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THE FORMATION OF THE LANGUAGE IMAGE OF THE BRITISH POLITICIAN RISHI SUNAK

The Russian invasion of Ukraine led to the start of a brutal war aimed at the destruction of the Ukrainian state and its people. This invasion had a huge impact on world society, changing its perception of the role and place of Ukraine in the world order, which contributed to the creation of a powerful information front in support of our state. Rishi Sunak is one of the important figures in the context of British-Ukrainian political discourse. He mentioned Ukraine more than once in his X (former Twitter) posts and spoke in the Ukrainian parliament. Rishi Sunak's tenure as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom began on 25 October 2022, when he accepted an invitation from King Charles III to form a government to replace Liz Truss, and ended with his resignation on 5 July 2024.

The language image in the public speeches of foreign politicians shapes public opinion and is a powerful tool that is often used by world politicians. The intersection of language and politics represents an important field of study where the manipulation and use of language play a powerful role in exerting political influence. Accordingly, the language image of a politician is a special set of parameters that is a method of invisible automatic interaction with the audience, the purpose of which is to establish power and ideology and further form meanings in the public in a certain political discourse. In other words, the language image should take into account the means of communication used by the politician to form a certain image, convince the audience and achieve political goals. This concept covers various aspects of speech, such as vocabulary and phraseology, rhetorical techniques, stylistics, pragmatics of statements, as well as non-verbal elements of communication. In order to understand the non-verbal component of Rishi Sunak's language image, it is necessary to take into account and analyze such parameters as his social network portrait, clothes, gestures, neatness, facial expressions, tone of voice. The influence of language on politics is determined by the use of persuasive rhetoric, the dissemination of political plans, the formation of public discourse and the desired perception of the speaker.

Key words: *rhetoric, vocabulary and phraseology, rhetorical techniques, non-verbal communication, political discourse.*

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ФОРМУВАННЯ МОВНОГО ОБРАЗУ БРИТАНСЬКОГО ПОЛІТИКА РІШІ СУНАКА

Російське вторгнення в Україну призвело до початку жорстокої війни, спрямованої на знищення української держави та її народу. Це вторгнення мало величезний вплив на світове суспільство, змінивши його сприйняття ролі та місця України у світовому порядку, що сприяло створенню потужного інформаційного фронту на підтримку нашої держави. Ріші Сунак є однією з важливих фігур у контексті британсько-українського політичного дискурсу. Він не один раз згадував Україну у своїх постах X (колишній Twitter) і виступав в українському парламенті. Перебування Ріші Сунака на посаді прем'єр-міністра Сполученого Королівства розпочалося 25 жовтня 2022 року, коли він прийняв запрошення короля Карла III сформувати уряд, змінивши Ліз Трасс, і завершилося його відставкою 5 липня 2024 року.

Мовний образ у публічних виступах іноземних політиків формує громадську думку та є потужним інструментом, яким часто послуговуються світові політики. Перетин мови та політики представляє важливе поле дослідження, де маніпулювання мовою та її використання відіграють потужну роль у здійсненні політичного впливу. Відповідно мовний образ політика це спеціальний комплекс параметрів котрий є методом з невидимою автоматичною взаємодією з аудиторією, метою якого є встановлення влади і ідеології та подальшого формування смислів у громадськості у певному політичному дискурсі. Іншими словами, у мовному образі потрібно враховувати засоби комунікації, які використовуються політиком для формування певного іміджу, переконання аудиторії та досягнення політичних цілей. Це поняття охоплює різні аспекти мовлення, такі як лексика та фразеологія, риторичні прийоми, стилістика, прагматика висловлювань, а також невербальні елементи комунікації. Для розуміння невербального компоненту мовного образу Ріші Сунака потрібно взяти до уваги та проаналізувати такі параметри як портрет його соціальної мережі, одяг, жести, охайність, міміка, тембр голосу. Вплив мови на політику визначається використанням переконливої риторики, поширенням політичних планів, формуванням публічного дискурсу і бажаного для оратора сприйняття сказаного.

Ключові слова: *риторика, лексика і фразеологія, риторичні прийоми, невербальні комунікації, політичний дискурс.*

Statement of the problem. The language image of a politician plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and exerting political influence. In the context of British-Ukrainian political discourse, Rishi Sunak's language image, including both verbal and non-verbal communication, significantly impacts his political effectiveness and public perception. Despite the importance of this intersection of language and politics, there is a need for a deeper analysis of how Sunak's linguistic strategies and non-verbal cues contribute to his image as a political leader, especially given the current global political climate.

