Boris for not letting our voices be ignored. You stood up and fought for us. 🇬🇧 🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧 you have put the great back in Great Britain.... now please stand by your word and not grant our jimmy cranky of a first minister a second independence vote!!!! Xx

Figure 2. Some comments on the post "*Two days to go*"

Boris Johnson's recognition as a leader is evidenced not only by the manner his followers address him (the overwhelming majority call the Prime Minister by his first name *Boris,* in very rare cases his full name, *Boris Johnson*, is mentioned, and in single instances – *Mr PM*), but primarily by the fact that he has earned a "popular name" coined from the first syllables of his name and surname – *BoJo*:

Vivienne Volkers-king
Jo Ker Michael ya make it an Independence Day public national holiday. Lol Go BoJo.

Ian Kniveton
If the EU start to muck you around, then 95% of the country is behind you in just walking away. GO BOJO!!!!!

Linda Kay Smith
Bloody well done Boris, you did what the majority of the country have asked for, once in the referendum and then again in the general election. Congratulations on your success x

Mark Caine-Grierson
Boris its Party time on Friday, well done for showing great strength and perseverance, putting up with backstabbing petulant MPs who have tried to rail road you.
Well done on getting Brexit done and roll on Friday at 11pm, let's make Britain Great again

Richard Cleal
Go BoJo, Go BoJo, well done Boris.

Figure 3. Some comments on the post "*Two days to go*"

This "popular name" albeit with some undertone of familiarity reveals that for the general public the PM is just a "regular guy", their "fella". Such a perception of Johnson demonstrates his personal appeal and charisma. Emotional expressiveness present in the comments for the post proves that Boris Johnson undoubtedly possesses a talent to appeal to people's hearts, which

is one of the key characteristics of charisma as a socio-psychological phenomenon. It ought to be noted that the expressiveness in the followers' comments is actualised through a plethora of means: syntactic (abundance of exclamatory sentences, intensified with several exclamation marks: *"You did it Boris, you got us out!!", "Outstanding leadership! Well done!"*); morphological (the use of emphasised interjections: "*Wwwwhhhhaaaatttt!*", and capitalised verbs in the imperative mood: "*GO BOJO!!!!!*"), lexical, when the expressiveness of lexical units is combined with their evaluative connotation (e.g., epithets to characterise Boris Johnson's actions "*Brilliant Boris*"). Moreover, frequent resort to exclamatory and cheering messages like "*We are all behind you*", as well as the use of words of gratitude and love serve to create a truly appealing and charismatic image of the people's leader.

Sally Brooks
Wwwwhhhhaaaatttt! No deal would be better!
We shouldn't be paying them anything and certainly not committed to their rules for another year. They have had plenty of notice. Absolutely gutting to end up with this deal after all we have been through. The EU are laughing at us all the way to their bank!

Shirley Morrison
Love you Boris from Scotland! You have a lot of supporters here! Ignore the Brainwashed SNP!!

Helen Philpin
Thank you Boris your absolutely amazing and well done,I've believed in you from the start on your campaign road to be MP.I'll be opening the Champagne 🥂 on Friday night. 🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧

Geoff Fawcett
Love you Boris. Simply the best, Winnie, Maggie Boris, forget the rest, Major, Cameron all non combatants. Take us forward to glory Boris.

Susan Connell
Brilliant News!!! All our thanks to you Boris for your achievement in Honouring the United Kingdoms Democratic Vote!!! 👍 🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧 xx

Massimo Maiorano
🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧 ❤️❤️ BORIS I LOVE YOU ❤️❤️ 🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧 🇬🇧🇬🇧

Don Osalonu Vico
I believe Boris 🙏 👍😂 4

Maz Lonsdale
Go Boris! ❤️ Love what you're doing for our country...a proper PM! Thank you

David Long
Boris – We should celebrate your Birthday as a national holiday! 🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧

Simon Lee
Brilliant Boris ..... 👍

Figure 4. Some comments on the post *"Two days to go"*

Followers' enthusiasm and expressiveness of their words are enhanced by a graphic segment of their messages, namely: the texts of comments incorporate pictograms of the British flag, hearts and champagne glasses, and the like, which symbolise people's patriotism and love for their leader, and perception of Brexit as a national holiday. The comments thread following this post vividly illustrates the most striking manifestation and evidence of Boris Johnson's charisma since he manages to evoke seemingly strong feelings and emotions which are not usually typical of rather reserved British people.

Overall, this post presents the politician as a leader who possesses certain charismatic traits: he is "one of them"; he associates himself with the supporters; he is open to communication and does not mind being perceived as both down-to-earth and famous, preserving the flair of his position; he is assertive and confident about the vision and cause he advocates and works for.