Analysis of research. The analysis of politicians and their influence on global politics from the linguistic perspective is required in order to stop chaos that is a modern global society. «Man is by nature a political animal» (Aristotle, 1998). This is perhaps one of Aristotle's most famous sayings and it perfectly represents current society. Language by all means is a powerful tool of influence. Several researchers have contributed significantly to the study of political language and the formation of language images in public figures. Norman Fairclough – a prominent figure in the field of critical discourse analysis, Fairclough has extensively explored the relationship between language and power, especially in political contexts (Fairclough, 2001). Teun A. van Dijk is known for his work on discourse analysis, he has focused on the intersection of language, ideology, and politics, providing a foundation for understanding how politicians craft their public images (Dijk, 2008). Ruth Wodak – a leading scholar in critical discourse studies, Wodak has analyzed political speeches and communication strategies, emphasizing the role of language in shaping public perception (Wodak, 2009).

Purpose of the article. The purpose of this article is to examine the formation of Rishi Sunak's language image as a British politician within the framework of British-Ukrainian political discourse. By analyzing both verbal and non-verbal elements of his communication, the article aims to reveal how these factors contribute to his political image and influence on the public. This study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the linguistic and non-verbal strategies employed by Sunak to achieve his political goals and maintain his authority on the international stage. The study of a politician's linguistic image seeks to establish causal relationships between the content of their speech, the manner in which it is presented, the methods employed in its presentation, and the effectiveness of these strategies in shaping public perception.

Presentation of the main material. Rishi Sunak, a young and talented British politician, attracts attention

with his open approach and modern style of speeches. His rhetoric not only reflects his personality but also shapes the concept associated with him as a political leader. The first parameter for analysis is vocabulary and phraseology – the words and phrases used by the politician, their specificity for certain topics. Rishi Sunak often uses formal and technocratic vocabulary, emphasizing his professionalism and expertise in financial and economic matters during the COVID-19 pandemic. He frequently employs terms that demonstrate his understanding of complex economic processes and challenges. For example, during discussions of the budget or economic measures, he uses terms such as:

– *Fiscal responsibility.* This expression is often used to emphasize his commitment to maintaining a balanced budget and avoiding excessive spending.

– *Economic recovery.* Rishi Sunak actively uses this phrase when discussing strategies for overcoming the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

– *Investment in infrastructure.* This phrase is often used in the context of long-term economic plans, highlighting the importance of infrastructure development for economic growth (HM Treasury, 2021).

Rishi Sunak's phraseology is characterized by simplicity, yet it is very influential. He uses short, clear phrases that are easily remembered and help convey key messages to the audience. Examples include:

– *Whatever it takes.* This phrase became key during the COVID-19 pandemic when Sunak assured the public of the government's readiness to take all possible measures to support the economy and protect people.

– *Plan for jobs.* This expression reflects Rishi Sunak's pragmatic approach to addressing unemployment issues caused by economic shocks.

– *Levelling up.* The use of this phrase emphasizes Sunak's desire to equalize economic opportunities for different regions of the UK, creating new prospects for communities (HM Treasury).

In Rishi Sunak's speech, the following elements of the rhetorical triadic argument are observed: ethos, which reflects his authority and credibility; logos, which demonstrates his logical and well-reasoned approaches to issues; and pathos, which attests to his emotionality (Whaley).

When analyzing the political activity of the politician on the social network X (formerly Twitter), his posts are quite controversial in the context of user comments (Rishi). This applies to posts related not only to British-Ukrainian political discourse but also to the economic and sociocultural situation in the United Kingdom during the 2021–2024 period.

Modern technologies allow for the manipulation of user perceptions (bot farms, bribed individuals with high follower counts, public figures, bloggers, etc.). Accordingly, user reactions to the politician's posts are driven by both constructive criticism of his actions and speeches, as well as by third parties interested in reducing public trust in the political figure, thereby damaging Rishi Sunak's image.

Rishi Sunak's oral speeches in the Ukrainian parliament require detailed analysis, as his charismatic skills contribute to the maintenance and improvement of relations between the Ukrainian community and Britain, both in political and military narratives.