The second post (see Fig. 5) was made at the time of the worldwide crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic on July 3rd, 2020, when he presented the programme "*Build Build Build*" to repair the economy.

Figure 5. Boris Johnson's post on July 3rd, 2020

The multimodal complex of this example includes the following modes of conveying the meaning of the message:

a) verbal: as in the previous case, this mode is presented through a number of elements: the first inscription in the photo itself, the comment under it, the text on the platform, and Johnson's signature.

The inscription quotes the PM "*Together, we will build our way back to health*". The quote consists of the lexemes which, as in the previous case, are exploited to create the feeling that the leaders and the followers are equal, they are in the same boat and will work for the better cause with them. Traditionally, it is actualised through the first-person plural pronouns "*we*", "*our*" and the lexeme "*together*". The verb "*will*" expresses both promise and belief in the vision and plan that the charismatic leader offers to the country. The metaphor "[…] *build our way back to health*", which is one of the common verbal means in characteristic communication [Towler, 2003], is used to make the vision both more poetic and tangible at the same time.

The text under the photo states as follows: "*As we cautiously come out of hibernation, it is absolutely vital for us to set out the way ahead. We are launching a tan-year plan to build more schools and facilities, and reforming the planning system so we can build the homes we need*." Here we see the employment of the same second-person-plural-pronouns principle with the same goal, as mentioned above. The politician uses the adjective "*vital*" to emphasise how important his vision is.

The programme slogan "*Build Build Build*" may also be categorised as common for charismatic rhetoric, as it utilises the imperative mood and lexical repetition to call the followers for action and consists of three elements, which some scholars attribute to charismatic speakers [Antonakis, Fenley, Liechti, 2012].

b) visual: the second post differs from the first one, as here the PM is in a more official context, standing alone behind the platform and giving a speech about his programme; it is not interpersonal communication but a mass one. The clothes are his signature official two-piece suit and a tie, the meaning of which we made an effort to analyse above. What is important here is John-

son's pose: he is standing straight, his left hand is on the platform, but his right one is lifted side-way. This gesture allows him to make himself look bigger behind the platform (as it was shown, people are more prone to see a big, fatherly figure as more charismatic) and illustrates the idea of the "*way*" which was supposed to be built.

The idea of the "*way up*", to the recovery of economy and standards of living is also illustrated by the logo of the plan itself. One may notice that the text "*Build Build Build*" and the white background gradually go upright. It may represent the then anticipated economic growth.

c) font: the word "*together*" in the phrase "*Together, we will build our way back to health*" is singled out by being in bold and in italics. This design decision expresses the main idea of the whole message: the country will rebuild the economy altogether and the PM does not see himself apart from the people;

d) perception (comments on the post): through calling to action and stressing his unity with people, by using the first-person singular pronoun "*we*" multiple times, Boris Jonson managed to bring about the desired feedback so that the comments section turns into a platform for the discussion of a construction reform. Followers' comments demonstrate that there is no unanimous support for this Prime Minister's initiative since a lot of messages contain arguments against the reform. This comment thread does not show much enthusiasm among the followers as compared to the previous post about Brexit, however, it is characterised by a rather heated discussion of a current national issue. Follower's engagement into the discussion (1,500 comments and 7,200 likes on the post), the freedom of expressing their opinions, criticism of the Prime Minister including, confirm that Boris Johnson is perceived by his people not only as a national but also as a democratic leader.
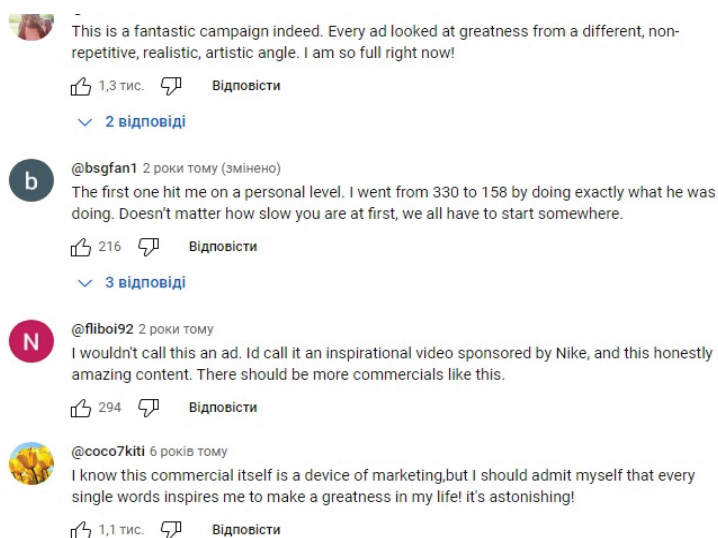