During his speech on January 12, 2024, in the Ukrainian parliament, he used symbolism, key words, and precedent units somewhat similar to the components of the speeches of another British politician, Boris Johnson (10 Downing Street, 2024) (Lenartovych, 2023).

For the Ukrainian public, not only words but also the confirmation of these words with actions by the British government are important. When Rishi Sunak speaks of a military aid package, it is guaranteed to be provided, and the Ukrainian public responds positively to this rhetoric:

«This year we are going to increase that with the biggest single defense package so far, with £2.5 billion» (Whaley).

Analyzing his speeches, one can observe the transparency and accessibility of his speech, which is accompanied by specificity and a call to action. He avoids using complex terms and speaks clearly and understandably to all audiences. His speeches are characterized by the construction of simple speech structures, which enhances public trust. Emotional connection with the audience is one of the key aspects of Rishi Sunak's language image. He knows how to create an emotional connection with listeners, using adjectives that resonate with the audience, accompanied by emotional coloring and personal examples, allowing him to effectively communicate with diverse audiences.

In the context of British-Ukrainian political discourse, Rishi Sunak's vocabulary, phraseology, and stylistic features can be analyzed through keywords, symbolic words, and precedent units. Analyzing these components will shed light on the formation of his political personality and allow us to trace his influence on both Ukraine and British society in his public statements.

The author highlights the following linguistic components in this speech:

I. Keywords

– **President Zelenskyi** – The President of Ukraine, a significant figure in the ongoing war and resistance.

– **Russia** – The aggressor in the war, often used to refer to Russian authorities and military forces.

– **Ukraine** – The central object of the speech, representing the nation in its struggle for sovereignty and independence.

– **NATO** – An abbreviation for the North Atlantic Alliance, a military union of Western democracies, discussed in the context of potential membership.

– **Putin** – The President of Russia – an international war criminal.

– **Democracy** – A concept defended and promoted in Ukraine, contrasting with the aggressor's authoritarianism.

– **War** – Describes the entire period of war between Ukraine and Russia, the central theme in the text.

– **Victory** – The ultimate goal of Ukraine and its allies, representing victory over Russian aggression and the preservation of sovereignty.

– **Security** – Emphasizes the need for protection and defense, discussed in the context of military assistance, alliances, and collective actions.

– **Sovereignty** – Represents Ukraine's right to self-governance and independence.

II. Symbolic Words

– **Bravery** – Depicts the courage and resilience of the Ukrainian people and their defenders in the difficult defense against aggression.

– **Freedom** – Symbolizes the fundamental value defended by Ukraine and its allies. It also contrasts with Russia's authoritarianism.

– **Hope** – An optimistic outlook on the future despite the challenges and adversities of the ongoing conflict.

– **Unity** – Solidarity and cooperation among democratic nations in supporting Ukraine and opposing Russian aggression.

– **Determination** – Highlights the persistence of Ukraine and its allies in achieving victory and defending democratic principles.

– **Defiance** – Marks the refusal to surrender or be intimidated by the aggressor, emphasizing the strength of the Ukrainian spirit in times of war.

– **Solidarity** – The support and assistance of international allies to Ukraine, demonstrating unity in the fight against external threats.

– **Resilience** – Reflects Ukraine's and its people's ability to continue resisting Russian aggression.

– **Victory** – Symbolizes the ultimate goal of Ukraine and its allies, representing victory over occupation and the restoration of peace and freedom.

III. Precedent Units

– **Maidan** – Refers to a series of protests and demonstrations in Ukraine in 2013–2014, leading to political changes and the beginning of Russia's attack on Ukraine.

– **1940** – Marks a turning point in British history during World War II, known as the «finest hour» of the United Kingdom, emphasizing resilience and victory.

– **1942** – Represents a difficult period during World War II, providing hope and a subsequent turning point despite hardships.

– **Vilnius Summit** – Refers to the NATO summit held in Vilnius, addressing security and cooperation issues in Eastern Europe, particularly concerning Ukraine.

– **Washington Summit** – Confirms the upcoming NATO summit in Washington, D.C., USA, indicating further discussions and decisions regarding Ukraine's security and NATO membership.

– **Churchill** – Refers to Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister during World War II, often quoted for his leadership and speeches in times of crisis.