Figure 6. Some comments on the post *"Build Build Build"*

Nevertheless, despite the criticism expressed towards Boris Johnson, the comments still contain the same informal register of address as under the post analysed above. In this thread followers also address the PM in a simple manner, by his first name (*Boris*), using colloquial language (*Come on, Boris*), and idioms (*you keep your head in the sand*). This style of communication reflects how close people of the country are to the authority, testifying that they are "in the same boat" and trying to deal with the problem together:

The followers' expressiveness is also present in the comments conveying their evaluation of Boris Johnson's work and performance. In the following thread, we find the same means that reflect followers' emotions as in the previous one, in particular, they extensively use evaluative descriptive adjectives (*wonderful, strong and courageous prime minister; resilient brilliant leader*) and a number of graphic intensifies (emojis) etc.:

Gail Hinkins
Come on Boris , allow beauty salons back. And some live theatre? If cinemas are open no reason why small cast plays shouldn't go on? Not west end big shows yet maybe.

Barb Wareing
He hasn't done a single thing for the 3.9 million 1950s born ladies that have had 6 years worth of pension stolen from them, many are in extreme poverty and have been forced to work a further 6 years before they can draw their miserly state pension. Well done Boris, you keep your head in the sand. NOT GOING AWAY

Margaret Greatwood
Ann Fielden totally agree well done. Boris 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 👍😆 12

Figure 7. Some comments on the post *"Build Build Build"*

Mwasya Lucy S. Favour · Подписаться
For sure this Prime minister is a performer and a great reformer, Britain have a resilient brilliant leader this time. Whish they could all support his timely reformation in their country. Moving forward strong a tick of the clock!!

Melissa Groves
The quality of your leadership has been an inspiration to me. Thank you so much for being a wonderful, strong and courageous prime minister 💙🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿

Mark Tuen-Matthews
This is an excellent policy Boris, please make sure we eco build so we have a greener sustainable economy. 🙂🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿

Figure 8. Some comments on the post *"Build Build Build"*

To sum up, the post's main idea is the new plan for the country to restore the economy. Johnson, as a charismatic leader, shares his vision, assures his followers of its relevance and inclusiveness. He utilises both verbal and non-verbal means which are common for charismatic communication.

The third post (Fig. 9) is made in support of the PM's programme "*Build Back Better*", whose aim was to provide people with opportunities for education in the fields which experienced a lack of qualified personnel resources after the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

Figure 9. Boris Johnson's post on October 7th, 2021

The message of this post is conveyed through the combination of the following modes:

a) verbal: this mode is presented with less information than in those mentioned above, it only consists of the name of the programme that Johnson promotes, i.e. "*Build Back Better*", being a slogan for his party. The same text is in the picture printed on boxer gloves and presented under the photo in the form of a hashtag. The name of the plan is catchy and strong, it utilises alliteration of the voiced plosive bilabial /b/, which gives the words a decisive and assertive sound;

b) visual: the PM is in an unofficial atmosphere of a gym. He wears boxer gloves and takes a boxing pose. Such body language mimicking a boxer represents Johnson as a fighter for a better future and economic recovery. The name of the plan on the gloves may represent a visual metaphor for beating the crisis and downfall with the plan. Once again, the politician is in a public place, we can see other people training in the background. Thus, he is represented as a high official who is not afraid of being in the same place with common people, as he is one of them. The PM is looking straight into the camera, making direct eye contact, being qualified as one of the characteristics of charismatic communication [Antonakis, Fenley, Liechti, 2012]. Despite being in the gym, he is wearing his signature official look.

c) colour: it is worth mentioning that the gloves are blue, which is an official colour of the Conservative party, which he was the head of at the time of the post. In the back we can also see a matching blue punching bag, which may mean that the party is exercising in "beating" the crisis;

d) perception (comments on the post): despite being laconic, this post on Instagram has more than 2,000 comments and 68,000 likes. We may assume that so many likes are explained by the expressiveness of the photo and the image of Boris Johnson as a boxer fighting for Britain's prosperity. This expressiveness is passed by his followers, as the comment section is full of pictograms depicting approval and elation. The comments following this post are in their majority laconic (conveyed through emojis and short phrases), but at the same time, they are of a higher emotional loading as compared to the previous post. In our opinion, the increased degree of the comments' expressiveness can be explained by statistics testifying that Boris Johnson's overwhelming audience on this social media platform ranges within the age group of 18 to 35. A large number of comments and likes demonstrates PM's popularity among the youth and young adults. It is to attract primarily their attention is the aim of this vivid post portraying Johnson-boxer with an element of playfulness, as if the PM was saying "I am in an official suit, but I can also be playful". The image of Boris Johnson-the fighter sets the audience on the same page with him in the matter of the battle against the crisis, as evidenced by the "boxing" theme vigorously picked up and elaborated by the followers in their comments:
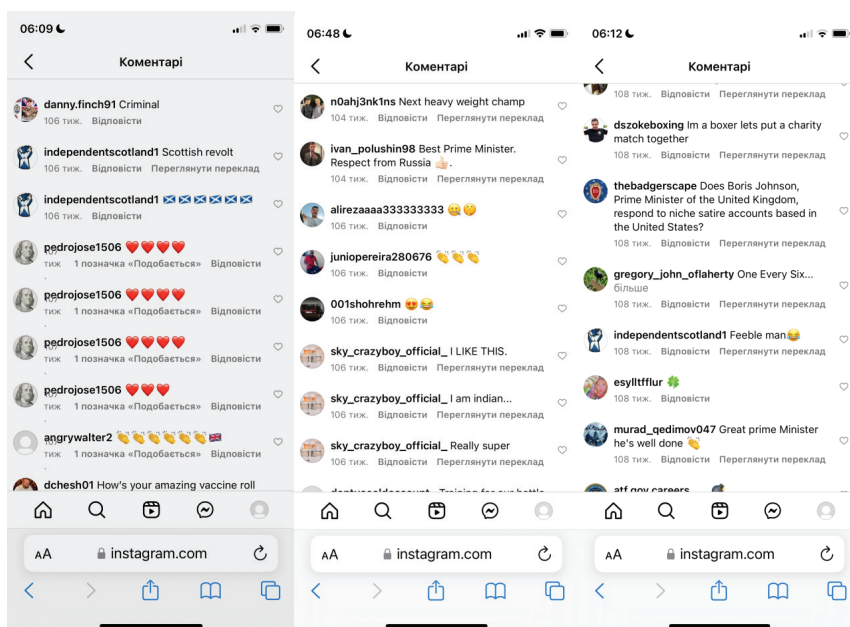

Figure 10. Some comments on the post *"Build Back Better"*

All in all, this post portrays Johnson as a leader who presented his vision to the followers and now is ready to defend this vision and its results, as well as the supporters who entrusted him with this mission. He is a "fighter", "protector" and a visionary.

As we can see from the analysed images, the set of visual-graphical techniques (font of the message, symbolic colour scheme, clothes style, body posture, gestures, emojis, etc.) in combination with verbal means (elliptical sentences, catchy slogans in imperative mood, assonance, alliteration, the use of first person plural pronoun "*We*", the lexical unit *together*, etc.) vividly display confidence of Boris Jonson and serve as a triggering mechanism in the recipient's mind to perceive him as a charismatic leader.

Conclusions

Multimodality, as well as multimodal critical discourse analysis are relatively young fields of humanitarian sciences. Nevertheless, charisma being a complex and multifaceted phenomenon requires tools being able to ensure its comprehensive analysis through all types, modes, and instances of communication. Multimodal approach allows the researcher to investigate charismatic speakers in any acts of communication and ways of self-expression, including such modes as language, image, sound, body language, graphics, etc. By applying multimodal critical discourse analysis, we were able to see whether Boris Johnson's social media self-presentation is actualised through means which are also representative of a charismatic leader. Multimodal texts analysed in the article include texts of Boris Johnson's posts (verbal aspect), their graphic images and inscriptions (verbal aspect), texts of comments (verbal aspect), and followers' emoticons, or emojis (semiotic aspect).

As a result of our study, we found out that Boris Johnson's social media presence is aimed at conveying his vision, especially in times of crisis, offering his followers support and promise of a better future, portraying him as an approachable, down-to-earth, considerate but at the same time serious leader, who sees himself as a member of the group and ready to work as much or even more to endure better future for other members of the aforesaid group. Boris Johnson's ability to evoke emotional response in his audience, engaging them in the discussion of issues is actualised through the semantic capacity of laconic text messages accompanied by vivid images. His self-representation as a national leader is expressed by the interplay of verbal and non-verbal means: on the *verbal level* through the lexical units that convey the idea of consolidation, unity of the nation and its Prime Minister (e.g. pronoun "*we*", adverb "*together*"), and communicate life-asserting messages, whose expressiveness is achieved through repetition of keywords ("*Build Build Build*"); usage of elliptical sentences and expressive metaphors ("*come out of hibernation*"); on the *visual level* it is realised by applying the colour palette that emphases the significance of the message, by various techniques of self-representation, like creating an image of a blue-collar worker, politician, boxer, etc.