Gradually moving on to non-verbal components, Rishi Sunak always presents himself well-groomed, with neat hair and a flawless suit. He demonstrates a high level of attention to detail, reflected in his choice of clothing, shoes, and accessories. His appearance reinforces his image as a professional and responsible politician. This contributes to the formation of trust among voters, as neatness is often associated with meticulousness, organization, and responsibility. His appearance confirms that he pays great attention to details, which resonates with his rhetoric, often focusing on precision and responsibility in governance.

Rishi Sunak's culture is manifested not only in his appearance but also in his behavior and manners. He always arrives on time for meetings, his documents are always prepared, and his speeches are well-structured. This reinforces his image as a reliable and disciplined leader. His punctuality and attention to organizational aspects create the impression that he approaches decision-making and state management with the same meticulousness. This makes his speech more convincing, as the audience feels that his words are backed by a well-prepared and thoughtful position.

Rishi Sunak's gestures are often used to manipulate the audience and are controlled. His speeches are accompanied by clear hand movements that enhance the emotional component of information perception. Active gesticulation creates the impression that he is in full control of the situation, emphasizing his ability to remain calm and rational, even in difficult situations.

Rishi Sunak's facial expressions play a key role in shaping his language image, as they enhance his communicative strategies and help establish an emotional connection with the audience. His facial expressions can convey a wide range of emotions, from calm professionalism to empathy and

engagement in conversation. The author identifies the following types of facial expressions present in Rishi Sunak's speeches:

1. **Controlled facial expressions** – expressions that reflect his calmness and confidence. He often uses neutral but friendly expressions, creating the impression of a focused and competent leader. The control of facial expressions underscores his serious approach to problem-solving and ability to remain composed in stressful situations. This helps to form the image of a leader capable of making balanced decisions and not giving in to emotions, making his speeches more convincing.

2. **Smile and friendly expression** – Sunak often uses a warm, restrained smile during speeches or meetings, which helps create an impression of openness and friendliness. His smile helps establish positive contact with the audience, making him more approachable and empathetic.

3. **Empathy and involvement** – In situations where Sunak discusses social issues or interacts with voters, his face often reflects genuine interest and empathy. He may slightly tilt his head or express concern with raised eyebrows and a focused gaze.

4. **Seriousness and focus** – When Sunak speaks on serious or difficult topics, his facial expressions become more severe and focused. He may slightly press his lips together or focus his gaze, emphasizing the importance of the topic. Such facial expressions help convey the significance of the issues being discussed and enhance the seriousness of his speeches.

The next component is rather unusual as it deals with examining Rishi Sunak's social media presence, looking at comments under his posts and the correlation between likes, reposts, and comments to better understand his language image and its impact on the audience. One of the problems facing modern humanity is the lack of critical thinking. Clear examples of this phenomenon can be observed across various categories on the social network X (formerly Twitter). Despite this, X remains the most active and politicized network. Under Rishi Sunak's posts on this platform, there are numerous angry comments, particularly regarding his support for Ukraine and the poor state of the UK economy. The commenters include both real users and paid bot farms, which can be easily identified by examining the profiles of these users. However, practice has shown that even obvious bot farms can influence others and change perceptions of a particular politician or any user. Given that Rishi Sunak's posts consistently receive highly controversial comments and a relatively low number of likes compared to the comments, it indicates that, despite his professional oratory skills, there is a

significant gap between the politician's actions and his words. His language image on the social network X is rather negative.

The last non-verbal component of the analysis is the timbre of the voice. Rishi Sunak's voice is characterized by evenness, warmth, and a certain degree of melodiousness, which enhances his ability to persuade and build trust. This helps to strengthen his image as a politician who strives to be close to the people and open to dialogue. It also helps to reduce the distance between him and the listeners, creating the impression that he is not only competent but also cares about the people he communicates with.

Conclusions. The overview of Rishi Sunak's language image, a British politician, demonstrates

how linguistic and non-verbal elements shape his political image and influence audience perception. His ability to use technocratic vocabulary, rhetorical techniques, and symbolic expressions underscores professionalism and competence, especially in the context of complex economic and political issues. Non-verbal aspects, such as appearance, gestures, and facial expressions, complement his communication, creating the image of a leader who is confident, disciplined, and open to dialogue. Overall, Sunak skillfully combines verbal and non-verbal means, allowing him to communicate effectively with diverse audiences, strengthening his authority on the international stage, and playing a significant role in British-Ukrainian political discourse.

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