Boris Johnson's charisma is confirmed by the survey conducted among British and Ukrainian respondents as well as by his subscribers' reactions, comments and likes on his social media posts. The carried out analysis allowed us to summarise the prevailing markers of politician's charisma as portrayed on social media. They are as follows: a large number of comments and likes for his posts; informality while addressing the Prime Minister by his first name "*Boris*" and presence of a "popular name" "*BoJo*"; high degree of the followers' messages expressiveness actualised through verbal means (significant amount of exclamatory sentences, interjections, evaluative epithets and idiomatic expressions), as well as graphical-visual means, in particular through the usage of graphic emoticons (emojis), serving to intensify the overall expressiveness of a message.

The performed analysis provides us with prospects of further analysis of the linguistic, psychological, sociocultural, and physiological traits of an individual which can serve for a well-founded and correct choice of the experimental data for inter-disciplinary research into a charismatic speaker's non-verbal presentation.

Adherence to Ethical Standards

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. We explained to the

participants their rights in detail and guaranteed the confidentiality and anonymity of their data. The participants of the study gave their voluntary consent to participate in the study.

Using data gathered from Facebook and Instagram adhered to ethical research standards, the ethical guidelines for digital research from the British Sociological Association, and standarts of Social Data Science Lab.

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MULTIMODAL MEANS OF BORIS JOHNSON'S REPRESENTATION AS A CHARISMATIC LEADER ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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In the paper, on the basis of a multimodal critical discourse *analysis* of political posters and social media posts, the authors outline the complex interplay of multimodal means serving to convey a political leader's charisma. *The paper aims* to advance a set of historically conventionalized features typical of the charismatic personality (such as intelligence, self-confidence, persistence, ability to inspire, sociability, dominance, narcissism, and vision), present the updated definition of this notion, and substantiate theoretical and methodological grounds for the study of the interplay of multimodal means portraying a charismatic political leader that assist in conveying a political speaker's charisma creation through its graphical image, namely political posters and social media posts.

The results of the study reveal that charisma is a complex communicative and cognitive phenomenon reflecting person's beliefs about certain innate, obtained or promoted by media, internal or external subliminal traits of a leader. These beliefs are shaped in the recipients' consciousness during interactive communication on the basis of the leader's strategy, techniques, and methods used in oral or written communication, as well as a set of linguistic and extralinguistic means associated with the speaker's ability to satisfy certain needs of the community. As a study material the authors opted for the images of Boris Johnson, a politician already acknowledged as a charismatic one by international audiences, who has been a prominent political figure for almost a decade and has recently come to the forefront of political and diplomatic support of Ukraine in the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war.

The carried out analysis proves the highly informative as well as subliminal potential of multimodal visual pictographic means aimed at creating a charismatic image of a public person. The authors outline a set of verbal (elliptical sentences, catchy slogans in imperative mood, assonance, alliteration, the use of first person plural pronoun "*We*", the lexical unit *together*, etc.) and visual-graphical means (font of the message, symbolic colour scheme, clothes style, body posture, gestures, oculesic features, etc.), whose interaction is aimed at triggering cognitive processes in the recipient's mind in perceiving a charismatic image of the politician.

Boris Johnson's charisma is confirmed by the survey conducted among British and Ukrainian respondents as well as by his subscribers' reactions, comments and likes following his posts on social media. The carried out analysis allows summarising the markers of a politician's charisma portrayed on social media as follows: the number of comments and likes for their posts; informality while addressing the Prime Minister by his first name "*Boris*" and presence of a "popular name" "*BoJo*"; high degree of the followers' messages expressiveness actualised through verbal means (significant amount of exclamatory sentences, interjections, evaluative epithets and idiomatic expressions), as well as graphical-visual means, in particular through the usage of graphic emoticons (emojis), serving to intensify the overall expressiveness of a message.

The conclusion is that social media graphical images are aimed at conveying charismatic political leaders' vision, offering their followers support and promise of a better future, portraying them as approachable, down-to-earth, considerate but at the same time serious leaders, ready to work to endure a better future.

The results of the performed study can provide grounds for interdisciplinary research of both oral and written charismatic communication within the cognitive approach framework considering verbal, non-verbal and paralingual means' (physiological, psychological, social, etc.) interplay that allows the audience to perceive a speaker as a charismatic one.

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